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**Exploring the Rhodes MK8 Piano with Hot Chip's Alexis Taylor**

**London, United Kingdom, August 8th, 2024 — Alexis Taylor, keyboardist and lead singer of the UK band Hot Chip, shares his first impressions of the Rhodes MK8 piano. Taylor discusses the distinctive qualities of the MK8 and provides insights into his experience with this latest evolution of the classic Rhodes sound.**

**A Longstanding Love for Rhodes Instruments**

Alexis Taylor’s connection to the Rhodes brand dates back to his early years. "I became aware of the instrument because of Stevie Wonder’s records, particularly 'Innervisions.' Watching footage of him playing the Rhodes in the 1970s drew me to its warm, gentle, and thick sound, which is quite different from a traditional piano," Taylor shared. He was inspired by the Rhodes used in songs like 'Still Crazy After All These Years' by Paul Simon and 'Waterfalls' by Paul McCartney.

Taylor's journey playing the Rhodes piano began when he borrowed one from Stephen Bass of Moshi Moshi, the label that signed Hot Chip. "Using it on tour and in London gigs was crucial for creating the funky sound in Hot Chip’s music," he explained. Influenced by Miles Davis’s electric era, Taylor incorporated Rhodes's overdrive and distortion qualities into Hot Chip's live sound. Eventually, he purchased his own Rhodes, starting with a Mark II and later adding a Rhodes bass piano and a 54-key model. "These instruments have been integral to my music, both for composing songs and performing live. The Rhodes has been my go-to instrument for the last 20 years," Taylor remarked.

**First Impressions of the Rhodes MK8**

Taylor was invited to try the Rhodes MK8 at The House of St. Barnabas in London and received the piano for a short loan to explore its capabilities further. One of the standout features he highlighted was the MK8's built-in effects, which include a VCA Compressor, 4-stage Phaser, Bucket Brigade Chorus, and Delay. These effects eliminate the need for external pedals, making it convenient and inspiring. "These effects are very playable and enjoyable to tweak, which allows for interactive experimentation," Taylor noted. "They've managed to include all these effects without making the interface too busy or overwhelming, unlike some digital keyboards."

**Versatility and Inspiration**The MK8's versatility was another standout feature for Taylor. "The built-in modulation effects are integral to how I like to play. Not having to pack and plug in all those pedals is certainly appealing," Taylor explained. "You can make the Rhodes feel like a pretty crazy sounding synthesizer. It can be wild and experimental or become the familiar, pleasing sound of the Rhodes from the late 60s and early 70s. It's capable of a big dynamic range, from extreme noise improvisations to gentle, luxurious sounds. There are a lot of options without feeling overwhelming, which is great for an instrument."

**Keyboard Action and Unique Character**Taylor found the keyboard action of the MK8 particularly satisfying. "The action felt really good to play, which is a big part of why I enjoy playing Rhodes pianos," he stated. This tactile experience added to his overall positive impression of the instrument.

Taylor continues, "It's exciting for me, the possibilities of playing with it. Even in the week I borrowed it, the MK8 helped me generate ideas for a pulsing rhythmic element to a song I was writing that otherwise didn't really have a pulsing rhythmic quality to it," he noted. "Every Rhodes I've ever played has a unique character, and the MK8 is no exception. It's inviting and responds differently, making it a pleasure to interact with."

**About Rhodes**

For Rhodes loyalists around the world, this is a new chapter in Rhodes history; not a new book. With the Rhodes MK8, we’re returning to the principles, aesthetic, craftsmanship and pride of Harold Rhodes’ originals. We’re paying homage to the past with our gaze fixed firmly on what lies ahead.

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