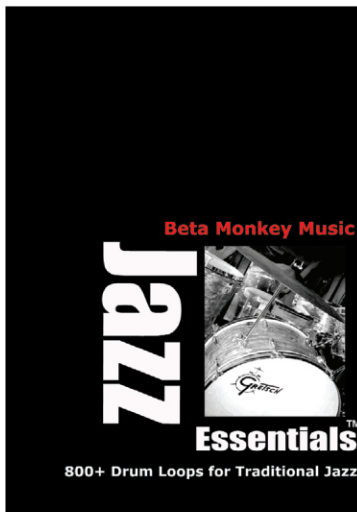


Beta Monkey Music *Jazz Essentials* **By John Rossi III**



Jazz Essentials (Drum Loops for Traditional Jazz) is a collection of pure Jazz drum loops, executed over a wide range of tempos, played on classic acoustic Jazz drum kits.

Delivery/Format/ Compatibility and Installation

The *Jazz Essentials* collection is delivered on one CD-ROM in ISO 9660 standard format compatible with both Macintosh and PC computer platforms. The product is available in three loop formats: ACIDized WAV loops,

Apple Loops, or REX2 loops. You specify which format you desire when ordering; the ACIDized WAV version is reviewed here. All loops in all versions are recorded at 16-bit/44.1 kHz.

Jazz Essentials contains no autoloader program so, unless your computer is configured to automatically display the contents of the disk, it will await your manually opening, browsing and selecting the content you want to use. No loop playback software is included, so you are required to supply an application that can work with one of the supported loop formats in order to use these sounds to their fullest potential.

Organization/Licensing

Jazz Essentials is organized as 17 loop folders, each containing loops associated with a cohesive theme, played at the same tempo. Within each folder a substantial number of loops are organized by section. Each folder contains a count-in loop, one or more roll filled loops, at least one intro loop and one ending loop, and a wide variety of verse loops (each with its own subtle phrasing nuances and rhythmic variations).

There are four 100 BPM themed folders, four 120 BPM themed folders, two 170 BPM, three 250 BPM, three 295 BPM and one 350 BPM themed folder. In addition, folders containing

multi-velocity one-shot samples of all of the drums and cymbals from the kits used in loop development are included.

There are no licensing restrictions for use of these loops in any musical arrangement.

In Use

Jazz Essentials is not for everybody. A thorough understanding of Jazz rhythmic structure and drumming techniques is probably necessary to get the most out of this outstanding traditional Jazz drum loop collection. Casual listening to the verse variations in a given theme, for example, might belie the fact that there are any differences at all between the loops. Careful listening, however, uncovers the subtle phrasing nuances that account for the differences. In fact, it is this degree of subtlety that makes this collection thoroughly usable in the hands of somebody who understands the Jazz idiom.

In addition to the subtle differences in phrasing, the loops are offered in 4, 8, 16 and 32 bar segments that make this loop collection unique in the world of Jazz-oriented drum loops. Another thing to note is that all of the loops in this set are of traditional Jazz. There are no "Latin", "African", or other ethnically flavored rhythms included here.

I'm not a Jazz soloist, but I was able to produce a few very convincing tracks using these loops with Sony ACID Pro 6, taking advantage of ACID's loop building structure to develop the rhythm tracks (these drum loops and a few very compatible Jazz upright bass loops), and then adding backing piano and solo sax using ACID Pro 6's linear multitrack capabilities. In all, once I had mapped what I wanted to do, these loops were easier to use than I initially thought they would be.

Summary

These loops will allow anyone with sufficient determination to build a drum track that sounds like it was played by a live drummer. The greater the degree of the user's proficiency with Jazz structures and phrasing, the more natural this loop collection will be to use. The bottom line is, if I can use them, somebody that actually knows what they are doing can *really* use them.

Price: \$39

More from: Beta Monkey Music, www.betamonkeymusic.com.