Soniccouture

Morpheus User Guide

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INSTALLING YOUR SONICCOUTURE PRODUCT

If you do not own Kontakt, you can install the free **Kontakt Player**

If you have an earlier (pre 5.6.8) version of Kontakt, click here

1. Open NI Kontakt in **standalone mode**.

2. In the *Libraries* tab, click **Manage Libraries**

3. Click **Launch Native Access** : Login or create an account if you don't have one.

4. Click **Add A Serial** (find it in your **SC account** with the product download).

5. Copy and paste the number in the box and click **Add Serial**

6. Navigate to the downloaded product folder and select it

7. Click **INSTALL** to complete the process.

NOTE: The login for **NI Native Access** is not the same as your login for the Soniccouture site. You must create an account with Native Instruments if you don't already have one.
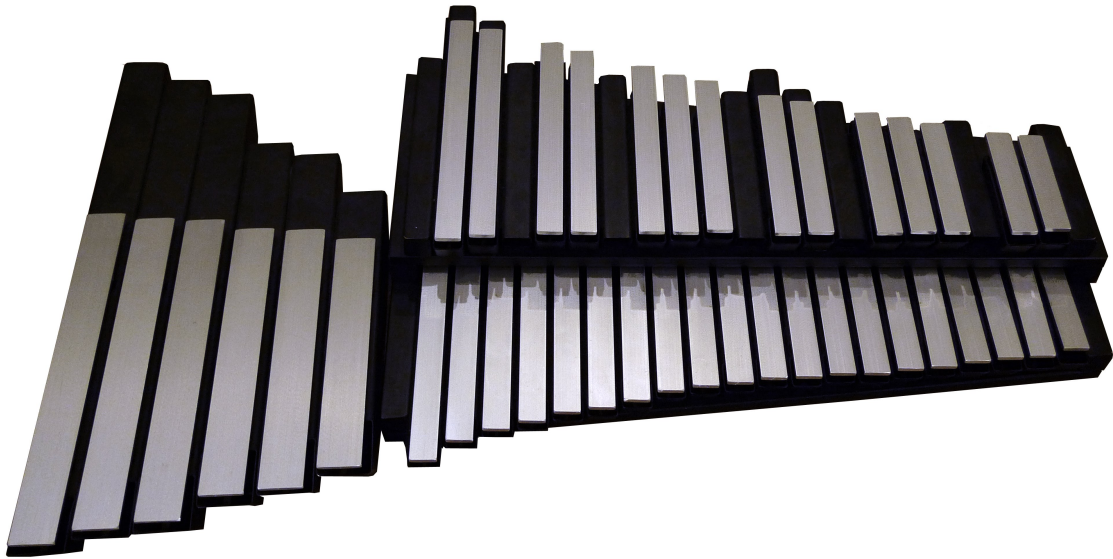
LIBRARY SPECIFICATIONS

- 1.6 GB Library
- 499 stereo samples
- 44.1 Khz, 24 bit Stereo Sampling
- 3 Velocity layers
- 3 - 4 Round Robin layers
- Kontakt Player / NKS compatible

THE MORPHEUS

The Morpheus is an aluminium percussion instrument made by the US company *Freenotes*. The instrument is modular, in that the keys can be rearranged in any order you like, as each metal bar is attached to its own tuned resonator. The sound of the instrument is extremely pure and calming, and is thus named after the ancient Greek god of dreams, "Morpheus".

There are several versions of the instrument, but we used the full chromatic model of two and a half octaves. We also recorded the "bass wing extension" which offers six notes ranging another octave below that of the main unit.

The keys are struck with custom mallets, also built by Freenotes, and ring freely afterwards. There is no damping mechanism.

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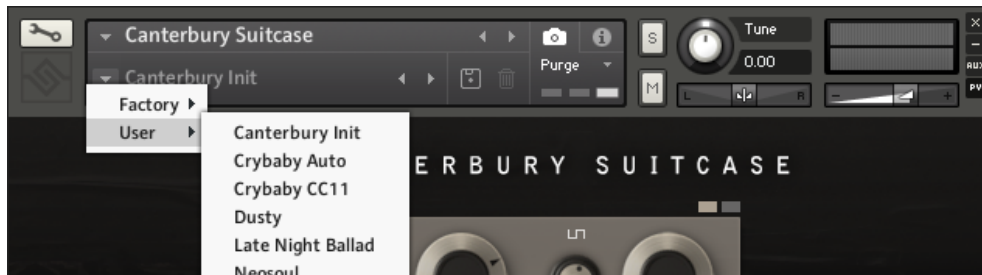
We sampled the instrument at three velocity levels, using three round robins (4 for the bass notes). We also looped some of the samples for use in sustained pad sounds.
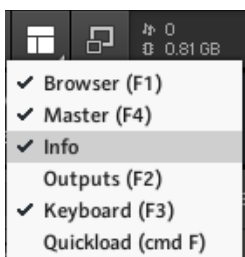
THE KONTAKT INSTRUMENT

SNAPSHOTS

Kontakt stores presets as Snapshots, and we've provided a selection of different Morpheus sounds here as Snapshots. To access them, click the 'camera' icon at the top of the Kontakt window and you'll see a drop down menu.   The Factory section contains the ones we've made, and your own will be stored in the User section.

BUILT-IN HELP

If you activate the Info pane in Kontakt, you can hover over any control in Canterbury Suitcase and a short note will appear in the Info pane at the bottom describing what that control does.

THE MAIN PANEL

CONTROLS

ENVELOPE SECTION

ATTACK: adjusts the speed of the start of the sound, from fast to slow

RELEASE: adjusts how long the sound rings after the key is released

VEL: adjusts the Velocity response - how loud the sound gets with a key press

LOOPED: Switches to a sample set with looped waves, for infinite sustain and pads

REVERSE: plays a reversed version of the sound

The Square switches flip between Amp envelope & Filter envelope

FILTER SECTION

CUTOFF: adjusts the frequency of the low-pas filter - lower values are darker

RES: emphasises the frequencies around the CUTOFF for a ringing sound

ENV: bipolar control of modulation of cutoff frequency by the Filter Envelope

VEL: bipolar control of modulation of cutoff by velocity (key pressure)

HPF: A high-pass filter - this removes bass frequencies and thins the sound.

Menu selects filter type.

THE MODULATION TABS

TREMOLO

This tab allows you to set up a tremolo effect that can be linked to various different parameters.

RATE: The speed of the modulation

AMP: Modulates volume for a classic vibraphone type effect

PAN: Wobbles the panning, for a classic EP auto-pan type effect

FILTER: Modulates filter cutoff, darkening and brightening

Waveshape: Select Sine, triangle, square and sawtooth tremolo shapes.

Arrow: Choose Absolute time sync, or sync to your DAWs clock

STRUM

On this page you can assign a controller (defaults to CC 1, the Mod Wheel) that will strum the entire Morpheus.

You can set the LOW and HIGH limits of the sweep.

The sweep takes its velocity from the last played MIDI note it received, however you can also control the Maximum velocity allowed and introduce some random velocity to the sweep.   The randomness is always subtracted from the starting velocity, and this helps give some realism to the glissando.

You can set the LOW and HIGH limits of the sweep.

STRUM: Performs the strumming action, right click to assign MIDI CC
RANDOM: introduces velocity variation
MUTE :   silences the keyboard note input, leaving only the strummer

ENSEMBLE

A layered detune effect that sounds particularly good on pads.

DRY: adjust the level of unaffected signal
WET: just level of ensemble signal
WIDTH: spreads the layers across the stereo field
TIME: adjusts the delay of the ensemble layers
PITCH: adjusts the amount of detuning between the layers

ACTIVE: Switches the effect on and off. Right-click to assign MIDI cc.

THE JAMMER PANEL

The play-notes icon at the top right enables or disables the Jammer.   Any Elements that are set to respond to the Jammer on the main Haunted Spaces panel will do so.   (If none are set to respond, the Jammer will have no effect.)

The five knobs along the top of the Jammer are global controls, these are:

MODE   This sets the type of arpeggiation used to create patterns.   The original Jammer mode is Random mode, but you can also choose Up, Down, or Up Down, for somewhat more traditional arpeggiator results.   This controls how the notes are selected from what you are holding down.

RATE controls the speed of the Jammer, this is always related to the tempo of Kontakt or the host sequencer.

LENGTH is an offset to the duration of the created notes.   In the centre position, the notes are created at the same duration set by the Rate knob, but using LENGTH you can make these longer or shorter.

VEL OFFSET adds or subtracts from the velocity of the notes created by the Jammer. Automating this can be useful for creating fades.

SWING adds some time to the offbeat notes to give a shuffle or swing feeling to the rhythm.

The next five sliders are controls for the generative part of Jammer, which are essentially randomising various aspects of note generation.   These are:
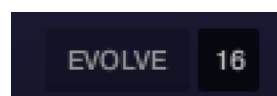
NOTE add random offsets to the pitches you give Jammer (are holding down). This is in semitones, so if it's set to "1" the Jammer will output notes plus or minus 1 from the notes you play, as well as the note you play.

OCTAVE add random octave offsets to the pitches created by Jammer. This control only ADDS octaves, it doesn't subtract octaves.

TIME add random changes to the timing of the Jammer, so that the result is less stable and rhythmic.

VELOCITY add random changes to the velocity of the output notes. This always uses the input velocity as a starting point, so if the VELOCITY range is small, it will just add small changes to your input velocity.

GAPS add random rests or silent beats into the Jammer sequence.

In the middle of this section you'll see a button titled "EVOLVE", with the number 16 to the right of it (by default).   EVOLVE mode means that the Jammer is working to generate new data constantly, the randomisers are always creating new patterns from your input notes.
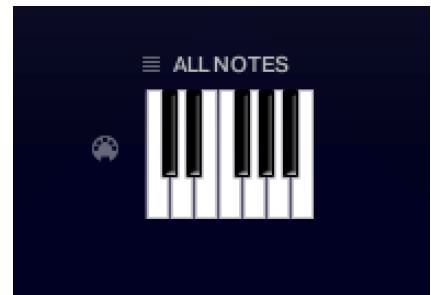
If you click on EVOLVE, the button changes to display LOOP.   Now the Jammer is repeating the pattern it most recently created. The length of this pattern is determined by the number to the right, so by default it repeats the last 16 generated 'notes'.

It's important to remember that the Jammer is not storing the 'notes' themselves, but rather the choice of, and offsets to, the input notes you play into it. So even in LOOP mode, the Jammer will output different notes depending on what notes you play. The pattern is stored, not the exact notes themselves. This means you can created quite complicated patterns, but play them with any chord or input notes.
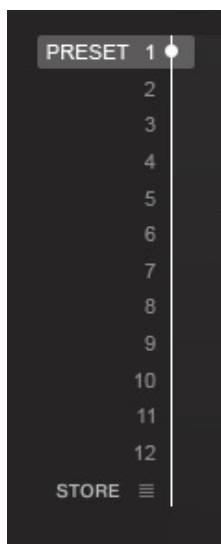
THE PITCH FILTER

Below the EVOLVE section is a small keyboard that represents a pitch filter. Here you can limit the output notes of the Jammer to a certain key or chord or any selection of notes you like.   At the top of the small keyboard is a drop down menu with some popular scales, but you can click on the keyboard directly to allow or disallow any pitch as you like.

You can also use the MIDI input switch on the left of the keyboard to LEARN a scale by playing it into the Jammer.
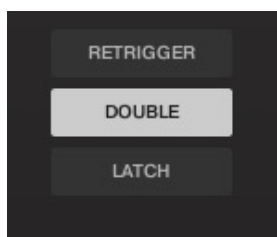
PRESET FADER AND STORE MENU

This fader on the left chooses between 12 presets.

The menu at the bottom lets you store the complete Jammer setup into any of the preset positions.

You can also copy and paste presets to different positions, or import / export patterns between various Soniccouture instruments that have the Jammer.

RETRIGGER will force the Jammer to start from the beginning after all notes are lifted (legato).

KEY LATCH will tell the Jammer to hold the current notes until new notes are received.

DOUBLE NOTES will trigger two notes on each step, as if you are playing with both hands simultaneously

CALDER

Inspired by mobile sculptures, in which a few objects float around in space, looking slightly different all the time and from different angles, CALDER is a structure that allows played notes to drift around in time.

The "space", or time through which the notes can drift is defined by the RATE and the GRID.   The GRID is the number of steps of note value RATE.

There are up to three "objects", turned on at the top with LOOP 1, LOOP 2, and LOOP 3. For each object, CALDER will choose one of the notes you are playing in real time. There is a graphic representation of each objects position in the grid at the very top.

Each of these objects has the same controls below it; WEIGHT, NOTE, VEL, and PAN.

WEIGHT controls the chance of this object moving in time from one repeat to the next. With zero weight, the object will move at each repeat, with maximum weight the object will not move.

NOTE introduces a random drifting of the pitch of each object away from the input note it has chosen.

VEL introduces a random velocity variation to each note as it repeats.

PAN introduces random pan variation to each note.

At the very bottom is the same PITCH FILTER we found in Jammer, which limits the output notes to a certain pitch set or scale. You can define your own pitches here, or choose from some common scales using the drop down menu.

At the bottom right are a few more controls:

ALIGN will move all objects to the first position on the grid.

RANDOM will move all objects to a random place on the grid.

LISTENER means that the timing of the grid is constant, no matter how many notes you are holding down as input.   This may seem logical, but in the first incarnation of the CALDER script in some early Soniccouture instruments it wasn't the case… CALDER calculated the timing faster as more notes were held down.   Although this was a mistake, it still sounded quite interesting, so it's still available if you want to use that mode.

If you turn on LISTENER you also have the option to LATCH incoming notes.

CHORD MUTATION

CHORD MUTATION takes it's inspiration from a piece called *Triadic Memories*, in which chords are slowly repeated and transformed very gradually over a ninety minute period.

CHORD MUTATION is different from the first two Generative Tools in that aside from the starting point (the input chord), it's not affected by notes you're playing in real time. After you hit PLAY, CHORD MUTATION goes on it's own… forever.   If you save the NKI, it will store the current position of the chord, so you could make an infinite version of *Triadic Memories* of your own.

To give it an input chord, hit RECORD CHORD.   Play a chord, as soon as all keys are released, the chord is captured.   The chord can be up to 32 notes.

When you hit PLAY, this chord is arpeggiated, and defaults to the LENGTH of the number of notes in the chord.   Typically you would then increase the LENGTH parameter at teh bottom right to give the mutation some breathing space, but you don't have to.

There are three aspects of the chord that are altered over time:

SHUFFLE   This alters the order of the notes, and shuffles their velocities as well.

DRIFT   This alters the position of the notes in time.

MUTATE   This alters the pitches of the chord.

There is a knob for each of these.   If the knob is set to zero, then that aspect will not change.   If it is set to 1, it will change on each repetition of the chord. If it is set to 5, it will change on the 5th repetition of the chord.

You can FORCE any of those alterations at any moment using the FORCE buttons.

RESET CHORD will set the chord back to how you first recorded it.
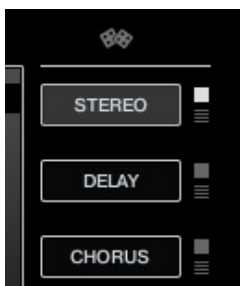
PLAY CHORD will play the current chord as a whole.

UPPER and LOWER, at the bottom right, limit the note mutation.   It will reflect off those boundaries.

Once again, we have the PITCH FILTER at the bottom, which limits the output notes to a certain pitch set or scale.   You can define your own pitches here, or choose from some common scales using the drop down menu.

THE EFFECTS PANEL

The Effects panel lets you configure up to six INSERT effects however you like, as well as a SPACE convolution reverb on the right.
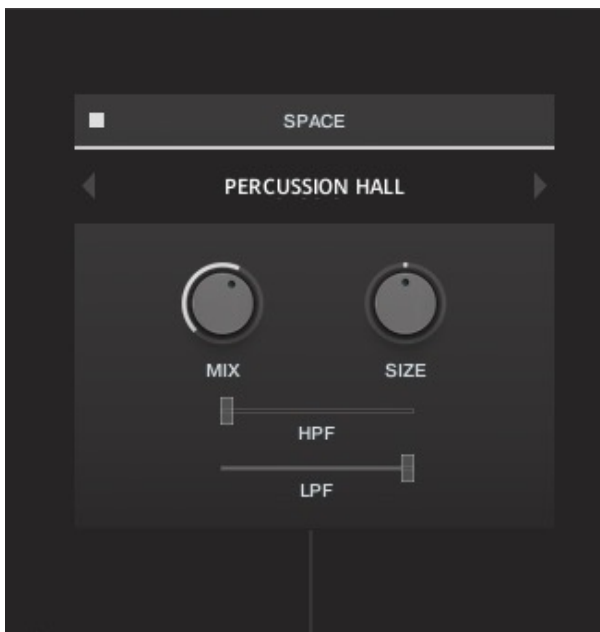

 The INSERT effects are selected by the large button displaying their name, and the selected insert's controls will appear to it's left.   The small square switch to the select button's right turns the effect on or off, and the menu below that let's you choose a different type of effect.

INSERT effects are in order of top to bottom. If you select an existing effect with the menu, the POSITION of those inserts will be swapped.

The small dice at the top of the INSERT list will randomize all the effect selections.

THE SPACE PROCESSOR

On the right hand side of the panel is our custom convolution based reverb processor SPACE.

Click the arrows or the name in the middle to load one of our preset impulse responses. Conventional halls or rooms are at the top of the list, vintage reverbs in the middle, and crazy spatial effects towards the end. Bear in mind that the longer the reverb time the higher your CPU meter will go.

SUPPORT

If you have any problems or questions relating to the use of this product, please feel free to contact us. You can email us at :

http://www.soniccouture.com/en/support/

We will always endeavour to reply to any enquiry within 24 hours. We are based in the UK, so please bear in mind differences in time zones.

While you are waiting, you will find lots of answers to common questions in our FAQ.

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