

room to breathe

A landscape guide with screenshots, practical settings and musical recipes.



Artwork from the plugin panel; decorative background, not a control screenshot.

Play. Pause. Listen.

Stillroom keeps the reverb quieter while you play. In the gaps, the ambience gently returns.

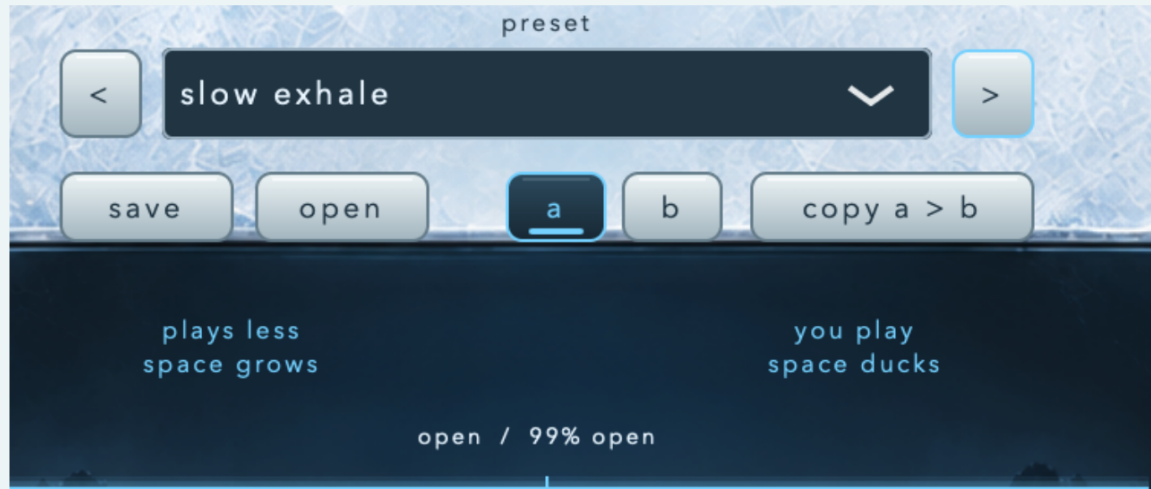
Start with a piano, guitar or sparse synth line. Play three notes, leave a gap, then play again. The room should step back when the next phrase begins.

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your first five minutes

Use Stillroom as an audio effect, after an instrument or on an audio track.



Your latest supplied Mac screenshot (0.3.3). It shows the redesigned buttons. In 0.3.4, both rows sit higher to leave more clearance above the display rim.

What changed in 0.3.4

Both central rows now sit higher, with a clear gap above the glass. Save/Open and A/B remain grouped separately. The selected bank has a blue indicator; Copy names its direction. Compact tooltips appear below the header.

1 / Choose a starting point

Select **Between the Keys**. Start at a comfortable listening level. Keep Output trim at 0 dB and Bypass off.

2 / Give it some space

Play a short phrase, then leave a two-second gap. Raise Breathing Room to hear stronger retreat; turn Bloom down for a quicker return.

3 / Match your playing level

If quiet notes do not trigger enough retreat, lower Sensitivity towards -40 dB. If the room stays held back, try -24 dB or less Breathing Room.

the controls

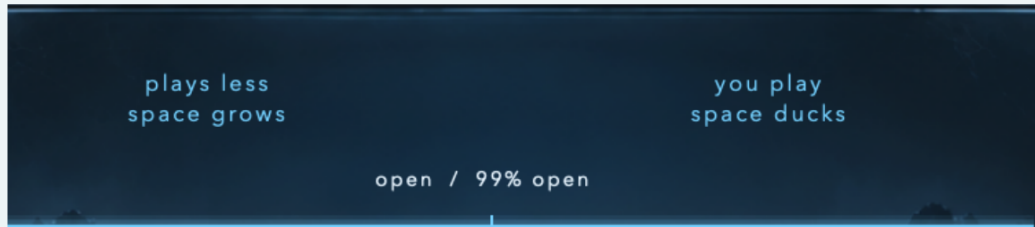
All controls stay on one page. These are sound-shaping settings, not sound generators.

CONTROL	WHAT IT DOES	START / LISTEN FOR
Breathing Room 0-100%	Ducking depth for the reverb only. Zero gives ordinary reverb; high values keep note attacks clearer.	65%. Raise it until the next phrase steps forward.
Space 0-100%	Decay length: compact room to broad ambient tail. Nominal low-frequency decay spans about 0.6-10 seconds.	50%. Use more Space with slow Bloom.
Bloom 80-2400 ms	How gently wet level returns. A response time, not a fixed wait or tempo-synced delay.	400 ms. Lower for rhythmic phrases; higher for slow swells.
Warmth 0-100%	Darkens the reflections. Higher is softer and more distant; dry sound stays unfiltered.	50%. Lower for bells; higher around bright vocals.
Mix 0-100%	Dry/wet blend. At 0%, dry only; at 100%, wet only. Output trim affects the final blend.	20-40% on inserts; 100% on a return.
Sensitivity -54 to -6 dB	Detector threshold. More negative means more sensitive to quiet playing. It does not amplify the input.	-30 dB. Adjust to the source, not to a universal target.
Output trim -24 to +6 dB	Final level, shared across A/B. Factory browsing retains it; user preset files recall it.	0 dB. Reduce it if the output warning appears.

Fine adjustment: hold Shift before dragging. Double-click a dial to reset it, or click its value box to type. Percentage controls currently move in 1% steps; Shift makes dragging less sensitive, without changing that resolution.

read the room

Openness tells you how much wet gain is available; it does not mean a tail is audible.



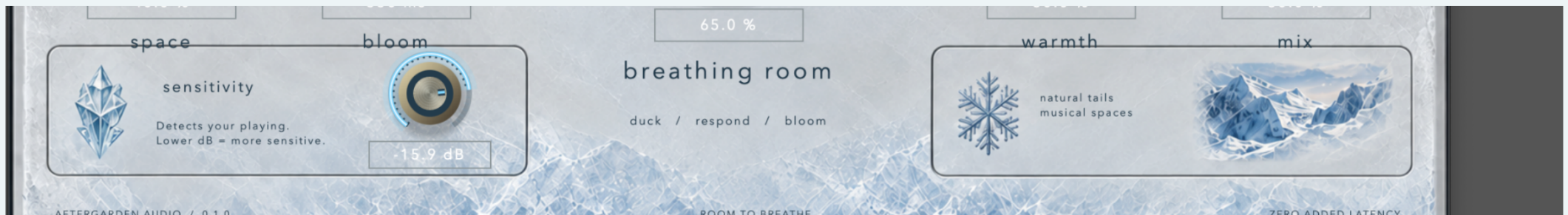
Display detail from your latest screenshot. The bright captions and status text are now clear of the graph. The centre line starts below the readout.

The blue trace

A short history of reverb openness. Higher means less ducking. The pale filled trace follows the input envelope. These are level/control histories, not a frequency spectrum.

Side meters

Input shows the detected level; Reverb shows the actual wet contribution. A 99% open display can still be silent when the reverb tail has already faded.



Earlier sensitivity-panel screenshot. Current dial values use dark blue; the lower-right panel now contains Output trim.

Status words: retreating = wet level falling; blooming = returning; open = almost fully open; held back = settled at a reduced level. Dry only and Bypassed identify those listening modes.

keep the good moments

Save a user preset before replacing a sound you want to keep.

Save / Open

Save writes the active bank and Output trim to a **.stillroom** file. The default folder is Documents/Stillroom Presets.

Open loads a file into the active bank. The other bank is retained, but the shared Output trim changes to the saved value. Use descriptive names such as "piano - late evening".

Mix lock

Turn on **lock mix** to keep your wet/dry balance while loading factory or user presets. This is especially useful at 100% Mix on a return.

You can still turn or automate Mix. A/B always recalls each bank's own Mix setting, even while locked.

A / B + Copy

A and B retain separate sound settings. Adjust A, press **copy a > b**, then select B and experiment. Switch back to hear A again.

Copy overwrites the other bank. Comparisons share one running reverb tail, so allow time for it to settle; this is not two independent reverb engines.

What the DAW remembers

Saving the DAW project stores both banks, the active bank, Output trim and Mix lock. It does not store the audio already inside the reverb: reopening starts with an empty tail.

Bypass smoothly returns to unity dry audio while the reverb keeps running in the background.

recipes / close + expressive

Choose the named factory preset first, then make the adjustment described. Output trim: 0 dB.

01 / Between the Keys

PIANO OR ELECTRIC PIANO

Breathing 65% | Space 50% | Bloom 400 ms
Warmth 50% | Mix 36% | Sensitivity -32 dB

Play a three-note phrase and pause. Try Mix at 25% for intimacy; increase Breathing for clearer attacks.

02 / Blue Hour Guitar

PLUCKED GUITAR OR SOFT SYNTH

Breathing 72% | Space 58% | Bloom 360 ms
Warmth 52% | Mix 38% | Sensitivity -32 dB

Pick slowly. If quiet notes barely move the room, try -38 dB Sensitivity. Reduce Mix for a closer sound.

03 / Velvet Voice

VOCAL OR BREATHY LEAD

Breathing 90% | Space 48% | Bloom 260 ms
Warmth 85% | Mix 32% | Sensitivity -34 dB

Leave a gap between phrases. If breath noise keeps the room down, raise Sensitivity towards -26 dB.

04 / Drums in the Snow

SPARSE PERCUSSION

Breathing 94% | Space 30% | Bloom 80 ms
Warmth 50% | Mix 28% | Sensitivity -22 dB

Use a restrained beat. Try Mix at 15% for glue. If it pumps too much, reduce Breathing to around 60%.

recipes / wide + atmospheric

Long blooms need enough decay time to remain audible. Leave space in the arrangement.

05 / Slow Exhale

HELD AMBIENT SYNTH CHORD

Breathing 92% | Space 98% | Bloom 1450 ms
Warmth 60% | Mix 52% | Sensitivity -36 dB

Hold a chord, release it, then wait. Try Bloom at 2200 ms for a slower reveal; avoid shortening Space too far.

06 / Thawing Bells

BELLS, MALLETS OR GLASSY PLUCKS

Breathing 80% | Space 90% | Bloom 1100 ms
Warmth 18% | Mix 50% | Sensitivity -38 dB

Play single notes with long gaps. Raise Warmth to 45% if the high reflections become too sharp.

07 / Quiet Footsteps

FOLEY OR ENVIRONMENTAL RECORDING

Breathing 92% | Space 42% | Bloom 140 ms
Warmth 60% | Mix 42% | Sensitivity -40 dB

Use separate taps or footsteps. Continuous rain may keep the room held back: try less Breathing or a higher threshold.

08 / A Room Without Walls

ABLETON RETURN TRACK

Breathing 0% | Space 95% | Bloom 400 ms
Warmth 34% | Mix 100%* | Sensitivity -30 dB

*Change factory Mix from 42% to 100%, then lock it. Balance with the send level. Raise Breathing to 65% to add movement.

when something does not feel right

Change one setting at a time, then replay the same phrase.

Too subtle?

Confirm Bypass is off and Mix is above zero. Try Between the Keys with a short phrase and a clear gap. Increase Mix before making the room much bigger. Lower Sensitivity if quiet notes do not trigger retreat.

No sound or a loud peak?

At 100% Mix you hear only reverb; it needs input to build a tail. Try 30% Mix to check the dry signal. Reduce Output trim when its warning appears. There is no output limiter.

Too washy or held back?

Reduce Mix or Space if the next phrase blurs. If the tail never seems to emerge, shorten Bloom or raise Sensitivity. A sustained pad or noisy recording naturally leaves fewer gaps for the room to open.

Install or update on your Mac

Close Live/Logic. Unzip the project and double-click **Update-Stillroom.command**, selecting your existing project folder to reuse its tools. For a first install, use **Build-and-Install.command**.

If the build stops: send Build-log.txt. If AU does not appear, close hosts and run Refresh-AU.command; send AU-Check-log.txt if needed. The native test creates Stillroom-Preview.png in the project folder. That image is useful for checking your exact installed layout.

About this guide: written against 0.3.4 source. The new header and display images come from your supplied 0.3.3 screenshot; 0.3.4 moves the buttons higher. The older lower-panel image is labelled. A full 0.3.4 screenshot has not yet been supplied. Stillroom is a locally signed AU/VST3 prototype.