

keyboard REVIEWS

December 2008

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widescreen ready sounds.
...It's hard to find any fault
with Evolve because it's
simply outstanding."

HEAVYOCITY EVOLVE

\$399, www.heavyocity.com

Heavyocity Evolve is a combination of stellar sound design, evocative textures, menacing impacts, and go-to pads and basses, all wonderfully produced and programmed into instruments and multis for Kontakt Player. The developers have made clever use of Kontakt's built-in effects, performance controls, and processors, including the highly programmable arpeggiator. The result is a collection that's musically flexible and quick to work with.

Content is divided into four categories: Rhythmic Suites, Stings and Transitions, Tonality and FX, and Percussive Kits. (As we were going to press, Heavyocity released an "Expanded Content" update of 150 new patches based on existing samples, but programmed to take advantage of Kontakt-specific features such as 5.1 surround output). The organization is sensible, and the names accurately reflect the kinds of sounds you'd expect in each category.

The emphasis is on functionality and ease of use. For example, tonal loops (a subset of Rhythmic Suites) are presented as single instruments as well as combined in "menu" patches for easy audition, so it's easy to find what you're after without having to load and unload a bunch of patches. Likewise, a staggering number of drum and

percussion loops have been combined into a handful of patches that present a wide range of related and musically-compatible grooves mapped across the keyboard, making the process of building up dramatic, propulsive percussion beds embarrassingly simple.

Any loop-based material automatically syncs to your host tempo. However, a good number of the tonal and percussion loops aren't actually *audio* loops, but instead, are generated using Kontakt's step sequencer. This gives you the added ability to tweak, customize, and completely re-invent Evolve's loops, which can make it easier to fit the material into your own original compositions – and is something most other libraries don't offer.

Similar to Sample Logic Synergy (see page 72), many of Evolve's ambience and soundscape patches are based on generously-looped single samples mapped across a range of keys. There's definitely a "sweet spot" on the keyboard where these sounds work best. In some cases, three or four related samples are mapped to their own key groups within one patch, which I found helpful, as it let me create longer or more interesting drones without using more instruments or MIDI tracks in my sequencer.



NEED TO KNOW

Hard disk space 5.75GB.

Formats Kontakt Player 2, Kontakt 2 and 3 (AU, VST, RTAS, standalone).

What's in it? Instruments, multis, and loops.

Standout points Organized and programmed to help speed the creative process. Built-in performance controls, step sequencer, and effects provide added flexibility. Killer impacts and transition effects.

Sonically, these are dramatic, widescreen-ready sounds. You'll find a seemingly endless supply of one-finger "cue starters," where holding down a single note can kick off a flurry of musical ideas. Likewise, many of the impacts and transition effects would serve as excellent devices to give a scene an extra element of mystery, impending doom, or unnerving discord. It's difficult to find fault with any aspect of Evolve because it's simply outstanding.

While it might not have the sheer volume of samples as some competing products, Evolve doesn't need to. It's not about "sample bloat," but about an imaginative, well-rounded set of tools that makes composing easier and more rewarding.