

CROW HILL | THE VERTICAL PIANO



USER MANUAL

VERSION V1.0.0 APR 2024

WELCOME

CROW HILL | THE VERTICAL PIANO



**“Music can heal the wounds
which medicine cannot touch.”**

— Debasish Mridha

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

CONTENTS

CROW HILL | THE VERTICAL PIANO



| | |
|-------------------------------|----|
| Origins | 04 |
| Installation | 05 |
| Quick Start | 08 |
| Front Panel Overview | 09 |
| Rack - Tape Reel/Effects..... | 10 |
| Rack - Settings/Master..... | 11 |
| Troubleshooting..... | 12 |
| Appendices | |
| Credits..... | 13 |
| EULA..... | 14 |

ORIGINS

CROW HILL | THE VERTICAL PIANO



Every piano has a story and the sound character the piano possesses bears witness to that story. Found within its unique complex harmonic choir of resonance are the echos, the expression, the blows of everyone who has come into contact with it, played on it, moved it, tuned it, dusted it. The humidity and change in temperatures it has endured. The love, and also the abandonment. Its sound board, bearing 1 ton of pressure in a curved "crown" that gradually over the years gives way to the pressure exerted on it. The days we sampled this piano are not repeatable, it will only sound like it did on the days we preserved it for future generations. This is what this piano sounded like at this point in its extraordinary lifetime. For this is no ordinary piano, it is a Victory Vertical.

The Victory Vertical, also known as the G.I. Steinway, is a special piano produced by Steinway and Sons during World War II for the American troops. These pianos were sometimes airdropped onto battlefields to provide some relaxation and boost the morale of the soldiers. They were manufactured in Steinway's Queens-based factory and were primarily sold to the U.S. government.

Initially, Steinway was prohibited from building pianos due to wartime restrictions on iron, copper, brass, and other raw materials. However, they were later granted a contract to send specially designed pianos to commissioned war soldiers. Between 1942 and 1953, Steinway made over 3,000 "Victory Vertical" pianos designed specifically for troops in battle. The pianos came in olive, blue, and grey drab, and the first "Victory Vertical" was dropped by parachute in 1942, complete with tuning equipment and instructions.

Music was crucial for American troops stationed far away during World War II. It provided peace of mind and reminded them of why they were fighting. One soldier wrote home about the joy of gathering around the piano to sing after meals. This sentiment was shared by many, and the Victory Vertical pianos created a strong appreciation on the battlefield not only for the music but also for the Steinway name.

Crow Hill has had the honourable task of preserving a recently refurbished original victory vertical. One of only a handful around the world that aren't stuck in glass display cabinets. The only victory vertical available for anyone wanting to play and forever more.

Over a week spent in Hans Zimmer's private studio complex in Santa Monica, the Crow Hill team carried out a meticulous set of recordings with the aim of capturing this piano's character born of its incredible story. Through vintage microphones (some rarities kindly lent to us by our friends at Kerwax). Neve mic pre's and vintage Neve desk efforts have been painstakingly made to provide you with something that is both responsive and playable. Whilst also being inspiring and characterful.

But the story doesn't end with us sampling the piano. The product team has slavishly prepared a total performance and production environment for this historic piano. From different mic mixes including ones derived from a host of traditional 1940s style mics. Noise sources (dial back in what we struggle to get out) including radios and loudspeakers from that era modelled by our team. Insane tape effects including a tape looper, granular synthesis generators, delays, bespoke reverbs, graphical EQs and a master section that will smash your signal to pieces. This environment is your next rabbit hole so let's read on!

INSTALLATION

CROW HILL | THE VERTICAL PIANO



1. Getting The Installer

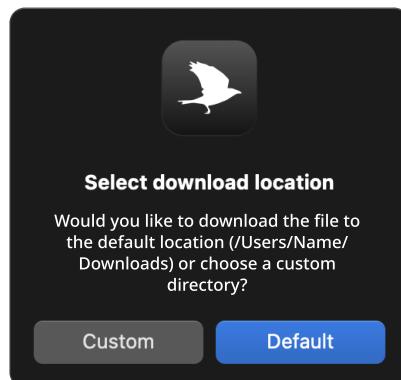
Each instrument has a dedicated download utility to assist in downloading each instrument's installer. This download utility (e.g. The Vertical Piano Downloader) is only a few megabytes in size and can be found directly from the product page or in your customer account on thecrowhillcompany.com

2. Opening The Downloader

Once downloaded, navigate to your download folder to open the utility. If on macOS this will be a .zip file that needs to be opened to show the .app and on Windows a .exe file.

Once you have opened the utility it will ask you to choose a desired download location.

By default, this will be your Download folder, but if you are low on system disk space you can choose to download to an external drive.

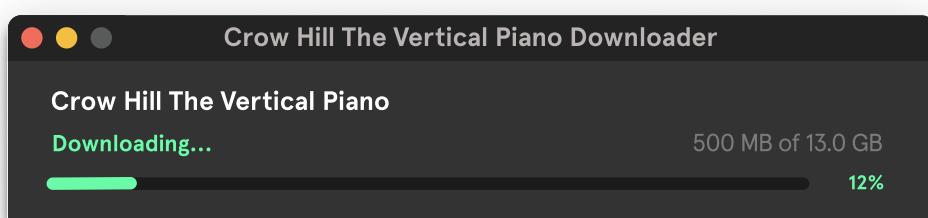


3. Downloading

Once opened the download utility will automatically download the instrument installer and open/mount the installer file.

!! What if the download has been completed and the installer files have not automatically opened after several minutes?

In this rare case, you can locate them in your chosen download location and open them directly by clicking on the file.



INSTALLATION (CONTINUED)

CROW HILL | THE VERTICAL PIANO



4. Installing

The installer has on-screen instructions to guide you through the process.

By clicking continue you are shown the End-User Licence Agreement. To install and use Crow Hill products this agreement should be read and agreed to. This agreement can be saved for your records and can be found in each instrument's user manual. Clicking Agree will take you to the next stage. Clicking Disagree will end the installation process.

5. Choosing A Sample Location

When installing your instrument, you will be presented with the option to select an install location for the audio content (.blob) and to de-select un required plug-in formats.

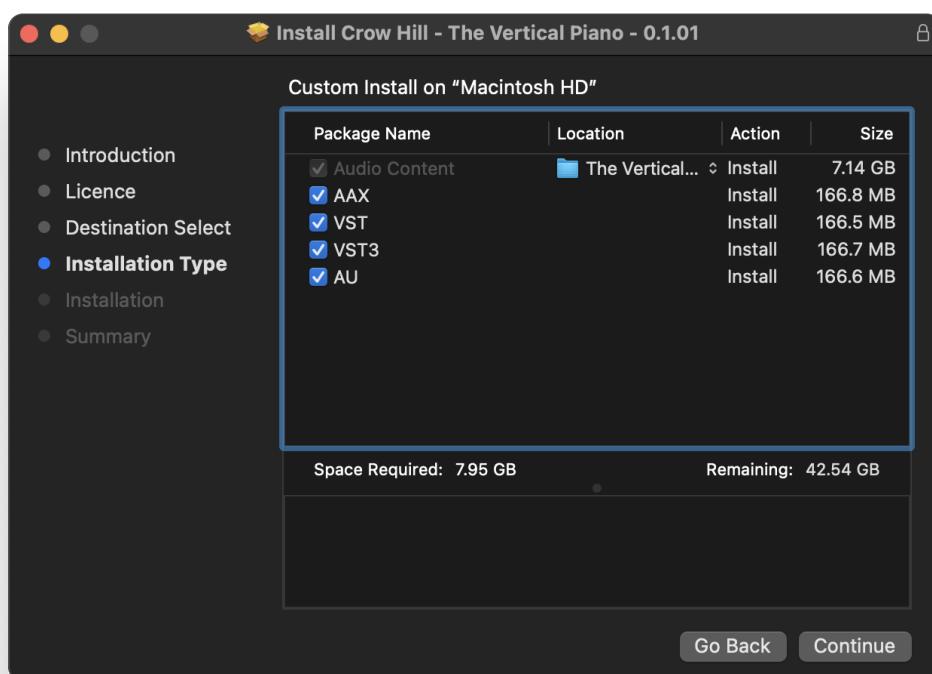
The default install location for the audio content is your system drive. For smaller products, this is perfectly fine. However, if you are running low on disk space you may install your instrument on an external drive. Select your desired location from the dropdown menu and proceed as instructed.

6. Choosing Required Plug-In Formats

If you only require a specific format (e.g. AU) then de-selecting other formats is a great way to save on disk space.

If you are unsure what plug-in format your D.A.W (Digital Audio Workstation) requires, we suggest installing them all to ensure maximum compatibility.

By default, all formats are pre-selected.



INSTALLATION (CONTINUED)

CROW HILL | THE VERTICAL PIANO



7. Confirming space

After clicking Continue the next screen confirms the amount of system disk space the installation will require. This is a great time to double-check you are only installing the formats you require and if you want to use an external drive or not. To make changes to your previous selection simply select "Go Back".

8. Time To Install

Once you are happy to proceed click "Install".

Your operating system will then ask you to enter login credentials.

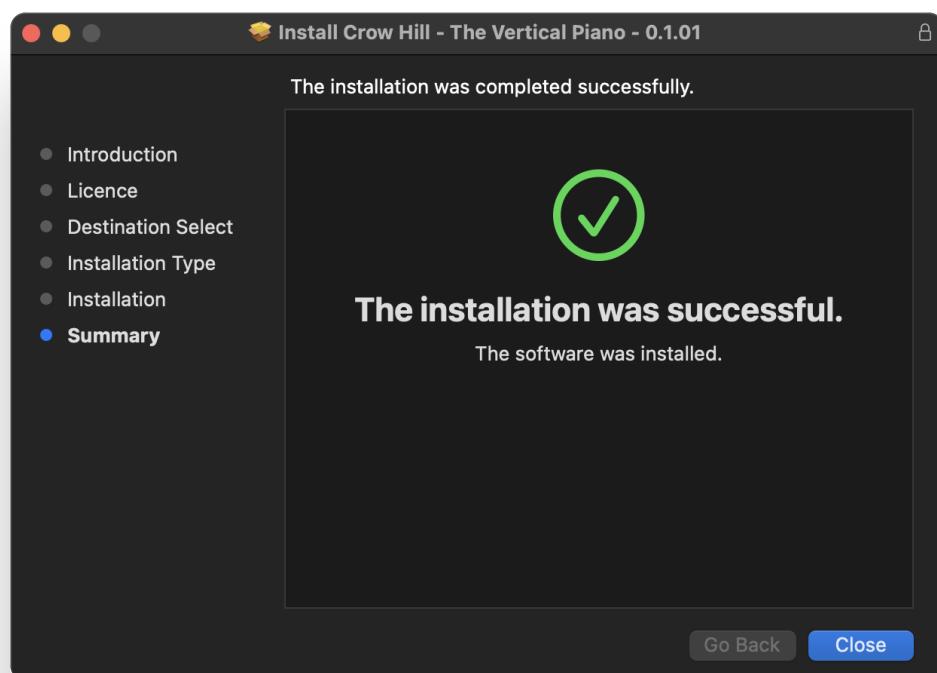
As the installer runs you will see onscreen progress. This process should only take several minutes with an estimated time presented throughout.

9. Next Steps

After a successful install your computer will ask you (macOS) whether you want to keep the installer or move it to your bin.

We suggest keeping a backup of all installers so, if needed you can use them again without having to re-download.

You are now ready to load up your favourite audio workstation, create a new instrument track, find the Crow Hill folder and load your new Plug-In.



QUICK START

CROW HILL | THE VERTICAL PIANO

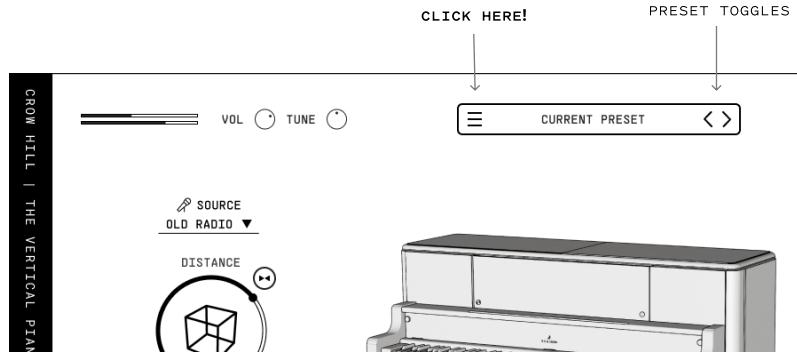


If you want to get up and running quickly or audition some presets, simply load the plug-in, navigate to the top preset panel.



Whilst we'd encourage you to mess around with all the controls. The preset toggles will move you forward and backward through the different expressions.

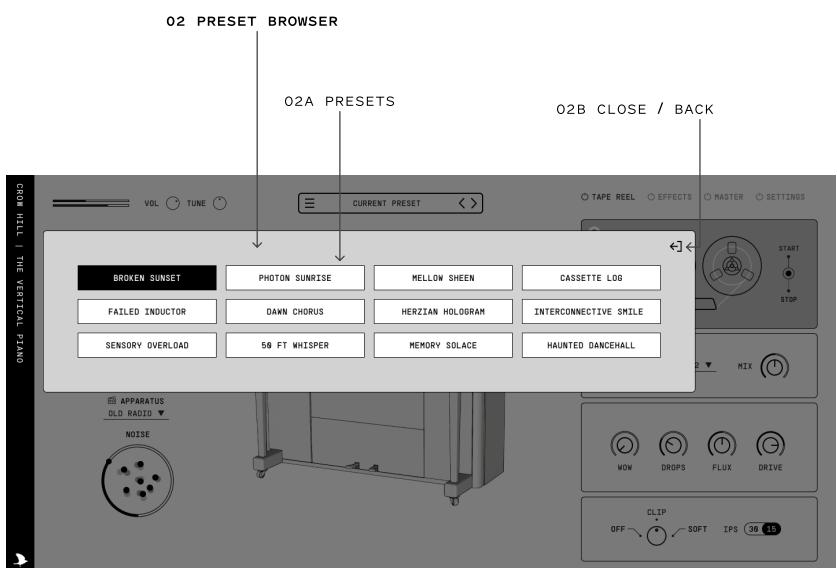
THE BROWSER WINDOW



Whilst you can work your way through the presets using the arrow toggles there is also a way of getting to where you want even faster. By opening the preset browser panel.

02 PRESET BROWSER

02A PRESETS - Click to load a preset, double click to return to the front panel.
02B CLOSE/BACK - Closes browser and returns you to the front panel.

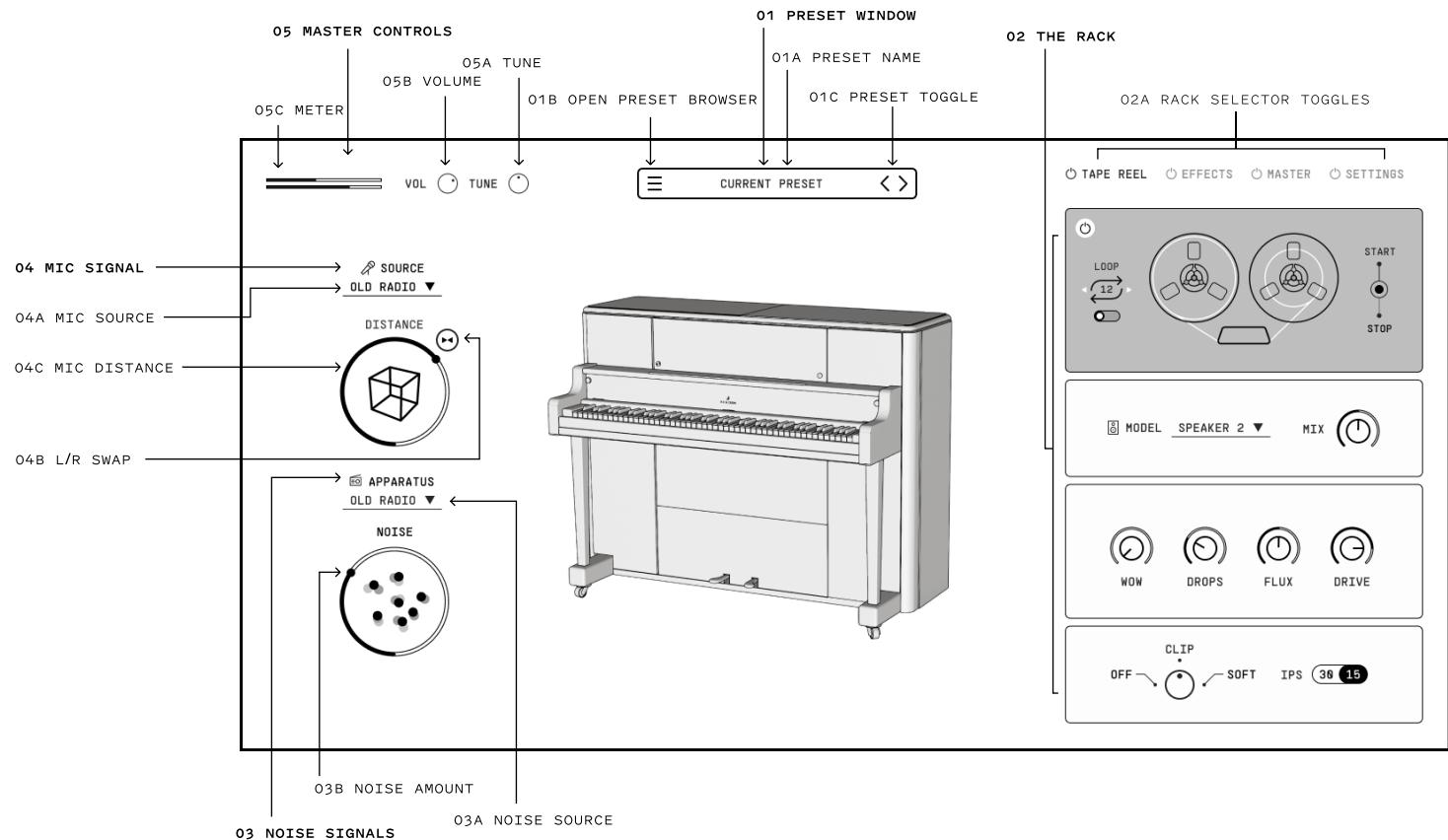


FRONT PANEL OVERVIEW

CROW HILL | THE VERTICAL PIANO



On this page we take you through the basic functionality of the vertical piano and the various signals we have recorded and processed it through. But that is only half the story with VP! Over forthcoming pages we unwrap the many wonders of "The Rack" controls.



01 PRESET WINDOW

01A PRESET NAME - Displays the preset you're currently playing.
 01B PRESET BROWSER - Opens the preset browser menu.
 01C PRESET TOGGLE - Toggles to the previous or next preset.

02 THE RACK

02A TUNING - Fine tunes the instrument.

03 NOISE SIGNALS

03A SIGNALS - A dropdown to select the signals
 03B AMOUNT - Controls the overall volume of the Room Tone.

04 MIC SIGNALS

04A SIGNALS - A dropdown to select the signals "source signal/mix"
 04B MIC DISTANCE - A control which changes the balance of the mix from "Close" and directly in front of the piano, to "Far" and a more ambient room position.
 04C L/R SWAP - A binary control which inverts the left and right stereo channel positions.

05 MASTER CONTROLS

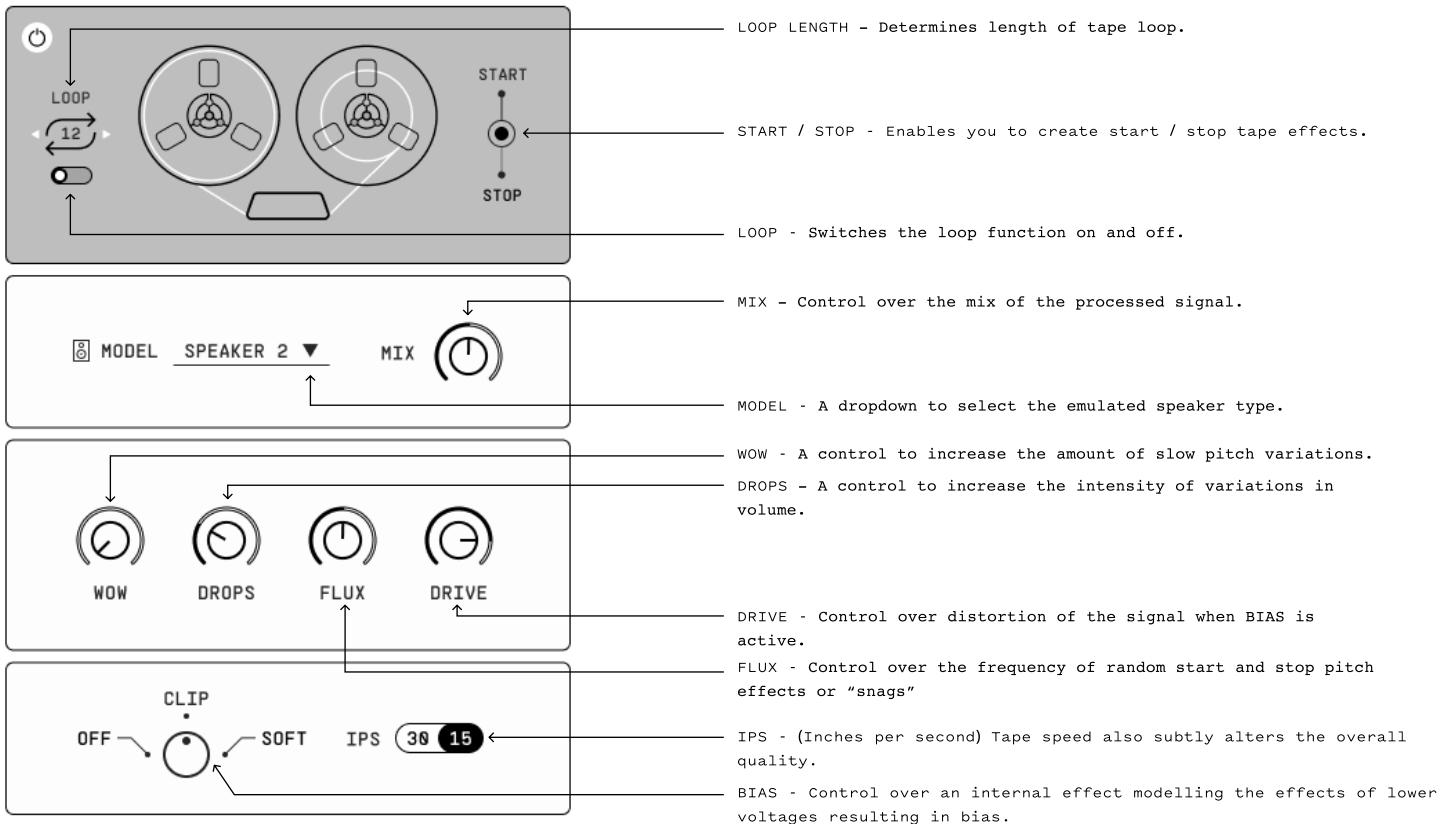
05A TUNE - Fine tunes the instrument.
 05B VOLUME - Adjust the master volume of the instrument.
 05C METER - A place to help identify issues and resolve frustration. If you can see it, you should hear it.

RACK - TAPE REEL / EFFECTS

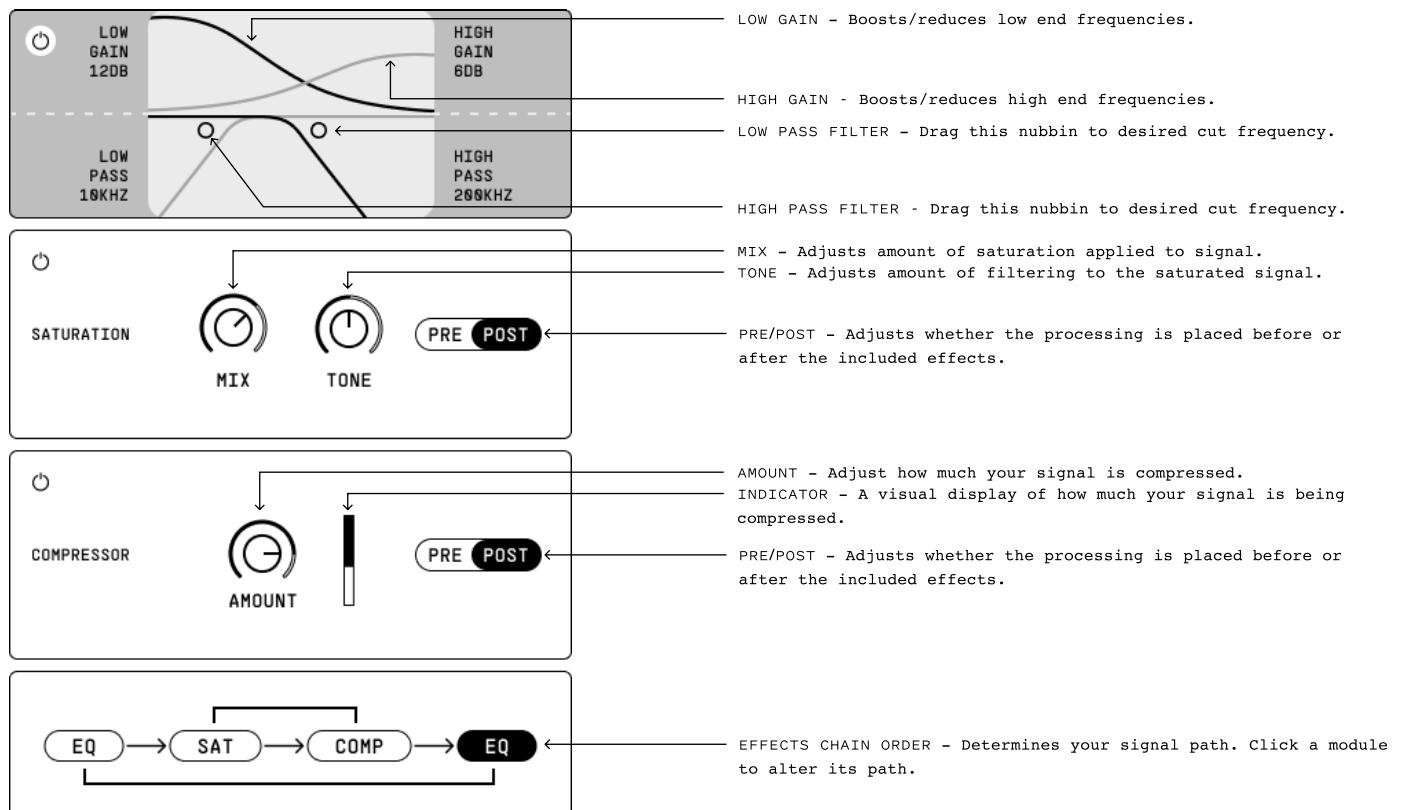
CROW HILL | THE VERTICAL PIANO



TAPE



MASTER

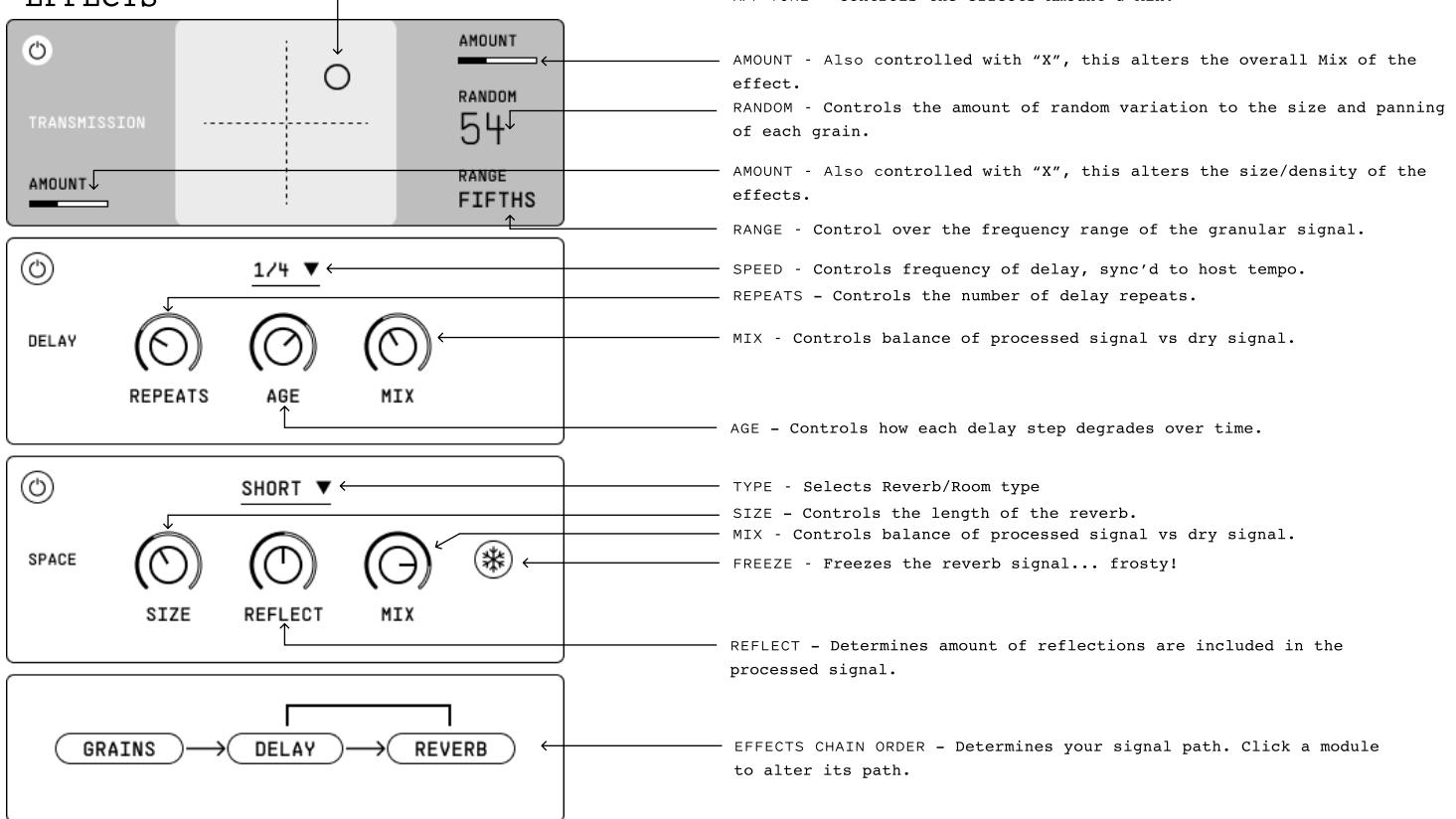


RACK - MASTER / SETTINGS

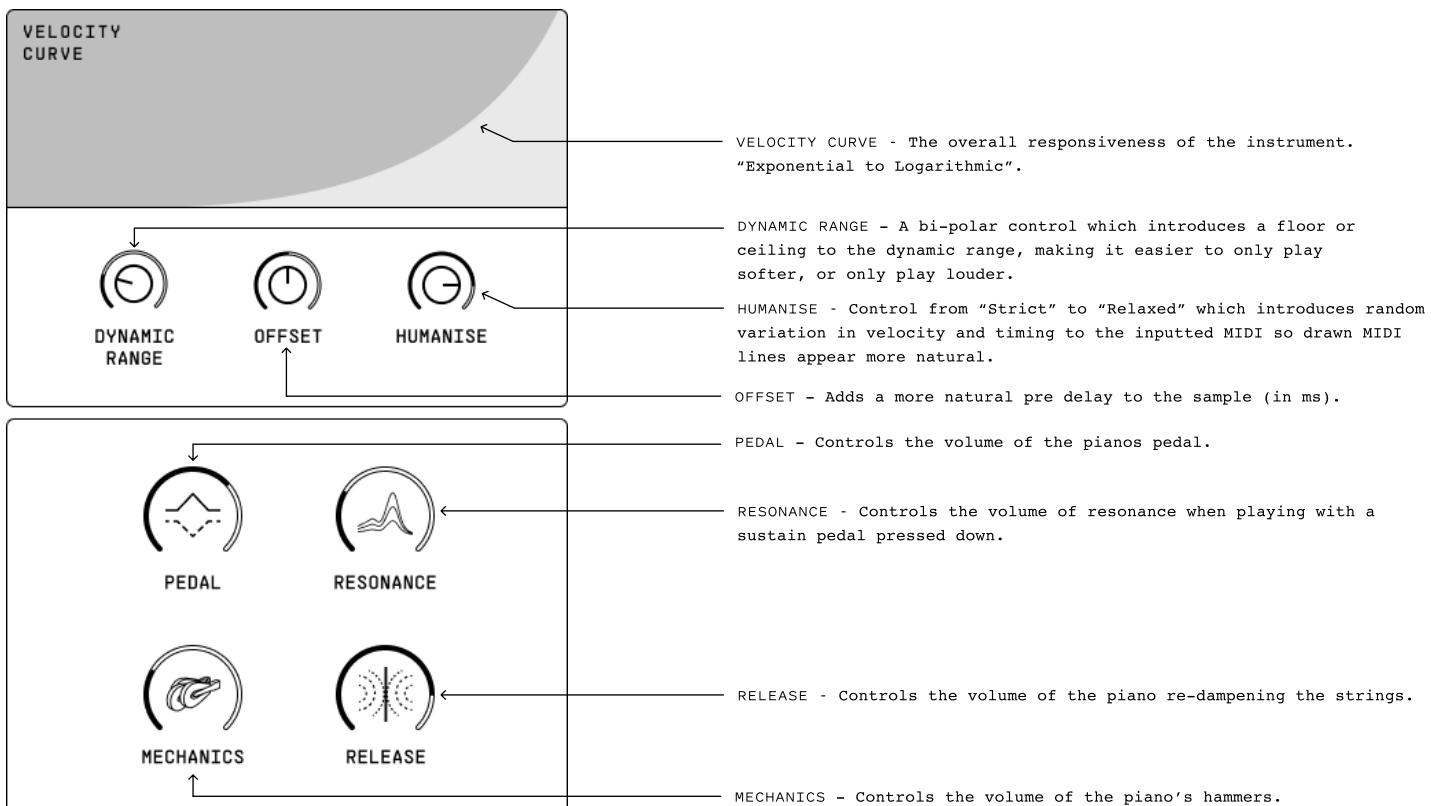
CROW HILL | THE VERTICAL PIANO



EFFECTS



SETTINGS



TROUBLESHOOTING

CROW HILL | THE VERTICAL PIANO



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 delete the previous files (where you previously installed your .blob's) and re-run the installer, selecting the newly desired install location.

This ensures no files are accidentally removed and will automatically overwrite any pre-existing instrument files.

APPENDIX - CREDITS

CROW HILL | THE VERTICAL PIANO



The Vertical Piano wouldn't be possible if it wasn't for the efforts of these amazing, talented and generous individuals.

Lead Player: Ant Steep
Produced & Played by: Calum Minuti-Goold
Co-Produced & Played by: Christian Henson

Engineer: Jacob Johnston
Assistant Engineer: Nolan Bacardi
Piano Tech: Teri Meredyth

Development: Calum Minuti-Goold
Art : Prokopi Constantinou
CX: Marley Petropoulos
Tech Stack: Stephen Tallamy
Editing: Kieran Greig

Crow Hill would like to thank Russell Emanuel for letting us capture this unique instrument and to Jillian Abood and Jessica Gibson for making us feel so at home in Remote Control Studios.

APPENDIX - EULA

(END USER LICENSE AGREEMENT)

CROW HILL | THE VERTICAL PIANO



ANY PERSON OR ENTITY ("User" or "You") USING OR OTHERWISE ACCESSING OUR PRODUCT OR ANY OF THE CONTENT AVAILABLE VIA THE PRODUCT SHALL BE BOUND BY THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF THIS END USER LICENCE AGREEMENT ("Agreement"). OUR PRODUCT IS AN INSTALLABLE SOFTWARE PACKAGE WHICH INCLUDES, BUT IS NOT LIMITED TO, AUDIO RECORDINGS, VISUAL ASSETS AND CODE, AND THE TERM ("Product") SHALL BE CONSTRUED ACCORDINGLY.

1. Contracting parties. The Product, together with all content, data and other materials ("Content") are owned or controlled by Crow Hill Productions Limited, having its Registered Office at c/o Cc Young & Co, 3rd Floor The Bloomsbury Building, 10 Bloomsbury Way, Holborn, London, WC1A 2SL ("we", "us", "our" or "Crow Hill"). When you register with (or otherwise access) us, you are contracting with Crow Hill. The licence granted to you by us is effective from the date you download, install or use the Product(s) (whichever is earliest) and shall remain in force until terminated by us.

2. Use of the Product. The Product and the Content is intended only for the purposes specified or implied therein, and your use of the Product and the Content is entirely at your own risk. You shall be solely responsible for all of your use of the Product. Please note, whilst we endeavour to provide accurate and up-to-date information, the Product and the Content may not be wholly accurate or up-to-date, complete or free of defects, and are subject to change at any time. The Product is provided without any representations or warranties of any kind (implied or express) to the fullest extent permitted by applicable law. We, unless otherwise stated herein, own or control all relevant intellectual property rights contained in the Product and the Content. You may not publish, distribute, extract, re-utilise, or reproduce any part of the Product or any Content in any form other than as expressly allowed herein or as otherwise provided for by us, (or under applicable laws). Save as expressly set out in this Agreement, the Product is for your personal use only. We will not be responsible if your use of the Product or of the Content does not fit your particular intended purpose.

3. Licence for Download and Use of Products. By purchasing a Product (and subject to your compliance with this Agreement), we grant to you a non-exclusive, non-sublicensable, non-transferable license to download (on not more than two devices concurrently) and use the Products you purchase from us, for personal use, PROVIDED ALWAYS that you use the purchased Sound File(s) only within your own newly-created sound recording(s) and/or performances in a manner that renders the Sound File(s) substantially different to the original sound of the Sound File in each case. The Products (and all recordings and/or compositions incorporated therein) are our property and are licensed to you only for use as part of a live or recorded musical performance. You may use these sounds for any commercial or non-commercial purpose where you have combined them with other sounds within one or more musical composition(s) and/or recording(s), in which case they are permitted to be shared with or given or transferred to any third party or uploaded to any file sharing site or offered for resale or public transmission. This license expressly forbids resale or other distribution of the Products or their derivatives, either as they exist in the library, reformatted for use in another sampler, or mixed, combined, filtered, re-synthesised or otherwise edited, for use as sounds, multi-sounds, samples, multi-samples, sound sets, programmes or patches in a sampler, microchip, computer or any sample playback device. You may not sell any Product(s), or give away any Product(s) for use by any other person(s). Products may not be used in or in relation to any competitive products that are sold or relicensed to any third parties. Except as expressly permitted herein, to the fullest extent of applicable law you may not copy, modify, distribute, sell or lease any Product, and you may not reverse engineer or attempt to extract the source code of any Product. Product(s) may not be used in datasets for, in the development of, or as inputs to generative AI programs. For the avoidance of doubt, your license with us is personal in nature and shall not be transferred to any other individual or corporate entity. You shall take all reasonable and practicable steps to protect the Product, together with any ancillary items that are sold with the Product, for all unauthorised copying or use. You shall ensure that in no way is the Product modified or in any way adapted to benefit use by an unlicensed third party.

4. Ownership. Ownership of, and title to, the Products (and all digitally recorded sounds and/or copies therein) is held by us. Copies are provided to you solely to enable you to exercise your rights hereunder. When you purchase any Product(s), you are purchasing a limited and personal licence for use (and not ownership) of Product(s). Except as expressly authorised in this Agreement, you may not rent, lease, sell, sublicense, distribute, transfer, copy, reproduce, display, modify or time share any Product(s) (or part or element thereof).

CROW HILL | THE VERTICAL PIANO



5. Intellectual Property. All rights not expressly granted to User are reserved by us. The Products are licensed, not sold, to you to be used for your own original musical compositions and productions. All copying, lending, duplicating, re-selling or trading of any Product or other Content is strictly prohibited, save as used for or incorporated into your original created works. Only you, as the original purchaser of a Sound File, has the right to embody and reproduce that Sound File within your music compositions/productions. This license is granted for you as a single user only (and is given on a worldwide basis). You agree and acknowledge that we have a proprietary interest in all sound recordings, and that any use by you that frustrates the purpose of this Agreement or seeks to prevent our payment process (including without limitation by the selling, renting, or otherwise using or distributing un-integrated Content) may cause irreparable loss to us in a way that could not be adequately compensated by damages. For the avoidance of doubt, no ownership of copyright is transferred by us to you hereunder. The brands, products and service names used by us and in the Content are trademarks or trade names of ours or our trading partners unless otherwise stated.

6. Warranty and Indemnity. You warrant that you will abide by all applicable laws when using the Products and the Content. User hereby warrants and represents that User has the right and power to enter into and fully perform all of its obligations under this Agreement; User will defend, indemnify, and hold us harmless, our parents, subsidiaries, affiliates, directors, officers, employees, and agents, with respect to any claim, demand, cause of action, or debt or liability brought by or claimed by any third party, including attorneys' fees, to the extent that any such claim is based upon or arises out of a breach of any of User's representations, warranties, covenants, or obligations.

7. No Endorsement. At no time, will we pre-screen or monitor, and therefore endorse, (and we expressly disclaim any and all liability in connection with) any third-party content or any other materials created or exhibited or otherwise exploited by our Users.

8. Termination of this Agreement. We may at any time terminate this legal Agreement, in our sole discretion without prior notice to you and without reimbursement, if we have reasonable grounds to believe that you may have breached (or acted in a manner indicating that you do not intend to or are unable to comply with) any term herein or if we are legally required to do so by law. You acknowledge that we will cooperate fully with investigations of violations of systems or network security at other sites, including cooperating with law enforcement authorities in investigating suspected criminal violations.

9. Liability. You agree that our liability to you hereunder shall be limited to the amount you have actually paid to us for all products or services hereunder of, if greater, GBP100. Except as set out herein, we shall not be liable for any indirect or consequential loss of any kind in contract, tort or otherwise arising out of your use of the Product or the Content or in relation to the goods and/or services that we provide. Nothing in this Agreement shall operate to limit or exclude liability for death or personal injury caused by negligence.

10. Warranties. TO THE EXTENT PERMITTED UNDER APPLICABLE LAW IN YOUR TERRITORY, ALL OUR PRODUCTS AND SERVICES ARE PROVIDED ON AN "AS IS" AND "AS AVAILABLE" BASIS WITHOUT WARRANTY OF ANY KIND, EITHER EXPRESS OR IMPLIED, INCLUDING, WITHOUT LIMITATION, THE IMPLIED WARRANTIES OF MERCHANTABILITY OR FITNESS FOR A PARTICULAR PURPOSE, OR THE WARRANTY OF NON-INFRINGEMENT. WITHOUT LIMITING THE FOREGOING, WE MAKE NO WARRANTY THAT (A) THE SERVICES WILL MEET YOUR REQUIREMENTS, (B) THE SERVICES WILL BE UNINTERRUPTED, TIMELY, SECURE, OR ERROR-FREE, (C) THE RESULTS OBTAINED FROM THE USE OF THE SERVICES WILL BE EFFECTIVE, ACCURATE OR RELIABLE, OR (D) THE QUALITY OF ANY MATERIALS OR SERVICES OBTAINED BY YOU FROM US, OR FROM ANY THIRD PARTIES' WEBSITES TO WHICH WE ARE LINKED, WILL MEET YOUR EXPECTATIONS OR BE FREE FROM MISTAKES, ERRORS OR DEFECTS. THE USE OF THE PRODUCTS AND THE SERVICES IS AT YOUR OWN RISK AND WITH YOUR AGREEMENT THAT YOU WILL BE SOLELY RESPONSIBLE FOR ANY DAMAGE TO YOUR COMPUTER DEVICE OR SYSTEM OR LOSS OF DATA THAT RESULTS FROM SUCH ACTIVITIES.

11. Indemnity. You agree to indemnify us for any loss or damage that may be incurred by us, including without limitation reasonable legal fees, arising from any breach by you of any warranty or other term herein or your misuse of any material or information obtained through the use of the Products or the Content.

12. Complaints. If you would like to notify us of Content, which you believe does not comply with this Agreement or otherwise is objectionable, please notify us via www.thecrowhillcompany.com/faqs making sure to include both the link to the infringing Content and the reasons as to why you believe there is an infringement.

CROW HILL | THE VERTICAL PIANO



13. **Hacking.** You agree and undertake not to attempt to damage, deny service to, hack, crack, reverse-engineer, or otherwise interfere with the Products and/or the Content in any manner. If you in any way cause such damage, you agree to pay all financial damages we incur as a result. We will cooperate with the authorities in prosecuting any User who Interferes with the Products or the Content or otherwise attempts to defraud us or any other parties. We reserve the right to deny any or all access or service to any User for any reason, at any time, at our sole discretion. You agree that we may block your access, and at our sole discretion to disallow your continued use of the Products and/or the Content. We reserve the right to take any action we may deem appropriate in our sole discretion with respect to violations or enforcement of the terms of this Agreement, and we expressly reserve all rights and remedies available to us at law or in equity.

14. **No Partnership.** Your use of the Product and/or the Content creates no partnership, client, fiduciary or other professional relationship.

15. **Entire Agreement.** This Agreement constitutes the entire agreement between the parties on the subject matter hereof. There are no understandings, agreements, or representations, oral or written, not specified herein regarding this Agreement.

16. **Force Majeure.** We will not be liable or responsible for any failure to perform, or delay in performance of, any of our obligations hereunder that is caused by events outside our reasonable control including but not limited to: natural disasters (fire, storms, floods), governmental or societal actions (war, invasion, civil unrest, labour strikes), infrastructure failures (transportation, energy, electricity), or any epidemic or pandemic.

17. **Severance.** If any part, term, or provision of this Agreement shall be held by a court of competent jurisdiction to be illegal, unenforceable, or in conflict with any relevant law, the remaining portions or provisions shall still remain valid and continue in full force and effect.

18. **No Waiver.** No waiver, express or implied, by either party of any term or condition or of any breach by the other of any of the provisions of this Agreement shall operate as a waiver of any breach of the same or any other provision of this Agreement.

19. **Variation.** This Agreement may be varied from time to time and any such amendment will be applicable from the date and time such revised terms have been made publicly available. Your continued use of the Product constitutes agreement with and acceptance of any such amendment or other changes.

20. **Law and Jurisdiction.** This Agreement shall be governed by and construed in accordance with the laws of England and any disputes shall be subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of the Courts of England.

21. **Contacting Us.** If you have any questions, please contact us at www.thecrowhillcompany.com/faqs