NI Reaktor

Posted by mr_snugglz - 2005/07/05 23:57
_____

i'm curious what everyone here thinks of Reaktor, possibly of version 5 if you have it. i was suprised to hear people on this forum regarding it really high. i'm not too familiar with it though.
i'm really looking for one good soft synth to add to my rig. i liked Absynth ok, but sold it cuz the font was SO damn small! and the Virus Powercore i could do, but apparently has some hefty bugs.

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Re: NI Reaktor

Posted by Acidfever - 2005/07/06 00:16
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Reaktor 5 (previously Reaktor 4) exists in my setup as the only modular and only softsynth i use.

It's highly versatile and i use it for practicly anything you can imagine. Freaky FX, subtile or hard distortion, synthsounds, samplemangling and so on.

I really couldn't think of my setup being complete without a tool like this. I am not saying there aren't alternatives but reaktor has a very nice GUI and is very configurable in the midi department wich makes it a breeze to work with combines with my Novation RMT25 midi controller.

Reaktor 5 is a very good softsynth but probably not the best if you are looking for emulation stuff like the Arturia synths. IF you are however, looking for a very versatile modular sollution that also supports sampling and sample processing you are in the right spot. In this area it even kills the Nord Modular (G2) with ease (I actually sold my G2 Engine to purchase reaktor).

Reaktor, and any modular soft or hardware sollution are very specific tools and not for the faint hearted. If you like the modular approach, i think u'll be very happy with it indeed. Hope this helps.

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Re: NI Reaktor

Posted by mr_snugglz - 2005/07/06 01:55
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cool...that does help. i'm checking out the demo ASAP!

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Re: NI Reaktor

Posted by - 2005/07/06 03:54
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I have to say it is nice. I also recommend getting as many presets as you can. It's pretty hard to figure out. I mean it can take some time. So far I find it easier to solder and follow directions than to figure out how to build with Reaktor.

But yea there are alot of tools there. You also need all the processing power you can get, just like any soft synth.

The new presets are pretty awsome. I don't use that word often, but yea. Definitely worth the money if you got it.

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Re: NI Reaktor

Posted by mr_snugglz - 2005/07/06 04:35
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well, i see it sold for even as little as like $400...so between it or something hardware, it's a great deal, so long as i'm not longing for hardware still ;)

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Re: NI Reaktor

Posted by milkmansnd - 2005/07/06 05:50
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I dont care how great it is, if its not hardware, I'm not interested. Theres just something about not being in front of a computer monitor thats nice about hardware synths - I mean, its not the DSP part - I am fine with that. But having a real knob, a real key, and a real modwheel is so friggin satisfying for me. And no latency is nice.

that said - why do you recommend presets?

and this also begs the question - if its hard to use, whats so great about it? Is simplicity not best anymore?

Just probing is all...

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Re: NI Reaktor
Posted by chiasticon - 2005/07/06 14:22
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milkman:
presets are good in Reaktor because it's modular and its complicated. the presets help you understand how other people did things, so that you can learn them and then do them on your own.

it's not hard to use, but it CAN be. it's not as difficult as Max/MSP at least. but it's there to grow with you and do complicated things if you want it to.

and regarding hardware vs. software... I agree and disagree. I love hardware and I prefer it for many things, but I like software a lot as well. I try not to ignore a tool just because the way of working with it is something I'm not used to or is less-than-ideal. but I understand how one can take this stance.

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Re: NI Reaktor
Posted by - 2005/07/06 15:53
_____

chiasticon wrote:
milkman:
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And on the 123.122.435.523.552.528.956.235.236.742.235.745.246.733th day Doepfer created the midicontroller. And it was good. And other manufactureres saw that it was good. And so they created other midi controller. And so it was all good.

 :-D I agree that without midi controller the situations gets less positive. Reaktor does kick-ass however. So damn flexible. Eveything (well ok almost) is possible. I love hardware too, no doubts there, but this is an awesome piece of program.

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Re: NI Reaktor
Posted by mr_snugglz - 2005/07/06 18:50
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that's pretty funny...the biblical reference.

anyway, PLEASE let's not turn this into another hardware vs. software thread. (although ironically that's what i'm debating and the reason i'm inquiring about Reaktor)

i'm yet to have time to check the demo...but good to know it seems to be quite powerful.

enough to replace a good hardware synth even, huh?

===

Re: NI Reaktor
Posted by Toni - 2005/07/06 19:10

_____

chiasticon wrote:
...
but it's there to grow with you and do complicated things if you want it to.

Everytime people speak of reaktor, everyone always glorifies how deep and complex things it can do. I'm getting bored to that. I'm _not_ saying chiasticon says that, but I borrow some of his argument which has same kind of vibe.

I'm not denying this at all. Reaktor is a mindbogging program. On the other hand I feel reaktors deepness and complexiness and other same kind of coolness is just an engineering side of things. It's really great program to do odd machines and stuff, but on the other hand odd machines and stuff have little to do with deep and complex music. I think it's easy to explore music from technical view (just what vst-revoltion offers), but much harder from musical view. For against reaktor-deepness-factor I would put the composiotion and arrangement deepness. What I'm really trying to say is that reaktor is amazing program for technical exploring off music machines, but doesn't offer much for the musical workflow. For example compare Ableton Live to reaktor; so different. It would be superduper cool if reaktor engineer side would meet ableton live in on problem (no I'm not speaking off vst-use of reaktor).

Nah.. just nagging around. It's a great program.

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Re: NI Reaktor
Posted by ggoodwin - 2005/07/06 19:19

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I am interested in reaktor as an audio experiment sandbox, but not as a music-making tool. I used to have an earlier version and I would frequently just lose inspiration while trying to build stuff with it.

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Re: NI Reaktor
Posted by glaive - 2005/07/06 20:02

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In fact, using Reaktor to build things is sure to bring your track writing to a complete standstill!

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Re: NI Reaktor
Posted by Acidfever - 2005/07/06 23:18

_____

glaive wrote:
In fact, using Reaktor to build things is sure to bring your track writing to a complete standstill!

Hmmmm....well depends on what level you decide to build. If you start with the new core level in reaktor 5 you can say your music (and social life) goodbye for sure.

But just recently i came up with the idea of actually combining an overdrive and filter ensemble to make the filter run in

overdrive the hotter the input signal became. This kind of emulated analog filter behaviour and only took me about 10 minutes.

I don't usually build very complex ensembles myself. I leave that up to the synth theory "nerds". I do however use the tools available to make new things. Currently i am trying to make a software enhancer/exiter. Not as easy as it would seem by the way.....

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Re: NI Reaktor
Posted by glaive - 2005/07/06 23:29
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I'm sure you can keep it to a manageable level, but the really complex ensembles are engineering wonders. Those guys (maybe a woman programs Reaktor, somewhere) must spend many, many hours creating them.

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Re: NI Reaktor
Posted by ggoodwin - 2005/07/07 02:10
_____

glaive wrote:
(maybe a woman programs Reaktor, somewhere)

Maybe so, but I have a feeling that she used to be a man....

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Re: NI Reaktor
Posted by milkmansnd - 2005/07/07 02:33
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like Wendy carlos? haha :-D

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Re: NI Reaktor
Posted by synthy - 2005/07/07 04:03
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have any of you with Reaktor also tried doing sample manipulations using a V-Synth or K2600 or other hardware sampler and how would those experiences compare in your opinion?

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Re: NI Reaktor
Posted by Acidfever - 2005/07/07 13:16
_____

synthy wrote:
have any of you with Reaktor also tried doing sample manipulations using a V-Synth or K2600 or other hardware sampler and how would those experiences compare in your opinion?

A friend of mine has a K2600 and i have been told the sample manipulation options in reaktor are more diverse and extendend.

Cannot confirm myself.

==

Re: NI Reaktor
Posted by MokBor - 2005/07/07 14:01

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The computerized PC sample editing will always be more powerfull than hardware samplers, thus reaktor will woop anybody samplers ass on part of techniques(although sound wise a hardware sampler may win cous of the AD/DA and other hardware variables.)

I've never seen a hardware sampler do grain tables and that sort of freaky techniques.

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Re: NI Reaktor
Posted by synthy - 2005/07/11 04:25

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I messed with the granular sampling option in Absynth 2 a bit this weekend. It can create some really bizarre textures, but it really lacks the hands-on control of the waveform playback point.

For example, on my Korg ESX, it can not only slap on grain and short delays onto a sample, but also vary the playback location of the sample in realtime. The combination of these can create some otherwordly sounds that in my opinion are much more captivating than what I'm able to get out of Absynth 2. Maybe I need more practice on Absynth's granular sampler... not sure. I just don't see the immediacy of getting where I want in the sound file quickly (i.e. without having to wait for it to play through to that point).

Also this weekend, I found a Roland V-Synth here in town. One thing that the V-Synth does that the ESX doesn't is it can freeze the audio position with the Time Trip Pad as opposed to requiring a retrigger as the ESX does, and while moving through the sound file, the V-Synth does not produce pops and clicks like the ESX retriggering at non-zero crossings. On the other hand, with the V-Synth Time Trip Pad, it was harder to "fast forward" and "rewind" through the sound file like the ESX can in an instant. This is a hinderance if the goal is to jump around in the file very rapidly, but quite an advantage if you want to move through the waveform slowly.

I think that hardware - at least the ESX and V-Synth - provide some interesting, immediate options as far as granular-esque sampling goes. I doubt you could say they are truly "granular" samplers because you don't get control of the grain time, grain size, etc. But the results are similarly captivating and more immediate and satisfying to get to.

==

Re: NI Reaktor
Posted by synthy - 2005/07/11 04:28

_____

BTW, if anyone has any links to .mp3's that feature Reaktor granular sampling techniques, I would really appreciate if you could post them. I poked around on the web and came up surprisingly short-handed in terms of finding .mp3 user demos showing off what people have done with Reaktor granular samplers.

==

Re: NI Reaktor
Posted by Acidfever - 2005/07/11 08:33

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synthy wrote:
I messed with the granular sampling option in Absynth 2 a bit this weekend. It can create some really bizarre textures, but it really lacks the hands-on control of the waveform playback point.

For example, on my Korg ESX, it can not only slap on grain and short delays onto a sample, but also vary the playback location of the sample in realtime. The combination of these can create some otherwordly sounds that in my opinion are much more captivating than what I'm able to get out of Absynth 2. Maybe I need more practice on Absynth's granular sampler... not sure. I just don't see the immediacy of getting where I want in the sound file quickly (i.e. without having to wait for it to play through to that point).

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Ehm, what does this have to do with reaktor? Absynth is a whole other beast. IF absynth doesn't do it out of the box, it aint possible. If reaktor doesn't do it out of the box, build it or search the library if somebody didn't allready.

The things you explain should be possible in reaktor. I agree hardware can be interessting in term of reliability and stability but software has come a long way aswell. And yes, hardware can crash aswell (like modern digital machines do sometimes).

I have checked V-synth and the ESX and in the sampling department they aren't nearly as powerful as reaktors samplers.

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Re: NI Reaktor
Posted by Acidfever - 2005/07/11 08:50
_____

synthy wrote:
BTW, if anyone has any links to .mp3's that feature Reaktor granular sampling techniques, I would really appreciate if you could post them. I poked around on the web and came up surprisingly short-handed in terms of finding .mp3 user demos showing off what people have done with Reaktor granular samplers.

Shame on you! :-D You didn't check the one place where you should have started. The NI Reaktor forum!

Here i found these links coming from 1 single reaktor ensemble:

http://www.redwierenga.com/reaktor/redklang1.mp3
http://www.redwierenga.com/reaktor/redklang2.mp3
http://www.redwierenga.com/reaktor/redklang3.mp3

Also from my attempt to search google:

http://www.native-instruments.com/fileadmin/redaktion_upload/mp3_reaktor/reaktorGrainstatesSP.mp3

http://www.native-instruments.com/fileadmin/redaktion_upload/mp3_reaktor/reaktorTravelizer.mp3

Here a preset i like, just because i do, not granular though :-) : http://www.native-instruments.com/fileadmin/redaktion_upload/mp3_reaktor/reaktorBlueMatrix1.mp3

Mind you this is all 128kbps mp3.

Another nice mp3: Vierring ensemble :
http://www.native-instruments.com/fileadmin/redaktion_upload/mp3_reaktor/reaktorVierring1.mp3

You know what....check this page for some more reaktor mp3's:
http://www.warhogsaudioshop.com/browseproducts/Native-Instruments-Reaktor-4.HTML

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Re: NI Reaktor
Posted by synthy - 2005/07/17 19:48
_____

Thanks for posting those links, I appreciate it.

However, in all honesty, the Reaktor demo sound files I've heard to date have been underwhelming. I know from

exerience that you can't judge something based on demo files, but I'm questioning whether granular is really what I'm after.

From a Reaktor standpoint, I think it makes sense to buy it if you're going to create your own VST/VSTi's with it. So I read through the threads at the Reaktor forum concerning the discussion of the new lower-level Reaktor 5 "Core" programming scheme. While I could certainly handle it, I'd rather spend my free music time writing music rather than programming Reaktor.

Also, when it comes to writing music, I like immediacy and minimal fuss. That's why I have the Machindrum and other boxes like it. Don't get me wrong - some software is immediate - like recording MIDI clips in Live's Session view is worlds faster than building up pattern-based music than on my MC-80. But Electribes and Machinedrums take the editing part to the simplest level and pull ahead of Live, in terms of least amount of time to accomplish editing a pattern.

Anyway, that's my diatribe on why I think I'm going to hold off on Reaktor.

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Re: NI Reaktor
Posted by Toni - 2005/07/17 23:32

_____

It's late here and I have nothing to do.. So I'll add my spoon to the soup. What people have been discussing here is from some part just what I'm tired of hearing. It's the 'can it do this and that synth' conversation. Also another opinion seems to be, that there are simple music boxes and complex music boxes. As with complex music box you are able to write so much more complex and cool music, since it comes from complex music box. People tend to think that reaktor is cool because of this. 'Gee man, I can do the granular-mumbo-jumbo-stuff and tha mathematics behind it is sooo complex! Man my music is so intelligent and elegant'. Yet it's a another drone or what else. I believe that people with ESX are going to write more interesting stuff, because what they try to achieve is musical aesthetics rather than engineering one. Ok, I'm making things black-and-white, oversimplyfing and such, but you get the point. When people are uncertain about songwriting it's easier to hide behind reaktor core-level than face yourself. Yeah I'm ranting again... Sure there is also talented people with reaktor- _and_ musical skills. :-D

==

Re: NI Reaktor
Posted by synthy - 2005/07/18 04:15

_____

You brought up a few good points I'd like to comment on:

What people have been discussing here is from some part just what I'm tired of hearing. It's the 'can it do this and that synth' conversation.

Well, there's a good reason for comparing and discussing different devices. Simple devices with limited synth engine architecture are only capable of taking your sounds so far.

I don't know about you, but I've been messing with electronic music gear as a hobby for a long time. I get into and figure out gear extremely quickly. That's why something like Reaktor interests me, because it presents new possibilities. Unfortunately, it looks like Reaktor 5 takes a very large effort to do something original compared to previous versions.

Also another opinion seems to be, that there are simple music boxes and complex music boxes. As with complex music box you are able to write so much more complex and cool music, since it comes from complex music box. People tend to think that reaktor is cool because of this. 'Gee man, I can do the granular-mumbo-jumbo-stuff and tha mathematics behind it is sooo complex! Man my music is so intelligent and elegant'. Yet it's a another drone or what else. I believe that people with ESX are going to write more interesting stuff, because what they try to achieve is musical aesthetics rather than engineering one. Ok, I'm making things black-and-white, oversimplyfing and such, but you get the point. When people are uncertain about songwriting it's easier to hide behind reaktor core-level than face yourself.

Remember, electronic music (techno) is all about using the technology to acheive new music. Songwriting in the sense of sitting down with paper and pencil and writing out lyrics and jamming it out on a guitar or piano, is something different. In electronic music, we speak with timbres, and let the music indirectly tells the story behind the music. Whereas in pop and rock, the songwriting directly tells a story to the listener.

So what you should probably become more acceptant of is here in electronic music, you will find many people that "speak" through their programming and the sound of their music as it attempts to touch souls without ever saying a word.

Yeah I'm ranting again... Sure there is also talented people with reaktor- _and_ musical skills. :-D

That's precisely what I was hoping to hear.   :-)

===

Re: NI Reaktor
Posted by Toni - 2005/07/18 12:14
_____

synthy wrote:

Well, there's a good reason for comparing and discussing different devices.

Yes, I like to do that sometimes too.

Simple devices with limited synth engine architecture are only capable of taking your sounds so far.

Now you are getting really close what I've been writing about. Gear with limited sound engine architecture isn't limiting the expression of electronic music. If I would have only old Akai S1100 sampler, I could still make mindboggling stuff with it (if I would with any other gear). I think Reaktor is much more making music machines than electronic music. In a way it distracts people with cool architecture stuff and what not. As I earlier said the Ableton Live is quite the opposite and I would imagine writing better electronic music (timbres and such) with Live than Reaktor.

Remember, electronic music (techno) is all about using the technology to acheive new music.

I _kind of_ agree. But music should not be embrassing the technology (if it would the reaktor ensembles would be enough). I see electronic music as a way achieve new music, mostly with technology, but not for the technology. So guys with old half-assed samplers or Sonic Foundry Acid only can do really cool stuff with loops only (as a extreme example). Then again, this is only one view. There is also for example House music, which has other goals. But yes I understand what you saying and I agree.

Songwriting in the sense of sitting down with paper and pencil and writing out lyrics and jamming it out on a guitar or piano, is something different. In electronic music, we speak with timbres, and let the music indirectly tells the story behind the music. Whereas in pop and rock, the songwriting directly tells a story to the listener.

So what you should probably become more acceptant of is here in electronic music, you will find many people that "speak" through their programming and the sound of their music as it attempts to touch souls without ever saying a word.

I like the way you describe things: "speak through programming". I've never wrote stuff in sense of sitting down with pencil and such, but I think programming synths isn't enough (I understand you might not mean this by saying so). With a vst-revolution we can have any and new timbres so easily that it doesn't count anymore. I think the best electronic music made by programming and altering our understanding of what is music. Electronic music has developed from cool sounds (early techno) to cool compositions (Square, some of Autechre and such) and I think this is why it's so interesting nowadays. Heritage of composition is much deeper and richer stuff than any of this electronic machinery. _But_ I must admit that reaktor has potential, because reaktor can be also used this way (the program itself just doesn't courage to this enough. It's headed too much for building machines. Kyma instead have this main timeline where you can put your works and start building music instead of machines. (yes, reaktor have sequencer, but they are not as flexible)).

Huh... I'm not really trying to prove anybody right or wrong here. I don't go into 'music: what-meaning?' -conversations so much. Still sometimes I like to speak out my mind (who doesn't). I admit that somebody might know more things or better than me and there is much music in the world with different goals, different work methods, different people. What I'm kind trying to rant here is that music comes from people to people, not from machines to people. And cool music is done by people, because the 'coolness' live inside sosial culture not in the machines.

===

Re: NI Reaktor
Posted by synthy - 2005/07/19 00:44
_____

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I agree and disagree at the same time. I agree that it's possible to make great music with minimal gear. Some of the earliest techno was extremely good stuff that was made with just a sampler and a few analog synths. It took them skill to do that for sure. But there's another element of innovative spirit that's required - for example - if you give the same kit to techno guys now, I bet you that most of their output will sound very similar. It would take quite a bit of work to get something genuinely new sounding out of old minimal kit. So where I disagree is regarding where new technology comes in, which IMO provides new creative resources for people to take electronic music to the next level.

A comparison would be comparing current 3D graphics in console game stations like Sony Playstation 2, compared to what we had when I was a kid, the original Nintendo and Sega Genesis. Some of those old games were just as much fun for us back then as the newest Grand Theft Auto game are for kids (and adults!) today, but if you give a Nintendo to today's technology savvy game players (or more to my point above - current 3D game developers), they won't find it too interesting.

So all I'm saying is to keep things fresh, we roll with the times and adopt new technologies. Otherwise, nobody would be interested in a $1,300USD Machinedrum - they'd all jump for the Roland R8's and Alesis MMT8's. (which some of them still do!)   :-o :lol:

Huh... I'm not really trying to prove anybody right or wrong here. I don't go into 'music: what-meaning?' -conversations so much. Still sometimes I like to speak out my mind (who doesn't). I admit that somebody might know more things or better than me and there is much music in the world with different goals, different work methods, different people. What I'm kind trying to rant here is that music comes from people to people, not from machines to people. And cool music is done by people, because the 'coolness' live inside sosial culture not in the machines.

I completely agree with your point here. But one other thing, is that the machines feed back into the culture. That's why so many of us feel "cool" using Elektron ultra-geek Machines.   :lol: And as for the video game analogy, look at the people who spend their free time playing online game and assuming imaginary character personas and carrying out virtual social lives. There's nothing wrong with that - I did a little bit of that some years ago - but the technology is allowing a new sort of social interaction that was never possible with a Nintendo or Genesis.

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Re: NI Reaktor
Posted by Toni - 2005/07/19 13:08
_____

I agree with your post. I was also thinking this thing yesterday, while doing some other things. I came to conclusion that I might have overstated the position of the individual in creative process. Typical picture of any artist in the common people seams to be that he/she is in the center of creative process controlling all the elements and the art comes inside of him. The picture of individual and allmighty creator of art. As with freud or darwin it has been stated many times that man isn't the center of universe, nor does he even control himself compleatly. So where I'm getting with this is that; yes, the machines infect what we do and their innerlogic (built by another man) drives the creative process also. We might not the creators of our art. It might be the culture, machines and so on from which we just bring them off.

I also feel that we have been discussing this thing in the axis of technology vs. content or technology vs. culture. I see and hear this same axis all over again everywhere and I'm sick of that ('producers of content and engineers of technology', 'technology is just a tool', and so on...). I've got a feeling that dualism like technology vs. content isn't a very good tool for speaking of these things. They are more molded to each other, but I haven't got any better tool for speaking of these things.

Ok, I'm thru with this... But I still think Reaktor isn't as cool as everyone thinks, but that is just my opinion.   :-D

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Re: NI Reaktor
Posted by synthy - 2005/07/20 05:37
_____

That was a good debate between minimalist and maximalist mentalities. There is no right answer, it's all a matter of perception. Take care.

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