Transoniq Hacker

The Independent News Magazine for Ensoniq Users

Insert FX on the MR Series

Tickling the Dragon's Tail

Pat Finnigan

Ya know, programming the older Malvern boxes used to be a snap. The ESQ-1 was as progressive as it got in 1987, the Mirage taught us hexadecimal, the EPS taught us such esoteric quantum mechanic phrases like "bidirectional crossfade bowtie loop" (as well as wave-particle duality). This was good. Their later variants not only added more polyphony, but a dedicated effects processor. Now we could ditch those old Alesis boxes and tweak reverbs and choruses on the Malvern box. This too was good. Then came Waveboy which threw more effects into the Malvern Sampler Box. Then came Ensoniq and gave us more effects in OS.3.xx for the Malvern Sampler. And this, too, was good. And we were so good to go with these new boxes we played with the chorus and reverb parameters, stumbling on Ensoniq's incorporation of modulation of the effects with any number of routings. We stumbled across the "Timbre" parameter: this, too, was good...

But during all this time did we open the manual to see what we were doing? Or was it only when we got the flanger self-oscillating did we open the Ensoniq Musician's Odyssey to figure out how to shut it off? Did we call Ensoniq Tech support to tell them we got reverb on one track but chorus on another? And some tracks had both while others had neither? Were we finding bugs in the Malvern box? Did we really believe the "No Commands On Page" the first time we saw that, or did we press the up/down arrows to discover the "Mr. Knob" page in the hidden menu?

One thing I neglected, and I'm sure quite a few of you did too, was reading the effects routing pages in the manuals. As we've all come to know, the sound of a particular patch is dependent upon more than its waveform and envelope, its modulators and their routings, as well as the hundreds of parameters available for tweaking. The effects of the Malvern box play a far greater role than we may give them credit for: they certainly play a far greater role in the sound of the Malvern box than we want to admit. And the MR-series have an almost unlimited selection of effects for perusal, which we're about to discover...

The MRs not only have chorus, reverb, flange, phase, rotary, DDL, EQ, etc., etc

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— they *also* sport an insert fx buss as well. And we're not talking the Roland type of 3 insert effects here, buckos; the MRs give you *forty* (40) insert effects! OS Version 2.0 for the MR keyboards is *not* just a maintenance revision: run down to your store and order it if you don't already have it, because *this* is the stuff the dragon is made of. And these 40 insert effect algorithms have just as many parameters as the regular effects. You're getting stuff the DP/4 can't do in your MR, and it's a simple ROM revision away. We're about to discover why the MR takes a few minutes when you "Save Session to Disk." Let's begin...

Begin by "Saving Session to Disk?" to a fresh blank scratch floppy. We'll restore the instrument with this file when we're done. Call up "AutoWahClav" in the "Keys" directory in the Soundfinder (ROM 004:059). What we have here, given the appropriate keyboard sensitivity curve you use, is the 1970's sound of a Hohner Clavinet through a Mutron (an early VCF box that controlled its cutoff frequency by signal strength). In this example the VCF actually stands for *velocity* controlled filter: the harder you strike a key, the "wowwier" it sounds. On the money with a tweak or two for "Superstition." Now the fun begins. Press the "Insert FX' button above and to the left of the pan button. *Now* let's explore...

The display reads "28 Dist->Autowah." Now spin the "Value" wheel a little to the right and a lot to the left to get us at the first of these variations. If the display reads "WHL Wah" you're there: play some chords and move the mod wheel forward to open a choked filter. Rotate the "Value" wheel one notch to the right: the display now reads "Vel Follow." Now the Clavinet's primed for Stevie Wonder's Clav intro on "Higher Ground." Turn the "Parameter" knob to discover still *more* parameters. Spin this knob to the right until you get to the "Post VCF Q" screen and increase to 27.9. *Now* it's Stevie's Higher Ground intro dead on the money. How did these pages get buried so deep behind the front panel? The MR gets better...

Now return to the "Insert Preset = Vel Follow" page by spinning the parameter knob left and turning one click right. Good: now turn the "Value" knob 10 clicks to the right: the display should read "Quack." Play the Higher Ground intro again, and although a bit exaggerated, sounds just like the edit to the "Vel Follow" edit we did in the previous step. I'm just curious what experimental pharmacologist titled these FX presets. Click the value knob one click more to the right to get to the "Rat Breath" preset to see what I mean. OK, this is just an isolated incident: some clever DSP programmer hid this easter egg here, right?

Nay nay, forsooth! Press the Soundfinder button, and turn the value knob one click to the right to get to "ChatterClav" (ROM 004:062). Press the insert FX button and scroll full left with the Parameter knob to get to "Insert Effect = 31 Pitch Detuner, then turn it one click right. Then click the "Value" knob two clicks to the right. Play a single key staccato at hard velocity and guess why they call this FX variation "Transporter." Spock lives! Scroll the Value knob 2 clicks left to get to the "Detune" variation: this clavinet sounds more technobass than clav now.

And we've just scratched the surface with a clavinet wave. The secret to unlocking the MR's potential in this manner (and you read it here in the *Hacker* first!) is to select any sound in the SoundFinder that you like, then press the "Routing" knob (to the right and above the Pan knob) and set to "Insert FX." Once you've done that, you can begin your sonic reconstruction (or as the case may be, demolition) with the Parameter and Value knobs. Now you know why they made those two knobs so big.

I've just done a string section from the *"Marcato Strings"* through the 8-voice chorus that defies description: suffice to say it's a rather *large* string pad that only takes up one voice of polyphony. Destructive synthesis: go granular with a "Surface Noiz"/Transwave layered hybrid. Route through the "Pitch Shifter" and randomize some parameters. "TundraVox layered with "Nylon Pad" routed thru "EQ+CHORUS+DDL" is a breathing yet tame dragon. Transwaves through the Formant Morph insert are a complete school in themselves: the "Vocorder" algorithm begs for a parallel distort routing for trance grooves: the "VCF+Distort" is the purveyor of the most powerful Moog/ARP/Prophet sounds of the analog synth lead school. Looks like I'm going to bed reading that 500 page *Musician's Manual* again...

The only cons to wreaking sounds in this manner? Any sounds you've assigned to sequence tracks that are bussed through an insert effect will sound just like your last edits. This may seem like a minor point until you realize that you didn't know what sounds that are currently assigned to tracks use insert effects. A "Transporter" clav is a way cool effect: a "Transporter" grand piano is not. Not to worry: just reassign your "Transporter" grand piano out of the "Insert FX buss" and torque reverb/chorus/send levels to taste. All better now, but it was a pretty big scare, wasn't it? Just another way to discover and learn your instrument. If you've really twisted the dragon's tail, reload your instrument using the disk we made in step one...

And we haven't even gotten into Unisyn and torquing a voice at the wave level yet! There's so much power untapped under the hood of the MR it can be *very* intimidating. It's very easy to miss what you can do at the front panel level with this thing just by getting hung up with the new Sequencer interface. Or the Drum Machine. Or the Idea Pad. Or comparing it to last year's Ensoniq box. It, too, was good.

But as hard as it is for me to say, the MR, too, is not only

very good: it's better. And that's a very difficult thing for me to admit to because I've grown *so* accustomed/acclimated to the more "traditional" (read older) Ensoniq interface. Yikes! I'm referring to the Ensoniq interface now as "Classic" interface as compared to the "new and improved" MR interface. Scary. You sit at an MR Keyboard for a coupla days and you'll not only find out why the MR keyboards are a bit higher priced than the comparable K and R synths, but also why this new interface is propelling Ensoniq into the 21st Century. And if all you based your judgement on was the whistles and bells of the non-"Classic" interface, you missed the point. Because sonically, the MR jumps through more hoops than Slick Willie at a press conference answering Asian fund raising questions.

The only way you could make the MR a more powerful synth keyboard/rack would be to add sample RAM. The FlashROM cards for the MR's resolve that issue. And if you're as stubborn to learn new tricks as the old dog next door, the ASR-X will give you the look and feel of the Ensoniq "Classic" interface with the sonic power of an MR onboard a 32 Mb ASR.

Something for everyone: I'll ask again: do those guys in Malvern *ever* sleep? ▬

Bio: Pat quit Truevision to return to audio. "If video is such an art form, explain television."

Front Panel

RND (♪♪♪)

Hacker News

Corrections: We'd like to thank BrosRyan@aol.com for sending in the following — *Please excuse my tattle pen. I'm not a nit picker nor even a guitar picker, and I think Tom Shear is the coolest writer, and certainly the coolest photo in* Hacker *pages. Refer however to: "In Search of the Perfect Sample — Part Dos" in Issue #139. He says, "...you may prefer to have it start sampling as soon as you hit the YES key. To set yourself up for this you'll hit the down arrow until the asterisk is as far* right *as it will go." Wrong! As far* LEFT *as it will go indicates the lowest threshold. Also: "Play your source, and when it's finished, hit* YES *to tell the sampler to stop sampling." Wrong! Hit* NO *to tell the sampler to stop.*

Ensoniq News

Ensoniq Announces E-Prime

Keyboard Range and Response — Sit down to E-Prime, and you'll feel like you're in front of your favorite acoustic piano. The flying-action mechanism simulates the weight and throw of a real piano hammer, for amazingly lifelike piano performance. You can customize the feel of E-Prime to match your playing style, selecting from 14 velocity curves and 4 pressure settings. Its 76-key range is big enough for most piano pieces and provides larger zones for split keyboard setups.

Three Sampled Pianos — Our no-compromise design philosophy puts three sampled pianos in ROM: a pop-oriented Bosendorfer, a rich 9-foot Baldwin grand, and a warm, inviting Yamaha grand. These carefully sampled instruments have been programmed to provide a balanced set of performance pianos — from a sparkling "cut-through-the-mix" timbre to a lush grand that's ideal for any concert hall.

Sounds for Every Need — E-Prime has sounds for every style of music, with improved fidelity for crystal-clear sound. The 308 on-board sounds offer a broad range of authentic instruments, as well as modern synthesized sounds. They also include 128 General MIDI sounds and 10 GM/GS drum kits. The keyboard enthusiast will appreciate the variety of organ, electric piano, synth, and pad sounds. A full complement of string, reed, woodwind, and brass instruments will enhance classical or pop arrangements. A wide variety of drum, bass, and guitar sounds provide high-energy dance or smokin' jazz rhythm sections. For the adventurous, there are exotic world/ethnic instruments and other unique sounds. Sounds are logically arranged and categorized by instrument families — all piano sounds grouped together, brass sounds together, etc. Plus, our exclusive SoundFinder (tm) searches through ROM, RAM, and cards to find sounds quickly and easily by their musical category.

Performance Controls — Versatile controls make it easy to add expression to your performance. The Mod and Pitch wheels are placed at a convenient angle. One button-push transposes your live playing to any key you choose with our new Transpose Keyboard feature. With Performance Presets, combine internal and external MIDI sounds, then save your setups for instant recall during performance. E-Prime is perfect for stand-alone playing or controlling your other MIDI gear.

Sequencing — E-Prime has the same advanced yet easy-to-use sequencing features that have made Ensoniq keyboards famous! Our user-friendly recording and editing tools will help you develop your musical ideas into fully orchestrated songs.

Increased Polyphony — E-Prime is the most complete and professional 64-voice instrument available. Increased polyphony provides true piano performance where you can hear every note — no matter how many sustained notes, chords, or arpeggios are played. At last, you'll have enough voices for

creating complete orchestral arrangements, playing live with your sequencer, or performing multi-layered arrangements of your favorite compositions.

Versatile Performance Features — It's easy to create your own keyboard splits or layers. Combine and save up to 8 sounds (both internal and external MIDI) along with their corresponding performance and effects parameters. Adjust volume, panning, key zone, release time, MIDI channel, sustain pedal on/off, effects parameters, and more. Save your setups as Performance Presets — they'll be right there, ready for instant recall during performance. Ensoniq's latest performance feature, *Transpose Keyboard,* will instantly transpose your keyboard playing to any other key. (You'll wonder how you ever lived without it when you're performing live with singers.) A single damper piano-style pedal (included) provides for sustain. The optional SW-10 dual foot pedal can be programmed for sustain, sostenuto, and sequencer start/ stop. The optional CVP-1 pedal can be used for volume or real-time control of modulation parameters. Combine all these features with a 76-key range and weighted action, and you'll see that E-Prime makes an ideal master controller for a complete MIDI system. And it's easy to arrange tracks for MIDI control with our one-touch Make-Default Preset button. Your Choice for Performance — Only Ensoniq could provide a keyboard with the sound and feel of a real piano along with such advanced yet easy-to-use performance features. E-Prime is the best synthesizer that combines 64-voice polyphony, 76-key weighted action, onboard effects sequencing, and General MIDI compatibility.

E-Prime Primary Performance Keyboard

Ensoniq's meticulous attention to sound, design, and versatile performance features ensures a lifetime of music making pleasure. Whether you play on stage, at church, or in your living room, E-Prime provides you with the keys to the best performance.

Keyboard
- 76 key (E-G) weighted action keyboard with programmable velocity and channel pressure sensitivity (MIDI transmission of Release Velocity)
- Up to 8 programmable keyboard zones for splits and layers

Internal Sound Memory
- 308 sounds available without a memory card:
  80 RAM sounds
  100 ROM sounds including 20 dedicated drum and percussion sets (including 8 GM/GS drum kits)
  128 ROM General MIDI sounds
- SoundFinder(tm) provides easy lookup by musical type for fast locating of desired sounds (ROM, RAM and Card locations)
- 100 RAM Performance Preset locations (sequence/song headers)
- 10 Performance Presets in ROM
- ROM demo sequence

Waves
- 48 Megabits (6 MB 4 Megawords) of waveform ROM
- Over 2000 variations possible from the 223 wave selections, which include:
  3 different multi-sampled acoustic pianos
  Multi-sampled acoustic instruments in Keyboard, String, Brass & Horn, Wind & Reed, Vocal, Bass, Drum, Percussion, Tuned Percussion and Sound Effect groups
  Sustained synthesizer waveforms with harmonic and inharmonic structures
  Transwave(tm) spectral interpolation waves with real time modulation
- Modulatable start offset, forward or backward playback, and multi-sample key shift available on all samples
- Pitched or fixed frequency playback of all waves possible

Voice Architecture
- 64 dynamically assigned voices with programmable voice priority
- A single Sound can use up to 3 waves per key simultaneously
- Drum sounds use a pre-programmed GM map containing 47 drum slots; the drum editor provides up to 17 custom slots for up to 64-key drum kits
- Programmable voice delay up to 250 msec or by key-up trigger
- Each voice has a complete set of programmable parameters:
  Independent waveform selection
  2 independent multi-mode dynamic digital filters (low pass, high pass, variable bandwidth band pass)
  3 four-stage loopable hardware envelopes with 12 parameters per envelope
  39 preset envelope templates for ease of programming
  1 multi-waveform LFO with adjustable rate, depth, delay, and restart mode
  Variable rate random Noise generator for modulation
  15 modulation sources routable to pitch, filter cutoff, volume, pan, wave start offset, TransWave index and LFO depth
  3 glide modes with adjustable glide time
- Global bend range with held pitch bend mode
- 34 ROM Pitch Tables
- System Pitch Table allows user to apply any ROM Pitch Table on all sounds instantly

Effects
- Custom VLSI 24-bit digital signal processor (ESP chip) with 48-bit accumulation
- Programmable stereo effects processing with real time modulation of most effects parameters from 15 sources
- 13 multi-effect algorithms including Reverb, Chorus, Flanger, Phaser, Stereo Delay, EQ, EnvVCF, Distortion, Rotary Speaker, and combination effects
- Three stereo busses allowing for dry, individual, or grouped effects processing

Sequencer
- 16 polyphonic tracks (including 8 "Song Tracks") each with its own sound and complete set of track parameters (same as Presets)
- Tracks can play any combination of ROM/RAM/Card Sounds and external MIDI control
- Up to 64 internal voices per track, dynamically assigned (no limit on MIDI voices per track)
- 70 Sequence/30 Song structure
- Song form provides up to 99 Steps with up to 99 Repetitions for each Step (each Sequence Track in a Step can be individually muted or transposed)
- 6,500 note capacity in internal RAM
- MC-512 RAM card (PCMCIA format) holds 6,500 notes in

Bank A, over 100,000 notes in Bank B, with direct memory access
- Each Card sequencer Bank holds 70 Sequence/30 Song locations for a total of 300 available sequence locations
- Clock resolution of 96 PPQ, synchronized to internal or MIDI clock source
- 3 real time record modes (Replace, Add, Looped) and Step-Entry recording possible
- Automated punch/edit locations remembered for each Sequence
- Post-quantization (auto-correct up to 1/64th note triplets)
- Song Step editing, bar/beat/clock and key range editing, event list editing, copy, append, change length, time-shift, transpose, merge tracks, filter/extract/scale any event
- All editing can be auditioned before saving changes
- Auto-locate controls, adjustable click track, and Tap Tempo control
- Auto Mix (automated mixdown) feature records all volume and panning changes for each Track

Output
- 16-bit D/A conversion with 96dB dynamic range
- First-order linear interpolation for wide transposition range
- 2 Hz – 18 kHz frequency range
- Dynamic stereo panning per voice and per track

Inputs/Outputs
- Left/Mono and Right/Mono audio outputs
- Front panel stereo headphone output
- Pedal/Control Voltage input (allows modulation of voices/FX or volume control with optional CVP-1 pedal)
- Single/dual pedal input (SW-6 included, optional SW-10)
- MIDI In/Out/Thru
- PCMCIA card slot

Display/Panel
- Large 32 (2 x 16) character backlit LCD display
- 48 front panel buttons, 16 with LED indicators (including 8 dedicated sequencer track buttons for ease of sequencing)
- Transpose Keyboard function with 11 dedicated LED indicators
- Dedicated SoundFinder (tm) buttons

Physical
- Dimensions: 50 1/2" (128.27 cm) wide x 5" (12.7 cm) high x 15 5/8" (39.69 cm) deep
- Weight: 51 pounds (23.13 kilograms) unboxed, 63.9 pounds (29 kilograms) boxed

Limited Warranty
- One year, parts and labor

Prices and specifications subject to change without notice.

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Basses Loaded

Syntaur Sample Set 17

Tom Shear

Product: Syntaur *"Basses 2"* Sample Set 17.
For: EPS, EPS-16+, ASR and TS.
Price: $29.95.
Contact: Syntaur Productions, 5402 W. 43rd St., Houston, TX, 77092.
Phone: 713-682-1960 or 800-334-1288.

I've gotta tell you — I LOVE bass. Sure, the four-stringed (or five-stringed, or six-stringed, or heaven forbid twelve stringed!) variety is great, but what really gets my heart pumping is the synthetic variety. Since I almost always build my songs from the bassline up, I am constantly on the lookout for new bass sounds. That's where the fine people at Syntaur come in. This month, we'll be taking a look at their second 4-disk collection of samples devoted to basses.

Before we get to the juicy parts, some thoughts... First of all, the documentation is excellent. The artist responsible for creating the sound is credited, the source of the sample is divulged, and all patch selects are clearly defined for easy reference. Secondly, although the per-disk cost is a little more than some vendors, the axiom of "you get what you pay for" is definitely at work here. These sounds aren't simply sampled, slapped onto disk, and fired out as is. Incredibly detailed programming is at work here from the patch selects, to the modulation capabilities, to the loops, to the effects (for those that have them), and anything else you can imagine. A lot of time went into making these sounds, so in that context, the price really seems like a bargain.

Let's take a look at what's inside, shall we?

DISK 1

This disk starts out with the sharp, digital-sounding "VFX Versibass." This is excellent for sequenced lines if you

want a lot of chorus and turns out to be easy to change if necessary as the thoughtful programmers at Syntaur have assigned the mod wheel to remove the chorusing. Nice touch. Next up is "SY77 Bass 2," a GREAT analog-flavored bass that has all the punch of a Mini, but also has some interesting high-frequencies that give it an unusual bite. "SY77 Elec Bass" was a bit disappointing to me. This grainy, static-sounding bass uses some rather abrupt cross-switching to change from regular to slap bass. I'd stick with Ensoniq's version of the real thing. "SY77 FM Bass 1" follows up with the once-ubiquitous DX-7 Slam Bass-type sound. For us nostalgia buffs it's a nice touch. Things round out with "X3 Synbass 1," another sequencey sawtooth bass similar to "SY77 Bass 2," but without so much high frequency bite.

DISK 2

The next disk starts out with "Uncle Bobs" — if you have to ask who Uncle Bob is you should be ashamed — a solid, monophonic squarewave sound that I feel is well-suited as a lead sound. Nice patch programming on this one. "X3 Ebass 1" follows with another synthetic electric bass sound. If you keep your velocities rather light (so the filter is closed), it can sound pretty realistic. The velocity switching to the slap sound (which sounds bright as opposed to especially slappy) is also done much smoother on this. "X3 Ebass 2" is next — a brighter and less realistic variation on the previous sound. "X3 Pkslpbas 2" has a very nice picked/muted bass tone velocity switched with a pretty poor slap sound. "SQ Elec Bass" is next and pretty much left me reaching for the next instrument button. The disk redeems itself, however, with "Moog 404" — an extremely expressive monophonic analog blowout complete with filter modulation. GREAT sound! The "CS-15 Bass" that follows is equally great with an extremely fat, analog flavor. Things round out with "X3 Housebass," a dark, plucked synth tone.

DISK 3

This picks things up right where the last disk left off with "CZ-VFX Bass," a beautifully punchy, and very fat (play the bottom few notes and let it sustain to hear what I mean) bass that has already inspired me on a remix I'm working on. Next up is "Numan Moog" a dark, sawtooth monobass that has a little more punch than "Uncle Bob" and is a lot more useful as a bass. The low end on these Moog samples is brutal! If you ran this through further EQ, you could probably knock down walls with it. "Mechanic Bass" beings back some of the nastiest of the old SQ-80 waves in a harsh, bright, metallic synbass that may bring to mind the old PPG days. Things take an abrupt about-face with "X3 Abass 1," an adequate upright bass sound, that regardless of lack of realism is still well-programmed. Unfortunately, I was unable to load the "WS Bass Knob" sound due to corrupt data. (I'm sure Mr. Mims would have replaced the disk quickly, courteously, and without charge — as is their way — if I had actually contacted him with the problem...) And rounding out the disk — "Quick Odyssey," a bright, highly unusual analog bass that is a refreshing change from the vast majority of analog bass sounds.

DISK 4

The final disk gets off to a good start with "Alpha Bass," an unusual combination of a full round bass sound with some digital fuzz that almost provides an analog character. "DX Samp Bass" provides another blast from the past with a layer of DX and electric bass. "Fump Bass" is an absolute killer analog with a nice, hard attack suitable for intricate sequencing. Staying on the analog side of things we have "Jupe Pulse," a bright, quacky synth that doesn't have a lot of low end, but is a cool sound nonetheless. This should make an excellent clavinet replacement. "Belglide Bass" takes a bell wave, makes it monophonic and adds some portamento for an unusual variation on the previous Moog sounds in the set. "Ws Kick Bass" is another one of the tasty digital/analog hybrids with a crisp attack and solid sustain. Things end on a bit of a low note (no pun intended) with "SQR-S50 Bass," a cheesey sounding synth slap bass.

So what's the word? Well, if you're looking for realistic electric bass simulations, look elsewhere. And while this programming is well done no one is gonna be fooled into thinking Flea snuck into your studio last night. The strength here is in the synthetic basses, of which you get a wide variety, and nearly all of which are as punchy as is legal. Combine this with excellent documentation, meticulous programming, and incredibly expressive modulations, and you have yourself a winner. ▬

Bio: 4 out of 5 dentists surveyed recommend brushing with Tom Shear in between meals.

The Quick-Start Guide

Eric Montgomery

Okay, here it is — everything you'll ever need to know boiled down the bare essentials. 100% Fluff-Free.

How to create a sample:

1. Press (Sample)
2. Press (Enter)
3. Press one of the eight instrument buttons located beneath the screen.
4. Start the sound you want to sample. (Note: If you are using an ASR-10 there is a volume input attenuator located at the rear of the ASR, next to the input jacks. Also with the ASR family if the input source is a mic you may have to use the Mic\Line input switch to increase the gain.) With ASRs refer to the input level LEDs and with the EPS family refer to the Peak meter in the display.
5. Press Enter and begin sampling.
6. Press the Cancel\No button to stop sampling.
7. Play the key that you want the sample to play on.
8. For an in-depth look at how to sample refer to your Musician's manuals section called "Sampling and or Signal source Concepts."

To truncate a sample:

This is a really important part of sampling especially for those with stock memory. In short, truncating is removing the unwanted start and end of a sample. Once a sample has been truncated the unused portions are erased and the time from those unwanted parts is reallocated into memory for other samples or sequences.

1. Press Edit, being sure that the screen =Name of sound LYR=x WS= xxx. The cursor has to be under WS to choose a sample to edit. Tap the key that plays the sample you want to edit.
2. Press Edit, then Wave.
3. Using the Cursor and Page buttons that are located to the left of the screen (up & down, side to side buttons) set the cursor below the # in parenthesis and set the sample start time as needed. For example, if there is noise before the actual sound that you want starts, make the # larger. Then set the sample end time as needed. If there is a lot of noise after the sound you can keep making the # smaller until it suits your tastes.
4. Press Command
5. Press Wave.
6. Continue pressing Wave until you see (Truncate) in the screen.
7. Press Enter.
8. For an in-depth look at how to edit a sample refer to your Musician's manuals section called "Sampling/Signal source Concepts" and " Wave Data/sample Parameters."

To create a sequence:

1. Assuming you have already loaded the instrument (s), select the instrument that you want to start sequencing with.
2. Press and hold the Record button.
3. While still holding the Record button, press the Play button.
4. The ASR will give you a one bar intro, then begin recording.
5. When finished recording press the Stop\Continue button.
6. The ASR will now ask if you want to keep the track you just recorded. Press Enter for yes and Cancel for no.
7. For specific details on sequencing refer to the musician's manuals section called "Sequencer and Audio Track Concepts, or sequencer basics.

To check the OS version:

Ensoniq supports its older products with software and (sometimes) hardware updates. Software updates usually include bug fixes and may also include new features. To obtain the most current OS version contact your nearest Authorized Ensoniq dealer, or call Ensoniq technical support at (610) 647-3930 between the hours of 9:30am to 12:15pm and 1:00pm to 6:30pm eastern time.

For the EPS/EPS-16+/ASR-10/ASR-88 the software version is disk based and listed on the diskettes. The EPROM version can be checked as below.

1. Press COMMAND
2. Press ENV1
3. Display = NO COMMANDS ON PAGE
4. Scroll until display = SOFTWARE INFORMATION
5. Press (ENTER/YES)
6. Display = RAM VERSION = X.XX
7. Press (ENTER/YES)
8. Display = ROM VERSION = X.XX
9. Press (ENTER/YES)
10. Display = KEYBOARD VERSION = X.XX

Getting started with a new keyboard is mostly a matter of orientation — of knowing how to follow the maps provided. Once that has been done a number of times it becomes an automatic thing and you can focus on why you are there pressing keys in the first place. Those first steps are both the most difficult and the least likely to get much air time. Good luck and happy sampling! ▬

Bio: Eric N. Montgomery has been a Customer Service Representative with Ensoniq for 1yr. In his spare time he enjoys song writing, sequencing, sampling, and sound programming.

Hang On, Loopy

or — Loops and LFO to the Rescue

Dan Rohde

You say there are a couple tunes with a distinctive, gotta have it, way cool background synthesizer that you cant figure out? You just cant find that jackhammer-helicopter-machinegun-budda-budda-Sgt.-Rock-charging-up-Hamburger-Hill sound that takes certain songs over the top, like *Theme from Miami Vice* by synth Titan Jan Hammer; ZZ Top's *Legs;* maybe even *Teenage Wasteland* by The Who. Never fear: Loops and LFO to the rescue!

Synthesizers with the ability to use repeating envelopes — or an LFO as a Modsource to Output on Ensoniq's SQ family — can generate this rapid eh-eh-eh-eh sound easily with many possible variations. Though it's also possible to prerecord a whole song on the sequencer using step entered sixteenth notes, that does take away a little from the live performance. No, the object here is to hold down a key so that it fires continuous sixteenth notes at whatever speed you prefer.

Output Modsource=LFO Method

Voices 1 and 2 use the LFO method to produce this repeating sound by selecting Outputs Modsource=LFO at Modamount=+99. The Brass Organ and Clavinet Waveforms both have that solid edge I was looking for. I detuned their pitches slightly (under Pitch) and panned them -28 and +28 (under Output) to get some stereo effect.

Their LFO settings need to be identical so Voices and 2 stay together. The Square wave produces the sharpest starts and stops. If you want something with a little softer attack, try Wave=POS/TRI. Speed=50 creates a tempo of 130 bpm (or 520 of those little gnat notes, as Frank Zappa once called them). Each LFO cycle translates to 3 bpm, by the way, so if you want to play a song at 124 bpm you would set Speed=48. If your band is perfectionist about keeping right in the middle of the beat, the drummer might want a click track fed into his headphones, but I doubt if the audience is going to notice if you're a little off.

Under Filters we have a couple things happening. Envelope 2 is engaged for both Voices for Filter 1 and 2 Cutoffs. To achieve a continuous filter sweep effect, Mode=Repeat. In other words, while those machine gun bullets keep firing, Envelope 2 is slowly raising and lowering the Filter Cutoff levels so the treble-bass varies slightly. Envelope 2 Decay settings are slightly different for each Voice so that their Filter Cutoffs rise and fall at different rates. Either Wheel or Pressure can also raise the Filter Cutoffs, for a continuous or occasional emphasis.

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SQ/KS/KT Prog: HANG ON, LOOPY

By: Dan Rohde

WAVE	1	2	3
Select Voice	On	On	On
Wave Class	Waveform	Waveform	BassWave
Wave	BrassOrg	Clavinet	SynthBs2
Delay Time	000	000	000
Wave Direction	-	-	Backward
Start Index	-	-	-
MODSCR	-	-	-
MODAMT	-	-	-
Restrk Decay	20	20	20

PITCH	1	2	3
Octave	00	00	+1
Semitone	00	00	00
Fine	+02	-01	+04
ENV1	-	-	-
LFO	00	00	00
MODSCR	-	-	-
MODAMT	-	-	-
KBD Ptch Track	On	On	On
Glide	Off	Off	Off
Glide Time	-	-	-

ENV1	1	2	3
Initial	-	-	-
Peak	-	-	-
Break	-	-	-
Sustain	-	-	-
Attack	-	-	-
Decay 1	-	-	-
Decay 2	-	-	-
Release	-	-	-
Vel-Level	-	-	-
Vel-Attack	-	-	-
Vel Curve	-	-	-
Mode	-	-	-
KBD Track	-	-	-

LFO	1	2	3
LFO Speed	50	50	-
Noise Rate	00	00	-
Level	99	99	-
Delay	00	00	-
MODSRC	MaxOn	MaxOn	-
Wave	Square	Square	-
Restart	On	On	-

FILTER	1	2	3
Filter 1	2Lo	2Lo	2Lo
Filter 2	2Lo	2Lo	2Lo
FC1 Cutoff	64	64	64
ENV 2	+15	+30	+15
FC1 KBD	00	00	00
MODSCR	Whl+Pr	Whl+Pr	Whl+Pr
MODAMT	+15	+15	+20
FC2 Cutoff	64	64	64
ENV2	+15	+30	+15
FC2 KBD	00	00	00
FC1MOD-FC2	On/Off	On	On

ENV2	1	2	3
Initial	00	00	00
Peak	55	30	60
Break	00	00	00
Sustain	00	00	00
Attack	55	45	50
Decay 1	55	55	55
Decay 2	00	00	00
Release	00	00	00
Vel-Level	00	00	00
Vel-Attack	00	00	00
Vel Curve	-	-	-
Mode	Repeat	Repeat	Repeat
KBD Track	00	00	00

AMP	1	2	3
Initial	00	00	99
Peak	99	99	99
Break	75	75	80
Sustain	00	00	00
Attack	00	00	00
Decay 1	99	99	03
Decay 2	99	99	02
Release	20	20	20
Vel-Level	00	00	00
Vel-Attack	00	00	00
Vel Curve	-	-	-
Mode	Normal	Normal	Repeat
KBD Track	00	00	00

OUTPUT	1	2	3
VOL	75	70	80
Boost	On	On	On
MODSRC	LFO	LFO	-
MODAMT	+99	+99	-
KBD Scale	00	00	00
Key Range	E1-G7	E1-G7	E1-G7
Output Bus	FX1	FX1	FX1
Priority	Med	Med	Med
Pan	-28	+28	00
Vel window	>000	>000	>000

EFFECTS — DIST & CHORUS & VERB

FX-1	15
FX-2	15
Decay Time	31
Dist Level	33
Chorus Rate	20
Chorus Depth	20
Chorus Center	50
Feedback	00
Chorus Level	53
MOD (Dest)	-
BY (MODSRC)	-
MODAMT	-

Under Amp, you might try raising or lowering the Break level, which I set at 75, to get a fatter or more staccato effect.

I chose Distortion+Chorus+Reverb stock Effect settings because they produced the sharpest edge on each note.

Amp Envelope Mode=Repeat Method

First of all, Voice 3 is NOT meant to be played with Voices 1 and 2 since it triggers the Synth Bass-2 wave at a slightly faster speed. Wave Direction= Backward under Wave just because it sounds a little more abrupt. Amp settings for Decay 1 and 2 make 140 bpm. By lowering either Decay setting one point, you decrease the bpm rate by 15. The Amp Repeat Mode method is therefore less variable than the LFO as Modsource under Output method. If you want all three Voices to play together, which sounds great to me, you must of course make all three use the same method of repetition. They are like hot dogs and hot dog buns in that you can never obtain equal amounts of either. One of those little cosmic mysteries that keeps us on our toes, I suppose.

Special Bonus

Today's Two-For is...the Helicopter sound! Simply use Noise Wave and Dance Kick to add that chest thumping quality, reduce Decay 1 by 1 or 2, and *voilà* — you have that awesome intro sound effect to Billy Joel's Saigon or the *Theme to M*A*S*H*. For a machine gun effect (snare gun?), reduce Attack, Decay 1, and Decay 2 to a total of 1, and use any Snare Drum sample. Since most percussion samples are very short, they will only work in the repeating Amp envelope mode, not the LFO as Modsource for Output way. ▬

Feedback welcome at:
darohde@muscatine.k12.ia.us.
10-4, back door, good buddies.

Bio: Dan Rohde is looking for a good bass pond and a baby blue '55 Chevy Nomad to get there in.

Put your SCSI to work:
Build a SCSI Switch Box

John May

For some time now, Ensoniq EPS, ASR and TS series synth owners have had a resource at our disposal that has been untapped, the SCSI port. Tired of scrolling through single line displays for that one instrument you know is in there? Sick of having to write those sounds you downloaded off the net onto floppy disk, only to have tot put that disk in your keyboard's drive and load it back up there? Want to automate sound-loading using your computer sequencer? Well, then have I got the project for you, a SCSI switch box.

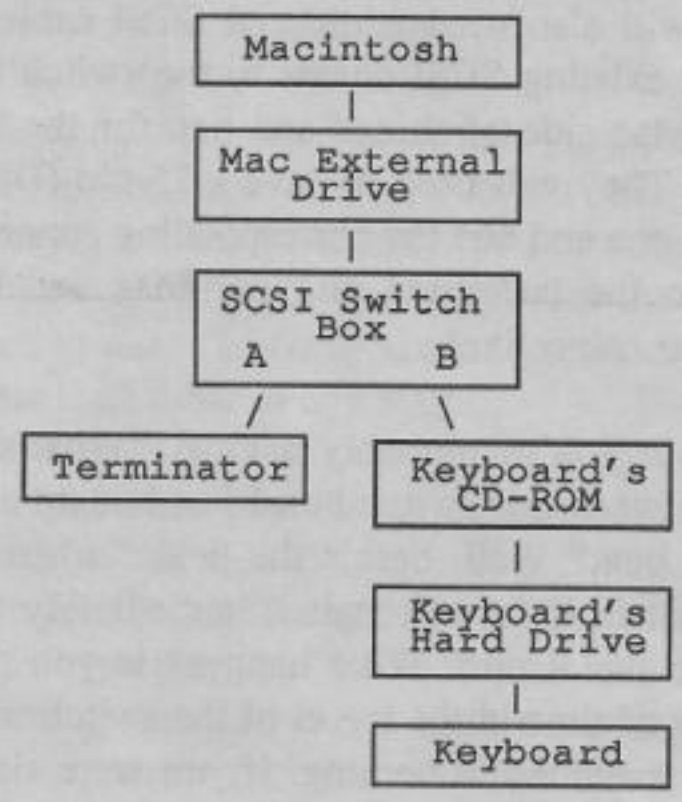
Disclaimer: *Although this method has worked for me on many, many setups, there is the slight chance that using the switch box could result in data loss and/or hardware damage. Also, when connecting and disconnecting SCSI cables, ALWAYS make sure that ALL the equipment is turned off (even the devices that you aren't connecting or unconnecting at the time).*

A Background On The Switch Box Concept

Previous articles in *The Hacker* have attempted to explain how to effectively use your Mac and keyboard's SCSI interfaces in harmony. Some people have had no problems simply connecting their keyboard's SCSI to their drives then the computer, as so:

For others, this setup has not worked. It is because Apple Computer has not always used the same SCSI driver chip in the Macintosh product line. For example, a Mac IIsi has no problems with this setup. However, with a Quadra 660AV and Power Mac 8500, you can boot the keyboard or boot the computer, but if you try to boot both then one will inevitably crash.

The solution is this: put a switch box between your Mac and keyboard that allows you disconnect their SCSI chains to boot them separately. After booting, you then throw the switch to use them in conjunction. A picture of this setup would look like this:



This works only because the Ensoniq 'boards have the ability to run their SCSI chains without termination (actually, this is more like a coincidence). When the switch is in position A, as denoted in the diagram, the SCSI chains are separated. In this example, the Macintosh is connected to its external drive then the terminator, while the keyboard is connected to its hard drive then CD-ROM.

Some of you may ask if this is safe operation of a SCSI chain, running it unterminated, and the answer is kind of gray. Although the SCSI specifications say that the chain must be terminated on both ends (the Mac and keyboard terminate their respective ends), it is still possible to get some specific setups to work without following this rule, as in our example above.

Building The Box

What you will need:

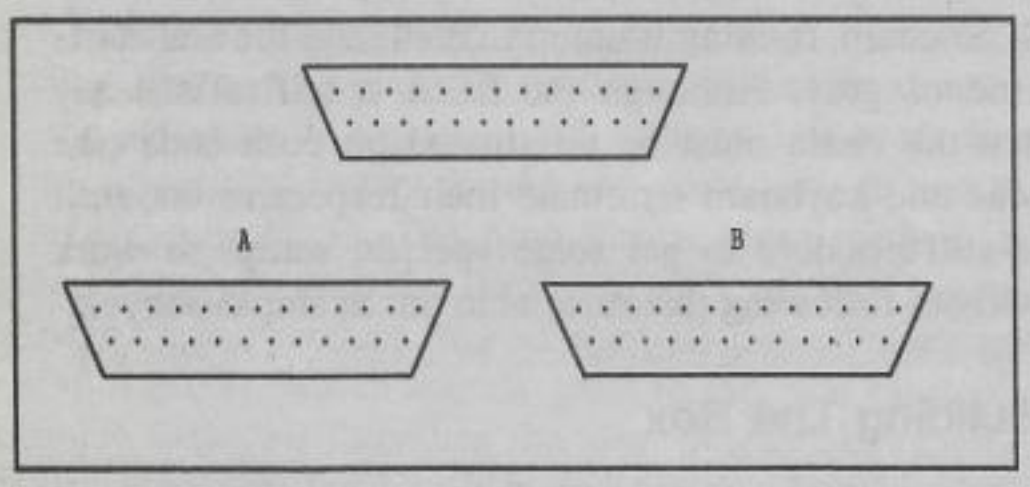
- A 25-pin (DB25 connector) A/B switch box [$15-20] (Make sure to get one that has wires, and not a printed

circuit board, in it.)
- A 25-pin SCSI terminator (active or passive) [$5-10]
- Soldering iron and solder
- Flat or Philips head screwdriver (whichever is required to open up the switch box that you bought)

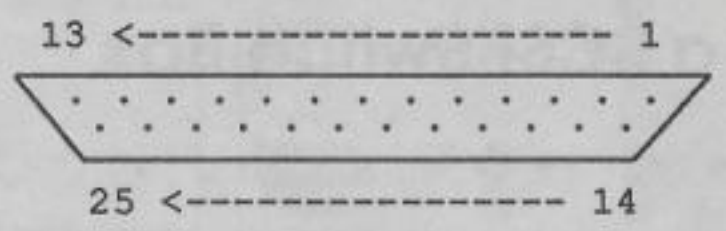
You should be able to find the switch box and terminator at any decent sized computer store or through mail-order computer supply companies. I picked mine up at MicroCenter (none of the mail-order companies I called would let me publish catalog numbers for them). You will also need additional SCSI cables to connect your existing SCSI chains to the switch box, one for the Mac side of things and one for the keyboard's side. They will need to have a 25-pin (DB25) connector on one end and the corresponding connector to connect to the last drive on your Mac and keyboard's chains respectively.

Okay, by now you're probably asking, "What's the difference between this switch box I just bought and a SCSI switch box." Well, here's the deal... when you throw the switch, it doesn't switch immediately from the A port to the B port. What happens is you get a small amount of time in the travel of the switch where it is actually switched to nothing. If you were simply switching between two modems with the box, it would be no problem. But, since we are switching SCSI, we have to rewire the box to make sure that certain wires never become disconnected over the course of the switching process, otherwise the Mac and/or keyboard will crash. (How many switches could a switch switcher switch...)

If you look at the back of your switch box, it should look something like this:



You also need to understand how the pins on these connectors are numbered. When looking at the connector side (e.g.: looking at the back of the box), the pins are numbered as so:



Okay, so here's what you have to do. First, open up the switch box. Inside you should see a bunch of wires going from the connectors to the switch. Our first order of business is to make all the ground wires common (don't worry if you don't know what this means, just follow the directions).

The ground wires include pins 7, 9, 14, 16, 18 and 24. We'll start with the top connector first. Find each of these pins on the top connector and, one by one, *completely* remove the wire connecting that particular pin to the switch by unsoldering both ends. Make sure you count correctly and when unsoldering the wire, make sure no stray solder is left over that could cause unwanted short circuits.

Once that's done, we need to connect the wires from the corresponding pins of the bottom two connectors to the top connector. Find pin 7 on connector A, follow the wire from that pin to the switch and unsolder it from the switch. Now do the same for pin 7 on connector B. Take the unconnected ends of these two wires and solder them both to pin 7 on the top connector, once again making sure to make a good connection and to leave no stray solder. Once you complete that, do the same for the remaining pins 9, 14, 16, 18 and 24.

What we additionally need to do is make sure that the terminator is going to be powered at all times. Choose one of the bottom connectors to put the terminator on (I chose A myself, since it makes sense to boot the system up in the A setting then switch to the B setting to use it). Find pin 25 on that connector, follow the wire from that pin to the switch and unsolder it from the switch. Now take that wire and solder it to pin 25 on the top connector along with the wire that is already there. Once you finish that, take your 25-pin terminator and connect it to the port you chose so you don't forget later.

That's it! Go through and double-check all your connections and solder joints. Any mistake could confuse or short-circuit your SCSI devices, so make sure you have it all correct before hooking it up.

Incorporating the Box Into Your SCSI Chain

Now that you have the box made, let's put it to work in the SCSI chain. I will assume you chose connector A to connect the terminator to (if you chose B, just swap the As and Bs in the remainder of this explanation). Your 25-pin terminator should already be plugged onto connector A, if not then do that now.

Remember: Always make sure *all* of your SCSI devices, as well as the Mac and keyboard, are powered down when connecting and disconnecting SCSI cables. (Not following this advice is a *real* good way to fry your equipment!)

Connect your keyboard to its corresponding drive(s) then connect the last drive to the switch box's B connector. Make sure that none of the drives are terminated or the system will not work. Next, connect your Macintosh to its corresponding drive(s) then connect the last drive to the switch box's top connector, once again making sure that none of the external drives are terminated. If you have no external Mac drives, simply connect the Mac's SCSI port to the box's B connector.

You should now have a system that looks like the second diagram at the beginning of this article, with the Mac chain connected to the top port, the terminator connected to port A and the keyboard's chain connected to port B. Now go through and make sure each device has a unique SCSI ID number. The Macintosh uses ID numbers 0 and 7 (for itself and its internal hard drive), while the keyboard uses ID 3. If you have an internal CD-ROM in your Mac, it also uses an ID number. You can use a SCSI utility program such as "SCSI Probe" to check what it is. Make sure each of your external drives has its own unique number that doesn't conflict with the Mac's or keyboard's IDs.

Testing and Troubleshooting the System

Before we go on, there are a couple things you have to know about using the system. First, when switching the switch box you have to make sure that no SCSI activity is happening, otherwise you can corrupt your data. Most external hard drives have activity lights on them that you can monitor to make sure the drive is not doing anything. With the internal Mac drive, it's a little harder to tell. I use a program called "Disk Light" that shows an icon in the upper left corner of my menu bar corresponding to which Mac drive is being accessed. You can find similar shareware programs on the Web, or just listen carefully to the drive to make sure it is inactive.

Second, you do not need to switch your SCSI chains together all the time. If you plan on using the Mac and/or keyboard independently, you can simply leave the switch box set to A and only boot the system(s) you want to use. They will act independently and will not affect each other in any way.

Third, if you have the chains switched together (e.g. the box is switched to B), you have to make sure not to load a file on the Mac and the keyboard at the same time. For example, if you're going to load up the sequencer on your Mac and a bank on your keyboard, load the sequencer first and wait for it to finish, then load the bank on your keyboard.

Now that you have it all hooked up, let's test it out. Switch the switch box to position A. Boot up your Mac and keyboard the same as you always would (it is OK to boot them both at the same time). Once they are booted, double check to make sure that no SCSI activity is happening, then switch the box to position B. This will be your boot-up procedure from now on if you want to use the Mac and keyboard in conjunction.

Try loading up a program on the Mac. Once that is finished, try loading a sound or bank into your keyboard. If either of these doesn't work, double check that each device has a unique SCSI ID number and that none of the external drives are terminated. Switch back to position A (making sure no SCSI activity is happening), then shut down the Mac and keyboard and try again.

If none of this works to fix your problem, try changing the order of your SCSI devices. For example, if you have your keyboard connected to its hard drive then to

its CD-ROM, try connecting it to the CD-ROM then the hard drive instead. Same for the Mac side of things (though you can't reorder the internal devices).

If this solution still doesn't work, you may need to swap the positions of the Mac and the keyboard's SCSI chains on the switch box. To do this, unplug the connector going into the top port on the switch box and swap it with the connector on the B port. This will now run the keyboard's chain terminated and the Mac's chain unterminated when the box is set to A. This might help if your keyboard's SCSI chain is considerably long and your Mac has few or no external SCSI devices.

Hopefully one of the above solutions will help if you have problems getting your setup to work. If you still have questions or problems, feel free to e-mail me at nucleus@ziplink.net or give me a call at (617) 983-8534. Next time I will cover what software will take advantage of this new setup, from backing up your keyboard's data onto your Mac's drive to using that CD-ROM inside your Mac to load sounds into your keyboard. Until then, keep hacking! ▬

Bio: John May authors web pages and burns CDs when not working on his next opus. He believes that one day even breakfast cereal will be digital. You can reach him at nucleus@ziplink.net or visit his web page at http://www.ziplink.net/~nucleus

Strike the Iron by Kevin Capito Image by Jason Rubenstein

Tape: *Strike the Iron* (c) 1996 SoniConcepts.
Artist: Kevin Capito.
Contact Info: 2139 Goldsmith Ln., Louisville, KY 40218, phone: 502-458-7821.
Equipment: Ensoniq EPS-16+, ASR-10R with CDR's 1 — 3, Yamaha, Alesis, Mackie, BBE, Stewart, Mesa Engineering, JBL, Tascam, Nakamichi, Audio-Technica, Shure, Sony, RCA, Creative Labs AWE32, Digital Audio Labs Truevision, Windows 95, Sonic Foundry Sound Forge, Adobe, Cakewalk.

Kevin's tape *"Strike the Iron"* is a nine-minute demo of ten partial tracks in a montage format. This is an excellent format for busy A & R types who don't have time to listen to entire songs. Kevin gives a good overview of his compositional, arranging, engineering, sequencing, and performance (keyboards and guitars) talents (which are considerable) in these excerpts from what apparently are complete, finished songs. My only nitpicky gripe about the packaging is that there is little or no space between the tracks, indeed, some almost blend seamlessly into the next tune, making it difficult to differentiate which track you're listening to. You have to follow the excellent liner notes very closely while listening in order to keep it all straight. That minor detail aside, let's look at the goods:

Twilight SW — East Indian percussion (tabla, rainstick) opens this sweeping, moody soundtrack. Tasty, kick-butt lead guitar just begins to jam when the song fades! I'm going, "More! More!" Kevin states that this tune was resurrected from a piece that "just wasn't coming together." Well, he certainly breathed new life into it.

Tuscan Blue — Kevin thinks this one is reminiscent of the Moody Blues or Pink Floyd, but I hear similarities to Phil Keaggy's rich harmonic stylings. Wonderful use of stereo panning, percussion effects, and love that fretless bass!

Conundrum — This song was a "mistake," says the artist. Well, you can't tell by listening to it. Excellent percussion on this fast rocker.

Traffiq Jam — Inspired by Rush (apparently the rock group, not the darling of conservative talk-schlock), this odd-metered, syncopated semi-prog-rock tune makes an interesting resolution to 4/4.

Insight — This beautiful piano ballad is a true standout.

Polyesteryear — Titled more like an Alesis QSx patch, this wash-n-wear tune is what "came out" when Kevin

was inspired by a random bank of sounds. Hey, don't blame the sound bank! Saved by Kevin's consistently tasteful guitar work.

Neptune Beach — This one has a more jazz-oriented vibe, although Kevin claims inspiration from "Yes." Busy keyboard and bass parts.

Mech Dream — Kevin asked, "If robots could dream, what would it sound like?" and came up with this track. This wonderful ambient soundscape is a collage of sound effects over arpeggiating mallet and "glass" pad sounds, with very cool, eerie vocal effects that remind me of Hendrix's *"And the Gods Made Love."* Showcases Kevin's versatility as a composer.

Espionage — Soundtrack for a spy movie. The superb tremolo guitar is a dead giveaway of this track's intentions.

Mechoes — Delay effects dominate this concept piece, in the same spirit as *"Mech Dream."*

The word that comes to my mind in trying to describe Kevin's music is "soundtrack." The production and engineering are superb, I might almost say faultless. These are high-quality tracks crafted with an obvious love of musical detail and an ear for sonic perfection. I would love to hear the full-blown tracks!

CD: *Image* (c) 1996.

Artist: Jason Rubenstein.

Contact Info: Box #232, 12190 1/2 Ventura Blvd., Studio City, CA 91604, phone: 818-905-9614.

Equipment: Ensoniq VFX-SD, ASR-10, TS-12, Yamaha TG-77, KX-88, Korg DW8000, Korg Mono/Poly, Rane PE15, Alesis Quadraverb, Midiverb, various compressors, bells & whistles.

"Image" is a superbly crafted instrumental CD, living on the outside boundary of "New Age," close to jazz on the one end and techno on the other. While the entire CD is replete with the best that synths have to offer, it is grounded in Jason's piano, which appears at center stage on nearly every track.

Jason states in his bio, "Finding your voice using only high-tech music instruments isn't easy sometimes. But I found that the jazz and the classical elements I drew from stood up pretty well... to the electronics. And the electronics are great at expressing moods that usually require a symphony. A lot of those moods are gentle 'new-agey' or 'ambient' sounds, which is fine, but on the other end of that spectrum there's power, intensity, anger. I like to start at one end and work through towards the other, if I can. Image is the first CD in what I plan as a series exploring this movement from one end of the scale to the other."

Let's take a tour of *"Image"*...

Mismanage (Door 122) — This trancey trip-hop opener has all the elements that would make a techno track proud, but is anchored by an organic piano melody that humanizes the whole piece. The middle section turns into a soundtrack wash, building tension back into the piece with a long sequenced section that slowly opens up the filter resonance, culminating in a return to spirited piano soloing. Bravo!

Out of Pocket — Piano is again at center stage, and Mr. Rubenstein's jazz stylings come to the fore. Unique synth effects and ethnic percussion create a moody backdrop for this track.

All the Drops of Water — Comparisons to Yanni and Enya are inevitable on this track. Driving percussion propels a strong melodic theme over a bed of synth pads.

Image II — Atmospheric, ambient washes of morphing synth pads punctuated by occasional samples of bird calls create a yin-yang-ish experience combining the earthy and the celestial. Puts other attempts at "environmental" ambient tracks to shame. Simply entrancing.

Blue — Once in a while someone will use the pitch-bend wheel on a piano patch, and I want to cover my ears and scream, "Noooooooooo!!!" Well, Jason grabs the wheel a couple of times on this track, and... it works! I never would have guessed it could be done. This tune has an almost "a-rhythmic" fast layer over the percussion track, lending a fascinating ambience to this piano-centric jazzy instrumental. Creates moods I haven't felt since the last time I listened to Pat Metheny. Very tasteful.

740 — Listening to the intro, you go, "Techno." but then the piano comes in and changes the whole vibe once again to a very human, jazz-flavored feel.

Image I — Another beautifully moody, free piano solo, interspersed with synth pads rolling in and out.

History — You have to call this one "New Age" because of the simplistic piano melody lines, but it has so much class... A techno percussion track and synth effects make it kewl.

Maid on the Shore — This traditional Scots tune takes on a hauntingly beautiful persona in the hands of Jason, with help from Jim McGrath on bodhran and snare drum.

Grandfather's Dance — The rhythmic centerpiece of this tune, played on Chapman Stick by Casey Arrillaga, fails to flow at times, detracting slightly from the wonderfully moody movement. This is a rare criticism on this project where rhythm tracks generally shine.

Bonus Track — a reprise of *"History,"* apparently another mix that Jason hated not to use on the final product.

Jason's forte seems to be, as he states in his promo material, to create music that walks the "line that separates the yin from the yang," combining the best of music technology with the time-honored universal language of the piano. I ask myself, "What makes this project work so well?" The answer seems to be obvious and simple: a gifted, inspired musician poured his heart and soul, and a lot of hard work, into his craft. Confidence seems to play a part here: one can't help but smile at the almost hyperbolic language used in Jason's promo material, but what at first glance appears to be hype turns out to simply be "truth." But mostly, you get the sense that he is steeped in his music, and it simply just oozes out of him. If you want to study what to my ears and soul is a perfect bringing together of electronic music and the human spirit, you can do no better than Jason Rubenstein's *"Images."* ▬

Tapes Recently Received

Creature Comforts — Sean O'Donnell & David Forlano.
Trypnotica — My Scarlet Life.

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. Please include your e-mail address!

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

Sampling Sound Effects

Sam Mims

I've always liked noise. When I was a young boy, I diligently made as much of it as possible. Now, 38 years down the road of life, I'm still at it, making various and assorted noises for a living.

Some of my favorite noises are sound effects, and I'm downright obsessive about collecting and sampling as many of them as possible. I have over a thousand floppy disks full of bleeps, crashes, burps, telephones, and buzz saws that I have meticulously sampled and filed away in their respective categories. Sampling these noises can be quite different from sampling a drum kit or an oboe, so I thought I'd outline some of the techniques that I have used to convert these from sound waves to floppy disks.

Recording

My favorite setup for collecting sound effects has been a portable DAT recorder with a good-quality microphone. If the DAT records at 44 kHz, you can transfer the samples *digitally* into your ASR for ultra-clean quality.

Some handy items for your travel kit: headphones, a wind screen for the mic, a shock mount stand, extra batteries for the DAT recorder and the mic (if needed), a notebook for jotting down recording notes, and duct tape.

I make it a point to record one channel of the DAT

slightly hotter than the other. If one channel suddenly red lights, you'll have the other one at a lower level to fall back upon.

The hardest part of making a decent outdoor recording is to get a clean and quiet background. What sounds like golden silence in the woods can sound like an aural nightmare once you're back in the studio. The quietness is shattered by rustling leaves, wind noise, bird chirps, distant traffic, and planes overhead. If you're trying to isolate one katydid chirp in the midst of all that, it can sometimes be quite a challenge. You soon learn to listen in a whole new way.

In addition to recording your own, there are dozens of sound effects CDs on the market, though they are somewhat hard to find and sometimes frightfully expensive. In any case, they are much cheaper than DAT machines and microphones. The recording quality is usually quite good, though you'll find that the producers of these CDs faced the same difficulties with background noises.

Sampling

Getting the sounds from DAT or CD into the ASR is fairly straightforward. Once you get the sample into your ASR or EPS, be sure and truncate the dead air at the beginning and end of the sound, and then normalize the sample. This stage is where you really notice those background noises — because your ear compares them to the absolute silence you hear before you press a note and then after the sample ends.

Looping

Now is the time to loop your sample, if necessary. Fortunately, most sound effects are easier to loop than musical sounds. Electric drills, motorcycles idling, and rain falling — all can be looped quickly and seamlessly. Don't, however, be tempted to make the loop too short; it can begin to sound unnatural.

For background beds — birds in the woods, traffic, ocean surf and such — looping is even easier. Here, however, long loops are even more important. Hearing the same bird chirp repeat over and over quickly clues the listener that this isn't the real deal. If the loop is long enough it won't be nearly as obvious. This is where you'll really push the memory of your sampler.

Noise Reduction

Now it's time to clean up your sample as much as possible. And you may be amazed at just how much you can do with the ASRs (or EPSs) programming capabilities.

This is also the part that will really give your ears a good workout (a good set of headphones will help out here). You've got to listen closely to the sample and determine where — in both time and frequency — the noise is. Then you've got to try and filter or envelope it out.

In many cases, there will be a continuous noise underlying the sound you are sampling. For instance, I recently sampled an assortment of killer whale sounds for a Sea World production. The whales were recorded with a hydrophone (an underwater microphone), and the orca calls were accompanied by a background of constant gurgling and rumbling from the water. After listening closely to the samples, it became clear that the noises were mostly low-frequency sounds and the whales

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themselves were mostly high-pitched whines and screeches.

It was fairly straightforward then to set a high-pass filter which pulled out the low-frequency water sounds, leaving the whale calls intact. Do this by pressing Edit/Filter, and scrolling to the MODE page. Set the filter mode to F1=2LP F2=2HP. This gives you one low-pass and one high-pass filter that you can use together to roll off noise frequencies both higher and lower than the desired sound (effectively a band-pass filter). Scroll one page to the right, and set the filter cutoff values to F1=150 (or 127 on the EPS and EPS-16) and F2=0. Scroll one more page to the right, and just make sure that the filter envelope amounts are both set to zero.

At this point, you should hear your sample unfiltered. Now, go back to the CUTOFF page; the values for F1 and F2 will now control the high-frequency roll-off and the low-frequency roll-off respectively. By adjusting the F1 value downward, you can eliminate noises at the high-end of the spectrum, and by adjusting the value of F2 upward, you can eliminate noises at the bottom end.

Listen very carefully while moving the data slider. Play the sample, and slowly adjust the F1 or F2 cutoff until you can hear that noise disappearing. The trick is to detect when the filter begins to also affect the sound you intended to sample. On those whales, I was fortunate that the low-frequency water sounds could be mostly eliminated with the high-pass filter before the filter affected the whale calls themselves. In other instances, you might record a low-frequency sound, such as rolling thunder, that is plagued by a high-pitched noise, such as rainfall. To eliminate the rain, pull down the cutoff of the low-pass filter until the rain stops but the thunder keeps on rolling.

On most sounds, unfortunately, you will find that the main sample and the noise overlap in frequency. Here, you'll have to make a compromise — do you want to pull out more noise and affect the sound of your sample, or do you want to leave the sample intact, but with a bit of noise? The answer depends upon what sounds best to your ears.

For non-looped sounds, I will frequently use another technique to filter out noise. I will set up envelopes both on the filter (Env 2) and on the amplitude (Env 3) to fade out the noise as the sound decays. Let's say we've sampled a gunshot, but there is a wind noise in the background. Playing back the sample, we can hear the gunshot decay, but the wind keeps blowing. Then the sample ends, and thus the wind ends abruptly. Very unnatural sounding.

The answer here is to set up envelopes on the filter and/or the amplitude that will fade out the noise and the gunshot in a natural way. I usually set up Env 3 first, with HARDVEL values something like 99 99 99 00 00, and with the SOFT VEL CURVE turned OFF (meaning that there will be no velocity response). Now, set the TIMES to 00 30 00 30 30. At this point, it's just a matter of twiddling with the second and fourth time values until the envelope matches the gunshot fairly closely. The second value sets how long the envelop stays fully open, the fourth value dictates how long it takes to fade out to zero. For a close-range urban pistol shot, both of these will be fairly quick. For a cowboy's distant rifle shot in a Wyoming canyon, the time values will be longer, particularly the fourth value, as the reverberations echo through the countryside.

Once the amplitude envelope is set, you may still hear a bit of the wind noise as the envelope closes down. In this case, try the same tactic, now on Env 2. You will need to decrease the cutoff frequency (usually of F1) and increase from zero the Envelope amount on that filter, in order for your tweaks to be audible. I usually go to the extreme at first, setting the cutoff to zero and the envelope amount to 99. This makes it easier to dial in the envelope's time parameters. Once you've got these values nailed, then back off on the envelope amount and increase the cutoff frequency until it all sounds natural.

Isn't That Spatial...

Most often I sample sound effects in mono. But I usually create a pseudo-stereo patch select when I do the actual programming. This is especially true for background beds, as the spatiality is more important to the sound itself. A field of crickets, for example, will sound very realistic if some crickets are chirping on the left, some on the right, etc. A gunshot, on the other hand, is a very localized sound, and it typically works just fine in mono.

Another reason for making a mono background bed into

stereo is that — if done correctly — the loop point in the sample becomes much less obvious. Here's how I do it.

Let's go back to that field of crickets. Say we have a six-second sample of them critters chirping away. We could loop the entire sample and be done with it, but then it might become obvious that every six seconds, we hear one particular distinct cricket chirp that stands out from the rest. Our ear has been cued that we're listening to a loop.

Now, try copying your cricket loop to a second layer (you can copy parameters only; there is no need to replicate the data), and solo this new layer. First of all, change the sample start time, to 40 percent or so. Now, redo the loop. The goal here is to make the length of the loop different from the first layer. Finally, pan the first layer to +50 and this new layer to -50.

When you play a key now, the right and left channels will sound completely different, and that one distinct chirp that recurred every six seconds will now appear in the left and right channels separately, at times that seem random. This adds tremendously to the realism of the sample.

With sounds other than background beds, I create pseudo-stereo effects as well. Back to our gunshot example, I will copy the parameters to a new layer, and pan the two layers oppositely, this time to +99 and -99. Then, I will add a 5 to 10 millisecond delay to one of the layers (press Edit/Layer, and scroll to the DELAY page). If you're really industrious, you might detune one layer slightly, and/or alter the start time of one layer slightly, to add subtle differences between the two channels. Though I keep the straight sample as the 00 patch, this "stereo" version works well as one of the patch selects.

Other Programming Tricks

On all of my sound effects samples, I program the mod wheel to fade the volume as it is rolled forward. This makes it easy to adjust the volume when sequencing effects (for post-production work and such). To do this, press Edit/Amp, then scroll to VOLUME MOD; set this to WHEEL * 99. Then scroll to the right and set A-B FADE-IN=127 TO 0. Move one more page to the right and set C-D FADEOUT=0 TO 127. Now you can fade the sound completely with the wheel.

A seldom-used but fun trick is to make something sound like it is underwater. For one project, we needed the sound of someone diving into the water, where the vantage point is from the diver's perspective. In other words, we needed a normal-sounding splash at first, changing quickly into a splash heard from underwater. I simply took a splash sample and programmed the mod wheel to control the low-pass filter cutoff rather extremely. By rolling the wheel quickly forward after the initial splash, the sound went perfectly underwater.

Finally, try using a pitch envelope to control some effects. An electric drill, for instance, can be sampled starting, running, and stopping. But if you loop the sample on the running portion, what happens when you release the note? With a normal loop, the amp envelope just cuts off the sound, and you don't hear the motor slowing down and stopping. You can set the loop to LOOP AND RELEASE, which will play the sampled stopping of the motor, but then you cannot control the timing accurately. If you have a two-second loop, for example, when you release the note it may be a full two seconds before the drill even begins to start slowing down.

One solution is to program Envelope 1 to control the pitch so that everything is constant until the note is released. Then, Env 1 adds a downward scoop to the pitch as Env 3 fades out the sound. You'll have to juggle release times around to get everything coordinated, but the effect is worth it.

Fade to Black

If you enjoy noises as much as I do, you'll love driving the neighbors loony with these program tricks. And if you ever need a sample of an iguana sneeze, call me. ▬

Bio: Sam Mims is the owner of Syntaur Productions, which began as a music production company and somehow evolved into an enterprise that develops sounds for Ensoniq keyboards. Sam lives in Houston with his wife and three iguanas.

Introducing the New DP/Pro Effects Processor

24-bit Effects Heaven at 44.1 kHz!

Tony Ferrara

I'm still quite happy using my DP/4+ as the main multi-unit effects processor dedicated to the send and return effects busses in conjunction with my MACKIE 1604 VLZ mixer. I thought that the DP/4+ was a happy improvement over the original DP/4, which nonetheless became very popular in its own right. In my opinion, the new DP/Pro is a quantum leap forward in terms of audio quality, as well as featuring the attraction of being upgradeable. That's my kind of gear, if you ask me.

Anyway, now I'm also using the DP/Pro to process the mixer's main inserts before going to the main output faders to monitor. I've never used an effects processor that had reverb algorithms that I've been happier with, and there's more: the DP/Pro has a digital in and out option (DI-Pro) on the way, along with a 24-bit user-installable converter upgrade kit (ADC-24) planned as well!

Enough with the glowing praise already, on to the technical sub-title to this article:

How to set your DP/Pro to default on power-up to the Effect Preset that you've previously created.

One of the most basic applications that you are likely to want to perform with your DP/Pro is to have it automatically default on power-up to the Effect that you have painstakingly edited and created during your previous session. As of the writing of this article in mid-February '97, a very well-written but slim *"User's Guide"* was the extent of the documentation that shipped in the box along with the DP/Pro units. Consequently, information on the overall workings (including this particular operation!) of the DP/Pro has generally been sketchy to date.

I should begin by qualifying the term "Effect" as it is used in relation to the DP/Pro. As you'll see on page 1 of the *DP/Pro's User's Guide*, an Effect is defined as the following:

"EFFECT" describes a complete audio processing preset, including a routing setting, the algorithms used by both ESPs (Ensoniq's custom Signal Processor chips), and all of the individual algorithm's settings.

So, what we are going to do is "walk" through the steps needed for you to create your very own default Effect.

First, you will probably want to reinitialize your DP/Pro using the following process, making sure to save your Effects as a Sys-Ex dump before you do so. Also, note that setting System Parameter 62 "Memory Protect=On" will not save your Effects from being erased.

While we are mentioning the System parameters, please keep in mind that the actual parameter numbers may change somewhat as the DP/Pro's operating system is revised. For example, the exact System parameter number for Memory Protect may be different on your unit since I was working with an earlier O.S. version at the time that I was writing this article. You may have gotten a unit with a much later version, hence the actual number mentioned here may not exactly match up exactly with your machine.

Now that we've gotten all of the warnings and disclaimers out of the way, here goes:

Press and hold the System button; then, press the Cancel button.

The screen will say *"Press enter to Re-init. System data will be lost!"*

1. Press the System button repeatedly and (if necessary depending on your O.S. version) use the Value knob to scroll to System parameter 62.

2. Using the "Next" button, select the System Wake Up parameter;

3. Using the Value knob, select the setting on System Wake up to "Restore."

4. Press the Effect Select button again to get back to the main screen. That's the button to the upper right of the Value knob that has a little red LED inside.

Then, edit the A and B Algos and parameters to suit your particular needs. Then press the Save button, after which the screen will default to:

"Save into location 0:000;
Name: Undefined 0:0"

Use the Value knob to select the particular location that you would like to save to. Hit Enter after the desired location is selected. The screen will then say *"Save new effect as: Name=_____"* at which time you can give your Effect the new name of your choice using the Value knob in conjunction with the Page buttons.

Press Enter, at which point you can select the type of effect category your Effect will be saved as by the DP/Pro's Finder. For the purpose of this short tutorial, allow this setting to default by pressing Enter. You will then reach another screen, which allows you to select the Finder type. Again, press Enter to default this parameter.

A *"***Save complete***"* message will then appear on the screen.

Hopefully, that's enough to get you going until you can get your hands on a copy of the DP/Pro Reference Manual, as it becomes available to registered owners.

My only major question with this processor at this point: how do I get my hands on another DP/Pro to dedicate for use in my guitar rack? ▬

Bio: Anthony Ferrara has begun working on his debut CD of original electronic contemporary Jazz, and invites all Hacker *readers to check out his home page at: http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/Anthony_Ferrara/.*

Classifieds

HARDWARE/SOFTWARE

Ensoniq ASR-10 kbd w/16 MB & SCSI, Syquest 105 MB removable drive w/hundreds of sounds including Waveboy transwaves & FX, and Optima ATA II flight case. All are in excellent condition. $2,250 obo. Contact: Sean O'Donnell at sodonne@vm.temple.edu.

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Electronic mail - 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 Pat Finnigan (PF). Letter publication is subject to space considerations.

Hello all,

Can anyone give me a definitive run-down on how I should allocate **MR-76** storage for FLASH Rhythms whose integrity I want to maintain?

If I try and load all of the RHYTHMS from the MRD-100 floppy into FLASH I don't appear to have enough memory. If I try to load selected banks one by one, some Rhythms seem to disappear although there is adequate free memory. Are these locations being over-written? Should I create a CUSTOM bank or save edited Rhythms as INT? What is the difference between INT and FLASH residency?

Basically, I need some information about how FLASH is allocated to Rhythms. Unfortunately, the MR manual does not go into this in any depth.

Any information, thoughts or suggestions would be much appreciated.

George P Brennan
106703.1144@compuserve.com

[PF – George: Ensure you're running the Version 2.0 (or later) ROMs. Contact Ensoniq for these if your MR doesn't have them, and request a copy of the new Musician's Manual.

Internal RAM, unlike the FlashRAM, loses its contents on power off and must be reloaded. FlashRAM contents, on the other hand, are preserved with power off.

You can change memory allocation through the librarian mode.

Enjoy!]

[Ensoniq – Loading in a new bank of FLASH rhythms does indeed overwrite the rhythms previously in FLASH. To accomplish what you're trying to do, load each bank, grab the rhythm or rhythms you want, and save the individual rhythms to floppy. When you've got them all, load them in one by one and save the resulting collection of favorites as your own rhythm bank.]

TH –

I purchased a new **KT-88** in December from a Mansfield, Ohio dealer. Another band member was showing me how to program the presets when he discovered that the KT-88 appeared to doing a total reset on boot. I took the KT-88 back to the dealer in January. They had it for a couple of weeks. They claimed to have fixed it. Yesterday, we noticed that the problem has re-occurred.

Problem: When power is turned on the "ENSONIQ KT-88" message does not appear. The display remains blank. If you leave the keyboard on for 3-5 minutes, then turn power off and back on, the keyboard boots. The real problem is that the internal preset banks are wiped! Voila – all the presets I labored so hard on have traveled to the *Twilight Zone*.

Yes. The presets are saved. When the circuitry is warm you can turn the keyboard off for several minutes (I've waited two hours once) and they are there when you power back up.

Help! Please Help! I've have $2700 bucks wrapped up in a piece of equipment I can't use for three months now.

Karen Shenberger
midiohio@richnet.com

[PF – Karen: Return the KT to your dealer for repair. If it won't boot with the "Ensoniq KT-88" wake-up message it's still ill. Also, on an 88, what kind of stand are you using? These things weigh quite a bit, and if you're using an "X" stand I'll bet the keyboard is bowing in the middle.

But your KT is exhibiting VERY un-Ensoniq-like behavior. You might call Malvern directly at 610-647-3930 for their tech support department to see if there's a trick to the problem your experiencing. I'll bet it's a hardware anomaly based on the behavior you describe, so contact your dealer as well to get them in the loop. The problem could be something as elementary as a loose ROM chip; it could be as exotic as an intermittent trace somewhere.

And rest assured that Ensoniq has THE best customer support and repair philosophy on this blue ball. They WILL absolutely square you away...]

[Christian Roth (rothc@informatik.-tu-muenchen.de) – Just wanted to let you know that I had the exact same problem with my KT-76 a few days ago. I was fiddling on a software editor template and in that process surely did send it bad sequence dump MIDI data, which made it crash and not able to reboot (blank display). I left it off for 15 minutes or so, disconnected MIDI and power plugs. After that time it would boot as before. I don't remember if the sequence memory was lost because the first thing I did was a complete reinitialization to wipe out any bad data from my previous sysex games. Since then, it has worked fine.]

[Ensoniq – We emailed Karen on April 8th and have not heard back yet. Karen, please call us (610-647-3930) so we can help.]

TH –

Please recommend what I should do to more fully utilize my **EPS**. I have the standard amount of RAM and no hard drive in the unit. I have a Kawai GMega which I use as a sound source instead of

having to load the sounds from the floppy.

I also use the MIDI sound card in the Pentium along with SoundSuite software for sequencing. I also have a PowerMac with various softwares along with Finale.

Now that I am retired, I am getting things together, finally. I play classical music on the keyboard. Of interest, I have received your magazine about five years ago, but didn't find the time to write. I love the Internet and its ability to link people quickly (and without cost!). Please let me know what to do. Thanks.

Also, I don't mind programming at all. If you think that I need to write a patch or a conversion program, it would not be difficult.

Thanks.
k2mina@eznet.net

[PF – With RAM prices as low as they've EVER been, now is the time to add memory to your EPS. Given, a hard drive or CDROM reader would be nice, but the memory is essential. Imagine having 16 MB of wavesample RAM to load sounds in – your GMega probably only has 2-4 Mb waveROM.

To be honest, I prefer the Ensoniq sequencer to a computer sequencer. All the buttons I need are right there without having to reach over and click a mouse, highlight a section, etc. And since the EPS is a sampler, just about any and all sonic enhancements/mutilation are possible. The fact that you have Internet access opens the world door to you and your endeavor. You might even consider exploring your EPS even further. But the fact that I'm reading your letter tells me you're already hooked up with the broadest base of elite Ensoniq users. Congratulations, and welcome aboard!]

TH –

To any who may be interested, I just put up an Official Un-official Web page for the **MR-Series** keyboards and rack mounts. It will have Sounds, Sequences, Software, News, Links, and possibly rhythms (some day...). It only has a few resources right now, but I would appreciate everyone contributing to make it a good web site. The address is: http://www.rain.org/~msavard/index.htm.

Hope to see you there!
Matt Savard
msavard@rain.org

Hello,

I am a recent **EPS-16 Plus** owner and I did not get the manual for the SP-2 hardware. I need it to understand how to make the the most of this feature. Do you have it on file that can be downloaded? Or know of someone I can get a copy from?

Thanx,
bump
pjc@welchlink.welch.jhu.edu

[PF – Bump: The SP2 manual explains macros and directory organization for the SCSI adapter. This manual is, in fact, available from the Accessory Desk at Ensoniq for a nominal charge. (Thanks to Bert at Ensoniq for reminding me.) Order from 610-647-3930.]

Hello,

My name is Doug Perry and I am interested in finding out if there are any people or places that I can find cartridges for my old **ESQ-1**. I have been looking in my area and nobody really knows what they're talking about.

If you have any information at all please let me know.

Thank you,
Doug Perry
www.vermontel.com/~rovocal
dprum@vermontel.com

[TH – Syntaur Productions is pretty much in charge of that. Give 'em a call at 713-682-1960 or hop over to our related links page and follow their link.]

[PF – Doug: Those old carts are getting pretty scarce. I can't find a blank one for my SD-1, either. I'm sure companies like Voice Crystal still have ROM carts, but RAM carts could be tough to find. I'd call the Ensoniq Accessories Desk first, then move on to Syntaur Productions and Rubber Chicken Software. If these three guys can't help you, those carts may simply not exist anymore.

Of course you can try companies like Rogue Music and Big Daddy's to see if they have one collecting dust somewhere. Also try the back 5-6 pages of Keyboard Magazine *(as well as the Interface). You might wanna post a message on the Ensoniq net links. "www.XXX.com" is a BIG source.]*

[JBolles702@aol.com – Cesium Sound used to sell some really great (in my opinion) patches on writeable carts. I haven't seen any ads for Cesium in quite some time, but last I knew the address was 1442A Walnut Street #300, Berkeley, CA 94709, phone (415) 548-6193.]

[TH – Unfortunately, Cesium disappeared a few years back and that phone number appears to be disconnected.]

Here's the problem:

Problem: My macro file on the **ASR-10** that I use to direct dial subdirectories no longer works.

Example: I start up the Syquest 105MB Drive, spin up the disk, and turn on the ASR. It boots off of the Syquest and shows me the directories on the disk. Fine so far, right? Then I key in a macro that usually takes me to a often-used subdirectory. The display reads "Disk Drive Not Ready." Usually, I hold down load and key in "22" and I'm at the analog synth directory that I long ago assigned to this macro. Now, not only does the display reply with "Disk Drive Not Ready," it will not allow me to return to regular LOAD mode without rebooting the machine. Obviously, it appears that my macros are no longer corresponding

to the data that constitute my subdirectories.

Solution: Hell, I have no idea... does this occur due to disk fragmentation? A friend of mine experienced this with his EPS-16+ and ended up losing all of his data. Am I headed for the same situation? Should I back up everything before losing the farm? Is there such a thing as a de-fragger for the ASR?

Sean O'Donnell
sodonne@m.temple.edu

[PF – Sean: You haven't changed the SCSI ID of the drive, have you? All macros point to specific SCSI ID locations. If this has changed, your macros will not work. If this is not the case, I'm afraid you'll be rebuilding your HD. I've seen this message more than a coupla times on my Original EPS Classic when I was getting close to the capacity of my HD...

Terje's node (http://fysmac04.uio.no/-eps.html) has Macintosh utilities that will indeed defrag your EPS HD. Ping him for the details. Hope this helps!]

Hi,

I've got a couple of questions for you.

Hopefully you can help me out.

I'm planning on buying a **KT-88** rather soon and I'm not sure what a good price for one would be.

Another problem I have is I have no idea what type of amp to get for the keyboard. I'd like to get something that costs under $1000.

Thanks for any help you could give me.
Erich Nolan
erichn@annap.infi.net

[PF – Erich: A good price for a KT-88 would be in the $1500-$2000 range, as the KT is $2695 new. As far as amps go, I wouldn't purchase anything less than a high-quality STEREO PA system, as the KT has unbelievable bandwidth. Do you plan to use the keyboard and amp system on the gig, or do you want a good quality reference system for the home? For the home I'd recommend a high quality stereo system in the 75-100 W/channel range. For live performance I'd want two self-contained amp systems (the KT is a stereo instrument), and if you plan on adding to your system (more Ensoniq keyboards, modules, etc), I'd recommend a 6-12 channel mixer. Ultimately the choice is yours: I use a Samson Mixpad to feed a pair of the newer powered JBL boxes – not a reference system, but great for live gigs...]

Hello –

Is there any way to select the different layers within a sound on the **ASR-10R** (rack mount) from the front panel buttons? The *Musicians' Manual* says this can be done if you use the SW-10 Dual Foot Switch – but I don't have one. Answers I've received so far don't detail clearly the actual steps involved.

Thanks much for the help,
Mike Randolph
randolph.mike@gene.com

[PF – Mike: The answer is yes, you can emulate patch selects on the rack mount, but yes, you HAVE to use the dual foot pedal and assign the "FS = Patch" to do it, as the rack does not have the patch select buttons or the associated circuitry as the ASR keyboard. The only way from here to there is with the SW-10 dual footswitch.]

[Ensoniq – This is precisely what Patch Select buttons are for! Check the index of your Musician's Manual to learn how to use these great (Ensoniq-exclusive) devices.]

TH –

Moving from the US to Australia! Yes, it's quite a move... from the US to Down Under...

Any advice as to what I should do with my **KT-88**? It's a great instrument, but bulky. There will be shipping issues and power supply issues...

Should I ship it in a hard case? Or the original box? Anyone have experience with shipping these big keyboards? What is the cheapest and safest way to do it?

Will an AC adapter work okay? It's 220V in Australia. Does it have to be grounded? Should I sell the KT and plan on buying another one there? Anyone out there with a 220V KT-88 wanna swap?

Please help me explore the options!
Mark
mlhtie@ibm.net

[PF – Mark: Put it in its original box/shipping container. If something happens to it on the way down to Australia, NO shipper can claim it was improperly packed. UPS has tried this on me on more than one occasion, and since the keyboard in question was in its original box and packing, THEY had to to pay for the repair.

Insure the KT-88 for its replacement value, as gear in Australia is NOTORIOUSLY expensive.

As far as power supply issues, I would

eTH — A Faster, Cheaper Hacker

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assume the Australian Ensoniq network could replace your 110V power xformer with a 220 one. Some manufacturers have 110/220V xformers in their instruments that use jumpers to select the 220 windings on the power xformer. I'd check with Ensoniq just to be sure as I don't know if this is the case or not. If not, a simple 220V power xformer swap should do the trick for you.

And readers, no "tie me kangaroo down" jokes, okay?]

[Ensoniq – When you get to Australia please contact our distributor, The Electric Factory. (Tel. +61 3 9480 5988 or Fax +61 3 9484 6708) They will be able to help you with the necessary modification.]

Hi.

I was wondering if it was possible to replace the battery in my **ESQ-1** myself. Is this information available?

Also, I have a single key on the keyboard that intermittently does not trigger. Is this a common occurrence and is there a cleaning procedure, etc., that I could follow?

Thanks in advance for any help.
Dorian Ramirez
dorian@davlin.net

[Kevin Sykes (Kazper@paclink.com) – I had to replace the battery in my SQ-1+ a little more than a month ago. I did call around to the local repair shops and the $65 repair was a little more than I wanted to pay.

First of all I am an electronic tech myself so this was a very simple procedure for me.

I got the battery for $2.16 and in about a half an hour it was all done. And I used a static strap too!!]

[PF – Dorian: Replacing the lithium backup battery in an ESQ-1 isn't a very big deal if you've got soldering experience. Unless your ESQ-1 boots with the "Battery Voltage Low" warning (or is that the SQ-1?) leave it alone: "If it ain't broke don't fix it" school of electronic repair. But if this is the case and the battery is going dead, replace it. Two things: (A) ensure you've backed up your patches, sequences, etc., as as soon as you remove that battery the contents of RAM are lost forever, and (B) make sure you have the polarity of the battery correct: EEPROMs don't react very well to reverse bias...

As for the key, the ESQ-1 uses a Fatar 61-note mechanism (which unlike the newer Fatar stuff, is very, very, very good). Each key has two phosphor-bronze contacts that get VERY oxidized. You'll see some black ooke on the springs or other corrosion on the gold-plated bussbars they're supposed to contact. Ensure they're clean by using zero residue cleaner on both the phosphor-bronze springs as well as the bussbars.

And you should be back to normal operation by then.]

[Ensoniq – We always suggest going to an authorized repair station. Doing this ensures the best quality work done by a technician with the proper documentation and factory parts. In addition, any work done at an authorized facility is warranteed.]

TH –

Is there a list of Frequently Asked Questions for the **ESQ-1** keyboard?

Also, is there a publication that can be used to supplement the Manual that came with this keyboard? Like most manuals of this type, this one was not written as clearly and as simply as it might have been

Any help that can be offered will certainly be appreciated. It will also reduce the amount of headscratching I've been engaged in recently.

Thank you,
Eugene Selig
aq094@lafn.org

[PF – Eugene: If you think the Ensoniq manuals are tough, try and read one of

WAVEBOY PLUG-INS

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Your ASR-10 becomes a high-end digital compressor, with this new Waveboy plug-in effect. This stereo compressor limiter has adjustable attack, decay, threshold, and ratio, plus a noise-gate function to control digital noise in more extreme squashing situations. Only in digital can you get true "instant" attack time, which can control the fastest transients. Great on internal sounds, for re-sampling, and for processing external inputs. A must-have tool for recording, mixing, and mastering. Also works on the EPS-16 PLUS (with mono audio-in.) $49.95

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those Roland brown-cover manuals for a W30 or equivalent: I guar-ann-teee you'll have a newfound respect for your Musician's Manual and Ensoniq.

I'd recommend contacting Sam Mims at Syntaur Productions (1.800.334.1288 or 1.713.682.1960; both voice) as he's inherited the Talking Owner's Manuals (TOMs) for Ensoniq products. I'm not for sure if they did one for the ESQ-1 as that might be a bit early for them. They in fact did the ASR, VFXsd and SD-1 TOM's (I reviewed one more than a few issues ago). Covert Video never did an ESQ-1 video tutorial that I'm aware of. Alexander Publishing probably has a manual/tutorial on the ESQ-1: they do manuals on just about every synth ever made. And of course, the Ensoniq Faxback System probably has all the major-domo on this magnificent little synthesizer/sequencer/workstation (that started all of this hoopla back in 1987). Readers?]

[Ensoniq – There is a variety of information on our faxback system (800-257-1439) and some of it relates to the ESQ-1. Try document numbers 0002, 0004.]

Hello!

I've been here before with my continuing problems getting my **SQ-2** to do any MIDI In. Here's my setup:

Ensoniq SQ-2 synthesizer
CyberMax P-200 computer
Ensoniq VIVO90 soundcard with updated driver
Midisoft Midi Kit Recording Session 4
Windows 95

I've been getting a huge run-around by all companies involved.

I recently took my synth to a relative's house with the same setup EXCEPT his computer is slightly older and is thus using an Ensoniq VIVO (not 90) soundcard. Same software and everything. Plugged the synth in and BINGO! MIDI!!!

Took it home, loaded his version of the software (in case mine had a bug), and nothing. Dead as a doornail.

I notice that several of his soundcard configs are different (DMA, IO, etc).

This so-called updated driver that "takes care of many MIDI problems" didn't solve mine.

Any ideas? This is driving me nuts.

Craig Morford
cmorf@netnet.net

[PF – Craig: I'd like to point to the VIVO90 as the culprit, but it's never as simple as one device causing all the headaches. Obviously you're trying to use the gameport of the VIVO90 as your MIDI I/O and it's not happening. The issue here is not the version of the software as much as it is HOW you installed it. If you just copy the contents of the disk over, nothing's gonna change. Windoze95 wants you to open the "Add New Hardware" applet, follow prompts and insert the disk when requested. It has to assign MIDI I/O to the VIVO, which it can't do unless you follow the above procedure...

I'd recommend running the "Uninstall" app for the VIVO 90, remove the soundcard and reboot. Shut down, reinstall the VIVO, and THEN your P200 should drop you into the "Detected New Hardware" screen. Follow the onscreen prompts and THEN reinstall the VIVO drivers and software. This will ensure that WIN95's "plug and pray (er, plug and play)" architecture will sense the presence of the VIVO90 on restart and adjust itself accordingly (by polling the card and looking at its DMA and IRQ). Remember, an asterisk beside either the assigned DMA or IRG in the "Properties" applet of the VIVO90 in the "Control Panels" folder indicates a conflict with other installed hardware. If this is the case, you'll have to change IRQ or DMA to a number not currently being used by your P200.

It's because of that furious headscratching I shifted to the Mac platform to save what little hair I have left! But I also keep a 586 around just in case my head decides to get itchy. It's quite possible that your P200 has the 440FX chipset or other conflicting chipset that doesn't especially like the VIVO90, but it's not very likely. My Soundscape Elite is working fine under 95, so your VIVO90 should work with a little elbow grease and varying degrees of frustration. Hang in there, and good luck!]

[Craig Morford (cmorf@netnet.net) – Transhack!

Thanks for the "come back."

I've pulled the soundcard out, turned the computer on. Then off, and reinstalled it and had the computer find the "new" hardware and reinstall the driver at least a dozen times. The screw holes on the computer case are stripped now due to over use!

I'll try it again, but.....

Meanwhile, if you have any other ideas, let me know!

Thanks for the speedy reply!]

[PF – Craig: The only other thing I can point to are the MIDI In/Out cables. I spent an hour and a half on the phone with a music teacher on an issue like this, only to find she had the MIDI In/Out cables reversed. So if nothing else, reverse the cables, as those gameport-to-MIDI-adapters are pretty vague about whether the one marked "in" should be connected to the instrument "In" or "Out."

And last, but not least, ensure you select the "VIVO 90 Midi In" & "VIVO 90 Midi Out" in the respective MIDI applets of your sequencing program. Good luck!]

[Craig Morford (cmorf@netnet.net) –

My sequencing program does not offer the options of "VIVO90 MIDI In" & VIVO90 MIDI Out." No such applets.

In the software, I can only choose

"Mulimedia Drivers for Windows."

• For sound card of MIDI interface with driver in Windows control panel. Default is: Extended MIDI setup (Channels 1-10)
• Or I can disable MIDI input
• Or I can use driver's time stamp
• Or I can choose no drivers for using MIDI without sound

There is also an option for choosing Wave Audio Setup –
Default is C:\PROGRAM FILES\SESSION 4\WAVE
Alternate wave directory is C:\PROGRAM FILES\SESSION 4

I doubt that is going to help me (us) but what the heck.

Yes, I've checked the cables a million times. MIDI In to Out and verse-visa!

Thanks.]

[PF – Craig: In the "Sound" applet inside the "Control Panels" folder (not within the Session 4 app) you should be able to select "VIVO 90 MIDI IN" and "VIVO 90 MIDI OUT" if the drivers are correctly installed. I don't know a sequencing program that doesn't have an option for MIDI I/O. For instance, when you've changed sound devices for another program and then launch Cakewalk, it automaticlly pops open a window saying "No MIDI I/O devices are selected at this time. Continue anyway?." Then when you click on configure, the MIDI Devices applet opens up in Cakewalk. It sounds like you don't get this kinda response from Session 4.

If this is the case, I'd defer to calling Session 4 tech support, as it's not seeing the drivers. All the Wave Audio Setup choices are simply what parent directory it will use to read and write wave files. They may have a MIDI I/O patch or the equivalent. Good luck!]

TH –

First, I want to thank you for taking the time to provide keyboard players a forum to share ideas and hopes! Second, I would like to share my experiences with keyboards.

My first synthesizer was a Micromoog which was highend when I bought it! I always dreamed of being like Edgar Froese or Jean Michel Jarre, but lacked the talent and funds for the equipment. Needless to say I quit playing with my synthesizer and bought a guitar. I became one hell of a guitarist (blues, metal, and neo-classical metal).

I played guitar for almost 20 years – until 8 months ago. I traded all my guitar equipment in on a Roland XP-50 workstation. (I was told I could become like my idols... Edgar and Jean with this keyboard – by the salesman!) After two months, I found this keyboard to be a nightmare to sequence with and traded it. My next keyboard purchase was the Ensoniq **MR-61**, which was a delight to get around and sequence with. I still was not happy! I got bored with the sounds. I needed more analog sounds so I bought the MRD1 floppy. The sounds were flat!!! I tried to order third party floppies, but to my dismay, there are no floppies available. I contacted my salesman about the shortage of sounds in my "taste" and he assured me that Ensoniq had the answer with an OS upgrade and a memory upgrade (about $300) or expansion boards ($500). At this point I'm wondering why I bought this keyboard which was released without very good support – look at Korg (X-series, N-Series), Kurzweil (K2500, the new K2).

This brings me to my next purchase. You guessed it! I traded my MR-61 in on another keyboard. My salesman had just received a used **TS-12** in mint condition. This was the beast I was looking for!!! Why the hell did Ensoniq discontinue a machine like this? The people at Malvern should have pooled their R&D dollars for upgrading the TS series – not developing the MR series. I found many third-party samples and patches for the TS-12 – even helpful videos on sequencing and effects by Covert videos.

If this beast fails me, my next purchase will probably be one of the N-series by Korg. At least Korg has enough sense to allow compatibility of newer and older models of keyboards (in the case of sound availability).

Sincerely,
Not quite sold on Ensoniq.
PAPPAS (pappa_pj@cowley.uwlax.edu)

[PF – Pappas: Since when can you take an M-1 soundcard and drop it into a Trinity? Or a Prophecy? Korg is just the R & D department of Yamaha: open up an M1 and look at the DX7 keyboard mechanism inside. Not to rail on other manufacturers (like Korg), but do they still make the M1? The 03R? The point I'm trying to make here is the MARKET determines which direction keyboard development goes. Roland sensed everybody lusting after analog and knobs and faders, released the JD-800, and had to sell them off at $995 just to recoup their investment (I think a hundred actually sold at $2495). It looks like their new JD8000 will maintain this philosophy...

The Ensoniq SQ-R, SQ-1, SQ-2 (as well as their 32-voice "Plus" variants) share

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the same libraries, sound cards and architecture, as do the VFX, VFXsd and SD-1. Don't get me wrong; I'm with you 'cause I think the TS-Series was the absolute best of Ensoniq – wavetable synthesis in ROM AND expandable sample RAM to let you use all of the EPS/16/16+/ASR sample libraries. An optional SCSI port so you can read all the ASR CD library? There're more sounds available for the TS-Series than all other keyboards combined...

But some people hate samplers and want to be able to turn on the instrument and wail away. Does this mean Ensoniq will discontinue its sampler line? Actually, I'd pay VERY close attention to the ASR-X when released: this thing's an MR-Rack with a single WAVEROM expansion slot combined with a redesigned ASR-10 expandable to not 16 Mb but 32 Mb of sample RAM. The reason for all this commotion about Emulator's new 128-voice box, or Kurzweil's K2500, or the Synclavier, for that matter, is that everybody wants ONE box to do it all. And it just ain't gonna happen.

NO ONE BOX IS THE ANSWER. Nobody does FM like Yamaha (Yamaha doesn't even do FM anymore since the demise of the SY77/99), nobody does analog like Oberheim, nobody does digital like PPG. The release of Ensoniq's EPS, in my estimation, was squarely aimed at the market that didn't have the disposable income (or operating capital) to purchase all these boxes, and instead, allowed you to play samples of these instruments. This trend continued with the 16+, the ASR, and will still continue with the ASR-X.

I'm truly sorry that you're not sold on Ensoniq, because Ensoniq is certainly sold on you. Ensoniq is above and beyond a reasonable doubt THE most musician-resonant manufacturer around. They realize better than any other keyboard manufacturer I've ever known that the musician is King. Give him the most productive tools to work with and he'll come back for more. In your case you've discovered that an older discontinued Ensoniq piece meets your requirements better than one of their newer keyboards. That's perfectly normal: most other keyboard manufacturers are just now starting to catch up with Ensoniq features, and they still don't deliver the bang for the buck a Malvern box will. I STILL use an SD-1 as a master keyboard because nothing else out there has a 24-track sequencer built in. And it was VERY short-lived. But I don't wish it was compatible with the MR-series, or the SQ-series, or the 16+ 'cause it's a different box. It's got a different sound. It does Sysex from other Ensoniq keyboards and writes them to disk. It does organ sounds better than anything I've ever heard (except my B-3 and 122), and my ASR does Joey DeFrancesco B-3 samples as close to my real thing as I care to haul to the gig...

But trust me here. I got po'd at having lost 4 hours of sequence time when my Original EPS crashed and washed my hands of Ensoniq back in 1990. Plunked down $2500 for a W30, another $500 for the SCSI adapter (that was NO faster than the floppy drive) and books on demystifying its operation. Spent 6 months wrestling with it only to find I was making LESS music on it (switching keyboard MIDI xmit channels to line up with track receive channels), cutting and pasting verses and choruses, polishing the loose note in the Microscope view. After a year of MIDI hell, I dumped this boat anchor and bought another EPS Classic. And never looked back again...

If I appear to be on an Ensoniq soapbox here, it's because I am. I've spent enough money at my local keyboard retail over the past 20 years to have purchased enough stock to probably own a good 25-50% of the store. And the most productive, musical, enlightening, and personally satisfying instruments I bought there were Ensoniq instruments only amounting to about 10% of the money I dropped there. I'd have saved about $28k if Ensoniq formed in 1980 instead of 1984. But as Dennis Miller says; "It's only my opinion: I could be wrong."

My wallet doesn't seem to think so...]

[Ensoniq – Thanks Pat!]

[Paul J. Pappas (pappa_pj@cowley.uwlax.edu) – First, let me apologize for my ignorance about keyboards. I love to make ambient-techno type music and the MR-61 did not have enough sounds for my taste. I was quite upset (it cost me $1,800). I was also quite upset with my salesman for telling me that there were a lot of disks available for the MR-61. I do not have an endless supply of cash! I was just looking for a keyboard that I could make expressive ambient pieces of my own. My next purchase of the TS-12 seemed to be a good choice, and I hope it is!

I wish I could find a book about the best keyboards to buy and what they can do. I read Keyboard Magazine, but I believe those people get paid for praising others' equipment! I hope I made a good choice with buying the TS-12. As far as sounds go for the TS-12, I bought some samples from Syntaur: TS-12 Set 1 – pretty cool! Samples for "films" – not really what I was looking for. And Rubber Chicken: Microwave II, which I was told was sampled from a Korg Wavestation. I found this production rather disappointing.

Could someone please direct me to someone who knows a lot about the TS-12? I do not know about upgrading the sample memory (how much does it cost, are there more up-to-date methods for this??). Could someone please direct me to some sounds for the TS-12 in the ambient/techno/analog area? My taste in music for comparison: Tangerine Dream (Virgin era), Jean Michel Jarre, Edgar Froese, Klaus Schulze (Body Love era), Delerium, Synaethesia, Sven Vath, and Intermix.

Please accept my sincere apology for bashing Ensoniq. I just want to know if I blew a lot of money on a product that I can't grow with. For all the publicity that Kurzweil and Korg receive, it just makes me wonder!

PS. I live in a little hick town that doesn't sell Ensoniq, Korg, or Kurzweil. I had to travel two hours each way for these keyboard exchanges. This just added to my distress!!!!]

[PF – Paul: Thanx for your response. Good to know I'm not the only guy here in the boonies that has to drive awhile to see new stuff! I personally feel Sam Mims is the premiere Ensoniq wavetable flyguy for animated pads. I've reviewed the SQ & TS sets 1 & 2, and there's a little something in both of them to whet your appetite.

But rather than buy preprogrammed sounds, why not start with a pad sound you already like and torque on it a bit? Changing the waves, layering with other sounds, and altering effects are not too terribly involved in TS programming and will yield the most productive edits you could make as a new user. If you don't mind spending a little time with the Musician's Manual and poking a few buttons, I think you'll be pleasantly surprised at what you can come up with.

And the best part of all, since you've got the TS, is the fact it can load ASR samples! This alone is worth the price of a CD-ROM reader and the SCSI kit. Drop a pair of 4 Mb 30-pin (non-parity) SIMMS in the TS first, and then you can download all the ASR samples that look like they might fit the bill and write them to an ASR floppy. I HIGHLY recommend the SampleBank CD that Garth Hjelte at Rubber Chicken Software distributes. It's got a runtime version of Gary Giebler's Ensoniq Disk formatter, as well as 300+Mb of warez for $39.95. Bag that if you've got a PC-compatible and try out the sounds!

Hey, we all bash somebody sometime: I've bashed Ensoniq in the past, tried an alternate route, and came crying back, so no apologies necessary. They'll get you one way or another, so I simply decided after almost a year of frustration with other manufacturers' boxes that I was making less music and spending TONS more time trying to do on an R piece what took me 10 minutes on an Ensoniq box. Hang in there: unlike other synth boxes, the Malvern wonders WILL grow on you once you've got the OS under your belt. Enjoy!]

[Ensoniq – Regarding memory expansion, make sure you buy the correct SIMMs. You may use one by eight or four by eight, eight bit, eighty nanoseconds or faster non-parity non-composite 30 pin SIMMs. The four megabyte SIMMs can be the two DRAM or Eight DRAM variety.]

TH –

I would like to ask something about the Unisyn Sound Editor program which came with my Ensoniq **MR Rack.**

My equipment:
- PC 486DX2-66 and Windows 3.11
- SB AWE32

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 6:00 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.

• Ensoniq MR Rack
• Kawai K4
• "nameless" MIDI-adaptor with In and Out

In sequencer use everything works fine (I use Cakewalk sequencer which came with SB AWE32) but the Unisyn sound editor doesn't work well. It gives the message "Sending initialization message to MR Rack." The answer is: "There was no reply from the device."

When I try to send batch to MR Rack the Ensoniq replies: "Rcv sound too big: 362 bytes." And the PC gives the message: "There was no reply from the device." Ensoniq answers "xmt sound successful" and the PC reads: "There was no reply from the device."

I don't have the MME-driver in my PC but the almost similar driver. Do you know what could be wrong in my system? Is it connections or channels or lack of something? What can I do to fix it all?

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	2.00
MR-61/76	2.10

Thank you,
Tomi Tuominen
tauno.tuominen@evl.fi

[PF – Tomi: I apologize for sounding like a broken record, but outdated device drivers rank right up there with the root of all evil. What once worked with one version of an OS and a card may not work with another OS version or another software version. There's not enough info/details in your configuration to point at the offending device. Are you running out of your PC into the MR and looping thru the K4? What's the order of your devices? Is the "nameless" MIDI adaptor a gameport MIDI I/O dongle from the AW32 or is it a MIDIQuest MPU-401-compliant interface card? What version of Cakewalk are you using? Earlier version prior to 4.0 were gnarly with Sysex and your wincake.ini file had to be massaged to handle more than a 64k burst coming down a MIDI cable.

I wish I could be more specific here – try removing all other MIDI devices so that the MR is the only device in the chain. I'd give MOTU Tech support a shout: I've had no problems with the Mac version of Unisyn with the MR profile except for the standard checksum error since I'm using the MR Keyboard with the MR-Rack profile.]

Hi,

I am the owner of a **VFX-SD** and I am planning to buy a **TS-10.** I have the following question:

Is the TS-10 compatible in any way to the VFX?

I know that the TS-10 cannot read VFX disks but that is no problem since I could transfer my files via sys-ex. I don't care about the sequences 'cause I can transfer them to a PC-based sequencer, and from there to the TS-10. The problem is with the sounds (programs). I have seen that the TS-10 uses exactly the same synthesis technique with the VFX (same parameters) but it has more and better samples in its memory plus a better FX engine. My thinking is simple. If the all of VFX's samples are contained in the TS-10, then if there is a way to find which sample of the VFX is the equivalent in the TS-10 (lets's say sample No.1 in the VFX goes to sample No.21 on the TS-10) then all other parameters should be the same. So I send my programs to a sys-ex recorder (PC), then I edit the header to match the TS-10 device ID, and the sample number (according to the sample map mentioned above) and leave everything else untouched. Logically this could work.

Unfortunately, I don't have access to a TS-10 and its manual, so I cannot check if this can work. On the other hand, the only way to have a TS-10 is to sell my VFX. But before doing so I want to be sure that this transfer of sounds (programs) is possible.

If you know that this plan is correct or if there is a way to find out, please contact me.

It is obvious that if I manage to make the transfer I will create a program to automate the whole procedure. This is easy for me and I believe that it would interest lots of Ensoniq users. I could even publish it (for free) through the Internet.

Thank you in advance for your time.

Best Regards,
George Wastor
gwastor@forthnet.gr
Athens, Greece

[PF – George: Why reinvent the wheel? Giebler (610-933-0332) has been there, done that, invented the t-shirt with some knockout utilities that will do all of the above for you. He's the cross-platform oracle of all Ensoniq disk-based sound/sample/sequence conversion utilities and has done all this work for you already. And they're in the $40 range. You can also find a link to his web site at TH's "related sites" page.]

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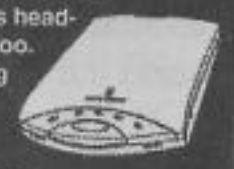

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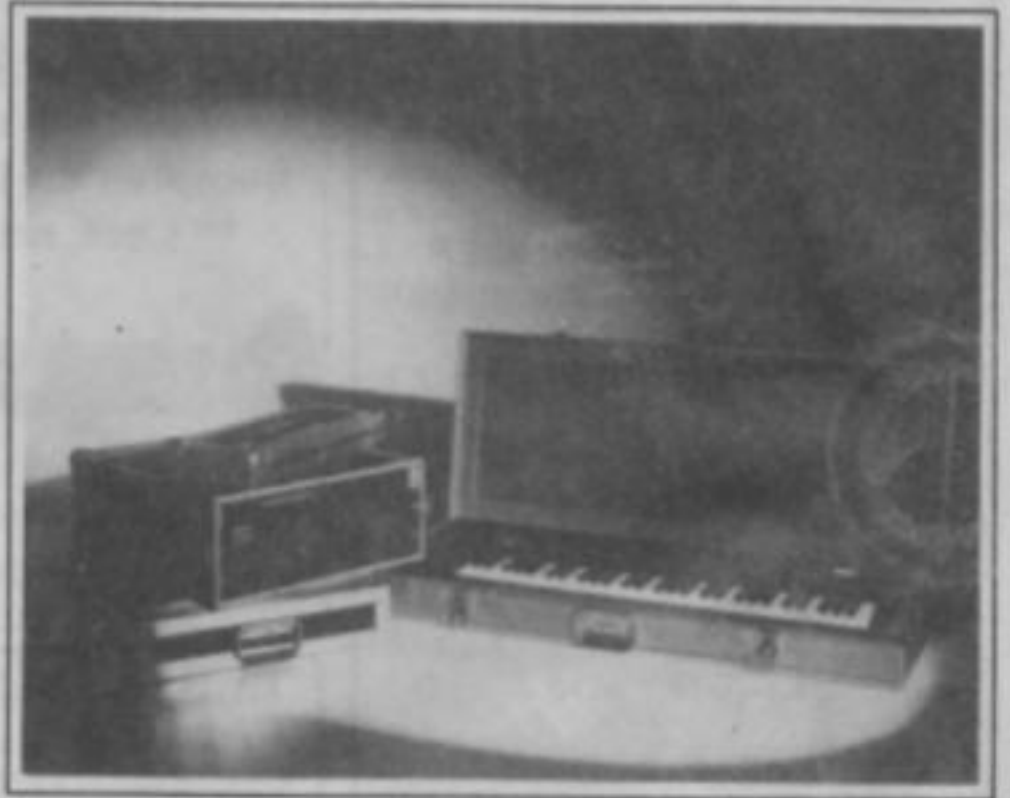

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