In the years to come, our age will be known as the “Tablet” era. [Like: *Baroque – Classic – Romantic – 20. Century – Tablet*]. Bouncy, sassy, slightly tinny music for flexible, handy and colorful instruments.

The new Roland JP-08 meets up to those expectations. Not much larger than a paperback, with the tiniest possible controls, ideal for the flexible hands of the young, dynamic Smartphone generation. Battery-powered for making music *on the go*, together with an optional mini-keyboard … the JP-08 is the essence of programmable, trendy, modern desktop synths.

And above all, the JP-08 represents the metal and plastic incarnation of the next generation. “Old fashioned granddaddys” is what those upstart-youngsters will be thinking about the musicians who toured with a Roland Jupiter-8 way back in the 80s and 90s: 22 kilos of cumbersome metal, complete with slipped-disc guarantee. The new JP-08 laughs last, its 970 grams (not quite a kilo!) – surely no man’s burden.

But “new” does not necessarily mean “good”, and the younger generation will have to put up with some shortcomings, too. The JP-08 offers only 4-voice polyphony (which explains – or actually *doesn’t* explain – its name).

And then there are those labels VCO – VCF – VCA. Is the JP-08 analog? (Yes or no?) …

“Using Roland’s acclaimed Analog Circuit Behaviour (ACB) technology the JP-08 faithfully reproduces the original JUPITER-8 sounds and adds a few new twists in the form of extra LFOs and expanded VCO range.” (www.roland.com/products/jp-08/specifications)

Which doesn’t tell us much. On the one hand, terms associated with the use of VOLTAGE control (pure analog, so to speak), on the other hand, the indication that the ACB Technology comes close to *reproducing* the sounds of the original Jupiter-8.

So what we’ve really got is not a JP-08 “piece of magic”, but more of a software synth with colored knobs and fancy sliders.

Be that as it be, the question of sound quality doesn’t necessarily have anything to do with the outfit. Roland *does* offer sounds comparable to the original (or so they say), organized in 64 patches and 8 patch presets.

And we have to admit that the JP-08 does offer more than granddaddy’s old, tired Jupiter-8 could give him. It comes equipped with USB, MIDI, a 16-step sequencer with 16 memory locations, a 24 bit / 44.1 kHz stereo IN/OUT USB audio interface, topped off with an integrated loudspeaker (meaning that those JP-08 sounds are immediately available for all of your friends standing around).

But: in order for those friends to enjoy those JP-08 sounds, you need – ideally, so to speak – the optional K-25m keyboard …

A special keyboard highlight is the panel tilt-up system. The JP-08 can be adjusted to 2 different positions. A consideration for those health-conscious musicians out there.

And here’s the JP-08 feature list:

VOLUME knob
Ribbon controllers 1, 2

LFO Section
RATE slider
DELAY TIME slider
WAVE FORM select knob

VCO MOD Section
LFO MOD slider
ENV MOD slider
FREQ MOD select switch
PULSE WIDTH MOD slider
PULSE WIDTH MOD select switch

VCO-1 Section
CROSS MOD slider
RANGE select knob
WAVE FORM select knob

VCO-2 Section
SYNC switch
RANGE select knob
FINE TUNE knob
WAVE FORM select knob
MIXER Section
SOURCE MIX knob

HPF Section
CUTOFF slider

VCF Section
CUTOFF slider
RESONANCE slider
SLOPE switch
LFO MOD slider
ENV MOD slider
ENV switch
KEY FOLLOW slider

VCA Section
LEVEL slider
LFO MOD switch

ENV-1 Section
ATTACK TIME slider
DECAY TIME slider
SUSTAIN LEVEL slider
RELEASE TIME slider
Polarity switch

ENV-2 Section
ATTACK TIME slider
DECAY TIME slider
SUSTAIN LEVEL slider
RELEASE TIME slider
KEY FOLLOW switch

PATCH NUMBER 1–8 buttons
PATCH PRESET 1–8 buttons
MANUAL button
UPPER/LOWER button
DUAL button

Power switch

Further Info:
www.roland.com/products/jp-08/features

Video Link:

PS: The Roland BOUTIQUE Series consists of 3 instruments: JP-08, JU-06 und JX-03 ...