

Land of the Living technical instructions

Installing and running the software

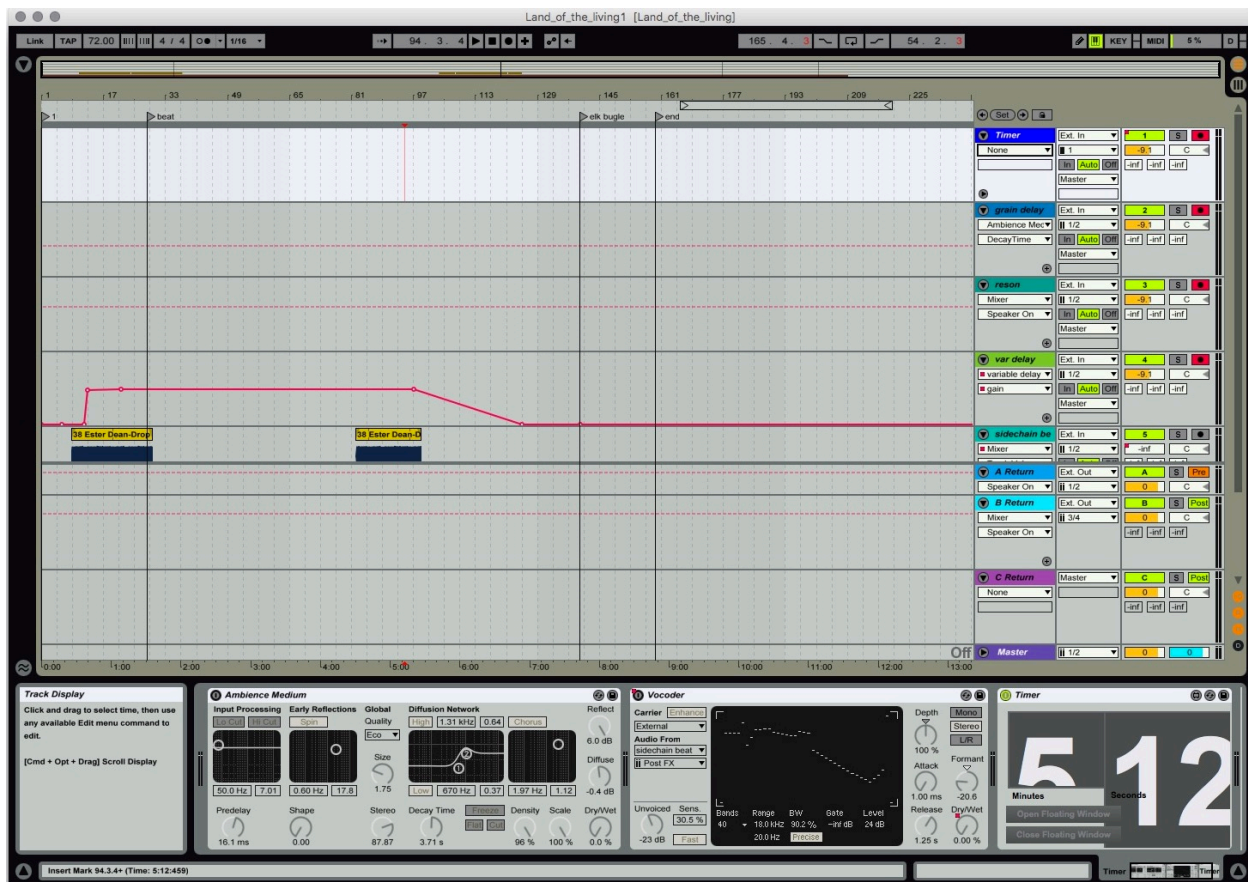
First step: you will need to download the trial version of the Ableton Live Suite. You don't have to purchase this software. The piece will run without any trouble in trial mode.

<https://www.ableton.com/en/trial/>

After you have downloaded and installed Ableton, open the “land_of_the_living.als” file. You may need to check audio preferences to make sure that your desired audio interface is selected for input and output. (go to “Live” then “preferences”)

The Timer

After you open the “land_of_the_living.als” file, your screen should look something like this.



In the bottom right corner is a custom timer object. If you click on “open floating window”, a large timer will pop up so that you can keep track of the minutes and seconds during performance.

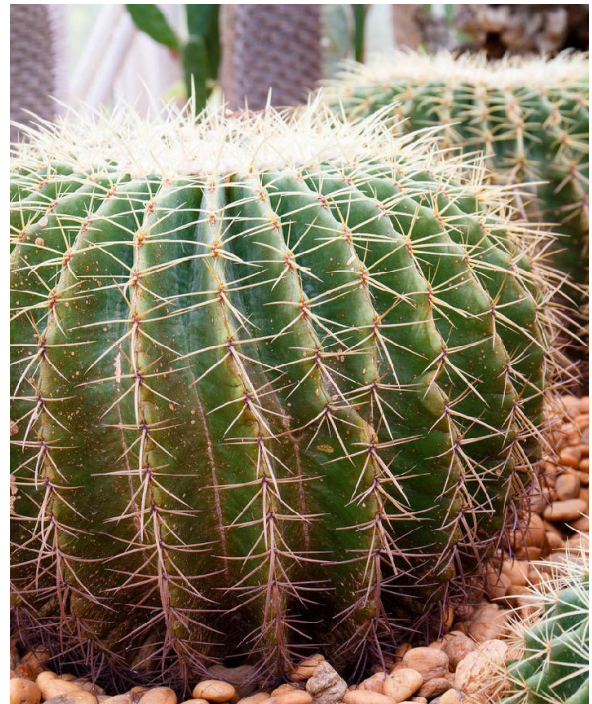


From there, you can just hit the play button or press the spacebar to start the piece. All of the live audio effects are automated and synchronized with the pre-recorded track.

Choosing an instrument

My personal preference is a barrel cactus. There are many varieties of this beautiful plant and I've found that ones in which most of the needles don't touch each other works best. (that allows for maximum resonance)

Other cactus types may also work and I encourage you to experiment to see what works best for you.



Microphones

One of the wonderful things about a barrel cactus is that it is naturally very resonant. Because of that, you only need a couple of contact microphones in order to amplify the entire plant. Affordable contact microphones are very common and can easily be found online.



From there, you just need to use some double-sided tape to attach the mics to the body of the cactus. If your cactus has lots of needles, you may need to cut a few in order to make room for the mics. (it's ok. cutting a few needles won't hurt the plant) In order to achieve even amplification, attach the mics on opposite sides of the cactus about halfway between the soil and the top.

I hope that you have fun with this piece and feel free to contact me any time if you run into any issues or have questions.

Best,
Steve
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