

Eowave Domino Analog Synthesizer



Price: R 2,799.00
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sequencer. That kept me amused for at least 20 minutes.

The Envelope section is a simple attack, decay/sustain, release affair. Not much I can say about that other than it works well and makes me do funny things with my face while I tweak the controls.

There are a few tricks beneath the simple surface of the Domino. One of them is that you can activate a little internal arpeggiator using MIDI CC's 4, 5 & 6. CC4 sets the different arp modes. CC5 turns the arpeggiator on and switches between octaves, CC6 turns latch mode on or off. Sounds so dry, but so enjoyable to jam with.

Also underneath the hood, the Glide mode is activated whenever notes are played legato, or controlled more precisely using CC1 and CC2. The Accent kicks in with any MIDI note values over 120. Warning: sounds exactly like the TB303 when played in this manner which might lead to all sorts of complicated after-effects.

The final feature is an Audio Input which allows you to use the Domino as an external effects unit.

Verdict

So why would you want to buy this little box full of analogue joy rather than use a free VST which supposedly does the same thing and probably more?

Well, playing around with the Domino for a while will certainly give you some answers. Which are that this does NOT sound the same as any virtual instrument I have ever played. It's distinctly more alive and for lack of a better word, squelchy.

And secondly the thing is covered in knobs which do exactly what they say on the box. Yes you could build yourself a little control surface that exactly mimics the behaviour, then I would refer you back to point 1. This Domino is above all an instrument, and it sure is fun to play.

Anatomy

For anybody who has had the pleasure of playing with some classic 1970's or 80's analogue synthesizers, you will know the feeling of how much fun a synth can be to play with. All those knobs. So responsive to tweaking. And yet on the verge of all getting totally out of control. For those who want the pleasure of the MS10 and the TB303 combined with the perks of MIDI, you might want to take a little peak inside the Eowave Domino.

The architecture is quite simple. You already know and understand it if you've worked with any subtractive synthesizer: An Oscillator, passing through a Filter, which is modulated by an LFO and an Envelope. Sounds so nice and clean, so German. But the Eowave Domino is French. This little Domino is dirty.

In Use

Once you've plugged in the power supply, MIDI in (it has no keyboard) and the audio output, its hands on fun time. Wow, send this baby some MIDI and she instantly starts purring pure analogue. Even asks to be warmed up for half an hour so that the oscillators are HOT when you start playing.

The first thing you'll notice is that there is no little LED display telling you what's happening. The knobs are all there is. There is no way to save presets; it's all happening live underneath your fingers. Personally, I love this feature. I think synth presets are a disease in modern music. Well, here is a good analogue

remedy to this modern problem of everyone sounding the same. A cute touch in the 2 page user manual is some diagrams of the Domino to mark your settings and "save" your presets.

The Oscillator could not be simpler, it creates continuous square and saw waves which can be mixed together. The LFO can control pitch modulation and/or pulse width modulation to create very rich sounding waveforms from straightforward components.

The Filter is a very phat and squelchy 24dB low pass filter, with a delicious sounding resonance. My first step is always to assign filter cutoff to LFO, and this is a knob tweak away. Now I'm wobbling away to my heart's content. The Envelope gives the Filter some added character. More smiles.

The LFO is always the heart of any synth for me, and the Domino creates magic from two simple knobs. The first controls the LFO speed which can lock to your sequencer clock, the second allows you to choose from 8 waveform shapes: triangle, saw, inverse saw, square, random, noise, staircase, and modwheel. In the last mode, the modwheel of your midi keyboard can be used as an 8 step

