ABOUT STREZOV SAMPLING

STREZOV SAMPLING © is a division of STREZOV MUSIC PRODUCTIONS LTD. – a company created by George Strezov – orchestrator, composer and orchestra/choir contractor in Sofia, Bulgaria.

We have been sampling since December 2012 when we started out with Storm Choir 1 and throughout that time we learned and incorporated a lot into our products. Our team is passionate about sample libraries because at the end we are the first customers of the products – we are composers and arrangers working around the world. Our headquaters is based in Sofia, Bulgaria where we record the fantastic musicians and singers that breathe life into the tiny .wav files that we later include into Kontakt.

DISCLAIMER / PHILOSOPHY

We would like to note that, in our pursuit for more lively and natural samples, we tend to avoid a few things that are considered commonplace. We used some tuning inside Kontakt and manually edited all single tones in the instrument trying to make it as balanced as possible. However, our main goal is to keep the depth of the instrument dynamics. We embrace candid, lively samples that include some natural imperfections.

A MESSAGE FROM GEORGE STREZOV

Hello,

Thank you for purchasing Storm Choir Ultimate and for once again supporting our company. This is the final chapter of Storm Choir, the library we started our company with! It’s been a long time since 2012 and now, with all the new features and techniques we developed over the years, we thought it is high time we bring Storm Choir on pair with the rest of our choral libraries.

Over an intense recording period of almost two months, we managed to capture the sound that inspired us to do this library in the first place – most notably epic trailer music and epic orchestral music (like Orff, or Howard Shore, or Verdi’s Requiem for instance).

We hope you’ll enjoy this library as much as we do. Thank you!

Kindest regards,

George
ABOUT STORM CHOIR ULTIMATE

It was inevitable that after the success of our Next Gen choir series (Wotan, Freyja, Arva, Rhodope 2) we had to upgrade Storm Choir (our most popular choir library) to be up date with the rest of our choral libraries and to have the same features.

Therefore we re-recorded everything, but this time with slightly bigger ensembles - 10 singers per section (men/women) for the syllables and 6 singers per section for the legatos. Again, we kept the same idea in mind - singing with exaggerated vibrato, over the top and generally - very loud. We re-recorded all 24 syllables of Storm Choir 2 in three dynamic layers, controllable with mod wheel (CC#1).

SYLLABUILDER ENGINE 3.6

When it comes to virtual choirs, there are basically two approaches: Phrase-building (Storm Choir series) and Word-building (Rhodope series). Storm Choir Ultimate combines the simplicity and sample recording of phrasebuilding with the advanced editing functions of wordbuilding.

“Ultimate” gives you the option to “write” words quickly. In order to do so, choose an empty position on the dashboard and click on any syllable in the list to your left. The editor will automatically switch to the next empty slot, so you can repeat the above procedure as many times as you want.
If you want to write Staccato words, choose an empty position on the dashboard and hold down the SHIFT key on your keyboard while clicking on any syllable in the list of the left. SHIFT+LMB shortcut is only available when an empty position is selected.

To edit words (syllables), you must first select one of the available positions on the dashboard. Any changes made from now on will be applied to the current selection until you move on to another position. You must tweak all the settings like Attack, Release, Volume, Offset or even change the syllable itself.

**Syllable options.**

Use the “Sustain / Staccato” switch to change the articulation on the go. Use Attack, Release, Start offset and Volume to set the syllable according to your preferences to adjust the transition in combination with Connect and Morph modes.

**Connect Mode**

To connect multiple syllables, click on the circle between them. Then you can play with a single note/chord on the keyboard. While operating in this mode, you can use the Rhythm Controls to adjust the specific length each syllable will be held for before jumping to the next one in the sequence. In Connect mode, click on any note to the right of the Rhythm sign to change the duration of the selected syllable. This will help you create various choral patterns and sync the lyrics to the dynamics of your project.

**Morph Mode**

Morph mode, on the other hand, allows you to crossfade between different syllables, thus creating new words. To morph two (or more) syllables, click twice on the circle between them until you see the crossed sign.

To control the morph between two (or more) syllables, use their Rhythm options. The Rhythm of the first syllable controls the timing when the first morph will start. The Rhythm of the second (third, etc.) syllable controls the duration of the morph between the syllable in question and the previous one in the sequence.

If you want to use a word (or a phrase) more than once in your track, you don't need to type it twice. Just assign it to a keyswitch. To do this, simply select the word (phrase or syllable) sequential number (counting from 1) using the corresponding knob in the upper left corner by click & hold and move the mouse up or down. The keyswitch G0 (not shown in the upper left side of the GUI) is always set for 1, or the first word/phrase.
It will be easier to press the word keyswitch from your keyboard first if you don't want to count the words that you have written. The corresponding knob in the upper left corner will turn blue. By dragging the keyswitch knob, you will see the grey note (below the syllables in the dashboard) jump between words, showing you which word is currently selected.

By default, each time you change the note/chord that you are playing, the next word/phrase from your dashboard will be played (when finished, they will loop). The keyswitches give you the option to change the order of the words/phrases being played. For example, each time you click (or play) the corresponding keyswitch for word/phrase 3, the next note/chord you play will trigger word 3 and continue from there onward with the word sequence as in the dashboard. This is a fast and efficient way to rearrange and change the order of the content, written in your dashboard.

**Legato options.**

Click on any button to the right of the Legato sign to change the legato duration for the selected syllable (uses only at the beginning of a new note/chord). If no selection is made, the legato is switched off.

You also have the Agile legato option available. In Hold Last Syllable mode (HLS – assigned to Sustain pedal by default) the transitions between notes are handled by the Agile Legato. It is fully polyphonic and it is equally useful for both solo melodies and harmonic content. You can switch the Agile Legato off for compatibility with your older projects or other Next Generation Choir libraries.

From this same menu, you're able to turn ON/OFF the Overlapping Notes and Release samples functions (turned on by default). When the “Overlapping notes” is ON, you are using the polyphonic legato and you can have one voice holding a pedal “Beh” syllable (for instance), while the other voices are still progressing through the lyrics.

You could also turn the Auto reset to last KS function ON/OFF. If switched ON, the sequence will automatically reset to the last used word keyswitch if you pause for more than 20 ms. You can progress through the lyrics by successfully connecting the notes/chords in legato mode or by using a word keyswitch.

Make sure you use the “Save”, “Load”, “New”, “Insert” and “Delete” functions – they will save you a lot of time and these can also help you create your own lyrics templates.

You can also quickly insert or delete syllables in the dashboard using keyboard modifiers while clicking on any of the available positions. CTRL + LMB = Delete syllable
ALT + LMB = Insert syllable

Hold Last Syllable (HLS)

If you wish to hold the last syllable in a word for a series of notes, use the sustain pedal, or assign a controller yourself by using the “MIDI Learn” function in the Options tab. The sustain pedal is not sustaining the notes themselves, just the word from the word sequence. If you wish to hold the last word by pressing and holding the dynamic keyswitch F1 (marked in yellow on the Kontakt keyboard).

Quick Words Browser

Use the button in the upper right corner to open the “Quick Words” browser. Click on any word in the browser and then use the dashboard to select and insert a position. Be careful – if there are too many words on the dashboard, a few syllables at the end may get lost.

There are two types of presets in the browser: factory (grey) and user presets (white). You can save separate words for later use through the “Quick Words” browser. To do so, click on “Quick Save” and then pick a word from the dashboard by clicking on any of its syllables. User presets can be deleted if you don't need them anymore. Just click on a preset and use the “X” sign on the right to remove it.

Every time you open the “Quick Words” browser (or use the “Quick Save” button), it will refresh the presets from the disk. If you have more than one instance of the library in your project, you can even transfer words between them without reloading the library or your project. Just save the word in presets using “Quick Save” and then simply re-open the browser (close and open) in the other instance.

Bulk Edit

Use SHIFT+LMB on any available position on the dashboard to add or remove a syllable to the bulk edit selection. All changes made using Syllable Controls will be applied to the entire selection. To clear the bulk edit selection, simply change the edit position or use one of the functions like New, Load, Save, etc.

The “Loop” icon appears if you combine two or more syllables so you can choose between:
Loop OFF – the last syllable in the word will be held until you release the key on your keyboard.

Loop ON – all connected syllables will run in a loop until you release the key on your keyboard.

Use the Connect of Morph options in front of the last syllable to control the loop transition.

You can use the Pan controls to place the signal in the stereo panorama. Use the Stereo Width control to adjust the width of the stereo field. When the two circles are overlapped at 100%, the signal becomes mono.

Sometimes it's necessary to increase or decrease the volume of a single note in a chord, which is hard to accomplish using only the mod wheel. Use the Velocity Dynamic Influencer to adjust the amount of velocity influence on a single note’s volume based on the individual note's velocity amount. This feature will increase or decrease the volume based on the value up to +/-6dB.

**PERFORMANCE PATCH**

**Storm Choir Ultimate** features a new intuitive “Performance” Patch designed especially for fast, out of the box playing or recording with optimal results. The patch itself contains just a part of the functions and content available in the other patches of the library, but its concept is to have all this at your fingertips.

By playing this patch, the default syllable cycle will be between the eight syllables shown in the center panel. Each time you change a note or chord, the next syllable will be played.
Some of the functions and modifications can be found only in this “Performance” patch.

From the panel on the right you can switch the men/women singers section of the patch ON/OFF. You can also choose the keyboard layout between:
- Normal - both men and women sections positioned on their actual recorded and sounding octave pitch – default setting when opening the patch.
- Divided – both sections are moved apart in order not to overlap.
- In Octaves – both sections are overlapped and sounding in octave apart.

From the central panel of the GUI you could choose and switch ON/OFF any of the corresponding syllables from the Round Robin Cycle.

On the keyboard you will notice a keyswitch located on C0. This keyswitch will select the first syllable that should be played after resetting the Round Robin Cycle.

LEGATO PATCHES

In your Legato instrument folder you will find two patches named “Storm Choir Ultimate Men Oh-Ah Legato” and “Storm Choir Ultimate Women Oh-Ah Legato”.

These are two pre-made patches which are engineered to morph between “Oh” and “Ah” legato samples depending on the dynamic layer. On the lower, quiet dynamic layer, the sound will be “Oh” and increasing the dynamics will morph to the “Ah” sound of the choir.

Making our choir engine as accessible as possible was the primary goal during its development process. That's why Storm Choir Ultimate has an integrated manual in the advanced options menu explaining every little feature in detail. **Just click on the up/down arrows next to the “ABOUT” section!**
OVERVIEW

• 32 GB compressed and optimized sample content
• 20-piece chamber choir (Syllabuilder patches) and 12-piece chamber choir (legato patches)
• Slavonic molto vibrato tone, over-the-top dynamics and performance
• Three microphone positions (Close, Decca and Hall), recorded in the Sofia Session Studio
• True Polyphonic Legato samples for both women and men
• 24 different syllables accessible through an intuitive phrasebuilder
• Recorded with ribbon close-mic array (Coles x3 and Royer x2) for a “darker” sound, Neumann M150 for Decca tree, DPA4006 for wide outriggers

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PATCH LIST:

MAIN PATCHES

• Storm Choir Ultimate Men
• Storm Choir Ultimate Performance
• Storm Choir Ultimate Women

FX PATCHES

• Storm Choir Ultimate Men FX
• Storm Choir Ultimate Men Whispers & Shouts
• Storm Choir Ultimate Women FX
• Storm Choir Ultimate Women Whispers & Shouts

LEGATO PATCHES

• Storm Choir Ultimate Men Ah Legato
• Storm Choir Ultimate Men Oh Legato
• Storm Choir Ultimate Men Oh-Ah Legato
• Storm Choir Ultimate Women Ah Legato
• Storm Choir Ultimate Women Oh Legato
• Storm Choir Ultimate Women Oh-Ah Legato

SOLOISTS PATCHES

• Storm Choir Ultimate Solo Alto
• Storm Choir Ultimate Solo Bass (Dramatic)
• Storm Choir Ultimate Solo Bass (Profundo)
• Storm Choir Ultimate Solo Mezzo-soprano
• Storm Choir Ultimate Solo Soprano (Dramatic)
• Storm Choir Ultimate Solo Soprano (Lyrical)
• Storm Choir Ultimate Solo Tenor (Dramatic)
• Storm Choir Ultimate Solo Tenor (Lyrical)
CREDITS

Recording engineer: Plamen Penchev, Angelia Vihrova
Conceptual Design & Scripting: Alexander Koev
Graphic Design: Kiril Dikov, Boyan Yordanov
GUI Design: Kiril Dikov, Boyan Yordanov, Alexander Koev
Sample editing: Kiril Georgiev
Sample mapping: Alexander Kostov, Azad Agassian, Zornitsa Slavova, Iavor Pachovski, Velislava Georgieva, Dobromir Kiiyiiov, Zhivko Vasilev
Marketing: Robin Birner
Beta testing: Iavor Pachovski
Conducted by: George Strezov, Georgi Elenkov
Session Producers: Simeon Edward, Kiril Georgiev
Contracting by Four For Music Ltd.

With the fantastic voices of the Sofia Session Choir!

Produced and conducted by George Strezov