Cubase 6 Template with expression maps for full HALion Symphonic Orchestra SE

Read Me First

(By ZeroZero)

What to do if the project won't load! Is here

The things you ABSOLUTELY must know *before* this project will work - are in red

You would still be better advised to read *all*! ☺

In brief, the mapping of the whole template is as follows

ORCHESTRAL SECTION = FOLDER = INSTANCE OF HALION SE = GROUP CHANNEL+MIXER VIEW

What's in the Archive File?

- ***HALion Symphony Orchestra SE Full Master Version 1.cpr*** (this is the fully loaded project ready to run if your system is able).

- ***HALion Symphony Orchestra SE Full Master Empty Slots Version 1.cpr*** The same project but with all instances of Halion Sonic SE deactivated and all instruments unloaded. You can use this project if your system is underpowered for the main project.

- ***HSSE-HSO Expression Maps.*** A folder with all the expression maps for the full orchestra additionally supplied

- ***HSO Multi Presets.*** A folder with all the multi presets for loading the orchestra into the nine instances of Halion Sonic Orchestra required for the full orchestra.

- ***HSO Drum Maps*** The drum maps required for the project (additionally supplied)

- ***HSSE Input Transformer presets.*** A folder of instrument transformer presets for the special finger cymbal, wood and temple blocks (see readme in this folder for further details).

- ***This ReadMe file***

The project file has been set up, and is running, without issues, on a Core i7 920, Windows 7 ultimate 64 bit PC with 12 gig of RAM, using Cubase 64 bit. I do not recommend using the full template on a 32 bit machine as the RAM load of the full project is over 5 gig. Also be aware that some versions of Cubase do not support expression maps. If you are running in 32 bit please use the **HALion Symphony Orchestra SE Full Master _Empty Slots_ Version 1.cpr**. You many find the additional supplied files useful also. The project has been working on both Mac and 32 bit machines, but *no guarantee* can be given that it can run on your machine and is **provided as is**.

The main .cprs are written for Surround Sound though all instruments are presently panned stereo front left and right. You may wish to create a stereo version of the project, though it does work with a stereo set up of my colleague.

The project features *all* instruments in HALion Symphony Orchestra SE, as provided on the Free Trial disk with Cubase 6, plus an additional piano and concert harp (*HSO SE curiously has no harp in its library*) from the stock instruments packaged with HALion Sonic SE. All the relevant instruments have expression maps. Some basic instruments did not require them

If you cannot load the cpr, you can load any expression map for a track and then simply load the instrument into an instance of HALion Sonic SE. Alternatively, you can load a multi for an instance of Halion Sonic SE and then load a group of tracks represented in a single folder.

The expression maps, drum maps, input transformer presets and the instrument presets are provided in a separate folders. Not *all* tracks need *all* of these files. Some tracks do not need expression maps, only some percussion tracks need drum maps and only three tracks need input transformer files – see separate readme in these folders.

The Expression Maps

Please Note these have NOT been designed with the score editor in mind. All the articulations are direction-type (see expression maps Operational Manual pg. 420) and they appear as text rather than symbols in the score editor. This was an editorial decision as it was felt that automated articulations led to an over embellished score. This approach facilitates key editor work. Obviously you may wish to change these settings.

The initialization Tracks...

The user will find short MIDI Parts at the beginning of the projects prior to bar 1. These are to initialize the mod wheel and expression parameters CC1 and CC11 to 127. The User can mute or delete these parts if desired.

Re-mapped Key switches

The Key **switches** of HALion Symphony orchestra are not very intuitive; as Steinberg puts it:

"all the programs [..] are set up to share the same key switches for the same type of expression. However, in some cases there are exceptions to this rule" (LOL).

We have organised the project so that most useful articulations begin at CO and rarer articulations are mapped higher. **You will need to set the Remote Key in MIDI/Expression map set up.. to C0. <u>This setting does not travel with the project.</u>** This option can be found in the left hand corner of any expression map and is a *global* setting for the entire project
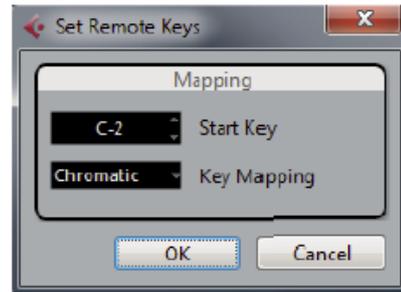
Please Note: Expression maps act as an *intermediary* between your input device (e.g. a keyboard) and the HALion Sonic SE instance –*remapping key switches*. This means that Expression maps can **rearrange** the key switching you see in HALion Sonic SE's virtual keyboard. Therefore, **do not be alarmed if the virtual keyboard in HALion Sonic SE Behaves erratically** where an expression map is active

Folder Schemata

The instruments have been divided into nine folders, fitting to the traditions of a Classical Orchestral Score:

1. *HSO Woodwinds*

2. *HSO Brass*

3. *HSOTimpsTTam&Blocks* (Timpani, Tam Tams, Temple and Wood Blocks)

4. *HSO DrumsCymbals&Percs* (Drums Cymbals and Percussion)

5. *HSO Melodic Percussion* (You will also find a basic harp in here - strangely, HS0 SE has no harp)

6. *HSO Violins*

7. *HSO Violas*

8. *HSO Cellos & Cello+Basses* (the latter being a single HSO SE 'instrument')

9. *HSO Basses*

The number of instruments in each folder varies, as do the number of articulations an instrument supports. The violins folder is especially weighty, at around half a gig.

For each project window folder there is an equivalent instance of HALion Sonic SE in the VST Instrument Rack.

*Note that the different members of the strings family (Violin, Viola, Cell, Bass) have a separate folder each.

The aim of this arrangement is to facilitate section portability between projects (see below)

All Audio Group channels, and the Piano instrument channel, have Roomworks activated on Send 1. The user is free to add Roomworks to Send 1 of individual instruments also, if desired. Of course you may easily change this reverb for another, in the fx channel.

There is no addition panning yet set up, except for a little on the blocks.

In the CPR, The Finger Cymbals, the Wood and the Temple Blocks have been amalgamated to a single channel per instrument, using wizardry (thanks Vic) best leave these tracks 'as is', unless you understand input transformers, drum maps and the HALion Sonic SE interface.

Mixer views

Every instrument is set up for its own stereo output in HALion Sonic SE and therefore is represented in the mixer. . In default view, the mixer contains almost 200 channels! Mixer views reduce this to manageable sections.

There are **several custom "Mixer Views"** which help harness the mixer (see bottom left corner of the mixer. For each section of the orchestra there is a mixer view with only that section of the orchestra visible (Instrument and MIDI channels) plus its relevant group channel and the reverb. *The MIDI channels for these types of views are hidden by default, deselect the dedicated button 'Hide MIDI Channels' in the common panel of the mixer (LHS) to reveal the MIDI channels for any view.

ORCHESTRAL SECTION = FOLDER = INSTANCE OF HALION SE = GROUP CHANNEL+MIXER VIEW

There are four additional mixer views:

1. 'All displayed' – this displays everything in the mixer

2. 'All Displayed Mini' – this displays all the channels in narrow view and hides the top of the mixer

3. 'Group channels' view this view gives you visibility of all the group channels and the Master Out.

4. *HSO All Strings*, this displays all the strings in one view.

Custom Mixer views

The mixer views have been created without using the dedicated buttons in the mixers 'common panel'. This means you are free to use these buttons, to reduce or expand the views.

You can of course create your own custom Mixer Views. If you have not got to grips with the mixer in an advanced way yet, we recommend you at least familiarise yourself with the notion of 'command targets' before you attempt to do this (pg 150 Operation manual).

Note: All the mixer views are prefixed with the label 'HSO' (HALion Symphonic Orchestra) to facilitate identifying the views should you wish to create other views for other instruments or even additional orchestras.

Naming conventions

The Naming of the tracks is consistent with the instrument name in the HSO Library. You will notice that names are prefixed with 'HSO' (HALion Symphonic Orchestra) . This is to facilitate recognition when working with other orchestral libraries in the same project, or if you export a folder to a pre-existing project. If you find that the whole of the name is obscured, you can usually reveal the whole name by hovering over it with your mouse.

Saving RAM

There are several ways you can save RAM if you get overload issues:

1] You can work with the HALion Symphony Orchestra SE Full Master Empty Slots Version 1.cpr

2] You can freeze instruments and tracks - using the 'snowflake' button on the VST Instrument rack

Glitch warning! Please note, Cubase 6 demands at least one empty track in a folder before it will freeze. Therefore to freeze an unused instrument folder/ HSE instance you MUST first create an empty track in the project window, for at least one instrument.

3] You can unload articulations from the instances of HALion Symphonic Orchestra SE loaded into HALion Sonic SE.

You could *always* work with ALL the articulations unloaded until required. This is probably the most RAM efficient way of working. To load only those articulations you need. Unloading all articulations saves about half a gig on my system.

To unload an articulation go to the Expression window in HALion Sonic SE and hit the square button left of the name of the relevant articulation – see pic.

What to do if the project won't load!

1. Check your VST connections

2. In the **Options view of HALion Sonic SE there is a panel called Disk Streaming**. In this panel there is a slider called 'Balance' drag this to the left. NB: This slider effects all instances.

3. If the project splutters, check your buffer sizes in your sound card increase them if necessary but this may introduce latency

4. Try loading the .cpr named HSO Symphony Orchestra Master <u>Empty Slots</u> Version 1.cpr found in the archive folder. This project does not have instruments initially loaded and should load much faster. You will have to load instruments manually - instructions can be found in the Notepad for the Project.

*Please Note: Under our tests, once an instance is loaded into RAM if it is then deactivated it appears to remain in RAM but in a 'switched off' state.

4. Get a 64 bit computer with at least 12 gig of RAM and face the future ;) No, seriously, a 64 bit operating system can utilise much more RAM and is a good, perhaps nowadays essential, investment for orchestral work - which is very RAM intensive.

Creating Custom Templates from the Master

You might also wish to consider creating your own Custom Templates from these Masters. You may wish to add your favourite synth, or you may wish to have a template for strings only. I encourage you to customise, but make sure you back up of course.

How to port a section from the template into a pre-existing project

In order to achieve this you will need to work with a folder track and its associated instrument preset.

Firstly export the folder and import into a new project. Then load an instance of HALion SE and search for the relevant instrument preset and load it. Check the MIDI channels all correspond.

You can use track archives or track presets (saving a folder as a single track preset). See the Cubase 6 operation manual

Using the maps and Multi Presets, supplied separately

In some circumstances you may wish to load only a single expression map, or perhaps an instrument group. This is why they have been supplied separately. If you load the Halion Sonic Se presets make sure you check the project track MIDI channels correspond. Be aware that the finger cymbals and the wood and temple blocks in the supplied project also have drum maps and input transformers

BTW: I recommend you save all of the instrument presets to Media Bay and the expression maps to folder of your choice.

Feedback

My forum name is ZeroZero and despite appearances I am <u>no</u> Guru ;) *I cannot offer support with this project. I do not work for Steinberg and am a user not a developer.* However, I do intend to post on the Cubase 6 forum a post called *"Free full Halion Symphonic Orchestra SE Template and expression maps"* with a link to the files. If you wish to make any comment I should be pleased to hear via this route, as I shall keep an eye on the post from time to time. In particular I am interested in what systems can run the cpr, or how you have customised the project. If you find any errors then you can post them here too and maybe someone can help.

I want to especially thank *Vic_France! (AKA Fred Flintstone)* of Cubase forum fame for all his help and testing.

This template has taken weeks of hard work by both of us. We give it to the Cubase Forum Community out of gratitude for the community support over many years.

Enjoy!

ZeroZero

Additional testing data

(NB: You may not wish to read this unless you are a geek!)

RAM Readings on my Win 7 64 bit Cubase 6 64 bit machine (with 12 gig of RAM) (Surround format) :

With Just operating system loaded 2.03 gig (plus AVG and a few other minor additions)

With Cubase 6 (64 bit) but No project loaded. 2.54 gig

With a Blank project loaded 2.54 gig

With a blank Surround template 2.54 gig

With all the HALion Symphony Orchestra SE Full Master Version 1.cpr, loaded and all instruments armed and ready to play 5.09 gig

With all the HALion Symphony Orchestra SE Full Master Empty Slots Version 1.cpr loaded

With all the HALion Symphony Orchestra SE Full Master Version 1.cpr, loaded, and all the instruments UNARMED (*Meaning the square boxes are unchecked in HALion sonic SE) and *Not* ready to play 4.25 gig.

With all the HSO instruments and all the instruments UNARMED and Not ready to play *and* FROZEN 2.69 gig.

Conclusions:

1] The Blank CPRs are negligible in size.

2] Surround working is not significantly effecting the size of the project

3] 9 instances of HALion SE come in at approx. 64 gig load (difference between armed and unarmed readings), roughly seven gigs each instance.

4] Most gain is acquired by freezing as this clears the HSE instance footprint.

5] The difference between the maximum 'ready to go instrument' (4.89), and the unloaded, unfrozen, instrument (2.69) is 2.2 gig redeemed.

Cubase with one loaded instrument (woodwinds) 2.84 gig with none 2.62 gig (therefore woodwinds+HS SE= .22gig)

Cubase with one loaded instrument (violins) 3.14 gig with none 2.62 gig (therefore violins alone+HSSE= 0.52gig)

My system with nothing loaded 2.01 gig (therefore subtract approx. 2.03 gig from above figures as required.

From these calculations it appears Cubase 64 bit comes in at .5 of a gig unloaded.