The Crow Hill Company VAULTS - RHYTHM MACHINE

The Crow Hill Company announces the availability of VAULTS - RHYTHM MACHINE as its latest VI (Virtual Instrument) release ready for all to download and make music with for free for the rest of their lives - literally preserving Roland's 1978-vintage CR-78 CompuRhythm's classic character as the Japanese giant of electronic musical instrument manufacturing's first programmable drum machine (that changed the way artists approached rhythm and, in doing so, stamped its musical mark on a number of notable hit records that subsequently secured its iconic status in the annals of music technology history for all eternity), effectively expanding its sonic potential with some tasteful effects as a result - as of October 1…

Far from stretching the boundaries of truth, it is fair to say that the introduction of Roland's CR-78 CompuRhythm changed the course of history as the first computer-controlled programmable drum machine. Most rhythm machines before its

late-1978 introduction were preset-only affairs, forcing their users to pick from the likes of 'Bossa Nova', 'Rock', and 'Waltz' - more in keeping with the home organ-orientated terminology of the time. The CR-78, however, offered something new - namely, an ability to program rhythm patterns and store them in memory using the external WS-1 programmer optionally offered by Roland. Indeed, its 14 onboard instruments include bass drum, cymbals, hi-hats, rimshot, snare drum, and tambourine alongside several Latin-type sounds, such as bongos, claves, and cowbell - all generated using analogue circuits, giving it a distinctly warm, punchy character. Thanks to the CR-78's analogue nature, though, the tempo control is not exactly surgical, but this foible only adds to its charm. And, as history has borne out, when placed in the creative musical hands of Blondie, Phil Collins, Peter Gabriel, and others, it became an iconic instrument in its own right.

"Before the '808, before drum machines became staples of pop, hip-hop, and electronic music, there was the Roland CR-78, Roland's first fully-programmable drum machine," so says The Crow Hill Company's Theo Le Derf, by way of affirmation, afterwards putting it into its iconic context by listing several notable hit records from famous users showcasing its distinctive sound: "First up, is 'In The Air Tonight' by Phil Collins; in the slow burn leading up to the iconic drum fill, the CR-78 is the eerie, ticking rhythm that carries the song along. Next is 'Atomic' by Blondie; the CR-78 opens the song before the explosive guitar riff takes over. Same band - even bigger hit; 'Heart Of Glass' fused disco and new wave, and the whole production was built around a hypnotic drum loop from the CR-78. Orchestral Manoeuvres In The Dark used the CR-78 in 'Enola Gay', bringing a machine-like precision to a song about nuclear devastation. The CR-78 was used in 'Mad World' by Tears For Fears, which aids in building its moody, dynamic soundscape."

Saying that, The Crow Hill Company has, in equal parts, preserved the CR-78's classic character and effectively expanded its sonic potential by adding some tasteful effects with the introduction of VAULTS - RHYTHM MACHINE as its latest VI release ready for all to download and make music with for free for the rest of their lives. "It features our usual VAULTS… GUI," guides Theo Le Derf, digging deeper: "The first large dial is aptly named SMASH, which is a British bus-style compressor, set to really unruly amounts so you can really push your signal. Our second large dial is WIDTH, which either reduces or enhances the stereo panning of the recorded audio files - leave it at the default of 85 for a more subtle and typical drum panning setup, boost it to 100 for a really exaggerated stereo image, or put it to 0 to fold it to mono. The small dials are more concentrated effects, the first one being PITCH, which allows you to pitch up or down the samples, which really brings out different tonal characteristics in each of the drums. The next one along is DIRT, which is an overdrive and saturator, which really allows the hard-hitting drums to hit even harder. And, finally, we have ECHO and SPLOSH - ECHO is a multi-tap tape delay and SPLOSH is a chamber-based algorithmic reverb."

Rounding off on a high note, Theo Le Derf's delightful denouement is, in itself, a fitting tribute to Roland's classic CR-78 CompuRhythm - as, indeed, is The Crow Hill Company's VAULTS - RHYTHM MACHINE: "The tone and character of the CR-78, to

me, is undeniable, and I love having a faithfully-captured library - also with really tasteful custom effects - to play with."

VAULTS… releases from The Crow Hill Company - including …RHYTHM MACHINE - are free for all to download and make music with for the rest of their lives from the website below. VAULTS - RHYTHM MACHINE installation and activation requires installation of The Crow Hill App - an easy-to-use app designed by the best in the business to provide seamless download, installation, integration, calibration, and organisation of The Crow Hill Company tools - available for free also from the website below.

Although anyone adding a VAULTS… release to their account for free can make music with it for the rest of their lives, only six such releases are available to download at any given time - the oldest being 'rested' whenever a new monthly release is added. All is not lost for those who may have missed the boat, so-to-speak, since those VAULTS… taken out of rotation periodically reappear as donation-ware, with six rested releases already available as VAULTS ARCHIVE N°01 for a small donation to Love Music, a Scottish dynamic music inclusion and education charity that strives to increase its participants' confidence, musical skills, and well-being through an exciting range of open-access projects designed to remove all barriers to participation and increase diversity in music-making.

www.thecrowhillcompany.com
ww.lovemusic.org.uk