

Nordic Psalmodikon
for NI Kontakt, EXS24 & SoundFont



The Nordic Psalmodikon is a single-stringed instrument with a haunting tone, captured in multiple articulations for cinematic and creative music production.

The Nordic Psalmodikon features:

- 537 mono 24-bit WAV samples
- Sustained, Marcato, Staccato, and Picked articulations
- Unique “scraped overtone” versions of all bowed articulations
- 1 program for NI Kontakt 3-5 with script and GUI
- 15 programs for NI Kontakt 2
- 16 programs for Logic EXS24
- 7 programs in SoundFont format (16bit)

Introduction

The Psalmodikon is a Scandinavian single-stringed instrument for playing hymns in churches.

In the early 19th century, many Christian congregations couldn't afford an organ, so members built their own instruments as substitutes.

To simplify the task of learning to play hymns, they burnt numbers into the Psalmodikon. These marked notes on the instrument that corresponded to numbers on printed psalms. The players didn't have to know musical notation, only to play after the numbers written.

Our approach when sampling the Psalmodikon was not to make it "realistic" in the traditional sense. We treated it more progressively, with an open mind as to how it could sound, instead of how it ought to sound. We recorded it in a way that makes the final product much more diverse and useful for modern contemporary music.

The end result is a haunting, primitive "Flintstone" type of cello with traditional articulations like Sustain, Pizzicato, Marcato, as well as bowing techniques that emphasise what we call the "scraped overtones" of the Psalmodikon's string.

We have included a control panel for Kontakt 3+ that provides unique performance features for layering and shaping the articulations, in addition to effects such as delay and reverb.

The Nordic Psalmodikon library is useful and unusual in its tone, ideal for cinematic scoring and creative music production if you like to add an "edge" to your sound.



Nordic Psalmodikon for NI Kontakt 3,4 & 5

The file in NI Kontakt 3, 4 & 5 format requires the full version of NI Kontakt and does not work fully with the free Kontakt player!

Psalmodikon Page



On the front page of the GUI, named “Psalmodikon”, you can adjust the articulation and dynamics of the sound. From left to right, the controls are:

Articulation

Articulation Menu: sets the active articulation for played notes. Seven articulations are available. In addition to being selectable with this menu, articulations can be chosen by pressing keyswitches on your MIDI keyboard. The articulations and keyswitches are as follows:

Articulation	Keyswitch note
Bowed 1	C1
Bowed 2 – scraped overtone	C#1
Staccato 1	D1
Staccato 2 – scraped overtone	D#1
Marcato 1	E1
Marcato 2 – scraped overtone	F1
Picked	F#1

- ① The currently selected articulation will be remembered after you save and reopen the Nordic Psalmodikon instrument.

Turning the modulation wheel (MIDI CC1) while playing the Nordic Psalmodikon will crossfade between different versions of the current articulation. For example, if Bowed 1 is active, then raising the modulation wheel will fade out Bowed 1, and fade in Bowed 2. The reverse is true when Bowed 2 is the active articulation.

The Picked articulation is different. When the modulation wheel is raised while the Picked articulation is active, a dedicated compressor will increasingly emphasise the attack of the pick, for a drier and more percussive sound.

Double: this button puts the instrument into a special mode where the recorded variations of each note are stacked together. When *Double* is on, two additional dials appear on the interface:



Stereo: sets the panning of the note variations. At 0%, both variations are panned centrally. At 100%, they are panned wide left and right.

Detune: sets the tuning of the note variations. At 0%, both variations are tuned normally. At 100%, they are detuned by +/-20 cents.

Envelope

Attack: sets the time in milliseconds for the sound of the instrument to reach full volume when a note is played.

Decay: sets the time in milliseconds for the sound of the instrument to die away to silence when a note is released.

Response

Velocity: sets the relationship between how hard you strike the keys (MIDI velocity) and the volume of the sound. At 0%, the volume of the sound is unaffected by how hard you play. At 100%, the volume of the sound is strongly affected by how hard you play.

EQ Page



On the EQ page, you can shape the tone of the sound. From left to right, the controls are as follows:

EQ

Lo Gain: sets the volume of low frequencies, between +/-6 decibels.

Mid Gain: sets the volume of mid frequencies, between +/-6 decibels.

Mid Freq: sets the centre of the frequencies controlled by the *Mid Gain* dial.

Hi Gain: sets the volume of high frequencies, between +/-6 decibels.

- ① The Lo and Hi EQ frequencies have been pre-tweaked by Precisionsound to suit the instrument.

FX Page



On the FX page, you can apply a delay effect and a high-quality convolution reverb. From left to right, the controls are as follows:

Reverb

Level: sets the volume in decibels of the convolution reverb effect.

Type: changes the impulse response of the convolution reverb. Seventeen impulse responses are available, ranging from short springs to churches and cathedrals. You can also disable the reverb by setting this menu to “Reverb off”.

Delay

Level: sets the volume in decibels of the delay effect.

Delay on/off: enables or disables the delay effect.

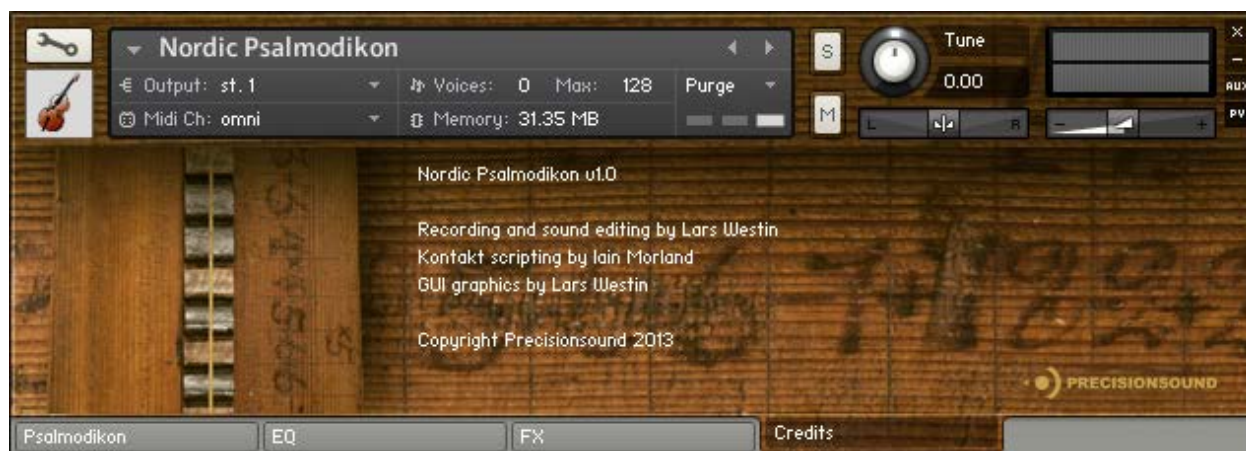
Time: sets the gap in milliseconds between delay repetitions.

Tone: sets the high-frequency damping of the repetitions generated by the delay, where 0% = no damping, and 100% = full damping for a darker sound.

Feedback: sets the extent to which repetitions generated by the delay are fed back into the delay, to produce more repetitions. At 100%, the delay continues regenerating indefinitely.

Spread: sets the stereo image of the repetitions generated by the delay, where 0% = mono, and 100% = full stereo for a ping-pong delay effect.

Credits



Recording and sound editing by Lars Westin

Kontakt scripting by Iain Morland <http://www.iainmorland.net>

GUI Graphics by Lars Westin

This product includes impulses from the free Bricasti M7 library by Acousticas, used under license.

The Nordics Psalmodikon manual was written by Iain Morland, with introductory text by Lars Westin.

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