

In The Studio Sound Environment

36dB gives producers the tools to create the perfect mix

DJ MAG Tech jumped into the studio with producers Dave Gardner and Barry Jamieson to find out more about their latest foray into the electronic music production world with their new company 36dB.

36dB is a new venture from two of electronic music's most revered production and engineering teams. Dave Gardner and Barry Jamieson are the names behind some of the biggest dancefloor hits from their own productions to working with artists like Sasha, Calvin Harris, Madonna, Thom Yorke, Hot Chip, Poliça, Frank Ocean, to name a few.

Their new venture 36dB sees them offering their music production knowledge and skills to the wider world with a set of Ableton Live Environments for creating electronic music. Think of it as having access to your very own mix engineer sat with you while you are producing, or sitting in on a session and getting to see and learn how the pros do it. This is a valuable part of the music-making process — methods and techniques learnt can be applied to take your music-making to the next level, helping producers develop their own skills and unlock their full potential.

36dB offer a collection of Ableton Live Production Environments made up of professional studio-quality sounds, samples, FX and processing. They contain uniquely designed sounds from the pair; drum samples, FX, MIDI clips and processing chains using equipment



from Roland, Moog, ARP, Korg, Novation, Sequential, Future Retro, AMS, Eventide, Boss, Strymon, Zvex, MXR and Arturia, as well as Live's native plugins and beyond. Each Environment is built from the ground up. Any component of the Environment, be it the bass sound or an FX chain, can be pulled out of the session and used in any way the user needs. The Environments cover all genres of electronic music from house to techno, drum & bass and even indie.

What was the reasoning behind starting 36dB?

Dave: "We've been making music for a while and we've gotten into the modular aspect of Ableton, already sharing working Environments with the people we collaborate with. We came across a couple of things online, basic templates

and stuff like that, and we thought we could do it better. Having had close to 30 years of experience producing music and at least 20 using Ableton, we thought we had something to offer. We did the first one and realised it was a really good idea and the project grew from there really."

Barry: "We are used to collaborating with a load of people so it wasn't really just about our music, it was about the things that we do for people like Sasha and other producers and artists we work with. We wanted to create ideas and content that can then be used in a lot of different ways, whether it's from a sound design point of view, creating patches for synths or just setting up a combination of things that can be used in a specific track and a remix — all of these elements really work well together. We do that all the time for

the people we are working with, so we thought, 'Why don't we start offering this to other people?' We've got all of this content that we've built up for years and years that has been lying around not doing anything.

"As you know, on some tracks you put in some ideas that don't make it to the final release, so what do you do with all this stuff? We went through all our old files and grabbed a few things and threw them together to see what we could come up with. We had all these bits from different tracks — melodies and stuff like that — and turned it into something cohesive that we could offer to people to use."

Dave: "The template market and the sounds market is such a big thing now, from people being in lockdown at home making music — so many more people are getting into music production. We've all been there with the thought: 'Why doesn't my music sound like the music that I like?' You can spend so long trying to figure it out. We thought we've got all this stuff which we haven't used that we could flip and put it out as a template or environment that can be used as part of the basis of your productions."

How do the Environments work?

Barry: "From creating and making music, one of the skills that you really have to master is combining the right textures

together to create a full track. Knowing what goes where and what things work together is quite hard — we've been sent stuff that people want us to mix down and the combination of sounds is really awful. The tracks are alright and there are some cool melodies and good ideas but there isn't any real effort to make them work together, mix together, so that is one of the things that the Environments do. All the bits work together for the track, you've just got to come up with the ideas and use elements that are already there and make it your own. Plus everything is mixed and balanced, so you get a pretty cohesive sounding mix from the start."

Why your Environments and not a sample pack?

Dave: "With our Environments, we've broken them down around certain genres and the plan is to keep growing them out. With Environments, you get specifically designed effects with unique processing for each Environment, unique sounds, things we've sampled from our own synths, tailored specifically for the genre of music. But every aspect or component of our Environments can be pulled out and used in a completely different session, be it the MIDI, the FX chain, the processing, master channel, everything. We've got this experience from having done this for quite a while at a high level — what we're offering is more interesting and useful to

people than just buying another sample pack or a standard preset."

Barry: "They're going to appeal to a wide range of users; established producers, new producers, it's a wide demographic. For users who just need the MIDI content, someone who just wants the sounds or the FX channels, it is all the things that make a sound/track sound finished. Everything is ready to go and to be used in your music, you can build your own library with the content. It works on all levels."

Dave: "It's an interesting learning tool — users can actually see the detail that goes into making sounds or the processing or the routing. This isn't something that happens overnight, if someone can show you these techniques so that you can use them in your own productions, it's something that is going to appeal to people on all sorts of levels."



• 36db.live

