

M MOBILE MUSICIAN

The world is your studio

January 2022

HISTORY OF THE
STYLOPHONE

PLUGGING INTO
NATURE

TAPE IS BACK!

REVIEWS:

MAXOAK AC10
MYVOLTS RIPCORD
BEHRINGER HPS3000
KVGEAR SYNTH STANDS
LOOPY PRO
ROLAND JD-08
RYMDIGARE
ROLAND GO: MIX PRO-X

STYLOPHONIK: a new
album from the Stylophone
Orchestra

PLUS

FIELD GUIDE:
HOW TO BUILD THE
PERFECT LIVE RIG

PATCHWORKS:
THE BASTL KASTLE

THRIFT STORE FIND:
RE-PURPOSING CASES

MARI DANGERFIELD

"QUIRKPOP OF THE MIND,
BODY, AND LAPTOP"

WE REVIEW HER DEBUT ALBUM
LOVE AND OTHER MACHINES



KVgear



Look as good
As you sound

A stand for every situation
Quality products designed and built in the USA.
Visit us at: www.kvgear.com

©KVgear 2022

MOBILE MUSICIAN

 www.mobilemusicianmagazine.com

 jeremy@mobilemusicianmagazine.com




Jeremy Spurgeon
Editor

Welcome to our premier issue of Mobile Musician Magazine! Mobile music technology is developing at break-neck speeds. Mobile devices, like the iPad, have created a whole new generation of musicians - the mobile musician. Gone are the days when electronic musicians needed a studio full of synthesizers to create the music they imagined. Now with a single iPad and a few apps, epic masterpieces can be composed, recorded, and released to the world. For this reason, I wanted to create Mobile Musician Magazine-a magazine that highlights the artists, tools, and devices that make mobile music possible and share my support and enthusiasm for electronic music.

I have been a musician for over forty years and I've seen first-hand how instruments and equipment have developed and improved over the years. They are more accessible than ever before, and we have so many options to choose from: now we can choose to work with vintage gear or work with the latest technology. I want to help you decide by featuring the latest apps and hardware, as well as some vintage gear that I think would be of interest to a mobile musician. There is no right or wrong answer-however you choose to make your music is up to you.

It is our goal to inspire you and help you see the possibilities. This month we introduce you to a rising star from London who is following her dreams to make music that is uniquely her own. We are featuring Mari Dangerfield, who is using all of the modern technology available to her, as well as remaining firmly rooted in the past. We learn about the origins of her favorite synth, the Stylophone, and we discuss some of her favorite studio techniques.

We share information on great gear to help you with your mobile rig and I explain how I built my own performance rig in a monthly feature called, "A field Guide to Building the Perfect Live Rig".

We hope you enjoy reading Mobile Musician Magazine. Please feel free to let us know how you liked this issue and how to improve upcoming issues. Most importantly, let's share what we know and encourage each other to keep exploring and making great music! 

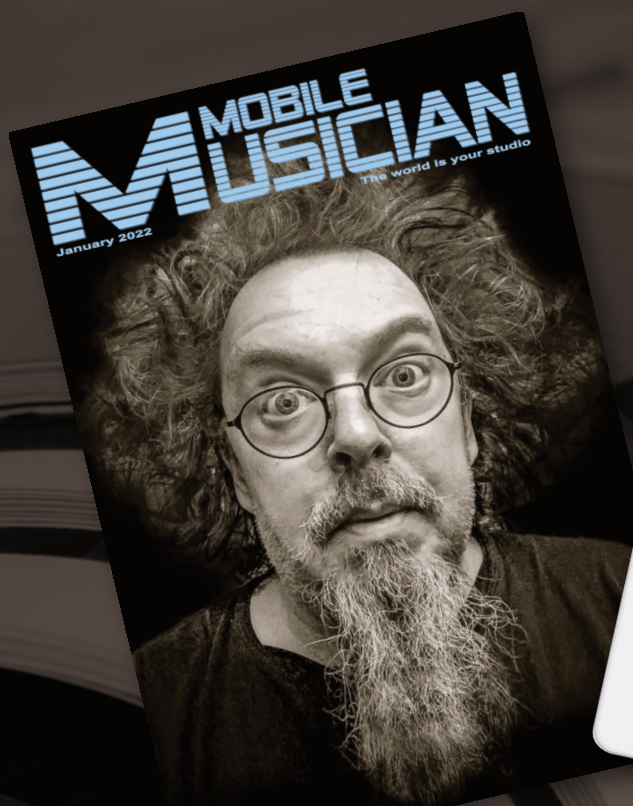
Jeremy Spurgeon

All contents copyright 2022 Jeremy Spurgeon or published under license. All rights reserved.

3	Welcome
6	News
8	Mari Dangerfield
12	Stylophone
16	Plugging Into Nature Electronically
18	Tape is Back!
22	Reviews
24	Rack Them Up
28	Loopy Pro
32	Roland JD-08
34	Rymdigare
35	Stylophonik
36	Roland Go: Mix Pro-X
38	Field Guide
42	Patchworks
44	Thrift Store Find

SUBSCRIBE NOW

And never miss an issue



Choose the print version,
digital version, or both!

Visit: www.mobilemusicianmagazine.com/magazine



SYNTH ROCK PIONEERS

KRAFTWERK

INDUCTED INTO THE ROCK AND
ROLL HALL OF FAME

On October 31, 2021, German synth rock pioneers, Kraftwerk, were inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and awarded the Musical Excellence Award. In a video tribute, they were honored by Martin Gore of Depeche Mode, James Murphy of LCD Soundsystem's, Philip Oakey of the Human League, and Darryl McDaniels of Run-D.M.C.

On the heels of their induction ceremony, Kraftwerk announced a tour for the summer of 2022. Not ones to rest on their laurels, the band shows no sign of slowing down any time soon. Visit <https://www.kraftwerk.com/concerts/index-concerts.html> for tour dates and locations.



Tangerine Dream Raum

On December 15, 2021 Tangerine Dream announced a new album to be released on February 25, 2022. The album features new compositions from Thorsten Quaeschning, Hoshiko Yamane, and Paul Frick, who had access to the archives of the group's founder, the late Edgar Froese, and were inspired by his Cubase arrangements and Otari tapes. The album was composed and recorded during COVID-19 lock downs. Pre-order the album on December 18, 2021. Visit <https://tangerinedreammusic.com> for more information.

January on Youtube and Instagram

If you haven't heard of January it is an idea that was created in 2017, by Cuckoo, an artist that creates amazing music on mobile devices and iPad apps. The idea is for anyone interested in electronic music to post a short jam or musical idea on Youtube and Instagram for every day in January. There are many contributors and some exceptional music is being made and posted.

Check out these links or do a quick search for #january2022 to watch the videos.

https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=%23january2022

<https://www.instagram.com/explore/tags/january2022/>

Free Moog DFAM Loop Pack from Marco Scherer of the Drum Depot

If you have ever wanted a Moog DFAM but don't want to fork over the purchase price, here is the next best thing. 92 minutes of loops and patterns recorded by Marco Scherer of the Drum Depot.

Features:

- 62 original stems from the Moog DFAM
- 22 variations from Moog DFAM stems
- 92 minutes of Techno & Electro patterns, synth percussion and basslines
- 1,4 GB of recordings in WAV format (24 Bit, 44.1 kHz)
- Compatible to all current DAWs, samplers and groove boxes

Visit: <https://marcoscherer.sellfy.store/> to download your own copy.



MART DINGERFIELD



London based Youtube sensation, Mari Dangerfield may be unassuming at first glance, but under her quiet demeanor lies an artist who commands attention with her extraordinary talent.

Occasionally there is a song or lyric that is so instantly gripping that it draws you in completely, leaving its mark with no apologies. Rarer still is the musician whose entire album is so artistically riveting, both technically and lyrically, that it takes you on the swells and waves of their journey. Yet, this is what I was delighted to discover in Mari Dangerfield's debut album *Love and Other Machines*. In an age where the experience of listening to and enjoying an entire album is becoming a thing of the past, this one captivates you and commands attention--reminiscent of my younger years when I would get a new album, and sit on the carpet absorbing every track and composition.

I was searching for videos on the Stylophone synthesizer when I came across some of Mari's tutorials, thinking she was simply reviewing music products. However, it turned out that not only is she familiar with the Stylophone, but she used the S1 to win a video competition held by Muse Records. I then found a music video for her original song entitled *Love Machine* and I was hooked by its original lyrical and melodic quality. As good fortune would have it, I was able to connect with Mari and she graciously agreed to speak with me for the premier issue of Mobile Musician Magazine. Upon meeting her for the first time the collocation of her soft-spoken voice and quiet personality with her bold videos, thoughtful lyrics, and technical arrangements did not escape me. While somewhat reserved in conversation, her art is courageous with a fearless

commentary on important social challenges of her time, and the thematic essence of her album, technology and relationships, is relatable to any listener. After all, music is a generational tether, helping us to understand the struggles, loves, and ambitions of both the young and old, binding us through art. *Love and Other Machines* joins the ranks of those great masterpieces.

The real deal

Having studied classical music from an early age, Mari has mastered modern songwriting and recording and demonstrates artistic maturity well beyond her years. Not one to be content with the modern convenience of pre-packaged loops and sound packs, she often meticulously records individual notes of the Stylophone in multiple takes to build up chords and backing tracks. She blends and layers her vocals so seamlessly that it creates beautiful, lush, choir-like effects in her music. And if that wasn't impressive

enough, she does all of this at home: "I usually start writing a song on the piano, working out the parts and lyrics. From there I start building the backing tracks in

"It has to be a good tune. That's a big thing for me."

Ableton. It has to be a good tune. That's a big thing for me", Mari says. She continues, "I'll record three or four vocal tracks for the lead vocals and sometimes nine or more tracks for backup vocals. It varies per song, of course". As a result, it is sometimes hard to separate the vocals from the synthesizer, a technique she uses with a semblance of seasoned expertise.

Learning from the past

We all learn from the artists who came before us, regardless of the genre. While Mari's music is unique and stands on its' own, the listener can hear echoes of past and present artistic influences throughout the album, so that it resonates as a modern yet familiar experience. Her musical interests are vast, including artists such as David Bowie, Kate Bush, Queen, and ELO. "I tend to cherry-pick things I hear and take inspiration from them", says Mari. "Sometime a song idea will come out of nowhere." She explains. "Many times, I'll wake up at night with a tune or lyric in my head and I'll sing it into my phone so I don't lose it", many creators can relate to this. Over the past year, there have been challenges finding creative inspiration due to the COVID-19 lockdown, but Mari finds inspiration everywhere. While unconventional, the year of lockdown presented unique opportunities to complete her album, by infusing her experience into her songs, such as, *Virtually, Webcam*, and *Screen Time*, where she explores the way we interact and build relationships online. Furthermore, her use of real instruments on songs like *Coping Mechanism* grounds the album in authenticity.

Each song is a masterpiece of finely crafted melodies that captures your imagination and has you singing along right away. Her compositions are quite intricate, yet everything is in its proper place. The complex songs come to life with her tasteful use of sweeps and risers, helping to build tension and release, and carrying the listener along on an emotional journey. In contrast, the minimalistic arrangement and vulnerable vocals on the song *Somebody*, lend a poetic rawness to the growing societal issue of loneliness "...Cause I don't know if it's you that I want or if I just want somebody...Is it you that I want or am I just feeling empty".

Her lyrics are clever and quirky as she puts her own spin on love, relationships, and the technology that we depend on, especially in our post-Covid world. In *The Stars Were Wrong* Mari reverses the common idea that love is "written in the stars" and portrays a relationship that thrives against all odds. The capricious nature of *Love Machine*, "Should I let the wave transmitter make the choice for my own mister?" encapsulate her whimsical sense of humor.

Stylophone

The festive sounds of the Stylophone were the perfect choice for this particular endeavor, and it adds a rich historical component to the album. Her creative integration of the Stylophone has lent much success to her musical career thus far. She started with a second-hand S1 that she found in a local music shop: "Originally I thought I could use it in one of my original tunes", she explains. But as luck would have it, she decided to use it to enter a video contest held by Mute Records to promote a new album by Yann Tiersen, entitled *Eusa*. Mari used the Stylophone to create an amazing cover version of Yann's solo piano piece, *Porz Goret* in which she had to break down the parts into single-note lines and record them in layers to build up the song with the Stylophone. The result was My Eusa Best-non Piano winner of 2017! Since then, she has developed a working relationship with the Dubreq company, maker of the Stylophone, and has created many official videos tutorials with Leigh Kemp, Social Media Manager and Technical Support for Stylophone. For a short time, she was also a part of the Kingston University Stylophone Orchestra and contributed to their new album, *Stylophonika*. Besides the official version of *Love and Other Machines*, Mari has also released a Stylophone-only version of her album on Bandcamp, just for kicks.

Lights, camera, action

Besides writing and recording twelve original tunes, she has been quite busy creating companion music videos for each song and posting them on her Youtube channel. Whereas her album has a serious feel to it, her music videos give us a chance to see Mari's more theatrical and humorous side, with cartoon animations and outlandish costumes. Leaning on her film-making education from her time at university, these videos are well-executed productions and quite entertaining. Mari seems to be right at home in front of the camera, as well as behind the scenes writing, directing, and even editing many of the videos. Her creativity shines through no matter the medium.

Future's so bright

Mari's hard work appears to be paying off. She seems to be in for a bright future as a filmmaker and recording artist. Her debut album has been very well received and Mari's songs are being played regularly on local radio stations. She has live performances booked around London and is already planning her next musical release. Who knows where her art will take her but if this is any indication of what we can expect to see from Mari in the future, we can't wait!

Be sure to visit Mari at:

www.maridangerfield.com

[www.youtube.com/c/MariDangerfield/
featured](http://www.youtube.com/c/MariDangerfield/featured)

www.maridangerfield.bandcamp.com



Stylophone®



The little synth from Leeds has found popularity once again as the Dubreq Company re-imagines the original Stylophone and offers many new models.

Invented by Brian Jarvis in 1968, the original Stylophone was conceived when Jarvis was repairing a toy piano for his niece. He had an idea to replace the keys with a metal keyboard that was played with a hand-held stylus, and the rest is history. Designed with a single oscillator, the Stylophone is simple and fun to play. It is one of the best-selling musical instruments, selling over 4 million units.

Stylophones have been used by many professional musicians throughout their long history most notably, Kraftwerk, Blondie, the White Stripes, and David Bowie. The latter has been honored with his own limited edition Stylophone released in 2021, featuring an all-white finish and the Bowie logo molded into the grill. Other versions of the Stylophone have been released as part of the company's revival.





Stylophone S2

Firm foundation

In 2007, twenty-eight years after production ceased, a new digital version of the Stylophone called the S1 was released. This version, manufactured in China, used sampled sounds of the original Stylophone instead of an analog oscillator. Following the S1, Dubreq continued in 2009 with a slightly different instrument, the Stylophone Beatbox. It featured a circular touch pad with 12 sections. Played by the typical stylus like the S1, it triggered samples of Beatbox Champion MC Zani. It also included steel drum sounds and bass sounds that could be layered up with a record and playback function. As the company gained popularity it released the British-made, all-analog S2 model in 2012, which featured a 37 note keyboard, a 12 dB/octave filter, dual VCO, a sub-oscillator, an 8 waveform LFO, and a CV

input. The S2 was a unique instrument and very playable but its high price point meant that it only appealed to true Stylophone enthusiasts. In 2019 the Dubreq company released the next generation Stylophone, the Gen X-1. This model features many functions that electronic artists are looking for in a portable synthesizer including an LFO with square and triangle waves, a low pass filter with resonance, an envelope generator with attack and decay, and an analog delay effect with time and feedback controls. At a price point of less than \$100, it is very accessible. Also in 2019 Dubreq released their most ambitious model to date, the Gen R-8. This limited edition model was fully analog with many features commonly seen on more expensive synthesizers. Only 500 were made and featured a 3-octave keyboard, dual VCOs, an 8 waveform LFO, a 16 step sequencer, a delay effect, ring modulation, a high pass and low pass filter, and 19 patch points to allow connectivity to a

growing number of modular and semi-modular synthesizers. Finally in 2020 Dubreq replaced the digital version of the S1 with an all-analog version based on the 555 timer chip, which sounds much more like the original Stylophone.

Something for everyone

Building a solid product line over the past 15 years, Dubreq has created something for everyone. Although some of their models have been limited editions, they are still available on the second-hand market if you look hard enough. But the S1 is a great place for a beginner to start their synthesizer journey. For mobile musicians, the Stylophone offers a lot of helpful features, such as battery power, a small footprint, and in the case of the Gen X-1, built-in delay and auxiliary inputs. Whether you play it live or sample it into your favorite iPad app, the Stylophone offers a unique sound that may be what you are looking for. Stylophone has come a long way from the curious toy keyboard

Stylophone Beatbox



full-blown professional synthesizer, but they have been able to stay true to their roots and their fans. 🎵



Stylophone Gen X-1

to

Plugging Into Nature Electronically

By: Lon Spurgeon

Connecting with nature is a great way to get the creative juices flowing. And it's not just for acoustic instruments anymore.

I remember seeing a promotional photo of my favorite electronic band, Tangerine Dream set up in a field with their stacks of electronic music equipment, even Edgar's electric guitar rig. What a strange sight! It was quite the juxtaposition of man-made technology and nature's organic beauty. I mean aside from the obvious, "where do I plug this stuff in"; the accouterments of electronic music should be on a stark artificially lit industrial looking stage, not a cow pasture! In my mind, at least, I associate being in nature with acoustic instruments like an acoustic guitar, penny flute, or a plucky ukulele; and while much of this goes back again to the practical problems of no power outlets, acoustic instruments just sound more organic, warm and natural, right?

So, for those of us who love nature and instruments you

plug in, are we relegated to only indoor performance or can we and dare we take our sound generators outdoors to a different field of view? Fortunately, the ever-evolving frontier of electric sound and their power sources make it easier than ever to be portable. With tiny pocket-sized synths, sequencers, and music making apps on our phones we can make "music from Mars" right in our back yard or on top of ole Smoky or whatever mountain you might be close to.

"So why would we" you might ask. Well, there is a proverbial fountain head of endless sounds and energies to tap into in nature at any given time! After all, where did the drone, the percussive thump, or the rhythmic gurgle come from to start with? If you don't know, go sit by a stream or small brook, or listen to the insects at night in some country grove and experience the plethora of

sounds, "young grasshopper!" Also being in different spaces and seeing different sights when creating music is always good for our muse and nature is always teeming with vibrant energy and motion everywhere! I am in no way discounting getting mobile in an urban setting either; there are all kinds of sounds and rhythms to be found in the city.

I learned this great lesson by experience on two different occasions with my cousin and music partner Jeremy. After a long hiatus from playing music together we met at a Kroger deli and improvised music via a small mixing board and headphones with me running my Strat into a pocket pod and delay pedal. Just over a year ago we met up in a park downtown and recorded over an hour's worth of music sitting at a picnic table and this time using a battery powered set up. The novelty and even

slight discomfort of a new setting coupled with the unique energy and vibe of where we were playing fueled new enthusiasm and creativity. Lesson learned, cow pasture here I come! Seriously though, I am pretty stoked about plugging in while in nature and consequently plugging into nature.

I don't imagine Tangerine Dream ever gave a concert sitting in the middle of a field, or even a Kroger deli for that matter, but that eye catching promotional photo has become for me a symbol of the invisible connection between electronic music and the source of sound, nature. Hopefully in the future I will have more opportunities to talk with you about some of the devices and techniques that I use to make electronic music more mobile and accessible. See you in the park! 🎹



TAPE IS BACK!

With the new year upon us, electronic musicians are anxiously awaiting to see what new technology will be developed in 2022. As our high-tech world continues to grow is there any room left for a lost format to make a comeback?



The year was 1989 and annual sales of cassette tapes had peaked at 83 million. I had just graduated high school and was spending the summer listening to my favorite albums and making mix tapes to share with my friends. Little did I know that my prized possessions would soon be obsolete.

The digital age

It wouldn't take long. I remember seeing the first portable compact disc player at my local shopping center in the early 90's and before long I was converting my tape collection to compact discs. By the year 2000 compact disc annual sales had reached 942 million, but it would soon start its slow decline as websites, like Napster and the mp3 audio format gained popularity. As with every other audio format the mp3 has also been replaced as smart phones and online streaming services have continued to grow and develop. Today, nearly any song is available for you to listen to at the press of a button. Many listeners don't even own music because they can stream it from the web any time they want. It is the epitome of modern convenience, but there is something that has been lost in that convenience and that is

connection. There was a time when music fans would anticipate a new album. It was a bit of a ritual. You would go to the record store, look through the racks, maybe even preview a track or two at the listening station, decide on your purchase, and bring it home. Then, you would put the album in the player and while you were listening with excitement, you would read through the liner notes, read the lyrics, and look at the cover art. It was an experience—one that my friends and I enjoyed for many years. Now however, that experience is gone. The connection to a tangible piece of art has been replaced with the latest Spotify playlist and liner notes with a google search for information on the song, artist, or album. For many, listening to music is something to do while doing something else.

Back in style

However, just as vinyl records are making a comeback so too is analog tape. Cassette tape sales are on the rise, reaching 100,000 units in 2020, and should continue to climb as more artists like Billie Eilish, Lady Gaga, Bjork, and other main-stream artists release albums on cassette. The Covid-19 lock downs also helped fuel the comeback with listeners turning to the lost format for a physical connection to their favorite artists. Many younger listeners are discovering cassettes for the first time, finding them to be a novelty and fashionable. But for many of us, who grew up listening to cassettes, we are choosing to listen to our music on cassette again because of its character. The way it sounds to us. There is a bit of nostalgia to be sure, but its more than that, its the connection, the experience of something real, and the familiar sound. Now that we have a choice of formats, we can choose to experience music on our own terms.



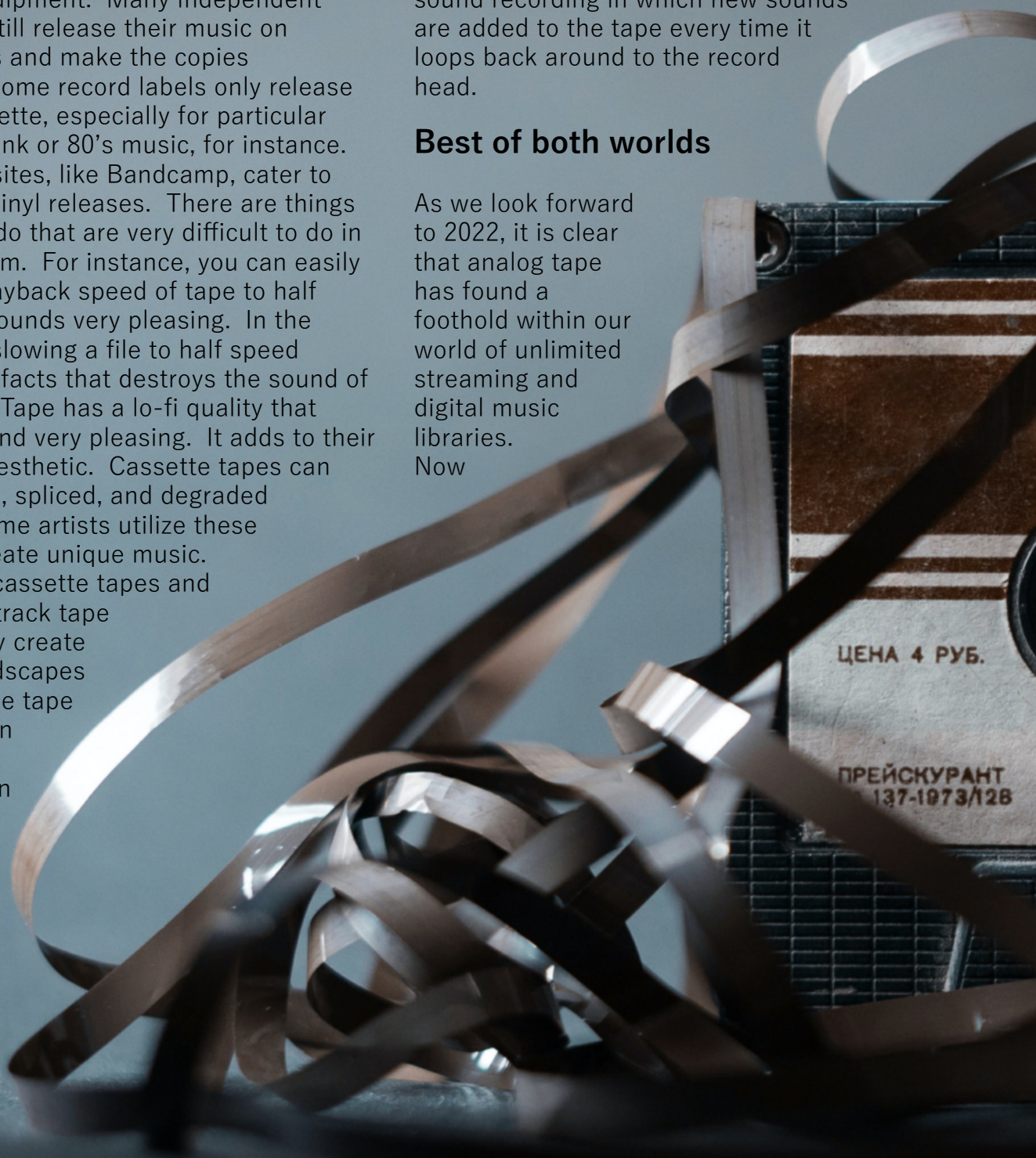
The test of time

Of course, tape never completely went away. Professional studios around the world have continued to record on large format reel-to-reel tape machines. Many artists prefer it and there are recording studios that specialize in all- analog equipment. Many independent artists today still release their music on cassette tapes and make the copies themselves. Some record labels only release music on cassette, especially for particular genres, like punk or 80's music, for instance. Online music sites, like Bandcamp, cater to cassette and vinyl releases. There are things that tape can do that are very difficult to do in the digital realm. For instance, you can easily change the playback speed of tape to half speed and it sounds very pleasing. In the digital realm, slowing a file to half speed introduces artifacts that destroys the sound of the recording. Tape has a lo-fi quality that many artists find very pleasing. It adds to their "sound" and aesthetic. Cassette tapes can also be looped, spliced, and degraded physically. Some artists utilize these features to create unique music. Using looped cassette tapes and vintage multi-track tape recorders, they create ambient soundscapes by "playing" the tape recorder like an instrument, fading tracks in and out to build interesting

combinations of sounds and textures. Some artists have even recreated vintage instruments, such as the mellotron, using voltage controlled cassette players that adjust the tape speed to produce different notes. While other artists modify the erase heads of their tape recorders to allow for sound-on-sound recording in which new sounds are added to the tape every time it loops back around to the record head.

Best of both worlds

As we look forward to 2022, it is clear that analog tape has found a foothold within our world of unlimited streaming and digital music libraries. Now



that the technology has advanced to the point where most people have access to the music they want to listen to online, many of us are deciding that there is still something worthwhile to listening to music on cassette tapes. Whether it is the lo-fi quality of tape or the sense of connection to a physical piece of art, tape is still relevant today. Digital streaming has its merits and in today's environment it is the best way to discover new music. It is also a great way to take all of your favorite tunes with you as you go about your day. But consider what

you have been missing. There is something to be said for purposely listening to music. In fact, the next time you discover a new artist that you enjoy, consider buying their music on a physical format, like vinyl, cassette tape, or compact disc. If you take the time to sit down, listen to the album, look at the artwork, and read the lyrics and liner notes, you might rediscover the connection to music that so many of us have lost. ®



MAXOAK AC10 POWER BANK

MAXOAK.NET \$139

To be a truly mobile musician, there may come a time when you will need an external power supply. That is where the MAXOAK AC10 Power Bank comes in handy. This TSA-approved 99Wh/26756mAh power bank comes with enough power to run your entire portable rig. It includes an AC outlet with AC120V/100W (Peak Power:140W) output for AC powered devices such as laptops, cell phones, tablets, and other devices, a PD3.0 45W USB-C(5-20V) for MacBook and other USB-C devices. The USB-C (in/out) is not only a recharge port but also a discharge port, and a USB 5V3A for smartphone, iPad, etc.



We put the AC10 to the test in various configurations and were pleasantly surprised. It powered our portable synthesizer rig which included an iPad, a mixer, some Korg Volcas, and a few effects pedals for more than two hours during a live performance.



MYVOLTS RIPCORD USB POWER

MYVOLTS.COM \$30

Myvolts Ripcord USB power adapters are extremely useful when going mobile. They have a large selection of voltage conversions and connectors so you can power most devices with USB power banks. Myvolts also cater specifically to Korg Volca users with a selection of power cables that will power multiple Volcas from one Ripcord power adapter, similar to guitar pedal power solutions.

With a powerful power bank like the AC10 and an assortment of Ripcords, you can power nearly anything you wish to include in your portable rig. We highly recommend Ripcord, having tested them in various mobile situations. They provided dependable power for our mobile needs and they are very affordable.

BEHRINGER HPS3000 STUDIOHEADPHONES

BEHRINGER.COM \$30

Behringer HPS3000 Studio headphones provide ultra-wide frequency response and high-definition bass with super transparent highs. They feature high-efficiency cobalt capsules and single-sided, oxygen free copper wire. They utilize oval-shaped ear cups for all-day comfort.

These headphones are not fancy, they just do the job they were meant to do, and do it well. We have used these headphones in many audio situations. They work well in all of them, whether its during a live jam session or at the mixing desk, these headphones provide the accurate feedback that you need to make the

best decisions about your mix. They are comfortable, block out unwanted noise, and are very durable.

The HPS3000 are a solid choice and an all-around good investment.



MAKERHART JUST MIXER S

MAKERHART.COM \$50

Taiwanese manufacturer, Makerhart, produces several compact mixers that are very useful to mobile musicians. The Just Mixer S is no exception. It features three stereo input channels with separate volume controls and a master output with its own volume control and a separate headphone output as well. Its small size of 4" x 3" x 1/2" is perfect for anyone trying to fit it into a small case. It runs on batteries or USB, giving users the freedom to power it with external battery bank or phone charger.





Rack Them Up

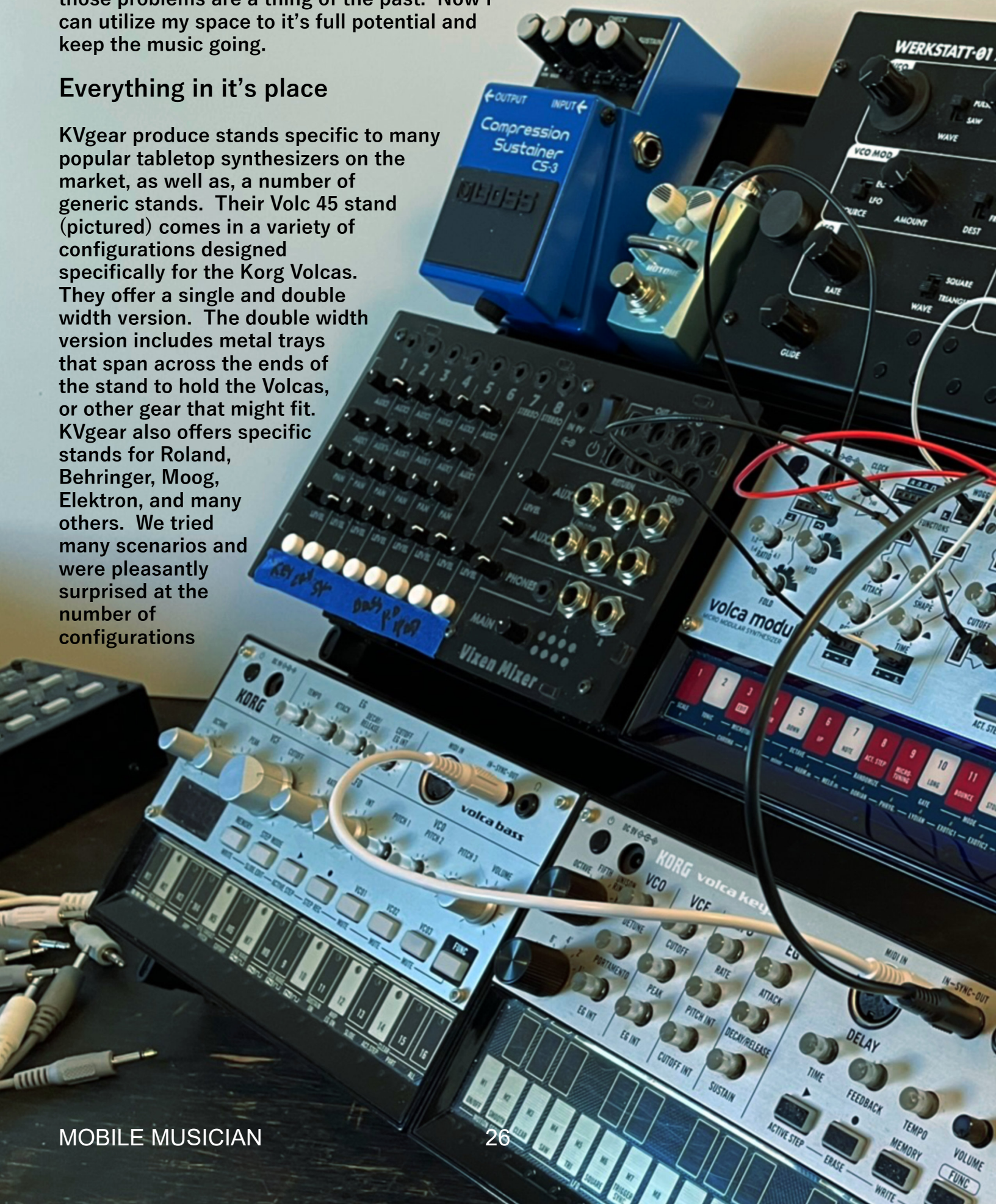
Chicago based company KVgear focuses on quality, precision, and customization to bring you the best tabletop synth stands in the business.

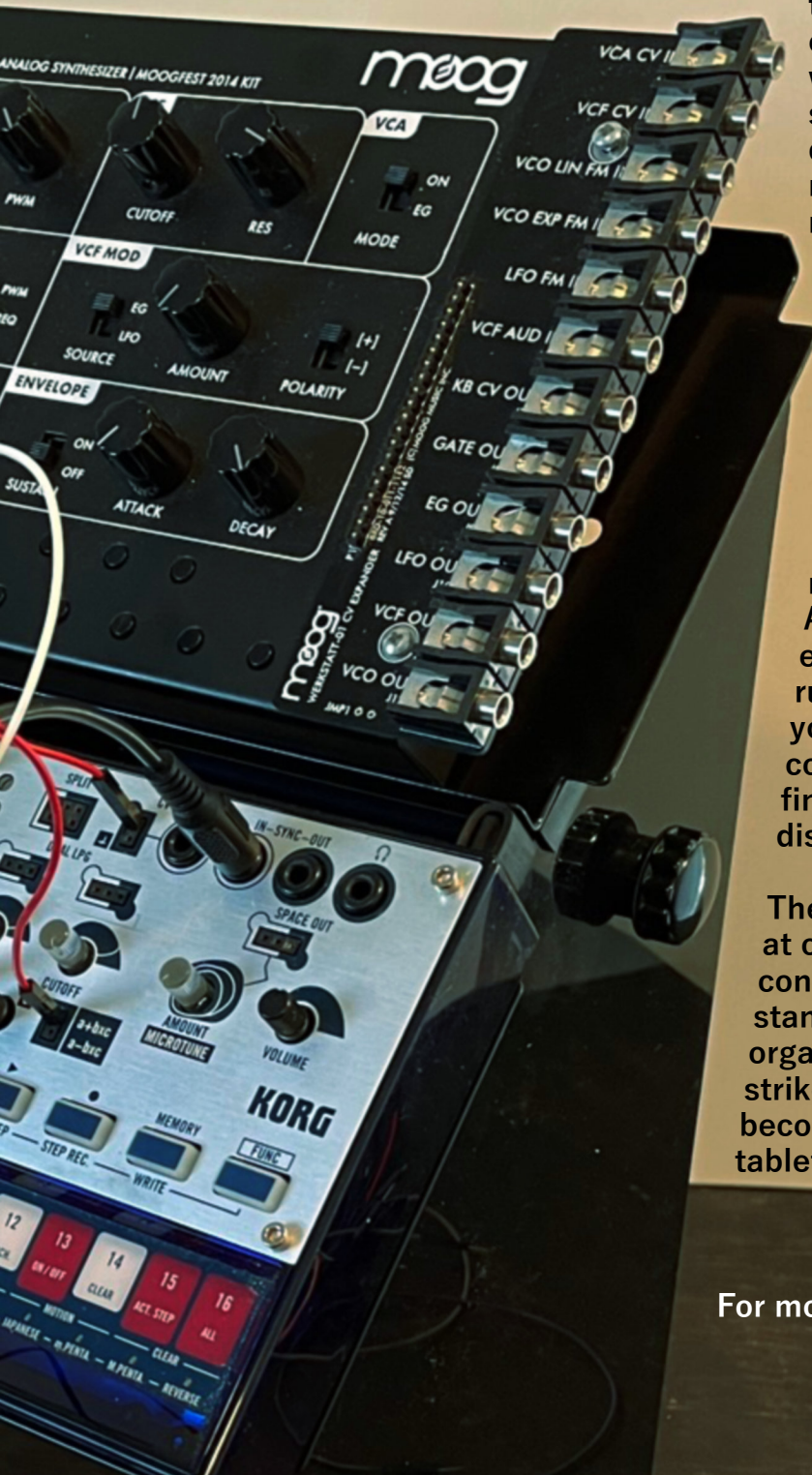
If you are like me you can't resist the amazing gear that is being manufactured by synth makers today. Korg, Roland, Moog, and many others are all producing small tabletop synthesizers that sound fantastic and are an inexpensive way to add to your sonic pallet. However, having so many small pieces of equipment takes up a lot of space. Korg Volcas alone include so many models that if you were to collect them all you would quickly run out of desk space. Add a few more synths from other manufacturers and you've got a problem on your hands. That is exactly where I was until I discovered KVgear. I have a very small work space and way more gear than I can keep on my desk. Having to disconnect my gear and rearrange it every time I needed to use a different synth was a lot of work and was hindering my creativity. Thanks to the tabletop stands at KVgear

those problems are a thing of the past. Now I can utilize my space to it's full potential and keep the music going.

Everything in it's place

KVgear produce stands specific to many popular tabletop synthesizers on the market, as well as, a number of generic stands. Their Volc 45 stand (pictured) comes in a variety of configurations designed specifically for the Korg Volcas. They offer a single and double width version. The double width version includes metal trays that span across the ends of the stand to hold the Volcas, or other gear that might fit. KVgear also offers specific stands for Roland, Behringer, Moog, Elektron, and many others. We tried many scenarios and were pleasantly surprised at the number of configurations





we could fit on them. The stands come with telescoping aluminum rods that connect to each end piece and allow you to adjust the width to accommodate different synthesizers. Even the stand specifically designed for Volcas was very easy to reconfigure with gear from other manufactures. KVgear also manufactures extensions for their stands to allow for further customization.

Built to last

Besides being very functional, these stands are built exceptionally well. KVgear have taken the time to refine their designs and they deliver one the best products on the market. Everything is finished to perfection. All surfaces that come in contact with your equipment is lined with rubber. There are rubber feet on all of the stands to protect your desk as well. The metal trays and connector rods have a baked-on, durable finish, and the stands can be assembled and disassembled with ease.

These days we have so many wonderful tools at our disposal. Tabletop synths have become a convenient addition to our studios and with stands from KVgear we can keep these tools organized and ready to use when inspiration strikes. If your workspace is disorganized and becoming a burden to your workflow, consider a tabletop stand from KVgear.

For more information visit www.kvgear.com. 





Loopy Pro

for iOS

A Tasty Pixel

If you have been waiting for an app that gives you loads of flexibility and solid performance, then wait no further.

Loopy Pro is sure to please.

From the makers of Audiobus and Loopy HD comes Loopy Pro, a giant leap forward in live looping and live performance apps. At its core Loopy Pro is a live looping app with numerous options for recording and controlling your loops. It is compatible with hardware keyboards, controllers, and pedals to assist

you in your live performances. It communicates over midi, usb, wifi, and bluetooth. You can customize how the app records your loops, how it plays them back, and what it does when the loop is finished. Loops can be recorded freely or synchronized to the tempo with fixed end points, up to 32 bars. Loops can also be imported and

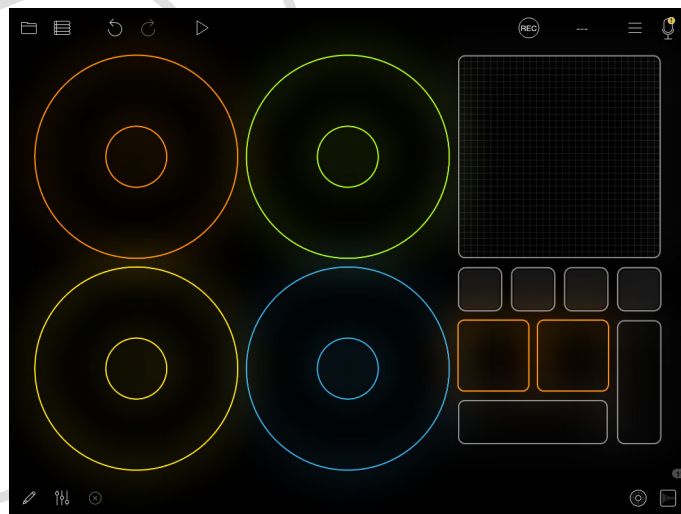
exported. Once you have your loops recorded, you can start and stop them with a tap on the screen, or a press of a button on your controller. You can assign individual volume, pan, and effects to each loop and there are many more options.

Customize to your heart's content

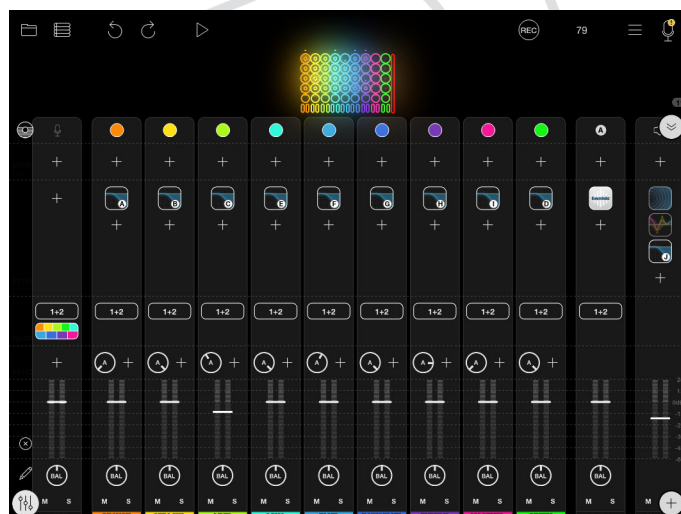
The new user interface is a blank canvas and can be customized any way you like. There are a number of options for controls like loopers, one-shots, buttons, sliders, knobs, and x-y pads. There is even a loop slicer that allows you to “play” sections of your loops like a keyboard. Loops can be assigned to color groups and can be merged and grouped together to allow them to be launched at the same time or controlled in other ways. Any combination of these controllers can be placed on the screen. Controllers can be arranged and sized however you like. Almost anything can be assigned to these controllers as well, such as, volume, pan, and effects sends. For example, you can assign individual parameters to the x-y pads and control filter cutoff and peak settings and that is just scratching the surface. Multiple parameters and actions can be assigned to the same control, allowing many things to be controlled at one time. There are also multiple pages or “scenes” that are customizable in this way. With such flexibility, Loopy Pro is so much more than a simple live looper. It can be configured to be a launch pad, an effects processor, a mixer, and a DAW (digital audio workstation). It also has a customizable mixing section that comes with an impressive suite of built-in effects, such as reverb, eq, filter, dynamics, and pitch, which can be assigned to the inputs, outputs, and channels. Loopy Pro is also an AUV3 host so you have access to all of your favorite external effects as well. You can add busses, route audio to different inputs or outputs in your audio interface, create effect sends, mute and solo

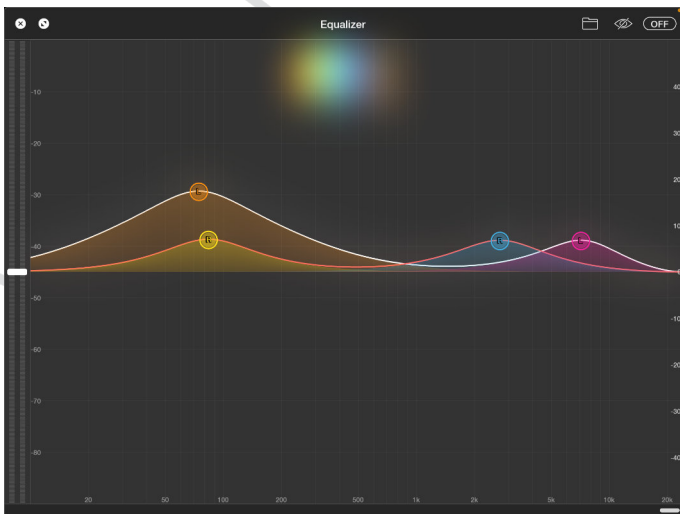


Individual control over each loop.



Controls are fully customizable.

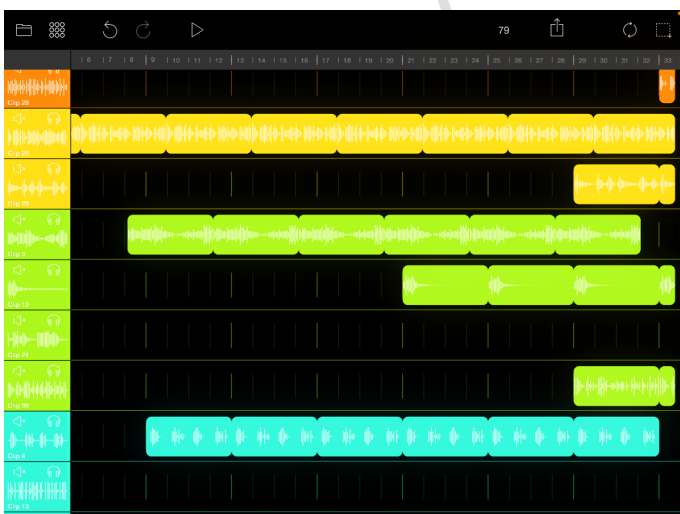




Equalizer controls.



AUV3 Hosting.



Linear DAW section.

channels, and much more.

A DAW disguised as a looper

Beyond all of the performance features and customization, Loopy Pro is a fully portable DAW. Under a separate window you will find all of your loops displayed in a linear format reminiscent of a classic digital audio workstation. This feature allows you to record your performance and save the audio in individual linear tracks that can be edited in a more traditional way. You can trim and extend parts, copy parts, quantize, mute, solo, and delete parts. With a multiple channel audio interface, multiple tracks can be recorded at the same time allowing full compositions to be captured live. Once you have your project the way you want, you can also export the final product as a stereo wave file or export the individual tracks to be used in other apps or edited further on a desktop computer.

Putting it all together

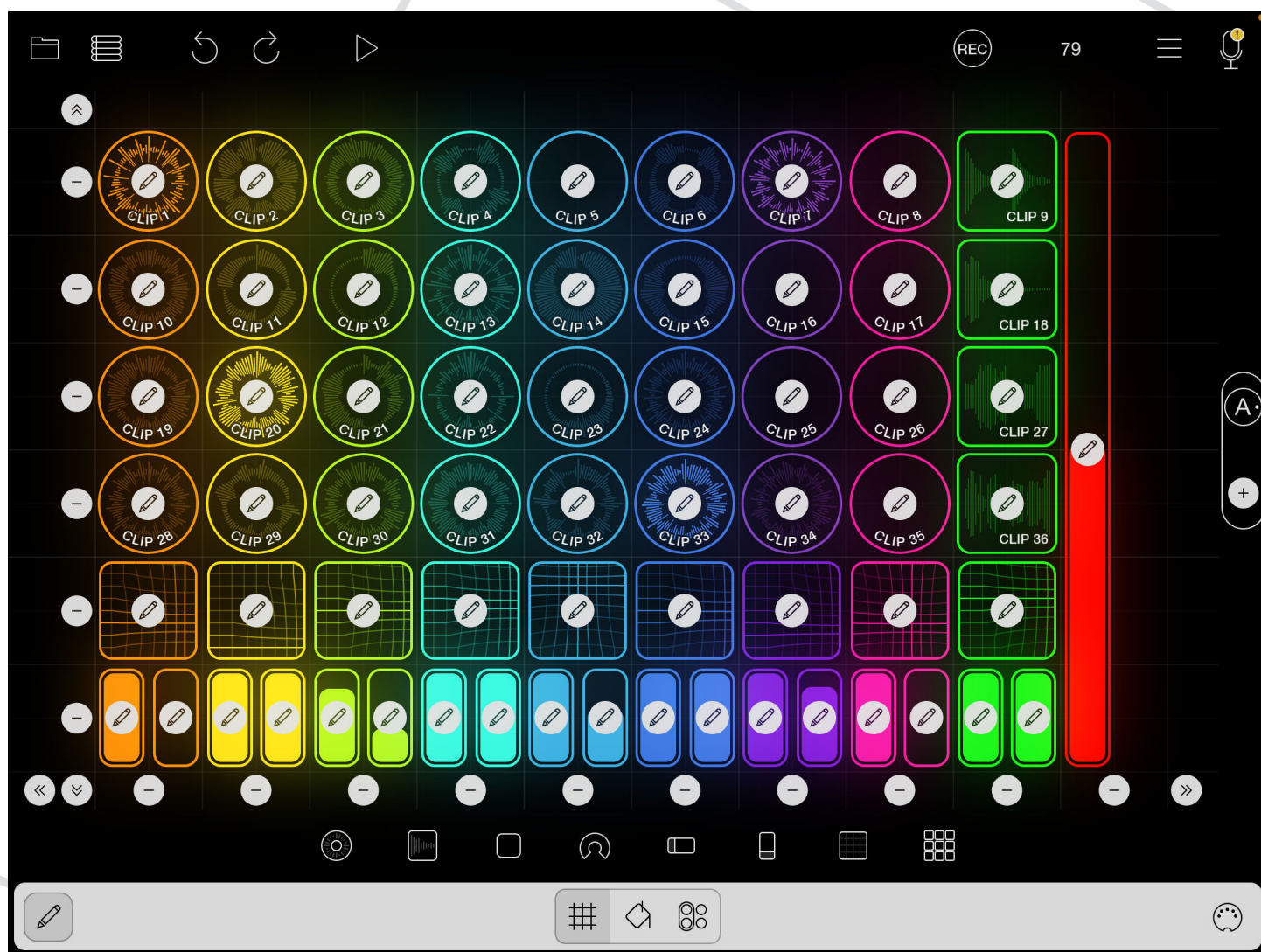
Loopy Pro is very capable of acting as the central hub for your live performance rig. With multiple tempo syncing options including Ableton LINK, bluetooth, and midi Loopy Pro feels right at home along side all of your favorite IOS apps and outboard gear. With a multiple channel audio interface, Loopy Pro can act as a digital mixer, effects processor, and multi-track recorder. It is an AUV3 plug-in and it will host AUV3 plug-ins. It can be controlled by nearly any hardware controller, and it can even be set to record a loop when the input volume reaches a certain level. With Ableton LINK you can run it along side your favorite midi sequencer app and cover all the bases. Maybe midi sequencing capabilities will be a feature in a future release.

The sky is the limit

For many years I have been waiting for an app like Loopy Pro. I have used many other clip launching apps in the past, with different levels of success, but there has always been

something that I needed them to do that they couldn't. The fact that you can customize Loopy Pro in so many ways means that when you need it to do something different you can change it. The freedom to simply add a new control or reconfigure the interface when faced with a new problem is so convenient. I can feel confident investing the time to build live sets with it, knowing I can easily make changes to them if my needs change. With features like live recording I can capture all of my favorite external gear and integrate them into my performances without taking them on the road with me. I like that I can record directly into

Loopy Pro without the need to record loops in a different app or on a computer and then load them into Loopy Pro to add them to a project. Using Loopy Pro as an effects processor when connecting my iPad to an effects send and return on my mixing board, gives me even more creative freedom and eliminates the need to have a large number of effects pedals in my setup. For anyone who is looking for an audio solution with enormous possibilities and features that can change as your musical needs change, Loopy Pro is one that I highly recommend. (M)



Customizable user interface.

roland JD-08

programmable synthesizer



Roland recreates the classic sound of the '90s in this boutique version of the JD-800 synthesizer.

The JD-800, released in 1991 was Roland's answer to the trend of digital synthesizers that buried all of their settings and parameters under menus and pages on the screen. The JD-800 was a fully digital synth, based on the Roland D-50's sound architecture, but it featured hands-on sliders and buttons for controlling the major parameters much like vintage analog synthesizers from two decades before. With 24 note polyphony, this 6 part multitimbral synth was on the forefront of the coming trend of virtual analog and physical controls. The JD-800 has been re-issued as part of Roland's growing Boutique series for 2022. The JD-08, as it is called, retains all of the features that made the JD-800 so beloved, but Roland has modernized it with a few

updates. There are 21 new presets to go with the original 64 and 256 user locations to store your own creations. The JD-08 is two-part multitimbral and has a whopping 128 note polyphony. Roland has also added a two-part, 64-step polyphonic sequencer that can record up to 8 notes per step, as well as, record knob turns and slider adjustments. There are 128 pattern locations to store your sequences. There is also a new on-board arpeggiator and an external clock input to sync the JD-08 to external gear. The JD-08 can be powered by batteries or USB-C. The unit also can serve as an audio/midi interface when connected to your computer.

The JD-08 is a welcomed addition to the world of the mobile musician. Particularly when most of the current offerings are

monophonic.

There are a few tabletop hardware synths that are polyphonic, but they have a limited number of simultaneous notes. For those of us who rely on iPad apps or an aging tone generator to produce complex chords and pads, the JD-08 is an exceptional new option in our sound-making arsenal.

Having features like a mix input, an external sync input, line level and headphone outputs, USB and battery power, and full size midi I/O, the JD-08 is fully capable of integrating into your current portable setup. Add to that the optional two-octave keyboard and you have the perfect controller for many of your tabletop devices that do not include a keyboard. The complete Boutique line of retro synthesizers have so much to offer the mobile musician and with the quality and craftsmanship that you get with a Roland product, you can be confident taking them on your next mobile music adventure. 

Standard Features

Authentic sound and behavior of the original JD-800 realized with advanced sound modeling

108 original waveforms for extensive patch design possibilities

Includes the original 64 presets plus 21 new presets

Two-part, 64-step, eight-note (per part) polyphonic sequencer with motion recording, random pattern generator, and memory for 128 patterns

Onboard arpeggiator

Two-part multitimbral with expanded polyphony, up to 128 voices (depending on patch load)

Four-part structure for tone layering

Detailed recreation of the JD-800's unique two-stage multi-effects section

Editable distortion, phaser, spectrum, enhancer, delay, chorus, and reverb

Multi-phase time variant envelopes for complex, evolving sounds

Palette sliders for quick parameter adjustment

USB-C audio/MIDI interface, full-size MIDI I/O, and external clock input

Portable design for mobile music making

High-quality construction with metal front panel

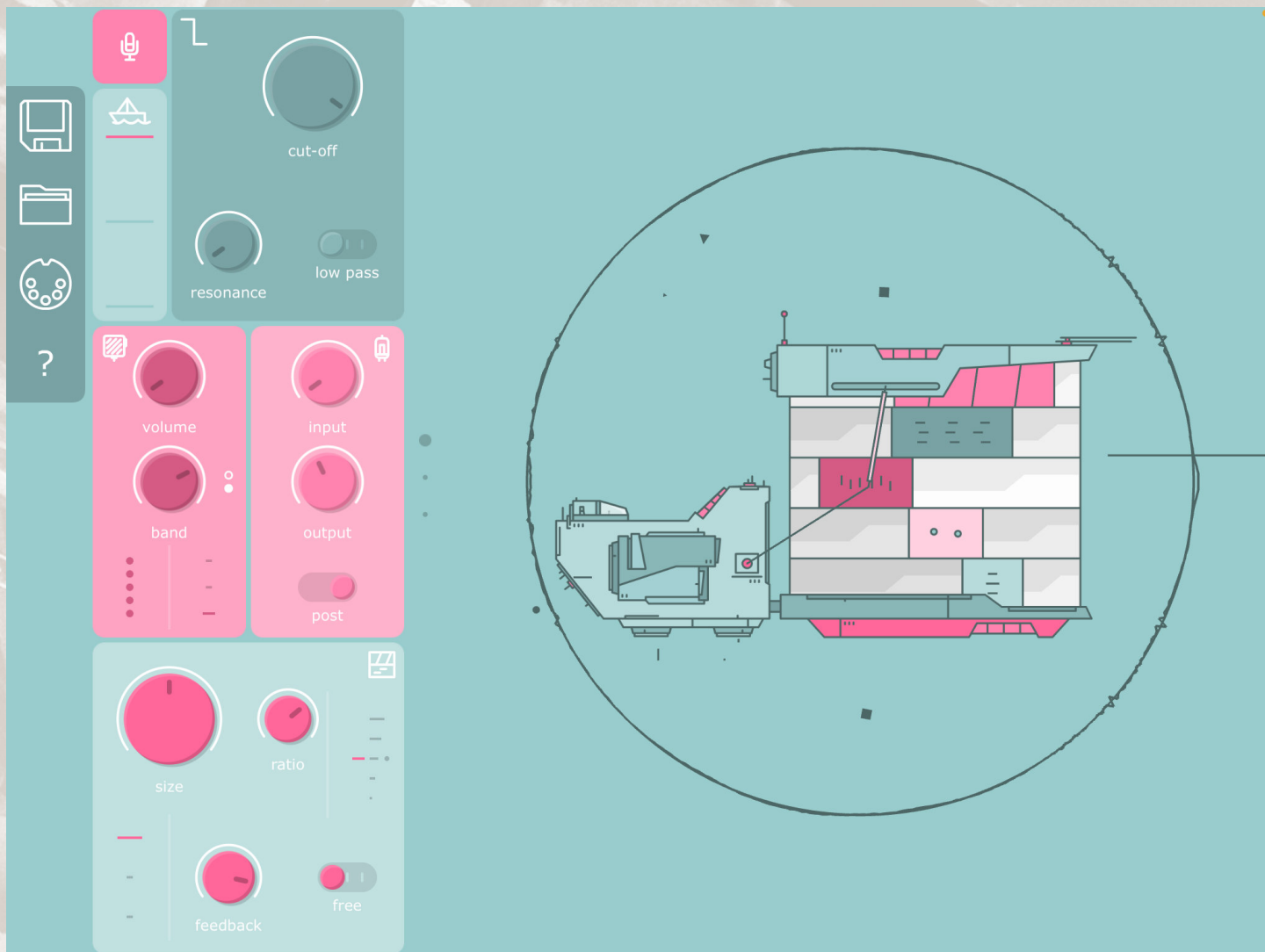
Powered via batteries (4 x AA) or USB-C

Control information can be sent and received via MIDI and USB-C

Built-in powered mini speaker for instant enjoyment

Compatible with optional DK-01 Boutique Dock or K-25m Keyboard Unit



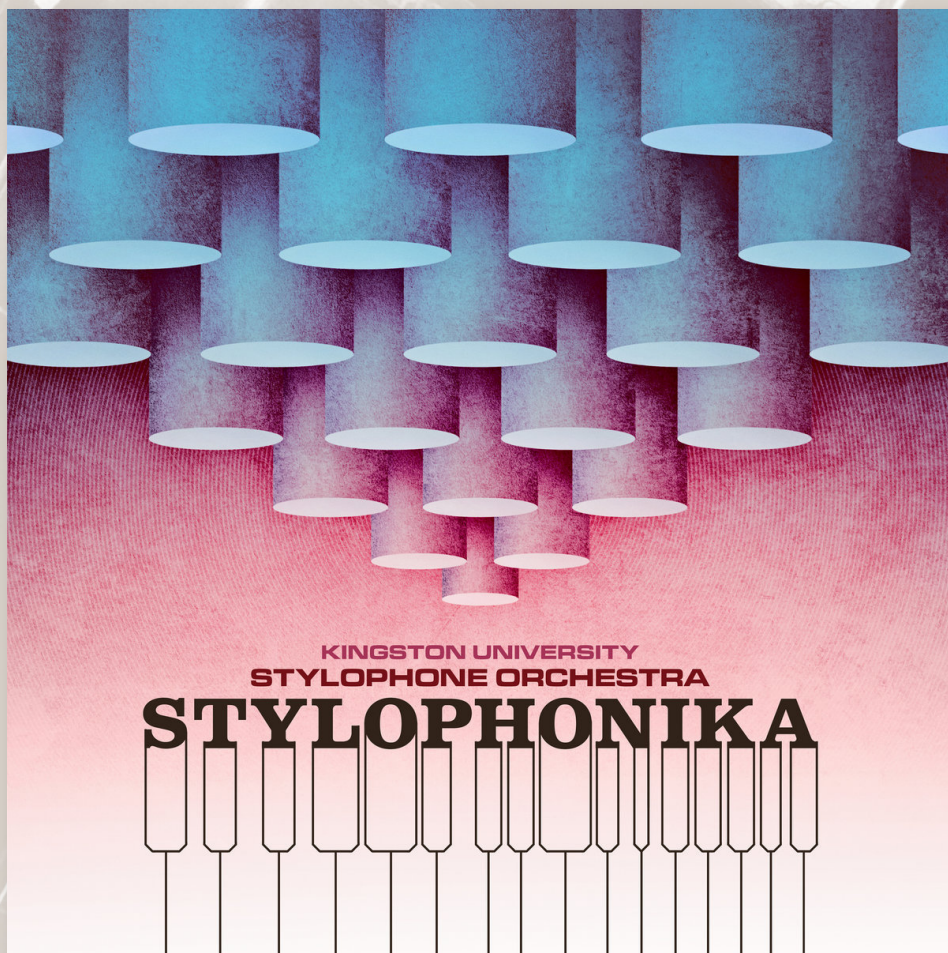


Rymdigare for iOS

BY: Erik Sigth

Rymdigare by Erik Sigth, maker of Nils, Strom, and other apps is part reverb, part drone machine, part quality degrader, and part wave shaper. In the reverb section you can control the sound with length and ratio parameters, tail and weight skew parameters, and an internal feedback parameter, that could be used to create swelling tails. There is also a built-in octave shifter, a resonant filter, speed and level degrader, and LFO sources for modulating a selected set of parameters. The app

can run in stand-alone mode or it can run as an AUv3 plugin. You can map and control any parameter with MIDI using Core MIDI, Bluetooth MIDI, Inter App Audio MIDI, or AUv3 MIDI.



demonstrates the amazing range of these instruments, presenting faithful recreations of some of the most iconic electronic composers, as well as a stand out performance of David Bowie's *Space Oddity*.

The group employed some unique studio techniques to record Olancha Goodbye, a tribute to the late ambient artist Harold Budd, who passed away in December 2020. Utilizing acoustic and plate reverbs and re-amplifying the music through the studio's grand piano, they captured synthesizers and vocals creating an emotional piece befitting the artist.

The album is available for pre-order at: <https://spunoutofcontrol.bandcamp.com/album/stylophonika> in digital and vinyl versions.

Stylophonika by the Kingston University Stylophone Orchestra is an exciting new album, scheduled to be released January 28, 2022. It features the talents of Kingston University students and staff performing original compositions and creative recreations of classic compositions from electronic pioneers Vangelis, Wendy Carlos, Jean Michel Jarre, and Brian Eno.

The Stylophone Orchestra is the brain child of Dr. Leah Kardos, Senior Lecturer in Music and Project Lead for

the Visconti Studio at Kingston University, London. After the Dubreq company, makers of the Stylophone, donated an assortment of new and vintage Stylophones to the studio, she wondered if a musical ensemble using the instruments was possible. In 2019 the Stylophone Orchestra was born.

Augmenting the Stylophones with Omnichord, Theremin, Korg Volcas, and voice, the Orchestra worked remotely and in the studio to record a stunning and creative record. Produced by Kardos and legendary producer Tony Visconti, the album




Roland Go: Mixer Pro-X

A portable mixer with a variety of professional features and multiple connections designed to be a companion to your phone.

Roland updates its Go: Mixer Pro with the new Pro-X version. New features include an added guitar/bass attenuation switch to control the incoming signal strength, an updated headphone I/O for compatibility with a wider range of mic-equipped headsets and earbuds, and native support for Roland's 4XCamera and Virtual Stage apps.

This grab-and-go mixer is ideal for the mobile musician with its 9 inputs and multiple power options. Compact mixers with so many useful features have been few and far between, but with the Pro-X mobile musicians now have a portable solution that

can tie the whole performance rig together. With dedicated inputs and outputs for smartphones and tablets, and a multitude of connection types, the Pro-X is quite capable of mixing all of your equipment in a compact rig and sending it to your smartphone, tablet, or portable recording device. It has been purposely designed for mobile applications, including live-streaming audio and video performances. It can be USB powered battery powered, giving you the freedom to perform virtually anywhere. 



FEATURES:

- Palm-sized audio mixer for mobile devices
- Multiple inputs—connect microphones, musical instruments, and more
- Combo jack supports standard mics with XLR or ¼-inch plugs; 48 V phantom power
- Dedicated guitar/bass input with selectable input pad for active pickups
- Mono/stereo instrument input
- Two stereo line-level inputs with TRS mini jacks
- Mini headphones jack with headset mic support
- Loop Back function for playing along with backing tracks from your mobile device
- USB Micro-B and four-pole TRRS jack for device connection
- Comes with three connection cables: USB Micro-B to USB-C, USB Micro-B to Lightning, and TRRS to TRRS
- Powered by your smartphone or four AAA alkaline batteries
- Easy integration with camera and livestreaming apps
- Also works with Roland Zenbeats and other mobile music production apps

https://www.roland.com/us/products/gomixer_pro-x/

HOW TO BUILD THE PERFECT LIVE RIG

By: **Jeremy Spurgeon**

Building the perfect live rig can be a daunting task. In this month's field guide we show you how to get started.

Because there are so many possibilities available to you, it is hard to narrow down the perfect combination of equipment to allow you to perform **your** music the way you want on stage. My live rig has gone through many iterations, and will continue to change as my requirements change. In this column, we will explore the possibilities and consider the challenges that you could face. I will offer some advice based on what I have learned, and share with you some product choices that have been very useful to me.

Where to begin

Let's start at the very beginning: before you begin building your live rig, you should consider what equipment you want you use. This may be common sense, but each piece of equipment has different requirements when considering how to power it and connect it to a sound system, etc. When I first started all I had was a couple of iPads, a USB keyboard controller, and a compact mixer. I put those in a gig bag and off I went to the gig. Even with that simple setup I had problems syncing the tempo between

the two iPads. Thus began my journey to building the perfect live rig. Now all of gear is safely tucked away in a guitar pedal board case. Everything is connected, synced up, and ready to play. It has taken a while for me to reach this point.

Command center

So let's talk about the iPad. I use the iPad as the control center of my rig. If you are like me, you may already own an iPad. I think the iPad is one of the best things to happen in mobile music technology in recent times. I have successfully made music with nearly every version of the iPad going all the way back to the iPad 1. Because of the apps available, the iPad can be used for multiple things in your rig at the same time. It can be a synthesizer, a sampler, a looper, a midi sequencer, an effects processor, or a multi-track recorder, just to name a few. In each case there are specific items that need

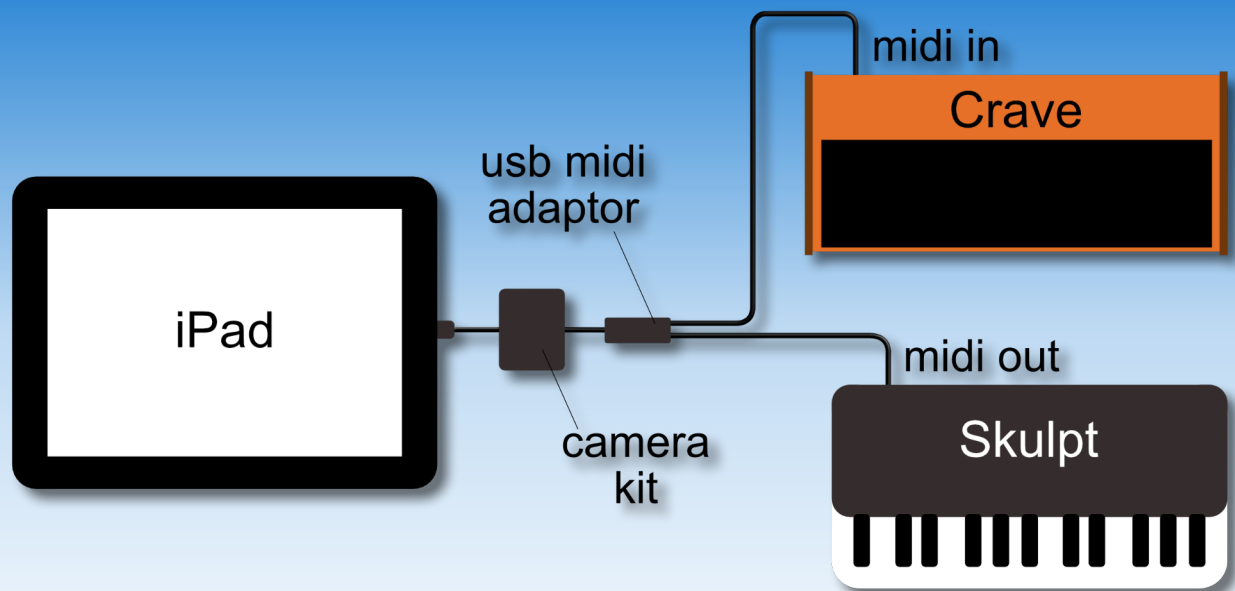




to be addressed.

First, you need to decide how to power the iPad. You can run it off of the internal battery, but it usually won't last long enough to get through a show. I have learned to always have my iPad connected to a USB charger, that way your iPad's battery doesn't die in the middle of your set! Next, you should decide on how you plan to use the iPad in your performance. This will determine if you need for instance, an audio interface, midi interface, wifi connection, sync output, or bluetooth connection. This will also determine where the iPad is connected in the signal chain. If you are going to use it as a live looper, for instance, you may have it at the end of your audio signal chain and you will need an audio input connected to your iPad. In my case, I am using the Modal Skulpt as a

midi keyboard to play synthesizer sounds on my iPad and I am sending midi note information and tempo sync to my other synths in the case from the iPad. So I have a midi interface connected to the iPad with the Apple camera kit and the Skulpt connected to the midi input. I also have the Crave synth connected to the midi output and the rest of my synths synced with the sync ins and outs on the Korg Volcas. This way all of the patterns on my synths play in sync with the audio loops on the iPad. It is important to use a USB midi adapter that is compatible with the iPad. I have tried a few models and the one I recommend is the Roland UM-ONE. It is very inexpensive, works well with the iPad, and takes up very little space in the case,



which is also another important consideration. Refer to the illustration above to help you understand the proper connections. The midi out jack on the Skulpt is connected to the midi in on the USB adapter. Then the midi out of the adapter is connected to the midi in of the Crave. This is a very typical connection between one midi keyboard, an iPad, and another device. You can substitute your devices in place of these. With this connection you will be able to play the keys on your keyboard and play an app on the iPad, like a virtual synth, and also play the second device, or trigger it from a midi sequence on the iPad. On the iPad app you may have to select your USB midi adapter from a list of possible connections in the app's midi settings. There are also 16 individual channels that midi information can be sent and received on, so you may have to learn how to set the midi channels on your particular devices to get them to play the way you want. Typically, the midi input channel on the iPad can be set to omni or all and the output channel set the same channel that your other synth is set to. Usually the default channel is channel 1. If any of your devices have a midi out or thru, like the Crave, then you could connect another device and play it

also. You can chain multiple devices this way and if you have a multi-track sequencer playing on your iPad you could play each track's notes on a separate synth. We will explore this and some of the other types of connections in our next issue.

I hope you have found this article helpful. Don't be afraid to give it a try and see what sort of live rig you can build with your devices. There are tons of possibilities and a whole lot of fun to be had trying different arrangements. [®]



Hand-braided Leather straps for your
a-style and f-style mandolin and open
back banjo.

Available in a variety of colors

Visit or Etsy store at:

<https://www.etsy.com/shop/>

[TheSonicEmporium](https://www.etsy.com/shop/TheSonicEmporium)



**The Sonic
Emporium**

PATCHWORKS

BASIC PATCH FOR THE BASTL KASTLE

The Kastle is a tiny lo-fi modular synthesizer produced by Bastl Instruments. It uses bread-board cables for patch cables similar to the Korg Volca Modular. The 1.5 version combines a complex oscillator and an LFO with a stepped waveform generator and can be used on it's own or in combination with other modular gear. The oscillator has six modes, which include phase modulation, noise mode, track & hold modulation, phase distortion, tonal noise mode, and formant synthesis. The LFO can be voltage controlled and features a square and triangle wave shape, as well as, an 8 step and 16 step random note generator.

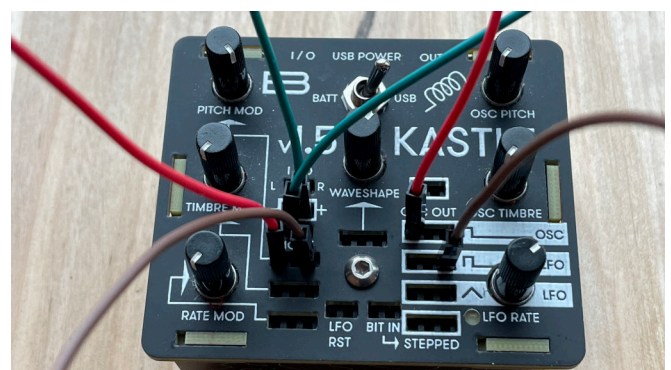
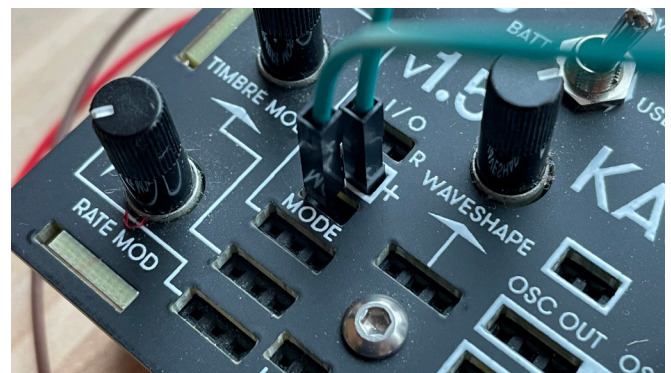
Our basic patch creates a blippy, throbbing bass line that can be tweaked to your hearts' content!

Start by patching the positive output to either of the mode inputs. This will give you a very basic tone that can be modified by tweaking the wave shape, osc timbre, and osc pitch knobs.

Next patch the osc output to the one of the pitch mod inputs and turn the pitch mod knob all the way up. This adds a second layer to the sound.

Finally patch the square wave of the LFO to another pitch mode input and tweak the LFO knob to adjust the rate. Now you should have a nice alternating rhythm.

Of course, this is just a starting point as you can try all of the different LFO wave forms and adjust pitch, timbre, and wave shape settings to get many variations on this simple patch. Do your own experimentation and enjoy this awesome little synthesizer. 🎵



SUPPORT THE MAGAZINE GET COOL STUFF

Help us bring you the latest in mobile music news, technology, and artists stories by purchasing official Mobile Musician Magazine branded merchandise from our online store. We have many styles and colors to choose from, as well as, other music related designs any mobile musician will appreciate.

Your support will help us with all of our day to day operations and allow us to continue to provide an exceptional product. We appreciate your support and are confident you won't be disappointed.



www.mobilemusicianmagazine.com/magazine

Thrift Store Find

One thing I am always on the lookout for are used cases to re-purpose into synthesizer cases. I'll show you how to make your own.



I am always trying to find inexpensive ways to improve my music. This can take many forms, second-hand instruments, used mixing boards, or a vintage tape recorder, just to name a few. Since I like to make music on the go, when I find a second-hand case that I can convert to a synth case, I jump on it! Second-hand cases are a fairly common item in thrift store inventories and if you are lucky enough to be the first to find it, you can easily convert it into a new synth case and save a bundle of money. With the right accessories, like a compact mixer, a battery bank, and some 90-degree cables, you can build a compact synth rig that you can take anywhere.



I found this aluminum briefcase at my local thrift store for less than \$20. It was in great shape and included some egg-crate foam as well. It is the perfect size to build a medium-sized rig with or to use as a carrying case for Volcas and other tabletop synths. Most of my gear has velcro on the bottom of them, so I simply added some velcro to the bottom of this case and arranged my gear into a nice little setup. I also use iPhones and iPads to make music. It is very easy to add velcro to an inexpensive iPad cover and add it to a case like this. It will usually fit very nicely in the lid of the case since it is so thin. Once I have decided on the gear I want to put in the case, I

will connect my audio cables, sync cables, and power cables. This is where the 90-degree cables come in real handy, since everything is so closely placed together. Once I have the cables routed and arranged nicely, I have a rig that is ready for making music. I can use it by

itself, or patch it into my larger rig. There are so many sizes and types of second-hand cases. I once used an aluminum pencil case to put together a tiny rig containing my Pocket Operators and Monotrons!

Next time you're browsing your local thrift store, keep your eyes open for your own synth case project. Use your imagination and give it a try. [®]



Korg Volca Modular Patchbook

100 pages

Available on Amazon