

USER MANUAL

THE CUATRO

Special Series

Guareschi
CREATIVE TOOLS

INTRODUCTION

Thank you for acquiring The Cuatro Special Series.

These are the newest edition of virtual instruments for Kontakt. Recorded in my new studio in Europe, it features many advancements in recording gear, recording technique, and scripting. The result is an ultra-defined and realistic instrument with flexible controls to tailor the sound.

The Cuatro is a traditional instrument from Venezuela. It has four strings and a small shaped guitar body size. The tuning from top to bottom: A-D-F#-B. The B (1st string) is tuned and octaved down, creating inversions of the chords and nicely filling the middle register of any arrangement.



It was sampled using a beautiful long-neck cuatro (17 frets) that I bought in Barquisimeto, Venezuela. I've been using it for more than 15 years in many movie scores, Tv series, and music productions.

The cuatro was meticulously sampled to capture its authentic timbre. Each note has four dynamics with 4 RR per dynamic, a total of 16 samples per note.

Besides chords, palm mutes, and many other articulations, I have created additional modes: Octave, Double Cuatro, and Andean Tuning. These modes will give you a fresh palette for creating big and rich sounding arrangements for ensembles or solo cuatro pieces.

Custom-made equipment was used for this presentation. Krystalos Audio technology was present in all the chains of the recording process. I have designed Krystalos Audio optimizers to produce an organic and detailed analog sound with the latest digital equipment.

The Cuatro will give your music a new approach and inspire you to create beautiful harmonic progressions and melodies. Have fun!

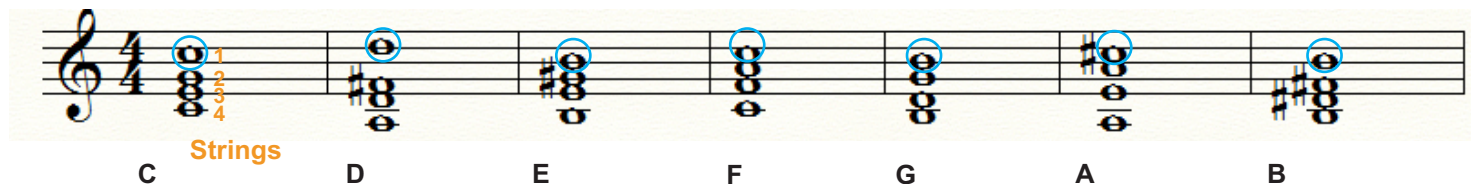
Guillermo Guareschi

THE CUATRO IDIOMATIC CHORDS

Here are some idiomatic chords voicings of the cuatro. If you follow the voice spacings, your cuatro arrangements and performance will sound more idiomatic and realistic.

MAJOR CHORDS

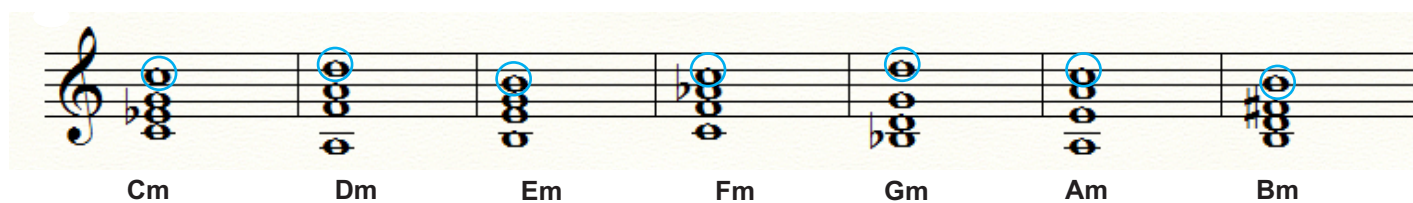
○ Sounds an octave lower



C D E F G A B

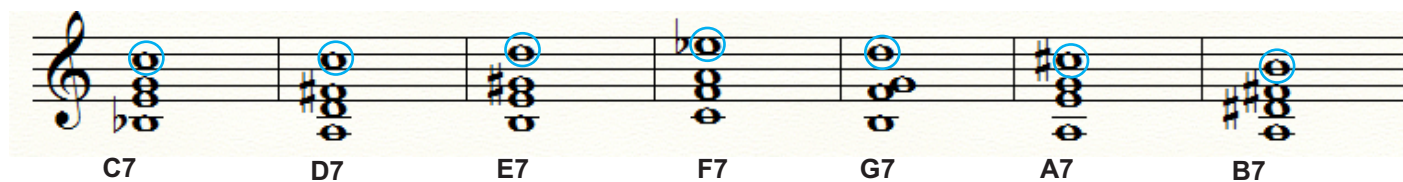
Strings

MINOR CHORDS



Cm Dm Em Fm Gm Am Bm

DOMINANT CHORDS

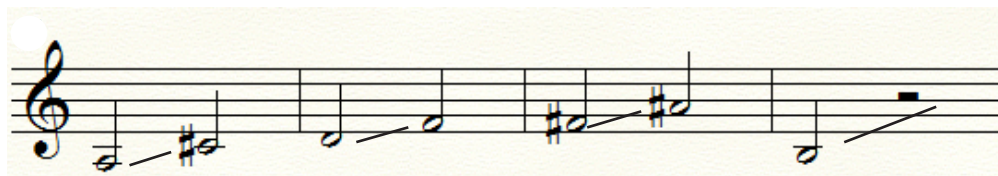


C7 D7 E7 F7 G7 A7 B7

INSTRUMENT RANGE



STRINGS RANGE (1st position)



STRING 4

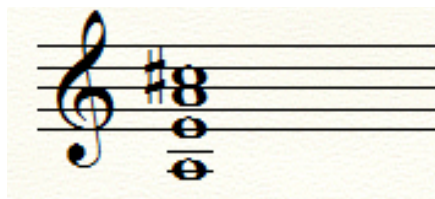
STRING 3

STRING 2

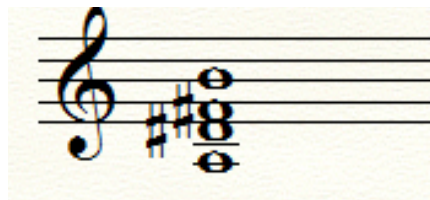
STRING 1

To voice authentic cuatro chords on the keyboard it helps to be aware of the open strings and their register in 1st position. If you want to play a triad, for example, A major (A/C#/E), you have to find the chord notes on each string. On string 4 we can play note A. On string 3 there is only the option to play the E. On string 2 the A again is available, and on string 4, the C#. The actual pitch of the C# will sound an octave lower because it is on string 4.

On the keyboard, it will look like this:



A major chord



B7chord

If we take a B7 chord, note A will be the fourth open string of the cuatro. The 3rd string will need to raise a half step becoming the major 3rd of the chord (D#). The same happens with the 2nd string. Rise it to an F# (the fifth of the B chord). The first string is a B so it can become the root of the chord. Because it sounds an octave lower, forms a major second with the seventh. This voicing gives the cuatro its unique sound.

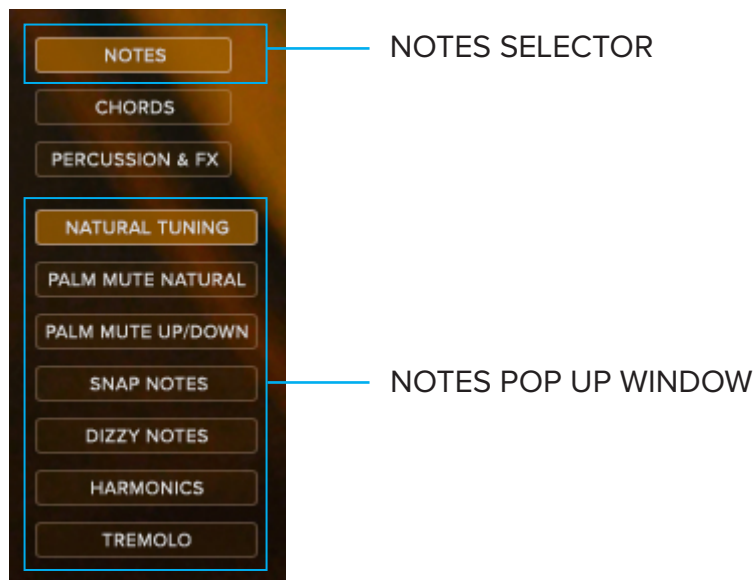
THE CUATRO INTERFACE



1. REVERB CONTROLS
2. PROGRAM SELECTOR
3. MAIN CONTROLS

PROGRAM NOTES

When the NOTES button is pressed, a menu with seven different articulations appears.



NATURAL TUNING is the first option. It consists of the whole range of the instrument. When the sustain pedal is up, a release sound will trigger for each note played. When you are playing with the sustain pedal on and then switch to pedal off, a subtle sound of the instrument appears to add more realism.

PALM MUTE NATURAL is the second option. It consists of palm muting the strings and picking them with the nail. It is excellent for creating rhythmic melodic patterns.

PALM MUTE UP/DOWN is the third option. It consists of the palm muting the strings with the nail pulsing with a different attack. The range is not in natural tuning, so it means that the pitches go up like a piano. You can control via the key switch to play; pick down - pick up, or pick up and down. You can also decide when to pick up and down through the key switch control.

SNAP NOTES is the fourth option. It consists of snapping the strings, pulling them up, and releasing them. It is similar to a Bartok pizzicato but with a sharp, edgy sound, very characteristic in the cuatro playing.

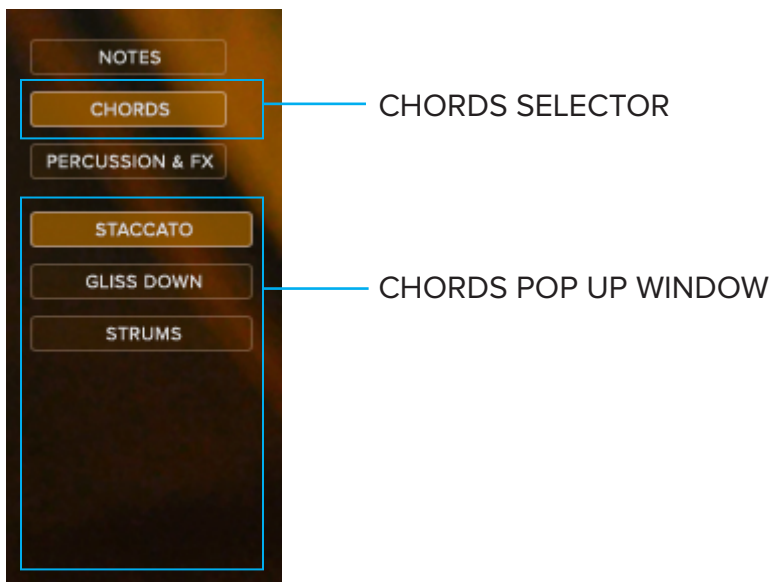
DIZZY NOTES is the fifth option. It is a special effect created by playing the notes with a guitar brass slide. It sounds like a note bending randomly up and down, creating an unstable effect.

HARMONICS is the sixth option. All harmonics have been chromatically sampled.

TREMOLO is the seventh and last option. Notes were sampled by playing chromatic tremolos with a hard tortoise pick.

PROGRAM **CHORDS**

When the CHORDS button is pressed, a menu with 3 different chords modes appears.



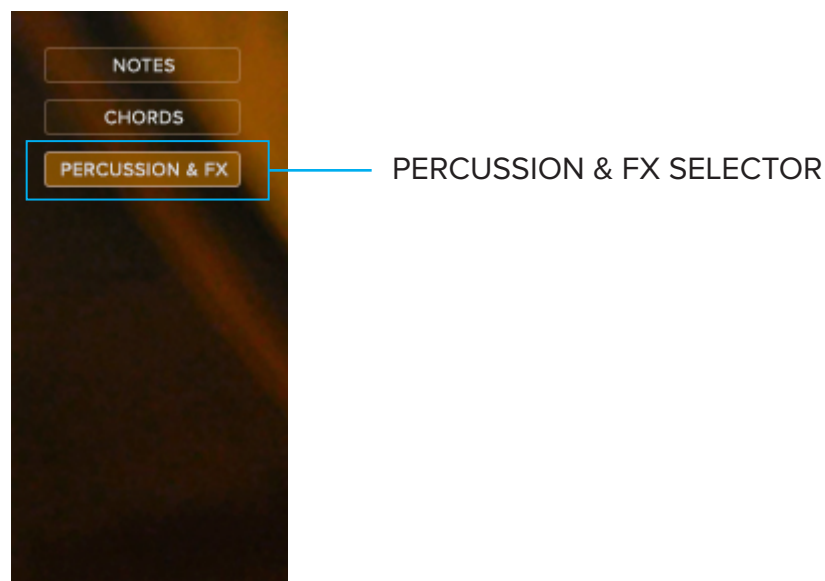
STACCATO is the first option. The chord is played by pulling on all four strings and releasing them, immediately cutting off the sound. It can be used effectively to create rhythmic chords. It is sampled (like all the notes and chords of El Cuatro) chromatically and in all keys. You can change via the key switch from major to minor, dominant, and diminished chords.

GLISS DOWN is the second option. It consists of chords played at a high position on the fretboard and gliss them down rapidly. You can change from major to minor and to dominant chord using the key switch.

STRUMS is the third option. Chords were strummed with different dynamics.

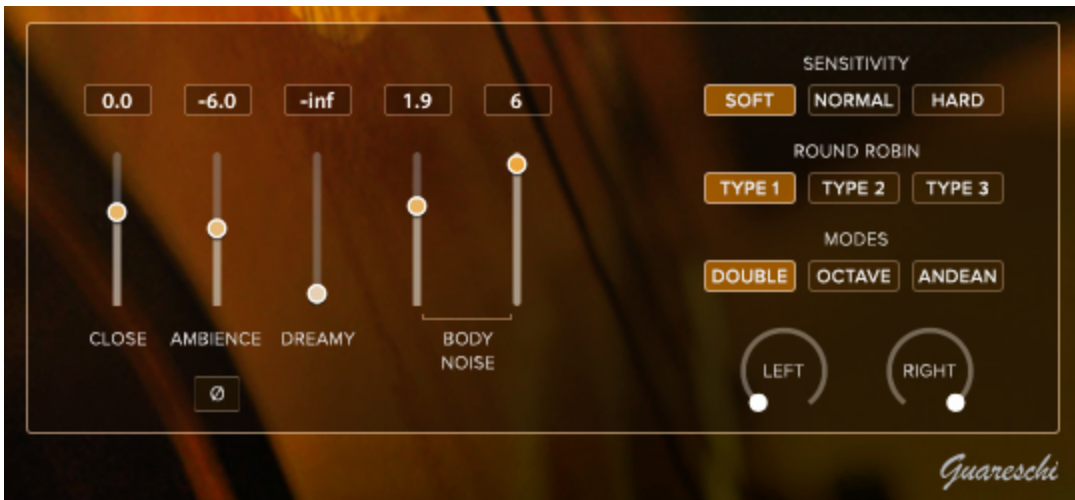
They automatically snap to the project tempo. Major, minor and dominant chords are available using the key switch.

PROGRAM **PERCUSSION & FX**



PERCUSSION & FX On this menu, you can find noises and fx. Most of them are sampled in multiple dynamics and round robins. For example, Mute Strums are located in two keys; F3 and G3. Alternating between these two notes, you can get realistic mute strums. The same happens with brushes short and long. You will find all kinds of inspiring sounds here to make organic percussion accompaniment and interesting fx to use in many situations.

MAIN CONTROLS



On this panel, you can adjust different parameters and choose other programs.

CLOSE fader:

Controls the volume on the main microphones.

AMBIENCE fader:

Controls the volume of the ambient microphones.

DREAMY fader:

Controls the volume of a special sound-designed patch. This pad has been made with the reverberation of the sympathetic strings of the piano.

BODY NOISE sliders:

Controls the volume level and presets for the body noise of the cuatro. The left fader adjusts the volume of the body noise. The right fader has six presets. If you play faster notes like an arpeggio at a fast tempo, lower numbers will work better because it triggers noises less often. If you play slow notes or arpeggios, the higher number will work better. It's a matter of adjusting it to your liking.

SENSITIVITY buttons:

Choose SOFT, NORMAL, or HARD depending on how hard you play. SOFT is the standard volume. NORMAL and HARD trigger samples with higher dynamics with less pressure on the keyboard.

ROUND ROBIN buttons:

There are three different types of activation samples. These controls can be used when you have more than one cuatro. For example, if you're playing an arpeggio with one instance of a cuatro, and then want to play the same or a different arpeggio with a second cuatro, assign different types of round-robin to each cuatro. The triggered notes will not be the same so no phase cancellation will occur. You can experiment with various settings. Depending on your arrangement, see what sounds most natural and open.

MODES buttons:

Besides NATURAL TUNING, I created three additional modes.

DOUBLE:

In this mode, two cuatros sound at the same time. Left and right knobs control the panning of each cuatro. They trigger different round robins sounding like a double-tracked cuatro.

OCTAVE:

From the second octave, all the notes will be octaved. The sounds become fuller.

You can press the buttons DOUBLE and OCTAVE simultaneously for an even bigger sound.

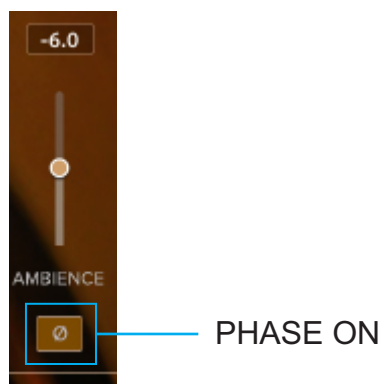
ANDEAN:

This mode behaves as if the cuatro has eight strings. They are in unison and octaves resembling the tuning of the ronroco and the ukelele of eight strings.

PHASE:

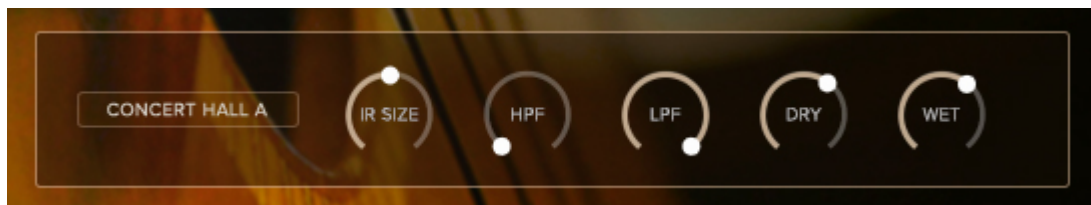
Under the AMBIENCE fader is the PHASE button. If you are working on a busy mix or have more than one cuatro, we need to minimize phase problems. Pressing the Phase button inverts the phase of the ambient signal. Sometimes using an instrument out of phase is the sound that works for you.

Try it to see what sounds better on your mix.



REVERB CONTROLS

Under this menu, you can choose the impulse response and the reverb parameters.



KEYSWITCHES

You can choose any program and additional articulation through keyswitches. As you toll over widgets with your mouse, information related to their usage will show up under the keyboard on the left side.

NOTES

The red keys (key-switches) will trigger different modes.

C -1 : NATURAL TUNING
C # -1 : PALM MUTE NATURAL
D -1 : PALM MUTE UP/DOWN
D# -1 : SNAP NOTES
E -1 : DIZZY NOTES
F -1 : HARMONICS
F# -1 : TREMOLO



NOTES - NATURAL TUNING

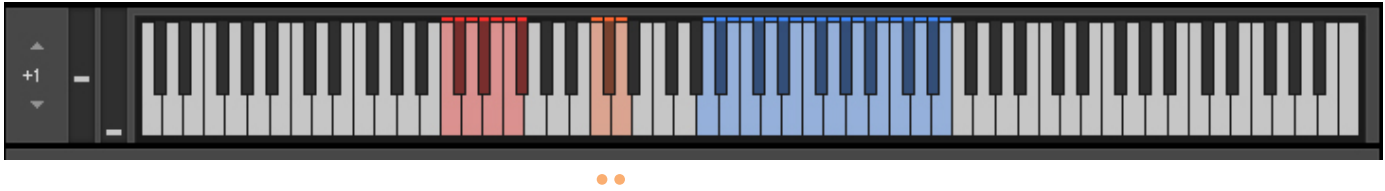


The pink keys (key-switches) will trigger different modes.

C -2 : HALF-TONE MORDENT (HOLD)
D -2 : WHOLE-TONE MORDENT (HOLD)

The VIOLET key will trigger the OCTAVE mode.
E -2 : TURN OCTAVE ON/OFF

NOTES - PALM MUTE UP/DOWN



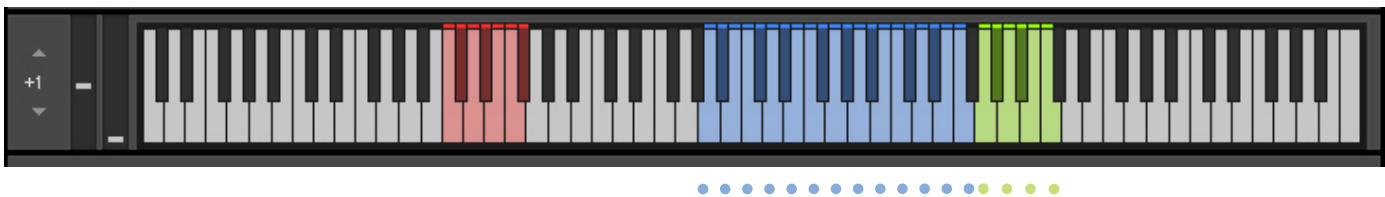
The light orange keys (key-switches) will trigger different modes.

C -2 : DOWN ONLY (PICK)

C#-2 : UP ONLY (PICK)

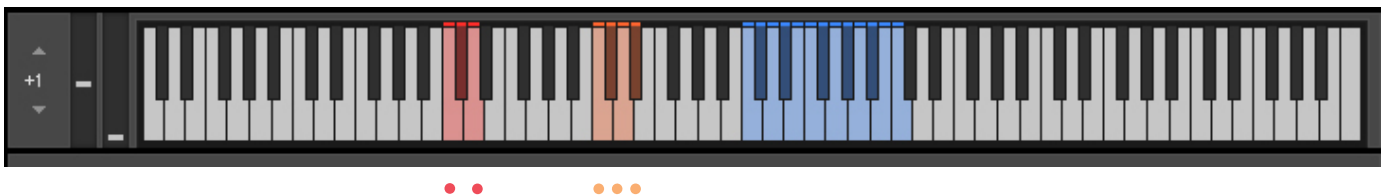
D -2 : DOWN-UP (PICK)

NOTES - HARMONICS



The blue keys (key-switches) are the chromatic harmonics. Light green: special harmonics.

CHORDS



The red keys (key-switches) will trigger different modes.

C -1 : STACCATO CHORDS

C#-1 : GLISS DOWN CHORDS

D -1 : CHORDS STRUMS

CHORDS - STACCATO

The light orange keys (key-switches) will trigger different modes of CHORDS (see pic. above)

C-2 : STACCATO CHORDS MAJOR

C#-2 : STACCATO CHORDS MINOR

D -2 : STACCATO CHORDS DOMINANT

D# -2 : STACCATO CHORDS DIMINISHED

CHORDS - GLISS DOWN

The light orange keys (key-switches) will trigger different modes of CHORDS (see pic. above)

C-2 : CHORDS GLISSANDO DOWN MAJOR

C#-2 : CHORDS GLISSANDO DOWN MINOR

D-2 : CHORDS GLISSANDO DOWN DOMINANT

CHORDS - STRUMS

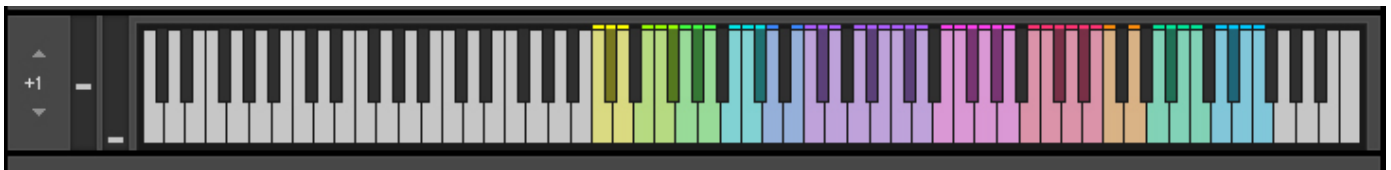
The light orange keys (key-switches) will trigger different modes of CHORDS (see pic. above)

C-2 : CHORDS STRUMS MAJOR

C#-2 : CHORDS STRUMS MINOR

D -2 : CHORDS STRUMS DOMINANT

PERCUSSION & FX



The keys (key-switches) are color-coded. Each color belongs to a group of sounds. Hover the mouse over the keys. A description will appear in the infobox.

PITCH BEND & MODULATION WHEEL



PITCH BEND MODULATION

The MODULATION wheel controls the vibrato in all the single notes of NATURAL TUNING, OCTAVE, DOUBLE, and ANDEAN.