Spitfire Audio HEIRLOOM



Spitfire Audio announces the availability of HEIRLOOM - hatched from the mind, heart, and soul of acclaimed multimedia artist and composer Keaton Henson as an emotional ensemble library like no other on account of bringing delicate strings, raw woodwinds, an inspiring piano, and haunting guitars into play, creatively captured in the sacred surroundings of renowned record producer, musician, and songwriter Paul Epworth’s The Church Studios, an award-winning space located in the heart of North London’s Crouch End as one of Europe’s leading recording facilities, forming a compositional toolkit of unique, modern scoring sounds conceived with humanity in its DNA, and the lingering human moments that bleed and seep their way into recorded musical performances to act as the sonic equivalent of the worn away seat of your father’s favourite chair, contemporarily served up in the sound-specialising British music technology company’s award-winning AAX-, AU-, VST2-, and VST3-compatible, NKS (NATIVE KONTROL STANDARD)-ready plug-in that loads into all major DAWs (Digital Audio Workstations) without the need for any additional software, perfectly poised for enhanced emotive scoring.

Perfectly poised to express emotions that are hard to put into words, HEIRLOOM captures contemplation of complex external feelings, the human condition, and the passing of time. The quality of the performances - played by eight string players (comprising three violins, two violas, two cellos, and one bass), as well as contrabass clarinet, guitar, tubax (a modified saxophone with the same register as a regular contrabass saxophone, but much more compact due to its tubing being folded more times), and an achingly beautiful piano - are both pure and expansive

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in character, captured as intimate recordings by London-based freelance engineer and producer Fiona Cruickshank in The Church Studios' sought-after sacred surroundings and lending themselves to enhanced emotive scoring. Saying that, the resulting expansive character provides endless inspiration via sounds that will slot into any composer's signature sound palette.

Acclaimed artist Keaton Henson himself is, of course, perfectly poised to put HEIRLOOM into its rightful context, having hatched this emotional ensemble library like no other from his mind, heart, and soul. "To me, HEIRLOOM is, at its core, about the feeling of things passed down and about the faint traces we leave behind in our lives - these human traces and the evocative sounds used to try and key into people's emotional memories," he explains, expanding still further with: "Whenever I record orchestral music, I put a huge amount of thought and effort into making sure there's loads of humanity in the sound. This is the sonic equivalent of the marks in an old carpet where a well-loved cabinet one stood, or the worn away seat of your father's favourite chair. These are all the elements that we pulled together to create HEIRLOOM - the sound of the parts of us we can't help but leave behind."

It is hardly surprising, then, that HEIRLOOM has a strong sense of home comforts, together with a beguiling familiarity that allows any composer working with it to feel comfortable using the sounds in a stripped back setting. By bringing beautiful raw woodwinds, delicate strings, an inspiring piano, rich guitar tones, and textures to the fore, Keaton Henson has honed in on that humanity he mentions, manifesting itself in the subtle artefacts of these kinds of recordings.

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Deep down, though, most musicians instinctively know that recording studios are sacred spaces - literally so in the case of The Church Studios, a beautiful old place of worship in North London, whose stone walls and stained glass have reverberated for 170 years with the sound of prayers and some of the greatest music ever made. Making recordings at The Church Studios today is playing a part in music history that has included Adele, Bob Dylan, Depeche Mode, Florence + The Machine, Radiohead, and U2, to name but a notable few - not forgetting, of course, Annie Lennox and Dave Stewart of The Eurythmics, who converted the space into a brand-new recording studio back in 1984, which was later bought by British singer-songwriter David Gray in 2004 before he passed the baton of ownership to the talented Paul Epworth, who completely refurbished the upstairs and downstairs floors to present three new studios to the recording world in 2013. Fast-forward to today, and Keaton Henson - known for his work outside of film with Supernova and Six Lethargies, as well as seven acclaimed albums as a solo artist - continues that lineage by acting as a medium between the decades of musicality shared there and Spitfire Audio, shaped through his own artistic lens and reverence for the beauty in imperfections: “From a technical standpoint, we used all of the techniques, musicians, equipment, and rooms that I use in my work. We’ve captured all the

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detail and humanness of the players, playing subtle and raw techniques, and also used the super-special piano there to capture that ‘heirloom’ sound since all my most successful writing experiences have been on old pianos at family members’ houses - or covered in dust at a friend’s - where you don’t care about what note you play next as you just want to hear the played note ring out.”

Outside of The Church Studios, onwards and upwards to the finished product that is Spitfire Audio’s latest release, the resulting PIANO section included in HEIRLOOM has the perfect amount of character - like an old but well-looked-after piano that sits at a relative’s house that beckons to be played whenever walked past. It is inspiring to play and unbelievably real, representing the beating heart of this emotional ensemble library like no other. Thereafter, the STRINGS have been kept small, recorded close and never playing too loud, so composers can achieve an emotionally epic sound without losing the intimacy of the playing involved, while the GUITAR sounds range from an authentic-sounding picked guitar through to some more complex techniques that have resulted in some rich and haunting pads and swells, all performed by Keaton Henson on his trademark Telecaster and re-amped within The Church Studios’ sacred space. CONTRABASS CLARINET, meanwhile, makes for the perfect amount of breath without losing the tone - the perfect deep bed to build from, or soft section with which to play rumbling chords - and the TUBAX is incredibly warm, characterful, and smoky-sounding, contrabass in register, but with the tones and warmth of a saxophone, subtle breaths duly captured with soft shifts in tone, together with guttural growls and snarling drones at the louder dynamic.

Creatively capturing new and alternative expressive techniques - the results of which can be quickly tweaked to suit within the sound-specialising British music technology company’s award-winning AAX-, AU-, VST2-, and VST3-compatible, NKS-ready plug-in’s easy-to-use expression, dynamics, REVERB, RELEASE, and TIGHTNESS controls alongside an array of (Mix 1, Tape, Cls, Mid, Far, Rbn, Lstn, Plyr, and Ped) signal options - certainly creates a solid foundation for working with HEIRLOOM. However, Spitfire Audio also expertly captured a selection of small, exquisitely performed moments that can be found, for instance, in its GUITAR and STRINGS sections, respectively, including Swells and Chimes (chime-like tones). These focused elements enable compositions to sound even more real, and - by that same token - even more human. Having said that, and despite the meticulous planning involved in its creation, HEIRLOOM has, through the true nature of collaboration, ultimately surprised even its creators in its realism and versatility, and will clearly continue to do so - as it is woven in and out of stories for years to come.

HEIRLOOM is available as an AAX-, AU-, VST2-, and VST3-compatible, NKS (NATIVE KONTROL STANDARD)-ready plug-in that loads directly into a DAW (Digital Audio Workstation) for a time-limited promo price of £199.00 GBP/$229.00 USD/€229.00 EUR until March 31, 2022 - returning thereafter to s price of £249.00 GBP/$299.00 USD/€299.00 EUR. (It is well worth noting here that the first 500 orders will receive an exclusive limited-edition artwork by Keaton Henson, the first 200 of which will be

signed by the acclaimed multimedia artist and composer himself.)

Spitfire Audio’s namesake Spitfire Audio application allows anyone to buy now and download anytime, and is available for free.

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