

The Focus Families and Focus Sets plugins

by Bob Zawalich, for Sibelius versions 5 and 6 January 29, 2011

These plugins let you create, save, and apply groups of staves (focus sets) that can be applied to a score to cause it to display those staves in View > Focus On Staves.

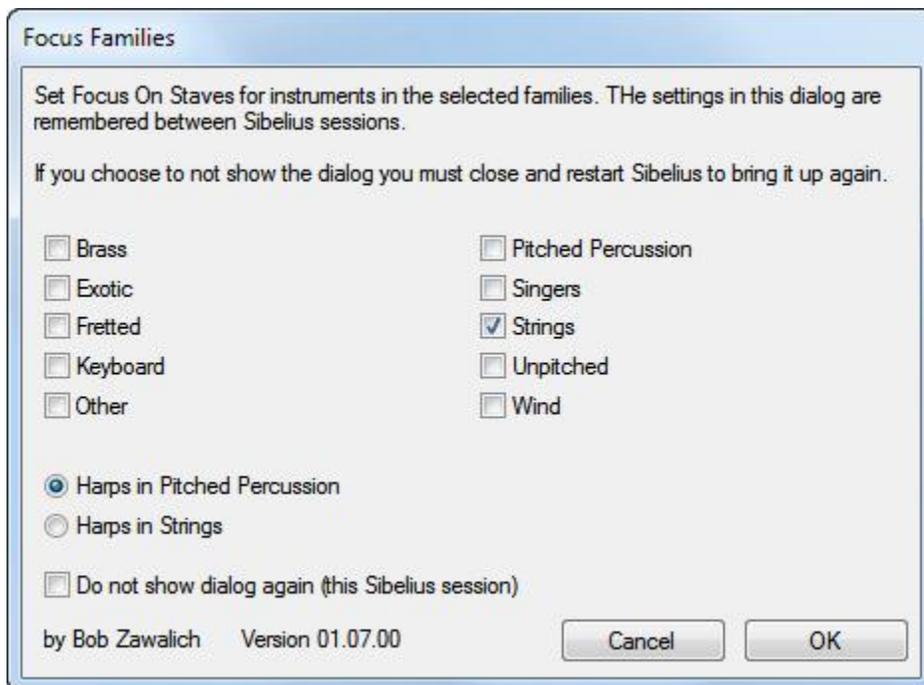
If you have ever used Staff Sets in Finale, you will find this to be a familiar concept.

The *Focus Families* plugins let you display instruments contained in one or more families of instruments. The families are predefined by Sibelius and are: "Brass", "Exotic", "Fretted", "Keyboard", "Other", "Pitched Percussion", "Singers", "Strings", "Unpitched", and "Wind".

The *Focus Set* plugins let you create custom groups of staves for specific scores. You need to set up the groups for each score you work on, but you can group any staves you want.

Sets of Plugins

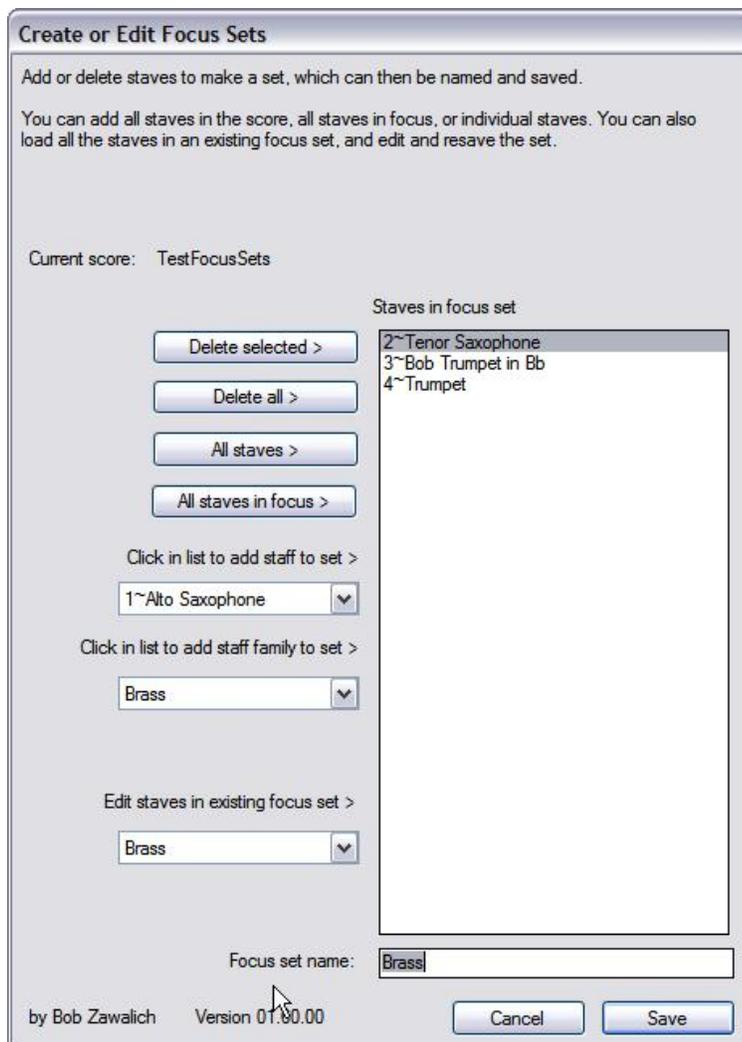
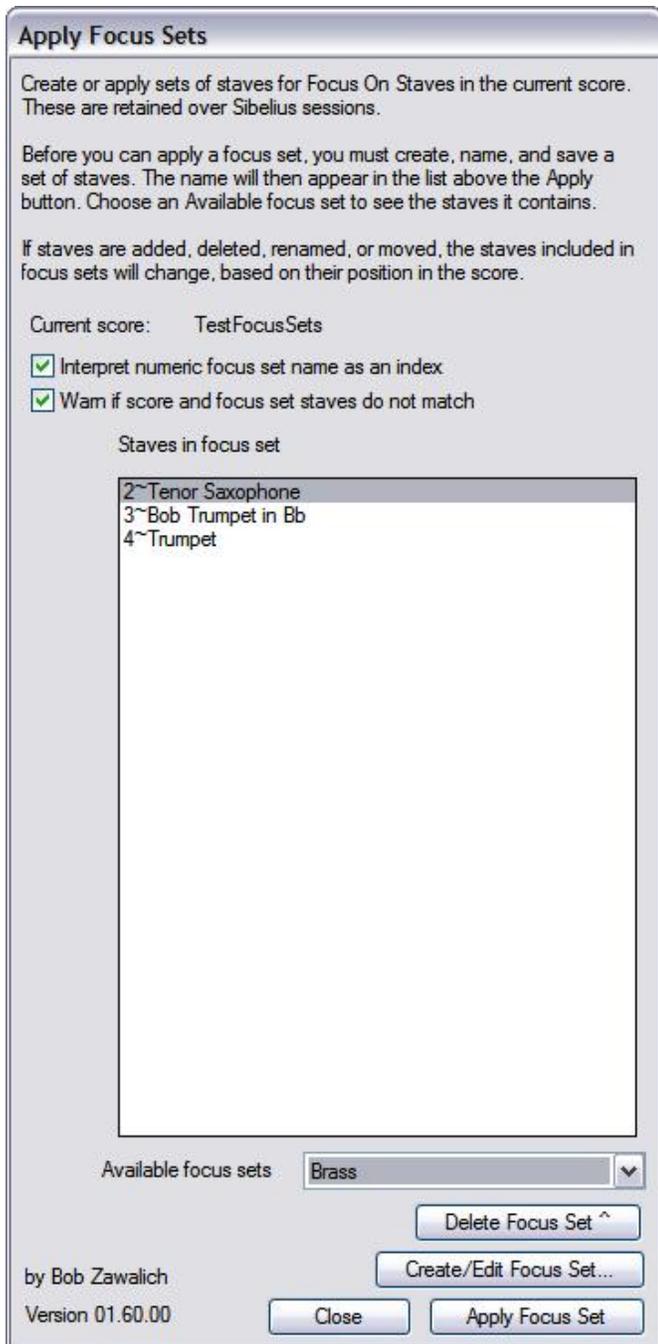
The *Focus Families* plugins consist of Focus Families (and its 8 clones, Focus Families 1, and Focus Families 2, ... Focus Families 9) which allow you to display multiple instrument families. These plugins bring up a dialog, at least the first time run in a session, and save their settings across Sibelius sessions.



There is also a set of plugins that will display one family of instruments. These have no dialog, and are meant to be assigned to shortcut keys. They are *Focus Brass*, *Focus Exotic*, *Focus Fretted*, *Focus Keyboard*, *Focus Other*, *Focus Pitched Percussion*, *Focus Singers*, *Focus Strings*, *Focus Unpitched*, *Focus Wind*, *Focus Strings Plus Harp*, and *Focus Pitched Percussion No Harp*.

All instruments are in one family only, but we make an exception for harps, which you can choose to place in either the Strings or Pitched Percussion families.

The *Focus Set* plugins consist of *Focus Set*, which allows you to create, edit, and apply focus sets, and the helper plugins *Focus Set 1*, *Focus Set 2*,...*Focus Set 10*. The helpers show no dialogs and apply a single focus set. *Focus Set 1* will apply the first focus set in *Focus Set*'s list of sets, *Focus Set 2* applies the second, etc. These plugins are intended to have shortcut keys.



The Focus Set 1.. Focus Set 10 plugins

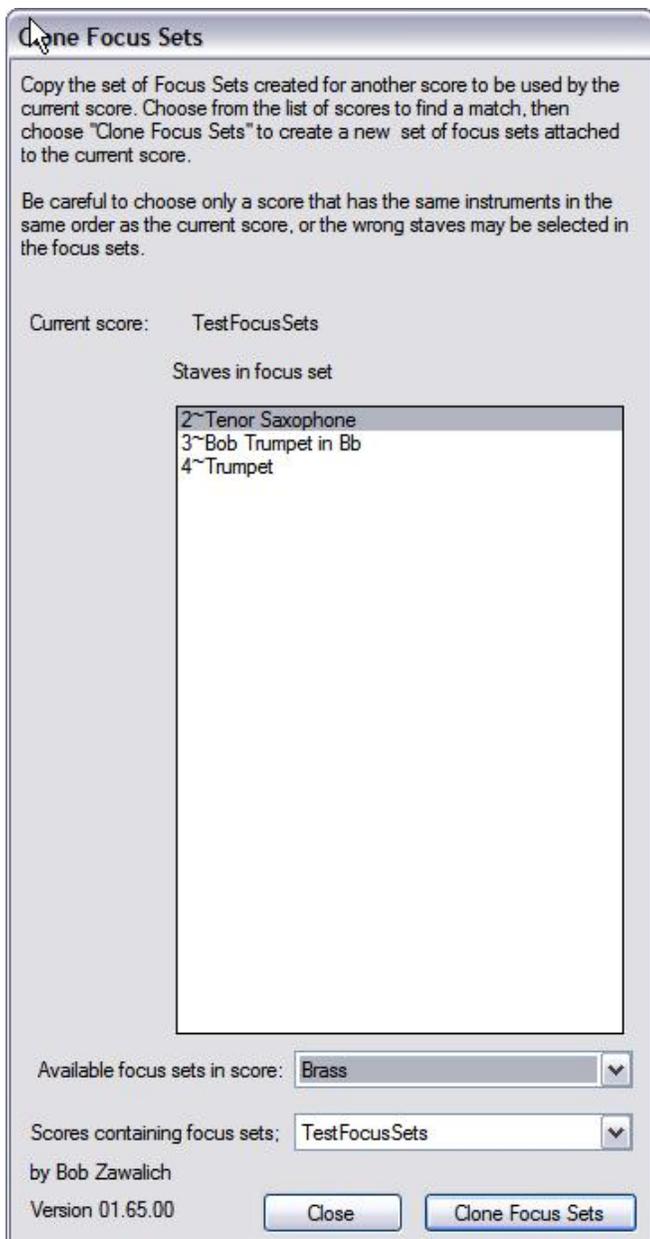
By default, these plugins apply the focus set in the list of Available Focus Sets that corresponds to their number. So *Focus Set 1* applies the first focus set. These work on any score. Be aware that the

order in which you create focus sets is important; even if you call the first one you create "2" and the second "1", *Focus Set 1* will always apply the first one in the list. If you need to reorder entries in the list, you will have to delete and recreate entries.

You can avoid the need to create in order if you use only numeric focus set names and you turn off the *Focus Set* option "Interpret numeric focus set name as an index". In that case, if you name your focus sets "1" through "10", the numbered plugins will treat their number as a name rather than an index, and will find the name "1" and so on regardless of the order in the list.

Clone Focus Sets

The plugin Clone Focus Sets can be useful if you have a number of scores with the same instrumentation. You can set up focus sets for one score, and use Clone Focus Sets to copy the settings into another score. Be sure that the instrumentation is the same, with instruments in the same order if you use this plugin.



Installation

Like all downloadable plugins, these plugin need to be copied into a subfolder of your "user" Plugins folder. (See the installation instructions on the Sibelius plugin download page if you have not done this before). I suggest making separate Focus Family and Focus Set subfolders for these plugins, and place all the Focus Families plugins on one folder, and all the Focus Set plugins in the other.

Using the plugins

Focus Families plugins work on any score without much setup.

If you want a single family, run the appropriately named plugin (e.g., *Focus Strings* will select all the strings). If you want more than 1 family to show, run *Focus Families*, or *Focus Families 1 ... Focus Families 9*, and choose which families to display. You can thus have 10 custom sets of families, and these settings are remembered across Sibelius sessions. A dialog will be shown the first time one of these plugins is run in a Sibelius session, but you can tell it not to show the dialog for the remainder of the session. If you want to change settings after the dialog is hidden, close and restart Sibelius and run the plugin again.

Focus Set lets you create multiple sets of staves to be shown in Focus On Staves for a given score. The sets are saved in the plugin Preferences database, so they persist across Sibelius sessions.

You can create focus sets by adding staves to a set, adding all the staves in a score, or the ones currently in Focus On Staves.

You can give a name to a focus set, and if you select an entry in the list of focus sets, it will display the staves in the set.

There is a set of helper plugins, *Focus Set 1... Focus Set 10*, which can be assigned to keystrokes. Focus Set 1 will apply the first focus set in the list of sets, *Focus Set 2* runs the second (regardless of the names). The helpers run with no dialogs.

Note that the sets identify staves by their staff number in the score and by the full instrument name.

If you rearrange the order of the staves or add or delete staves after creating a focus set, the plugin will warn you that the staves and focus set are out of sync. You can still apply the focus sets but they may select a different set of staves than those originally selected.