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Test: Cherry Audio Yellowjacket

Cherry Audio pays homage to the legendary EDP Wasp, which has enjoyed cult status since the late '70s with its rough character and digital heart in an analog guise. The emulation continues the idea of the hybrid synth and offers features that capture the attention of even creative Producers. But how does it sound? **by Vera Schumacher**

Features

Emulation of the EDP Wasp

16-voice polyphony, Mono, Unison, and Cycle modes

Flexible arpeggiator

Polyphonic aftertouch

Effects: Speaker Emulation, Octafuzz, Phaser, Chorus/Flanger, Echo, Reverb

Over 270 presets



Yellowjacket not only visually resembles the original – including the striking yellow-black control surface – but also captures the rough character of the EDP Wasp with sensitivity.

Facts

Manufacturer: Cherry Audio

Web: cherryaudio.com

Distribution: Download

Price: 49 US Dollars

- ▲ Authentic, rough sound
- ▲ Inspiring arpeggiator with random & humanize
- ▲ Expressive control with aftertouch
- ▲ Very good preset library
- ▲ Affordable price
- ▲ Low resource requirement
- ▼ No MPE support

Sound: ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■

Operation: ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■

Price/Perf: ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■

Total: ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■

It really was time for a plugin developer to take on a faithful emulation of the EDP Wasp. After all, the British synthesizer is considered a cult instrument, thanks to its rugged sound, idiosyncratic design, and hybrid concept with digital oscillators and an analog filter. Like its hardware counterpart, Yellowjacket comes with two oscillators here, which have extended setting options.

They offer sawtooth and square waveforms, and the modulatable pulse wave known from the EDP Gnat. In addition, there is a noise generator on board. The virtual Wasp can be played not only monophonically, but also up to 16 times polyphonically. The Cycle mode is particularly suitable for making arpeggios more lively and varied, and in the Multi-Voice mode, you can set variations in pitch, pan, filter, or envelopes.

Simple, but effective!

The filter is based, like the original, on a 12-dB state-variable design with a typical Wasp sound. You can choose between lowpass, bandpass, highpass, and notch

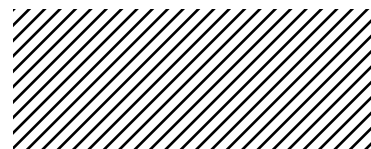
modes. With plenty of resonance – up to self-oscillation – the filter decisively shapes the typically rough, slightly dirty Brit sound. Cherry Audio has cleverly expanded the concept with the envelopes: Both envelopes can be looped, allowing for rhythmic movements.

The control envelope allows for both positive and negative modulations, such as for filter sweeps. It's a solid setup, but a real modulation sequencer or a more complex matrix would have been desirable. At least there's a flexible LFO with six waveforms, which delivers chunky modulations of oscillator or filter frequency or Amplitude at a rate of up to 100 Hz. Atonal, metallic, or FM-like sounds are easy to achieve.

A cool detail: Yellowjacket processes polyphonic aftertouch. Up to six parameters (such as filter, pitch, volume, or reverb) can be dynamically modulated by pressing a key. Also practical: Scales can be set, if desired, so that white keys automatically play only the appropriate diatonic notes of the desired key.

Modern Wasp Sound

Sonically, Yellowjacket scores with a biting, slightly overdriven basic character. This is complemented by effects like octafuzz, flanger/chorus, echo, reverb, and the emulation of the built-in speaker – including mains hum and noise for real LoFi



charm. The Octafuzz effect, in particular, is a lot of fun. The output section also includes a Limiter that can catch overloads. Oversampling up to 4x is also possible – with moderate CPU load.

A real highlight is the new arpeggiator, which Cherry Audio has endowed with the parameters Chance (Note Probability) and Humanize (Timing Accuracy). This allows you to create lively, random patterns – perfect for experimental sequences and organic arpeggios. Combined with the Multi-Voice mode, Yellowjacket can produce new sound nuances with every strike.

With over 270 presets, the plug-in provides plenty of inspiration right from the start – from Vince-Clarke-esque synthpop sequences to Nine-Inch-Nails-like sounds to funky leads in the Daft-Punk style. The MIDI learning function is also thoughtfully implemented and can be used either globally or individually per preset.

Verdict

The mix of rough digital-analog DNA, expanded sound generation with more flexible modulation options, inspiring presets, and creative performance features make for a lot of fun. With its biting and rough sound, the plug-in particularly shines with brutal basses, aggressive leads, dirty acid sequences, and experimental sounds. Those who love the dirty charm of British vintage synths will get a versatile one with a sound that stands out pleasantly from the crowd. ■ ■



More info

Alternatives

GForce impOScar 3

100 GBP

gforcesoftware.com

Behringer WASP Deluxe (Hardware)

134 Euro

behringer.com