

EastWest ComposerCloud Online Virtual Instrument Bank

By Paul Lau

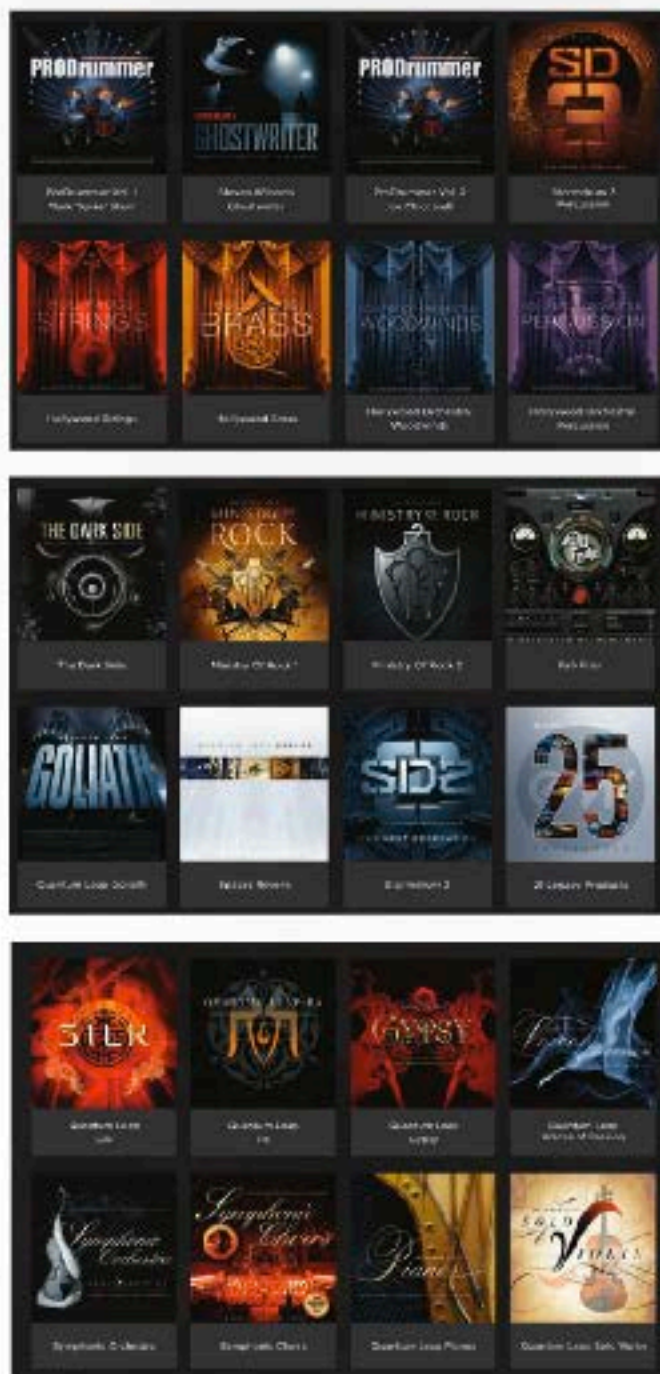
EastWest has been around for a long time and has built a tremendous reputation for having created some of the world's best-produced sample instrument libraries for creative musicians and sound designers.

I remember when they first introduced CD-based drum samples with Bob Clearmountain. It was the beginning of a new concept to help musicians and producers incorporate and have an alternative for the "real" drum sound without an elaborate set-up or prep time. It was an exciting time and digital music technology was just taking off. We've come a long way in 30 years and EastWest has remained a pioneer when it comes to utilizing sample-based recording instruments.

I must note that EastWest is probably one of the most decorated music tech companies with accolades that continue to accumulate with their more recent offerings. If you've seen films by the likes of JJ Abrams (*Star Wars*, *Star Trek*), Danny Elfman (*Alice in Wonderland*, *Terminator*), or James Newton Howard (*The Hunger Games*, *The Bourne Legacy*), just to name a few endorsers/composers, you've already experienced sounds from the EastWest library.

EastWest ComposerCloud is like a huge sound palette that would benefit virtually any budding or seasoned musician, composer, or designer. (Sound palette is not bad as a descriptor, but I could probably say it is more like an arsenal of sounds that will blow your mind.)

EastWest has a huge collection of professional sample and virtual instrument banks, which it would be impossible for me to list as there are over 9,000 instruments in the catalogue. Basically, if you can think it, they've done it. A few examples are the multi-award-winning Hollywood Orchestra collections of strings, woodwinds, brass, etc.; Symphonic Choirs; Voices of Passion; Ministry of Rock; Gypsy Style; instruments from China, India, and Persia; Percussion Insanity; and Goliath, which itself has over 180 instruments from various genres. You have to hear the richness and professional quality of these sounds, and in that, you really begin to



understand just what EastWest has to offer.

ComposerCloud is a collection of 52 award-winning products – including a total of 9,000 virtual instruments from the EastWest library – that are made available in the cloud on a monthly or annual subscription basis. The company offers a free 10-day trial of the service with three of the 52 titles to give potential users an idea of its performance.

Installation was very simple, and I was up and running in less than 30 minutes. It's the download of the samples that took the most time.

The PLAY interface is so simple to use and very intuitive, similar to other software GUIs that many people would be familiar with. After loading PLAY, I went straight for the Steinway D sample, which was just gorgeous. So was the Bosendorfer piano. It sounded like heaven and I spent hours just trolling through samples.

Most notable throughout my exploration was the overall ease of use and accessibility, especially for musicians. You can purchase a 7,200-rpm hard drive to have the samples already loaded and ready to use at a very reasonable price, so no downloading to your hard drive is necessary, which saves tons of space and time, though note you can't really use this drive without having an active subscription to ComposerCloud.

The total value of the libraries included in ComposerCloud would exceed \$13,000 when sold separately, making the subscription plan a very attractive option. Basically, for less than a dollar a day, you get access to all the sounds in ComposerCloud – the same sounds that a plethora of the world's best-known composers and designers have put to work for mammoth projects. The monthly plan is basically pay-as-you-go, and if you need to cancel at any time or if you're taking a break for a few months, you can freeze your subscription. It's that easy. I should also note that purchasing an annual plan saves an additional 10 per cent over the cost of 12 individual months.

Sure, you don't own the content, though you have unlimited access to it for a fraction of the cost, and it's a rich and robust library with endless applications. EastWest sounds inspire and create new dimensions and ideas when it comes to music and music production. EastWest ComposerCloud can breathe new life into your compositions and productions with a very reasonable and innovative model that should be attractive to a variety of users.

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