

New book from Hal Leonard
All About Music Technology in Worship

The long-awaited complete guide to music technology in ministry is here — and it lives up to all the expectations. Written by a worship musician for worship musicians, this book covers all the essential topics on both the art and the heart of using music technology in worship.



All the topics that challenge the best of us are deconstructed and explained in simple terms, with practical examples that you can use, whether you're a beginner or a guru. Technology for keyboard, guitar, bass, drums, recording, big and small churches, traditional and contemporary churches — it's all covered along with real-life ministry profiles of worship leaders, and how they're using music technology creatively to enhance both their music and their ministry.

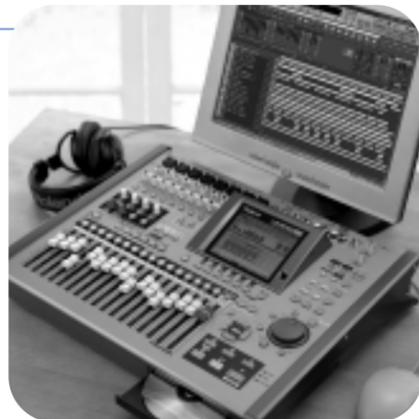
Order it today from the Roland SuperStore at RolandUS.com!

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the ultimate keyboard workstations, with sequencing, sampling, expansion, and a gorgeous new piano built-in. A huge, color LCD makes setting up layers and splits a breeze, and the assignable knobs give you realtime control of all your favorite combinations.

VS-2000CD

For recording your music, sermons, rehearsals, new songs, kids choir, or you name it, the new VS-2000CD is the most feature-packed yet affordable digital studio ever. It has eight inputs and over 300 virtual tracks, so there's no limit to what you can record. Making CDs is simple with a built-in CD burner, and the included mouse makes navigating even easier, especially if you plug in the optional VGA card for using an external monitor. Take it home for group studies, take it on retreats, take it everywhere your music leads you and capture the moment.



TRACK TALK

Thanks to overwhelming demand from VS and BR-Series digital recorder users, Roland has launched Track Talk, a website dedicated to all things VS and BR. Check out Track Talk for the latest product news, in-depth studio profiles, tips, tricks, and advice from the pros. Log on at: www.RolandUS.com/TrackTalk.



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MIDI IN MINISTRY

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More Than Meets the Ear—Part 2

by Corey Fournier

In the last issue of MIDI in Ministry, we introduced the idea of taking a different approach to playing keyboard in worship: Instead of thinking like a keyboardist, think like an orchestrator. Don't take the "patch" of least resistance. A keyboard (synthesizer) can do so much more than emulate a piano or organ. You have an orchestra at your fingertips! So let's discover some ways you can use it as such.

One of the most common things to do with a synthesizer is to layer sounds. This is a good start to becoming a realtime orchestrator, but how you "work the layer" is the key to making it sound musical.

Let's take a typical combination of a piano sound layered with a "pad" sound. What is a "pad"? Well, it's two things, a noun and a verb — a type of sound and a playing technique. A pad is a non-percussive, slow moving patch that serves a supportive role for a rhythm section and for layering with percussive patches like piano. Typical "pad" patches are string sections, airy voices, mellow organs, or analog synth textures. Think of a pad like musical honey — something sweet and warm that oozes into all the cracks.

In terms of playing, the act of "padding" is very much the same — playing sparse, long notes as an underscore for a prayer, reading, transition, etc. These moments are ideal for using a pad. Wise keyboardists pick a few good pad patches on their keyboard and have them ready to use at a moment's notice.

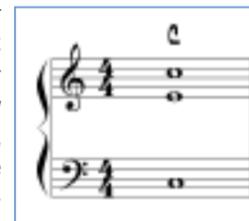
The key to making a pad sound good is playing it appropriately and using it as an orches-

trator would. Pads generally have a slow attack and long decay. This is a big hint on how to play it. We keyboardists like to play a lot of notes, because that's how we were trained. Just look at a Bach Invention! So, for us, playing whole-notes is counter-intuitive. Nevertheless, when playing a pad sound, that's exactly what we must do! The other thing we must limit when playing pads is the sustain pedal. Any sound with a slow attack and long decay will quickly become muddy if you play fast and use too much sustain pedal.

Once we keyboardists start playing longer notes, we naturally think, "Wow, since I've got all this time, I can play more notes at once." This is another thing we must avoid when playing layered sounds. Though this might seem completely foreign, you probably only need to play a maximum of three or four notes at a time. Many times, two are plenty! Remember, when you're playing two notes with a 2-sound layer, it equals four notes.

Which notes you choose to play can also make a huge difference in the sound. When layering a piano with strings or any kind of pad, try to play "open voicings." In other words, try to avoid small intervals between notes. For example, if you're playing a C-major chord and you're working with a guitarist and bass player, just play middle-C and the G above it. If there's no bass player, play a single low-C with your left hand. If there's no guitar player, the 3rd of the chord is more important, so play the E above

middle-C with your thumb and the C above it with your pinky. If you play only two notes, you'll keep the sound from becoming cluttered while still having plenty of harmonic content.



Realize that a string patch isn't just one string instrument. It's a whole string section — multiple string instruments — so the overtones will be thick, making it less important to play every note in a chord. This might be a revelation, but you almost never need to play all the notes in a chord.

Also, look for common notes between chords. This is called "voice-leading." The less movement you make between chords, the better. For example, if you're moving from our C-major to E-minor, simply hold onto the E with your thumb and move your pinky to the B above it. You only had to move one note down a half-step and you're there. This takes some practice, but you'll start to notice that many chords share common notes. When you're "padding" with layered sounds, it's even more important than ever to keep changes between chords smooth and seamless.



Also, as we talked about briefly in Part 1, the pad doesn't need to be present all the time. In fact, it's much more dynamic and expressive to "fade" the pad in and out underneath a

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5 minutes

with Chris Springer



by Pablo LaRosa

Chris Springer is the Director of A&R for acclaimed Christian record label Integrity Music in Mobile, AL. As a veteran keyboard player and producer, he has a deep understanding of how music technology can improve the worship experience. MIDI In Ministry recently spoke with Chris to learn more about how he uses Roland gear on the road and in the studio when working with such artists as Don Moen and Paul Baloche.

MIDI in Ministry: Tell our readers a little about what you do at Integrity Music.

Chris Springer: My title is director of A&R and Producer. I do maybe two to four records a year, and I'm really tied in with our songwriters, worship leaders, and artists. I don't get to tour as much, but have probably done six to eight weeks on the road this year. We partner with a lot of ministry organizations like Family Life and Women of Faith, where we have these arena conferences all over the country. It's a lot of fun and we definitely use a ton of Roland gear!

MiM: You also do some clinics, right?

CS: Yeah. Most of them are along the lines of songwriting and trying to help people figure out how to record their worship at church. I take them from start to beginning . . . you know, from the whole conceptual stage of what you're trying

to do all the way to figuring out what a budget should be to making CDs and more.

MiM: It seems a lot of churches are starting to record their performances and sell CDs.

CS: Yeah, everybody's doing it. And the cool thing is a lot of these guys are kind of putting the cart before the horse. You know, they're writing some pretty incredible tunes and have no idea how to, or aren't proficient at putting it on tape in a sonically beautiful way. And that's been my area of expertise at the company — the live recording aspect.

MiM: How has technology made life easier?

CS: When you're on a remote location it's real hard to find a great-sounding grand piano and someone to tune it. So a primary need has been good sounds, and Roland has always done that. I've been a

big fan of Roland for years. I've got an MKS-20 [Digital Piano module] that is my prized possession. Patch number seven with the chorus on is still just a gorgeous electric piano sound. And the grand piano stuff has really come a long way — from the early RD stuff to where the RD-700 [Expandable Keyboard] is today.

MiM: Is the RD-700 your new axe?

CS: It's one of them [Springer also has an XV-5050, XV-2020s and more]. It has such a great sound that I just played it on this new live DVD we shot with one of our artists Paul Baloche. At the time, we went through all these discussions about if we were going to rent a piano, and it finally came down to a staging issue. We just didn't have the space by the time we had all the band and singers on stage. So we decided I would just bring the RD and we'd track it and then I could replace it later in the studio. Later I went to the studio with the

Pro Tools files and recorded the performance again on my favorite piano with a couple of mics and my Neve preamp. But in the end, they ended up using the Roland in the mix! I remember the engineer saying how the RD-700 was real warm and had this nice stereo image to it. It just laid in the track perfectly.

MiM: What else do you like about the RD-700?

CS: The other thing I love about the RD is the four sliders and the way you can layer the sounds. Some of it is kind of fundamental to what worship is anyway; there's not a lot of silence so we do seamless transitions throughout the whole evening. With the RD-700, I'm able to switch sounds and kind of set up different patches with different layers and then just mix the sounds from song to song with the sliders.

MiM: What kind of sounds do you like to combine?

CS: My favorite is the "Stereo Grand

Piano" patch and I layer it with the "Soft Pad." Then, if I wanna get it a little more pop, I'll add that "E. Piano" patch and you can kind of mix between all three of them. Of course, the polyphony comes down a little bit by the time you start doing three or four layers, and if it's real open, like on a ballad, I'll just keep it to two layers. Then you can bring that pad in at the end of the song.

MiM: You mentioned earlier about creating "transitions" throughout the service. Tell us more about that.

CS: I like to call it "atmospheric" or "stirring the waters." For example, at the end of a chart you might feel the presence and power of the Lord and you know it's not quite time to go into the next song. There's this kind of "lingering" effect you're looking for where it's almost stillness, but silence isn't appropriate either. So with players who know exactly what to do, we're able to just kind of weave

this experience from beginning to end using pads. It's never the same and sometimes it will evolve into a groove without any written melody or lyric. It's just a sea of beautiful worship, and Roland has the perfect sounds.

MiM: What kind of impact has contemporary music had on today's worship settings?

CS: It's culturally relevant. There are still churches doing it the way it was done in the '50s and '60s, but there are way more of them who really desire to impact their neighborhoods, cities, and cultures. So to do that, they incorporate multimedia and contemporary music that's sometimes as aggressive as what you'd hear in the secular environment.

For more information, visit www.integritymusic.com.

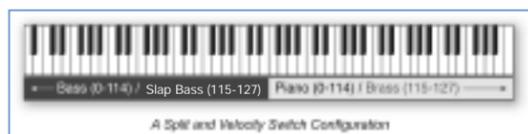
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piano or electric piano patch. You can do this with a knob or slider on the front panel of your keyboard (since now your left hand needs something to do) or with a pedal. Another way is to use aftertouch. Also known as "key pressure," aftertouch is a feature on some keyboards that allows you to press down harder on the keys "after" you've already "touched" them to create an effect. One of these effects could be to fade-in a pad sound. So, after you land on that big piano chord at the end of the song, you can press down a little harder, and, without having to take your hands off the keys, add a big string crescendo — just like an orchestrator might do!

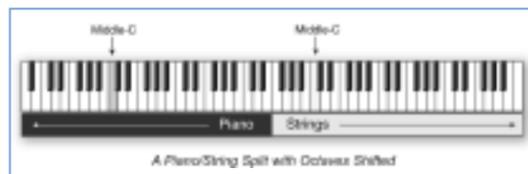
Another way to utilize your keyboard as an orchestra is to setup some splits and velocity switches. A split is simply defining a range of keys to which a particular patch is assigned. The most common split is to put a bass guitar patch in the left hand and a piano or organ in the right. This is fine and can certainly be effective, but only if you don't have a bass player.

But there's much more potential here. Using a velocity switch, you could use that same split scenario, but also be able to trigger different sounds with each hand depending on how hard you strike the keys. For example, you can set up your keyboard to have piano on the

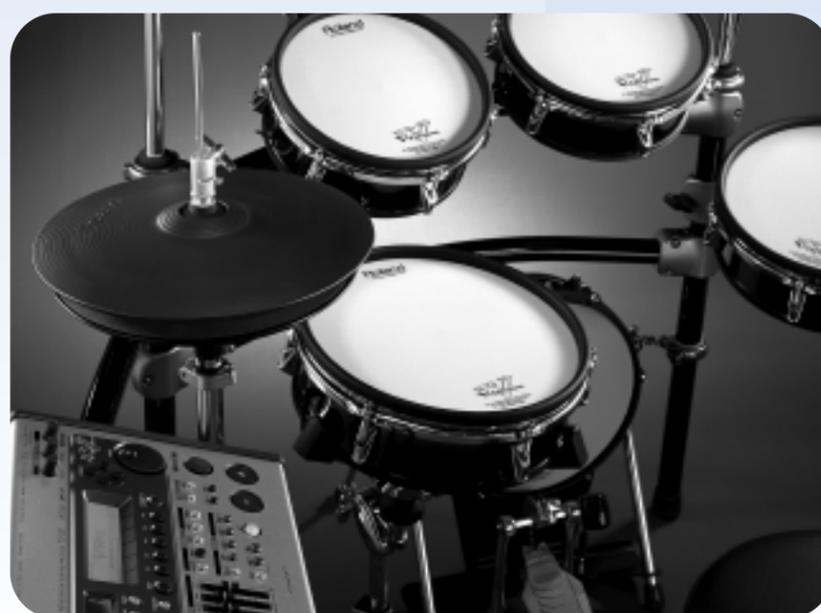
right hand, but if you play extra hard (e.g. velocity of 115 and higher), it triggers a brass patch. On the left hand, a slap bass patch could be triggered to add emphasis to the chorus of the song, while during the verses you play with normal velocity and trigger only a finger bass patch.



If you have a bass player, try this: Set up a split with piano in the left hand and an orchestral string patch in the right, but make the sustain pedal active only for the left hand, and transpose the octaves of the piano so the lowest note is A below low-C (see diagram). Now you can do independent piano and string parts. Play simple chords with your left hand "comping" on piano, while the strings do more intricate parts and scale runs without being muddled by the sustain pedal. With a little practice you'll be able to add exciting new dimensions to your arrangements.



All these ideas can be customized to your situation with any number of variations, all of which will transform your role from keyboardist to realtime orchestrator. In the process, you'll add new levels of expression and creativity to the sound of your band, with colors and textures popping in and out, making each song unique and spontaneous to the flow of your worship.



2004 NEW PRODUCT OVERVIEW

NAMM shows are always a cornucopia of new gear, but we want to highlight only the products that are likely to be good choices for music ministry. This year, there are many to choose from, so whether you're a drummer or a musician (just kidding), there's sure to be something here that gets your juices flowin'!

New V-Drums

One of the biggest hits this year is the new Roland V-Drum lineup, starting from entry-level kits for the practice/bedroom all the way up to the new flagship TD-20S. V-Drum technology has been taken to a new level with this kit, with new V-Drum pads, new TD-20 module, and a brand-new V-Hi-Hat, which mounts in two pieces on a real hi-hat stand. It opens and closes, is totally adjustable, and responds to all of the nuances a drummer can dish-out. Three words: Playing is believing.



New Fantom-X Line

The Fantom keyboards are also back, but in new form, with amazing sounds and features to benefit any worship ministry. The new Fantom-X series consists of three keyboard models (61-note, 76-note, and 88-note weighted action) and a sound module, so even if you already have a keyboard, you can still tap into the Fantom-X's sound engine and sampling capability. These are

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