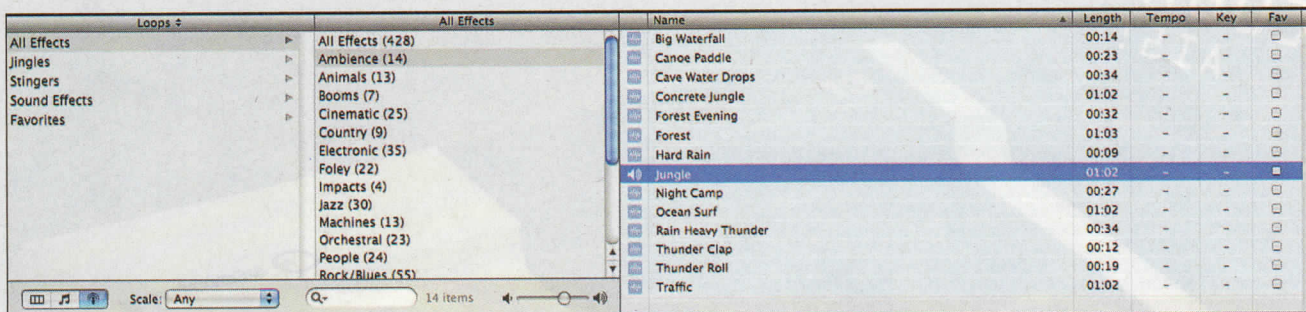


Dance

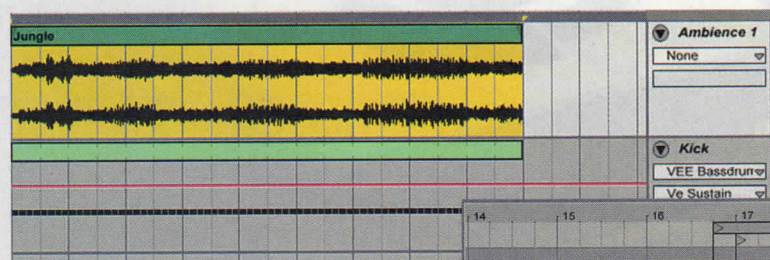
REAL-WORLD AMBIENCES

Killer synth riffs and slammin' drums are key components of dance tracks, but if you want fans to wonder, "How was *that* sound created?" you can get a lot of mileage from adding *ambiences*. Not as in "Brian Eno" washy drones, but Foley-type ambiances like in professional sound effects libraries. By taking natural sounds like forests and jungles, or industrial sounds like construction sites, you can add a layer of organic content that will give your tracks a truly unique sound. Francis Preve

1. On a Mac, there's a smattering of real-world ambiances in GarageBand's sound effects library. Click on the Podcast icon in the loop browser, select a sound from the *ambience* category, add it to a GB track, and render the result. Another great resource for free ambiances is hollywoodedge.com. From the main page, click on Free Sound Effects in the menu bar (free registration required).



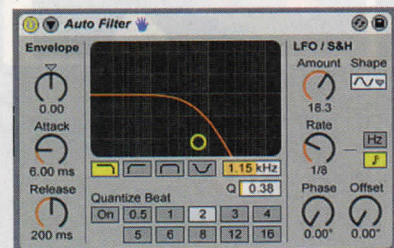
2. Drag this sound effect into a new track in your latest electronic opus, as I've done here in Ableton Live. In our online audio, we put the loop over a simple four-on-the-floor kick, so you can hear exactly what's going on.



3. With your *ambience* clip and drums in place, begin auditioning one-measure bits of the clip. Each single-bar segment has its own distinct rhythmic character. Spend some time finding one that really revs your engine, not just audio filler.



4. Once you've got a loop that grooves, get creative with tempo-synced effects. Filters and auto-panners are good, as are flangers and phasers. In our audio example, I added a touch of eighth-note LFO filtering to give it a bouncy wobble.



5. As an alternative to LFO-based effects, tinker with the volume envelope for the loop. By "gating" the loop rhythmically, you can create syncopated riffs with your *ambience* that would be nearly impossible to achieve any other way.

