Skylife's

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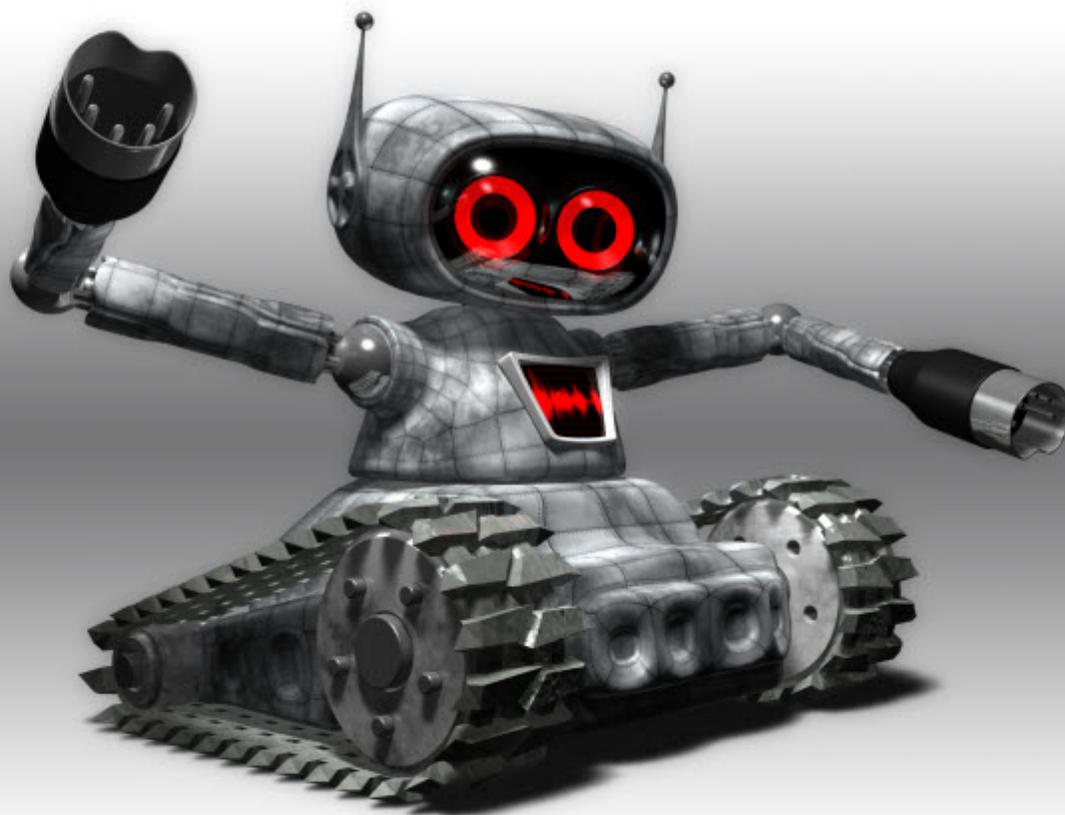
www.samplerobot.com

by Paul "Triple-P" Evans

Skylife's Sample-Robot

I often hear people looking for an easy way to transfer sounds from their hardware onto their computer. Of course, sampling can achieve this, but it also involves setting up loop-points, cross-fading, mapping and all the other tasks of manually sampling ones equipment. This usually results in hours upon of hours of work - laborious work. You make it halfway through and have another layer of velocities and you wonder if you should continue. Sound familiar?

I have a guy I have been working with for months; he has some awesome synth keyboards and it just takes way too much time to do it the old fashioned way. I'm a young buck and I am not into "old fashioned". Even if you get the samples, there's still the mapping. Geez. I'm here to help though. Sample-Robot from Skylife covers every aspect I mentioned. What's more, it does them for you! I hear the angels singing now as I type.

Sample-Robot is not your ordinary sampler. No sir, it features a fully automatic sampling mode. Yes, fully automatic! This means that a couple mouse clicks will rip the samples from your midi sound modules or, with virtual midi cables, VSTi's to. Lazy people like me rejoice. It auto-loops, fades, maps, and samples. The full version of Sample-Robot also comes with Wave-Robot: a sample editor that you can open up to do the editing manually if the auto-modes don't satisfy you. Interestingly, Wave-Robot's graphic engine is based on video game technology. This in turn makes it operate very fast. Not to mention, it looks really good to. It's better than any other sample editors I have used for sure. Wave-Robot can also be purchased as a stand-alone application. If you don't mind the sampling but need a precise editor, this is it. Wave-Robot's design and layout make it very easy to edit your samples. Quite honestly though, Sample-Robot's auto features do the trick very well. The auto-looping has different settings to fit whatever you may need. Of course, you can sample non-midi instruments as well. You will have to do it the old fashioned way though. Mapping is done as you go though, and auto-looping can still be done!

A fully automatic sampler has to be a sound designer's dream. With a simple multi-sample setup you can make layers of velocities at will and design totally unique multi-layered sounds. The interface is very user-friendly. All tools are right in front of you on a compact screen that is dead-easy to navigate. All of your sampling tools are just a click away. I think it is the most intelligently designed sampler I have ever used. Mapping, looping, and fading can be taken out of the equation totally with its auto functions. Those are the biggest sources of aggravation when it comes to sampling. Even if it had no fully auto sampling, not having to map and set loop-points cuts the time in half if not more.

The robot comes with tons of sampling templates to get you going as well. Upon opening you are greeted with a project manager to set all your preferences such as looping, and how many keys. This makes the process worry-free from the start. The wait can be long when exporting samples and they even have a chess game to keep you busy while it processes!

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Sounds fantastic, but how is it in practice? Amazingly enough, just as described! It exports to all of the popular formats, including our own WusikSND. The price point may be a turn off for some. Have no fear though; it comes in a cut-down version in which the limitation is no Wave-Robot.

Like I said earlier though, the auto-looping is spot on. I rarely need to use Wave-Robot as is. So unless you are extremely anal about loop points, the cut down version will do all you need.

This product would score a ten if we had a rating system (soon very soon).

Impressed probably isn't the word. Skylife designed a sampler that is scarily perfect. I enjoy using all products I get the opportunity to review. I am not amazed by them all though. Skylife has made a product that leaves me in awe.

Sampling is an art form that leaves many discouraged. You can design multi-sampled instruments with a couple of clicks. If you have hardware but want to be in the box entirely, Sample-Robot was designed for you. If you have a synth ready to die out and you don't know how to go on without it, you need Sample-Robot. Hardware can now live forever, the assimilation has begun.