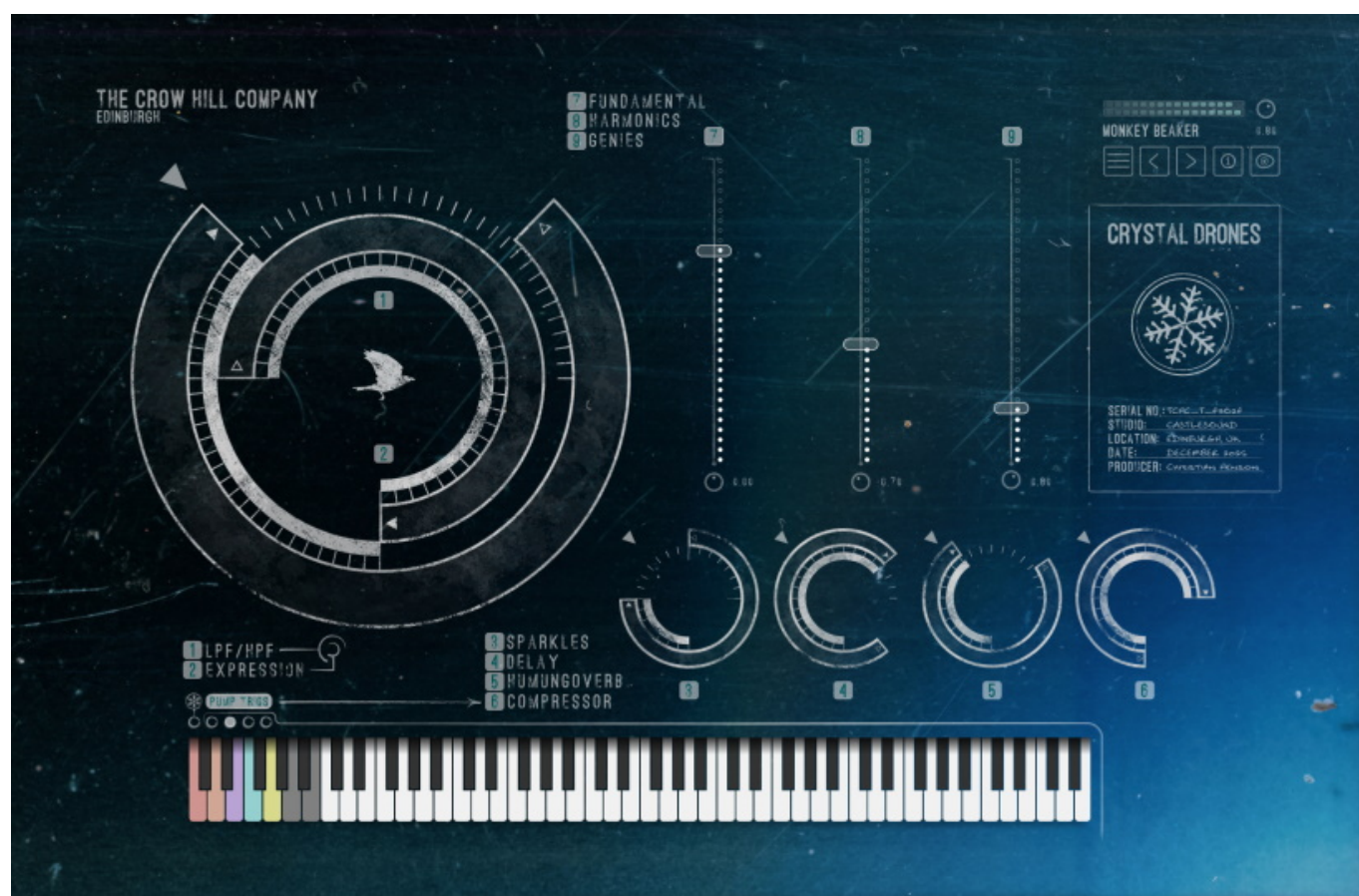


## The Crow Hill Company CRYSTAL PADS Library



Following in the trailblazing footsteps of its relatively recent CRYSTAL PIANOS release musically leveraging the Edinburgh-based enterprise's innovative Sheppard Mapping breakthrough bringing about the creation of entirely chromatic instruments from single objects that resonate at only one pitch brought to bear upon 18 different glass objects sampled to create a piano library like no other, The Crow Hill Company creates a truly magical world-building palette of sounds that embrace the power of sample synthesis with CRYSTAL PADS - readily representing a new attitude towards controlling sound to fit anyone's music rather than forcing them to fit their music around their sounds, courtesy of 48 (16 x 3) carefully curated pads multi-layered into independently controllable stems designed to come alive as the user performs and composes with them - as of June 12...

Clarifies The Crow Hill Company co-founder and professional media composer Christian Henson, his 'samplist-in-residence' cap duly doffed towards thinking out of the box: "Based on this library that we released a few months ago with pianos that were made virtually - by the power of sampling - out of wine glasses, tumblers, vases, and that kind of stuff, I'm no longer content with pad sounds that are either static or, indeed, I have no control over; it feels like I'm playing a reverb tail from someone else's album. As such, the CRYSTAL PADS concept is that you have 16 different sets of sounds, but you have to multiply that by three, because each

‘preset’ or patch contains not one but three very different approaches, all of which are complimentary to creating soundscapes - some really surprising, some utterly beautiful, and some, dare I say it, a bit beguiling.”

But by using purely organic sources, each of CRYSTAL PADS’ three layers of stems contains a harmonic complexity that the user will find easier to mix into tracks containing other acoustic instruments. Indeed, with cinematic and widescreen application very much in mind, these pads have been specifically designed for the composer or performer to tweak, creating movement and magical standout moments in realtime without having to modulate the composition. Christian Henson has clearly given this some serious thought - unsurprisingly, perhaps, given a background that contemporarily led to crystallising CRYSTAL PADS’ raison d’être: “Giving a glassy glimpse at where my head is at and where it is headed with tools that I’m making and sharing for fellow music-makers, and composers like myself, think of user interfaces not as a way of interfacing with complicated functionality, but, in fact, a method of interfacing a performance. For me, a user interface shouldn’t be about setting and forgetting; it should be a device that takes your musical ideas and animates them. I’ve been harking on about MIDI controllers for well over a decade now, and their importance of bringing your sounds and music to life - particularly if you’re in a position like mine, writing music for TV, film, and computer games, where, more often than not, you’re being asked to do more with your music without doing more music.”

Those three stems or partials - in The Crow Hill Company-speak - provide CRYSTAL PADS performances with FUNDAMENTAL root tones, then harmonic complexity, with the second HARMONIC partial adding greater complexity and richness to the music, before bringing in all sorts of glassy-sounding surprises with the third (GENIES). Long looping sonics feature ‘moments’ and enable compositions to come alive unexpectedly without it ever feeling like the compositional flow is being dictated by the tools that are being used. Ultimately, all three partials are easy to operate either from the GUI (Graphical User Interface) itself or via assignable MIDI (Musical Instrument Digital Interface) controls. Continues Christian Henson: “You can actually tune these partials independently of each other - the first one to try and imitate the THX mnemonic with this wins a biscuit! But there’s not just these kind of glassy drones and soundscapes, so if you do decide to stick this in your toolbox then I really urge you to go through each sound. There’s a lot of easter eggs and surprises in there. Though you may end up using partial three more episodically, you may actually be surprised at how standalone that one is in itself, too.”

There is, however, more to CRYSTAL PADS than might first meet the eye. Enter the ‘snowflake’ climax button that can instantly enhance the four - self-explanatory SPARKLES, DELAY, HUMUNGOVERB, and COMPRESSOR - effects macros, all of which have been carefully curated by The Crow Hill Company’s team of professional working composers, alongside keychain PUMP TRIGS that squeeze and almost gates the pad signals as part of the performance. “They take it from being real soundscape into something much more avascular and internal,” its instigator notes.

## The Crow Hill Company creates CRYSTAL PADS Library

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Anyone at all familiar with any of The Crow Hill Company's more recent releases should feel comfortable working with CRYSTAL PADS' (admittedly gorgeous) GUI. Guides Christian Henson: "The inner big knob is expression - CC#11, while the modulation fader is what we control the big knob with. This has combined LPF [Low Pass Filter]/HPF [High Pass Filter] - the further up you go, the less low stuff you get; the further down you go, the less high stuff you get."

Getting into CRYSTAL PADS could well prove addictive. As Christian Henson concludes with vigour, veering into teaser territory: "This is merely opening the door and having a peek into where we're going within the fairly tight confines of a pad library made entirely from household glass objects. This is literally the tip of the iceberg. We've got a bunch of these coming out very soon, performance-oriented - pads, I don't think is a good enough word for them, which will then usher in some absolute stonkers that we've got coming up in the next weeks and months. But I think the most important thing to mention here is that this is an environment that is set to work around and be sculpted into your music - not for you to have to sculpt yourself around your sounds - and inform the music that you make."

Featuring 16 individually selected pieces of glassware recorded at Gorbals Sound Recording Studios in Glasgow, UK with a multiple - Neumann KM 84, KM 184, and U 87 - microphone setup, CRYSTAL PADS is available to buy for £29.00 GBP as a sample-based virtual instrument supporting AAX-, AU-, VST-, and VST3 plug-in formats for macOS 11 through to 15 (Apple Silicon and Intel compatible) and Windows 10 through to 11 from directly The Crow Hill Company.

CRYSTAL PADS installation and activation requires installation of The Crow Hill App - an easy-to-use app designed by the best in the business to provide seamless download, installation, integration, calibration, and organisation of The Crow Hill Company tools - available for free from the website below.

[www.thecrowhillcompany.com](http://www.thecrowhillcompany.com)