



The String Collection II

Installation Guide & User Manual

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HS-K4L-A021

Hideaway Studio Presents The String Collection II....

As with all of my Kontakt instruments, the ethos behind them is not so much an attempt to capture and recreate the past but an opportunity to present the original source material as textures, elements and building blocks in order to create something new. At the same time, hopefully some the original beauty and character of these rare and vintage instruments and equipment is retained.

A long time in the making, I have been wanting to release for some time now a sequel to one of my most popular Kontakt instruments to date which has been a personal favourite of mine since the beginning. As I'm sure many are aware, I have always had a bit of a soft spot for evocative cinematic synth strings, and especially pseudo realistic string ensembles. It has been very exciting for me that some of these string ensembles and textures have found their way into a number of major music productions around the world.

My original String Collection was largely based on early string synths such as the ARP Omni and the Eminent 310U. I wanted to add several new offerings from several other families of synthesizer. The reasoning behind this was an attempt to broaden the sonic territory in what has proven to be a remarkably effective and easy to use layering engine. Some extra elements from my beloved 1938 Novachord #346 have been introduced including a very "warts & all" string timbre straight from the beast. Such elements may sound a little too antique to some in isolation but can form a remarkable secret element when layered with others in the layering engine. It is hard to believe this quarter ton 163 tube monster is 80 years old this year!

Around 30 instruments were captured and I've tried to draw upon a number of basic synthesis methods including divide down/formant, classic subtractive, DCO, digital FM and additive as well as capturing some tube synth textures from three vintage synths. Synths included the DK Synergy and ultra rare Mulogix Slave-32, Rhodes Chroma, Octave Cat Voyetra-Eight, Farfisa Syntorchestra, ProphetVS, Elka Synthex, Oberheim OB-X and Matrix 1000, Korg PS-3100. Tube synths included the Hammond Novachord, a Jennings Univox J6 and a heavily modified Cordovox CG-1.

I have also tried to introduce a number of unique processing methods to add tonal colour, character and movement to various sounds. This included a rather bizarre idea I had to play raw material through a speaker and record it using an old carbon granule GPO telephone mic. This imparted a wonderful crunchy antique character which when layered with the original source produced a rather beautiful effect. Other methods involved recording on and off of rather worn 1/4" tape on a wonderful 1967 Revox G36 tube reel to reel. An original 1969 Dolby A-301 (the world's first Dolby dynamic noise reduction system) and a DBX II 128 compander along with a gorgeous Binson tube Pre-Mixer were also used to good effect. A number of triple ensembles were used to process single string timbres from various synths into something much more akin to the original Solina strings. This included the often overlooked Korg SDD-3300 and retasking the triple BBD chorus ensemble in the little Böhm Dynamic 12/24 as well as the wonderful "Orbitone" generator in the Eminent 310U. Truly uniquely, I used the latter to process some of the string timbres from the Novachord to produce some very special ensembles!

A number of layers and blends were brought together to form the basic 36 instruments loaded into the layering engine to form The String Collection II...



Novachord #346 is now 80 years old & has proven to be a truly unique sonic ingredient!



The bizarre custom Cordovox CG-1 tube polysynth I originally built for Will Gregory

Equipment Used:

1938 Novachord #346, Eminent 310U, Minimoog T2798E, ORLA DSE-24, Böhm Dynamic 4x9, Oberheim OB-X, Jennings Univox J6, Studio Electronics OB-8, Sequential Prophet 600, Sequential ProphetVS, Octave Cat Voyetra Eight, Sequential Six-Trak, Rhodes Chroma, Korg PE-1000, Korg PS-3100, Waldorf microWave I, Yamaha TX802, Yamaha TX81Z, Custom Cordovox CG-1, Oberheim Matrix 1000, DK Synergy II+, Mulogix Slave 32, Evolution EVS-1, Roland D-110, Roland JX-8P, Roland JUNO-106, Roland VP-330, Roland alpha-Juno II, Elka Synthex, Farfisa Syntorchestra, Crumar Performer, Crumar Bit One. Passive formant resonator circuit, GPO Carbon Microphone, Revox G36, Dolby A-301, DBX II 128, Binson tube Pre-Mixer, Korg SSD-3300.

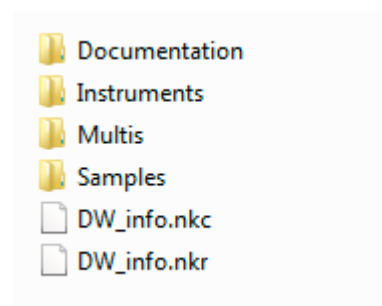


Installation

Installation is straightforward. The String Collection II requires Kontakt version 4.2.4 or higher and Approximately 1.2GB of free hard disk space.

Once the .zip file has been downloaded unzip the archive making sure the original directory structure is retained.

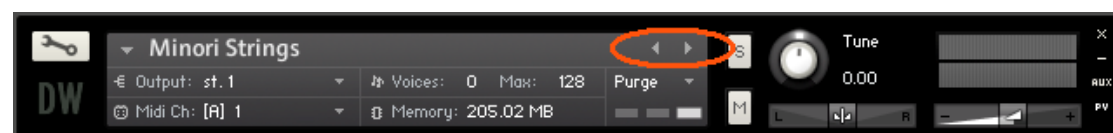
This should result in a folder called The String Collection II containing the following folders:



To run the library simply load up one of the 64 example .nki files in the Instruments folder. You will also find a basic template in this directory to use as a starting point for new instruments.

Instant Gratification

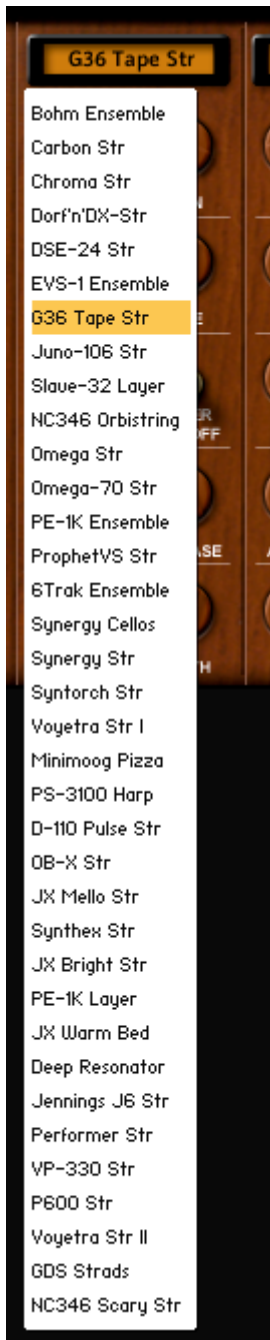
You can easily run through each of the example instruments (.nki) in the instruments folder by clicking on the small arrows to the right of the instrument name.



Using the Layering Engine



Naturally the example instruments packed with the library can be used as is but where the fun starts is having a go dialling in your own sounds using the intuitive layering engine. This permits up to four sounds to be blended together with a number of basic synthesis parameters at hand such as pitch and envelope control. The layering engine consists of four identical programming panels and an effects section...



Voice Selection

Above each of the four voice panels there is a yellow LCD display showing the selected voice. By clicking on each of the displays a pull down menu appears allowing one of 36 voices/partials to be selected. The selected sounds can be used in any combination including multiple instances of the same sound.

The Programming Panels

Each of the four voice programming panels features 10 basic controls to shape each sound in the layered instrument. Each control is altered by moving the mouse whilst clicking on it.

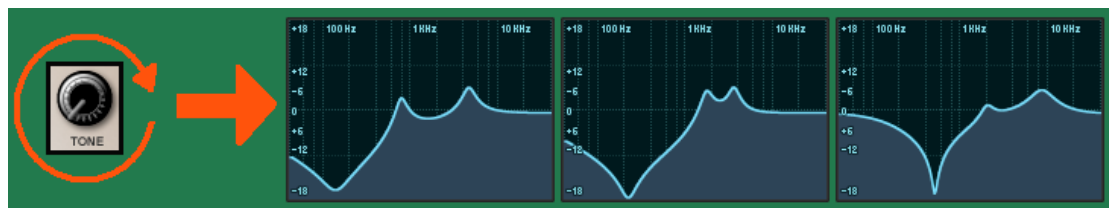


The **LEVEL** control sets the level of the voice in the layer

The **PAN** control sets the position of the voice in the stereo mix

The **SEMI** control sets a fixed pitch offset above or below the key played

The **FINE** control sets the fine pitch of the voice



The **TONE** control is a deceptively powerful feature. In the fully counter clockwise the signal is unaffected. As the control is rotated a continuously evolving complex EQ curve is applied. With some experimentation this feature can be used for embellishing formants within each voice and helping to sit each of the layered voices together in the mix.

The **LAYER ON/OFF** enables each of the four voices in the instrument. By clicking on the button the layer toggles on and off. It is often useful to use this feature whilst creating new sounds to determine how each voice is contributing to the overall sound.

The Envelope Controls

The **ATTACK** and **RELEASE** controls offer basic envelope control. The further the attack control is rotated clock wise the more gradually the sound builds up. The more the release control is rotated clockwise the longer it takes for the sound to decay after the note is released.

***NB:** Several of the programs in this library make use of **velocity controlled attack modulation**. The use of **velocity sensitive** keyboards will therefore really bring out this feature. This means that the attack parameter is lowered the harder the note is played. This is a means of improving the playability and expression of a sound especially in a live performance. It can be used to good effect by setting the attack a little more clockwise than first expected.*

The LFO Controls

Each voice features it's own pitch LFO. This permits everything from a gentle vibrato to a dramatic plunging effect.

Both the **RATE** and the **DEPTH** of the LFO can be altered. To disable the LFO simply set the depth control to the centre position. The depth control is bi-polar which is not something you can hear in isolation but can become a very powerful effect when LFOs of opposite polarity are used on adjacent voices. A typical gentle vibrato is created by setting the depth control just slightly to one side of the centre position with the rate control somewhere around half way.

Mixing it all up

Although the layering engine is basic, it can be used to great effect. With experimentation a multitude of sounds can be created.

As well as the more obvious layers consisting of four different voices all tuned to the same pitch it is also possible to create other effects:

Making it Fat

Try selecting four instances of the same voice and then slightly detuning them using the **FINE** pitch controls and even setting different **LFO** parameters.

Expression

Setting a different **ATTACK** level for each voice can often help to make an instrument more responsive to changes in velocity and through sustain.

Please note that most voice/partial sounds in this library are designed to react in a number of ways to velocity (volume, VCA and VCF attack phase, filter cutoff and pitch). With this in mind it is highly recommended that a velocity sensitive keyboard is used and that many featured sounds often benefit from a very gentle and sustained playing style thus adding to the dynamic effect when more strident notes are subsequently played.

Making it Wide

Try setting the **PAN** controls for each voice to wildly different settings for each voice for a more spatial effect.

Intervals

Some interesting and sometimes quite beautiful effects can be created by setting one or more of the **SEMI** controls to something other than a simple octave. This can be used to create partials on organ voices in conjunction with careful adjustment of the level controls.

Phasey

When using two or more of the same voices setting the **FINE** tune controls to very similar but not identical settings can result in some interesting phasing effects.

Wobbly

Using relatively deep **LFOs** of slightly different speeds across all four voices, especially in conjunction with a suitably timed delay can be quite effective.

The Effects Section

To the right of the layering engine is the effects section.



The effects section comprises of four basic effects. Each of the four effects are chained in series and can be disabled by turning their respective **AMOUNT** control fully anti-clockwise.

Reverb

The reverb utilises the latest convolution technology to digitally simulate the reverberation of a physical or simulated acoustic space.

Click on the blue LCD display to select the type of room simulation required and then use the **SIZE** control to set the size of the space and the **AMOUNT** control to set the amount of the effect to be mixed with the dry signal.

Echo

The echo section is a delay with feedback and damping. The **TIME** control sets the delay whereby turning the control clockwise increases the delay time. The **FEEDBACK** control sets the amount of the signal from the delay that is fed back to the input. The further this control is turned clockwise the more the input signal is recycled thus creating dramatic repeating and sustain effects. The **DAMPING** control determines how the delay decays with time. The **AMOUNT** control determines how much of the effect is mixed in with the dry signal.

Phaser

The phaser is a digital simulation of a classic analog phaser. The **RATE** control determines how rapidly the phaser is modulated and the **AMOUNT** control sets the amount of the effect to be mixed with the dry signal.

Chorus

The phaser is a digital simulation of a classic stereo analog chorus (minus the noise!). The **RATE** control determines how rapidly the phaser is modulated and the **AMOUNT** control sets the amount of the effect to be mixed with the dry signal.

Saving Your Own Sounds

All of your creations can be saved as .nki instruments simply by using the **save as** function by clicking on the **files** icon in the main Kontakt control pane.

Remember that if you edit an existing sound you must save it under a new name otherwise you will overwrite it!



Credits

Dani Wilson (Hideaway Studio)
Sound Design, Sample Set & Example Instruments

Stephen Howell RIP (Hollow Sun)
Layering Engine Concept, GUI Design & Graphics

Mario Krušelj
Layering Engine Script

My huge gratitude to my friends blessed with golden ears for being so supportive and inspirational to me over the years. Its been an honor & I cannot thank you enough....

Will Gregory, Jean-Michel Jarre, Richard D.James, _BT, Wendy Carlos, Adrian Utlej

For more information and many more releases for Kontakt by Hideaway Studio please visit:
www.hideawaystudio.net

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HS-K4L-A021 V1.01 05/12/18

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