

The Independent News
Magazine for Ensoniq Users

A First Look at Ensoniq's ASR-10 Advanced Recording Sampler

Robby Berman

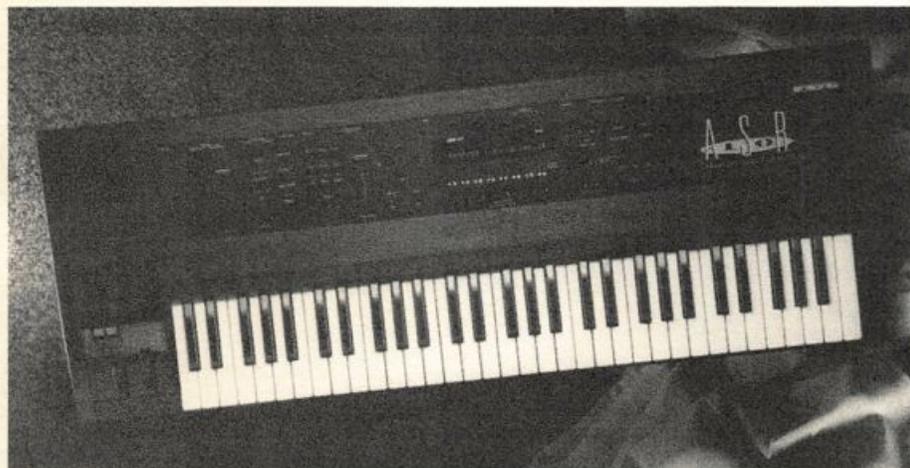
Whadda ya know, they *do* listen.

The ASR-10 Advanced Recording Sampler, Ensoniq's next-generation sampler, is now out and it's almost as if it's been designed by the readers of the *Hacker*. Ensoniq-savvy readers have in fact been writing to the Interface for a while now with a feeling in their (ear)bones that such a unit was on its way. And the wish list for new features had been growing. Some letter writers had requested new capabilities in updates to their 16 Plusses; often, Ensoniq replied that the current hardware made such items as SIMMS-expandable memory, greater polyphony and stereo sampling impossible to offer. The company said that they appreciated users' suggestions and would

consider them for future products. But, would they really?

Yup.

The ASR-10 is a new 31-voice stereo-capable sampler with memory expandable from the factory-shipped 2 meg all the way up to 16 meg (with standard SIMMS chips). At the center of the action is a new Ensoniq VLSI chip known as "Otto." The ASR-10 is heavily based on the EPS architecture and even with its number of colorful new features, users of those earlier samplers will find the terrain very familiar. It's just that now you can do that voodoo that you did so well with stereo samples. And you can do a lot more with many more of them due to some excit-



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ing new features and the beeg memory. Oh, and not to worry, all of our EPS sounds and sequences will play just fine on the ASR-10.

Sampling works much the same way as it always has in the EPS series, though you have some new options. There's a hardware switch on the back panel to choose between line and mic levels. And even more important, there's a trim knob back there, too, so you now have an input level control when sampling. On the face of the ASR-10 you also get two pairs of LEDs (for the left and right audio inputs) — green ones signifying signal present and reds giving an overload warning.

In addition to having the option to make stereo samples (done in pretty much the same way as you make mono ones), you can now also sample through the effects, allowing you to get your sounds gussied up exactly the way you want them right from the get-go (and also leave the effects for later use). If you prefer your samples dry, the trim pot (maybe in conjunction with one of the EQ or compression algorithms) completely eliminates the need for a mixer between your sound source and the ASR-10.

And you can sample the main outputs of the ASR-10, allowing you to play sounds from the keyboard and resample them with effects, all in real time and in the digital domain. You can sample what the ASR sequencer is playing and make your own rhythm track loops. Or you can take stacks of instruments or layers of samples, like background vocals, and resample them into one stereo sample.

All stereo sample editing, by the way, is done the same way as with mono samples. The ASR just does everything twice, with both sides of the stereo being processed simultaneously. Edit and Command options are nearly identical to the 16 Plus, with at least one very slick new command. You can now time-stretch or time-shrink samples without changing their pitch. Maybe you wish that snare hit was a little longer but its pitch is just perfect or your drum loop doesn't quite match up to the closest sequencer tempo you can find. A little experimentation with the time compress/expand wave command will soon have your sounds right in the pocket.

One of the ASR-10's powerful assets is its expanded effects section. There are now 50 onboard effect algorithms (including the 16 Plus's original 13), many of them similar to those in Ensoniq's much-praised DP/4 effects unit. There are a number of new reverbs: rooms, halls and plates, a gate, two reversed and three non-linears. There are three real-time pitch shifters (Ross Bagdasarian was born much

too soon); expanders; a ducker; a de-esser, a parametric EQ; new combo FX with things like vibrato and flanging. There are simply too many new algorithms to list here — a whole slew of new grist for your audio mill. And virtually every effect parameter is available for real-time modulation in the algorithms.

There's another terrific new wrinkle added to the FX game that will have your family and neighbors howling at you to turn the damn thing off and get to bed — or, as my wife said, "Robby, is that really necessary?" Thanks to the new Audio Tracks, you can now route a mic (or anything else) through the effects section (a la WAVeBOY Disk 2 for the 16 Plus) and sing or play along with your sequences and samples, frightfully flanged or delightfully delayed (ridiculously reverbed? despicably distorted?). Your performance will come out the main outs (and headphone, Jack) along with everything else. Since each Audio Track has its own volume, pan, and effects rout-

ing, what the ASR-10 becomes, in effect (oops), is a big-high-quality digital mixer and effects box. Note: a keyboardist/singer who can fit all the necessary sounds and sequences onboard can gig with nothing but the ASR-10 (and a hard drive), a microphone (and mic stand) and a PA. That's different. Lasers and smoke machines extra.

Another new twist is the disk drive, which automatically recognizes, reads, and writes both high-density disks and ol' faithful double-sided, double densities. With a high-density disk you can save up to 3176 blocks, so you can cut down on your floppy consumption.

All told, the ASR-10 is the answer to number of *Hacker* readers' prayers (not that new ones won't come along, such being the nature of prayers and technology). I'm certain that Ensoniq has a big hit on their hands — there's really no competition at \$2695 for this board. The rack version's price and release date are unannounced as of this writing.

And what do we learn from this, boys and girls? Just that we should keep those cards and letters coming — Ensoniq reads the *Hacker* just like the rest of the class. Those letters really do provide a way in which we can contribute to Ensoniq's product development process, in effect designing for ourselves the keyboards of our dreams. ■

Bio: Robby Berman is a musician currently residing in southern Illinois. He doesn't recall exactly why. His latest album is Rings and Rings.

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Front Panel

RND (🎵🎵🎵)

Hacker News

Well, we did actually manage to do the printing ourselves on last month's issue. You might have noticed a few little "printer-type" glitches — but we hope to fix all this up as we move away from the bottom of the learning curve. (And that's one *heck* of a curve...)

The ol' Hackerpatch bin is looking a little low on VFX & SD-1 Hackerpatches — now's a good time to send some in. See your very own name in (clean, crisp) print!

We'd like to welcome Dara Jones to our list of VFX helpers on the Transoniq-Net. (Gee, our first e-mail only listing.) And, we'd like to point out that Garth Hjelte has expanded his question-answering domain to include the ASR-10.

Third-Party News

Rubber Chicken Software has a new address: P.O. Box 2513, Kirkland, WA 98083. Their phone number remains 1-800-8-PRO-EPS.

We'd like to welcome to our bevy of third-party advertisers **Red Shift** (SQ-80 sounds) and **Sky is the Limit** (EPS samples). Look for their ads elsewhere in this issue.

TRANSONIQ-NET HELP WITH QUESTIONS

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

All Ensoniq Gear – Ensoniq Customer Service. 9:30 am to noon, 1:15 pm to 6:30 pm EST Monday to Friday. 215-647-3930.

All Ensoniq Gear – Electric Factory (Ensoniq's Australia distributor). Business hours – Victoria. (03) 4805988.

VFX Sound Programming Questions – Dara Jones, Compuserve: 71055,1113 or Midi-net and Fido-net. My local BBS is the Nightfly here in Dallas: 214-342-2286.

SD-1 Questions – John Cox, 609-888-5519, 6 – 8 pm EST.

SQ-80 Questions – Robert Romano, 607-533-7878. Any ol' time.

Hard Drives & Drive System – Rob Feiner, Cinetunes. 914-963- 5818. 11 am – 3 pm EST.

SQ-80 Questions – Michael Mortilla, 805-966-7252 weekends and after 5 pm Pacific Time.

EPS, EPS-16 PLUS, & ASR-10 Questions – Garth Hjelte. Rubber Chicken Software. Pacific Time (WA). Call anytime. If message, 24-hour callback. (206) 821-5054.

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

ESQ-1 Questions – Jim Johnson, (503) 684-0942. 8 am to 5 pm Pacific Time (OR).

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

Sampling & Moving Samples – Jack Loesch, (201) 264-3512. Eastern Time (N.J.). Call after 6:00 pm.

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.

Mirage Sampling – Mark Wyar, (216) 323-1205. Eastern time zone (OH). Calls between 6 pm and 11 pm.

SD-1, sound programming, sequencing, & MIDI – Eric Olsen, Pegasus Sounds, (616) 676-0863. Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri: 4 pm to 9:30 pm Eastern Time. Sat: 12 to 10 pm. (*No calls on Wednesday please!*)

SQ-1 Questions – Pat Finnigan, 317-462-8446. 8:00 am to 10:00 pm EST.

ESQ-1, MIDI & Computers – Joe Slater, (404) 925-7929. Eastern time zone.

HYPERSONIQU NEW PRODUCTS

Hitman Music announces a new catalog of samples. New disks include Alesis D-4 Drums, Horn Section, Industrial, Analog Wonders, 5-String Tobias Bass, and many more. Also now available on 44- and 88-meg Syquest cartridges for \$200 and \$250 respectively. For more information contact: Hitman Music, 1280 Terminal Way, Suite 3, Reno, NV 89502, phone: 702-329-5979.

Tested and Approved Hard Drives for the EPSs

The drives listed below are known to be compatible with the EPS and EPS-16 PLUS *at the time of testing*. Changes in firmware or hardware by drive manufacturers may make later versions incompatible (with the exception of **PS Systems**, **Eltekon**, and **Frontera** whose drives are configured to work specifically with Ensoniq products). Drives *not* included on this list may also work just fine. For up-to-date information about specific drives call Ensoniq Customer Service: 215-647-3930.

MANUFACTURER	MODEL
Dynatek	All Models
Frontera	All Models
PS Systems	All Models
Eltekon	All Models
Rodime	45plus, 60plus, 100plus, 140plus
Microtech	R45, N20, N40, N80, N100, N150
PL1	45 Meg Removable
Mass Micro	Datapack 45

Drives Reported to Work by Readers

The following drives have been reported to work satisfactorily with reader's EPS systems. No guarantees — but they'll *probably* work with yours. Try to try *before* you buy.

Jasmine Direct Drive 100	Quantum 100M, 210M
PowerDrive44	Seagate 80M
Syquest 555 (removable)	Tech Data Model 60e

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88 MB Rmv..	\$999
45 MB	\$499
90 MB	\$629
135 MB	\$739
185 MB	\$889
425 MB	\$1889
680 MB	\$1939

Desktop Models Available

Are you tired of sorting through hundreds of loose floppy disks for that particular sound, only to watch your EPS/EPS16+ take thirty or more seconds to load it into memory?

There is a solution to this frustration. With a Frontera rackmount hard drive, your EPS will load sound, sequence, bank and sys-ex files up to *ten times faster!*

All of this power and speed contained within a single disk drive! Finally, you can leave your mountain of floppies behind and get on with the music! If you think your EPS needs to lose some excess wait, find out about the cure that's guaranteed to work: *Frontera Rackmount Hard Drives.*



1318 E. Mission Rd, Suite 202
San Marcos, CA 92069

(619) 727-3410

HACKER BASEMENT TAPES

Daniel Mandel

"...Said the Spider to the Fly"

Tape: *The Accessible Penninger.*

Artist: William Holt Penninger.

Contact info: 1682 E. Gretna, Springfield, MO 65804.

Equipment: Ensoniq ESQ-1, Roland MT-32, Yamaha TX81Z and Yamaha TG-33. All of these are sequenced from the ESQ-1 using a Boss BX0-800 8 channel mixer.

Right up front let me state that Mr. Penninger wins the award for *Voluminous*, if not in terms of volume of works on tape, then certainly in accompanying explanatory text.

It begins thusly: "A copy of the Accessible Penninger (Rev. 1.4.1) is enclosed. Rev 1.4.1 is substantially similar to Revs. 1.1, 1.2, and 1.3, and 1.4. It differs only in the inclusion of..."

And it ends like this: "The Accessible Penninger (100 minutes) will be available on chrome cassette for \$10 per copy. I am now marketing another version as MAN/MUSIC/MACHINE (60 minutes) for \$6 and I will be releasing a new tape soon titled Fdt=mdv (60 minutes) for \$6. They should all be avail-

able through the Computer Musician Coalition."

And for those of you who may be interested: Computer Musician Coalition, 1024 W. Wilcox Ave., Peoria, IL 61604. Order Line: 1-800-4CMC (4262). Regular Phone: 1-309-685-4878. Fax: 1-309-685-4878. PAN: AIMCMC. Compu-serve: 72067,2120. Applelink: Wallace.Ron. Connect: WallaceRon.

Mr. Penninger continues: "Essentially I am a converted bass player. Long ago, I heard a song entitled Blues Theme. There was a sound in it I liked. I asked someone what instrument made that sound and they told me it was a bass guitar. Somewhere along the way I picked up a guitar (primarily acoustic in the John Fahey style). I've never played keyboards well. Almost every part on The Accessible Penninger is stop entry. The ESQ-1 was the synth I had been waiting for."

"The title, The Accessible Penninger, comes from my days at the Creative Writing Program at M.I.T.. Works the reader couldn't understand were quickly termed "inaccessible." The Accessible Penninger does not include "learned experiences," "failed experiments," or "pieces without form." The 60 minute version MAN/MUSIC/MACHINE is under the name The Ministry for the Absorption of Protohumans, Androids & Cyborgs

(does that adequately reflect my frustrations caused by switching from the sequencer on the ESQ-1 to a Brother PDC-100?)."

The Philosophy

"The definition of 'Accessibility' should emphasize focus, rather than whether a piece is experimental. If the author supplies the focus, the work is probably accessible. If the author does not supply focus, but forces the reader or listener to focus the piece, it would be inaccessible if the effort was too great for the reader or listener (BUT how hard should they try? What qualifications should they have? Which listener? What is focus?)"

The Useful Information

"I've found out several things you might want to pass along to your readers, in reference to registering materials with the Copyright office. The label on the tape should (but need not) bear the inscription (C) plus the year and the name of the copyright owner (in my case (C) 1991 William Holt Penninger, JJ). Registration with the Copyright office is not necessary (until you bring an infringement action), but it helps. The Accessible Penninger was registered as a single collection for \$20 on a single application. Forms, circulars and pamphlets may be requested from the answering machine at the Copyright Office at 202-707-9100. You can take care of the deposit with the Library of Congress and registration with the Copyright Office in a single mailing."

The Review

I would say that Bill's music fits squarely into the round peg we all know and some of us love as New Age. More so in today's definition which allows a sort of jazzy, free, rock, anything and everything that doesn't have an easy label (and from time to time even a vocal piece or two). There are elements of an earlier '60s rock and a love of FM and Moog sounds throughout.

I can not really believe that most of this tape was put together in step mode. I would go out of my mind entering all those parts in step mode, and it certainly is quite musical and moody, not at all mechanical as I would assume a step entered song would sound, but if Bill says so...

The mix needed a bit of help though. It's a bit muddy. Noise reduction instructions? A bit heavy on the base. Remember you've got to really listen to your final mixes on several different stereos, car stereos, portables, boom boxes. It'll give you a better overall sense of how you're going to sound to your audience. I actually had to adjust my bass in order to listen to the tape comfortably.

The moods tend to be heavy. Heavy and dark, heavy and slow, heavy and black, heavy and sorrowful. Maybe this was due to the deep end being a bit overpowering. Possibly the Penninger

palate is a dark and heavy thing. There were moments of sweetness and light, funky and cool — but, overall, heavy.

There are some nice endings and intros here. If introducing and exiting with grace are signs of a good songwriter, Bill's doing well. In between, he's done a great job too. These songs are fascinating and thought provoking and moving. The beats evolve. There is very little static on this tape and the sounds chosen are far ranging, but with style. The most bizarre sets of sounds are usually manifested a la '60s with all the black light imagery in full force as they wind down past your consciousness. For the rest of the songs, it's your standard keyboard pads and fillers. There are a lot of good drum sounds, usually synth bass patches with some vibes thrown in, a sort of free-form jam.

I wish that these songs were all on CD, so it would be a bit easier to name each song by name and go through and discuss them, but alas these were on cassette and the 100 minutes were divided among 31 songs. Here are a smattering of the titles: "Dancing with Ingraine," "Promises I Never Made," "Time-O," "Calm #1," "One Nite Late," and "Love in the Age of Magic."

I think Bill has an interesting point worth wrestling with. How much time should be spent in making one's music so acceptable [read: so much like what the audience has already heard (in some form) and already knows (in some sense) and is familiar with] and how much time should be spent in creating a new musical listening experience? I think the burden of the answer falls partly on you, the artist. What are your goals? Do you want to make money? How much money? How quickly? Who do you want your audience to be? What do you want to say? Do you want to be famous? Do you want to wear one white glove and have a nose job and live in a mansion and sleep in an oxygen tent? Is it okay if no one ever hears the songs you write?

These are difficult questions and ones that I hope we are all asking ourselves as we write and record and sequence for all those hours when we could have been watching Wheel of Fortune.

But seriously this is a very good, very full package from Bill Penninger. I look forward to my copy of "Fdt=mdv" when it's ready to be reviewed, and I would say when it's all said and done, yes, this is "The Accessible Penninger." ■

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



Bio: Daniel Mandel is a songwriter, sound designer, and has sold pro audio and keyboard equipment and produced demos for local bands.

Waveform Mutilation 101 for SQs & KSs

Part 8: Sequencing Wave Sequences

Jack Stephen Tolin

Ever since the beginning of sound synthesis, people have wanted to get the most out of their sounds in order to create inspiring music. Sampled waveforms, which are now considered staples in every new synthesizer on the market, are the building blocks of the eventual end sound. Rarely do people use just one oscillator to produce that end sound. After all, if your synthesizer can shoot off 32, 21, 16 or even eight oscillators at once, why on earth use a sound that utilizes only one oscillator?

This popular philosophy is made even easier by MIDI itself. If you've ever read an interview with a famous MIDI musician, chances are that you've heard someone saying how they've come to a sound that they use by layering a patch on one synthesizer with a patch on another. In fact, if you have more than one MIDI sound source, you've probably done it yourself. It's so simple and the possible sonic combinations are exquisite enough to encourage us to continue with this practice.

Then something called wave sequencing came along. This particular style of synthesis turned traditional synthesis upon its head — or, more accurately, on its side — from vertical to horizontal synthesis. Because such a technique is rhythmic by its nature, it is necessary to utilize it within an overall rhythmic context such as a song or a sequence. The best examples I've heard of wave sequencing in a song context are in the songs "Raging of the Moon" and "Silhouette" by White Heart on *Tales of Wonder*.

In order to hear a wave sequence in a sequence context, program "Wave Series #1" into an SQ-1/2/R and save it. Set up the preset on the SQ to look something like this:

Track	Name	Location	Vol.	Output (Mix)
1	Top-40 Kit	DRUM 81	99	DRY
2	Wave-series 1		84	CONTROL
3	Phaser Bass	ROM 62	89	DRY
4	Organ 3	ROM 33	99	CONTROL

Make sure that the effect for the preset/sequence is that of Wave Series #1. If you put the preset together with the wrong effect and you're using an SQ-1 or 2, simply do the following. Hit the Select Sounds button. Using the Bank and Screen buttons, find the location of Wave Series #1 again. Hold down the Edit Sequences/Presets button and then, while still depressing it, press the track button which corresponds to the track you originally placed the wave series on. At this point, your preset/sequence should have the correct effect.

And now, let's begin.

Mute Voices 1 and 2 in Wave Series #1. Hold down the key

one octave below middle C. Sound rather chaotic to you? Try playing some sort of figure to get used to its rhythm. You'll notice quickly that since pitch determines wave length, for each key the rhythm is either faster, if played higher, or slower, if played lower. Try this for each voice. To hear voices 1 and 2, you may prefer to keep voice 3 muted. With the CV-pedal in front-down position you will hear save sequence 1 (mostly in the left channel). With the pedal in back-down position you will hear wave sequence 2 (mostly in the right channel). There is obviously no need to mute Voice 1 if listening to Voice 2 or vice versa since you won't hear both at full volume at the same time or in the same channel. Once you gain a handle on each wave sequence, you may find yourself switching back and forth from voice 1 to voice 2 for rhythmic emphasis.

Now select the preset you just set up. In an available sequencer, program the respective musical patterns from Figure 1 for tracks 1 (to keep the beat) and 2. You may want to edit the Wave Series as shown above by muting the voices and going back to the preset and playing the sequencer to hear how each wave sequence operates at this particular pitch and tempo. Start by SOLOing voice 3. Here you can tell why I chose a loop length of 010. You wouldn't hear any waves past the eighth note in bar two anyway since it starts over again on the Bb. Notice how the additional unquantized rhythms add to the motion and feel of the overall sequence.

Try playing the musical figure for track 2 or track 3 (Phaser Bass) with the sequencer playing. Notice how a difference of pitch is evident. This is a result of the difference of the original pitches of each sound sampled for the SQ. When putting together a wave sequence for a song, make sure to keep this in mind. That is why Figure 1 is in G minor and not in C blues as was originally intended. (I started the wave series with Voice 3.) This is also why Semitone and Fine tuning was done with Voices 1 and 2, that is to get the first wave of each voice as close as possible to the same pitch. Because of this, one may find oneself trading off either key for speed of the wave sequence used or vice versa.

Record the Phaser Bass part on track 3. I chose this simple line just to complement track 2. Track 4 is basically what I use to jam with. The bit for Organ 3 in Figure 1 is a watered down version of one of the simpler patterns I came across. Feel free to really let go by experimenting. After you program track 3, you



SQ-1/2 & KS-32 Prog: Wave Series #1

By: Jack Stephen Tolin

WAVE	1	2	3
Select Voice	On	On	On
Wave Class	Multiwave	Multiwave	Multiwave
Wave	AllWaves	AllWaves	AllWaves
Delay Time	000	000	000
Wave Direction	Forward	Forward	Forward
Start Index	71	76	67
Loop Length	010	010	010
Restrk Decay	00	00	00

LFO	1	2	3
LFO Speed			
Noise Rate			
Level			
Delay			
MODSRC			
Wave			
Restart			

FILTER	1	2	3
Filter 1	2Lo	2Lo	2Lo
Filter 2	2Hi	2Hi	2Hi
FC1 Cutoff	127	127	127
ENV 2	+00	+00	+00
FC1 KBD	+00	+00	+00
MODSCR	Off	Off	Off
MODAMT	-	-	-
FC2 Cutoff	000	000	000
ENV2	+00	+00	+00
FC2 KBD	+00	+00	+00
FC1MOD-FC2	Off	Off	Off

AMP	1	2	3
Initial	99	99	99
Peak	99	99	99
Break	99	99	99
Sustain	99	99	99
Attack	00	00	00
Decay 1	00	00	00
Decay 2	00	00	00
Release	00	00	00
Vel-Level	00	00	00
Vel-Attack	00	00	00
Vel Curve	-	-	-
Mode	Normal	Normal	Normal
KBD Track	+00	+00	+00

PITCH	1	2	3
Octave	-2	-2	-2
Semitone	-05	+00	+00
Fine	+00	-60	+00
ENV1	+00	+00	+00
LFO	+00	+00	+00
MODSCR	Off	Off	Off
MODAMT	-	-	-
KBD Pitch Track	On	On	On
Glide	Off	Off	Off
Glide Time	-	-	-

OUTPUT	1	2	3
VOL	99	85	79
Boost	Off	On	Off
MODSRC	Pedal	Pedal	Off
MODAMT	-99	+99	-
KBD Scale	Zone	Zone	Zone
Key Range	A0 C8	A0 C8	A0 C8
Output Bus	FX2	FX2	FX1
Priority	Med	Med	Med
Pan	-70	+70	+00
Vel window	000	000	000

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

ENV2	1	2	3
Initial			
Peak			
Break			
Sustain			
Attack			
Decay 1			
Decay 2			
Release			
Vel-Level			
Vel-Attack			
Vel Curve			
Mode			
KBD Track			

EFFECTS — 8-VOICE CHORUS

FX-1	75
FX-2	10
Chorus Rate	20
Chorus Depth	20
Chorus Center	00
Feedback	+00
MOD (Dest)	Center
BY (MODSRC)	Modwheel
MODAMT	+99

can always go to the Mix bank (screen 2) and mute the track so you can keep jamming. Ultimately a song may form. This is an example of how one can use a wave sequence to inspire the creation of music. The moral of the story, boys and girls, is thus: When you use or set a wave sequence, factors like rhythm, pitch, tempo and loop length will greatly influence the impact it has upon the entire sequence.

That's all for now. Keep those waveforms mutilated. ■

Bio: Jack is currently a psychology major at Eastern Nazarene College in Quincy, Mass. and performs at Boston area churches with his musical group, "Clay in Hand."

Figure 1

Jack Stephen Tolin

Riding the Range — Live!

Alan MacIntosh

The eight instrument buttons on the EPS never quite satisfy me.

I'm used to the old DX7 with its 32 little green pads and the M1 with its hundred programs and hundred combinations. I thrive on that built-in convenience. As a result, I'm eager to find ways to call up a greater variety of EPS sounds on stage, quickly and effortlessly.

True, the DX7 and the M1 both allow easy access to a great number of sounds but those sounds are all preprogrammed. The EPS, on the other hand, allows for only eight basic instruments but the instruments can be mixed and matched to produce thousands of combinations. The catch is that the EPS is more interactive than the DX7 or the M1. It demands more of you in live performance. You are, in a sense, programming live when you select, deselect and double-click the EPS instrument buttons on stage. And that kind of on-the-spot programming can become confusing and downright aggravating. The key to easy operation and button-clicking virtuosity is a bit of careful planning and a measure of crafty tweaking.

Positioning Instruments

First, let's look at the instrument layout. When you decide where to load your instruments, keep it simple and logical. For example, if you kick left-hand bass, then load the bass instrument into track 1, on the left-hand side. If you use a gritty guitar sound for solos and a rare metal mallet sound for melodic fills, load these two lead instruments into tracks 7 and 8, on the right-hand side where you play them. Group similar instruments. Load the warm synth pad beside the strings and put the brass pad next to the brass hit. Design a moronically easy-to-remember layout. If locating an instrument requires anything resembling thought, you're on the wrong track!

Range Programming

Next, let's eliminate unnecessary button pushing by programming instrument ranges. The goal of range programming is to combine instrument selection and deselection into a single button push. The basic rule is that any two instruments with exactly the same note range will mutually deselect. In other words, when you select one, the other will automatically deselect.

Test Bank

For test purposes you may want to create a special bank of instruments with very small block sizes or dummy instruments, using `COMMAND-CREATE NEW INSTRUMENT`. On a blank disk, save a BANK, then save eight small instruments to the same disk. Finally, load the instruments into tracks 1-8 and save the bank again.

Automatic Deselect

Here's a simple scenario for starters: eight instruments that use the full range of the keyboard. Load your test bank, set all the instrument ranges for C2-C7, then resave each instrument.

As you select instruments, each button push will deselect the previous sound. Try selecting an instrument, then double-click one or two more to create a layered sound. Now select any other instrument and the combination that you just created will disappear. This way, you can program a layered sound and with one move, replace it with a new sound.

Split Pads

Range programming works just as well with splits. If your music requires playing left-hand pads and right-hand fills, you can program a set-up that frees you from deselecting instruments as you change from sound to sound on either hand. Set the range for instruments 1-4 to C2-E4, set the range for instruments 5-8 to F4-C7 and save each instrument again. You'll find that when you select instruments within one of the groups, they'll mutually delete, but the selected instruments in the other group will remain unaffected. Operating the set-up in performance requires that you think about, and do, only one thing: select the next sound.

Panic Button

Here's a twist to the split pad set-up: you need a full-keyboard, all purpose sound to bail yourself out of tight spots and you need to be able to get to it in a split second. Use the split set-up from the previous example, but set the range for instrument 1 to C2-C7, and resave it. Create a normal split by selecting, for example, instruments 3 and 6. When you select instrument 1, the split will evaporate, leaving you safe and sound with a full keyboard instrument.

Presets

Presets work wonderfully for calling up special splits and layered configurations and presets can certainly handle any particular sound combination we create using range programming. But with range programming, we're making the simpler combinations easy to produce by programming speed and convenience into them. We can then reserve the super-smart presets for more complicated combinations.

When you're using presets on stage and want to return to your normal range set-up, simply select any instrument and press zero on the key pad. All ranges, transpositions and values on the instrument pages (EDIT-INSTRUMENT) will return to normal and your range programming will again be in effect.

Double-Duty Programming

If you'd like a taste of simple but slightly diabolical range programming, grab a second cup of coffee and I'll demonstrate how to combine splits and full range capabilities into a single system.

We'll use the split set-up we already created (4 left-hand pads/4 right-hand pads) and add full keyboard capability to the left-hand pads. To make it easy, first create a special instrument that contains only a single wavesample. Choose a smooth analog sound or any sample that sounds decent over the full range of the board. Rename the sound, erase all layers except layer 1 and erase all wavesamples except the sample that you choose. Set the range of the *wavesample* to A0-C8, set the instrument range to C2-C7, enable layer 1 (only) on patch 00 (EDIT-double-click INSTRUMENT), disable all layers on patches *0, 0*, and **, and save the instrument. Next, copy layer 1 (parameters only), creating layer 2, enable layer 2 on patch **, and then resave the instrument.

Check layer two and make sure that the wavesample octave setting (EDIT-double-click PITCH) is okay for a normal full keyboard sound. Then edit layer 1, setting the wavesample range to C2-E4, and adjusting the wavesample octave setting so that you can play a C major triad on the lowest part of the keyboard without a muddy sound. Again, resave the instrument.

You now have a test instrument that gives you a left-hand pad on patch 00 from C2-E4 and a full keyboard sound on patch ** from C2-C7.

To complete the process, load the test instrument into tracks 1-4. If you like, save instruments 1-4 to the test bank disk, naming it differently each time, replacing the dummy instruments. Finally, set the ranges for instruments 5-8 to F4-C#7 and resave them.

The left and right pads will operate normally, mutually deleting within each group as before. But, in this case, you have to observe a new rule: when you select a left-hand pad you must immediately select a new right-hand pad (otherwise, you won't hear any sound on the upper part of the keyboard). To use the full keyboard capability, press both patch select buttons with your left hand and, while holding, select instrument 1, 2, 3, or 4. When you release the patch buttons, Patch ** will be locked into place and you'll be hearing layer 2 (full keyboard) of that instrument only.

To select different full keyboard sounds, hold both patch buttons down and select any of the first four instruments. The previous sound will delete and the new sound will lock on patch **.

To return to the split pad set-up, select any left-hand pad, followed by any right-hand pad.

When you program a double-duty set-up like this, assign sounds you use more frequently to patch 00 because they'll be easier to get to. Put the sounds you use less frequently on patch ** because calling them up requires two hands and a little more time.

Good luck with these performance programming suggestions! Each player has a unique set of tastes and requirements when performing live but if you take time to work with range programming, I think you'll come up your brain-teasing applications that'll add to your performance. ■



Bio: Alan MacIntosh performs with his EPS in lounges and showrooms in Las Vegas. He is hopelessly addicted to the study of the Japanese language and madly scribbles Kanji and mutters incomprehensible Japanese phrases every spare moment before, during and after gigs.

CURRENT ENSONIQ O.S. (Disk/EPROM)

EPS	1.30/2.40	VFX-SD	2.1/2.00
EPS-M	1.30/2.40	SQ-1	1.11
EPS-16 PLUS	1.1	SQ-R	1.02
MASOS	2.0	SQ-1 PLUS	1.1
MIRAGE	3.2	SQ-2	1.2
ESQ	3.5	SD-1/SD-1 32	4.10/4.10
ESQ-M	1.2	DP/4	1.06
SQ-80	1.8	KS-32	3.0
VFX	2.1	ASR-10	1.00

SCSI — The Search for the Holy Grail

Connecting Multiple Drives

Rob Feiner

I often think back to simple times when there were only a few cables. Bob Moog was cranking out gear as fast as Good Humor made ice cream bars. Yes... that was then.

What...Huh... who turned on the lights???? Wow, what a dream. Now that I'm back to reality, I must tell you that I dread every time I have to go behind the console and the racks in my studio. I have refused to count the cables, although if I sat down to think, I could name every in and out... not bad, eh?

Life in Musicville has indeed become more complex but I'm here now to take your hand and guide you through our search for the SCSI Grail.

I have spoken with a lot of you through the TRANS-NET so I know many of you have two EPSs and a hard drive or more. So do I. In fact, I have an EPS, a 16+ and four drive systems interconnected. And, they work too!! This simply means that any keyboard can talk to any drive on the buss. I have also had the occasion to add a fifth hard drive for special applications. While your cockpit may not be as elaborate, there are still many of the same principles functioning.

There are simple facts. The 16+ with a factory-installed Ensoniq SCSI card *does* provide termination. The old EPS *does not!!*

Non-Termination is usually the cause for getting "Disk Not Responding" or "File Operation Error" messages. As the Digital Data flows through the cable to and from the drive the data has a tendency to echo or "ring" and thus makes the pure data unreadable. The rules are both basic and fairly simple. Termination must be present on both ends of the SCSI chain. Proper termination will keep the echoing to a minimum and pure and accurate data transmission will result.

If you have two hard drives, *un-terminate* the middle drive. Terminators themselves come in different flavors. Some are black and some are tan. They are about one inch long and have eight or so pins on them. They are usually found in threes. This means that three terminating "packs" are right next to each other and the pins will plug in to a corresponding receptacle located near the rear of the drive. Some attach directly into sockets under the drive mounted on the circuit board. They are sort of like SIP memory modules for PCs.

The exact placement of the terminator sockets varies from drive to drive. On the SyQuest Removable, they can be found on the top rear frame rail next to the 50-pin drive connector. The terminators are fairly delicate and need to be handled as such because the pins can easily be bent or destroyed.

I have found that in a dual drive configuration when one of the drives is a SyQuest removable, the SyQuest likes to be at the end of the SCSI chain. You could have everything correctly configured and still have error messages generated from the EPS or 16+ if this not adhered to. (Don't ask me why!) Of course, this is the preferred way of wiring together a fixed drive and a SyQuest removable system. If you have two SyQuest drives, un-terminate the one in the middle and hope for the best. Chances are everything will work fine. As a side note, I have only seen these problems when a SyQuest drive is in the configuration. You'll almost never have a problem when both drives are of the fixed type. On the EPS make sure your ROM version is 2.4 or higher. Upgrades are available for around \$40 from your Ensoniq dealer. *Never* let stupid fingers inside your keyboard, too much can go wrong! Enough said!

The cables are your next concern. The maximum cable length allowed on a SCSI buss is 19 feet... SCSI law. This too is nonsense. As most of you know, what happens between theory and reality is purely coincidence. In a best case scenario, a 19-foot cable between a MAC and hard drive might work fine provided there was nothing in between. The EPS and 16+ in most cases (and there are always exceptions) will not tolerate 19 feet in the SCSI buss. The shorter the cable run, the better. Don't forget to calculate the amount of cable inside a rack box. Typically, if you have two drives in a single rack box, add two feet to your external cable length.

On the back of your drive case, on the outside, will be two 50-pin Centronics type plugs. The cable will have to convert down to 25 pins for connection to the keyboards. Most drives are sold with a 1 foot, 50-to-25-pin shielded cable and then, a 25-to-25-pin ribbon cable completes the cable run from the drive to the keyboard. The inter-mixing of cable types can cause problems too. A single *shielded* 6-foot cable from the drive to the keyboard will help in achieving your ultimate goal, and that is to allow us to defy the theories about inter-mixing cable types. Since we want to hook up two EPSs to the drive system, somehow we will have to daisy chain the two keyboards with the drive system. This

can only be done with a specially made ribbon cable. Now I'm no genius and I'm sure that if you can open a can of tuna fish, you can figure out what connectors you need. The trick was in the experimentation of the length. Too long created operation errors.

If you are adventurous and you want to make the cable yourself this is what you need. In addition to the two 25-pin plugs at each end, a third 25-pin plug is added in line to achieve the daisy chain. I told you it was simple! Make sure that pin 1 aligns to pin 1 along the entire ribbon cable. Also make sure that the ribbon cable doesn't exceed 24 inches in length, and when you have completed the cable, ring out all the pins with an ohm meter.

This interconnect works best with two physical keyboards, on a stand, one on top of the other. While the arrangement of keyboards doesn't matter much, I'll assume that you have an EPS and a 16+ for this discussion. Since the 16+ is the new more powerful boy on the block, you should be using this for your master keyboard. I keep the 16+ on the lower portion of the stand and the EPS on the upper. (Since I don't tour, this works fine for my studio. I sit in a swivel chair when I compose. If you want to change the arrangement, use your head and remember that you might need to turn the 25-pin connectors around and thus need just a bit more cable. If this is the case, discuss this orientation of keyboards with whoever makes your cables.)

The 50-to-25-pin shielded SCSI cable should be run from your rack or drive to the top of the stand. You can tape the cable in place so it won't move around. At this point, the ribbon cable takes over. From the connector point where the shielded and ribbon cables meet, move down about 5 inches on the ribbon and put the first keyboard connector into the line. This is a series connection. This first connector will go into an un-terminated EPS. The ribbon continues down toward the floor to the 16+ (gravity) and is connected to the

terminated 16+. This completes the connection.

The Boot Procedure is as follows: turn on the *drives first* then the 16+ to establish termination on the buss. After the 16+ boots, turn on the EPS. Depending on how many drives you have, the O.S. will be searched for by the keyboards and if it exists on a drive, that O.S. will boot the particular keyboard. There can not be more than 1 O.S. on a hard disk at a time. For a point of information, the EPS searches the SCSI buss from 0 to 7, the 16+ searches the buss from 7 to 0. You *can* use *any* SCSI ID *BUT* 3 — which the EPS uses for itself. If you have a MAC, you can't use 7 either. My EPS boots from SCSI 0, the 16+ boots from SCSI 7, and the two removable 45-Meg drives are on SCSI 1 and 6. In this configuration both keyboards can talk to any of the drives as long as it is not at the same time.

If you own a rack version of the EPS or 16+ you will need a different configuration and I encourage you to experiment with cables and lengths. Remember, *all* the principles are the same.

This interconnect of multiple drives and keyboards is certainly for people who have a lot of patience. No matter who you are, you are going to encounter a visit with the Satan of SCSI at some time in your musical career. Use common sense, and follow the basic rules. Be aware, *there are drives that will not work*, no matter what you do. The problem can usually be traced to the ROM code on the SCSI circuit board. When testing, write your hook-ups down and the results from each unsuccessful undertaking; this way, when you contact me or other trans-netters, you will have a point of reference. Remember science class? Methodology is extremely important. If you think you shouldn't touch this or that, you're probably right! The drive systems are static sensitive, shock sensitive and need to be handled with great care. And *never* hold a spinning drive in your hand!! ■

Keeping RAM Files in Order

John Cherniawsky

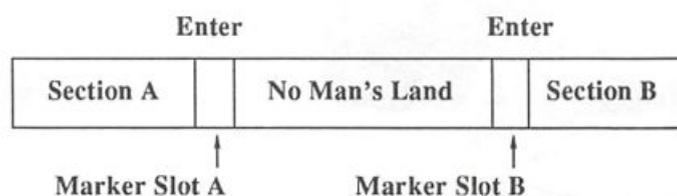
Greetings, Hackers and other creatures. What I want to demonstrate today is something that will save time and eliminate frustration.

To begin with, I want to use the part of my machine devoted to RAM to store two types of sounds:

- A) sequencer sounds
- B) programmed sounds

Sequencer sounds are very often drum kits which must be

saved into RAM to allow for adjustment of individual drum sample volume. Programmed sounds are just what the name implies.



This diagram shows that we have 3 main areas in our overall file — A, B, and No Man's Land. Which brings us to our first rule:

1. Any time a sound is found in No Man's Land (NM'sL) it must not be stored there but must be loaded into either Section A or Section B by way of the appropriate marker slot. These slots insure that the Saved Sound ends up at the front of the pile that relates to its future use.

I hear someone saying, "Does this mean I can only use sounds that are found in NM'sL?" Read on.

2. When using a sound which exists in Section A or B, the sound can be used in its present position as long as the sound is not altered in any major way.

3. If a sound from Section A or B is used but needs to be altered it must first be loaded into the corresponding Marker Slot.

Well, have you figured it out? If the three rules are followed, you will be able to use any of the sounds within the total RAM file.

As time goes on and Section A and B keep getting bigger,

they will eventually meet in the middle. When this happens, the file is finished and should be saved and filed under "Solid." This Solid file is an accumulation of all the transactions that have taken place from the time this file was started until the present. That means there is a minimum of loading and unloading files — a fact that should be pleasing to anyone using MIDI Sys-Ex.

Now somebody out there is probably saying, "That's great for him, but what do I do with the mess I've created?" Well, you sort out the sounds you want to keep from those that can be written on top of and then you mark them (either used or unused.) This may mean loading up all the sequences made with this RAM file, but once you've got it sorted out you'll be glad you took the trouble. ■

Bio: John plays drums and percussion and has somehow found himself drawn into the neverending vortex of electronic music. He claims to like anything from classical to industrial.

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Streamlining Composition with your VFX-SD/SD-1

Jeffrey P. Fisher

In my book, *How To Make Big Money Scoring Soundtracks for Corporations, Cable TV, and Commercials*, I suggest a strategy for streamlining your composition setup and methods. The basic idea behind the strategy is to simplify your composition routine and, in so doing, free your creativity to write better music.

An important element is to take care of the details. That is what makes a keyboard workstation like the VFX-sd/SD-1 so attractive as a main composition tool. I've heard that many composers — even those with extensive computer-based MIDI setups — prefer to compose on a VFX-sd/SD-1 or EPS. It's faster, more musical, less complicated, and even the scratchiest of scratch track sounds great.

I use my SD-1/32 exclusively because when you score for a living, you need to work fast. Here's my strategy for streamlining your methods so you can concentrate on more important matters — like creating great music!

Taking Care of the Routine

There are four steps to organizing your composition routine so that you are free to compose and not spend valuable time worrying about all the details and sweating the technology. The point of this strategy is to get your music down fast — while the ideas are flowing — and worry about transforming it into a finished composition later, after your creative surge has passed.

Here are the four steps:

- Organize your MIDI system.
- Streamline your composition tools.
- Program template sequences.
- Edit and mix later.

Organize Your MIDI System

First, get all your individual components talking together on the right channels, the right programs, etc. If your setup is small, this is quite easy. But as your system grows, it is tough to keep it all straight. Take the time to organize patches, MIDI channels, effects programs, everything. AND WRITE IT DOWN.

Group like patches into blocks, give them the same MIDI channels and program numbers, and put them on separate disks. For example, all my drum sounds are on MIDI channel 3, basses on 2, etc. I keep drum kits on a disk, basses on a disc, and my favorite collections — or mini “bands” and “orchestras” on their own disks (more on this below). This way, you can find things easier.

Sure it takes some time to organize all this, but it's well worth it. I use a three-ring binder to store disks (you can buy pages to store four disks together) with appropriate information written down on adjoining pages

The point is this: you should be able to configure your system with just a few button presses. This way you're up and running quickly and optimally. You can take time later to change things — when you mix — but right now you need to compose fast with the equipment as transparent as possible.

Streamline your Composition Method and Tools

Use your VFX-sd/SD-1 exclusively for composing. Its on-board sequencer, built-in drums, effects, and master keyboard capabilities make it the ideal composition tool. You can turn it on and be writing music in seconds. Even if you have a bunch of other synths and samplers, I strongly urge you to keep them out of the composing process. You can add them later — during editing and mixing. But first you need to compose. Using just your VFX-sd/SD-1 exclusively lets you record tracks as fast as you can play them. Don't try mixing creativity with craft.

Use Your Favorite Sounds

Of the thousand of sounds I own there are a few that I just love. I use them repeatedly, trying to wrench every nuance and last drop of creativity from them.

The piano has one particular type of sound and composers have been writing music for it for a long, long time. People never seem to grow tired of it. But too many synth players, myself included, tend to look for the newest, trendiest sound. It's a shame really that we never seem to concentrate on one sound long enough to discover what it can do.

To combat this unfortunate behavior, I made a pact with

myself to decide which sounds I really liked and use them as much as I can. Let me tell you. This is NOT easy! The result? An improved musical vision and sonic continuity to my work. You should try it.

Program Blank Template Sequences

Using blank template sequences configures your setup with the press of a button. I start every composition session with a template sequence on sequencer tracks one through six. I tie these templates to other gear in my system, but I don't use the external modules until a sequence is roughly finished.

For basic rock or MOR work I use this template:

Drums — BALLAD-KIT/SLAM-MAP-R (doubled to my drum machine on MIDI channel 3)

Bass — SLICK-ELEC/CROSS-BASS (doubled to external synth on MIDI channel 1)

Piano — CLASSIC-GND/WARM-TINES (doubled to electric piano patch on external synth MIDI channel 4)

Strings — DRAMA-STGS/LUSH-STRNGS (doubled to tone module on MIDI channel 2)

Solo sound — (sax, trumpet, acoustic guitar, etc.)

Effects — (miscellaneous sounds on MIDI channel 5)

Immediately after my sketch is finished, I bring in the other instruments and try combinations quickly. I have several different templates (each on their own disk) geared to a particular style of music. For example, my orchestral template is:

Orchestral percussion — ORCH-PERKS

Double bass — CELLO

Strings — LUSH-STRG-2/QUARTET

Solo violin — VIOLIN

Brass — STARBRASS

Woodwinds — DOUBLE-REED

Here's my jazz template:

Drums — FUSION-KIT

Acoustic string bass — BEBOP-BASS

Jazz piano — JAZZ-GRAND

Synth pad or organ — SD-1-PAD/VERYBREATH/ORGANIZER

Saxophone — TENOR-SAX/ALTO-SAX

Synth lead — DREAM-GTR/DIST-GTR/SQUARE-PAD

Notice how the templates use ROM sounds. Presets are fine

in this instance. In fact, this is the ideal (and probably ONLY) use for presets. They get you up and running faster because you don't have to load a disk. At 3am when the muse sometimes strikes, even searching for a disk can ruin the creative moment.

Needless to say I have several variations on these templates using different sounds and instrumentations. Start with presets because you can personalize your music later by changing them.

This is the essence of a streamlined composition routine. Get your ideas down, quick and dirty, and then move on to what's next.

Edit and Mix Later

The three steps in the creative composition process — composing, recording, and mixing — should not overlap. Following my method, you would never start editing, tweaking, or mixing your composition until the previous step is complete. Don't start editing until the composition is in reasonable sketch form. Don't even look for special sounds until the song structure is done. Don't send information to other synths until the editing stage. And don't start with the effects until all the editing is complete. Again, use templates to first start you off in the right direction.

After the track is down, you can start editing. Sure you may re-record a part, replace a part or a sound, or go in a different direction altogether. But do it after you've first tried writing what you thought was good. Don't record a drum part and then tweak and quantize it to death before moving on to the bass. Use a preset drum pattern or two, drop in a bass line, move on to chords, etc. Build up the sketch and stop.

Take a short break and then come back to your composition and start editing. Once you finish editing, it's time to mix, balance, and do all those fancy things we do to make music better. ■



Bio: Jeffrey P. Fisher is a composer for films and video and the author of How to Make Big Money Scoring Soundtracks for Corporations, Cable TV, and Commercials.

Sounds From The Deep

Tom Shear

For: EPS, EPS-16+, ASR-10.

Product: *SL-2 Sound Library*, Bases.

Price: \$39.95 — 5 disk set.

From: Ensoniq Corp., 155 Great Valley Parkway, Malvern, PA, 19355
(215) 647-3930 or contact your local Ensoniq dealer.

Well kids, we have a lot of sounds to plow through this month, so instead of babbling on too long I'll jump right into this. *SL-2* is the second in a series of disks designed specifically for the EPS-16+. This set covers all the bases (obligatory base/bass pun) when it comes to basses. Electric as well as synth basses are provided. Regular EPS users can use the sounds too, but with a few drawbacks: you won't be able to play the demo sequences, you won't get the same fidelity as a '16+, and if any sounds make use of the new BOOST parameter on the '16+, you might find some samples are too quiet on your machine. So, with that out of the way, let's see what we have here...

ELEC BASS 1 (1275 Blocks)

This is a useful, multi-sampled Music Man Stingray electric bass. The bottom end consists of several octaves of regular bass. At the top, we get the sound of fingers sliding on the fretboard (a great addition that will help you fool lots of people into thinking you are using real bass) and some bass harmonics(!). The 0* patch provides greater velocity sensitivity and velocity controlled "hammer-ons" The *0 patch also has those lovely hammer-ons, this time without velocity control. A little touch like this goes a long way in making a convincing bass simulation. The ** patch calls up a muted picked bass sample. I didn't like this patch as much and thought it sounded more like a muted synth sound than a muted bass. A demo demonstrates each of the facets of this sound nicely.

LIL BASS (96)

A very memory efficient alternative for those of you for whom block numbers are vital. Pretty good, considering the size, but it seemed a little noisy and was sorta sterile sounding. Chances are though, that when it's playing in the mix with the rest of the sounds, you won't notice. Patch selects provide muted and octave versions of the sound.

ELEC BASS 2 (1127 Blocks)

This sound is set up identically to ELEC BASS 1, but is a much brighter, more metallic sounding bass. I didn't think it's as convincing as ELEC BASS 1 and as a result I didn't like it as much. Not a bad sound by any means, but if a realistic sound is what you're after, I'd use something else.

LIL BASS 2 (238 Blocks)

Another memory-conserver which still sounds pretty good despite the low block numbers. A different tonality than LIL BASS 1 and not as noisy. I also liked the faster vibrato on this better than the slow, seasick vibrato on LIL BASS 1. I'm sure there is a reason when a programmer makes the vibrato rate so slow, but I'm unsure what it is.

SLAP BASS 1 (1178 Blocks)

When you play this with a normal velocity you get just another electric bass sound, but punch those keys hard and...ahhh! I love slap bass and finally I've heard a halfway decent sample of it. No, make that very decent. It is impossible to play this patch and not break out into the theme from *Nightcourt!* There are lots of extra goodies such as slaps without any tone, slides, harmonics, pops, and other embellishments to help make it still funkier. A definite winner!

LIL SLAP 1 (152 Blocks)

Not too shabby! You don't get all the extras of the original, but it'll still work great if you need the funk!

MOOG-REZ 1-3

Moog Rez 1 is an extremely resonant synth bass. When I played with this sound and listened to the demo I recognized it as the type of sound that has been all over house and acid house songs playing in the clubs these days. The other two MOOG REZ sounds provide variations in attacks and brightness.

MOOG FUNK 1 (324)

I'll be using this one a lot! True analog punch. Those of you doing any type of dance music will love this one.

MOOG FUNK 2 (133)

I don't know that I agreed with the manual's assertion that this is "techno-pop at its finest." This sound is overwhelmed by a knocky attack that I didn't find very useful. I also found that it was VERY unsuitable for high speed parts, as the manual suggests, because the attack makes the tone hard to hear.

MOOG JAM 1 (278 Blocks)

Similar to MOOG FUNK 1, but brighter and with an even punchier (!) attack. A great sound!

MOOG POP 1 & 2

In number 1, a "pop" attack melds into a deep, dark drone. The second bass is a more ballsy "Jam & Lewis" type sound.

MOOG SWELL (817 Blocks)

WOW! Yes, this is a big sound memory wise, but it also a big sound sonicwise. This would be a great beginning to a song or maybe even a movie soundtrack. The chorused patch gives new meaning to the term "fat."

MOOG BOOGIE (183 Blocks)

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Whew! So there you have it. Suffice it to say that if you need bass sounds, look no further. The programming is in-depth and well-considered and the sound quality is great. Not to mention that this may very well be the definitive collection of Moog basses. All the sounds were punchy and had lots of power in the low range...the types of sounds you can feel

resonating in your chest when you have your amps turned up to 11. There are a couple of "huhs?", but overall, you are getting more than your money's worth. ■



Bio: Tom Shear is not only the president of Hair Club for Men, he's a client.

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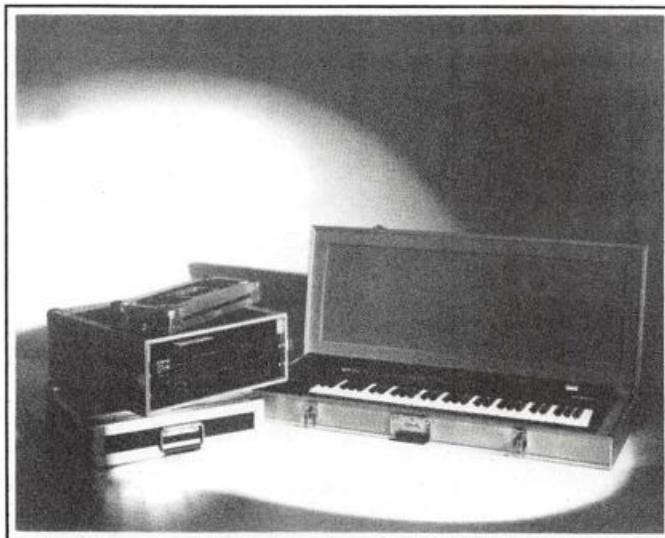
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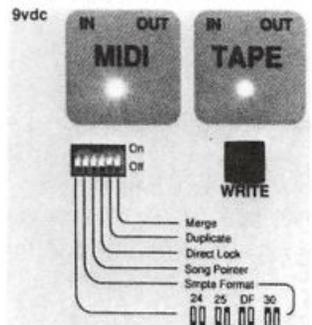
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An SQ-R Primer For ESQ-1/SQ-80 Owners

Brian Rost

Part I of III

I've been a fan of Ensoniq synthesizers since I first heard the demo sequences on the ESQ-1. Over the years the synths have gotten better and better, but the upgrade path has been a bit rough. For an SQ-80 owner, upgrading to the VFX was questionable, since it had neither a sequencer or disk drive. Many hoped that a VFX module would be forthcoming, but it never did. Then along came the VFX-SD with a hefty price tag increase and an improved but non-compatible sequencer. So some stuck with the ESQ-1 or SQ-80, but when the SQ-1 came out I was beginning to weaken. Maybe having one more keyboard taking up space wouldn't be too hard to take after all, I thought. Luckily I was saved when the SQ-R was released. Finally, a module!

If you own an ESQ-1 or SQ-80 and have been thinking of upgrading to an SQ-1, it may be more sensible to hang on to your current keyboard and simply add an SQ-R. The current difference in list price between the keyboard and module versions is six hundred dollars, which is more than a dealer would likely give you in trade for either board. The only thing you really gain in the SQ-1 over the ESQ-1/SQ-R combination is the sequencer: you get twice as many tracks and more advanced editing capabilities. Unless you spring an extra three hundred dollars for the sequencer expansion memory, you only have half the storage (9000 notes versus 20,000 notes) and the small display of the SQ-1 makes using some of the editing features more complicated than they are on the VFX-SD. By comparison, the ESQ-1 has two real advantages over the SQ-1: FSK tape synch support is provided in the sequencer and both patches and sequences can be saved to tape (or disk in the case of the SQ-80). Remember that the SQ-1 has no tape or disk storage capabilities. RAM cards are quite expensive compared to the pennies it costs to store ESQ-1 patches and sequences on tape or SQ-80 disk.

SQ-80 owners have some even better reasons to go with the SQ-R. If they trade up to an SQ-1, they lose both the PolyKey keyboard and the disk drive. In fact, an SQ-80 plus an SQ-R is actually a more potent setup than an SQ-1 in all respects except the sequence editing features.

The icing on the cake is that if you hang on to your ESQ-1, you can still use it! That means eight more voices that you have access to, plus your investment over the years in developing patches and sequences is not lost. This is a value that may be hard to quantify, but is still significant.

This series of articles is aimed at getting ESQ-1 and SQ-80 owners up to speed on integrating an SQ-R module into their setup. It is broken into three parts. First, we will look at fun-

damental differences between the ESQ-1 and SQ-R architectures that you'll need to understand. Secondly, we will examine how to use the SQ-R Smart Transmit feature to add powerful controller capabilities to the ESQ-1 in live performance. And, thirdly, we will explore using the SQ-R in a multi-track sequencing environment and wrap it up with a discussion on using the SQ-80 disk drive to store SQ-R patch and preset data.

Architecture

There are many fundamental differences between how the SQ-R and ESQ-1 operate that the new user needs to understand. Since we are talking about two Ensoniq products, the differences may be more evolutionary than revolutionary, but they still can cause some confusion.

The first and most obvious difference has to do with patch numbering. In the MIDI spec, the range of program changes is 0-127, but many manufacturers choose to number the range as 1-128. Ensoniq did this with the ESQ-1, where the internal patch range runs from 1-120 (if we include the cartridge banks). From the sequencer MIX/MIDI pages it is possible to select the full range of 1-128. In any event, an ESQ-1 program change 1 is equivalent to a MIDI program change 0, and an ESQ-1 program change 128 is equivalent to MIDI program change 127. Conversely, the SQ-R has a patch range running from 0-99 (despite what it says in version 1.0 of the manual!). Patches 0-79 can be accessed from four possible banks, the internal ROM, internal RAM and two card banks. Patches 80-99 always access the 20 drum kit patches store in internal ROM regardless of which bank may have been selected. This means that when you wish to select patch 10 in the SQ-R, you must select program 11 from the ESQ-1. Those who have not used the ESQ-1 with other MIDI modules before will find this irritating at first, but after a while it becomes second nature.

The need for multiple banks in the SQ-R is due to the sheer number of patch locations. With a card inserted, there are a total of 340 patches stored, which is greater than the MIDI range of 128. In order to select banks remotely from the ESQ-1, Ensoniq cleverly chose to let the SQ-R change banks in response to the four highest program change numbers. This is where things get confused. The program change numbers to select banks are listed in the SQ-R manual as 125 to 128. This obviously assumes the 1-128 numbering scheme rather than the 0-127 numbering scheme used elsewhere in the SQ-R! So to choose the internal RAM bank of the SQ-R from the ESQ-1, select program 125; to choose internal ROM select program 126; for card bank A select program 127; for card

bank B select program 128. Any of the patches may be selected with a maximum of two program change messages (this is a minor problem when sequencing, as we shall see).

The ESQ-1 uses the concept of a "straight" synth residing on the base MIDI channel. The SQ-R does not use this concept. While the base channel is still used for global control on the SQ-R, it cannot actually play any notes. Only the eight tracks contained in a preset can respond to note messages.

The ESQ-1 enables system exclusive transmission and reception together (you can't have one without the other). However, the SQ-R is always enabled to transmit system exclusive (sys-ex for short) messages; only reception may be disabled. Like the ESQ-1, the SQ-R uses the base MIDI channel for sys-ex messages, so to receive back dumps of patches and presets, the unit must be set to the same base channel for reception as it was for transmission.

The SQ-R presets correspond roughly to ESQ-1 sequencer "templates." However, on the SQ-R one track of a preset is always selected, unlike the ESQ-1 where it is possible to have no tracks selected (in effect selecting the "straight synth"). When a new SQ-R preset is called up, track one is always selected, regardless of what track was selected in the old preset. When turning tracks off in a preset, at least one track must be left on.

The SQ-R does not use the concept of splits and layers as used in the ESQ-1. ESQ-1 splits and layers use pointers from one patch to one or more other patches, so that it appears to the user as a single patch. The SQ-R requires you to use multiple tracks in a preset to set up splits and layers (however, as we shall see, this allows considerably more flexibility at the cost of some programming complexity).

Finally, the SQ-R always powers up in Select Sound mode. In order to be able to select presets from the ESQ-1, the SQ-R must be placed in Select Preset mode. This can be accomplished from the SQ-R front panel by pressing the Select Preset button or it can be done remotely by selecting program 123 from the ESQ-1 on the SQ-R base channel (the SQ-R must have program change reception enabled). There is no equivalent program change to switch back to Select Sound mode. If the SQ-R is left in Select Sound mode, it will not respond to program changes on the base channel, even if it is enabled to receive them. ■

Bio: Brian Rost spends his evenings either hunched over his SQ-80 or playing bass with the HUBCAPS, a Boston-based roots rock band. To unwind during the day he designs computers.

Eye Patches

Robby Berman

For: VFX/sd and SDs.

Product: VFX Sound Disk VSD-1003.

From: Ensoniq, 155 Great Valley Parkway, Malvern PA 19355, phone: (215) 647-3930 or contact your local Ensoniq dealer.

Price: \$19.95.

Way back in *Hacker* #45 (that's March, 1989) Ensoniq announced the arrival of the original VFX and the race was on to collect sound programs for that new and versatile synthesizer. Since then we've seen multiple VFX/sds and SD-1s sprout from the original. As its capabilities have grown so have our collections of sounds.

By now, most of us have hundreds (some of us, thousands) of sound in our libraries. Woe be it then to she/he who attempts to create a new set of programs at this point. Haven't we heard everything already?

Well, no, actually.

It may well be that we've already gotten the most realistic

possible imitations of traditional instruments, give or take a few. But the VFX-series synths are deep and when it comes to sounds that are based purely on synthesis and the imagination of programmers, I suspect there may be no bottom to hit.

With their VSD-1003 Sound Disk, Ensoniq continues to release collections of programs priced economically enough that most any of us can afford to refresh our personal libraries without too much fiscal risk. This particular set was programmed by Paul Cunningham, a programmer at Eye & I Productions who put out the Voice Crystal sound sets and are one of the sources from which our beloved factory programs emanate. The package includes two banks of sixty programs each, with twenty presets to go along with each bank of sounds. About a third of the programs utilize waves found only in the SD-1. The sounds are the usual mix of the realistic, situation-specific and the fantastic.

Traditional Instrument Imitations

This is where this collection is weakest, to my pointy ears.

This is no big whoop, since most of us, no doubt, already have most of the emulations we need.

There are organs and strings in VSD-1003, though nothing that really improves on the factory versions. Several of the disk's string-related sounds have maddeningly long attacks. There are some piano variations — a good honky-tonk (TACKY-PNO) and a piano with built-in delay (FST-DDL-PN), wastefully and inexplicably derived from six polyphony-eating, staggered piano waves instead of the on-board delay algorithms. I found the electric piano mutations fairly undistinguished.

KLEEN-ELEC is a likeable Strat patch, though the vibrato was unrealistic — one of Ensoniq's great contributions is the positive-only waves they offer for modulating LFOs when creating vibrato on stringed instruments. Just try wiggling a guitar string so that its pitch goes flat.

Down in the "bassment," I found a few I quite liked: the punchy POW-BASS (which uses a cymbal wave as an attack component) is good for funk and TIN-BASS and SYNCHROBASS would do well in a setting where you wanted your bottom to sound sequenced, perhaps by using repetitive eighth-note patterns.

The few drum kits provided are not laid out in the SD-1 drum-map kinda way, but they do have some useful components, particularly the NOISE-derived snare sounds. There are also a whole bunch of programs meant to simulate Moogs and ARPs and the like. I suspect we've all got more than enough of these.

Situation-Specific Sounds

These are sounds that catch the ear and tend to play a pivotal role in a musical arrangement. The fact is that they're so striking that you aren't overuse them. IMPACTANGEL is a good case in point. Playing one key, it crescendos powerfully (even ominously, with the right note) into a snare hit, then trails out uneasily. Love it and yet it's so attention-grabbing, I'd have to save it for just the right moment in a piece of music. SHADOW-WARP is another favorite. Play a major chord and hold it down; the sound will start with pulse waves gliding upward under a DPNO-TINE wave stairstepping downward — chaos, until suddenly, almost shockingly, it all resolves into the chord you're holding. Cool.

There are a number of sound effects included in VSD-1003, none of which really knocked me out. Got yer basic old-fashioned (from way back in the future) phaser shot with GALACTIC. Got yer IN-THE-LAB burbles and pops, got yer MOTHERSHIP low-register speaker shaker. There are some fairly unconvincing birds (BIRD-LIKE) and WINDCHIMES. CRICKETS is okay, but it's a little too mechanical for my tastes (I speak as someone who's made a

lot of synth crickets in his day.) TOUCH-TONE sounds pretty realistic.

Fantastic

The VFX/SD series synths are designed to do much more than imitate sounds we can already produce some other way. Why settle for the past when the future is at your fingertips? It shouldn't be too surprising that here's where VSD-1003 (and any number of other recent Ensoniq sound disk releases) really shines. Evocation, not simulation, is the name of the game here. It's where programming skill moves beyond craft; it's where imagination is everything.

In no particular order, some of the standouts here include EPISODE, a fanfare sort of sound with a tympani wave underbed (utilizing the back half of the wave, not the attack) creating a feeling of ponderosity (I invented that word. Like it?) [Ed. — *I'm still working on "underbed."*] and power. For a sparkly, almost transwavy, organ-based patch, try the right Patch Select button on ARCHEOLOGY. FIFTH-ME, played with the timbre slider moved to the top, makes for lovely chords, with each key playing a root and a fifth. CIRRUS is all vibes and vapor, while every note played using STELLAR-SURF is cleverly trailed with a wash of white noise, a musical underline.

There are a number of other sounds of this sort that I liked, some difficult to describe for lack of a reference point back here in reality. Do take a listen to VSD-1003 for yourself.

Presets

I'm not sure what value the included presets have, since they use up so much polyphony and, being so odd, it wasn't too clear to me in what situations they would be useful. They are big, though.

At \$19.95, I can't really see a reason not to check out VSD-1003 at your music dealer. I should add that programming junkies will find all kinds of clever and educational touches.

Special kudos go to Cunningham for his widespread use of the timbre slider and his sensitive, subtle use of the patch select variations. Thanks also to Ensoniq for making this whole series of disks so inexpensive. ■



Bio: Robby Berman is a musician living in the middle of a bunch of soybean fields in southern Illinois. He's just wrapped up work on his double album, "Rings and Rings" and is a-hankerin' for distribution.

EPS-16+ Disk Wizard

Brian Rost

For: EPS, EPS-16+ and Atari ST computer.

Product: *EPS-16+ Disk Wizard*.

Price: \$20 registration fee.

From: Steve Quartly, 6 Pollock Court, Kingsley, Western Australia 6026.

The success of Gary Giebler's *Ensoniq Disk Manager* software for IBM-PC computers has shown there is a market for utilities that allow manipulation of Ensoniq disks on a personal computer. Now a fellow named Steve Quartly has thrown his hat into the ring with an innovative disk utility for the EPS family that runs on Atari ST computers.

The need for such a utility becomes obvious once you try to do some housekeeping on your EPS disks. Doing backups, copies, archiving and so forth can take a long time due to the constant need for disk swapping and the relatively slow user interface of the EPS. Offloading these tasks to a personal computer saves valuable time plus you can do the housekeeping without having to turn on the EPS, or even have it around!

EPS-16+ Disk Wizard is a program that will run on any Atari ST computer with at least one double-sided floppy drive. Two drives are recommended, however, and a hard disk can be useful. Both monochrome and color monitors are supported starting with Version 2.0 (Version 1.0 is monochrome only). The program itself is shareware, which means it is distributed for free, but you are encouraged to register with the author for a fee of \$20. This entitles you to updates and limited bug support. I think anyone who tries this program will find the fee a bargain.

Disk Wizard is a GEM program, so navigating is a breeze. The initial screen offers a selection of seven main functions: Disk Directory, Delete File, Format Disk, Write Label, Catalogue, Copy File/Disk and Write O.S. We'll examine these one by one.

Let's start by formatting a new disk. Selecting the Format Disk option results in an obligatory warning and a last chance to return to the main menu before jumping to a second screen which asks which drive you wish to format the disk in. You may choose A, B or A and B both (assuming you have two drives). If you need to format a bunch of disks quickly, the A and B option is a real timesaver. The author claims to have tested this portion of the program only with Atari TOS Versions 1.4 and 1.6, but I used TOS 1.0 and had no problems.

Selecting Disk Directory prompts you for which drive to read. After selecting either A or B, a screen with eight windows pops up. Shown above the windows are the disk's label and the number of free blocks. The windows are labeled Directories, Instruments, Banks, Effects, Songs/Seqs, Sequences, System Ex. and Macros. In each window the names of appropriate files are shown. Below the windows are three command icons. From the left they are Print Label, Autoprint and Another Disk. Print Label is used to print out a self-adhesive label for the disk with any 9-pin Epson-compatible printer. The output looks much like the labels on the Ensoniq factory disks, showing the disk's label, the file names and block sizes and number of free blocks. Another Disk is used to read the currently selected drive again. To change the selected drive, you must return to the main menu. Turning on Autoprint causes a new label to be printed immediately when a new disk directory is read.

The copying feature lets you copy entire disks or individual files. The copying screen allows setting the source and destination disk (choices are A, B or hard disk) and format (choices are EPS and Atari ST). The EPS format is self-explanatory, but the ST format needs some explanation. The ST format must be used to store files to hard disk, but it can be used for floppies as well. The author has cleverly used the same format as Gary Giebler's EDM program. Since the ST and IBM disk formats are the same for 720k DD disks, you can exchange files with EPS users who have access to EDM, a nice touch.

For copying files (as opposed to the entire disk) a screen that is similar to a standard GEM file selection window pops up. To the right a selector is used to determine what type of file is to be copied (instruments, banks, effects, etc.). To the left the file names are displayed. Files to be copied are selected by clicking on them with the mouse, a process that is quick and intuitive. In case you neglected to format a disk in advance, a command icon is provided to allow formatting the disk prior to the copy. The same file selector screen is used when deleting files.

The Write Label feature is somewhat confusing because what it writes is not a self-adhesive label for the disk, but rather the disk's label (the one which the EPS knows the disk by). There is a warning to use only upper-case alphanumeric characters since the EPS may not be able to read other types of characters, but there is nothing preventing writing such characters in. This is a minor flaw.

The Write O.S. feature is used to write the EPS operating system onto a disk. Unfortunately, in the current version, it also deletes all files currently on the disk! The author assures me that this will be fixed in future versions. The OS provided is V1.1 for the '16+, so owners of the original EPS won't get any use out of this feature since there seems to be no way for the user to replace the OS data file provided with the program with his own. Adding this capability would be a useful enhancement.

The Catalogue feature is something that power users will find of use. It reads the directories of EPS disks and converts the data into a format readable by data base programs. Within such a program, a user can easily find a particular file by file name, file type or disk label. The current version will only write catalogue files to hard disk. In fact, the program crashes if you attempt to use this feature on a floppy only system. The author assures me that the ability to use this feature with floppies is coming in a future version.

Well, we've walked through the whole program. Now, how useful is it? If you are a user who has lots of EPS floppies, this program will assist you in maintaining them. You no longer need to be near the EPS to create a new floppy from your sample or sequence archive disks. Making backups of floppies is quick and easy, and that sinking feeling you get when looking at a pile of floppies with blank labels will be a thing of the past. Those of you who actually sell or swap floppies will find this program can save a lot of wear and

tear on the EPS in addition to saving valuable time.

As I mentioned earlier, *EPS-16+ Disk Wizard* is shareware. It can be found online on many bulletin boards, both Atari and EPS related. If you can't locate a copy online, the author will provide you with a disk for \$20 plus \$5 postage, in U.S. funds. Payment should be made with an international money order. This will also register you as a user. The program is extremely well thought-out, is easy to use and comes with not only documentation but a bug report form! For a user with both an ST and EPS, *EPS-16+ Disk Wizard* really is a must-have program. ■

BACK ISSUES

Back issues are \$2.00 each. (Overseas: \$3 each.) Issues 1-30, 35-38, and 67-72 are no longer available. Subscriptions will be extended an equal number of issues for any issues ordered that are not available at the time we receive your order. **ESQ-1** coverage started with Issue Number 13. **SQ-80** coverage started with Number 29, (although most ESQ-1 coverage also applies to the SQ-80). **EPS** coverage started with Number 30. (But didn't really get going till Number 35.) **VFX** coverage (which also applies to the SDs) got started in Number 48. The **SQs** got going in Number 63. (SQ articles also apply to the **KS-32**.) Permission has been given to photocopy issues that we no longer have available — check the classifieds for people offering them. A free back issue index is available which contains the tables of content for all issues since Number 43.

Classifieds

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VFX-sd Multi-timbral keyboard synth with built-in 24-track sequencer and disk drive. Home use only. Original box, all manuals, disks, etc. \$1000. (201) 933-9636. Leave message. New Jersey, Giant's Stadium area.

Ensoniq SQ-80 complete with manual and cover, 8 sound disks and 2 cartridges. Over 2000 sounds. Was only used in studio. \$765. Phone: (215) 489-7646.

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Industrial/Alternative musicians: I have some great EPS-16+ samples that I'd like to trade. Drop me a line. Bob Green, 860 Briar Hill Ln., Traverse City, MI 49684.

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Proteus and U220 sounds digitally mastered on Compact Disk (CD). 600 samples total, covering 98 individual sounds. \$14.95 + \$2 s/h. CA Res. add appropriate sales tax. Digiteles, 5232 Camino Playa Malaga, San Diego, CA 92124.

MIRAGE SAMPLES. 57 new samples for \$30. Most are unusual. 5 disks, \$6 each (US funds). Demo \$3. SASE for free listing. Treehouse Sound, PO Box 18563, Boulder, CO 80308-8563.

SUPERB EPS-16 PLUS SAMPLES of E-mu Percussion, Minimoog, K-4, and more, from the *Hacker's* Sam Mims, \$9.95 per disk. Post-production quality sound effects samples

for EPS-16 Plus, all from digital source recordings, \$5.95 per disk, \$5.45 each for six or more. Mirage Disk 1, samples from Minimoog, DX-7, and VFX, for \$7.95. Send SASE for free listing to: Syntaur Productions, 2315 Mid Lane #44, Houston, TX 77027, or call (713) 965-9041.

PATCHES/SOUNDS

60 VFX-sd patches created by Jim Grote. Wide variety of sounds with complete documentation. Call for free Information Packet, or send \$30 for VFX-sd disk to: Jim Grote, 3721 Frances Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45211. Phone: (513) 661-8885.

Free Drum Patterns with 120 VFX-sd1 sounds: \$20. 100 Dynamic Drum Patterns SR16, HR16, EPS/EPS16, VFX/SD, SD-1. Only \$12. 2000 Digital Samples on 2 XLII-100 tapes. Best sounds from T1, DPM, SD1, Proteus, Moog, lots more. \$25. EPS/SPS16 Sound Disk. My 10 best disks, sounds like Steinway + Strings on the modulation wheel, all fully programmed. \$35 a set. EPS/EPS16 Sampling Made Easy Video. Easy to follow, step by step. 2 hr video, 2 disks, 90 min cassette. \$30. Satisfaction Guaranteed. Wildwood Sounds, 4726 Pebble Creek Terr., Pensacola, FL 32526. Call Tony after 6 pm. (904) 944-6012.

NEW SD-1 sounds from Eric Olsen! Volume 3 and Volume 4 are now available. Killer organs, shimmering EP's, punchin' basses, and wavesequences!! \$25.00 each. Send check or money order to: Pegasus Sounds, 6050 Adaway Ct., Grand Rapids, MI 49546. Phone: (616) 676-0863. (Updated VFX-sd or SD-1 only.)

NEW SQ-80 SOUNDS from the *Hacker's* Sam Mims! Soundset 4 takes full advantage of the SQ-80's unique waveforms, and brings "hidden waveforms" to the SQ-80 for the first time. Also available for the ESQ and SQ-80 are Soundsets 1, 2, and 3. Forty patches per set, each with 22-page booklet of programming notes and performance tips, for \$17.95. Send SASE for free literature. Syntaur Productions, 2315 Mid Lane #44, Houston, TX 77027, or call (713) 965-9041.

USER GROUPS

30-Year-Old EPS-16+ owner would like to meet other '16+ owners in the New York area. Call Abraham, (718) 956-3597.

SOFTWARE

Midicaster is still available. The way-cool operating system that turns your Mirage into a very capable System Exclusive data librarian, a 20,000-note sequence player, a disk copier/formatter, and wave-draw synthesizer is still available for a limited time. For more information, or to order, contact Tim Martin, 1510 S 5th W, Missoula, MT 59801. Phone: 406-542-0280 And thank you for your support.

MUSIC / SEQUENCES

MERRY Christmas Live performance MIDI sequences of Christmas carols on floppy disk for IBM PC. Other formats available. 25 Religious classics: \$24.95. 25 Secular favorites: \$24.95. Plus \$3 shipping and handling per order. MIDI Music Co., 230 Foster St., Bldg. 2, Suite 1, Brighton, MA 02135. Phone: (617) 787-5980.

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38 issues of *Hacker* for sale. Excellent condition. \$40.00. Call 803-791-7627 after 5:30 EST.

M.U.G. will provide Out-of-Print issues for cost of materials and postage. M.U.G. Hotline: 212-465-3430 or write: G-4 Productions, PO Box 615TH, Yonkers, NY 10703. Attn: TH Back Issues. Phone: (212) 465-3430.

Photocopies of out-of-print past issues of the *Hacker* can be obtained by calling Jack Loesch, 201-264-3512 after 6 pm EST.

Folks in the New York City area can get copies of unavailable back issues of the *Hacker* - call Jordan Scott, 212-995-0989.

FREE CLASSIFIEDS!

Well,—within limits. We're offering free classified advertising (up to 40 words) to all subscribers for your sampled sounds or patches. Additional words, or ads for other products or services, are 25 cents per word per issue (**BOLD** type: 45 cents per word). Unless renewed, freebie ads are removed after 2 issues. While you're welcome to resell copyrighted sounds and programs that you no longer have any use for, ads for *copies* of copyrighted material will not be accepted. Sorry — we can't take ad dictation over the phone!

Prog: Hammondish

By: Randy Zielinski, Rochester, NY

Notes: This is one of my better patches. I hope you enjoy it. It is meant to be used as a typical workhorse rock organ, evocative of a B-3. I find the (unauthentic) velocity control useful in the live band setting as it allows expression and "goes to 11" if you pound hard

enough. This is helpful to keep guitarists in their proper place, but is easily disabled in the Amp section. Switching Pedal to Modwheel everywhere except in the Output section (where Mod Amt can then be increased) would add authenticity but would be more cumbersome.

WAVE	1	2	3
Select Voice	On	On	Off
Wave Class	Waveform	Transwave	-
Wave	1+2Harm	Pulse2-X	-
Delay Time	0	0	-
Wave Direction	-	-	-
Start Index	-	10	-
MODSCR	-	Env1	-
MODAMT	-	+15	-
Restrk Decay	0	0	-

LFO	1	2	3
LFO Speed	49	49	-
Noise Rate	0	0	-
Level	0	0	-
Delay	0	0	-
MODSRC	Pedal	Pedal	-
Wave	Sine	Sine	-
Restart	On	On	-

AMP	1	2	3
Initial	95	99	-
Peak	90	90	-
Break	86	99	-
Sustain	90	99	-
Attack	26	7	-
Decay 1	9	12	-
Decay 2	60	9	-
Release	6	10	-
Vel-Level	19	0	-
Vel-Attack	0	0	-
Vel Curve	Convex	Convex	-
Mode	Normal	Normal	-
KBD Track	0	0	-

PITCH	1	2	3
Octave	0	-1	-
Semitone	+7	0	-
Fine	+7	0	-
ENV1	0	0	-
LFO	+01	0	-
MODSCR	-	-	-
MODAMT	-	-	-
KBD Pch Track	On	On	-
Glide	Off	Off	-
Glide Time	-	-	-

FILTER	1	2	3
Filter 1	3Lo	3Lo	-
Filter 2	1Lo	1Hi	-
FC1 Cutoff	0	66	-
ENV 2	+75	+08	-
FC1 KBD	+40	+20	-
MODSCR	LFO	Pedal	-
MODAMT	+12	+11	-
FC2 Cutoff	0	+50	-
ENV2	+99	+10	-
FC2 KBD	0	+35	-
FC1MOD-FC2	On	Off	-

OUTPUT	1	2	3
VOL	90	85	-
Boost	On	On	-
MODSRC	Pedal	Pedal	-
MODAMT	+10	+07	-
KBD Scale	0	-10	-
Key Range	-	G1 C3	-
Output Bus	FX1	FX1	-
Priority	High	Med	-
Pan	0	0	-
Vel window	0	0	-

ENV1	1	2	3
Initial	-	0	-
Peak	-	99	-
Break	-	0	-
Sustain	-	0	-
Attack	-	15	-
Decay 1	-	17	-
Decay 2	-	0	-
Release	-	0	-
Vel-Level	-	0	-
Vel-Attack	-	0	-
Vel Curve	-	Convex	-
Mode	-	Repeat	-
KBD Track	-	0	-

ENV2	1	2	3
Initial	99	0	-
Peak	86	99	-
Break	85	0	-
Sustain	70	0	-
Attack	20	20	-
Decay 1	11	20	-
Decay 2	60	8	-
Release	16	16	-
Vel-Level	0	0	-
Vel-Attack	0	6	-
Vel Curve	Quickrise	Convex	-
Mode	Normal	Repeat	-
KBD Track	0	+14	-

EFFECTS — PHASER & REVERB

FX-1	5	Phaser Level	99
FX-2	25	Input Invert	Off
Decay Time	07	MOD (Dest)	Rate
HF Damping	40	MODSRC	Modpedal
Phaser Rate	20	MODAMT	+57
Phaser Depth	68		
Phaser Center	41		
Feedback	0		

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

The Hack: With Hammondish (not the same "Hammondish" found on the SC-3) Randy shows us that some patches are still best found the "long way around" or the old-fashioned way. This B-3 for the SQ is the very best I've heard to date. It does *not* use the Organ Variation waves or the Rotating Speaker effect. Instead, it relies on Harmonic and Pulse waves (remember the original analog Hammond patches?) with Phaser effect and LFO. And this B is no emaciated little kitty — it's sharp and mean and growls on demand. (This is the SQ 'B I'll be using for any live Hammond work from now on.) Nothing really needs to be done to the patch, but if you don't have need of the "Leslie from Hell" here are some small changes to the 145-147 Rotating Speaker. For Voice 1 in the output section bring MODAMT down to +02. For Voice 2 bring that same parameter down to +04. Also for Voice 2 in the Filter section, adjust MODAMT to +05. For the Phaser+Reverb effect try FX1=+20, FX2=+25...Decay Time=10, HF Damping=40...Phaser Rate=28, Phaser Depth=40...Phaser Center=50, Feedback=00... Phaser Level=89, Input Invert=Off and Modulate Rate by Pedal=+46.



Jeffrey Rhoads

Bio: Jeffrey Rhoads has been a keyboardist/composer on the Philadelphia Jazz and R + B scene for a period of time resembling forever. He has an interest in cinema and has developed some film courses. Jeff still believes in magic and longs for city lights.

SD & VFX Hackerpatch

Guest Hacker: Robby Berman

SD & VFX Prog: DEFENDER

By: Robby Berman

NOTES: DEFENDER is my top o' the line Fender bass patch, designed for realistic articulation and real bottom.

Velocity modulates the wave start times. Medium keystrokes get you the classic pop rhythm track sound, lighter ones soften notes, harder ones bring in some convincing edge. For SD-1 owners, the right Patch Select button brings in a thumping sound.

Hold down a chord and press the sustain pedal. Without letting go of the pedal, play another chord — the notes glide into place. With the Pitch Mod page's Glide set to Pedal, the sustain pedal locks in the polyphony, determined by how notes were being held down when the

pedal was depressed, allowing notes to glide to one another for as long as the pedal's down. For a single-note slide, press the pedal when you're playing just one note, and the next one you play will be glided to. Change the Glide Time on the Program Control page to suit the tempo of what you're playing.

The left Patch Select gets you some moderately convincing harmonics; pressing both gets you a modern bass sound.

DEFENDER as shown here uses a flanger/reverb effect (suitable for funk); I generally use DEFENDER bone dry.

WAVES	1	2	3	4	5	6
Wave	Pick-Bass	Pop-Bass	Fretless	Gtr-Harmo	Slap-Bass	Pno-Noise
Wave Class	BassSnd	BassSnd	Waveform	StringSnd	MiscSamp	PianoSnd
Delay	000	000	000	000	000	00
Start	35	00	-	00	00	80
Vel St-Mod	-41	+00	-	+00	+00	+00
Direction	Forward	Forward	Forward	Forward	Forward	Forward

MOD MIXER	1	2	3	4	5	6
SRC-1	-	-	-	-	-	-
SRC-2	-	-	-	-	-	-
SRC-2 Scale	-	-	-	-	-	-
SRC-2 Shape	-	-	-	-	-	-

PITCH	1	2	3	4	5	6
Octave	-1	-1	-2	-2	+0	+1
Semitone	+00	+00	+00	+00	+00	+00
Fine	+00	+00	+00	+00	+00	+00
Pitch Table	System	System	System	System	System	System

PITCH MODS	1	2	3	4	5	6
MODSRC	LFO	LFO	LFO	LFO	LFO	LFO
MODAMT	+35	+35	+35	+35	+35	+35
Glide	Pedal	Pedal	Pedal	Pedal	Pedal	Pedal
ENV1	+00	+00	+00	+00	+00	+99
LFO1	+00	+00	+00	+00	+00	+00

FILTER 1	1	2	3	4	5	6
Mode	LP3	LP3	LP3	LP2	LP3	LP2
Cutoff	005	100	005	000	000	127
KBD	+15	+07	+15	-99	+15	+15
MODSRC	Timbr	Timbr	Timbr	Off	Timbr	Timbr
MODAMT	+99	+99	+99	-	+99	+99
ENV2	+99	+49	+99	+99	+99	+99

FILTER 2	1	2	3	4	5	6
Mode	HP1	HP1	HP1	HP2	HP1	HP2
Cutoff	000	023	000	000	000	127
KBD	+00	+06	+00	+00	+00	+00
MODSRC	Off	Off	Off	Off	Off	Off
MODAMT	-	-	-	-	-	-
ENV2	+00	+24	+00	+00	+00	+00

OUTPUT	1	2	3	4	5	6
VOL	74	76	49	82	99	90
MODSRC	Veloc	Veloc	Veloc	Veloc	Off	Off
MODAMT	-05	+99	-06	-05	+00	+00
KBD Scale	+00	+00	+00	+00	+00	+00
LO/Hi Key	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-
Dest Bus	FX1	FX1	FX1	FX1	FX1	FX2
Pan	50	50	50	50	50	50
MODSRC	Off	Off	Off	Off	Off	Off
MODAMT	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pre-Gain	On	On	On	On	On	On
Voice Prior	Hi	Hi	Hi	Hi	Hi	Hi
Vel Thresh	000	000	000	000	000	000

LFO	1	2	3	4	5	6
Rate	03	-	03	03	03	03
MODSRC	Wl+Pr	-	Wl+Pr	Wl+Pr	Wl+Pr	Wl+Pr
MODAMT	+99	-	+99	+99	+99	+99
Level	00	-	00	00	00	00
MODSRC	Off	-	Off	Off	Off	Off
Delay	-	-	-	-	-	-
Waveshape	-	-	-	-	-	-
Restart	-	-	-	-	-	-
Noise SRC RT	-	-	-	-	-	-

SELECT VOICE

00	1	2	3		
0*				5	
*0				4	
**	1		3		6

ENV1

	1	2	3	4	5	6
Initial						99
Peak						99
Break 1						00
Break 2						00
Sustain						00
Attack						00
Decay 1						20
Decay 2						20
Decay 3						00
Release						16
KBD Track						00
Vel Curve						Q-Rise
Mode						NOR
Vel-Level						00
Vel-Attack						00

ENV2

	1	2	3	4	5	6
Initial	99	00	99	99	99	99
Peak	99	99	99	99	99	99
Break 1	62	77	62	62	50	62
Break 2	50	14	50	50	50	50
Sustain	23	01	25	23	23	00
Attack	00	00	00	00	00	00
Decay 1	09	10	09	09	09	09
Decay 2	19	34	19	19	19	19
Decay 3	61	65	61	61	01	61
Release	03	19	03	58	03	00
KBD Track	-09	-09	-09	-09	-09	-09
Vel Curve	Q-Rise	Q-Rise	Q-Rise	Q-Rise	Q-Rise	Q-Rise
Mode	Nor	Nor	Nor	Nor	Nor	Nor
Vel-Level	63	99	63	63	63	63
Vel-Attack	99	99	99	99	99	99

ENV3

	1	2	3	4	5	6
Initial	99	99	99	99	99	99
Peak	99	99	99	99	99	99
Break 1	99	69	99	99	99	07
Break 2	99	25	99	99	99	00
Sustain	99	00	99	99	99	00
Attack	00	02	00	00	00	00
Decay 1	32	42	32	32	32	32
Decay 2	40	45	40	40	40	40
Decay 3	61	40	61	61	61	00
Release	45	13	45	58	45	00
KBD Track	+05	+00	+05	+05	+05	+05
Vel Curve	Cnvx-1	Cnvx-1	Cnvx-1	Cnvx-1	Cnvx-1	Cnvx-1
Mode	Nor	Nor	Nor	Nor	Nor	Nor
Vel-Level	00	22	00	00	00	00
Vel-Attack	10	10	10	10	10	10

PGM CONTROL

Pitch Table	Off
Bend Range	**
Delay	x1
Restrike	04
Glide Time	20

EFFECTS (1)

Effect	Phaser+Reverb
Decay Time	30
FX1	04
FX2	25

EFFECTS (2)

Rate	20
Depth	30
Center	+30
Feedback	+75

EFFECTS (3)

Detuen Amt	04
HF Bandwidth	99
HF Damping	00

PERFORMANCE

Timbre	00
Release	00

The Interface

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

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

Electronic mail - GENIE Network: TRANSONIQ, CompuServe: 73260,3353, Internet (via CS): 73260.3353@compuserve.com.

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

TH,

Here's an answer for one of the hackers regarding the value of upgrading the EPS. My friend smoked his up because of a bad ground in his house circuit. It only took two weeks to get it up and running at the sample rate of \$175. It sounds better and has more parameters.

I have another friend who doesn't like controller #4 because it would shelf. It doesn't have a smooth transition like the Yamaha gear. So we tried my Korg EXP2 foot pedal which worked better than the Ensoniq one but not to full satisfaction. So what's the problem here - the foot pedal, the processor, the filter cutoff? All of the sequences were done using controller #4 if that will help.

Thanks,
Don Suite
Holladay, UT

[Ensoniq - It is difficult to answer your question, because you seem to be describing different problems. If controller 4 is shelving for you, then it might relate to pushing a parameter (such as filter cutoff) from a high value, such as 80, to the top quickly, and then experiencing dead range in your pedal. But then you describe a smooth transition, which could be controller resolution, not shelving. From your description, the only answer we could give is that the symptoms you describe could be the result of any or all of the sources you list. The best thing to do is contact our Customer Service Department so we can better qualify what your problem is.]

header, then recording everything until the "end of exclusive" trailer. If multiple sys-ex messages come in, they will be recorded as well until you either tell the board to stop or the memory overflows. What happens when you dump the sys-ex back out is that the messages are sent out back-to-back with no delays between them, even if there were delays when they were loaded. This would certainly cause problems if there are requirements for minimum waits during handshakes.

The reason I originally came up with my rather bizarre technique was that I was using a Casio CZ-101 in conjunction with my SQ-80 and wanted to be able to load patch banks without having to turn on my computer. It turns out that the CZ has no concept of loading patch banks per se, but it does allow programming the synth via sys-ex, so that the editor/librarian software I was using sent rather large dumps to "load" a bank by programming up the 16 patches in the bank in real time! I could watch various indicators on the CZ front panel flicker on and off just as if I were punching the buttons manually at an accelerated rate. The CZ does return handshakes according to the Casio documentation and I verified this by disconnecting the CZ MIDI OUT during a transfer, causing it to fail. However, the "surrogate" dump from the SQ-80 worked perfectly, time and again, despite the fact that the returning handshakes from the CZ were being ignored.

What Mark really needs is documentation from Roland showing the handshake sequence for patch dumps and verifying that delays are indeed needed to make it work. If this is the case, I doubt my technique will apply. This holds true for any MIDI device that doesn't support self-initiated dumps: it's definitely worthwhile getting the docs on the MIDI sys-ex implementation before you start trying to troubleshoot your setup.

It's also worthwhile, as I mentioned in an earlier article, to consider weeding out devices that have compatibility problems like Mark is experiencing. I guess that's not the most helpful answer, but the bottom line is that the MIDI world is far from perfect and one of the most important

things you can learn is how to decide whether or not a new piece of gear you are looking at using will really be compatible with what you have already. Little headaches grow into larger ones fast.

Brian Rost
Northboro, MA

[Ensoniq - We also have been investigating Mr. Schaefer's situation, and Rob Clemens from our software department offers the following solution:

The Juno 2 bulk transfer functions are designed for transferring data to and from other Roland products. These dumps depend on a certain communication protocol which employs handshaking throughout the transfer. That is, instead of sending the message in one dump, it is sent in packets. Transfers to other Roland devices work fine, since they expect the information to be in packets, but transfers to a generic SysEx recorder fail, since the generic device will not send nor receive the handshakes.

Fortunately, the Juno 2 can be instructed to do bulk transfers without the Roland handshaking. This allows the data to be processed as one data dump by the Ensoniq device. The procedure is as follows:

Transfers from JUNO 2 to Ensoniq:

- 1. Set up Ensoniq device to receive SysEx.*
- 2. On Juno 2, hold DATA TRANSFER and press BULK DUMP. (This will do the SysEx transfer without handshaking.)*

Transfers from Ensoniq to JUNO 2:

- 1. On Juno 2, hold DATA TRANSFER and press BULK LOAD.*
- 2. Send the data from the Ensoniq device.*

Always set up the receiving unit first, then initiate the transfer from the sending unit.]

Dear Hacker,

As I near the edge of (what for me) is a

Dear Hacker and readers,

This is in response to Mark Schaefer's letter in Issue #87 about sys-ex load/dump problems. I'd like to thank Mark for the kind words about my article and mention a few things that may be of use to others having similar problems.

The way the SQ-80 (and other Ensoniq boards that can store sys-ex dumps) actually reads a sys-ex dump is by monitoring the MIDI IN for a "start of exclusive"

major purchase (the SD-1) there is a question I have to ask. Is there any chance that Ensoniq will be putting the guts of an SD-1(32) behind that wonderful weighted keyboard action of the KS-32? I love the piano touch but I'm unwilling to trade it for the polyphonic aftertouch, patch selects, the voices, the disk drive, the 24 tracks, the display... I'm getting dizzy... all that stuff in the SD. But if they'd put the SD behind that KS keyboard, the world and I just might beat a path to their door. And I'd mortgage my guitar collection, my car, my dog, to buy one. Hey Ensoniq, want a dog????

Dave Fowler
Ashland, NE

[Ensoniq – Dear Dave,

You pose a difficult situation. We can't use the Interface to allow customers to guess at our future product designs and expect to get a response. That's not the purpose of this dialog. If we answer you, then others might be prompted to ask their crystal ball projections and see if they were right. We can't run a business like that.

That said, we will tell you that we have no current plans to offer a weighted-action SD-1. (Must be the effect of all the election rhetoric in the air.)

Dear TH,

I was wondering if you could tell me where I might obtain packaging for my disks. I own Pegasus Sounds, a company that produces sounds for the SD-1.

I've been told that the type of packaging I need is called a "diamond-pack." I believe Ensoniq uses this type. All a diamond-pack consists of is two pieces of snap-tight plastic. There's an indentation in the bottom half where a 3.5-inch disk can be placed.

I called one company which uses a similar type packaging and they told me that produce their own, in-house, and do not sell it.

Where can I find packaging? If anyone has any answers please write to me at the address below.

In dire need of packaging,
Eric Olsen

Pegasus Sounds
6050 Adaway Ct
Grand Rapids, MI 49546
(616) 676-0863

[CS – This one had me stumped, Eric, until my wife (who's known for her innovative thinking and ingenious solutions to complex problems) suggested trying the Yellow Pages. I did a test run out here, and found that she was right! If you look up "Packaging," you'll find dozens of companies involved in this very thing – at least in the Portland yellow pages you will. Good luck!]

Dear Hacker,

I suggest you publish more Hackerpatches that are usable in a typical rock band. Hasn't anyone else cooked up good electric pianos, organs, accordians? If anyone specializes in such stuff, I'd be interested in trading patches or talking to them.

As for myself, I'm an emergency physician who's addicted to all music. I'm currently rediscovering and developing that creativity and testosterone that was almost stifled by the oppressive ignorance of too many classical lessons as a kid.

A suggestion: If you want to encourage more Hackerpatch submission, print a full page in the *Hacker* with templates for each synth. This could be photocopied and the parameters simply filled in rather than having to write out "Wave: Voice, Class...etc" which was a real pain in the ass. The other side of the page could even be printed with your address and instructions to fold, staple and stamp. This way, we could tear it out, fill in the numbers, fold and send it without even bothering with an envelope. Simple enough even for new-age players.

Sincerely,
Randy Zielinski
Rochester, NY

[TH – Some people (it sometimes seems male physicians in particular) labor under the impression that the sun rises when they open their babyblues in the am. Randy, we like your suggestion so much that we already printed templates for every new Ensoniq synth – as they were announced. Couldn't afford the space for self-enveloping though. (Sorry about the jape – our

female, classically-trained editor is still recovering from your testosterone comment...)]

[CS – I don't know, but speaking as a fellow male and all, and even though I'm not a doctor or anything, it seems to me that if you were to ask real nice (and maybe even include an SASE), the Hacker's female, classically-trained editor might just send you the blank patch charts of which you speak for your own personal photo-copying. As for me, the most testosterone I've produced lately was in trying to retain my normally quite dignified composure when my wife made fun of me for not being able to think up an answer for the previous question.]

[TH – Certainly – But you have to tell us which instrument.]

Dear People,

Thanks for the good magazine. I've been using the EPS classic (with 2X expanded memory) for about three years now. It controls a Casio CZ-101 and VZ-10M. I've



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also been using a Casio SK-1, Yamaha DD-5 and a Moog Rogue. I send the sequenced or live music directly through an EQ to stereo analog tape. Not an impressive system by some standards but quite serviceable for my needs. Which causes me to question the letter from "Faithful Ensoniq Customer" in your August '92 issue.

Yes, I wouldn't mind more memory. I don't know what Faithful does with his/her instruments, but I've written a 24-minute classical style composition using nothing more than the EPS and all eight tracks with eight instruments with variations under the patch buttons. I've also put 13 different (not variations, but different) instruments into the eight slots, accessible with the patch select buttons. If I do run out of room, I shrink the instruments, re-evaluate my arrangement and/or composition, or use my MIDI'd 101 and/or VZ-10M (or play the SK-1 or Moog live while recording).

Having more memory, I suppose, would be nice. But I've grown to like the physical limits - when I reach them I need to evaluate what I am doing. I need to get

into the machines, fix sequences, tailor sounds. I'm forced to learn a little more each time I reach the edge of my envelope. Sometimes having all the memory (or money, or anything else) one thinks he or she wants is worse than having physical limits. Coming up against the boundaries helps one learn, promotes ingenuity, fosters creativity and lessens the tendency to be self-indulgent.

Of course, this could all be taken as justification and rationalization for not having the economic means to afford more than I already have. I suppose that if I did have the money, I'd have all the toys I wanted. (Yes, these are serious instruments, but a large part of creativity is play and things one plays with are called toys. Hence, this is not a term of disrespect.) But not having the means, I've had to find other ways. In the meantime, I've grown more by having to find those other ways.

Obviously, I agree wholeheartedly with Clark's response and it amazes me when I hear or read about proposals to start letter-writing campaigns to change physical reality. I spent six months reading magazines, talking with salespeople and

trying several different keyboards before settling on my EPS. Best thing I could have purchased.

Sincerely,
Michael J Sohns
M: Milwaukee, WI

[CS - I, too, agree fully with my response to "Faithful Ensoniq Customer's" letter - whatever it was. And I believe that what one person sees as a limitation the next person will see as a door into a new place. Now let's chant. Ommmmmm...]

Dear Hacker,

I have a product request.

I am an EPS-16+ owner who is concerned that we are coming up to the time where we are likely to again see a new and BETTER version of our beloved EPS introduced, this time probably with oodles of expandable RAM and more polyphony - which are the essential things this wonderful board really lacks.



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I'd order one today! Don't forget the great "SAVE BANK" command. I couldn't work without it.

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[CS – So, how many is a "wack," anyway? And by the way, you've probably seen the specs on the new ASR-10 from last month's Hacker by now, but if you haven't,

you might want to check it out.

For what it's worth, I agree that an inexpensive sample-playback unit would be cool. The operative word here, though, is "inexpensive." Peavey, for example, has a 16-bit sample playback module that's expandable to 32 meg of RAM, and it only sells for \$995. However, it doesn't include onboard effects, and only has 4 audio outs and 16-voice polyphony. And Peavey is known for being able to put together real inexpensive stuff. My guess is that the module you're talking about might have to retail for more than \$1450 or so – but who knows? It's still a cool idea.]

[Ensoniq – The main problem with your request is that your new product couldn't be daisy-chained to the EPS-16 PLUS without redesigning the existing product, since it doesn't currently have this new proposed feature. And taking off user-sampling circuitry won't reduce the price (including all the new stuff you want) to anywhere near \$1450. But we hope that the new ASR-10 will come close to satisfying your needs. Thanks for sharing the idea.]

[TH – Well, you were certainly right about the timing.]

Dear Hackers,

I realize that the Interface is a quorum for your readers to ask questions about problems they are having with their Ensoniq devices, but I didn't know who else to direct this to, so...

I don't actually have a problem with my EPS, but I thought I'd just share a unique application you might find interesting (or maybe not).

First a little background (I'll keep it brief). For the past six years, I've been employed by the Illinois Dept of Transportation as a Communications Specialist. It is my job to monitor traffic congestion, dispatch emergency equipment to clear up accidents, assist the general public with directions and otherwise keep the state roads which are under our jurisdiction safe for the motorist. The Communications center where I work is the only one of its kind in the country (and, incidentally, the largest

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non-military communications center in the US, second only to NASA,) and serves the six-county area of northeastern Illinois – most of which is the city of Chicago. The systems we use to do this are custom designed and so unique that we have had tour groups not only from other state DOTs but also officials from other countries to see how we manage and control traffic congestion.

One of the tools we use in our daily operations is our HAR, or Highway Advisory Radio network. This is essentially about 10 low-output radio transmitters placed alongside the expressway at various locations so that their signal can be heard in a 1-mile radius from the transmitter site. We broadcast traffic congestion, road construction and (when applicable) emergency information 24 hours a day.

The HAR system is essentially several "microvoice" (digital recording) units and an IBM computer with a 10-meg hard drive. The microvoice units are used to record emergency messages, whereas the computer has about 350 digitized sample phrases stored in it. Each one of these phrases is generally an expressway name, or any of the various cross-streets and has a corresponding hexcode descriptor. The congestion information is generated by vehicles passing over loop detectors embedded in the expressway pavement at half-mile intervals. This information (rate of speed and number of vehicles) is then transmitted to a databank where the information is processed and sent in ASCII via telephone lines to our computer. From the ASCII, the computer picks the correct digitized phrase and strings them together to form a traffic report which is sent to the transmitter sites.

To make a long story short, the last time the IBM was programmed it was done by

recording each sample on audio tape then queued on an endless loop and digitized on a microvoice unit. The entire process took 5 days to complete. After being online 24 hours a day for 5 years, the hardware died, and since the guy who made the original recording was no longer available, I was approached to re-record the samples. I suggested that I use my EPS to record the voice samples and then transfer them directly into the microvoice. They liked that idea. They liked it even more when the downloading took 5 hours instead of 5 days (although it took me about 15 hours to record all the phrases). The technician who designed the communications center couldn't believe how great the EPS was and said he was going to talk to his boss and see if they could buy one.

This system isn't up and running yet because there are a few bugs to be worked out, but it should be ready to go back online in a week. So, if any of you get to Chicago and you happen to be riding on the expressway system, flip on your AM radio to 1610 or 530 and give a listen.

Sincerely,
Mitchell Rogers
Mt Prospect, IL

[TH – Actually, we love to see application-type letters in the Interface. Thanks!]

[CS – I'd have to say that this is pretty much the most, uh, unique application for Ensoniq gear that I've heard of in a while. But I dig these kind of stories – helps me to keep focused on the big picture.

So how about it readers? Anybody got an application as strange as this one? Stranger? Not as strange, but still interesting? Send 'em on in, and we'll publish them right here in the Interface, along with

your name and everything. I can hardly wait!]

[Ensoniq – It's always exciting to hear about unique applications of our products. You are to be congratulated for your efforts.]

Dear TH,

I'm a subscriber from Spain and an owner of a VFX-sd. So excuse me if I write strange. I haven't been able to receive solutions to these problems within my country:

1) My VFX-sd (with O.S. 2.0) hangs up often. Especially when I try to copy tracks and edit events. I also get too many recalibration errors (more when the VFX is cold). What causes these errors? Perhaps my disk or my hardware is corrupt?

2) Do you know somewhere in the US to get the disk with the 2.1 O.S. for the VFX or the 4.1 for the SD-1? Here they say the disk and the SD can not be purchased separately – I have to buy another instrument. Can you believe it?!

3) How can I get a description of the operating system? I'd really like a complete listing so I can make some changes of my own.

I hope Ensoniq and Transoniq grow all over the world – changing ideas and making better products.

Thanks,
Javier Sarsa
Zaragoza, Spain

[CS – I) Sounds like you've got a hardware problem to me. I'd get your unit in

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2) Ensoniq informs me that your local dealer is authorized to make a copy of the OS disk and give it to you. If there's some reason that your dealer can't or won't do this, I'm sure Ensoniq would be happy to provide you with a copy for a nominal fee.

3) There is no way that I know of to get a listing for the operating system for any Ensoniq product (or for any other proprietary software that anyone manufactures, for that matter).

[Ensoniq - You are not getting the right answer. The O.S. disk and EPROMS can be updated for your unit for a small labor fee. Please contact us directly and we will try to solve your situation (we are also forwarding this letter to our distributor in Spain). We are sorry for your inconvenience.]

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