

# Knobula Poly Cinematic Press Release

Knobula's Poly Cinematic brings big synth polyphony to Eurorack: launches at SuperBooth 2021, Berlin.

56 oscillator, 8 voice polyphonic module with built-in reverb brings vast cinematic soundscapes to the popular modular synth environment.

**London, 15th September 2021** Boutique synth company Knobula has announced the availability of its Poly Cinematic Eurorack module which packs an 8 voice polysynth into a compact form factor. With a total of 56 detunable oscillators, 8 voices and built-in reverb, the unit is capable of truly gargantuan sounds. *(Full resolution image at [www.knobula.com](http://www.knobula.com))*



Until now, Eurorack has been resolutely monophonic, able to achieve almost any conceivable electronic sonic effect, *except polyphony* - the ability to play multiple notes at once. Knobula's challenge was how to bring polyphony to Eurorack while still paying heed to its conventions and strengths. It has achieved this by allowing chords to be memorised and played back in sequence via control voltages. Chords and polyphonic parts are played via MIDI, through a 3.5mm jack on the front panel.

## **Elegance and simplicity**

Designed by Jason Mayo, a record producer and remixer based in London, Poly Cinematic was inspired by the simplicity and elegance of great synths of the past: the TB303 with its 6 knob interface, the Moog Prodigy with its ease of programming (and total lack of presets!), and the silky smooth super saws of the Roland JP8000 and the Access Virus.

A traditional polyphonic synth would need a gigantic control panel - typically with 40 or 50 knobs - or a confusing "digital" interface where parameters are adjusted and stored as presets. Poly Cinematic has no presets. Instead, it is designed so that it is easy to find great sounds. The simple controls are actually far more powerful than they seem - with software "parameter mapping" so that a sweet spot is never far away.

The module is focused on pads and stabs. Each voice can be made up from seven detuned oscillators and chords can be modulated with an external LFO for wild or subtle tuning effects. Filters are optimised for pads and full envelope controls are provided. The built in reverb wraps the sounds in a lush blanket of stereo warmth and makes Poly Cinematic's output seem impossibly big.

Poly Cinematic's designer and Knobula founder, Jason Mayo commented:

*"We've taken a great-sounding synth engine and built our ideal Eurorack polysynth around it. We've harnessed the power, tamed it and made it easy to get extremely usable polyphonic sounds."*

*"Like most Eurorack modules, this one is focused. It's designed for pads and sounds that need polyphony. Pads call for a certain type of filter, they need reverb, and rich voices, each made up from multiple detunable oscillators."*

*"Even with our low control count, you're never far from the sound you want to make. And with fewer controls, it's more intuitive and helps muscle memory. For live performances, it's ideal."*

**Does it really have 56 oscillators?**

Yes. Seven per voice. You can detune them slightly for a wonderful ensemble sound or more dramatically for dissonant effects. In between you can select intervals of a fifth or an octave. This is an extraordinarily powerful synth module.

Detuning is central to the design of the synth and the spectacular sounds that result from it are what inspired the name “Cinematic”. Each of the 7 oscillators has its own individual tuning curve mapped to the rotation of the detune knob, furthermore each voice is subtly micro-tuned depending on what chord you are playing so the sound is always moving; always natural and never static.

### **What does “cinematic” mean?**

It means - literally - like you’d hear in the cinema. You could describe this with words like *lush*, *full*, *warm*, *expansive*, as well as *dramatic*, *powerful*, *shimmering* and *big*. You could also use words like *epic* and *all-surrounding*. It’s an original soundtrack for modular synthesisers.

### **Why are there no presets?**

With presets, the position of the physical knobs doesn’t always represent the real settings. With the way we’ve designed Poly Cinematic, the position of the knob directly defines the sound.

Modern synthesisers are so well specified - with controls for everything - that most people can’t program them, particularly while performing, so Knobula has taken a different approach: no screens, no menus, no encoders. Just knobs and switches. It just makes it feel more like a musical instrument and mentally more satisfying and creative to operate.

Mayo talked about his hopes for the future:

*“Poly Cinematic is the first of a series of products that will bring powerful polyphony to Eurorack. We love the flexibility of Eurorack and we want to extend it into new territory while maintaining the spirit of modular synthesis.”*

Poly Cinematic from Knobula will be available mid September 2021.

### **Video Demos**

<https://youtu.be/8-NvDZBPf7M>

[https://youtu.be/InFMi6TSB\\_s](https://youtu.be/InFMi6TSB_s)

<https://youtu.be/neLXEPeAJPs>

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