

Zero-G IMPACT DESIGNER USER MANUAL



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OVERVIEW



IMPACT DESIGNER is a futuristic mega-slam drum machine with extremely high quality impact sounds built from live environmental recordings then processed with customised software by an Italian Professor of Sound Design, Alessandro Camnasio. His trailer credits include Transformers: Age of Extinction, Captain America - The First Avenger and THOR.

It combines amazing raw sounds, incredible simplicity, a high degree of playability and a very high level of customisation.

Under the hood there are **3 dynamic velocity layers** and **3 round robins** for each sound so it all stays nicely organic-sounding without a machine-gun effect of repeat sample-triggering.

The **GUI design**, with silver knobs, flashing LEDs, long sharp shadows from overhead spotlights and a veneer of blue pool baize, was designed to transport you into an addictive fantasy of late-night studio tweaking.

GENERAL PRINCIPLE OF THE IMPACT DESIGNER

Every Impact is made up of 3 elements (4 if you have the PRE-HIT enabled) - HIT, BOOM and DECAY. Respectively, these 3 elements are the attack, the body of the hit and the long release. This Impact Designer instrument quickly crossfades between 3 different sounds in order to produce sonic complexity and a very wide range of possible variations. Including PRE-HITS, there are over 15 million possible variations.

THE MIDI KEYS



There is a different Impact sound on every pair of adjacent MIDI keys. Pressing a key will instantly change the GUI to show you the settings for that sound, on that pair of MIDI keys. If you tweak the knobs or load different sounds into the slots, it will only change them for the last-played pair of keys, and will remember the settings for when you play that pair of keys again.

The **two-note blue and green stripes** are trying to tell you that the sounds are organised into pairs. That is, whatever plays on one key also has exactly the same thing on the key next to it. This is so that you can play fast twiddles on your keyboard.

The two **upper black keys** are NOISE GATES. So you can cut off the sound and get gating effects, after a fashion.

The **red keys** show the last key-pair played. The settings on the GUI relate to the impact sound on that key-pair.

[Exception to this main layout: the PITCHED INSTRUMENTS (in the Pitched nki folder) have one-octave sets of tuned sounds rather than pairs.]

SAVING YOUR SETTINGS

If you've made some great noises, you should re-name the nki and save it, to keep it for posterity. True, your changes will also load as part of your DAW project but you really should save it to a new nki if you made some good noises - you'll want to load them back up again on future projects!

GUI: PRE HIT, HIT, BOOM and DECAY



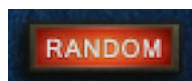
The **black windows** are sound menus. You can load different sounds into the 4 different slots, with the downward triangles opening up menus and sub-menus.

The **PRE-HIT**, if enabled, is a reverse sound that can give your Impact an impressive thwack. You can adjust the time between this and the main Impact using the **GAP** knob. A longer gap increases the dramatic tension, akin to hearing a rolled up newspaper swishing towards your head, with a moment of silence as you wait for the impact. Or more epically, the air rush of an alien missile immediately prior to Earth Impact.

The **HIT** is the initial attack transient. The **BOOM** is the bit immediately afterwards - the body of the Impact. The **DECAY** is the long fading aspect.

The knobs under each window control the volume of that part of the sound.

RANDOM BUTTON



This **magic button** loads a random set of sounds into the slots on the last-played key, offering you an endless set of new impact sounds. The amazing thing is, they almost always sound great! Beware though - it wipes out whatever was on that key-pair so make sure you save your nki under a new name before you wipe over your previous creations.

BOTTOM ROW OF KNOBS

This row gives you a lot of control over the sound on your last-played MIDI key-pair, because the settings only affect that sound - they are not global for the whole keyboard.



VEL is the velocity sensitivity. Low levels give you a loud sound with a gentle keyboard hit.

PAN is PAN of course! You can pan every sound differently.

F is the filter cutoff

Q is the Filter Q, aka resonance.

V/F is the velocity to filter map. High settings make the velocity affect the filter cutoff a lot, but you can only hear that if the F (filter) has a low setting.

TUNE - pitch of course

DEC - Only two states, this selects between shorter and longer versions of the DECAY part of the sound.

REL - Length of the release after you stop playing the key

DEL and REV - These are delay and reverb sends just for that sound. To make a difference, the delay and/or reverb effects need to be switched on on the MASTER FX page.

MASTER EFFECTS PAGE

These are global effects which will affect every sound currently loaded on the whole keyboard.



This will all be obvious enough if you've used effects before, which you have! You can create some enormous distorted megalithic monstrosities with DRIVE and COMP(ression).

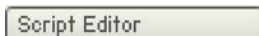
The top 3 effects (DRIVE, COMPRESSION and FILTER) are all INSERT EFFECTS while DELAY and REVERB are SEND EFFECTS. Delay and Reverb send levels are controlled separately for each sound back on the MAIN page.

HIDDEN ROUND-ROBIN OFF-SWITCH

Perhaps you'll find the round robins occasionally no good to you, for example if the timbre changes too much with each repetition. To switch off round robin:



1. Press the generic Kontakt Edit Tool button

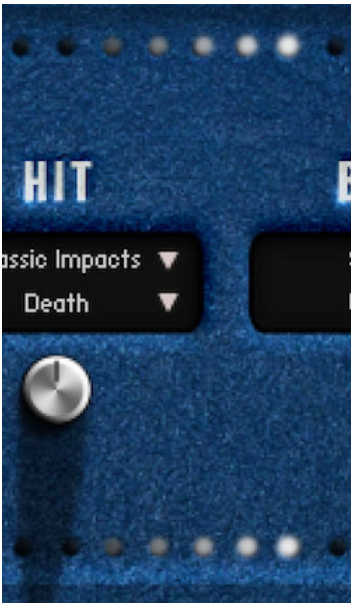


2. Press the Script Editor tab



3. Select the Round Robin tab, and click the Round Robin button off.

FLASHING LIGHTS



It is said that little things please little minds, and in this spirit I insisted on a flashing lights animation, because I wanted to see a light show when I hit a key.

Perhaps it has a practical value of warning you that a PRE-HIT is fast incoming, and also, perhaps making a musical tool fun to work with is even helpful to urge you on through the long thankless hours of creation.

But mostly it's just fun and serves the decorative illusion of making you feel like the sound is being sucked into the machine, spat out again, and still there even though you can't hear it.

TIPS

There are some great presets included which show the wide range of different sounds that can be created with very simple tools. However, every track is different and **you will definitely get the best results by creating your own customised sounds and settings** that better fit your track.

For example, you might want to **ditch the reverb** so you can use your superior reverb sounds, or have them sounding more dry.

You might want to **detune everything** at once by dropping the Kontakt Tune button from 0 anything down to -36 semitones (3 octaves) or up from 0 to +36 to create small percussion sounds.

You might want to make all sounds to the left of the keyboard PRE-HITS-only with everything to the right HITS-only so you can perform your own **live action fwish-KRANG whoosh-hits**.

Above all, just move the knobs, press RANDOM and listen to all the interesting possibilities.

Enjoy!

Dan Graham

CREDITS

Alessandro Camnasio....Sound Designer
Adam Hanley.....Scripter
Dan Graham.....Producer