Transoniq Hacker

The Independent News Magazine for Ensoniq Users

Tuning on the MR Series

Steve Curtin

In this third and final installment of our series in alternative tunings on Ensoniq instruments, we feature the tuning capabilities of Ensoniq's newest synths, the MR series. The MR comes in three flavors — the MR-Rack, and the MR-61 and 76 keyboards. The tuning implementation of these units is identical so most of this article will refer to all of them as the MR.

Parts is Parts

In the multitimbral MR-Rack, each MIDI channel is directed to a voice architecture component known as a Part. All Parts can use one of a collection of system pitch tables in ROM and or a user-programmable RAM-based pitch table. Each Part can be set to use the pitch table selected in the System parameter page or its own individually selected table. On the MR-61 and MR-76 keyboards, the information that was stored in a Part on the MR-Rack is contained in the Tracks of the 61/76's integrated sequencer. On both of these systems the pitch table parameter is marked "PitchTbl" on the display. The "RAM" pitch table is the only one that can be modified by the user — it's the last table on the list after the ROM tables.

The format of an MR pitch table is the same as other Ensoniq synths, a table of 88 entries with a note and offset mapping for each MIDI note number. The MR's tuning resolution is double that of the TS and ASR series. Each semitone is divided up into 128 equal- tempered steps. This comes out to 1536 frequency steps per octave, up from the 768 steps per octave the TS and ASR get from 64 steps per semitone. The ROM tunings in the MR are recalculated versions of all of the ROM tunings in the TS plus 11 new tunings, including two African Mbira scales and the Pierce scale.

NRPN Pitch Table Change

The pitch tables used by each Part or Track can be set over MIDI using NRPN number 021. This involves sending three controller messages to the MIDI channel of the Part on the MR-Rack or the Track on the 61/76. The first two messages set the parameter number. These are sent to MIDI controller number 98 and 99. In this case parameter 98 is set to 21 and parameter 99 is set to 0.

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The third message is the parameter's value. This value is sent to MIDI controller 6, the standard data entry controller. The RAM pitch table is number 46 (45 counting from 0). Note that the data entry controller input to a Part or Track must be enabled for this to work.

MIDI Tuning Standard

The MR series synths support the MIDI Tuning Standard (MTS for short) for downloading tunings from a computer or sequencer into the global RAM pitch table. This means that tuning editors don't have to support a special SysEx tuning format for the MR — if they support MTS, the MR and the tuning editor are already compatible. There are two kinds of MTS messages, called Bulk Dump and Note Change, and each has a particular application.

Bulk Dump is the same kind of message that the EPS and TS have — the contents of an entire pitch table are contained in the body of the SysEx message.

Note Change is a new kind of message defined in the standard. The MR is the first synthesizer to support it. Note Change lets you tweak the tuning of a single note without having to download the entire table. What good is this? It lets you make subtle alterations in the tuning of a piece as it progresses. Arabic and Middle Eastern music modes change the tuning of notes frequently and Note Change allows this. An extension to the standard Note Change message has been added to the MR implementation to better support octave-repeating tunings and Middle Eastern music. Sending the Note Change message to tuning 128 or hex 7F between the C4 and C5 keys will extrapolate that tuning across the keyboard. All other note changes will only affect the assigned note as defined in the original MTS spec.

MTS Compatible Applications

Although tunings cannot be edited from the front panel on the MR, because of its support of MTS the MR's computer-based editing support is the best of any of Ensoniq's products. Tuning editors that support MTS include *JI Calc* for the Mac and *MIDI Tuning Wrench* for Windows and the PC. All of the tunings in the ROM were created using these two programs.

JICalc

JICalc was mentioned in the first installment of this series because of its support for the EPS and ASR. Its authors, Robert Rich and Carter Scholz, were among the authors of the MTS spec, so it was also the first tuning editor to support MTS. Simply select "MIDI Tuning Standard" in the MIDI menu and the current tuning will be sent to the MR.

MIDI Tuning Wrench

This is a tuning program that was released last year by Artic Software. It was written by Jim Johnson who some of you may remember as a writer for the *Hacker* a while back. This is a windows program that runs under Windows 3.1, 95 or NT. It uses the MIDI device installed in the system for its input and output.

The display shows a piano keyboard and a notes/cents value in an edit box above it. Clicking the mouse on a key of the keyboard both plays that note out to a synth connected to the PC via MIDI and displays the current pitch and offset values for that note. The user can change these values and the edited scale can be automatically or manually downloaded to the synth.

The Extrapolate and Interpolate operations previously described in the TS installment of this article are supported. Also included is a ratio mode — clicking and dragging on two adjacent keys or clicking and option-clicking on two different keys, wiil cause the 'ratio' button to be un-dimmed. Clicking on this button will then bring up a dialog box that displays a ratio with a numerator and denominator. You can enter in a decimal ratio, for instance 1.5, by typing that number in the numerator field and leaving the denominator field set to 1. Or to enter a ratio of 4/3 for instance, you would enter a 4 in the numerator and a 3 in the denominator.

This is an extremely useful tuning program in general and is recommended for any Windows users who wish to edit their own tuning. My one complaint with it is that its floating-point display of the offset in the main window clips to the MTS resolution, which means that if you enter an offset of 15 you might get 14.9993. The thinking behind this is that this way you know what you're getting from the resolution of MTS but it seems like a distraction.

For more information contact Arctic Software, Box 28, Waterford, WI 53185-0028. Phone: 414-534-4309, Fax: 414-534-7809, email: artic@execpc.com, www: http://ex-ecpc.com/ ~artic, Compuserve: GO ARTIC.

Tuning Controller

This is a Mac application developed to test and demonstrate the note-change support on the MR. It is a Forth program written under HMSL, an object-oriented composition environment available from Frog Peak Music. For more information about HMSL contact Frog Peak, Box 1052, Lebanon, NH 03766, (603)448-8837. Their web site is at http://music.dartmouth.edu/~larry/fpfront.html. *Tuning Controller's* source is available on the HMSL archive web site at shoko.calarts.edu:pub/HMSL/mac. The *Tuning Controller* screen displays twelve buttons, one for each key. Clicking on a button will detune the key a quarter- tone and cause the button to go black. A button marked INIT will set up the attached MR synth for RAM tuning on all of its parts. If you are using an MR 61/76 you must assign a sound to a track before clicking this button or the NRPN tuning assignment will be ignored on

that track.

Conclusion

And that's all, folks! This series has described the tuning capabilities of pretty much all the synthesizers and samplers ever produced at Ensoniq. The Mirage was not mentioned because tuning was not directly supported by Ensoniq, but was supported by Dick Lord and others in their third-party OS's. The pitch modulation technique described for the ESQ in Part 2 of this series could probably be applied to the Mirage as well.

There's some late breaking news about PC-based tuning editors for the ASR. Rubber Chicken Software is adding a pitch table editor and librarian to version 3.0 of their Windows-based ASR parameter editor called *EPS/ASR Tools*. Contact Rubber Chicken for more info at P.O. Box 100, Wilmar, MN 56201, 1-800-8-PRO-EPS, http://members.aol.com/chickenEPS. Thanks to Bill Sethares for passing on this information.

It is hoped that this series has been informative and educational and has helped to start your exploration of the musical vistas offered by alternative tunings. ▬

Bio: Steve Curtin is a software engineer and tuning evangelist at Ensoniq. He developed the MIDI Tuning Spec support and ROM pitch tables on the MR series synths. He's been interested in alternative tunings since the late '70s, after playing in a Javanese Gamelan and discovering the music and writings of Harry Partch.

Front Panel

RND (♪♪♪)

Hacker News

We have an update on contact info given in last month's Steve Vincent *Basement Tape* review of *My Inner Ear:* Jorgen Teller, Sortedam Dossering 41 D, 1 th., DK-2200 Copenhagen N, Denmark. Phone: 45-31 35 81 81, e-mail: teller@babel.dk. Jorgen also mentions that he's into a couple of interesting projects these days involving microtuned EPS and MIDI- guitar. Also, Steve Vincent says that he's down to "the last box" or so... should be caught up later this year.

Back Issues

Back issues are $2.00 each. More than 10: $1.75 each, more than 21: $1.50 each. (Overseas: $3 each.) E-mail copies of back issues are available for all issues since #118: $1 each (anywhere). Orders for e-mail issues should be sent to: issues@transoniq.com.

Issues 1– 40, 61, 67 – 74, 77, 79 and 82 – 85 are no longer available. Permission has been given to photocopy issues that we no longer have — check the classifieds for people offering them. A free back issue index is available which contains the tables of content for all issues since #43.

ESQ-1 coverage started with Issue #13. **SQ-80** coverage started with #29, (although most ESQ-1 coverage also applies to the SQ-80). **EPS** coverage got going with #35 (and also applies to the **ASR-10**). **VFX** coverage (which also applies to the **SDs**) got started in #48. The **SQs** got going in #63. (SQ articles also apply to the **KS-32** & **KT-76/88**.) **DP/4** coverage started in #88 (much of which also applies to the **ASR-10**, and most of which also applies to the **DP/2** & **DP +**). **TS-10/12** coverage got going with #98 but owners should also check out sample reviews for EPS/ASR sounds — which also can be used on the **MR Series**.

Current Ensoniq O.S. (Disk/EPROM)

EPS	2.49/2.40	SQ-R PLUS	1.15
EPS-M	2.49/2.41	SQ-2	1.2
EPS-16 PLUS	1.3/1.00F	SQ-2 32	2.03
MASOS	2.0	SD-1/SD-1 32	4.10/4.10
MIRAGE	3.2	DP/4	1.15
ESQ	3.5	DP/4+	2.02
ESQ-M	1.2	KS-32	3.10
SQ-80	1.8	ASR-10	3.53/1.5
VFX	2.30	ASR-88	3.53/3.50
VFX-SD	2.1/2.00	KMX-8	2.00
SQ-1	1.11	KMX-16	1.50
SQ-1 32	2.03	TS-10/12	3.05
SQ-1 PLUS	1.15	KT-76/88	1.62
SQ-R	1.20	Soundscape	1.3.03
SQ-R 32	2.03	MR Rack	1.03

HYPERSONIQ — New Product Announcements

3D Sounds has just released the *MIDI Resource Bank.* This PC-format CD-ROM contains the following: 50 megs of samples for the ASR/EPS/TS/MR series, 1000+ instrument wave files, 7000+ MIDI files, patches for TS-10 and most major synths, MIDI/synth/sampler utilities and more for $39. 3D Sounds is now online and willing to answer technical and programming questions for Ensoniq products at http://www.in.on.ca/~dwhite/3dsounds. E-mail: dwhite@in.on.ca.

Makin' Waves with the DP/4

Tom Tracy

Well it doesn't have to be just the DP/4, it could be "Makin' Waves with the DP/4+," and since this is only a 2-unit preset, it could be "Makin' Waves with the DP/2." What flexibility! Something for everyone! Oh by the way, I'm not talking "waveforms" here, I'm talking about the sound of the surf — those kinds of waves.

The Scenario

Aaaahh a relaxing, quiet afternoon on the beach. You've got all the amenities: the suntan oil, the cool shades, the beach umbrella, the webbed folding chair, the latest issue of the *Transoniq Hacker* — but, even with all these necessities, nothing is more pleasing than the soothing sound of the surf. What a sound. God's music. Now imagine that your DP/4 (substitute the Ensoniq effect processor of your choice) is a giant seashell, and if you hold it close to your ear, why you can....

No need to imagine — this sound is easy to recreate! For this preset, we'll use two algorithms:

Sine/Noise Gen — this is used to create the surf sound.
EQ-Panner-DDL — for creating a left to right movement of the waves. After all, waves aren't static, are they?

I call this preset "By the Sea Vee" (Buy the C.V. — as in Pedal), for obvious reasons. Yes, buy a C.V. Pedal. There is nothing more cool than immediate satisfaction from real-time modulation control. For additional control in creating wave movement, the C.V. Pedal is hands-down (or foot-down maybe?) the best way to control modulation with your effect processor. Don't delay, call (610) 647-3930 and order one now! Our operators are standing by! (a shameless plug).

Now it's time to get our hands dirty (sandy). Let's dig in:

Setting Up Unit A

1. Press the Edit Button, and then the A button.

2. Press the left arrow button until the algorithm name is flashing in the display.

3. Turn the Data Entry knob to select the Sine/Noise Gen algorithm. It's probably a good idea to lower your audio source first, since the Sine/Noise Gen algorithm will generate a sine (or noise) signal.

4. Using the Data Entry controls, set the following parameters:

Mix = 20
Volume = 99
Sine Freq = 9999Hz
Balance = 99
Noise Filter LowPass Fc = 1700
Bass FC = 164 Hz
EQ Gain = +07 dB
Treble Fc = 04KHz
EQ Gain = +03dB
EQ Input Level Trim = +00 dB
Mod1 Source = Cntrl-6 (DP Analog CV In)
Mod1 Destination Parameter = 005
Mod1 Param Range Min = 55%
Mod1 Param Range Max = 64%
Mod2 Source = Cntrl-6 (DP Analog CV In)
Mod2 Destination Parameter = 009
Mod2 Param Range Min = 70%
Mod2 Param Range Max = 78%

Setting Up Unit B

1. Press the Edit Button, and then the B button.

2. Press the left arrow button until the algorithm name is flashing.

3. Turn the Data Entry knob to select the EQ-Panner-DDL algorithm.

4. Using the Data Entry controls, set the following parameters:

Mix = 99
Volume = 99
Panner Rate = 09
Panner Width = 80
Left/Right LFO = Out-of-Phase
Panner Sample & Hold Rate = Off
Panner Left Delay Time = 300ms

Panner Right Delay Time = 501ms
Panner Delay Regen = -01
Panner Left Echo Time = 300ms
Panner Right Echo Time = 448ms
Panner Echo Level = 35
Bass Fc = 180Hz
Bass EQ Gain = +18 dB
Treble Fc = 05KHz
Treble EQ Gain = +02dB
EQ Input Level Trim = -01 dB
Mod1 Source = Off
Mod1 Destination Parameter = 001
Mod1 Param Range Min = 00%
Mod1 Param Range Max = 99%
Mod2 Source = Off
Mod2 Destination Parameter = 002
Mod2 Param Range Min = 00%
Mod2 Param Range Max = 99%

Setting the Config

The order of these parameters may be different, depending on which effect processor you are using. So if you just set the parameter values to the appropriate names, you should be fine. Here they are:

1. Press the Edit button, then the Config button.

2. Using the Data Entry controls, set the following parameters:

"2 Source Config" in the DP/4 and DP/4+ ("1 Source Config" in the DP/2)

AB Input Select = this doesn't really matter since the sound is internal — this preset doesn't need an input source, but if you *have to have one*, set this to either mono or stereo — depending on what your input source would be (a Fender Jaguar comes to mind as the ultimate surf input source, but I'll use the Ensoniq Quakercaster, thank you).

AB Unit Routing = [A->B] serial

Dry Path Around AB Amt = 95 (this only affects the input signal, set to taste).

(b)ypass (k)ill A = b
(b)ypass (k)ill B = b

Any other Config parameters (that you may or may not have) are unimportant to this preset, so they're not listed here for the sake of brevity. Now that the parameters are properly set up, you should save the preset.

Saving the Preset

1. Press the Edit button, then the Write button.

2. Use the Data Entry knob to select a location for the surf preset.

3. When you've decided on a location, press the Write button again.

4. Now using the Data Entry Controls, name your new preset. I named mine "By The Sea Vee" but you can call it anything you want (within 16 characters).

5. Press the Write button a final time to complete the save.

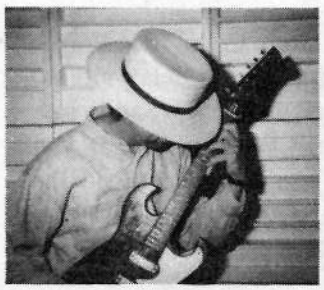
For detailed instructions on naming and saving presets, consult the Storage chapter in that excellently written Reference Manual. Now that your preset is saved,you can connect your C.V. Pedal, return your audio to normal listening level, and begin the fun.

Using the C.V. Pedal

The CV Pedal is set up to modulate both the Noise Filter LowPass Fc and the EQ Gain parameters in the Sine/Noise Gen algorithm at the same time. In the real world, as a wave crashes, it sounds louder and it's usually closer to you. These conditions are emulated by these two parameters. When you move the CV Pedal, it gets louder, and the filter suggests a "closer" sound. Try it. It might be tricky at first, but you'll soon get the hang of it.

In Closing

I'm sure you'll get some good use from this preset. You can listen to it alone (no need for expensive toys to plug in) for an evening of quiet relaxation, or add the surf sound to your cover band's Ventures' set (every good cover band has a Ventures set, right?). If nothing else, you won't get sunburned from the display.



Bio: Tom Tracy is a self-indulged ethno-musicologist and luthier searching for the ultimate bow for his yayli tambur (and a lover of the parenthetical), but his greatest desire is to cross the valley.

InVision Orchestral Instruments

Pat Finnigan

For: ASR and TS-series instruments (w/full DRAM expansion).
Product: *CDR-8: Orchestral Instruments.*
Price: $99.
From: InVision Interactive, Inc., 2445 Faber Place, Suite 102, Palo Alto, CA 94303-3316, phone: 415-812-7380 (voice), 415-812-7386 (fax).

Talk about a busy company! InVision Interactive has been a long-time producer of sounds for not only Ensoniq, but all those lesser brand keyboards as well. These guys are some pretty heavy hitters; programming was done by *TH's* own Clark Salisbury w/assistance from Erick Hailstone, so this is a pretty serious offering. So serious, in fact, you'd better go out and make a run on 4 Mb SIMMS if you wanna hear these samples: only the Nylon Guitar, Solo Oboe and some limited orchestral percussion will load into an unexpanded ASR. This is distributed by both Ensoniq and InVision. This is serious fare here, so let's begin.

The Roses

Yes, fired up the ASR, CD-ROM ID #4, okay, load macro file first. All macros work fine. Oooh, first selection is Legato violins at 3813 blocks. Very rich, nice sample points, patch selects add sub octave, okay, I'm not overwhelmed. Next file: a 6789 (gulp!) block Lush Strings file.

Yes, now this is the stuff: I can smell the rosin in these samples. Same patch selects, nice attack, this IS the Boston Pops, left stage. A 2293 block Pizzicato Strings file may sound overkill, but to sample a SECTION of pizzicato and play it back, well, the varying pluck times and various decay times are on the money. The Orchestral string (4108 blocks) are a verbatim lift from the Terminator 2 Intro Title soundtrack, simply exceptional...

The real killer here is the 3926 Solo Cello file. Proper sample points are observed here so that the delay vibrato doesn't munchkinize this most glorious sample. Sad to say, the 1863-block Solo Violin doesn't fare as well. If you want the same level of quality, you'll have to load the 7241 block (aaaiiieee!) Solo Violin 2 sample. Can't get both the mondo Cello and Violin into the ASR at the same time with anything else (@#$%$#), but that's why there's AudioTracks, I guess.

Of particular noteworthiness is the attention to detail in the Harp Glissandi banks. Diminished, whole tone, 7ths, major 7th ascending and descending glissandi, as well as octave rolls are represented in sterling accuracy; I haven't seen any other collection of this breadth in the harp department anywhere. I was disappointed the french horn samples had no representative rips, but at 1504 blocks, I shouldn't be so presumptuous; difficult, if not impossible, instrument to accurately sample at best. The Orchestral Hits & Blasts, well, there're better lifts from the third party, although these are pretty low caloric, maxing out at 1203 blocks, so there's room for more. As orch hits are terribly subjective, I withhold comment...

Winds are well represented, the 3435 Solo Flute being the star here. Perfect wind noise, an elegant white noise burst on attack without becoming shaku-like, this is the real thing here! Other emulations suffer the same fate of dropping samples in search for less blocks: use the smaller ones for ensemble stuff; the Strawberry Fields intro works well with the 1473 block Piccolo played an octave lower and saves 2000 blocks over the gorgeous Solo Flute.

I was particularly critical of the Glockenspiel samples since that's what I play in our Concert band (I've got to march with one for the 500 Parade, as well as march a lap around the Speedway on Race day as well), and yes, the 1333 Lyre Glockenspiel sounds just like what I'll be whaling away on for two and a half miles of left turns this Memorial day.

The 3018 Orchestral Glockenspiel file is a veritable Musser 4-octave glock kit, so play it in those ranges and it's perfect. Orchestral Percussion (at 6942 blocks) is a study in tympani accuracy; tambourine, tam-tam and the usual plethora of percussion is excellently represented here. Refreshing change from all those @#$%^ 303 and 808 gated noise files of late. The clarinet and oboe are sterling: the bassoon suffers from an attack delay, but that's probably my own observation: when I play a low Bb

on my bedstick, I hear it immediately, but there's tactile feedback from the reed that you don't get playing the Bb ASR key, so it's probably my own interpretive disillusion.

The 7164 block brass section is dead on, but again, only in a limited range. Face it, the odds of 29 trombone, trumpet, flugelhorn and baritone players playing any chord is only convincing for about an octave and a 3rd of range: out of range this is VERY unconvincing. Be warned: it's the undoubted best there is — in the wrong area it's just another Brass Section synth patch.

The 6794 Nylon Guitar is a Martin D28 Dreadnought with replete cavity resonances: there're three different guitar files for FF, MF and MP levels: the definitive acoustic nylon guitar personified.

The Thorns

With respect to the quality of sound, none. Glorious samples, no noise, no DSP quantization noise (zipper noise), this is THE GOODS. No qualms or complaints.

With respect to usability, let's talk. Ensoniq, Ensoniq — unless I copy this CD to a hard disk, I could get rheumatism waiting for these samples to load from CD. It's high time we got the 4X driver written for the next O.S. release, that is, while I still have hair (er, some hair); the 6X CD-ROM driver would be *very* appreciated in inclusion with O.S.3.5.X. I'd truly prefer listening to these samples instead of watching the ASR display shuffle data. We've got to be able to get these big awesome samples into our instruments sometime today. Then again, with 850 Mb SCSI drives under $200, copying CDs to hard disk is a viable, yet labor intensive, option. Maybe it's time for POWER architecture on a 604E running an Ensoniq OS emulator. The 601 was an experiment, remember?

The Deal

Ensoniq raises the bar again on high quality samples for the masses. The CDR-8 CDROM may not be a Digidesign-enhanced DDD Kenny Jager Violin library: it's not $1200 either. For that reason, this CD wins, absolutely, positively, hands down. I'll gripe about load times, but try and load a 32 Mb Emulator/Peavey/Roland sample file and do lunch while you wait. We're at that point in sample technology where the ASR is used for verbatim accuracy in the lead mix, over wavetable synth beds of emulation. We want, to quote the Eagle's *"Life In The Fast Lane," "Everything, All the Time."* But an ASR-88 and a couple of ASR racks, fully expanded to the gills, is a virtual orchestra. I remember cabling up a Mirage and 8 Mirage racks, thinking how cool this was; Ensoniq designed the EPS, which was 8 Rack Mirages in a single box (if you could get the $700 4 Mb expansion) and redefined the synth/sampler/sequencer standard in 13-bit accuracy.

It's become apparent that the sounds drive the engine: with quality like this it's painfully apparent (especially to the competition) that Ensoniq IS the leader in the sample marketplace, and, well, I pity their competition. Again, a new standard from Ensoniq and InVision sates the Ensoniq masses for dead accurate orchestral instruments in keeping with their affordable policy. A welcome addition to the biggest library in the industry, and one of the most accurate orchestral renditions you'll find at 6X the price.

Put in on the top shelf... ▬

Sequence Skating

Pat Finnigan

Okay, you've got a free hour: no distractions, no chores, no kids to bug you, a whole hour to spend on yourself. So you fire up your trusty Ensoniq SQVFXSDTSKTKS synth to begin a little sequencing. Let's see here, set up some tracks, route some FX, poof, there's an intro. Create a new sequence, set up tracks, route some FX, poof, there's the verse. Create a new sequence, set up tracks, route some FX, poof, there's my chorus. Seems like I'm stuck in some kinda loop here, eh? OOPS! There's the doorbell, here's the kids, there's the lawnmower; that hour just went up in what seemed like 15 minutes.

No, this has never happened to me, either. Just as I'm about to chain the song together the World calls to let you know time's up. And it's particularly frustrating because it'll take you another day to get another free hour, the majority of *that* hour to try and return to the same semblance of mindset you beheld writing those sequences (as if you can

ever get back), and, if you're not careful, will forget to save them to disk and lose them anyway. ooo....here's an avoidance strategy to maximize that hour...

(A) Create your first sequence SLATE! Assign instruments, tracks, tempo, meter, etc. Then assign Effects. I regularly default to the Chorus & Reverb algorithm and route instruments accordingly, since chances are I'm gonna use the chorus for EPs, pads, and sectional instruments while the remainder will receive some kinda reverb wash. I can fine tune that later through the busses. Will take 7-12 minutes.

(B) Copy this sequence at least 10-12 times in numeric order. If you're using a VFX variant, copy it 12 times so it fills 2 6-sequence pages: if an SQ/KS variant, copy it 10 times to fill a bank. Don't worry about names yet: you can edit that in *after* you've recorded the note data, okay? Will take 2-3 minutes. Still with me?

(C) Return to "Sequence 1." Record your intro. Title your sequence "Intro."

(D) Advance to "Sequence 2." Record your verse. Title your sequence "Verse."

(E) Advance to "Sequence 3." Record your chorus. Title your sequence "Chorus."

Beginning to see a pattern here (or am I just stuck in a loop?).

(F) Repeat steps C thru E to taste. Before you run out of blank "sequences," copy the last blank to another 10-12 locations (if required).

(G) Chain your sequences together in the "Create Song" menu-warp. Add Song tracks if desired.

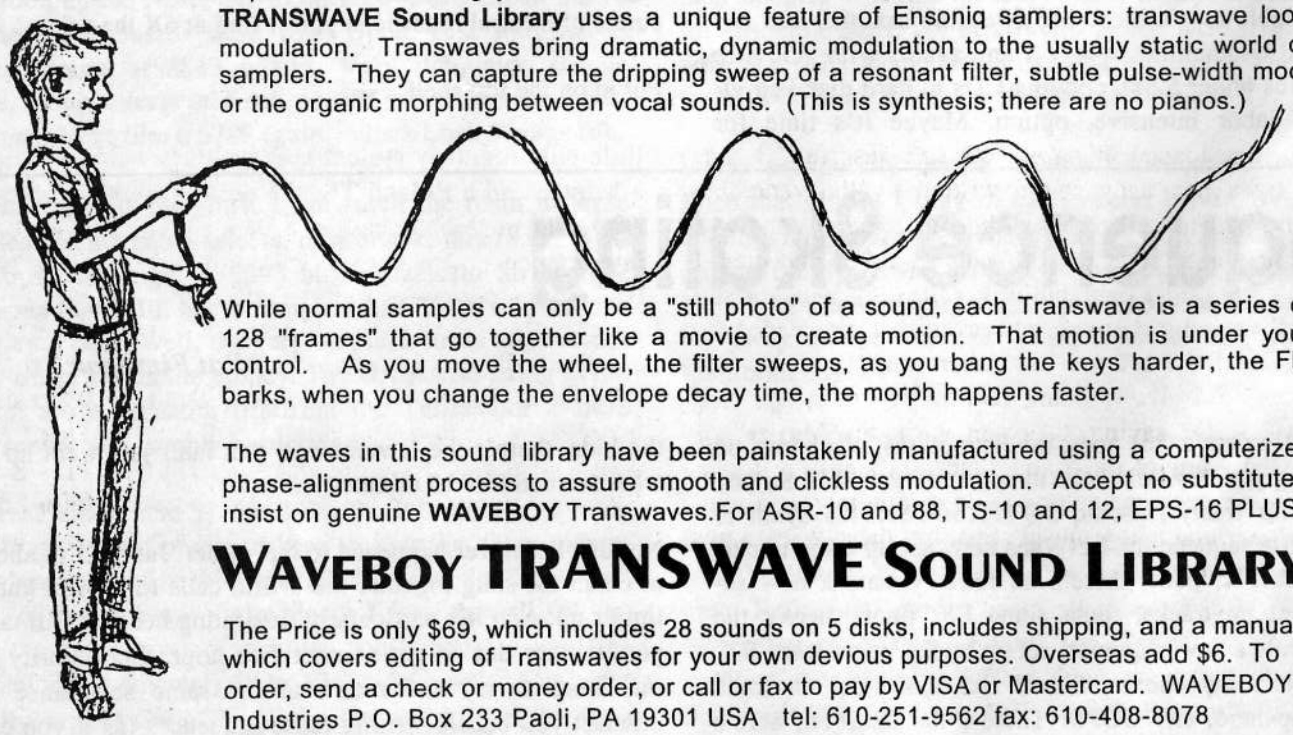
(H) Open your favorite adult beverage and enjoy while simultaneously pressing "Play." After all, you still have nine minutes left to kill...

The key here is *not* to reinvent the wheel every sequence. And make mine Grand Marnier up with a Perrier back... ▬

Bio: Pat Finnigan is a tech support person for RasterOps. He still uses a B-3 for a keyboard stand and watches the alpha channel.

TAKE CONTROL OF A TRANSWAVE.

Experience something you've never heard - something you've never *felt.* The **WAVEBOY TRANSWAVE Sound Library** uses a unique feature of Ensoniq samplers: transwave loop modulation. Transwaves bring dramatic, dynamic modulation to the usually static world of samplers. They can capture the dripping sweep of a resonant filter, subtle pulse-width mod, or the organic morphing between vocal sounds. (This is synthesis; there are no pianos.)



While normal samples can only be a "still photo" of a sound, each Transwave is a series of 128 "frames" that go together like a movie to create motion. That motion is under your control. As you move the wheel, the filter sweeps, as you bang the keys harder, the FM barks, when you change the envelope decay time, the morph happens faster.

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Sound Clips for System Events

Duane Frybarger

When I first loaded *Windows 95* late last fall, I was greeted by a new-agey sound written by the venerable Brian Eno. It was called *"The Microsoft Sound"* and was very ambient and rather wistful — as would be expected. I thought it was pretty cool, but it was the only sound on my PC worth attaching to system events. I proceeded to search around the Internet for other sounds to attach. I found some *Star Wars* dialog (Darth Vader saying, "All too easy," R2D2 saying, "As you wish, my Master"). I downloaded a few of these and attached them to different system events such as opening a file or minimizing a window. I also found many music clips, but these were songs and didn't really work in the context of being attached to an event.

Before long, I became bored with these clips and decided to attempt writing something of my own to give my PC a personal touch and sat down to my trusty ESQ-1 to do a little diddling. (My system also includes a Roland U-110, a Mirage and a Roland TR-505 drum machine.) I wrote a few little melodies about 4-8 bars long. Then I wrote a few segments in more of a "film score" style. I later found that the melodic clips didn't really work that well — the "film score" pieces were ideal for this project. I put together about 10 sequences each lasting from 5-10 seconds in playing time. I recorded them to DAT using a metronome count-off so that recording to my hard drive would be easier. I then plugged my DAT into my Sound Blaster 16 sound card and recorded them to my hard drive using *Windows 95* built-in Sound Recorder program. It was then a simple matter to attach these events to different sounds in my Operating System.

When I first put up my page on the World Wide Web to showcase my music, I decided to offer these clips for downloading as an incentive to visit my site. I needed a

conversion program for my sound clips which were in WAV format. I also had four sound clips from two of my albums in WAV format that I wanted users on other platforms to be able to download. After some searching, I settled on *Cool Edit* (http://www.Syntrillium.com/), which is a way cool shareware program for $25.00 — worth more than twice the price. This program allowed me to easily convert my WAV files into AIFF and AU format to accommodate MAC and Sun/Next users. I simply loaded a sound and then "exported" it to my hard drive in the new format. This program also made it really simple to edit unwanted silence at the start of clips and to "fade out" my album clips. This last little bit was a really nice touch as many sound clips downloaded from the 'Net end in a very harsh, abrupt manner. The fades gave my clips a professional, polished sound.

I ended up with seven clips to attach to different events. My Internet Service Provider allows me 10 Mbytes of storage for my Web page and the seven clips plus four album clips, each in three different formats, takes up over seven Mbytes. By the way, I only pay $15.00 a month for unlimited Internet access plus the Web page — not a bad investment for showcasing my music to a potential audience of millions. ▬

Bio: Duane Frybarger is a composer living in San Francisco. He records under the name, "Pangaea World Orchestra" and his latest album is "On the High Road." *His WWW address is http://www.creative.net/~duane.*

How Sounds Work

Part XVIII: Wurlitzers

Mark Clifton

It was a gift, really, the heavy, rectangular chip-wood finish coffee table-like object that sits next to my other keyboard equipment. It was one of the most beautiful things I had ever seen at the time, all levers and tubes and fabulous fifties kitsch (only a blind man could appreciate the aesthetics of that natural sawdust colored finish). It has proved to be a bit of a burden since. The 1956 Wurlitzer 112A (with dubious interior modifications) was in a state of high disrepair. Its original hardware, dusty and rusty and far overdue for replacement, was charming in a philosophical, nostalgic way, but quite unhelpful when you tried to turn it on and actually play it. Senility has corroded its contacts, thrown its tuning into orbit, and dulled the warm glow of its tubes. It is but a shadow of its former self.

Luckily it was given to me for free, in the hopes that I could at the very least give it a good home in which to live out the twilight days of its life. My duty, then, has been to keep it in at least one piece until I can dig up enough money to pay for the countless number of repairs that might give it a new life. Made poor and humble by student life, I have for the time being put my dreams on hold, and the old Wurlitzer remains on life support.

However, there are reasons why I occasionally come back and still play it. Despite its weaknesses it still retains that old sound: warm but biting, slightly thinner and more naive than a Rhodes, and always able to cut through an old Rock N' Roll mix with more spirit than its more respectable counterpart. And yes, it does reward heavy playing, with a crisper and more distorted "spank" than a Rhodes offers. Mellow and sophisticated a Rhodes is, of course, but its muddiness can weigh down the brighter blend of a Rock band. If you want to get funkdafied, you need that Wurli sound. And since that sound remains intact, even in that old codger of mine, I have used it to translate to the SQ-1 some custom Wurlitzer patches of my own, one of which, "Whirly," we will spend this month dissecting.

"Whirly" is a little mellower, even more Rhodes-like, than your usual commercial Wurlitzer patches, which usually lean toward the thin and harsh. The real thing does tend to sound thin and quite trebly, but let's not forget that toasty tube goodness that they share with other vintage equipment, a treat not really captured in samples that must be experienced first hand. For this I have toned down the bite a bit, and in the process porked up the body. This sound will cut and fill.

Oscillators 1 and 2 supply the main body of the sound, with the ELEC PNO 2 wave providing attack and rounded sustain and ELEC PNO 1 (seemingly a sample of a real Wurly) providing the teeth. Both of these are expansion waves, so if you've just moved back from Siberia and have never expanded your SQ, you're out of luck. The

third oscillator provides an obligatory DIG PNO GRIT whammy on hard attacks. This sounds...okay, but it really doesn't match the staticy quality of a W's growl, so you may want to mess with this a bit.

The full and muted tone of this patch can be traced to the filters, which on all three oscillators are set to Lo/Lo-pass combinations with frighteningly low cutoffs. If you want to brighten the sound a bit, raise the cutoffs, particularly on Oscillator 3. Also of note are the extreme keyboard tracking settings on each filter. These basically narrow down the timbres of each element until they fit into the range they belong, creating a lively and evolving tone as you run your fingers across the keyboard. You will find it hollow and reedy in the lower range, warm and tubby in the middle and thin and tinkley in the high range. Nothing really spectacular in the AMP envelope section, except that the hard attack of the ELEC PNO 2 wave has been softened somewhat. Wurlitzer attacks do tend to be kind of chiffy.

The only thing I couldn't really accurately reproduce on this one is the vibrato, which (as it is the "cheap model") is conspicuously absent on the 112 that I happen to own. Since the population begins to thin at this age, I had none of the other more advanced models around for an A/B comparison, so I just slapped on a wheel-controlled Rhodes-like volume vibrato. If any of you have another model of Wurly and can formulate a more accurate vibrato patch on the SQ, I invite you to send it in to the *Hacker*. The sounds offered here, after all, should be looked at more as "beta" versions than a final product, subject to refinement and debugging by the reader until a truly perfect finished piece is achieved. The letters section is a good forum for small improvements, the *Hackerpatches* perfect for major overhauls. I encourage you to build on these sounds!

The icing is a slight, Warm Chamber reverb that is not too intrusive and can be removed with a tap of the footpedal.

That old Wurlitzer still has tales to tell, and maybe one day I'll be able to get it back on its feet and swinging. Until then, we'll spend next time trying to concoct an electric guitar patch that you can actually present to your string wanking friends without hurting your pride. ▬

Bio: Mark Clifton is one bad motha-(shut yo' mouth).

Prog: WHIRLY

By: Mark Clifton

WAVE	1	2	3
Select Voice	On	On	On
Wave Class	Expan	Expan	Wave
Wave	ElecPno2	ElecPno1	DigPnoGrt
Delay Time	000	000	000
Wave Direction	Fwd	Fwd	-
Start Index	00	00	-
MODSCR	Off	Off	-
MODAMT	-	-	-
Restrk Decay	12	12	12

PITCH	1	2	3
Octave	+0	+0	+1
Semitone	+00	+00	+00
Fine	+00	+00	+00
ENV1	+00	+00	+00
LFO	+00	+00	+00
MODSCR	Off	Off	Off
MODAMT	-	-	-
KBD Ptch Track	On	On	On
Glide	Off	Off	Off
Glide Time	00	00	00

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

LFO	1	2	3
LFO Speed	34	34	-
Noise Rate	00	00	-
Level	00	00	-
Delay	00	00	-
MODSRC	Wheel	Wheel	-
Wave	Sine	Sine	-
Restart	Off	Off	

FILTER	1	2	3
Filter 1	2Lo	3Lo	2Lo
Filter 2	2Lo	1Lo	2Lo
FC1 Cutoff	005	082	035
ENV 2	+00	+00	+00
FC1 KBD	+54	-99	+27
MODSCR	Veloc	Veloc	Veloc
MODAMT	+35	+31	+33
FC2 Cutoff	069	012	061
ENV2	+00	+00	+00
FC2 KBD	+70	-25	-50
FC1MOD-FC2	Off	On	On

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

AMP	1	2	3
Initial	75	99	99
Peak	99	99	00
Break	69	69	00
Sustain	00	00	00
Attack	00	00	39
Decay 1	36	36	00
Decay 2	59	59	00
Release	12	12	05
Vel-Level	26	26	99
Vel-Attack	00	00	00
Vel Curve	Conv	Conv	Conv
Mode	Norm	Norm	Norm
KBD Track	+42	+42	+00

OUTPUT	1	2	3
VOL	99	99	76
Boost	On	On	On
MODSRC	LFO	LFO	Off
MODAMT	+14	+09	-
KBD Scale	+00	+00	+00
Key Range	A0-C8	A0-C8	A0-C8
Output Bus	FX1	FX1	FX1
Priority	Med	Med	Low
Pan	+00	+00	+00
Vel window	>000	>000	>000

EFFECTS — WARM CHAMBER	
FX-1	30
FX-2	25
Decay Time	20
Diffusion	26
Detune Rate	33
Detune Depth	14
HF Damping	46
HF Bandwidth	93
LF Decay	-
MOD (Dest)	FX1-Mix
BY (MODSRC)	Pedal
MODAMT	-99

Zip-ity How-To-Do Da

Garth Hjelte

Someone reminded me of what removable hard drives cost a while back. So I pulled out the original receipt (I still have it — it's tax time, and I have all my receipts out for access), and was shocked at that I paid $1600 for a 44-Mb Syquest and 4 cartridges! Wow. Each Cart was $120.

The Iomega ZipDrive is a highly popular removable drive of modern times (i.e. the last year). Check these prices out — about $200 for the drive with a cartridge, and each cartridge is under $20 per 100-Mb ZipDisk! Slightly lower pricing, wouldn't you say? Actually, the Ensoniq SCSI interface is more expensive than the ZipDrive. (Attention 3rd Party companies — could this be a revenue opportunity?)

I recommend the ZipDrive as my #1 choice for a hard drive for the ASR-10 or TS-10/12. But that doesn't mean the drive has no eccentricities. (That's probably why I like it...). It does!

The ZipDrive is a derivative of the popular 230-Mb Bernoulli produced by Iomega. Iomega has some pretty brilliant marketing experts, if you ask me. They simply put the thin floppy-like magnetic media that occupies the Bernoulli, put it into a 3.5 casing that resembles — yes, a *floppy disk*. They used modern techniques to pack the film with denser magnetic particles, increasing the storage to 100 megabytes. They then developed a "cute" drive mechanism, with a convenient in/out mechanism and small size, and marketed it with colorful schemes etc, and all of a sudden it's a mainstream hit. (I even heard the the second most desirable item listed in *Vogue* magazines' end-of-the-year list (1995) was ZipDisks... now, they aren't *that* cute).

As far as Ensoniq equipment goes, the ZipDrive works with the ASR-10/88 and the TS-10/12, and with the 16-Plus with some considerations (see below). DiskTracks work fairly well, surprisingly. I am describing this somewhat vaguely, because from the responses I get, some people have problems, but some swear by it and use the system to a great length. Perhaps it's how hard you push it.

Okay, let's get to the meat. There are some quirks inherent with the ZipDrive that we've found only through experience. And since we don't want to have you stumbling in the dark either, here they are.

Format Foe

Imagine this. A person buys a ZipDrive. It comes with a cable, wall-wart, driver software, instructions, and a FREE SOFTWARE ZipDisk called the ZipTools. Since he doesn't want to use the ZipDrive on his computer, he tries to format the ZipTools disk on his ASR-10, and he gets a DISK WRITE PROTECTED error message. Problem is, the ZipDisk way of write-protecting is with a small crystal thing to the lower left corner of the disk. There isn't any physical means of taking off the write-protection! So he gets all mad, kicks the cat, comes back the next day.

What the poor guy will find out is that the only way to format the disk that comes with the ZipDrive is to install the ZipDrive and ZipTools software on a computer, and do what they call a Long-Format. It erases the password that is on the ZipDisk, and removes the write-protection. Then he can format the ZipTools disk. (Or he can get the Ensoniq Disk Manager, which can do all that too.)

Further Format Foe

He then tries to format the formatted Zip-Tools disk, and finds that the Busy light on the ZipDrive merely blinks once, and the ASR-10 flashes FORMATTING for a while, and then says DISK NOT RESPONDING. He tries it again and gets the same message. He kicks his cat again, and comes back the next day (pretty temperamental person).

Upon a call to Ensoniq or RCS or other, he finds this out: Iomega changed the firmware (the information stored on chip in the ZipDrive itself) around July/September 1995 that affected the FORMAT SCSI UNIT command that instructs the ZipDrive to start formatting. Iomega is very protective of its creation, and use proprietary drivers in PC/Mac's for control, which IMHO is very inconvenient. Because of this driver thing, when Iomega changed the FORMAT SCSI UNIT command it didn't affect anyone, except us — the Ensoniq users.

The new Zip's started hitting the streets, and after some

ASR users bought some, they found that the new PC/Mac formatted disks they bought wouldn't format. Finally, Gary Giebler and some other folks discovered the problem, and asked Iomega to fix it. Surprisingly, they did, and the new drives are presently hitting the streets now.

However, the exact serial numbers of the affected drives, nor a start serial number of the new drives, is not available, so your best bet is to just get a drive and try it. If it doesn't work, just call Iomega at (801) 629-7630 (or fax them — actually, we've always gotten busy signals, so we fax them at (801) 778-3461), mention the code "A/V" and they'll give you a RMA# number and replace the drive for free. From what I've heard, they've really lived up to the deal.

Furthermore Format Foe

After getting a new cat (he kicked the other one a little too hard), he comes back and tries to format the the ZipTools disk, and all he gets is that the Busy light on the ZipDrive merely blinks once, and the ASR-10 then shows FILE OPERATION ERROR. He then shoots his cat, and comes back a couple months later (with probationary release from jail for animal abuse). He finds out that when he attempted to format the PC-Formatted ZipDisk on the "defective" ZipDrive, he erased some critical sectors on the ZipTools disk, thus making it a "nothing" disk, if you will. This can also happen if you turn off the EPS/ASR while formatting, or unplug a SCSI cable while formatting. You must have a formatted (PC, Mac, or other) ZipDisk in the ZipDrive for it to work with Ensoniq equipment. What the man must do is to Long-Format it again with the computer, and then format it with the ASR-10 (or use the Giebler *Ensoniq Disk Manager* to format it within the computer). Then he'll have a working ZipDrive.

You'll notice that there are no unformatted ZipDisks sold. but you can "unformat" them by using a "defective" ZipDrive, turning off the ZipDrive or EPS/ASR while formatting, or unplugging the SCSI cable.

In recap, here are the format principles:

1) Certain ZipDrives use a non-standard FORMAT SCSI UNIT command, necessitating you replace the drive to format it correctly.

2) Your ZipDisk must be formatted correctly before you can format it in Ensoniq format (does that make sense?).

3) You cannot format the ZipTools disk unless you remove the write-protection with a computer, using the Long-Format function or the Giebler *Ensoniq Disk Manager.*

It's Gotta Be In

For Ensoniq gear to recognize the ZipDrive upon boot-up, you must have a ZipDisk in the drive. Otherwise, it does not negotiate with the ZipDrive nor any other device physically beyond the ZipDrive in the SCSI chain.

Turn Off to Turn On

Remember, with all SCSI peripherals, when you make changes such as termination on/off, or SCSI 5 or 6, or even after you have an error with the EPS/ASR/TS, you must turn the ZipDrive off and then on again, and reboot the EPS/ASR/TS. This amounts to unplugging the ZipDrive, since there is no power switch on the unit.

Only Two, Only Two

The ZipDrive can only be set the SCSI #5 or #6. That usually is not a problem, you can set your other peripherals to other settings. But it also means you can only have two ZipDrives on your system. Too bad.

16-Plus Approved

Ensoniq does not have the ZipDrive "approved" for the 16-Plus. But that doesn't mean you can't make it work — with a little work.

The SCSI buss is a "powered" buss in the sense that it needs the data flowing in the correct voltages for the devices to recognize them. The termination buss line is one of these, and usually the initiator (in our case, the EPS/ASR/TS) supplies the correct power to the termination buss. Neither the 16-Plus nor the ASR nor the TS supply that power, unfortunately.

However, the ZipDrive is recognized and will interchange data (read and write) with the ASR and the TS perfectly, when it is hooked up as the only SCSI device in the chain, but the 16-Plus can recognize but not interchange data with a ZipDrive. That's a problem. But according to our experience, once you supply power to the termination buss from an external source (this can be another drive on the system, or an externally powered terminator such as the SCSI Sentry), the 16-Plus could conceivably *marry* the ZipDrive, and be recognized and interchange data. (That's

a joke...) In more serious words, it works. Even though the ASR is does not supply term power, it seems to work with the ZipDrive because of its opto-isolation features (the apparent reason why it costs $150 more).

25 or 50 to Cable

The ZipDrive has a DB-25 jack connection with the SCSI chain, the same one as the EPS/ASR/TS. 25-to-25 cables are not immediately available, and cost a little more usually.

ZZZZZZZZZleeping

The Zip has a "sleep-mode" built into, which it spins down after a default time of fifteen minutes of not accessing the drive. This is a good thing, since it makes it easy on the drive and media, but a bad thing in that next time you try to access the drive, it has to "wake-up" giving the access a 2-second lag. If you have a computer, you can change the time between 1 minute and 30 minutes, but when the ZipDrive is hooked to the Ensoniq, it's always 15 minutes.

It's an EZ comparison

Syquest used to be the King of the removable drive market, but it seems that Iomega has taken the crown away. Syquest's competing drive is the EZ-135. Here's a comparison list:

Description	ZIP	Syquest	Comments
SCSI Channels	5 or 6	0-7	No big deal
Drive Price w/cart	About $200	About $220	
Cart Cost	$20	$25	
Storage	100 MB	135 MB	EZ's better, but isn't the point of removable storage is that you can increase the size by buying more carts? What's the use of bigger carts? Perhaps longer songs on DiskTracks.
Physical Size	smaller	small	The Zip's handier, if you ask me.
Reliability	Good	Not so good	Since I sell both, I've never had to send back a Zip, but I've sent back 40% of the EZs. That's just my perception.
Adaptability	Standard	Non-Standard	The EZ-135 fits in any 3.5 drive bay, although the SCSI version is always sold in a external box. The Zip has a non-standard casing, but then it's a cool one.
Speed	slow	fast	The EZ is twice as fast as the Zip, although you probably won't notice it.
Caching	Great	Not so great	The Zip has the intelligent caching feature of most Iomega drives. This is why the Zip will do DiskTracks, even though it's too slow. A good way of saying this is "The ZIp is slower and smarter, the EZ is faster and dumber."
Cart Reliability	Okay	Better	The EZ cart seems more fragile, and clatters when you handle it. The ZipDisk is tight and takes lots of abuse.
Media Age			Since neither drive has been around for too long, who knows? But since the Zip is based on just magnetic film technology, it's suspect to errors after 3-4 years, while the EZ will last a little longer. Reigning king of long-term storage is magneto-optical.

Final Note

These are the facts as well as I know them; however, there have been a couple of exceptions to the rule based on what I have heard, but could not substantiate. I have tested upward of 100 ZipDrives, and done numerous experiments, so that's what this article is based on.

If you are looking for a hard drive for your ASR, get the ZipDrive. It's the best bang for the buck. Although the DiskTracks performance is not as good as say the Bernoulli 230, in my humble opinion, you should concentrate on digital recording with a computer or dedicated system anyway, since the ASR digital recording system is an add-on to a overdriven processor as it is. ▬

Bio: Garth Hjelte is one of the guys around Rubber Chicken Software, an Ensoniq-hatchery unit. He takes pride in the fact that RCS is located in the town that the head of the Internet Society was born in.

DP/4 Custom Configs

Part I — Design and Preparation

Steve Byhurst

It may well be that many users of the DP/4 only use the factory programmed config presets, or minor edits thereof, to get the effects processing they require. In a lot of cases this method will generally get you fairly close to what you want to achieve, but it is no replacement for a custom-built config that gives you exactly what you want. It is well worth learning how to program configs because they are the key to getting the most out of the DP/4.

Of course many of us who feel that they would rather spend their time playing music than button-pushing and knob-turning, myself included, might think that designing and programming a completely new config would not be worth the investment of time required. However, I hope to show you that this isn't the case and that by following through a set list of stages you can quickly learn to program your own config presets and find out more about the capabilities of the DP/4 at the same time.

For the purposes of this article I am assuming some knowledge of how the select and edit modes of the DP/4 are used so that I don't have to mention every single button push. I also assume that you have a rough idea of how configs work (you certainly should have if you own or regularly use a DP/4!).

Stage 1: Design Plan

Now I know that the term "design plan" tends to present visions of reams and reams of paper with tons of scribbles on, but it doesn't always mean spending ages writing out detailed plans. As with any design project it is well worth sitting down with pen and paper (or keyboard and word processor) and working out exactly what you want to achieve. This stage is important because just taking a few minutes to actually think through what you need can save a lot of wasted time later when it comes to using those digits on programming buttons and knobs.

Apart from making clear to yourself what the general purpose of the effects processing is, in relation to programming config presets there are several key questions you need to ask yourself. They go something like this:

(a) Which effects/algorithms do I need to have? Check in the manual to remind you of what is available.

(b) Can I make use of multi-effect algorithms? Using one of these may free up room for additional effects without losing any flexibility. Despite constant use of the DP/4 I still find that I forget that some algorithms contain useful little extras like EQ and noise gates.

(c) How do I want the inputs to be configured? This depends very much on how many sound sources you have and whether you want to process mono or stereo inputs. Again, check with the manual to remind yourself of the various input configurations available.

(d) How do I want the outputs to be configured? This mainly depends on the way your system is set up. In the majority of cases outputs will be assigned to one stereo pair but all four outputs may be required if you have your DP/4 routed to a mixer.

(e) How do I want the individual units to be routed to one another? You should work out which links, parallel, serial, or feedback, will be needed between each of the units.

(f) How do I want to set the parameters of the algorithms I have chosen? Consider the settings of parameters like mix, volume, depth of effect, modulation, etc. You only need to roughly think this through at this point as tweaking will almost certainly be needed at a later stage.

(g) Will I need the bypass status of each of the units to be set to bypass or kill? This may be important, especially if you are setting up a config that will be controlled over MIDI to turn individual unit effects on and off.

Working through these questions will force you to make initial programming decisions which, even though you may change them later, will give you a firm base to start with.

Now gear yourself up for the start of button-pushing!

Stage 2: Preparation

First, just a quick reminder of what a config actually does. A config is a type of preset which, when selected, loads unit presets into the four units, sets up the signal routing between the units, and reconfigures the inputs and outputs of the DP/4. There are a total of 100 presets containing 50 RAM locations in which to store your own creations and 50 selectable ROM presets. Any of the 100 presets can be used as a base for programming new configs by changing the unit presets it uses (and therefore the algorithms they contain) and/or altering the parameters of the config itself. Like the unit presets it is then saved by writing over one of the existing RAM locations.

The very first thing to do is to check that you don't already have a config preset that matches your design plan. It is unlikely that you will find a perfect match (hopefully you won't have gone to all the trouble of writing a design plan only to find that what you want was there all the time!), but you might find a preset which is not too far off your plan to use as a base for editing. If you do find one you have to decide which way to go: edit or start from scratch.

Remember that even though a config may contain the unit presets you want, you may still need to significantly change the config and algorithm parameters. I have found that it is usually easier and less confusing to go for the "start from scratch" option, especially when there are very useful config templates in ROM just waiting to be put into edit mode (as you will see in part two).

Whichever route you choose, before starting to edit your config preset template it is helpful to make sure that you have the right unit presets ready to be loaded into it. This is because other programming is best done after the process of selecting a unit preset or presets for the config.

The type of unit preset(s) you are able to select will depend on the type of source config you will be using. A 1 source config can only select 4 unit presets, a 2 source config selects only 2 unit presets, a 3 source config selects 1 or 2 unit presets, and 4 source configs only 1 unit presets. Although you can change individual unit presets in edit mode after you have selected them in a config, it makes things easier if the correct ones are in there to start with.

Now check that you have ROM/RAM unit presets which contain the algorithms you require. Factory programmed 1 unit presets cover all the different algorithm types, but you may not find all the combinations you need for 2 or 4 unit presets. If this is the case you will need to edit existing presets and then update them ready for use by your config. At this stage don't worry about programming the algorithm parameters, just make sure you have the right algorithms saved in the right type of unit preset.

There is just one more thing to mention. If you are not able to save presets to a computer librarian, and are therefore dependent on internal RAM for storage, make sure that you identify presets which you will not mind writing over. When the time comes to save your new presets you don't want to lose old ones which you may have wanted to keep.

Hope to see in part two where I will go on to look at the config parameters themselves, algorithm programming, and testing of the finished config. Bye for now. ▬

Bio: Steve Byhurst is a thirty-something British composer of electronic music who is quite adamant that his compositions should not be classed as "New Age."

William Holt Penninger, Jr., The Hunger

Arnold Mathes, Joran Ingvaldsen, Jouko Kantola, The Bros. Ryan

Tapes: *Fdt=mdv* (c) 1992 & *The Coyote, the Scorpion & the Goat* (c) 1993.
Artist: The Ministry for the Absorption of Protohumans, Androids & Cyborgs (aka William Holt Penninger, Jr.).
Contact Info: Creative Musician's Coalition, 1024 W Wilcox Ave, Peoria, IL 61604, phone: (309) 685-4878.
Equipment: Ensoniq ESQ-1, Roland MT-32, Yamaha TX81Z, Yamaha TG-33, Brother PDC-100.

I immediately knew I was going to like William Holt Penninger, Jr.: anyone who includes James Joyce in his list of influences is automatically on my top ten list. Add to that a slew of letters after his name (as if Jr. weren't enough, or perhaps to compensate for it?), including a B.S. in creative writing from M.I.T., a law degree and M.B.A. from Tulane, and a Masters in maritime law... well, here is one interesting fellow. William's tape *The Accessible Penninger* was reviewed here in the *Hacker* back in November 1992 (TH #89). I refer you to that article for more background information on his philosophy and musical journey.

Like Joyce, you can't hurry through Penninger, the man or his work (try blurting out *"The Ministry for the Absorption of Protohumans, Androids & Cyborgs"*). He makes you slow down, not because his music is always slow, mind you — there are some extremely fast arpeggiated roller coaster rides — but because his focus is contagious, and it takes you inward, far from the realm of fax machines and ISDN lines, and also outward, where you imagine the music that the stars and planets could produce. If I absolutely must categorize this music, words like "prog new age lite industrial" come to mind.

Snippets from *"Fdt-mdv": "Irresistible Impulse"* uses wonderful jazz voicings on string pads over a relentless train beat, building tension like a Pat Metheny song; like that, uh, "irresistible impulse." *"Audio Porn"* is an industrial dreamscape, like a visit to a haunted toy store in the *Bladerunner* era.

From *"The Coyote, the Scorpion & the Goat"* (the title refers to creatures actually sighted in or around Penninger's house): The opening cut *"Down In Flames"* introduces us to a different dimension of Penninger composition: more regal, with a somewhat classical feel due to orchestral voicings. *"New Age Tax & Spend"* is a rollicking metaphorical ride through the political machinery. *"Teledildonic Ritual #39."* In William's own words: "This is music for one of the rituals of virtual sex." ("One of" the rituals? Bill, do you know something we don't?!) This is classic Penninger new-age prog rock, with dueling synths trading fours (or fives?).

From a technical standpoint, I was at times amazed at the quality of the sounds Penninger wrings out of what some might consider dinosaur synths, a reminder that the need to have the latest gear is pathological. Seek treatment.

Daniel Mandel's original assessment is still apropos: "Mr. Penninger wins the award for *voluminous*." The word fits: this guy bleeds music, and it's obviously the outlet for his life energy.

CD: *Grip* (c) 1993.
Artist: The Hunger.
Contact Info: Randy Spain, Gut Records, 2614 Anice, Houston, TX 77039, phone: (713) 449-1028.
Equipment: Ensoniq EPS, EPS-16+, ESQ-1, Yamaha DX-11, FB-01, Roland U-220, D-550, Juno 106, Moog Rouge, Oberheim Matrix 1000, Fostex 16 track, Mackie 24x8, Lexicon, Alesis, Roland and Yamaha outboard gear, Mac Classic with Master Trax, Atari 1040st with SMPTE Track.

If you like Skinny Puppy, Led Zeppelin, Information Society, and love stylishly radical, ballsy guitars up front, but don't like The Hunger... then you've got a problem. These guys can rock the house. The temptation is to classify this ambitious, high-voltage band as "dance," but The Hunger's versatility crosses the boundaries. Their remix of Bad Company's *"Feel Like Making Love"* is pop enough for Top 40, but the hard rockin' chainsaw guitar pumping open fifths in *"Dangerous Weapon"* smacks you right in the snot locker. They describe themselves as a "techno rock" band, but their versatility extends from early Peter Gabriel-ish experiments (*"Communication Breakdown"*) to razor-sharp quantized euro-dance (*"Work Song"*).

With three of the five band members playing keyboards, The Hunger is a shoe-in for the *Basement Tapes Hall of Fame*. This Houston-based band is doing everything right,

riding the wave of their success onto the Billboard charts (their single *"Shoot To Kill"* was number 38 back in '91). And no wonder: their promo pack is top-notch, chock full of professionally executed letters, sharp copies of press releases and favorable reviews, and a great-looking 8x10. *"Grip"* was recorded at guitarist Stephen Bogle's home studio, using virtual tracks for all the MIDI stuff and freeing up 15 tracks for big-time vocal and guitar tracking. Production quality is flawless. The album is very vocal oriented with rich, thick overdubs, and is filled with excellent, stylish rock compositions. The Hunger exhibits wonderful use of keys for comping and FX, but leaves plenty of room for Mr. Bogle to rant and rave on his guitar. Imagine that in a band with three keyboard players! My only complaint with this project is the paper cut I got under my thumbnail trying to peel their band logo sticker off the cover of their promo brochure. For a study of a band that is on the right track career-wise, or to add a gem to your rock collection, check out The Hunger, and get a *"Grip"*!

Short Takes:

Tapes: *Jungle Concrete* (p) 1993 & *Avenue of the Gods* (c) 1992.
Artist: Arnold Mathes.
Contact Info: 2750 Homecrest Ave., Brooklyn, NY 11235, phone: (718) 646-3214.
Equipment: Ensoniq SQ-80, Yamaha RY-30, EMS VCS3, Roland SH-101, Minimoog, Yamaha TX-81Z, Casiotone MT-70, Grundig Satellite 650 Shortwave Radio, Yamaha SPX-90, Digitech RDS Time Machine, Deltalab Effectron, Fostex Model 80 8-track, Sony digital VCR for mastering, Tascam M-208 8-channel mixer.

"Jungle Concrete" and *"Avenue of the Gods"* are works of what I would call sci-fi soundtracks with a social conscience. Mathes' artistic intent seems to be the expression of futuristic moods, but with periodic comic relief through the use of whimsical narrations. *"Avenue"* is the more polished of the two tapes (*"Jungle"* used only the SQ-80 for its synth source), offering a thicker soundscape through layering more modules. Low point: *"Central Control Jig's"* relentlessly irritating, chewing-gum-commercial melody. High points: the haunting mood created by an air-raid siren in the background, and the narration opening *"Kozmik Konduit"* copped from a financial seminar tape!

CD: *Reunion* (c) 1993.
Artist: Joran Ingvaldsen.
Contact Info: Smedplassu. 7C, 7600 Levanger, Norway.
Equipment: Ensoniq SQ-1, SD-1, TS-10, EPS-16+, Akai sampler.

"Reunion" is a collection of Christian pop tunes and rock ballads by Norwegian Joran Ingvaldsen, featuring tasty guitar work by Olav Teigen and a menagerie of guest vocalists. While the production and engineering quality fairly sparkles on this CD, the vocals and lyrics at times suffer from what I call "religious laziness," that is, the apparent assumption by the lyricist that the subject matter itself will bless the listener, regardless of the quality of writing. Gospel songwriters take note: it can only *help* your cause to put as much attention into the lyrics as you do into a killer guitar solo. If the lyrics in *"Reunion"* matched the quality of the album's production, this would be one heckuva gospel CD.

Tape: *Black to de Rock* (p) 1993.
Artist: Jouko Kantola.
Contact Info: Hermannintie 10, 84100 Ylivieska, Finland, phone: 358-83-426-015.
Equipment: Ensoniq EPS-16+, TS-10, Emu Proteus, Yamaha DX-7, Kurzweil K2000, Roland R-8.

...and speaking of gospel, have you ever dreamed of hearing eighteen black spirituals performed by a 70-piece Finnish choir? Well, quit dreaming and pick up a copy of *"Black to de Rock"*! I would guess that Jouko Kantola has this market niche pretty well sewn up with his lively collection of well-produced black gospel. The lyrics are classic and soulful — the original item from traditional spirituals, and it's obvious that the musicians had a great time laying down the grooves for this project, which is replete with gospel B3 chops and guitar licks that sound like they're coming straight from Soul's Harbor. But... "Black" to de Rock? Y'all sound so... white!

Tape: *Pants Shitter & Proud P.S. Jerkoff Too* (p) 1994.
Artist: The Bros. Ryan (Joe Ryan and E.J. Ryan).
Contact Info: P.O. Box 964, Ocean View, DE 19970, phone: (302) 537-0775.
Equipment: Ensoniq EPS-16+, Sequential Six Track, Sequential Drumtracks, AKG 330 BT, boss SE-50, Mackie 1202, Peavey 600S spring reverb, Tascam 424, Tanko Voice Decoder, Ryan dbx compensator, Kenwood 8050.

On the completely opposite side of the continental divide from gospel, we have The Bros. Ryan, whose twenty-eight (count 'em!) tracks are a veritable garage sale of tunes in the spirit of *The White Album*. They've got your Beatles covers (a 3 a.m. drunken version of *"Act Naturally"*), your nasty little boy ditties (*"Community Wack-off"* with

a square-dance caller calling the shots), your *"Rocky Raccoon"* ripoffs (*"Bay Rum Blues"*), your weird harmonica jam session rags, and twenty-four more! Forget engineering and production chops, forget sophistication, forget ego: bottom line, these guys are *funny*, and they have fun! If you're getting too anal retentive, let your soul be your pilot, but let The Bros. Ryan be your Ex-Lax. ▬

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

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

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

Classifieds

HARDWARE/SOFTWARE

Fostex 450 8x4x2 mixer $400, Alesis Quadraverb $250 or trade. Contact Mike at 1-541-967-7529.

WANTED: Ensoniq SD-1 32-voice. Call Bob, 214-278-9402.

WANTED: Yamaha YC-45D and Vox Continental Baroque combo organs. Contact Kirk at (303) 988-2162 or PROTIST@AOL.COM.

CD-Rom for sale: 2X External Chinon 535s. $145. Only have one. Call Jose 615-871-4287. E-Mail at J-Alea@usit.net.

For Sale: EPS 16+ with OEX-6 expander, $1100. Roland A-80 Master controller, $1200. Both pieces in excellent condition. Call Dave at 407-671-9596 or E-mail me at dco47518@pegasus.cc.ucf.edu

VFX-sd Workstation: $790. Good condition, although the logo on the back peeled off. Extra sound libraries, good hardcase, sustain pedal, all manuals. Used for film scoring and band recording — great machine. Also, **DART: $199.** Alex, 703-370-2760.

WANTED: SD-1 32-Voice. Leon Forrest Productions, phone: 541-996-2575.

SAMPLES/PATCHES/SOUNDS

DinosauRemains — vintage sounds for EPS-16+. New Mellotron multi-sample disks. Two-disk sets of violins, choir, brass. Sets are $19.90 each + $3 s/h. Call for free brochure. 713-481-1256.

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

ASR-10 samples of the TS-10. Hi fidelity, fully programmed. $6 per HD disk, $30 for all six (36 sounds). Check or M.O. Or send SASE for complete documentation. James Samp, 90 N. Bell St., Fond du Lac, WI 54935. Phone: (414) 922-4337.

TH's Jack Tolin presents SYNTH-BITS! Classic HR-16 drums (2 disks; 49 sounds), M1 synth-textures (5 disks; 50 sounds) come in easy to manage samples that turn your EPS-16+ or ASR-10 into a synthesizer! Star-Trec SF blurbs (2 disks; 20 sounds). Only $3 per disk. SF blurbs for your PC: $2 per disk, 12 disks available. Jack Tolin, 9314 Myrtle Ave., # 186, Kansas City, MO 64132.

Your ultimate source for synth samples for your Ensoniq Sampler. Moog, Korg, Oberheim, Yamaha, Sequential! Send SASE for free catalog: Tom Shear, 805 Fifth Avenue, Williamsport, PA, 17701.

OUT-OF-PRINT BACK ISSUES

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. * * * Folks in the New York City area can get copies of unavailable back issues of the *Hacker* – call Jordan Scott, 718-983-2400.

FREE CLASSIFIEDS!

Well – within limits. We're offering free classified advertising (up to 40 words) for your sampled sounds or patches. Additional words, or ads for other products or services, are $0.25/ word per issue (**BOLD** type: $0.45/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 (we won't!) take ad dictation over the phone!

If you're selling your gear...

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

The Interface

Letters for The Interface may be sent to any of the following addresses:
U.S. Mail - The Interface, Transoniq Hacker, 1402 SW Upland Dr., Portland, OR 97221
Electronic mail - GEnie Network: TRANSONIQ, Internet: interface@transoniq.com. In many cases a quick answer can be obtained by posting to our interactive, on-line Interface at our Web site (http://www.transoniq.com/~trnsoniq/interface.html) or calling Ensoniq CS at 610-647-3930.
This is probably one of the most open forums in the music industry. Letter writers are asked to please keep the vitriol to a minimum. Readers are reminded to take everything with a grain of salt. Resident answer-man is Clark Salisbury (CS). Letter publication is subject to space considerations.

TH –

Three things have come to mind as I am in my 10th year of reading the *Hacker:*

1. Even with all the new products, I see where many people are still making music and hopefully money with their old keyboards from Malvern.

2. Anyone who has an Ensoniq board and doesn't have Gary Giebler's software is missing out.

3. I can't imagine who would try to be a professional keyboardist and not have a subscription to the *Transoniq Hacker*. For a long time, it has explained to me how to use my unfamiliar creatures. Keep up the great work guys & gals.

GNormand@aol.com

[CS – Gee, thanks! And write again, anytime at all!]

TH –

I have a **KS-32**. I think the grand piano sounds excellent for the most part. But it really gets "tinky" in the area about G above middle C and maybe an octave thereafter. You may not perceive this as a problem, but if you do, are there any upgrades or retrofits that have sought to improve it?

Babaloo@gnn.com (Mike McLane)

[CS – I'd suggest that you try to locate a dealer who makes a practice of stocking Ensoniq sounds. There are nearly 200 different acoustic piano sounds available for the KS-32, and chances are you'll find something you like in there somewhere. In particular, check out the EX-1, SC-2, SC-4, SC-5 and ISC-2 cards.]

Hi,

I am seriously interested in buying an **MR**. I'm from Germany and over here it costs about $1600. As I will go to New York City near the end of May, I was wondering how much the MR costs in the U.S. If you know the price just roughly, it would be nice if you could answer me.

Christoph Martyn
C-MARTYN@recht.jura2.uni-hamburg.de

[TH – The suggested retail price here is about $1700. Any New York readers know of any bargains?]

[CS – I'm sure that by doing a little comparison shopping, you'll be able to find a competitive price. Check with Ensoniq via their toll-free dealer-locator number (in the US: 800-553-5151). They'll be able to provide you with the location and phone numbers for authorized dealers in New York or wherever you plan to be shopping.]

TH –

Since yesterday, I have an **MR-Rack**.

And I have a question: In the manual there isn't any information about sysex programming the MR-Rack. Do you have any information about that?

Thanks,
Jean-Claude Brantschen
e-mail: brantsch@vptt.ch

[CS – You can get information on the MIDI implementation of any Ensoniq product (including sysex specifications) by writing (no phone calls, please) attn: MIDI Sys Ex., Ensoniq Corp, 155 Great Valley Parkway, Malvern, PA, 19355-0735.]

TH –

I own an **EPS-16+**, but have not accumulated many sounds. I decided to purchase a CD ROM drive and the EPS-16+ CD ROM Sound Library, which I believe is contained on two or three disks. When I called Ensoniq, they told me this was a bad idea, and that I would do better to sell the EPS and purchase the new ASR, rather than plunk more money into the older sampler. I know they would like me to buy a new machine from them, but the comment seemed to make sense. I could really use some advice.

Thanks for your help.
Michael

[CS – Consider this. If you buy an Ensoniq-approved CD-ROM drive, and a few EPS-compatible CDs, you might find you've got just what you want. If not, you can always trade in the EPS on a new ASR, and keep the CD-ROM drive and CDs; they'll work with the ASR just as well as they would with the EPS.

Granted, the ASR has some advantages over the EPS-16+, and I'm sure you'd be absolutely delighted with it. Still, the EPS-16+ is no slouch. Sound quality and functionality are excellent. In my opinion, the major stumbling block with the EPS-16+ (for most users, anyway), is the memory size, which is not large enough to allow for loading of a lot of the sounds designed for the ASR series. If you can find the sounds you need in the EPS library, though, I think that the decision to stick with your EPS or move up to the ASR is not such a clear-cut one.]

[Michael – Thanks so much for your response to my question about upgrading to the ASR. I've been giving this a lot of thought and it seems to me that I've got a great machine, and I can always use the CD ROM drive on other music equipment, if and when I buy any. I'm leaning in the "keep chugging along" direction. Just knowing that I'm not completely off base really helps. Thanks again.]

[Ensoniq – I'm not sure with whom you spoke or how the discussion went, but it is not our policy to dissuade customers from adding to their setup in favor of buying today's model. You can certainly get a lot of value and use from adding a CD-ROM drive and disks to your EPS-16 PLUS.

The first two CD-ROMs (CDR-1 and CDR-2) bring together all the sounds we released for the original EPS and the EPS-16 PLUS, but there are other titles that will also work nicely with your unit. CDR-4 (AS Archives), CDR-5 (L.A. Riot Vol. 2), CDR-8-13 (In-Vision collections), CDR-14 (Analog Digital Synth Resource), SCD-2 (D.J. Jazzy Jeff Sig-

nature Series) and SCD-4 (Keith Emerson Signature Series) all contain enough sounds that will fit in the EPS-16 PLUS to be considered compatible.

Please note that not every sound will fit into your unit. We certainly recommend that you have the ME-16 PLUS installed if you want to use most of these titles. Also, effects will not load from CDR-4 and higher, but adding the effect of your choice is easy to do, and it is likely you will be choosing a Bank effect for your sequencing anyway. Enjoy!]

Hello Hackers,

I have some trouble with the rotary speaker algorithm in the **DP/4** (the old one with OS version 1.14). Within the algorithm it is possible to select a slow or a fast rotary speed (parameter 4). The fast algorithm is performing nicely. However, the slow option acts more like a weird pitch shifter than like a nice, slow Leslie (the intended result of my programming). As soon as the speed parameter (number 3) deviates from zero (no rotary speed at all), the pitch climbs fast producing a sound which distorts the harmonic structure of the chord progression severely. There is also no distinguishable difference in speed from the fast option. Is this a malfunction of the algorithm or am I doing something stupid?

Sincerely yours,
Tom Poot
The Netherlands
email: tompoot@xs4all.nl

[CS – I don't think you're doing anything wrong. It sounds more like some sort of glitch.

*You might try reinitializing the unit (remember, reinitializing WILL ERASE all your RAM presets). While holding the [SYSTEM *MIDI] button, press the [B] button, then the [>] button. The display will read "Hit <WRITE> To Reinitialize!"; press [WRITE] to reinitialize the DP/4, press [CANCEL] to abort the operation. If this doesn't help, I think your best bet would be to contact Ensoniq Customer Service directly.]*

Hello,

I have a question: I own a SCSI interfaced **ASR-10**, and I've linked a Syquest 270 MB removable drive. I have now purchased a Pinnacle RCD RD-ROM writer, on which I want to make backups of the Syquest drive.

Now, this Pinnacle software, which is delivered with the CDR unit, has an option to copy the contents of a SCSI drive to CR-ROM, without knowing which format the SCSI drive is. I have already tried this out, but something went wrong. Later on, I discovered that it was some hardware thing.

In order to avoid to make a new "CDbee" (a wasted CDR, so it becomes a frisbee), I would like to know what your experiences are concerning backing up Ensoniq formatted hard disks to CDR.

Kind regards,
A very polite John B.
SCIA@SCIA.be

[CS – My experiences have been pretty good – I've never had any trouble (granted, I haven't made dozens of CDs, but I've made several.

Lately I've been using Toast software to write CDs (to a Ricoh mechanism), and it's performed admirably. For example, I had a couple hundred megs of ASR sounds and sequences on a 730 meg hard drive. I asked Toast to make an image of the disk, using its generic format. Of course, it told me that the disk was too large to fit the target CD (a 63 minute blank). It then allowed me to limit the size of the copy to something that would fit, and the rest of the process went off without a hitch.

So as long as you dot your i's and cross your bridges (use a hard drive that's fast enough, avoid disk fragmentation, terminate properly, etc.), you should have no problems.]

[Ensoniq – We make all of our CD-ROM masters in-house. Additionally, we archive a lot of sound development work using a Yamaha CDR-100 (4x CD-ROM burner) and Optical Media's Quick Topix software. As Clark mentions, organizing your files before you start and religiously avoiding any disk fragmentation are the main issues.

To avoid fragmented files (which really hamper CDR performance) you can back up the drive (to floppies or to another removable) then reformat and restore it. This insures zero fragmentation.

While we're not familiar with the software that comes with the Pinnacle, QuickTopix has a template called "Device Image" which simply copies the data on the drive, sector by sector, to the CD. It sounds like you are using the equivalent function on your system, which is the right thing to do. QuickTopix also has a Test Mode, which will go through the whole process, except that it doesn't actually write the CD, so you can see that your connections, writing speed and buffering settings are correct. If your software has this function, it can save you creating quite a few CDbees (though you can use them to make lovely wall clocks).]

TH –

As a member of our church choir and a computer buff, I am trying to help one of our musicians with a **TS-12**. She is not at all computer literate and is looking for a manual – written from a musician's point of view – for the TS-12. Does such a thing exist?

Thank you,
Peter E. Balsam
peterb@digital.net

[CS – I don't know of any instructional books written specifically for the TS Series, but that doesn't mean they don't exist. Perhaps one of our readers knows of something...

The only thing I do know of is a set of instructional videos from Covert Videos. I believe they have a set of instructional tapes focusing on the TS-10 series. It consists of 7 hours of material, and retails for $119.95. I haven't seen any of their videos, nor have I heard anything about them, good or bad, so don't take this as a recommendation.]

[TH – Covert Videos isn't really around anymore. Rubber Chicken has made a deal with Covert to continue making the videos available. However, there seems to be a real problem obtaining the existing inventory. We've heard pretty good reports on these videos but until things get straightened out (if they get straightened out), about the only way to obtain them is to run a small classified (free) to see if anyone wants to sell a used set.]

TH –

A friend has an Ensoniq **ESQ-1.**

Problems: (1) very low output, (2) rapid heating of fins, (3) displays occasional blinks.

He bought it used in Canada in December 1995 to take to St. Vincent, a Caribbean island.

Grantley Williams
bsisvg@bsi-svg.com

[TH – Anyone know the line voltage in St. Vincent?]

[CS – The best thing to do, probably, would be to get a service tech to take a look at it. If you don't have a tech familiar with Ensoniq gear handy, I'm sure you could arrange to have Ensoniq work on it. Try Ensoniq Customer Support directly to see what they might suggest.

It seems to me, though (if I'm remembering correctly), that the ESQs did get fairly warm, and that the display might occasionally blink, so I might not necessarily get too concerned about these phenomena, unless there's been a recent noticeable change. And the low output could be something as simple as a loose wire. Also, tropical humidity can pose problems, (condensation, corrosion) so you may want to be aware of that.]

[Grantley Williams – Hi Again;

Thanks for your comments. The line voltage in St. Vincent is 220. Oh, there is no Ensoniq dealer here.]

[Ensoniq – According to your response, St. Vincent has 220 volt power. If he bought the unit in Canada, it is almost certainly a 120 volt unit. Operating it off 220 volts, without replacing the transformer with a 220 volt unit will lead to major overheating and damage to the power supply and will probably cause the display over-voltage protection circuitry to kick in until it too overheats and shuts down. At this point it will need repair. Contact our Customer Service department for more help.]

TH –

I have an **ESQ-1** and am having trouble with my MIDI files not playing the right instruments. How do I change the sounds to match general MIDI specs? Is there an E-PROM cartridge available that would set up the ESQ correctly?

Thanks for all advice!!!
WWCLAW@aol.com

[CS – I don't know of anyone offering GM-compatible sound sets for the ESQ. Unfortunately, GM requires 128 program locations, while the ESQ provides only 60 internally (120 with a cartridge). You could try to create your own GM set for the ESQ by hunting through whatever libraries of sounds you have available to find appropriate sounds, and then copying them into GM-specified locations, but it seems to me that it would probably be simpler to just re-map your program changes to correspond to the sounds already in your ESQ. Of course, I don't know what external sequencer you're using, so I could be a bit off the beam on this.]

Hi,

I am looking for answers for a problem I am experiencing with my **ESQ-1**. The parameters (especially the tempo on the sequencer) seem to jump around by themselves without human intervention or MIDI connections. Any feedback with be greatly appreciated.

Thanx,
Ryan

[CS – By now, I assume you've seen the response to ReggieB's question (Reggie is also having problems with spurious data vomiting in an ESQ) in Issue 131 of TH. As I told him, my guess is that the problem lies with a faulty data slider. The faulty slider can randomly fire off some data or other, affecting whatever parameter is currently selected; in your case, this is often the tempo parameter. One solution is to install a new data slider (I'd check with Ensoniq Customer Support for this). Another is to make sure you never leave important parameters (such as tempo) underlined while sequencing. And my illustrious editor also suggests trying some spray-type contact cleaner (you should be able to find some at any electronics supply house). Make sure any contact cleaner you use has the phrase "safe for plastics" clearly printed somewhere on the label, though.]

Greetings.

Great site. Great mag. Look forward to exploring.

Perhaps you can be of assistance. I am in need of converting ATARI MIDI FILES to MAC MIDI FILES. My compositions are trapped in DR. T's KCS (for THE Atari ST) files. I was hoping you would have a suggestion as to getting them into my Mac.

Thanks for your kind assistance.
Mike Liebner
bikini@bikininet.com
(408) 521-1007

[TH – Hopefully, Clark will have some info on the DR. T aspect of this. As far as just moving files around is concerned, unless you want to fool around with terminal programs and null-modem cables, the easiest way that I've found to move files from an Atari to a Mac is to put them on a 720k DOS-formatted disk – Ataris and Macs can both read/write these.]

[CS – My editor is right (imagine that!) about transporting the files via DOS-formatted diskettes. And my guess is that once you get the file physically to the Mac, you won't have any trouble opening it.

I suppose it's possible, though, that you may need to change the file type and creator before your Mac sequencer will recognize the files. There are several programs that make this simple. File Buddy (shareware, $25.00), is an excellent addition to the Mac for all-around file management. File Typer (shareware, $10.00) is designed to handle one thing only – editing file types – and it does so in an elegant, straightforward manner. File types can also be changed using the ubiquitous ResEdit.

Once you've located the file type and creator for the MIDI file you wish to convert, change the file type to "Midi" (without the quotes, and pay attention to case). Creator can probably be left blank, (creator specifies what Mac program created the file), but if you change creator to match the Mac sequencer you use, then the file can probably be used to auto-launch the correct Mac program by double-clicking.

To find out what creator to use for your Mac sequencer (Vision's creator, for example, is "MIDA"), simply save a MIDI file, and use whatever program you're using to take a look at its creator.

File Buddy: Contact Laurence Harris #17 Old University Station Road, Chapel Hill, NC 27514-1572, 919-933-9595; Compuserve 76150,1027; AOL LHarris). File Typer: Contact Daniel Azuma, 1449 Belleville Way, Sunnyvale, CA 94087; you can receive the latest version of FileTyper, plus a few free "hacks" and some other stuff by enclosing a formatted 800k disk with your registration. A SASE would be appreciated, too.]

TH –

God, **TS-12** "System Error 170 initialize"! I briefly see the display with (U0-0) and then the TS reboots herself again... and again... and again... Must go to repair I think.

This happened just after using "Logic" with the TS via TG100 V1.3 Window driver to send/dump SysEx Program Parameter. Maybe some illegal data could have entered the TS thru its MIDI jack to its startup memory or something?

Thanks to Ensoniq for bringing my SysEx buffer problem with Soundscape to their technical meeting but I lost the kind Tech Rep's name who sent me email. Sorry. Could you also check on this too?

I shall bring my TS to be serviced at the local dealer.

cousin@asiaonline.net

[CS – Sorry about your TS. You might try e-mailing Ensoniq Customer Support directly to check the name of the service tech you're looking for (we won't be shipping these letters off to them for a couple of weeks).]

[cousins@asiaonline.net – To Clark: Thanks – and I have contacted Ensoniq customer Support and received a very prompt reply. Al (at Ensoniq) says to hard boot the TS with very special and interesting command and my TS is working again.

Thanks for the great Interface and thanks to Ensoniq, Al and Clark.]

To anyone:

I work with a **VFX**. (Ser# 10186, 07/09/90) piloted by the C-Lab "Creator" sequencer (Atari ST vers. 3.16).

Does anyone have any bright ideas on how to store merely 3 or 6 voice-programs in the sequencer, for use in a loading and piloting the VFX in a MULTI set-up, instead of having to save and transmit the entire Internal Banks??

The purpose of this would be to save storage space on my disks. If I have to save 64 voices in order to save merely the 3 voices that I actually need, this is a huge waste of disk space, not to mention a timing problem when loading the information.

So far, the only way to do this that I have discovered is very cumbersome:

I have to spit from my sequencer one individual voice sysex into the VFX write-buffer, then have the sequencer trick the VFX into thinking I am pushing the buttons on the console necessary in order to load this program into a specific slot in Internal Memory (using the "virtual button" method, Manual p.A-3, MIDI Specifications). Then I have to do the same for the other 2 voices, or however many I need. Then I have to send the MULTI set-up, and a switch-to-MULTI-mode message, for safety. Only then am I ready to proceed with the note information.

This I have to do for every piece, (and a similar process when using a Preset in homophonic music). It all takes precious time to set-up, save, and again, precious time in the actual loading process. (It does NOT allow quick major changes in the MULTI set-up during a piece of music.)

I would love to hear of another solution to this problem. But if my method is the only one, is there a way anyone has found to streamline the process, or to shorten the amount of information (and therefore time) necessary???

If anyone can write or phone directly, immediately, that would be terrific. I've been working at this problem for many years, and would like it to end as soon as possible. (Is there anyone near NYC? I'd love to hear how you've used the VFX in general.)

Good luck to all the other VFX fans/users out there. In so many other respects, it's such an elegant and beautifully constructed instrument!

Thanks so much.
Chris Kenny.

212-568-7298
prader@nyplgate.nypl.org

[Chris Kenny (follow-up) – Thanks for the input from so many. Still no solution, but it's wonderful to know I have so much company!

Someone at U. of Colorado pointed out that the SD-1 provides the option for saving 1, 6, or 64 programs. 6 would be indeed perfect, but my version of the VFX does not provide this option (only 1 or 64, nothing inbetween).

Is there a ROM upgrade available?

Ensoniq's terrific "Fax Retrieval System" (1-800-257-1439) has provided me with much valuable information, but wouldn't you know it, the "pamphlets" "Checking your software version," and "SYSEX to Storage Device – A Common Problem" are not being sent out at present. (System down? – I get blank pages.) Is there a way to email Ensoniq?

Thanks to Richard Green(e?), who phoned from CA (!), I learned the technique for checking my software version (hold down the "Preset" button, simultaneously press "Master"). My ROM is vers. 2.10, with KPC 233 (what does "KPC" stand for?). As I noted last time, my instrument is Ser#10186, 07/09/90, if that helps.

Thanks so much for your attention!]

[Ensoniq – We're not sure that we have much to offer in your search for a work-around, but we can add that KPC stands for Keyboard Processor Controller. It is the software version of your Poly-Key pressure system. Your software should be upgraded to Version 2.30 – it adds the following features:

** Pitch Bend Held function*

** The ability to convert regular cartridges (STC-32) to Pitch Table Cartridges (up to 60 instantly selectable Pitch Tables)*

** The addition of a Chorus and Reverb with Distortion effect*

It does not add support for 3 or 6 Program Sys. Ex. Dumps. Good luck in your efforts!]

TH –

Question: I have an **ASR-10**. I am having trouble with a shareware program entitled "convert" (currently available at the Oakland EPS archive), that is supposed to convert different sounds to different formats. This would be great, as I am only 16, and, not possessing great amounts of cash, have little access to different sounds. I can't get the program to work. I've run it from Windows and MS-DOS, but all I get is an initial screen listing the many formats (GKH, AIFF, ETC.) that the program supports, and then... nothing. I would appreciate any assistance you could give as to what I am doing wrong and how I can get this potentially beneficial program to run properly.

Also, what are the advances that the ASR-10 OS 3.53 makes over 3.0? And is there an IRC channel for keyboardists?

Thank you,
Emily Lloyd
emilyl@erols.com

[CS – Not being a Convert user, I'm afraid I can't offer much in the way of advice. Perhaps the best thing is to hope that one of our readers (with Convert experience) will see your letter , and offer some suggestions. Also, you might try contacting the program's author, Jesus Villena (jvillena@dsic.upv.es). Keep in mind, though, that your problems may well be related to the configuration of your PC, rather than any inherent problem with Convert.

While I don't know of any IRC channels for keyboardists, I was able to dig up this information (courtesy of Ensoniq) regarding the OS 3.53 upgrade for the ASR-10 (by the way – a lot of this type of information is available, quickly and free of charge, via Ensoniq's fax-back system. Dial 1-800-257-1439 and follow the instructions to receive faxes detailing a number of pertinent issues):

ENSONIQ ASR-10/ASR-88 OPERATING SYSTEM VERSION 3.53 Release Notes

**Note Regarding Operating System Size The operating system size has not changed since version 3.01. If you are upgrading from version 2.51 or prior, you will see that the operating system requires 160 more blocks.*

SOFTWARE CHANGES:

This release addresses the following situations :

Voice stereo phase coherence. Stereo sample phase coherence has been improved in version 3.53. We recommend that "Stereo Layer Link" should be set to "ON" to ensure stereo phase coherence.

Effective in version 3.08, the PHASER + REVERB algorithm was changed to eliminate intermittent ticks and pops. Any instruments or banks that were previously saved with the old PHASER+REVERB algorithm would still exhibit these symptoms when that instrument was loaded and FX=INST or FX=BANK was selected. Version 3.53 fixes this by intercepting the old algorithm and replacing it with the new one.

Edits to the ASMPLNAME field, when stereo audio tracks were selected, could have affected the system data thus creating unpredictable results. This has been corrected.

Direct-dialing of SCSI files has been improved.

Cross-compatibility with the new ASR-88 operating system.Instrument and system default differences between the ASR-10 and the ASR-88 are now cross compatible. The ASR-10 default instrument has a key range of C2-C7 with the INST pressure mode and BASE CHANNEL PRESSURE default to KEY.

The ASR-88 default instrument has a key range of A0-C8 with the INST and BASE CHANNEL PRESSURE defaulting to CHAN.

ASR-88 translates ASR-10 instruments on loading. When an ASR-10 instrument is loaded into the ASR-88, the ASR-88 will convert the INST PRESSURE MODE to CHAN if it was KEY. Likewise, BASE CHANNEL PRESSURE loaded in from global parameters saved on an ASR-10 will translate to CHAN if it was saved as KEY. Key ranges are preserved and not translated.

Sequencer playback of pressure- When INST pressure mode is set to CHAN, both types of pressure (channel and key) will now be played back by the sequencer. This was to ensure compatibility of the ASR-88 with demo songs created for the ASR-10.

Version 3.53 addresses the proper loading of global parameters on bootup. Specifically, the Audio Track SCSI Configuration parameters, and the ASR-88 Touch and Pressure parameters. (This only applies to users of version 3.52).]

Greetings:

I hate newbie questions as much as anyone, but where can I find complete instructions on setting up/connecting my old **Mirage** to a Macintosh? Hardware? OS? Software?

I'm a pro in graphics and every other area EXCEPT MIDI, so I can follow instructions, if someone could tell me where to find them!

Thanks,
Rob Frankel
Robfrankel@aol.com

[CS – The definitive text on all things technical regarding the Mirage is the "Mirage Advanced Sampling Guide," which should be available from Ensoniq. Start out by nabbing yourself a copy of that.

Once you delve into that, you'll find that you need the Mirage Advanced Sampling Operating System (MASOS) to do any serious sampling or sample manipulation. This is probably also available from Ensoniq; if you don't already have a copy, order one when you order your Mirage Advanced Sampling Guide.

Finally, the only software for the Mac (that's currently available, anyway) that can communicate with the Mirage is Alchemy, available from Passport Designs (http://www.mw3.com/passport/passport.htm). It's a great program (I use it all the time), but it's not inexpensive (last time I looked, it was over $400.00, but that may have changed).]

TH –

I have a **TS-12** and am trying to emulate a sound on my friend's KS-32 called CATALINA MIX. This should be possible but I cannot seem to get it exact.

Can anyone advise me how to do this?

jpott@primenet.com

[CS – The short answer is, use the same waves, filter, envelope and effect settings on the TS-12 as you find in the KS-32, and you should be able to get pretty close. The reality is, a lot of this is going to involve a

certain amount of guesswork and trial-and-error, as the waves and other parameters you'll find in each machine won't necessarily be identical.

The approach I'd take would be to turn off the effects in both machines, and then try to nail the envelopes (and rough in the balance) for the voices you're going to use. If CATALINA MIX uses three voices, solo each one in turn, and rough in a corresponding voice in the TS-12. Don't worry about the wave – just try to get the envelopes and levels as close as possible to what you hear when you listen to the KS-32.

Once you've done that, try getting the waves together. If you have waves in the TS-12 that correspond to those in the KS-32, so much the better.

If you find waves in the two synths with the same name, but that sound more than a little different from each other, check the filter settings. Chances are the TS-12 waves will sound pretty close to those in the KS-32 if the filter settings are similar.

If you have trouble finding waves in the TS-12 that corresponds to some or all of those used in CATALINA MIX, things can become a bit trickier. If you're lucky, you'll be able to find a wave in the TS-12 that's close enough to do the job. If not, you'll have to try to emulate the the KS-32 wave in the TS-12. There are a few ways to approach this (all of which are a bit complex to detail here), but the basic ideas would be 1) layer two or more waves together to create a composite sound; 2) use the multisample-shift parameter to push a wave out of its normal range, hopefully producing a wave more like what you need; 3) use the filters to change the character of a wave or 4) a combination of these approaches.

If you can get this far, it shouldn't be too difficult to turn the effects back on, and duplicate the KS-32 effects in the TS-12.]

TH –
Subject: Ensoniq **KT-76/88**

Someone, please review these synths. I couldn't help but notice that no one talks about them. Why? Are these bad synths? Please tell me something about them, before I make a bad investment. Please reply via E-mail.

Thanks,
MrClintD@aol.com

[Tom Mandel – I think the KT-88 is one of the BEST SOUNDING Instruments I own.]

[Yuri (yuri@ptc.com) – I also find it a little bit disconcerting that nobody seems to notice KT, considering the amount of info floating around about KS-32.

I bought a KT-88 about 6 months ago. Since this is my first real instrument (I had an antique weighted Yamaha electropiano), it had to be all-around, meat-and-potatoes kind of synth. So far, the overall experience is pretty good.

In more detail (this is all IMH

The on-board sounds' quality is spotty. The

Transoniq-Net
HELP WITH QUESTIONS

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

much-ballyhooed "KT Grand Piano" sample is not up to snuff, at least in the middle register. I actually found myself playing the piano in the GM set more often. The saxes sound fake, there is no tuba (except in GM kit), and loop points on some of the strings need adjustment. Nothing that can not be fixed by fiddling with sound parameters, though (the process itself is not very easy, but manageable). Great Hammond samples, and the basses and guitars are more than decent.

Sequencing is a blast. The interface is good and intuitive. You need the optional SRAM card, though, if you want to REALLY create songs of any considerable length.

MIDI capabilities are probably the strong suit of this synth. GM kit is superb, and setup is a snap. Pity, though, that most software does not recognize the native sound map or SysEx. Oh well, there are always upgrades. If there's gonna be more of us buying these things.

Action is on par with the best from Roland. It is not Baldwin grand, of course, but I am not complaining.

Hope this helps. If you have more detailed questions, I'll be happy to answer them.

Good Luck!]

[CS – I love it! Reader reviews! We should do more of this.

As for my fiftieth of a dollar's worth, I'm fairly biased. But I do have several friends who own KT-series instruments, and they love 'em.]

[Ensoniq – The KT's were reviewed in the June 1995 issue of Keyboard, *the March 1995 issue of* EM, *the May 1995 issue of* EQ *and the May 1995 issue of* Recording.*]*

TH –

My **VFX** has ROM ver2.10. (I have a VFX, not a VFX-SD.) Vers. 2.30 is "current" and available (according to *eTH130*). What are the differences between 2.10 and 2.30?? How do I find out definitively what all the differences are? Where do I look?

Is it possible that 2.30 allows saving and loading 6 programs via MIDI-sysex to an external computer, (instead of just 1 or 64)? Does someone out there have 2.30 and can tell me right away?

What other differences MIGHT there be?

How much does a v.2.30 cost? Can I install a ROM chip myself? Is it accessible inside? What are the dangers? (I have installed RAM chips successfully in the past.) Does it involve de-soldering and soldering? If a dealer must install it, how much does that cost?

I'm also looking for a functional shareware librarian (AtariST) for the VFX, or generic. If I could find an VFX-editor also, or a combo, I would love it, but a librarian is what I need most. Does anyone know where to look? In an archive somewhere? Does anyone have one they could send me?

As I get more money in a couple of months, I will likely want to buy a better librarian/editor than shareware. What do people out there recommend for the VFX (via Atari-ST)? Does anyone wish to sell one?

Thanks,
CHRIS KENNY
prader@nyplgate.nypl.org

[CS – I can't tell you what the difference between 2.10 and 2.30 is, and I don't know what v.2.30 might cost, but you should be able to find out easily enough. Try e-mailing Ensoniq Customer Support directly, or give them a call (610-647-3930). You might also want to visit their web site (http://www.ensoniq.com/). From here, you can ferret out all sorts of useful information, such as how to check the OS version of your instrument, or what the current OS version is (we publish current OS versions in the Hacker as well). I'll also run your questions by Ensoniq next time I talk to them (two to three weeks or so).

Installation of OS EEPROMs is pretty straightforward; certainly no more difficult than installing RAM chips, (no soldering is involved), although the VFX is a bit more involved to open up than most computers. If you'd rather have a service center handle the chore, I'd guess you should expect to pay $25.00 to $35.00 dollars for the labor.

As far as Atari software goes, I don't know of anything specific. You might, however, try contacting a company called Sound Quest Inc. They sell universal editor/librarians for the PC, MAC, Atari, Amiga, and they support several Ensoniq formats (although I don't know if the VFX is one of them). They can be reached at (800) 667-3998, or via the Internet at 76702.2205@Compuserve.com.]

[Ensoniq – See our response to your earlier letter (above) for more information about version 2.30. It is our policy not to endorse users trying to install their own chips into our products. The chips are free, but we recommend that you take your unit to an Authorized Repair Center to have them installed. Along with their technical expertise, the facility can also check out your unit while it is on the bench and give it a clean bill of health.

We would also recommend that you check into Emagic's Sound Diver and Sound Surfer programs, which are available for the Atari platform. Contact them at (916) 477-1051 voice, (916) 477-1052 fax, emagic@emagicusa.com e-mail, http://www.emagicusa.com web site.]

Hi there!

I have a friend whose floppy drive on his **Mirage** has packed up and needs to be replaced. I was told that you might be able to help with info on alternative types of drive which may work/fit, as the Ensoniq one is apparently very expensive. Any info would be appreciated!

I'm also on the lookout for circuit diagrams for the SCSI piggy back card for the **EPS** Classic. I have the 4x expander but need to build the SCSI interface, as getting hold of one seems to be impossible...

Andy Brown
Soundcraft in the UK

[TH – We recently had a similar question about the Mirage drive and here's the answer we had then...

Actually, way back in November and December of '89 we ran articles on converting an earlier Mirage to a double-sided drive. About the only requirements about the drive were that it fit mechanically, be addressable as drive 0, and have the 34-pin cable connector on the back. There were some modifications mentioned in the article but they were just some switching/indicator changes so the Mirage could use both sides of the floppy. (Both of these back issues are still available – #52 & #53, $2 each.)]

[Ensoniq – Make sure the 4-pin power connector is mechanically compatible with the Mirage power cable (there are variations out there). Also, check the 5-volt power consumption. The Mirage was designed to use a disk drive that required +12 volts and +5 volts. Newer drives require only +5 volts, but demand more power from the +5 volt supply than the old ones. Be careful not to overload the power supply.]

[Ensoniq – The SP-1 SCSI interface is still available. Contact us directly for more information so we can help you (ask for Steve Mash).]

TH –

Finally, a real solution to the storage problem for the **ASR-10**!!!

Last week I bought a JAZZ drive from ProMax Technology. (http://www.scsi-disk.com) The Promax box is better than the stock JAZZ. It has a built-in power supply, fan, SCSI ID chooser, SCSI thru port all in a sturdy compact box. Hooked it up and formatted it. No problem. Since there is no way I know of to do a direct copy from a Bernoulli 150 to a 1 gig Jazz I simply restored a back-up disk to the JAZZ. I recorded disk tracks to three previously sequenced songs. Punched in, punched out and tried to do anything I could think of to crash the disk tracks. NO PROBLEMS!!

Dennis Lisonbee
lisonbde@UVSC.EDU

[Drew (drew@fcom.com) – I keep getting an error when I try to format the Jaz disk. What did it say when you tried to format yours? I know that the disk is not locked because I used it on my PC.]

[CS – It should be pointed out that the Jazz drive has been tested by Ensoniq and is not *approved for use with any of its samplers (which will probably come as no surprise to you, Drew), so count your blessings, Dennis.]*

[TH – Garth at Rubber Chicken has written us an article on similar problems with ZipDrives that you should find elsewhere in this issue (#132). Don't give up yet. Check the article.]

TH –

I own a **TS-10** and I have heard that with the right programs it's possible to convert WAV-files from the PC and then put them on TS-10 disks so that I can use them on my synth.

I therefore ask the following questions:
1. What kind of programs do I need?
2. How do I use them?

I have both the CONVERT program and "Ensoniq disk extractor." The Ensoniq disk extractor formats disks so that I get no error-messages on the synth, but when I try to extract a Linndrum-sound I have downloaded from the net into a TS-10 disk, then no kind of sample-banks or sounds show up at all on the synth.

Geir Hongro
Oslo

[Andrew Adams – I managed to convert .wav files from my PC to my TS-12 using software available from the oakland site. URL: http://oak.oakland.edu/oak/eps/utils-msdos.html

It was a while ago but I think I used a mixture of convert, epswav and snddem. The basic premise is that you convert the file to work on an EPS machine. The TS series will read the EPS files. It worked but the quality wasn't great. Hope this helps.]

[CS – You might also want to check out Garth Hjelte's article, "From Cyberspace to Your Ear," available at the Hacker's ftp site, which originally appeared in TH issues #122 (August '95) and 123 (September '95), and which covers this exact subject in some detail.]

TH –

I just got a used **KS-32** this week, and I've been shopping around for some decent software to handle MIDI stuff on my Power Macintosh. Any recommendations?

Holliker@aol.com

[CS – This is kinda like saying, "I just got a license, and was wondering what kind of car I should buy." My advice to you is to check out back issues of publications dealing with electronic music, such as Keyboard *and* Electronic Musician. *You should be able to find reviews of all the major software packages there.*

In the meantime, you might want to check out Midigraphy, one of the most amazing shareware packages I've ever seen, available at Tontata's home page (http://ux01.so-net.or.jp/~mmaeda/indexe.html).
It's a full-fledged sequencing program, including a number of cool editing features (including graphic editing!). Unfortunately, the documentation's in Japanese, but most Mac-savvy electronic musicians should be able to figure most of it out. Still, it's worth every penny of the paltry $20.00 shareware fee asked for in the documentation.]

TH –

How can a person get the 2.30 chips for his old **VFX** with 2.0? Can I install it myself?! How much? etc. etc.

Richard Green
madsix@earthlink.net

[CS – Just in case you missed my response to one of Chris Kenney's many letters asking pretty much the same question, I'll reiterate:

You should be able to acquire the current VFX OS directly from Ensoniq. Try e-mailing Ensoniq Customer Support directly, Or, try calling their toll-free accessories order-line (800-553-5151). You might also want to visit their web site (http://www.ensoniq.com/). From here, you can ferret out all sorts of useful information, such as how to check the OS version of your instrument, or what the current OS version is (we publish current OS versions in the Hacker *as well).*

Installation of OS EEPROMs is pretty straightforward – just swapping a couple of chips, really (no soldering is involved). The hardest part is getting the VFX opened up and the chips exposed. If you'd rather have a service center handle the chore, I'd guess you should expect to pay $25.00 to $35.00 dollars for the labor.]

[Ensoniq – See our answers to Chris Kenny.]

TH –

I have called Ensoniq Tech-Support three times and still have not received an answer to this thorny problem.

I am using a **KT-76** as a keyboard controller

for my new **MR Rack**. The bank change buttons on the KT (when I have a card installed on the KT) will access three different RAM banks and the GM bank on the MR Rack. I cannot access the ROM banks on the rack.

All I want to do is be able to switch to the MR ROM Banks from my KT. Some ideas I have had is to somehow send a LSB controller message from the KT sequencer or perhaps use a preset that would send the controller message. I know that the MR Rack is set up to respond to bank changes because Cakewalk 3.01 can do it without a hitch.

It also may be that I am simply out of luck, that the KT can only send Bank Change messages LSB 0,1,2, and 3.

Does anyone have ANY ideas of how I can have a more successful interface between these two great pieces of Ensoniq equipment??

Thanks!!
Eric Sandrich
esand@halcyon.com

[Ensoniq – You are correct – the KT can only send Bank Select 0, 1 , 2 and 3. Here's a simple work-around: By setting a part to ignore Bank Select messages and setting it to a sound in a ROM Bank of your choice, when you send program changes from the KT it will ignore the Bank Select (which would have caused it to change from a ROM to a RAM Bank), and select the sound of your choice. This method doesn't allow you to change Banks on a given Part, but you can use it to find a way to work with the 16 parts in an MR to suit your needs. Hope this helps!]

TH –

Announcing a free Windows 3.1 based sound editor for the Ensoniq **SQ-1/2** series synthesizers. The Ensoniq sound editor allows you to:

1. Download sounds (programs) from the Ensoniq to your Windows based PC and save on disk.

2. Edit the sound parameters on screen.

3. Save the edited sounds on disk.

4. Upload the sounds to the Ensoniq and play.

All of the work was done using Visual Basic 4.0 and the MIDI Programmer's Toolkit for Windows. The program and necessary VB support files are approximately 1.9 Megabytes zipped. The file EVE.ZIP should be unzipped to C:\TEMP and then installed by clicking on SETUP.EXE. An EXE module has been prepared and can be downloaded for free from http://www2.netdoor.com/~rlang.

The program has been tested on a 90MHz Pentium with 16 Megs of memory using MQX-32M and Soundblaster MIDI interfaces. The program is in beta testing and I am interested in your feedback.

Just contact me at my email address, rlang@netdoor.com.

[CS – Cool. Good luck with it, rlang!]

TH –
Subject: fandangled Consarned Computer Midi-thang

I'm running Cakewalk Pro v2.0 and Band in Box Pro. All is well except for an irritating "hollow" or "pipeline" effect whenever the two programs are engaged (even if minimized). The signal is from a 486DX4/100 to a **'16-Plus** and MIDI Thru to a one-in/4-out. The effect persists even with the Soundcard's MIDI-In disconnected.

I suspect that it's one of the "echo on/off" toggles but the documentation is so voluminous and my eyes and mind get so weary it's just...ZZZZzzzz, SNORT! Ooops, sorry ...dozed off. Can anyone help me WAKE UP and SMELL THE COFFEE on this?

J.D.
BrosRyan@aol.com

[CS – Well, it sounds an awful lot like the dreaded MIDI echo problem to me. My best guess is that you are echoing the same MIDI data from both Band-in-a-Box and Cakewalk. The fix would be to turn off MIDI echo (also known as MIDI Thru) in one or both of the programs. In Cakewalk, I believe you find the controls for MIDI echo under the settings menu. I don't know where you might find it in Band-in-a-Box, but it shouldn't be too hard.]

Hi TH's,

I have one question: I have five files with extension .EFA downloaded from MIDI MUSIC FORUM in Compuserve, and I can't convert to Ensoniq format with EDE 107 software for my **ASR**. Which software do I need? Where can I find it?

Best Regards,
Carles Torras Arnal
72333.1605@CompuServe.com
SPAIN

[CS – Apparently, it's a format used by Giebler Enterprises (http://members.aol.-com/giebler/) for single files. We're passing your letter along – hopefully, Gary Giebler will shag it and formulate some sort of response.]

[Answer (and shameless plug) from Gary Giebler – To take the mystery out of our file extensions, the first letter is the manufacturer (Ensoniq), the second letter is either "D" for disk or "F" for File, and the last letter is the model (A = ASR, E = EPS). The Ensoniq Disk Extractor (EDE version 107) is a shareware program which extracts all Ensoniq disk image files (.EDA, *.EDE, *.EDT, etc.) back into a copy of the original diskette. EDE provides a means for Ensoniq owners to download copies of Ensoniq disks from the Internet and BBS's. The files you downloaded are not disk images, they are copies of individual ASR files created with our Ensoniq Disk Manager. Our Ensoniq Disk Manager ($34.95) can read/write/format/copy individual Ensoniq files, entire Ensoniq diskettes, Ensoniq CD-ROMs and Ensoniq SCSI hard drives. There are also several shareware programs available which can be used to write the *.EFA files. Check the recent article in the* Hacker *(Issues #122 and #123) for more information about where to find the shareware programs, or check our web page at http://members.aol.com/giebler/.]*

Hi Hackers,

After a long break from using (and owning) any synth – the last one was a DX7 some years ago – I picked up a used **VFX-SD** at my local store. Okay, it's not the latest gear, but it suits my needs (awful sounds, good sequencer etc).

I'm also new to *Transoniq Hacker*, so ex-

cuse me, if any my questions have been already answered.

1. My dealer gave to me all of the stuff he has found in his store with VFX-writing on it; there are also two cartridges labeled "VFX Sound demo No. 1" and "No. 3" with loading instructions (Insert, press CART, select DEMO). After inserting these cartridges in my VFX the display flashes once – and then nothing happens. No chance to switch to cartridge sounds or to load any demo ("Np cartridge").

Any idea for what are these cartridges good? If not for VFX-SD, does anybody need them?

2. Is there any chance still to get RAM-Cartridges (or at least ONE) for my VFX-SD? (I'm not willing to pay too much ... and I live in Germany.)

3. In used-gear ads I've found some VFX-SD v2 (32 voices). Are there any other differences (new waveforms, effects) to my v1? Can I update my VFX-SD to the new versions? How much does it cost?

Thanks for your answers!
Marcel (mkral@vgp.de)

[CS – 1. The cartridges contain demo sequences for the VFX (which has no sequencer or disk drive) and were provided to dealers by Ensoniq. They are pretty much useless in anything but a VFX.

2. I'm not sure if RAM cartridges are still available, but if they are, you should be able to find out about them by e-mailing Ensoniq Customer Support. Or, try calling their toll-free accessories order-line (800-553-5151).

3. There was, at on time, an upgrade for the VFX-SD, but it is no longer available. I believe the upgrade included a couple of new waveforms (acoustic piano, and maybe a new electric piano), but that's about it (other than the increased polyphony).]

TH –

Has anyone figured out how to do any upgrades to the original **EPS**? I have an EPS with the 2X expander. I need more RAM (is there any way to modify the 2X expander with bigger SIMMS?), extra outputs, and a SCSI port. If these upgrades can't be done without ordering the hardware, do you know of good sources for the hardware?

Thanks,
SoundWarp@aol.com

[CS – It's possible that some of these accessories might still be available directly from Ensoniq. They have a toll-free number you can call for ordering accessories. Dial (800) 553-5151 between 8:30 am to 5:00 pm EST, Monday through Friday. Also, check out the FAQ at Oakland University's EPS archives (http://oak.oakland.edu/pub/eps/docs/faq), you'll find some information there on home-brew modifications to your EPS (proceed at your own risk, of course).

The 2X expander does not use SIMMS. I doubt there's any way to expand it.]

[Ensoniq – There is no way to "upgrade" the upgrades. You would need a 4x expander, SCSI adapter and OEX-8 to get what you want – they are all still available. There is no way to add additional memory to the 2x expander, it doesn't use SIMMs (they were not common when the EPS was designed) and 4x is the maximum that an EPS can use.]

TH –

Does anyone out there have a **VFX** (not SD) with a ROM chip version 2.3?

If so, does it enable the VFX to save and load six sounds into internal memory at a time, instead of merely one or 64???

I guess it would be helpful to know if ANY VFX in the world is capable of saving and loading six sounds at a time.

Hope to hear from someone.

Thanks,
Chris Kenny

[TH – Clark says he's already answered this (more than once). If you missed it (them), check the response to Richard Green's letter elsewhere in this column.]

[Ensoniq – We're beginning to wonder if Chris Kenny, Richard Green, CHRIS KENNY, and Chris Kenny are the same person. Any comments Richard? :-)]

Hi there –

My **VFX** was a gift in exchange for helping choose and buy it, and construct a few useful sounds for a friend in N. Vermont state, who "borrows" it back every now and then to use as an organ in accompanying choirs. He's particularly happy with the organ sounds I've made. I'm "buying" it from him this summer by helping him run and teach in a music camp up there.

I use it mostly to create my own sounds, and am fascinated with its potential. I'm still tweaking every day this and that, and then using the sounds to create new music (improvisations) in my own particular style, which is a weird mix of styles from Medieval Europe through some jazz styles of this century.

I used to be a specialist in European music of 1200-1600, and played a bunch of instruments (strings, brass, recorders, etc). The VFX has allowed me to create some sounds that I've always wished for, and to only have to keep in shape one instrument technique (keyboard). (It was difficult practicing all those instruments enough to be any good on them.) I've sometimes used the VFX to play 3 and 4 part music from the 14th-15th Century, and very successfully so. I use C-Lab Creator, and can sculpture the lines with keypressure and pedal and mod-wheel information to get a very expressive result, sometimes more than what "original" instruments were capable of. It's a lot of work to get that much expressivity, and to make it subtle enough. But it's a good result.

I decided to write in case someone out there

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is doing something like what I am and cares to let me know (which would be nice).

Chris Kenny
prader@nyplgate.nypl.org

TH –

I have a EZ135 and when I do DiskTracks it seems to affect the sequencer when I play back a song in song mode. The symptoms are that it goes off beat. It's sorta like hic-ups throughout the playback of the song. How do I fix the problem? Does this happen when doing DiskTracks on the Zip Drive?

What I want to know is which drive is better for doing DiskTracks and why? They both are great for storage but has anyone had thorough experience with either of these for DiskTracks?

Gerald M. Ressler
ressler@pop.erols.com

[CS – So far, I don't have any reports on the EZ135; it's altogether possible that it's not up to the task. However, don't give up until you've experimented with other settings for your drive. Ensoniq suggests that using the 30 kHz system sample rate for Audio Track recording will often improve results, as well as setting the SCSI speed to a higher value and increasing the SCSI buffer size.

As far as the Zip drive is concerned, the word so far is that it will play back disk tracks okay, but recording is a bit iffy – sometimes it works, sometimes it doesn't. The bottom line is, if you want to do disk tracks, stick with bigger hard drives (they're generally faster), and be very cautious of anything not on Ensoniq's approved drive list.]

Hello,

I'm the owner of an **ASR-10** and I'm trying to find a Macintosh compatible patch editor for it. (I just can't stand working through that little window.)

I also own a software developer company. So, if no editor exists for the ASR-10, any info you could relay on getting involved in developing such a product would be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,
John Dole

Mind-ware
MindWare01@aol.com

[CS – The only thing I know of is a program called Tiresias (reviewed in the Dec. '90 issue of TH), written by Chip Burwell of Bokonan Technologies. Theoretically, there's a demo version available in the CompuServe MIDI/Music Forum Library. Otherwise, perhaps my erstwhile editor would be kind enough to look up the address and/or phone for these guys, and place it in the space I've graciously left below...]

[TH – The only address and phone number we have is very old. We checked the phone number and it no longer works. Maybe a "wanted" ad in our Classifieds will lead to something.]

Hello,

Stuck in the quagmire of SCSI – or, the SCSI sample download music mystery!

I bought my **TS-12** without the SCSI interface. Now that I'm about to buy a computer, and having grown tired of loading floppies, I would like to buy the SCSI read only controller for the TS-12 and a hard drive. However, a little research has identified some questions:

Are the cables (and connectors) from the PC to the hard drive and from the TS to the hard drive 50 or 25 pins? Can they share the hard drive? Are we talking SCSI I, SCSI II, SCSI II Fast and Wide, or SCSI III? Does this affect the cables? Where do I put the terminators? (Again, 50-pin, 25-pin, active?) Do the Iomega 100M, 1G, and Syquest 135M drives work for this? What do I need for the PC SCSI driver software and controllers?

Do I also need the "EDM" software from Gary Giebler to allow me to create files on the hard drive that can be read by the TS-12?

The salespeople in most stores (computer or music) think SCSI is what happens to food when it's left too long in the refrigerator. Also, when I read about solutions, they say, "There are so many possible solutions... so I'll just say that in general... blah, blah, blah." Well, the next time you go shopping ask the clerk for a "blah, blah, blah." I challenge you and your readers to face this question with one solid viable option which when connected together will create music. I want manufacturers, model numbers, part numbers, etc.

P.S. Maybe Ensoniq will put these parts together in a package that you can order from them. One-stop shopping.

Thanks,
Dave Clinch
Sunnyvale, Calif.

[CS – First, the TS-12, (which supports the standard SCSI protocol), will require a cable with a 25-pin D-type sub miniature connector, called a DB-25P (the same type of connector required for Apple computers). Virtually all hard drives, however, use standard 50-pin SCSI connectors. Almost certainly, you'll use a 50-pin to 50-pin cable to connect your hard drive to your PC, and a 25-pin to 50-pin cable to connect your TS-12 to the hard drive. This is a perfectly common setup.

Although both the TS and the PC can be physically connected to the same hard drive at the same time, they can't share the same media; each device needs to find its own file system written on the disk. This can make removable media (Syquest, Zip, etc.) an attractive choice. You can format some cartridges to work with the TS-12, and others to work with your PC. Of course, your TS-12 can't be used to format a SCSI drive, so (as you've surmised) you'll need Giebler's EDM for that.

Any other questions you might have regarding SCSI operations with your TS-12 will be addressed in the documentation that comes with your TS-12 SCSI interface kit. As far as SCSI software and hardware for your PC, I'm afraid I'm not qualified to make recommendations. I suggest narrowing the field to two or three drives for your TS-12 first, though, and then check with your computer dealer or user group to find out which ones will work best with your PC. You should be able to get recommendations for SCSI controller and software from the manufacturer of the drive you select.

As far as drives that are compatible with the TS-12, the Iomega Zip drive should work, but the Jaz drive is not approved by Ensoniq. As for the Syquest 135, it hasn't been tested yet, but unofficial reports indicate that it's probably OK. For the latest information on SCSI drives approved for use with Ensoniq keyboards, contact Ensoniq directly, or make use of their toll-free fax-back system by dialling 800-257-1439.]

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