

Hip Hop eJay

Chuck out those chewns, but it's **a bit cheesy.**

Have you got the skillz to pay the billz?

Do you think hip hop began with Jason Nevins? Hip Hop eJay is not going to win you street cred, but if you love kitsch it may be right up your street. The software itself will be familiar to anyone who has laid down a tune with previous releases Dance eJay and Rave eJay. The music itself is fantastically easy to produce and the interface lets you drag-and-drop rhythm and melody sections on to the eight-track synthesiser. All the samples are recorded at 96bpm (beats per minute) so your tune hangs together perfectly.

There's only one problem with the music, really: it's not hip hop. Funk eJay would have been a better name, as this software lets you produce some sleazy cod George Clinton tracks. But because it remains at 96bpm you won't be challenging Run DMC in the charts. The real reason the program has the

▼ **CREATE YOUR MASTERPIECE OVER EIGHT TRACKS**
▶ **THEN SCRATCH IT UP!**



hip hop moniker is because there is a cheesy toy included — your very own turntable with which to scratch up a storm. Place the mouse over the LP and run it back and forth against the trackball — hey! You're a DJ. It really is that easy. This is an instantly appealing toy, although sadly it remains appealing only for an instant.

PAUL TRUEMAN



PCW DETAILS

★★★★

Price £34.99

Contact 01923 495496

www.fasttrak.co.uk

System Requirements P66, 16Mb RAM, Windows 95/Windows NT, SVGA display, 2X CD-ROM, 16-bit sound card, 50Mb free hard-disk space

One Hundred Treasures from the British Library

Just a little dusty but packed full of **interesting info.**

The British Library is home to one of the finest collections of books and manuscripts in the world. It holds the earliest-dated printed book, the *Diamond Sutra*, the first Western book printed with movable type, as well as the *Gutenberg Bible*, the *Magna Carta* and others.

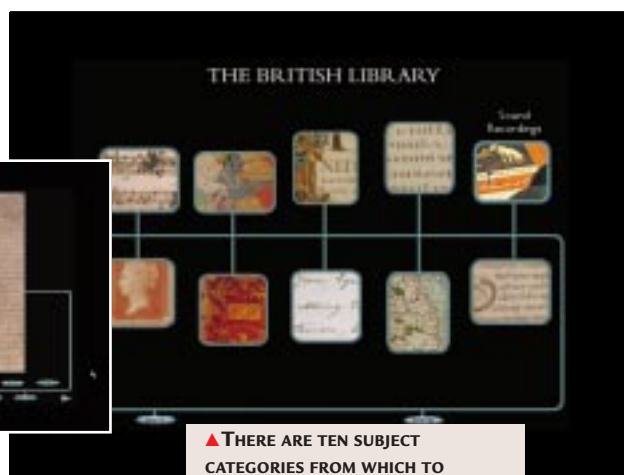
One hundred treasures from the library are highlighted. These are divided into ten categories: Music, Illuminated Manuscripts, Sacred Texts, Sound Recordings, Newspapers, Stamps, Printing and Bookbinding, English Literary Manuscripts, Maps and Views, and Historical Documents. Each category features ten items of some considerable variety from all periods, ranging from the *Lindisfarne Gospels* through a wartime forgery of the London *Evening Standard* newspaper, to Paul McCartney's scribbled song lyrics. Each is accompanied by an audio introduction, explanatory text and an



image you can enlarge to gain a better view of the detail. There are musical extracts, too, and a history of the British Library. Presented in the form of a slideshow, it takes you back to the three individual collections on which the library was built.

Treasures is all rather basic to look at and even the slideshow is a bit dull. Neither is there much information about each item. But, the CD is a nice souvenir.

PAUL BEGG



▲ **THERE ARE TEN SUBJECT CATEGORIES FROM WHICH TO CHOOSE**

◀ **A PIECE OF THE MAGNA CARTA WITH AN EXPLANATION**

PCW DETAILS

★★★★

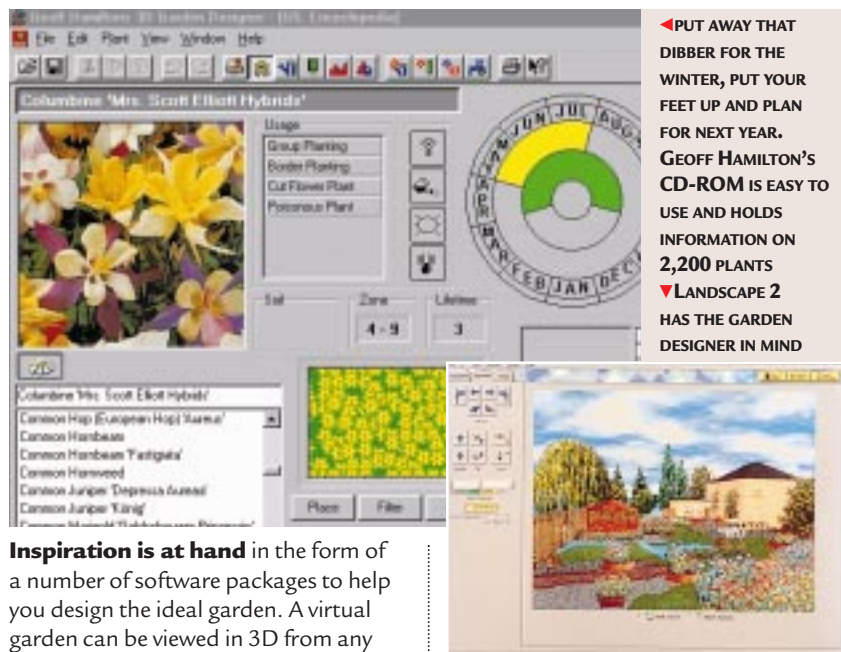
Price £14.95

Contact The British Library
0171 412 7704

System Requirements Windows 3.1 or later, 486DX-66 minimum, 8Mb RAM, SVGA graphics mouse, 4X CD-ROM drive.

Glorious gardens

No longer does 'the answer lie in the soil': design your garden and **plan your planting** on-screen.



Inspiration is at hand in the form of a number of software packages to help you design the ideal garden. A virtual garden can be viewed in 3D from any angle to visualise how a finished design would appear at various times of the day and throughout the seasons.

3D Garden Designer 3

With this CD you can design, plan and view your virtual garden in 3D as it would appear at certain times of the day, month or year. The database of 1,500 plants includes 1,200 full-colour photographs as well as cultural notes. The structures and hard features seem more limited and more difficult to customise accurately than in the other packages reviewed here. Its strength lies in its special effects, from birdsong to moving clouds, providing a visually interesting screen. Although the backdrops provide some perspective, it is not possible to customise them. The 3D visualisations are good, and the movie-camera feature allows you to film a virtual tour of your garden.

Geoff Hamilton's 3D Garden Designer

A horticultural delight, with 2,200 plants listed and a comprehensive guide to correct planting and care. There are helpful, animated video demonstrations for gardeners of all levels of expertise, which show some of the most commonly-used gardening techniques. Most of the physical features usually present in a garden are incorporated in the program to help you customise your

design. The program is straightforward to use and provides good 3D visualisations of what your virtual garden would look like throughout the year. The strength of Garden Designer lies in its excellent information and ease of use.

3D Landscape 2 Deluxe and Garden Encyclopaedia 2 Deluxe

This program has been produced with the garden *designer* in mind. It covers all aspects of creating your garden, taking you from the initial design process through to the various stages involved in its implementation. The program originated in the US so some of the terminology and plants may be unfamiliar to the British gardener, but it compensates for this by including local garden-centre phone numbers. The 2,200 plants on Landscape 2 Deluxe, combined with the extra 1,500 in the Garden Encyclopaedia, provides an extensive database. The plant selection guide is design-orientated in that it looks at a plant's shape as well as its cultural requirements as part of the design process. It is also possible to view how your garden would look throughout the year, and its likely growth pattern. Garden Encyclopaedia 2 Deluxe is easy to use and its features are extensive and easy to customise. The 3D representations are good and the virtual tour of the garden is a bonus.

◀ PUT AWAY THAT DIBBER FOR THE WINTER, PUT YOUR FEET UP AND PLAN FOR NEXT YEAR. GEOFF HAMILTON'S CD-ROM IS EASY TO USE AND HOLDS INFORMATION ON 2,200 PLANTS. ▼ LANDSCAPE 2 HAS THE GARDEN DESIGNER IN MIND

Complete Home Gardener

This program has no design function. It is purely a horticultural guide to the garden so it may be useful for those who just need to select plants and vegetables suited to their own garden conditions. It contains over 900 plants with cultural notes, but some are more familiar to the North American market. The video demonstrations of gardening techniques were helpful but some of the notes did not correspond to the adjacent pictures. A potentially interesting feature was the recipe section using garden fruits and vegetables. Unfortunately, though, it was marred by the use of canned vegetables in some of the recipes!

PENNY MURPHY

PCW DETAILS



3D Landscape 2 Deluxe and Garden Encyclopaedia 2

Price £44.95

Contact Fast Trak Software Publishing
01923 495496 www.fasttrak.co.uk

System Requirements

Windows 95/3.1, 486DX-66 (Pentium recommended), 8Mb RAM, SoundBlaster-compatible sound card



Geoff Hamilton's 3D Garden Designer

Price £19.95

Contact Global Software Publishing
01480 496666 www.gspltd.co.uk

System Requirements

Windows 95, P166 or higher, 16Mb RAM, SoundBlaster-compatible sound card



3D Garden Designer

Price £29.99

Contact Europress 01625 85933
www.europress.co.uk

System Requirements

Windows 95, 486DX-100 or higher (P100 recommended), 8Mb RAM, 2X CD-ROM (4X recommended), SoundBlaster-compatible sound card



Complete Home Gardener

Price US\$14.99

Contact Expert Software
www.expertsoftware.com

System Requirements

Windows 95/3.1, 386DX or higher, 4Mb RAM (8Mb recommended), 2X CD-ROM, SoundBlaster-compatible sound card