V. 2.0 Addendum NSM HYDRASYNTH







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Welcome to Version 2.0!

Ashun Sound Machines released our first synthesizers in 2019: the beloved Hydrasynth and Hydrasynth Desktop models. They quickly gained a devoted following among synthesizer enthusiasts around the world for their elegance, power, and simplicity. Within 2 years the product line grew larger (and smaller!) to include the Hydrasynth Deluxe and the Hydrasynth Explorer, each sharing many features with their predecessors, and each a formidable instrument in its own right.

The family resemblance is strong: each model offers an unprecedented combination of sound generation methods and processing power, coupled with hardware that is perfectly tailored for real-time tweaking, all at a very affordable price. On top of that, the Hydrasynths have set a *de facto* standard: musicians have come to expect that a polyphonic synthesizer should also provide polyphonic aftertouch, so the performer can shape the sound of every note as it is produced.

With the release of version 2.0 firmware the Hydrasynth product line continues its trajectory into unexplored timbral territories, while maintaining the ease of use for which they are known. And most importantly, this update confirms our commitment to you, our beloved customers and fellow musicians, to provide cutting-edge sounds and features that will continue to be a perpetual source of inspiration.

One caveat: This addendum is specific to the Hydrasynth, Hydrasynth Desktop, and Hydrasynth Deluxe, because their module pages are identical. All of the version 2.0 features are also available for the Hydrasynth Explorer, but they are sometimes located on different pages within each module. If you own one of these instead (or also!) you'll want to download the v2.0 addendum for the Hydrasynth Explorer from <u>AshunSoundMachines.com/downloads</u>.

And now without further ado, here's a brief overview of the great new features in version 2.0:

System Setup changes

- Individual FX bypass: Now you can enable and disable the Pre/Post FX, the Delay, and/or the Reverb as needed. See <u>Individual FX bypass (p. 5)</u>
- The new Lights menu lets you set independent brightness levels for the Tap Tempo LED, the Patch knob & wheels, and all other LEDS as a group. See *Light menu (p. 5)*

More Patch memory, faster Browsing and Saving

- We added 3 more Patch Banks to the Hydrasynth, Hydrasynth Desktop, and Hydrasynth Explorer in version 2.0. The Hydrasynth Deluxe already has 8 banks in Single mode, so now all 4 models have the same number of banks.
- There's a new Bank select parameter in the Browse and Save menus, which makes selecting a patch or a target location even faster!

New performance options

- Each patch now has 3 settings for the Sustain pedal: Sustain, Sostenuto, or Mod source only. See Sustain pedal: Two new features (p. 6)
- Version 2.0 provides even greater resolution for the Mod wheel Vibrato Amount. See <u>Mod Wheel Vibrato Amount (p. 7)</u>
- The Glide feature now has a Glissando option! See Glissando (p. 7)

Arpeggiator

- Arp range has been expanded to 6 octaves. Hold [SHIFT] and press Arp [ON] to enter Arp Edit, then use Control knob 6 to adjust the range.
- The new Arp Step Offset parameter can offset the phrase or arp steps forward or backward +/- 32 steps. See *Arp Step Offset (p. 8)*

Sound engine

• The Oscillator Bit depth can be reduced to 2 bits, with many intermediate values. Perfect for adding a bit of grit to a patch, or a lot! See <u>Oscillators: Bit Reduction (p. 9)</u>

Per-voice Modulation

- The Voice menu has a new Voice Offset parameter that can introduce per-voice modulation of destinations via the Mod Matrix (tuning, filter, envelopes, LFOs, etc.). See <u>Per-Voice Offset Modulation (p. 9)</u>
- As a result, the Modulation Source list has grown! There are two new options (VoiceMod and VoiceMd+), for bipolar and/or unipolar modulation of destinations according to the Voice Offset values. See <u>New Mod Matrix Sources</u> (p. 10)

One-Shot LFOs: Step advance per trigger

• The LFO One-Shot mode now has a third option when LFO Wave = Step. When the new setting of "Step" is selected, the LFO will progress to the next Step with each LFO trigger. See *One-Shot LFOs: Step Advance (p. 10)*

New Quantize options

• Version 2.0 can quantize Envelopes and LFOs to provide a stepped output. Multiple resolutions are available. See *New Quantize Options* (p. 11) for a description.

Randomize and initialize more parameters

Start from scratch or let Hydrasynth decide! You can now use the [INIT] and [RANDOM] buttons to affect more parameters, such as:

- VoiceMod values: This new parameter lets you modulate each voice independently.
- WaveScan selections: Oscillators 1 and 2 can each hold as many as 8 different waveforms.
- Step LFO values: Each Step LFO lets you define up to 64 steps per cycle.

For the new Randomize features, see <u>page 11</u>; for the new Initialize features, see <u>page 12</u>.

The next chapter provides more information about the new features and how to use them. For full coverage of every feature, please download the dedicated manual for your product from the <u>Ashun Sound Machines website</u>.

And while you're there, check for firmware updates! Our passion for synthesizers continues unabated, and you don't want to miss out on any new features and fixes that we release. Plus you'll find new patches, more microtuning scales, helpful video tutorials, and more. Be sure to look for us on all the popular social media platforms too, where you can swap tips and patches with other Hydrasynth owners.

We know you'll be as excited about the new features as we are. Now go make some great music!

—The Hydrasynth team

This chapter describes the version 2.0 features in greater detail. The new processes and pages are nearly identical for the Hydrasynth, Hydrasynth Desktop, and Hydrasynth Deluxe, so the name "Hydrasynth" is used to represent all three products.

System Setup Changes

Light menu

Version 2.0 lets you specify independent levels of brightness for the Tap Tempo LED, the Patch knob ring and the wheel LEDs, and all other LED buttons as a group.

- Press [SYSTEM SETUP].
- Press Control button 7 to enter the Light Menu.
- Use the Control knobs to select the settings shown in this table. Note: "Pads Dim" is only on the Desktop unit; the Lo/Up Color options are only on the Deluxe.

Parameter	Settings	Description	
LED Dim	On, Off	Dims all LEDs except Patch knob, wheels, Tap Tempo button	
Patch Dim	Off, Dim 1-4, Kill	Controls the Patch knob LED ring and the wheel LEDs	
Tap Dim	Off, Dim 1-4, Kill	Controls the Tap Tempo button brilliance	
Pads Dim	Off, Dim 1-4, Feel It	Desktop only. "Feel It" = Pad LEDs stay dark except during [SHIFT]+[PAD] operations.	
Lo Color	1-32	Deluxe only. Sets color for Lower patch	
Up Color	1-32	Deluxe only. Sets color for Upper patch	

The LED levels change as each value is selected so you can set the proper lighting for the current environment. Exit System Setup to preserve the settings.

Individual FX bypass

There are times you may want to defeat one or more of the effects globally, but not all. Some effects are integral to a patch, such as flange or distortion. On the other hand, some effects set the creative mood, but are not needed when tracking parts in a studio. For example, you might want to disable the reverb but keep the delay for its rhythmic contributions. However, if you change the song tempo later, a recorded delay could cause trouble.

For maximum flexibility in the studio or at home, Hydrasynth version 2.0 adds the ability to enable and disable the Pre-FX, Post-FX, Delay, and/or Reverb as needed. The settings are global; i.e., they affect all patches the same way.

- Press [SYSTEM SETUP] twice to access page 2.
- Press Control button 7 to enter the FxBypass Menu.
- Use Control knobs 1-4 to enable or disable the desired FX module. Their LED buttons toggle off and on to indicate the settings.

Parameter	Settings
Pre-FX	On, Bypass [1]
Delay	On, Bypass

Parameter	Settings
Reverb	On, Bypass
Post-FX	On, Bypass [1]

[1] A Pre-/Post-FX module can have its FX Type set to Bypass. This only affects the current patch, not all patches, so the module LED stays lit. See the user manual for more information.

Three Patch Banks Added

There are so many great patches available, you'll be glad to know we have expanded the Hydrasynth memory by 3 patch banks, for a total of 8 banks. That's another 384 patch locations! So now in addition to banks A-E, you have banks F, G, and H to store your creations and those of your friends.

Note: This memory expansion applies only to the Hydrasynth, Hydrasynth Desktop, and Hydrasynth Explorer. The Hydrasynth Deluxe already has 8 patch banks in Single mode, so this is the only v2.0 change that doesn't affect all four products.

Bank Selection: Browse & Save Pages

It's now even easier to select a different patch bank while browsing or saving patches.

- Press [BROWSE] or [SAVE] to access the desired menu.
- Use Control knob 5 to select the proper bank. Note: When Find By = Category this option is hidden.

For more details about Browsing and Saving patches, see the relevant sections of the User Guide.

New Performance Options

Sustain pedal: Two new features

Version 2.0 lets you choose one of three functions for the sustain pedal: Sustain, Sostenuto, and Mod Only. These options are on [VOICE] page 3, edit field 5. Your choice is saved with the patch.

Remember: It's always possible to use the Sostenuto or Mod Only settings with the pedal, and then sustain all of the notes by holding [SHIFT] and pressing [LATCH].

Sostenuto

Most grand pianos have a middle "sostenuto" pedal which can sustain a note or chord without sustaining all of the other notes. As long as that pedal is held down, whenever the selected notes are played they will sustain while all of the other notes play normally.

Now the Hydrasynth has that feature too! This makes it possible to sustain one or more bass notes while changing the upper chords, for example, or play a bass line beneath a sustained chord, etc.

Let's try it! Access page 3 of the [VOICE] module and use Control knob 5 to select "Sosten" for the SusPedal parameter. Then:

- 1. Hold the note or chord you want to sustain.
- 2. Press the pedal and release the notes. The selected notes continue to sustain.
- 3. Still holding the pedal, play other notes: only the pre-selected notes sustain, and the others don't.

As long as the pedal is held the pre-selected notes are sustained; their voices cannot be stolen by another note. For example, if you use sostenuto to hold 8 notes (or 16 notes on a Deluxe in Single mode) and then try to play another note, the new note does not play. The sostenuto voices are not released until you lift the pedal, after which those voices are available again.

Note that the sustain pedal always sends MIDI CC #64. It does not send MIDI CC #66 when SusPedal = Sostenuto.

Mod Only

Until version 2.0 it wasn't possible to use the sustain pedal without also sustaining a patch. Now you can use the Sustain pedal as a mod source only. Here's an example:

- 1. Press [INIT] twice to start from ground zero.
- 2. Turn Cutoff all the way down.
- 3. Press [MOD MATRIX] and then Control button 2 to select the first mod route source.
- 4. Hold [SHIFT] and turn Control knob 2 until ExpPedal is selected.
- 5. Release [SHIFT] and turn Control knob 2 clockwise to select SusPedal as the source.
- 6. Press Control button 6 and then [FILTER 1] to select it as the Destination.
- 7. Turn Control knob 6 to a positive value of 30 or higher.
- 8. Play a note, press the pedal, and release the note. The filter opens and the note sustains.
- 9. Release the pedal, press [EXIT], and then press [VOICE] three times to access page 3.
- 10. Use Control knob 5 to select "Mod Only" for the SusPedal parameter.
- 11. Repeat step 8. The filter opens but the note does not sustain.

The possibilities are endless: the pedal can control an LFO, a Mutant, an effect time or level, etc., without sustaining a note.

Mod Wheel Vibrato Amount

Version 2.0 increases the resolution of the dedicated Pitch LFO by a factor of 10! We've added a decimal point to the Vib Amt parameter value, so now its range is 0.0 - 12.0 in increments of 0.1. You'll find this parameter on [VOICE] page 2.

Glissando

Glide has a new glissando option. This provides a "stepped" glide that follows the selected scale, rather than providing a smooth glide between the start and end notes. To find this new feature:

- Press [VOICE] twice to access page 2.
- Turn Control knob 5 fully clockwise. Gliss is the third option.

To experiment with glissando, try setting Glide Time to 80 or so. Then play a series of notes an octave apart, and listen as the pitch shifts chromatically from one note to the next. Use Control knob 5 to toggle between the Glide and Gliss settings if you'd like to compare the results while playing.

For extra fun, press [VOICE] again and select a non-chromatic scale. The glissando follows the selected scale in both directions. Remember that you can change the Key Lock setting if you'll be using the current patch for song that is in a particular key. It's on Voice page 3 also.

Arpeggiator Improvements

Arp range expanded to 6 octaves

The Arp Octave parameter range has been expanded to 6 octaves. It's easy to find:

- Hold [SHIFT] and press [ON] to enter Arp Edit mode.
- Turn Control knob 6 clockwise to set the desired Octave range.

Arp Step Offset

This new parameter can offset an Arp pattern by up to 32 steps, forward or backward. It can be used with standard arpeggios or phrases.

Here are two examples:

- 1. Press [INIT] twice to initialize the patch.
- 2. Make sure the Arp is not running.
- 3. Hold [SHIFT] and press [ON] to enter Arp Edit mode.
- 4. Set Division to 1/4 and Octave to 2. (You can use the top panel knobs for this too.)
- 5. Hold 3 notes and press [ON]. The Arp plays notes 1, 2, and 3 in each octave and repeats.
- 6. Press [ON] to stop the Arp, and press the Page Down arrow to access page 2.
- 7. Set StpOffset to 1 and hold the same 3 notes.
- 8. Start the Arp. It plays notes 2 and 3, and then repeats notes 1-3 in each octave.
- 9. Repeat steps 5-7, but set StpOffset to 2 this time.
- 10. The Arp starts with note 3, and then repeats notes 1-3 in each octave.



When 3 notes are being held a StpOffset value of 3 sounds the same an offset of 0, 6, or 9 (and all multiples of 3). But when 4 notes are held a StpOffset of 3 starts with note 4, and then repeats notes 1-4. In that case, all StpOffset values that are multiples of 4 sound the same.

In the next example you'll see how the Offset works within the boundaries of the Length parameter. Starting with an Init patch and Arp off:

- 1. On Arp Edit page 1, use Control knob 7 to set Mode to Phrase.
- 2. While you're on page 1, set Length to 16 steps.
- 3. On Arp Edit page 2 select phrase 14, which has 32 steps.
- 4. Press [ON] and play a note. You'll hear the Arp phrase play steps 1-16 and repeat.
- 5. Now set the Step Offset to 8 using Control knob 8.
- 6. Play a note. You'll hear the Arp phrase play steps 9-16, then repeat steps 1-16 until you release the note.



In item 5 above a StpOffset value of 8 or -8 yields the same results, because each makes the phrase start at the halfway point of the 16-step pattern. So either way, the phrase starts on step 9.

See the next chapter <u>The 64 Hydrasynth Phrases (p. 13)</u> for a musical transcription of all 64 phrases.

Oscillators: Bit Reduction

Bit reduction degrades a signal by reducing its digital resolution. At its extreme settings the resolution is so low that the original sound is unrecognizable. It's like a pixelated photograph for the ears!

We've added a new BitRedux parameter to all three oscillators. Let's try a simple example using Oscillator 1:

- 1. Initialize the patch by pressing [INIT] twice.
- 2. Press [OSC 1] to access its module.
- 3. Use Control knob 2 to set the Wave to Triangle.
- 4. Hold a low note and use Control knob 7 to audition the BitRedux settings.
- 5. Note how the sound first becomes 'crispy', and then gradually degrades as the value approaches 2 bits.
- 6. Experiment with different waveforms and BitRedux values. Every combination has its own character!

BitRedux includes standard binary values such as 16-, 8-, 4-, and 2 bits. But there are timbres ranging from the beautiful to the malevolent lurking in less-explored bit depths of 10, 7, and 3, etc. You may want to select your favorite patch, apply BitRedux to one or more oscillators, and see what happens!

For more information about the Oscillators, please refer to the User Guide.

Per-Voice Offset Modulation

Version 2.0 has an intriguing feature that lets you dial in a certain amount of deviation per voice, per patch. This enables the Hydrasynth to exhibit varying levels of instability like your favorite analog synths of the past. The good news is that it only shows up when you want it!

The fun starts with the VoiceMod menu, located at [VOICE] page 3. It lets you define a per-voice offset that can be applied via the Mod Matrix to any destination. Use it to set each voice's filter cutoff to a slightly different value, for example, or to make each voice generate radically different Mutant values. Again, this can only happen if a VoiceMod source has been mapped to at least one mod destination in the Mod Matrix.

In this section we'll describe how to access and change the per-voice offset values; in the next we'll explain how to route them to a destination.

- Press [VOICE] three times to access page 3.
- Press Control button 7 to enter the VoiceMod menu.
- Use Control knobs 1-8 to set a positive or negative value for each voice.

The [INIT] and [RANDOM] buttons can be used to reset or randomize each value; hold one of those and press the Control button for the desired voice.

You can also initialize or randomize all of the VoiceMod values at the same time. Exit back to [VOICE] page 3, then hold [RANDOM] or [INIT] and press Control button 7 to perform that action on the entire VoiceMod menu.

New Mod Matrix Sources

The new VoiceMod feature also provides two new Mod Matrix sources: VoiceMod (bipolar) and VoiceMd+ (unipolar). They are found in the Source list between MPE-Yrel and CC 000. You'll need to use at least one of these in a mod route or else the VoiceMod feature won't do anything.

Here's a simple example that you can use as a framework for further explorations.

- Press [INIT] twice, then press [VOICE].
- On page 1 set StMode to Rotate.
- On Voice page 3, use Control button 7 to enter the VoiceMod Edit menu.
- Select values that are multiples of 10.
- Hold [VOICE] and press [OSC 1] to set up a mod route.
- Set a mod depth of 128 using Control knob 6.
- Play the same note 8 times. It plays a melody!
- Try different mod destinations and depths, like Filter 1 Cutoff and a depth -128, etc.
- To have zero modulation on a VoiceMod Edit value, first look at the selected mod source. If it is VoiceMod, set the value to 0 for that voice. If it is VoiceMod+, set the value to -128 instead.

This example barely scratches the surface. Please refer to the user manual for more information about the Mod Matrix, more examples, and a full list of the mod sources and destinations.

One-Shot LFOs: Step Advance

Version 2.0 gives the LFO One-Shot mode a third option: Step. When both the LFO Wave and One-Shot mode are set to Step, each time that LFO is triggered it advances to the next Step in the sequence.

Let's set up a crazy little Step LFO:

- 1. Press [INIT] twice, then press [LFO 1] to access page 1.
- 2. Turn Control knob 1 clockwise until Wave = Step.
- 3. Press the Page Down arrow to access LFO page 2.
- 4. Turn Control knob 4 clockwise until One-Shot = Step.
- 5. Use Control knob 7 to set SemiLock to ON. This provides semitone values in the Step Edit menu.
- 6. Press Control button 8 to enter the Step Edit menu.
- 7. Select values between -12 semi and +12 semi.
- 8. Hold [LFO 1] and press [OSC 1] to set up a mod route.
- 9. Set a mod depth of 128 using Control knob 6.
- 10. Play the same note 8 or more times. Each time the LFO is triggered the sequence advances by one Step!

Here's some important information about Step LFOs:

- A Step LFO can contain up to 64 steps, each with its own value.
- The Step Edit menu is only visible on LFO page 2 when the LFO Wave = Step.
- Step LFOs advance differently depending on the Stereo Mode setting on page 1 of the Voice module. See the Voice Module chapter in the manual for details.

New Quantize Options

The new Quantize options for the Envelopes and LFOs can add a stepped effect to their output. It's similar to what Bit Reduction can do to the waveforms: make them a little less pristine or brutalize them.

Envelope Quantize

In the following example the Quantize feature makes a complex attack very easily.

- 1. Press [INIT] twice.
- 2. Set the CUTOFF knob to minimum and the ENV 1 knob to maximum.
- 3. Press [ENV 1] and use Control knob 1 to set the Attack to 272 ms.
- 4. Play a midrange note below middle C. You'll hear a basic brass sound.
- 5. Use Control knob 7 to set the Ouantize to 9.
- 6. Play the same note and listen to its attack. It has a bit of "spit", like a real trombone.
- 7. Use Control knob 1 to set the Attack to 1.53 seconds.
- 8. Hold the note and listen. The quantized attack is easier to hear.
- 9. Try different Quantize values. OFF is completely smooth; other values have steps.

LFO Quantize

In the following example the Quantize feature makes a complex LFO out of a sine wave.

- 1. Press [INIT] twice.
- 2. Hold [LFO 1] and press [OSC 1] to create a mod route.
- 3. Set the mod depth to 120.0 with Control knob 6. Hold [SHIFT] to fine-tune the value.
- 4. Press [LFO 1] to access that module.
- 5. Use Control knob 2 to set Rate to 0.50 Hz.
- 6. Press the Page Down arrow to access page 2.
- 7. Hold a note and turn Control knob 3 slowly through the Quantize values.
- 8. When Quantize = 9 the LFO becomes a 2-octave diminished arpeggio.
- 9. Try other Quantize values, waveforms, and rates. The results can be very complex.

New Randomize Targets

Another change in version 2.0 is the ability to randomize even more parameters, including some of the new ones. Try these combinations:

- VoiceMod: On [VOICE] page 3, use [RANDOM] + Control button 7 to randomize the VoiceMod values.
- Wavelist: Set [OSC X] Mode to WaveScan, then use [RANDOM] + Control button 2 to randomize the waveform selections.
- LFO Steps: Set the Wave type to Step on page 1, select page 2, then use [RANDOM] + Control button 8 to randomize the LFO Step values.

The VoiceMod feature is described earlier in <u>Per-Voice Offset Modulation (p. 9)</u>. Please refer to the user guide for more information about WaveScan mode and the Step LFO.

New Initialization Targets

Version 2.0 also makes it easy to initialize each of the targets mentioned in the previous section. It can be useful to reset the values of a specific feature when you want to start over, but don't want to initialize the entire patch.

- VoiceMod: On [VOICE] page 3, use [INIT] + Control button 7 to reset the VoiceMod values.
- WaveScan: Set [OSC X] Mode to WaveScan, then use [INIT] + Control button 2 to reset the waveform selections.
- LFO Steps: Set [LFO X] Wave type to Step on page 1, select page 2, then use [INIT] + Control button 8 to reset the LFO Step values.

The VoiceMod feature is described earlier in <u>Per-Voice Offset Modulation (p. 9)</u>. Please refer to the user guide for more information about WaveScan mode and the Step LFO.

Other Improvements

Favorites page remembered

We've also made improvements to the Favorites section. For example, if you are on page 3 of your Favorites and decide to make some quick edits, it's easy to access the other modules. With version 2.0, the next time you use [SHIFT] + [BROWSE] to access your Favorites the Hydrasynth will take you back to page 3, rather than having to reselect that page with the Page Down arrow.

For more information about using the Favorites feature, please refer to the user guide.

Local On/Off status recalled

Local On/Off status is now saved with the other System Setup settings, and will be recalled when the unit is powered up.

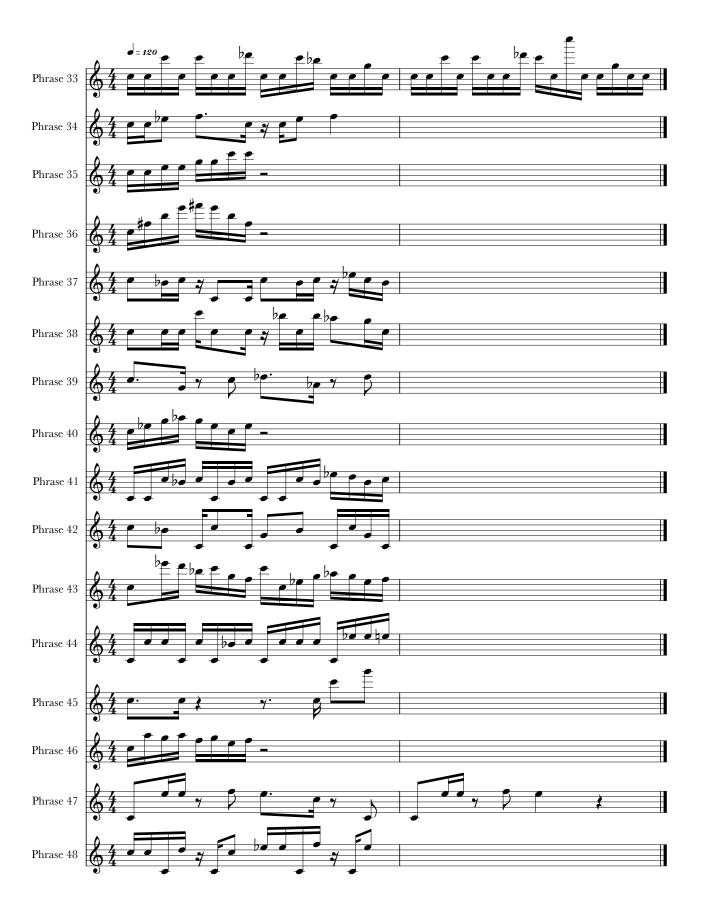
Hydrasynth Phrases 1-16



Hydrasynth Phrases 17-32



Hydrasynth Phrases 33-48



Hydrasynth Phrases 49-64

