

ARRANGING MUSIC AT THE KEYBOARD

Workshop created by Heidrun Dolde - English translation by Eileen Lowry and Carol Sissons

Hello dear readers,

First: to create good music you need two things: the desire to try different things out and a lot of time. Sometimes it will take hours or even days to arrange a single piece with registrations!

Basically, the best source for successful instrumentation is found in the original song. It is worthwhile to listen closely to it and take note of how the solo, accompanying voices and the rhythm instruments are used - if they are used.

Here is a list of what should be observed in order to provide good instrumentation:

- Voice: which instrumental voice is used as solo and should be highlighted in the mix?
- With newer keyboards also consider old legacy voices (in Legacy, XG & GM folder)
- You can use Left Hand voice as a solo voice if required, not only as a background accompaniment

You may combine the main instrument with other instruments, this instrument support / reinforce with similar coloration. In this case, consider the following in the Mixing Console:

"Three-dimensional" registrations

- Pan (Stereo : Left - center-right) used for multiple instruments
 - Create different spatial depth of the Voices with different amount of reverb
 - Octave voice position
Take into account when using voices from the same instrument family:
Don't use two of the same voices (eg. 2 clarinets or 2 pianos) in the same octave as this will produce unpleasant overlays or sound cancellation.
 - Use Filters - they make the sound softer or sharper and give a different sound coloration and are often underestimated (eg. *Individual voices voice editor*)
 - Harmony / Echo effect used specifically for orchestral instrumentation: octave and order of the selected voices should be taken into account - they play a large role.
 - Using Effects EQ enables you to alter the balance of individual voices by taking elements (bass/treble) up or down.
 - Mono effects are used specifically for solo instruments. Notice to set the Portamento value (on the Tune Page of the Mixing Console) to zero if the effect is not wanted.
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Voice Set

This is a useful tool which allows you to adjust the sound by changing the touch sensitivity, frequency or envelope. There are five different pages in this section which can be altered to your liking. You don't need to store these as Custom Voices – you can just store them to your registration bank.

Foot pedals

These can act very specifically to individual voices. This creates many more opportunities for sound variation and affects volume, sustain effect or other instrument related pedal-settings such as the glide effect with a harmonica.

Styles

These are well worth trying out to see which effects suit you.

You can adjust each style separately in the mixing console (volume, pan, filters, etc.) and you can, of course, also change the instruments.

Be cautious when changing an instrument to a Mega Voice if the style wasn't originally written using Mega Voice, as you will get unwanted squeaks and noises.

You can mute various voices in each style by going to the Channel on/off switch – this will temporarily switch off those voices you don't want.

Other important points

- Multiple split points – you may split your keyboard into 3 parts
You can now syncro-start Multipads so that they start with the style
- Make folders on your hard drive for quick reference

Good tips on this available here: <http://heidruns-musikerseiten.de/download/pdf/Datei-Organisation.pdf>
http://heidruns-musikerseiten.de/tyros/workshop_1.html

Finally, an extra tip on how you can learn to orchestrate:

Get hold of some good registrations that are already set up for you. The OTS settings that come with the styles can be a good place to start, however registrations are better because they can also contain footswitch assignments, style revoicing etc.

As so often in life, it's a matter of trial and error, and taking the time to explore the available options. I wish you good luck on achieving better musical arrangements.

Best regards,

Heidrun