

Transoniq

Hacker

The Independent
Newsletter for Ensoniq Users

The Esoteric, Astounding, Omnipotent ASR-10

or "I've got your Virtual Studio Right Here, Bucko"

Pat Finnigan



The issue of digital recording on the computer is getting to be way too big an issue to be ignored anymore. Ensoniq's doing PARIS. Digidesign's doing ProTools. Cakewalk's gone "Pro" Audio, Performer has gone "Digital," and all refuse to go away. We've got Pentium II technology, we've got 300 MHz G6 PowerPC Macs, and if you stop and scratch your head for a minute...

You begin to realize here's all this technology in an already oversaturated market. That's why such hoopla — technology serves to propagate itself, pure and simple (or, if you're a hardware/software engineer, complicated), but serves NOT to drive the market. Everyone assumes, "Geez, Martha, I've already got this PC, lemme go buy a SoundBlaster and make a recording studio out of it." Hey, Homer...

Gang, I don't care (A) if technically it *can* be done, (B) requires Windows NT 4.0, (C) is audibly superior to a real performance, (D) can become a viable product, or (E) is eco-

nomically feasible. It's the same old cart before the horse parable again. I don't wanna wear three hats (artist, engineer, and producer). I'd be the stereotypical plaintiff who represents himself without counsel if I did — I'd have a fool for a client. So stop the madness, let me up, cease and desist, whoa, quit! I've got all the tools I need to do all this stuff without reconfiguring my computer to a new infant technology. Go ahead and flame me if you want, but let's defuse this myth of the "virtual" recording studio...

(A) Every major label/session I've been involved in has a multimillion dollar investment in what is known as a recording studio. You know, a place where people record stuff. Not in their basement, not in their garage, not even in their vaulted grand room.

(B) This "recording studio" has mysterious little black boxes that have knobs and dials and faders on them so you can work on them in real time. They've even got this big huge conglomeration of knobs and faders on a desk they call a mixer. And there's a guy there who isn't in the band who moves bunches of these knobs and faders in real time. Why, he even grabbed eight faders with two hands and moved them SIMULTANEOUSLY! I saw it! Really!

(C) And, ya know what? After the sessions, we got this little tiny cassette called a DAT. It was mailed to Sony in Terre Haute, IN, where they turned that little tape into thousands of CDs! It's alchemy. How can they make all those little jewel boxes by melting one little itty-bitty DAT tape?

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Sorry for acting like a buttmunch, but do you see how obtuse this is? Everybody wants the sonic perfection of hard disk recording, yet they wanna record grungy analog sounds. The technology is switching roles? I smell methane — lemme put this cigarette out...

And let me put this argument to rest. Yes, digital tapeless hard disk recording is coming, and we'll embrace it soon enough. I'm simply not going to drop \$7500 for a ProTools setup

Transoniq-Net

HELP WITH QUESTIONS

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

All Ensoniq Gear – Ensoniq Customer Service. 9:30 am to noon, 1:15 pm to 6:00 pm EST Monday to Friday. 610-647-3930. Ensoniq's Fax On Demand line, (1-800-257-1439) can also be used to retrieve specs, OS info, hard-drive info, and the like.

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

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

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

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

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

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

SD-1, DP4, 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. (320) 235-9798. Email: chickenEPS@willmar.com.

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

SQ-1, KS-32, SD-1, SCSI, MR & 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.

(or any more computer hardware, for that matter), \$2500 for a multi-disk RAID array to keep up with it, or another \$3000 for a “control” surface. I've *already* got the control surface, I already know how to torque it, and so do you. There's only a few things required here, and you've already got the CPU. It's called an ASR-10. And here's the serious setup for all you power users explained...

Three Items

There are three objects to making the ASR the complete home studio. And, for convenience sake we'll assume you have an ASR-10 (this is the *Hacker*). We'll further assume you've got the SCSI expander and a hard disk (you're a subscriber) and are having a ball with the power of this box. We could further assume you have in your possession a DAT recorder to backup your hard drives through the Digital I/O option (you subscribe to eTH). Let's take the issue of the Malvern box and direct its power to its logical conclusion while we send you off to purvey the following...

Item 1: The OEX-6 Output Expander. Initially, we saw this box and said “What? \$350 bucks for 6 phone jacks?” when the friendly Ensoniq salesperson offered it to us. Gang, this ain't just 6 phone jacks. This, in conjunction with our satin black pet, gives us TEN discrete outputs. And that's ASSIGNABLE outputs — complete instruments can be sent out these jacks, separate layers can be sent out these jacks, separate WAVES can be sent out these. Given, you have to edit each instrument to do this (instead of just assigning the TRACK to a given output jack)(Ensoniq!), but now you have 8 discrete dry outputs and two AUDIO TRACK outputs (with the attendant FX processing of the stereo pair). Get the picture? Good. Get the OEX-6 — you NEED separate outs in the studio.

Item 2: An ADAT. Yes, an ADAT. Don't flame me here; I'll explain. How many of these new hard disk recorders can record on all their tracks simultaneously (e.g., in real time)? Answer? None. The VS-880 will do four at a whack, the new Fostex only does two at a whack, the new Yamaha and other MiniDisc recorders, well, their compression scheme excludes them from professional consideration. So, basically, the standalones are smoke and mirrors anyway. ADATs are the “cassettes” of the 21st century. *Every* commercial or professional studio has a couple in its possession, or rents them as needed (when a client requests it) for a yard a day. They're just *too convenient*. You need

64 digital tracks? Daisy-chain 8 of them together, stripe 8 VHS tapes, arm your tracks and hit it. When done, copy the masters for working tapes — it's still 1st generation, remember? Given, hard disk recording eliminates a stage or two of ADC-DAC. The ADAT's a standard, and it'll take more than Digidesign, PARIS, or other wannabe's to knock them out of first place. And it certainly isn't going to happen overnight...

Yeah, I've had ADATs lunch a tape before, too. That's why you arc the masters and work on copies. And yeah, they're SO convenient, some people skip this step. They pay for it dearly. The issue here is *medium of exchange*. You're gonna take these ADAT tapes and do a final mix on them in a mastering room when you lay off to DAT with leader tones for the CD facility. THAT's when you take the masters...

Item 3: A high-quality studio mixer. Not a 5-year old Mackie 1604, nor a 10-year old Peavey MK IV. You want a mixer with patchable channel outs — something like a Yamaha O2D, or if you can afford it, an O3D. These are digital mixers that store mixes, fader movements, effect settings, pan changes, and play them back in real time as well. Ensoniq was gonna do one (remember the “picture” of their 16-channel prototype at www.ensoniq.com last year?), but they went straight to PARIS.

But since the key word here is budget, any high-quality *studio* mixer with separate/patchable channel I/O will work fine. People are raving about the new Behringers — I'll have to audition one...

The Reel Deal

I'd like to be as excited about direct-to-disk recording as everyone else. My old homies at Truevision do this very thing with both audio (196k/sec @ 48k DAT sample rates) and video (2:1 M-JPEG compression for 14 Mb/sec) simultaneously. And it's the absolute best, but it'll set you back \$12k for the hardware, \$8k for the software, and you still need a \$5k box and \$75k of I/O devices. The question is WHY? These factors at work here are double-edged, They must be markedly superior — their price certainly reflects that. Are they user-effective? More productive? Cost-effective? I don't think so. Successfully marketable? Who's “demanding” this stuff? Just because the technology exists doesn't warrant blindly pursuing it for its own sake. Many companies remember this behavior as their final product. Remember Sequential? Synclavier? Fairlight?

Front Panel

RND (🎵)

Third Party News

We'd like to welcome a new sound vendor to these pages — Happy Salmon Music. Samples from Norway. Check out their ad and their web site for more info.

Speaking of web sites... Long-time supporter of Ensoniq samplers, WaveBoy, has their new web site up and running. Give 'em a visit at: www.waveboy.com.

Hacker News

We're changing our policy on the On-Line Interface a little: From now on, first priority will be given to questions and let-

ters from paying subscribers. Questions from non-subscribers *may* be included if they are likely to be of interest to our readers. There's currently too much effort going into dealing with issues that are really old news to those who have been reading the *Hacker* for any length of time. Plus we're getting a little tired of "giving away the store" and feel that folks who help support the *Hacker* certainly deserve some attention that your average web surfer dude doesn't. This should also allow us to cut down on the noise a little and maybe even boost the point size in the printed version to something a little more eye-friendly.

Along similar lines, we're also going to

have to raise the rates for the printed version of the *Hacker*. This is something that we haven't done since Issue #35, May, 1988 — 10 years ago!

We're going to adjust things so they're a little closer to actual costs: the printed version will be going from \$23/year to \$25/year (\$34 non-U.S.), and the e-mail version will actually be dropping from \$20/year to \$19/year.

The renewal notices going out about the same time as this issue (folks whose last issue is #157) will still have the old rates. These notices will have a closing date of July 1st. Anyone else can also renew by this date and still get the old rates. Of course, the new lower rate for the e-mail version is effective immediately.

Not to say it isn't the wave (no pun intended) of the future. Software architecture to support "plug-in" modules for FX, EQ, etc. are powerful and fascinating tools. They already exist in the DSP of all keyboard products as code. Adobe Premiere has been using this architecture for three years — it's finally "trickling down" to the audio world. The editing power of digital audio is unbelievable. Hey, this is a disk-based system here — read NLE (non-linear editing). When I buy an 8-track hard-disk recorder that doesn't record all 8 tracks in one pass I take it back. And did. Until this technology performs as advertised and is an *economical* alternative to *displace* the current environment, it remains a high-tech curio that, albeit, is a constant conversation piece, becomes the butt of some very cruel jokes referencing a boat anchor while remaining on the dealer's shelves. In other countries educators are asked "How can we broaden and enrich the learning experience?" In the U.S., educators are asked "How can we speed up the learning process?" And that's a blanket indictment of our society's "me-now" fixation. This will not simply change overnight any faster than recording studios will toss their tape machines in the dumpster and buy 9 Gb RAID arrays...

Because as we all sit in judgement, it's up to our ears to hear the difference. Did anybody notice that Madonna's "True Blue" album of 10 years ago was the first DDD album? Anyone notice that Rod Stewart's last album

was done entirely on ProTools? Could you hear the difference? In a \$3 million dollar mastering room like Glen Meadows in Nashville where you can hear every tick/edit point/level shift in Yes' "Owner of a Lonely Heart" (there are a *lot!*), absolutely. In your home on *your* reference system? Maybe, at best, if you've got Krell Class A's and Martin-Logan electrostats. On the radio or in your car? Hey, Homer...

I feel as if I should apologize for seemingly burying my head in the sand on this issue, but I just won't go quietly (or ravingly) into that good night. But the current technology isn't performing up to the standards it's been lauded to offer. When it does, I'll write the sequel to this article.

So currently, one of your best bets is an ASR with all the above trimmings. It defines the most cost-effective, easy to use, powerful, flexible and affordable 2-track real-time digital recorder under the guise of a sampler. The above configuration defines a pre-production room. With an idyllic mixer like the O2D or O3D, it defines a post-production room, replete with stereo direct-to-disc recording, and that's *while* the sequencer is playing back in real time. And the ASR-10's built-in sequencing environment, FX processing, Audio Tracks and user interface push it right up to the top of the heap. Korg just added hard disk recording (Hi Jerry!) this year as an option to the Trinity? Malvern's been there, done that, three years ago.

Given, Ensoniq doesn't have *their* keyboard cases made by White Castle, but it's the form and the function of the box that keeps their technology performing.

It keeps me performing very well... ■

Bio: Pat just finished a 12-hour ProTools session. He said he'd better write this article while the experience was still fresh in his head.

Call For Writers!

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

Make the Ultimate Fat Comp Sound on the TS-10/12

Tom Tracy

Introduction

It's been a while since I've written anything for the *Hacker*. In fact, it's been a while since I've sat behind my trusty Ensoniq products. And now sitting here staring at them, it's like seeing old friends, but not knowing what to say. So the following articles over the next few months (yes, I promise) will be kind of like a refresher course for me, if you will, as I try to remember what I once knew. I'm sure these articles will be coming from a different perspective than how I once documented features in the *Musician's Manuals*, since I am now viewing the products from a completely different angle.

Did you ever do something, forget about it, and then come back (sometimes) years later stumbling upon what you've done, thinking "Hey this is really cool! What did I do?" or "How did I do that?"

Well, that's how I felt when I loaded an old file from a floppy into the TS-10 and nearly jumped out of my seat when I found this fat, layered "comp" sound. Not much to it, but it sure can be sweet, soulful and satisfying (these are words that begin with "s" — for all you elephant talk fans).

Like a passionate archeologist on a mission, it was my duty to solve the "mystery of the sound," and share it with you, oh faithful readers. After some electronic excavating, I discovered how it had been created.

The Short Form

This is the quickest way to recreate this sound. It was made with two sounds layered together, so you can't save it as a single program. If you really want to save this version, it's best to do it as a preset. It's still quickest this way, so I'll call this version the "short form." If you want to create and save this sound as a single program, use the Long Form.

The Process

This expressive sound is simply a tweaked layering of two ROM programs. Let's begin

the process:

1. Press SOUNDS (I'm assuming you've already plugged in and turned on the TS-10/12).
2. While holding down BANKSET, press the bank 2 button. This selects the first ROM bankset of sounds (R2 is in the upper left corner of the display).
3. Press the bank 2 button.
4. Press the lower right button in the display. This selects the PNO-N-ELEC sound.
5. Hold down BANKSET, and press the bank 4 button (R4 is in the upper left corner of the display).
6. Press the bank 0 button.
7. Press the lower right button in the display. This selects the HARP sound.
8. Press the MIX/PAN button (HARP is still selected), and with the data entry controls, change "MIX=091."
9. Press the PERFORMANCE OPTIONS button, select PNO-N-ELEC by pressing its soft button, and change the patch select setting to "-0*-" (signifying that the right button is pressed down).
10. Press the TRACK EFFECTS button three times, and change to "EFFECT=06 PARAM EQ+CHORUS+REV."
11. Press any lower soft button, and use the data entry controls to select "VARIATION=14 BRASS + DRUMS."
12. Press the TRACK EFFECTS button twice, press the lower middle soft button, and change "FX2--REVRB=49."
13. Press the MIX/PAN button again, and double-click the soft button above HARP. If both sounds are layered, one will be fully underlined, and the other will be flashing underlined. Make sure it's this way (this is a good way to test if you're double-clicking too slow). I hope you find it as pleasing as I have.

To Save it as a Preset

1. Press the PRESETS button twice to get to the WRITE screen (which is the right screen).
2. Press the lower right soft button.
3. Name the new preset using the data entry tools, and when ready,
4. Press and hold down the PRESETS button, then press the BANKSET, bank

(0-9), and a soft button to place the preset into the RAM location of your choosing.

That's all for the short form. Now spend some time enjoying it!

The Long Form

If you like this sound, but want to save it as a single program, it requires a little more work. What you will do in this version is copy the two voices used by PNO-N-ELEC, and paste them into the HARP program (with some additional tweaking). There are obviously some benefits to this extra work, though — specifically for sequencing (you only use one track). Because it takes a little more programming, I call this version the "long form."

The Process

1. Press SOUNDS.
2. While holding down BANKSET, press the bank 2 button, then release both buttons.
3. Press the bank 2 button again.
4. Press the lower right button in the display to select the PNO-N-ELEC sound.
5. Press the SELECT VOICE button, and press the lower left soft button in the display.
6. Press the COPY button.
7. Press the lower right soft button to "MAKE COPY."
8. Press SOUNDS.
9. Hold down BANKSET, and press the bank 4 button (then release them).
10. Press the bank 0 button.
11. Press the lower right button in the display. This selects the HARP sound.
12. Press the SELECT VOICE button, and press the lower left soft button.
13. Press the COPY button.
14. Press the lower middle soft button to select "RECALL."
15. Follow steps 1-4 to select PNO-N-ELEC again.
16. Press SELECT VOICE, and press the lower middle soft button.
17. Press the COPY button.
18. Press the lower right soft button to "MAKE COPY."
19. Press COMPARE (green light goes on).
20. Press SELECT VOICE, then press the lower right soft button to select "(SAW-WAVE2)."
21. Press the COPY button, then press the lower middle button to select "RECALL."
22. Press SELECT VOICE.
23. Press the lower left and right soft buttons until there is no parentheses are them.
24. Press the patch select buttons, and for each combination, make sure these two voices are not in parentheses.
25. Press the PROGRAM EFFECTS button

(the effects button on the far right side of the keyboard), and select and modify the algorithm as explained in the "Short Form."

To Save It as a Program

1. Press the WRITE PROGRAM button (next to the COMPARE button).
2. Name your sound using the data entry tools, and when ready,
3. Press and hold down the SOUNDS button ("SAVE" flashes in the display), then press the BANKSET, bank (0-9), and a soft button to place the program into the selected RAM location.

That's all for the long form. I hope this process hasn't been too taxing. ■

Bio: Tom Tracy, once a full-time technical writer for ENSONIQ, has returned to the pages of the TransonIQ Hacker. With his vast experience and corporate insight, it should be a pleasant addition.

To Fehrion, wherever you are.



L.A. Riot Vol. 1

Britton Beisenherz

Product: CD-ROM Sound Library, *L.A. Riot Vol. 1*.

From: Ensoniq Corporation, 155 Great Valley Parkway, Malvern PA 19055, phone: 610-647-3930 (voice) 610-647-8909 (fax).

For: Any Ensoniq sample player.

Price: \$199.95.

Having already reviewed Ensoniq's *L.A. Riot Vol. 2* (Issue #149), I was both interested and a bit skeptical about the *L.A. Riot Vol. 1* CD-ROM. Those of you who read my review of Vol. 2 know I was not exactly sold on that particular CD-ROM (though, I admit it is the first Ensoniq CD which I wasn't crazy about). Prior to my review of *L.A. Riot Vol. 2*, I had heard that *Vol. 1* was a much more useful CD-ROM, so I took on the assignment to review it with high hopes in spite of its predecessor. Thankfully, my impression, after careful examination of *L.A. Riot Vol. 1*, was considerably more favorable.

Now, for those of you who don't know (or couldn't guess), the *L.A. Riot* CD-ROMs (Volumes 1 and 2) are geared toward the Rap, Hip-Hop and Acid Jazz creators and producers of da' world. Both CD-ROMs are 250 megabytes in size (*Vol. 2* is not

597 megs like I said in its review. I dunno where I got that...) and both boast 1000 FAT samples. Similarly, both CDs contain six root level directories for organization. That is about where the similarities end. Instead of 1000 FAT samples of material including "deepest rare grooves, dopest punky grooves, sax squeals, sex squeals, bass wipes, slam hooks, and lowrider sensoround (what is 'dat?!?!)" as offered in *Vol. 2*, *L.A. Riot Vol. 1* offers 1000 FAT "loops, scratches, breaks, and transforms." Sample material which I think is not only a lot more useful, but also sounds better in a sentence? ..ehh?

L.A. Riot Vol. 1 was compiled and laid out in a juicy kinda way. It is the first collection of DJ skills and moves on CD-ROM, including drum loops, backspin loops, live drum and DJ mixes, construction sets for all dope styles, and DJ effects like scratches, vinyl squeals, chirps, and more. These are useful sounds for their genre — especially when compared to the material on *Vol. 2*. Another interesting aspect of the *L.A. Riot Vol. 1* CD-ROM is its directory layout. The directories in *Vol. 1* are laid out by DJ (from Longbeach to Lynwood, Compton to Venice) and include (in order): DJ DRE, DJ ALLYWAD, DJ MANN-E, LIS-10, AL FRESH, and SKIL.

Each main directory includes between nine and nineteen subdirectories, which basically amounts to seventy-six loadable ASR-10, EPS, or TS Series multi-sample Instruments. Within those seventy-six loadable multi-sample Instruments are contained one thousand samples. That is roughly thirteen samples per Instrument.

The Instrument layout is contiguous throughout the CD-ROM. The majority of the Instruments per DJ are all basically drum, percussion, and DJ effects "construction kits" in order by BPM. The latter Instruments are devoted to DJ effects and are called "DJ name SCRATCH." For instance, the directory DJ DRE contains sixteen Instruments. The first fourteen Instruments are construction kits named DRE __ bpm. DRE's sets range from 90 to 115 beats per minute. The last two Instruments are called DRE SCRATCH1 and DRE SCRATCH2, and are devoted solely to DJ DRE's favorite dope fresh turntable scratches, squeals, and effects. The construction Instruments for *L.A. Riot Vol. 1* offer a nice range of meters. Depending on the DJ in question, tempos range from as slow as 76 bpm to the kickin' speed of 148 bpm.

The bulk of the CD-ROM consists of these "construction kits" with varying tempos in the form of multi-sample Instruments within each DJ's directory. I consider these Instruments construction kits, because that is what they are most reminiscent of... Multiple samples laid out in one

eTH — A Faster, Cheaper Hacker

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

Instrument that correspond with each other to make simple or complex song layouts and arrangements quickly and easily. Now I must clarify the difference I see between the type of construction set in *Volume 1* as opposed to the type of construction set in *Volume 2* — in order to not contradict myself. It would appear at first to the alert reader, that these are the same types of “Instruments” that appear in the Dope Trax sections of *L.A. Riot Vol. 2*: the passive, interactive TV, non-musical approach to making music that has done so much to destroy musicianship. Well, there is a difference. Each individual DJ construction set in *Vol. 1* offers opportunity for the construction of the foundation of a percussion, drum, and/or turntable groove. The Dope Trax sections of *Vol. 2* offer construction of a whole tune...riffs, bass lines, loops, and vocal samples all right there to be instantly and mindlessly sequenced together. *L.A. Riot Vol. 1* does not afford the musician that luxury, but offers mainly the

opportunity for a foundation to be created in the form of drums, percussion, and DJ effects. The guitar, bass, and vocals will have to be stolen from somewhere else.

The majority of the samples contained within *L.A. Riot Vol. 1* are quite useful. Each construction kit contains at least three variations on a particular drum loop, and include numerous other pre-timed and sampled surprises. The overall quality of the samples on *L.A. Riot Vol. 1* is great, of course. I have yet to hear an Ensoniq CD-ROM that did not have great sounding samples...even if the sample material was not up to par. The patch select buttons do exactly as you would expect. Each sample has a normal version, a high pass version, a backwards version, and a reverb version.

L.A. Riot Vol. 1 is perfect for creators of Rap, HIP-HOP, Acid Jazz, and perhaps funk music. Not to say that it would not be useful to musicians who work within other

genres. But, if you are picky about the versatility of your sampled sounds, and you do not make this type of music often, then this is probably not the disk for you. However, for the experimentalists and the aforementioned stylists, I suggest you consider running right out and buying this CD-ROM. ■

Bio: Britton Beisenherz is a student finishing his degree in Synthesis at a school of music in the dreadful Northeastern portion of America. Britton has been writing, recording, and producing music for many years, and hopes to someday breath a bit of life back into a dying art... any one of them.

WTHM and Dr. Love

Part II

Eric Montgomery

Well, here we are again. Bringin' it to ya live on the real tip! Thanks for tuning into WTHM and Dr. Love, where we always reunite people and their gear. We got our first caller and he seems to be concerned about a horrible sickness that has been going around. Caller, you are on the air with Dr. Love.

“Thanks Dr. Love for talking to me about this. I heard from my cousin who heard from my mom’s step mother’s uncle that Ensoniq was out of business and that they moved to China and that they recalled all of the MRs and...”

Wait! Now hold on Mr. Caller. I think that you have heard way too much from your family and friends. Let me fill you in with the real story.

First of all, Ensoniq has not gone out of business or moved or quit making keyboards. Ensoniq had a new keyboard released at NAMM last January (the ZR-76). That’s not all. There’s a new EXP expansion board (The Perfect Piano) coming for the new keyboard and the MR family, new hardware and software for PARIS and (if you already didn’t know) a new OS for the ASR-X. I am

going to check it out myself and I will post my findings to you when we are on the air again.

“So what does NAMM actually stand for?”

That is a good question. NAMM stands for National Association of Music Merchants. They represent the music products industry through trade shows and seminars.

Our next caller says that his ASR-X is giving him da’ blues. You are on the air!

“Hey Doc. I got this ASR-X and the dealer told me that it has Time Expansion/Compression. Is that true?”

Yes it is! Please check your software version by going to the Disk/Global section and pressing and holding the SAVE button. Press SYSTEM and release *both* buttons. The OS version number will pop up on your screen. You need 2.53 OS. It has some great new features like Time Expansion/Compression (aka Scale Time), Song Mode, Sequence Play mode, loading of EPS/16+, ASR samples and more. Just send Ensoniq \$9.95 for shipping and handling and they will send you the coolest upgrade to your X!

Hey caller, you are on the air with Dr. Love!

“I bought the MR and I also bought Cakewalk software. I need the MR sound list for Cakewalk. Where can I get that?”

Well my friend, all instrument definitions are available only from the software manufacturer. Ensoniq cannot help you here. Cakewalk is the company to call regarding this situation.

“But wait! Don’t hang up. I’ve got another question. I’ve got the Mark of the Uniform software and it doesn’t work on the expansion boards. What about that?”

Mmm. Well, there is a whole new website designed by Gary Houk of Ensoniq. It is very easy to navigate through. If you go to download (<http://www.ensoniq.com/html/binary.htm>) there is a new profile for Unisyn that addresses this situation. And it is free! Just download it and keep in mind that you have to already have Unisyn for it to work.

Our next caller says that her MR is not talking to anybody. Such a rude angry “mister.” You are on with Dr. Love.

“I am trying to get the MR to play a sequence into my computer and when I sync them and try to record the MR sequence into the computer nothing happens. I also have trouble setting the MR up to use the computer as the sequencer. What am I going to do?”

You already did the right thing by calling WTHM! Now, so far as the MR sending the track data out via MIDI, all that has to be done is to change the sound you have selected on each track to the MIDI OUT instrument. So far as setting the MR up to work with an external sequencer just stay in Select Sounds mode and select the MIDI OUT instrument. Then the MR will be in multi mode and local will be turned off automatically.

"What does Local On or Off mean?"

Local is the term used when the keys of the unit are (through software) disconnected from the internal sound module. They will only send out MIDI data. Your sound module in the MR will now wait for data to play when local is off. Thanks for calling!

"Hello Dr. I am having real trouble with the DP-Pro. When I select the Dual Mono Gate the right side does not work?"

Has it been reinitialized?

"Yes."

This is a situation where I think it is just a matter of understanding the algorithm. The algo is a stereo algo that is in mono mode. Use the left A Params for the A unit and use the right B Params for the B unit. This should make the unit operate for you.

Hello caller, you are on the air with Dr. Love.

"I am trying to get the ASR-10 to work with an external sequencer? What do I do?"

After booting up the ASR, set the MIDI in Mode to MULTI. You can make that setting by pressing the Edit button, then pressing the System/MIDI button. Use the arrow buttons till you see MIDI IN MODE. If you want that setting to be that way every time you boot then you need to press Command, then System/Midi and go to SAVE GLOBAL PARAMETERS. Be sure that the OS disk is in the drive and unprotected, press enter and save the settings.

Next, be sure that each instrument is set to its own MIDI channel. The ASR normally does this automatically with the MIDI channels set to correspond to the track. Track 1 = MIDI channel 1. Track 2 = MIDI channel 2 etc. Thanks for the call.

You are talking with Dr. Love.

"Hello Dr. I seem to have the same problem that the guy earlier had. I don't know how to get my keyboard to work with my computer."

What do you own?

"The E-Prime."

Oh, that's an easy one. Here is what you do.

First, press System/Midi and set the In Mode to MULTI. Next, create a Sequence/Preset location in the E-Prime. Then press Edit Track and go to MIDI Status. You can then set the status of track 1 to a status of MIDI. Set all other tracks to a MIDI status of BOTH or MIDI. Now you can stay on track 1 and let your sequencer send bank and program changes to select the sounds for each track.

Well, that's all the calls we have time for today. Keep in mind that WTHM and Dr. Love love to help people and their gear. ■



Bio: Eric Montgomery is a up-and-coming songwriter/producer who has published his work with Salt Records, Integrity Music, several local compilation CDs in Gary, Indiana, in CAMS of Chicago Illinois and Ensoniq product demos.

HACKER BASEMENT TAPES

Steve Vincent

Instrumentalist's Revenge Trackilla

CD: *Instrumentalist's Revenge* (c) 1997.

Artist: Trackilla.

Equipment: ASR-10, two Mackie 1202's, Fostex 80 8-track, flute, sax, clarinet, basses, beats, overall insanity.

Contact info: Sonical Illusions Studio, 455 Park Place #1L, Brooklyn, NY 11238, Phone: (718) 399-0816.

Trackilla (apparently a.k.a. Bret Frederick) is a working musician with a number of "gigging units": As Trackilla, he DJs with flute and sax embellishments; Shanto Band is a group of Guyanese drummers playing tradi-

tional spiritual music with Trackilla on flute, sax and live mixing; and Trackilla's Big Band is a "constantly transforming group of professional, forward-thinking musicians whose styles span the globe to create truly listenable music that will shake your butt." His gig history literally spans the globe, including such far-flung places as Italy, Brazil and Amsterdam, but majoring in NYC and Brooklyn.

Let's check out his tracks...

1. *The Village, I Am* — Drumz-n-bass meets R. Carlos Nakai. Overdubbed soundbites

heavily processed transport the listener into the midst of an ebonic plague of gangspeak.

2. *Bugged Out Shanto Bandjam* — This track is 5:35 minutes of Trackilla jamming on flute over a trancey percussion track. As in "The Village, I Am," bass predominates. The hypnotic effect is heightened (or deepened) by constant panning and flanging of the percussive elements. Almost-subliminal crowd vocals convey the listener into a shamanistic ritual.

3. *Ataque de Flauta* — I don't know what the connection is between this fave Mexican dish and the music... (just kidding) but we're served up another passionate course of Trackilla's flute soloing over a bed of hip-hoppy and low-end-intensive jammin'. Highly processed needle scratches and other effects embellish.

4. *View from the Brooklyn Bridge on a Track Bike* — Another trancey track, this time the

predominant soloing sounds as if it was performed on the keyboard, or perhaps a wind controller. Eerie vocals courtesy of Miss Cha. Other eerie elements (ghost whistling, low-end croaks) appear courtesy of the ASR-10. Trackilla's trademark flute takes over the soloing in the second half. At times this track reminds me of Hendrix's "1983 A Merman I Should Turn to Be."

5. *Sarangetti Drama* — (must be Italian for "Serengeti") Perhaps the African beast sound FX are what gives this a dark-continent feel. It is the least differentiated of all the tracks; in other words, it sounds like elements from most of the other tracks are combined into this one, which perhaps makes it the most differentiated track on the CD. It succeeds in producing a less rhythmic, but nonetheless dreamy trance-like vibe.

6. *Fearoshus Cats Throw Down* — Back to the bottom-heavy trip-hop. This track captures some of the whimsical nuances associated with feline self-importance.

7. *Lotsa Peanut Chews* — The "angelic vocals" are done by Miss Cha and the Robe. Fancy hi-hat work propels this track with more forward momentum. More Trackilla flute.

8. *Myrtle Avenue Meditation* — Highly processed sax (or keyboards) provides the focus in this montage of pitch-shifted vocals over flanged percussion.

9. *Jam for Ganesha* — A cacophony of FX fills layer after layer of the sonic spectrum in which a tinny wah-sitar sound predominates. The result is a dreamscape of sonic tapes-tries.

10. *A really weird jam to take you out* — The title of this track pretty much says it all, but it isn't really any more weird than the previous nine cuts. More processed sax, layered keyboard FX, drumz-n-bass.

The lack of "dead space" between these ten tracks provides over 62 minutes of nonstop trance music. Trackilla states in his accompanying letter that this "basement CD was done almost completely on an ASR-10. What can I say, the ASR is a slammin' compositional tool. Mine is maxed out with 16 megs RAM, gig h-drive, and output expander. I send it to a couple of Mackie 1202's, lots of old effects and compressors; [then] to a Fostex 80 8-track where all instrumentals are slammed down live, no overdubs with effects. Some engineers would say this is wrong, but I find it keeps the effects 'in the mix' a little

more tastefully, and as a musician who gigs with lots of effects, I know what I'm looking for. It makes mixdown a lot easier as well. But the ASR is what made this all possible. Big up to Ensoniq!"

Trackilla's "Instrumentalist's Revenge" can be had for \$12 (check or M.O.) sent to Sonical Illusions (contact info above).

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



Bio: In his pre-Nirvana days, Steve Vincent paid his dues playing live accordion gigs at the local mental hospital.



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The Interface

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

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

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

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

Hi guys,

I've got a problem.

I have an ASR-10, a P200, and a copy of Awave 4.4.

How do I transfer the sound files I have on my computer to my ASR-10? These are downloaded files from the net in various formats.

Mark Trayner
Vintage Hammond Hire (Scotland)
VintageB3@USA.Net

[PF - Mark: You need to save them in *.ede format, so that Gary Giebler's runtime version of the Ensoniq Disk Manager will write them to an Ensoniq-formatted floppy. Check out www.soundcentral.com for the shareware version of EDE...]

Hi,

Thanks to all for the help in the past. Great site.

Subject: Reboot - Error 129 !@#!@\$!@%????!

I am short of throwing my ASR-10 out the window... I am getting the above-mentioned Error 129 Reboot problems quite frequently. It mostly happens when I'm using a long sequence. Does ANYONE have any hints or comments? I can't believe the ASR-10 operating system is so slow. I read somewhere that the OS is as fast as some handheld calculators. Now I do.

Great machine, but this would prompt me to start looking elsewhere if I can't resolve these mysterious Reboot/Error system lockups.

Thanks for anyone's help.
Andy Dokmanovich
adokmano@ford.com

[PF - Andy: Error-129 is a MIDI buffer overflow. Could be something is pushing more MIDI data into the ASR than it can handle. Sounds like you're driving it with an external sequencer, but there's no mention of this in your post. Ensure you're using O.S. V. 3.5.3 and ROM V.1.50. If you're not using disk tracks or audio tracks (ATRKS), turn them off, as they draw a lotta CPU power from normal ASR operations. Check your expansion SIMMS to ensure they're the same speed. With memory at today's pricing, no ASR should be less than 16 Mb. The ASR runs a 16-MHz 68000-series Motorola CPU. Considerably faster than handheld calculators...]

[Garth Hjelte (chickenEPS@willmar.com) - Errata: Error 144 is MIDI buffer overflow - Error 129 is usually internal data problem, due to a OS bug, processing bug, or bad data. Save your work often - that's my only thought.

Also - to those of you who DO save your sequencing work often - you have noticed the long-standing sequencer bug (which Ensoniq has never fessed up to) where a Song get's larger and larger (thousands of blocks...). A full solution to this problem is published at http://www.soundcentral.com/~chickeneps/rcs_tips#BigSequences.

[Eric Montgomery (Ensoniq) - All of the suggestions

about simms and checking MIDI are very good suggestions. If you have added memory to your ASR, be sure that you have the correct simms installed - 8 bit, 80 nanoseconds or faster, non-parity, non-composite, 30 pin (similar to Mac Quadra and II ci.) If your ASR was manufactured before 20 June 1995, you may only use 4 meg SIMMS that have 8 DRAMS on each board. If your ASR was manufactured after that date, you may use only the 2 DRAM 4meg SIMM, but the 10 meg setup is no longer allowable.

Garth is right about the error 144 message, 129 means "odd address error," even though the same message can appear with the MIDI In scenario. The fix for the oversized sequence file is well known. Load the song and sequence back up. Erase the song and save each individual sequence back to disk. Reboot the ASR and then load the separate sequences back into memory. You can then rebuild your song playlist in the song mode and you should be fine.]

TH -

Is it possible to send me a schematic for the Ensoniq SD-1?

Can you send me an editor for SD-1 that will work with Cakewalk Pro Audio 5?

How can I get new samples for the SD-1?

GEORG ASTER
gdd437@bse.bg

[PF - Georg: Answers, in order:

(A) No. Unless you know an Ensoniq service tech that will let you photocopy his \$125 set of Ensoniq schematics of discontinued instruments, they're unavailable. Ensoniq policy, not ours.

(B) No. We're not a clearing house for Twelve-Tone Systems, as they have their own webpage at www.cakewalk.com. Define "editor": do you mean an IDF (Instrument Definition File) for the SD-1 patches? See www.cakewalk.com for these kinds of files.

(C) You don't. The SD-1 is not a sampler. All of its sounds are ROM-based. You'll want to browse synth sites for different PATCHES for the SD-1 to get different sounds. Recommend www.soundcentral.com/ensoniq...

[syntaur@juno.com - Ensoniq has turned over the distribution of all of their SD-1 cartridges and sound disks to Syntaur Productions. In addition to their sounds, we have created more banks in-house. We also offer the Musician's Manual, the sequencer expander, and other accessories for these keyboards. Sam Mims, syntaur@juno.com, Syntaur Productions, 800-334-1288 or 409-234-2700.]

TH -

To subscribe to the ASR-X users' list, go to: <http://www.onelist.com/subscribe.cgi/asrx>

To view the archives of the list, go to: <http://www.onelist.com/archives.cgi/asrx>

Feel free to add these links to any of your personal web pages that may have people interested in joining the ASR-X list.

Thanx,
-Chris
nefarium@pceez.com

[PF - Gang: Hard to confide in a service whose opening page to join is a 32-paragraph legal disclaimer. I'll forward this to Paula Jones' lawyer (he's not very busy now) and get an opinion...]

TH -

I'm an aspiring "producer" like the rest of the world, and am getting ready to start up a studio. I have begun to do my reading (endless amounts it seems), but sometimes information isn't complete or in-depth. Anyway, all I need to know is regarding a Mirage I found in a local paper. The style of music I lean towards is break-beat/jungle, and I was wondering if the Mirage would be a suitable piece of equipment to get started with as a sampler. Also, the asking price is \$495 - is that a reasonable price, assuming that the 'board is still in good working order?

Dave Spang
jonlawrence7@email.msn.com

[PF - Dave: The Mirage was the FIRST affordable sampler back in 1984. In 1998 it's a retro box that does "historic" 8-bit sampling at 5k. To a collector it might be worth \$495 - to an aspiring producer it's not enough of a solution. \$500 will buy an EPS these days. You're looking for something with more polyphony, better sounds, and a built-in sequencer to get started...

Nothing against the Mirage: it's the 'board that started it all...]

[Mark (<http://www.midimark.com>) - Hello, I agree with the above statement. I'd go with an ASR-X. This is the newest machine and has the newest features that you need. Anything else and you will be stifled once you've reached the many technological barriers on other units. BTW, there are many sounds available for the newer equipment, not so for the later.]

Dear Transoniq Hacker,

I have a very specific question. I own an EPS-16+ keyboard. The disk drive recently failed due to bad heads so I bought a replacement for it. The problem is that the disk drive itself is very unique, a Panasonic JU 257A manufactured for Ensoniq. It has configuration switches on it that were moved around when the drive was tested. So neither of the two drives (the old or the new) have the correct configuration for the switches. There are about 6 switches on the drive. Other than this problem the keyboard is in perfect condition. I am aware that Ensoniq no longer handles technical support issues concerning older equipment, however there really isn't anywhere else for me to find the info that I need. I have found that the EPS drives are made by SONY and are no longer manufactured like the Panasonic. I am not sure why my drive is made by Panasonic. If you can give me the configuration settings for my drive, or any useful information it would

be greatly appreciated.

The old and new disk drives are identical.

Thanks,
daydream@hotmail.com or YTMH@aol.com

[PF - Daydream: Contact Techzam at 805.520.9845 (vox). They remanufacture floppy drives for Ensoniq keyboards. They'd have the correct jumper settings for you...]

[Tim Ostermeyer (nosterme@mail.win.org) - I have an old Ensoniq that recently trashed the disk drive. The dealer says that the drive is no longer available. The drive that was in the machine was a Panasonic Matsushita LR57568. He also said that a Sony MP-F63W-00d would also work. He has given up hope of locating one of these drives. Is there somewhere that I can locate one of these drives or is he destined to sell me a new machine? Thanks much.]

[MAT217@aol.com - My EPS crapped out and my service center can't find the drives either - so I called Techzam 805-520-9845. The gentleman there said a new drive cost around \$400!!! And then I still have to have it put in. A rebuilt one (sent to him) cost around \$125 and still someone has to put it in. I'm stuck. I depend on this keyboard for gigs... hundreds of hours of sequences... I've been thinking of getting an ASR 10 - could I still play my EPS seqs in it? What kind of support can I get with it? It's out of production, right??]

[PF - MAT217: Sounds like Techzam raised its prices. Last couple months readers have been having their old drive rebuilt for around \$40 plus shipping: wonder what happened?

The ASR-10 can read EPS sequences, but since the ASR sequencer resolution is TWICE that of the EPS (96 ppq vs. 48 ppq for the original EPS), some "misconverted" note data may occur. But our old friend Dr. Gary Giebler sells a utility to convert the 48 ppq EPS sequences into 96ppq ASR sequences without the occasional "mistake." Contact him at www.giebler.com.]

Hi, Trans:

I am an ASR-10 owner. I need to connect the ASR to the Soundblaster of PC via MIDI connector, but I haven't a pinout diagram of SB. Can you tell me how I can connect these devices?

Thanx in advance,
Carlos
carlosm@mbasystems.com.ar

[PF - Carlos: You need a gameport-to-MIDI adapter. They're sold through most popular computer stores like Best Buy, Frye, CompUSA, etc. Expect to pay between \$20-\$40 (ordering one from Creative labs is \$40)...]

TH -

How do I go about converting my krz samples to be played on my friend's EPS-16 Plus? I've tried AWave in conjunction with EPSDisk but have not been successful. It may be the format I'm converting to. I don't understand the difference between say, EFE, GKH, etc. Could someone please explain the process in order for me to play my krz samples (patches) on my friend's EPS-16 Plus? Your help would really give me back my sanity!!!

Tony Mitevski
tonymite@netspace.net.au

[PF - Tony: I don't know of any shareware app out there that will xlate *.krz files into a native Ensoniq for-

mat. Check out www.soundcentral.com/chickeneps: Garth has a pretty comprehensive explanation of the *.ede, *.gkh, etc. formats at the Rubber Chicken Software website. I did an article on them a couple months ago, but I've slept since then...]

[TH - Pat's article just got printed in #155.]

[Garth Hjelte (chickenEPS@willmar.com) - Remember the tilde (~), it's www.soundcentral.com/~chickeneps. You can do this transfer by converting the .krz file using AWave into .wav files. However, it will split it up into files. You can take AWave or our Disk Tools (which can reassemble the files) to convert the separate .wav's into a File Image. Disk Tools is scheduled to support .krz files in May.]

TH -

Does anybody out there know if I should use a 512k S-RAM card, or are the 1M cards more readily available? The dealer I bought my keyboard from tells me the 1M cards may be cheaper than the 512k cards. He also tells me that no PCMCIA Type I cards are available from Ensoniq. I need to know what to use, and where I can purchase them at the best price and availability. Please respond to this, or e-mail me at: flyinace@erols.com.

Thank you,
flyinace

[ladyred@erols.com - I found a company in Calif. that had a web page that made sense. I ordered some cards from them and I'll try them to see if they work. If anyone else has this same problem, their web sit is: <http://www.magicram.com/sram.htm>. Their price for a 512k card was \$79. Anyone with further insight, please contact me at: flyinace@erols.com. Thank you, flyinace.]

[syntaur@juno.com - While I'm not sure which keyboard you are using - the KT, E-Prime, and MR Rack all use PCMCIA cards - I do know that the KT series can use 256k cards, even though Ensoniq specifies that they must be 512k or higher. We sell the blank 256k cards for \$97.95, or for \$109.95 with 80 KT/E-Prime sounds on board. Sam Mims, syntaur@juno.com, Syntaur Productions, 800-334-1288 or 409-234-2700.]

To all TS-10/Unisyn users,

I was reminded last issue of TH that TS-10 users who use Performer composition software are out of luck. If they want to store their sounds to the only compatible Editor/Librarian software (Unisyn), they can't. You can e-mail the maker MOTU at techsupport@motu.com. They will create a profile to support you if there are enough whiners. Make sure you give them some cheese with your wine.

Dan
japandan@iea.att.ne.jp

[PF - Dan: Not so. If you create a sequence in Performer of about 140 BPM, AND check the "Sysex" box in the filters, you CAN record sysex dumps to Performer, as well as record "virtual" button presses and data entry slider movements on the TS. As a matter of fact, that's about all I used Performer for back in the 4.2-5.0x days with an SQ-1, and I had to fiddle with the playback tempo to get the sysex dumps to take back, but it works.

And Performer works fine using the TS-10 as a sound module, but yeah, don't hold your breath waiting for MOTU to do a TS profile for Unisyn. I think Ensoniq used up all their MOTU favors on the MR profile...

I never thought of Performer as a \$495 librarian, though...]

Hi there,

I'm (was) the happy owner of a KS-32. One day it stopped working and I sent it to the local service (I live in Buenos Aires, Argentina) and he told me the motherboard was to be replaced. The problem: apparently he can't find a KS-32 motherboard in the local market nor any other place. Ensoniq stopped producing them some time ago. Is there something you can do for me? Do you have any address I should try?

Any answer would be very appreciated,
Thank you,
Federico Fialayre
fried@interserver.com.ar

[PF - Federico: Have your service center contact or call Ensoniq directly at 610.647.3930. They should have spares available, as the KS-32 is not on the "discontinued" service products listing of September 7th. Good luck!]

[Eric Montgomery (Ensoniq) - Try the service center listed below. They can contact Ensoniq and get the board needed for the repair.

Argentina, Arte Musical S.A., Talcahuano 218, 1013, Buenos Aires. Phone: 541-374-8049.]

TH -

I have a rackmount ASR-10 that I have had for a couple of years now. I recently decided to try and use the digital I/O that came on the unit but there is no way to select the digital inputs. The only choices I get are input+effect, the dry input, or the main out. Any help or suggestions would be greatly appreciated.

DJ Ntalec
ski-beats@usa.net

[PF - DJ: The ASRs do NOT ship with digital I/O - that's a \$500 option that's no longer available. Unless you ordered one and had it installed at an Ensoniq dealer, you have a pair of black RCA jacks that do nothing more than plug up the holes on the chassis. Take the lid off and look inside if you don't believe this...]

Dear TH,

I have a problem in getting my EPS-16+ to interpret the MIDI data coming from my pc, whether with Cubase or Cakewalk. The data sounds totally irregular/random with lots of stuff missing and cut off - a bit as if you were hearing an FM radio station slightly off-frequency. Consider this:

Pentium 133 with Soundblaster (and latest drivers from Creative). EPS-16+: RAM 1.30, ROM 1.00.

- pc to sy77 = no probs
- sy77 to EPS = no probs
- pc to EPS = probs

Only thing I can think of is MIDI overflow?? Or corrupt ROM??

Have tried through the official support phone and all could get was, "Did you set the EPS on multi?"

Need your urgent advice - this is wearing me down.

Thanks,
Andrea
pacdra@netvigator.com

[PF - Andrea: Well, of course you've set your EPS to Multi or it wouldn't respond except on the selected

channel/track. Ensure you've set your EPS to 21-voice playback (might be set to 12 or 16), and double check to make sure you're not sending it more notes than it can play back. I assume you're using a multi-port interface to direct traffic, i.e., port 1 to your SY77, port 2 to the EPS.

If this is the case, ensure you're not sending all the MIDI data down one port, as this will "choke" the EPS into trying to play notes intended for the SY77. Ensure no tracks have the same MIDI channel #'s as well.

If you're using a single-port interface, make sure you connect the MIDI THRU to the MIDI IN of the next instrument in the chain. MIDI OUT introduces delays, as the MIDI stream is processed by the host keyboard, where it's simply mirrored at the THRU port...

TH -

I have heard that you can install a ZIP drive into an ASR-10 keyboard in the old floppy drive port. Then using RCS's Disk Tools you can format on a PC (with ZIP) a bootable ZIP drive and copy sounds to the ZIP... I can't stand that floppy anymore.

Question: Has anyone installed a ZIP in a KB ASR-10??? If so...please post the instructions on how to do so...

Jose Alea
alea@pobox.com

[PF - Jose: Contact Rubber Chicken Software at <http://www.soundcentral.com/chickeneps>. Garth announced the ZIP installation kit last year...]

[Garth Hjette (chickenEPS@willmar.com) - Remember the tilde (~) it's www.soundcentral.com/~chickeneps - or our e-mail address chickenEPS@willmar.com. We sell a Internal ZipDrive Kit - yes, it is possible, and it is fun to carry around just your ASR to gigs. I love it myself. Look for an upcoming article detailing this.]

[PF - ~Gang: ~/oops! @#\$%^& punctuation got me again...]

TH -

I own an EPS with version 2.49 RAM and 2.00 ROM and I'm experiencing increasing problems with the machine crashing. Initially random characters appear on the display although it is still possible to play sounds, but after a few minutes the machine locks up completely. Rebooting always clears the fault, but the fault seems to be gradually worsening with delays between the fault occurring decreasing. I had a similar fault some years ago and an engineer claimed it was due to a faulty "coupling lead on keyboard panels" which he repaired and this seemed to cure the problem for some months. Before I go to the expense of getting an engineer to look at the machine again, has anyone else experienced similar or any suggestions on the cause of this?

Will the reply (if any) be cc'd to mail, or do I have to keep checking the site for updates? ;)

Cheers,
Chris Roberts
croberts@demon.net

[PF - Chris: As old as the EPS is, what you're experiencing has happened to me as well. Your EPS needs a going over. It's possible that the keyboard pcb interconnect is intermittent again (which is common). Ensoniq issued an ECO (engineering change order) that removed the Molex interconnector and hard-wired the two halves together. Ensure your "engineer" did this first...

I recommend taking your EPS to an Ensoniq dealer or other competent repair facility to have them give it a thorough cleaning. Contact points age and get oxidized, expansion/contraction of chips gradually unseats them, a veritable plethora of issues abound on an instrument of the EPS's age. Have your local tech clean and reset all connectors, contact points, chips, interconnects, etc., on your EPS. I recommend Cramolyn mixed with Blue Shower in a 32:1 ratio, but any good-quality zero residue cleaner will suffice. Expect to pay for an hour of bench time for this procedure. Your EPS will be as good as new...]

[TH - Sorry, the only way to get the replies is to check back here every so often - or subscribe...]

[PF - Chris: BTW, order the 2.40 ROM from Ensoniq - should clear up a LOT of issues as well as get you the most current version...]

[Jonathan (globe@thepla.net) - I had this same problem and our local engineer fixed it, at the second attempt - it failed again three months after the repair. Regrettably, two years later (last week) the keyboard failed altogether and it's cost me nearly as much as it's worth to fix it (new keyboard). I advise you sell your machine pronto and get an ASRX. So sad when these beautiful machines die.]

TH -

I'll be getting an ASR rack soon, and I've read that you can use AKAI CDs with it. Is this true and if so, how well does the ASR import these sounds?

Matt
msavard@rain.org

[PF - Matt: Importing Akai samples is limited only by the ASR-10's memory. Trying to stuff a 32 Mb piano into a 16 Mb ASR, well, you get the picture. Other than the memory limitations, it's a pretty straightforward deal (thanx to Dr. Giebler for doing such a SMOOTH job on that particular hunk of code in the OS). You can only import samples; you'll have to assign them to layers and do some massage, but nothing like Awave or shareware flaming hoops to jump thru...

BTW, your MR webpage remains the best (if not the only) source for MR-wares; hats off for making it available...]

Dear TH:

I've got a problem that your more coordinated readers have probably never posited: I keep dropping my KS-32. More specifically, I've damaged the frame, so that the front right corner (closest to the highest key) has come undone.

Believe it or not, this is the second KS-32 I've done this to. I sold the last one to a friend, paid more for an intact used one, then promptly dropped it as well, and it's now in worse shape than the first. Both still play fine, but I would like to repair my present one. Can it be glued? If so, what type of adhesive?

Although I no doubt deserve a solemn lecture about the care and feeding of my axe, I'd prefer some good advice about fixing it. Whaddya say?

Bill Anschell
billanschell@mindspring.com

[PF - Bill:
(A) Hire a roadie.
(B) Buy a case.
(C) Pump iron.
(D) SuperGlue.]

TH -

As a subscriber to TH for about a year now I haven't seen this issue addressed yet, although I'm sure it has been.

I have an MR-61 and Cakewalk software on a PC. When I save a sequence on a floppy disk and transfer it to Cakewalk, everything works perfectly except the drum machine MIDI data on channel 10 isn't there. When I play the sequence on the computer everything comes through except the rhythm. Ensoniq support told me to make sure the MIDI out on the rhythm track was on. Well, the procedure in the manual only works for a sound. Pressing play on the sequencer transmits MIDI data on all the tracks respectively except for 10. Am I overlooking something? How do I get the MIDI data out of the drum machine and on to my computer sequencer? I've tried saving the rhythm to disk and then opening it up in Ensoniq's rhythm builder but have had no luck.

Any advice you could give me would be greatly appreciated.

Don VanPelt
vampeld@prodigy.net

[PF - Don: We published an article by Tony Ferrara about how to do exactly this. You have to assign/export the drum machine MIDI data to Channel 10/Track 10. See our "back issues" for the complete details...]

[TH - That was Issue #139.]

TH -

I own an ASR-10 and have always made all creations "onboard" using the internal sequencer, samples, and sounds loaded from disk. I recently became interested in EMU's Planet Phatt sound module. After talking to salespeople and a guy at Ensoniq Tech Support, I'm still not certain that the ASR-10 works seamlessly with Planet Phatt. Anyone out there have info/experience?

Brad
b4lcamm@msg.pacbell.com

[PF - Brad: I don't think ANYTHING works seamlessly with another manufacturer's stuff (or the same manufacturer's stuff, for that matter). Planet Phatt is a sample playback module with a bank of looped grooves and hip/trip-hop urb waves. It's probably more important to ask what the ASR-10 DOESN'T do that you're considering the PP. Before you plunk down \$895 for an EMU box, check out the Urban Dance CDs advertised in the Hacker. You could save yourself a BUNCHA dinero...]

TH -

I would like to know how I can make General MIDI work on my Ensoniq TS-12. When I go to MIDI control it will display OFF. I change it and when I exit it will again display "Off." Are there any drivers or upgrade to make this happen?

Please help.
JRaimundi
Wanda12@ibm.net

[PF - JR: As far as I know, there were two versions of the TS-series, the second of which was GM compatible. I'm pretty sure it was a ROM upgrade (and maybe some other firmware/software) for \$99. Contact Ensoniq at 610.647.3930 (vox) to see if this upgrade is still available, or email them at www.ensoniq.com. Good Luck!]

[Eric Montgomery (Ensoniq) - The upgrade is still available from authorized Ensoniq service centers. A list

of US Authorized Service Centers can be found at the following URL on our Web Site: <http://www.ensoniq.com/html/servlist.htm>.

Greetings,

I am looking for any MAC software that is comparable to Giebler Enterprises PC software to edit EPS sound data from the MAC, transfer or convert audio files to EPS samples and/or transfer MIDI sequences to the EPS form the MAC. Any or all of these functions will do.

Thanks,
Kevin Whittenburg
kwhitten@dave-world.net

[PF - Kevin: Your best source for ALL Ensoniq sampling wares is good 'ol Garth Hjelte in Rubber Chicken Software. Check out Ensoniq Disk Tools and ping RCS at www.soundcentral.com/~chickeneps. And check out our related links at the top of the page...]

[Peter C Heim (pch7@interport.net) - Hi. I use Passport's Alchemy for serious sound editing, I've recently started using Garth's EAVES software for parameter editing, and for sequencing, ya can't beat MOTU's Performer.]

Hi,

I have an old SDP-1. When it gets turned off it won't start up. If you leave it for a few months you usually can turn it on and it will start up properly. When it doesn't start up properly the LEDs go into a chasing pattern clockwise. Each LED lights up three or four times and move on to the next one and so on. I do not need to subscribe to the Transoniq Hacker because this is the only Ensoniq product I have and once it hopefully gets fixed I don't need a whole lot of information there after. If you can help me out and there's an inexpensive way to fix this I'll gladly pay you for your time.

Thanks,
Alex Macfarlane
amacfarl@direct.ca

[PF - Alex: There are no replacement logic boards available for the SDP-1, so here's hoping you have a power supply problem or a regulator problem. Take the instrument to an Authorized Ensoniq Service Center in your area, as they have the schematics to the SDP-1. Have a tech look at it to determine if the problem is a power supply-related or logic board-based failure. And keep your fingers crossed that it's a power supply-related problem.

Have the tech ensure proper voltages from the power supply - these things want a rock-solid +5 and +12V, not 4.95V or 11.58V. Check the 7805's and other regulators on the PS PCB. Good luck...]

TH,

I am a novice music "technician" who has had an Ensoniq SQ-1 for several years and it's still not easy for me to operate. I will admit to being initially impressed with what I saw and convinced myself that I could "grow into" it. Sadly I have not reached the potential with this machine that I had hoped. Even soon after its purchase I was hearing about patch keys and other innovations that could expand sound effects that the SQ-1 does not have.

Have there been technical improvements in this field since the SQ came out that would let the fledgling musician enjoy music creativity without falling into the techno jungle of confusion about how to use the machine or should I look at another option in a keyboard? Have I just banished myself to the simplicity of a magnus chord

organ again? I HOPE NOT.

I want to look and learn before I leap this time!!

Thank you,
Joe Young
jnyoung@dcache.net

[PF - Joe: By our very nature, we as musicians want more power in keyboards which is supposed to translate into more sounds, better quality, more polyphony, etc. Problem is all this power comes at the cost of putting it all in one box with a little display to edit all this power. ALL "professional"-level keyboards can be a terror to navigate if you don't know the basics of synthesis. Actually Ensoniq is, IMHO, the easiest interface of all keyboards. That's why I've been using them for the past 14 years...]

Ensoniq invented the MR-series keyboards just for musicians like you. Sadly, they discontinued them - BUT the new ZR-76 uses an almost identical user interface to the MRs. Take a peek at one at your local Ensoniq dealer - it's the easiest keyboard to navigate around you've ever seen...]

TH -

In an effort to promote clarity and thoroughness I wish to add a footnote to my review in Issue #154 "Psychic Horns," wherein I expressed my thanks to Rubber Chicken's Disk Tools. Subsequently, I noted posts that described difficulty in making two and three disk 16-Plus files. Please note that I have not been successful in getting either Disk Tools or Disk Manager to write a three-disk set. I have been successful in writing two-disk sets. As a matter of curiosity, I would like to know if this is my unique experience or if the conversion software generally fails at this task.

J.D. Ryan
broryan@dmv.com

[Garth (chickenEPS@willmar.com) - JD: It's you. Gosh, didn't you have this problem a few months ago? It's still not resolved? I can't speak for Gary, but I tested about 10 File Images with 2-disk and 3-disk lengths, and all of them copied fine using both Disk Tools and the EDM. Feel free to e-mail me the .efe file in question, and I can test it. Also, how did you acquire the large File Image in the first place? Did you download it? If so, where?]

TH -

Top resource, this. Well done.

I have a problem with using an Alesis MMT8 to do sequencing. I've hooked the MMT8 to my EPS and nothing else in the MIDI chain and I've recorded sequences and played them back all fine. What I want to do is modulate LIVE the sounds the MMT8 is triggering with the mod wheel and the bend wheel, say filter on a drum loop or crossfade layers on a bass sample. It won't do it. I can record the modulations into the MMT8 and play them back, but not do them on the fly, unless I do it with the data slider, which means flicking through pages to get to the parameter I want to mod. Can it be done?

Thank you Ensoniq users everywhere.
Jonathan
globe@thepla.net

[PF - Jonathan: All you have to do is select the track you want to do this to by pressing its corresponding track button (to light the red LED and make it active), then whale away with the pitch and mod wheels. That's all there is to it. Remember, the sound must have pitch and modulation functions programmed into it in order

for the wheels to have any effect.

And here's another EPS secret: pitch bend range can be different for EVERY instrument/track...]

Dear TH

I need good string sounds for my ASR but the only CD-ROM recommended is Spectrasonics Strings. This is a native Akai disk. Would the sounds I import differ from the originals if they were 8 wavesamples per key or under? Wouldn't it be good to just buy a cheap CD version? If I did, what limitations would I have in sound quality OR anything else? Do you have any CD-ROM recommendations?

Thanks,
Dan
japandan@ica.att.ne.jp

[PF - Answers, in order:

(A) The sounds you import will not differ from the original; the only caveat is that they cannot total more than the memory capacity of your ASR. This could be a limitation if the string samples you're importing are larger than 16 Mb (the limit of a fully-expanded ASR)...]

(B) Buy what cheap CD version? I don't understand your question here: do you mean a cheap CD of string samples? My apologies for not getting the gist of your question...]

(C) See (B) above...

(D) Ensoniq's CDR-8 (a collaboration with InVision) has some spectacular orchestral samples, inclusive of strings, viola, cello, etc. Check it out.]

[syntaur@juno.com - You might also consider the string sections that Phil Ramone produced for Ensoniq. They are available in the SL series of floppy disks, and sell for \$39.95 per 5-disk set. They are: SL-10 Violin Section, SL-11 Viola Section, SL-12 Cello Section, and SL-13 Bass Section. These are wonderfully expressive, and contain numerous articulations (spiccato, tremolo, etc.). The SL sets are available from Syntaur Productions, 409-234-2700 or fax to 409-234-2900. Sam Mims, syntaur@juno.com.]

Ladies and Gentlemen,

One of the drumkits in the SD-1 is titled "Compressed Kit." I need to separate the kick from the snare to send to their own tracks on an ADAT for process and mix purposes. I love and I need the sounds of that particular kit. Can this be done?? And if so, how???

With respect,
Jake
bluezguy@worldnet.att.net

[PF - Jake: Assign those particular samples to the auxiliary outputs. Only problem here is that the aux outs are dry (no FX), so the kick and snare will have no processing. This may or may not be a problem, depending on just how heavily processed those particular samples are. Give it a whirl - you may need to add effects to them from an outboard FX processor, but you can adjust to taste.]

TH -

Has anyone with an MR-61 experienced a HOT or high velocity key. My 2nd F natural from bottom generates a velocity of 120 when played with same pressure that elicits a velocity of 36 - 41 from its neighbors. This isn't bad for organ sounds but its a real thrill on pianos, wind

and perc. I've just upgraded to 2.11 Any similar experiences? I don't recall seeing any in the Hacker! I'll be using my TS-12 while I wait for response.

E. Becks
erb@freeway.net

[PF - E Becks: Funny you mention that - a week after I got an MR-61 my lowest G sent a 127 velocity. Turns out the key contact was dirty. Have your local tech clean that one contact and you'll be fine. No, upgrading the ROM didn't cause it, sunspots and the relative position of the moons over Mepzor didn't cause this anomaly - just some old-fashioned dust got in there...]

Me again!

I wrote a while back concerning controlling program and chord changes via MIDI from my SD-1 to my studio vocalist. I have learned more about MIDI setup and have all the parameters set up, but still don't know how to record or send the changes to the vocalist. Digitech has been a lot of help but I need info from the Ensoniq point of view. Please help...

Thanks...love the hacker!
JRSoulF8@aol.com

[PF - JR: Just send the program change corresponding to the Vocalist patch you want to select, and presto, you're there. Select a track in each sequence of a song, assign it MIDI output (rather than LOCAL or BOTH), select the MIDI channel the Vocalist is listening to, and select a program change # 1-128 that corresponds to the desired program on the Vocalist...]

TH -

I've had an MR-61 for the last 6 months. I installed the Flash board about two months ago and was able to load .wav files with no problems. However recently, while trying to load .wav files onto the Flash I have encountered the following problem. The display asks which .wav I wish to load as usual and then says "loading files... please wait." I hear the usual cranking of the floppy drive however it stops midway through the load and although the drive still seems to be spinning it will pretty much stay that way - with the green floppy light on and the display saying please wait. My only option is to eject the floppy and shut off the keyboard because it is basically locked up.

Needless to say, my .wav file does not get transferred to the Flash board - although I have been able to do so in the past. I'm puzzled because the floppy is still able to load songs into the sequencer without problems.

I haven't heard of the Flash board advertised with the new Ensoniq keyboard similar to the MR series so I don't know what type of support I can get regarding the Flash board. Anyone have any ideas, suggestions, similar experiences with the Flash board? And if it does turn out to be a problem with the Flash board, does anyone know if it's covered by a warranty? Or if it is a floppy drive disc problem, has anyone had floppy drive problems and are they easily resolved?

Sorry so long, but thanks for the forum!
JP3T3MAX@aol.com

[Andres (amell@ibm.net) - I have also experienced a similar problem with loading .wav files onto the MR-61's Flash board (by the way, it probably isn't a very good idea to eject the floppy while the drive light is still on - turn the power off first, then eject). I don't think it's a problem with the floppy drive or with the Flash board, but it does seem to be an issue of how large the .wav file is that you're trying to load and how much space is left on the Flash board. Try erasing some

samples off of the Flash board to make space for the .wav file before you try loading it. Go to Librarian, Erase samples, Erase single sample to individually delete .wav files you don't need. Another alternative may be to make your .wav file smaller (i.e., change the sample from stereo to mono, or cut down on the length of the sample) and then see if it loads properly. Hope this bit of information is helpful to you.]

[PF - JP3T: Sounds like your Flash board is full. Try deleting a couple waves to make a little more room and see if that doesn't cure the problem check the *.wav file. It's possible it's (a) too big, (b) corrupt, (c) incomplete, or (d) an unrecognized file type. Chances are it's being recognized since it tries to load, so I'd collective point at (A) thru (C)...]

TH -

A few days ago after saving a bank to my 320 meg hard drive I suddenly was unable to access the hard drive. I saved the song/seq I was working on to floppy and then shut off the EPS. I tried rebooting from the hard drive and all I saw was some default MACROS when I pressed load and numbers (1,2,3,4,etc). I was able to boot off of the floppy fine. When I changed storage device to the hard drive once again, all I saw was the same default Macros. No sign of my sounds, banks, hard work, etc.

I took the hard-drive and connected it to my Mac and ran EPSm2 software (you know this software?) and was able to view the top level directories. When I clicked down into any of the directories all I saw was weird file names with odd characters and weird numbers, which look like they should be file sizes. Grrrrrr...

Well, like a fool, I formatted one of my Syquest 44 Meg cartridges and got back to work starting from scratch. I worked all day yesterday creating sounds and sequences. And around midnight the same thing happened. I connected the Syquest to my MAC and noticed the same thing again...double shit!

Well...I really need these disks fixed. Especially the one I worked on yesterday. I called Ensoniq and they told me about some Ensoniq disk software from "Giebler Enterprises" in Pa. I gave them a call and it looks like Gary actually fixes drive problems like this and might be able to retrieve my data (finger doubly crossed!). I have it packaged up and will send it off today.

Wheww (okay I will breath now!)... Has anyone ever had SCSI problems on their EPS-16+ that caused hard disk corruption? Looks like this is some sort of FAT corruption. Any success in retrieving your data?

Classifieds

HARDWARE/SOFTWARE

EPS-Classic keyboard, 4x memory expander, SCSI, 8xOut expander, SyQuest 44 MB drive with 10 carts (with a few sounds/tunings). European 220 volts version!!! 8.500 Danish Kroner (appr. 1.250 USD). e-mail: delete@compuserve.com, Jorgen Teller, Copenhagen, Denmark.

FS: Oberheim OBMx Analog Synth. 2 vox. Mint Condition. \$700 obo. Contact: Sean at sodonne@vm.temple.edu.

MR Rack. Home use only, \$600. Contact Jonathan. Daytime: 208-962-3271, Eve: 208- 983-2876.

For Sale: EPS-16+ Turbo, gig bag, cover,

I have this super important school project due in 2 weeks and really need the data.

Oh ya... I also need to figure out what is happening with my EPS corrupting my hard drive. Anyone have a spare SCSI adaptor hanging around?

Any input would be appreciated.

Take care,
Kennedy
cosker@cruzio.com

[PF - Kennedy: When Murphy lands on your porch, chances are it's too late to do anything but restore your disk. I know EPSm VERY well as a Mac user: the first thing I did was take a "snapshot" of my drive using scEPSi (an old shareware app from the Oakland Archives) so if I really munged it I'd be able to restore the hardest work on building an Ensoniq Disk drive (the directories, subdirectories, macros, etc.)...

But it sounds like one of the following scenarios popped up on you...

(A) Your 16+ had a brain fart. Without getting too technical, it simply pulled its own finger and farted around with the FAT.

(B) Your disk drive was getting very full and trying to save the file put it over the top before it could prompt you with a "disk full" message.

(C) You were approaching the limit of the 16+ sequence memory (which it shares with sample memory) and there was a "stack collision" where the sequence edit buffer (remember the 16+ keeps your old track in memory for "YES--NO" audition purposes) overflowed into sample memory. I've done this ALL too many times and hosed my SCSI drive. Nonrecoverable, I might add. THAT's why the "snapshot" file on my Mac proves invaluable...

(D) You started up and did all your work from floppies, then plugged in a SCSI drive and went to the "Change Storage Device" screen, whereupon the 16+ didn't detect a SCSI device at startup but the drive answered back when polled, crashing your 16+...

(E) The combination of sunspots, cosmic rays, and El Nino was just too much for your 16+, and it went non-linear...

Sorry Mr. Murphy landed on your 16+, but he does come unannounced and at the most inopportune times. I'll say it again, gang: save early, save often, but save, save, save. Buy two identical drives, do your work on

hard-drive, lots of sounds \$850. Korg M3r w/sound card \$250. Matt Savard, msavard@mwbi.org.

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!

one, take them both to your buddy's ASR-10 and have it copy the drive ("mirroring" is the on-the-fly term). Or use a computer app to take a picture ("snapshot") of your drive for archival purposes...

Because Mr. Murphy will return. And unannounced...]

Help!

My VFX/sd is sick. It won't boot up anymore. All I get is an error message "system error 144, reinitialize, press any key to continue" when I power up. Anyone familiar with this problem? Anyone with inexpensive solutions? I have no idea where to start looking for the problem. Any suggestions or support would be greatly appreciated.

Duane Hamilton
hamild@hotmail.com

[PF - Duane: Sounds like your VFXsd is telling you what's wrong with itself. Error 144 is a MIDI buffer overflow - are you connecting the VFXsd to something else via MIDI? There's no mention of other equipment in your posting, so I would assume (here I go assuming again) that something is sending MIDI data to your VFXsd faster than it can process it (at least on boot)...

If there's nothing else your setup but the lone VFXsd, reinitialize the unit as follows:

1. Press and hold (PRESETS) button.
 2. Press Soft button (1) (upper left corner of screen), release both buttons.
 3. Display = Erase All Memory And Re-Initialize.
 4. Select *YES*.
 5. Display returns to sign on message. All RAM is erased and all internal programs reset with ROM sounds.
 6. Reload Sequencer Operating System and internal sounds from your Operating System Disk.
- (Cut & Pasted from Ensoniq's web page at www.ensoniq.com)

There's another initialization procedure that involves turning the unit on and off seven times in rapid succession, but I've forgotten the details. I'd call Ensoniq at 610.647.3930 for the skinny on that procedure if the above doesn't clear it out.

And it's possible there's a hardware problem here if your VFXsd won't initialize. Are any of the buttons stuck down? Mine is so old the metal escutcheon has shifted and some buttons will stick occasionally. If all else fails, take your pet to an Authorized Ensoniq Service Station, as they have the schematics to it...]

Call For Writers!

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

TH -

My trusty TS-12 has started acting temperamental. I am using the latest OS. My problem is this: At irregular intervals I will get a System Error 130 or Error 129 when I am trying to load a sequence file from the floppy. It happens with different disks, and different sequences. I can get it to repeat the phenomenon if I try to reload the same file again which gave me the error. It then takes me a little while (hitting several different button combinations, including the suggested reboot keys from the manual) to reinitialize. Does my floppy have a bad "read" spot on it somewhere? Is there a remedy for this? I have learned to make back-ups continuously, but it really gets annoying.

R.Friedman
Docrogerf@aol.com

[PF - R. Friedman: You, sir, have answered your own question. Error 129 is a bad data error, either caused by a defective disk sector, an OS anomaly, defective sound/sequence information, even a bad disk drive can cause this. Most problems of this nature are indeed defective disk media, although the disk drive can sometimes cause this if the heads are dirty...

You're doing the absolute right thing by repeatedly trying to load the file until it does load, then saving it to a fresh floppy. I'd recommend a disk cleaning kit from a nearby computer store, as this sounds way too intermittent to be a genuine and provable disk drive failure.

Purchase the best floppies you can find: 1.4 Mb floppies are SOOOO cheap now (most stores sell them in 100-count boxes for \$19.95 and then give you a rebate coupon for \$19.95, so they're essentially free). Spend a coupla bucks and buy Maxell: the black 1.4 Mb floppies are very sexy as they have a black shutter as well.

Floppies are a strange media in this day and age, as they've become too small for holding the vast amounts of data computers require (count the 39 floppies in the Microsoft Office Package if you think I'm kidding), very few will format out with no bad sectors (an Ensoniq REQUIREMENT as well as an older Apple requirement), yet they're too convenient and implanted in our society to make any other alternative feasible. Contrary to popular belief, they have a shelf live of maybe a year (retentivity) if you're lucky and box them away from exterior influences. Yet something as important as our own personal (and unrepeatabe) work deserves the most reliable medium you can give it, so feed your TS the Beluga caviar. It's worth every penny...]

Hi,

I was trying to set up a Fujitsu M2513 MO drive (640MB) with my ASR-10. During formatting I always get a file operation error. Does anybody know if there is a working setup or is this drive just not compatible?

Thanks a lot!
Uli
ulit@eikon.e-technik.tu-muenchen.de

[PF - Uli: MO drives haven't been tested with the ASR, and it's been my experience that they aren't compatible with any of the Ensoniq loopboxes. All the latest removable media devices return that "File Operation Error," at least with the drives and gear I've been using. You might ping RCS at <http://www.soundcentral.com/~chickeneps/>: they're pretty up-to-date on this stuff...]

[Ulrich Tuerk (ulit@eikon.e-technik.tu-muenchen.de) - Hi. I found out that the 128 and 230 MB media work perfectly with the Fujitsu drive. At first, I tried to use a 640MB media which caused the file operation errors.

Maybe it is the different block size (the smaller ones use 512 bytes/sector, the big ones 2048 bytes/sector.)

[PF - Uli: Thanx for the heads up on this. Glad you got it squared away...]

TH -

Can someone tell me the wiring for the sustain pedal on my ESQ-1? Is it simply an open circuit, that when closed with a momentary switch, causes sustain? I need to make a pedal, but don't know the wiring.

Thanks,
Tim
kg8rj@ramlink.net

[PF - Tim: It's a normally open momentary switch...]

TH -

Peter Heim had trouble (last month's Interface) getting an ASR-10 to pan a sound from full left to full right using a sine-wave LFO as a modulator. It sounds to me that he simply selected POS/SIN as the LFO wave instead of SINWAVE. POS/SIN is a sinewave that is positive-going only, while SINWAVE goes equally positive and negative. If you used POS/SIN as a pan modulator, you will get exactly what Peter describes - the panning only goes from center to full right (or full left).

Sam Mims, Syntaur Productions
syntaur@juno.com

[Peter C Heim (pch7@interport.net) - Nope. It was full sine wave. Some samples seem to pan better starting from hard left or right, others don't. Go figure.]

Gang: This just in on the SCSI bus...

Iomega stumbles on ZipPlus compatibility By David Morgenstern (david_morgenstern@macweek.com)

Iomega Corp. of Roy, Utah, today warned users of compatibility problems with its ZipPlus drives that can lead to data corruption when the drive is used with other SCSI devices or third-party cables.

The company said the problem is due to the \$199 drive's proprietary AutoDetect circuitry, which supports parallel or SCSI connections from a single 25-pin connector. Iomega said the drive should be used only with the AutoDetect cable that ships with it and not with other cables or adapters. The drive should be the sole external device on a SCSI chain and not connected with other SCSI drives.

Users can request a new manual at (888) 446-6342 or the company's Web site at <http://www.iomega.com>.

Pat Finnigan

Killer new effects files for your sampler!

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