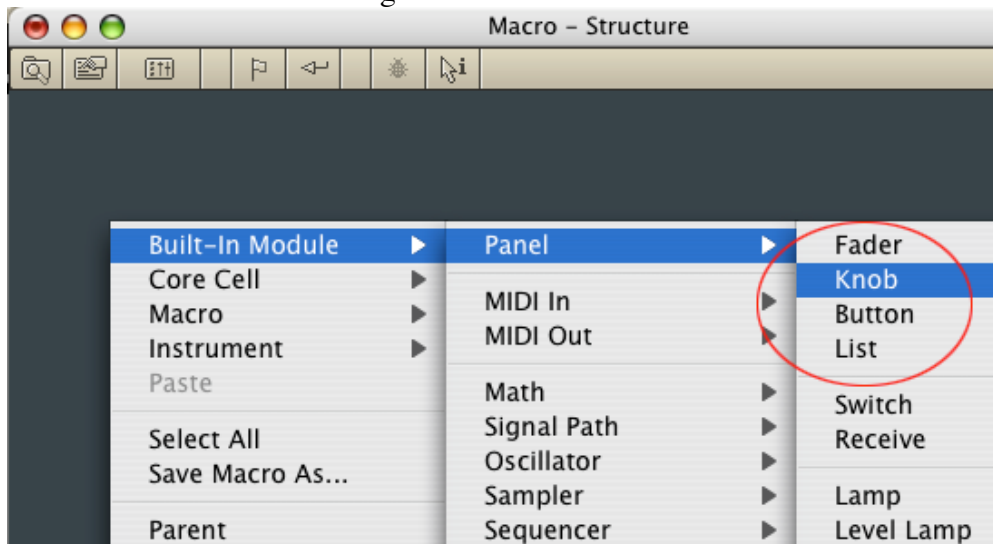


Converting TGA files for Reaktor 5

By Don Dailey - March 2007

This tutorial is for those who wish to skin knobs and buttons in a Reaktor instrument. I assume you know your way around Reaktor somewhat if you are attempting to change the appearance of an instrument. However, not everyone knows how to make use of some very nice knobs and buttons available on the web and in the NI UL that happen to be in raw TGA file format, which cannot be used directly. These must first be converted in the Properties > Skin Bitmap window.

1. Open a new_empty Instrument and inside that a new_empty macro.
2. Inside the macro structure go to Built-in module > Panel > Knob

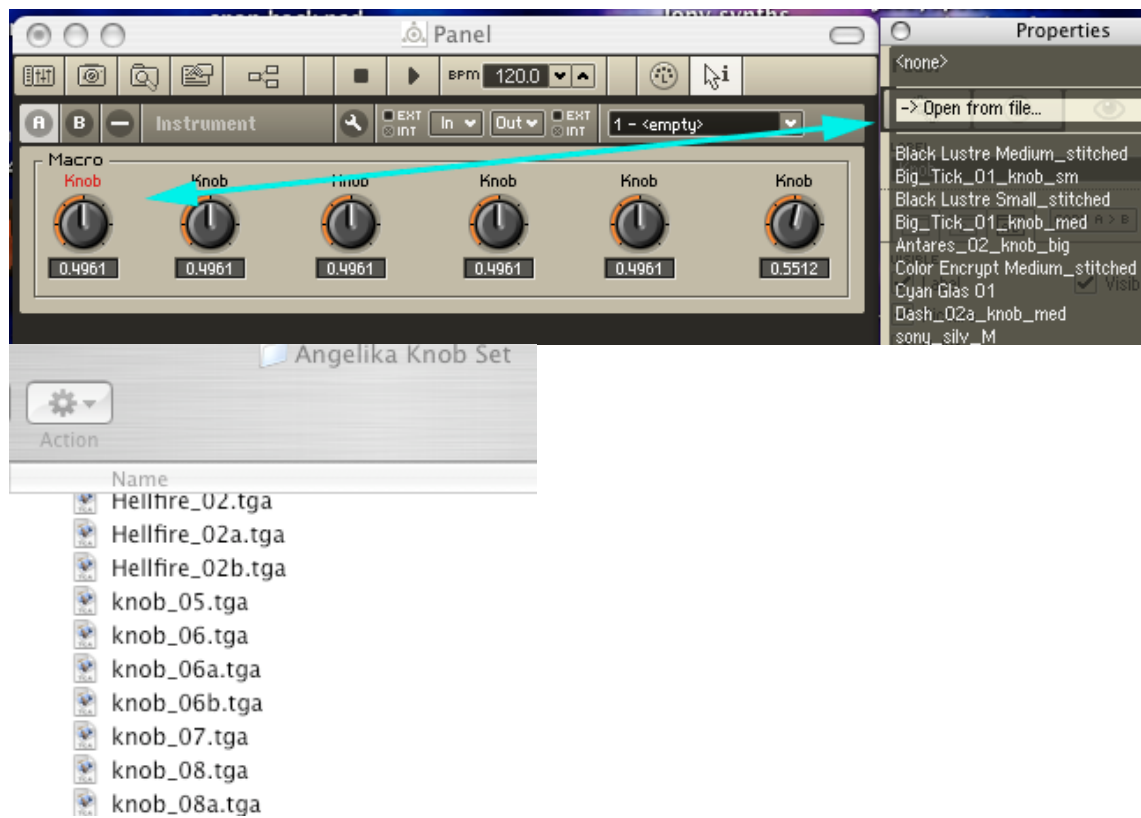


This loads a single knob. Duplicate this for as many as you want to convert. If you are converting buttons and faders, repeat above, but choose button instead of knob. Note: if you don't want the label or value to show in your layout, you should turn those off before you make a lot of duplicates.

3. Go to the front panel view and open the properties window. You will be doing your work in these two views.

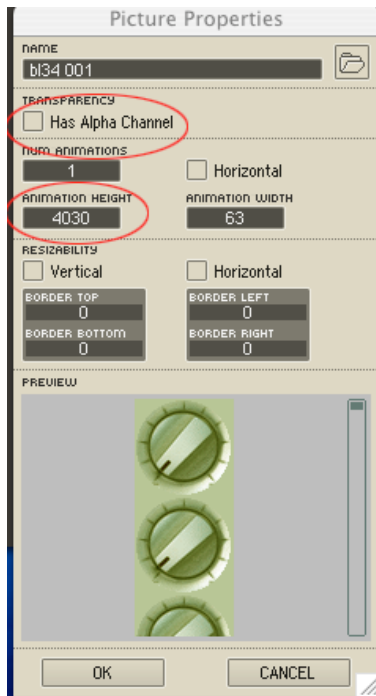


4. Select a knob then in the properties > skin bitmap pulldown menu, select open from file... and navigate to the folder with the TGA files you wish to convert.



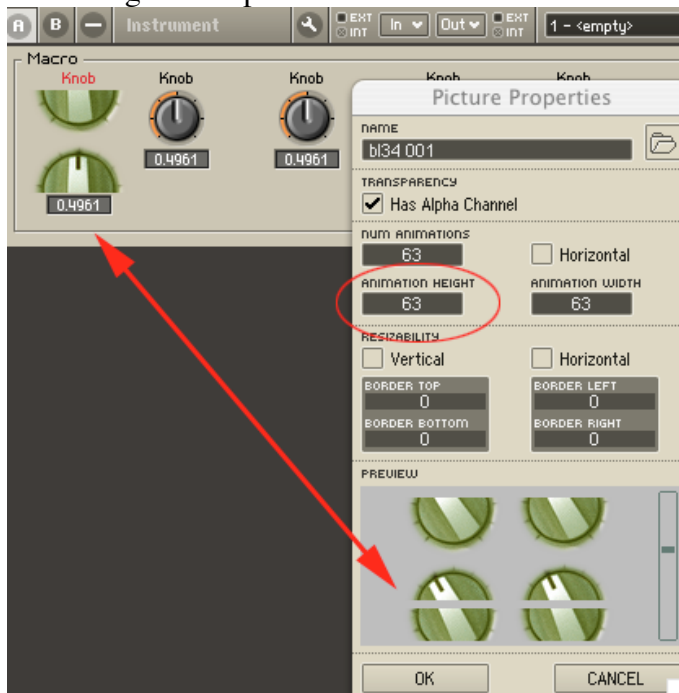
Click Open.

5. This will open the Picture Properties window. If you do not like the look of the knob you chose, just click the little folder icon in the upper right corner and you will be taken back to the folder of TGA files.



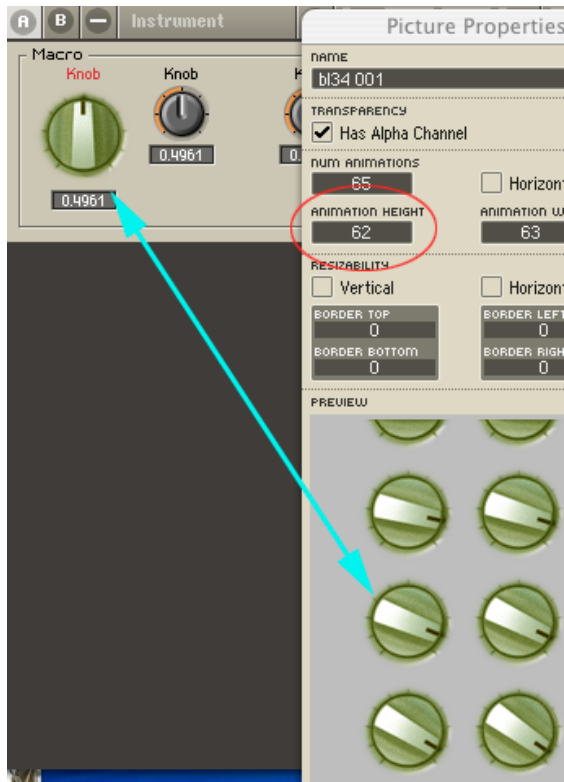
Check the "Has Alpha Channel" box.

6. In this case, Animation Height is set to a very large number (4030). Change this to the number for Animation With (63) and click anywhere on the background. This will change the appearance of the knobs below. Scroll down. All the knobs should appear "whole" then click OK. The knob will change in the panel view. Test to be sure it functions properly.



Sometimes, in this example, 63 is not quite the right number for animation height. Knobs will appear broken and won't function.. if this happens, go back to animation height and add or subtract by one at a time until the problem is corrected. In this case the numbers are 62 ht and 63

W.



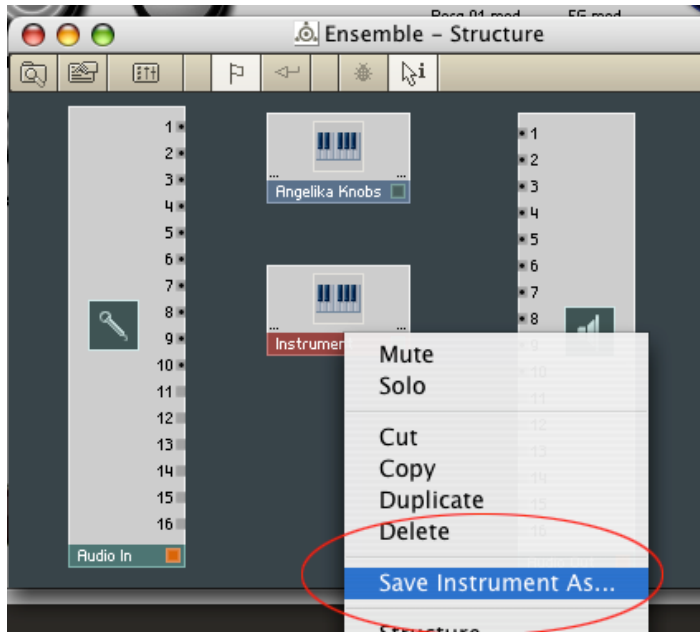
7. Name the knob if you so choose, but the name it had in the TGA form will be the name that appears on the Skin Bitmap list.

8. Repeat the process for different type and size knobs.

9. To re-skin a button, use the same method but in the Alpha Channel box.

10. Faders are a little trickier if they have two parts, a track and a slider. That's another tutorial.

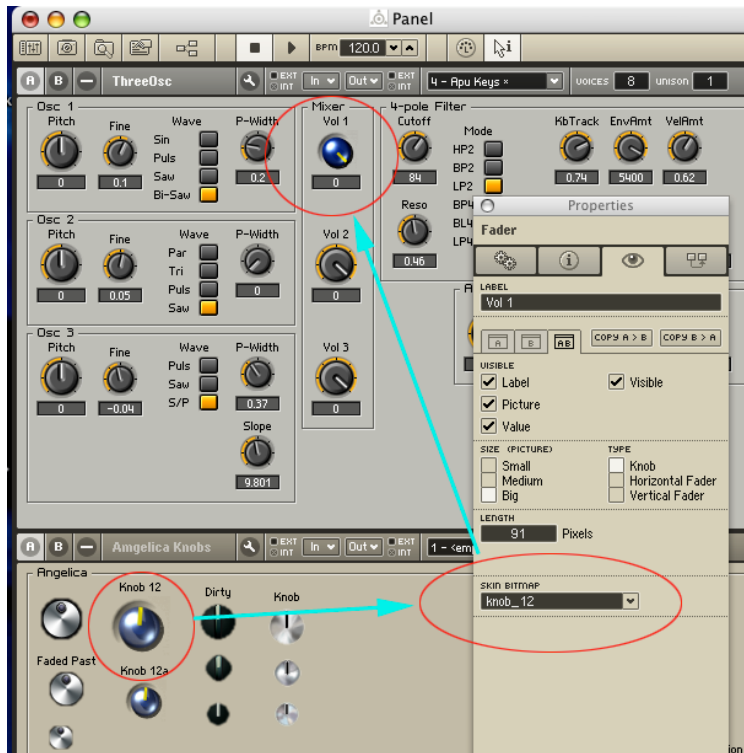
11. Once you have converted the TGAs you can arrange the panel to your liking and name the macro and the instrument with a name you will remember.



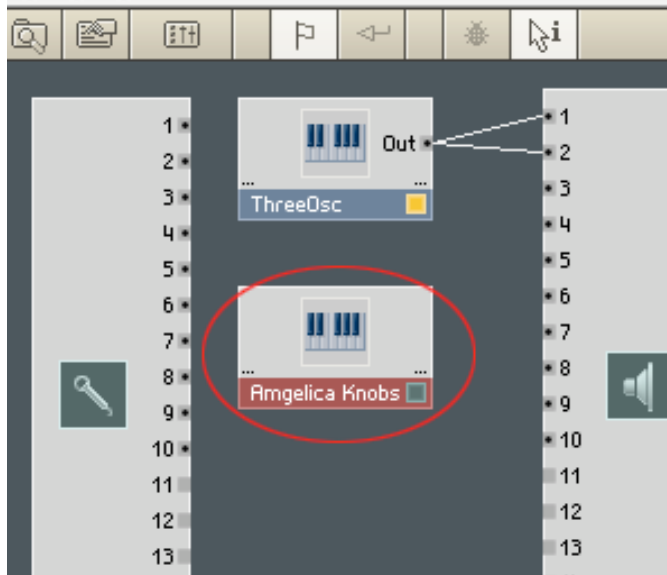
12. Lastly, Right-click to Save Instrument As... this way, you can open it when you have an instrument open that you wish to re-skin some knobs and not disrupt your entire layout as you would if you were inserting it as a macro.



Saving your knob as an ensemble isn't such a good idea either, since you won't be able to change knob directly and you'll have to copy and paste them into your layout.



13. To change a knob skin, simply select the knob and choose from the Skin Bitmap list in the Properties. Once you have skinned some knobs with one of each different knob you want, you can delete the knobs instrument from the top level structure window.



The next time you close and reopen the ensemble, unused knobs will be removed from the list and it will be much easier to find your new skins in the list while you finish re-skinning all the knobs.