Soniccouture

BALINESE GAMELAN II

User Guide

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INSTALLATION

Keep the 'SC Balinese Gamelan II' folder somewhere safe on your system.

TO ADD THE LIBRARY AND AUTHORISE IN KONTAKT

FIRST INSTALL KONTAKT PLAYER ; Kontakt Player Download Link

1. Open NI Kontakt in standalone mode. In the *Libraries* tab, click **Add Library**
2. Navigate to the downloaded product and choose the **Library** folder
3. When the library graphic loads in Kontakt, click **Activate**

4. The *NI Service Center* app will launch. Login or create an account, and enter your product serial number (shown in your SC account with the download product).

5. You will also find a folder called Snapshot Installers. In here you'll find a small installer application for both OS X and Windows. Please run the necessary app to install the Gamelan Snapshots on your computer. There are over 100 snapshots for choosing gamelan setups quickly.

RESTART KONTAKT TO COMPLETE AUTHORISATION

QUICKSTART

OR… WHAT'S NEW ?

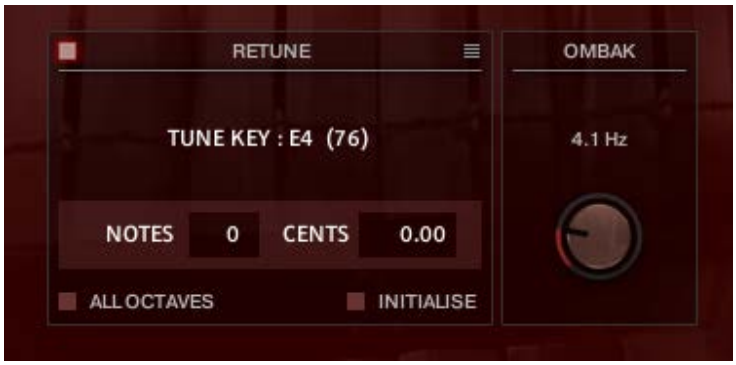
This section will help you get up and running quickly, and assumes you have some familiarity with both Kontakt and Gamelan. Users of the previous edition of Gamelan may find this section is all they need to consult.

There are now two full gamelan ensembles included in our Balinese Gamelan collection. The original Semaradana, and a new Gamelan Batel Ramayana which includes the familiar Gender Wayang instruments, known to most westerners from shadow puppet plays popular in Bali. There are four pitched *gender* in this ensemble, plus new gongs and percussion appropriate to the Batel Ramayana.

Each gamelan orchestra is now contained within a single NKI, so there is one instrument for the original Gamelan Semaradana, and one for the new Batel Ramayana. This means you can layer various combinations of instruments together and play them at once (or use just one at a time if you prefer of course). It also means you can retune the entire orchestra at once with a single tuning page.

Each gamelan therefore includes a setup page to turn instruments on or off, with pan and level controls like this:

The TUNING page looks like this, and allows you to both import and export tunings, as well as design your own within the instrument:



The OMBAK is the detune between higher and lower instrument pairs, and can be adjusted freely as a beat frequency.

There is a SHAPE page which allows you to use some typical synthesis parameters:

And an effects page which provides freely configurable insert effects.

MULTIS

There are some multis included that give you a template starting point for multi-channel composition in either Semara Dana or Batel. These are similar to the multis we provided in our original Gamelan library, in that each instrument is on it's own MIDI channel. Note that although individual instruments in the multis are 'named' this is just for identification purposes, they are in actuality simply copies of the main NKI with the necessary instruments turned ON.

If you want to mix instruments of one gamelan with the other, you can retune one to the other using the RETUNE page and load the appropriate preset (SC Semaradana or SC Batel). Or both can be tuned to any other scale you choose.

SC BALINESE GAMELAN now requires version 5.5 of Kontakt or later. This means that there is no longer support for OSX 10.6.8 or Windows XP (sorry guys, we kept it up for as long as we could, but the new features are too enticing to ignore!)

It's encoded for Kontakt Player, so if necessary you can download the free Kontakt Player (latest version) here.

LIBRARY SPECIFICATIONS

- over 30 different Balinese instruments sampled
- full control over tuning, equal temperament and microtuning
- 24 bit 96 khz stereo sampling
- 14 GB library (with NCW compression)
- circa 8,000 samples
- both multiple velocity and round robin samples
- two articulations (mute and ring) on all pitched instruments

ABOUT GAMELAN

Western musicians have long been fascinated by the exotic sound of Indonesian gamelan. Claude Debussy was first captivated by a Javanese ensemble at the Paris Exposition in 1889, and since then it's been clear to many western musicians that there is something unique and magical about this ancient music. More recently gamelan has influenced an entire generation of American minimalists, as well as many popular and electronic musicians and film composers.

There are now gamelan groups across America and Europe, but access to an ensemble isn't always easy. The instruments are heavy and take up a lot of space, and you need a fair number of like-minded people to get any music happening. Soniccouture is therefore proud to present our complete professional Balinese Gamelan, in digital form, lovingly sampled in painstaking detail.

BRIEF HISTORY OF BALINESE GAMELAN

Gamelan is a very old music, significantly older than our western music tradition. The earliest image of a tuned percussion instrument is found on Borobudur temple in Java, which was built around 800 AD. In the 14th century Islam was introduced to Java and the existing Majapahit empire fell. Bali then became an exile for remaining Hindus, and the music of Bali today is a direct descendant of the music of that Majapahit period.

In the 15th century, a very large gamelan called Gong Gedé was used for ceremonies in court, as well as for ritual dances and festivals. This huge ensemble consisted of many gongs and drums and required some 40 players. In the 17th century, a gentle 7-tone gamelan appeared called Semar Pegulingan, and this music was often played outside the bedroom of the king at the palace (Semara is the Hindu love god.) By the 19th century we find a Pelegongan gamelan, which is essentially a 5-tone version with added *gender*, popular for accompanying the Legong dance.

In the early twentieth century the old royal courts were dissolved, and Balinese music underwent a radical change. The style known as Gong Kebyar became popular and has dominated Balinese music ever since. Kebyar means “flowering” or “bursting”, and the music is characterised by sudden changes in tempo and dynamics. It’s an extremely virtuosic music, and is probably Bali’s best known musical export.

Very recently there has been a renewed interest in older styles. You can now find groups that play Semar Pegulingan, Pegulongan, Gong Gedé, and other ancient music.

The tradition thus continues. Gamelan is by no means a “historical” music inside Bali. Despite the influx of western pop music, gamelan is very much alive and there are new compositions and styles evolving still.

GAMELAN SEMARA DANA

One of the gamelan ensembles sampled in this set is a relatively recent innovation called a Gamelan Semara Dana. This type of gamelan first appeared around 1985, and is essentially a Kebyar ensemble enhanced with a full 7 note Pelog scale. This means that a very wide range of music can be played on it, ranging from the classical Semar Pegulingan (7 tones) to more recent Kebyar (5 tones) styles. It also opens up possibilities for new types of gamelan compositions.

There are now more than 25 Semara Dana in Bali, and it shows signs of becoming the gamelan of the future. The gamelan sampled here is resident at **LSO St.Luke's** in London. It was built in 2003 by I Made Gabeleran of Blahbatuh, Bali, and is named "Semara Wertih" or "pure, sincere desire".

GAMELAN BATEL RAMAYANA

The other gamelan ensemble included in this set is the Gamelan Batel Ramayana.

The Balinese *gamelan batel Ramayana* ensemble is used primarily to accompany the shadow play of Ramayana stories, *wayang Ramayana*. This ensemble is rarely recorded and not nearly as well known as the *gender wayang* quartet which accompanies shadow play (*wayang kulit*) performances of stories from the Mahabharata.

The main instruments of the *gamelan batel* are the four *gender wayang*, the ten-key, two-octave, and suspended-key metallophones tuned in *saih gender wayang*, the Balinese equivalent of the pentatonic Javanese slendro. One pair of instruments is tuned higher than the other, and the pairs perform the same musical parts in octaves. The instruments, sometimes called *gender dasa* (ten-key gender) are played by four performers with a round-ended mallet in each hand, occasionally with unified motions but usually in a contrapuntal fashion, and the keys must be struck and damped by the same hand. The left-hand parts of the four players create a basic unison melody in the lower octave, while the right-hand parts normally interlock in figurations in the upper octave. This playing technique is considered the most difficult in Bali.

The distinction between the *gender wayang* quartet and the *gamelan batel* is that, in the latter, the four metallophones are accompanied by a percussion ensemble. In fact, the ensemble is often called "*gender wayang batel*".

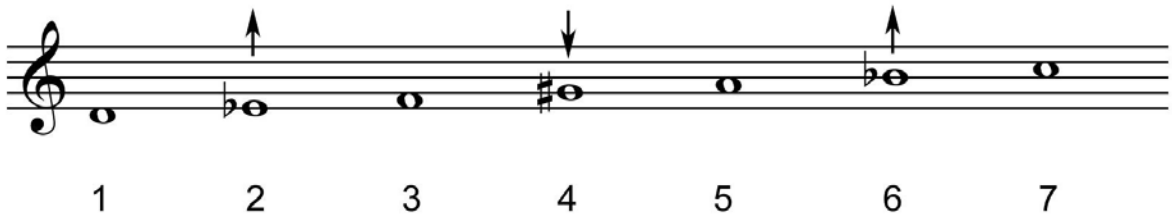
The Gamelan Batel Ramayana sampled in this library are the instruments of Gamelan Seka Rat Nadi, based in Toronto.

GAMELAN TUNING AND MODES

One of the most fascinating aspects of gamelan music is its tuning system, and this is no small matter. Firstly, the Balinese use tuning systems that are not readily found within our western equal temperament. Secondly, there are no standard tuning references in Bali, each gamelan ensemble is tuned to the preference of its maker and essentially only in tune with itself. (It's therefore nearly impossible to mix instruments from one gamelan with another.) Thirdly, Balinese gamelan instruments frequently appear in pairs, which are detuned to create a beat frequency when the two are played simultaneously. This detuned beating is called the *Ombak*. This detuning of similar tones extends to the octaves, which are generally stretched to accommodate the overtone behaviour of brass bars.

There are, nonetheless, tendencies towards certain types of tuning that are common across both Java and Bali. The two main scale types are called Slendro and Pelog. We can describe these two systems by saying that in general Slendro tends toward *even* divisions of an octave, and Pelog tends toward *uneven* divisions of an octave, a mix of small and large intervals. Most large gamelan ensembles in Bali, including Kebyar and the Semara Dana, use a Pelog scale. Smaller ensembles, such as Anklung or Batel Ramayana and Gender Wayang typically use a Slendro tuning.

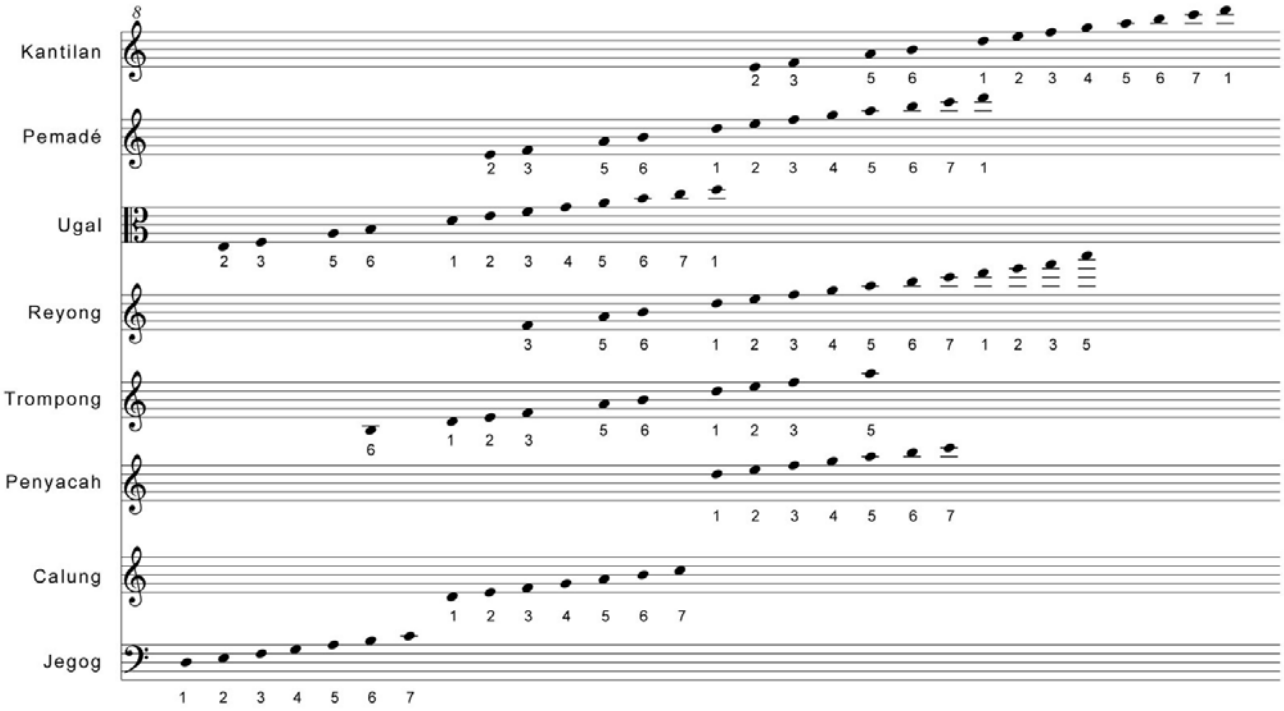
The original notes of our Gamelan Semara Dana **pelog** scale are *very approximately*:



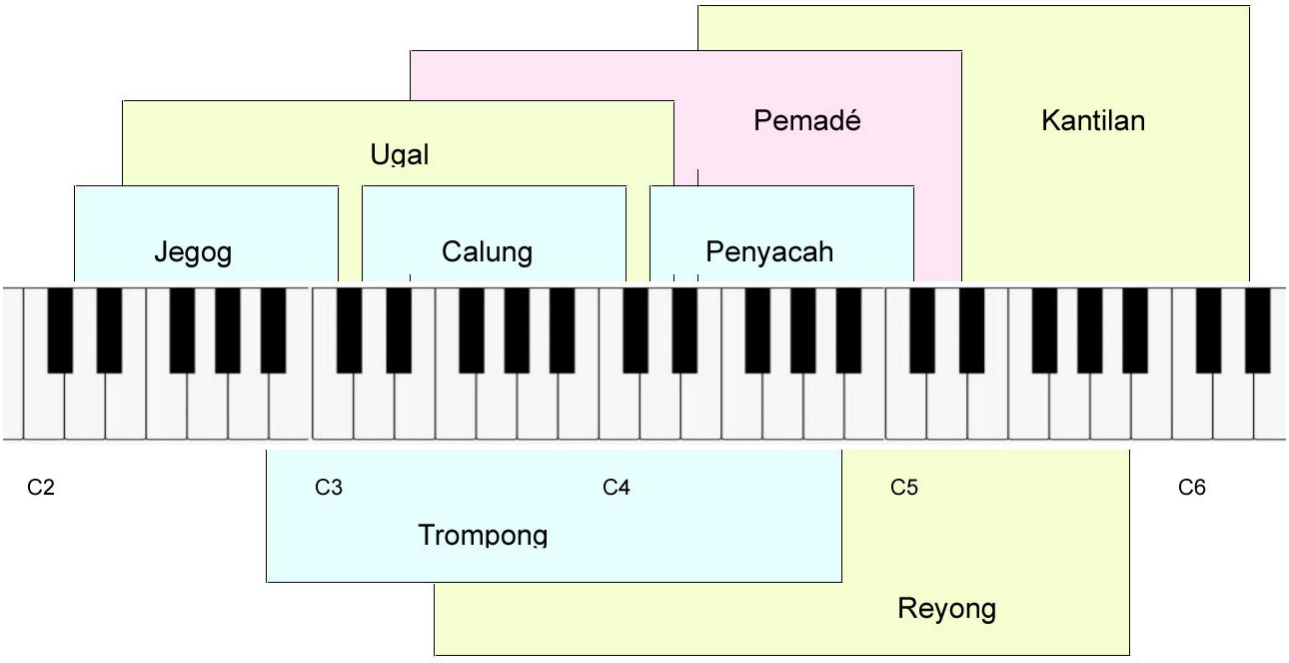
The original notes of our Gamelan Batel **slendro** scale are *very approximately*:

SEMARADANA INSTRUMENT RANGES

Here are the original note ranges of the Semara Dana orchestra:

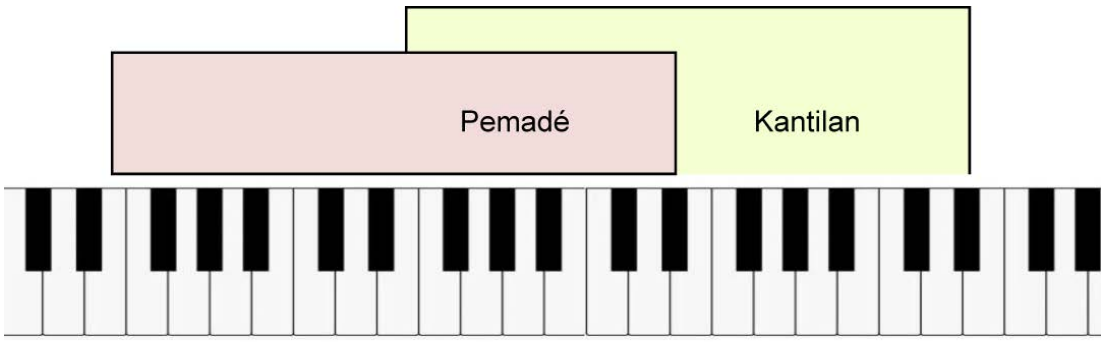


Here are the same note ranges shown on a keyboard:



BATEL RAMAYANA INSTRUMENT RANGES

Here are the original note ranges of the Gamelan Batel Gender instruments, essentially identical but separated by an octave:



MODES

Although there are several types of 7-note gamelan ensembles found in Bali, most pieces of music use just 5 notes or less at any given time. These five note modes are analogous to our major or minor scales in the west. A typical seven note ensemble like Semara Dana uses one of these five modes, or "*patutan*" :

Selisir	1	2	3		5	6	
Tembung	1	2		4	5	6	
Sunaren		2	3		5	6	7
Baro		2	3	4		6	7
Labeng	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Selisir is a very popular mode, this is what you usually hear in Kebyar music. To imitate this, simply avoid notes 4 and 7 (G and C on the keyboard).

On our Semara Dana, 1 is mapped to D, and if you use the original tuning all the notes are on white keys.

Gamelan Batel is in a slendro tuning of five pitches and therefore usually mapped to the black keys. On our Batel instruments the 1 is C# if set to use original tuning.

Note that the default state of our instruments is NOT original tuning, but western tuning. Check the Kontakt Tuning pages to learn more about this subject.

BALINESE GAMELAN STRUCTURE

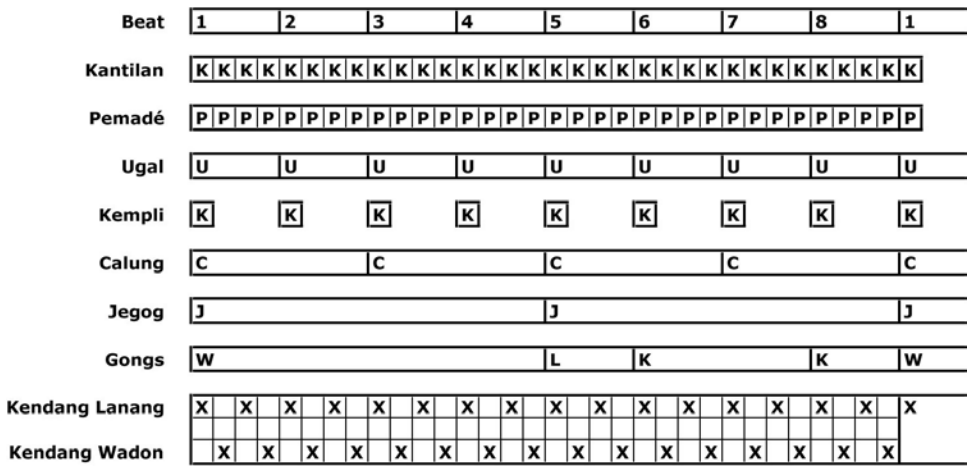
Gamelan music is usually often as having a "colotomic" structure, which refers to the cyclical gong cycle that delineates the basic form of a piece. These cycles can range from 2 to 256 beats, the beginning and end of which is marked by the large Gong. Structural points within this cycle are marked by the other gongs. For a Balinese musician, the music is always leading *towards* the next gong.

The core melody of a piece is usually played by the Calung and/or the Ugal, with important notes doubled by the Jegog. Unlike western music, the core melody is not the most prominent aspect of the music, but rather a foundation on which the rest of the music is built.

The ornate rapid patterns we hear on the higher instruments are decorating or elaborating on the core melody. These higher instruments are referred to as the gangsa, and include the Ugal, Pemade, and Kantilan. On beats that coincide with the melody, the gangsa will usually be playing the melody note, but filling in the gaps between as well.
The Reyong also provides a similarly rapid and decorative part, although it isn't considered part of the gangsa.

The two Kendang drums play fast interlocking parts, with the higher drum (Lanang) usually on the beat. The Kendang also signal changes in the music, "conducting" the rest of the ensemble in a sense.

This brief explanation is intended to give you a rough idea of how the various instruments of the gamelan work together. There are many exceptions and variations on this basic concept, but the rhythmic strata of a gamelan piece might look like this:

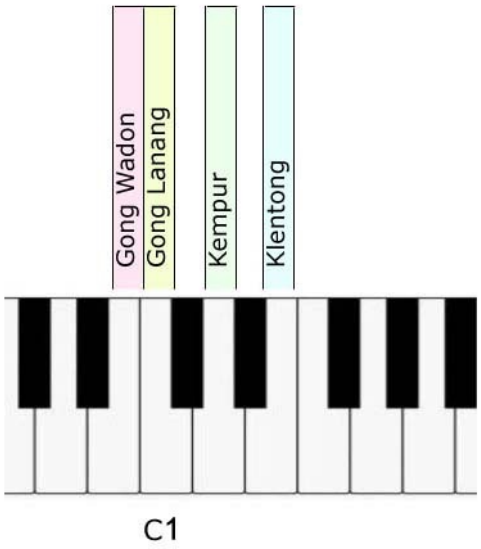


THE SEMARA DANA INSTRUMENTS

GONGS AND PERCUSSION

GONGS

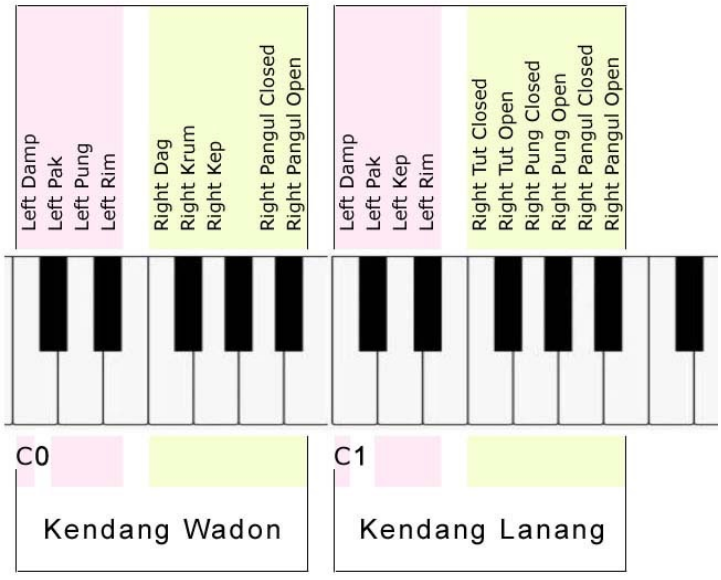
The Gong Wadon, the largest gong, is usually the main gong of a rhythmic cycle, marking the beginning or end of a structural section. The other gongs mark divisions within the cycle. Our gongs are mapped as follows:



KENDANG

The two kendang drums are mapped with various types of hits, separated into the left and right hands/drum heads. The last two hits on A and A# are strikes with the pangul, a wooden drumstick.

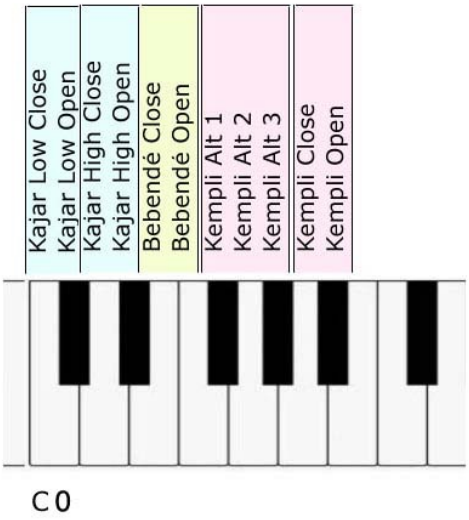
In our instruments, the LOWEST key of the Kendang is set in the Gamelan Setup page. By default it is at C-2, the lowest MIDI key available. But you can move this to a more convenient key if you want to use it on its own. The mapping of the various Kendang hits move together, and look like this:



KEMPLI, BEBENDE, and KAJAR

The Kempli is used as a kind of time keeper or metronome. Most of the time it simply plays a damped sound, on the beat. It can also be played open however, so we offer that alternative with our main Kempli here. We also offer three alternate Kempli, using different mallets.

The Bebendé and Kajar are similar non-pitched damped gongs for rhythmic use, and these also include an open and damped option. Whereas the Kempli tends to play on the beat, Bebendé will usually play off the beat.

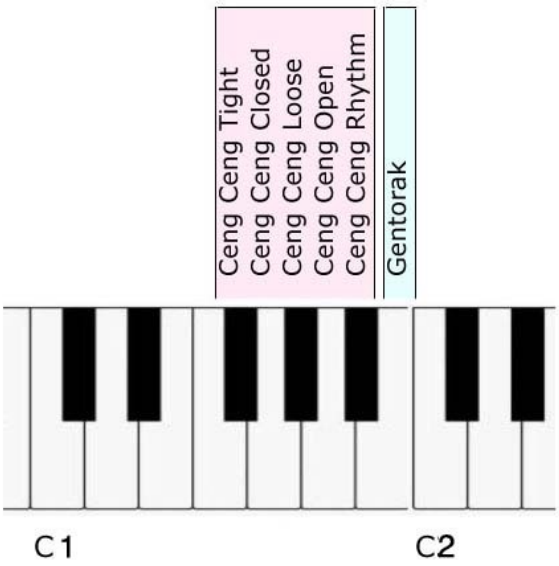


CENG CENG & GENTORAK

The Ceng Ceng is a rhythmic instrument with small cymbals that are shuffled and hit together. It has a similar function to a high-hat, and is therefore mapped a little bit like a high hat, with the tighter samples on the left end of it's range. It's also programmed as an "exclusive group" instrument, so that a tight sample will stop an open sample from sounding.

Often the Ceng Ceng plays very tightly with the Reyong part, with damped and open strokes being matched and enhancing the syncopation of those rhythms.

The Gentorak is a kind of bell-tree, which is used sparingly to accent points in the music, usually at the same time as the Gong Wadon.



METALLOPHONES (GENDER)

The metallophones are generally divided into two sections, the core melody instruments, and the "gangsa" decorative instruments. All except the Ugal are generally played in pairs. Pairs of instruments are detuned, so you have a higher and lower pitched version of each.

JEGOG

The lowest of the metallophones, the Jegog generally also tends to play most slowly, usually reinforcing important notes from the Calung part.

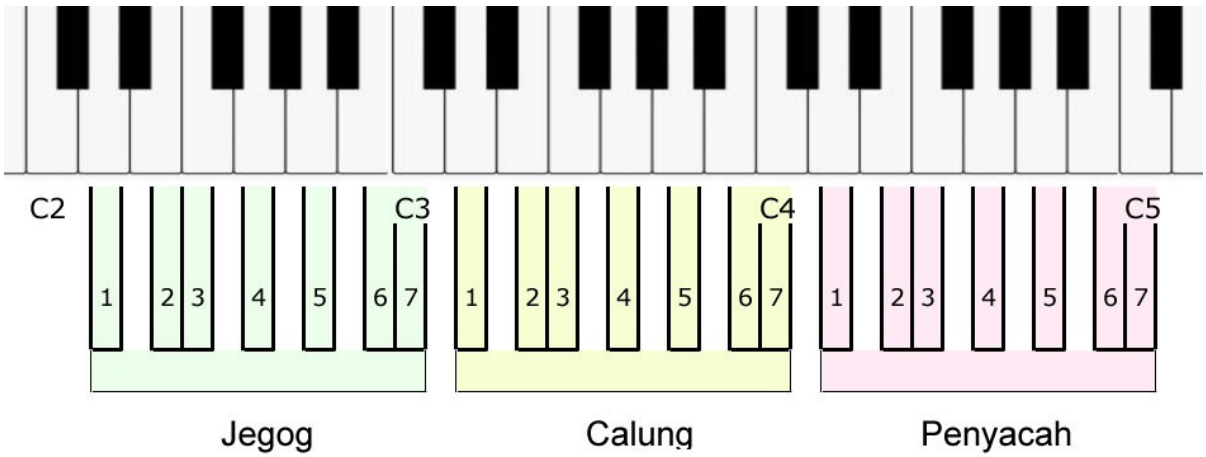
CALUNG

The Calung usually play the "core melody" of a piece, which often tends to be much slower than the perceived speed of the music. In gamelan, the "core melody" is a kind of structural base, upon which all the other instrumental parts are layered. The higher instruments will often play much more quickly, elaborating on this core melody in various ways.

PENYACAH

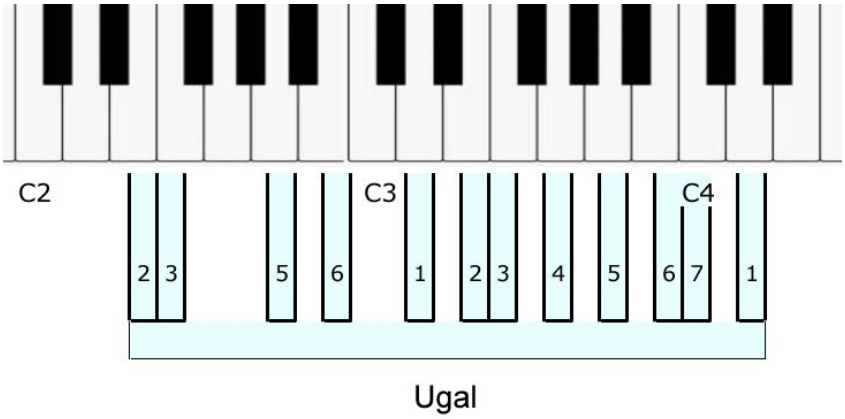
Although the Penyacah is a core melody instrument, it is pitched quite high and therefore helps the core melody to ring through the texture. Sometimes it doubles the rhythm of the Calung part.

Here is a map of the original key keyboard layout for the three "colotomic", or core melody instruments:



UGAL

The Ugal is the leader of the “gangsa” section of the gamelan, and usually plays the core melody or an elaboration of the core melody. Unlike the other gender instruments, the Ugal is not paired with a detuned partner.



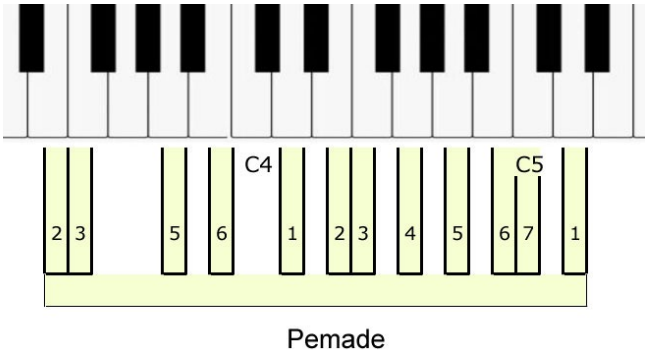
PEMADE

The Pemadé and Kantilan fill out the gangsa section with a texture of rapid intertwining patterns that decorate the core melody. Usually the gangsa is the fastest and most ornate content of a gamelan piece.

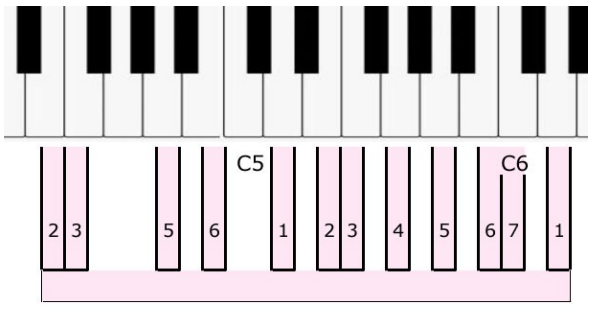
The fast passages on Pemadé and Kantilan are played using a technique called "kotekan", in which successive notes are shared between two players, enabling them to play much faster passages than would be possible for a single player.

KANTILAN

The highest pitched and most brittle sounding of the gangsa, the Kantilan sometimes plays a similar part to the Pemadé, or else elaborates further ornate patterns of it's own.



Pemade



Kantilan

KETTLE GONG INSTRUMENTS

The kettle gongs are not paired instruments, but solo melodic and decorative instruments. The Reyong is more commonly used within Gong Kebyar styles and the Trompong in older styles.

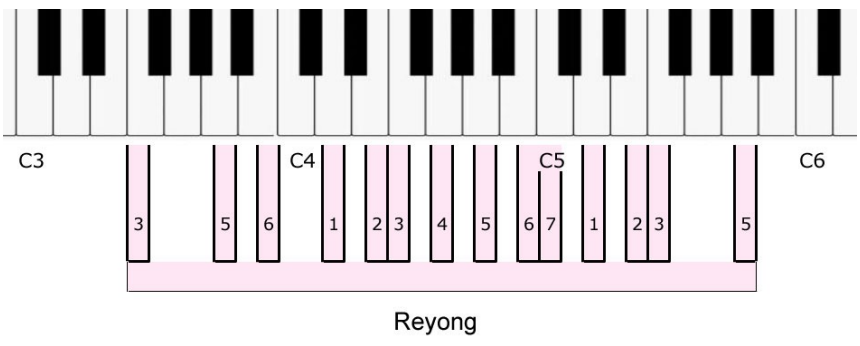
The front panel for these instruments offers random velocity and timing control, as well as attack, release, and "note off level". The playing style of these instruments requires that the gong be damped with the mallet, and this makes a small but sometimes audible sound.

REYONG

The Reyong is very prominent in Kebyar styles, and is often played by four musicians sitting side by side, each responsible for a few notes. These intertwining patterns decorate certain passages, or are featured as a solo section for a piece. As such, Reyong parts are uniquely "chordal" in much gamelan music, although the chords occur very quickly.

Since all players play with both hands, the damping of the gongs is done with the sticks themselves, and therefore sometimes creates a little bit of sound. Our version has a "key off" level, which lets you control the amount of this damping sound.

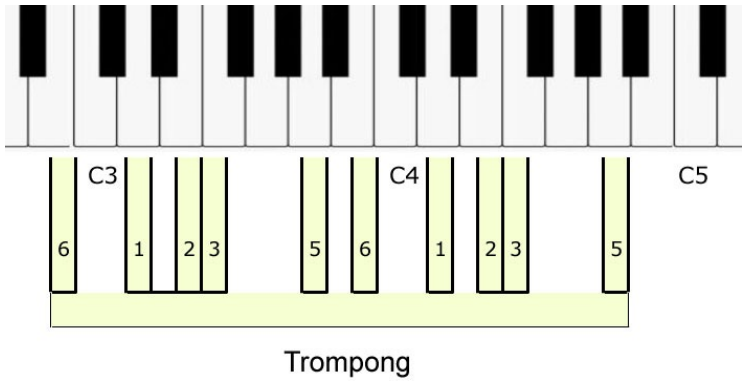
There is also a common technique where players strike the edge of the gong in an almost non-pitched, percussive way.



TROMPONG

Although the Trompong is physically similar to the Reyong, with less notes and slightly lower pitch, it traditionally is played by a single musician. It's not so common in modern Kebyar styles, but in older styles had a very prominent lead role as a melodic instrument.

Often it takes a similar role to the Ugal, leading the group with a elaborate version of the main melody.



THE BATEL RAMAYANA INSTRUMENTS

METALLOPHONES (GENDER)

KANTILAN & PEMADE

There are only four melodic instruments in the Batel ensemble, two Kantilan and two Pemade. These have a similar range of notes, with the Kantilan pitched one octave above the Pemade.

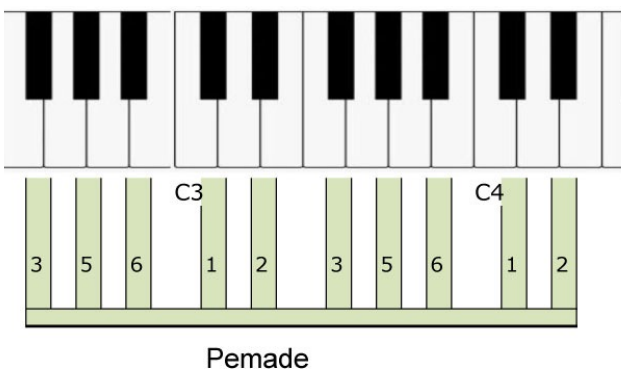
The gender instruments are each constructed from a wood frame and ten rectangular, bronze keys suspended by string and composite hide and wood bridges over upright, tuned bamboo resonators. An instrument spans two octaves with a pentatonic slendro scale.

These are always played in pairs, detuned the same way as other Balinese gamelan instruments, so a typical Batel Ramayana ensemble will include two Kantilan and two Pemade.

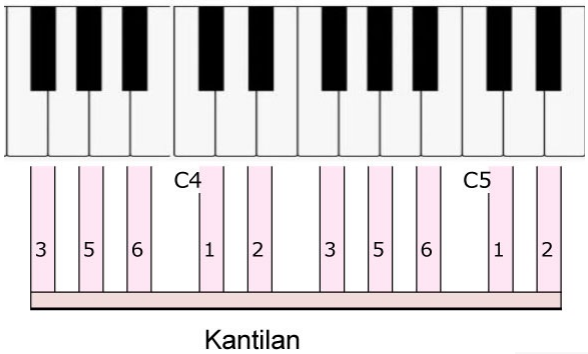
The mallets ("*Pangul*") are slender and radially symmetrical with wooden disc heads and conical bead-like horn rattles. Their shape allows players to fit mallets between second and third fingers of loosely open hands and strike and dampen keys simultaneously with minute, rotating motions of the forearms. Because of this technique, the relative exposure of two instrumental parts, and the execution of syncopated, dynamic compositions in precise synchronicity, gamelan gender wayang is considered one of the most complex genres of Balinese music.

This somewhat advanced technique means that the four instruments of the gender can sound like eight, and be quite dramatic and full, despite a smaller number of players.

Keymap of Pemade and Kantilan:



Pemade



Kantilan

GONGS AND PERCUSSION

KEMPUR

The Kempur is much smaller than the large gongs used in Gong Kebyar (or those found in the Semara Dana collection). It's function is however the same as the large gong, marking large metrical sections.

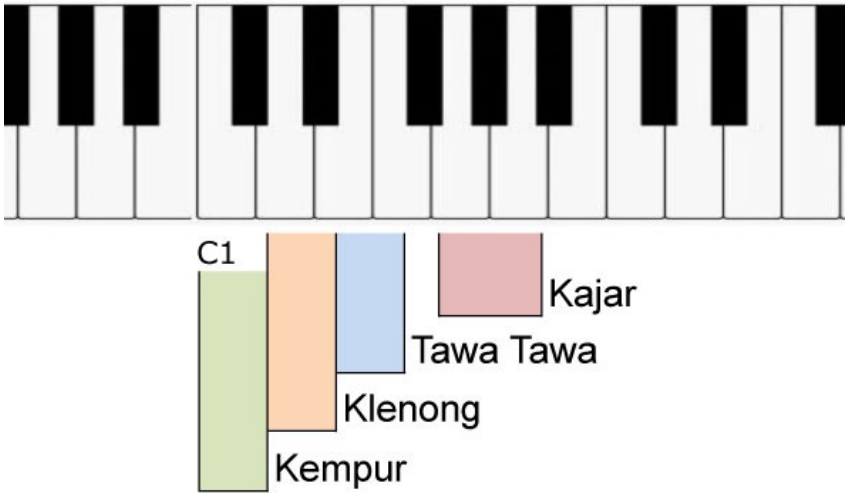
KLENONG

This very small gong marks smaller divisions within the gong cycle, often simply alternating with the larger Kempur.

TAWA TAWA AND KAJAR

The Tawa Tawa and Kajar are used for basic rhythmic time, often alternating against each other.

Keymap of Gamelan Batel gongs:

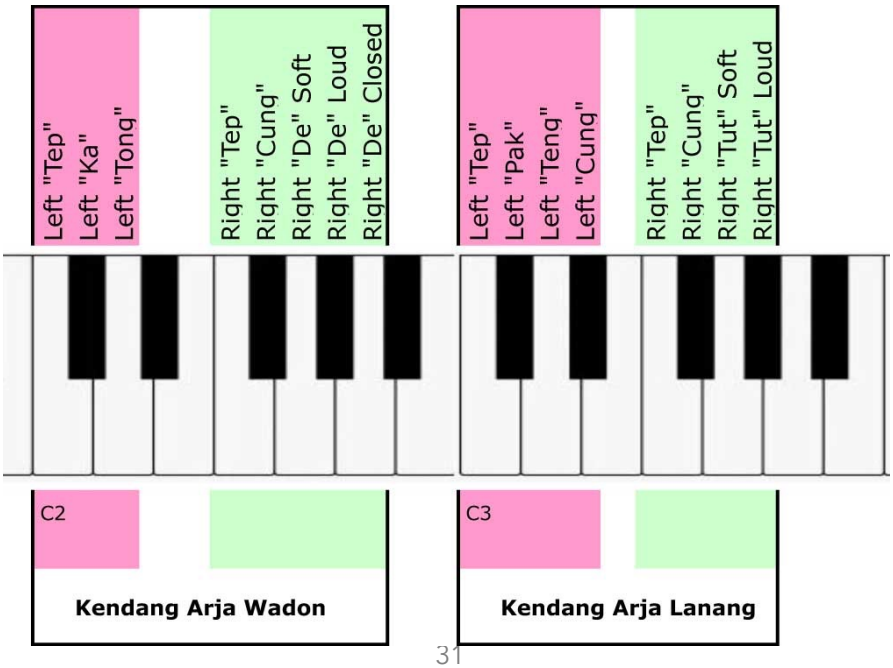


KENDANG ARJA

These kendang are smaller drums than those found in the Semara Dana ensemble. They are also played only with the hands and not with sticks.

The two kendang drums are mapped with various types of hits, separated into the left and right hands/drum heads.

Keymap of Kendang Arja articulations (the precise location of this range can be edited, but the key layout itself is constant) :



FURTHER READING ON GAMELAN MUSIC

If you want to learn more about Balinese gamelan, perhaps the most detailed book available is Michael Tenzer's "Balinese Gong Kebyar". This is a very thorough study, with extensive examples in western notation and two accompanying CDs. As the title suggests, it focuses primarily on Gong Kebyar style.

Lisa Gold's "Music In Bali" is also a good introduction to this music, and beautifully conveys it's cultural and historical context. It also comes with a CD of audio examples of various instruments and techniques.

Michael Tenzer also has a lighter book entitled "Balinese Music", which is a good general introduction to the subject.

Finally there is the classic tome "Music in Bali" by Colin McPhee, but this is now out of print and has therefore become difficult to find and very expensive.

THE KONTAKT INSTRUMENTS

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

There are two primary Kontakt Instruments in this library, one for each gamelan ensemble, named Gamelan Semaradana, and Gamelan Batel. These two instruments are structurally the same, although they include different instruments and sample data.

Each includes three tabs, at the bottom: Gamelan Setup, Shape, and Effects.

Gamelan Setup is where you define the instruments included in your ensemble, the Shape section provides some filters and envelope (synthesis) parameters, and the Effects section of course provides some Effects to further enhance the sound.

THE GAMELAN SETUP PANEL

This panel includes two tabs of it's own, INSTRUMENTS and TUNING.

INSTRUMENTS

All of the instruments found in each ensemble is listed on this tab (Kantilan High, Kantilan Low, etc). Each instrument can be turned on or off with the LED to the left of it's name, and each has a pan and volume fader to the right of it's name.

The range of each instrument will display on the Kontakt virtual keyboard below, although of course many instruments overlap. (Melodic instruments are always green, keyswitches red, and percussion instruments yellow or orange.)

This means that, by default, you are probably playing several gamelan instruments at once. This can be useful for users new to gamelan, or for simply exploring the sound quickly, turning instruments on or off while composing. If you want each instrument on it's own MIDI channel, as a multi, you can do that too. We provide a couple of example Multis as starting points.

The Kendang instrument is mapped at the very bottom of the MIDI note-range by default, so that all instruments can be played at once with a single keyboard map. You'll notice that the range of the Kendang is displayed below it's name, and can be adjusted if you need.

There are some global adjustments you can make to VELOCITY sensitivity, KEY OFF levels (for instruments that have key off samples, not all do). You can also HUMANISE the VELOCITY and TIMING. Humanise is useful if you're sequencing and want to introduce a bit of randomness into an otherwise quantised sequence.

The Keyswitch (default B5 and C6) switches between muted and ringing samples. Many gamelan instruments use these two articulations to add percussive variety to the music. You can move the keyswitch to other keys if you prefer, or assign a controller to the switch instead by right-clicking on the word RING.

PURGE SAMPLES will remove unused samples from memory if the instrument is off. This saves memory but also takes some time, so you don't want to do this if you're automating the on/off instrument switches.

TUNING

By default the Kontakt instruments are set to equal temperament (western standard tuning). If the RETUNE power LED is on, the gamelan is being retuned, and if the tuning system is initialised then this is equal temperament.

If you want to play the instruments in ORIGINAL pitch, simply turn the RETUNE LED off.

Original pitch also implies original mapping (ie. only five or seven notes per octave), so for Gamelan Batel the original pitches are on black keys, and for Semara Dana the original pitches are on white keys.

When RETUNE is on, you can change the pitch of any input MIDI note by semitones (NOTES) or cents (CENTS) (in fact, you can adjust to a hundredth of a cent if you so wish).

You can load or save complete tunings with the menu on the right of the RETUNE title bar. We include some example tunings in the Data folder in your SC Balinese Gamelan / Library folder.

The INITIALISE button simply sets all NOTES and CENTS offsets to 0, putting you back in Equal Temperament.

The ALL OCTAVES button allows you to adjust all octave equivalent keys at once. For example, if you want all input C#s to be fifty cents higher turn on ALL OCTAVES, play a C# and then type 50 into the CENTS box.

You are always viewing and adjusting the last note played, and the active note will be displayed below the Retune title.

OMBAK is the Balinese term for the detuned chorusing between pairs of instruments. Here you can set it as a beat frequency, so that no matter what tuning you choose, the upper and lower instruments will be slightly detuned to create that typical Balinese shimmer. Typical OMBAK frequencies are between 3 Hz and 8 Hz. Batel is generally a little less detuned than Kebyar ensembles.

Note that there are two special tuning presets we provide, SC Batel and SC Semaradana. These allow you to tune one gamelan to the other, so that if you wanted to use the original Semaradana instruments you can tune the Batel instruments to that to join in, or else vice versa.

The tuning file format is compatible with our Hammersmith Piano library, so you can share tunings with that, or else tune the piano to the gamelan, etc.

SHAPE

Shape is the synthesis parameters page. If you're aiming at a natural gamelan emulation you probably won't touch this page, but if you want to make new or original sounds then this can be interesting.

There are three main sections to the Shape page: ENVELOPES, FILTER, and LFO.

ENVELOPES

Here you have controls over the ATTACK and DECAY of the sound for both the AMPLIFIER and FILTER envelopes.

FILTER

Here you can turn on or off a dynamic filter.
Choose the type of filter you want to use with the menu to the right of FILTER.

You can then adjust the CUTOFF, the RESonance, the ENVelope depth to the filter cutoff, the VELocity sensitivity of the filter. And there is also an additional High Pass Filter which you can adjust.

LFO

There are two LFOs, one for FILTER and one for PAN. You can choose the shape of the LFO with the drop down menu beside the words FILTER and PAN. The knobs FILTER and PAN adjust the amount of LFO depth to those parameters.

The two RATE knobs adjust the RATE of the LFOs.

All these controls can be automated either using host automation or by assigning MIDI controls (right click on the control).

THE EFFECTS PANEL

The effects panel is divided into two sections. The insert effects path is on the left, and here you can assign six insert effects in order from top to bottom. The parameters for the currently selected effect appear on the far left, and you can choose which effect you're editing with the buttons on the right. To the right of the selection buttons you can see LEDs to turn the effect on or off, and a small menu icon which allows you to choose which effect is in that "block".

This means you can put the effects in any order you like.

There are 16 insert effects available in the insert block drop down menus. These are:

CHORUS
PHASER
FLANGER
DELAY
SATURATION
DISTORTION
LOFI
SKREAMER
FILTER
TAPE SATURATION
CABINET
ROTATOR
COMPRESSOR
EQUALISER
STEREO
REVERB

Each of these have controls specific to the effect.

You cannot have the same effect in two different effect blocks, if you choose an effect that is already in another effect block, the two effects will simply swap positions.

All effect parameters can be automated, and all parameters are retained even if the effect is not currently being used.

The dice icon at the top of the insert effect blocks chooses a random set of effects.

The SPACE section on the right of the screen is a convolution reverb. You have controls over the MIX level, the SIZE, and High Pass and Low Pass filters on the reverb. You can choose which convolution IR to use with the drop down menu icon at the right of the word SPACE.

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