Prepared Electric Piano Mobile Version
by Les Productions Zvon

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PHOTO : LOUIS LAFONTAINE

This set includes a soundfont with 67 instruments and 79 samples in wav format. The demo set has a 16 instruments soundfont and 16 samples. Added in November 2019: two sets of kits, one for EG Pulse drum machine/sampler and one for NanoStudio 2 Slate instrument.

This is a smaller version our Prepared Rhodes sample set. It's kind of "best of" as I made a selection among those that, IMO, are best suited for use in mobile apps. But it's more than a simple repackaging as I have added 38 instruments made with one sample mapped across the keyboard in the soundfont and I have edited 11 of the 79 wav files.

The sampled instrument is a real Rhodes electric piano that was prepared as John Cage and others prepared an acoustic piano. That means inserting springs, plastic tubes, pins, all kinds of objects inside the piano. These objects when touching the strings or the tines change the sound of each key played. All the notes can be radically different from each other and often the original sound is not even recognizable. The result is an instrument that is much more percussive in nature. This has been done quite often with acoustic piano but rarely with an electric piano.

Even if there are some clean sounds, these are "dirty" samples. When you put things inside an electric piano, a lot of things happen sonically, like strange vibrations and resonance between the objects and the tines. Even the release of the key produces artefacts on notes. The samples are not looped.

Besides the reduced number of samples, the main difference between the regular computer version and the mobile version is the lack of programs where each note of the keyboard plays a different sound and programs with velocity layers. This is because: a) some apps do not support velocity layers, b) these programs use more memory, c) they are best played on a real keyboard in my opinion. On the other hand, "drum machine" apps are very well suited to play and control the wav files.

The 67 instruments made simply from one sample mapped across the keyboard in the soundfont make fun semi-tuned percussion instruments.

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Things to keep in mind:
- Be careful with the volume when listening/monitoring, some of the samples generate a lot of low frequencies when transposed down and highs when transposed up. Protect your hearing and equipment!

- Sample names refer to the notes of the actual prepared electric piano, not the pitch heard. "di" means sharp in French.

- The soundfont instruments use only one sample so the speed and length of the playback change across the keyboard. They are intended to be used as semi-tuned instruments and none are perfectly tuned but some are more in tune than others. To help you easily determine those who are, I have added a T or a S at the end of the names of some presets. So, in regard to tuning, there are 3 categories of presets.

The T indicates those that have the better tuning, the S indicates the second best tuning and the ones with no letter are the instruments where the samples have no clear and specific pitch information or the pitch moves widely. Most are either a few cents sharp or flat and in some instruments the relation between the intervals changes. For instance, in a given instrument, C4 may be sharp and C2 may be flat. I feel that it's true to the percussive nature of the set and it also is more interesting.

- Some instruments are well suited to play melodic lines and even chords. But remember that the original intent is to offer a range of percussion hits.

- As most instruments in the soundfont cover a few octaves, it's a good idea to check the sounds across the whole keyboard. You may prefer the sound of specific octaves over others. These instruments can be recreated in any sampler where samples can be mapped with a root note, like NanoStudio 2 Obsidian, Cubasis MiniSampler and Thumbjam for instance. To help you do it, I have included below a table listing the instruments with their sample and the root note that I have used in the soundfont for each one.

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Details

The table below lists all the soundfont instruments with the sample used for each and its root, where middle C = C4 (MIDI note 60). The fourth column indicates those that are in the demo. The samples at the end were not used to create an instrument.

Instrument/ Program	Sample	Root Note	
Africa Java (T)	E4_v3	B3	
African (T)	F1di_b long vel 3	A0	
Almost Plucked (S)	A1 vel03	C#2	
Another pluck (S)	A1di vel04	D#3	Demo
Balafon EP (T)	A5di_v5	F6	
Bamboo too	F4di_v3	D#5	
Bamboo you	C4_v2	G#2	Demo
Boxy drop (S)	C5di_v2	A#4	
Click click	G3_V3	D#2	Demo
Clockoo	C6di_v2	A#3	Demo
Depth	F3di_00 fort	A3	
Distorted space	D6di_var4 med court	C4	
Don't know (S)	d3_v2	F#3	Demo

Double hit	E5_double	C5	
Dreamy (T)	C5_b_v1	G5	Demo
Droplets (S)	F6di_v2	A#3	
EP like (T)	A5di_v3	F6	Demo
Fairy tale (T)	C5_b_v1	G4	
Frog jump	B5_v4	D#5	
Fun hit	E2 vel04	E3	
Fun perc	A4di_v3	C4	
Going bass (T)	G1di_v4	G1	
Going up (T)	G1di_short v4	G1	
Hard hit 1 (S)	E6 med_var1	A#1	
Hard hit 2 (S)	E6 med_var1	A#1	
Hard Hit short	E6 short_v3	B1	Demo
Harp like (T)	C2 long vel02	F2	Demo
Heavy spring (S)	D6di_var3 med	C3	
Hit it E2 vel03 F2	Hit it E2 vel03 F2	Hit it E2 vel03 F2	
Honky funk (S)	F1 vel 2	A1	
In a hurry (S)	G2 vel02	B2	
Javaneese (T)	D4di_v2	G4	Demo
Kind of wood	C3di_v3	G#1	
Knock	F6_var bit softer	C4	
Lookin for a tunin 1 (S)	E6 long_v2	A#1	Demo
Lookin for a tunin 2 (S)	E6 long_v1	A#1	
Magic (T)	A6di_v1	F#6	
Metallic madness	E3_v3	E3	
Moving out 1 (S)	E1a vel 4_edit	G1	
Moving out 2 (S)	E1b vel 2	G1	
Music box (T)	A5di_V1	F6	
Night music (T)	F3di_03v1	C3	
Noisewriter	F5di_variante sec	D2	Demo
Old hit (ST)	G5_variante	C4	
Pitch a curve (T)	C2di vel04 shorter	F2	Demo
Reso Wood 1	G1_vel 4	C2	Demo
Reso Wood 2	G1_vel 5	C2	
Rimring harp (T)	A4b_v4 long	D5	
Roasted nuts (T)	F3di_01v3	C3	
Screwball (S)	d2 vel02	F2	Demo
Sharp bass (T)	C2 shorter	F2	
Sharp Kalimba (T)	F1c vel 1	G#1	Demo
Short change (T)	B6_vel 3	F#5	

Singing bass (T)	C2 very short vel02	F2	
Small Ben (ST)	C3 vel02	G#2	
Small tremor	B3_v3	D#4	
Soft gong	E5_v3	C5	
Spring in Bali (T)	D6di_long v2	A#2	
Springy	G2di c_vel03	D#2	
Squeaks	F1di_b short vel 3	A0	
String wood (T)	C4di_v2	F4	
Toughy	G2di b_vel01	B2	
Vibra Orient (T)	A2 long vel02	F#2	
Vibrating East	A2 short vel03	A#2	
Woods done it	F2 vel02	C2	
Wrong echo	C6_st	C4	
Zest of gong (S)	C3 vel02	G#3	
Sample only	A2 long vel03		
Sample only	B1 vel03		
Sample only	B5_variante		
Sample only	B5_variante2 soft		
Sample only	C3 short vel02		
Sample only	C5_b_v2		
Sample only	D5di_v3		
Sample only	D6di_b_v2		
Sample only	D6di_v1		
Sample only	F4_b		
Sample only	F4_v4		
Sample only	F5di_v2		
Sample only	E1a vel1		

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Here are some comments about the regular computer version:

"A lovely sample library ... You are not going to find these sounds anywhere else. I auditioned the samples one by one and I got incredibly itchy to start messing with them right away - they are so inspirational and musical."

Ronnie on rekkerd.org, September 2009

"Each note has a different mechanical preparation and was recorded for its full duration at several Velocities. These make exceptional semi-tuned percussion instruments. For more conventional playing, presets are provided that map a single sound across the keyboard."

Len Sasso in Electronic Musician, April 2005

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Every note was prepared by Maxime de La Rochefoucauld who is also internationally known as a composer and a builder of mechanical musical automatons: http://www.cooptel.qc.ca/~maxime. There's also a Caustic 2 version (Android) available on Google Play.

Note that this is a subset of the Prepared Rhodes available for various samplers: http://lesproductionszvon.com/zvon_PR.htm

Please visit our iPad and iPhone page for more sounds for your iOS devices: http://lesproductionszvon.com/for_iOS.htm

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