

THE CROW HILL COMPANY

# TINA GUO STORM CELLO



USER MANUAL

# WELCOME

CROW HILL | TINA GUO - STORM CELLO



*"Fix your course on a star and  
you'll navigate any storm."*

- Leonardo da Vinci

The Crow Hill Company thanks you for your purchase. Designed by professional composers with the sonic connoisseur in mind.

We're a small team and have worked hard to make everything as intuitive as possible. Our hope is this user manual can offer further help to best explain how to install and use our plugin.

In order to help you make music, your music, we have taken time to make this affectionate user manual get the best out of your purchase.

However if you find yourself still stuck with anything we have a great set of FAQ and videos at:

**[thecrowhillcompany.com/faqs](https://thecrowhillcompany.com/faqs)**

# CONTENTS



- Welcome .....04
- Installation .....05
- Quick Start .....06
- Front Panel Overview .....07
- Techniques Pane Overview.....08
- Textures Pane Overview.....09
- Effects Pane Overview.....10
- Troubleshooting.....11
- Appendices
  - 1 Credits.....12
  - 2 EULA.....13

# WELCOME

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Tina Guo is a trailblazing virtuoso cellist, touring musician, composer and one of the most successful session musicians working in Hollywood today. Her unique and extraordinary use of the cello to create entire forgotten cultures, imagined instruments and soundscapes of this world and others.

In this release Tina teamed up with the incredible talents of composer and producer Steve Mazzaro to create a sample-based instrument supervised entirely by herself according to the needs of AAA composers she has worked with over the last decade. With this instrument Tina brings you the highly in-demand unique sonic capabilities of her electric cello that has graced so many iconic scores for blockbuster films, computer games and TV shows of recent times.

By coming together with Crow Hill we hope we have matched her and Steve's enthusiasm to create something truly exceptional, unique, inspiring and versatile. Tailor made to the incredible demands made on professional composers and music makers working in the trade today.

Your purchase is a rare opportunity to collaborate with a true AAA-lister and we hope you will agree is therefore money well spent.

We would like to offer our humblest thanks to Hans Zimmer for bringing Tina, Steve and everyone at Crow Hill together and making this entire project possible.



# INSTALLATION

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Installation of Crow Hill products couldn't be easier courtesy of our dedicated installer app.

Make sure you have this downloaded as you will require this to install Glass Strings.

We've also prepared a simple overview of how the app works but also a suite of quick installation guides specific to your choice of DAW.

Everything you'll need is located here:

**[thecrowhillcompany.com/crow-hill-app](https://thecrowhillcompany.com/crow-hill-app)**

# QUICK START



Before we start let's establish some key-words so we're on the same page.

**TECHNIQUE** - Different styles of playing. From simple long and short articulations all the way to stylistic choices unique to Tina.

**KEY-SWITCH** - A Means of assigning a technique to a corresponding key on the lowest octave of your controller keyboard so you're able to switch techniques in real time whilst performing Tina's techniques.

**PRESET** - All of the technique assignments, additional modulated signals, effects and processing is housed in a single recallable (editable and saveable) preset.

**TEXTURE** - Unique soundscapes and fragments of performances with an additional 9 layers of custom and controllable sound design, created by Steve Mazzaro.

**FORM** - A secondary layer of global processing of all sounds with 6 fixed "styles" to choose from.

When collaborating with Tina and co-producer Steve Mazzaro a workflow was established that has been encompassed in this trailblazing interface. By describing this workflow we also describe the way in which this plugin works and how to use it.

Tina and Steve worked together to painstakingly capture not a series of samples per se, but more notes imagined as part of a performance idiomatic of Tina's unique and in-demand electric cello performances.

This captured signal was then processed through a series of custom pedal boards which can be dialled in to the sound produced by each technique by using the "Form" control. Or in more depth by utilising the Textures mixer page available for all Texture-based techniques.

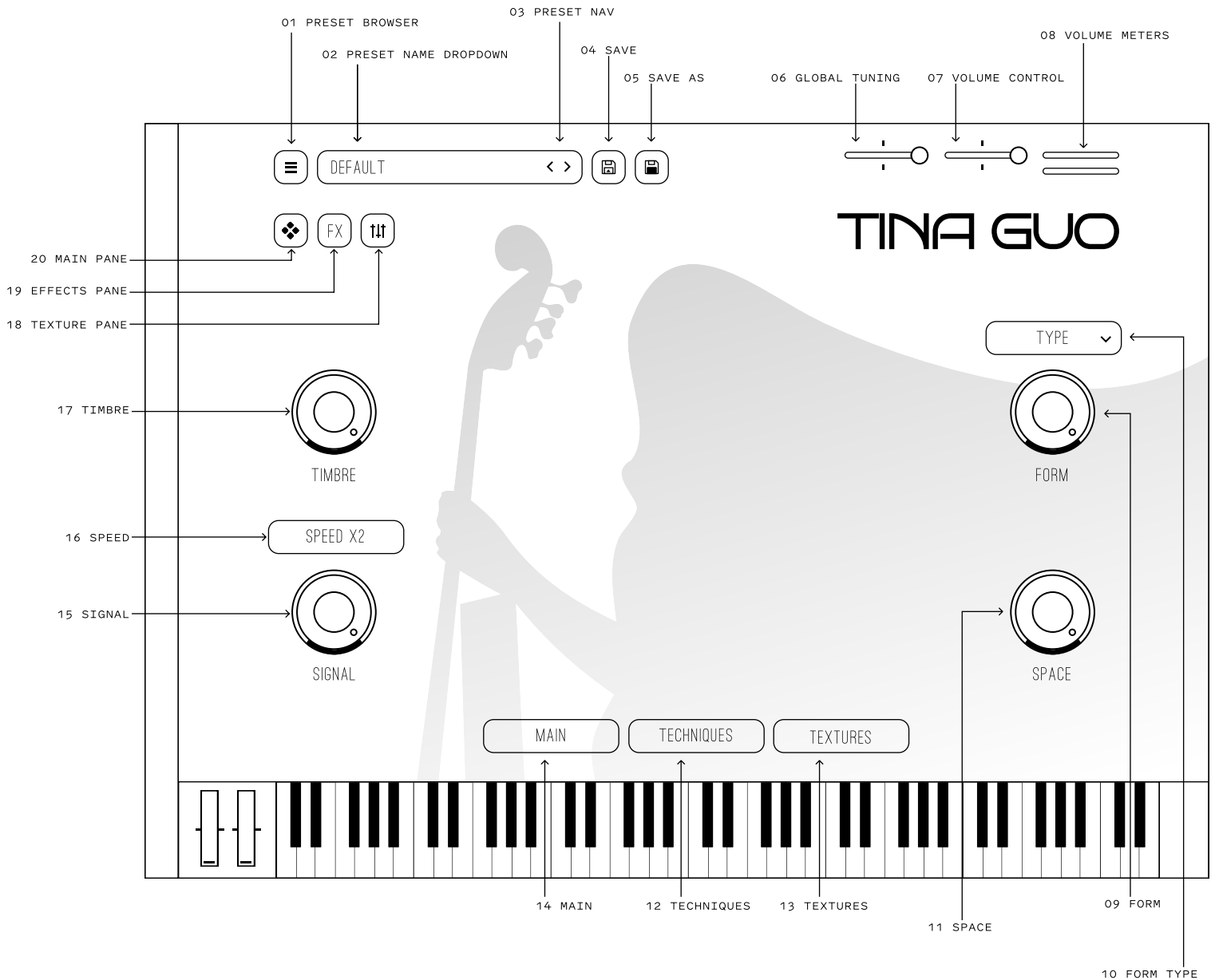
Each of the core techniques was then assigned to a dedicated key to key switch to and from live, either through the realtime performance of your left hand, or by using as technique switches triggered by your DAWs piano roll.

A series of textures have also been created by Steve Mazzaro, employing a multitude of rarefied vintage analogue and digital outboard. This texture designer is a unique feature of Storm Cello and allows you to create entire worlds out of Tina's unique and iconic performances.

The combination of the 'live' techniques, 'Form' signals and textures then terminates at a comprehensive effects rack including an onboard granular re-synthesizer, gate step sequencer and a master bus that features a "double" function that duplicates Tina's performance for added size and width of signal.

# FRONT PANEL OVERVIEW

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**01 PRESET BROWSER** - Opens the preset dropdown that allows you to scroll through factory and user saved preset configurations of the instrument.

**02 PRESET NAME/DROPDOWN** - Displays current preset being played but also accesses preset browser dropdown.

**03 PRESET NAV** - Advance to next or previous preset.

**04 SAVE** - Save your edited preset in it's current file location (NB Overwrites the original).

**05 SAVE AS** - Save your edited preset in a new file location and give it a new name.

**06 GLOBAL TUNING** - Tunes entire plugin (double click returns to home position)

**07 GLOBAL VOLUME** - Adjusts volume for entire plugin.

**08 VOLUME METERS** - Displays levels output from plugin.

**09 FORM** - This blends the original "captured" signal with the transformed signal select by:

**10 FORM TYPE** - (Display and dropdown menu) Selection over the type of transformed signal.

**11 SPACE** - Controls mix of the virtual space (as selected and tweaked in the effects pane).

**12 TECHNIQUES** - OPENS AND CLOSSES THE TECHNIQUE SELECTION BROWSER.

**13 TEXTURES** - OPENS AND CLOSSES THE TEXTURE SELECTION BROWSER.

**14 MAIN** - RETURNS YOU TO THE MAIN PANE.

**15 SIGNAL** - CONTROL OVER THE BLEND BETWEEN BETWEEN D.I AND AN ACOUSTICALLY CAPTURED SIGNAL.

**16 SPEED** - (DROPDOWN) CONTROL OVER THE TIME COMPRESSION AND EXPANSION OF TEMPO SYNCHRONISED TECHNIQUES. (ONLY AVAILABLE FOR CERTAIN TECHNIQUES)

**17 TIMBRE** - CONTROL OVER THE PERCEIVED DYNAMICS OF THE PLAYED TECHNIQUE, CONTROLLABLE VIA MODULATION WHEEL (CC1)

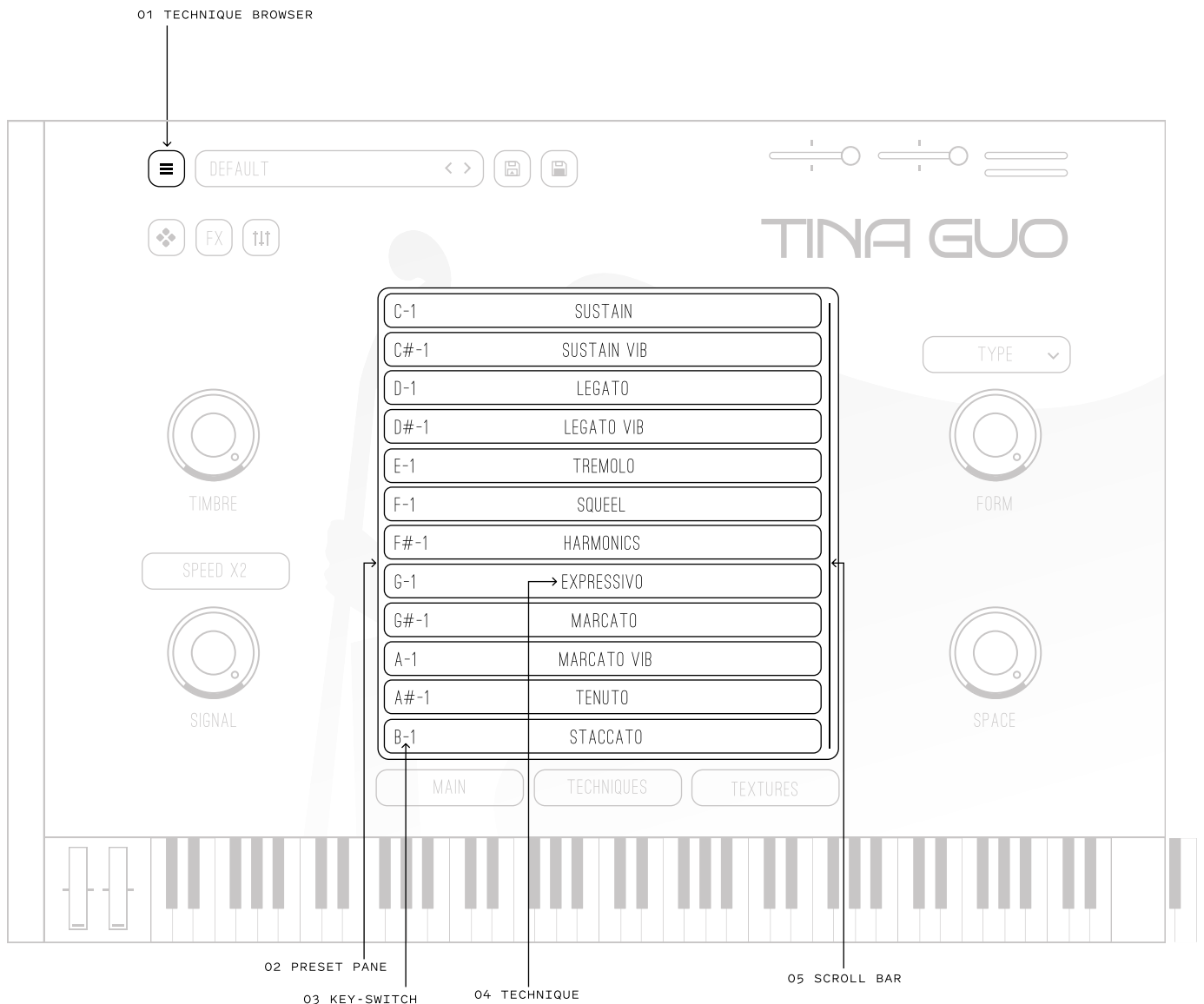
**18 TEXTURES PANE** - Opens the texture mixer pane.

**19 EFFECTS PANE** - Opens the FX pane.

**20 MAIN PANE** - Returns you to the main pane.

# TECHNIQUE PANEL OVERVIEW

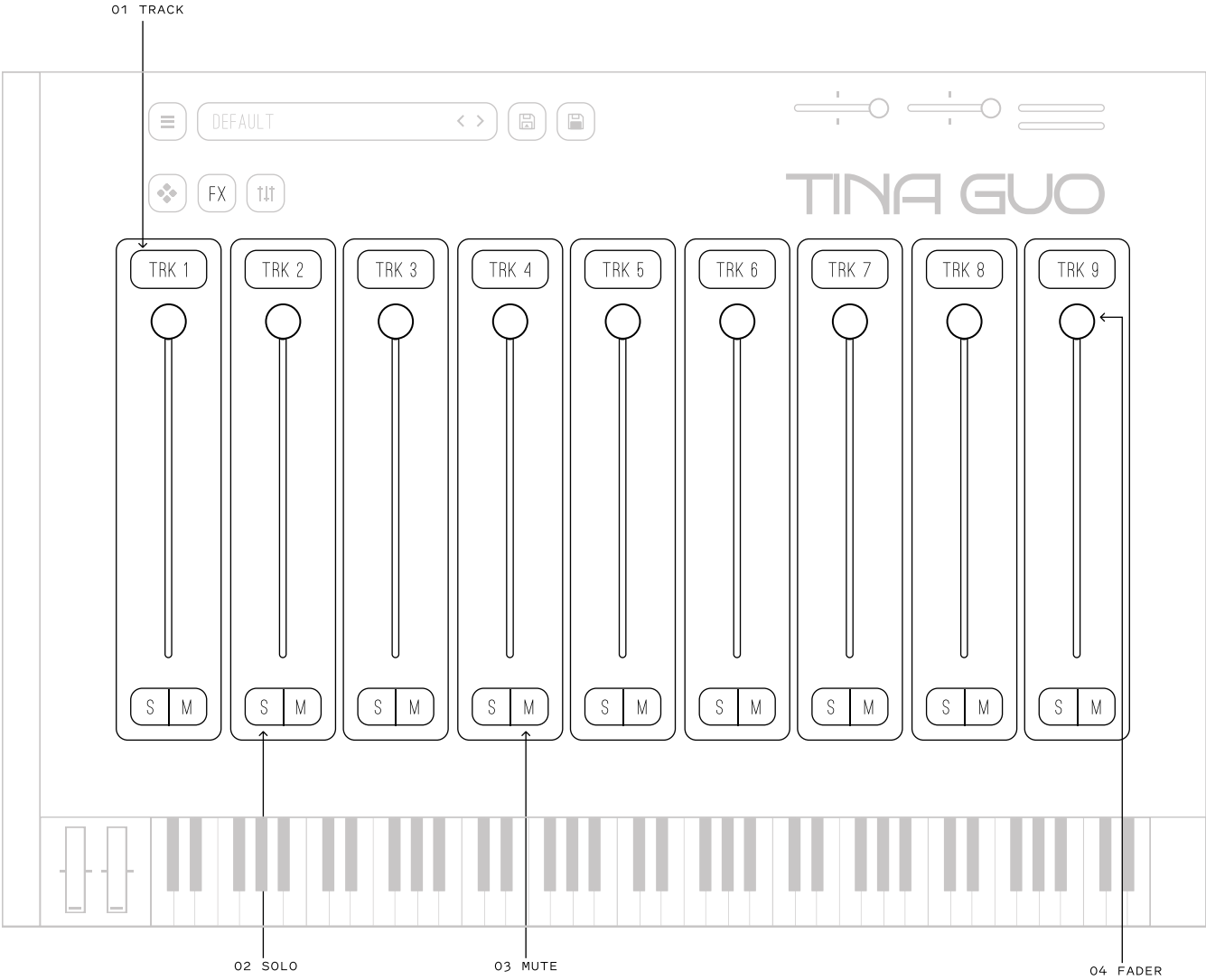
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- 01 TECHNIQUE BROWSER** - Opens browser (pictured) that allows you to assign techniques to a preset / key-switch.
- 02 TECHNIQUE BROWSER** - An area in which you can browse to and assign techniques to key-switches within the preset.
- 03 KEY SWITCH** - Indicates the key-switch where the technique is assigned.
- 04 TECHNIQUE** - Displays the technique assigned to its associated key-switch whether as loaded with the preset or changed by yourself.
- 05 SCROLL BAR** - Lets you scroll through the available list of included sounds.

# TEXTURE PANEL OVERVIEW

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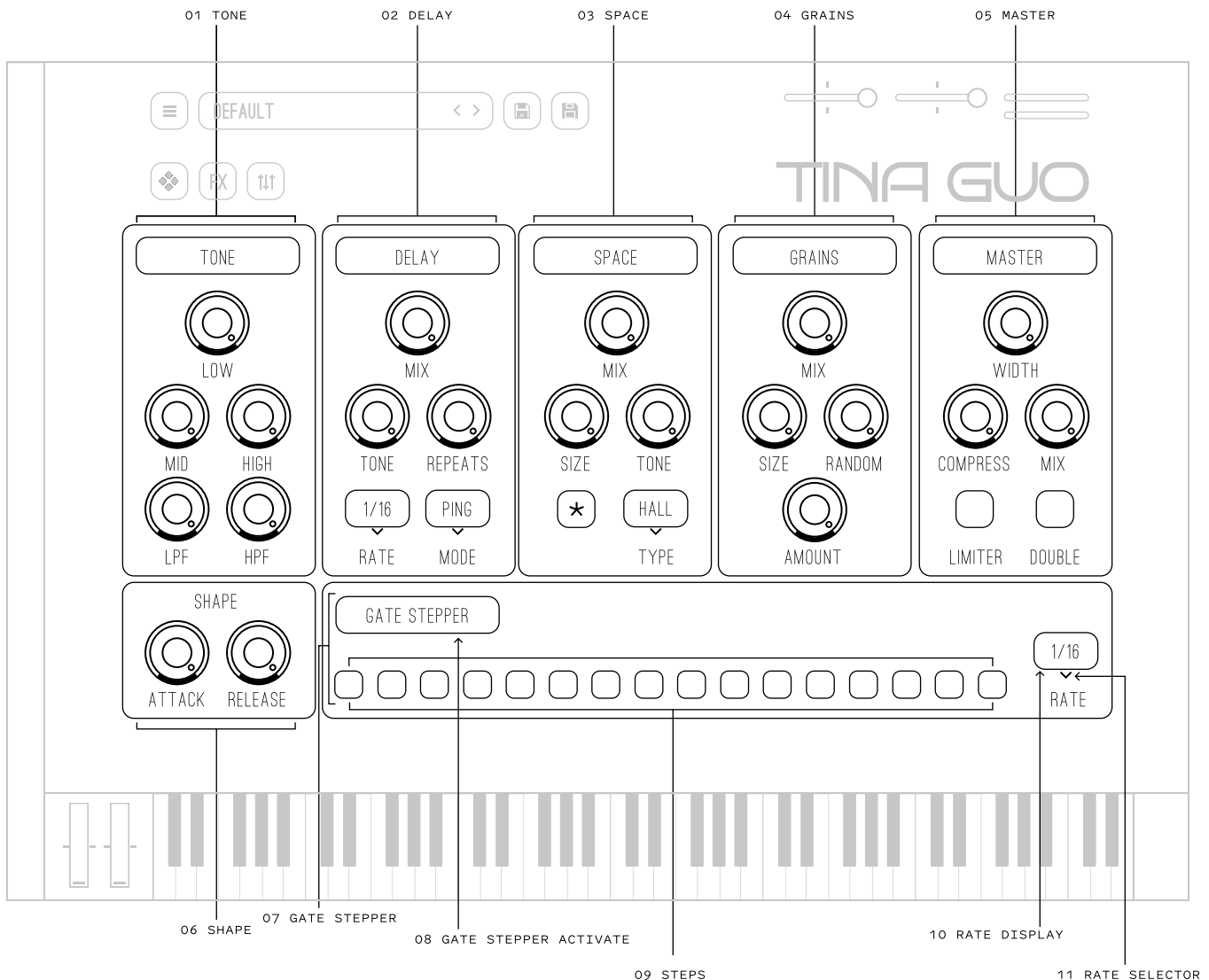


- 01 TRACK - Identifies 1-9 tracks.
- 02 S (SOLO) - Solos track
- 03 M (MUTE) - Mutes track
- 04 FADER - Controls level of texture signal.



# EFFECTS PANEL OVERVIEW

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**01 TONE** - An EQ and filter module.

- **LOW** - Adjusts the lower end frequencies.
- **MID** - Adjusts the mid-range end frequencies.
- **HIGH** - Adjusts the upper more air-based frequencies.
- **LPF** - Controls a low pass filter through the frequency range high to low.
- **HPF** - Controls a low pass filter through the frequency range low to high.

**02 DELAY** - A stereo digital delay module.

- **MIX** - Adjusts balance between dry and wet (repeated) signal.
- **TONE** - Adjusts the amount of filtering over the processed signal.
- **REPEATS** - Controls how much signal is fed back into itself.
- **RATE** - Controls the overall speed/timing of the effect.
- **MODE** - Selects the type of modelled Delay algorithm in use.

**03 SPACE** - An editable virtual space to add to your preset.

- **MIX** - Adjusts the balance of dry vs wet effect (this controller is duplicated on the main pane).
- **SIZE** - The length of the decay of the reverb.
- **TONE** - A high/low boost of the wet signal.
- **\*FREEZE** - Allow the current buffered reverb signal to hold indefinitely.
- **TYPE** - Dropdown menu to browse to the type of space you'd like to work in.

**04 GRAINS** - YOUR OWN ONBOARD GRANULAR SYNTHESIZER!

- **MIX** - ADJUSTS THE BALANCE OF DRY VS WET EFFECT (THIS CONTROLLER IS DUPLICATED ON THE MAIN PANE).
- **SIZE** - CONTROL OVER THE SIZE OF EACH "GRAIN".

(CONTINUED...)

- **RANDOM** - CONTROL OVER THE RANDOM SIZE OF EACH "GRAIN" AND ITS POSITION IN THE STEREO FIELD.
- **AMOUNT** - CONTROL OVER THE DENSITY AND FREQUENCY OF THE "GRAIN" PLAYBACK.

**05 MASTER** - A master bus channel with some juicy surprises.

- **WIDTH** - Control over the amount of exaggerated stereo-width.
- **COMPRESS** - Control over the amount of overall compression.
- **MIX** - Control over the amount of overall compression signal (wet/dry) and additional sub frequency added to the master output.
- **LIMITER** - Control over a final-stage mastering limiter to minimise risk of digital clipping.
- **DOUBLE** - Binary control over a second take of each performance (or re-pitched secondary layer) to add Double-Tracking to your instruments output.

**06 SHAPE** - An ADSR envelope amplifier shaper (only available in TEXTURE DESIGNER)

- **WIDTH** - Control over the envelope's attack.
- **COMPRESS** - Control over the envelope's release.

**07 GATE STEPPER** - Don't say we didn't spoil you. Storm Cello's scant regard for purism extends to an onboard gate step sequencer.

**08 BYPASS** - Switches sequencer on/off

**09 STEPS** - Control over which steps in a sequence allow or mute audio content to create rhythmic patterns / pulses for sustained material.

**10 RATE** - The overall speed or time signature of the "gated" sequence.

# TROUBLESHOOTING

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## **I Can't Hear Anything!**

As much as we all love John Cage, we are sure you want to hear your instrument. Included in each instrument are a few utilities that can be used to diagnose some likely causes.

Each plug-in has a combination of ways to control the overall volume.

- Ensure Expression (CC11) is at its maximum value.
- If included, check that the mixer controls are not set to -Infinity or muted (m).
- Check that your Master Output Volume is not set to its minimum value (-Infinity).

This can be quickly checked by looking at the Volume Meter, which should be moving while sound is passing through your instrument.

Still no luck?

If you have tried the above and still hear nothing, the onscreen MIDI keyboard can be directly played by Left-Clicking a piano key in the user interface.

If you can now hear the instrument then the issue is likely the connection between your MIDI keyboard and your workstation's associated track.

Ensure there are no loose connections, triple-check your MIDI input settings, and remember to arm your track.

## **Help! My Plug-In's interface is entirely blank.**

Don't worry. Looks can be deceiving, this means the plug-in is unable to locate the audio (.blob) files.

Ensure your external drives are connected and restart your digital audio workstation (D.A.W).

Unable to locate your .blob files, lost track of where you installed them, or had the misfortune of misplacing a drive? Simply re-run the installer to be up and running in no time.

We recommend frequent back-ups of your system, as well as archiving your instrument installer files to ensure a speedy recovery should it ever be needed.

## **How Do I Relocate My Instruments Audio Files?**

The simplest way to relocate your instrument's audio files (.blob) is to close your D.A.W, locate your .blob files in your previously chosen installation location, and move them to your preferred location.

When you next re-open your D.A.W and/or instrument you will be prompted to direct the instrument to your new install location.

# APPENDIX – CREDITS



**Storm Cello** wouldn't be possible if it wasn't for the efforts of these amazing, talented and generous individuals.

Performer / Co-producer:.....Tina Guo  
Co-producer / Developer: .....Steve Mazzaro

Co-producer / Developer: .....Calum Minuti-Goold  
Developer:.....Kieran Grieg  
UI Design: .....Voger Design  
Operations: .....Dot Allison  
Art Direction & Packaging Design:.Christian Henson  
Content Producer: .....Anna O'Donnelly  
Content Director/Videographer:.....Jack Rosam  
Videographer:.....Robbie Crawford  
Beta Testing:.....Theo Le Derf  
Tech Stack: .....Stephen Tallamy  
Community:.....Simon Fyffe  
Customer Experience:.....David Scobie

# APPENDIX – EULA

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# APPENDIX – EULA (CONTINUED)



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