

realsamples

German Harpsichord 1738

Christian Vater, Hannover, Inv.-Nr. MI 449
Edition Germanisches Nationalmuseum



Vater harpsichord (image by Günther Künel, copyright © Germanisches Nationalmuseum)

Thank you for purchasing the *German Harpsichord 1738* HALion sample library.

Installation

For proper installation of your new HALion library, please see instructions on the Steinberg website or watch the „How to install“-HALion instruments video.

For questions regarding installation or registration of HALion instruments, please contact Steinberg. Concerning the instrument itself, please contact realsamples at info@realsamples.de



The instrument

Your new *German Harpsichord 1738* library features one of the very few preserved historical German harpsichords – a beautiful sounding instrument by Christian Vater. The instrument – built in Hannover in 1738 - features a mellow low end and rich low mids, combined with a delicate treble range. This nicely displays the German harpsichord tradition. Residing at the Germanische Nationalmuseum in Nuremberg, the harpsichord is in well-playable condition.

The sampling

The sample library contains all 3 sounds of the instrument: The front and rear 8' registers as well as both together. The combination of both was sampled separately, to capture the original harmonics. The latter combination offers the beautifully complex harmonics of the instrument.

In former centuries, the standard pitch was much lower than today's 440 Hz, and the instruments were constructed accordingly: The harpsichord was sampled at 392 Hz. The pitch can be changed in the virtual instrument.

Like all harpsichords, the Vater instrument is not touch-sensitive like a piano is: Pressing a key down leads to the strings being plucked by a pick, always at the same volume. However, each pick sounds slightly different due to resonances of both strings and body. Early digital versions of harpsichords often relied on just one sample. This

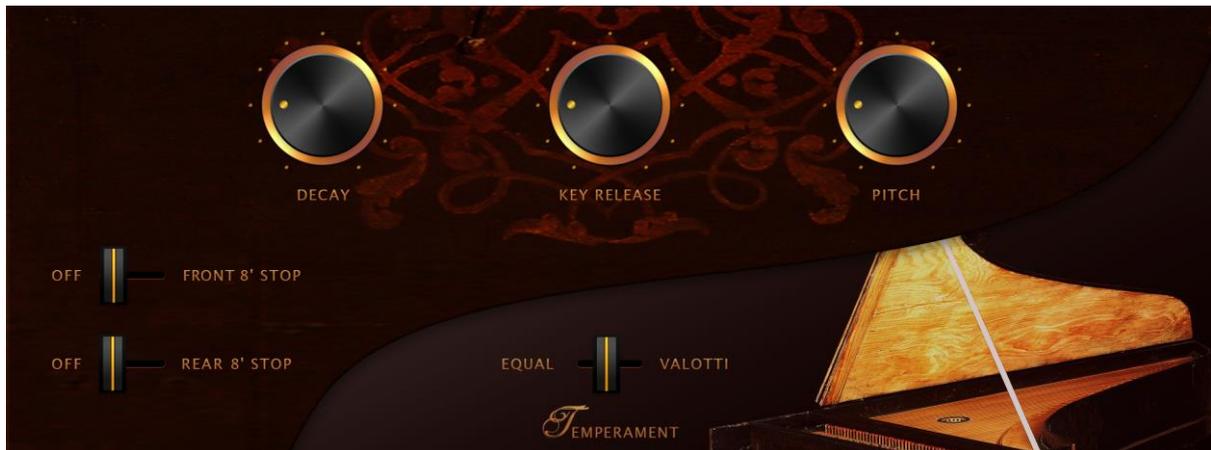
becomes tricky when repeatedly playing a key or even playing trills. Hearing the exact same sample played leads to the so-called “machine gun”-effect – a dreaded flaw of early digital which is quickly exposed by the listener as “artificial” sounding.

While sampling each note separately, we also sampled eight variations per note. The HALion library is programmed in “round robin” mode – no sample is repeated immediately. This helps supporting the idea of a “real” instrument.

Furthermore, the sounds of the key release (and the picks moving back) are important to complete the picture. If left out, the instrument may sound strangely abstract. Therefore, we recorded four key release samples per note.

The instrument was recorded on location in the great sounding “Aufseß-Saal” of the Germanische Nationalmuseum, using a specialised signal chain including custom-made tube microphones. It was originally captured at 192 kHz/24 bit and resampled to 48 kHz.

The controls in detail



Decay

- allows to adjust, well, the decay of the notes after the key is released. Typically, a value around 500-1.000 milliseconds sounds most natural. If completely adjusted to the left, the control says “OFF”. In this setting, the note-on-samples are turned off and you can hear the key release sounds only.

Key release

- allows to adjust the volume of the key release sounds. In the 12 o'clock position (0 dB), it is the original volume in the context of the key-down samples. In the far-left position of the knob, the key release samples will be turned off

completely. Some users prefer to up the key release volume, in order to emphasize the impression of a “real” instrument being played.

Pitch

- allows to adjust the general pitch of the instrument. It was sampled at 392 Hz originally. The default setting is 440 Hz

Temperament

- allows to switch between modern temperament (“equal”) or the historical “Vallotti” which offers a “sweetened” tuning. It differs from equal temperament by the following cent values: E = -2.0, F +7.8, F# -2.0, G +3.9, G# +2.0, A 0, B -3.9, Bb +5.9, C +5.9, C# 0, D 2.0

Off/Front 8’ Stop

- you guessed it – it switches the front 8’ stop of the instrument. In the left position (“OFF”), it is, frankly, off.

Off/Rear 8’ Stop

- same goes for the rear 8’ stop here. If you want to combine both stops, just switch them both on, and a separate set of samples is used which captured both switches in conjunction. If both stops are in the “OFF” position, you can hear just the key release noises (in case their volume is on).

May this virtual harpsichord bring you lots of enjoyment, inspiration and – last, but not least – some great music!

Production Germanisches Nationalmuseum: Dr. Frank P. Bär

Instrument tuning: Georg Ott

Recording & production realsamples: Nicolay Ketterer

Consulting: Tobias Birkenbeil

GUI design: Verena Segert

HAlion instrument programming: Robin Mussmann

Florian Haack and Frank Seidel at Steinberg – thank you for your help!

All rights reserved. Copyright © realsamples 2020.