

MIXING UP A DREAM

The Rane Sixty-Eight is the newest mixer to challenge clubland's greatest accolade of ultimate club mixer. Demi and Omid, aka SOS, put it through its paces...

Demi and Omid are two cheeky chappies that DJ under the SOS moniker. They play gigs all over the world, while the latter also runs his bespoke label, SexonWax. These boys are in hot demand, so we let them loose on Rane's top-of-the-range Sixty-Eight club mixer to see if, at over £2000, this bad boy can really cut the cloth...

What do you guys like about the Rane Sixty-Eight?

Omid: "It's a great mixer as far as first impressions are concerned, but once you get into the whole spectrum of what it can offer, you realize the guys at Rane haven't been sitting down twiddling their thumbs and have come up with something special."

Demi: "The mixer is a heavyweight build and quite colourful, as far as design is concerned. All knobs and sliders feel natural, and surely built to last a little longer than average."

Omid: "One of the useful selling points of the mixer is the dual USB ports, allowing for two laptops to be hooked up simultaneously, which suits how SOS perform live."

Demi: "Sonically, the Sixty-Eight is one of the best mixers we have come across since the original Urei/Rane Rotary mixers. Rane have obviously used high-end components to make sure you're getting the best sound out of the mixer."

What do you think of the layout?

Demi: "It's a very well-designed mixer in our opinion, and to be really honest, we are quite amazed at how many buttons Rane have managed to include on the layout — without overdoing it, of course! The layout resembles the high-end Pioneer and Allan & Heath mixers, adding instant familiarity with the basic four-channel controls and EQs."

Omid: "All the sliders and knobs are pretty much where most people would want them, and even though a lot has been squeezed into the layout, there is still room for your fingers to go nuts without accidentally pulling the wrong slider down or hitting the wrong button."

How would you compare the Rane to other club mixers?

Omid: "Pioneer have had a niche in the DJing market for quite some time for many reasons. It's only of late they are pushing better sonics for all their mixers. Yet Rane have always focused on the sonics, it would be unfair to compare the two in a blatant way... "Both serve what they do best, yet we feel both companies have now looked at each other in a different light, and have maybe been more inspired by one another to make a better product. In Rane's case, the priority is quality of sound with all current DJ necessities in a mixer, and we are not disappointed so far."

How did you find the effects?

Omid: "GREAT! You're going to have a lot of fun with these. The Flex FX buttons located on each channel

is a brilliant idea. A bright blue light comes up with a push of a button as it's activated, giving enough illumination, especially if you're DJing in a dark booth."

Demi: "We would love to ask Rane if they'd be kind enough to consider adding a reverse roll function effect to the six existing effects available. Not that we are being greedy."

Omid: "Got to mention, the filter knobs on all four input channels are so good! They are the warmest high/low pass filters you could imagine. Great sweep action, and complete kill on the frequencies, with full emphasis on either turn. Great reverb and a very special phaser add to more typical effects like delay and echo, but it's the phaser that steals the show,

adding a certain edge to the mixes when used on top. Overall, the six FX that come with the Sixty-Eight sound like beasts..."

What features stand out?

Omid: "The ability to have dual USB laptop action, which few other club mixers in the market cater for."

Demi: "As mentioned earlier, having its own designated set of effects that are of such a high quality."

You've commented a lot about the FX features on the Rane...

Omid: "Yes we have, the mixer is capable of having multi-effects that can be used, whether it's from the





PRICE
£2199.00

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on-board FX of the mixer, or your Serato Scratch, Traktor or Ableton effects. This really adds to the DJing experience and offers DJs lots of scope for really getting creative in the mix.”
Demi: “This is a big leap into the digital realm of performance DJing that Rane are making, and they will hold their own with this unit.”

Did you try and use the Rane as a controller for Serato, Traktor etc?

Demi: “For Serato users in particular, it’s all set in place and works in perfect harmony. This is one of the selling points of the Sixty-Eight: instant hook up to Serato’s Scratch Live software, and being MIDI map-able also means that other digital DJs can get the benefits of such a good mixer.”
Omid: “We are sure they’ll have MIDI maps for other DVS software like Traktor pretty soon, as it would be great to use this mixer with our software of choice.”

How does the mixer sound?

Omid: “Crunchy and punchy... really smooth and clean, all at the same time! You can’t but notice the mixer’s valve-sounding EQ — very pleasing to the ear, even when all knobs are maxed, so you’ll be able to boost those frequencies without sounding like you’re hurting people’s ears.”

What’s the build quality like?

Demi: “Heavily impressed, which is always a promising sign. High-end components have evidently not been spared here.”

Omid: “The buttons and knobs on the mixer are heavy duty, Rane are renowned for their rotary fader control, the faders are smooth and of good quality. The build quality is wicked — this will take a beating without crying in most clubland situations.”

Overall opinion?

Omid: “For me, it’s the total package — great for playing live, DJing and using even as a desk on the move or in the studio. Its design is unique and fun to play with.”
Demi: “We voted this as our choice club mixer at the 2010 DJmag Tech Awards. This is the complete package. With the additional four auxiliary inputs on top of the four standard analogue outputs, the room for experimentation in your live performance and integration with another performing DJ is utterly thrilling. Rane have evidently picked up on the vibe that in this day and age, it’s no fun just playing on your own, something we’ve been advocating for some time now, and we’re glad to see it’s having the same effect with many of our peers. Rane have thrown their balls out there with this unit, and all they are saying with it is for you to do the same.”

Anything else you want to add?

Omid & Demi: “Can we please have another one?!”

VERDICT

BUILD QUALITY	9.0
EASE OF USE	8.0
FEATURES	8.0
VALUE FOR MONEY	7.0
SOUND QUALITY	10

HYPE

Excellent sound quality and amazing FX, and the integration with Serato Live is amazing.

GRIPE

Not cheap.

At over £2000, it is quite a heavy price for a mixer, but considering its pro specs and forward-thinking features, you have to be realistic. If you want the best, it costs a little more than the rest!

9.1/10