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PolyKB

XILS-lab launches second soft synth

Grenoble, FRANCE: XILS-lab is proud to announce availability of its second soft synth plug-in as of April 1, 2010…

PolyKB is a Mac (OS X 10.3.9 and later; Audio Unit, VST, RTAS — Pro Tools 7.0 and later) *and PC* (Windows 7, Vista, and XP; VST, RTAS — Pro Tools 7.0 and later) *compatible virtual recreation of the rare RSF Polykobol II*, a 1983-vintage French programmable analogue polysynth based on two waveform-morphing, aliasing-free oscillators, and a self-oscillating four-pole low-pass filter… superficially similar-looking to Sequential Circuits Incorporated's infamous Prophet 5 — the world's first fully-programmable polysynth — by virtue of its beautifully finished woodwork (purportedly by Michel Lâg-Chavarria of LAG Guitars fame); whereas SCI shipped around 7,500 Prophet 5s during an impressive three revision, four-year production run, sadly, Serge Fernandez's RSF SA. Synthétiseurs managed a mere 30 Polykobol IIs before running into financial difficulties — hardly surprising given its technical complexity (500-plus parts), attendant weighty price tag (equivalent to €6,500 EURO) and general weightiness (22kg), all of which were hardly in keeping with the-then 'art nouveau' digital age of dominating desirable FM synthesis from Yamaha's considerably cheaper, MIDI-equipped DX7. This was a real shame since *an amazing-sounding analogue feature unique to the Polykobol II is its continuously modulated waveform — sort of a modulated waveform morphing*.

Times and tastes change, however, and, thanks to today's technological advances, *Xavier Oudin* — himself no stranger to soft synth development (Arturia anyone?) — *has successfully made this beloved analogue behemoth fit for the 21st Century in the graphically-driven, ear- and eye-catching form of the PolyKB* — a virtual RSF Polykobol II for the masses with a more pocket-friendly price (€149.00 EURO) to boot! But why choose to emulate the RSF Polykobol II? Oudin claims he first thought about doing this over ten years ago: *"With its non-standard waveforms, which can do such wonderful pads, as well as deep basses and leads, it was too attractive, and, after developing the XILS 3 [EMS VCS 3 emulation], there was no other synth I wanted to do! I began by using the BLIT [Band Limit Impulse Train] method of creating an oscillator in the digital domain — stretched it, and, after much work, achieved my goal: the PolyKB oscillators can morph smoothly from a triangle to a pulse wave, passing through a sawtooth wave with a clear and deep sound, without that digital noise called aliasing."*

Moreover, Oudin also achieved another Polykobol II *coup de grâce* — namely, hard synchronisation between those two oscillators: *"I stretched the algorithm, turned it on its head, and, finally, magically, it was done: the first hard synchronisation between two oscillators, generating PWM morphed sound, was born."* *Voila*! A virtual Polykobol II. That unique French sound so favoured by the likes of Kate Bush, Vince Clarke, Depeche Mode, Peter Gabriel, Jean-Michel Jarre, Vangelis, and Hans Zimmer lives again. *Vive la RSF synthétiseurs*!

Other **notable PolyKB features** include: two ADSR envelope generators; two MIDI-synchronisable LFOs; MIDI-synchronisable Sample & Hold; extensive modulation matrix (with five dedicated destinations); 128-step polyphonic sequencer (records and plays eight independent voices with pitch and velocity using a two- to 128-step clocking system for wide-ranging rhythmical possibilities, all assignable as a modulation source); chorus and delay effects; Mono/Poly/Unison playing modes (with up to 16 voices of polyphony); and more.

XILS-lab plug-ins are available directly online for €149.00 EURO
or from the following resellers:

www.audioMIDI.com   **www.novamusik.com**   **www.keyfax.com**

xils lab

www.xils-lab.com

About XILS-lab (**www.xils-lab.com**)

*Based in Grenoble, France, **XILS-lab** is a new music software company, founded by Xavier Oudin. Having developed some of the best-known virtual instruments and effects plug-ins in the market for various companies over the last 20 years, Oudin believes that a virtual effect or instrument is not only a mathematical algorithm, designed by and for PhD engineers, but a musical machine for musicians. XILS-lab likes to make virtual instruments and effects that inspire its users!*