

Omnitone – Rhythmi

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Using Rhythmi to Create Melodic Components

Rhythmi is primarily a **drum sequencer**, but it has a few features that make it useful for building **melodic and quasi-melodic material**, especially when paired with other Eurorack modules.

What in Rhythmi is melodic?

The key melodic feature is:

- **TOM CV output**
- Outputs tom pitch
- Tracks **1V/oct**
- Quantized to a **minor pentatonic scale**

This means Rhythmi is not only generating triggers for percussion, but also a usable pitch control signal. That makes it possible to treat the tom lane as a kind of melodic sequencer.

Core patch concept

Use Rhythmi as:

- a **rhythmic brain**
- a **trigger source**

- a **pitched CV source** via the TOM CV output

Then patch it into:

- an oscillator
- a percussive voice with pitch input
- a low pass gate
- a sampler
- a resonant filter ping setup
- a quantized melodic voice

Best ways to extract melody from Rhythmi

1. Tom lane as a melodic sequencer

Patch:

- **TOM trigger out** → envelope or trigger input of a voice
- **TOM CV out** → 1V/oct input of an oscillator or synth voice

This turns the tom pattern into a melodic line. Since the TOM CV is quantized to minor pentatonic, it will usually sound musical immediately.

Why this works well:

- The tom rhythm is already pattern-based
- The **Energy** control tends to create tom activity near the end of the loop, so you naturally get melodic fills
- The manual says tom pitch is biased toward a **descending pattern near the end of the loop**, which is excellent for fill-like melodic phrases

This is one of the strongest hidden musical uses of the module.

2. Use the hi-hat gate output to articulate a melodic voice

The **HI-HAT output** produces:

- short triggers for closed hat

- longer gates for open hat

You can repurpose that as **articulation** for a melodic patch:

- **HI-HAT out** → envelope gate input / LPG strike input
- **TOM CV out** → pitch input of oscillator

This gives different note lengths depending on whether the pattern generates open or closed hats. So the hat lane can become a kind of phrasing generator for a melody.

This is especially nice for:

- plucky voices
- noise-plus-filter melodic textures
- LPG-based “bongo melody” patches

Interaction of the major controls for melodic use

Energy

Energy is extremely useful musically.

From the manual:

- It increases kick, snare, and tom density
- It introduces more variation
- It creates fills, especially with toms
- At higher levels, crash triggers at loop starts

For melodic use, this means:

- low Energy = sparse melodic notes
- medium Energy = more active riffs
- high Energy = dense fills and transitions

You can think of Energy as a **macro for melodic intensity**.

A great use: - Send a slow CV or manually ride Energy during a performance - Let the tom melody bloom during transitions

Evolve

Evolve is the most compositionally interesting parameter.

It creates related rhythm variations that persist until changed. For melody, that means:

- the TOM trigger pattern changes in related ways
- the melodic contour can feel like variations on a theme
- you can move back to the root rhythm by reducing Evolve

Musically, Evolve behaves like: - phrase mutation - controlled recomposition - branching variations

Patch idea: - Keep TOM CV patched to an oscillator - Use Evolve manually or via CV - Generate new branches with the encoder press - Return to zero Evolve to come back to the “home phrase”

That gives you a very playable melodic variation system without traditional step editing.

Swing

Swing affects every second clock pulse and can push hits late, even beyond following syncopated hits.

For melodic material this is powerful because it can create:

- lazy or shuffled riffs
- displaced pentatonic motifs
- off-grid melodic fills

If the tom lane is driving a melodic voice, swing can make it feel much more human and animated.

Length

Loop length ranges from **2 to 32 clock pulses**.

For melody:

- short lengths create repeating motifs

- longer lengths create evolving phrases

Especially useful trick: - Set one melodic voice from TOM CV with a long loop - Use shorter rhythmic phrases on other outputs - This creates polymetric-feeling interplay even though it all comes from one sequencer

Base patterns matter for melody

The manual explains that there are **5 base patterns**, and these determine the order in which hits appear as density increases.

This is very important for melodic use because the base pattern is effectively a **phrase skeleton**.

Changing base pattern changes:

- where notes first appear
- how the melody fills in as density rises
- whether the phrase feels backbeat-heavy, anticipatory, or more circular

So for melodic patching, base patterns are not just drum feel—they are also **note-order personality**.

Practical approach: 1. Set Evolve and Energy low 2. Dial in tom density/ syncopation 3. Change base pattern by long pressing encoder 4. Listen for which one gives the most musical phrase shape 5. Then add Evolve and Energy

Syncopation as melodic placement

Rhythmi's **Syncopation** control for a piece sets the approximate ratio of on-grid vs off-grid hits.

For the tom lane, this means the melody can be:

- more anchored
- more syncopated
- more conversational against the beat

A melodic line with: - low synco = stable, grounded riff - high synco = offbeat hook or fill language

This is especially effective when the melodic voice is plucky or percussive.

Strong melodic patch examples

Patch 1: Pentatonic tom lead

- **TOM CV out** → oscillator 1V/oct
- **TOM out** → envelope trigger
- Envelope → VCA
- Oscillator → filter → VCA
- **Clock out** from Rhythmi → modulation reset or synced delay clock

Use: - low tom density for sparse motifs - medium Evolve for phrase variation - higher Energy for fills

Result: - an automatically varying minor pentatonic lead or riff

Patch 2: LPG melodic percussion

- **TOM CV out** → tuned oscillator or resonator pitch
- **TOM out** → LPG strike
- Optional: mult **SNARE** or **HI-HAT** out to extra strikes
- Add reverb

Result: - mallet-like melodic percussion - naturally fill-oriented phrasing - very good for ambient, dub techno, or generative grooves

Patch 3: Hi-hat articulation with tom pitch

- **TOM CV out** → oscillator pitch
- **HI-HAT out** → envelope gate input
- Oscillator → VCA/LPG

Result: - note lengths vary with open/closed hat behavior - more expressive melodic articulation - less obviously “tom-based”

Patch 4: Crash as melodic phrase reset marker

At high Energy, the **CRASH output** triggers at the beginning of each loop.

Use it to: - reset an LFO modulating oscillator timbre - retrigger an envelope affecting filter cutoff - clock a sequential switch for phrase changes

This lets the melody feel structured in larger phrases, not just note-by-note.

Patch 5: Rhythmic sequencer for sampled melodic slices

- **TOM out** or **HI-HAT out** → sample trigger
- **TOM CV out** → sample pitch input or playback rate CV
- Use Evolve to mutate phrase rhythm

Result: - chopped melodic fragments - pseudo-sequenced vocal/sample riffs - excellent for experimental or breakbeat-oriented music

Using Rhythmi with another melodic module

Even though Rhythmi is not a traditional note sequencer, it pairs well with:

- analog oscillator voices
- quantizers
- sample players
- resonator voices
- physical modeling percussion
- LPG-based west coast voices

Especially good pairings would be modules that accept:

- trigger/gate

- 1V/oct
- accent/timbre CV

Then Rhythmi can provide: - timing - density - groove - phrase variation - some pitch data

Musical strengths of Rhythmi for melody

Rhythmi is best at melody when you want:

- **groove-first melodic writing**
- **generative fills**
- **variation without step programming**
- **pentatonic, percussive, phrase-based lines**
- **drum/melody hybrid behavior**

It is not ideal if you need: - exact note entry - harmonic chord sequencing - precise scale selection beyond the built-in tom behavior

But it is excellent for: - melodic percussion - auxiliary riffs - generative lead fragments - call-and-response lines with drums - evolving pentatonic hooks

Best performance strategy

A good live workflow for melodic use:

1. Start with low **Energy** and low **Evolve**
2. Dial in tom **Density** and **Synco**
3. Choose a good **base pattern**
4. Patch **TOM CV** to a melodic voice
5. Add **Swing** for feel
6. Increase **Evolve** to explore phrase variations
7. Raise **Energy** to generate fills and transitions
8. Use **Crash** output as a macro phrase marker elsewhere in the patch

This makes Rhythmi function like a **groove-driven melodic variation instrument**, not just a drum sequencer.

Bottom line

Rhythmi can create melodic components mainly through its **TOM CV output**, especially when paired with the **TOM trigger, HI-HAT gate behavior, Energy, Evolve**, and **base pattern** system. Its strength is in producing **organic, groove-locked, pentatonic melodic phrases and fills** rather than programmed note sequences.

So if you use it as the rhythmic and phrase-generation center of a patch, it can drive:

- melodic tom lines
- pentatonic leads
- tuned percussion
- generative fills
- articulated riffs
- phrase-synced modulation for larger melodic structure

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