Earthquaker Devices — Afterneath

- [Manual PDF](#)

Using Afterneath for Densely Rhythmic, Hyper-Complex Percussion in Modular Synthesis

The **Afterneath** by EarthQuaker Devices, while designed as a reverb/effect, is an extraordinarily malleable module for rhythmic and percussive complexity—especially if you lean into its voltage-controllable, delay-line-based structure. Here's how you can weaponize its parameters for generative drumming, complex polyrhythms, and outré percussion.

Understanding Your Tool: Afterneath as a Rhythmic Engine

- **Not just a reverb:** The Afterneath is a cluster of short delay lines, not a standard reverb. This gives it a "smearing," pingy or stuttering potential.
- **CV Control:** The Drag, Mode, Diffuse, and Length parameters are all voltage controllable with dedicated inverting attenuators—perfect for dynamic manipulation via external rhythmic, trigger, or sequencer sources.

- **Self-Oscillation:** At high Length and Reflect, it can self-oscillate—opening up pseudo-voice/oscillator duties driven by rhythmically-triggered CV.
- **External Feedback Loop:** Via Reflect Send/Return—process the feedback path with rhythmic VCA chopping, filtering, or even clocked effects for synced complexity.

Strategies for Hyper-Complex & Percussive Rhythmic Exploration

1. Rhythmic CV Modulation

- **Drag CV Input:** The Drag control is where dense rhythm action happens. Patch fast/complex envelopes, random clocks, trigger sequencers, burst generators, or sharply rhythmic LFOs here—each change in Drag shifts the 'delay tap' times, creating pronounced stuttering, time-warped, and even pitched effects. Use a clock divider/multiplier for polyrhythms!
- **Mode Selection:** In quantized modes (4-9), Drag tracks 1V/oct for pitch-rhythmic relationships. In non-quantized modes, it's much more freeform—try both!

2. Percussion Sound Design

- **Self-Oscillation Percussion:** Crank Reflect and Length > 12 o'clock. Trigger the Drag CV input with fast envelopes, gates, or random step CV sources to "strike" the reverb buffer, generating tonal/atonal pings perfect for IDM, glitch, or experimental rhythms.
- **"Chopped" FX:** Use the Reflect Send to reroute the feedback path through a VCA sequenced with sharp rhythmic gates/triggers—this creates gated, isntrumental, or sliced-percussion effects.
- **Input Drive:** Input control at modular level ensures incoming drum sources are punchy and don't get washed out. Overdrive the input for transient snap.

3. Complex Patterns/Polyrhythms

- **Asynchronous Drag CVs:** Patch two or more LFOs, each at an odd/even multiple (e.g., 5/7 against 4/8), through a CV mixer or sequential switch into Drag. This modulates delay density polyrhythmically.
- **Step Sequencer Per Mod Destination:** Send different sequenced voltages to Drag, Diffuse, Mode, and Length for evolving textures. Use odd-length sequences (e.g., 7-step, 13-step) for maximum temporal complexity.
- **Burst Gates:** Use burst generators or clock randomizers patched through logic modules for unpredictable, organic rhythm bursts—these will make the reverb "skip" unpredictably.

4. Creating Perceptual "Punch" and Clarity

- **Short Length, High Dampen, High Input:** For crisp, transient-rich percussive effects, keep Length and Diffuse low, Dampen higher (for brightness), and drive the input.
- **Reflect Feedback Abuse:** Inject noise, envelopes, or short triggers into Reflect Return to "re-strike" the input with feedback-tuned transient artifacts.
- **CV Attenuator Tuning:** The inverting attenuators allow for both normal and "reversed" CV directions—use this to invert the correlation between your CV and the resulting sound for more variety.

5. Stereo and Spatial Play

- **Pseudo-Stereo Outputs:** Mult output and Reflect Send to two mixer channels or main outputs. Use external processing on one branch (distortion, filtering) for a moving image, as the manual suggests—this makes complex patterns feel wider and less cluttered.

Additional Tips

- Experiment with sequencers that offer probability or randomization for real "beyond-human" rhythm.
- Use Mode CV (with a stepped/trigger source) to rhythmically jump between quantization scales per bar/beat.
- Use chained VCAs or matrix mixers before the CV inputs to "draw" rhymic scenes or interpolate between beats with fine control.

Inspirational Patch Example

```
 Kick Drum → Afterneath Input
Trigger Sequencer (odd-length steps) → Drag CV (through attenuator)
Euclidean Burst Generator → Reflect Return (audio)
Maths/Envelope → Diffuse CV (inverted on alternate bars)
Reflect Send → Distortion → Right output
Dry Output → Left output
```

This patch will create polyrhythmic, stuttering, clap-like bursts with swirling, glitched reflections—making even a basic drum pattern hyper-complex and evolving.

Manual Reference:

Afterneath Eurorack Module – Operation Manual PDF

Generated With Eurorack Processor