

Transoniq

Hacker

The Independent News
Magazine for Ensoniq Users

Déjà Vu... The Old School Revisited

Pat Finnigan



Product: *MidiMark Sample Disks*.
For: EPS/16+/ASR/TS Series, MR Workstations.
Price: \$6 each (\$5 each over 10-disk order).
From: MidiMark Productions, P.O. Box 217, Whittier, CA 90608,
phone: 800-301-6434 (voice),
562-699-8064 (fax).

Once again we're seeing that same arc of fashion returning to vintage keyboards: Everybody seems to have forgotten how impossible they were to keep in tune or how dangerous it could be to move one without something going wrong. Remember your first MiniMoog? You know, the one that wouldn't stay in tune longer than three minutes until you installed the \$650 Stabilized Oscillator Board Upgrade Kit? Or the Oberheim 8-voice that changed scaling at random?

Those things died for a reason, you know. Like, some things simply weren't meant to be (the ARP Quadra, at \$4k was one of those behemoths). That's where the term "technoweenies" got started — ya really wanna go back to that?

Well, MidiMark certainly does, and they've got the perfect solution: Use the Malvern box as reliable technology (read "stay in tune," "reliable," "user-friendly") to play back those sounds of yesteryear. And play them back with a bit more spit and polish than was available back in those Crustaceous periods, at that. Besides being a very reputable company (MidiMark has been doing this since 1989), MM has quite the veritable plethora of samples to satisfy the most demanding palettes, and this month we peer into that void of retro instruments some of us (like me) have spent the past 30 years trying to forget...

The Roses

The MiniMoog and Prodigy are well represented in this 10-disk collection. Although they account for only two of the ten I received for review, samples were clean with no aliasing artifacts or loop ticks. Of course the Prodigy sam-

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ples are largely bass samples (how interesting can a primary waveform get?) and are on the money. The "New Kraft Bass" is one of my faves, with just enough sustain to put it out of the "sequencer bass" blip school. Some hard sync bass samples are present here that I wasn't aware could be done on a Prodigy; makes for interesting fare. The term "old skool" is used sweepingly on many of the titles, and well, I can't define it other than "primary waveform synthesis" Must be some trendy westcoast descriptor that hasn't hit here in the midwest yet. The MiniMoog disk offers "Low Bass," the sine wave-rap kick boomer wave; one of my faves was the "Clinton Bass," the kind of square wave P-Funk bass that only a Mothership could love. Mini lead sounds aren't ignored though; you'll find the obligatory ELP's *Lucky Man* modular Moog solo wave in "MMP Moog Lead," and although you'll have to wash it through an FX box if you're dancing on an EPS Classic, it's tre' cool on all the other Malvern sampler variants. Kudos to MM for supplying them on 800k (rather than ASR/TS-exclusive 1.4 Mb floppies.

Oddly enough, there were two Casio CZ-1000 sample disks in the set I received that, if memory serves me correctly, represent the first bank of eight patches on this instrument. And yeah, the "Brass Ensemble" was the first factory patch on a CZ-1000 at A1 — it's also the first file on the disk. "Sgt. Pepper's Pipe" is more "Strawberry Field" than "Lonely Hearts Club." Enough blow by blow; at \$6 a whack, you can afford to be brave and audition them personally.

The Thorns

Hey guys, put a ribbon in your printer! The labels were so dim it was tough to read what files were on what disk. I know, demo copies for review. [TH — MidiMark assures us that they've since changed their ribbon — "...200% easier to read."] Not much patch select action going on here, but when you're working with primary waveforms, whacha gonna do? I suggest filter envelope tweaks and chorus under those two soon-to-be-extinct patch select buttons. Then again, I've griped at companies that do just that and copy it to all the sample files, so minor beef.

That's all I got to gripe about...

Change of Address

Please let us know at least four weeks in advance to avoid missing any issues. The Post Office really will NOT reliably forward this type of mail. (Believe us, not them!) We need to know both your old and your new address. (Issues missed due to late or no change notification are your own dumb fault — we mailed them!)

The Deal

I've reviewed MidiMark's CDs in the past, and some of these sounds remind me of sounds I've heard from the opticals. So while this may or may not be the case, it's a credit to MidiMark to make these available in floppy form (and at this price) for people who don't have a CD reader (or the budget for those \$199 CDs, for that matter), and on 800k at that. Documentation isn't much to speak of, other than a listing of all the disks in the MidiMark collection. Each disk is cataloged and numbered, so again, when you're working with primary waveforms, what's to say?

Again, I'm gonna be out front here and proclaim my bias about letting these old unreliable instruments die a natural death, but using a Malvern box to capture the essence of this archaic technology does create a market niche as well as capture the sonic (and not so sonic) rumblings the old analog school instigated. These guys do a great job: subtle little things like locking the disk so you can't accidentally save your edits over the master; attention to detail most vendors overlook is fairly evident here like personalized labels (no white generics here). Good stuff from one of the most reputable firms in the business.

The MidiMark library (in its entirety) is somewhere in the Gig range, so there's something sure to push your button in their library. This collection represents the trend coming full circle again, and whether we like it or not, samplers are the perfect technology to take snapshots of the sounds those discrete, analog beasts groaned.

Good company, good warez, great prices, and formats for all those wondrous Malvern boxes, including the old ones we've come to try and NOT forget. Siskel and Ebert's two thumbs up works here. Great bang for the buck, great value. Looks like another winner to me... ■

Bio: When not answering broadcast NTSC/PAL video-capture questions for TrueVision, Pat Finnigan is a tech support person for RasterOps, a company that makes video boards and monitors for Mac and IBM platforms. He still uses a B-3 for a keyboard stand and watches the alpha channel.

Missing or Damaged Issues?

Every month we mail out thousands of issues and every month about a dozen get "misplaced" by the Post Office. If you're ever one of the winners of this lottery, just give us a call (503-227-6848, 8 am — 8 pm Pacific Time) and we'll be happy to mail a replacement copy — no prob. (However, if you accuse us of nefarious schemes to "rip you off," you will be offered a refund and given helpful subscription info for other musician magazines.)

Front Panel

RND (🎵)

Hacker News

Clarification: The mysterious Hackerpatch appearing in Issue #133 was created by Gregoire Marchal, of Vanves, France, and is part of a set of thirteen patches that he donated to our ftp site — where they're still available for downloading.

With the MRs shipping, a new wave of Ensoniq owners is starting to show up. As is usually the case, our coverage of a new instrument lags its introduction by a couple months. If you're one of these new owners, how about sharing some of your discoveries, tips, applications or whatever? That's how just about all of our current writers got started. Meanwhile, the MRs are starting to show up in the Interface, and... don't forget that sounds for the ASR/TS families can also be used in the MR keyboards (with Flash memory).

Long-time *Hacker* writer Charles R. Fischer died on Sunday, July 29, 1996 at age 38. The apparent cause of death was a heart attack. (Chuck was a diabetic for years and suffered poor health because of it.) Chuck was well-known and liked in the electronic music industry. If you wish to express your sympathy to Chuck's family, you can send cards to: Purita Fischer (Chuck's widow), 3164 Birmingham Ave., Apt. 101, San Pablo, CA 94806 or Mr. and Mrs. Fischer (parents), 1561 Kildare, Pinole, CA 94564. As per Chuck's wishes, Purita Fischer is going to sell off the large number of electronic instruments from his home studio. Long-time friend and Senior Editor of *Electronic Musician Magazine*, Steve Oppenheimer is organizing and appraising the equipment. The money raised by the sale will be a great help to Purita. Further information can be obtained from Steve at *EM* or at steveop@well.com. Chuck will be greatly missed.

HYPERSOVIQ

New Product Announcements

WAVEBOY Industries is pleased to announce the *Demolition Disk* — a new effects disk for the Ensoniq ASR and EPS-16 Plus. The *Demolition Disk* contains GRAIN-STORM, PITCH-WARP, and LO-FIDELITY. Each is an effect "plug-in" that becomes the bank effect. They offer dozens of ways to twist, bend, warp, decimate, injure, transform, transmogrify, transliterate and just plain mess up a sound.

GRAIN-STORM is a kind of spray can for audio. The technique is also known as granular synthesis. It takes the incoming sound and chops it into thousands of very short pieces, called grains. Then it flings them out across the spectrum at random times and pitches, creating a cloud of dense sound. The amount of fidelity to the original signal varies from "enhanced" to "totally unrecognizable." Offers full modulation of the knobs for frequency spread, time spread, frequency shift, and grain length.

PITCH-WARP is more like a fun-house mirror for sound.

The technical term is Frequency Shifter. Each frequency component of a sound is changed by a different interval. This makes normal harmonic sounds become clangorous, inharmonic and bell-like. Drums and percussion can be shifted all over the spectrum without getting shorter, longer, speeding up or slowing down. A unique tone-balance control mixes between ring-modulator and frequency shifter sound. Supports MIDI, keyboard, and LFO modulation.

LO-FIDELITY means the destruction of fidelity as we know it. Conveniently limits the dynamic range, the bandwidth, the number of bits and the distortion level in a sound — down to the point where there is nothing left. Preset variations include TELEPHONE, ASTRONAUT, MIRAGE, and RETARDED.

The *Demolition Disk* is just \$39.95 including shipping. For further information, contact: Waveboy Industries, P.O. Box 233, Paoli, PA 19301. Phone: 610-251-9562.

In Search of the Perfect Sample

Sampling 101 — Part 1

Tom Shear

So, you just bought one o' them nifty Ensoniq samplers. Congratulations. I'm guessing you've already stayed up for about three days straight without sleep or food playing with your new toy and isolating yourself from your friends and entire family. I'm also guessing that if this is your first sampler (or even if it isn't), you are feeling completely overwhelmed by how much there is to learn. So, over the next couple months, I'd like to try and help take a little of the bite out of that learning curve and save you the hours of banging your head against the wall. (Heck, just look at my picture... you don't want that to happen to *you*, do you?) This month, I'm going to share some tips on insuring that you get professional-sounding samples. As you've probably already discovered, it's not as easy as you might think, but hopefully, if you follow some of the suggestions below, you'll find yourself a couple steps closer to that elusive perfect sample.

Your Source

This is an important consideration. What is it you're sampling and how are you getting it into your sampler? The classic computer programming credo "GIGO" (garbage in, garbage out) is especially applicable to sampling. If the source you are sampling is noisy, grainy, and all-around terrible-sounding, don't expect your sampler to be able to miraculously transform it into a bright, sparkly gem. You'll need to tune your ears up a little more than you might be used to... is there noise in the source sample? If trying to sample an instrument from a tape, are there other instruments playing in the background that might interfere? If you intend to loop the sample, are there irregularities in the source that might make getting a smooth loop difficult?

Also, consider where the sound is coming from. If it's coming from cassette, or your old Fisher-Price Record Player, you're going to have to expect some noise in the samples. If you must sample off cassette or vinyl, be sure to use the best deck/turntable you can get your hands on. Much more preferable (unless you're intentionally going for noisy/lo-fi sounds) would be to sample off CD or DAT with DAT having a slight advantage because it's recordable. With a recordable medium, you can record a sound

only once and repeatedly get the exact same performance while doing the actual sampling. This is especially useful with acoustic instruments.

Speaking of which, if you're using a microphone to capture the sample, you'll again want to use the best one you can manage to find. A \$30 Radio Shack special may seem more cost-effective, but your sample of Uncle Louie's prized Strad is always going to sound like a Strad fed through a \$30 microphone. Of course, if you're recording a synth or something with a line output, you can also jack that directly into your sampler. Whatever the source, make sure that the cables you're using to patch the equipment together are in good condition and are free from bad connections, excessive noise, or the dreaded 60-cycle hum.

You might also consider feeding the source through an Equalizer as you sample it. If that kick drum needs a little more bottom or if the cymbal needs a little more sizzle, you can fine tune it before committing the sound to your sampler. Of course, you may also feed the sound through other effects, but keep in mind that the longer the audio chain to your sampler's input, the more noise you'll be adding to the sound. It's also important to remember that sounds sampled through effects are significantly more difficult to loop (a bear we'll wrassle next time...). Finally, keep in mind that once that particular effect is on the sample, you're married to it. If you get into the studio and wish there wasn't so much chorus on your Strat sample, you're out of luck.

So there we are. All of that time and thought and we haven't even pressed the "sample" button yet. Sort of disproves the anti-sampling contingent's theory that sampling is for lazy people, doesn't it? Next time, we'll press that intimidating button and be on our way to one heck of a great sounding sample. Until then, spend some time with your family. They're starting to worry about you. ■



Bio: Tom Shear has never been a beginner. Nope. Not him.

Out of the SD-1 Fryer and Into the Pan...

Clayton Lewis

Here's a tip for the more novice-type hackers just starting out on how to get the most out of your panning controls and the four audio outputs.

As with almost all of the Ensoniq gear, the SD-1 has four audio outputs — two mains and two auxiliary, both left and right respectively. Lotsa people only use the mains, but there is so much sonic flexibility to be had by using all four.

You can change how a sequencer track is routed by using TRACK EFFECTS — the choices are CNTL, FX-1, FX-2, DRY, VOICE and AUX. This tip is limiting itself to the last two. By using AUX it allows you to by-pass the internal FX and increase the flexibility of your mixing.

Let's put together a simple 4-track sequence and do a quick mixdown. Track one will be our drums with the output set to AUX. Track two will be the bass, output set to AUX for a nice clear sound. Track three will be an electric piano set to VOICE and let's make four a rhythmic guitar part also set to VOICE.

Now, heading over to the mixing board — you will need 4 channels on your board for this. Plug cables into all four of the outputs on the back of the SD-1 and route each one to its own channel on the board. CH1 will be main out left, CH 2... main out right, CH 3... aux out left, and CH 4 aux out right. Our main concern now is the panning, so leave the pan controls on the board at center for now. Got all that? Great, let's head back to the SD-1 now and record your new tune.

Now, using the same sequence press the PAN button in the performance section. For all the tracks it should read VOI, which means the panning is set to whatever the program is set up for. Press the soft button for track one (our drums). Now use the value slider to change the position in the stereo field — +00 being

hard left, +50 is center and +99 hard right. Panning allows you to aurally emulate the setup of a performing group on stage so you hear that instrument in the same part of the stereo field as you would hear it in the live performance.

We'd like to keep the kick drum and the snare in the center of the mix but the hi hats, toms and cymbals need to be put in their proper "stereo place." If you've chosen a drum sound that uses an Ensoniq drum map, chances are the sounds are already panned. The bass track is next, so select that one. In most commercial music today the bass is driving force and it should be a solid part of the mix so the best place for the bass is to be is dead center. Move the slider until it reads +50. Moving on to track 3 and 4. Three is our electric piano playing the nice little chords to our little tune. We don't want to clutter up the middle of the stereo field and we want our piano to have its own space. So by moving the slider slightly off center around +35 (just to the left of center) should suffice. We don't want to push it all the way to +00 or +99 which would put the sound to the far side of the field and would sound unnatural for our demonstration. Track 4 will be put just right of center so by sliding the slider to +75 should be just about right.

So we have our drums in the center of the stereo field along with the bass for kick-butt drive. The piano is a little to the left and the guitar line is just off to the right. Now, you can add more tracks if you wish and by experimenting with the pan settings you can create a space for all of your tracks. By using outboards FX and bypassing the internal FX using AUX for an output you process your drums and your bass separately from the rest of your mix. ■

Bio: Clayton owns and operates a small recording studio called BNM Productions just outside Baltimore and is trying to figure out what BNM really means...

Stuff That Only the SQ-80 Can Do

Part 1

Kirk Slinkard

I believe it's official now that Ensoniq's ESQs and SQ-80 are considered dinosaurs. They are classic subtractive synthesizers that use a combined digital/analog technology and have a lot of flexibility and synthesizing power few synthesizers made since can match. After these were made, Ensoniq joined the bandwagon of making more organ-like sample-playback synthesizers with a simpler voice architecture, whose main strength was the quality and quantity of waveforms included (although Ensoniq does seem to include more extra synthesizing features than other brands). This was a wise move on their part because most of the people who buy synthesizers nowadays are not really synthesists, but pianists, organists, and the like, and don't want to get much into the components of sound. So older synthesizers with more exotic features like the ESQs and SQ-80 are becoming rare treasures for sonic surgeons who like to mess around with the insides of their sounds.

In the *Transoniq Hacker*, quite a few articles have been written about the ESQs, but not many specifically about the SQ-80 which is basically an ESQ-1 with the addition of a second release available on the envelopes for reverb effects, exponential velocity, several more waveforms, a slightly brighter output stage, and maybe one or two other things. In this article and in part two, we will take a brief glimpse at some of these extra waveforms and the unusual things they can do that you won't hear out of any other instrument unless it's playing SQ-80 samples. For part one, we look at a couple of examples of SQ-80 waveforms taken out of their standard context and used in unique ways, and for part two we look at the way that some of the SQ-80-exclusive waves behave in a very strange way when used with SYNCing and audio-frequency Amplitude Modulation.

The first patch "NORGAN" uses all three of the GLINT waveforms. These waves are designed to add high frequency brightness or "glint" to a sound that doesn't change pitch (much) across the keyboard.

Each GLINT wave is centered around a different frequency. This is a clever way of getting three whole sounds from very little waveform memory, as well as a family of waveforms dedicated to a very specific function which I haven't seen on any other instrument. For this patch, they are all combined into one sound in an organ format and lowered a few octaves. The result is a combination of different organ tones that keep folding back in pitch as you play up or down the keyboard. The tone changes every few notes and repeats every two octaves. Since an envelope was used to lower the pitch on these waves, I was able to program in a "rising reverb" effect after the note is released. The MOD WHEEL lowers the pitch one octave, and pressure gives a weird tremolo effect.

The second layered patch uses the complex VOICE3

SQ-80 PROG: NORGAN								BY: Kirk Slinkard		
	OCT	SEMI	FINE	WAVE	MOD#1	DEPTH	MOD#2	DEPTH		
OSC 1	+0	00	00	GLINT1	ENV1	+49	WHEEL	-24		
OSC 2	+0	00	00	GLINT2	ENV1	+49	WHEEL	-24		
OSC 3	+0	00	00	GLINT3	ENV1	+49	WHEEL	-24		
	LEVEL	OUTPUT		MOD#1	DEPTH	MOD#2	DEPTH			
DCA 1	50	ON		LFO1	+63	*OFF*	-			
DCA 2	50	ON		LFO2	+63	*OFF*	-			
DCA 3	50	ON		LFO3	+63	*OFF*	-			
	FREQ	Q	KEYBD	MOD#1	DEPTH	MOD#2	DEPTH			
FILTER	051	00	00	ENV2	+63	*OFF*	-			
	FINAL VOL	PAN	PAN MOD	DEPTH						
DCA 4	63	08	KBD2	-63						
	FREQ	RESET	HUMAN	WAV	L1	DELAY	L2	MOD		
LFO 1	13	OFF	ON	SAW	00	00	-	PRESS		
LFO 2	14	OFF	ON	SAW	00	00	-	PRESS		
LFO 3	15	OFF	ON	SAW	00	00	-	PRESE		
	L1	L2	L3	LV	T1V	T1	T2	T3	T4	TK
ENV 1	-63	-63	-63	00L	00	00	00	00	63	00
ENV 2	+40	+40	+40	00L	00	00	00	00	10R	00
ENV 3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
ENV 4	+63	+63	+63	00L	00	03	00	00	10R	00
	SYNC	AM	MONO	GLIDE	VC	ENV	OSC	CYC		
MODES	OFF	OFF	OFF	00	OFF	OFF	ON	OFF		
	SPLIT/LAYER	S/L PRG	LAYER	L PRG	SPLIT	S PRG	SPLIT KEY			
	OFF	-	OFF	-	OFF	-	-			

waveform in an unusual way by simultaneously modulating the frequency and amplitude from an LFO, giving a big diesel engine sound (Oscillator 3 in the "HLCPT2." patch). No other wave I tried comes this close to the real thing — only VOICE3 has the right harmonic and inharmonic content. For this example, it is used as part of a helicopter sound. "HLCPT1" has "HLCPT2" layered with it to get the complete sound.

To play this patch, select "HLCPT1," tap just one key and wait a few seconds. If you want to hear just the diesel engine effect by itself, play "HLCPT2." while the mod wheel is forward.

Next time, we take a look at some really weird behavior found in some of the SQ-80's waves. See you then. ■

SQ-80 PROG: HLCPT1										BY: Kirk Slinkard											
		OCT	SEMI	FINE	WAVE	MOD#1	DEPTH	MOD#2	DEPTH												
OSC 1		-2	00	00	STEAM	KBD2	-63	*OFF*	-												
OSC 2		+1	00	00	NOISE2	KBD2	-63	*OFF*	-												
OSC 3		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-												
		LEVEL	OUTPUT	MOD#1	DEPTH	MOD#2	DEPTH														
DCA 1		63	ON	*OFF*	-	*OFF*	-														
DCA 2		63	ON	*OFF*	-	*OFF*	-														
DCA 3		-	OFF	-	-	-	-														
		FREQ	Q	KEYBD	MOD#1	DEPTH	MOD#2	DEPTH													
FILTER		000	00	00	LFO1	+63	ENV4	+28													
		FINAL VOL	PAN	PAN MOD	DEPTH																
DCA 4		63	08	ENV3	-63																
		FREQ	RESET	HUMAN	WAV	L1	DELAY	L2	MOD												
LFO 1		42	OFF	ON	TRI	63	00	-	*OFF*												
LFO 2		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-												
LFO 3		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-												
		L1	L2	L3	LV	T1V	T1	T2	T3	T4	TK										
ENV 1		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-										
ENV 2		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-										
ENV 3		-63	+63	+63	00L	00	50	63	63	63	00										
ENV 4		+22	+63	+63	00L	00	37	55	59	58R	00										
		SYNC	AM	MONO	GLIDE	VC	ENV	OSC	CYC												
MODES		ON	OFF	OFF	00	OFF	OFF	OFF	ON												
		SPLIT/LAYER	S/L PRG	LAYER	L PRG	SPLIT	S PRG	SPLIT KEY													
		OFF	-	ON	HLCPT2	OFF	-	-													

SQ-80 PROG: HLCPT2										BY: Kirk Slinkard											
		OCT	SEMI	FINE	WAVE	MOD#1	DEPTH	MOD#2	DEPTH												
OSC 1		+3	11	00	BREATH	KBD2	-63	LFO3	+02												
OSC 2		+3	09	12	BREATH	KBD2	-63	LFO3	+02												
OSC 3		-3	11	06	VOICE3	KBD2	-63	LFO1	+05												
		LEVEL	OUTPUT	MOD#1	DEPTH	MOD#2	DEPTH														
DCA 1		37	ON	WHEEL	-63	*OFF*	-														
DCA 2		37	ON	WHEEL	-63	*OFF*	-														
DCA 3		58	ON	LFO1	+12	*OFF*	-														
		FREQ	Q	KEYBD	MOD#1	DEPTH	MOD#2	DEPTH													
FILTER		019	00	00	ENV4	+63	*OFF*	-													
		FINAL VOL	PAN	PAN MOD	DEPTH																
DCA 4		50	08	ENV3	-63																
		FREQ	RESET	HUMAN	WAV	L1	DELAY	L2	MOD												
LFO 1		63	OFF	OFF	TRI	63	00	-	*OFF*												
LFO 2		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-												
LFO 3		27	OFF	OFF	NOI	55	00	-	*OFF*												
		L1	L2	L3	LV	T1V	T1	T2	T3	T4	TK										
ENV 1		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-										
ENV 2		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-										
ENV 3		-63	+63	+63	00L	00	50	63	63	63	00										
ENV 4		+28	+63	+63	00L	00	36	58	57	57R	00										
		SYNC	AM	MONO	GLIDE	VC	ENV	OSC	CYC												
MODES		OFF	OFF	OFF	00	OFF	OFF	OFF	ON												
		SPLIT/LAYER	S/L PRG	LAYER	L PRG	SPLIT	S PRG	SPLIT KEY													
		OFF	-	OFF	-	OFF	-	-													

DP/4 Custom Configs

Part III — An Example: The Rejuvenator

Steve Byhurst

In Parts One and Two I looked at my own methodology for creating custom-built configs. For this final part I will produce a real-life example following through the stages I have already presented.

Design and Preparation

A few months back I came across some early recordings of

mine which I had mastered onto compact cassette tape over ten years ago. Some of the tape was already showing signs of deterioration and so I was eager to transfer the recordings onto DAT so as not to permanently lose them.

The poor sound quality of the recordings was such that I wanted to process them to tidy-up and improve the quality before re-mastering. I decided that this was a job for my

trusty DP/4 and, as I didn't already have a config that did what I needed, I had to program a new one which I would call, for obvious reasons, the Rejuvenator.

The general purpose of the config was to make the DP/4 act as one multi-effect processor using all four units to process the stereo signal from a cassette player and send the improved stereo output to the DAT player. The answers in my design plan were as follows:

- (a) The algorithms required will be: a noise gate to clear up noise before the start and after the end of recording; a parametric EQ to get rid of any unwanted hums, clicks, etc.; an exciter to compensate for loss of frequencies in the original sound source; and a reverb to add some ambience to the somewhat dried-out recordings.
- (b) As I want to use the DP/4 as one integrated processor I can have one unit per effect. No multi-effect algorithms are required. I will use the Expander because it has the best noise gate, the comprehensive Parametric EQ, the Van Der Pol Filter for excitement(!), and the Hall Reverb as a good quality ambience provider.
- (c) I need to process stereo inputs so the cassette outputs will go into inputs 1 and 2.
- (d) The output to DAT will be in stereo from outputs 1 and 2.
- (e) The signal first of all needs to be processed by the Expander, then fed into the Parametric EQ, the Van Der Pol Filter, and finally the Hall Reverb. As I want a chain of effects, the units will be serially linked in that order with no feedback.
- (f) Because of the nature of this particular config, most of the algorithm settings need to be experimented with at the testing stage. Default values will be fine as a starting point.
- (g) It will be more useful to have the bypass mode set to Bypass rather than Kill for all four units.

I started my preparation by deciding that I would use one of the ROM templates as my base for programming as I didn't have an existing config that would be worth using. The design plan told me that I needed to set up a 1 source config using one 4 unit preset, so the first thing I had to do was create a new preset with all the required algorithms loaded in the correct processing order.

I created a 4-unit preset called "Rejuvenator" (to be consis-

tent) by using a "no effect" template I had in my preset library and loading in the algorithms from the standard 1 unit preset list one by one. Now I was ready for the creation of the config.

Config Programming and Testing

Config programming was, in this case, fairly simple. First, my plan told me I needed to select ROM preset 54, a "1 source:stereo in" type, to act as my template. Then I loaded up my prepared 4 unit preset and, as the preset was custom-made and needed no editing, went straight into config edit.

The type of source was, of course, already correct so no need to change that. I made links between all the units serial and set dry signal amounts to zero. The type of input to the units was set to stereo and all four units were set to bypass status so that I could test out the effect each algorithm had on the original signal. Finally, I christened the config with its proper name and wrote it to a spare preset.

The algorithm programming stage was especially important with this particular config as the parameters of each effect needed to be programmed mainly by alternately listening and then adjusting until the right result was achieved. They also depended on the variance in quality of the source signal and even the initial programmed values would need to be altered according to the changes in sound quality from individual recordings. I therefore decided to set up values which I thought would be right most of the time. I could always tweak them in real-time when it actually came to the re-mastering process.

First, I set all of the volume parameters to a full 99 so that each unit processed the full output of the unit that was feeding it. For mix values I set the first two units to a full 99 for full processing and the last two to an initial 00 as the exciter and reverb was not always required. I also decided that I would use MIDI to control the volume setting of unit D and thus the final volume amount sent to the DAT recorder. This provided me with a means to control overall volume by using something like a modulation wheel, and thus the ability to make smooth and more easily controlled fades.

The expander was carefully set up to get rid of unwanted noise at the beginning and end of tracks. It has parameters which enable quite sophisticated control of the way the noise gate functions but needs to be programmed according to the dynamics of any one piece of music. I was also able to override it in real-time by using the bypass button if I wanted manual control of the volume.

The parametric EQ was initially set up to have no effect on signals but when required could be used in a very subtle way to either cut noisy or boomy sounds, or boost bass or treble as required.

The Van Der Pol filter is normally used on individual sounds and you have to be very careful when using it on an entire mix, using only small amounts. It appears to be a very subtle effect but using the bypass switch to toggle between the original and effected sound can help to check what it is adding to signals. I set it up to give a mild effect when I needed it.

The reverb was required because some of my source recordings were very dry and desperately needed some ambience to bring them alive. Small amounts of a slightly-tweaked version of the hall reverb gave me what I wanted, adding some space to the sound without making it too smudged.

With all the parameters set to initial values I played one of my recordings through the DP/4 and tweaked away until I was happy, which actually didn't take too long. I found the

bypass and edit buttons very useful in checking out the processing of each algorithm. The end result was achieved and the quality of sound from the re-mastered recording was much improved.

That's It

If you are actually interested in using the Rejuvenator on your own recordings, I haven't provided a complete set of programming values because, as I have said, the settings of the algorithms will change according to the type of source signal. However, by following what I have written you should be able to program the unit preset and config parameters, and I leave the algorithm programming to you so that you can customize them to your own circumstances. Why not try out this method for yourself? Have a nice config! ■

Bio: Steve Byhurst is a thirty-something British composer of electronic music who is quite adamant that his compositions should not be classed as "New Age," "New Instrumental," or placed in any other meaningless category. So there!

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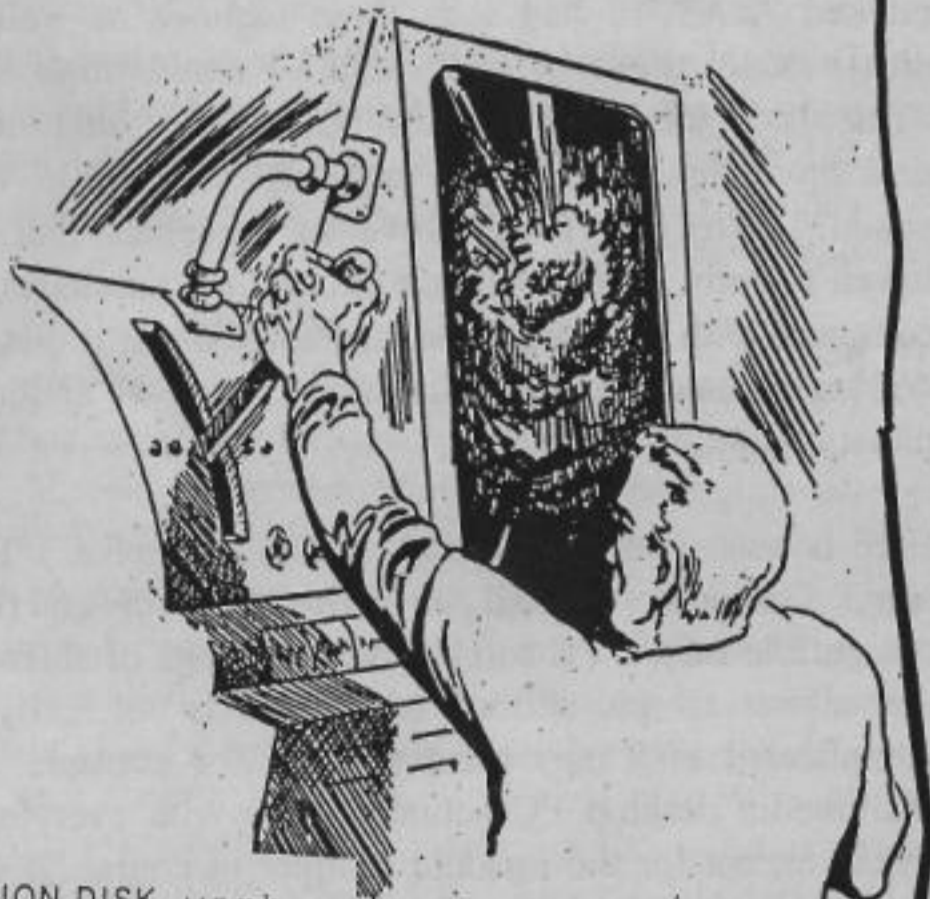
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WAVEBOY

Waveform Mutilation 101

Sampling A PC Sound Card

Jack Stephen Tolin

I am not sure if it is actually possible for anyone to use an Ensoniq sampler to sample sound effects and such and not enjoy or get a kick out of the whole process. As a matter of fact, experimenting with pitch shifting, modulating loops, adding digital effects, and on and on can go on and on! Certainly after we have been sampling non-stop for hours it can get hard to maintain that freshness. How soon we can forget the joy of our first sampling operation.

And speaking of getting a kick out of the whole process, I was wandering through the software on my multimedia computer one day when I discovered something rather interesting: sampling capability! Now I know what you must be thinking: "yeah, so what?" Right? Well, to me, that was just the point. I mean, I had seen the sound events list many times before. The audio station looked very nice, though seemingly deceptive with the section marked "DAT." I had seen these features as well as others many times before and all I could think was, "This is a joke, right? How could something on a desktop computer ever do anything worthwhile with sound?" Why don't we prove to ourselves that we haven't really wasted all our money by purchasing a computer with so much preloaded software in it that we don't even use (not to mention about which we are completely ignorant).

Here is what you will need: 1 Ensoniq sampler, 1 Personal Computer (I will be working from an IBM compatible PC), 1 PC soundcard, a package of software that allows sample editing. All of this is not really as complicated as it may seem at first. For example, my multimedia desktop PC actually came with everything listed, except for the Ensoniq sampler of course. It will come in handy if you've been able to spend some time playing around with both Ensoniq sampler and PC soundcard software. If not, then read on anyway...

As you can see in Figure 1, the sound card — at least

the one that I have (IBM compatible) — has a few connectors on it of which we can make use with our Ensoniq sampler, and without having to purchase an extra MIDI connector. The initial setup will allow your PC to sample from your Ensoniq. What I do is connect the soundcard to my Yamaha MT120 Multitrack Cassette Recorder which doubles as a mixer for both my Ensoniq boards. This also makes it easier since I have an adapter cable that suits this situation perfectly. I use a cord that, at the mixer end, is a double mono RCA and, at the PC line-in, is a single 3.5mm.

Figure 1: Sound Card Design (Voyetra Forte 16)

S			
O	LINE IN	<	(3.5mm Audio Jack for Stereo Line-in.)
U			
N	MIC	<	(3.5mm Audio Jack for Microphone Input.)
D			
	LINE OUT	<	(3.5mm Audio Jack for Stereo Line-out.)
C	SPK	<	(3.5mm Audio Jack for Speaker Output.)
A			
R	GAME	/	(D-SUB 25 connector for Joystick
D		\	& MIDI Interface.)

If you wanted to go direct, of course, you could; you would need at least one quarter-inch to 3.5mm cord, from your Ensoniq phones jack to your PC. (See Figure 2.) The other option would be a cord that goes from two quarter-inch jacks (from each individual channel out) to the 3.5mm PC.

Figure 2: Sampler Design (Ensoniq ASR-10)

E	PHONES	<	(.25 inch Audio Jack for Stereo Head-Phones.)
N			
S	LINE L	<	(Two .25 inch Audio Jacks for Mono Line-out.)
O	OUT R	<	
N			
I	LINE L	<	(Two .25 inch Audio Jacks for Mono Line-in.)
Q	IN R	<	(One on Mirage and EPS [16 PLUS].)

Keep in mind that you will have to adjust volume controls to get your desired setting. You can do this from the volume control of your Ensoniq (and mixer, if you

are using one). If you need to adjust your PC volume or gain, it is probably located under the particular sound card manufacturer's directory. In my PC, the command line is "C:\FORTE16\UTILITY\WINMIXC.EXE"; the software is located on drive C, the name of the card and directory is "FORTE16," the subdirectory is "UTILITY," and the command to execute the program is "WINMIXC.EXE." Running this command will bring up "Mixer: Play Control." You may want to adjust Master, but, before you do that, adjust your "CD/Line" control (unless, of course, your Master is all the way down).

Next we open up our DAT. In my computer, the command line is "C:\FORTE16\VOYETRA\WINDAT\WINDAT.EXE." A program opens up that looks much like a cassette deck in many ways with many sampler similarities. (If it does not, or if it only takes up part of the screen, try pressing the up arrow in the upper right corner of the DAT window.) It has a VU meter, rewind, stop, play, record, pause and forward transports, kHz, Bits and File size information read-outs, and more. The biggest difference between it and an Ensoniq sampler, though, is in the visual display. More on this later.

Try this. Find a special-effects sample on your Ensoniq — like a dog barking, a laser blast or something else that has a definite beginning and a definite end — and load. Turn off the effects processor to make it a dry sample. Next, hit the record button on your PC DAT. Mine starts blinking bright red. Next, hit the play button. Your DAT is now recording. Next, play a note on your Ensoniq, and hold the key down until the sound comes to its end. Then hit stop on your DAT.

Now the computer will visually display the sound you recorded. You will notice that, both on the beginning and on the end, there are flat-lines connected to the main body. These both represent the silence that existed between the time you started recording and the time you began playing the sound, and between the time the sound ended and the time you stopped recording.

With your mouse controller, place the cursor directly in front the main body on the flat-line while leaving a tiny portion of the flat-line, and push the left mouse button down. While holding the button down, pull it all the way to the beginning of the recorded signal and let go. If you don't quite get the cursor to where you want it, simply press the left mouse button again somewhere in your

wave-recorded work area and start over. When you have the part of the recording selected that you want to eliminate, hit Control X — OR — select Edit at the top of the page, and then Cut. You do the similar operation at the other end of the wave. If you screw up and accidentally cut something you didn't really want to, then just hit Control Z — OR — select Edit at the top of the page, and then Undo; this will undo your last command. Now hit play to hear your sample. Too quiet? Try selecting the entire sample display as if you were going to cut the entire thing, and then select Transforms, and then Normalize. This is the natural volume of your current sample. If it is still too quiet, adjust your soundcard from the mixer as we tried to do earlier.

What we have done is shown that by using a visual sample editor, we can easily eliminate unwanted excess in sample data. Whereas in the Ensoniq samplers we do the same thing by listening for the beginning and end points of the sample, we simply look at the display of the visual editor and see where it begins and ends. The same thing can be done when trying to find at what point a certain part of the sample is playing.

Although this PC sampler isn't any where near as equipped to handle and manipulate samples as the Ensoniq keyboard is, it certainly opens the door to some clever manipulating and stimulates creativity — at least, it did for me. Since I have discovered this, I have put many sounds from my Ensoniq disks onto my computer and vice versa. After visual manipulation, they can always be sampled back to the Ensoniq anyway.

This article, while not dealing with the professional, high-price samplers with MIDI sample dump capabilities, has sought to introduce you to PC sampling, and manipulation and general use of visual editing. In addition, by the same setup described earlier from the Ensoniq boards to the soundcard, you can also play your boards and hear them through your computer. This is also convenient for sampling performance bits and turning them into PC bits. Sample new uses for yourself! ■

Bio: Jack is currently attending Nazarene Theological Seminary in Kansas City, MO, programs progressive music with a contemporary flavor, and takes experimental sequencing, synthesis and sampling to new heights.

Dan Nigrin, Bump Stadelman

Glenn Govot, Bix Beitelman, Mark & Vicky Mikrut, Chris Gregory & Bill Goodman,
Jean Pascal, Ricky D

CD: *Out of Sync* (c) 1994.

Artist: Glitch (Dan Nigrin and Bump Stadelman).

Contact Info: Defective Records, 3041 Abell Ave., Baltimore, MD
21218. Phone: 410-243-3653. E-mail: dnigrin@welchlink.welch.jhu.edu.

Web site: www.welch.jhu.edu/homepages/geh/html/defective.html.

Equipment: Ensoniq EPS-16+, Waldorf Microwave, Sequential Circuits
Prophet 5 and Pro-1, Roland MC-202 and TR-909, Ensoniq DP/4, Ken-
ton Pro-2 MIDI-CV converter, Mackie CR-1604, Tascam DA-30, OSC
Deck II 2.2.

Glitch is busy! This duo's discography of fourteen published works documents the history of techno-industrial music in the Baltimore area, and includes vinyl, CDs, EPs, videos, and their latest full-length CD, *Out of Sync*. Nigrin and Stadelman have created a techno soundfest using wonderful sounds: juicy, fat analogs, raucous percussion samples, lots of sample/hold effects. They use the stereo field to great effect as well, utilizing a generous array of stereo multitap delays to keep the music dancin'. *Out of Sync* sticks with a consistent formula from track to track: repetitive melody line repeats ad infinitum (repetitive redundancy intended, and I meant to do it, too). What changes as these long tracks evolve is not the key signature, melody or arrangement per se, but textures, by judicious (and merciful) changes of synth patches and percussion arrangements.

Here are a few notes on some of the tracks:

"The Beat" — Sampled vocal phrases interspersed over Information Society beat and pulsing synth work.

"Synaptic Breakdown" — High-energy aerobics class tempo; another dose of InfoSoc.

"Kick the Habit" — Long (8:19).

"Human Beatbox" — Bobby McFerrin on a bad acid trip. Sequenced entirely with human vocal samples of razzberries, mouth-farts (one hopes, anyway), rolled "r's," and gasps. Fun!

"Black Sand" — A departure from the up-tempo tracks, this is a slow, ominous, almost ambient track.

"Can Die" — Make sure you're current on your Prozac. Truly induces depression. You ought to try it if you're too happy.

"Brain Circuit Surgery" — My fave track: numerous quotes from Carl Palmer's synth-drum solo on *Brain Salad Surgery*. Will make any ELP fan nostalgic.

"Bang Bang Boogie" — Expertly sequenced from sampled bites of "Bah-b-bah-b-dang-d-dang-diggy-diggy." Great job on this one, guys!

If you like trance, industrial, experimental music, then you really ought to get a hold of Glitch. It's easy to do: their slick website (complete with animated CDs) is found at:

<http://www.welch.jhu.edu/homepages/geh/html/defective.html>

Nigrin and Stadelman's grass-roots, living room (as opposed to basement) label, "Defective Records," is on the lookout for new artists in the same general genre. If you're interested in submitting a demo, visit their website and follow the rules.

Medium Takes:

CD: *Love Today* (c)1996.

Artist: Glenn Govot.

Contact Info: 901 Sunrise Ln #E, Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33304, Phone:
954-561-5690, Fax: 954-563-5503.

Equipment: Ensoniq TS-12 (with ASR-10 samples), Postex 280 multi-
tracker, Alesis Quadraverb 2, 3630 Compressor, Sony A7 DAT, Yamaha
YMC-10 MIDI converter, Roland HP 3000S home piano, Gibson Les
Paul, old Fender tube amp.

You can't tell a CD by its cover: clean-cut Glenn Govot is leaning contemplatively against a Young Chang grand piano with a dreamy, far-away look in his eye... one ex-

pects to hear yet another new age piano album. But instead we're treated to a tasty "tamed" alternative rock CD with very tricky vocals. He even sent a lollipop with his CD! (My favor can't be bought, but don't let that stop you from trying...)

Just about everything about this CD is a strength: Vocally, both melody and performance are top-notch, with really nice harmonies. Lyrics are a bit thin at times, but are catchy overall, mostly about being in love. Rhythm guitar work is very tasteful; Glenn has that slightly-distorted Spin Doctors thang down. Production is excellent, making this CD a joy to listen to. Glenn demonstrates a nice use of "digital black" from time to time with that screech-to-a-dead-stop-then-start-again effect. Stylistically, *Love Today* is very consistent from track to track. Alternative rock tracks segue into smooth, synthpad-washed bridges. As mentioned above, the overall sound is Spin Doctor-ish, very cool. Track 6, "*MIK!reprisal*," epitomizes Glenn's work: it sounds a lot like "*Two Princes*," then medleys into a very nice, moody piano ending a la "*Layla*." Great arranging and composition chops.

In addition to the lollipop, Glenn sent a neat promo pack along with his CD, and it looks like he's busy playing around the Ft. Lauderdale area. Check him out at that Bimini Boatyard or the Bahia Mar Pool, or contact him for info about his latest gigs. Great work!

CD: *Freedom Drive* (c) 1995.

Artist: Bix Beitelman.

Contact Info: P.O. Box 93, Altoona, WI 54720-0093, Ph: 715-835-3991,

Email: SFCBIX@aol.com, Internet: <http://kspace.com/beitelman>.

Equipment: Ensoniq SQ-R 32 Voice Plus, Ensoniq SDP1, Master Tracks Pro.

Long ago a reviewer referred to Elton John's music as "wash and wear" because he cranked out catchy, hummable tunes, but few enduring classics. *Freedom Drive* is the instrumental version of this phenomenon: thirteen tracks of well-sequenced, superbly engineered tunes that somehow fail to engage the imagination after the CD player shuts down. Don't get me wrong, I don't have to be blown away by every CD, but even superb engineering doesn't always raise the level of compositional strengths. This project could find a home as a soundtrack for the "*Over [fill in the blank]*" travelogue series of videos, or Muzak (seriously, this is no putdown; one of my best friends has submitted demos to Muzak, which is

rumored to pay well). I've already mentioned the strengths: excellent engineering, sequencing and production, not to mention a great-looking package. But the tunes tend to be a bit weak in their predictable, simplistic melodic content. My suggestion: find a killer composer and sit under his or her tutelage. You've got a talent for clean production; raise your composing/arranging chops to the same level, and you'll have a winning combination.

All that said, the popularity of *Freedom Drive* shows another opinion: Bix's CD has received airplay and favorable reviews on a number of New Age radio programs, specifically on WKXE and WJCD in Norfolk, and on WVKR, where he was compared to Suzanne Ciani. Congratulations, Bix! You're getting your music heard in the right places.

Tape: *New Beginning* (c) 1995.

Artist: Music With Spirit (Mark & Vicky Mikrut).

Contact Info: 1512 Normandy Way, Leesburg, FL 34748.

Equipment: Ensoniq EPS-16+, EPS-M, Proteus/1 XR, Roland MKS-20, Yamaha TX-81Z, Rockman Sustainer and Stereo Chorus, Alesis MidiVerb II, Digitech DSP-128, Roland DEP-5, Yamaha REV-7, dbx 166, Aphex Type B, Atari 1040ST running SmpteTrack Gold, Yamaha SG2000, Ovation Elite, Fender Stratocaster guitars, AKG C1000S mics, Tascam 688, Tannoy PBM8's, Technics SV-DA10 DAT.

This duo calls itself "Music With Spirit," and it is that. Spirit definitely shines through in Vicky's strong, confident vocals. Mark and Vicky present ten tracks of folksy Christian pop tunes, produced in their well-equipped home studio. But there are some growing edges to think about: Pay closer attention to tuning the guitars; at times the pitch problems can be a distraction. Work hard on keeping tempo — if you have difficulty keeping a steady beat, let quantization come to the rescue! And finally, as is so often the case in this genre of music, the lyric writing could use a tune-up. Check out a summer poetry writing class or corroborate with respected lyricists. You've definitely got all the right ingredients, but woodshedding in these areas could let your spirit permeate your tracks unhindered.

Tape: *Primitive* (c) 1995 Chop 'n' Chunk Records.

Artist: Overcast (Chris Gregory & Bill Goodman).

Contact Info: 2401-B Bureson Ct, Austin, TX 78741, Ph: 512-442-7635.

Equipment: ASR-10, CZ 1000, Tascam 4-track, Mac Color Classis running Vision.

Their mission: "To capture the mood that is created by frustration and emotion in our lives." Mission accomplished! This creative duo is wringing every ounce of dark nightmarish sound possibilities from their gear. They "hope to have an industrial style edge with danceable beats." They do — and with enough ultra-low-end to put the "bass tapes" industry out of business. Carl Jung would have been impressed by Overcast's loosening of the shadow from the collective unconscious. Got a log-jam of angst in your soul? Get and play and dance to *Primitive*. Maybe it will keep you from hurting someone. My only complaint: this is only a four-song demo! Give us a CD!

Tape: *Vielfaure*.

Artist: Jean Pascal.

Contact Info: 28 Rue du Landy, 92110 Clichy, France, Ph: 47-31-59-98.

Equipment: Ensoniq ASR-10, EPS-16+, Yamaha DX7, Roland Jupiter 8, Akai S700, Roland U11, Yamaha TG55, SPX90, Midiverb, B77.

It's a glorious summer evening and I'm sitting at my favorite haunt at the beach listening to Basement Tapes, next to the railroad tracks. I just popped Jean Pascal's tape into the Walkman, and the first tune, "Urbain," opens with a train whistle! Instinctively, I look over to see the train and realize — no train! Heh, you fooled me Pascal, you dog. Oh yeah, the music... Jean gives us a true demo tape: nine short tracks showcasing his writing, performance and production chops, which are considerable. He covers funky techno stylings to sci-fi soundtracks, all produced with flair, panache and attitude. If the right people hear this (including Brakeman Bill), Jean could land some jingle or soundtrack-scoring gigs. Good luck!

CD: *Jazzy Moods* (c) 1995 T-Town Recordings.

Artist: Ricky D.

Contact Info: T-Town Recordings, Sharon J. Simmons, 17719 Pacific Ave So #352, Tacoma, WA 98387, Ph: 206-536-7381.

Equipment: Ensoniq ASR-10, Yamaha SY22, Proteus/1, Boss DR-660, Ensoniq DP/4, Alesis Midiverb III, Lexicon LXP-5, Alesis 3630 compressors, Tascam M1516 mixer, Alesis ADAT, Tascam DA-30 DAT, Cakewalk 5.0.

"T-Town" — Tacoma Town! Finally a Hacker from Our Fair City, Tacoma. Ricky states that he has only been

"messing around" on keyboards since '91, but this CD doesn't give you a clue. *Jazzy Moods* is aptly named; it is definitely mood-music with a funky edge. Highlights include "Sax Talk," a slow, funky groove with moody nightlife sax lines, and a not-half-bad sax patch! "Sunday Morning" — a slow hip-hop beat drives this contemplative piece, which is a bit monotonous with its 2-chord changes. Nice composition and arranging abounds on this 11-track CD. My complaint list: a number of the song endings fizzle, in my opinion; either work in some fade-outs, or keep those composition muscles flexing to the bitter end! Also, on a track or two, the synth patches and samples are out of tune with each other, creating an unwelcome tension. In another track, what sounds like a stray note sounds in the intro, and repeats with every trip around the intro hook. A tiny nitpick, but one of those things you notice. These aside, Ricky D has forged a path from his soulful heart to the DAT machine, and has given us some memorable tunes. Thanks for putting us on the map! ■

[TH — For the next few months, Hacker Basement Tapes is going to be in "catch-up mode." We've divided the column into two sections: A main review section, in which we'll try to have at least a couple reviews per month. A "Short Takes" section. This will just be a few sentences on some of the submissions that have been piling up the longest. If your music falls into this category, and you'd like to have a more thorough going-over, please feel free to re-submit.]

Tapes Recently Received

12 Bilder — Eirik Lie

The Tunesmiths — Miro Svetinsky

If you want your tape run through the wringer, err, *Hacker*, just mail it off to: Basement Tapes, *Transoniq Hacker*, 1402 SW Upland Dr., Portland OR 97221.



Bio: Steve Vincent produces demos and CDs at his home-based Portent Music, and can be reached via email at vincent@harbornet.com, or at his website at <http://www.kspace.com/vincent>.

Prog: Tone Clusters

By: Jack Carder, Springfield, VT

Notes: Play and hold a chord to hear another chord (a perfect fifth higher) fade in.

WAVE				LFO				AMP			
	1	2	3		1	2	3		1	2	3
Select Voice	On	On	Off	LFO Speed	35	35	-	Initial	88	88	-
Wave Class	StrngWave	StrngWave	-	Noise Rate	00	00	-	Peak	99	99	-
Wave	StrngEns	StrngEns	-	Level	00	00	-	Break	99	99	-
Delay Time	000	000	-	Delay	00	00	-	Sustain	86	86	-
Wave Direction	Forward	Forward	-	MODSRC	Wheel	Wheel	-	Attack	30	30	-
Start Index	70	70	-	Wave	Triangle	Triangle	-	Decay 1	32	32	-
MODSCR	LFO	LFO	-	Restart	Off	Off	-	Decay 2	81	81	-
MODAMT	-71	-71	-	FILTER				Release	52	52	-
Restrk Decay	51	51	-	Filter 1	3LoPass	3LoPass	-	Vel-Level	13	13	-
PITCH				Filter 2	1HiPass	1HiPass	-	Vel-Attack	19	19	-
Octave	0	0	-	FC1 Cutoff	106	000	-	Vel Curve	Linear	Linear	-
Semitone	0	+07	-	ENV 2	00	+99	-	Mode	Normal	Normal	-
Fine	0	+06	-	FC1 KBD	00	00	-	KBD Track	00	00	-
ENV1	00	00	-	MODSCR	LFO	LFO	-	OUTPUT			
LFO	00	00	-	MODAMT	00	00	-	VOL	76	84	-
MODSCR	LFO	LFO	-	FC2 Cutoff	000	000	-	Boost	Off	Off	-
MODAMT	00	00	-	ENV2	00	00	-	MODSRC	LFO	LFO	-
KBD Pch Track	On	On	-	FC2 KBD	00	00	-	MODAMT	00	00	-
Glide	Off	Off	-	FC1MOD-FC2	On	On	-	KBD Scale	-23	Zone	-
Glide Time	00	00	-	ENV1				Key Range	C5-C7	E4-F6	-
ENV1				ENV2				Output Bus	FX2	FX2	-
Initial	-	-	-	Initial	-	00	-	Priority	Med	Med	-
Peak	-	-	-	Peak	-	35	-	Pan	+98	-98	-
Break	-	-	-	Break	-	84	-	Vel window	000	000	-
Sustain	-	-	-	Sustain	-	30	-	EFFECTS — HALL REVERB			
Attack	-	-	-	Attack	-	58	-	FX-1	25	FX-2	25
Decay 1	-	-	-	Decay 1	-	54	-	Decay Time	25	Diffusion	50
Decay 2	-	-	-	Decay 2	-	55	-	Detune Rate	38	Detune Depth	12
Release	-	-	-	Release	-	66	-	HF Damping	53		
Vel-Level	-	-	-	Vel-Level	-	00	-	HF Bandwidth	93		
Vel-Attack	-	-	-	Vel-Attack	-	00	-	LF Decay	+07		
Vel Curve	-	-	-	Vel Curve	-	Linear	-	MOD (Dest)	Decay		
Mode	-	-	-	Mode	-	Normal	-	BY (MODSRC)	ModWheel		
KBD Track	-	-	-	KBD Track	-	00	-	MODAMT	+29		

The Hack: This pad, reminiscent of Roland's ubiquitous "Soundtrack" patch, is well-suited for atmospheric situations where you can hold a chord and let it develop. Our friend Mr. Carder, no stranger to fifth tunings (check out his patch in *Hacker #130*), mentions several tasty voicings to try, such as major and minor seventh chords, ninths, etc. Really though, just about anything sounds interesting, from a simple major triad, which becomes a major ninth chord, to a sharp nine/flat thirteen chord, which becomes a, um... well I don't know what you'd call it, but it sure is interesting. Notice that voice 2 is not only tuned a fifth higher, it's also slightly sharp, which fattens up any instances where both voices wind up sounding the same note.

It's a nice effect, but I'd like to hear voice 2 come in a bit sooner, and stay around longer. Change the attack on voice 2's envelope 2 to 45, and the sustain to 60. Also, the output

section of voice 2 utilizes the "zone" setting to limit the section of the keyboard in which the voice will sound. Depending on the musical application, it might be better to have the higher voice taper off instead. Set the key range to C4-C6, and the keyboard scale to +85.

Finally, our poor LFO isn't really doing too much. Let's put it to work by setting its level to 20 in both voices. In the pitch section of voice one, set the LFO amount to +04, and for voice 2, set it to -04. This adds a bit of movement which can be made more or less subtle, depending on how you tweak the mod amounts.

Bio: Nashville-based keyboardist Jeff Jetton has toured with several country recording artists, including Victoria Shaw, John Berry, and Michelle Wright. Currently, he and his KS-32 can be spotted on the road with Tanya Tucker.

Hackerpatch is intended to be a place where patch vendors can show their wares and musicians can share their goodies and impress their friends. Once something's published here, it's free for all. Please don't submit patches that you know to be minor tweaks of copyrighted commercial patches unless you have permission from the copyright owner. All submitted patches are subject to consideration for mutilation and comments by our resident patch analysts. If you send in a patch, please include your phone number. Requests for particular patches are also very welcome.

The Art of Ensoniq Brass

Pat Finnigan

While paralyzed by the *Artic Clipper* that blew through here last winter and dumped 16 inches of snow on the mideastern states, I actually got two days of uninterrupted playtime (I was snowed in) with my Ensoniq toys. You know how it is; maybe after watching the news, taking out the trash, school functions, or whatever domestic bliss you've talked yourself into, you might get a spare 30-45 minutes to yourself and your board. Most of the time you're (a) not in a melodic mood, (b) dead tired and pass out in the recliner, (c) finishing work you've brought home, or (d) shoveling snow. So these two days were a blessing for me, as I completed/tweaked a number of sequences I'd been trying to complete.

Seems that I couldn't get killer sectional brass sounds outta my SD-1; I was doing TV themes that quarter, and besides the lower brass hassles I was having, the lead horn sounds were way too glorious and stealing the show. I was getting "splotts" instead of "splats," shakes weren't happening, my saxes just grunted. I had decent arrangements/sequences, but they weren't convincing; they just sounded like someone sequenced them. Poorly, at that. So, while tightening up my horn technique I explored several tricks that brought my tunes to life. Also gave me a whole lot more respect for those engineers up in Malvern for making the box possible and including parameters those other guys are still in committee considering. Here's the secrets I discovered, both in the box and in the charts...

Part I: Pre-production

(A) The Ensoniq brasses are spectacularly over-processed. While an ethereal soprano or alto sax, replete with four patch variations, is glorious awash in the splendor of a reverberant cathedral or large hall reverb, four Kenny G's are not. Sounds like four prima donnas in search of a spotlight. When you want a section of altos, assign them a track and turn the FX bus assigned to dry. This will not only give you a real concept of what the section sounds like, its gain is

much more accurate, i.e., you won't be wrestling with recording multiple volume overdubs later. I start with the Chorus and Reverb 1 as a default and turn FX1 and FX2 sends down to 10 (default is 25); that way I've got lots of room to fix stuff in the mix with twiddling 3-4 parameters instead of torquing individual track parameters out the wazoo. Handy shortcut that gets me from A to B in a straight line.

(B) The Ensoniq brasses are not a finished product. Most of the patches for our instruments are/were sculpted with a particular range in mind. For instance, play the "Starbrass" patch in the bottom octave of your SQ/VFX/SD variant: it takes a good two seconds for the attack to develop. Play above middle C and wow, it sounds like real horns again. As a rule, you should always play an instrument in its normal range to be a credible realization, but if you're like me, I'm not content to play things in the ranges they were written. By error, intent, or just rotely entering parts from the score, some brasses when played just a 3rd or 4th outside of their range absolutely suck (er, are vacuum-enabled, for our PC friends). In particular, trombones, trumpets, and french horns are quite vacuum-enabled when played in this manner. Secret here: the "wave start" page. Ensoniq thoughtfully allowed you not only to start a wave at a point other than its beginning, but allows you to modulate the start point by key position. I caught onto this from the EPS back in 1987, and fortunately, all Malvern marvels then and now allow you to start the wave by a modulator, as well as a modulatable amount. Next time you've got some free time after (a) shovelling snow, (b) finishing work brought home, etc., explore this and write your edits to disk/cart/RAM.

If you wander outside of a french horn's stopped range while sequencing the *James Bond Theme*, you'll appreciate having spent the time when it goes "splat" instead of "sspplllootttt" in a very open section of the arrangement. This technique is very essential for credible trombones as well as stopped/unstopped french

horns. Real lucky Ensoniq thought ahead on this one for us...

(C) Set your slate up and save it. I don't know how many of you stroll into the gig and just plug in randomly to the first open jack or disconnected cord without knowing what channel you're working with, but I've seen Song tracks (not just from Ensoniq users, but Cakewalk *.wrk files, Performer files, standard MIDI *.smf, *.mid files) with instruments all over the place. You wouldn't dream of turning your amp on without looking to see where the volume was set, would you? But that's exactly what most people do when sequencing. "Hey, here's an undefined track, I'll put that Drum-Map-R here!" Have you ever tried to edit someone else's sequence? Or have you just given up after siphoning off a coupla SMF's off of a BBS? Been there; done that? Drums on MIDI channel #12? What planet are these "artistes" from? Any monkeys flying around there? No, set your tracks up just like you would in a studio; you don't have to worry about transients being on an edge track; this is digital, so crosstalk doesn't exist. And it doesn't matter if you like drums on MIDI channel 12 or not: just keep them there throughout the song and not just thru the sequence. On the older 8 Mhz 21-voice machines this "part-jumping" and MIDI channel track "bilocation" can cause audible tempo shifting (see my 1988 precis "*Slagging Silicon Back to Sand*"), as well as LFO slowdown. Your keyboard's working hard enough generating these sounds; keeping track assigns and things constant will allow the sequencer optimal note event timing headroom since it won't be tracking migrating instruments ("Wait a minute, that Slick Bass was on track two, MIDI channel #4; now it's moved to track 7 MIDI channel #11?") times 8-12 in sequence mode: the problem becomes times 16-24 in Song mode. Do your keyboard a favor and organize your slate: if you don't it'll show its affection and throw an "Error 127-reboot?" trying to organize your madness...

(D) Discrete vs. grouped parts. Ensoniq has made it way too easy to lay down 4-5 parts on a single track. Or is it just genetic that we have five fingers that leads to this observation? In either case, it's way too easy to read four staves of the conductor's score and drop them on one track in one pass. In most instances this is very cool and productive. However, sometimes you can't get the individuality of each horn within the sec-

tion this way. You may very well have to take each instrument of the section in its own pass to preserve subtle nuances. This may not become apparent until you've moved to mixing and the post-section of your song. Again, Ensoniq allows us multiple tracks with instant "save new-old track?" OS calls, so don't sweat it just yet. Besides, you may be able to save it in the mix without breaking up the section into its individual parts; the key here is getting it down now. I've said it before, and I'll say it again: Quincy Jones likens fixing a bad track/take by editing the individual sound to painting a 747 with a Q-tip. We're trying to make music here; don't polish the song until it's completed. One idea, one track: one song, many tracks. Don't worry about getting the solo perfect: 2 gets you 5 you'll do that as a song track anyway, so just get the sequences lined up in song mode first, then call those four prima donnas in search of a spotlight...

Part II: Production/Post-Production

(A) Check your track levels. Most horn sections should be balanced unless you went discrete as in (D) above, so this shouldn't be a problem. I usually leave everything around 80 to start with; that way I've got room to bump a section up or down with respect to the other tracks. This is contrary to most audio engineering standard of attenuating the background rather than soloing ("gain-riding") the solo section. But this way I can do both: boost a section if it needs it, and cut a section in a quiet passage. After all, woodwinds as a section are a good 6-9 dB quieter than the brasses, both (a) in the design/nature of woodwinds as well as (b) the manner in which they're scored. So by doing this I've allowed myself plus or minus 40 scalular gain difference using this technique. I don't know what this equates to in dB, but let's just say it's really great to have that much range in matching, for example, the trombones to the clarinets. Nothing will ever get buried in your mix this way. I know you could edit the Amp pages or the Boost pages, but remember Quincy's maxim. Besides, where are you going to save this edit? It might be called in another track or another sequence, and it'll be way too loud if you save it over the existing program. To paraphrase Nike, just don't do it...

(B) Data Entry. How you input your data is as equally important as the data itself. This dichotomy rears its

ugly head when you try to correct mistakes using event edit functions. This is a wonderful feature of Ensoniq keyboards, but I personally don't have the time to jump thru menu pages and note events: I just take the track over again while the idea's still fresh in my head. Yeah, sure, maybe I'm overwriting that unrepeatable take: if it's so perfect I wouldn't be event editing it or rerecording it now, would I? It's just too easy to hit "Keep original track" and press Record and Play again. I furiously implore all of you Poly-key pressure Ensoniq owners to leave this parameter on when taking section tracks. Not one of you out there presses all the keys at the same velocity and pressure every time: look at your track data thru a MIDI monitor and prepare to be absolutely amazed at how irregular the note-on and aftertouch data reads. I've been playing professionally for lots of years, and, well, it sent me back to my Czerny book. But that irregularity is exactly what you want when you're taking four saxes to a track: it gives each note its own identity in the chord: with Polykey pressure on, each note is modulated differently, just as each player in the section would do. It's a ton easier than doing each horn on a separate track. Some of you Cakewalk guys could use a macro to split each note out to a different track/MIDI channel like the CAL Drum macro; I could note-limit a "copy track" function, but I'd really like to hear this song today. Use poly-key pressure: you'll be glad you did...

(C) It's Party Time with Track Effects! Finally, now is the time to start tweaking effects. That reverb can still be easily overdone, so inch up to the FX1 25 setting to ensure your high hat or other cymbal work doesn't come across as reflecting off of a pond; that's the first sign of an amateur recording/production. Set your bass dry (unless your bass player is playing in the same lake your cymbals are reflecting from (yuk-yuk)). Also, ensure your working with "Song Effects" rather than "Sequence Effects" as they'll have priority. This assumes you've chained your sequences together as a song already.

Now for the fun part: saxes respond very well to a light chorus with reverb, so set the track FX assign to "Voice" and inch up the FX2 value a bit at a time until you're happy with it. For real tweaking the saxes, solo the track and then bump the FX2 level until it starts to sound more like a handful of notes than saxes. Then

pull it down 5-6 increments: remember, all these effects are going to be additive: the chorus rate of your sax section will be the same rate as your trombone section, so use sparingly or it'll say "synthetic" all over it. Lastly, in the FX department, select another song or sequence so you get the "Save changes?" prompt. I've lost many a good effect setting by pressing the "No" to "Save Changes" prompt afraid I'd altered something else. Save early, save often, but SAVE!

(D) Torquing the Accessories. Now is the time to record fades with the CVP-1 pedal and shakes/vibrato with the mod wheel. Make sure the record page is set to "add": if you don't have a volume pedal ensure the data entry slider is set to "volume" and not "timbre." This is where the string crescendo of the *Perry Mason Theme* begins to sound conducted rather than sequenced, where the sinister *James Bond Theme* rises into the horns of the B- strain; this is the dynamic of your realization. Here is time well spent. It's at this point where you have to make the determination if you'll have to resequence discrete parts out of the section if you can't credibly guise it with FX routing and shaping. I personally use a breath controller (Ensoniq doesn't make one or I'd use theirs) with the vent taped shut so I get a much higher response curve out of it: just bought an adapter to use that mini plug on the volume jack. Hmm, if I had some kinda drum pad kit my drum parts wouldn't be so, uh, vacuum-enabled...

Well, there you have it. These are not rules, by any stretch of the imagination. Most new ground is broken by either stretching the envelope (no pun intended) or by breaking those same rules, so don't read anything into the above. These are more guidelines than rules, and they're sure to save you a gaggle of time and a ton of lost work just because you didn't know where "Start" really was. Different speeds, that's all. And the Ensoniq boxes have the best reeds and brasses you could hope for: if you're a looper, there's no excuse for not having Ensoniq horn samples in your box to work with. There's no "right" or "wrong" way to build your sequence, either. Some of you start with drums: I start with the bass, lay the drums and then do the bass over to fit. Sometimes the best results are accidental, so stretch it out. I've distilled two productively huge days for your perusal here, and if you think the results weren't worth the effort, I've got the proof on disk.

I'm still continually amazed at how much power is in the Ensoniq box. I'm more amazed at how much power is still unrealized in the older discontinued Ensoniq boxes! I'm still the weak link in the equation, and still haven't got the *James Bond* tag right, but I'm working on it; if you wanna hear the results of these labors, and have an SD-1, drop me a line; I'll share. *The Perry Mason Theme* and the *Naked Gun Theme* are damn near verbatim, and all I did was wiggle my fingers to sound like a 22-piece jazz band.

But I haven't gotten this kinda sound out of any box that didn't say "Ensoniq" on it. And trust me, I've spent way too much money trying not to put my eggs in one basket. I've tried the R-company, I've tried the Y-company, I've tried the K's and A's and P's, and I can't get as much music out of all those boxes combined as I can with an Ensoniq box.

Must be a hacker thing... ■

Classifieds

HARDWARE/SOFTWARE

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EPS 16+ Turbo w/all options & factory sound library + a few others - \$1100.00. Tascam DA-30 DAT - \$850.00. Kawai Q80 Sequencer - \$300.00. BOSS DR-500 Dr. Rhythm Section - \$275.00. DOD R431 graphic EQ (2) - \$135.00 each. Original owner of all except R431's. All manuals except for R431's. Home studio use only in clean environment (no guns, drugs, booze, groupies or smoking). Each in excellent condition. Call: (708) 365 0553. Fax: (800) 203 1725. Email: FortySixP@aol.com.

If you're selling your gear...

Please be sure to pass along how absolutely vital it is to have a subscription to the *Transoniq Hacker*. And — we're always happy to do a sub transfer. No charge, and it's a nice extra to help close the deal.

SAMPLES/PATCHES/SOUNDS

WANTED: MIDI sequences of East Indian rhythms — especially tabla — and African rhythms. Robert Williams, 5580 La Jolla Blvd., #427, La Jolla, CA 92037. Phone: 619-454-7144. Email: Row108@aol.com.

ASR-10 Sounds: Synth Collection 1. Hand-drawn and additive synthesis. Crisp, metallic to warm, analog sounds. HD, 10 disks - only \$30 plus \$3 s/h. Send check or money order to: G. Bolton, 19 Third St., Ayer, MA 01432-1844.

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CUSTOM ASR-10 VOCODER SAMPLES! Yes, indicate what phrase needed (up to 12 syllables) and I will create/sample the robotic voice. These aren't vocoder samples, rather Kraftwerk "music nonstop" voices. \$10/phrase, 5/\$40 pp. For info write: Wayne Schroeder, 573 Scott St., Studio L, San Francisco, CA 94117.

TH's Jack Tolin presents SYNTH-BITS! Classic HR-16 drums (2 disks; 49 sounds), M1 synth-textures (5 disks; 50 sounds) come in easy to manage samples

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OUT-OF-PRINT BACK ISSUES

M.U.G. will provide Out-of-Print issues for cost of materials and postage. Write: G-4 Productions, PO Box 615TH, Yonkers, NY 10703. Attn: TH Back Issues. * * * Folks in the New York City area can get copies of unavailable back issues of the *Hacker* — call Jordan Scott, 718-983-2400.

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The Interface

Letters for The Interface may be sent to any of the following addresses:

U.S. Mail - The Interface, Transoniq Hacker, 1402 SW Upland Dr., Portland, OR 97221

Electronic mail - GEnie Network: TRANSONIQ, Internet: interface@transoniq.com. In many cases a quick answer can be obtained by posting to our interactive, on-line Interface at our Web site (<http://www.transoniq.com/~trnsoniq/interface.html>) or calling Ensoniq CS at 610-647-3930.

This is probably one of the most open forums in the music industry. Letter writers are asked to please keep the vitriol to a minimum. Readers are reminded to take everything with a grain of salt. Resident answer-man is Clark Salisbury (CS). Letter publication is subject to space considerations.

TH -

I have not spent much time with the new MR-Rack yet, but how do you get an EPS-16+ or an ASR to send PERF commands to it? These take you to the various sets of sounds, i.e., General MIDI, PCMCIA card, ROM, and various RAM locations. It looks to me like ya' can't do it, and that you're limited to assembling everything you want to use into one PERF (bank) location.

I want to be able to perform with my '16+ as the source sequencer for performing. I'm still just wading into this great sounding piece, so I hope I'm wrong!

Thanks,
Tom Jordan
tjordan@iac.net

[CS - It seems to me that what you want to know is not how to send commands to change PERFS, but how to remotely select sounds from the various banks in the MR.

The MR is designed to respond to standard MIDI bank select messages. These are normally a two-byte message generated by sending controller 0 (the MSB) followed by controller 32 (the LSB). Generally, to select bank 3, for example, you'd send an MSB of 0, followed by an LSB of 3. The form this would take would be this:

Controller 0, value 0
Controller 32, value 3

Of course, these messages would need to be sent on the appropriate MIDI channel. Also, I should mention that some instruments need to receive these messages in reverse: the LSB, followed by the MSB.

None of this need worry you, however.

The MR uses a streamlined version of the bank select message consisting of only the LSB. In other words, to select ROM Bank 005 on your MR, simply send a controller 32 message with a value of 5 (on the MIDI channel corresponding to the Part you wish to affect in the MR).

Now for the tricky part - getting your EPS-16 Plus to generate a controller 32 message. Here's how:

Press Edit, then System and scroll until you reach the page saying MIDI XCTRL NUMBER=XX, and set this value to 32. The EPS is now set to send and receive controller 32 messages wherever XCTRL (external controller) is designated as a controller.

Next, select a track in your sequence into which you'd like to place a bank select message. Press Command, then Track and scroll until you reach EVENT EDIT TRACK. Hit Enter. Scroll left a tick to the EVENT TYPE=XXX page. Set EVENT TYPE to XC EXT-CONT. This will allow you to insert external controller messages into your sequence.

Now move to the location in the sequence where you'd like the bank select message to occur. For example, if you want to send a bank select at beat 2 of measure 1, use the cursor keys and the up/down arrow buttons to set the EPS bar/beat/clock display to 001.02.01. Press the Enter button, and the EPS will ask, "INSERT EVENT?" Press Enter, and a new event of the type XC (external controller) will be placed in your sequence at the current location. All that remains is to set the XC value to the number corresponding to the bank you wish to select (if you want to select bank 005, for example, set XC=5) and press the Cancel button to exit Event Edit mode. The EPS will ask whether you want to keep the OLD or NEW version of the sequence; just press the Enter button

and you're set.]

TH -

Is the Iomega JazDrive compatible with the ASR?

Mattias Roos
roos@pub.mil.se

[CS - Ensoniq has tested the Iomega Jaz Drive and has not approved it for use with any of their SCSI-equipped instruments. However, several Ensoniq users have reported success to some degree with the Jaz. Garth Hjelte at Rubber Chicken (<http://members.aol.com/chickenEPS/>) has had a great deal of experience with Iomega drives, particularly the Zip drives. You might want to check out his article on Zip drives (Zip-ity How-To-Do Da) in Issue #132 of TH; some of the information contained therein may pertain.]

[Ensoniq - For more information on the Iomega Zip Drive compatibility with the ASR series, check out document Number 0021 on Ensoniq's fax retrieval system (800-257-1439).]

TH -

Is it true that the TS-10 is no longer in production? Golly, I loved my SD-1, but when it was replaced by the TS-10, I went along with the script and got the TS-10. I understood the technological reasons for moving ahead and cheerfully upgraded my TS-10 with additional memory and a SCSI port.

Why do the people at Ensoniq approach the sale of keyboards as appliances? Actually, I've found everyone at Ensoniq to be courteous, responsive, and helpful. Good luck to them and the MR series.

As for me, if the TS-10 has been discontinued, then probably, it's "Goodby Ensoniq, Hello Kurzweil 2500." (I know, Ensoniq will promise to "support" the keyboard. But it will never be any better.)

But I'll continue to subscribe to the *Hacker*, if only to read the writers' bios.

JerryHunts@aol.com

[TH - From a publishing point of view, we wish Ensoniq still produced every keyboard they ever made. Unfortunately, they're a fairly small company and they have to target their resources very carefully.]

[Al Friedberg, alcasio@aol.com - Imagine my surprise finding out that the TS series will be out of production. I hope this doesn't mean my broken TS-12 will not get fixed... In the meantime, is there anyone out there with a used TS-10 for sale?]

[CS - Jerry, you're a marketing guy's dream-come-true: a consumer who figures that as soon as there's a new model of something he owns, the current model becomes worthless. It was from just such an individual that I bought my current Arp 2600 - for \$25. It's now worth in the neighborhood of \$1000. So should I sell? No way! Like my TS-10, the Arp can produce unique and beautiful sounds, unlike anything else I own, so I guess I'll hang on to both of them.

As for the K2500, that's a great piece of gear, but I should warn you. Someday (and most likely within a couple of years or so) it will be discontinued and replaced with something "better." When that time comes, give me a call - I might even be interested in buying it (although you won't be able to get me to trade my TS-10 for it...).

And Al, have no fear. Ensoniq has proved time and again that they are committed to supporting all their customers, whether the Ensoniq products they own are current or not.]

Dear Transoniqs,

Just a quick query regarding the re-sale value of the truly magnificent Ensoniq SD-1?

Thanks in advance,
Michael "The Spanner" Conolan
aconolan@mpx.com.au

[TH - We're not sure about the price but we thought you'd like to know that there're two people who are looking for SDs by running ads in our Classifieds - and another just called the other day.]

[CS - I'm afraid I don't really have a good idea of what the SD-1 might currently be worth, but I know how you could go about finding out. For one thing, you could call local or national music stores and inquire if they might have a used SD-1 for sale. If so, find out what they're asking. If you can come up with prices from just a few stores, you should be able to form a reasonable guess as to the SD-1's typical selling price. Also, keep your eye on any classified ads you might have available (many of the little "Nickel Ads" type of papers publish on line, so you can probably run down copies of a number of these. Also, you might want to check out the Used Gear Price List (<http://www.synthcom.com/cgi-bin/gear>), which tries to keep track of what folks are asking for used music equipment in all the various newsgroups and mailing lists.]

TH -

We have been unable to set up the left pedal as a "soft" pedal (to decrease the volume as on a standard piano). Can someone instruct us how to do this?

Thanks,
Peter Balsam

[CS - Not all Ensoniq instruments implement the soft pedal function, and those that do have various schemes for

doing so. Either write again and let me know what instrument you are using, or try giving Ensoniq Customer Service (610-647-3930) a call.]

Hi!

My name is Fredrik and I've been looking for sounds to my Ensoniq ASR-10 for some time. Do you know any place on the WWW where I can find sound disks? I'm not interested in buying or any demo disks.

Thanks for your help,
Fredrik

[zowie@digital.net - Did you find anything? I've found a few links - go to Alta Vista, and search on Ensoniq samples.]

[Tommy Falkenstam (kdf@algonet.se) - Hi!!! I've got a lot of patches for the ASR-10. If you help me with sounds for my SQ-1, I'll send you sounds for your ASR-10.]

[CS - A great starting point for locating this sort of thing is Michael Hyman's well-loved Ensoniq Resources on the Internet Guide (<http://www.netaxs.com/~mikeh/ensoniq.html>) - it'll point you in the right direction for hours of surfing pleasure.]

TH -

I just purchased a used ASR-10, and cannot figure out how to create those great technotic sounds with the analog synth sounds I have. Please guide me through the process. I love Trance and Euro-style music, and I know some of you are fully literate in the use of filters and LFOs. Please respond so that I may enhance my creative enjoyment.

David Adonis

[Eric N. Michaels (traswave@dreamscape.com) - David:

The sounds you are looking for are heavily programmed with analog resonant filters. Digital samplers and synths can only come so close to the real thing. Practice programming your VCF FX algorithms with mod sources such as velocity + mod wheel. Waveboy Industries (phone: 610-251-9562) makes a resonant filter algorithm for the ASR, but I know little about it. I use my ASR for drum/percussion sounds, and a TS for lead and bass chores. The TS has more programmable algorithms, but the ASR has more separate outputs. Since analog gear is hard to find, maybe Ensoniq will develop one with the features we need!]

[INTOYOU555@aol.com – Roland has come out with a new version of the TB-303, called the MC-303. It's only available in U.K. right now.]

[CS – An attempt to discuss all the possible methods for creating such a category of sounds is well beyond the scope of what we can do in this measly column. However, gobs and gobs of EPS, EPS-16 Plus, and ASR-10 programming articles have appeared in the Hacker through the years, many of which can actually help you become a better sound programmer. So you might try checking out back issues of TH (which just happen to be available, in case you're a new subscriber). Also, we'll be running lots more programming articles in the future, so you might want to just take out that checkbook and renew your subscription RIGHT NOW for, say, another 40 years.

In the meantime, you might want to check out ASR sound library AS-16, "TechnoTrance" which Ensoniq bills as "more sampled sounds for the ASR and TS instruments, covering different synth dance trends. Suggested list price is \$39.95." The cool thing is, if you can acquire some sounds you like, you can take them apart pretty easily to see how they're put together, which can provide much valuable information in and of itself. One of which is, "If it's software, at least you don't have to put it back

together again to make it work."]

TH –

Does anyone have a comprehensive listing of patches and addresses for the MR Rack?

Dirkfelix@aol.com

[CS – Try checking out the MR page at <http://www.ensoniq.com/> – you should find the listing you're looking for there. Also, a lot of this type of information is available, quickly and free of charge, via Ensoniq's fax-back system. Dial 1-800-257-1439 and follow the instructions to receive faxes detailing a number of pertinent issues.]

Hello Hacker,

I'm writing in response to the person who was trying to get an SQ to play correctly from some PC software called The Jazz Pianist (Issue #133). The response to the question indicated that no one knew about this software package. However, Clark's description to the solution was correct. You configure an SQ preset that matches the channels that the software uses and make sure that the SQ is set in the MIDI mode of Multi.

I have the exact same configuration and the SQ sounds great. I use the factory Jazz Piano, Fretless Bass and an R&B drum kit to play back the songs. I should plug the software too. Since I'm not a proficient sight reader this software was the perfect way for me to learn jazz voicings. It consists of many jazz standards performed by top notch pianists. In fact, one of the artists, Renee Rosnes is featured on page 17 of the August Keyboard Magazine. The recorded format is standard MIDI files so you don't have to use the Jazz Pianist software to play it back. But if you do use the software to play it you get the score scrolled in front of you as it plays and you get how it is played on a visual keyboard.

Fingering is not illustrated... (I know what you're thinking – no I don't work for the software company.)

That's all. Keep up the great work!!
Jack Ginnever

[CS – Thanks for taking the time to drop us a line – it's nice to know that we're on track, more or less, at least some of the time...]

TH,

I have an Ensoniq EPS (Classic) that won't start up. The message is: "DISK DATA CORRUPTED."

I have used the original disk EPS OS 2.49 and three different disk copies; so I assume the disks are okay. Is this a known problem?

I was able to start it once by putting a little pressure on the disk itself during startup.

Thanks,
Estuardo

[MidiMark – It could be possible that the disk drive is damaged and needs to be replaced. I'm having the same problem with my '16+, and will be taking it to the shop soon. Remember, I am not an expert, this is just a guess.]

[Amberwolf@gnn.com (the moozikally reclined...) – Just so you'll know, the drive used in the EPS-16+ (and probably the others as well) is a standard double-density, 3.5" drive. Mine is made by Panasonic, and when it wore out, I tried a Panasonic from a leading-edge desktop pc, and it worked fine. (It has been a while, so I may have had to change some of the switch settings on the new drive to match the old one.)]

[CS – Your problem could be an aging disk drive, or a problem with your disk drive controller, or a funky disk drive cable, etc., although you could be ex-

periencing problems with three OS disks if they are copies of the same (possibly defective) OS disk. Is this could be the case, you might try to acquire a fresh OS disk from your dealer, or from Ensoniq Customer Support (610-647-3930). If you're pretty sure this isn't the problem, I'd recommend talking to Ensoniq Customer Support anyway. It seems to me that there's an issue or two you should be made aware of before attempting to replace your disk drive on your own, and they could clue you in.]

TH -

I am an ex-SQ-80 owner (not by choice). I have some SQ-80 sequence disks. Do you know of any shareware I can download for a PC that reads an SQ-80 disk and converts the sequence files to standard MIDI file format?

Thanks,
Rick Davis

[Amberwolf@gnn.com (Michael Elliott) - Check out Giebler Enterprises (Giebler@aol.com). They have something like that on the Ensoniq page (WWW.Ensoniq.com) - or at least some order forms for it.]

[CS - Amberwolf is right - Giebler Enterprises (<http://members.aol.com/giebler/>) has just what you need to turn your sequences into PC compatible MIDI files.]

TH -

Hi. I'm trying to use a Technics sustain pedal with my EPS-16+. Is there a way to invert the signal interpretation? Unfortunately, when pressed, it disables sustain - quite the opposite of what I'm used to.

Please don't tell me that I've voided warranties etc. With a Master's in EE, I'm quite confident that a closed/open

switch is 'zactly what the Dr. ordered here. Trouble is, it's reversed! I know I can rewire the switch, but I hope there might be a software option.

As an alternative, can I leave the sustain hooked up to the Technics, and feed it through MIDI? It doesn't seem to be working - the EPS sustains when nothing is plugged into its pedal connection.

Thanks,
zowie (zowie@digital.net)

[CS - No, zowie, you haven't voided your warranty, and you are correct the the Technics switch is simply the opposite of what you really need.

You should be able to plug your pedal into your Technics unit and send sustain pedal messages to the EPS via MIDI, as you have surmised. The only reason I can think that your EPS continues to sustain is that you unplugged the pedal from it while it was powered on, leaving it thinking that it was connected to a sustain pedal that's depressed. If this is the case, either plug the pedal back into the EPS, depress (to turn the sustain off), and while keeping it depressed, unplug it. Or simply re-boot with the pedal unplugged from the EPS.

If your EPS continues to sustain, you might want to check with Ensoniq Customer Support (<http://www.ensoniq.com/contact.htm>), (610)-647-3930. The EPS should not be sustaining notes without a pedal plugged in.]

[Ensoniq - This problem can be resolved by using the correct foot switch. Ensoniq keyboards are designed to use a normally-open circuit. This means that the unit will not sustain until the circuit is closed. This is done by pressing down on the foot switch. A few manufacturers use a normally-closed scheme which requires pressing down on the foot switch to open the circuit. This is not the best way to implement sustain, since a special shorting jack has to be used on the keyboard itself to insure that if no switch is plugged in that the unit

will not sustain forever. If this jack fails, the entire unit is unusable.

It is not easy to rebuild this circuit with an already existing pedal. We suggest getting another pedal, they are only about \$17.]

Hi,

Tell me, please, where I could to buy full-fledged Super Jam! software, of Blue Ribbon Soundworks, to use with my PC and Ensoniq Soundscape card???

Can I order it via Internet or e-mail?

Very Thanks!!!
Petras Pukenas,
Lithuania,
ppetras@fermentas.lt

[Tom Miller (stmiller@neont.com) - I have a registration card that says you can order a Super Jam upgrade for \$49.95 at 1-800-226-0212 or on CompuServe (type GO BLUERIBBON). But I prefer Band in a Box.]

eTH — A Faster, Cheaper Hacker

If you can receive e-mail via the Internet, you can take advantage of avoiding the post office and get a faster, cheaper, e-mail version of the Hacker. The e-mail *Transoniq Hacker* contains all of the same information and advertising as the printed version, but it's only \$20/year — anywhere on the planet. Plus, if you convert over from the printed version you'll get extra issues added to your sub. Interested? Just send a message to us at eTH@transoniq.com and we'll e-mail back complete subscription information. Let us know if you'd like a free copy of the current issue and we'll send one along.

TH -

I wonder if you could help me with a technical query regarding the Ensoniq MR Rack?

I recently bought a new MR Rack (OS v1.02) which generally seems to function correctly (and sounds excellent) except for a strange quirk which seems to be caused by some of the insert effect types.

Basically, if certain effect types are chosen, notes played through those effects seem to cause a kind of feedback problem, and the unit generates an intermittent but repetitive "howl" that continues until the sound is changed on that part.

The most obvious occurrence of this is when the demo track "MR Trance" is played. At the end of the demo track the unit is left howling! The problem seems to be to do with the "formant morph" and "chatterbox" effects. If parameters in these effects are altered, the howl stops.

Is this peculiar to my unit? Is it a fault? If so, is it a hardware or software problem? Would upgrading the OS fix the problem? Would my guarantee cover this kind of thing? Could I get the unit replaced?

Any help or advice would be very welcome.

Thanks,
Richard

[Christoph,
fb17@recht.jura2.uni-hamburg.de - I face the same problem with my MR Rack. I got the newest OS version 1.50 but while it fixed some other bugs it didn't stop the "howling" as you called it. It doesn't occur after playing the demo song but rather when playing some of the RAM sounds. I also want some advice badly. Thanks in advance.]

[CS - The problem you guys describe is

definitely not normal. I'd suggest getting in touch with Ensoniq Customer Support (<http://www.ensoniq.com/contact.htm>), (610-647-3930).]

Hello,

I am a musician and computer programmer who has, as of yet, not bridged the gap by buying a keyboard and doing music on my computer. I have no idea what synths are good or bad, and could use some help. I have a friend who offered to sell me his Ensoniq SQ-1. Please give me some information on this particular keyboard, especially concerning flexibility, performance as a controller, and sound quality. Any information on used prices would also be appreciated.

Thanks,
Justin Bankston
airstream@88net.net

[Tommy Falkenstam (kdf@algonet.se) - Hello! I read your letter in the Transoniq Hacker. Buy it!!! (SQ-1) It's a good value for the money! Questions? E-mail me.]

[CS - As far as prices go, see the response to Michael "The Spanner" Conolan's letter above. As far as information on the SQ-1 goes, all the major music publications (as well as the Hacker) have published detailed reviews of the instrument; it shouldn't be too hard to locate some back issues.

Also, I imagine you could find a fair amount of detailed information on the net. Try heading over to your favorite search engine, type some appropriate keywords (such as Ensoniq, SQ-1 and review) and wait for the thousands of little info-supercars to start pouring in off the info-superhiway.]

Hello...

I have an early SQ-1 with all the original factory sounds. This machine has been a great asset over the last few years in my home studio. But the questions I have are:

1) Where could I get some new sounds for this synth other than the ROM card??

2) Once I do find some how do I get them on to a formatted BROTHER external disk drive??

LZanre,
lzanre@on.bell.ca

[Uncle Viceroy (tesjuptr@Bayou.UH-EDU) - Well...

1) Syntaur Productions has sounds for the SQ-1, 2, R, and KS-32.

2) Oh Brother! The particulars should be in your manual - look under sysex dumps receiving. (Your SQ will need a few button pushes to initiate the dump.)]

[CS - Right on, Uncle Viceroy - couldn't have put it better myself. So I won't.]

TH -

I just bought a used Ensoniq Mirage sampler (keyboard) but I can't find the Advanced Samplers Guide at any of the local stores.

Help!!!!!!!
ETorres845@gnn.com

[TH - We'd be pretty surprised if you had found one. That Mirage is slightly older than we are (over 10 years)! You might try Syntaur (713-682-1960) and the MIDI Users Group (PO Box 615, Yonkers, NY 10703). If neither of those work out, you're welcome to try a little ad in our Classifieds (free, if it's small), just to see if there's anyone out there who doesn't need theirs anymore.]

[Uncle Viceroy (tesjuptr@Bayou.UH-

EDU) - Indeed. Syntaur has the ASG-1 for \$19.95 + shipping. (It includes the MASOS disk.)

[CS - Once again, Uncle Viceroy leads the charge. Thanks, UV!]

Hi,

I have a TS-12, a Mac, and I'm using Performer. My problem is this: When I select a bank and patch name on the Performer screen, the patch names are similar but not the same as I have on my TS's screen. I called MOTU (Mark of the Unicorn) and downloaded FreeMIDI 1.24 which they thought would solve my problem but it has not. Also, when I change patches on the TS I see patch numbers appear on the Performer screen, not patch names. What is going on here? How can I get these two to coincide?

Also, do you know if there is editor/librarian software that will support my TS and enable me to manipulate its parameters on my computer screen?

Thanks a lot!
Clinton Brown
CABB1664@aol.com

[CS - I'm afraid you'll need to resolve your Performer/FreeMIDI inconsistencies with MOTU. I generally use the TS-10 with Vision, Galaxy, and OMS, and this have no difficulty getting the patch-name thing to work (once I got over the initial - and rather steep - learning curve). So though I know the system can work, I can't tell you how to make it work in Performer-world.

At this time I know of no editor/librarian software package for the TS-series (although Galaxy provides librarian functions.)

TH -

For the ASR-10, has anyone heard of a

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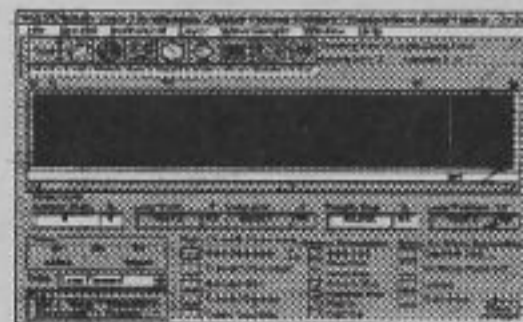
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chart that tells sample length number compared to bpm? Or how many octaves to raise or lower to get a loop to a desired tempo from a different one? Why doesn't Ensoniq have an e-mail address? (Instead of one tied to a long-distance phone line?)

P.S. Has anyone else figured out how to migrate into space w/ their keyboard?

INTOYOU555@aol.com

[TH - You can certainly reach Ensoniq at their web site: <http://www.ensoniq.com>.

[CS - Let's take your questions in reverse order. Since space is wherever you are that there isn't something already there, why would I want to go where everything isn't - just to be the only one who is? Not my idea of a hot date, if you get my pitch and yaw.

Ensoniq does have an e-mail address - at least, Ensoniq Customer Support (<http://www.ensoniq.com/contact.htm>) does. Or you can just visit their web site (<http://www.ensoniq.com/>) - after touch-down, that is.

Finally, the formula for converting tempo to pitch and vice versa is pretty complex, but one of our readers (Mark Zimmerman) has created a table that helps in converting "sample-speeds-BPM to BPM. It also contains some values that are needed to change the pitch of a sample without changing its speed."

If you are interested, write to:

Martin Zimmermann, Rainstrasse 37, CH-8038 Zurich, Switzerland.

If you simply want him to send you a copy, he asks that you send \$5.00 to cover costs.

You may also find this useful: you can easily calculate time compression ratios to use with the ASR's built in compress/expand function to change tempos

of grooves. Simply divide the original tempo by the destination tempo, and multiply by 100. So, to go from 85 to 140 bpm, the formula looks like this: $85/140*100 = 60.714$, or a compression factor of 61% (rounded up).]

TH -

I have downloaded sys-ex files from the Ensoniq Site: <http://www.ensoniq.com/mid/binary.htm#sq> and tried to load them into my SQ-2 by a sys-ex dump from Cakewalk. The Sounds work great but the sequences crash the SQ-2. I get an error message and the keyboard eventually re-starts itself. Anybody know what's up? The manual, page 12-8, says that it should load the sequence.

Thanks in advance,
Tom Miller
stmiller@neont.com

[CS - Make sure you are using current versions of Cakewalk and the SQ-2 OS. In particular, earlier versions of Cakewalk do not provide the pause between the transmission of sound and sequence data that the SQ needs to properly receive this data.]

[Ensoniq - Let us explain a little bit about what happens when your SQ sends a Sys-Ex message to an external device. This information applies to all Ensoniq synthesizers, as well as products from a number of other manufacturers.

A Sys-Ex dump for a single sound contains a very small amount of data. The Sys-Ex dump protocol for a single sound consists of one Sys-Ex message. A Sys-Ex dump for the entire sequence memory, or an entire bank of sounds contains a large amount of data. This type of Sys-Ex dump protocol uses two messages. The first message is a dump alert command that informs the receiving device of the next message. The receiving device should respond with a message containing an ACK (the preceding dump command is acceptable) or a

NAK (the preceding dump command is not acceptable) message. If the receiving device does not respond in one second, the SQ will proceed with the Sys-Ex dump. Unfortunately, many Sys-Ex recorders, including some found in software sequencer packages, do not recognize the dump alert as a separate message. When they are recording Sys-Ex data they run the messages together as one. When this Sys-Ex data is sent back to the SQ, the two messages are together and they are unintelligible to the SQ.

For the data to transfer back to the SQ properly, there must be a delay between the two messages. Fortunately, there is a way for you to adjust the Sys-Ex recorder in your Cakewalk sequencer that will allow it to restore the delay between the two messages. Once this is done you should have no problem sending data back and forth between the SQ and Cakewalk.

This fix is for Cakewalk for Windows version 2.01 and above. To fix the Sys-EX timing problem, edit the configuration file named TTSSEQ.INI. This file is located in the C:\Wincake directory. Add these three configuration lines in the [OPTIONS] section of TTSSEQ.INI exactly as shown:

```
SysxDelayAfterF7=1  
SysxSendDelayMsecs=200  
SysxSendPacketSize=65535
```

These settings cause Cakewalk to delay 200 milliseconds if it encounters the hexadecimal number F7 in a Sys-Ex message. (The hexadecimal number F7 is always used to identify the end of a Sys-Ex message.) This delay is long enough to allow the SQ to process the Sys-Ex message properly.]

TH -

I've run into a frustrating problem with my ASR-10 and wondered if anyone had the same experience.

Recently I upgraded my OS to v1.5 (or whatever the latest was). Overall it works fine (actually a little slower, but the manual said to expect that). The problem is a high incidence of crashing.

This has happened several times since I upgraded – we work all day on a new song – sampling, sequencing, etc., only to have the ASR-10 freeze up. It says “Error 129 REBOOT?” Of course, there’s nothing you can do but reboot, but I am so sick of losing hours of work for no reason. (Yes, I usually save, but I didn’t this last weekend.) What’s up with that? It doesn’t happen all the time, just occasionally and I can’t see any kind of pattern to predict the crash. Twice we had just finished recording the song to our VS-880 when it crashed. Fortunately, we had the hard copy, but it’s too scary to live with – I think I want my old OS chips back!

– Mike

[“Wink” (mvwinkle@intcomm.net) – I’ve had my ASR for a couple of years and it has constantly crashed. I’ve found three situations where this happens.

First and foremost is the audio tracks. Since you have a VS-880 (as I now do), disable the audio tracks immediately upon booting and leave them off, don’t even leave it set to RAM. This will help tremendously. Another alternative is to use an earlier version of the O.S. which doesn’t support audio tracks. To correct a point in your message, unless you had a dealer replace some ROM chips in your unit, the O.S. updates involve booting from a newer disk, and not replacing chips. The current version is 3.53 and is available from their website.

The second instance I’ve found is the abysmal MIDI support in the ASR. Be careful setting MIDI clock to external and controlling the sequencer from the VS-880. I can consistently crash the unit with a few transport key presses. After recording a track, remember to set the VS back to internal clock before pressing any transport buttons, and it won’t

crash the ASR.

The last diagnosis is unsupported but after loading and playing multiple banks, it usually crashes. I seemed to correct that with an earlier O.S. (can’t remember which). I love the ASR. It feels good and sounds arguably better than anything on the planet. I have a DP/4 as

well, which combined is awesome. I finally got tired of the ASR quirks yesterday and bought a MR-61 (my third Ensoniq buy) and I’ll still use the ASR, but this MR is the next generation. Good luck. – Another Mike]

[CS – The best advice I can offer is that you get in touch with Ensoniq Customer

Transoniq-Net

HELP WITH QUESTIONS

All of the individuals listed below are *volunteers!* Please take that into consideration when calling. If you get a recording and leave a message, let 'em know if it's okay to call back collect (this will greatly increase your chances of getting a return call).

All Ensoniq Gear – Ensoniq Customer Service. 9:30 am to noon, 1:15 pm to 6:30 pm EST Monday to Friday. 610-647-3930. Ensoniq's Fax On Demand line, (1-800-257-1439) can also be used to retrieve specs, OS info, hard-drive info, and the like.

All Ensoniq Gear – Electric Factory (Ensoniq's Australia distributor). E-mail address: elfa@ozemail.com.au; their web site at <http://www.ozemail.com.au/~elfa>; or e-mail their resident clinician, Michael Allen, at mallen@geko.com.au. Phone calls, Business hours – Victoria. (03) 480-5988.

All Ensoniq Gear – The Electric Factory in New Zealand, phone (64) 9-443-5916, fax (64) 9-443-5893, or e-mail geoffm@elfa.co.nz (Geoff Mason).

TS Questions – Pat Esslinger, Internet: pate@execpc.com, CompuServe: 74240,1562, or AOL: ESSLIP.

TS, VFX, and SD-1 Questions – Stuart Hosking, stuh@ozemail.com.au.

MIDI users and ASR-10 Questions – Ariel and Meiri Dvorjetski, Internet: s3761921@techst02.technion.ac.il, or dvorjet@techunix.technion.ac.il. You can also call Sincopated BBS at (Israel country code: 972) 4-8776035, 24 hours, 28.8K Modem. Please Login as: ENSONIQ, Password: MIDI.

SD-1 Questions – Philip Magnotta, 401-467-4357, 4 pm – 12:30 EST.

VFX, SD32, and EPS-16+ Questions – Dara Jones, Internet: 71055.1113@compuserve.com or call 214-361-0829.

SD-1, DP/4, ASR-10 Questions – John Cox, 609-888-5519, (NJ) 5pm – 8 pm EST weekdays. Any time weekends.

SQ-80, VFX Questions – Robert Romano, 607-898-4868. Any ol' time (within reason) EST.

Hard Drives & Drive Systems, Studios, & Computers – Rob Feiner, Cinetunes. 914-963-5818. 11am-3pm EST. CompuServe: 71024,1255.

EPS, EPS-16 PLUS, & ASR-10 Questions – Garth Hjelte. Rubber Chicken Software. Call anytime. If message, 24-hour callback. (612) 235-9798. Email: chickenEPS@willmar.com.

ESQ-1 AND SQ-80 Questions – Tom McCaffrey. ESQUPA. 215-830-0241, before 11 pm Eastern Time.

EPS/MIRAGE/ESQ/SQ-80 M.U.G. 24-Hour Hotline – 212-465-3430. Leave name, number, address. 24-hr Callback. Email: G4Prod@aol.com.

MIDI Users – Eric Baragar, Canadian MIDI Users Group, (613) 392-6296 during business hours, Eastern Time (Toronto, ONT) or call MIDILINE BBS at (613) 966-6823 24 hours.

SQ-1, KS-32, SD-1, SCSI & hard drive Questions – Pat Finnigan, 317-462-8446. 8:00 am to 10:00 pm EST.

ESQ-1, MIDI & Computers – Joe Slater, (404) 925-8881. EST.

Support (<http://www.ensoniq.com/contact.htm>), (610-647-3930), and give them a shot at troubleshooting your system. I've been using the latest OS without too many problems, and what you describe doesn't seem right to me.

The one thing I should mention is that you might want to make sure you aren't echoing any MIDI data to your ASR (this usually occurs when both the MIDI in and MIDI out on the ASR are plugged into the same interface – one that's capable of supporting echo or software thru). In my experience, the ASR absolutely hates being echoed its own MIDI realtime data (MIDI clock, etc.). This will crash it for sure...]

TH –

Is it possible to use a Fujitsu Optical 230 MB with a '16+? If yes, what are the switch configurations on the drive?

Tony Enriquez

[CS – The Fujitsu Optical drive has not been tested by Ensoniq, and I have no experience with this particular unit. So it may work, it may not... (perhaps one of our readers has experience?). If you are thinking about purchasing one to use with your EPS-16 plus, the best advice I have (and I imagine you've heard this before) is to make sure you can return the drive for a refund if it doesn't work out.]

Hi,

I own an Ensoniq SQ-1+/32-voice synth. Which I know is basically obsolete... [eek...]

Anyway... Do you have articles on chips (or whatever) to upgrade a SQ-1+ to a KS-32? I really like the drum kits in the KS and would like to see if I could upgrade my existing SQ to those stats. I'm assuming your magazine does do

sales as well as articles?

Feedback would be MUCHO appreciated.

Rich
rjmi@snet.net

[TH – It's not obsolete if you're still getting use out of it. (We prefer the term "classic" – or, better yet, "venerable.") We haven't seen any articles or even rumors about being able to do what you're hoping to do. I suspect there's a lot more to it than swapping some chips.

The only things we sell (other than the magazine) are the world famous and always-in-style Hacker t-shirts. How many should we put you down for?]

[CS – Internally, your SQ is already pretty much identical to the KS-32, so no upgrade is needed there. If you're hoping to change any of the hardware (case, keyboard, etc.), I'm afraid you're out of luck.

Using KS-32 sounds with your SQ, however, is a piece of cake; the SQ-1+ will happily accept KS-32 sounds without question. The tricky part in the case of ROM sounds (such as the drum kits) is that these are not readily available anywhere other than from a KS-32's internal ROM.

If you have access to a KS-32, though, it's pretty easy to dump sounds via MIDI to something that will record and store sysex data – a computer, sequencer, etc. – and then load that data right into your SQ. If you don't have access to a KS-32, you might write again and let our readers know; perhaps one of them would be kind enough to send you the required sysex.]

[Ensoniq – If your unit is an SQ-1+ 32 voice it will be able to use sounds from the KS-32.]

TH –

I have a question about the EPS classic. I have had mine for six years and during that time I have had two motherboard swaps by none other than Cosmo Watts himself. I have also sent the unit to the factory where they inadvertently overlooked one of the problems I requested they look into. It has a high-pitched whine (F#) that is ever-present once the unit is booted. Anybody have this problem? I'm at wit's end.

Also, what in the heck is the deal on Unisyn for the MR Rack? I've been waiting SEVEN(!) months.

Michael Zentner
Fresno, Ca.

[terje.finstad@fys.uio.no – I received the Unisyn editor for MR-Rack sent from MOTU more than a month ago. I naively would think that a call to MOTU to check that they had received your card would be reasonable.

For myself, I would like to ask: a) What is the latest version of the Unisyn/Ensoniq MR-Rack editor? And, b) Is it a bad idea that MOTU place a working copy of the MR-Rack Editor on their web page or on Ensoniq's web page?]

[CS – I'd try contacting Ensoniq Customer Support (<http://www.ensoniq.com/contact.htm>), 610-647-3930. This sounds like a service issue to me.

As far as the Unisyn profile goes, the Mac version has been shipping for a little while now, and the PC version is complete and should be shipping pretty much immediately.]

Hi,

Will the MR Rack be able to use the flash RAM boards and load samples onto them by MIDI at some point? The Quadrasynt does this with its pcmcia cards.

Jon

[CS - The MR Rack will not support the flash feature (although the keyboard version - which supports loading of samples from disk - will).]

TH -

I am using an ASR-10 and a Zip-drive. Is there any way to format the Zip drive with the ASR-10 or is there any software for the Macintosh to do that? And where can I get it?

Urs Keller
Karlsruhe/Germany
urs.keller@t-online.de

[*"Wink" (mvwinkle@intcomm.net) - Simply bootup the ASR from the floppy instead of the Zip, and you will now have a new option under System - "Format SCSI." It disappears when you boot from SCSI, which naturally makes me wonder how you are using the Zip if you can't format. Good luck.*]

[CS - You might want to get your hands on a copy of TH #132, which contains Garth Hjelt's article "Zip-ity How-To-Do Da," which details all issues Zip-tical. Apparently, there are several hoops through which one must jump to successfully format a Zip drive for use with an ASR-10.]

[INTOYOU555@aol.com - The ASR cannot read a normal Zip drive. You need to exchange it with Iomega for one with an "av" upgrade. (If you haven't done so already.) They mailed me one overnight express before I even mailed the old one back. Just expect to be on hold for a good 1/2 hour.]

[Ensoniq - For more information on the Iomega Zip Drive compatibility with the ASR series, check out Document Number 0021 on Ensoniq's fax retrieval system (800-257-1439).]

TH, Ensoniq, et al:

Because of a ripped-off VFX-SD and good insurance, I decided to wait for the MR-61. But what a long wait. So I grabbed a nice TS-10 with some spare change. And now with the MR-61's recent arrival, I love the synth engine, but there are tons of things that it should "learn" from its predecessors about flexibility in live performance!

First and foremost, I am impressed with the MR-61's synth engine, with quite a bit more to offer on the whole than the TS-10 (if I read the manual correctly), and I eagerly await the Unisyn package to play with this in depth. Just today, I discovered those organ patches where the sustain pedal or the modwheel does something like the old "patch select" buttons - if that's a hint of what's possible, I can't wait!

But what a giant step back into the Stone Age as a performance keyboard! Oh where, oh where, has the polykey pressure gone?

Oh well, that hardware decision was made. Now, software that might have a chance for change...

As far as I can tell, insert effects are not individually selected by presets. And accessing the presets is really cumbersome: spin the dial to the last option, and answer "yes." What's more, after layering/unlayering something with the "layer" button, you can't immediately go to another preset, but have to do this clumsy procedure again. And when modifying a preset, you have to rename it each and every time you save it - a pain in the rear when doing multiple variations of the same basic split!

This wouldn't be so bad, if those 16 sequencer track buttons and the associated sequencer banks provided even half the flexibility of the TS-10. Boy, do I miss the ability to do double-clicks to layer different tracks in performance! And held notes mute when you select another track! Please, Ensoniq, can you bring back all or most of the behavior of the TS-10, et al, within the sequencer track

buttons? Including the way one half of a split could stay constant while merrily selecting randomly between all those other 11 tracks for the other half?! Why should I have to take up memory and valuable time saving splits as single sounds, and lose the different effects bus routings in the process?

Meanwhile, the bugs I've found: lockups, lockups, and more lockups, associated with 1) random dialing between sounds, 2) attempting to make a playlist, 3) God knows what. The display frequently moves to the "pan" page without apparent reason.

I don't regret having the device at all - you know, tradeoffs and all that. Nonetheless, you really have lost a number of performance-oriented features that kept me touting the Ensoniq line through thick and thin. I sure hope some of it can be "restored."

John Seboldt
Minneapolis, MN

Current Ensoniq O.S. (Disk/EPROM)

EPS	2.49/2.40
EPS-M	2.49/2.41
EPS-16 PLUS	1.3/1.00F
MASOS	2.0
MIRAGE	3.2
ESQ	3.5
ESQ-M	1.2
SQ-80	1.8
VFX	2.30
VFX-SD	2.1/2.00
SQ-1	1.11
SQ-1 32	2.03
SQ-1 PLUS	1.15
SQ-R	1.20
SQ-R 32	2.03
SQ-R PLUS	1.15
SQ-2	1.2
SQ-2 32	2.03
SD-1	4.10/4.10
SD-1 32	4.10/4.10
DP/4	1.15
DP/4+	2.05
DP/2	1.02
KS-32	3.01
ASR-10	3.53/1.5
ASR-88	3.53/3.50
KMX-8	2.00
KMX-16	1.50
TS-10/12	3.10
KT-76/88	1.62
SDP-1	1.70
MR Rack	1.50

[James Rosand (jrosand@olympus.net) – I sure wish I had read your letter before I ordered my MR-61. I expect it to arrive today from Thoroughbred Music in Florida. It's coming a long way since I live in the Seattle area.]

I too have a TS-10/12 and was rather deflated after reading your comments. I always assume that a new product is better than its predecessor. You really brought up some major issues concerning the features Ensoniq left out of the MR-61. The same concerns and features you mentioned in your letter are exactly the same features I use all the time with my TS-10/12.

I only have myself to blame, but I bought the MR-61 sight unseen.

Perhaps if enough of us express ourselves as eloquently as you, Ensoniq may make some of the changes you suggested to the MR-61. It's wonderful that we have a forum via the Transoniq Hacker to vent our frustrations.

I am only hoping that Ensoniq will revamp their OS on the MR-61/76 models.

Thanks again for your insight on the new "flagship" in the Ensoniq lineup.]

[erb@freeway.net – You actually HAVE an MR-61! For whatever reason I've only seen the MR-76 so far. I really wanted to order MR-61 but after trying the MR-76 at my dealer I don't seem to

match the Instrument, the Manual and the very pretty ad sheet they sent me. The dealer (a sharp guy who owns some old Ensoniq equip) and I tried with no success to load a .WAV from a DOS disk or sample in ASR format from a Rubber Chicken disk, even though the back page of ad sheet, under "Disk," says "1-Sound (loadable to FLASH or RAM)." It may require a FLASH board (price and release date unknown) to do ANY samples. As a happy TS-12 owner I just wanted to add these thoughts to yours.]

[Anthony Ruocco (anthonyr@geocities.com) – I just wanted to say that while reading this letter, I discovered a number of new ways to use my TS-12 that I never thought of before. Thanks to TH and all of its contributors, especially the Interface – it's an invaluable source of information.]

[Ensoniq – 1) The TS was and still remains a great product. However, we feel it's not at all accurate to associate its performance/workstation capabilities with the MR's songwriting and inspirational tools. The MR-61/76 is an excellent songwriter's keyboard, but can easily be used as a performance keyboard. With features like an on-board Drum Machine and Idea Pad, it's primarily a powerful tool for songwriting. The entire design and look of the front panel was done to make life easier for the creative songwriter. We believe that having an Idea Pad, 16-track Recorder, Drum machine and an easy Song editor, and soon the ability to load up to 12MB of ASR, .WAV, and AIFF files actually makes the MR a more powerful tool.

2) Channel pressure sensitivity is available on the MR, poly-Key is not. However, sounds in the MR can be set up to receive poly-key from an external source.

3) Insert effects are selectable by presets. The object is to save these Presets to the Flash Bank for quick access.

4) The Preset is automatically updated

when you edit the Insert effect. You don't have to rename it.]

TH –

I own a TS-12, SQ-1 and a DP/4+. For about two years now I've been looking for sounds that resemble sounds in Tangerine Dream's "220 Volt Live," or "Tyranny of Beauty," or Enya's "Watermark," or Pink Floyd's "Division Bell." I have tried Syntaur Productions samples and program disks. I've also tried samples from Waveboy. No help. The sound I'm most interested in is also used as backup sound in a song called, "The Captain of My Heart." (I forget who the artist is.) Please, can you help me? I'm sure some TH-er out there has heard the above mentioned CDs. The sound is very smooth and unique. Again, I would appreciate any help you can give me.

Thank you much,
Deane
Chalfont, PA

[J.D. (BrosRyan) – Perhaps Rubber Chicken (Garth) will respond to your post.]

[Uncle Viceroy (tesjuptr@Bayou.uh.edu) – Hi Deane! I believe the artist in question was called "Double" – late '80s song "Captain of my Heart." In response to getting "that sound" – I always dig up info on the keyboards used by the artist whose sound I'm interested in so I have an idea what instrument the sound came from. Then I select that category of sound from a sample of that instrument (i.e. clav, bell string etc) from the plethora of Ensoniq sound vendors out there – or preferably in the Hacker). Good Luck! :)]

[CS – All I have to add is this: don't neglect the Ensoniq library for these products. Between the SQ and TS series, I believe there are upwards of 2000 sounds available. For more information, call Ensoniq at (800) 553-5151 between 8:30 am to 5:00 pm EST, Monday through Friday.]

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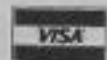
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