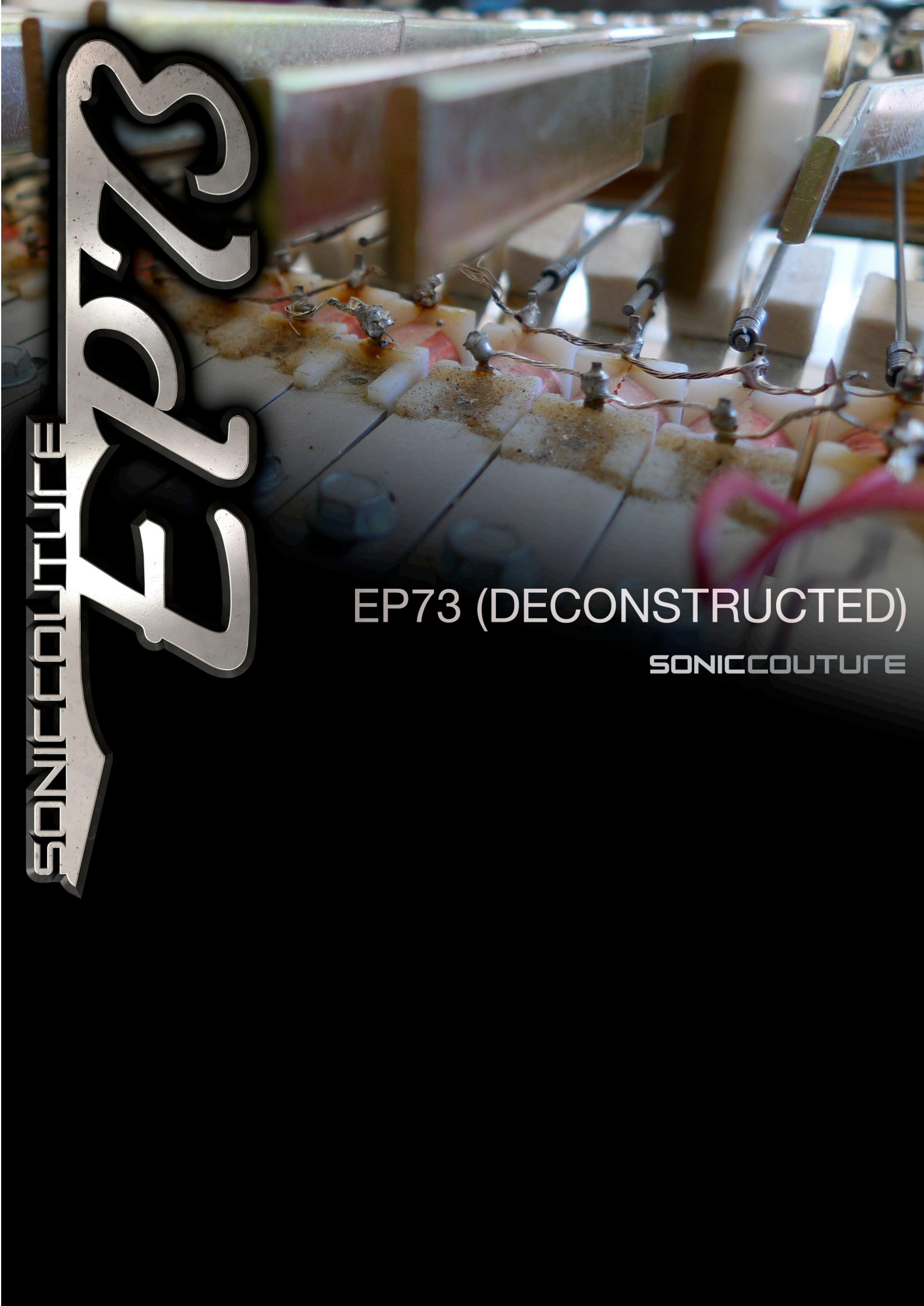


EP73 (DECONSTRUCTED)

SONICCOUTURE

SONICCOUTURE

EP73 DECONSTRUCTED

CONTENTS :

SONICCOUTURE

INSTALLATION

This library requires Kontakt 5 or later.

If you do not own Kontakt, you will need to download and install the free Kontakt player which you can do here ; Kontakt Player Download Link

TO ADD THE LIBRARY AND AUTHORIZE IN KONTAKT

1. Make sure you have updated Kontakt 5 to the latest version in NI service Center.

2. Then, start Kontakt or Kontakt Player in standalone mode (ie. not as a plug-in). Then open the Browser on the left (the folder Icon at the top).

3. In the Libraries tab at the top of the browser go to "Add Library"

4. Click and use the dialogue window to navigate to and point Kontakt to the location of the *EP73 Deconstructed > EP73 Library* folder. This will add it to the Kontakt Library list AND to the Service Center.

5. If Kontakt asks you to Activate the library, the *NI Service Center* program will launch and you will need your serial number to authorize *EP73*. (you can find your serial number in your soniccouture account, next to the product download.)

6. If Kontakt *doesn't* ask you to authorize, you can force it to by clicking the little "Activate" button in the upper right corner of our *EP73* Library graphic, in the Browser/Libraries list. It will then prompt you to launch the Service Center.

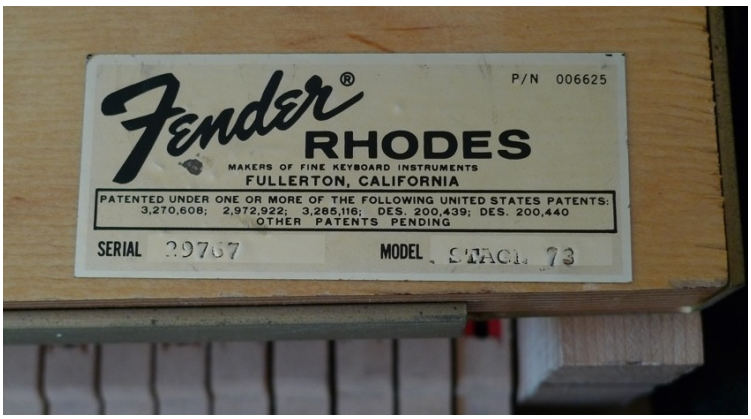
After authorization, you should restart Kontakt.

If you experience any problems, you will probably find the answer on our FAQ page.

DECONSTRUCTING A RHODES

After the success of our Xtended Piano project, we decided to explore this concept with another instrument; the ever-popular Fender Rhodes. We decided to try and find the oldest instrument we could lay our hands on, and found ourselves purchasing a 1973 Stage 73 Mk1 model.

As this is a very early Mk1, there are some differences between it and the MkII that are not so defined between the later models (which tended to be largely cosmetic). These earlier Mk1s tend to sound a little darker, ever so slightly softer, and definitely more “vintage” sounding. Our Mk1 has the old wooden hammer/key design, which a lot of players still lust after.



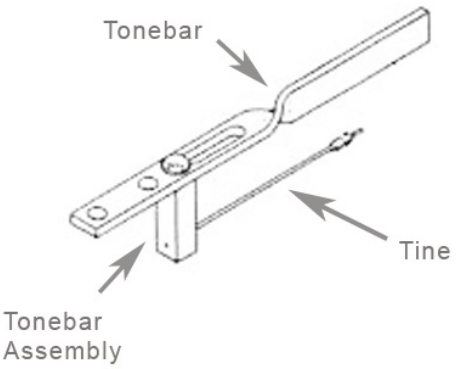
The instrument we bought needed a fair amount of work before it was playable, so the first job was to replace all the dampers and hammers, as well as a couple of pickups. Once this was done, we started exploring.

When the cover is removed, you can see all the tonebars like this:

The entire harp can be raised up exposing the tines and pickups beneath:

The hammers would usually strike the tine portion of the Rhodes “tuning fork” system. The tine vibrates in front of a magnetic pickup (the red coils in this photo), but when raised vertically like this the hammers don’t reach the tines.

The tuning fork assembly is basically constructed of three parts: the “tine” (which is struck by the hammer), the tonebar (which resonates together with the tine) and the assembly base that hold the two together.



EXTENDED TECHNIQUES

On of the first things we tried doing was bowing the tines. This proved a little bit more difficult than bowing the piano since the tines are so short and stiff. It’s difficult to get enough friction to keep them resonating, so we had to make longer and thicker bows than we used on the grand piano. Once we got this working, however, it gave us a really nice, slightly spooky, sustained sample.

Plucking the tines with a guitar pick was the next ‘obvious’ technique, and this gave a really nice gentle sound, a bit like a metal harpsichord. (As usual, Soniccouture prefer *Jim Dunlop™ USA Nylon* picks when plucking instruments that are not made to be plucked.)

Next we found ourselves a tiny steel jeweller's hammer, and started hitting the tuning fork assembly in various different places. We ended up sampling the steel mallet hitting the tine, the tonebar, and the base of the assembly.

As well as this, we banged and beat the case, bounced marbles down the tonebars, and committed various acts of abuse to make a collection of special effects that wouldn't be pitched, but could perhaps be useful.

So in the end we ended up with four complete sets of samples: Bowed Tines, Plucked Tines, Mallet Tines, and Special FX.

But there was still one thing missing; the keyboard...

RETRACTED TECHNIQUES

So if we were going to sample the keyboard of the Rhodes, what signal should we record?

In addition to the line out of the instrument, we placed a microphone above the tonebar to capture the *acoustic* sound of the Rhodes (as well as lots of hammer noise), and we used a contact mic to capture a slightly different, *physical* kind of signal from the instrument, rather than magnetic.

This gave us three mono channels simultaneously, the standard *Line Out*, the *Microphone*, and the *Contact Mic*.

In truth, many Rhodes players used to mic the tonebars during recording sessions since it added a physical aspect to the sound (and was probably closer to what they heard themselves) than simply using the line out. They probably didn't get the mic quite as close to each tine as we did, but the Mic signal definitely provides that acoustic "clunk" of the Rhodes if you need it.

KONTAKT INSTRUMENTS

EP73 (Deconstructed) consists of five main instruments: *Stage 73 Bowed, Stage 73 Keyboard, Stage 73 Mallets, Stage 73 Plucked,* and *Stage 73 SFX*. On the top level of your Instruments folder you'll find one of each of these. In the Electric Piano Presets and Sound Design Presets folders you'll find about a hundred more Instruments, but all of them are based on one of these five main types.

In the Library Browser, the Instrument window appears like this:

Note that if you are inside a subfolder, like *Sound Design*, you can go back to up a level by double-clicking on the folder's title at the top.

STAGE 73 KEYBOARD

The Stage 73 Keyboard instrument is the “natural” Rhodes, i.e. we sampled this one using the Rhodes’ own keyboard.

You can see at the bottom there are three tabs; *Options*, *Instrument*, and *Effects*. The Options page provides some preferences, and the Effects page is obviously for the effects, but the Instrument page is where most of the action is. You will find these three tabs in all EP73 presets, although the content of the Options and Instrument page varies somewhat depending on the instrument type.

Across the top of the Instrument panel for Stage 73 Keyboard you see three large knobs. These are the levels for the three main signals we sampled; *Line Out*, *Microphone*, and *Contact Mic*. The title above the knobs functions as an on/off switch for that channel, so you can quickly hear the presets with or without that channel and not need to change the level.

The *Line Out* is the normal Rhodes signal that would usually be routed to a speaker. The *Microphone* is the signal from a microphone placed above the tonebars, and the *Contact Mic* was attached directly to the tonebar. These are obviously unusual signals and are usually best mixed together with the *Line Out*, although you can of course adjust them however you like.

Below the three main knobs you can see some more controls. From left to right : Tremolo depth, the Filter section, the Envelope section, and the Key Off level.

The Tremolo depth is exactly that, the depth of an LFO to the level of the signal, which we call tremolo (although on some old electric pianos it was sometimes called vibrato). The Rhodes we sampled doesn't actually have Tremolo, but this is a very typical and suitable effect.

THE FILTER SECTION

The filter section is identical in all presets in EP73.

In the Filter section you have control of the Frequency of the cutoff, the Resonance, the FEG (Filter Envelope Generator depth), and the Velocity to the filter cutoff.

Note that FEG and VEL are bi-directional, so to have no they are at zero when at 12 o'clock.

THE ENVELOPE SECTION

The envelope section is identical in all presets in EP73.

Here we find Attack, Decay, Sustain, and Release, your standard ADSR envelope for the sound. By default, this is adjusting your **Amplitude** envelope.

To the right of those there is a small LED called *FEG*, this switches the controls to the Attack, Decay, Sustain, and Release of the **Filter** envelope.

> ***TIP:*** *With all knobs you can Command-Click (or Control-click in Windows) to instantly set a knob back to it's "default" position.*

On the far right, we find the *Key Off* knob. This adjusts the level of the noise the dampers make when you release a key. (It's a slight clunk as you hear the note being damped.)

This is very nice for realism, but if be aware that this will always happen at the exact time you release a note, so if you're making a preset that has a long envelope release time, this might be inappropriate.

EDITING EACH CHANNEL

To the right of the three large level knobs you can see a small LED called Edit. This opens up a window with several options for each channel. When Edit is on, some more smaller knobs appear beneath the large knobs.

The first of these is Tremolo Speed, which adjust the rate of Tremolo.

Then there are slightly different controls for each of the main signals. You can see above that for the Microphone signal there is and LPF (Low Pass Filter), and an HPF (High Pass Filter). For the Line Out and Contact Mic there is a SAT (Saturation level) and an HPF (High Pass Filter).

These small knobs vary a little bit from one instrument to the next, depending on what we thought was most useful for each signal. But they will always be one of HPF, LPF, Saturation, or Pan.

TIP: *When the Kontakt Info pane is activated, you can hover your mouse over any control to get information about its function*

THE OPTIONS TAB

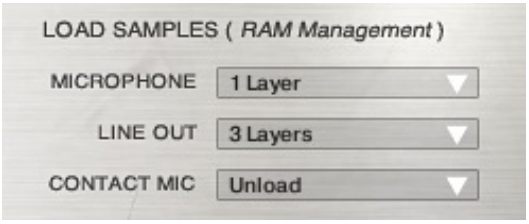
The Options tab allows you to set up some performance preferences for the instrument. This varies slightly for each instrument type.

At the top of this tab we have the Velocity Setup area. Here you can control the velocity SENSITIVITY, which is the amount of velocity to volume, and the CURVE of the velocity response. Below the graphic representation of the curve are two controls for minimum and maximum velocity output. Usually you would leave this at 1 and 127, but you could use this to limit the output range of the velocity. For example, if you lowered the maximum to 100, you wouldn't be able to hit the very loud samples of the Rhodes, no matter how hard you hit your keyboard.

RAM MANAGEMENT

In the bottom half of the panel there are three sections. On the far left we have the *RAM Management* section. EP73 puts a lot of sample data at your disposal, but you may not need all of this detail, especially if your computer has limited RAM resources available. In this section you can set each of the Stage 73 Keyboard channels (the big knobs on the main page) to use either *1 Layer*, *3 Layers* (round robin), or to be completely off (*Unload*).

Remember that if you Unload a sample set, you won't be able to hear it, no matter what the setting of the Level knob on the Instrument tab.



In this example, the Microphone channel is set to use just one Layer, the Line Out is set to use 3 Layers (round robin), and the Contact Mic is off.

PEDAL

The pedal section is in the middle lower half of the Options tab. These are functions related to the sustain pedal behaviour of the instrument. There are two main controls here:

RESONANCE. When you hold down the sustain pedal on a piano, and play a note, it sounds very different from when you play the same note with the sustain pedal up. This is because of sympathetic resonance between the strings. The same is true of a Fender Rhodes, when the sustain pedal is down you hear a lot of sympathetic resonance in the harp that you don't hear when the sustain pedal is up.

We've modeled the sympathetic harp RESONANCE with this knob. When it's off (at zero) the effect is bypassed, otherwise the RESONANCE knob sets the amount of sympathetic resonance of the Rhodes harp.

WARNING!

PEDAL RESONANCE *is extremely demanding on your CPU, so be aware of this when you bring it up. If you get crackles or distortion of some sort when using* RESONANCE *you may need to either increase the playback latency of your system or else just turn it off again. It's off by default in all our presets because of this, so only use it if your computer is up to the task.*

The pedal also makes a bit of a clunky noise as it goes up and down. This level is controlled with the NOISE knob in the Pedal section. This doesn't require much CPU at all, so don't worry about that.

The entire PEDAL system can be turned on or off with the LED above it.

NOISE

The Rhodes Line Out generates a certain amount of noise, basically RF buzz. You can turn this on if you like with the Noise LED and adjust it's volume with the knob. It's not a very pleasant noise, but it's there for realism if you want it.

There are some slightly different Options in the other main Instrument types, which we'll get to when we cover those Instruments a bit later.

TIP: *Remember that all knobs in our Instruments can be automated, either by MIDI or by host automation. Often the quickest way to automate a knob is to right-click on it and move the controller that you want to assign to that knob.*

THE EFFECTS TAB

The effects tab is identical in all the EP73 Presets.

Here you'll find a great many effects that you can adjust on the preset.

The top half of the panel has six tab switches for AUTO-WAH, AUTO-PAN, CHORUS, PHASER, DELAY, and REVERB. When you click on the coloured tab, you select the controls for each of those.

In the bottom half you have controls for a COMPRESSOR, a CABINET (loudspeaker) selection, an EQUALISER, and TAPE DRIVE.

The effects are primarily insert effects except for the DELAY and REVERB, which are send effects. The order of these effects is as follows:

Let's start with the tab effects.

All effects have an LED at the far right which turn it on or off.

AUTO WAH

AUTO-WAH is a modulated filter effect.

FREQUENCY sets the frequency around which the modulation occurs. Use it to find the modulation sweet spot. Resonance controls the filter resonance to emphasize the wah-wah effect. Rate controls the modulation rate in Hz when the Sync button is off and in tempo-synced note divisions when the Sync button is on.

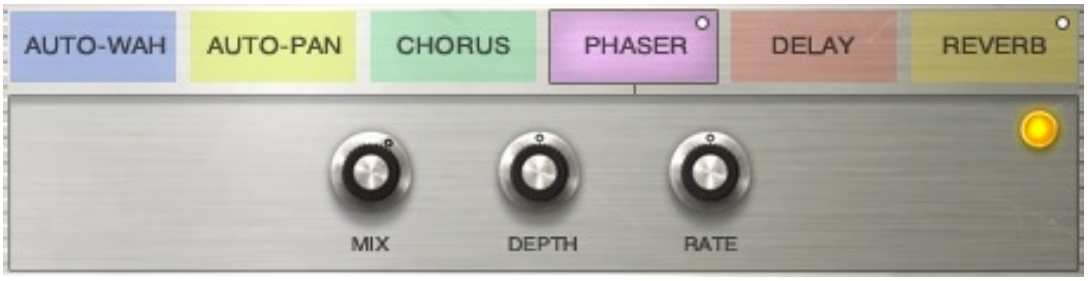
AUTO PAN

AUTO-PAN has DEPTH and RATE controls to set the LFO amount and speed of pan modulation. Here too, the rate can be set in Hz or tempo-synced note divisions by using the SYNC button on the far right bottom.

CHORUS

The CHORUS is a standard chorus fattening effect, and gives you three controls. MIX adjusts the level, DEPTH and RATE control the amount and speed of the modulation.

PHASER



The PHASER is another famous effect, especially in 70s music, in which the phase of the sound is varied over time to create a liquid, swirling effect. Here you can again adjust the MIX level, the DEPTH and RATE of the effect.

DELAY

An effect which creates echoes of the original sound. MIX adjust the level of the effect. TIME is either in milliseconds or in 16th notes, depending on the SYNC button on the far right. FEEDBACK creates cascading copies of the delay, as it feeds back into itself.

REVERB

The REVERB is based around Kontakt's convolution processor, and can provide both realistic spatial reverberation of natural spaces, or more creative, FX-style textures and effects.

Choose an impulse response from the drop-down menu. The top half of the list features natural spaces, the lower half are the special effects.

You can vary the amount of reverb applied using the MIX knob. The SIZE knob can increase or decrease the default size of the apparent reverb by lengthening or shortening the impulse response.

OUTPUT EFFECTS

On the bottom of the Effects tab you have four more effect sections. From left to right these are:

COMPRESSOR

This controls the amount of compression, and is bypassed when turned all the way to the left. When you adjust this knob you are actually adjusting the *threshold* of the compressor. If you hold down ALT or OPTION on your keyboard, you can adjust the *ratio* of the compressor as well.

CABINET

Choose from a drop down menu of various loudspeaker cabinets. You can also adjust the BASS and TREBLE response of the cabinet. The entire section is turned on or off with it's own LED.

EQUALISER

This is a three band EQ (the new Solid Gold EQ in Kontakt 5). Here you adjust the *gain* of three bands, LOW, MID, and HIGH.

If you hold down ALT or OPTION on your keyboard you can adjust the *frequency* of those bands.

TAPE DRIVE

This is a control for the new Tape Saturator effect in Kontakt 5. The knob adjusts the *gain* of the drive.

If you hold down ALT or OPTION on your keyboard you can adjust the *warmth* of the effect.

STAGE 73 BOWED

STAGE 73 BOWED is an instrument made by bowing the tines of the Rhodes piano. There are two main knobs on the top of the main Instrument tab, which provide level controls for the BOWED TINE, and the BOW NOISE itself. The titles of those large knobs also function as on/off buttons for that channel.

In the bottom half of the screen you see controls for TREMOLO, FILTER, and ENVELOPE (There are no KEY-OFF samples when you use Bowed Rhodes). These are the same controls as found in the keyboard instrument. The TREMOLO is the depth of Tremolo. The Filter controls are explained here. The Envelope controls explained here.

When the EDIT LED is enabled, some more controls appear, like this:

Now you can adjust the PAN and the HPF (High Pass Filter) of either of the main two channels with the knobs directly below them. On the far left you can adjust the TREMOLO SPEED.

You'll also notice a new LED called LAYER.

When LAYER is turned on the Bowed samples are duplicated, and you can DETUNE them, resulting in a thicker sound. The WIDTH knob spreads the two LAYERs apart in the stereo field.

THE OPTIONS TAB

The Options tab in Stage 73 Bowed is similar to the one in Stage 73 Keyboard (covered here), except that there is no RAM Management section. (Bowed Rhodes doesn't require very much RAM.)

Instead, in the lower left corner you'll see a GLISSANDO section.

GLISSANDO

The GLISSANDO effect is a continuous pitch shifting of the sound. It is turned on or off with the LED at the top left.

The AMOUNT knob controls the direction, as well as the amount, of pitch shift. When it's at 12 o'clock, there is no pitch shifting. When it's turned higher the pitch glides UP, when it's turned lower, the pitch glides DOWN.

The TIME control adjust the speed of the glissando effect.

THE EFFECTS TAB

The Effects tab in Stage 73 Bowed is identical to all presets in EP73. The Effects panel is covered in detail here.

STAGE 73 MALLETS

Stage 73 Mallets is an instrument made using a tiny steel hammer. We hit three different places on the Rhodes tuning fork to get slightly different metallic sounds. The three main knobs on this panel allow you to adjust the level of the three different types of sound. These are the TINE itself, the TONEBAR, and the ASSEMBLY (the base of the assembly bracket).

The titles above these knobs also function as switches, allowing you to turn the channel on or off without adjusting it's level.

Below the three main knobs you can see some more controls. These are, from left to right: Tremolo depth, the Filter section, the Envelope section, and the Key Off level. These are identical to the Stage 73 Keyboard instrument, and are covered here.

When you click on the EDIT LED to the far right of the large knobs, you open a window that allows you to edit a few extra parameters. These include the TREMOLO SPEED, and a PAN and HPF (High Pass Filter) for each of the three channels.

THE OPTIONS TAB

The Options tab in Stage 73 Mallets includes a RAM Management section, and is identical to the Stage 73 Keyboard Options. Those are covered here.

THE EFFECTS TAB

The Effects tab in Stage 73 Mallets is identical to all presets in EP73. The Effects panel is covered in detail here.

STAGE 73 PLUCKED

Stage 73 Plucked is an instrument made by plucking the Rhodes' tines with a guitar pick. This only has one channel, but for consistency we left the LEVEL knob in the middle of the Instrument tab, as see above.

The lower part of the Instrument tab includes TREMOLO, a FILTER section, an ENVELOPE section, and KEY OFF Level. These controls are identical to the Stage 73 Keyboard version, the full explanation of which can be found here.

When you click the EDIT button beside the level knob you open up some extra controls, like this:

These include a knob for the TREMOLO SPEED (far left), and a SATURATION and HPF (High Pass Filter). It opens up a LAYER switch and some controls for that.

When LAYER is turned on the plucked samples are duplicated, and you can DETUNE them, resulting in a thicker sound. The WIDTH knob spreads the two LAYERs apart in the stereo field.

THE OPTIONS TAB

At the top of the Stage 73 Plucked Options tab we have the VELOCITY SETUP, and down below we have a STRUMMER, a PEDAL section, a PLUCK section, and a NOISE section.

The VELOCITY, PEDAL, and NOISE sections are identical to those in the Stage 73 Keyboard Options, and are explained here.

There are two unique options in Stage 73 Plucked however.

First, on the far left we have the STRUMMER.

The STRUMMER allows you to strum a chord using a MIDI controller, such as the Mod Wheel. It's set to use the ModWheel by default, so if you hold down a chord, and move the ModWheel you should hear the notes you're holding down strummed across a wider range than you are holding (the full range of the instrument).

It's turned on and off with the LED at the top left. The MIDI CC you want to strum with can be altered in the little number box. The STRUM knob simply mimics the behaviour of the strum controller. The RANDOM knob introduces some random offsets to the velocity of the notes generated by the STRUMMER (starting from the velocity of the notes you played).

There are also two LEDs: MUTE INPUT stops the MIDI you're playing from being throughput to the instrument, so that you only hear the output of the STRUMMER. INVERT turns the controller upside down, so that if the ModWheel was strumming from bottom to top, you could make it strum from top to bottom.

PLUCK LATENCY

We also have one other unique option in the Stage 73 Plucked instrument, which is control over the Pluck Latency. When you pluck an instrument (be it a guitar or anything else) there is typically some noise from the plectrum before the string actually begins sounding. However, if you edit the sample when the string starts sounding, it generally sounds a bit artificial, a bit too percussive. If you edit the sample at the point at which the plectrum starts scraping, the onset of the sound tends to be a bit late, but more realistic.

The Pluck Latency gives you some control over this. When it's set to 0 ms, the attack is right at the transient, which is slightly percussive. As you bring it up, you are introducing some latency, but starting the sample earlier, before the transient, to allow some of the plectrum noise through.

This sounds nicer, but will be late. So if you use the Pluck Latency, it's often best to shift your MIDI tracks earlier in your sequence by the same amount of time as the latency... then they will be in time with your other instruments, but have the full natural pluck sound.

THE EFFECTS TAB

The Effects tab in Stage 73 Plucked is identical to all presets in EP73. The Effects panel is covered in detail here.

STAGE 73 SFX

Stage 73 SFX is a bit different from the other instruments in this collection. It consists of 127 different special effects, a different one on each MIDI key, made by hitting, rubbing, and just generally abusing the Rhodes in some way or another. (Some of these effects are looped and some are not. The notes on the keyboard display in red are those that are looped.)

Since each key is a different effect, it's not generally intended to be used as a chromatic musical instrument, although as we'll see there are some situations in which it can be.

In the middle of the upper layer we have the big knob for LEVEL. But to the right of that you'll see a panel which has two LED switches: EDIT SINGLE, and FOCUS.

When EDIT SINGLE is enabled, you are only editing the last note you played (It's name is displayed in the window beside the word "KEY".) So you if you adjust the attack time on C3, you won't be changing the attack time on any of the other notes (SFX).

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If you turn this off, the text changes to EDIT ALL, and in that case you are editing all the sounds at once. This is very handy as well of course, especially if you want to reset everything to a natural starting point (remember Command/Control Click!).

The FOCUS button is rather special. When the FOCUS button is turned on, the last sound effect you played is spread across the entire keyboard and centred on middle C.

If you have the Keyboard display enabled, it will turn green, like this:

This helps remind you you're in FOCUS mode. While in FOCUS mode you play a single sound effect as if it were an instrument. You can save an Instrument in FOCUS mode.

The controls below are almost the same as in the Stage 73 Keyboard, but can be set differently for each SFX if not in FOCUS mode. The one control that's different for Stage 73 SFX is the TUNE knob in the bottom right. The rest of them are explained here.

The TUNE knob is a pitch control.

THE OPTIONS TAB

The Options tab of Stage 73 SFX has the Velocity section at the top, which is the same as in other instruments and explained here.

Below that there are two switches in a panel called KEYZONES.

The SHUFFLE switch randomizes the order (layout) of the different SFX samples on the keyboard. This is fun for exploring, since you quickly will have a completely different set of samples under your fingers.

RESET sets the keyboard mapping back to it's original state.

Neither SHUFFLE nor RESET are audible if the instrument is in FOCUS mode, since while in FOCUS mode only one sample is mapped across the entire keyboard.

THE EFFECTS TAB

The Effects tab in Stage 73 Plucked is identical to all presets in EP73. The Effects panel is covered in detail here.

TECHNICAL DATA

EP73 Deconstructed was built entirely of recordings of a 1973 Fender Rhodes Mk1 Stage 73.

It was recorded at 44.1 kHz, 24 bit, all channels in mono.

It contains over 13,700 samples and has a compressed size of approximately 8.5 GB.

SUPPORT

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

customerservices@soniccouture.com

or we have a support forum within the KVR Audio community, which can be found here :

Soniccouture Support Forum

We will always endeavour to reply to any enquiry within 12 hours, but do bear in mind the differences in time zones, so please be patient!

E.U.L.A.

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