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Download of the Month

Twisted Tools Vortex By Len Sasso

If you're a fan of Native Instruments Reaktor, or even if you're one of the users of the Komplete 6 bundle who ignores Reaktor, the Vortex (\$29) ensemble from Twisted Tools (twistedtools.com) is worth checking out. You can also download a demo version along with some useful free ensembles from the Freebies section. For lack of a more succinct description, Vortex is a 6-track controller sequencer for granular sample playback. If that doesn't convince you, consider that many notable sound designers including Richard Devine, Mike Huckaby, and Glitchmachines have contributed to the more than 264MB of sample content that comes with Vortex.

Each Vortex track has four 16-step controller lanes, and the value of each step is set with a bar graph. The azure Gate lanes control sample triggering with playback synced to your song's tempo. Because steps without a bar graph have no effect, leaving gate steps empty lets playback continue on through the sample. The orange Roll lane effects a granular stutter with the bar-height controlling its speed. The purple and green Mod lanes have no default function; you can use them as controllers without affecting

other aspects of playback. You can assign any of the controller lanes to modulate any of the front-panel knobs: sample select (from a 128-sample map), start, and length; grain stretching and size; pitch-envelope amount and decay; and output pan and amplitude. You can assign either of two LFOs, programmed on a separate page, to modulate the knobs.

Vortex also has an 8-step scene sequencer. Each scene holds a complete track-sequencer setup, and any scene-sequencer step can recall one of eight Scenes (labeled A through H). That lets you fashion long, complex arrangements, and because the Reaktor plug-in tracks your DAW's song position, Vortex arrangements stay in sync with your song (see [Web Clip 1](#)). Global and selective copy, paste, and randomize options, along with a robust MIDI Learn implementation round out Vortex's bag of tricks. Spend some time with the presets and bundled samples, and you'll quickly get caught in the vortex.



OPTION-CLICK By David Battino

Take Control of Your Controller

Flying high with MIDI

MIDI controller not working the way you want? You don't have to do all Moldover on it. (Though that's not a bad idea; see [Fig. 1](#).) Instead, customize your controller's output with software that remaps the MIDI data on the fly. Bome Midi Translator (bome.com; approximately \$81) is the Rand

McNally of MIDI mapping programs. At the 2010 NAMM show, developer Florian Bömers even used it to remap a Wacom graphics tablet to control Native Instruments Traktor, adding the precision of pen-based input to his DJ moves.

Midi Translator also converts MIDI to computer keystrokes,

allowing you to, say, advance a PowerPoint presentation from a drum pad, or control a flight-simulator game from your mod wheel. Timer support lets you repeat an action multiple times with a delay—transmit a series of Ctrl-Down Arrow keystrokes to iTunes to create a fadeout,



FIG. 1: Moldover (moldover.com) deconstructs M-Audio Oxygen 8 keyboards to put the controls where you want.

for example. —David Battino, Batmosphere.com

This Month on Emusician.com

MUSIKMESSE 2010

Check out our exclusive videos of new-product debuts from the Musikmesse/Prolight + Sound show.



BIG SOUNDS IN SMALL PACKAGES

Watch videos that show the four synths from this month's cover story—the Tom Oberheim SEM, the Dave Smith instruments Mopho and Tetra, and the Doepfer Dark Energy—in action.

