



// Instrument Reviews

David Gallant checks out the latest jazz-related instrument and technology launches

Fusion Keyboard Cases



Fusion F3-26 K 13 B keyboard cases

Although there are a few specialist cases on the market produced by manufacturers such as Roland for their own specific instruments, there are very few general keyboard cases, and these tend to be either poorly padded or weak on design. Fusion has addressed both these issues and come up with a range of 16 different bag sizes that cover almost every model on the market.

The heavily padded F3s are a move away from the traditional keyboard bag with its shoulder strap and grab handles, also incorporating a pair of case style wheels and some very nifty hidden handles. The F3-26 K 13 B has a two-tone, tough denier nylon skin and is heavily padded with solid walls. The keyboard compartment is accessed by a 3/4 weatherproof "reversed zip", and features two lightly padded interior retaining wings with quick release buckles and eight

velcro attached padded cubes for extra protection should your particular keyboard be either slightly narrower or shorter. To the front face there are two pockets – one large – one small, again with reversed zips. The base of the bag is covered with a strip of heavy duty ballistic nylon, while the wheeled end also has a heavy duty composite section that incorporates two feet and a grab handle, with all the bottom corners being reinforced once again with ballistic nylon. The top end of the bag hides the highly unusual but very effective hidden lip, which acts as a grab handle and is set into the skin of the bag. It also has the usual double grab handle with a padded sleeve for finger comfort, which conveniently folds away behind a double velcroed flap while not in use. Fusion deserve some design awards for this one, but the glittering prizes might have to wait until they produce a model with recessed wheels.

For more go to www.fusion-bags.com

Yamaha Motif Xf synthesisers

Soon after Yamaha introduced the original Motif Music Production Synthesizer nine years ago, it was quickly recognised as the best sounding, top selling and most requested music workstation on the market at the time. Since then, the Motif has continued to evolve over the course of three product generations, and with each step has improved its expressiveness and functionality. And now, the next generation XF builds on the decade-long heritage of the Motif, with a Flash memory expansion that provides groundbreaking capabilities setting a new standard for keyboard workstations to last, Yamaha confidently predicts, for years to come. The new XF is packed with sonic power and versatility, having a massive 741MB of internal Wave ROM, including incredibly realistic pianos, acoustic instruments and vintage synths. It also features up to 2GB of optional Flash Wave memory, so whenever you turn the synth on, your samples will be stored already in the internal memory waiting for you. There is a sophisticated synth architecture with customised articulation and 18 different filter types to let you shape your sound as you wish, all controlled by eight front panel knobs and sliders making the process easy – even in real time. The popular FSX (Motif XF6/7) and BH (Motif XF8) keyboard actions let you express your passion for playing with 61-key, 76 key and 88-note weighted action. Also included is an integrated Yamaha digital mixer, and all this together with a direct-to-USB recording and playback allows you to record your final mixes to any connected USB memory device as CD-quality WAV files, or to play them on your computer back on the XF.

For more go to www.yamahasynth.com



V-Moda Crossfade LP headphones

If packaging alone won prizes, you would have expected these over-the-ear headphones to have won a gong or two. Designed and developed in Hollywood, the angular box comes with a faux snakeskin handle and similarly styled press-studded clasp and contains, in padded security, a hardshell shaped zippered case that holds not just the extraordinarily lightweight glitzy metal headphones, but also a universal luxury fabric audio Kevlar-reinforced cable with a quarter-inch adapter and a remote fabric audio cable featuring a three-button remote with inline mike/volume and control features for the latest iPhone, iPod, iPad and MacBook. Phew! Both neatly strapped in with strips of black elastic.

The brainchild of V-Moda's chief executive officer Val Kolton, the Crossfade LP is the outcome of four years' collaboration with various musicians, producers and DJs to find headphones that would deliver the ultimate in sound quality. The core of the system is the 50mm dual-diaphragm high definition drivers which pump out a massive sound without the need for batteries. It all seems to have worked a treat, with crystal clear treble, plenty of body in the mid-range and a deep, rich, vibrant bass that is further enhanced by the memory foam pads that all but eliminate any ambient noise. Make no mistake, these are quality cans. For more go to www.v-moda.com

Yamaha Motif Xf Keyboard

