STEMS

Drone Thoreau Two
SoundChaser

Cerebral ◎ Audio

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A collection of over 120 samples and STEMs used in the process of creating Drone Thoreau Two. Includes raw sources, layers, and submixes of the tracks.

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Introduction

As suggested elsewhere, *Drone Thoreau Two* (aka *DT2*)is a different beast from *Drone Thoreau One* (aka *DT1*). Nowhere is this more evident than in the STEMS and samples collection. When I created *DT1* I wasn't really thinking about saving or releasing the STEMS and samples used during the creation. It was only as I got to the end of the project that I thought "Hey, why not release the STEMS?" And that was the Genesis of Drone Thoreau as a multi-part project.

With *DT2* I was a lot more proactive in saving as many snippets and samples and STEMs as I could. The result is a massive collection of 127 pieces of audio. This includes some of the un-edited materials that were used as the basis for some of the pieces.

The process of saving all this audio provides a bit more documentation (yet still oddly incomplete) on the process used in building each of the pieces. What follows is a brief discussion of each of the pieces, and the audio files that are included in this collection.

Wynds of the Lumpkin

This was the first piece created for this release. It was an attempt to create something similar to my other drone works (*DT1*, *ITWM* and *FTMQ*), while being much shorter.

The drone is created from six different layers of sound mixed and rendered into a single lind. The Lumpkin was a layer on it's own. What I call the "shimmering" effect was more complicated on this release as I created it in two registers, each using four individual samples.

Wibbly Wobbly

This was an exploration of another effect that I'd played around with on the *Parts* release: sliding time. This changes the pitch of a segment of audio over a period of time. That pitch change can be either up or down.

For this track I created a series of samples (nine of them) and the pitch shifted them. I then arranged them so they cycled over each other. This created a "wobbling" effect as the pitches slide up and down through their assigned frequencies.

Note: this track actually has several different versions. The version presented on the main release is the Master A version. There's also a Master B version, and of course Master A+B is also possible. Originally I was going for the Master A+B, but I decided that the less dense version of Master A was more appropriate for the main *DT2* release.

Wunka Wynka Wenka

This was the final track put together for this release, and it's actually the most interesting / fun track in my opinion.

The drone is a series of tuned noise samples. These samples are then laid out in the following progression: a, b, c, b, a+c, b, a+b+c, b, a+c, b, c, b, a.

The pulse is another sample, tune to a different frequency, and repeated multiple times. This series of pulses is then interspersed over the main drone at specific locations.

Finally, another sample was tuned to 9 different frequencies. These samples were then layered in groups of three, and then sequenced. Two copies of the sequence are then layered over the top of the main drone, with a cross-fade between them.

Whirl

This was the result of an experiment that yielded an intresting phenomena. What started it out was taking a small segment of audio and stretching multiple copies in .1 increments: 1.0, 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, etc. When played back, the effect was a cascading start to the audio that quickly descended into a caucaphony that had interesting pulsating qualities to it.

I took this idea and applied it with a much longer stretch of 100.X across nine copies of the poem. The 100.1 version was kept in stereo as the base piece of audio. The other eight were split between channels: 3, 5, 7, and 9 on one channel while 2, 4, 6, and 8 were on the other channel.

This set of STEMS (which is included as Track 8) was then split into four parts used in the final tracks.

For each part, filters and effects were applied to the samples in pairs to shape the sound of each of the lines. They were then adjusted for position, depth and level relative to each other. In doing this I was able to create similar, yet distinctly different waveform shapes that brought out different aspects of the pulsating shapes.

A couple of asides: one part of *Whirl* has the final mix reversed. This brought a different take on the pulsating sounds, and played nice with the part that follows it. Also, on a couple of parts the 100.1 STEM is inverted from it's original form. This creates an almost violent feeling to the pulsation as portions of the signal that were common to other STEMs are suddenly cancelled out by the inverted signal.

Final Thoughts

There was a lot of work on these tracks, more than might be apparent to listeners of the final results. Working with filters has brought about more interesting possibilities for manipulating the underlying waveforms of a sample into different shapes,

Adding additional effects is sometimes quite difficult. Many hours were spent adding and removing effects, to verious STEMs. Sometimes an effect that sounded great on a STEM played in isolation, didn't work when combine with other STEMs and effects, or would be compltely lost during a submix or final mix.

That's all the insightes into this collection of oddly shaped and manipulated sounds. Have fun playing aorund with them. :)

Oh, and I mentioned that there was another version of *Wibbly Wobbly*. I will probably include it on a future release. :)

Artwork

The artwork for this series pays homage to the experiment netlabel 17 Sons. This experimental netlabel was based in France, and featured a group of artists that would create abstract and ambient works that featured a specific device or piece of software. When the original experiment(s) were deemed to be concluded, the label was re-formed as Textural Records.

The artwork for the original 17 Sons netlabel was notable for it's simplicity: a black and white cover, a sidebar with a texture and simple text for the release on the right part of the image.

CerebralAudio is adopting a similar simplicity for these experimental releases. A simple colored sidebar with plain black text on a white background. Even the video images adopt the same simplicity, instead of the normal image-in-image layout of most *CerebralAudio* releases.

Biography

George De Bruin (aka SoundChaser) is a computer nerd, writer, Creative Commons advocate recently turned sonic explorer. After writing about Creative Commons music for the past several years, he felt compelled to take a more direct role in the creation process.

Initially he was going to start this exploration by creating some special effects / sound beds for his podcast. This project lead to the creation of *Floating Through Mist on the Quays* and *Inside The World Machine*, which lead to the establishment of *CerebralAudio*.

Drone Thoreau Two is SoundChaser's sixth release.

Contact

Contact SoundChaser via the CerebralRift Contact Form.

Credits

All selections composed, arranged and performed by SoundChaser.

All instruments: SoundChaser

Cover Art: George J. De Bruin

Lettering / Layout: George J. De Bruin

Liner Notes: George J. De Bruin

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