

VIRTUOSO ENSEMBLES

BEFORE YOU START - Virtuoso Ensembles requires the **FULL VERSION** of Kontakt 5.7.1 or newer. So **DO NOT** "Add Library" or "Manage Libraries" with this product.

What is Virtuoso Ensembles?

Virtuoso Ensembles is an orchestral sample library that is designed primarily as a compositional and/or live performance tool, and works great for final mixing as well. It's a time-saver!

Overview - Strings, Brass and Woodwind Solos:

Virtuoso Ensembles' Strings, Brass and Woodwind Solos are the collective "flagships" of this library. Each of these three instruments contain all of the available sections. With truly great sounds, and by loading all sections into one instrument, (each containing amazingly flexible controls), you will find yourself using this library as your "go-to" tool for super fast composing, performing and even final tweaking and mixing. Additionally, these instruments are designed to have a very low memory footprint while still being "chromatically" sampled (every half-step).

Instrument	Section 1	Section 2	Section 3	Section 4
Strings - 789 MB total sample size	16 1st and 2nd Violins	12 Violas	12 Cellos	6 Bases
Brass - 426 MB total sample size	4 Trumpets	6 French Horns	4 Trombones	2 Tubas
Woodwind Solos - 496 MB total sample size	1 Flute	1 Oboe	1 Clarinet	1 Bassoon and C. bassoon

- All four sections mapped over the keyboard so you can get a "feel" of an entire orchestral compliment.
- Control the split or crossfade of each of the 4 sections to get the ideal sound you are seeking.
- Convenient LED indication for active section, and active keys played.
- Choose either "Legato" mode (for lead lines and fast chords) or "Poly" mode (for playing all chords).
- Use IntervaLive® to add realistic transitional intervals when you slur (overlap) notes. This works in both "Legato" and "Poly" mode.
- Control the amount of the IntervaLive® effect.
- Layer any combination of the 4 sections together, or use them independently.
- Control each section's volume and pan.
- Includes many popular "sustained" articulations - Arco, Marcato, Tremolo, Soft and Medium Tongue, Sforzando, and more.
- Includes many popular "short" articulations (Staccato, Staccatissimo, Spiccato, and Pizzicato)
- Use "Slur" and any "sustain" articulation, even aggressive ones such as "Marcato" will always have smooth slurs.
- Control Accent Strength for the Marcato, Sforzando, Staccato, Staccatissimo, and Spiccato articulations via velocity or MIDI CC or both.
- Crossfade any "sustain" articulation with the "tremolo" articulation via MIDI CC (Strings only).
- User-selectable keyswitching.
- Choose volume control via velocity or MIDI CC or both. (Read special instructions for Brass and Woodwinds.)
- Velocity sensitivity (Strings, Brass, Woodwinds) and MIDI CC sensitivity (Strings) control for volume.
- Envelope attack and release control
- 3 band semi-parametric equalization.
- Reverb on/off and amount.
- Room size (for reverb).
- Microphone distance (with or without reverb)

The Full Interfaces - Strings, Brass, Woodwinds

Strings



Brass



Woodwinds

WOODWIND SOLOS

VIRTUOSO INSTRUMENTS

KIRK HUNTER STUDIOS

BASSOON

VOLUME 24 PAN 44

POLY

RANGE

CLARINET

VOLUME 22 PAN -44

POLY

RANGE

OBOE

VOLUME 20 PAN 50

POLY

RANGE

FLUTE

VOLUME 22 PAN -36

POLY

RANGE

F2 D2 D3 B2 D#4 E4

ARTICULATIONS

SUSTAINS

SOFT TONGUE R-1

MED TONGUE R#-1

MARCATO G#6

MARCATO POCO R6

SLUR

SFORZANDO OFF

SHORTS

STACCATO B6

STACCATISSIMO C7

ATTENUATION

EQUALIZER GAIN

LOW MID HIGH

0 0 0

EQUALIZER FREQ

LOW MID HIGH

89.5 HZ 874.3 HZ 4.8k HZ

FEATURES

ENVELOPE

ATTACK RELEASE

0 106

DYNAMICS

VOLUME

CONTROLLER Velocity

VEL SENSITIVITY 65

INTERVALS DURING SLUR -48

AMBIENCE

REVERB 18

ROOM SIZE 50 X 60

MIC DIST. 16 ft

The 6 parts of the Strings, Brass and Woodwind Interface.

1 - Instrument Status Pane:



Here is where we control each section's volume, pan, range and playing mode.

The volume and pan controls are self-explanatory.



Playing Mode:

At the bottom of the Instrument Status Pane, there is a drop-down menu that contains 2 modes:

- 1 - Poly
- 2 - Legato

"Poly" enables complete polyphony where you can play chords. Notes can be added to already-held notes, and notes can be released with the usual "piano style" expected.

"Legato" enables smooth transitions between notes. When you play a single note, and then play another note overlapping your first note, (slur) that first note will be released so as to create a smooth transition. In this mode, however, you are also allowed to play chords as long as all of the notes in your chord are played at almost the exact same time. If you hold that chord, and then play an overlapped note, (slur) the last note that you played in the chord will be released.

Active Section:

Whenever a note is played within a certain section's range, a green LED indicator at the upper-left corner of the Pane will light up making it easy for you to see immediately which section(s) is playing during your performance. In the example below, a note was played that triggered the cello section:

1st and 2nd Violin Status (Violins only):

For violins, there are 2 features that do not appear in any other section:

1 - Switches (light blue switches at the top of the pane) that turn on/off the 1st violins and 2nd violins.

2 - 1st 8va - This slider, when turned up, will make the 2nd violins play the actual note you perform, but force the 1st violins to play 1 octave higher than the 2nd violins. This way you get a very convenient octave in the violin section.

Instrument Range:

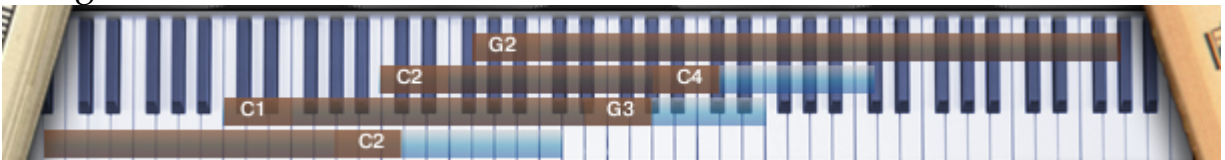


At the bottom of the **Instrument Status Pane**, you will see 2 sliders. The one on the left controls the lower range of the instrument, and the one on the right controls the high range of the instrument. *Note: The highest section (in strings, the violins; the brass, the trumpets; the woodwinds, the flute) there is only a low range slider. The lowest section (in strings, the basses; the brass, the tubas; the woodwinds, the bassoon) there is only a high range slider.*

As you adjust these sliders, you will see the actual range of the section displayed in the **Range Display** area below.

2 - Range Display:

Here, you will find the range display of the 4 sections. In this case, the strings.



The top dark pink bar (in this case) represents the violins. (Note that only the low range is adjustable.)

The next dark pink bar down represents the viola upper and lower range.

The next dark pink bar down represents the cello upper and lower range.

And the last dark pink bar at the bottom represents the bass range. (Note that only the upper range is adjustable.)

The blue translucent bars "under" the dark pink bars represents the various section's possible range.

As you drag over the Instrument Ranges, (described above in the



"Instrument Status Pane") you will see the appropriate dark pink bars move to represent your selected range. You also will see the actual note name move along and change accordingly. Conveniently, you are not forced to use all 4 of the sections. For example, you can move the violas, cellos and basses completely out of the violin range so as to use this instrument for violins only. That makes the process of mocking up to final mix a LOT faster!

Another handy feature is that you are able to see exactly which sections play on each performed note:



Small green LED indicators light up to display the notes you perform relative to the various section's ranges. In the example above, I can quickly see that the low note in the chord is played with the cellos and violas, and the high note is played by the cellos, violas and violins.

3 - Articulations Pane:

STRINGS:



Sustains:

Arco - Normal bowed note. Best for slow phrases or phrases that do not have quick repeated notes.

Arco Vel Attk - Normal bowed note with heavier attacks on higher velocities. Best for phrases that change quickly from slow to fast, but don't require a lot of heavy attack.

BRASS and WOODWINDS:



Sustains:

Soft Tongue - Normal soft attack

Med Tongue - Normal soft attack with heavier attacks when you play harder. Best for phrases that change quickly from slow to fast, but don't require a lot of heavy attack. However, a rather heavy attack will be created if you play exceptionally hard.

However, a rather heavy attack will be created if you play exceptionally hard.

Marcato - Arco, but with a heavy attack. See "Features Pane - Accent Strength" below.

Marcato Poco - Arco, but with a slightly heavy attack. This attack is more "crisp" than "Marcato". See "Features Pane - Accent Strength" below.

Please note that for all 4 "Arco" articulations above, you have the option to crossfade in or out the tremolo articulation. Below the "Tremolo" articulation, there is an on/off switch for this feature named "Trem XF".



If you turn this switch on,



then whenever you select any of the 4 "Arco" articulations, you will be able to crossfade in/out the Tremolo articulation. You should also note that this doubles the voices played on each note. Additionally, you can choose which controller you want to access this feature. See the "CC" drop-down menu just to the right of the "Tremolo XF" switch.

Slur (On/Off) - For all Arco articulations, the slur on/off applies. If on, then when you play a note followed by another overlapped note, a slur articulation will be played. For example, if you select "Marcato" and play a note followed by an overlapped note, the first note will have a heavy attack, and the second note will be slurred. If off, then all notes will follow with the exact attack of the Arco articulation selected.

Tremolo

Shorts:

Staccato - Short Arco articulation

Spiccato - Very short articulation played by bouncing the bow off the strings

Pizzicato - Plucking the string

All articulations except the first Arco and the Tremolo articulation use Round Robin. You needn't worry about resetting the Round Robin because the Round Robin feature only engages when you perform fast phrases.

Marcato - Heavy attack See "Features Pane - Accent Strength" below.

Marcato Poco - Less Heavy, crisp attack See "Features Pane - Accent Strength" below.

Slur (On/Off) - For all 4 above articulations, the slur on/off applies. If on, then when you play a note followed by another overlapped note, a slur articulation will be played. For example, if you select "Marcato" and play a note followed by an overlapped note, the first note will have a heavy attack, and the second note will be slurred. If off, then all notes will follow with the exact attack of the articulation selected.

Sforzando - A heavy, fast attack, followed by a sudden drop to pianissimo. You can then use the Modwheel to crescendo.

Shorts:

Staccato - Short

Staccatissimo - Very short

All articulations except the first Soft Tongue articulation use Round Robin. You needn't worry about resetting the Round Robin because the Round Robin feature only engages when you perform fast phrases.

For all articulations, you can choose keyswitches. To the right of each articulation is a drop-down menu showing all available keyswitches.

4 - Attenuation Pane



All instruments have an attenuation pane that enables you to use a 3-band equalizer. You can choose the gain and frequency of each band.

5 - Features Pane



Each instrument (strings, brass and woodwinds) comes with a Features Pane.

Accent Strength

Whenever you choose an articulation that has adjustable attacks, the "Accent Strength" feature will appear:

This is to alert you that you can control the attack of the selected articulation by either velocity or a controller. Here is where you do that.

Velocity - This knob controls how much sensitivity there is on the attack via velocity.

CC - This knob enables you to choose which controller, if any, adjusts attack.

Envelope

You can adjust the attack and release here. Raising the value of the Attack knob will soften the attack. Raising values of the Release knob will lengthen the release time.

6 - Dynamics



Volume:

Vel Sensitivity - Controls the sensitivity that velocity has on volume.

Controller (Brass and woodwinds only) - Select how to control volume (velocity or controller).

(Brass and Woodwind - Using both Velocity and MIDI CC for volume.)

First, select a MIDI controller via the drop down menu.

The controller you choose will now control volume.

If you wish to use velocity volume along with this controller, then from the same drop down menu, select Velocity.

CC Sensitivity (Strings only) - Controls the sensitivity that the selected controller has on volume.

Intervals During Slur - Here, you will find an on/off switch where you can choose whether to include intervals between slurred notes or not. Additionally, you will find a slider that controls the volume of the intervals if you have them turned on.

Ambience:

Reverb - Choose to turn reverb on/off and the level.

Room Size - Choose the size of the room. (Effective only when reverb is turned on.)

Mic Distance - Adjust the mic distance from the stage.

Overview - Tympani and Killer Kettles:

258 MB total sample size - designed for artistic and dynamic control, the Virtuoso Tympani and Killer Kettles work great whether you want that "bombastic" feel, or a softer "mysterious" quality. And while you can certainly get a huge, epic sound from Virtuoso Ensembles' Tympani, you get more range, and even fatter, bigger drums with Killer Kettles.

Tympani



- Popular articulations - Single hits, Roll, Roll with Modwheel crescendo, Sforzando with Modwheel crescendo, and Short Roll.
- User-selectable keyswitching.
- Convenient Left and Right hand range display for Single Hit
- Convenient range display for all other articulations.
- Convenient LED indication for active keys played.
- Choose a keyswitch for damping the drum.
- Add "Epic Bass" for a truly huge sound.
- Reverb amount control.
- Room size (for reverb).
- Microphone distance (with or without reverb)

Killer Kettles



- Convenient Left and Right hand range display for Single Hits.
- Convenient LED indication for active keys played.
- Add "Epic Bass" for a truly huge sound.
- Reverb amount control.
- Room size (for reverb).
- Microphone distance (with or without reverb)

Overview - Epic Hits and Rolls:

161 MB total sample size - A set of exotic percussion primarily, but not exclusively designed for that "epic" sound often heard in film scores and video gaming. There are a few more common instruments such as snares, toms and cymbals as well.

Recordings - Tam Tam, Giant Metal Log, Drumble, Bass Drums, Big Plastic Bottles, Darbukas, Toms, Snare hits and rolls, Piatti, Suspended Cymbals and Crash Cymbal.



- Convenient Left and Right hand range display for Single Hits such as Bass Drums and Toms.
- Convenient LED indication for active section.
- Room Ambience amount control.
- Reverb amount control.
- Room size (for reverb).
- Microphone distance (with or without reverb)

Overview - Piano:

305 MB total sample size

Virtuoso Ensembles' piano includes 3 sets of samples.

1 - Notes played with the sustain pedal up.

2 - Notes played with the sustain pedal down.

3 - A sophisticated sustain pedal effect. This effect captures the "body" of the piano when the sustain pedal is either pressed down, or when it is released. So if you play a note, and then press the sustain pedal, an effect is immediately added. Then, a different effect is added when you release the pedal. If you press the pedal down before you play a note, the effect is only added when you release the pedal.



- 3 band semi-parametric equalization.
- Velocity sensitivity control for volume.
- Velocity sensitivity control for brightness.
- Sustain pedal effect control.
- Reverb amount control.
- Room size (for reverb).
- Microphone distance (with or without reverb)

Overview - Church Choir:

55 MB total sample size - Virtuoso Ensembles' Church Choir is a simple "Ah" choir that is designed to enhance your compositions. While it is quite simple and does not contain the sophistication as the other instruments in Virtuoso Ensembles, it is quite effective and dramatic when used in the right situations.

Instrument	Section 1	Section 2	Section 3	Section 4
Church Choir	12 Sopranos	12 Altos	6 Tenors	6 Bases



- All four sections mapped over the keyboard so you can get a "feel" of an entire orchestral compliment.
- Convenient LED indication for active section, and active keys played.
- Choose either "Legato" more (for lead lines and fast chords) or "Poly" mode (for playing all chords).
- Use IntervaLive® to add realistic transitional intervals when you slur (overlap) notes. This works in both "Legato" and "Poly" mode.
- Control the amount of the IntervaLive® effect.
- Control each section's volume and pan.
- Choose volume control via velocity or MIDI CC.
- Velocity sensitivity control.
- Reverb amount control.
- Room size (for reverb).
- Microphone distance (with or without reverb)
- Envelope attack and release control
- 3 band semi-parametric equalization.

FAQ

Are the samples in Virtuoso Ensembles different than other Kirk Hunter libraries?

Yes with the exception of the piano and the tympani. HOWEVER, the programming in these instruments is SO enhanced that it creates a difference so distinct as to render these instruments completely unique.

How would one describe the over all difference in sound of this library compared to other Kirk Hunter libraries?

The "vision" of this library is similar to others in the Kirk Hunter collection, however, this one has a more "cinematic" and "broad" sound. As usual, there is the characteristic "bite" and "edge" so often associated with Kirk Hunter libraries, yet this one is a bit more "refined" and pristine.

I love the "ensemble" nature of this library, but are there separate sections as well?

Yes indeed, you can find all of the major sections separated.

How does the memory load compare to other orchestral libraries?

This library was designed for you, the on-the-go composer / performer! Compared to other like-sounding orchestral sample libraries, this one is truly lean when you consider how much can be loaded in a single instance. You won't have to be waiting to watch your fingernails grow while you load up this entire orchestra!

I really like the legato intervals in this library. Can I control the amount

of this?

Yes. You are not limited to one "set" volume for this feature - "IntervaLive®". You can scale this, or completely turn it off to your taste.

Were these sounds recorded dry or wet?

Basically, they were recorded fairly dry, but with enough ambience to effectively produce a nice "space" to the sounds. You can easily add your own reverb, and the samples will not suffer. Mind you, in this situation, you would want to turn off the default reverb in the GUI.

Will this library run in the free Kontakt player?

No. Virtuoso Ensembles requires the FULL VERSION of Kontakt 5.7.1 or newer.

Does this library include keyswitching?

Yes, for all of the included articulations, you can select your own keyswitching.

Can I automate the features?

Yes. All features can be automated. The only items that are restricted from this are the drop down menus for choosing between "poly" and "legato", or the drop down menus that change your choice of MIDI CC designation.

What is the total sample size?

While you would think that such a great sounding library would be in the neighborhood of 50 - 100GB in size, this one is unbelievably only 2.55GB

total! The whole idea was to be able to get a really amazing sound with a very low memory load and a small CPU hit.

I love being able to control dynamics with velocity, much like a piano. But can I choose different ways? Especially with strings and brass.

Yes. Not only can you choose different ways, but you can have velocity AND another MIDI CC control your dynamics. So you get the best of both worlds.

I like having all of the orchestra in a multi along with the piano. But in other libraries, when I put everything in a multi, I can't play "piano style". When I use the sustain pedal, the whole thing gets awash and piles up like a dogfight.

Not to worry. There are multis especially-created where the piano receives sustain pedal input, but the rest of the compliment does not. It's like playing a piano on steroids!