

The Crow Hill Company FOREST HARPS



The Crow Hill Company is delighted to continue investigating its Origins series of virtual instrument plug-in collectables with the release of its intriguing-sounding FOREST HARPS — being billed as an incantatory invention collectively crafted by the Edinburgh-based enterprise, effectively comprising a harp made from elk horn, conch shell, animal ribs, and fishing wire brought together with medieval psaltries fed through a slowly rotating Leslie cabinet to create a forest floor of plucks, textures, and atmospheres as a rare and grotesque approach to sound design — as of October 20...

Taking a tour of FOREST HARPS' reassuringly recognisable — certainly to owners of other virtual instrument plug-in collectibles and, indeed, several other sample-based virtual instrument plug-ins released relatively recently by The Crow Hill Company — and, as always, gorgeous GUI (Graphical User Interface), Christian Henson, co-founder of The Crow Hill Company, says, "What you'll find the outer [TREMS] knob does on most of the acoustic samples is add this highly aleatoric kind of staggered tremolando — speeding up, slowing down, but each note is very different. And the net result — something I've been investigating on other plug-ins — is that the chords that you play suddenly form melodic phrases in the sense that — because these things are totally aleatoric — these notes pop out, not in phase, and they form these kinds of melodic cells, if you will. We've been somewhat

agnostic about the three different signals — conch harp [SIGNAL 1], first psaltery [SIGNAL 2], and second psaltery [SIGNAL 3], but see these very much as things you should address and negotiate with whilst you're performing — not just the set-and-forget that you would expect maybe more so of the effects macros. Now, when we tried putting the psalteries through the Leslie, there was a couple of problems with it — because these instruments are so quiet, they don't really emit much in the way of the frequencies of the Leslie, which is very much a low mid- and subby-sounding cabinet. We found it just sounded rubbish, so we've filled up the slots with other layers that I think you'll find very interesting. I also thought it would be interesting to create a loose ensemble of psalteries — the fingered, the bowed, double-tracked, but on SIGNAL 2 and SIGNAL 3 we have the other two psalteries just in solo — suddenly you've got this just feathery, almost echo-like sound, which is absolutely stunning. We also did exactly the same layout of instruments, but with an octave."

Obviously, the inner (HPF/LFP) knob — controlling high-pass and low-pass filtering — and smaller knobs — controlling labelled LESLIE, DELAYS, SPARKLES, and SPLOSH effect levels — are all present and correct in their usual positions, playing their part in tweaking the 12 unique instruments that form FOREST HARPS. Concludes Christian Henson: "All are sound designed by yours truly, but all made solely from the psalties and the harp." It is fair to say that this, the latest in The Crow Hill Company's always-creative Origins series of virtual instrument plug-in collectables, will provide hours of inspiration; whether used as a centrepiece of a new music project or, indeed, an engaging patina to add broader arrangements, its sheer beauty will be certain to captivate both users and audiences alike with its instruments and signals with preset combinations and sound design elements satisfying multiple use cases as an incantatory invention, rare and grotesque as its approach to sound design so clearly is.

Featuring the individual soloistic beauty of a one-of-a-kind conch shell-elk horn harp to the indistinct but highly-detailed metallic detail of a soprano and tenor psaltery creatively captured at Castlesound Studios outside of Edinburgh and presented as 12 unique instruments — including Electric Elk-Conch Harp, Harp & Psaltery Ensemble, Psaltery Ensemble (loose), Psaltery Ensemble (loose 8ves), Solo Psaltery 1, Solo Psaltery 2, and six Textural Pads), FOREST HARPS is available to buy for £29.00 GBP as a sample-based virtual instrument plug-in 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 directly from The Crow Hill Company.

FOREST HARPS 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