GOTHIC INSTRUMENTS

DRONAR

Revolutionary Kontakt atmosphere creator.
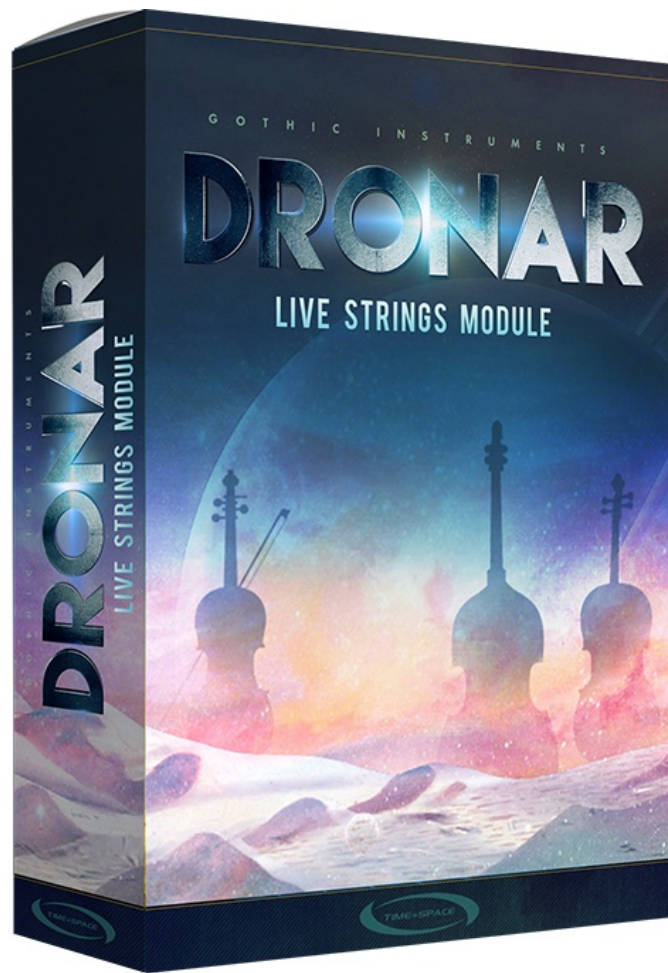
LIVE STRINGS MODULE

CONTENTS

1 – WELCOME!

Thank you for buying the DRONAR Live Strings Module. DRONAR is a deep, expressive and innovative atmospheric sound creator, each module exploring a different area of sound & music. This Live Strings Module creates a massive range of strings-based textures from natural live strings and live-played effects to awe-inspiring soundscapes, with hundreds of varied presets and a huge set of controls designed to invite deep exploration, expression and discovery. With 10GB of world-class live recordings being fed into a huge multi-track modular engine plus synth, effect, arpeggio and rhythm sequencer controls, this is a powerful cinematic beast worthy of heaven and hell.

ABOUT

Gothic Instruments are **Dan Graham** and **Adam Hanley**. Dan has produced sample libraries for Zero G and is the founder of Gothic Storm Music. Adam owns Icebreaker Audio and has scripted many blockbuster products. The incredible Live Strings were performed by members of the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra. The GUI & box art is by **Ryo Ishido**, DRONAR logo by **Sam Hayles** and dial animations by **Koke Núñez Gómez**.

2 – OVERVIEW

A UNIVERSE FROM A NOTE:

DRONAR creates mind-expanding atmospheres from a very small number of notes played (1 to 4 recommended). It automatically spreads out the chord in the mid-range, adds a root bass note, a high note and then adds evolving sound effects. 8 simultaneous different sounds are then animated with LFOs, a rhythm sequencer and arpeggiators to bring them to life. The results are rich and dramatic.

A HAND FREE FOR EXPRESSION:

This sonic complexity from one hand frees up the other to expressively control dials with mouse drags or external MIDI controller knobs, and record the changes as a performance in your DAW. Subtle dial movements give deep expression, ideal for soundtracks as well as highly expressive pads, patterns and atmospheres in any genre.

A COMPLETE ATMOSPHERE:

Because DRONAR instantly adds low, mid-range and high sounds plus sound effects, you barely need other non-Dronar sounds to quickly create a complete piece of atmospheric, expressive music.

BEGINNER AND EXPERT FRIENDLY:

Needing to only play a few notes and move a few dials to get such rich expression is inviting for beginners, but an expert will get further by knowing what notes to play and how to express emotions using the dials. Beyond the shimmering immediacy of the 'Main Page' awaits a whole other world of expert control, turning DRONAR into a vast modular multi-timbral synth/sampler with multiple independent arpeggiators.

DRONAR'S PRESET HIERARCHY – BRIEF OVERVIEW

DRONAR starts from thousands of evolving **sample loops.** 8 of these are loaded into each 'Drone' (an .nka preset file in the /Data folder, one loaded onto each **'Drone Key'**), and then there are 12 Drones in each .nki **patch** (in the /Instruments folder).

CAUTION

Don't blame us if you lose hours in an addictive, hypnotic tweak-state of sound-and-dial wonder, not helped by magical glowing dials and shimmering animations. If you do go on these voyages, save presets or record what you do into your DAW while you work, like postcards from another realm.

SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

- 2GB RAM
- Kontakt 5.6 full version (not the free Kontakt Player)
- Mac OS X 10.6 and above
- Windows 7-10

3 – INSTALLATION

DRONAR - LIVE STRINGS MODULE contains Kontakt Formatted files, which can be accessed from the Files tab within the full version of Kontakt. From within Kontakt, please ensure you are on the Files tab, and not the Libraries tab, and use the browser to locate your chosen install path.

Now, with the product folder in the bottom of the two left windows, navigate through the folder and there will be Kontakt instrument files (.nki) which you can double-click to load into Kontakt.

Going back and forth between the library and files tab can slow down work flow, this is why Native-Instruments included a handy **Quick-Load feature** within Kontakt. By setting up the Quick-Load feature you can customise the layout and access all of your Kontakt formatted files and libraries in one location. Please see the handy Time+Space video for more details on how to set this up: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZtON7YKor5Y

QUICK START

LOAD A PATCH:
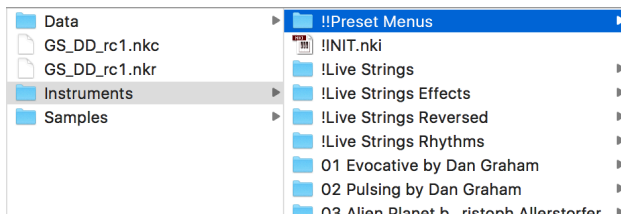
In the "/Instruments/!!Preset Menus" folder you'll see a set of .nki files. Load one from the Kontakt browser or drag across from Explorer (PC) or Finder (Mac).

AUDITION A DRONE FROM THE 12 KEY SWITCHES: Every "Menu" patch has 12 different drones (complete atmospheric sounds) to audition from the 12 key switches on a lower octave (G1 to F#2) of your MIDI keyboard range.

HOLD DOWN 1 TO 4 KEYS: 1 key will give you an octave-based drone. Try holding down different numbers of notes to hear the options – octaves, fifths, fourths, chords. You can hold down more than 4 keys, especially if you want the arpeggiator to create intricate runs, but 1-4 is usually enough.

MOVE THE MOD WHEEL: Looking at the GUI, the **INTENSITY** dial is mapped to the Mod Wheel and immediately opens up the expressive power of DRONAR.

MOVE THE MAIN PAGE DIALS:

Move the dials with your mouse as you hold down the notes (or sustain them with a sus pedal). You will hear the immediate impact on the sound and get a good understanding of the way DRONAR works.

INTENSITY (also controlled by the Mod Wheel) takes you from silent to powerful by fading up through different velocity layers.

MOVEMENT has a global effect on the intensity of the arpeggiators – set it high for strong effects and zero for a flat pad sound.

HI, MID and **LO** control the automatically generated high notes, mid-range notes and bass notes. Moving these dials has a huge expressive effect on the music. It's only like using a mixing desk and yet – having it so accessible in front of you encourages you to work with the balance as part of the original creative expression, instead of a mix decision later on.

FX controls the level of 20-second futuristic, unpitched sound effects loops in the mix and add instant movement and complexity.

So, you should now be up and running. Read on to delve deeper.

4 – THE MIDI KEYS

The Kontakt keyboard shows a colour coded guide to what's happening in each range.

THE 12 DRONE KEYS (red keys, F0 to E1):

Each of these red **Drone Keys** contains a different **Drone** (a preset). Play a red key to select one and another red key to switch to another. The "Menu" presets have a totally different **Drone** on each **Drone Key**. The other, individual presets have the same **Drone** on every **Drone Key**, encouraging you to create your own variations on the 12 keys.

PLAYABLE RANGE (blue keys G1 to B4):

This range is used to detect the notes you play. Think of it almost like a 'note and chord detection range' more than a playable synth. DRONAR wants to know what notes and chords you want, it doesn't want you to play it like a piano.

OVERFLOW RANGE (pale cyan keys C5 to B5):

In case you start playing outside the detection range, it repeats the top octave for you just to make sure your chords are captured.

5 – MAIN PAGE

Behold, shimmering clouds of magic space dust and dazzling light wheels! These 6 simple dials have a huge influence over the sound. Record changes as DAW automation, or assign dials to an external MIDI controller and hit the DAW record button.

MAIN PAGE FEATURES:

There are 6 main dials (INTENSITY, MOVEMENT, FX, HI MID and LO), plus effect send levels (Reverb and Delay), and tabs for the 5 pages.

SOLO OR MUTE A LAYER:

Click a layer name (e.g. 'MID') to toggle mute on/off. Solo using ALT+click.

6 – EXPERT PAGE

The EXPERT PAGE shows you all the settings for the current, last played **Drone** from the 12 **Drone Keys** (the drone-selecting low F0 to E1 octave). These settings are remembered until you close the Kontakt Instrument, so if you switch to a different Drone on a different Drone key and then switch back, you will find all the values as you left them.

This chapter explains each EXPERT PAGE feature, starting at the top and working down. First though, some notes about the layers and sounds:

EACH DRONE HAS 4 LAYERS: FX, HI, MID & LO:

To recap, DRONAR is detecting the notes you play with one hand and automatically adding new notes – extending the middle range, adding a high note, adding a bass note and mixing in sound effects to create a rich, evolving atmosphere.

On the EXPERT PAGE each of these 4 layers (FX, HI, MID and LO) has a separate set of controls, like a rack of 4 synths, or 4 mixing desk channels.

EACH LAYER HAS 2 SOUNDS:

Each of the 4 layers consists of 2 different sounds (actually long, complex loops at 3 dynamic levels).

RANDOMIZE SAMPLES BUTTON

RANDOMIZE SAMPLES Hitting this button will keep all your settings but instantly swap all the samples in the 8 named sound slots (2 per layer). This is wonderful for quickly finding new sound variations and it's easy to keep hitting the button if you're not happy with what it throws at you.
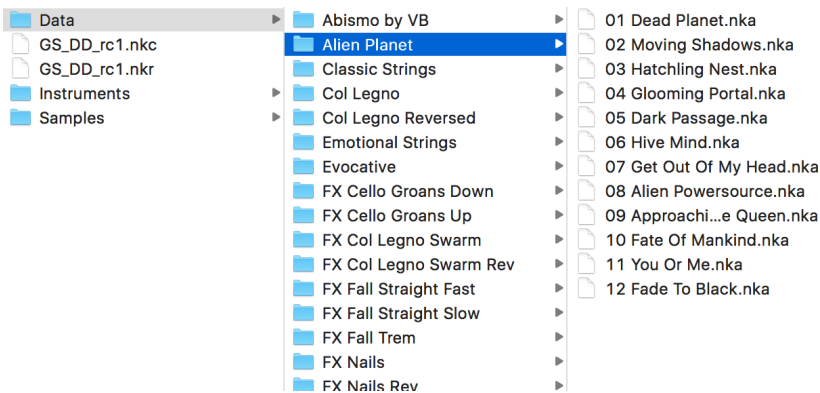
CAUTION: Kontakt has no "UNDO" function, so once you hit RANDOMIZE to change the samples you can't change them back. Save the .nki or "STORE" your Drone if you want to keep it permanently.

STORE AND LOAD DRONES

STORE DRONE   LOAD DRONE DRONAR has an entire **hidden internal Drone preset system** which you can work with. This is a large set of .nka files sitting in the /Data/Factory Presets folder which can be individually loaded onto Drone Keys, and you can also create and save your own new .nka Drone preset files.

STORE DRONE allows you to save the settings on the current Drone Key as an .nka file to be loaded into a different Drone Key, or loaded later into a different or new file.

Data	Abismo by VB	01 Dead Planet.nka
GS_DD_rc1.nkc	Alien Planet	02 Moving Shadows.nka
GS_DD_rc1.nkr	Classic Strings	03 Hatchling Nest.nka
Instruments	Col Legno	04 Glooming Portal.nka
Samples	Col Legno Reversed	05 Dark Passage.nka
	Emotional Strings	06 Hive Mind.nka
	Evocative	07 Get Out Of My Head.nka
	FX Cello Groans Down	08 Alien Powersource.nka
	FX Cello Groans Up	09 Approachi...e Queen.nka
	FX Col Legno Swarm	10 Fate Of Mankind.nka
	FX Col Legno Swarm Rev	11 You Or Me.nka
	FX Fall Straight Fast	12 Fade To Black.nka
	FX Fall Straight Slow	
	FX Fall Trem	
	FX Nails	
	FX Nails Rev	

LOAD DRONE opens an Explorer or Finder window where you can load an .nka file onto the current Drone Key, overwriting the current Drone.

CAUTION – NO UNDO: Kontakt has no Undo function, so unless you've saved your patch or .nka Drone preset, overwriting the current Drone will lose it forever. Be careful to save great sounds in case you overwrite them!

MASTER FX AREN'T SAVED: Your .nka preset will store your REV and DEL *send* settings, but the reverb and delay settings (as well as other master effects) in the MASTER FX page are not stored in the preset and could have a big influence on the sound.

SOLO & MUTE LAYERS:

FX Click on the layer name (e.g. 'FX') to toggle mute on/off. Alt+Click to solo the layer. This is very useful when auditioning different samples or making changes to one layer.

'THICK' BUTTONS:

Thick Each of the 4 layers has a THICK button. This adds in extra notes for a thicker sound:

- In the **FX** layer THICK adds the same sound at a lower octave.
- In the **HI** layer THICK adds an extra octave higher up for a more piercing, high sound.
- In the **MID** layer THICK spreads the chord intelligently across 2 octaves for a thick chord or a larger arpeggio range.
- In the **LO** layer THICK adds a note an octave above the main bass note for a slightly more powerful lower mid range.

THE TWO SAMPLES AND THE A/B SLIDERS:

Each of the 4 layers contains 2 samples (2x 20 second loops at 3 dynamic velocity layers). The names of those samples are shown in the boxes.

The **A/B SLIDERS** to the right allow you to have just the top sound at 100%, just the bottom sound at 0% or a blend of both if the slider is between the two.

A/B SLIDER TIP: Blending 2 sounds fills out the frequency spectrum and therefore creates an overall more noise-like sound, especially FX sounds, and even more so if all layers have blended sounds. For more purity and character, try some or all at 0% or 100%.

SAMPLE SELECTION MENUS:
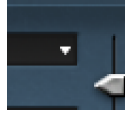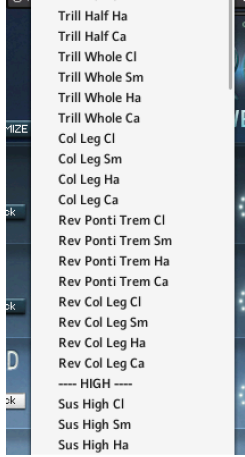
If you click a **WHITE DOWN-ARROW** to the right of a sample name it will open up a **SAMPLE SELECTION MENU.**

These raw sample loops are organised into categories and samples. Categories are sustain sounds, reversed sounds, "DRONAR" sounds (including strings and synths and common to all modules) and "RHYTHMS" – rhythmical loops which can be re-arranged in the RHYTHM EDITOR.

ATTACK AND RELEASE TIME:

The white ramp up and down icons are for the ATTACK TIME and RELEASE TIME. Together they control whether the sound fades in and out slowly or quickly.

FILTER SETTINGS:

E➔F is for **ENVELOPE TO FILTER.** Set high, the filter opens up and closes as the sound gets louder and quieter (as set by the ATTACK and RELEASE TIMES).

F is the **FILTER** cutoff – low for a less bright sound.

Q controls the **RESONANCE** of the filter.

Mw➔F is for **MOD WHEEL TO FILTER.** Set high, the Mod Wheel controls the FILTER CUTOFF frequency (as well as the INTENSITY setting).

FILTER NOTE: these filter settings and those in the Arpeggiator all interact, sometimes unexpectedly, meaning that you won't always get the same results from any one dial setting.

WIDTH, TONE AND VOLUME:

WIDTH controls the stereo separation of the two sample loops in the layer. A high setting pans them out left and right while low pans them both centre. This can be good to get spacey wide sounds, or focused central sounds.

TONE is a complex EQ control. At low settings it takes off the high frequencies and boosts the low for a big low sound. At high settings it boosts the high frequencies and cuts out the lows, resulting in a thin bright sound.

VOLUME (speaker icon) controls the layer volume and mirrors the big dial settings on the MAIN PAGE.

SMART BASS ON/OFF BUTTON:
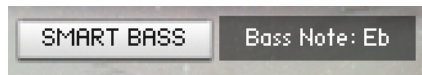
When enabled, **SMART BASS** works out the correct root note for your current chord. If this is off, the bass note will instead just be the lowest note in the chord you are holding down.

7 – LFO & FX PAGE

Whereas effects on the "Master FX" Page are global across all 12 Drones in the current patch, any settings on this LFO & FX page are only active on the current Drone now playing, on the most recently played Drone Key of the 12 key switches.

LFO SETTINGS:

For those unfamiliar, **'LFO'** (for Low Frequency Oscillator) is a continuous wave of changing values spread over time, which can be routed here to Pan, Filter and Pitch. Those audio parameters then change over time under the control of the LFO. This helps add movement to the sound, including panning, vibrato or siren effects.

- **RATE** is the speed of the LFO
- **MWHeel** allows you to control the amount of LFO using the Mod Wheel
- **Shape** changes the shape of the wave from triangle to sine to square
- **Pan** defines how much the LFO makes the sound pan from left to right and back
- **Pitch** defines the amount of pitch change caused by the LFO
- **Desync** at high settings throws all of the different sounds in the current Drone out of sync with each other, so they don't all move together any more, for a more complex and varied sound.

DRONE EFFECTS:

These *insert* effects alter the sound of the currently playing Drone, as selected by the last played Drone Key of the 12 key switches.

DIST (VALVE DISTORTION):

- **DRIVE** adds steadily more distortion to the sound
- **DAMP** dampens the sound, making it more soft and dull
- **MWheel** maps the Mod Wheel to the DRIVE level. A high setting means it will get very distorted near the top of the Mod Wheel.

CHORUS:

Chorus is an effect created by playing the same sound twice but slightly detuned and can add thickness, interest and colour to the sound.

- **AMOUNT** is the depth of the chorus effect
- **RATE** is the speed of the chorus modulation

REVERB AND DELAY SENDS:
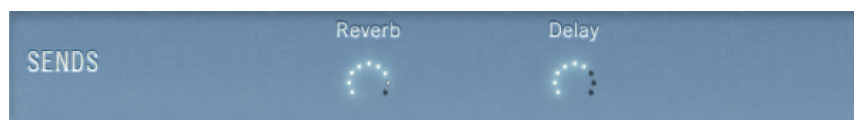
This is a mirror of the "REV" and "DEL" dial settings on the Main Page GUI and controls the amount of sound being sent out to the Reverb and Delay effects.

8 – ARPEGGIATOR PAGE
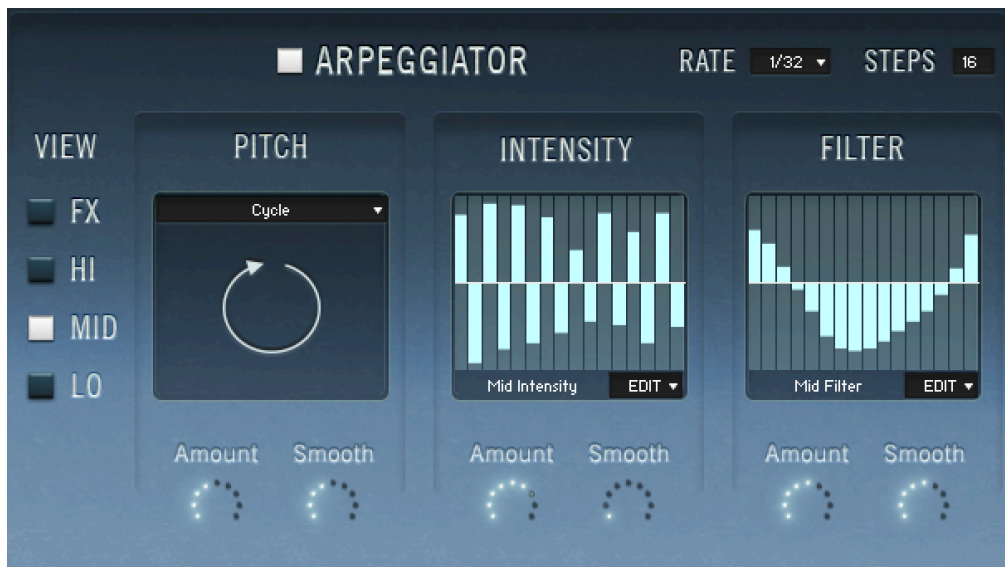
This is the place to get sounds really moving or pulsing over time, synced to the DAW host tempo. In the factory presets the "Arp-O-Rama" presets are heavily using pitch arpeggios in the MID range and the "Pulsing" presets are heavily using INTENSITY and FILTER patterns to get those pulsing qualities.

ARPEGGIATOR ON AND OFF:

This switches the arpeggiator on and off for the currently selected Drone (the last played of the 12 Drone Key key switches). If you don't need the arpeggiator, turning this off will save some CPU.

RATE AND STEPS:

RATE allows a wide range of rates from slow 1/4 (where each step in the arpeggiator is a quarter note) right up to a very fast 1/64 (each step is a 64th of a bar). This gives you the ability to use the Arpeggiator as much for slow undulating movements as much as for fast strobe-like patterns.

STEPS defines the number of steps in the pattern. 16 is the default. Using 12 will be useful for a 3/4, 6/8 or triplet pattern.

LAYER SELECTOR:

Select the layer (FX, HI, MID or LO) that you wish to view and edit in the Arpeggiator. The rest of the ARPEGGIATOR page then shows the settings for that currently selected layer.

Because the MID layer covers a wide range of different notes and the other layers don't (the FX layer has no pitch, and the HI and LO layers have single notes or octaves), the MID layer has extra PITCH arpeggiator options.

Each layer has all other options in common, with their own independent arpeggiators. This allows a lot of complexity and flexibility, for example having fast rhythms in the FX layer, no arpeggiator in the HI layer, pitch arpeggios in the MID later and slow pulses in the low layers.

ARPEGGIATOR - KEY-TRIGGERED PATTERNS TIP: If you get a good complex pattern going across the different layers, you can STORE the Drone, then create different variations on the pattern and STORE each of those. Then LOAD those different Drones onto the 12 different Drone Key key-switches. Now, you have your own 12-pattern key-triggered sequence!
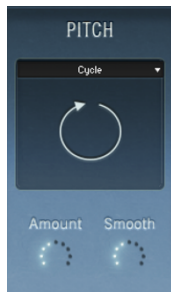
AMOUNT & SMOOTH DIALS:
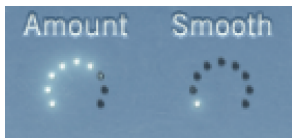
Each of the 3 types of arpeggiator (PITCH, INTENSITY and FILTER) have these two controls. **AMOUNT** controls how *strong* the arpeggiation is, whereas **SMOOTH** fades in the arpeggiation effect - slowly at high settings and sharply at low settings. This vague explanation will be made more clear below.

**DRONAR'S UNIQUE PITCH ARPEGGIATOR:**

The PITCH arpeggiator as far as we know is an original type of arpeggio generator not found elsewhere. Whereas other arpeggiators re-trigger the note at every step, DRONAR's pitch arpeggiator plays all the notes that you are holding down but **cross-fades between them.** This is like having the different notes of a chord all going through different channels on a mixing desk, then turning the faders in succession to create the impression of an arpeggio.

The beauty of this approach is that you can choose how *strong* the arpeggiator is. If the **AMOUNT** dial is low you hear just the chord you are playing, set full you hear all the separate notes as each sound is faded out between steps. Between zero and full you get a wonderful blend of half-arpeggios – shimmering chords with a hint of movement.

The **SMOOTH** dial is like fading up the mixer faders quickly for a fast, gated, non-fade, or slowly for a slow, smooth crossfade between the notes in the chord.

HOW THE MAIN PAGE MOVEMENT DIAL AFFECTS AMOUNT & SMOOTH VALUES:
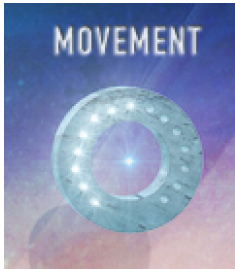
Back on the MAIN page, one of the 6 big dials is the MOVEMENT dial. This dial is actually globally increasing or reducing all the AMOUNT settings on the ARPEGGIATOR page. At 12 o'clock, you hear just whatever AMOUNTS have been set on the ARPEGGIATOR page. At zero, the arpeggiator's AMOUNT values are brought to zero, cancelling out any arpeggiation. Set full, the AMOUNT values are all pumped up full for exaggerated arpeggiator action.

### PITCH ARPEGGIATOR – FX OPTIONS:
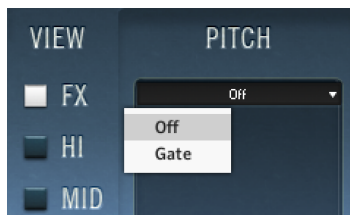
Because the FX layer doesn't actually have pitches, we couldn't actually give pitch arpeggiator options Here. So, rather than leaving it blank we've thrown in a GATE option which pulses the FX layer on and off.

PITCH ARPEGGIATOR – HI OPTIONS:

If you have the HI layer's THICK button enabled on the EXPERT page then DRONAR is producing two HI notes an octave apart. These options – UP or DOWN – create a simple octave up or down arpeggiator pattern in the HI layer.

PITCH ARPEGGIATOR – MID OPTIONS:
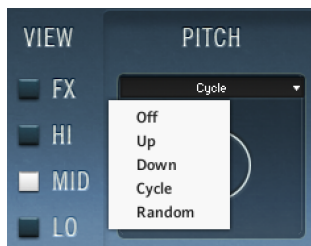
It is in the MID layer that the real arpeggio magic happens. Four different patterns (UP, DOWN, CYCLE and RANDOM) cycle through all the notes you are holding down with a subtle shimmery arpeggio (at low AMOUNT settings) or a clear arpeggio pattern (at high AMOUNT settings).

MID PITCH ARP – "THICK" TIP: A nice effect is created when the MID layer's THICK button is enabled on the EXPERT page - there is an extra octave of notes to cycle through and the pattern is therefore bigger, takes twice as long to complete and produces more soaring patterns.

MID PITCH ARP – CLUSTERS AND RUNS TIP: Instead of a chord, if you hold down a cluster of notes, some close together, the 'arpeggio' becomes a run, like a little melody. Try holding down the notes A, B, C, E and F# now for a magical little pattern based around an Am6+9 chord.

PITCH ARPEGGIATOR – LO OPTIONS:

Like the HI layer, the LO layer only has two octave notes (and only then if the THICK button is enabled on the EXPERT page) and therefore you just get the simple UP or DOWN options.

THE INTENSITY ARPEGGIATOR:

As far as we know, the INTENSITY arpeggiator is another unique DRONAR feature. Where other arpeggiators control the volume of a sound, the INTENSITY arpeggiator actually controls the dynamic velocity layer of the sound. It is as if the values you set here are moving the Mod Wheel up and down in a pattern, fading up and down between soft and intense samples.

To edit the pattern window, drag your mouse to 'draw' patterns.

INTENSITY ARPEGGIATOR – DROP-DOWN EDIT MENU:

Here you get some handy options to speed up your editing:
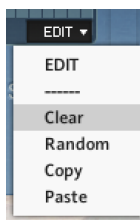
- CLEAR clears the box, resulting in a flat line
- RANDOM gives you a random pattern for chaotic effects
- COPY copies this pattern to your clip board to paste into other pattern windows in other layers or in the FILTER pattern window.
- PASTE pastes a pattern from your clip board into the current window.

INTENSITY ARPEGGIATOR TIPS:

Some ideas about what could be done with the INTENSITY arpeggiator:

- **GATING:** use this as a noise gate producing complex gating effects. This is going to be more dramatic with high RATE settings (32 or 64) for speed, and with sharp contrasts between high and low INTENSITY bars, and with the AMOUNT dial high and SMOOTH dial low.

- **TREMOLO:** get an effect like a guitar tremolo pedal with high-ish RATES (16 or 32), draw in a wave pattern and set the SMOOTH dial high to smooth off the jumps further.

- **UNDULATING WAVES:** have the sound undulating slowly back and forth with slow RATES, a mild wave pattern (or low AMOUNT dial setting) and high SMOOTH dial setting.

- **SLOW PULSES:** set the RATE slow and have half of the INTENSITY pattern at the top and half at the bottom, with the AMOUNT dial high and the SMOOTH dial low.

- **RHYTHMS:** With high RATE settings, draw large saw-tooth patterns to mimic notes being played with a fast attack and decay, and lay them out in a pattern. By having different patterns in different layers you can build up a groove.

- **MAKE A LAYER SUPER LOUD:** A trick to make one layer super-loud (say you want the LO layer to blast out even at low Mod Wheel settings), is to set the intensity pattern at full – all white bars to the top, with AMOUNT set full. This will have the effect of overriding the Mod Wheel and getting a big volume boost for that layer.

THE FILTER ARPEGGIATOR:
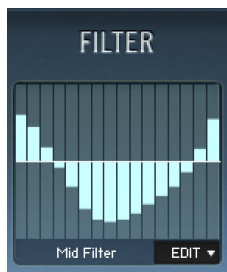
This works just like the INTENSITY arpeggiator. The difference is just that instead of the INTENSITY level, the FILTER CUTOFF FREQUENCY is being modulated, making it more bright or dull.

Using this you can get effects like filter sweeps, or follow the INTENSITY pattern to get filter envelope effects.

WATCH OUT FOR FILTER INTERACTIONS:

On the EXPERT page you have various filter settings. On the LFO/FX page you also have a filter to LFO mapping, and on this page you have even more filter movement. All of these are controlling the same filter and therefore they will interact unpredictably; the same settings will give different filter results depending on what else is going on.

9 – RHYTHM EDITOR

Live Strings rhythm samples (as found in the sample selection menus on the EXPERT page) were performed live for a natural sound where no two adjacent notes are exactly the same and they therefore have a certain flow compared to triggers of single samples. They were also recorded at 3 dynamics (soft, medium, loud) allowing you to accent your rhythms using the Mod Wheel to fade between dynamics.

The **RHYTHM EDITOR** page allows you to change the patterns of the rhythm samples. Under the hood, the Dronar engine is creating your new patterns in real-time by jumping around the original loops and playing different sections of them in a different order.

Note - if no rhythm samples are active on the current drone, this page won't do anything to the sound.

LO / MID / HI LAYER SELECTOR:

Select the drone layer where you want to edit the rhythm.

PATTERN DISPLAY:

The pattern display shows the active rhythm pattern. The area is divided into bars. Bars are divided into beats, and beats have beat divisions of 2 (8ths), 3 (triplets) or 4 (16ths).

 Click on a beat to select that beat and a dotted rectangle boundary appears. Once selected you can either use the "Beat Div" button to alter the beat division, or click again to toggle an accent (louder note) on and off.
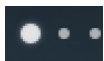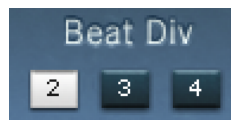
 A large dot indicates an **accent** (louder note). Click inside the currently selected beat area to toggle accent on and off.
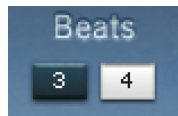
 The **Beats** selector allows you to choose 3 or 4 beats in the bar for a 3/4 or 4/4 time signature.
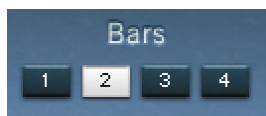
 The **Bars** selector allows you to choose 1, 2, 3 or 4 bars for the total pattern loop length.

 The **Beat Div** (beat division) selector allows you to divide the currently selected beat into 2 (8ths), 3 (triplets) or 4 (16ths).

 TRIGGER MODE allows you to select either FREE (triggers as soon as you press a MIDI note) or BEAT (waits until the next quarter note, to allow a secure lock to the current DAW tempo grid). **NOTE:** This setting is GLOBAL for the whole preset, for all 12 current drones.

TEMPO allows you to choose between half speed, host tempo or double speed for slow or fast rhythmical momentum.
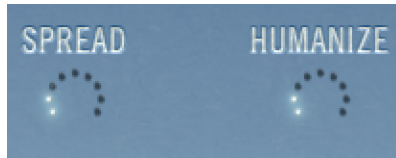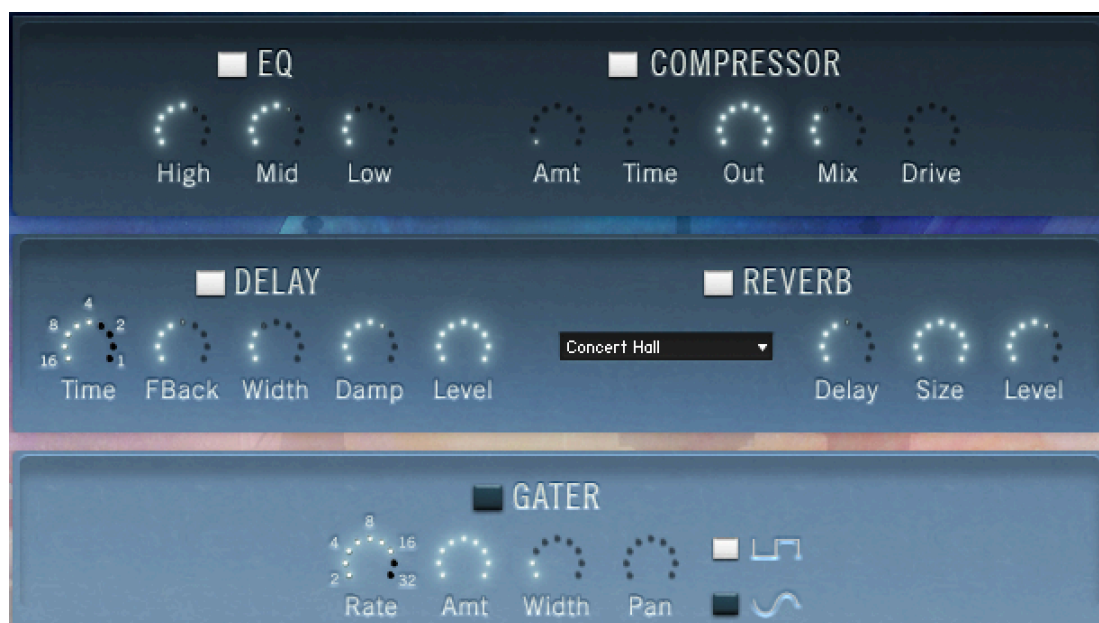
SPREAD slightly separates the notes in a chord in time (arpeggiation) to get a more natural 'strummed' effect.

HUMANIZE adds randomness to that spread, so that instead of a very regular argeggiation it has a more natural loose timing.

The **SAVE** and **LOAD** buttons allow you to permanently store and recall rhythm patterns as ".nka" data files.

10 – MASTER FX PAGE

Effects on this page are inserted into the final master stereo audio output, and that means they are active on all 12 Drones on the 12 Drone-Key key switches.

They are all standard effects which probably need little explanation, but some quick notes below:

- **DELAY & REVERB ARE EFFECT RETURNS:** Meaning that whereas on all the Drones you have different REV and DEL *send* levels, this is the *return*. So, increasing the "Level" dials here will make reverb and delay louder on **all of the 12 Drones** and in a similar way, all other settings on this page will have an impact on all of the Drones in the current nki preset.

- **REVERB TYPES:** DRONAR includes a couple of digital (algorithmic) reverbs and also a set of convolution impulses including some creative and unusual impulses for sound design. Try them out!

- **NOTE: MASTER FX ARE NOT IN THE .NKA DRONE PRESETS:** These Master Effects settings, unlike those on the "LFO & FX" page, are not stored with the individual ".nka" Drone Presets. So, if you want to save these values you need to save your work as an .nki patch.

11 – USING EXTERNAL MIDI CONTROLLERS

You will get the best results from DRONAR by assigning at least the main 6 dials on the MAIN page GUI to knobs on an external MIDI controller.

This is because:

DRONAR IS DESIGNED TO BE PLAYED EXPRESSIVELY.

> The best results come from holding down a note or chord with one hand (or sustaining it using a sustain pedal), and then expressively moving the dials with the other hand. It is more intuitive to do this with an external controller than the alternatives which are (a) trying to move the dials with mouse drags, or (b) trying to write in automation curves in your DAW.

EXTERNAL MIDI CONTROLLER OPTIONS:

- **MIDI KEYBOARD KNOBS:** Many MIDI keyboards have knobs that output MIDI cc data.

- **DEDICATED CONTROL SURFACE:** Popular and inexpensive control surfaces with MIDI cc knobs include the KORG nanoKONTROL2, Behringer X-Touch Mini DAW controller, Novation Nocturn and more.

- **SMARTPHONE / TABLET APPS:** apps capable of creating MIDI cc output include TouchOSC and JazzMutant Lemur.

- **LEAP MOTION + GecoMIDI software:** highly recommended is the Leap Motion 3D infrared gesture-based controller using 3rd party GecoMIDI software (available on the Leap App Store). A preset for GecoMIDI pre-mapped to work beautifully with DRONAR has been created and placed in the /Extras folders.
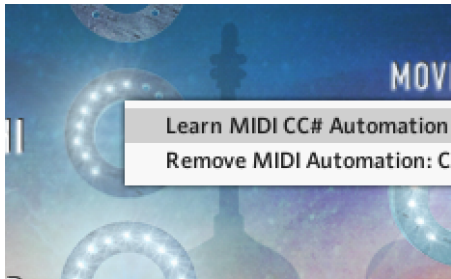
DEFAULT GUI DIAL-TO-MIDI CONTROLLER MAPPINGS:

Each DRONAR preset has been set up with the following cc controllers mapped by default:

- CC01 ➜ INTENSITY dial (the Mod Wheel is mapped to cc1).
- CC14 ➜ MOVEMENT dial
- CC21 ➜ FX dial
- CC23 ➜ HI dial
- CC24 ➜ MID dial
- CC25 ➜ LO dial

TO RE-MAP MIDI CC NUMBERS:

Right-click on any Kontakt dial that you wish to map to a MIDI controller. As well as the MAIN page dials, you can also do this for any other dial on any page.

From here you can LEARN (select then turn a knob on your controller to detect and map it), or REMOVE (remove the default mapping to avoid any confusion).

12 – RECORDING DIAL CHANGES TO YOUR DAW

Automating DRONAR'S dials can be done 3 ways:

- Via an **external MIDI controller** (see previous chapter)

- By **programming automation curves** in your DAW

- By enabling "Write Automation" in your DAW and **recording your mouse-drag dial movements during your performance**. Then enable "Read Automation" when playing back.

HOW TO RECORD MIDI CONTROLLER DIAL MOVEMENTS TO YOUR DAW PROJECT:
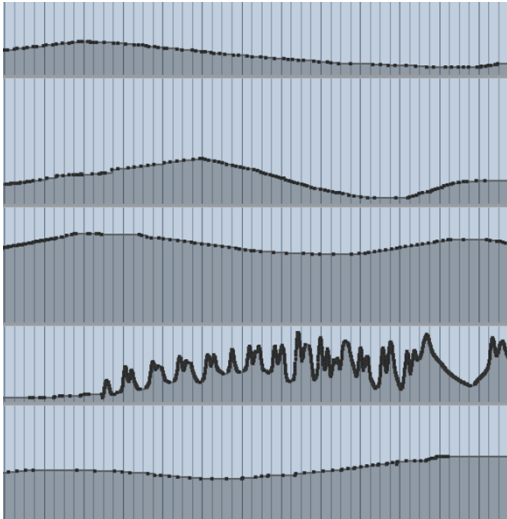
- **ASSIGN DRONAR DIALS TO YOUR MIDI CONTROLLER:** see previous chapter.

- **HIT RECORD, AND PERFORM!** That should be it. As long as your MIDI controller is correctly configured, and your DAW is picking up MIDI from all sources (controller and keyboard), your DAW will record the MIDI cc movements along with the MIDI notes that you play, leaving MIDI automation lanes ready to be edited later.

TIP: MAKE PRESETS FROM DIAL RECORDINGS. If at some point in your recording you get an especially wonderful sound, play it back at that point, hit the DAW STOP button and save what you have as an .nka Drone Preset or .nki Kontakt Instrument patch.

13 – FACTORY PRESETS

DRONAR's Live Strings Module comes with hundreds of presets lovingly designed to show its amazing potential, divided into many categories.

Regarding the raw audio and names of the string playing styles, the more standard articulations are:

Sustain - but instead of flat straight notes like typical sample libraries they were told to undulate in and out in intensity. This creates a very live feeling of movement around the stereo spaces.

Staccato - fast short notes, played alone and in rhythmical loops

Pizzicato - fast plucked notes played alone and in rhythmical loops

Trills - undulate quickly between two notes, either semitones or whole tones. Semitones and whole tones are triggered by drone keys next to each other so you can switch between them.

More unusual articulations are:

"**Col Legno**" - where the strings are tapped with wood on the back of the bow for a creepy sound like little creatures,

"**Pins**" are strings plucked with fingernails next to the tuning nuts for tight high eerie sounds, "Nails" are the same thing on lower strings.

"**Groans**" are the bows being dragged hard against the strings while the pitch slides up or down.

"**Screeches**" are similar but with the pitch range more narrow and undulating slowly

"**Swarms**" are played tremolo (fast bow back and forth) with the pitch sliding around

"**Swirls**" are similar but played straight not tremolo

"**Ponticello**" are tremolo played very close to the bridge, producing a silvery sound high up, and resonant sound like a didgeridoo low down.

.NKA DRONE PRESETS:

Found in the /Data folder, these are individual Drone presets that can be loaded onto individual Drone Keys in an active, loaded patch using the "LOAD DRONE" button on the EXPERT page.

Note: the factory .nki presets in the /Instruments menu are all built up from these individual .nka Drone presets.

PRESET MENU, LIVE STRINGS, REVERSED STRINGS AND SINGLE SOUND PRESETS:

In the /Instruments menu there are 4 types of presets. **MENU** presets load up 12 different drones, one on each of the Drone-Key key switches in the lower F0 to E1 octave.

LIVE STRINGS MENUS focus on natural strings sounds being played back as they were recorded, but giving you expressive control over the dynamics with the Mod Wheel and giving you the freedom to adapt them with all the Dronar engine tools.

The **SINGLE SOUND PRESETS** have one Drone preset, copied across all 12 Drone-Keys. This enables you to create your own variations on the main sound as you are working, save them as .nka Drone presets and quickly switch back and forth between them using the key switches.

The MENU sounds use more RAM because they have more samples loaded.

TO LOAD KONTAKT INSTRUMENT (.NKI) PRESETS:

Either navigate to the /Instruments folder in the Kontakt file browser, or alternatively open the same folder in Explorer (PC) or Finder (Mac) and drag the .nki file onto an open, empty (nothing loaded) instance of Konkakt.

14 – LICENSE AGREEMENT

You are free to use sounds and music made with this software in any musical context including sound design, commercial recordings, soundtracks and Production Music.

Restrictions:

1. You are not authorized to use this software or any of these sounds in any sample library product.
2. You cannot use any exposed single sounds as an entire cue on a library music album with nothing else added for the duration of the track. Please fade or blend more than one Dronar layer, and/or add other sounds.
3. Use is restricted to the single purchaser of the software.
4. This software cannot be shared or distributed without the permission of Gothic Instruments.
5. This license is revoked if any of the above terms are not complied with.

General:

6. This license is subject to the laws of the United Kingdom
7. This license is not a transfer of copyright to the purchaser – the ownership of the intellectual property within the software and the audio it contains remains with Gothic Instruments.

15 – TIPS
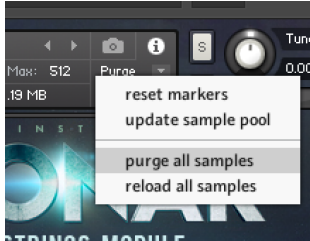
PURGE. Each instance of Dronar would use over 1GB of memory if allowed to load all samples. You can massively reduce the RAM footprint by selecting "purge all samples" and Kontakt will then only reload samples that you actually use and trigger. All factory presets have been saved in a purged state to avoid long load times and RAM hogging.

TWEAK. The presets here only skim the surface of the incredible range of possibilities in this instrument.

A deep exploration is highly recommended.

EXPRESS WITH THE MOD WHEEL. All expression in DRONAR is built around the Mod Wheel (MIDI cc 1), which fades up through the different intensity levels of the actual soft, medium and loud performances on the sample recordings. Velocity (how hard you play MIDI keys) has no effect on the volume.

ACCENT YOUR RHYTHMS WITH THE MOD WHEEL. By rocking the Mod Wheel back and forth while a rhythm is playing you can get great natural accents, including syncopated rhythms.
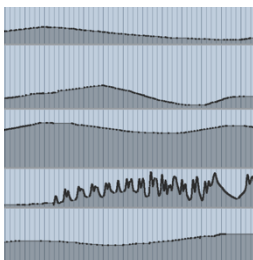
MAKE PRESETS FROM DIAL RECORDINGS. Leave your DAW recording automation ("write automation" enabled) while you play with the dials. If you get an especially wonderful sound, hit the DAW STOP button (or keep going and go back to that point later) and save what you have as an .nka Drone Preset or .nki Kontakt Instrument patch.

16 – FINAL WORDS

Thanks so much for choosing DRONAR – LIVE STRINGS MODULE. We hope you enjoy its vast potential to create amazing, complex atmospheric sounds and expressively perform them.

Please visit our Facebook page where you can keep up with developments & updates and message us with any questions or suggestions:

https://www.facebook.com/gothicinstruments/

Once you've enjoyed the possibilities of the LIVE STRINGS MODULE, we hope you'll stay on board for the future modules in this series!

Thanks,

Dan & Adam

GOTHIC INSTRUMENTS