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GRAND MARIMBA

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INSTALLATION

1. Put the 'SC Grand Marimba' somewhere safe on your system (C drive) or main Macintosh Hard Drive. You can move the library folder to a separate HD after you have authorized it.

If you do not own Kontakt 5, 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. In Kontakt or Kontakt Player open the Browser on the left (the folder Icon at the top).
2. In the Libraries tab at the top of the Browser go to "Add Library"
3. Click and use the dialogue window to navigate to and point Kontakt to the location of the *SC Grand Marimba>Library* folder. This will add it to the Kontakt Library list AND to the *NI Service Center*.
4. If Kontakt asks you to activate the library, the *NI Service Center* program will launch and you will need your serial number to authorize *Marimba*.

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 Grand Marimba Library logo, in the Browser/Libraries list. It will then prompt you to launch the Service Center.

(You will find your serial number in the email you were sent when you purchased, and next to the download in your Soniccouture account If for some reason you haven't received this yet, you can run your library in demo mode until it arrives.)

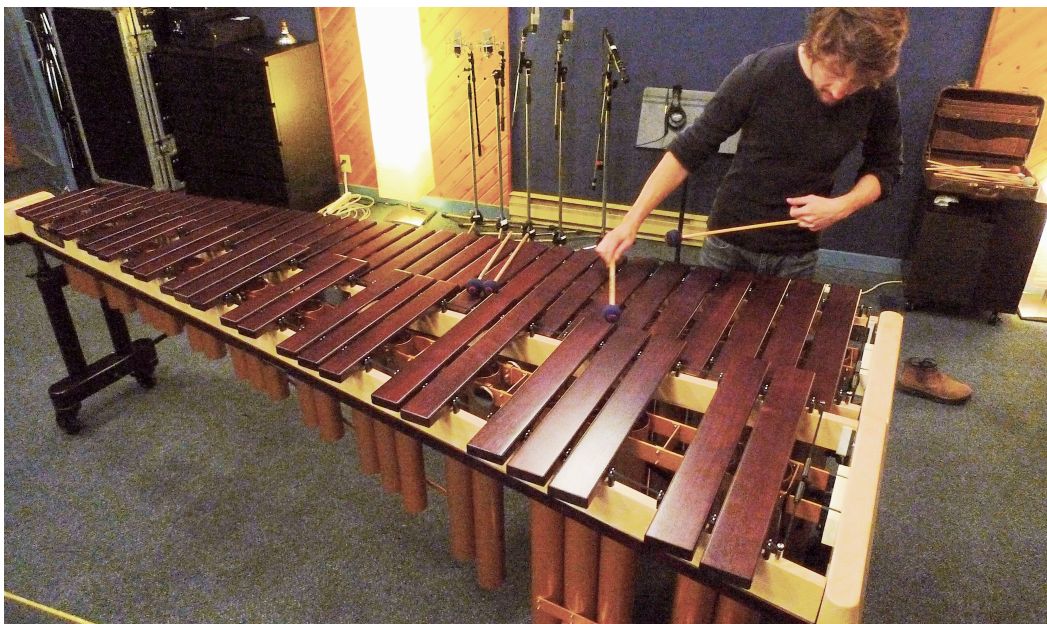
N.B : After authorization, you should restart Kontakt.

SAMPLING THE MARIMBA

When we decided to sample a marimba, we were already certain we wanted to find a 5 octave concert model. There's something about the enormous bass notes of a full sized model that's quite special. After some research, we decided on a Yamaha 6100 model, which was designed in collaboration with world-renowned marimba legend Keiko Abe.

The Yamaha is really a state-of-the-art instrument, with Yamaha's exclusive precision tuning method ensuring true pitch and full sound, Honduran Rosewood bars, and welded resonators to ensure rattle-free playing.

These instruments are massive, almost 3 meters across, which makes micing them a challenge. You can't get too close to an instrument that large and maintain any sort of sensible stereo image. And since we were aiming for an intimate, non-ambient, recording, we needed a very large but relatively dry studio to work in.



In the end we settled on three mic pairs, AKG414s (with CK12 capsules) and Shoeps cardioids... in front of the unit, slightly above, with an AKG ribbon somewhat further back. These were all recorded direct to disk at 96 kHz, and then mixed to a final stereo signal.

A shot from the control room showing the mics above the marimba (and Greg patiently waiting for a note to finish):



Another shot from inside the studio:



NO EXTRA MALLETS?

No, in fact according to our resident expert, marimba players don't choose mallets for different timbres, they choose mallets for a consistent timbre. Softer mallets are used at the lowest notes, and harder mallets are used at the highest notes. Players are very likely to be holding four DIFFERENT mallets at the same time, but will use each of them in a different range of the instrument to get a similar tone across the entire thing.

We actually used 5 different mallets to make our single Mallet articulation. Send us a postcard if you can detect at which notes we changed mallets and perhaps you'll win a prize if you're right!

GRAND MARIMBA SPECS

- 24 bit 96 khz stereo sampling
- 3.4 GB library (with NCW compression)
- over 5,000 samples
- 5 octaves: 61 notes, from C1 to C6
- 4 articulations: Mallet, Stick, Roll, Bow
- 5 round robin layers on the Mallet articulation
- up to 15 velocity layers on the Mallet articulation

THE KONTAKT INSTRUMENT



Note that you can hover your mouse over any control in Grand Marimba to get Info about its function if you have the Kontakt Info pane activated.

THE INSTRUMENT PANEL



Selecting the 'Instrument' tab provides access to the main controls of the Marimba instrument.

CONTROLS ON THE INSTRUMENT TAB

At the top left is the filter section, here we have controls for the CUTOFF frequency of a low pass filter, the RESonance of that filter, the ENVELOPE

depth to the filter cutoff, VELOCITY depth to the filter cutoff, and a separate High Pass Filter cutoff control. The entire filter section can be enabled or disabled with the small LED button beside the title FILTER.



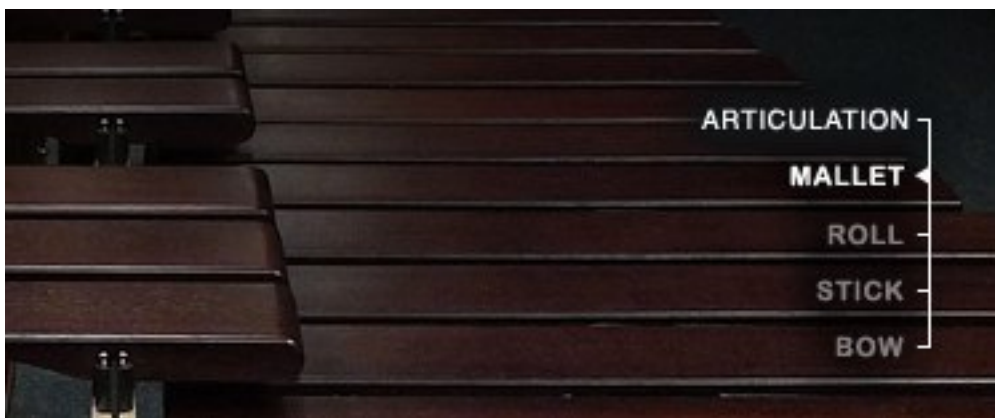
To the right of that is a STEREO control. Note that setting WIDTH in the middle, at 12 o'clock, is its normal stereo position. That is the sound of the marimba unchanged from our recording. If you bring the WIDTH control above that, you will be exaggerating the stereo field, and if you bring it lower than 12 o'clock you will be narrowing the stereo field.

The FLIP button allows you to flip the stereo perspective. The default is audience perspective, if you enable FLIP it will be player perspective.

At the top right there are the ENVELOPE controls, with the standard ATTACK, DECAY, SUSTAIN, RELEASE controls. These can be set independently for the AMP envelope or the Filter Envelope (FEG), using the small menu at the top right. There is a VELOCITY control for both the Amplitude and the FEG, note that Amplitude velocity is unipolar, whereas FEG velocity is bipolar.

All controls can be automated, by right-clicking on the knob to Learn MIDI CC routing, or by using the Auto tab in the Kontakt Browser section.

At the bottom of the main Instrument panel you'll see the ARTICULATION sections:



You can click directly on these to change the articulation, or use Keyswitches and they will automatically change here to show you which articulation is currently selected.

ABOUT THE ARTICULATIONS

MALLET is of course the main articulation here. This is what we spent the most time sampling, since that's really the typical marimba sound.

ROLL is a played Roll, sampled and looped from the marimba player's actual performance. Don't confuse this with Tremolo. In fact, marimba players rarely use Rolls, so this is a special effect of sorts. Marimba players DO use a lot of Tremolo, so see the Performance section for info on our scripted Tremolo controller.

STICK is sound made by hitting the marimba with the handle of the mallets rather than the head. This is a kind of special effect you find in contemporary marimba repertoire, and we quite liked it so included that here. This sound is sometimes called "Rattan".

BOW is, you guessed it, the marimba bowed with a cello bow. We can't seem to help bowing everything we get our hands on. This articulation is only 4 octaves wide, so there's a wrap of the top octave you can enable or disable in the Performance section.

THE PERFORMANCE PANEL



This panel contains various options for setting up the Marimba to behave the way you prefer.

TREMOLLO

Tremolo is such a common marimba technique we've designed an original Kontakt script to mimic this performance with unparalleled accuracy. It comfortably handles 1 to 4 voices of harmony, since marimba players rarely use more than 4 mallets, and will intelligently remap the tremolo in real time based on the incoming MIDI or your playing. If you play more than 4 sustained notes, the tremolo will use the top 4.

To turn the tremolo on or off, you can use the little LED button at the top left, but since this is such a common effect you can dedicate a controller to trigger this in the menu named TRIGGER. All our default presets use the sustain pedal (CC 64) to trigger the Tremolo.

The two large knobs under the TREMOLO switch are VELOCITY and TIMING. These introduce some random variation into the velocity and timing of the tremolo if you want it to sound less machine-like. We're using

a 1/f noise algorithm for this randomness, since many studies have shown that human variation in music is similar to this kind of chaos.

Depending to some degree on the tempo of the music, typically marimba players will tremolo in approximately 8th note triplet rhythm, sometimes gently increasing or decreasing this speed for expression. You can set the general tempo of the tremolo with the TIME menu.

We can use a controller to modulate the speed and velocity of the tremolo with the MODULATE setting. Our presets typically default to the Mod Wheel for Tremolo modulation, or CC 1.

The depth of this modulation to the VELOCITY and TIMING is set with the two smaller TREMOLO knobs to the left of the MODULATE CC assignment.

HUMANISE

Humanise is similar to the randomisation knobs in the Tremolo section, but works on the MIDI input to the instrument rather than on the Tremolo script. If you have perfectly quantized MIDI sequence, you can use the HUMANISE section to give it a bit of variation in playback.

VELOCITY randomises the incoming velocity, and TIMING randomises the onset of the note.

KEYSWITCHES

Here you can set the four MIDI keyswitches for the four articulations.

OPTIONS

Three options that we've set to our preference, but allow you to change if you disagree:

WRAP BOW RANGE - This "wraps" the top octave of the Bowed marimba articulation so that if you're playing higher notes something will at least sound between C5 and C6. We were unable to bow this top octave of the marimba in real life, sorry about that. Our player couldn't either.

ROLL : USE KEY-OFF SAMPLES - If you're using the Roll articulation, this will play one last note when you release the note, so that the Roll finishes like a player would do in real life. However, if you're using Roll as a special effect with a long Release time, then this feature should be turned off.

BOW + ROLL : IGNORE TREMOLO CC - To us, it doesn't really make sense to Tremolo the Bow or Roll articulations, so we made this to simply ignore the Tremolo when you switch to those articulations. However, if you want to Tremolo the Bow or Roll sounds, feel free to turn this off.

MEMORY MANAGEMENT

You can choose to use or not use the Round Robins here. If you use All Robin Layers, the Grand Marimba will need about 600 MB of RAM, if you set this to Single Robin Layer you will only need about 130 MB of RAM.

THE EFFECTS PANEL



The effects panel is divided into a few sections. Here is a list of the various effects available inside Grand Marimba:

EQUALISER

This is the high quality ‘analogue’ EQ introduced in Kontakt 5. You can enable or disable it with the LED at the top left. There are knobs for each of the four bands frequency and GAIN. The bottom and top band can be switched between Shelf and Bell shape.

DELAY

The DELAY effect has controls for MIX, TIME (in milliseconds), PAN, and FEEDBACK.

SPACE

This uses Kontakt’s built-in Convolution processor, and offers a wide selection of Reverb spaces that you can choose using the drop down menu. You can also disable or enable it with the little LED at the far right. You have knobs to control MIX, SIZE, High Pass Filter, and Low Pass Filter.

SATURATION

This can be turned on or off with the small LED switch, and has one knob for the amount of saturation, called DRIVE.

TRANSIENT

This is the Transient Designer that was introduced to Kontakt in version 5. This is really great for adjusting the sound of percussion instruments, like Marimba. You have control over the INPUT drive, the ATTACK and SUSTAIN of the sound, and the OUTPUT level.

LIMITER

Finally you have the option to use a LIMITER at the end of the effects chain, which you can enable or disable with the small LED switch. You can also control the INPUT gain to the LIMITER using the knob.

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 :

support@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!

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