

# MODEL : LIVID INSTRUMENTS OHM64

I have to say, I do see a lot of new gear turning up all the time, and I am often impressed with quite a bit of it, but it is rare for me to open the packaging of a new piece of kit and literally be jumping with excitement. This does happen though, and did when I got my hands on Livid Instruments OHM64 MIDI controller. Now, there are loads of MIDI controllers on the market, especially now with programs such as Ableton Live having electronic musicians craving more hands on control, but none that I have gotten my hands onto quite offered the flexibility of the OHM64. And none look anywhere near as good either.

## SOLID CONTROL

The OHM64 is a well thought out unit. It proudly boasts being "made in the USA by humans" and this is evident when you first get your hands on it. The knobs and faders both have a firm but smooth action to them that don't give you the impression that they will collapse after lots of use. And after all, that is what it is designed for, lots of use. All the buttons respond nicely and have a good action that neither leaves them a strain to push, nor likely to be hit by accident. The central cross fader glides smoothly and quickly, giving DJs a very workable tool indeed. In all, there are 81 buttons (75 of which are programmable), 16 knobs, 8 faders and one cross fader. If that isn't enough to control your software, then maybe you need to rethink

your setup. All this is mounted onto a solid metal faceplate that is recessed within a glossed wooden case. Yes folks, a wooden case! Now are you starting to see why I got so excited on first laying my eyes on this thing? I was even surprised to find that it didn't actually weigh a tonne, as one would expect of a wooden encased unit, but instead was light and very portable.

## THE INS AND OUTS OF IT

Well, this part is really quite simple. Taking a look at the back of the unit, a small metal plate holds the connections snugly in one place, all three of them. Firstly, here is MIDI In and MIDI Out, both on 5 pin DIN connections so you can interface with other hardware in your setup. The other connection is the most important, being a simple USB. This enables you to bus power to the unit from your computer and handles all the MIDI data flow both to and from your computer. The two way communication not only allows you to send control message from the OHM64 to your computer, but also allow it to accept messages back to determine which buttons need to light up for your current scene. This is something that Ableton users will find very handy as it makes for a more intuitive workspace.

## FUNCTIONALITY

Where this unit really stands out is that it is completely programmable and Livid Instruments not only want it to be that way, but have built it to offer enough options for you to program just about



any control scenario. With the supplied editing software, you can fully customise the unit so that it becomes an extension of yourself. There is no longer a need to get upset with the manufacturer because they put a pan knob where you thought a filter controller should be placed. Simply set it up so it suits your workflow best. It doesn't take long to have the unit doing you bidding with the MIDI learn feature in most software and that is the way it should be.

With the obvious target audience being electronic music producers and performers, the OHM isn't just limited to that market. Because of its programmable nature, it can also be used as a powerful tool for

lighting control or even for VJs. This unit is not only beautifully built, but is very logically thought out and designed. Sure, it may cost a little more than some of the flimsy plastic controllers on the market that don't offer anywhere near the functionality, but as the old saying goes, you get what you pay for. In the case of the OHM64, you get a lot more!

**ROB GEE**

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