

Transoniq Hacker

The Independent
Resource for Emu-Ensoniq Users

X Notes

Garth Hjelt & the ASR-X Internet List



As time goes on, we are seeing more support for the ASR-X. It has been out for more than a year — boy, sure doesn't seem like it. Let's get up to date...

OS 2.62 Ships

Not everyone has it at the time of this writing, but yes, it is shipping. There are no new features, just fixes.

- 1) Addresses internal sequencer timing glitches and MIDI response
- 2) Improved loading time from floppy, including speeding up EPS/ASR conversions.
- 3) MIDI sync fixes, MIDI bank & program select fixes with a setting to support the backward standards of Roland and Alesis gear with MSB or LSB formats.
- 4) Disk access problems loading and getting the "no loadable files" errors have been addressed.

There may be more, but Emu-Ensoniq doesn't send any documentation on what has been

fixed and what hasn't with the update. So, break out the checkbook and the hex wrench again. See below for details on getting your new OS.

Timing Errors

Does the ASR-X seem sluggish to you — when you are using the internal sequencer, or when you are playing or sequencing from an external source? You're not alone — the ASR-X's response to MIDI and its internal sequencer hasn't been the best — especially prior to 2.62 OS.

For example, if you play 4 notes via MIDI or program 4 notes into the ASR-X sequencer, timed to play at exactly the same time, not all the notes will sound *exactly* at the same time; rather, they will come one after the other very quickly. Add more data, such as controller information, polyphonic aftertouch, etc. and the possibility for sound delay becomes greater. Reasons for the delay are MIDI transmission into the ASR-X, the efficiency of the ASR-X OS, the way the CPU processing is allocated, and other factors. This is the way of life for all electronic music instruments.

We did a timing test with OS 2.62. We used an external sequencer to drive the X and recorded the output from each track simultaneously to separate tracks on our hard disk recorder. We then figured out the starting sample for each beat by using a graphic sound editor.

We tested the timing delay between the same beat on track 1 and track 16 as the number of tracks (with the same pattern as the first) used was increased. In this case I was looking for the delay value to be as small as possible.

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of tracks used: milliseconds between two tracks (averaged over 4 beats)

2	2.9
3	5.8
4	8.7
5	11.6
6	14.2
7	16.3
...	...
16	42.1

A timing reference to compare against are 64th notes at 180 bpm, which are 20.8 ms apart. 64th notes at 120 bpm are spaced 31.25 ms apart.

So with these numbers in mind, the worst delay was equivalent to about a 32nd note at 180 bpm. The most inconsistent timing between beats was about 160th note at 120 bpm. These numbers are reasonable. In real life situations these numbers can be improved by moving a track slightly forward or behind a few ticks so that not all note-on events are occurring at the same time. In our subjective opinion the X's timing is better than the Emu Morpheus, but worse than the Waldorf Microwave and my Clavia Nord Lead 2. Of course the Nord and the MW are different sorts of instruments and only have 8 and 4 part multitimbral capabilities respectively.

In subjective analysis by listening to the beats, we heard flanging with 2 tracks, which is good. By the time we were up to 5 tracks the flanging was gone, and we could start to hear the attacks of the kick drums separately. At seven tracks we could very distinctly hear the two attacks of the drums. One thing we didn't test, and which could be very important, is to see how these numbers change when some realtime controller messages are added to the tracks. Since the ASR-X has been "pitched" to the "dance" crowd, timing is critical issue.

If anyone is interested on the details of these tests, let us know, and I will write it up.

Lastly, it was true that in OS versions before 2.62 you could easily make the internal sequencer be inconsistent in its timing by changing tracks or changing anything while the sequencer was playing. Most of this has been rectified in 2.62.

Other Fun 2.62 Things

On the good side, with some of the expansion card sounds, there was a certain amount of distortion that has been fixed. On the not-so-good, it would be nice to be able to save the Loop Playback parameter within a Song or Sequence; as it is now, it always defeats to ON. (BTW, the EPS 16-Plus had that problem for a year — until OS 1.3 fixed it.)

I have mentioned a sys-ex bug whereas sys-ex dumps of ASR/Akai/Roland translated sounds do not dump properly. This has been temporarily dealt with — now you cannot send/receive sys-ex dumps of ASR/Akai/Roland sounds. This is a significant issue,

since it inhibits certain aspects of editing these sounds via computer. (Specifically, soloing a wave is difficult, you cannot edit effects in realtime, and editing multiple waves in a keymap is made more difficult.) ASR/Akai/Roland translated sounds are the most powerful types of sounds in the ASR-X, since they allow multiple voices to play on one MIDI-note.

Also, the present sys-ex dumping does not reveal the loop information — thus you cannot edit loops in realtime from most sampled sounds. Since Emu-Ensoniq didn't put a full featured editing interface on the ASR-X, I would hope that they would implement enough sys-ex stuff to enable these things.

Presently the only ASR-X computer editor is RCS's *ASR-X Tools for Windows*. It now has the capability to create/delete/edit Insert Effects into 1-SOUND's, and fully edit ASR-X AIFF files using your favorite sound editor (*Sound Forge*, *CoolEdit*, others). A Mac version is under development.

ASR-X Pro

Yes, there is a new ASR-X model coming out — see the announcement in this issue. Hey, 66MB — with 2 SIMMs slots able to hold up to 32MB each. I like the Flash ROM option — let's see, how much have I forked over for new chips? ASR-X Pro owners will probably have the option of downloading the latest OS from the Emu-Ensoniq web site, instead of paying for it. Tempo resolution can now be set to within 1/100 BPM, and if you have 8MB or more installed, the sequencer has 140,000 event capacity. Also new is Stomper, a software synthesis feature that can make synth drum (and other) sounds from scratch. (See Zap's site below — a Windows version has been available for some time.) And can we spell "phat" right? (It's FAT.) See <http://www.ensoniq.com/html/mainasrxpro.htm> for more WAY COOL details, including the TIPS page (submit your own tips!) and the PARTNERS section. Oh, and it's RED!!!!

Speaking of seeing RED, that seems to be Emu-Ensoniq's company color — their web site has been improved again — and it's RED too. Either RED means ALERT, or DANGER... we'll see. Interestingly, there's no mention of the ASR-X "Amateur" (the original) at the site — looks like Emu-Ensoniq phased that out.

Editing Ensoniq-type AIFF Files

A common problem I've been hearing is that

someone will edit an ASR-X generated AIFF file using *Sound Forge* or *CoolEdit*, only to find that it won't load back into the X as part of a 1-SOUND file.

Emu-Ensoniq advertises the reading of "industry standard AIFF files," which is true, but the X-generated AIFF's have some additional chunks in their header. The AIFF file format allows for that; that's the beauty of AIFF. Problem is, all PC sound editors that we've seen do not preserve any extra chunks when they rewrite a file. So when the ASR-X tries to load them — BURP.

I've written a free Windows utility called *E-AIFF Loader*. It allows you to select the AIFF to edit, finds your related 1-SOUND file, starts up your choice of sound editor, and allows you to edit. After you are done, you save the AIFF file and close the editor. *E-AIFF Loader* cleans up the job by restoring/updating the E-specific chunks and updating the .SOU file. It is available at <http://www.soundcentral.com/~chickeneps/asrx.html>. (We'll try to get it into Mac soon.)

OS by Credit

Yes, you can call in your order for the latest ASR-X OS and put it on your credit card. Boy, that's cool. Or you can send a check for \$9.95 to:

Emu-Ensoniq
ATTN: ASR-X Upgrade
155 Great Valley Parkway
Malvern, PA 19355

Rad Web Sites

If you didn't know, there is a mailing list that focuses on the ASR-X. The list address is asrx@onelist.com, and you can subscribe by going to <http://www.onelist.com/isregistered.cgi?listname=asrx>. In addition here is a list of web sites that at least have something to do with the X:

Emu-Ensoniq

<http://www.ensoniq.com/html/mainasrxpro.html>
<http://www.emu-ensoniq.com>

>From the Creators themselves. Keep looking at the www.emu-ensoniq.com site — it's being developed.

Warren Bones Novakill Site

<http://www.ar.com.au/~novakill/synth.html>
A general overview of synthesis with the ASR-X in mind — entertaining site as well

Dgoa's ASR-X Site

<http://www.globaldrum.com/interface/asrx>
ASRX Cakewalk Instrument Definitions,
SOU sound files, .WAV's, ASR-X songs
(.MP3) by Dgoa, and links

Rubber Chicken Software

<http://www.soundcentral.com/~chickeneps/asrx.html>

Lot's of ASR-X stuff

Zap's Site

<http://www.master-zap.com>

"Zap" Anderson is the author of Stomper and a genial ASR-X owner to boot. The software version of Stomper is available at his site,

along with Little Drummer Boy (also called LDB) — <http://stomper.base.org> — be prepared; this is quite a site!

SoundEngine

<http://www.soundengine.com>
ASR-X sounds

SoundCentral

<http://www.soundcentral.com/keyboard/en-soniq/asrx.html>
Free ASR-X sounds and information

About this article: Shehryar Lasi provided most of the information on the tests, "Zap"

Andersson gave us the first-hand information on the ASR-X Pro, and Chris Nefarium helped with additional 2.62 update information. Special thanks to Chris for running the ASR-X list. ■

***Bio:** Garth Hjelt runs Rubber Chicken Software Co., a multi-national organization which exclusively supports Ensoniq samplers. It is in no way affiliated with the UN.*

Front Panel

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Transoniq News

We certainly hoped to have more news regarding the Emu-Ensoniq merger and what it means to our humble little publication, but the folks involved have been so busy that it's been a little tricky getting things going. Latest word — *just* as we go to press — is that our subscription flyer has been okayed to be included in the Emu boxes. Once this starts happening you can expect to see changes begin to work their way into the newsletter.

Hypersoniq — New Products

ENSONIQ Announces ASR-X Pro Resampling Production Studio

Malvern, Pa, 1998 — ENSONIQ is excited to announce the next generation of the remarkably successful ASR-X, the *ASR-X Pro!* The original ASR-X was the first to offer a professional quality sampler, expandable synthesizer, sequencer, and effect unit as standard features in a single tabletop unit with drumpads.

New features of the ASR-X Pro include a distinctive new look, and RAM expandable to 66mb for over 12 minutes of 44.1khz mono or over 6 minutes of stereo sampling. The operating system is now stored in Flash memory for convenient software upgrades. Also new to the ASR-X Pro is Stomper, a built in software synthesis program that creates faithful reproductions of classic electronic drum machines — and even phatter sounds! 10 "Essentials" buttons have been added for instant access to 15 sounds of your choice. These buttons may also be used for numerical data entry or direct access of

patterns. In addition, tempo resolution can now be set to within 1/100 BPM for more accurate matching of audio loops to MIDI sequences.

The ASR-X Pro provides a unique combination of tools for sampling-intensive productions such as Hip-hop, Techno, Industrial, and dance oriented music. The expanded features of the ASR-X Pro also make it suitable for a much wider variety of applications. When the RAM is expanded, the longer sampling times allow the ASR-X Pro to be used for flying in background vocals or other material to supplement a live or recorded performance. Using the advanced capabilities of the ASR-X Pro, grooves may be mixed, resampled with effects, and saved as an industry standard AIFF files for instant compatibility with leading internet publishing and CD creation software.

Expandability is a key feature of the ASR-X Pro. An optional EXP series sound and wave expansion board may be added to increase the on-board synth's ROM memory. Installing the X-8 output expander allows sounds to be routed to any one of 10 outputs. The included SCSI interface opens the door for a wide variety of storage options, as well as access to a huge library of samples on CD-ROM. Most hard drives, removable media, and CD-ROM drives are compatible with. Two RAM expansion slots are provided. Sample memory can be increased to 66mb using industry standard 72-pin SIMMS chips.

Computer users, internet developers, and multimedia professionals will appreciate the ASR-X Pro's use of standard file formats. Disks are DOS formatted, sounds are saved as AIFF files, and EPS, ASR-10, Roland, AKAI, and WAVE files are easily imported. ENSONIQ has many 3rd party partners who

offer a wide range of compatible products. These include editors, sample libraries, MIDI programs, etc. A complete list can be found at www.ensoniq.com.

SYNTAUR Announces ESQ Cartridges Available Once Again

For years, the storage cartridges for the ESQ and SQ-80 keyboards have been unavailable. Now, Syntaur Productions has a limited supply of these. Each cartridge holds two banks of sounds (80 patches altogether).

Syntaur's Soundsets 1 and 2 are available on ROM cartridge, for \$59.95. (You cannot write your own sounds to this cartridge.) Soundset 1 contains a variety of Top 40 sounds, such as electric pianos, organ, strings, brass, bass sounds, etc. Soundset 2 is a unique collection of sounds that are reminiscent of the breathy, ambient sounds of the Roland D-50 keyboard. Here, you'll find an assortment of lush pads, ethereal textures, bells, and more.

Also in stock are a limited number of EEPROM cartridges, for \$74.95 each. These are the cartridges that you can store your own sounds to (that's why they are more expensive) — great for organizing and saving your sounds!

Coming soon will be a second ROM cartridge, containing Syntaur's *Soundset 5* and the upcoming *Soundset 6*. *Soundset 5* is geared especially to hip-hop and R&B productions, and *Soundset 6* focuses on vintage analog synth sounds.

Available from Syntaur Productions, 500 W. Prairie Ave., Eagle Lake, TX 77434. (800) 334-1288 or (409) 234-2700, Fax: (409) 234-2900. Please add \$4.00 for shipping and handling.

The Keyboard Foley Artist

J.D. Ryan

Twack! Zzzzzsss... Plop! That plop could be yours... Er, I mean you could have created that sound yourself and/or have extracted it from your library for synching to a video or film track. In the movie industry, certain techniques are referred to as Foley recordings, named after Jack (George) Foley, a sound effects editor and innovator, and are still in use in motion picture studio productions today. The athletic folk who create these sound effects are known as Foley Artists. They use artifacts to perform these sounds synchronously to picture on a "Foley stage." This high art is quite labor and equipment intensive however, and is therefore quite expensive.

Today's digital samplers are eminently capable of composing "keyboard" Foley effects. Industry experts tend to minimize keyboard Foley in favor of traditional stage-created sounds, saying that those are superior in the delivery of "audio perspective" and realism. Truth be known, it is a combination of keyboard *and* stage Foley that has become the standard approach in professional post-production today. Sometimes we forget that power audio tools such as Sound Forge are really digital samplers too. In practice, you will find that you cannot avoid recording some of your own base (before editing) effects. There are simply so many real-world sonic events occurring within even a few minutes of visual "take" that you could spend hours just trying to cull the unedited base effects out of your library.

Nature films, for example, are very demanding Foley-wise. Except for narration, there is no dialog to speak of — perhaps a little incidental music — but the dominant part of the soundtrack is often sound effects. For a production of *"Lives of the Northern Snow Wolves"* the Foley work alone took two people six to eight hours to finish just 15 minutes of Foley sound. This is quite typical. I used to actually think that they got those little sounds — the paws of a wolf padding across prairie grass, a pollywog squishing its way through puddle mud, and the like,

with a shotgun mike. Not so. They're so *perfect* the viewer never even notices them.

When you are working up sound-for-picture you are bound by a whole set of restrictions imposed by the video. The actual synching-to-picture will be done in a separate process, guided by the following considerations:

- Duration — The length of time the sound event is audible
- Volume — Loudness of the individual event
- Continuity — How the sound "plays" relative to the others

Unique to keyboard Foley is the *playable* control we can coax out of our ASR and EPS keyboards (or their MIDI counterparts). This is where the argument that keyboard Foley doesn't deliver audio perspective breaks down. Perhaps the reason that this is believed is because the personnel that assign the final Foley track often aren't keyboardists. Often they're not sound designers either. For instance, once I had to create a Foley sound of a fire extinguisher being discharged over the sound of the fire. I couldn't find anything like an extinguisher in my library so I built a monster extinguisher sound out of a 3 second rattlesnake from a SFX CD. A little filtering and looping and it was BETTER than the real thing, only because of the fineness available through the keys. Your keyboard is just a whole bunch of on-off switches and because the pitch is shifted by a semitone at each key you can fire all those variations to create the life-like realism often missed in real-time recording/reproduction. When I slapped down a bunch of lower keys and then added a bunch of upper keys I got a perfect sonic picture of the nozzle of that spewing extinguisher rotating from an "in your face" blast, to a flame choking discharge across the room. A 360-degree Doppler effect! The sound of that huge rolling boulder in *"Raiders of the Lost Ark"* was keyboarded

from an effects library lion's roar. Alternating pitches (keys) of a swishing scimitar resulted in a comedy effect of a swirling lasso — a multiple keyed, time-stretched diving "Stuka" aircraft sound effect became part of a harrowing elevator crash mix. On and on, without limit.

So, while some mere technician types may sync sound effects to picture by punching an in/out console key locked to time code with a detached interest, oblivious as to how those effects arrived in the real world, keyboard Foley and effects artists may have actually *created* many of the sonic elements that are applied to the mix. The *keyboard* is the controller of choice for those who are interested in the *artistry* of sound design, and its imaginative use in the creation and customizing of sound elements for effects tracks is no less the product of a composer playing an instrument than is the musical chord elaborated by the keyboard musician. ■

Bibliography:

"Creating the Sounds"
KVED Productions
Salt Lake City, Utah.

The Mining Co.
General Internet Co.

Happy Media
Burbank, Ca.

Digital Movie News
El Dorado, Ca.



Bio: In 1994 J.D. Ryan earned certification in "Sound for Motion Picture and Television" through the Full Sail Center for the Recording Arts in central Florida. Some of his "Sound Spinner" effects are found in post-production suites around the world and a few are published in Rubber Chicken's CD-ROM II under "The Brothers Ryan sounds." E-mail: bros-ryan@dmv.com.

EPS-16+ and ASR Editing Made Easy

Eric Montgomery

This is intended for those who just want some simple tips and information on making basic patches and edits on the EPS-16+/ASR-10. I have always been one to experiment and this is a good way to get started. You will probably find that some of the sounds you always wanted are hiding right under your fingertips, just waiting to explode into your next song.

Before you start editing you need to decide what you want to edit — the whole patch, one of the layers, or a wavesample. To select which, press the edit button. Put your cursor under the name of the sound to edit all layers and wavesamples. Put your cursor under layer and then you can edit just the selected layer and its waves. Lastly, put the cursor under WS and play a key. Once you get a sample number, you will be editing the patch data of the wavesample.

Some users have asked how to transpose on an ASR/EPS-16+. That can be a nightmare because all of the samples have their own key ranges and transposition. There is a simple way to do it though. Press edit and be sure that the name of the sound is underlined. Press the Instrument button. Continue to press the Instrument button until you see "XPOSE= +0 SEMI= +0." Put the cursor on "semi" to change the key in half steps and "oct" to change the octave. Press the up arrow button to lower the key and press the down arrow button to raise the key.

Call For Writers!

In spite of their current god-like status, writers for the *Hacker* were once mere mortals — just like you! If you're noodling around with Ensoniq gear, you too can join their elite ranks. We're always looking for new writers, and yes, there is actual payment involved. If you're toying with an idea for an article, how about giving Editrix Jane a call at 1-503-227-6848 and listening to her soothing words of encouragement?

Let's go through setting key ranges. Press Edit, then press Instrument. Continue to press Instrument until you see RANGE on the screen. Play the lowest key to set the lowest key you want the selected instrument or wavesample to play. Play the highest you want it to play. That's it! This is important since you may want to layer sounds, do splits and (or) set your own key ranges for those splits and drum kits. To layer a sound just select the first sound, then double click the second one while the LOAD light is flashing.

Another common edit is setting a sample to play its entirety, no matter how short the note is that is played. The common use is if a drum was sampled, and you want it to play until the sample is over, no matter the length of time the note is being played. Press the edit button and be sure that the cursor is under WS. Play the key that the sample is on. You will get a sample #. Now you can press ENV3, scroll to Envelope Mode and change the setting from "normal" to "finish." That was simple! If you want to make this setting for several samples, be sure that WS = ALL. Then make the same edits we just discussed.

If you want to make patch edits, a few items to consider changing are Attack, Decay, Brightness and Sustain. Attack is how fast the sound begins to play after the key is depressed. A string sound has a slower attack than a piano. Decay/sustain determines the fade of a sound while a key is being held down. You might decide that you want a sound to be more staccato, like a synth bass or muted guitar. Brightness is pretty obvious — high end EQ. Lastly, sustain determines how long a sound will continue to play after a key has been released. A string sound has a longer decay time than a trumpet or piano sound. (Also remember that there are levels and times for each of these settings. We can cover these in depth in another article.)

To change attack on a sound, select ENV 3 and use your left or right arrow buttons to get to "HARDVEL = XX XX XX XX XX." Edit the leftmost double-digit number and change it to 00. Using the left or right arrow buttons go to "TIMES = XX XX XX XX XX." Change the leftmost double-digit num-

ber. 00 would be the shortest attack time.

To change decay, select Envelope 3 on the keypad (#3). Using the left or right arrow buttons, go to "HARDVEL = XX XX XX XX XX." Edit the leftmost double-digit number and change it to 00. Also edit the rightmost double-digit number and change it to 00. Using the left or right arrow button, go to "TIMES = XX XX XX XX XX." Edit the second and fourth double-digit numbers. The second number adjusts how long the sound will hold before it begins to decay. The fourth double-digit number changes the length of the fade out (the larger the number, the longer the decay). Remember to hold down the key while you are making these edits so you can hear the changes.

To edit brightness, select Filters on the keypad (# 5). Using the left or right arrow buttons, go to "CUTOFF F1 = XX F2 = XX." They are already totally open or at the maximum. Making these numbers smaller will make the sound darker or roll off the high end. Scroll back to Mode and change F1 = 3/LP F2 = 1/LP to F1 = 2/LP F2 = 2/HP. Increasing the value of "CUTOFF F1 = XX F2 = XX" will roll off bottom end or bass. LP means Low Pass, HP means High Pass.

To change release, select ENV 3 on the keypad (#3) and go to "TIMES = XX XX XX XX XX." Edit the rightmost double-digit number. The higher the number the longer the release.

I hope that the info in this article will be able to help you make common tweaks to many of your existing sounds to make brand new ones. Just give it a try, relax and use your imagination. Always remember to save your new edits to disk. Do not save over your original sounds. Do not overwrite your original sounds. If you overwrite your files you will not be able to get the old ones back. Good luck and happy programming! ■



Bio: Eric Montgomery's work has appeared with Salt Records, Integrity Music, several local compilation CD's in Gary Indiana, CAMS of Chicago Ill. and Ensoniq product demos.

How Sounds Work

Part IV — Groovy Guitars Galore!

Mark (The Kid) Clifton

What?? Another installment of that wacky SQ programming series with the cheesy title? You betcha! And this time around, as promised, I'll tape on my trusty Geraldo mustache and present a shocking, in-depth expose into the dark murky world of acoustic guitars. Of course, this article focuses only on the way guitars generate sound and how to imitate them and not on the actual playing of the patches themselves. To go into detail about all the little tricks that make up a good fake guitar performance would take hundreds of pages, which would surely provoke more than a few fistfights with the editor. [Ed. — Mark, dear, I don't make fists. I use my little red pen.]

So I, being the peaceful guy that I am, will merely suggest that you do your own research on the subject. With a little digging, you're bound to find some useful books and articles (you know, from those *other* magazines) or maybe even a guitar player who will cooperate with a nerdy keyboardist like

yourself and help you out.

The first thing to do is look at the envelopes of the accompanying patch, ACOUSTIC GUITAR. You'll notice that I've set Keyboard Tracking to 28 on all of them, making them sustain for a shorter amount of time in the upper range of the keyboard and longer on the bottom. This is to accurately reflect the fact that the higher strings on a guitar are stretched tighter than the lower ones so they vibrate for a shorter amount of time. This characteristic is inherent in almost all plucked string instruments. You'll also notice that I've applied some Env 2 modulation to the filters, making the sound mellow out as it fades, just like on a real guitar.

The next major feature of this patch is the pitch modulation on the Pitch Mods page. I've programmed a slight amount of modulation from Env 1, which I've shaped into a sharp downward slope. This makes the initial attack of the sound slightly sharp, then

quickly evens it out to the correct pitch. This characteristic on a guitar is caused by the increased tension of the string when it is first plucked. This light pitch bend on the attack of many instruments (not just the guitar) is a very subtle but important aspect in the accurate recreation of that instrument's sound and is overlooked too often by many programmers.

Vibrato is another often abused aspect of an instrument's character that I chose not to include in this patch since it is used sparingly, if at all, in most styles of guitar playing. The only exceptions that come immediately to mind are slide playing and certain blues, jazz and Latin styles. If you do use vibrato, remember that a guitar, like all other fretted instruments, can produce only a slight bending of the pitch and that it always bends sharp. The positive LFO shapes are used to accomplish this. Only slide playing and electric guitar whammy-barring, to be covered in some future article, break this rule, since the slide allows greater freedom of movement up and down the string. Non-fretted instruments, such as the violin, have this greater freedom of movement and are therefore capable of producing a pure up-down pitch vibrato.

The mod wheel on this patch brings in another guitar wave tuned an octave higher to simulate a twelve-string guitar. The mod pedal increases chorus-ing, an effect that really complements the sound of an acoustic guitar. For a dreamy new age-type sound, turn up the mod wheel all the way and bliss out until next time when I'll blow some hot air about woodwinds. ■

Bio: Mark Clifton is a player and composer of Jazz, New Age, Orchestral and Rap (yes, Rap!) music and an aspiring Cyberpunk writer who also wouldn't mind going into sound design or film scoring. His favorite color is the infinite, star-speckled blackness of space.

This article originally appeared in TH #96 (June, 1993).

SQ, KS, KT, E-Prime Prog: Acoustic Guitar				By: Mark Clifton																																																																																																																			
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F.I. Originals

Michael Paradise Band

Tape: *F.I. Originals* (c) 1998 Mutt Music

Artist: Michael Paradise Band

Contact Info: Michael Paradise, 17 Mayfair Rd, Cranston, RI 02905.

Equipment: Ensoniq EPS 16+, Yamaha MT-120 4-track recorder, Les Paul guitars, Fender bass, live drums.

Michael Paradise gives us yearly installments of his latest demos. We have reviewed his tapes in August 1996 (3 songs; a "*Short Takes*" review) and February 1997 (a five-song demo). His latest tape to go through the wringer is a five-song demo of songs recorded by Michael's band, "F.I." He never mentions what "F.I." stands for. As in Michael's previous tapes, the purpose of these demos seems to be to showcase the compositions themselves as opposed to programming skills, production, or even performance. The reason I make this judgment is because these sound like true "basement tapes." The songs sound like they were recorded live without much (if any) overdubbing or re-takes.

Michael's songwriting style seems to have stayed consistently in the same ballpark over the past few years. These five songs still keep Michael's "British invasion" feel, making me wonder if he was a stowaway in the cryonic time capsule that transported Austin Powers and Dr. Evil from the '60s to the '90s. Michael's lyrics still remind me of Paul McCartney's focus on the lighter side of relationships and love, with occasional

forays into the dark side (i.e., breaking up). That's about as heavy as it gets. Let's listen...

Love Is Here to Stay (and That's OK) — This song is performed with the exuberance of a junior-high garage band in the '60s (that would be the 1960s, not their age...). Of course, Michael's voice sounds very "Beatles," so that helps the British vibe to shine through. Bubble-gum lyrics are front-and-center over a '60s-love-song rhythm section, thickened with chorused electric piano and slightly crunchier guitars than we heard way back then. Some very nice guitar soloing, complete with high-speed fingertappings. Thick background vocals lend a wonderful fullness to the song, but the hokey synth horn parts toward the end bring in the cheese, and whoever was playing the 16th-note tambourine part was getting tired...

I Don't Want to Lose You — More vintage Beatles sounds, reminiscent of "*Hey, you've got to hide your love away*." This song, however, introduces elements from the Electric Prunes and Iron Butterfly, uncharacteristically "heavy" for Michael Paradise. Thorns: this time the tambourine is totally out of control tempo-wise! And the digitally-delayed synth parts are jarringly anachronistic. Rather than blend the decade's influences, it might be better to stick with a consistent formula. These elements tend to detract from what are fine compositions. This song is redeemed, however, by a slammin', jammin' guitar solo section. This band obviously loves to jam!

Let's Hit the Road — The manic tambourine is replaced by maracas in this White Album era tune. Still hyper-cafeinated though. More bubble-gum lyrics, but imaginative guitar parts keep the rhythm section providing movement and interest.

Every Time I Try — This song sounds as if it's having an identity crisis: it can't decide what it's going to be, as if the intro, verses, and choruses were cut-n-pasted from different tunes. Even the introductory tempo/meter changes three times before "settling" (I use the term loosely) into its groove. I am

tempted to give Michael credit for crafting a song that musically emulates what its lyrics state: he tries different things, but none of them work. If this stylistic schizophrenia is deliberate, then kudos to the band for an ingenious concept! It would be more convincing, however, if each new "phase" of the song were executed with commitment, instead of halting quasi-transitions marching halfheartedly into the next segment like the befuddled leader of a lost platoon. As if this weren't all confusing enough, the band jumps into a shuffle-beat bluesy jam before the final chord even stops ringing, ostensibly a continuation of "*Every Time I Try*." Every Time I Try "what"? is my question. The answer? "*Every Time I Try to Finish This Song...*" Actually, the blues-rock jam is pretty catchy, with a good hook. The guitar soloing is a bit weak on this one, however, and the bass goes to the final bridge section two measures ahead of the guitars. This is the kind of thing that would normally happen in a jam session down in the basement... but on a demo tape?

I'm In Lust — "I'm in lust with a friend of mine / She makes me feel good all the time / Got one thing on my mind..." You've gotta hand it to good ol' Michael: this song is about as honest as a guy wants to get. Too bad it seems to be naively and happily celebrating the fact, rather than spotlighting the narcissistic shadow with a tongue-in-cheek parody. One thing about boorish stereotypical macho self-centeredness: it sure makes an easy target! So let's pick a more challenging one: lyrical flow. Set aside for the moment the poetic quality of these lyrics; the problem here is, they simply don't fit the melody line. They flow like cotton balls down a velcro slide (point: they don't). Actually, the lyrics flow more like finely-ground dark espresso roast Seattle's Best Coffee from the grinder into the thingy that holds the coffee: it doesn't pour out, so you keep tipping it, it still lingers stubbornly in the grinder, so you tip it more steeply, give it a tiny "tap," then all of a sudden the whole batch avalanches all over the thingy, your hand, the kitchen counter, and the floor. Difficult-to-say lyrics are forced into the

eTH — A Faster, Cheaper Hacker

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beat, placing the em-PHA-sis on the wrong syl-LA-bles. This detracts from the, uh, message of the words. This is a good thing. Perhaps the band recognized all this and became fed up and frustrated, because this song just all of a sudden... ends! No build-up, no outro, no fore-, um, warning, just... that's it! And it's obviously not a tape machine glitch, because there's a reverb tail clearly marking the engineer's territory like a "Kilroy was here" sign. You have to wonder what the band talked about when coming to this production decision. Perhaps they just couldn't come up with a decent ending, so, what the hell! Just shut it off! Works for me.

Now, as I mentioned at the beginning of this review, this is Michael Paradise's third contribution to the grueling *Basement Tapes* ordeal. He is a Veteran of the Wringer! But so he doesn't feel like wringer fodder, let's take the historical perspective. In earlier demos, Michael apparently performed more of the parts himself. In contrast, these songs sound like they have been performed live to tape by his band. There is a much more organic feel to the performances; less synth, more emphasis on guitars and acoustic drums. Let's take a dualistic approach here (with apologies to Pat F.)...

The nettles... Perhaps this is an artifact of playing "live," but this project is replete with tempo and rhythm inconsistencies. The beat wanders all over kingdom come at times, often thrown off-kilter by a drum fill. Another inconsistency is what I would call "stylistic" inconsistency, that is, different musical styles are butted up against each other in some of the compositions (notice I didn't say "mixed" or "blended," because actually the effect is fairly jarring). My suggestion is to stick with one major stylistic thread in a particular song, keeping it more "pure." This will keep the lyrics and vocals center-stage, where I believe Michael wants them.

The daisies... Michael's voice is very pleasant to listen to. He has an earnestness in his voice, and a bell-like, throaty clarity that rivets your attention on the vocals like Doug Ingle (WHO is Doug Ingle? Try Iron Butterfly, hello). Many of the vocal parts are doubled (I would like to know how he does this, recording an entire band on a 4-track machine; do you use some kind of doubling FX, like a Digitech Vocalist, Michael?). The end result is richly textured vocal tunes. Another plus in Michael's arrangements is the interesting endings he writes for his songs. With the exception of "I'm In Lust," it is clear the Michael and his band put some

real thought and inventiveness into their song endings. More composers should give attention to how their songs end; I am often guilty of simply giving in to the ubiquitous fade-out. I think I'll turn over a new leaf, and learn a lesson from Michael Paradise, and just end the article right ■

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



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



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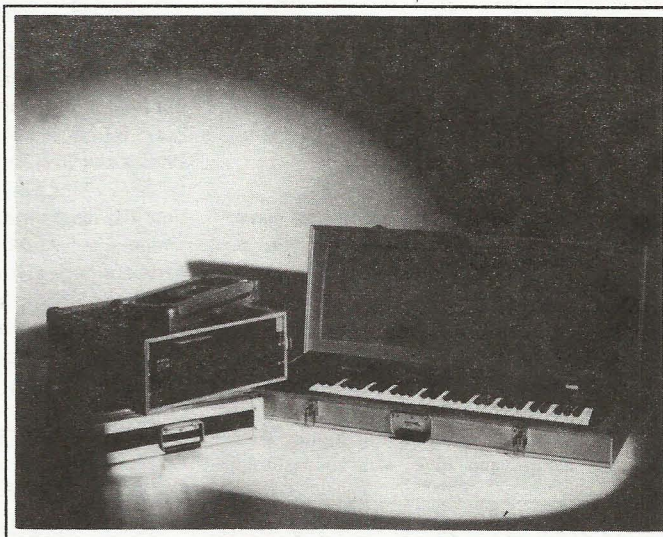
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Electronic mail - Internet: interface@transoniq.com. In many cases a quick answer can be obtained by posting to our interactive, on-line Interface at our Web site (<http://www.transoniq.com/interface.html>) or calling Ensoniq CS at 610-647-3930.

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

Hi there, everyone!

I am still here. Just had to graduate from seminary, that's all.

Anyway, digging right in (bypassing the vitriol controversy), I have a question for which I hope to find rest.

When I sold my EPS-16 PLUS in order to upgrade to the ASR-10, I "threw in" quite a few sound disks, also including the WAVEBOY Audio-In Effects Disk. Well, I just figured that the ASR-10 has the capability to process inbound audio signals anyway, so why keep the disk? The problem is, I have not yet found out how to do that neat little thing where you hold down certain keys - like the third and fifth, etc. - in order to produce harmony with the incoming audio signal. Does the ASR-10 not do this on its own? If I did have the WAVEBOY disk, would it work in an ASR-10?

Anyway, nice to see you all again! My, you're really looking thin! Talk with you again soon.

Jack Stephen Tolin, M.Div.
Yahkohv@Juno.com

[PF - Jack: You'll need the Waveboy disk to do this, as the ASR has no harmonizing algorithms built in. And as Waveboy is the only game in town, I'll bet it works just fine on the ASR.]

Hi,

I recently bought an EPS and have a problem with the sequencer. When I try to use the command "copy track" to copy a track from, for example, sequence 2 to another sequence, say 3, this works as long as I remain on the page with the option "keep old or new." When I get into the edit/sequence page, however, the only thing that's heard is noise. My question is, if it's supposed to be possible to copy tracks between sequences and, if yes, what might be the error? Unfortunately, I only own "Musician's Manual" so I haven't been able to check this up. The OS I've used is V 2.49.

Roland
Mega779@hotmail.com

[PF - Roland: Interesting name for an Ensoniq user (nyuk-nyuk). Seriously, though, check the firmware (ROM) version of your EPS by pressing the "Command" then the numeric "1" key. Yeah, the display reads "No commands on page" but don't even believe that. Press the Right cursor arrow until the display reads "Software Information." Press the up cursor arrow to get to the "ROM Version =" page. If that doesn't say 2.41, order the 2.41 ROMS from your Authorized Ensoniq dealer.

I've never really copied track data from one sequence to another, so I can't say if what's

happening is a glitch, bug or pilot error. I do know that it's just about impossible to get out of the "Keep Old - New" page without pressing yes or no, however. The EPS wants to flush that buffer and return that memory back to the pool...]

[Eric Montgomery (Emu-Ensoniq) - I just happened to have an EPS classic near me and tried what you mentioned. It worked just as you said. I would agree in trying the most current ROM, though the service manual does not indicate that there were issues in this area that were addressed. The current ROM mostly seems to deal with SCSI problems. I have OS 2.49 and ROM 2.40. According to my notes, the most current ROM for the EPS is 2.40 and 2.41 for the EPS-M.]

Hi guys,

We have a very reliable SQ-80. Just purchased a computer with a MIDI interface. We bought a cable and hooked it up. Oops, it doesn't work. We have Windows NT. Keyboard works great when it is not hooked up. But no sound comes out when it is connected to the computer. What are we doing wrong? Please help. Sorry, we are MIDI and computer dummies but are eager to learn. Hope you can help us.

Thanks muchly:
(DRUMMER) & BRIAN (guitar and keyboard)
corrin@caribsurf.com

[PF - Drummer & Brian:

What music application are you using? There aren't a lotta soundcards or drivers that are NT-savvy, and you simply can't just buy a cable, hook it up and expect Grammys to come running down your MIDI pipe. Questions you need to answer are:

- (A) What kind of cable?
- (B) What version of NT?
- (C) What soundcard?
- (D) What soundcard driver version?
- (E) What music program (application)

Given the minutiae you've posted, I can't offer a solution without the above info to get a handle on your configuration...]

Hi folks...

Long time subscriber and have not written in awhile - that is not to imply that everything is just dandy!

Anyway, after owning my MR for a year and a half and using it just for performance, I've retired it to the studio for some serious work.

I'm not sure if I have a problem with the MR or if I am just doing something awfully stupid but here's

the problem:

If I save a song from the 16-track recorder as a SMF on to disk and then read it into Cakewalk, Cakewalk sees every track EXCEPT the drum track. There is no data on track 10 (default) yet it "sees" that something should be there. Hmmmm. very difficult to explain.

What am I doing wrong? BTW, for what it is worth, the drum track may or may not have originated from the idea pad and subsequently was sent to the rhythm track of the sequencer. Data is definitely there... I can hear it but Cakewalk will not see it or play it.

Thanks for any advice.
John
jmiriello@enter.net

[PF - John: Common misconception with the MR (and one of its most misunderstood features). All rhythm data, whether it originates from the idea pad or the Drum machine, MUST be assigned track status and dropped into the Rhythm Track (track #10) in the sequencer. Furthermore, if you want it to output MIDI data, it must be assigned a MIDI track status as well. The MR (and ZR) rhythm data does not originate from the sequencer, but originates from the Drum machine, which is entirely separate of the sequencer. You have to copy the drum machine data into a sequence track by assigning it track status and then dropping it into Track #10...

This issue was addressed by Tony Ferrara many issues ago in the Hacker...]

Hi Transoniq Hacker,

I'm the proud owner of an Ensoniq EPS Classic. Here's my problem. When I turn on the EPS it reads the OS and then tries to calibrate the keyboard. Then it fails. I'm left with an EPS with no keyboard to play on. I'm using OS version 2.49 and 2.40. I also don't do silly things like play the keyboard while it's calibrating. Got any troubleshooting ideas?

Yours truly,
Paul Carpenter
paulc@netstra.com.au

[PF - Paul: The connection between the two keyboard PCBs is broken. Common EPS problem. Take your pet to the nearest Authorized Ensoniq dealer and have him install the keyboard connector ECO (Engineering Change Order). This ECO removes the connector blw the key contact PCB halves and hardwires across them. Not a major problem, but frustrating, nonetheless. Expect to pay about an hour of bench time to have this performed...]

Transoniq,

I have a TS-12, and in playing the TS-10 and the TS-12 side by side, I notice that the 10 is more responsive than the 12. Also, if I trigger the 12's sounds from my ESQ-1, they are more punchy and bright. Changing sensitivity and velocity curve settings doesn't seem to help. It seems as though something was not taken into account when the patches or the system software was transplanted from the 10 to the 12. Has anyone figured out how to compensate for this?

I have one other question. I have a TS-12, a Macintosh, and Logic Audio. I'm considering getting RAM and a SCSI interface for the TS-12 in order to effectively interface between sample recording and editing on the Mac and sample playback/trigging on the TS-12. I'm wondering if anyone out there who has put together a professional, smooth, and fast system for dealing with Hard Disk based file conversion and management might be willing to tell me what they are using in terms of hardware and software.

Many thanks,
Hans.
oroboros@ncal.verio.com

[PF - Hans: Check your keyboard's global "Touch" settings. I'll bet they're all different from one another...]

The only Mac-based editor worth a salt is Alchemy. Problem is Passport Systems is out of business. If you can bag a copy from a friend or obtain a copy from one of the newsgroups, you'll be good to go. Terje Norstad (<http://fysmac-elg01.uio.no/eps.html>) has some excellent utilities for the Mac->ASR/EPS/TS series for moving/archiving files back and forth, as well as changing formats.

Readers?]

TH -

Just bought an early model ESQ-M to load my ESQ-1 programs onto. Trouble is I can't figure out how to load from my cartridge onto the module. I get as far as "Cart A to INT" but can't find an enter button to execute the command. SOMEBODY HELP!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

DAVID B. MC DONALD
dbmcd@charlotte.infi.net

[PF - Dave: I owned an ESQ-M for about 2 weeks in 1989, so I'm pretty fuzzy on how to do it myself. I'd contact Ensoniq's web page at www.ensoniq.com and email Eric Montgomery or one of the TSE's up there to see if anyone else remembers the ESQ-M. I've slept since then: readers?]

[Eric Montgomery (Emu-Ensoniq) - Once you have gotten to the CART A TO INT screen, press the STORAGE button while holding the SCROLL button. While the transfer is working the screen will read COPYING PROGRAMS. When it is complete it will return to the storage page.]

TH -

Thank you for the response about using my MR-76 board to control my Roland XP 50 and making

those fat layered sounds for live performance. I am familiar with setting up my sounds on the MR for presets, and on the XP50 in User bank. My desire is to link them together and during live gigs, be able to with the single turn of the knob, (in preset mode maybe), have the assigned sound or layer of the MR and the assigned sound of the Roland being played. Right now I have them together via MIDI cable and the MR plays the Roland fine, and the sound layers of them together are seriously fat, but here's the deal.... I am manually changing the sounds of both boards to get the desired effect.

I just went through the steps you suggested to set my MR up to speak to my Roland XP 50. I selected a sound, sent it to the sequencer track 1. The second step is vague. Do I select the same sound again in Soundfinder, or when I am on track 1 and turn the right "value" knob it asks to change sound, or when in track 1, I turn the FX mix knob and the expression value comes up, or when in track 1 do you mean to turn the left parameter knob and then I am at syst cntrl 3 and 4, or do I go to sound MIDI out by turning the left parameter knob from the same sound in Soundfinder where ch., bank and prg. is... then the program will change but the MR local sound is off and all that plays is the Roland.

One other thing, since I like such a large array of sounds available, would the flash sample board assist me in my library of sounds I am looking for? I really don't want to keep buying sound moduals. By the way readers, Syntaur Productions says they will have their own programed sounds very soon for the MR. I'll be looking forward for that.

I have a PC, Pentium 2-400, Soundblaster AWE 64 Gold soundcard. I installed the Unisyn software in my PC, plugged in the cable - in and out MIDI to the MR and the 15 pin plug to the sound card. There is a "Y" female split off the male I left hang freely. I called up the Unisyn software on the PC and after the program is initializing it says "no response from device." I know it's a lot to ask and a lot of new equipment on my part. Could you help? Should I be looking at getting a Cakewalk program also?

Thank you again.
WARNERPRD@aol.com

[PF - WarnerPrd: Answers, in order:

(1) You're trying to get the MR to (a) send one program change to your XP-50 for a sound, and (b) send another program change internally to the MR to get it to play a different sound. No can do. Whatever program # is assigned to an MR sound is the same program # being sent out MIDI. And since you have to assign a "sound" to a "track" and spin the wheel to select MIDI out (in the Sequencer) you can't play a local sound once a track has been assigned in this manner. Check out the August Keyboard report on the ZR-76 - says it a lot more eloquently than I...

(2) Step 2 was simply to do the same thing to another track to get you into a Track MIDI Status = OUT condition without repeating all the button presses of step 1. Seems you've escalated this step into a button-pressing frenzy Keith Emerson would've been proud of in the Tarkus era. But that's good, as you've now discovered once a track has been assigned MIDI OUT Status the pan knob generates outbound CC#10 messages to pan a selected Roland sound right and left, the Mix Knob

generates CC#7 to raise and lower volume of the selected track, etc. Way cool given the MR's limitations and caveats in (1) above...

(3) The FLASH board seems to be not more than, IMHO (again), a cursory tip of the hat to the TS-series with no software update to load that 4Mb with ASR samples. So you've gotta make *.wav files out of ANY samples, line them up to play only in their specific keyzone and range, interpolate the filter settings, more than a LOT of programming yada-yada-yada, only to discover once loaded into the Flashboard, waves MUST be looped before they get in there. It's SO much work Ensoniq discovered the ASR-X was hurting because it shared the same limitation and spun the OS to let it read ASR disks. The MR didn't get the same maintenance revision, so it's *.wav files or nothing for an MR Flashboard. I'd go with the ROM expansion cards - there's a lot more data in them, and somebody's already done the programming work on them. This isn't to say you can't tweak them - it's just you won't be spending all your time doing housekeeping chores assigning/looping/programming waves to zones to layers to FX to sounds, etc...

(4) Which is why the computer might help. To most people, hooking up a computer to an MR is like trying to put out a fire with gasoline: unless you're VERY computer literate, VERY Ensoniq literate, and VERY MIDI literate this is little more than an exercise in futility (as you're discovering). And pouring a gallon of Cakewalk on this inferno, well, you get the picture. I've tried Unisyn on the MR on both Mac and PC platforms. On the PC it simply wouldn't work unless the planets were aligned, I bowed three times and faced the East, hung a Crescent over my MR and chanted the Microsoft mantra. When I got it going on my G3, every time I'd change a parameter in Unisyn and send it to the MR for audition, the MR went into its "Save Everything" mode for five minutes at a time. By the time I figured it out I had to go play the gig...

(4b) The other part of the MIDI dongle on your gameport "hanging freely" is a joystick port. You can leave it open or plug a joystick into it. The dongle doesn't care and it will have no impact on your configuration. Try reversing the MIDI IN and OUT to the MR - a lot of these offshore MIDI adapters don't specify whether they're labeled for function or connection.

(5) The MR was designed to be a songwriter's workstation. Ensoniq was crafty enough to put all the reins to that horsepower under the hood where only a MIDI cable would let you do certain things. This made the user interface less confusing and more musically productive. It's terribly unfriendly if you view it as its component pieces. Then again, it was always the gestalt of the collective pieces that made Ensoniq such a force in the market.

[WARNERPRD@aol.com - Thank you very much for your help and direction. I'll continue to crank out tunes from the MR for the band. Such a great creative tool it is. Must be a 455-Hemi under the hood of the MR. And if any of you readers just happen to be in the Seattle area, stop by the OASIS, in southwest Seattle, you'll see us, the house band, and me, doin' the Keith Emerson routine, spinnin' the knobs and pushin' those buttons to make all of this work... What a deal. Later, Kyle]

[PF - Kyle: The MR keyboards are just about the

most powerful wavetable synths out there, yet they remain the easiest-to-sequence-on workstations yet realized. I wouldn't suggest poking it into a computer until you're ready to run 500 miles in that hemi...]

[WARNERPRD@aol.com - Very good... It is a pleasure to use this forum and your help has been a blessing. Any on-liners should definitely subscribe to the Hacker and support it that way. After reading each issue, it's a "long" wait to see what the next one has to offer. Kyle.]

TH -

Help! I am using a borrowed **E-Prime** keyboard that is perfect for the sounds my band needs. I have heard that this keyboard was only manufactured only for a short period of time and replaced the KT-88. I need to find one for sale somewhere or a close substitute. My questions are:

1. Does anyone know of one of these for sale anywhere?
2. Does the KT-88 have the same internal sounds, especially the B3 sounds and the Wurlie sounds?
3. Is there another instrument that might work instead of this one? My MR-76 does not sound as good for these particular sounds.

I know that how good the sounds sound is subjective, but I also have a Hammond XB-2 and the E Prime has far more realistic B-3 sounds than it does. Any help that could be provided would be greatly appreciated...

Doug Leins
dleins@nshlmlis.stthomas.org

[PF - Doug: Answers, in order:

(1) As of 12:45 AM July 18, 1998, the Ensoniq webpages notes, and I quote: "We offer a range of instruments with the features you want. All with the great sounds, effects, and sequencing that have made **ENSONIQ** famous. Whichever you choose, you'll get an instrument that's as musical and creative as you are." And the **EPrime** is the third instrument from the top, so it's obviously NOT an orphan like the earlier brethren. So I'd presume their sound libraries are still available for it. ALL the SQ, KS, and KT-variant sounds should work fine in it: I'm just assuming it has a larger wavetable with more waves internally that the earlier libraries don't address. But that's a good thing...

(2) I would think so: aforementioned SQ/KT/KS variants are all capable of B3 emulations that are downright scary. I wrote an article years back in the Hacker on using the mod wheel as a vari-speed leslie. The factory Wurlie emulations need tweaking to get them to sustain longer, and didn't seem to have as much "bite" as the ASR-based Wurlie samples, IMHO. Tweaking gives VERY credible results here...

(3) Check out Pelle Piano's Demo Disk from the Ensoniq website. I bagged it about 4 months ago, so I only hope it's still up there. There are some righteous B3 sounds with all the obscure drawbar settings AND cabinet noise/driver sizzle that are more dead on the money for an MR than any other 3rd party stuff I've ever heard. You can smell the

nicotine in those drawbars...

(4) Yeah, the XB-2 wasn't even close to what I heard out of my B3 and leslies. The new Roland is awfully damned close to the real thing, but the ASR/16+ Joey DeFrancesco library is the only one I've ever heard that has the 60 Hz induction noise aliasing the first three drawbars just like the tonewheeler. And other samples from this set sport all three Chorus Vibrato settings. Trust me: your B3 solos don't scream until you hit those vibrato tabs with the knob set to C3. If someone programmed 888000000 with C3 for an MR, I'd LOVE to hear it, because that's the only sonicstate tell-tale of the Ensoniq library: the Chorus vibrato speeds up with higher notes in certain sample registers ('cause sampling every note would yield a 16 Mb B3 stop)...]

[Steve Vincent - Pat, are you saying the ASR/16+ using Joey deF's samples sounds better than the Roland wannabe? I also recently heard a Roland VK-7 on stage, and even with its on-board rotary emulation, the sound blew me away. For live gigging the past 2 years, I've been using an Alesis QS-7 (which I bought solely for its piano and B-3 sounds) through a Motion Sound Pro 3 rotary speaker, sending the low end emulator to a Barbetta Sona 41 Pro Combo keyboard amp. I thought this sounded sublime, but the Roland VK... I think I need one.]

[PF - Steve: The Joey deFrancesco samples sound more AUTHENTIC than the VK-7. The VK doesn't have the 60 Hz running through the samples like the real thing. In live performance, the VK-7 is a pretty close approximation, especially with the C1-C3 chorus vibrato stops. And yes, the COSM rotary simulator is very good; I think it's the best leslie simulator out there. But it's not good enough for me to sell my B3 & leslies yet...]

TH -

I just want to say, "thank you very much" to Steve Vincent. I appreciate your words of encouragement and your comments about each song. I am not sure of release times or dates regarding the CD, but I feel a lot more confident than before and just wanted to say thanks.

Thanks,
Eric Montgomery
Ensoniq Technical Support

[Steve Vincent - Eric: You're welcome! The listening pleasure was all mine.]

TH -

I'd like to give a few more hints to Dave Faunce (and other TS users), who wrote in issue #157 about corrupted factory TS sample disks. I had the same problem with my factory sample disks. My personal theory is that Ensoniq's error correction methods when writing to disk are not as rigorous as those of MS-DOS (in the old days) and Windows. (And, wasn't there some other type of computer, long ago... some kind of fruit?) The medium on the 3 1/2" disks is, of course, the same, so why do my TS disks fail so much sooner than my PC disks? Fortunately for me, a friend of mine was so blown away by my TS-12 that he went and bought one a few weeks after me, so I used his disks to make

copies when mine went bad.

The simplest way to protect yourself from corrupted sample disks is to make backup copies on your TS. A local dealer told us that it couldn't be done, but you can copy sample disks with your TS. The other great way to back these up is with your PC. If you haven't already done so, get **Ensoniq Disk Tools for Windows** from Rubber Chicken Software Co. (see the back cover of TH). With EDT, you can make backup copies of all your samples onto your hard disk. You can also buy the latest hot CD-ROM sound library and copy the files onto floppies in Ensoniq format.

Dave Simenson
fivetone@elite.net

[PF - Dave: Yes. Ensoniq read/write verify is a CRC redundancy check - not a Norton Disk Doctor sformat utility writing running 1's and 0's thru the disk (time-consuming read/write verify). If the checksum matches, an Ensoniq disk is pronounced/blessed as "good" and calls the "Format Completed" ROM BACK (exactly like that piece of fruit company that just blew away Wall Street this week)...

What's happening here is that Ensoniq formats a disk and looks at it as a container. The file system doesn't look at/compensate for bad sectors after a successful format (the checksum matched, right?), so after sitting on top of the power supply, floppy drive, or other magnetic influence, upon load, the # of bytes written doesn't equal the checksum anymore. As there aren't any high-level read/verify ROM routines for an already overtaxed CPU, the poor TS can only ack back "Disk Data Corrupted." So if you don't get a "Track 0 unreadable: Disk Unusable" or "Unable to save Unformat info" prompt, remember this ain't no Pee-Cee...

Fortunately, that fruit company hired Peter Norton to write a suite of disk utilities that LATER got ported over to said Pee-Cee, one of which called Norton Disk Editor can correct these flaws, but only if you've got one of those fruit computers. But by and large, most disk errors are caused by bad media. Make it a point to buy Maxell floppies (not these 100 blanks for \$19.95 with a \$19.95 rebate, cause you get what you pay for: zip), and wash them thru your Mac or your PC to ensure they're formatable. Even these disks will occasionally return a "Track 0 error: Disk Unusable" error, but Maxell WILL replace them free of charge. Again, it's your blood, sweat and tears on these floppies, and the racing analogy of a \$10 helmet for a \$10 head most certainly holds true here...]

Just a quickie...

I have an old **EPS** (keyboard form factor, not EPS-16+ etc). A very old EPS. In fact, it's completely unexpanded. I'd like to snag a RAM upgrade and maybe even a SCSI kit for it.

I am aware that they haven't been made for a bit, and are thus somewhat rare. The crux of the problem is that I am based in London, and most EPSs are in the US. In fact, both my EPS and mixer run from a US->UK power converter.

Anyway, if anyone knows of any little specialists making/refurbishing RAM boards, or even has one for sale for a small amount, I'd appreciate a yell..

Thanks in advance...
My addr is peter.mills@hydramedia.com.

[PF - Peter: Syntaur Productions (www.fatsnake.com/syntaur) has the 2X and 4X original Ensoniq Memory Expanders. For all practical purposes, go with the 4X. Rubber Chicken Software (www.soundcentral.com/~chickeneps) has a cool SCSI expander for the EPS that's actually better than the factory one (now unavailable) in that it lets you use Zip Drives with the EPS. Ping these URL's, bag these items, and, once installed, bask in ownership of the fastest-loading sampler ever created.]

TH -

I am running a TS-10 into an AWE-64 Gold card to Cakewalk. I can't get communication into the program. It just doesn't want to record any MIDI. Do I need to switch something in the sound card?

RockerBill@aol.com

[PF - RockerBill: Reverse your MIDI cables. These things are labeled "IN" and "OUT" but does that mean connect to the MIDI IN of your soundcard or connect to the MIDI IN of your TS-10?]

TH -

My son has a KS-32 with expanded sequence memory. He wanted to use some General MIDI sequences, but had to edit them manually to use them on his KS-32 - very time consuming.

Some years ago I got him something from a Transoniq ad that (I think) did some conversion between Gen MIDI and SQ-1 (KS-32). We can't find it now (we both moved from Montreal to BC). Does this software still exist? Could you tell us where to find it? Someone says check with Cakewalk - OK, but his funds are at low ebb right now.

Thanks!
Rob Davis
robdavis@gec.net

[PF - Rob: You might have had the Giebler KS-GM conversion utility. Ping Gary Giebler at www.giebler.com. He probably has a record of your purchase (if that was, in fact, the utility you speak of)...]

The other option, if you already have Cakewalk installed, is to bag the KS-32 IDF (Instrument Definition File) for the KS-32. Also available from the Twelve-Tone web site...]

[Bob Lang (rlang@netdoor.com) - The midi mapper for WIN3.1 is available free at <http://www2.netdoor.com/~rlang/midimap.htm>.]

Hi again TH'ers -

I recently had to reinstall my Mac OS, because of a major crash (first in four years) and since that time, I haven't been able to get Alchemy and my EPS-16+ to talk to each other. Apparently, Passport is no more, so you're my only hope. I've tried everything I can think of, but it always says, "16+ not responding - check connections." Help!

Peter Heim pch7@interport.net

[PF - Pete: Ensure Sysex is on (on the ASR), and that Alchemy is speaking to your 16+ on the BASE channel. If this is an older version of Alchemy that doesn't have the 16+ setup option/driver you may be out of luck unless someone can eMail or otherwise send it to you. I couldn't get my old version to run on my ASR, BTW, so you're not alone...]

[Peter C Heim - Thought you'd like to know - after days of unsuccessful attempts, I woke this AM with a picture in my mind of some little thing tucked away in an unused extension file. I looked, and there was this little thing called Midi Driver. I put it in extensions, restarted, et voila! Alchemy rides again! By the way, it also seems to connect with my ASR-10 on the same midi channel. Today's bummer: the sound I was trying to edit keeps giving me FILE OPERATION ERROR from my syquest, even though I had it loaded two days ago. (Whimper..)]

[PF - Peter: Yeah, the Apple MIDI Driver. I forgot about that. Then again, so did Apple, as it wasn't rev'd past V. 2.0 (check the date in the "Get Info" box). I had some troubles getting a CSIX to talk to XGedit until I dropped the Apple MIDI Driver AND the MIDI Manager into the Extensions folder. Then I had to load the old PatchBay DA and draw lines to and from my Interface Icon to and from the CSIX - only THEN would it work correctly. It's a shame Apple quit supporting their MIDI Toolkit, but with MOTU, Opcode, and all the other guys doing FreeMIDI, OMS, etc., they just rolled all their efforts into QuickTime (and QT Musical Instruments, PowerPlug, etc...)]

TH -

As always, a great mag. I have one suggestion, and a question.

Suggestion: Your most recent issue had a "classic" article reprint with the "Something Grand" patch for the KS/SQ line. I've still got most of those old classic issues going back a few years, and the Something Grand patch has been in my KS-32 since you originally printed the article. But WHEN did you print it originally? Maybe I'm the only one who cares about this nostalgia, but I think it would be interesting for you to print the original publication dates of future reprints (if you did print this somewhere and I missed it, my apologies...).

Question: I've got an ASR-10 Rack which is currently hooked up to a ZIP drive. I just purchased a Korg D8 hard disk recorder (great little machine for those of us who can't afford PARIS) which has a 1.4 gig drive built in, and a SCSI port for more external drives. I would like to use a Syquest Sparq with the D8 and/or the ASR-10. However, it only comes in a parallel port model. A friend of mine told me that there is such a thing as a p.port-to-SCSI converter which might solve the problem. Does anyone out there know if this can be done?

Thanks, and keep up the good work.
Bernie Fabricant
BERFAB@AOL.COM

[TH - Good point. That patch originally showed up in Issue #94 - April, 1993.]

[PF - Bernie: I don't own a Sparq drive, but I'm VERY leery of devices that autosense b/w parallel and SCSI connection. For instance, the Zip PLUS drive is the same type of interface, doesn't work

with any of the Malvern loopboxes, and can be the ONLY device in any SCSI chain...

I'm not trying to scare you off - just be sure you can return the Sparq drive if it isn't compatible. Most reputable vendors have a return policy similar to this, but be sure to purchase it with that return caveat.

And, of course, eMail us back and tell us if it works or not...]

Dear TH,

I came to your site looking firstly for a list of Ensoniq service representative but I was pleasantly surprised because the questions that I had about my battery problems and concerns about taking my board to someone who really may not know what they are doing were answered and addressed in a letter from Peter Eggleston. For my own reasons, I have not been able to use my board for years. When I went to turn it on again, the battery message started and I was unsuccessful locating assistance. Not only did your site provide insight into the problem but also provided Ensoniq Customer Service number so I could find a local representative although I'm not sure how close one will be. I used my Ensoniq ESQ-1 for preliminary programming my ideas for a CD-single I'm about to release on the Internet Underground Music Archive website for independent musicians. I want to begin creation mode again so thanks... Your assistance has been invaluable.

Claire Machado, CAM ENGINE
camengine@cruzers.com

[TH - You're very welcome.]

[PF - Claire: An Ensoniq service tech (who shall remain nameless) volunteered this info to me while I was trying to resurrect a dying ESQ-1. My thanks to him for providing this level of tech support (that Ensoniq doesn't on the discontinued keyboards) and for allowing me to share this info with our esteemed reader base.

He asked me to add this quip to my response: "I am the Pentium Borg. You will all be approximated..."]

Gang:

Check out the ASR-X-Pro in the September issue of Keyboard or www.ensoniq.com. And yes, it is CERTAINLY red...

Pat F.
Transoniq

[Dvkrogh@aol.com - I can't find any info about the ASR-X Pro you mentioned - could you give me an exact address? As I live in Germany, the "Keyboard" September issue is not an option for me... Thanks, Derek]

[PF - Derek: I quoted the ad from Keyboard magazine. I went up to www.ensoniq.com and found absolutely NO mention of it either. Basically, it's a hopped-up ASR-X that holds up to 66 Mb RAM (counting the 2 Mb soldered in, I guess) with the SCSI interface built in. No mention of the output expander built in, but we'll see. Sorry for the misinformation, but that's how the ad read: maybe

Ensoniq will get this info on their website soon (since they're advertising info on it is there)...]

[TH - We should have info elsewhere in this issue.]

TH -

I have an **EPS Classic**. Today it suddenly will not read its drive. It gives the message "Bad device ID" and goes to "Insert disk hit Enter" when I try to save the sample. The disk gets reinserted and enter is hit. This brings up "Bad device ID." Any ideas on how to correct this?

Thank you in advance.
Tim
light111@earthlink.net

[PF - Tim: If your EPS won't read from its floppy drive, you can't load the OS and get "Bad Device ID" messages. I think you've got a bad or corrupted disk. Reformat the defective/bad floppy, and ensure it's an 800K DSDD, and NOT a 1.4 Mb DDHD floppy. DDHD's have two shutter holes, DSDD's have one...]

Hi there,

I am currently wrestling with the following **TS-12** problem. My set-up is a TS-12 plus Korg 03 sound module, which is connected to the TS-12 on MIDI channel 1. For live work I play the TS-12 exclusively in its Preset mode, where each preset will not only set up the TS-12 sounds but also output the required programme change to the Korg. This works well and allows me "on-the-fly" patch changes at gig's.

I am now trying to record these live performances on tape+external computer sequencer and have encountered a major problem. I do not seem to be able to capture my sound changes correctly!!

What I want to do is have the external sequencer record my performance plus preset changes correctly.

In order that Preset programme numbers are transmitted from the TS-12 I have to set the MIDI transmit setting to SEND=BASE. So for example, when I press the button to select Preset U0-0, a programme change command with a value of 61 is recorded by my external sequencer, this bit is fine. The MIDI receive mode is set to MODE=POLY. This has the disadvantage of not selecting the correct Korg patch - but I can live with this for now.

I can then record, notes, volume pedal, modulation, pitch-bend AND PRESET PROGRAMME CHANGES into my external sequencer.

The next bit is where I am having troubles. I change the TS-12 MIDI transmit setting to SEND=TRACK so that the Korg will receive its correct programme changes and this is what happens.....

When the sequencer runs my performance plays both the TS-12 and the Korg - fine so far. However, when a Preset change comes along the TS-12 alters its patch accordingly but the Korg doesn't change at all. It looks as though the programme changes to the Korg are not being transmitted!!

If I stop the sequencer and press the panel buttons to manually change TS-12 presets this condition continues and the Korg sounds still don't change. To get back to normality I have put the TS-12 into its "Sounds" Mode and select any sound. The Korg then changes its patch. Now when I return to TS-12 "Presets" Mode and select new presets the Korg obediently changes to the correct patches for each preset.

Am I missing the point, doing something wrong OR is this a software feature?

Regards,
Dan Sullivan (England)
100700.1264@compuserve.com

[PF - Dan: Not a software feature - pilot error. First, set the TS's MIDI Mode to "Multi." Poly won't go there as you want multichannel operation. Second of all, Presets and Sequences are actually different for the TS-series. In the "Preset" mode you get the option of selecting 3 different layers, which is fine for mixing/layering INTERNAL TS sounds. But as you've discovered, it sends no MIDI data. Which is why you have to go to "Send=Track" and define a SEQUENCE of both internal and MIDI sounds. Set both of the above there, and when you want multiple instruments, just double-click the track you want to layer onto the current track and they both become active (from the keyboard). And, unless the Korg is set to receive in "Combi" or "Multi" mode, it'll probably ignore base channel external commands. Turn Sysex ON on the TS, open a MIDI Monitor window on your computer, and you'll see the TS is most definitely sending out MIDI data: question is the Korg set properly to receive and make sense of it.]

[Dan Sullivan - Despite your suggestion I am still not having much success.

I followed your instructions and copied one of my presets into a new sequence, (I also copied the effect setting as well). I then created another se-

quence and copied a different preset into that. I was then in a position to switch between the two sequences and have the correct sound changes including my external Korg 03 module, (By the way this is just the same state of affairs as when switching between presets in my gig situation!)

I then fed the MIDI output of the TS-12 into my external sequencer, put it into record mode and switched between the two sequences. Once this was done I played it back into the TS-12 MIDI input.

I was expecting the TS-12 to switch between the two sequences mirroring my button pushes when recording into the external sequencer. This was not the case. I read the manual and found there is an option to enable or disable the transmission/reception of MIDI song changes so that external sequencers could select TS-12 sequences remotely - unfortunately when I checked this option it was already enabled.

Instead of creating sequences with my preset settings I tried created songs, once again patch changes all worked correctly during recording but on replay no change in song selection was observed - only the track sounds within the song were changing.

If the changes to the track sounds were correct this would be fine, however, the sounds that are selected on each track do not reflect the original settings that were present when I was doing the recording.

If I could get the transmission and reception of song changes to work I'm sure that this method would prove successful! How can I?]

[PF - Dan: Then it's time for you to contact Ensoniq Tech Support and speak with one of their tech support engineers for a resolution. If it's this sticky a problem the pros in Malvern are your best bet. They'll ask for the ROM rev of your TS and OS rev, the ROM rev of your external sequencer, and

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other details above the scope of this forum. Let us know what they recommend should the same issue return in another letter. And good luck!]

[TH - And if that doesn't work, this'll be among the letters that go for the "official word" before going to print - so there's still one more chance.]

[Eric Montgomery (Emu-Ensoniq) - I know that this may sound silly but, if it all worked before except for the Korg, then the way you were doing it at first probably worked except for one thing. After the computer recorded everything, and it is time for playback, be sure that the Korg is plugged into the MIDI thru port of the TS instead of the MIDI out port. You did not mention that you had a multi port interface so I assumed you did not.

If you do have a multi port interface, just insert the program changes where needed for the Korg separately. You already have the note data in the computer. It is just a matter of setting the Korg on its own track and inserting program changes where they are needed.]

Hi,

The **ASR-10** keyboard we work with has developed strange behaviours, sort of like a mind of its own. When the OS diskette is inserted the "Calibration failed" message shows up. After several attempts to reboot the ASR may finally work only to start randomly playing numerous notes and keys. A strange message on the display keeps popping up: ERROR 144 - REBOOT. Have any of you encountered any such difficulties with this particular model or make?

Daniel & Bill
dopn@goteborg.mail.telia.com

[PF - Dan & Bill: Sounds like a defective or intermittent keyboard assembly, as this is what's actually being calibrated when you get that message. Error 144 is a MIDI buffer overflow, which the keyboard CAN cause if defective, but usually 144 means you're pumping more MIDI data into the ASR than it can deal with. Take your pet to an Authorized Ensoniq Service Center: they can square you away in no time...]

Hi,

I am trying to use my **ASR-X** to sysex some synth patches into my Yamaha **AN1x** (they are in **AN1X** format - downloaded from the net). Could you tell me how to get the **ASR-X** to transmit sysex data? (It has the latest O.S.)

Thank you very much,
Robert
rcmidi@yahoo.com

[PF - Robert: The issue here is what format these patches were saved in. Are they Cakewalk Sysex dumps, Unisyn dumps, Galaxy patch format, IBM or PC format? This will determine if you can do this. As I don't own an **ASR-X** I can't step-by-step you thru this. But I can explain the procedure.

Once you get these patches in an **ASR-X**-readable format, set the **ASR-X** to transmit Sysex information. Ensure you have the **MIDI** out of the **ASR-X**

connected to the **MIDI IN** of the **AN1x**, and the **MIDI OUT** of the **AN1x** connected to the **MIDI IN** of the **ASR-X** (in case they need to handshake). Load the sysex file into the **ASR** and transmit it. The **AN1x** should respond with a "Receiving MIDI Data" prompt if it is receiving the data.

As this is a current Ensoniq product, I'd call Tech support at Malvern if you have any trouble doing this. That's a relatively new product that any of their tech support engineers should be able to steer you thru...]

Dear TH,

I have a bit of a problem on my hands. I am the proud owner of an **EPS Classic** with a mind of its own. The problem I have is that after booting the unit, every time it has to engage the floppy drive the drive spins without reading. It does this EVERY time, whether trying to load an instrument, after pressing the sample button or when trying formatting a floppy. I have tried using different O.S. disks/versions, I even downloaded a new one. I even tried cleaning the drive, to no avail. Someone told me I needed to have the drive rebuilt? But I don't think that makes any sense. If there was something wrong with the drive wouldn't it not be able to load the O.S. disk, and therefore boot?

Please help!
Anthony
san_agustin_1@hotmail.com

[PF - Tony: Just because a drive can read the OS sectors doesn't mean it can read the entire disk. Your problem could be as simple as a defective OS diskette, a failing disk drive, a failing power supply, intermittent connectors, maybe even the logic board. On a problem of this nature it's absolutely best to take your **EPS** to an Authorized Service Center for the following reasons:

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TH -

I would like to know who has the best patches for the **ESQ-1**. I've been looking into Patchman Music, Voice Crystal, Manymidi, and Syntaur Productions. I purchased a 3 volume set from Kid Nepro and was very disappointed with the quality of the programming. The sounds were useless. The factory presets were better.

S. Somsoda

suk@ix.netcom.com

[PF - S. Somsoda: You're looking in all the right places, as you reference the three top choices for these patches. As far as who has the "best" patches - sounds are way too subjective for anyone to say who is "best," as what is "best" for you may be the "worst" for someone else. It's probably better to contact the patch vendor and ask what type of sounds are available. Usually by their response you can tell if they've done serious work on their stuff or not. I can speak from personal experience that Sam Mims of Syntaur Productions does wonderful sound development for the **SQ/KS/VFX/SD** series, so I'd look at his wareS first...]

[Steve Vincent - Having purchased a zillion **ESQ-1** patches over the years representing just about every vendor, my vote definitely goes with Syntaur. Sam Mims has created gorgeous patches that fully explore and utilize the **ESQ-1**'s sonic abilities. I have used mostly Syntaur patches on my recordings.]

TH -

What are my options for adding new sounds to my **ESQ-1**? I know it uses an EPROM card, but are there additional sound cards available or can it be interfaced into my computer for downloading???

Thank you,
First time Transoniq Hacker user,
Dan Copher

[PF - Dan: The **ESQ-1** can interface with a computer via **MIDI** for downloading and uploading sounds. You'll need a Sysex utility or editor program to do this, but it's pretty straightforward. You can also Sysex via **MIDI** to a **Mirage**, an **EPS/16+**/**ASR** or other Sysex device such as a **MIDIDisk** or other **MIDI** Data filer...

The **EEPROM** carts are the coolest, though, as they're immediately recognized. Sounds can be played from them as soon as it's inserted, where, with Sysex storage, it takes some time to load the memory of the instrument...]

TH -

Can I transfer my **VFX** seqs to a newer machine, if I were to purchase one?

SEA94@aol.com

[PF - SEA94: Sure. Depends what format of sequences your new machine can read. Gary Giebler has the most extensive collection of sequence converters on this blue ball. URL is www.giebler.com. Check there to make sure your new keyboard is supported. Chances are it'll read **Standard MIDI Files (SMF)** and you'll just need the **VFXsd->SMF** utility...]

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Our (somewhat regular) illustrious bevy of writers includes: Craig Anderton, Robby Berman, Britton Beisenherz, Mark Clifton, Steve Curtin, Anthony Ferrara, Pat Finnigan, Jeffrey Fisher, Frank Fortunato, Duane Frybarger, Garth Hjelte, Jeff Jetton, Dara Jones, Johnny Klonaris, Ray Legnini, Bob Lang, Sam Mims, Eric Montgomery, Dan Rohde, J. D. Ryan, Tom Shear, Kirk Slinkard, Jack Tolin, Tom Tracy, Joe Travo, Steve Vincent and Garry Wasyliw.

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