PatchDirector

Audio & Preset Management Tool

Manual
Windows/OS X

(Version 1.0)

no website since 2020

Welcome

Patchdirector is a unique, intuitive and easy-to-use sound archive and audio manager for your own sounds and presets. You can share all samples, protect them from abuse with an audio watermark, load shared samples easily, tag them, sort them... and much more.

Patchdirector is a program for recording, previewing and managing sound patches and presets. You can save your own creations (instruments, banks, presets). But you can also access prepared lists and audio samples if you import them.

In addition, groups/collections can be formed from different models and banks, which can be shared as exported container files or MP3 files.

Composing your songs and collaborating with others becomes more diverse, faster, and most importantly: much easier.

....

Patchdirector is based on my 40 years of experience as an active stage, studio and home studio musician.

The development is the result from my need, never having the time and patience for a long-term search for "the right" sound, due to the fact that I had so many high-quality sounds on my computer. And because I did not want to invest my creativity in the constant search for sounds, but wanted to use the sound as a vehicle for my creativity, I have developed Patchdirector. I hope it will enjoy you as much as I do.

I´m happy to hear your suggestions for improvement. Send me an email to
thomas.haake@gmail.com

Thomas Haake, December 2017

(revision in December 2023)

Patchdirector is not on social media present.

Short and quick overview

What does Patchdirector do exactly?

Patchdirector helps you to find the right sound for a piece or even for a video, e.g. if you have only a vague idea what you are looking for. The main tasks are to find, organize, record and play audio snippets that are between 20 and 60 seconds long and can either be recorded by you or loaded as ready-made containers. Containers can contain between 1 and infinite sounds in MP3 format.

Why do I need Patchdirector?

If you work creatively with sounds, you'll find that your library gets cluttered very quickly. If you have a vague idea of what a sound might sound like, you can search by keyword and quickly focus your search.

How do the sounds get in there?

First of all you have to know what Patchdirector is NOT: Patchdirector is not a so-called plugin wrapper that automatically scans all virtual synthesizer sounds and effects and makes them available. Patchdirector is not bound to proprietary (manufacturer-dependent) formats and records all sounds that are routed to the stereo output of the PC/Mac.

There are 2 ways to get the audio snippets into Patchdirector:

- the comfortable solution: you can import ready-made containers, already fully populated with audio samples and sorted by all possible models. The containers are easy to import and within 3 minutes you have everything sorted by categories, models keywords. Super simple.

- the intensive solution: You record yourself and have full control. Patchdirector provides you with everything you need, including watermarks and export.

What are the most important features?

- Recording of own sounds from all sources
- Assignment of over 60 keywords in the 3 categories: Instrument, Category and Character
- Search by model or across the entire database
- Selection and grouping across all models and sound banks
- Export as own container file or as MP3
- Retention of the complete model hierarchy during export
- Import of containers with automatic creation of a model hierarchy including all presets or according to selected specifications
- Flexible database path
- bilingual in English and German available
- System requirements Windows 7 and OS X 10.8 or higher

Top WIndows 10, below Apple OS X El Capitan (10.11):
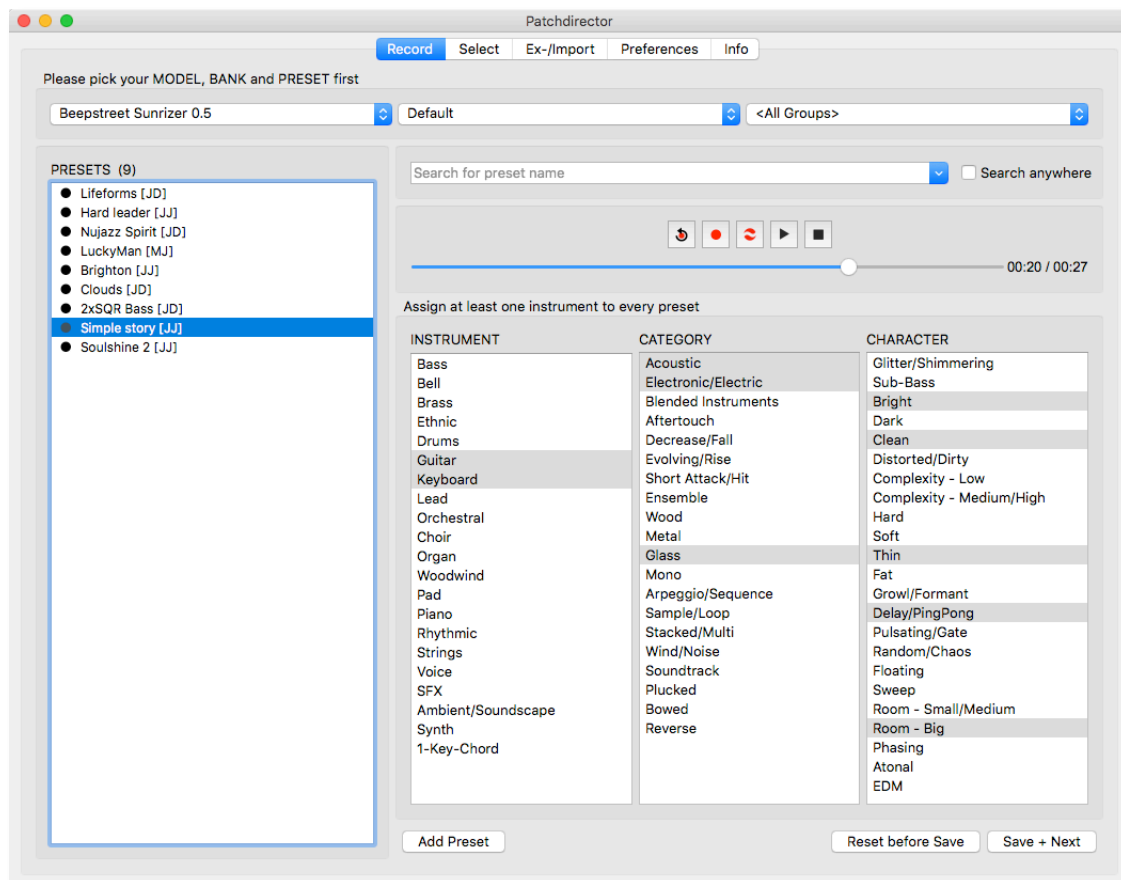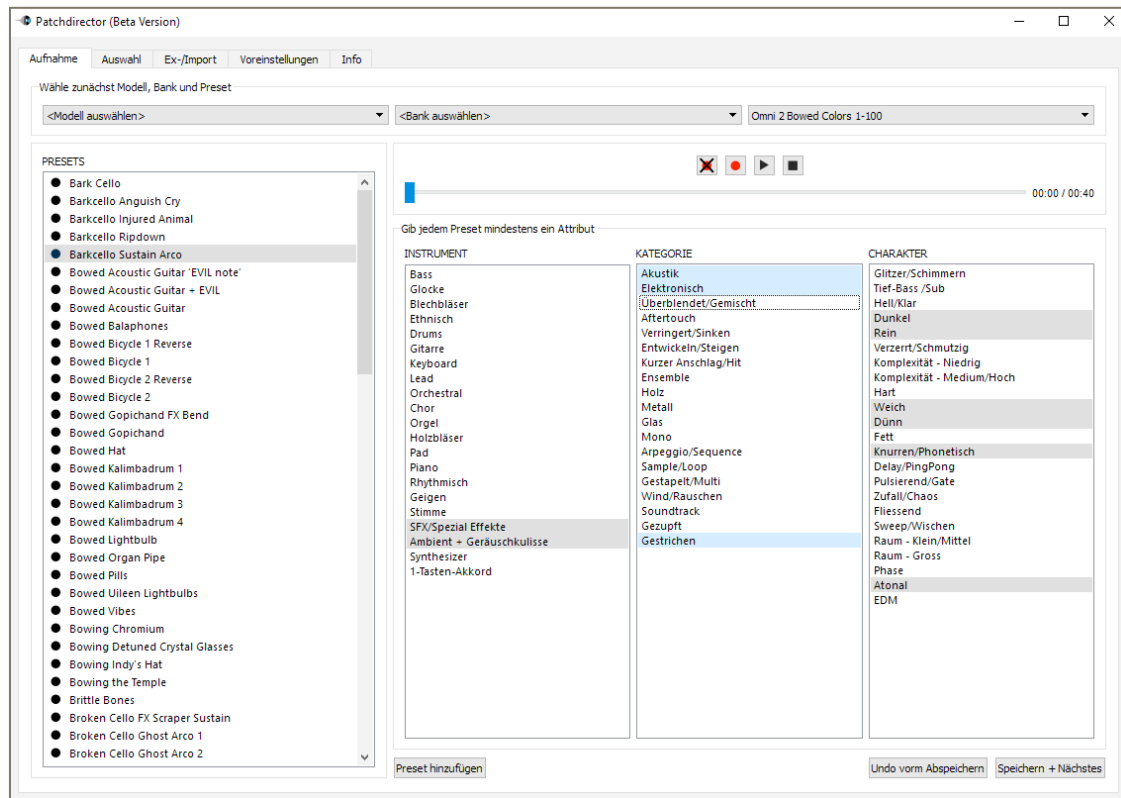
The individual windows and views can be accessed via the five tabs Record, Select, Ex-/Import, Preferences and Info.

- Preferences
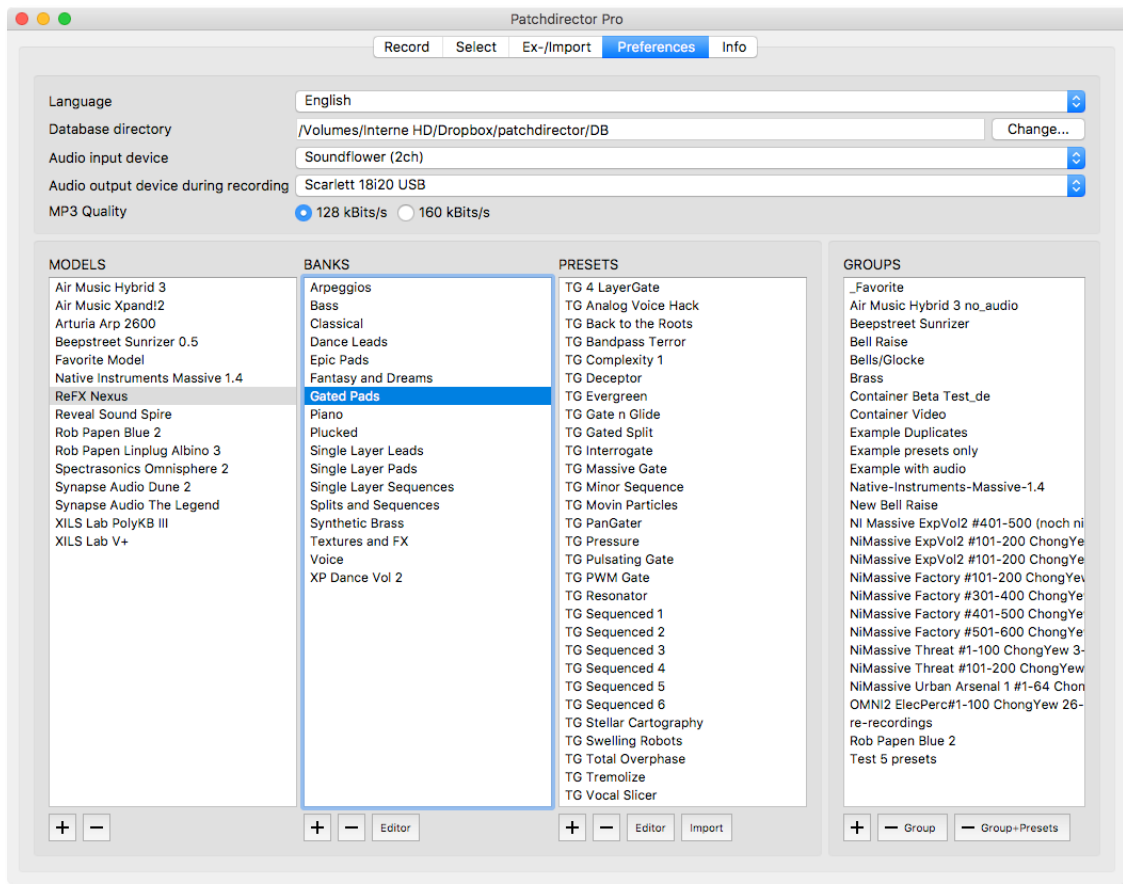
- • **Language**: English or German are available

- • **Database (DB) directory**: can be chosen freely. Since the DB can be quite large for many entries, it is recommended to transfer the database to an external memory. The DB can be linked to any other installation of Patchdirector on a portable memory.

- • **Audio recorde**r: varies depending on the system (PC/Mac), more detailed explanations in the next chapter "Audio Setup".

- • **Audio output device during recording**: Mac only, usually you choose the audio interface here

- • **MP3 quality**: 128kBit/s or 160kBit/s selectable

Creating a structure using the categories Models, Banks, Presets and Groups is explained in more detail in chapters 3 and 4.

Worth mentioning here is the possibility to delete complete groups including presets from the database. Since a group with the content and name of the imported container is automatically created when importing a container, you can throw out the entire container here if you don't need it any further.

You can also delete individual models, banks and presets. Note that a deleted model also deletes all the banks and presets it contains.

Deletions are final and cannot be undone.

- Audio Setup (Mac OS)

The following only makes sense if you want to make your own recordings. If you only want to play sounds, you don't have to do anything else.

Mac OS still doesn't offer the possibility to record internal system audio until the current version Monterey (12.4.) (March 2022). To be able to record in a program like Patchdirector, you have to make a small detour.

To do this, you install a small tool that allows a redirection (so-called audio routing). I recommend the free **GroundControl** from gingeraudio.com (download currently here: https://www.pluginboutique.com/product/3-Studio-Tools/72-Utility/7639-GroundControl) or Blackhole (download: https://existential.audio/blackhole/) The whole preparation takes hardly five minutes:

When the manual was developed, the pictures were still made with the well-known tool "Soundflower", but it is no longer developed. Nevertheless, the steps are the same as for the other tools. Do not get confused.

1. Load and install GroundControl/Blackhole (no reboot necessary) In the next step create two audio outputs: one to the normal standard output (e.g. internal speaker or external interface) and one to GroundControl/Blackhole -> which now receives audio and forwards it to Patchdirector.
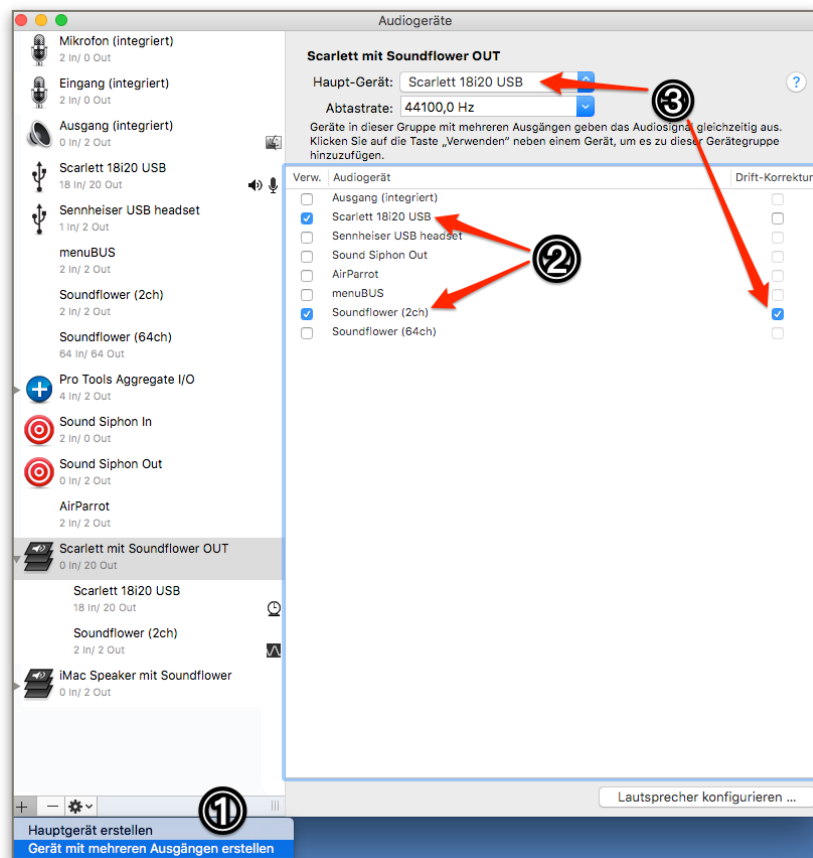

2. open Programs->Utilities->Audio Midi Setup, there in the menu Window-> Show Audio Devices. Now press the plus sign at the bottom left and select "Create device with multiple outputs" ①.
    With double click or Enter/Enter you can change the name. For me it is called "Scarlett with GroundControl" . The name is of course freely selectable.

Activate the checkmarks in the right window ② once from your monitoring device (the interface or "Output (integrated)") and once "GroundControl". Your monitor is the main device (select it in the dropdown above) ③ "GroundControl" gets a check mark on the right side at Drift Correction.

Now select "GroundControl" as audio recording device in Patchdirector under Preferences. This is the input in Patchdirector for the recording.
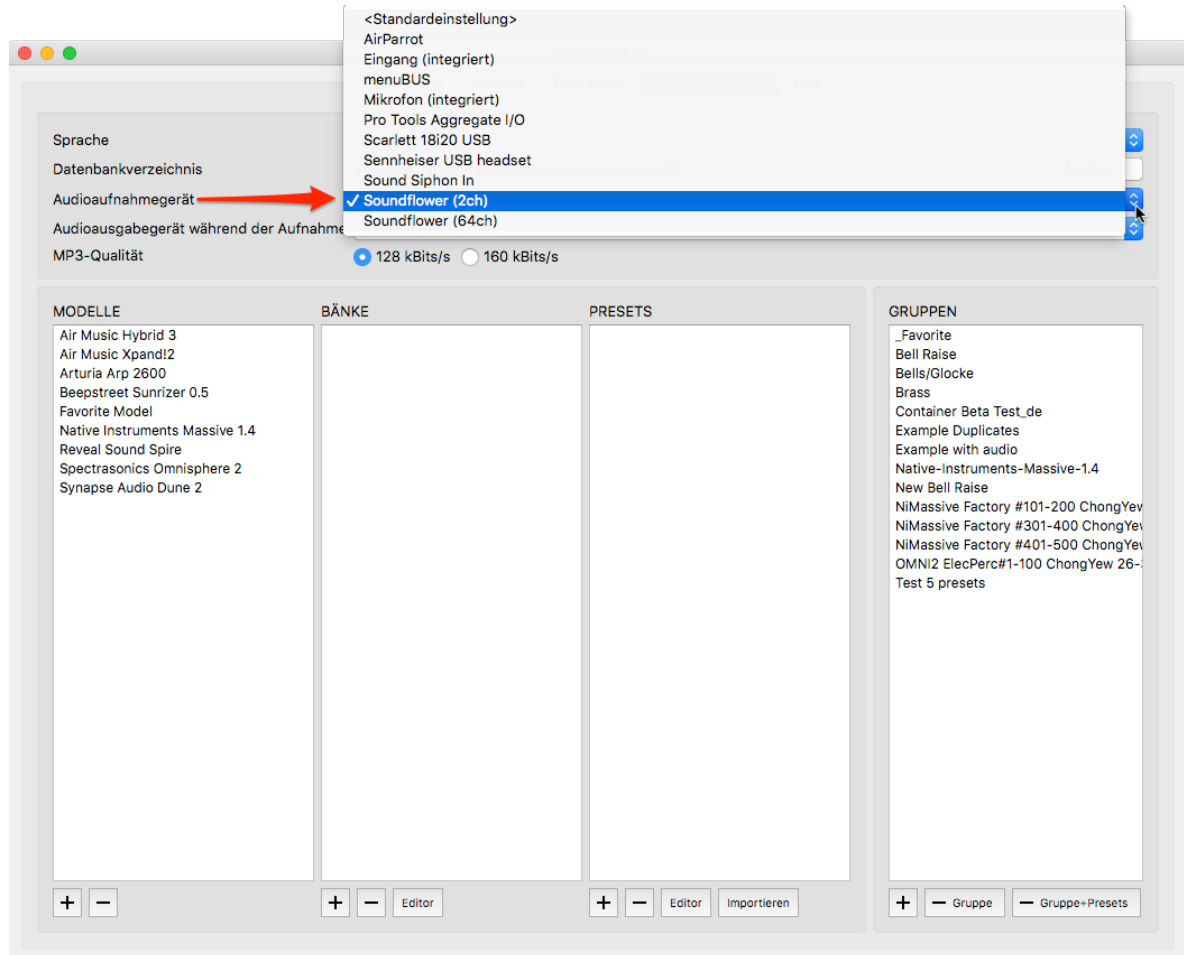
Very important for a recording in Patchdirector:

Your DAW (Ableton Live, Logic, Pro Tools, Reaper…) must have this newly created output "Scarlett with GroundControl" assigned as audio output. Only then GroundControl can receive audio.
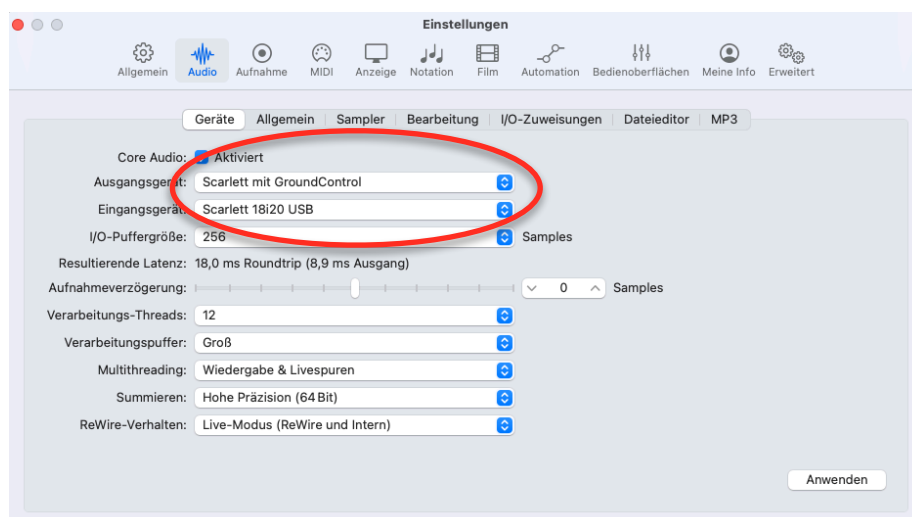
- Audio Setup (Windows)

Select as audio device in the DAW "Windows Audio" ① or any other supplied by Windows - please do not use ASIO. Open the control panel ② and deactivate the exclusive mode ③ (tick off).

Some PCs/laptops, especially newer models, have an equalizer, "enhanced mode" or similar before the audio output, through which the audio runs and is supposed to sound better. Such additional systems must be switched off, as they interrupt the audio routing.
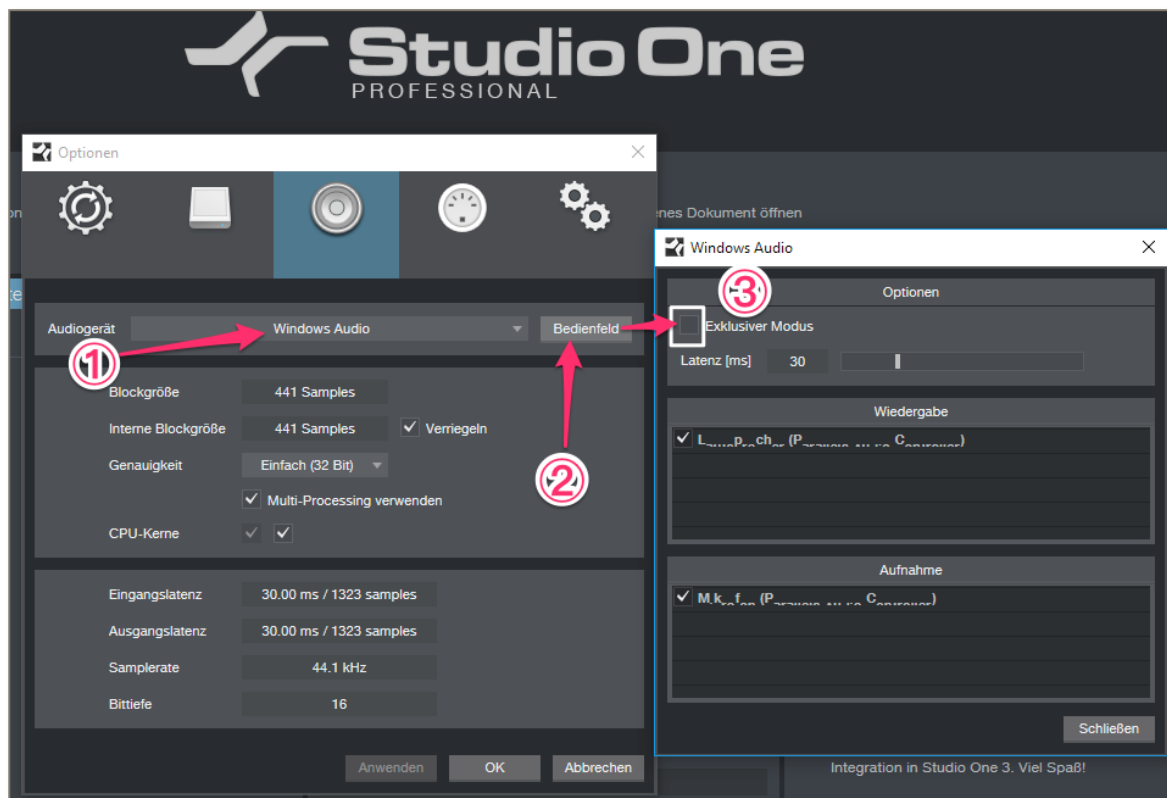
Example based on preferences in Studio One
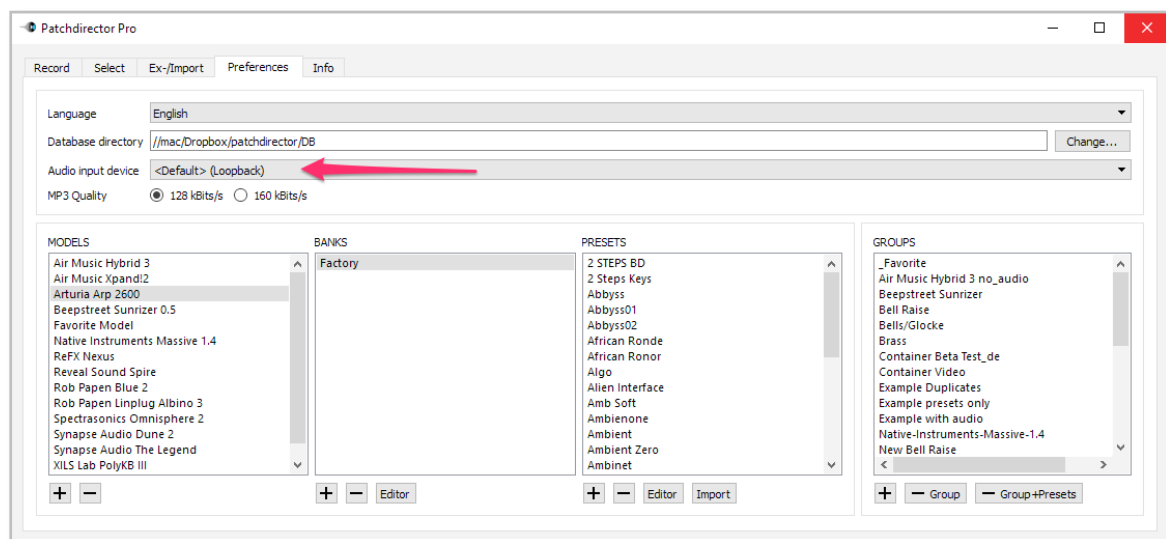
According to this, choose <Default (Loopback)> as your input device in Patchdirector.

# - Manually create Model, Bank, Presets and Groups

The individual method (slower, but full control): each *Model* has at least one *Bank* containing *Presets*. These must be created before start of a recording session.
Groups are a powerful tool in Patchdirector and can be created on the fly if desired

*(The faster method is the **Import**, see next chapter)*

Open tab ->Preferences: the hierarchy is created from left to right ①:

- first enter the *Model*, then enter the name for one or more *Banks* and finally enter the *Presets*.
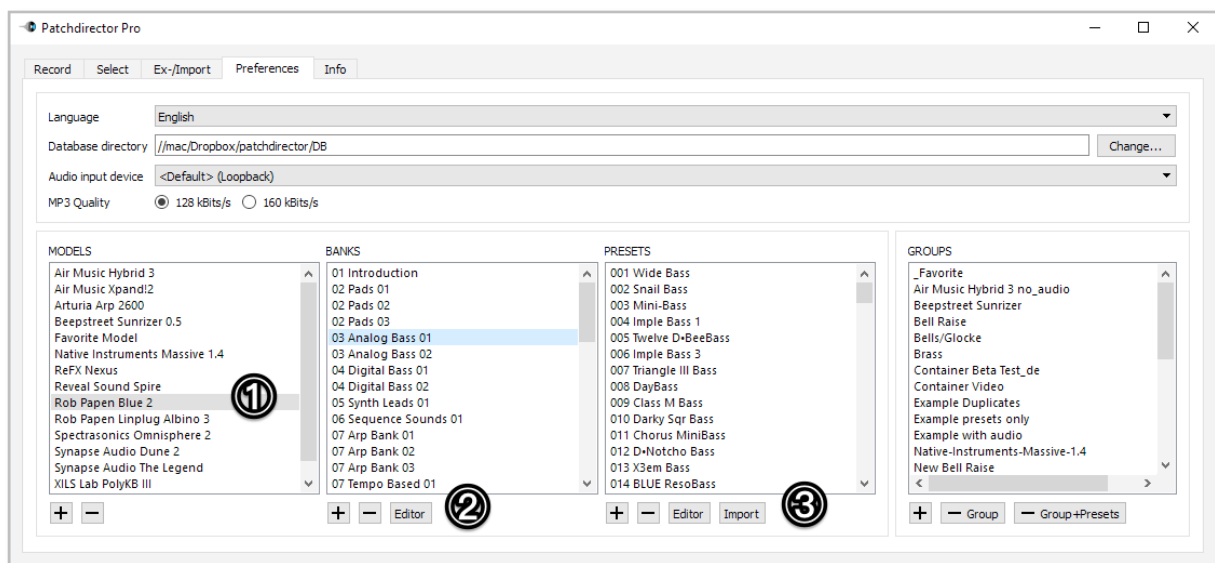
- The editors in Banks and Presets ② allow you to insert the names with Copy/Paste.

- Presets can also be imported as. txt files ③

- optionally create some basic groups (e. g. Favorites, Temp,[Songname]...)

Of course, all names can be chosen freely. This makes sense if you develop your own sound presets. In this case, it is important to assign your own bank names and preset names and not mix them with manufacturer's banks.

Note: The names/files of the presets are placed at several possible locations on the hard disk, but some manufacturers (e. g. Korg) also like to package these preset lists in their own banks (.fxb), which unfortunately cannot be read out. Using a screenshot of the preset lists and an OCR program or online services, any number of lists can be created quickly and efficiently.

- Import container with automatic structure design

The quicker and more convenient way to create a structure is to import a prefabricated .padi file. This already contains the entire synthesizer structure with or without audio but with all banks and preset names. If a model, bank or group is not created, this is done automatically during the import.

First things first a container is only opened and not yet imported ① so that unwanted presets can be excluded or deleted from the import. Don't worry, files inside the **container** are always kept and will not be deleted.

As long as a container is opened, Patchdirector only displays this container content: the title bar changes to "Patchdirector -[Name of the container].padi".
Access to all data already present in Patchdirector is blocked at this time. The container must be closed again after the import.
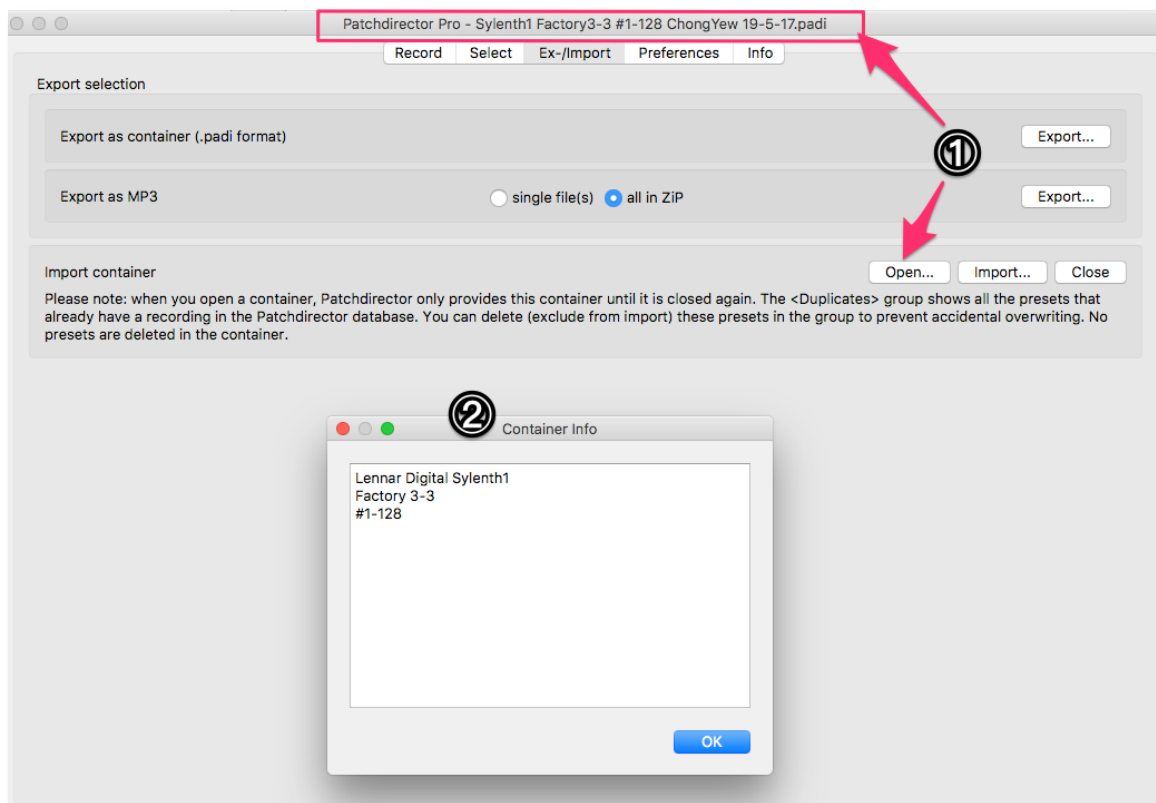
The container info window ② provides additional information about the content.
If this is clicked away with OK, you can now cancel the process completely-> button "Close" ③
or the container is made ready for import:

1. Click on the "Import" button ③ to create the structure and load all the presets it contains (see below for more details).

2. Switch to the "Selection" tab Ⓐ (see picture below), select the presets you do not need and click the "Delete presets" button Ⓑ to exclude them from the import.

3. if audio material is available with the same preset name, the group <duplicates> Ⓒ is automatically displayed in the Ⓐ Selection window. Again, in the results list, select the presets that are not to be imported and delete them using the Ⓑ button.

In the last step switch back to the Ex-/Import window and
finish the process by clicking „Import…" ③ (see in above picture).
The container is closed and a last message confirms the successful import.
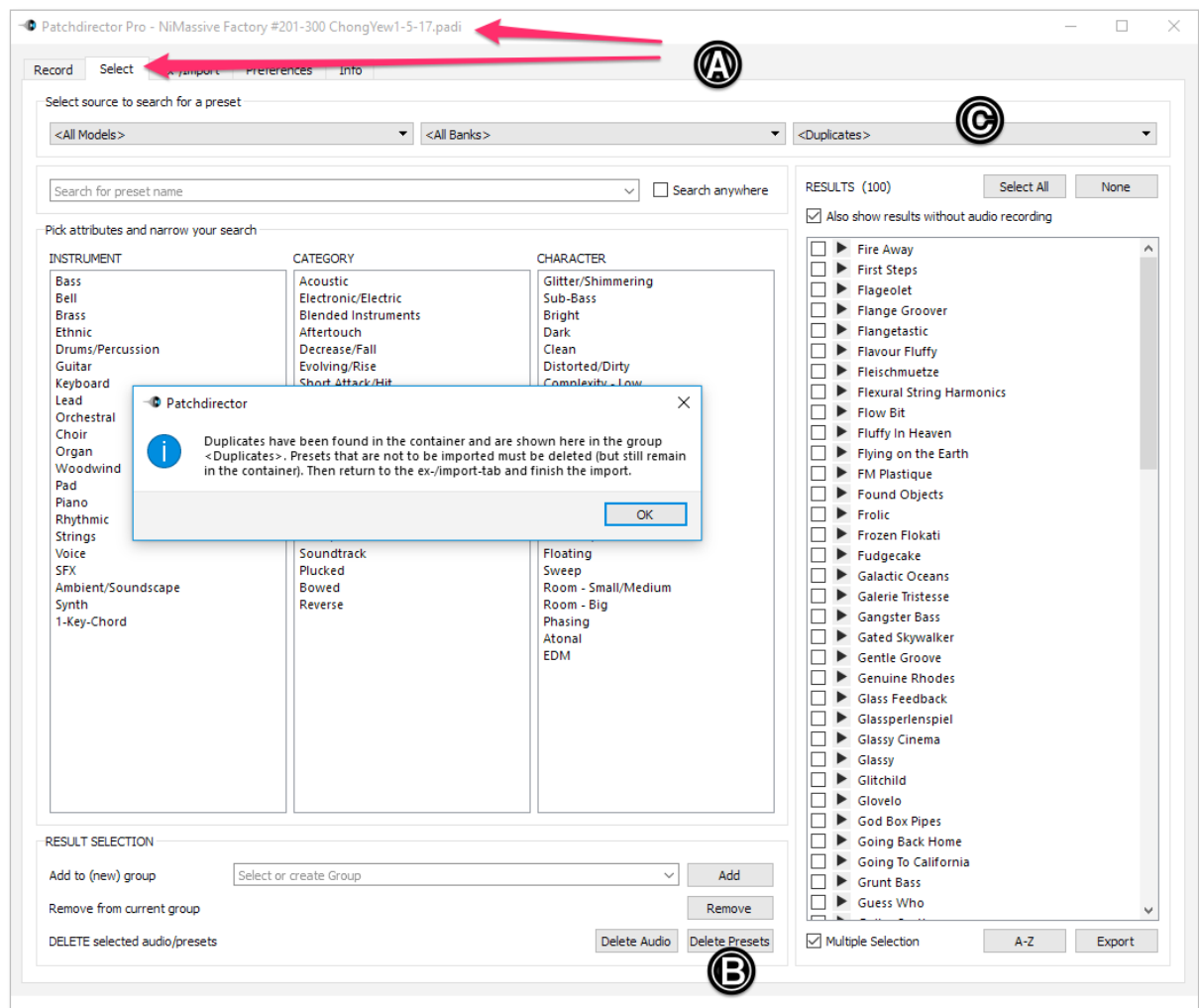
Patchdirector has now conveniently created a *Group* that collects all imported presets with or without audio. The group automatically gets the name of the container, in the example below it is „NIMassive Factory #201-300 ChongYew 1-5-17.padi" (see Ⓐ).

If the presets are no longer needed later, the group and the presets it contains, including the audio, can be conveniently deleted in the "Presets" tab.

At the end of the import process, the container is automatically closed.

Now Patchdirector shows all data including the newly imported ones again: the title bar only says "Patchdirector".

- Record

Record presets and add attributes and tags to audio recordings.
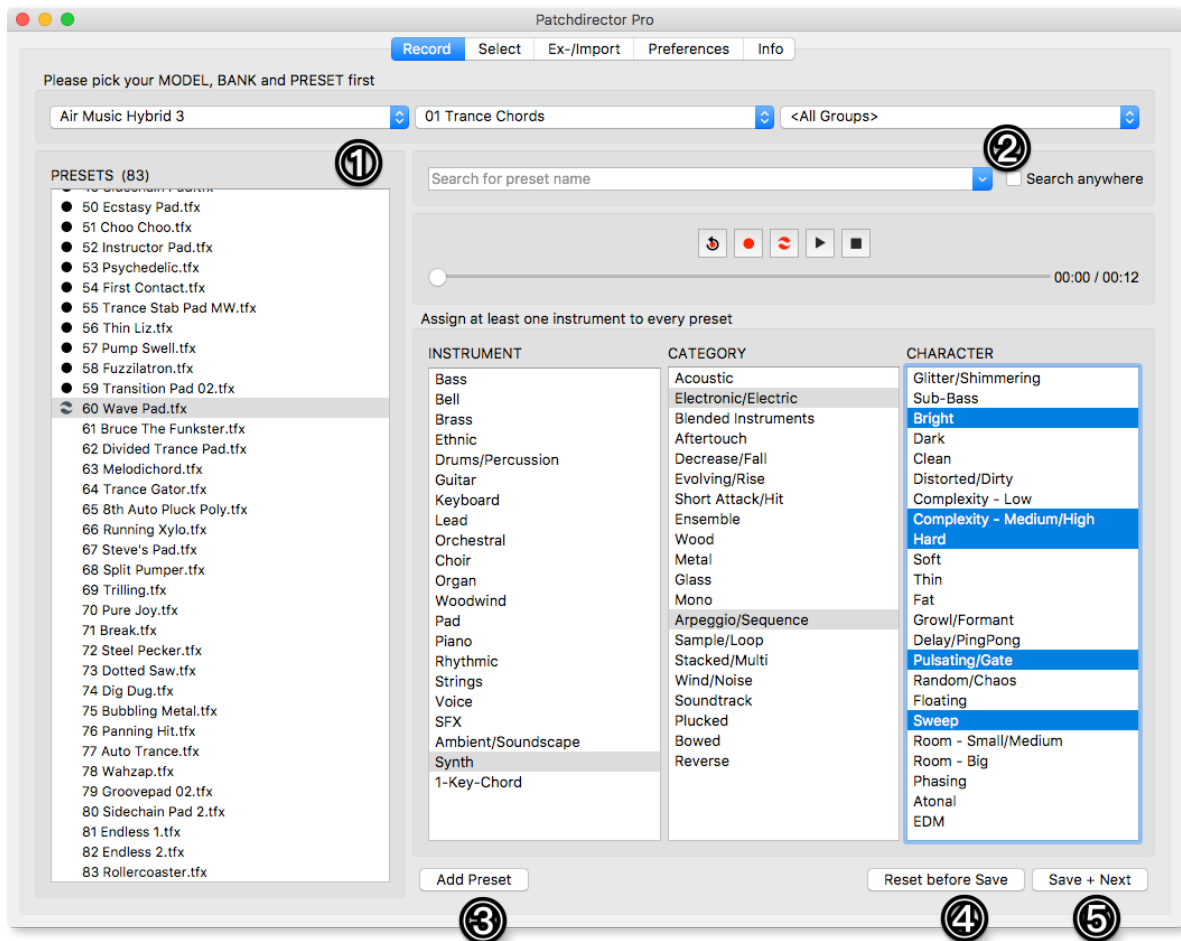
-
  ① select a *Model, Bank, Group* or search for a specific preset name (or parts of it) in the upper part

- A search is limited to the *Model* or, if the checkbox ② is activated, across the entire dataset.

- The number of found presets is displayed above the *Preset* list.

- Presets with a black circle in front of the name indicates: with audio
  Presets with a wave in front of the name indicates: audio with watermark signature
  Presets without indicator: no audio available

- Start recording: Press the *Recording* button [●] or press `Cmd/Ctrl+R`.
  Recording starts as soon as an audio signal arrives.

- Record watermark signature: Press the *Watermark* button [↻] or `Cmd/Ctrl+W`
  The recording also starts here as soon as a signal arrives.

- Undo recording: Press the *Undo* button [↺] or `Cmd/Ctrl+D`. The attributes remain, the recording is not saved, thus this function is only possible before the first saving.

- Play audio: Press the *Play* button [▶] or `Spacebar`
  Pressing it again pauses playback.

- Stop recording: Press the *Stop* button ▪. Cursor is put back to the beginning.
  The Stop function is designed to correct failed recordings in an uncomplicated way and to be ready for a new recording immediately. The creative flow is not interrupted.
  A successful recording is completed by pressing the „*Save and Next*" button (see below).

Three more buttons are located at the bottom of the window:

- Button *Add Preset* ③ adds a preset to the end of the preset list.
  An (alphabetical) sorting can be done later in the Preferences window via the editor of the presets.

- Button *Reset before saving* ④: reset everything, including attributes

- Button *Save+Next* ⑤ or `Cmd/Ctrl+S`: after saving, the next preset is jumped directly

-

❋ Any number of attributes can be assigned to each preset.

❋ The recording time per preset is limited to 60 seconds.

❋ Saved presets can be provided with new attributes at any time (do not forget to save).

- Select (Search) and Listening

The selection and search is very powerful and can go over the entire database or only in parts of it. A total of 64 attributes and their crosswise combinations are available.
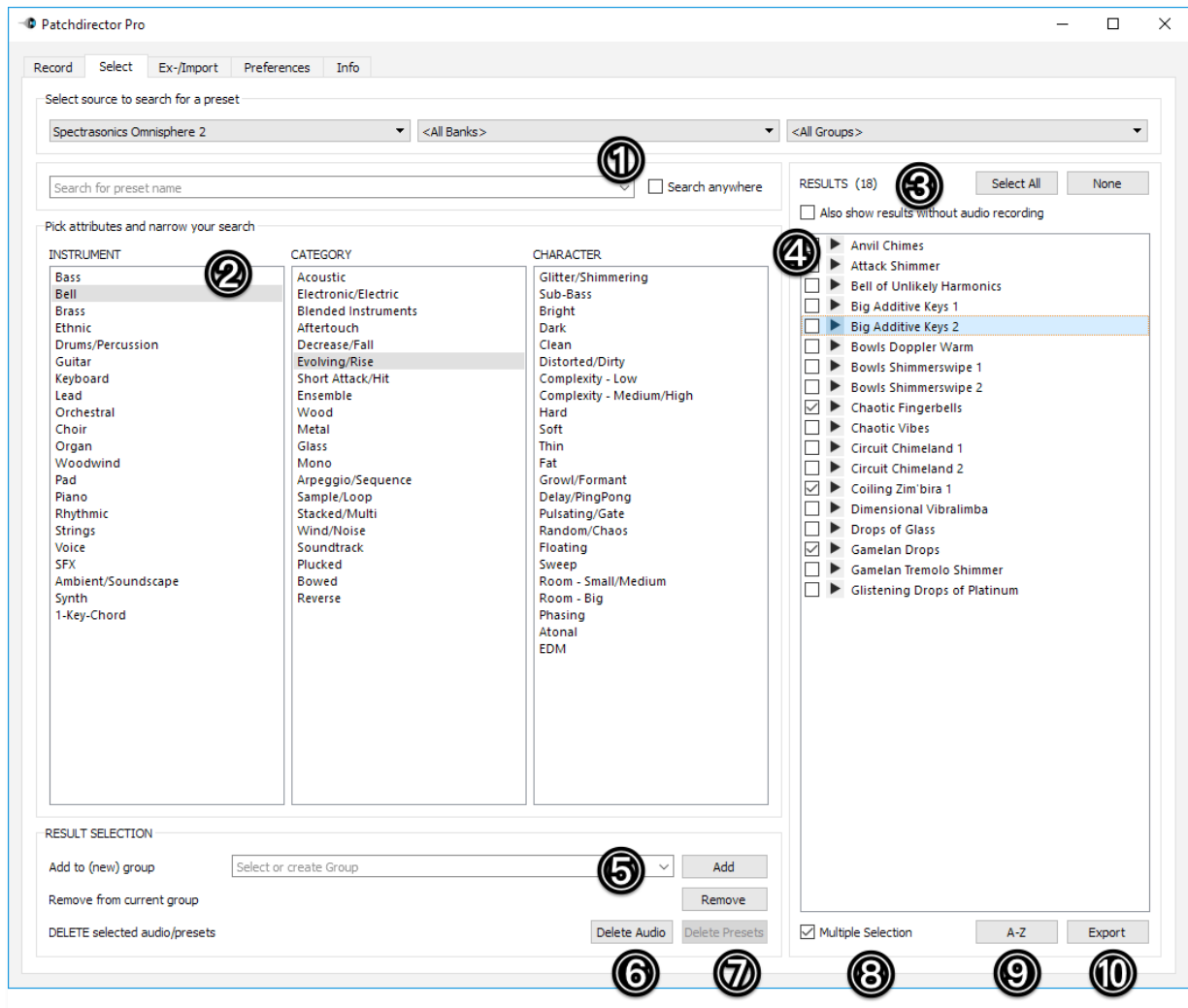
Where to search ①:

   a. make a selection using the dropdown lists Models, Banks or Groups

   b. search for whole preset name or part of it in the search box.

Mark ☑ the tickbox "Search anywhere" to search over the whole database.

Search presets and filter the results with attributes ②:

The returning results can be a large list of presets. To find the sounds you can filter by activating one or multiple attributes.

- Instrument **expands** the selection ("Show all presets with instruments bass, keyboard and pad."): if one or more of the attributes apply, each appropriate preset is displayed.

- Category and character **narrows** the selection ("Show only those with the category 'Glass' and the character 'Hard' from the selected instrument list."): appropriate results are shown for suitable combinations.

☞: I recommend to search with one or two attributes of category and character only

Listening to the results ③ is very intuitive:

play any sound via clicking on the triangle ▶ and then navigate up ↑ and down ↓ using the arrow keys on the keyboard. As soon as a new sound is selected, it will be played back.

If the mouse hovers briefly over a preset in the results list, the name of the model and the corresponding bank name **appears in a yellow hint note**:

Air Music Hybrid 3
01 Trance Chords

By default, the search shows results with audio. If all presets of a model or group are to be shown in the results, including those without audio, the Show results without audio ④ tick box must be checked ☑.

To select a preset in the results list, either press the space bar or activate the tick box with the mouse.

If you want **all** presets of a model or group to be shown in the results, even those without audio, mark the tickbox *Also show results without audio recording* ④

Select appropriate presets

- they can be added to a new group or to existing groups ⑤

- their audio can be deleted ⑥
  Note: The grayed-out/inactive button for deleting presets is only activated when a container is open.

- they can be removed from existing groups ⑦
  Note: to remove from a certain group the group must be selected above

- they can be exported to new containers or MP3 ⑩

- Audio for projects or songs can be created in groups

- Groups can contain presets from all available banks and models.

- When exporting a group, the original origins of the sounds are completely preserved (see chapter 5).

- Export

Patchdirectors "second mainstay" is the exchange of audio files. The Pro version provides two functions for this purpose: the export as a separate container file in "padi" format and the export as MP3 files. In both cases, all relevant information about the previously created preset structure (Model, Bank, Preset name) and all attributes are passed on.

With each export, an individual, date/time-dependent CSV file is created, which can be read in later in a spreadsheet. This means that every export can be tracked perfectly.

When exporting multiple models, the presets are first collected in a group and then exported from there. The individual steps are as follows:

    c. Searching for presets in „*Select*"

    d. Assigning selected presets to a *Group*

    e. Repeat until all presets are collected in the group.

    f. Select group at the top right (in „*Select*")

    g. All results via button „Select All"

    h. Press the *Export* button (automatically switch to the *Export* tab)

In the Export tab you can decide whether a .padi-container file or an MP3 export should be done as single files or as a packed ZIP file.

Again, click the button *Export* and specify a location and a file/container name.

A container info window now opens and should provide additional information of your choice, such as copyright information or further instructions (this window will open later during the import).

Click OK to complete the export.

- About Tagging audio…

At this point the spirits divide...

Each manufacturer has different ideas about how to label a sound.

The labels also depends on how a sound changes after playing. So a sound can go through different stages/phases.

A wind player becomes a string or strings turning into atmosphere or a bell becomes a choir. With synthesizers, all conceivable sound colours are possible.

So how do we set the "correct" labels? Hearing is always subjective and so are the labels (or tags).

Often the preset names already give a hint, e.g. if "Big Hall Bell" is in the name, the sound will definitely get "Bell" as instrument and "Room - big" as character. Further characteristics are possibly "Acoustic", "Metal" and possibly "Bright/Clear".

But beyond that there are many borderline cases and mixtures. Not every tag describes the sound as a whole, often characters are heard only in the course of a sound development.

On the following three pages (each for instrument, category, character) follows a short analysis and interpretation of the tags for a better understanding.

Attribute **Instrument**	Description
Bass	
Bell	
Brass	
Ethnic	country-typical, most acoustic instruments e.g. chinese gong, austrian zither, scottish bagpies
Drums	any kind of percussion, orchestral as well, also in connection to other instruments like „Ethnic" and „Orchestral"
Guitar	as e-guitar in category „Electric/Electronic"
Keyboard	typical keyboard-sounds like the DX-7 or e-piano
Lead	often as synthetic, classic lead-sounds, often together with „Mono"
Orchestral	typical, classical orchester sounds as well as elektronic, epic sounds
Choir	also together with „Pad"
Organ	
Woodwind	
Pad	layered, broad, soft, often together with charcter „Floating", mostly enduring soft
Piano	most typical acoustic piano. If as e-piano then find it in „Keyboard"
Rhythmic	with „Arpeggio"Sequence" and also when an LFO determines the rhythm
Strings	often with „Pad" but also „Short Attack/Hit" if as pizzicato for example
Voice	vowels or as „Choir", often with character „Growl/Formant"
SFX	most with „Atonal"
Ambient/Soundscape	genre-overlapping. Can be steps or machinesounds, also ambientsounds but also synthetic scenery
Synthesizer	typical for synthesizer sounds, created (mostly) synthetic
1-key-chord	play one chord with only one key

Attribute Category	Description
Acoustic	it sounds acoustic, can be in partnership with electronic as well
Electric/Electronic	in contrast to „Acoustic" pure electronic created and sounding, almost always with „Synthesizer"
Blended Instruments	also with „Stacked/Multi" and „Evolving/Rise" or „Decrase/Fall"
Aftertouch	when pressing on the key after touching will change the sound
Decrease/Fall	mostly a gliding down often detaching sounds
Evolving/Rise	mostly a gliding up,often adding more sounds
Short Attack/Hit	very short, quick, atonal, often in conjunction with „Mono"
Ensemble	Classic, more in orchestral interaction, also for chamber instrumentals
Wood	
Metal	often in combination with glass
Glass	same, often in combination with metal
Mono	only 1 key at the same time possible, sound can be polyphone
Arpeggio/Sequence	
Sample/Loop	also overlapping with „Arpeggio/Sequence" and „Ambient", the source of the sound is an audio file,
Stacked/Multi	several instruments either distributed over the keyboard or sounding at the same time
Wind/Noise	like „Woodwind" but also with „Sweep", noisy sounds
Soundtrack	genre-overlapping, suitable also to „Ambient…"
Plucked	short attack like a guitar but also synthetic
Bowed	long attack, evolving, sometímes rumbling, can be bowed over many materials

Attribute **Character**	Description
Glimmer/Shimmering	as a layer on top, glassy, bright, bell
Sub-Bass	often with „EDM" but not limited to
Bright	
Dark	
Clean	
Distorted/Dirty	can be noise as well
Complexity - low	most but not limited to synthetic sounds, evolving
Complexity - Medium/High	hard to define the border to high/medium complexity
Hard	
Soft	
Thin	like flutes can not be fat even played in a chord
Fat	heavy weighted, loud, massive
Growl/Formant	both occur single and not necessarily together
Delay/PingPong	mostly connected to „Room - …..")
Pulsating/Gate	also meant as tremolo
Random/Chaos	complex
Floating	„Pad", sound carpet, enduring, soft
Sweep	not only but also distorted sweep, more quick
Room - Small/Medium	from almost dry up to Club for a few hundred people
Room - Big	a real big room, hall, cave, long reverb
Phasing	like vowel from A to O
Atonal	not to be classified into a pitch
EDM	typical sound for EDM (it´s a trend and is about to change constantly)

Keyboard Shortcuts Mac and PC

Cmd = Command key („⌘") on the Mac

Ctrl = Control key on a PC

Cmd/Ctrl+R - Arm Record Button

Cmd/Ctrl+W - Arm Record Button with Watermark

Cmd/Ctrl+D - Delete current Recording

Cmd/Ctrl+S - Recording „Save and Next"

Space - Play/Pause Audio

In the results you can navigate with the arrow keys up ↑ and down ↓ and mark

with the `Space bar` (you can activate multiple selections if necessary)

Important notice to copyrights

Patchdirector is not a software that infringes or is intended to infringe the rights of third parties.

Patchdirector is equipped with a watermark identifier, which, if desired, layered a swelling and decaying noise on top of the audio samples worthy of protection, in order to prevent illegal copying or render it worthless.

We ask all users to respect the rights of other creators and not to use the software for unlawful distribution of samples.

The developer of Patchdirector disclaims any liability for the unlawful use of the software in any case. The usage is subject to the rules described in the installation and info tab.

Feedback requested

Patchdirector is a one-man project, even if I had to call on the help of other, very nice colleagues and experts (by the way, which I was happy to do). I have tried to make the whole project as clear and intuitive as possible.

Nevertheless, it is not missing that certain things are not seen as easily as I thought they would be. I would therefore ask you to address me with all your remarks and criticism, and I will try to take this into account in an update.

thomas.haake@gmail.com