The Crow Hill Company ABSURDLY QUIET PIANO PRO



Following in the foundational footsteps of the recently released VAULTS - ABSURDLY QUIET PIANO, cunningly creating the seemingly impossible sensation of playing a grand piano impossibly quietly as the latest downloadable drop in the Edinburgh-based enterprise’s free virtual instrument collection, The Crow Hill Company announces the availability of ABSURDLY QUIET PIANO PRO - produced beyond the possibilities afforded in live performance on the very verge of silence as a mellow, soft, and alluring piano that hits all the right (sampled) notes without having its resonance hindered by being based on a felt or celeste-pedal piano - as of May 20…

It is fair to say that The Crow Hill Company has, quite literally, gone ‘pro’ after scoring a hit with its insanely popular VAULTS - ABSURDLY QUIET PIANO release - recorded during the dead of night in company founder and media composer Christian Henson’s front room, sampling a grand piano at the quietest dynamic possible to create a beguiling effect that is impossible to recreate when playing piano in a regular fashion - by creating an even quieter, more intimate version, this time recorded at Castlesound Studios, situated in beautiful countryside just 20 minutes from Edinburgh as one of the leading recording studios in the UK, with a much chunkier spec sheet including dynamic layers, a brace of round robins, pedal up and down samples, release triggers, and more. Maintains Christian Henson

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himself, setting the scene for its inventive introduction that is, in itself, surely set to inspire: “It is designed for intimacy, but doesn’t have the ‘thonk’ of a felt piano - that sound that I’ve got very tired of, and is part of my ORIGINS range, building my sample palette up from scratch. I’m hoping that ABSURDLY QUIET PIANO PRO is going to be my workhorse.”

Creatively, Christian Henson found the exact point at which the key produced a tone for each and every note. Needless to say, every note and every round robin became a game of searching, finding, and ushering out something beyond just a quiet thud. This, however, created a problem in that the notes were whisper quiet, meaning managing even the slightest movement in the room resulted in a somewhat rigid, ache-and-pain-inducing week in Edinburgh’s esteemed Castlesound Studios. Saying that, even with the quietest microphones and preamps, the noise floor was always going to prove problematic, as the nightmarish level of noise reduction required meant that the subtle, bright harmonic characteristics of the piano were lost; all was not lost, though, as a solution was found during the post-production process - painfully time consuming as it was - that involved going into each and every one of the 2,000 samples recorded and meticulously etching out every harmonic from the ‘shash’ that surrounded it. “It has a pianoforte element to it that belies the quietness at which I recorded this thing,” continues Christian Henson, adding: “Also, it’s an Estonia, which is a relatively modern piano that has a very modern action; when you play it quieter there’s a load of resonance and warmth because it’s new and young, so, because of the characterful nature of the sampling, we did a bunch of round robins. We recorded it two different ways; it’s got release triggers that give it that real intimate sound - fully controllable; and the damper pedal has a beautiful, shimmering noise to it, alongside some really good functionality on the front end.”

ABSURDLY QUIET PIANO PRO is available to buy for £29.00 GBP as a sample-based virtual instrument plug-in supporting AAX-, AU-, VST2-, and VST3 formats for macOS 11 through to 15 (Apple Silicon and Intel compatible) and Windows 10 through to 11 directly from The Crow Hill Company.

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