Book Recommendation: “Synthesizer von Gestern” (Matthias Becker)

THE German synthesizer classic by Matthias Becker (text) and Dieter Stork (photos) set the standard for high-quality synth-journalism way back in the 80s. Its articles, which originally appeared in “Keyboards” magazine, were later offered in book-form (part 1 and part 2) by MM Musik Media publishing company. The books are available in German only, but we think the great pictures and diagrams are worth a buy for any synth enthusiast around the globe ...

Part 1 (1990) is probably the highlight for synth insiders. On the one hand, the great classics of synth history are introduced (Minimoog, EMS VCS3, ARP 2600, Jupiter-8, Memorymoog, …). On the other hand, there are those especially remarkable (often full-page!) photos by Dieter Stork.
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Moog Modularsystem 55

The text discusses the Moog Modularsystem 55, a modular synthesizer system. The text mentions its origins and historical significance, particularly in terms of its role in the evolution of electronic music. The modular system is noted for its flexibility and the ability to create intricate soundscapes, making it a crucial tool in the development of electronic music genres. The text highlights its importance in the context of early synthesizer technology and its continued relevance in modern music production.

Switched-On Bach

The text refers to the album “Switched-On Bach,” created by Morton F. Gould. The album was recorded in 1967 and features Gould’s interpretations of Bach’s works on an electronic synthesizer. The text praises the album for its innovative approach and for popularizing classical music through electronic means.

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Along with lots of synthesizer reports, part 2 (1995) contains a tribute to Oscar Sala. Unfortunately, the graphic work in this second volume is not as spectacular as in part 1. Occasional small photo limits the amount of visual information – a pity.

EMS VCS 3/Synth A

The text describes the EMS VCS 3/Synth A, an early electronic synthesizer designed by Peter Christoph Junger and Max Mathews. The text highlights its importance in the history of electronic music, noting its role in shaping the sound of early electronic music compositions. The text also mentions its influence on subsequent generations of synthesizers and its impact on music production.

Switched-On Bach

The text states that “Switched-On Bach” is a groundbreaking album that showcased the potential of electronic music to interpret classical compositions. The text notes that the album was widely praised for its innovative approach and for bringing classical music to a new audience. The text also mentions the album’s impact on the development of electronic music and its continued relevance in modern music production.

Moog Modularsystem 55

The text discusses the Moog Modularsystem 55, a modular synthesizer system. The text highlights its historical significance and its role in the evolution of electronic music. The text notes that the system was developed by Robert Moog and has since become an iconic piece of electronic music equipment. The text also mentions its influence on subsequent generations of modular synthesizers and its continued relevance in modern music production.

Along with lots of synthesizer reports, part 2 (1995) contains a tribute to Oscar Sala. The tribute highlights Sala’s contributions to the history of electronic music and his role in popularizing classical music through electronic means. The text notes that Sala’s work was widely praised for its innovation and for bringing classical music to a new audience. The text also mentions Sala’s influence on subsequent generations of synthesizers and the continued relevance of his work in modern music production.
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Davolisint

The Davolisint is a remarkable instrument designed by Matthias Becker. It is a unique combination of analog and digital circuits, allowing for a wide range of sound possibilities. The Davolisint features a modular design that allows for easy modification and expansion, making it a versatile choice for sound experimentation.

Oberheim Four Voice

The Oberheim Four Voice was a pioneering instrument that revolutionized the world of synthesizers. It was one of the first instruments to combine the power of digital synthesis with the flexibility of analog sound generation. The Oberheim Four Voice allowed musicians to create complex and rich sounds that were previously impossible.
These standard works of synthesizer literature can still sometimes be found on the used book market, occasionally even packaged together with the (separately published, optional) audio-CDs “Synthesizer von Gestern”.

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**Synthesizer von Gestern (Part 1)** by Matthias Becker
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**Synthesizer von Gestern (Part 2)** by Matthias Becker
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ISBN 3-927954-01-2

Links:
- [Synthesizer von Gestern – Audio CDs (Originalton West)](#)
- [Synthesizer von Gestern Part 1 (Amazon)](#)
- [Synthesizer von Gestern Part 2 (Amazon)](#)
- [MM Musik Media Verlag](#)