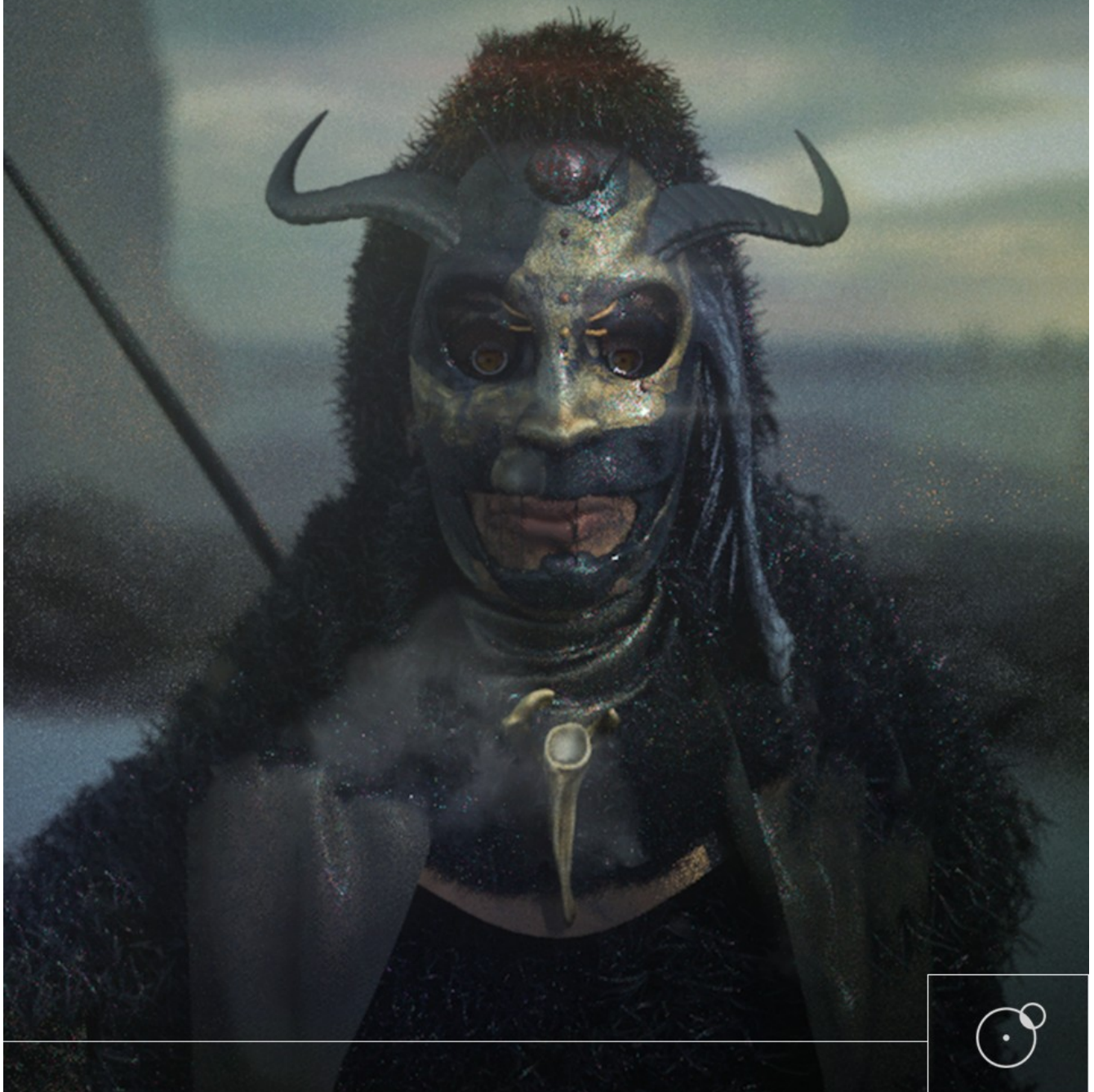End User License Agreement

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Written by Giuseppe Caiazzo, October 15[h] 2021

KONTAKT COMPATIBILITY

Like all the Silence+Other Sounds libraries released until this date (November 2021), **you need a FULL version of Kontakt (v 5.8 or above)** to use the nki instruments, **the free Kontakt Player is not compatible**. Please bear in mind that you can still use the wav files of Omen by accessing the sample folders, regardless if you own a full version of Kontakt or not.

If you're not sure which version you own, just open Kontakt and look at the top left corner of the GUI as showed in the red box in the image below.
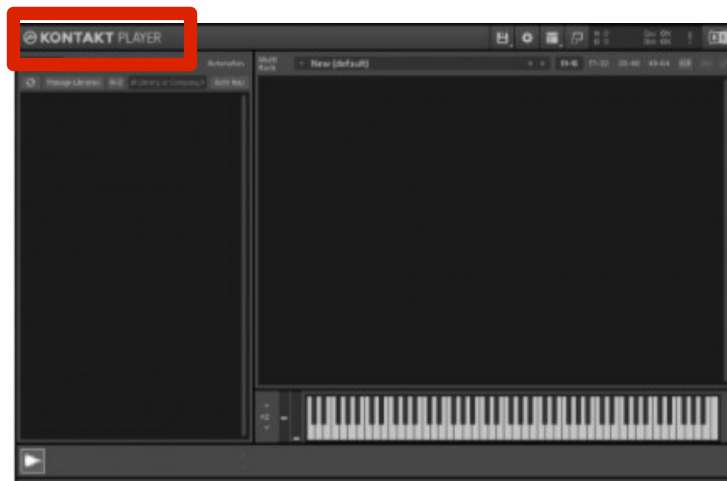
In the case of the full version, you will only read "Kontakt".

SAMPLES AND SNAPSHOTS INSTALLATION

In order to properly use the Kontakt instruments contained in Omen, you need to follow a simple installation procedure for both the samples and the snapshots. Please make sure to have downloaded the following files:

- *OMEN.zip*

- *04-Textures.zip*

- *Omen Snapshots.zip*

Samples

Please extract both *OMEN.zip* and *04-Textures.zip*. Once finished, copy the extracted folder *04-Textures* into *OMEN→Samples*. Make sure the Samples folder in Omen now looks like in the image below.

Installation of the samples is now complete.

Snapshots

Please extract the *Omen Snapshots.zip* file*:* this will extract a folder named *'01_Vocal Layers'*, which contains the snapshots of the Vocal Layers Kontakt instrument featured in Omen. You need to copy the whole extracted folder '*01_Vocal Layers*' to the Kontakt snapshots folder. Depending on your computer OS (Mac or Windows), you can find the Kontakt Snapshots folder by following the file-path below:

Mac OS:

System Drive/Users/<*your username*>/Documents/Native Instruments/UserContent/ Kontakt/

Windows:

C:\Users\<your username>\Documents\Native Instruments\User Content\Kontakt\

Once done, you will be able to see and use the 72 snapshots in the Vocal Layers instrument (the other instruments in Omen do not have snapshots).

If you experience issues with the snapshots after the installation described above, please follow this short tutorial to fix the problem: https://youtu.be/D5SU_wR2bxM?t=51

TECH SPECS

Size (unzipped)	5.89 GB
Kontakt compatibility	FULL version of Kontakt 5.8 or above
Delivery method	Digital download only
User License	Single user license, royalty free

CONTENT

Omen includes 8 Kontakt instruments , listed below:

01 Vocal Layers

02 Rhythmic Chants

03 Phrase Builder – WAR

04 Phrase Builder – SORCERY

05 Vocal Horns

06 Growls – Whispers

07 Sentences

08 Bonus Percussions

Omen features 72 snapshots (only valid for the Vocal Layers instrument) and 48 MPE Multis.

1. OMEN – VOCAL LAYERS Instrument

1.1 - Basic concept

Vocal Layers is a playable, MPE compatible instrument. As the name suggests, the basic concept of the instrument is to give the possibility to blend different vocal sounds together and create a large variety of sonic combinations.

There are 4 different sound sources (vocal layers), selectable from 4 independent menus located at the top of the GUI in the Main panel. The 4 menus are identical, you can select from a total of 94 different layers per menu (including both male as female voices), ranging from Asian styles like kaargyraa (throat singing), khoomei, szygyt (overtone singing) to Western styles like tenore, baritone, soprano etc. All of the 4 layers can be individually manipulated and controlled.

The sounds in each menu are organized in 4 different categories:

Vocal Drones (VD)	Tonal vocal sounds in the low register, including throat singing (kaargyraa and khoomei), Tuvan overtone singing (szygyt) and baritone voices
Sustained (SUS)	Tenor, soprano, kulning (Scandinavian chant), Slavic chant.
Phrases (PHR)	Throat singing, overtone singing, soprano. *Due to their rhythmical nature, the following voices (selectable from the menus) are tempo synched:* *PHR Psamathes F 11* *PHR Psamather F 12*
Textures (TXT)	*designed/synthesized vocal sounds, ranging from manipulated throat singing sounds to synthesized vocal samples*

1.2 - Mapping and managing the vocal layers

The main peculiarity of the Vocal Layers instrument is that you can decide on which part of the keyboard you want one or more sounds to be mapped.

For example, you might want three overlapping low droning vocal layers assigned to the *blue* keys (see previous picture) to play them in unison with your left hand, and an high pitch sustained layer on the *turquoise* keys, to play it independently with

your right hand. Or you might want to stack all the 4 available layers on the top of each other and play them altogether to create a thick choir effect.

The *Manage Layers* function allows to freely assign one or more layers either to the low side of the keyboard (**Part 1**, highlighted in **blue**) or to the high one (**Part 2**, highlighted in **turquoise**) .

Click on the *Manage Layers* button, located at the top-middle of the GUI in the Main panel: you will see that the screen is lightly darkened and the image of a keyboard shows up at the middle of the GUI. By using the right-left side arrows, you can select between 3 options of how the vocal layers are assigned to the two parts.
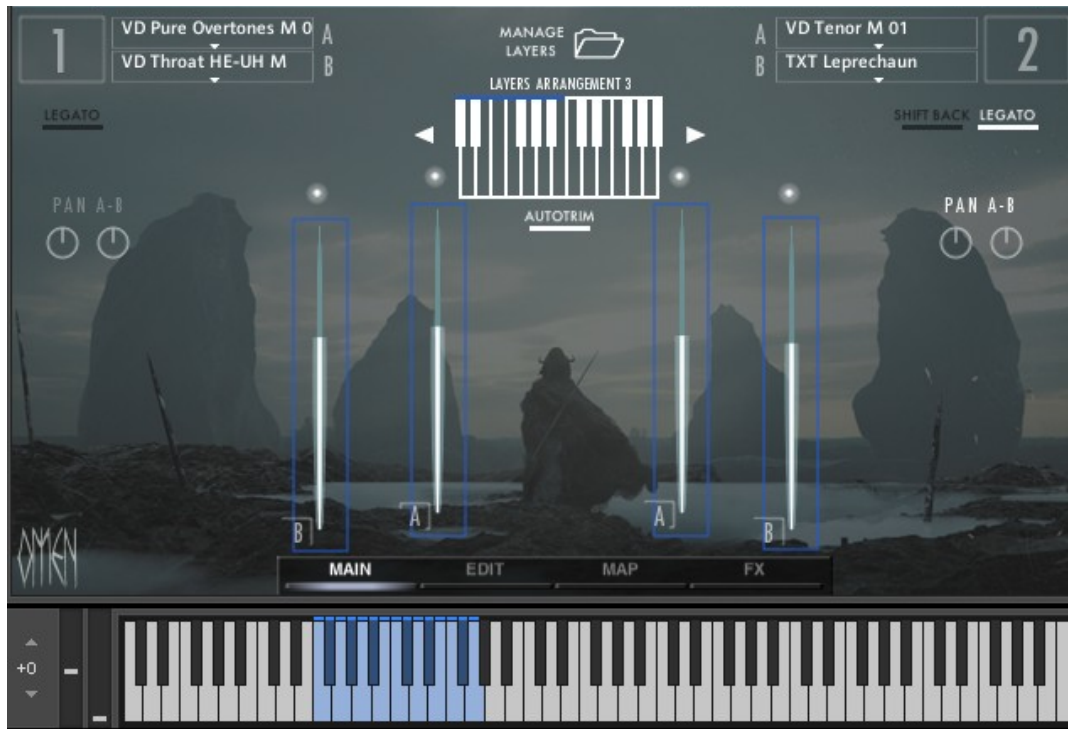
LAYER ARRANGEMENT 1: Layers 1A, 1B are mapped to the blue keys, Layers 2A and 2B are mapped to the turquoise keys.
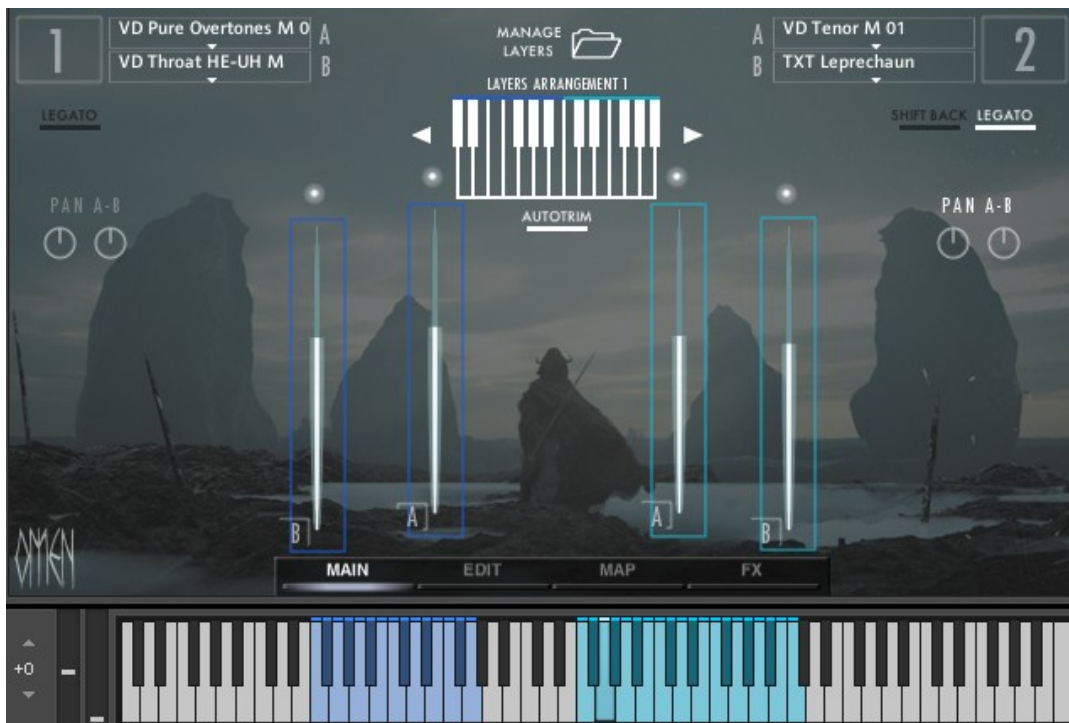
LAYERS ARRANGEMENT 2: Layers 1A, 1B and 2A are mapped to the blue keys, layer 2B is mapped to the turquoise keys.
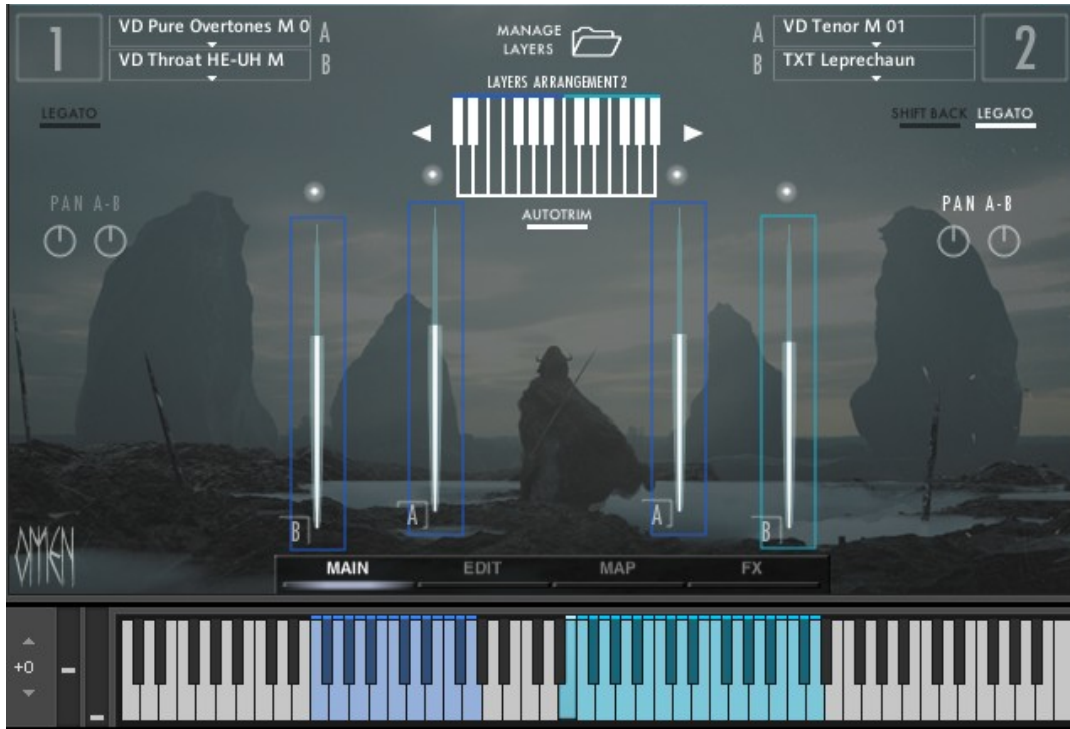
LAYERS ARRANGEMENT 3: All 4 layers are mapped to the blue keys (unison), no sound on the turquoise keys.

By having the option to map one or a group of layers to either sides of the keyboard, you can experiment by blending several sound together and use the Vocal Layers instrument as a sound design tool as well.

*The mapping of the samples via Layers Arrangement **does not affect the pitch at all**, the same samples are simply mapped to another region of the keyboard.*

1.3 - Auto-trim button

In order to explain the function of the Auto-trim button (below the keyboard image in Manage Layers) it is necessary spend a few words about the actual peculiar nature of the sounds featured in Vocal Layers.

As previously mentioned, many of the sounds in Omen are based on musical and vocal styles belonging to the tradition of Asian cultures (more specifically, Tuva and Mongolia). Due to their intrinsic peculiarities, building such kind of instrument around these sounds presented two main issues:

1- The vocal extension of a throat singer rarely exceeds one octave and half. For reasons concerning the actual physical effort required by these styles, it is extremely hard, if not impossible, to perform throat singing below and above specific frequency limits.

2- Each style has a different peculiar notes range, which can change substantially according to the singer.

For said reasons, two different vocal layers might not occupy the same note range, as showed in the picture below:

RANGE
LAYER 1
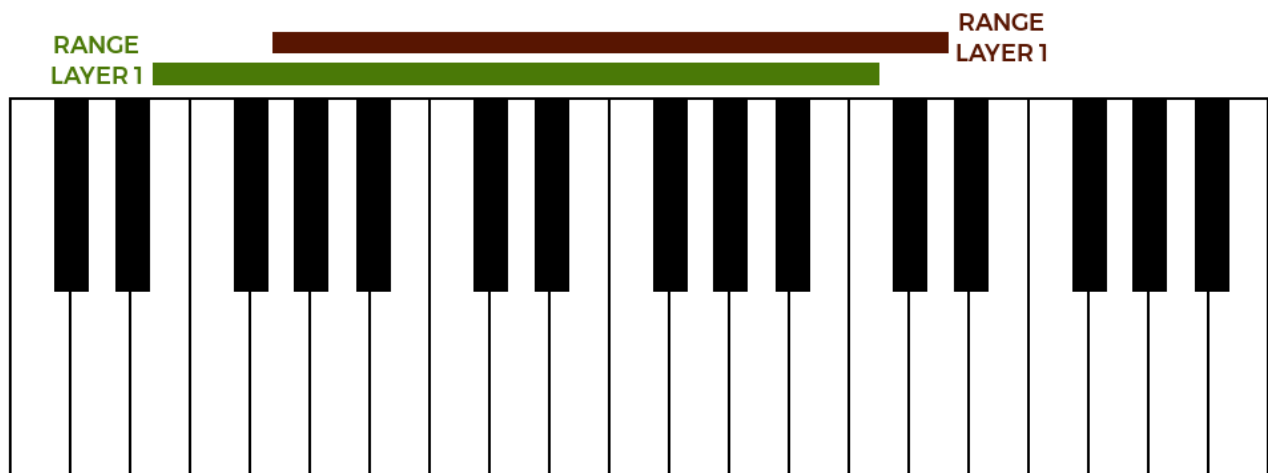
RANGE
LAYER 1

In order to avoid inconsistencies when playing (only a number of keys featuring both the sounds and others having just one), we have introduced the Auto-trim function: very simply, when activated it sets the total range of the overlapping layers only to the notes where both the layers are present. In the case of the previous image, Auto-trim reduces the range to G2-C4 and only colors the keys corresponding to the 'trimmed' range (blue or turquoise). Auto-trim unconditionally affects the samples regardless of the Layer Arrangement setting.

RANGE WHEN AUTOTRIM IS ON
RANGE LAYER 1
RANGE LAYER 1
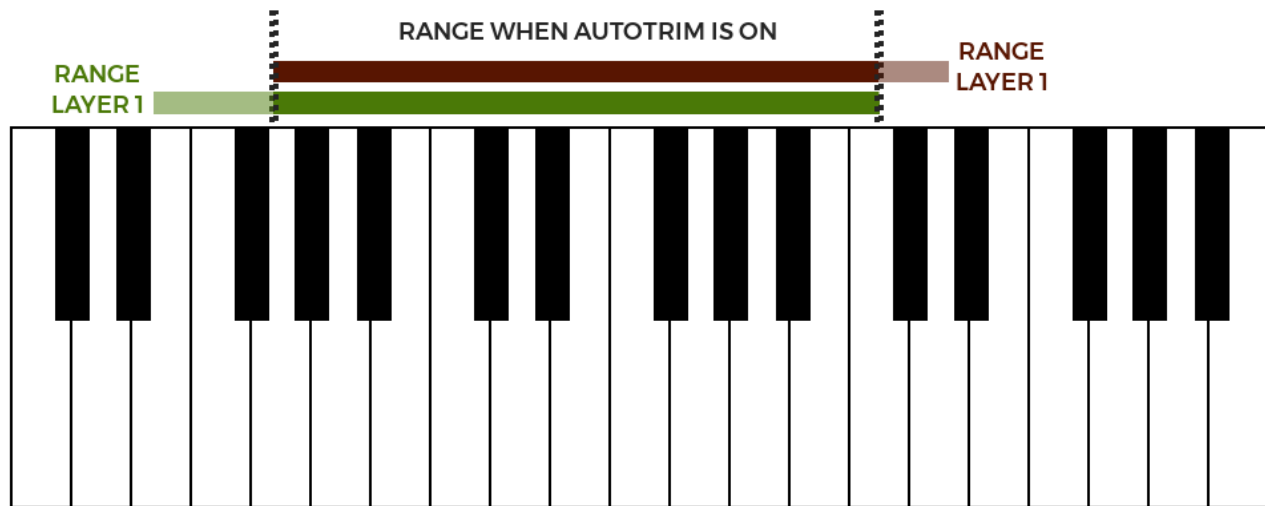
Auto-trim is activated by default in any snapshot and MPE multi based on Vocal Layers; however, you're free to de-activate and use the instrument as you please.

1.4 - Shift Back

The Shift-Back button on the top right of the GUI (Main panel) simply shifts the key-range of the layers mapped on Part 2 (turquoise) of minus one octave, without affecting the pitch. Due to the aforementioned concerns in regard to the notes range, it might happen that the layers on Part 1 and Part 2 are inconveniently outdistanced along the keyboard. By activating Shift-back , the key-range of Layer 2 is shifted back of one octave and clipped to C3 on the low bound.

1.5 Legato

It is possible to independently activate legato for the vocal layers on Part 1 and Part 2 respectively.

Given the remarkable quantity of available sample, it is worth to highlight that Vocal Layers does not feature a true legato; some of the samples (when possible) have been recorded in order to create a smooth, realistic transition from note to note. Others, like for example the throat singing vocal layers, sound more natural when legato is disabled. We encourage you to experiment with legatos and the volume attach to achieve more realism.

Legato 1 and 2 affect all the samples mapped to the corresponding part.

1.6. Sample editing controls

Main Panel	*Volume (per layer)*
	Pan (per layer)
Edit Panel	*Attack , Release (per layer)*
	Low Pass Filter, High Pass Filter (per layer)
	Resonance (per layer)
	LFO rate and amount (per layer)
	LFO Shape
	LFO Filter Selection
Map Panel	*See '1.6 - MPE in Omen' paragraph*
FX Panel	***Convolution Reverb***
	Pre-delay
	Size
	LPF
	HPF
	Wet

1.6. MPE in Omen Vocal Layers

MPE is supported in Kontakt by using Multis.

Omen offers a collection of 48 MPE Multis: if you use a fully MPE compatible DAW and an MPE controller (for example the Seaboard Rise), all you need to start using Omen with MPE is just open one of the multis and start playing. You won't be able to use MPE with a single .nki instrument alone.

Mapping Omen Vocal Layers to the Seaboard Rise

In Omen you can easily map Volume, Low / High Pass Filter and LFO Amount by using the **triangle-shaped MIDI assignment buttons** in the **Mapping screen**. Here you can browse the parameters you want to map by using the buttons column on the right end of the panel, and independently assign Volume, filters and LFO to a MIDI channel of your choice.

Although mappable on any MPE and non-MPE MIDI controller, the Mapping screen of Omen has been designed with specific reference to the controls available on the Roli Seaboard Rise. The following table illustrates MIDI assignment buttons and their corresponding physical controls on the the Roli Seaboard Rise.

17

MIDI assignment buttons	Physical Controls on the Seaboard Rise	Default MIDI CC
		74
		113-114
		107-109-111

MIDI assignment buttons allow to map a given parameter both in down-top as top-down direction: for example, if you want to assign the volume of a vocal layer to the Slide on your Seaboard Rise, you can either have the volume increasing by sliding your finger from down to top or vice-versa.

You can easily re-map the parameters with one click: in the example above, if you want to re-assign the volume of the layer to the XY Pad on your Seaboard Rise (left to right direction), just click the triangle with the side facing right (CC 113).

The controls on the Seaboard Rise are mapped by default to the MIDI CCs reported in the table above, therefore the corresponding MIDI assignment buttons in Omen are assigned by default to the same MIDI CCs.

NOTE If you want to change the default MIDI CCs from the Roli Dashboard application, make sure you make the same changes in the Mapping screen of Omen, by manually typing the numeric value of the MIDI channel in the boxes above the MIDI assignment button.

Just click on the numeric boxes above the MIDI assignment buttons in order to change the corresponding MIDI CC
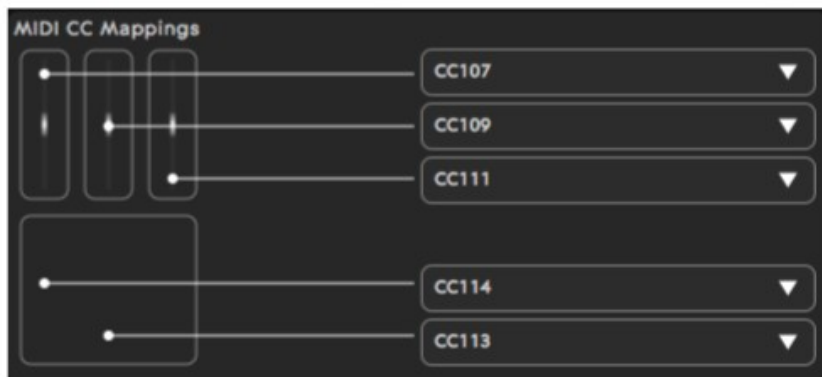
MIDI CC Assignments in the Roli Dashboard screen

1.7 Using Omen with other controllers (standard MIDI)

Omen doesn't necessarily requires an MPE controller, it can be played as a standard Kontakt library on a standard MIDI controller. When using Omen in standard MIDI you **don't need to use Multis**. Just open the Vocal Layers instruments as a a single .nki.

Standard MIDI Mapping in Omen

The easiest way to MIDI map the controls in Omen is using the MIDI learn function in Kontakt, which can be selected by right clicking on the control you want to map.

However, you can use the MIDI assignment buttons also for standard MIDI mapping on any controller. In this case, all you need to do is to **manually change** the MIDI CC of the MIDI assignment buttons in order to make it match with the MIDI Channel of the physical control you want to use.

Just click on the numeric boxes above the MIDI assignment buttons in order to change the corresponding MIDI CC

If you want the Slide MIDI assignment to correspond to a knob/slider on your physical controller, just change the MIDI CC of the assignment button to match the one corresponding to the knob/slider you want to use. For example, if the knob on your controller is on MIDI CC 22, you need to manually enter 22 on the MIDI assignment button you want to correspond.

If you don't know which MIDI CC corresponds to the knobs and faders of your controller, please consult the original manual or website of the manufacturer.

When mapping the parameters in Omen on a standard controller, you can still use the MIDI assignment buttons in the Mapping screen. However, you need to make sure to match the MIDI channels displayed on the MIDI assignment buttons to the ones corresponding to your controller.

2. RHYTHMIC CHANTS

Rhythmic Chants in Omen is a phrase based instrument. As the name suggests, it consists of a number of tempo synched ritual-style choirs , phrases and single voices to easily combine the available sounds and provide a rhythmic vocal backbone in a 'dark age' oriented style. It is inspired to the tradition of Tibetan monk ritual chants, characterized by a repetitive rhythm on a given root key at slow tempos.

Rhythmic Chants is made of three categories of sound, each one mapped to a different range on the keyboard.

- **Rhythmic Drones:** highlighted in red, it mostly features throat singing rhythmical phrases, both solos as choirs

- **Phrases Set 1**: highlighted in blue, it features powerful vocal choir phrases

- **Phrase Set 2**: highlighted in turquoise, it features single tempo synched phrases.

By using the Root Key slider, it is possible to set the root tonality of the rhythmic chant. All the samples have been recorded in 7 root keys, from E to D. It is possible to set the root key to sharp notes by using the pitch knob, without noticeable effect on the quality of the sound. For example, a root key of C# can be simply obtained by setting the root key to D and lowering the pitch knob to -1 semitones (the range of the pitch know is +/- 2 semitones).

The following controls are available for each category:

- *Volume*

- *Low Pass Filter*

- *Resonance*

- *Drive*

- *Straight or reverse sample play*

- *Half tempo button*

The *half tempo* button simply halves the bpms of the sample; as the rhythmic chants work better at slow tempos, it can be useful for tracks at 120 bpm or above to keep the slow evocative ritual mood of the track.

TIP: try reversing the Rhythmic Drones and add some distortion as an interesting sound design solutions, usable also for hybrid composition and electronic music.

3. PHRASE BUILDERS : WAR AND SORCERY

Omen features two similar phrase builders, based on different voice styles: War and Sorcery.

Both instruments are based on a series of short groups of spoken syllables (from 1 to 3 syllables), which are tempo synched to the DAW, allowing to create rhythmic spoken chants in an imaginary language inspired to old Norse.

The syllable sequence is either selectable by choosing the sample step by step from the 16 menus, or using the 'Randomise' button. It is possible to set the time length of each step, by choosing between ½ and ¼ beat.

In both instruments, **the sequence is started by pressing and holding the key B2, highlighted in green on the virtual keyboard**.

It is possible to select the number of steps of the spoken sequence (Length slider) and activate/deactivate the loop.

Pitch, Low Pass Filter, Resonance and Reverb are available as global controls.

If you play the samples using the blue keys, without sequencing them by pressing the green key, you will hear them with the voice settings of the first step

3.1. Phrase Builder : WAR

In the Phrase Builder WAR, it is possible to select two different voices, independently for each step: Crew and Single. Both voices feature the same syllables/groups of syllables, it has been recorded and created with the purpose to create powerful, aggressive war chants.

With Leak, it is possible to set the tail of the sound for each step. For lower tempos, high value of leak provide more realistic results.

By using the Triplets-Straight button, it is possible to set the syllables on a straight timing or triplets.

3.1. Phrase Builder : SORCERY

As for the Phrase Builder War, the Sorcery Phrase Builder is based on two voices which can be independently activated/de-actived per step.

In order to achieve more realism, it is possible to set the volume of the samples per step (instead of using Leak as in the War Phrase Builder).

It is based on a more evocative, obscure style, with the aim to recreate a magic ritual pronounced by a shaman.

4. VOCAL HORNS

The Vocal Horns instrument is a one shot sampler. The idea behind the sounds was to create an hybrid between a human vocalization and an ancient war horn: no sounds except of the voice have been used to create these samples, which are based on extreme re-pitching and morphing as sound design techniques. As counter-intuitive this might sound, most of the source vocal sounds have been recorded at extremely high pitches and lowered/morphed with a variety of material.

Tonal screams, low tones, braam-esque SFX and Maleventum-esque effects are the core sounds of this instrument.

All of the parameters showed on the GUI (with the exception of the Convolution Reverb and the Global Controls) can be set **per sample**.

- *Volume*

- *Pitch*

- *Low Pass*

- *High Pass*

- *LFO Rate*

- *LFO Amount*

- *LFO Shape*

- *LFO Filter select*

- *Volume Attack*

- *Volume Release*

- *Straight/Reverse sample play*.*

By using Extend, the current sample (highlighted in red on the virtual keyboard) is extended along the keyboard and can be played chromatically.

By using the Global Controls, it is possible to simultaneously set the same parameter to all the samples.

For the Pitch, by clicking on Global Tuning it is possible to select the root key to which all the samples are tuned simultaneously (12 root-keys, C to B).

For all the other parameters, it is possible to make a given control global by using the 'Set Global Controls' window (bottom right of the GUI). As an example, if LPF is selected in Global Control, by changing the Low Pass of the current sample, all the other samples will be affected on the same parameter (LPF) by the same amount.

The Convolution Reverb section is identical to the one featured in the Vocal Layers.

When reverse is activated, the sample plays in reverse from the position of the green sample offset slider located upon the waveform. In order to hear the effect, move the offset slider from 0 to the middle of the waveform.

5. GROWLS-WHISPERS-SENTENCES

The Growl-Whisper and Sentences instruments are both one-shot samplers. They feature shouts, growls, whispers and spoken sentences which (as for the Vocal Horns) can be manipulated per sample.

The two instruments are identical in regard to the GUI and functionalities. The available parameters that can be set per sample are the following:

- Volume

- Pitch

- Low Pass

- High Pass

- LFO Rate

- LFO Amount

- LFO Shape

- LFO Filter select

- Volume Attack

- Volume Decay

-Volume Hold

-Volume Sustain

-Volume Release

- Straight/Reverse sample play.

It is possible to make the Pitch knob global (affecting all the samples at once) by simply activating Global Tuning.

The Convolution Reverb section is identical to the one featured in the Vocal Layers.

6. BONUS PERCUSSIONS

The Bonus Percussions instrument features 30 tempo synched percussion loops, divided in Low Drums, Mid Drums and High Drums.

The featured instrument sampled for each category are the following:

Low Drums	Bodhran
	Tammorra
Mid Drums	Udu
	Water Drum
High Drums	Coral Shaker
	Waterfall Shaker
	Rain Shaker
	Shells
	Bronze Cymbal
	Tibetan Chimes
	Ocean Drum

The GUI and functionalities of the Bonus Percussions instrument are similar to the Rhythmic Chant (section 2), with the only difference that an High Pass Filter is featured instead of Drive.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost, thank you for purchasing Omen. So far, it has been the most challenging library I have developed so far, the choice of creating a whole instrument based on these peculiar voices had its challenges , required a lot of trial and error and countless edits or (in some cases) starting everything from scratch several times.

Hopefully, Omen will be a source of inspiration and sounds which, despite being somewhat unusual, can egregiously set the mood and the atmosphere and offer a lot of versatility. As everything I did so far it's an experiment, I deeply believe in it and I hope it continues the legacy started with the two chapters of Maleventum.

However, there would be no Omen without the fantastic singers I had the privilege to collaborate with. It's not easy to find talent, dedication, patience (a lot!), knowledge, kindness and resourcefulness in one person; find it in 6 is a sort of miracle and I couldn't be more grateful.

So, let me introduce the amazing singers that made Omen a reality:

Giovanni Bortoluzzi

Giovanni is a teacher of throat singing (Kaargyraa and Khoomei) from Treviso, Italy. Starting as a jazz drummer and bass player, Giovanni discovered harmonic singing and studied with international masters of overtone singing and throat singing.

He's currently one of the most sought after teachers and performers in Italy, with many students from his native country and abroad. He's the cofounder of Sherden Overtone Singing, an school focused on teaching the technique of overtone singing with an innovative methodology.

Ilaria Orefice

Ilaria is a teacher of modern and polyphonic singing based in the island of Sardinia, Italy. Currently the only Italian female vocalist specialized in throat singing, she has held masterclasses in Italy and other European countries (Belgium, Poland and Switzerland). As an independent researcher of several vocal styles originating from folk traditions across the world (with specific focus on Sardinian , Tuvan and Khosa throat singing), se has published her studies on scientific journals

like Journal of Voice. She is the founder of Sherden Overtone Singing, a music school characterized by an innovative approach to teaching overtones and throat singing.

Alessandra 'Psamathes' Cognetta

Psamathes (Alessandra Cognetta) is a singer, instrumentalist, and music producer based in Rome, Italy. She is known for her wide range (G#2-G6) and vocal versatility, combined with a unique voice color. Her blend of modern and classical training as a lyric coloratura soprano for over 10 years provided the foundation for vocal experimentation in powerful belting, several folk techniques, heavy metal growls, but also jazz, soul, one-woman choirs, and electronica.

With an academic background in languages, she can sing not only in Italian and English, but also in Japanese, Latin, Swedish, German, French, Russian, Icelandic, Chinese, and made-up languages. She developed a constructed language that is often used in her original works and whose atmospheres range from Lord of the Rings to viking battle chants.

Her vocals can be heard in Original Videogame Soundtracks such as Austin Wintory's score for The Pathless, and she is the singing voice for the protagonist of Cyberpunk turn-based rhythm RPG "Keylocker".

Her solo work spans from nordic folk to metal and orchestral pieces. She plays traditional instruments like the lyre and tagelharpa and has collaborated with dozens of international musicians in the video game music scene.

Aimeric 'Hangsvart' Lerat

Born in 1991 in France, Aimeric is specialised in extreme vocal styles like growl and undertone singing. With experience in the Metal scene as singer, guitarist, bassist and producer, in 2013 he started his first remarkable musical project, Abysmal Growls Of Despair, under the artist name Hangsvart, released by several labels. AGoD explores extreme music, drifting through a wide range of sounds like ritualistic dark ambient, drone and funeral doom. Aimeric is also a a writer and poet, he published short books of poetry and horror stories in French. Aimeric is available as a singer for hire on Soundbetter.

Alessandro Granato

Alessandro is a singer and vocal coach from Naples, Italy. He is a graduate of the Conservatorio di Napoli as an operatic singer and a specialist of extreme high pitch and distorted singing. He has a long background in Metal and Rock bands and currently very active as a live performer in Italy (with bands Stamina and Sir Joe). Alessandro is a very sought after session singer on Fiverr.

Omen SM

A shaman and researcher of Asian cultures, who prefers to not disclose his identity and infos. The story behind the collaboration with him is a separate chapter on its own, maybe one day I will be able to tell it.

That's all. Now go make some music.

Sincerely yours,

Giuseppe

APPENDIX: GUIDE TO FOLDERS ORGANIZATION AND FILE DENOMINATION IN OMEN

Categories of samples (folders and subfolders)		
VD	Vocal Drones	Throat singing (Kaargyraa, Khoomei, both male and female), undertone singing, baritone voices, low tone vocal ensembles
SUS	Sustained	Soprano, high pitch
PHR	Phrases	Female Phrases in several folk styles
TXT	Textures	Synthesized/Manipulated vocal sounds

Singers denomination	
GB	Giovanni Bortoluzzi
IO	Ilaria Orefice
AC	Alessandra 'Psamathes' Cognetta
AG	Alessandro Granato
HV	Aimeric 'Hangsvart' Lerat
SM	A singer who contributed to some recordings of Omen, who prefers not providing his name and identity

Example: folder **VD GB** means *Vocal Drones recorded by Giovanni Bortoluzzi*