

ICONICA

ENSEMBLES

Ensembles to inspire the brightest ideas

Operation Manual

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This PDF provides improved access for vision-impaired users. Please note that due to the complexity and number of images in this document, it is not possible to include text descriptions of images.

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1 Welcome to Iconica

The sonic palette of the symphonic orchestra is a force to be reckoned with and, stemming from the classical repertoire, has found its way into a myriad of genres and styles.

Iconica is a complete, easy-to-use solution for creating stunning symphonic masterpieces or adding orchestral elements to your productions. From huge cinematic arrangements to chamber ensembles and solo instruments – Iconica serves as the orchestral backbone of any production environment.

Recorded at one of Germany's most intriguing venues, the Funkhaus Berlin, Iconica is made up of two volumes that complement each other perfectly.

Iconica Sections & Players brings all the single instruments and instrumental sections of a symphonic orchestra right to your productions. The five string sections (Violins I, Violins II, Violas, Celli, and Basses) are complemented by a full solo woodwind choir with every instrument sampled individually, as well as solo and ensemble brass, again with every instrument and section sampled individually. A generous complement of orchestral percussion rounds up this all-in-one orchestral solution.

All instruments and sections were recorded with a plethora of playing styles and articulations. The advanced scripting coupled with an intuitive UI makes everything readily accessible, while providing powerful tools to shape the performance.

Iconica Ensembles takes the orchestral instruments and sections and combines them into carefully curated, uniquely playable ensembles. Separate Full, High, and Low Strings, as well as Woodwind ensembles pair flexibility with the ability to get results quickly when a deadline is looming. The Full and Low Brass ensembles, just like their woodwind counterparts, put special focus on smooth blending and range breaks to provide a seamless playing experience. Special Cinematic Scenes use individual instruments from Iconica Sections & Players to create stunning style/mood-based composing ensembles that also work perfectly as a source of inspiration. A Percussion Essentials ensemble, basic Timpani standards, as well as melodic percussion make this a perfect complement to its sister library, yet also perfect on its own.

Iconica uses the power of HALion 6 and is a true virtual instrument that can adapt to any style or genre and is sure to provide you with the quality of sound, variety of content, and usability needed for arrangements on a truly orchestral scale!

Enjoy the orchestra under your fingertips!

Your Steinberg Team

2 Installation, Activation and Registration

For detailed installation instructions see the Steinberg Helpcenter at

<https://www.steinberg.net/how-to-install-iconica>

- The process for license activation is described in detail on the Steinberg web site.
- The process for registering the license with the Library Manager is described on <https://steinberg.help/> in the section "VST".

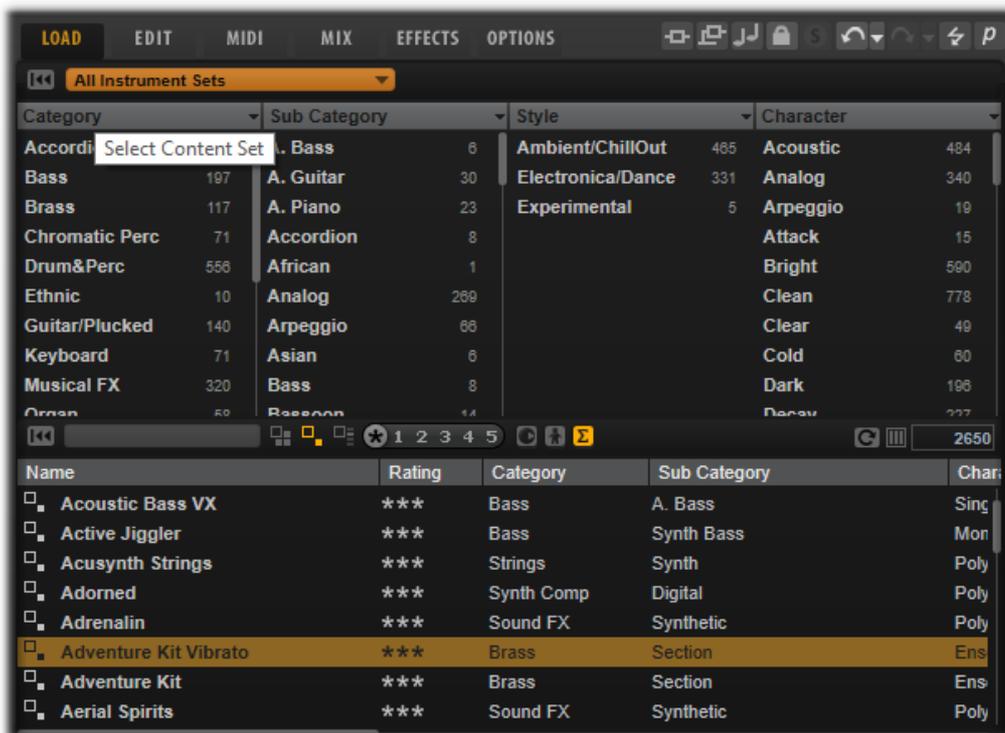
3 Quick Start

Iconica works in the free version of HALion Sonic SE, but also in HALion Sonic as well as the full version of HALion, where the full capabilities of the HALion Sampler are at your disposal.

You can load either plug-in in your host, but the exact steps to do that depend on the host software.

If the license is correctly activated, Iconica will appear in the Instrument Sets within the Load tab.

Finding Iconica's Presets



Click on "All Instrument Sets", or on the name of the currently selected set and choose Iconica from the list.

You can then choose the preset you need from the results list. Double-clicking a preset will load it into the selected program slot.

You can use the Category and Sub Category to narrow down your search to the instrument you are looking for.

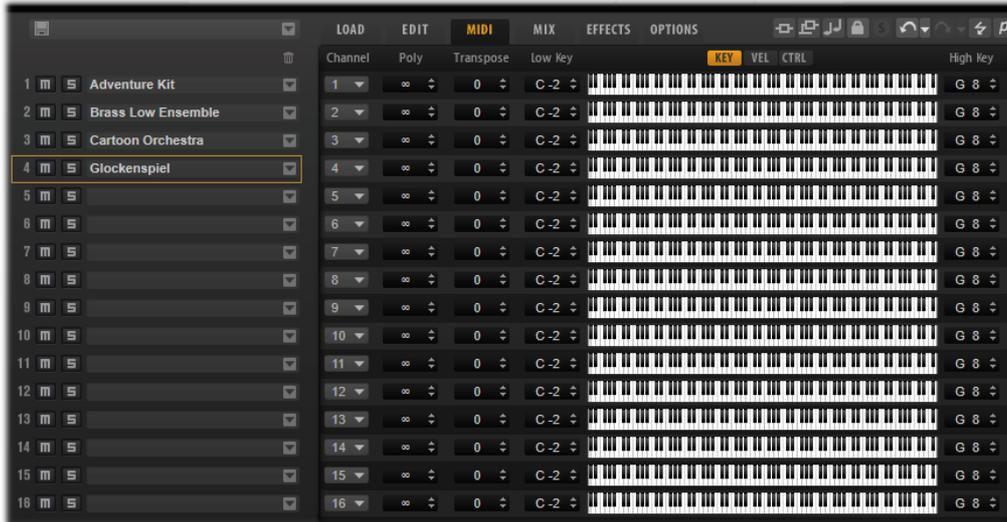
Accessing the Macro Page

To access the macro page, where all settings can be made, make sure the desired slot is selected on the left of the window and click the Edit tab.

The macro page for the loaded program will open. You can switch between macro pages of different programs by clicking on their slot.

Loading Multiple Instruments in One Instance

If you want to host multiple instruments in the same HALion instance to play them from different MIDI channels, or play multiple instruments at the same time, load the desired programs into different slots and select the MIDI tab.



Here you can set the different slots to be triggered by individual MIDI channels, or to the same MIDI channel to stack them.

You can also change the transposition and key range to have different instruments at different ranges on your keyboard.

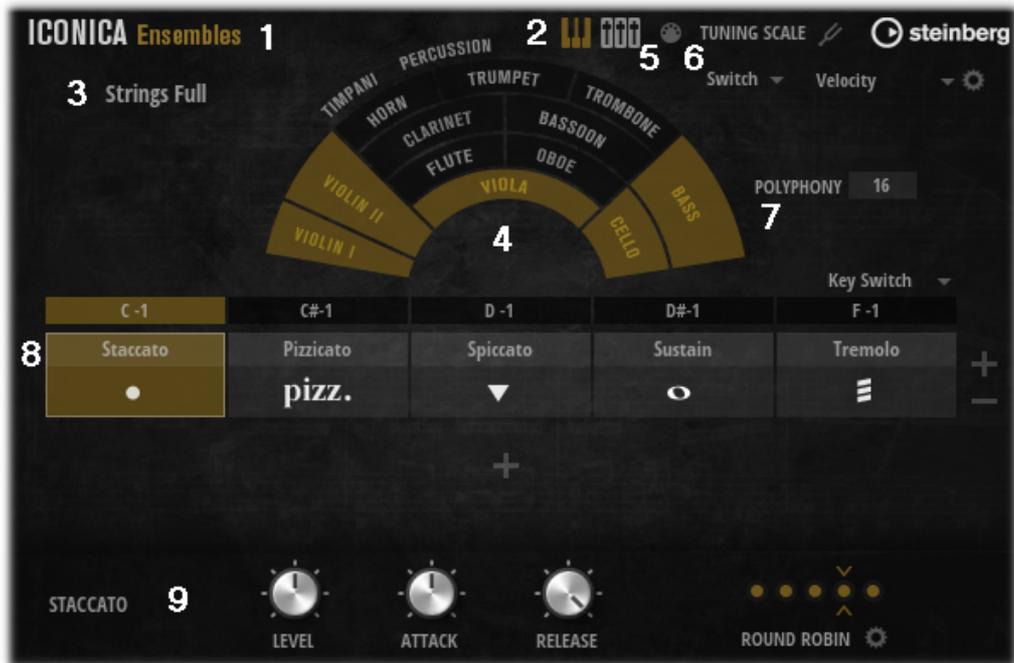
Importing key switches into an Expression Map in Cubase

If you are using Cubase, you can import the key switches of the current program into an Expression Map with one click.

To do this, make sure the track containing the HALion instance is selected in Cubase, select the Expression Map tab in the inspector in Cubase and select "Import Key Switches". All key switches will be imported into a new Expression Map ready to use. You can then switch between the articulations in the Key Editor.

For detailed information please consult the HALion and Cubase Operation Manuals.

4 General Interface



Iconica is a VST Sound Library that can be used by several plug-ins based on the HALion engine.

After loading a program, the Macro Page is divided into multiple sections:

1. Library Name

This section shows whether the current program belongs to Iconica Sections & Players or Iconica Ensembles.

2. Page Buttons

These buttons select the [Main Page](#)^[17] or the [Mixer Page](#)^[20]. The screenshot above shows the Main Page.

3. Instrument

This area shows the name of the current instrument/section/ensemble.

4. Orchestra Diagram

The center part shows a representation of the whole orchestra stage. Instruments or sections playing in the currently loaded ensemble are highlighted, all other instruments or sections are grayed out. The control area to the top right lets you choose by which means to control the velocity layers and dynamics of the instrument.

5. MIDI Follow

When MIDI Follow is on, the editor area will follow the played articulation, when a slot is chosen via MIDI (through a key switch, MIDI CC, or other means). If multiple cells are activated this way, the first such cell is selected.

6. Tuning Scale

The [Tuning Scale](#)^[17] controls let you choose a musical scale the instrument uses when playing.

7. Polyphony

The [Polyphony](#)^[13] setting determines how many simultaneous notes can be played at the same time. The instrument will then play as many voices per note as needed up to the Max Voices limit set on the Options Page.

8. Cell Rack

Articulations are loaded in the [Cell Rack](#)^[14], which can hold up to 16 articulations.

9. Articulation Parameters

The [Articulation Parameters](#)^[18] area provides easy access to relevant settings for the selected articulation.

5 Features and UI

The Features and UI section describes the Macro Page of Iconica with all user-centric features.

All features in all instruments/articulations are described. If at any time, a particular UI element/feature is not accessible, that means that the respective instrument/articulation does not have that particular feature.

5.1 Main Page



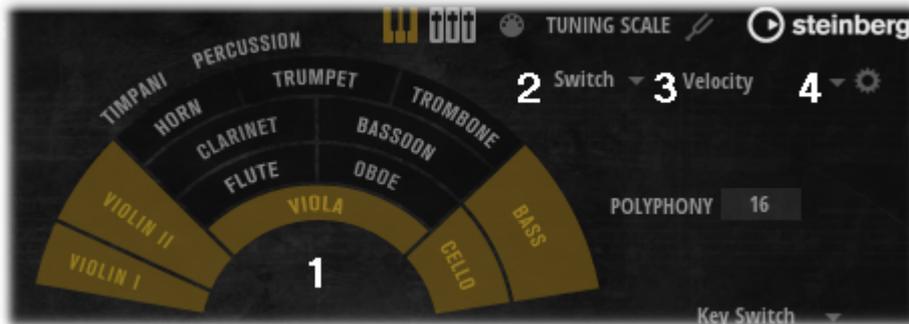
The Main Page lets you load articulations, control how these articulations react to your playing, choose how to move between articulations (if multiple articulations are loaded), as well as set relevant options for these articulations.

All playing-centric properties of Iconica are set and adjusted here. You can call up the Main Page at any time by clicking the Main Page button in the top middle.

Adaptive True Legato

Iconica uses an Adaptive True Legato system that employs recorded legato transitions for playing realistic connected lines. The legato reacts to playing speed: in a slow line, the full length of the legato transitions will be played. When playing fast, transitions will be shortened for a tighter and more agile playing. The Adaptive True Legato is focused on providing smooth connected lines, preserving note boundaries. It does not employ portamento or similar slides between notes.

5.1.1 Center Controls



The Center Controls fill the top area of the Main Page, next to the Instrument Icon.

It lets you control how Iconica moves between the different velocity layers. These settings apply to the currently selected articulation within the instrument.

Note that this may not be the currently active (playing) articulation!

- The currently selected articulation can be recognized by a white cell outline in the [Cell Rack](#)^[14].
- The currently active articulation is highlighted.

1. Orchestra Diagram

The center part shows a representation of the whole orchestra stage. Instruments or sections playing in the currently loaded ensemble are highlighted, all other instruments or sections are grayed out.

2. Fade/Switch Selector

The Fade/Switch selector above the Recorded Velocity Layer lets you choose one of two modes of moving between velocity layers for each articulation:

1. Fade will crossfade between the available layers, providing a smooth transition between layers and timbres.
2. Switch will switch between the available layers, avoiding phasing issues, but necessitating sometimes sharp timbre changes between layers.

Choose whichever mode is best for your situation. Percussion is best used with the Switch mode, while the other sections generally work best in Fade mode.

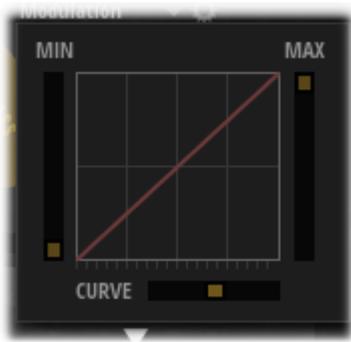
3. Control Mode Selector

The Control Mode Selector to the right of the Orchestra Diagram chooses the means by which the articulation responds to dynamics changes. The most common options are Velocity (reacting to key velocity) and Modulation (reacting to MIDI CC 1). The chosen option then applies to either Switch or Fade mode, depending on which is selected.

Choose whichever mode is best for your situation. "Long" articulations like Sustain are best used with Fade mode, while the "Short" articulations like Staccato generally work best in Switch mode. You can, however, assign this whichever way you prefer.

4. Control Curve

The Control Curve sets how incoming values for the control method chosen with the Control Mode selector will be interpreted by setting a user-adjustable curve. The default is a straight line, so every input value will correspond to the same value used in the articulation. By clicking on the Control Curve icon (gearwheel), the Control Curve Dialog opens.



The Min and Max sliders set the minimum and maximum value, respectively. This makes the instrument use only a certain value range, for example, to never exceed a certain velocity.

The Curve slider adjusts the shape of the curve.

Ctrl/Cmd-clicking on any parameter restores the default value.

5.1.2 Polyphony

The Polyphony determines the number of simultaneous notes that can be played at the same time. The instrument will then play as many voices per note as needed up to the Max Voices limit set in the Options Page.

Every sample equals a voice, so multiple mic positions, velocity layers, etc. mean a higher polyphony is needed and this Max Voices setting has to be raised accordingly.

By default, all articulations within the programs are set to a polyphony that allows normal playing in a manner usual for the instrument with the pre-activated mic positions. If you enable more positions and/or have very busy parts, you may want to raise this setting to your needs, and/or raise the Max Voices.

5.1.3 Cell Rack



The Cell Rack holds up to 16 loaded articulations in an X/Y grid and offers several ways of moving between loaded articulations.

It shows both the currently active articulation and the currently selected articulation at a glance:

- The currently selected articulation can be recognized by a white cell outline.
- The currently active articulation is highlighted.

Loading Articulations

To load an articulation, click on the top part of any Articulation Cell. The Articulation Overlay shows all available articulations. Any articulation can be loaded into a cell by clicking on its name.

Clicking the lower part of a cell selects that cell, but does not open the Articulation Overlay. Note that it is possible to load the same articulation in multiple cells.

Adding and Removing Articulation Cells

The + button to the right of the Cell Rack adds one articulation cell per click up to a maximum of eight cells.

The - button removes one cell down to a minimum of one cell. There always is one cell visible, though nothing needs to be loaded in it.

It is possible to leave cells empty.

Adding or Removing the Second Articulation Row

The + button below the Cell Rack adds a second row of cells. The number of cells in that row corresponds to the number of cells in the main row. The + button turns into a - button when the second row is visible.

The - button removes the second row. Again it is possible to leave cells empty. When the second row is not visible, the button shows +.

Controlling the Articulation Cells

Depending on how many Articulation Cells are displayed and whether or not the second articulation row is visible, the UI options will change.

Navigating the First Articulation Row

When two or more cells are visible, UI elements to determine how to navigate between these cells are displayed.



Key Switch: (default). Every cell is assigned to a key switch, by default ascending chromatically from C0. Any note can be chosen by double-clicking on the note name and entering a value, or clicking on the note name and dragging up/down. One cell can only be assigned to a single key switch but one key switch can be assigned to multiple cells to stack articulations. Pressing the selected key switch will make the cell active, which lights up.



MIDI CC: (any controller can be chosen from the list). Every cell is assigned to a value range on the chosen controller.

Auto Button

If Auto is on, the controller range will be equally divided by the number of cells. A bar above the cells will follow the controller input and show the current value. When the value corresponds to the range of any cell, this cell will be made active and light up.

If Auto is off, a text box will appear above the right of each cell where an individual threshold value for that cell can be set. This way it is possible to have the first cell react to for example 0-20, the second cell from 21-110 and the third cell from 111-127.

Play All: All cells play together. In this mode no key switch/CC line will be shown.

Navigating the Second Articulation Row

If the second articulation row is visible, UI elements to determine how to navigate between the two articulation rows are displayed.



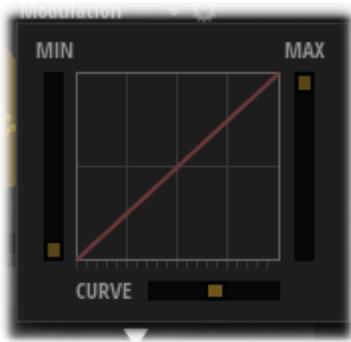
The drop-down menu lists all possible controllers that can be used to move between rows. The bar to the left of the rows will follow the controller input and show the current value.

There are three modes of moving between rows: Fade, Switch, and Layer. In Fade and Switch mode, cells can be left empty, which for example allows you to fade a particular articulation in or out with the use of a controller.

Fade Mode

Fade will crossfade between the upper and the lower cell using the assigned controller.

The gearwheel button adjusts the control curve, which sets how incoming values for the chosen controller will be interpreted by setting a user-adjustable curve. The default is a straight line, so every input value will correspond to the same value used in the articulation.



The Min and Max sliders set the minimum and maximum value, respectively. This makes the instrument use only a certain value range, for example, to never exceed a certain velocity.

The Curve slider adjusts the shape of the curve.

Ctrl/Cmd-clicking on any parameter restores the default value.

Switch Mode

Switch will switch between the upper and the lower cell using the assigned controller.

The Threshold box sets the upper limit of where the upper cell will be triggered; every value higher than this threshold will trigger the lower cell.

Layer Mode

Layer will play both vertical cells at the same time, layering the articulations loaded.

MIDI Follow

Next to the [Tuning Scale](#)^[17], the MIDI Follow button always directly reflects the played articulation on the UI.

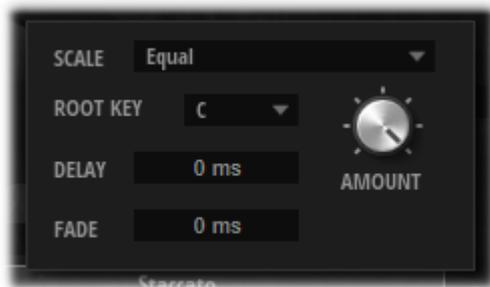
When MIDI Follow is on, the editor area will follow the played articulation, when a slot is chosen via MIDI (through a key switch, MIDI CC, or other means). If multiple cells are activated this way, the first such cell is selected.



5.1.4 Tuning Scale

The Tuning Scale function lets you tune Iconica to a number of different tuning scales. By default, all programs are set to Equal Temperament. You may want to change this to use another scale, either for artistic reasons or to conform to a different tuning standard, for example, when writing/accompanying period pieces.

Clicking on Tuning Scale opens a popover:



1. Scale

This drop-down menu selects the tuning scale to be used.

2. Root Key

The Root Key selects the note from which the tuning is calculated as the base note. It is very important to set the Root Key correctly for the key you are in.

3. Delay

The delay in ms determines a time after which the scale will take effect. You can use this for artistic purposes, for example, to have the attack of a note in equal temperament, then switching to a scale of your choice.

4. Fade

The fade in ms sets a time during which the scale will fade in, after Delay has been taken into account.

5. Amount

The Amount knob determines the strength of the scale. The higher the value, the more notes will be pitched towards the scale.

5.1.5 Articulation Parameters

The Articulation Parameters section at the bottom of the Macro Page shows adjustable parameters for the currently selected articulation.

Note that this may not be the currently active (playing) articulation!

- The currently selected articulation can be recognized by a white cell outline.
- The currently active articulation is highlighted.

The available parameters differ between articulations. The following section lists all possible parameters grouped by sections. If a particular parameter is not visible when an articulation is selected, this articulation does not offer that parameter. Only parameters actually valid for the selected articulation are shown.

General Parameters

Level

The Level sets the volume of the articulation. By default, articulations are pre-balanced to each other. This parameter is available in all articulations.

Attack/Release Parameters

Attack

The Attack parameter determines the length of the attack. Lower values make the sample start slightly later, leading to tighter playing at the expense of attack characteristics.

In legato articulations, the Attack parameter influences the attack of the first note in a sequence; all connected notes are unaffected. In percussion instruments, the attack can only be made longer, not shorter.

Release

The Release dial controls the length of the release. If True Release is on, the release sample will be affected. If True Release is off or no dedicated release samples are available, the dial controls the fade-out time of the sample.

True Release

This parameter switches between three possible modes for True Release samples. Legato articulations offer all three options; other articulations featuring True Release have a checkbox that toggles usage of True Release samples on/off.

If True Release is on, the release tail can only be shortened, because the natural release tail is the upper limit of release time.

- Legato+Release
True Release samples will always be played, both for single notes and for notes within a connected legato sequence.
- Legato
As long as connected legato notes are played, True Release samples are played. The last note in a legato sequence can be freely adjusted in its release (also made longer).
- Off
True Release samples are off.

Stop Key

In instruments with the Stop Key, all sounding notes will always play until their end. Pressing the assigned Stop Key will end all currently sounding notes. If the Stop Key is not pressed, the full samples will be played.

Legato Parameters

Legato Level

The Legato Level sets the volume of the legato transitions.

Round Robin Parameters

Short note patches generally provide multiple recordings of the same note and velocity that are played one after another when pressing the same note repeatedly. These samples are called Round Robins and combat the dreaded machine gun effect that occurs when the exact same sample is repeated multiple times in a very short amount of time.

RR Selector

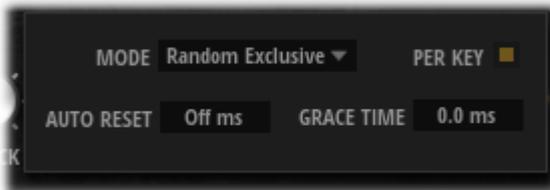


The RR Selector shows one dot per available RR. Individual RRs can be deactivated or reactivated by clicking on a dot.

A bracket above and below the active RR shows which RR is triggered when playing.

The gearwheel button opens the Round Robin Parameters Panel.

Round Robin Parameters Panel



Mode

Mode determines the sequence in which RRs are played. There are four modes.

Select Cycle Up to cycle through the layers in ascending order.

Select Cycle Down to cycle through the layers in descending order.

Select Random to alternate the layers randomly with each note that you play.

Select Random Exclusive to alternate the layers randomly, but without repetitions.

Per Key

Activate this parameter to apply the alternation for each MIDI key separately. If this parameter is deactivated, the alternation is applied globally across the entire keyboard, so that any key that you play advances the alternation sequence.

Auto Reset

Allows you to reset the layer alternation automatically after a specific time.

Grace Time

Sets the minimum time between two steps. This allows you to play chords, for example, because otherwise, each note of a chord would play with a different layer.

5.2 Mixer Page



The Mixer Page gives you access to all available microphone positions of the current instrument, lets you assign outputs to these positions, as well as control their volume and load status.

All audio-centric properties of Iconica are set and adjusted here. You can call up the Mixer Page at any time by clicking the Mixer Page button in the top middle.

5.2.1 Microphone Positions

All programs offer multiple microphone positions that provide different room perspectives.

You can freely mix these mic positions to dial in a particular sound.

All positions stay consistent throughout all instruments, if available, so all instruments are recorded in their correct positions.

The following positions are available, depending on instrument/section:

Close

This position has a fairly dry sound close to the instrument and is perfect for adding definition. Tree

The Tree position is a medium ambient standard position that works well for almost all use cases.

AB

The AB position can be used to enhance the sound and provide a broader basis.

ORTF

The ORTF position has a lot of presence and is good for providing definition to the sound.

Surround

Not only usable for actual surround sound applications, this position is perfect for adding ambience to the sound.

5.2.2 Mixer Channels

Each microphone position has its own channel in the mixer.

There is one additional Main channel strip where all positions are routed to by default (see [Output Routing](#))^[22].

Each microphone channel strip has a number of controls:



1. Position Name

This area shows the name of the mic position.

2. On/Off Switch

This switch toggles the position on/off. If a position is switched off, its samples are unloaded from memory.

3. Mute

The Mute switch mutes the audio of that mic position.

4. Solo

Solo solos the mic position.

5. Channel Fader and Meter

The channel fader adjusts the volume level of the mic position. A meter to the right of the fader shows the signal level when audio is played.

6. dB

The dB field shows the volume setting in dB.

7. Panorama

The panorama slider adjusts the stereo panorama from left to right.

8. Routing

The [Routing](#)^[22] field determines where audio is routed to.

5.2.3 Output Routing

The output routing selector lets you assign any mic position to any plug-in output.

By default, all mic positions are routed to the Main channel strip to the very right of the mixer, which sends its audio to the Master output (the first stereo output of the plug-in).

You can change this to any plug-in output you like by clicking on the output routing selector and choosing the desired output.