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Apr 13 2012

[Moldover vs. Traktor Kontrol F1, in Live Sampling-Mash Mayhem \[Videos\]](#)

by Peter Kirn

Matt Moldover takes on Native Instruments' Traktor Kontrol F1 in a hands-on demo; NI reportedly gave him a weekend to see if the "controllerism" advocate could do something interesting with their hardware/software combo. The resulting video really gives some insight into what controllerism is all

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sampling and real-time manipulation, to make this more of an instrumental performance and not just a DJ set. That's part of what I admired about the direction of the F1 earlier on. And here, sampling in particular comes to the fore – all within what is essentially DJ software.

Rather than comment too heavily, though, the best illustration of Moldover's style comes from seeing both this F1 video alongside a live performance with his own, custom-designed MOJO controller. (The latter is [available as a custom build from 60works](#) – and means that Moldy himself was more or less in the business of building what NI, too, had on offer.)

I was present at the performance at STEIM's Patterns + Pleasure Festival in the fall. The first half is a bit more experimental – and, how shall we say, STEIM-y? The jam gets going halfway through. In the end, you can do the same sorts of things with Traktor and F1 as with Ableton Live, and with these two controllers. That's not to say the workflow is the same in the two tools; it isn't. It's really a matter of Matt bringing his own musical style and idiom to the two tools, which is, after all, the whole point.

I'll be interested to see what other musical expressions may be possible. Whatever tool you choose, there's a chance to genuinely practice. So, this is what Moldover did with one of his weekends. What will you do with yours? Have a good one.

[F1 Product Page](#)

<http://moldover.com/>

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Mad marx

i'm sorry, but this was kinda cheesy.

6 days ago 7 Likes

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Peter Kirn

I'm curious: what about it is "cheesy" to you? The performance? The video? The music? Did it just involve a sprinkling of Parmesan? You're entitled to your opinion, but specifically, what do you mean?

5 days ago in reply to Mad marx

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Ryan Patrick Taylor

Musically, it's corny (cheesy works too) - I think Moldover is obviously very smart and talented, and I've heard cool stuff from him, but this just comes off dated and not very imaginative.

5 days ago in reply to Peter Kirn 2 Likes

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Koko

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cheesy by their nature, no? It's all that earnest hyperbole and, in this case, the silly steampunk basement setting.

[4 days ago](#) [in reply to Peter Kirn](#)

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Koko

Don't be coy, Peter. It's obviously cheesy. Cheese has always been part of Moldover's schtick. He's largely a mash-up musician, and mash ups embrace the cheesiness of things like 80's metal and rock. Comes with the territory, whether its Girl Talk or Shitmat or Moldover. The devil's horn hand and the Cash is God rap underscore this.

[4 days ago](#) [in reply to Peter Kirn](#)

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Koko

It has nothing to do with a subjective opinion about the music on display. Paid advertisements, even those put out by NI, can be a bit pretentious and silly. Get over it. People like Tim Exile embrace this and have fun with it. Whether it's this guy or Richie Hawtin or someone at Moog gushing over the crazy bass generated by the Minitaur, we keep coming back despite this to learn more about the product or even because we're bored.

The idea that criticism of PR and marketing collateral needs to be constructive is absurd and borders on disingenuous. What's wrong with poking fun at commercials? They're totally disposable. No harm, no foul.

[4 days ago](#) [in reply to Koko](#) [1 Like](#)

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Peter Kirn

You don't have to like something - and I don't only post things on the site that are my cup of tea, aesthetically. But I do think if you're going to criticize something, you need to elaborate. Now, obviously, since I asked that question, people are elaborating... I'm still not sure it's *constructive*

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Peter Kirn

Don't be *coy*? When someone makes a comment like "this is cheesy" and fails to elaborate, I think it's worth asking them what they mean.

Also, whether you like his music or not, Moldover's last album was original songwriting, not in fact "mash-ups."

[4 days ago](#) [in reply to Koko](#) [1 Like](#)

[Like](#)



Adam Cahan

In the NI video, Moldover does make the 'sign of the horns' heavy metal gesture w/his fingers. Presumably deliberate, but nonetheless cheesy. "Cash is God" is also kind of a cheesy phrase. Depends on your attitude I guess (but what doesn't - "cheesy" is inherently relative) but it reminds me of some kind of early '90s industrial music/thingy, or, like Neo/The Matrix lite. I mean, even the ideology of "The Matrix" is kinda cheesy in some ways.

And there's not really a wink/nod in the video, i.e. except for the horns, not many signs of deliberate irony.

Finally, is playing a shred guitar solo on MIDI pads cheesy? I'm not sure about that one.

[5 days ago](#) [in reply to Peter Kirn](#)

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Peter Kirn

But Johnny Cash is God...

[4 days ago](#) [in reply to Adam Cahan](#) [3 Likes](#)

[Like](#)



Adam Cahan

agreed.

[Noisepages](#)[Log In](#)[Sign Up](#)[Blog Authors](#)[Visit](#)**H. Slaw**

Techniques cease to be experimental when they've been beaten into the ground and done over and over again. If the end result is the same as we've been hearing for about 5 years now is the technique used to create it really experimental? The 90s were filled with musicians making experimental music with gear that was not intended for experimental results and that seems to be lost on the current crop of "experimental musicians". Now let the onslaught of people offended by any opinion that isn't theirs begin. Also, the words controllerist, controllerism and multi-instrumentalist are so amazingly pompous, dated and obnoxious that I'm really surprised to still see them in use.

[6 days ago](#) [5 Likes](#)[Like](#) [Reply](#)**Edison D**

hahahahaha....

[6 days ago](#) [in reply to H. Slaw](#)[Like](#) [Reply](#)**H. Slaw**

Yeah, that's really a blowhard comment. It's a opinion and one you should consider. Glitchy "controllerism" has become the obnoxious 80s guitar solo for the 21st century. Anyway, thanks for resorting to name calling and for really contributing to the conversation and proving my point that dissenting opinions aren't welcome on CDM.

[6 days ago](#) [in reply to Edison D](#) [2 Likes](#)[Like](#) [Reply](#)**Coldsaw**

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treating you like you didn't try to make it like your opinion wasn't the only one that mattered from the get go, while at the same time trying to claim victim when no one had said anything against you yet..... it's an old tried true and played out technic that belongs on the hannity show, not on a music forum.

now the only problem I have with your post is that you're actually blaming 'words' for being "amazingly pompous, dated and obnoxious" . in a word, that is ridiculous because only people can be those things. you have an argument without a basis and a basis without an argument. basically you think you're smart..... well that's ok we all think we're smart.

[6 days ago](#) [in reply to H. Slaw](#) [2 Likes](#)

[Like](#)



kid versus chemical

Wow, I thought that was pretty cool. Tough crowd.

All that other stuff aside though....Is this software/controller combo (I forget the names, the controller and the version of Traktor he's using in the video) something that could be useful for an electronic musician (not a dj) for writing and performing original music?

[5 days ago](#) [3 Likes](#)

[Like](#) [Reply](#)



Korn

Mmm...very interesting. MIDI controllers with buttons, faders and knobs. We live in exciting times.

[6 days ago](#) [3 Likes](#)

[Like](#) [Reply](#)



Peter Kirn

Tired of the strings, frets, keys, valves, and reeds, too? ;)

[5 days ago](#) [in reply to Korn](#)

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To me, the only reason this is newsworthy is that NI is trying to drum up some interest from the so-called "controllerism" audience by tapping its self-proclaimed leader to sell MIDI controllers. I don't think there's much weight behind your assertion that the video "really gives some insight into what controllerism is all about", mainly because it isn't really about anything other than Moldover promoting himself -- something I have no problem with, by the way.

I've been geeking out with people over electronic music gear for a long time, and the fact is that I've never heard the word "controllerist" spoken aloud, and the only time I see it in print is in relation to Moldover. People manipulate devices (some with strings and keys, etc, as you rightly point out) to perform music. The main point of controllerism seems to be to convince people from a traditional instrumental background or mindset that playing software controllers is a legitimate form of performance. The rest of us don't need convincing. Save it for the tradeshows.

[4 days ago](#) [in reply to Peter Kirm](#)

[Like](#) [Reply](#)



Peter Kirm

Fine -- "what controllerism is to Moldover." I thought that was implied given that the only artist mentioned in the story was Matt. We talk routinely about controllers on CDM without necessarily framing it as controllerism, but Matt (and others using this term) may find it useful.

[4 days ago](#) [in reply to Korn](#)

[Like](#)



Adam Cahan

Not quite an apt comparison.....guitars, violins, clarinets, etc, don't become obsolete the way unsupported computer technology can. I mean, the NI vid is ultimately an ad for a product perhaps designed or possibly destined for obsolescence. And I'm not knocking the product....at least from the vid it looks like it's made a lot of things which took work to do before immediately accessible for creative use by someone who's non-technical.

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prerequisite of technique. Though, I guess if you didn't post comments to that effect every now and then I'd lose out on the fun of arguing back ;) And yeah, it's true, I probably write more comments than music :/

[5 days ago](#) [in reply to Peter Kim](#)

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Edison D

good shit!!!!

moldover for mayor!!!!

[6 days ago](#) [3 Likes](#)

[Like](#) [Reply](#)



Plauto Camargo

Native Instruments has a lot of courage to release a video like this.

[6 days ago](#) [3 Likes](#)

[Like](#) [Reply](#)



Expdog

What a strange argument indeed. Peter, I can't understand these vague comments either.

Usually I avoid the comment section all together. More and more it seems that there is a huge lack of or fear of explaining music content in terms of music itself. No theory, no history, no external references, just opinion. Why does out of context documentation become so subjected to off topic banter? I never went to that Moldover show, nor can I critically discuss a NI ad as a finished work. My opinions on that would be moot. I think controllerism seems to be the topic at hand as you have written. It's an interesting topic and time for laptop musicians. Does controllerism strive to romanticize virtuosity? Is the laptop too familiar an object for an audience that performative devices like these are needed to justify the performance? Is it appropriate to present computer music in the model of a traditionally staged music performance? Is Moldover trying too hard to present electronic music in the guise of guitar rock or is he just having fun at home and putting it on stage? Questions I think that are worth thinking about rather than adding useless banter.

[4 days ago](#) [2 Likes](#)

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awesome. +10.

[3 days ago](#) [in reply to Expdog](#)

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[Jordaan Allison](#)

It was exhausting to go through the comments on this post. I really don't understand.. usually people on CDM have more interesting things to say.

[4 days ago](#) [1 Like](#)

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[Peter Kirn](#)

Apparently some people, instead of playing with knobs and switches, are powered entirely by Haterade. New alternative fuel source!

[5 days ago](#) [1 Like](#)

[Like](#) [Reply](#)



[mauxuam](#)

hey Pete...are you trying to feed the trolls -> FAIL

am I trying to get into your top 10 blacklisted ? -> Success ?

those 60 millions comments save this blog from total boredom (advertisement).

feeding on Haterade better than feeding on corporate diarrhea. :D

[4 days ago](#) [in reply to Peter Kirn](#)

[Like](#) [Reply](#)



[Peter Kirn](#)

Also, I want to thank all the people who aren't here in comments... ;)

Moldover did this in a weekend.

You're not Moldover. You don't have to like what he's doing.

You'll do something musically meaningful *to you* this weekend - provided you don't get

Am I making sense?

[5 days ago](#) [1 Like](#)

[Like](#) [Reply](#)



Peter Kirn

Come on, folks. Obviously, people are free to disagree with what's on CDM - no clue what anyone is talking about there. We have literally 61,000 approved comments. (That's 61 *thousand*.)

We also have a blacklist. If you fill a comment thread with personal attacks, you'll see your comments deleted and could wind up blacklisted. Stick to the subject matter. There's no need to go after people. And lighten up... it's a comment thread.

Unfortunately, I have to add, that includes "feeding the trolls" - cut it out; it's not helping. (Who the troll is may depend on which side of the debate you're on, so when in doubt, just try being civil.)

[5 days ago](#) [1 Like](#)

[Like](#) [Reply](#)



H. Slaw

"i would bet money that niether of you have invested the time and effort in music, that he has" hahahahaha! there are other outlets for music besides the internet and believe it or not some of us were making music before the internet. But what is more amusing is that what you are basically saying is that if you don't create then don't share your opinion. That's absurd. It's very clear that it is not ok to be critical of posts on CDM. I didn't personally attack the guy. I questioned the term 'experimental', and yes I personally find some of the language to be pompous. It's ok for me to disagree, but to tell me I can't have an opinion different from yours or CDMs because I don't create or share is ridiculous. I personally don't care for what the dude does, but I hope he keeps on doing it...it's possible to feel that way.

[5 days ago](#) [1 Like](#)

[Like](#) [Reply](#)



Onyx

dude...i could care less. i was bored and i made an observation and now you're pissy.

5 days ago in reply to H. Slaw

Like Reply



mauxuam

indeed...there was music before internet...I remember.

hey skywalker...I found a cool controllerism link :<http://28.media.tumblr.com/tum...>

btw...how much money you bet ?...I need some cash.



5 days ago in reply to Onyx

Like Reply



mauxuam

click on the pict dude

I thought that geeks with an helmet where more intuitive...instead you are just like a stupid computer...you get error and you just stop...LOL.

your opinion hasn't affected me (never the less it amused me)...I was bored too...I got no problem and lots of free time...no helmet...no controllers...and no haircut...and I am not a troll either.

I thought that skywalker was busy destroying dark star...instead of playing with trolls.

here you go again

<http://28.media.tumblr.com/tum...>

how much money you bet ?



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link led to nothing except an XML error (surprise, surprise) i dont get why you are so tender. you have an opinion. i have an opinion. but apparently my opinion has affected you. but that is your problem. i thought trolls had thicker skin than that. butch up...

[5 days ago](#) [in reply to mauxuam](#)

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**Onyx**

wow, most of the comments here are obviously from people with too much time on their hands (ie. people who dont do music for a living). Moldover has been holding it down for YEARS! creating, experimenting and pushing the envelope. what -the fuck-do you do? i challenge anyone with a negative comment, to post a link to their brilliant alternative. keep holding it down moldover. that the trolls hate you shows that youre doing it right.

[5 days ago](#) [1 Like](#)

[Like](#) [Reply](#)

**H. Slaw**

AHHHH! The old "you can't have an opinion about someone's art if you don't post your own challenge." What nonsense. It's pretty amazing that people get so worked up just because someone challenges the idea of what experimental is. "What the fuck do I ?" Apparently I get your panties in a bunch for having an opinion.

[5 days ago](#) [in reply to Onyx](#)

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**Onyx**

hmmmm....i dont see a link...nuff said, troll...

[5 days ago](#) [in reply to H. Slaw](#) [1 Like](#)

[Like](#) [Reply](#)

**Onyx**

touchy, touchy...seems that the astronaut hit a nerve;-)



[mauxuam](#)

freedom of speech...you say it ! (but only if you are a PRO and you haven't got much free time...LOL).

you have your opinion..trolls have theirs..I have mine.

I do not see any link to ur rubbish here...it looks like you have the assumption that we all should know who you are...oh well...maybe I have the same assumption too...maybe I spent far more time than you and Moldover doing music...but you just don't know who I am. (I am not going to send you any link here...I am not writing here to self promote my shit...like you...and anyway I never become famous since I got the wrong haircut...and maybe it doesn't matter what I do and why or how I do it).

like H.Slaw said...I don't see why having spent alot of time doing music and all the blah blah blah...entitles you to produce self celebrating rubbish like this...expecting that those trolls will buy it.(and I refer to both music and plastic boxes here)...

even if the technoogy was mindblowing (it is not) and even if instead of Moldover there was Jimmy Page or a resurrected Jimi Hendrix...this rubbish (in my opinion) make me wish to trash all my electronics and go back to the bongo...and I will state it again...here and there....in your face...nuff said baby.

[5 days ago](#) [in reply to Onyx](#)

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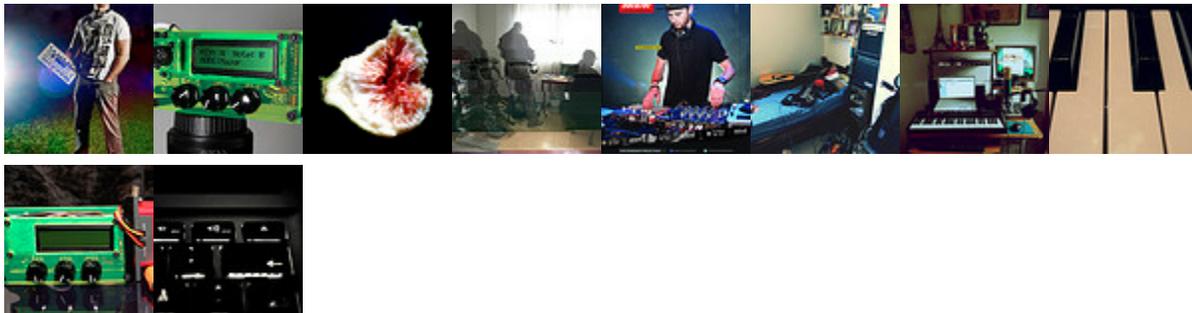
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