

*flow*state

user guide

Soniccouture

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TUNING THE WORLD

Back in 2021 while we were updating Geosonics we stumbled across a [video](#) by Ayako Okamura in which she used filter resonance to “tune” field recordings to precise pitches. It was a nice trick, and seemed a fun way to introduce pitch to non-pitched sound. At the time this technique found its way into many Geosonics 2 presets. There are even key commands in Geosonics to fix the filter pitch quickly at various octaves.

From that it was a short conceptual jump to creating a bank of filters, and tuning these to a collection of frequencies. This would impose a more complex “formant” onto the ambience. It seemed logical to tune these a bit like a drawbar organ, set at the first few overtones from the fundamental up, and then mix them as you like.

But by choosing different overtone sets, you could create quite different formants, so it wasn't long before we started editing the frequencies themselves. Eventually the idea of morphing between them came along which resulted in a quite radical, surreal effect. Flowstate as a concept started taking shape.

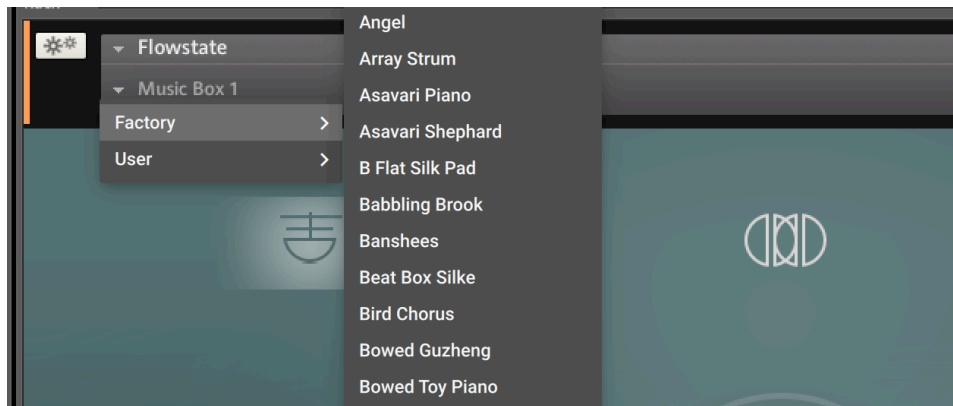
It's very simple to drag your own ambience into Flowstate and have the formants “pitch” it, turn it into a pad or a backdrop drone or whatever, but we wanted to demonstrate the full scope of this technique, so have provided a wealth of presets of different types. Even within each Snapshot there are five distinct STATES, which you can switch between.

There's lots of room to experiment, tune your own world.



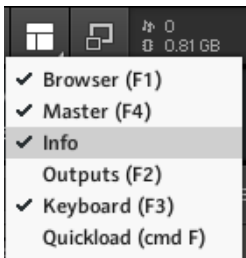
FLOWSTATE

SNAPSHOTS

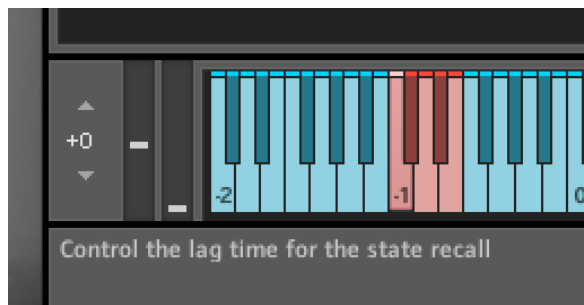


Kontakt stores presets as Snapshots, and you can use these to save your setups. We have provided a selection of Snapshots provide some initial inspiration.

BUILT-IN HELP



If you activate the Info pane in Kontakt, you can hover over any control in the instrument and a short note will appear in the Info pane at the bottom describing what that control does.



MAIN PAGE OVERVIEW

The main page of Flowstate displays five STATE SWITCHES across the top, a modulation BIG WHEEL in the centre, and the waveform of the source sample at the bottom. Clicking on any of the five STATE SWITCHES will select that state and recall its settings. (Option-clicking any STATE SWITCH will STORE the current settings in that location.)

Turning the BIG WHEEL will morph the preset. This is assigned to the Mod Wheel (CC1) by default. If you want to change it, you can right-click on the big wheel.



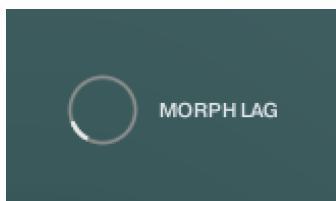
There are three smaller EDIT icons at the top right... the MIXER, FX, and OPTIONS COG menu. The first one, the MIXER, opens the main editor for Flowstate.



STATES



The five STATE switches across the top hold entire editor setups, like presets.



When switching between these, the STATE of the preset will morph to the new one. The time this takes is set with the MORPH LAG knob on the EDIT page. This setting is global.

You can change the STATE by clicking on it, by using the KEYSWITCHES*, or with the NKS Knob on NKS controllers.

During a STATE morph, the setting for the harmonics in the formant are being slowly changed from one set to another, so if you use the BIG WHEEL at the same time you will create conflicts and noise in the output. **Since both the BIG WHEEL and the STATE switches are changing the formant, you can only safely do one of these at a time.**

Most of the EDIT page parameters (the A and B formants, the filter and envelope parameters, etc.) are stored in a STATE, although most of what you hear is usually the formants morphing. Note that Effects settings are NOT stored in a STATE. You store a STATE by using OPTION or SHIFT while clicking on it.



EDIT HARMONICS

When you click MIXER EDIT switch (first icon, top right), you'll open up the edit page. It will look something like this. In fact, there are two pages here, HARMONICS and SYNTH, and you can switch between them at the top right. HARMONICS is where you adjust the resonant filters, or formant, of the current preset or state.



The eight faders in the centre adjust the level of the 8 harmonics, but note you have two complete setups here; A and B. Below the fader bank you can click on A or B to switch between two formant setups. The horizontal fader between A and B morphs between the two (as does the BIG WHEEL on the [main page](#)).

Below the fader is a number which represents the overtone of that fader. Note that "1" here is the fundamental, and that you can go negative if you like (undertones), although they're very low pitched and not terribly useful most of the time.

The "8vb" switch to the left of the fader bank will lower the entire formant by one octave.

The MORPH LAG on the far left adjusts the time it takes to morph from one STATE to another. This is a global setting per Snapshot, not part of the formant or state setup.



PURITY

The PURITY fader to the right of the fader bank is perhaps one of the most important parameters to get familiar with. This is essentially controlling the resonance or ringing of the resonator, and the higher it goes the more like a sine wave the result (hence “purity”).

But too much PURITY and everything starts to sound the same. No PURITY and you can lose all pitch awareness completely. So finding the sweet spot for PURITY is very much a personal thing, and very much depends on the dynamics and frequency content of the waveform currently loaded.

In my experience, PURITY seems to work best on the lower side, but still with a sense of strong pitch centre. You basically want to hear the character of the original wave as much as the pitch. It can be very sensitive at times.

A AND B SETUPS: SAVING YOUR WORK

As you edit A or B, it will store itself automatically in whichever is currently selected, but you can also copy one to the other by storing it with an ALT or SHIFT click. Sometimes it's handy to make a copy and then tweak it for the B formant.

However this entire setup won't be stored into a STATE until you OPTION click (or SHIFT click) a STATE. So if you want to keep what you've done, be sure to store it in a STATE (and eventually a Snapshot as well). If you switch STATES after editing a STATE, you will lose your work if it hasn't been stored.

MODULATION

The little tiny fader at the top left of the PURITY fader is the modulation depth. This controls how much the BIG WHEEL will alter that parameter. You will see this again in other places.



EDIT SYNTH

Clicking on the word SYNTH at the top right of the editor chooses the other edit page, which is essentially Kontakt synthesis parameters.



It's divided into four main sections; WAVE, ENVELOPE, FILTER, and LFO.

In WAVE you have control of the START time of the sample. RANDOM here will randomise that start time for each note. WIDTH here is a stereo width.

In ENVELOPE you have the main ADSR controls, as well as controls for VELOCITY sensitivity and SATURATION. SATURATION has a modulation depth to the left, this controls how much the saturation will change when you move the BIG WHEEL.

In FILTER you have controls for another Low Pass Filter. It's cutoff FREQ, RESonance, VELOCITY sensitivity, ENVELOPE sensitivity, and the dedicated ADSR for the filter as well. The cutoff FREQ and RES have modulation depths to the left.

NB Adjusting a knob or modulation on this page with OPTION key held will set all States to the same value. This is handy for quickly setting all States at once.

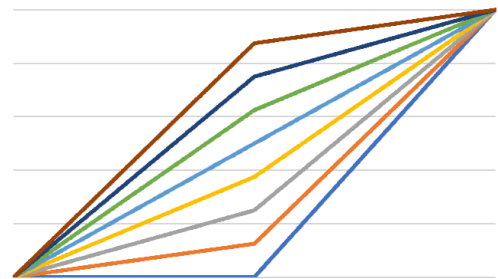


In LFO you have controls for the RATE, and depth to PITCH, PURITY, FILTER, AMPLitude, and PAN. All of which have modulation depth faders to the left. You also have controls for the FADE in time of the LFO, which you'll only really notice if it re-triggers on each note.

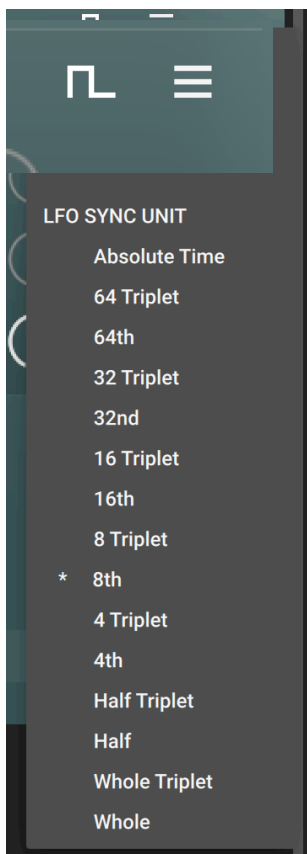
There is a PHASE knob here which controls the LFO phase offset between the 8 resonators or harmonics. At 0, all LFOs are in sync with each other and start at phase 0. As you increase the PHASE the offset of the later harmonic LFO is delayed further, until at 50% the PHASE of each LFO is evenly distributed between each of the 8 harmonics. This is an interesting position, because in that special case the LFO is sequencing the 8 harmonics in order. This is most audible with a square or pulse wave.

There are many presets that use this special condition. ALT or OPTION clicking the PHASE knob will set it to exactly 50%.

As you move PHASE above 50% the phases move towards each other again, until maximum, at 100%, all the LFOs are in phase again.



Diamond Modulation of Phase



At the top of the LFO section there are two menus for the LFO WAVE SHAPE, and some of the LFO options.

The LFO options are the RETRIGGER state, and the frequency unit.



WAVEFORM CONTROLS

While you're in either of the EDIT pages, there are some extra controls that appear around the waveform at the bottom of the panel.



AUDITION

On the left of the waveform there is a little speaker icon, which will audition the waveform for you, but not through the resonators. This can be useful to just check how the original sample sounds.

LOCK

Below the audition speaker icon is a small padlock icon. This will stop the WAVEFORM from changing, even if you load a different Snapshot. So this can be quite useful, if you drag your own wave into Flowstate and want to explore how various formant presets sound on it, you can hit the LOCK and step through Snapshots and States both.

WAVE NAME

Below the waveform is the current sample's name, but this is also a menu containing our factory samples. You can step through these factory samples using the left and right arrows beside the name.

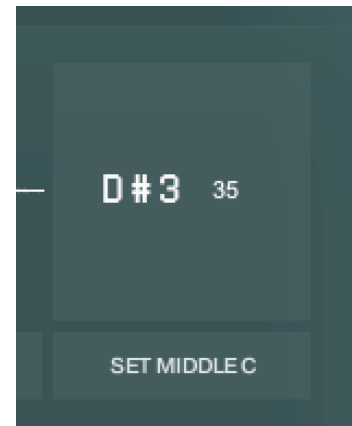
LOOP AND TRACK

The icons to the right of the wave name are LOOP and PITCH TRACKING, which can be turned on or off for any Snapshot.



PITCH

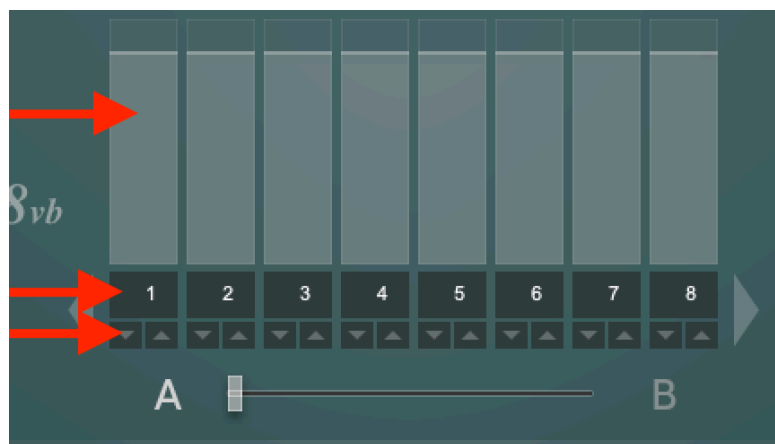
At the far right of the waveform is the original pitch setup. You can set the key here that plays the sample at original pitch. To the right of that is a small cents offset for tuning the sample up and down. Below the PITCH section you can quickly set the sample to MIDDLE C playback, or else use it to try and guess the original pitch using Kontakt's pitch detection algorithm (this has varying success, depending on the sample content).



ADVANCED EDITING TRICKS

For most EDIT controls on the SYNTH page, OPTION or ALT clicking on them will set all STATES to that same value. ALT-CMD will set a knob both to the default and to all STATES at once.

In the HARMONICS page, ALT clicking at the left slider will set all harmonic levels the same, all harmonic indices sequential, or step all harmonics up and down together.



SHIFT-CTRL-OPTION click on A or B will export a file of that Formant setup to disk. This makes it easy to store harmonic structures you happen to like and use them again. To load a Formant file, drag it onto the WAVEFORM and it will load into the current A or B, depending on which is currently selected.

Similarly, SHIFT-CTRL-OPTION click on any State at the top will allow you to export an entire State to disk. You can load these again by dragging them onto the state row at the top, the disk State will be loaded into the currently selected State.

There is a folder in your library (Flowstate/Samples/Data) with some example Formant and State files you can drag in to any preset to experiment.



EFFECTS

Clicking the middle icon at the top right of any page selects the Effects page. Here you'll find three insert effects which can be chosen with drop down menus.



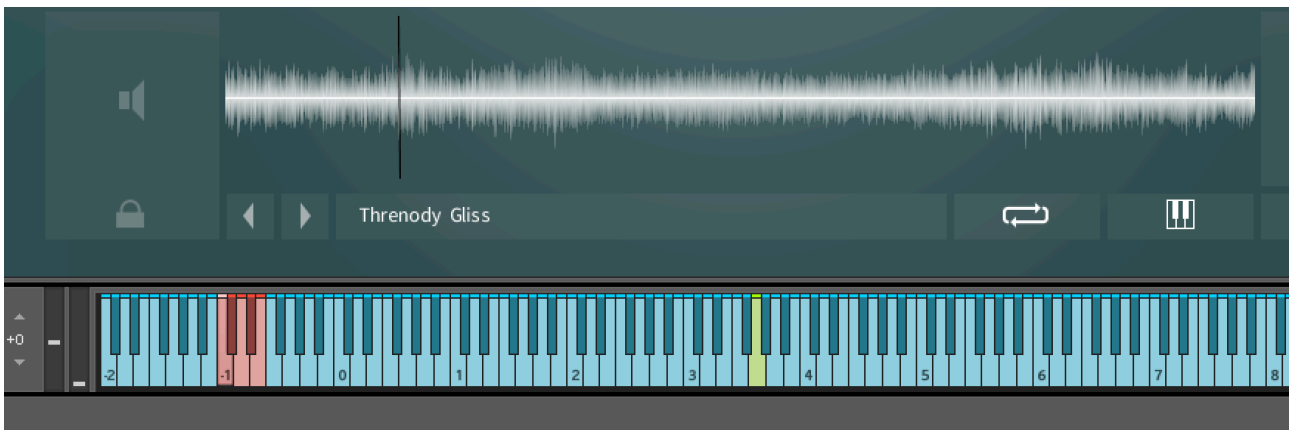
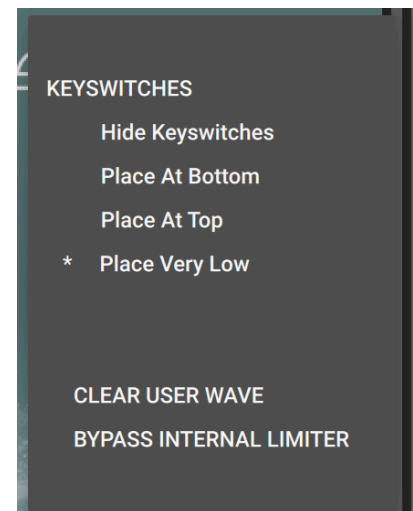
OPTIONS COG

Clicking the cog at the top right opens up a menu with options in it.

The first is the position of the STATE KEYSWITCHES, which can be hidden entirely if you don't want to use them.

The second title "CLEAR USER WAVE" is just a command to remove the user sample, should you want to completely remove a user sample before saving a Snapshot.

The third "BYPASS INTERNAL LIMITER" allows you to bypass the internal limiter if you need. This is a bit dangerous, as Flowstate can have quite extreme dynamics, but the option is there if you need to do it.



KEYSWITCHES are displayed in RED on the Kontakt mini keyboard

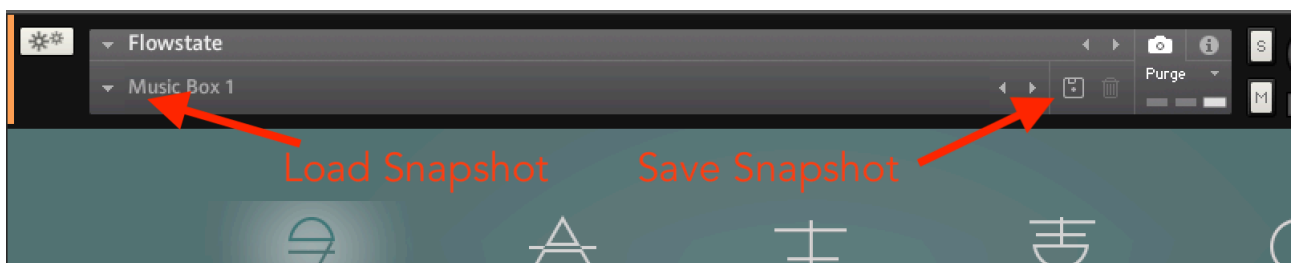


MAKING YOUR OWN PATCHES

To get your samples into Flowstate, simply drag them onto the WAVE display on the interface. You can drag WAV, AIF (uncompressed), or NCW format samples.



Save your patches as SNAPSHOTS. Use the little floppy disk icon at the top in the Kontakt header window to save a Snapshot. You can then recall snapshots using the drop down snapshot menu.



SUPPORT

If you have any problems or questions relating to the use of this product, please feel free to contact us. You can email us at :

<http://www.soniccouture.com/en/support/>

We will always endeavour to reply to any enquiry within 24 hours. We are based in the UK, so please bear in mind differences in time zones.

While you are waiting, you will find lots of answers to common questions in our FAQ.



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