MOBILE MUSICIAN

The world is your studio

MARCH 2022

Korg microKorg

Moog Rogue

Roland TR-808

Guitar Sustain

Clone Wars

The Synth Freq

FutureRetro Classic Synth Emulations for IOS

REVIEWS

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Tula Microphone
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RAUM: a new studio album by Tangerine Dream

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DIY: ORGAN MIDI PEDALS

LISTENING BOOTH

RODNEY CROMWELL

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Editor

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Welcome to the March issue of Mobile Musician Magazine! We have been working hard to bring you another exciting issue this month. I have been speaking with some amazing artists this past month and I am looking forward to sharing our conversations with you.

We are also very thankful to everyone who have supported us. We are continuing to grow our readership and build our community through our website and social media. We are planning some new things in the future with a YouTube channel, merchandise store, and special editions of the magazine. Feel free to share your thoughts and suggestions. I welcome any feedback you have to offer.

In this issue, we sat down with Adam Cresswell to talk about his new Rodney Cromwell album, *Memory Box* coming out this month, his amazing musical journey from his days with Saloon, and what it is like to run a record label in a world of digital music streaming platforms.

We also introduce you to The Synth Freq, a duo comprised of two sisters who are identical twins, who have overcome impossible disabilities to produce amazing '80s style instrumentals. We hope their story will be encouraging and inspiring to anyone who is struggling to follow their dreams.

In our Reader's Rigs article this month we feature another amazing artist, Thomas Geleyn, who confirms that the iPad is all you need to make an amazing album.

We review some of Adam Cresswell's favorite gear, the Moog Rogue and Korg microKorg, look at how the Roland TR-808 went from a commercial failure to changing the world of music, and introduce you to some amazing classic synthesizer emulations for IOS.

We also continue where we left off in the Field Guide and discuss some creative ways to route your audio signals to effects processors and mix them all to one output.

We have packed this issue with a lot of content and we hope you find it helpful and entertaining. Please let us know how we are doing and enjoy the issue!

Jeremy Spurgeon

NEWS

CONGRATULATIONS!

We are happy to announce that Ben Le Foe is the winner of our Jamhub Tracker MT16 give-away for our February issue. Be sure to checkout our March give-away and sign up to win.

TRADE SHOWS ARE BACK FOR 2022

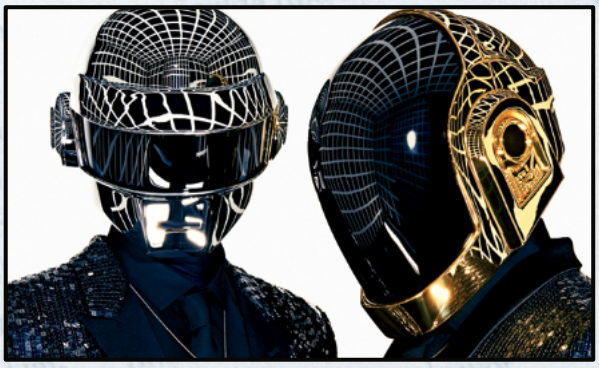
No one could have predicted the events of the last two years. The worldwide pandemic that brought everything to a screeching halt seems to have waned and organizers are quickly filling in the calendar to make up for lost time. Here is a short list of some of this year's biggest shows, according to Audio Media International.

South by Southwest - Austin, TX
March 11 - 20
NAB Show - Las Vegas, NV
April 23 - 27
Superbooth - Berlin, Germany
May 12 - 22
NAAM - Anaheim, CA
June 3 - 5
Synthplex - Burbank, CA
October 27 - 30
For more information visit:
https://audiomediainternational.com

TEARS FOR FEARS RELEASE NEW ALBUM *THE TIPPING POINT*

On February 25, 2022 Tears for Fears released *The Tipping Point*, 18 years after their last album. The pop duo explore the struggles of life in this collection of songs that are masterfully written and arranged. For more information visit:

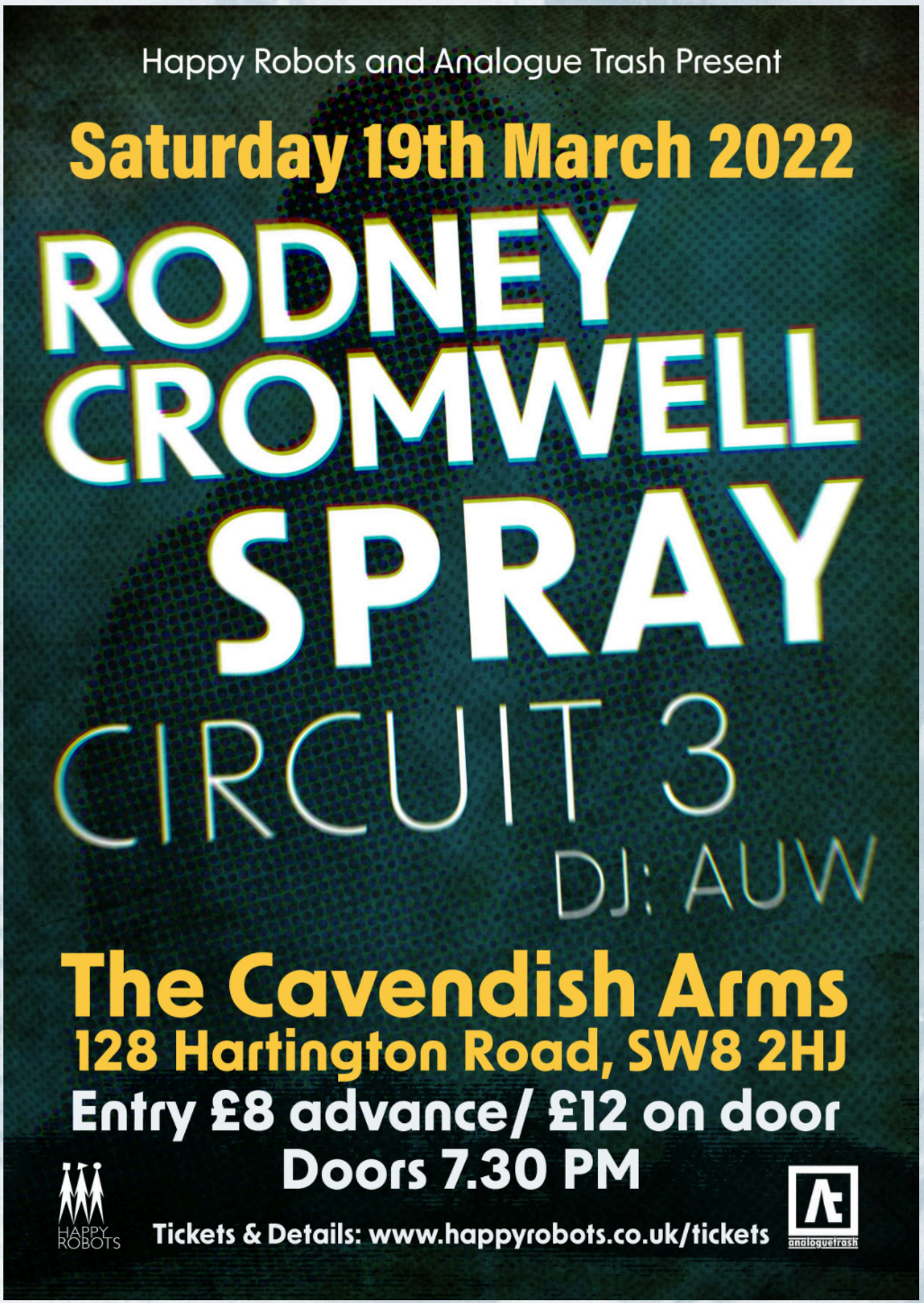
https://tearsforfears.com



25TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION OF *HOMEWORK*

On February 22, 2022 Daft Punk released a 25th Anniversary edition of their debut album, *Homework*. It features all of the original recordings plus remixes of each track, some of which were previously unreleased. They are planning to release a new box set as well in April 2022. For more information visit:

https://daftpunk.com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RODNEY CROMWELL

Rodney Cromwell: Meet the man behind the curtain-Music producer, record executive, artist, and alter-ego at large.

With a resume spanning twenty-five years and five albums, he has a seasoned precision in music production that includes all aspects of creativity and arrangement. Rodney Cromwell is actually Adam Cresswell, a pseudonym suggested by a band mate back when Adam was in the band Saloon. Rodney Cromwell resurfaces whenever Adam releases a solo record. His last album, *Age of Anxiety*, released in 2015, was met with overwhelming success. His current album, *Memory Box*, will not disappoint and is set to release March 18, 2022. "It has been a while since my last album but, I have been busy running a record label", says Adam, speaking of Happy Robots Records, a label that he and Alice Hubley started back when they formed the band Arthur and Martha.

For the record

The artistically adaptable, chameleon-like, Adam Cresswell shares thoughtful introspective dialogues on his new album. Upon meeting him, one is quick to fall into an easy-flowing conversation. He is personable, charismatic, and has a quirky sense of humor. *Memory Box* has a nostalgic feel that tugs you back to the '80s with complex chord progressions and layers of synth sounds, all the while remaining fresh and exciting. "I have all these massive old synths from my days with Saloon that I wanted to use, but most of the sounds came from the microKorg",

> "I have all these massive old synths from my days with Saloon that I wanted to use but, most of the sounds came from the microKorg."

Adam explains. “I really did a deep dive into the sonic possibilities of that synth and recreated the sounds I was looking for”, he continues. His hard work and dedication paid off with an album that has an authentic, stand-alone sound, featuring the Moog Rogue and Opus 3, as well as, the Korg DS-10 and microKorg. “I basically pulled everything out of storage and used it”, he says. “There are Stylophones, melodicas, pocket theremins, and a bunch of guitar pedals too”. Adam also used quite a few IOS apps, including the Funkbox drum machine, AutoArp, and Vox 3000. Adam played electric and bass guitar, as well, to round out the feel of the album. The album is a fantastic combination of jubilant synthpop tunes, sprinkled with krautrock instrumentals, and dreamy orchestrations awash with vocals, layers of arpeggios, and strings that have been expertly arranged. He artfully juxtaposes robot voices and ambient pieces—effectively conjuring images of an alternative reality, while reminding us why we love vintage synthesizers and poignant songwriting.

Straight out of the gate

Adam graduated from college in 1997, and immediately started a band. After speaking with a friend, Michael Smoughton, they formed the band Saloon and started working on some tunes that Adam had written. By 1998 the band was really starting to take shape with Adam on bass, Michael on drums, Alison Cotton on viola, Amanda Gomez on lead vocals, and Matt Ashton on guitar. After releasing demos and a few singles, they caught the attention of BBC DJ John Peel who promoted the band. They would eventually record three Peel Sessions with him. They released their first album in 2002 entitled, *This is What We Call Progress*, and toured quite a bit. Their song, *Girls Are The New Boys* reached number one in Peel's annual Festive 50 chart. They quickly got to work on their follow up album, *If we Meet in the Future*, released in 2003. While the success of Saloon was accelerating there was discord among the group, and they soon disbanded. In 2006 the band released a compilation album of the early Saloon singles, *Lo-Fi Sounds, Hi-Fi Heart* and Saloon was over. However, Adam soon formed a new group with Alice Hubley, who he had met on tour with Saloon. Arthur and Martha, as they were called, released an album entitled *Navigation* in 2009 on their own record label called, Happy Robots Records. Although they had worked on the record for three years together, it was a heartbreaking time in which they both lost loved ones. Shortly after the album was released they disbanded. “I took a long break after that”, Adam reflects. “It was a hard time in my life and I thought my music career was over at that point”. Adam found himself writing music again. As he put it, “I asked Alice if she wanted to release another Arthur and Martha album with the music I had recorded but, she thought I should release it as a solo project. So, I revived Happy Robots Records and released it as a Rodney Cromwell album entitled, *Age of Anxiety* in 2015”. Adam continues, “I thought nobody would listen to it. I put it out and thought, 'that is that', but it started getting a little traction and before long it was doing pretty well”.

Record Executive

Adam was soon fielding calls from other artists who were interested in releasing albums on his label. “Alice wanted to

release her new project called Alice Hubble and a couple of other artists we knew came on board as well". So far, a total of nine groups have joined the label including, Mood Taeg, Pattern Language, and Tiny Magnetic Pets, who have opened for Neu! Legend Michael Rother, toured extensively with OMD, and recorded two songs with ex-Kraftwerk member Wolfgang Flür. When I asked Adam what he thought his record label had to offer artists in today's musical environment he said, "Mainly I think it is the connections we have to distributors and promoters. Yeah, you can easily self publish your songs and get them online which is something we offer, but we work with companies who have been around for a long time and they know how to produce vinyl records and cd's and get them into shops". It is a bizarre time in history when physical media is coming back in style. "It's all about connection", Adam says. "I love records. I have my own collection of favorites and now I even have a small collection of cassette tapes again", he explains. "I think it is important for people who don't want to go online and log-in to an account to be able to pick it up at the shops. We provide that and we aren't the only boutique label out there now", he continues. There is something priceless about a tangible piece of art—it feels a little more personal.

Mobile madness

Speaking of the mobile aspect to modern music making Adam says this, "I'm not a totally mobile musician. I play bass guitar and I have a few heavy synthesizers. When I recorded the new album I did use GarageBand on my phone to work out a lot of the parts. I transferred those tracks over to the computer and finished them up. The biggest area where I think portability comes into play with me is with touring. I can throw the microKorg and laptop in my backpack and go to a gig, without having to take a huge setup with me". I also used a lot of online tools to make the album. My producer and mixer are both in North America, so when I finished a track I uploaded it to Dropbox and we collaborated like that", he explained. "In fact, some of the artists on the label work like that as well, it's pretty common these days". This is becoming more popular with the tools that we have at our disposal: The flexibility and capability of mobile music is perfect for trimming the bulk of gear that is normally required to play live gigs.

Pulling back the curtain

So, who is Rodney Cromwell? He is a creative trailblazer. He does not take himself too seriously, yet has a driven work ethic, the life experience that lends itself to layering depth in his art, and an astute ear for production. *Memory Box*, the title track, is a winding path where you can trip along the edges of fantasy and reality—a sort of half-awakened twilight sleep. After an extended illness he began to have intense brain fog. He, very succinctly, elucidates the frustration of losing precious moments or memories—especially, a loved one's voice or face. The intense fear of forgetting and the desperation, and lengths one will go to preserve the ability to recollect resonate on a level of authenticity.

"...And your memory box, Like a play-pit of sand, meanings blow in the breeze, so I can't understand...Now I've written it down, Reproduce what you say, and the meanings preserved, so it can't blow away..."

The minimalist lyrics of the title track imprint deeply while rhythmically keeping you moving along. Do yourself a favor and add this one to your collection.

For more information on Adam visit: https://www.happyrobots.co.uk

KORG microKORG

Launched in 2002, this twenty year old synth has made a name for itself as one of Korg's best selling creations.

The microKorg has been a staple of electronic music for the last twenty years. It is hard to believe but, this little synth sells for higher prices on the current second-hand market than it did when it was first sold new in 2002. It has made a name for itself as one of the best selling synths of all time and has been used by a number of famous artist such as, Prodigy, Royksopp, LCD Soundsystem, Jean-Michel Jarre, the Pet Shop Boys, and many others.

Big sound small size

At it's core the microKorg is a MS2000, only repackaged into a smaller, more portable version with a 37 key mini keyboard that can be powered with batteries. And even in an era of true analog synthesizers, this baby still sounds amazing today. It has 4 voice polyphony and can be divided into 2 separate sounds with the split mode. The microKorg has 128 programs arranged into 8 categories, all of which can be over-written to make room for your own patches. There are two oscillators with 7 analog waveforms: sine, triangle, saw, pulse, noise, cross-wave, vox, external audio, and 64 DWGS waves from the DW-8000. It also has a multi-mode -12 or -24dB/oct filter with low, band, and high pass options as well as resonance. With an 8-band vocoder, two LFOs with sample and hold and MIDI sync and two ADSR envelopes, you can created the sounds you need. There is also an arpeggiator with 6 patterns, and a multi effects processor, with modulation, delay, and EQ. The microKorg is capable of creating lush pads, heavy basses, and piercing leads, as well as, more traditional instrument sounds like pianos, organs,

Photo: korg.com

acoustic guitars and many more. With it's virtual patch function, you can setup more elaborate modulation routing to add even more creativity and movement to your sounds.

Who is in control

The microKorg is more that just a portable synthesizer, it can function at a MIDI controller as well. All of the knobs and buttons on the front panel can send and receive MIDI controller data. This is a nice addition when connected to a computer or iPad, especially when your software has a MIDI learn function. The 5 on-board real-time control knobs can be assigned to parameters in your DAW (digital audio workstation) or virtual synth to provide hands on control of your apps. The external audio can also be processed through the vocoder, filter, effects, and EQ, either with the provided microphone or through the two external audio inputs. All of the controls on the microKorg can be assigned to the parameters you want as well. The five parameter control knobs are preset to control things like filter cutoff and resonance but, they can be re-assigned to the parameters that you want and saved per patch. The pitch and modulation wheels can also be re-assigned.

Get to cranking

Possibly the greatest feature of the microKorg is it's simplicity of use. Everything you need is at your fingertips. There is no menu-diving required with this synth. All of your controls and parameter settings are printed right on the front panel, reminiscent of the Korg Poly-800. Sound

design is immediate and straightforward by turning a knob to choose a parameter and dialing in the desired value.

Flavor of the month

The microKorg has been extremely popular. It is still part of the current product line offered by Korg today. It is considered one of the most popular synthesizers in recent history and by 2009 it is estimated that 100,000 units had been sold. Over the years Korg has released a few variations to the original green and tan model. In 2007 they release a limited edition model with reverse-color keys. In 2016, Korg released the microKorg S model, which featured a white case, 256 patches, and a built-in speaker. In 2017, Korg released a 15th Anniversary edition of the microKorg with a platinum color scheme and black side panels. The microKorg has been highly customized by owners as well, with custom paint jobs and case modifications.

Despite being 20 years old this little synth has retained its value and popularity. Although it is now competing with less expensive true analog synthesizers, the microKorg is still highly sought after and resale prices are stable. For the mobile musician, the microKorg is still a powerful option with many useful features.

Photos: matrixsynth.com

For more information visit: www.korg.com


VOLUME
TONE

GUITAR AUDIO Sustainability

Lon Spurgeon

What is guitar audio sustainability or G.A.S.? You are probably thinking we're talking about how to be a more environmentally friendly guitar player and just happened to choose a poor acronym but, actually we're talking about how to make your guitar sustain a longer note. In other words, how to keep your long notes from running out of gas. I heard an interview with Franky Valli, I believe, where he recalls how him and Buddy Holly were seeing whose Stratocaster had the longest sustain as they rode the cold tour bus across the mid-west in winter, which highlights that in the old days sustain was completely a mechanically or acoustically produced effect. A few years later though, instrument companies would begin to make devices to help lengthen sustain and note length on the guitar.

To many guitarists, sustain may not matter that much but, to us weird guitarist who like to sail the ocean of electronic ambient space music, sustain is a big deal. Guitars in their natural form tend to be plucked and strummed whereas space music tends to favor drones and airy floating chords backed by walls of ambient ethereal noises. What's a guitarist to do? I don't admit this too often, but I have found myself envying my synth smacking cousin's ability to just hold a single key down and let wave after wave of synth sounds travel to the edge of infinity and back. With a sustain pedal he doesn't even have to hold the key down! Doggone keyboard players! (Whoops, sorry for my anti-keyboard rant.) Well on a brighter note (forgive the pun) there's lots of help today for guitarists looking for sustain. I would like to share a few that I've found in my sonic adventures that hopefully will help you. I will divide these into two categories; mechanical methods and sound processing and restrict my discussion to electric guitars.

Mechanical methods: We will start with the oldest and most basic. You usually get longer notes by using the neck pickups on your guitar. The sound close to the neck tends to be more bassy, dark, full, mellow, and to sustain longer. Also, heavier strings tend to give you more sustain. A technique that adds sustain is vibrato, that is slightly bending the string up and down to make the note have vibrato and bravado, kind of like an opera singer when they hold a note. This is a pleasant effect and it can sustain the note for a long time when done properly. Hendrix

would sometimes do this to sustain a note and get feedback started from the loud amplifiers as he stood near them. This is especially effective when paired with distortion. The use of a glass slide can also attain long notes while sliding up or down the fret board or it can produce its own version of vibrato and sustain by rapidly sliding back and forth in one place over a fret. Harmonics can also produce long high sustainable notes that last a little longer than a regular note as well. Another technique which sometimes employs a device to help, is the volume swell. Alone I'm not sure if the volume swell will increase the note length, but it is a handy technique used in conjunction with sound processors to give a long note that sounds a lot like a synth or orchestra string section (or a whale call with a little bend.) Anyway, you just pluck a note or strike a chord with the volume mostly turned down and then immediately sweep your volume knob or volume pedal up to stretch the note out and make it sound more like a pedal steel. A really cool device, dating back to the psychedelic rock era is the e-bow. It is a little hand-held device that uses magnetic fields to cause the guitar string to vibrate, it sounds very similar to a bow used on a violin but it will keep vibrating and producing notes until you pull it away from the string. For a while they had almost gone extinct but I see them more often now in stores and web sites.

Ok, what about sound processors i.e., guitar pedals? Well let's start with a couple of classics; your reverb and delay pedals. By turning your time of delay up and also the number of repeats, you can make reverberations and echoes last nearly to next year. Couple this with volume swells or any other technique that creates long sustained notes and voila you have a very spacy cloud of sound rivaling anything a synth can create. Another oldie but goodie is the distortion pedal or distorted amp setting. Turning up the gain or distortion while turning down the overall volume produces endlessly long sustained notes and also encourages amp feedback which will sustain as long as you and your neighbors can stand it! Another helpful pedal is the compression sustainer pedal that, as the name suggests, controls the

dynamics of your volume and also helps sustain volume levels. This is doubly helpful, creating longer notes and holding down any out-of-control swells created by distortion and infinite reverb and echoes. I usually put this at the end of my pedal chain. A very useful newer pedal (new to old guys like me) is the freeze pedal, where you can freeze a note and let it hang there until your grandchildren come along to hear it. It can be a little sparce by itself but combined with other effects it really does a lot. Obviously using these processors together gives you many options to experiment with and do different soundscapes. Add in a little whammy bar, a pinch of wah pedal and half a teaspoon of pitch shifter and you've got your own cooking show on the local cable network!

So anyway, you get the picture hopefully and are ready to start exploring the edges of the cosmos riding your own fusion powered Stratocaster. Watch out Buddy Holly! Ⓜ

Moog Minimoog

FUTURE retro

If you have ever dreamed of owning a studio full of classic synthesizers but could never afford them, now is the perfect time to consider IOS emulations.

Software recreations of hardware synthesizers are nothing new. Ever since Steinberg released Neon, the first VSTi synth plugin as part of Cubase 3.7, musicians have been enjoying the convenience (and inconvenience) of virtual instruments. As music technology advanced, virtual instruments found their way to IOS as well, starting with the Noise.IO synth for iPhone in 2008. Today, there are countless virtual instruments available in the app store, ranging from the latest form of sound generation to obscure vintage instruments, and everything in between. It is an exciting time to be a mobile musician! In this article, I want to focus on apps that recreate classic synthesizers from the past. These are just a

small sampling of what is available but, I hope it will be an introduction for newcomers to mobile music making as to what is possible within the IOS platform.

Analog never sounded better

While many may argue that real analog synthesizers sound better than their virtual counterparts, the digital recreations available today have never sounded better. In audio comparisons you would be hard pressed to tell the difference. Analog modeling techniques that were developed for computer plugins have been continuously refined to perform on mobile platforms. The iPad itself is now powerful enough to run many synth apps, effects apps, and recording apps at the same time. All of this processing power allows developers to create faithful emulations of classic synthesizers with every nuance that made these instruments so popular in the first place. They also have included many modern features that were not available at the time they were originally released, like MIDI, polyphony, built-in effects, velocity sensitivity, built-in sequencers, programmable controls, and much more. If you are like me, you have probably read all about the instruments that were used to make your favorite records. I spent the better part of my youth dreaming of one day owning many of these synths and now I can, at least in iPad form. Not only do they sound fantastic but, they are so convenient. I actually prefer to use my IOS versions of some of the hardware synthesizers that I do own because the iPad is much more portable. This is another instance where the iPad shines. I am constantly on the lookout for ways to get the most out of my mobile music setup and with these virtual synths on my iPad I can perform live with an enormous pallet of sounds and real-time controls and leave my delicate aging synthesizers at home. For anyone who is skeptical, the iPad is a dependable option for live shows. I have used it countless times

Moog Model 15 Modular


EMS VCS3 Emulator

Oberheim OB-X

Korg ARP ODYSSEi

Tal-U-No-LX

Korg iPolysix

and it has never let me down. I will agree that is possible, so I always have a back up plan but, I have been so pleased with how well it has worked, that I have built my whole live setup around it.

Wolf in sheep's clothing

As with everything, there is a downside to having all of these amazing apps at your disposal. Because they are so inexpensive, many of us tend to purchase way more than we really need. In most cases, this has a negative effect on our creativity. When I was younger, buying a hardware synth was nearly impossible for me because of the prices. I remember saving up to buy a Yamaha QY-20. That was an awesome upgrade for me and I learned how to use it to it's full potential, because I couldn't afford to get anything else. Today, many of us tend to buy the latest apps when they come out and stop using our older ones, never really focusing on them long enough to get the most out of them. We also tend to spend a lot of time combing through sound banks and auditioning sounds, instead of making music. We can allow ourselves to be detracted by all of the possibilities and never get anything completed. I am guilty of this myself. I love noodling around on a new app as much as the next synthesizer nut but, it can be a huge waste of the already limited time I have to devote to music. Limitations nearly always spawns creativity, so sometimes it is good to limit ourselves to a handful of apps and see what we can create.

Be who you want to be

It may sound strange to say it but, some of the best music from the last few decades is being written now. What I mean is that there are many artists today who are writing

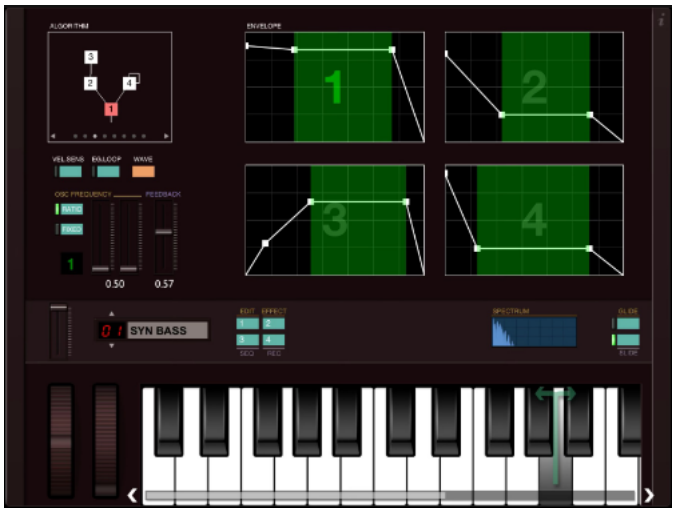
amazing music in styles of the past. Last month we featured an article about the musical genre called “Berlin School” and there are many artists writing new music in that style, using emulations of famous synthesizers from the ‘70s. The same goes for ‘80 musical styles and many others. The fact that we have access to these great sounding, inexpensive emulations, only helps to fuel these genres and the artists who work in these styles. Audiences want to hear new music in their favorite styles and that means artists can continue to make the music they want, even if it sounds like music from 50 years ago. It is a great time to be a musician.

Tip of the iceberg

Like I stated earlier, these apps are just a small sampling of the amazing apps that are available to the mobile musician. There are many more apps that recreate classic synthesizers, pianos, electric pianos, acoustic instruments, drum machines, samplers, and audio effects units. You name it and there is probably an app for it. There are also many modern instruments that push the boundaries of sound creation and musical performance by utilizing all of the features of the iPad in creative ways. With the combination of a hardware controller and your favorite apps, you really can have a whole studio full of classic synthesizers at your fingertips. They sound great, are inexpensive, include many modern features not available on the original synths, can be taken anywhere, and allow you to make the style of music that you want to make. I hope you will consider the iPad and some of these apps as part of your musical arsenal. If you have ever dreamed of owning a classic synthesizer from the past, the choices of emulations are almost endless. Ⓜ

Korg iM1

Casio CZ



Dxi FM Synthesizer

The many faces of the moog ROGUE

Originally designed as a scaled down version of the Moog Prodigy, the Rogue has had many identities over the course of it's long history, sometime disguised as something else.

Following the natural progression of cost cutting measures, Moog released the Prodigy in 1979 as a less expensive option to their extremely popular synth, the Minimoog. In 1981, they went a step further and released the Rogue, a scaled down version of the Prodigy. Probably know best for it's bass sounds, the Rogue was one of Moog's most basic synthesizers consisting of a two oscillator monophonic design with a simple contour generator, modulation section, and a filter. Each oscillator had two waveforms to choose from, a sawtooth wave and a square wave. However, both oscillators had to play the same waveform and the same octave range, which limited the sonic possibilities of the synth. You could detune the oscillators with a knob control, sync the oscillators, and use the contour generator to sweep the sync effect. The Rogue included a mixer to control the individual volume of each oscillator which included a noise source and an overdrive circuit to fatten up the sound. The simplified contour generator only included attack and decay adjusters, with a simple switch control for sustain. The modulation section

included three waveshapes: triangle, square, and sample and hold. These could be set to modulate the oscillators and the filter and could be triggered. The Rogue also included pitch and mod wheels, a glide control, keyboard tracking control, and an audio input.

Going Rogue

The Rogue existed under a few guises, thanks to some clever marketing and recycling by Moog. The Realistic Concertmate MG-1, by Tandy/Radioshack appeared to be very similar to the Rogue. In fact, Moog built the Concertmate for Radioshack specifically for the home market. Designed with features that were very basic and easy to use, it dispensed with the pitch and mod wheels, and included RCA jacks instead of ¼" audio jacks. There was also a polyphonic organ sound added to the sound sources, as well as, a ring modulation effect labeled "bell". There were other slight differences, such as, the inclusion of pulse waveform on oscillator 2 and individual selection of waveforms and octave per oscillator. Overall the Concertmate MG-1 offered an inexpensive entry into electronic music and access to Moog sounds.

Pedal to the metal

Another place you would find a Moog Rogue in disguise was in the Taurus II pedal synthesizer. The designers at Moog saw a great opportunity to repackage the Rogue in a very unique way, by removing the 32 key keyboard and packaging it with an 18 key pedal board. They used the very same synth engine as the Rogue but, they re-branded it with the Taurus II name plate on the front panel. The Taurus II and the pedal board came in separate units so the Taurus synth could be attached to a synth stand or even mounted to a microphone stand. The pedal board had CV/gate outputs and could be used with the Taurus II or other synths with CV/gate inputs. This monophonic synth and the unique pedal board were the perfect combination for anyone who needed to play bass notes with their feet while playing keyboard or other instruments with their hands. And by allowing the Taurus II synth

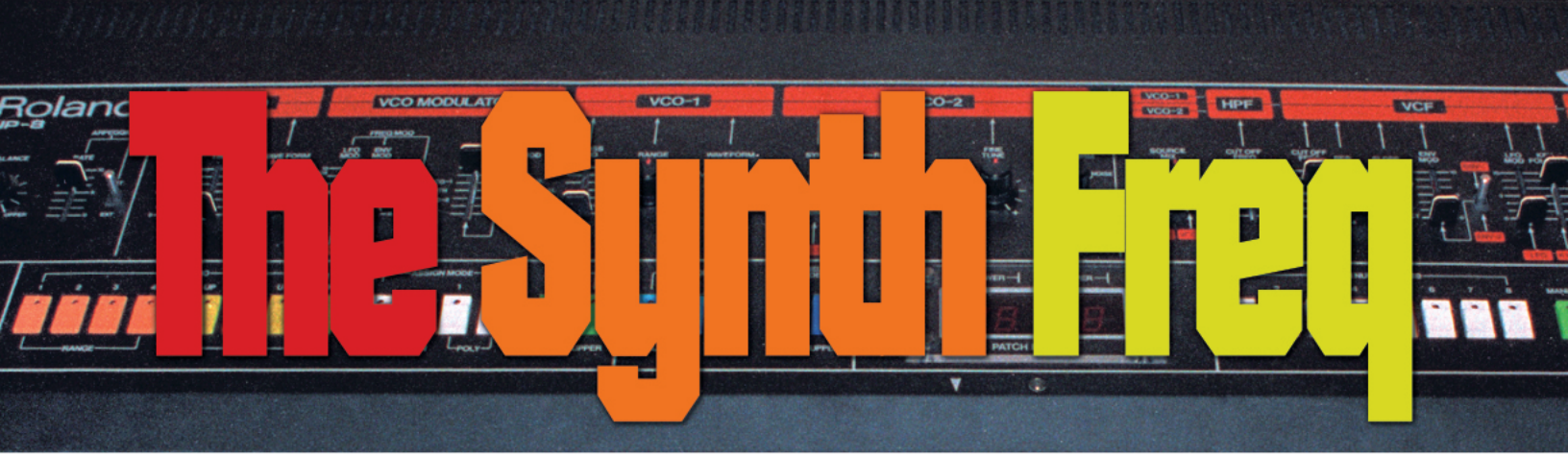
unit to be separated from the pedal board allowed the musician to quickly and easily dial up changes to the sound.

A new generation

The Rogue is still being used today. Those musicians who are lucky enough to own an original have an awesome piece of synthesizer history. But don't go looking to buy one these days. A quick search on the second hand market will give you a shock. The second hand prices are through the roof on nearly all vintage hardware synthesizers today. However, the popularity of these classic instruments have continued to grow as new generations of artists discover how great they sound. One advantage we have today is instrument plugins and powerful computers and mobile devices. We have been spoiled with virtual instruments of nearly every classic synthesizer made. That is where the Surrealistic MG-1 Plus comes in. It is an authentic recreation of the Realistic MG-1 with it's bold sounds and tweakability. It is available in many formats for Windows and Mac and has some modern features that make things more convenient, like midi control, tempo sync, and memory locations. And best of all it is free to download from Cherry Audio.

If you want that classic Taurus sound without taking out a second mortgage you are in luck. Moog has continued the line with the Taurus III pedal and the Minitaur tabletop synthesizer. While the Taurus III is a limited edition and super expensive the Minitaur can be had for around $500. Combine that with a modern pedal controller and you'll have yourself a nice new Moog bass pedal at a fraction of the cost. In fact, if you take a look at our DIY feature in this issue we show you how to build your own MIDI pedal from a set of organ pedals. Ⓜ

Danielle and Crystal in their home studio



The Synth Freq

Overcoming physical challenges, twins Danielle and Crystal Morales create amazing ‘80s synth music that is inspirational.

Danielle and Crystal Morales, known as The Synth Freq on their Youtube channel, have been turning out original tunes since childhood. Starting in December 2009, they began posting live performance videos to their channel featuring their original compositions. From the very beginning it was evident that they possessed the technical skill and intuition to produce music that rivals any professional. Their playing style is on par with the likes of Steve Winwood, Stevie Wonder, or Jan Hammer. Take a listen to their song Chasing the Storm and you will immediately forget that you are not listening to a seasoned pro. Only later did I discover that both Danielle and Crystal are legally blind and deaf, having been born two months premature. Having struggled with physical challenges their whole lives they could have easily given up music all together, but they have persisted and their accomplishments will inspire you. Not only have they created a successful Youtube channel with over 200 videos and nearly 10,000 subscribers, but with the help of their friends, they have performed live at the South By Southwest music festival and at the Knobcom trade show many times. “Transportation is our main issue because neither of us can drive”, Danielle explains. “But due to the tremendous help of our friends at Switched On Austin, we were able to get our gear to some shows”, she continues.

Do the work

Although they discovered at an early age that they had a natural talent for music, they pushed each other to improve. “We started composing music at age 6 on a pink toy Casio keyboard we had. We gradually worked out way up to workstations and synthesizers”, Danielle says. “We actually challenged each other taking turns trying to copy what the other was playing and practicing our ear training. We used to turn the metronome up and try to play as fast as we could accurately to get better” she explains. Music was a calling that could not be ignored for them—more of an imperative, and no challenge would keep them from excelling. In addition to being born both blind and deaf, they have continued to have significant setbacks with their health, including strokes and blood clots that affected both gross and fine motor skills requiring hours of physical therapy and occupational therapy. “Since we have trouble hearing certain frequencies, we had to write bass lines, for instance, in a higher octave and then transpose it down once we got it memorized. The same goes for the higher frequencies, we just can’t hear them”, Danielle says with a laugh. “Thank

Danielle and Crystal’s home studio


YAMAHA
KORG

goodness the keyboard repeats so we can work out all of our parts and then just move up or down to play them in the proper octave". Luckily they can rely on various tools to help them in the studio. "On all of our synths we have replaced the labels with braille. That helps tremendously because we can't see the labels on the panels. There is still a lot of memorizing that has to be done, especially with the menus. We can't read the screens so we have to navigate through the menus by memory. Sometimes we get completely lost and just have the shut down the synth and start over", says Danielle. "We do have some apps on the iPhone that can read text to us and that is a big help. We also use magnifiers to see with and we have our hearing aids set for hearing music instead of hearing speech". Danielle also wanted to learn everything she could about sound synthesis. She began studying at all of the local libraries and taught herself how to program custom patches in nearly every form of synthesis. In fact, she gathered so much information on synthesis and sound design that she decided to write a book. "I am currently writing a book based on 8 years of research I did on synthesis, sound design, synthesizer circuitry, acoustics, and more. I hope to publish it when I finish it up, but I had to take a break from it because my eyes couldn't handle the strain", she explains.

Creativity is in our blood

Besides composing and performing music, Danielle also creates hand-drawn, life-size posters of her favorite synthesizers. She says, "I wanted something to hang in the studio that I could see up close and enjoy, so I taught myself how to draw them using Sharpie and poster board. After I finished the first one, I sold a few to friends of mine". I use magnifiers and many different pairs of glasses depending what I am working on. It is very challenging, but I love it", she continues.

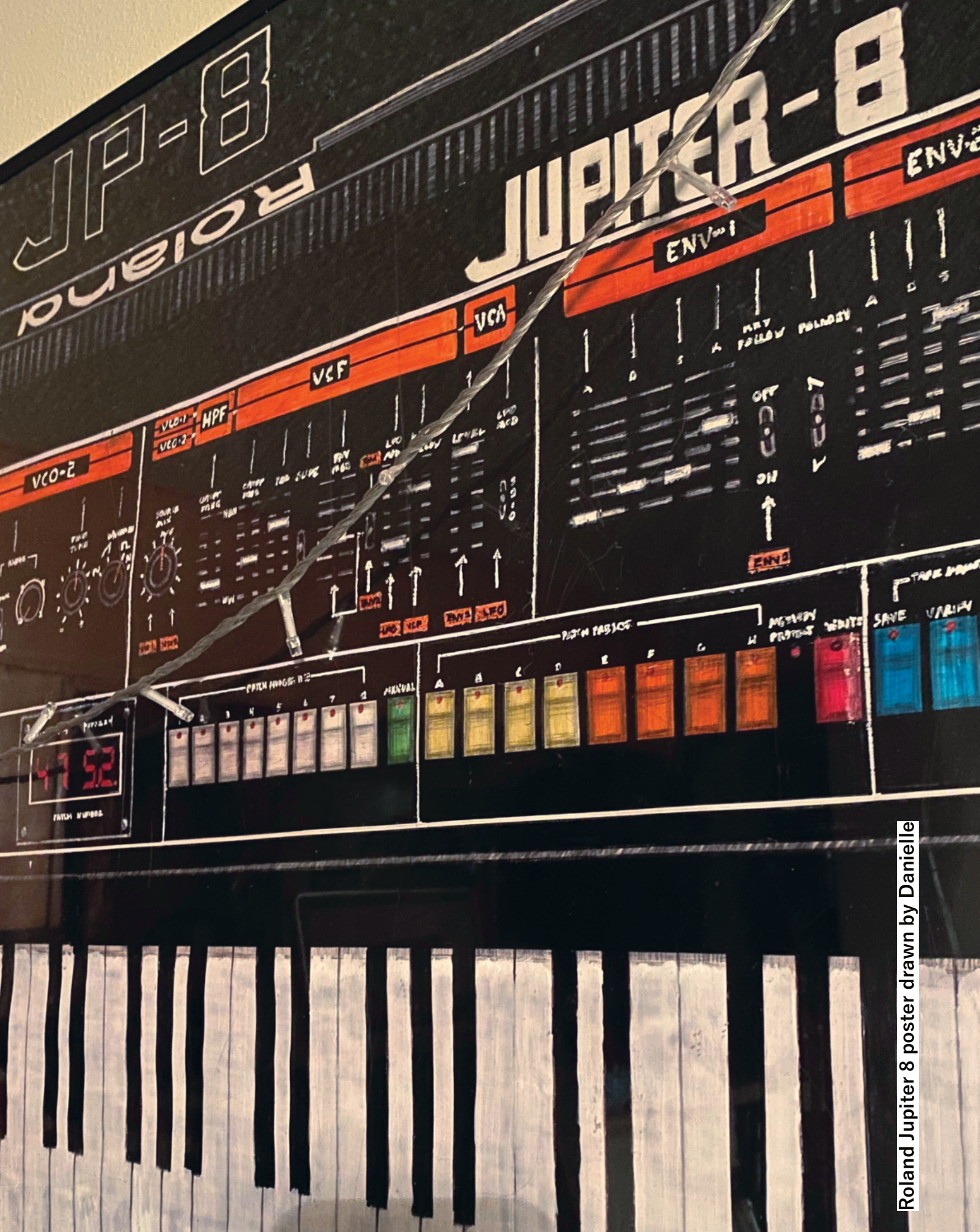
Modern Technology

Although they have many synthesizers from the '80s in their studio, they both incorporate more modern machines. "We have some newer synths and drum machines we use, the Korg EMX1, Korg microKorg, the Novation Nova desktop synth, a Yamaha Motif, and a Roland System-8", Danielle says. "We also use the iPhone and iPad for apps like the Moog Animoog and Funkbox and with the accessibility options in IOS I can use larger text, text to speech, and voice over, which is very helpful". When I asked her what she would like to say to developers she said, "I would like for them to know that the disabled community would like to use their gear and I wish options like braille overlays would be offered, larger screens and back-lit buttons and knobs would also be very helpful".

Future endeavors

When asked about the future, Danielle said this, "We want to record an album one day. Our fans have been asking for one and I hope we can get that arranged. We want to keep writing and posting videos to our channel as well. I would also like to finish up my book and publish it for those who are interested in sound. Mainly, I want to inspire anyone who wants to get into synthesis to work hard and it will pay off. If you are disabled, there are ways around everyday problems it just takes time and perseverance. There are many apps today that can help you as well. Don't give up on your dreams. Keep working and it will reward you". The world needs people like Danielle and Crystal Morales. They are inspiring in so many ways, and the joy and dedication they infuse into their life and music is infectious. Please check out the link below and immerse yourself in a world of wonder and amazement.

For more information visit: https://www.youtube.com/user/TheSynthFreq



Roland Jupiter 8 poster drawn by Danielle

ROLAND
TR-808

In 1980, Roland introduced the TR-808 to the world. Initially a commercial failure, it would eventually be used on more records than any other drum machine in history.

One of the most iconic instruments in history, the Roland TR-808 seemed destined for disaster when it was released in 1980. Compared to the Linn LM-1 drum machine that used sampled drum sounds, the 808 used analog synthesis to produce sounds. Ikutaro Kakehashi used inexpensive "faulty" transistors which gave it it's signature "sizzle" sound. Initially it was not received very well as electronic music had not become mainstream and many musicians and producers of the time were more interested in authentic-sounding drums instead of the "toy-like" sounds of the 808. Only 12,000 units were produced between 1980 and 1983. Roland discontinued the TR-808 when the "Faulty" transistors could not be restocked.

Down but not out

The fact that the 808 was such a commercial failure is ultimately what started it's rise from the ashes. As with many instruments that become influential, the 808 had hit rock bottom by 1983. Roland replaced it with the TR-909, which used drum samples instead of analog synthesis. The 808 which originally retailed for $1,195 was selling for $100 or less on the second hand market. It soon developed a cult following among

underground musicians and producers. It was easy to use and inexpensive. Soon the TR-808 began showing up on records. First on Yellow Magic Orchestra's album *BGM*. Marvin Gaye used it on *Sexual Healing*.

But is was Hip hop that changed everything for the 808. It has been compared to the influence that the Fender Stratocaster has had on rock music. The 808 was embraced by artists including Run-DMC, Public Enemy, LL Cool J, and many others. The bass drum sound of the 808 in particular could be tuned to create bass lines, a signature Hip hop sound. It's popularity in Hip hop spilled over into other genres such as, Electro, Detroit techno, Miami bass, and more. Between 1983 and 1986 the 808 exploded onto the music scene. Pop artists like Whitney Houston, Phil Collins, New Order, Britney Spears, Madonna, and so many more, all used the 808 on many of their hit records. The 808 changed the world of music as we know it.

Here to stay

The 808 has been so influential that it's sounds are now commonplace. They are included in nearly all electronic instruments, drum machines, digital audio workstations, sample pack, loop pack, etc. Not only has it been sampled, but it has been reissued and reproduced by Roland and other manufacturers. As part of their Boutique series, Roland produced the TR-08 in 2017, a miniature version of the TR-808 that included an LED display and modern features such as, MIDI and USB connectivity. In 2019, Behringer released the RD-8, a recreation of the TR-808 that uses analog synthesis instead of samples and virtual synthesis, like the TR-08 does. These new instruments are not exactly like the original but, they are a good indication of the demand for a tangible connection to a bygone era. It is this connection that is driving a wave of new artists and equipment manufacturers to re-imagine the possibilities of analog. We are experiencing a renascence of synthesizer technology that is very exciting. The stage is set for another commercial failure to turn the tides and set the world (of music) on fire again.


Roland
120.0
TEMPO
START
STOP
Computer Controlled
Rhythm Composer
TR-08


behringer
Computer Controlled
Rhythm Designer
RD-8
Low Conga
Mid Conga
Hi Conga
Claves
Maracas
Accent
Bass Drum
Snare Drum
Low Tom
Mid Tom
Hi Tom
Rim Shot
hand ClaP
Cow Bell
CYmbal
Open Hat
Closed Hat
SELECT
TAP/ HOLD
1400
DATA
TEMPO
SWING
PROB
FLAM
DATA MODE
AUTO SCROLL
LENGTH
TRIGGER
MUTE
SOLO
SETTINGS
AUTO FILL
MIDI
USB
CLOCK
MAP
PREFS
FILTER
POLY
RAND
PROB
FLAM
RPT
1/8
1/8T
1/16
1/16T
1/32
BASIC RHYTHM
INTRO/FILL IN

CLONE WARS

In a shrewd business move Behringer has announced two new lines of miniature synthesizers that clone some of the most popular synths in music history.

Behringer is known around the world for it's inexpensive music gear, offering some amazing product designs at extremely low prices. Over the last few years however, they have released a number of clones and recreations of popular synthesizers and drum machines of the past like the Roland TB-303 and TR-808, the Moog Minimoog, the ARP 2600, and many more.

Their latest clones seem to be targeting the miniature desktop synth market and will be competing with the likes of the Roland Boutiques and Korg Volcas. They have announced 4 new desktop synthesizers so far, the Saturn, the Pro VS, the JP-4000, and the UB-1. All promising to be recreations of classic synths from the past and all at less than $100. This is very exciting news for

mobile musicians looking for ways to incorporate the sounds of these classic synths into their sonic palette. The new synths are divided into two lines, the Soul and the Spirit. Soul models feature a larger 27 key touch-sensitive keyboard, full size MIDI input, and sync in and out jacks, while the Spirit models are smaller and feature a 16 key touch-sensitive keyboard and a USB port for MIDI and power. The **Saturn** is a recreation of the Roland Jupiter 8. It is completely analog featuring 3 VCOs with 4 selectable waveforms. It includes pulse width modulation, a vintage multi-mode filter with resonance, and an LFO with saw, triangle, square, and random waveforms. It also has an arpeggiator and a 16-step motion sequencer with 8 memory locations. The **JP-4000** is a recreation of the Roland JP-8000. With 4-voice playback, 2 analog modeled oscillators per voice, and a real analog filter. It is capable of recreating the JP-8000 sounds with the super saw waveform and it includes an additional 2-operator FM synth engine as well. It also includes an arpeggiator with 3 patterns and a hold function. Comes with 32 memory locations that can be expanded via the Synthtribe app. The **Pro VS** is a recreation of the Sequential Prophet vs. It will be a 4-voice hybrid synth with vector control and digital oscillators with analog filters. It includes full MIDI implementation, 127 wave tables for sound synthesis, 32 presents, an arpeggiator, sequencer, and a display with an oscilloscope. The **UB-1** is based on the sound chip design found in the Oberheim Matrix 6. It features 2 DCOs, a classic 4-pole filter, envelopes for VCF and VCA, 2 LFOs, and an arpeggiator with 3 patterns and a hold function. It has 32 memory locations and can be expanded via the SynthTribe app.

The Soul models will cost around $99 and the Spirit models will be $49. Available in the coming months. Look for our in-depth reviews in upcoming issues.

Pro VS Soul

JP-4000 Spirit

UB-1 Spirit

REVIEWS

BUSKBUDDY
MINI POWER BANK

buskbuddy.com $149

The Buskbuddy Mini is a portable power bank made specifically for musicians on the go. It is small enough to fit into a pedal board or backpack, yet it packs enough juice to power your rig for several hours. It's 13600mAh lithium ion rechargeable battery provide 150 watt hours and 100 watt max draw. It provides one 110v outlet, two 5v USB ports, two quick charge 4-9v USB ports, and a 12v outlet. At 8x8x2 inches in size and 4.6 pounds it is small enough and lite enough to be included in any kit.

TULA
MICROPHONE

TULAMICS.COM $229

Looking a lot like a vintage electric razor, Tula has packed many modern features into this retro-looking mic. More than meets the eye, the Tula is more than a simple microphone. It features cardioid and omni capsules for a high quality professional sound. With it's ultra-fast USB-C connection it works with your computer, phone, or tablet for pod-casting, video conferencing, or recording music. It is also a stand-alone digital recorder, with 8 gigs of memory, and records in high quality 16 bit 48kHz wav format. It includes a rechargeable battery that provides power for up to 12 hours. With built-in noise reduction and a headphone jack that doubles as a lavaliere microphone input, the Tula mic is the only mic you need.

IK MULTIMEDIA
iRIG STREAM SOLO

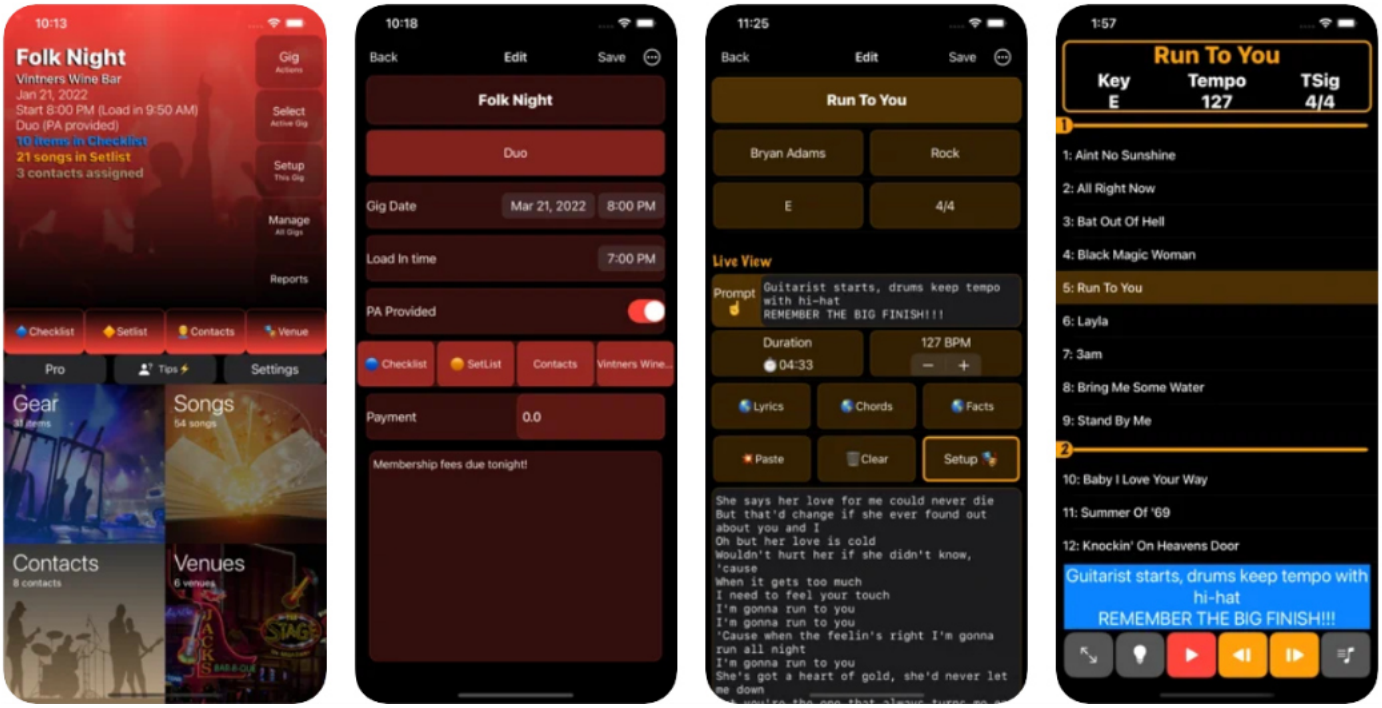
IKMULTIMEDIA.COM $49

The iRig stream Solo is an easy to use audio interface designed to work seamlessly with your iPhone, iPad, or Android device. It allows you to connect up to 3 distinct audio sources and mix them together into your audio and video apps or live stream. It includes a TRRS jack to connect to your device, a stereo RCA input for mixer or instruments, a headphone output with integrated mic input, and a loopback function that mixes incoming signals with your device's audio. It also features a thru output to send the mix to an external device, like an audio recorder. It is powered by 2 AA batteries and works with all of your favorite apps.

ELECTRO-HARMONIX
8 STEP PROGRAM

EHX.COM $155

8 Step Program by Electro-Harmonix is a simple 8 step sequencer pedal that sends CV signals out to the CV input on your synth to play it. You can sync the tempo with the MIDI input and select the note type from ¼ notes to 32nd notes. You can also adjust parameters like glide, depth, and rate, as well as, sequencer length. Runs on a 9v power supply.



Gigbag Pro for IOS

By: George Cook

Designed for the gigging musician, Gigbag Pro is loaded with helpful features. Designed for iPhone and iPad, Gigbag Pro helps you manage all of your gigs, venues, gear, contacts, and songs. Everything can be synced to your other devices with iCloud.

When a new gig is entered, you can assign it a date, time, venue, payment, contact, gear checklist, and song setlist. There is a "Duration Wizard" that will estimate the total length of you gig and how many songs you might need. You can use Gigbag Pro to email band members the setlist, navagate to the venue, and check-in and out you gear. You can also take it on stage with you for scrolling lyrics, chords, notes, and a visual metronome.

With Gigbag Pro everything is covered. When you setup a new gig you can name the gig, pick the venue, set the time and date, add contact person, set load in time, select whether or not a PA will be provided, set payment amount, and add notes. All of this information is stored in the database and once you have created a few gigs, contacts, venues, etc. they will appear in the lists for new gigs. The same goes for the gear list and the songlist. As you add new items to Gigbag Pro they will show up in the various lists. Before too long you will have a complete library.

The song section allows you to add things like the title of the song, artist, style, key, time signature, duration, tempo, lyrics, chords,

facts about the song, and notes. As you add your songs they will show up in the songlist for you to choose from when preparing your songlists for future gigs.

With the reporting feature you can share a complete inventory of all the items in your gearlist, share a songlist with band members, or send gig details out to your fans. Need to know how many times you played last year? Just create a report. It's that simple.

Gigbag Pro is a fantastic way to keep the gigging musician organized and on time to his or her shows. You no longer need to waste time looking up directions to a venue or download lyrics right before practice, it's all right there in your pocket. With it's visual metronome and scrolling lyrics, you'll no longer need to flip through your notebook between songs to be reminded. It is a great companion for any performer.

Features:

Library: Everything in one place gear, songs, contacts, and venues.

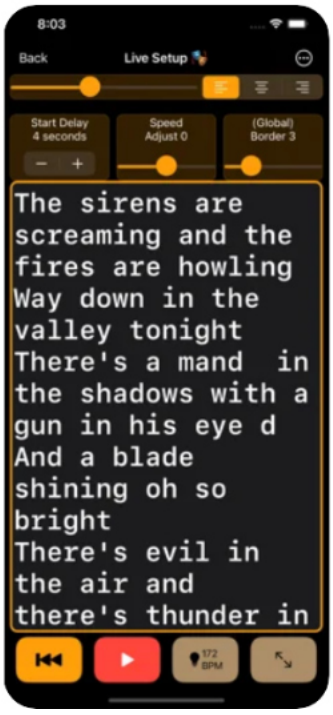
Gig: Central location to link specific items from all of your lists.

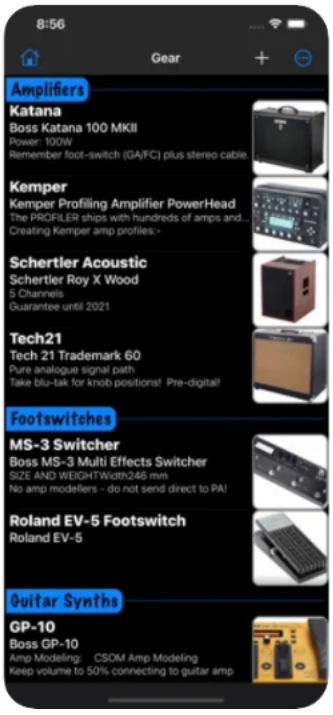
Reporting: Quick and easy recall of all information.

Navigation: Integrated with Apple Maps navigation with one button press.

On stage tools: Scrolling lyrics, visual metronome, tempo, key, and time signature.

Inventory: Gear database with description and photos.





GAIKA - WAR ISLAND sample library

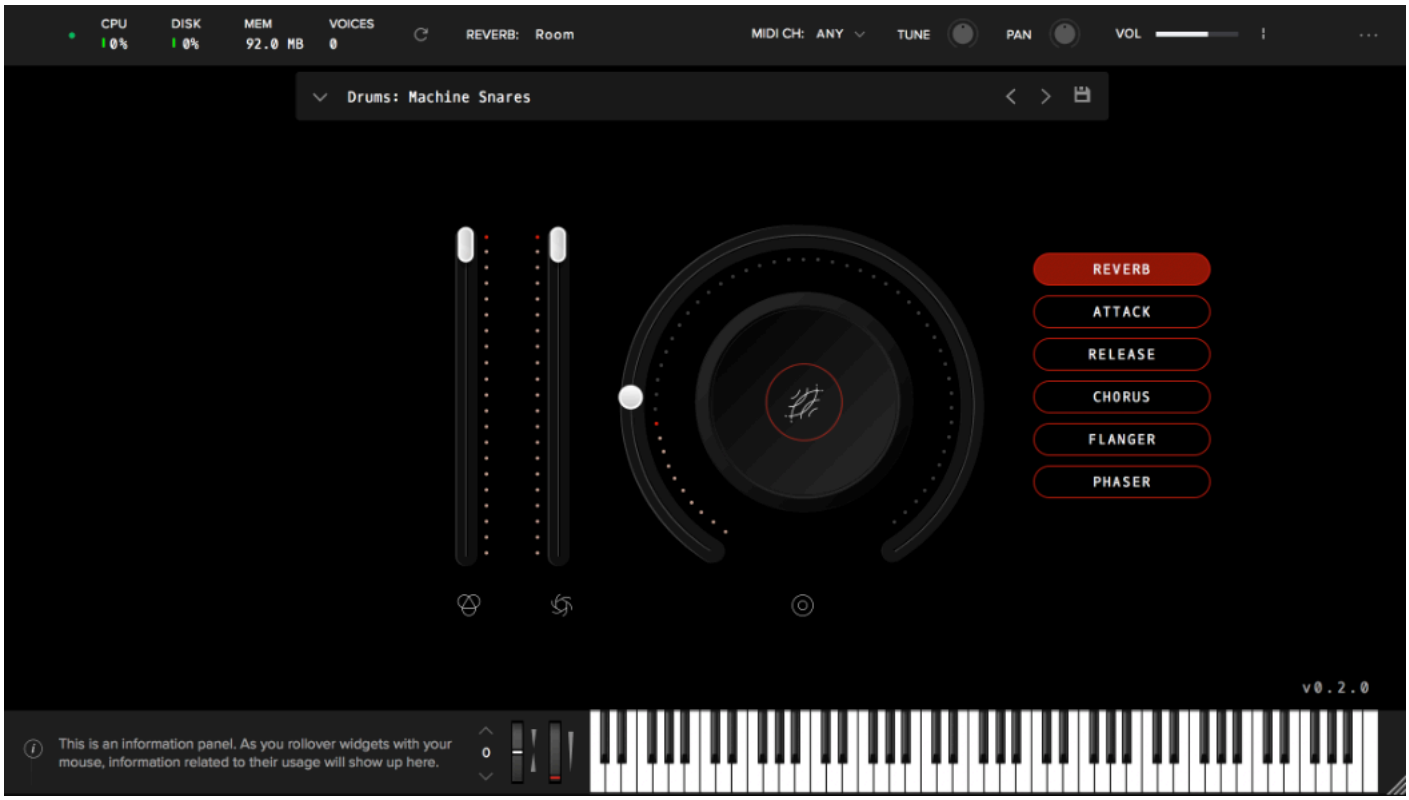
By: Spitfire Audio

LONDON, UK: Spitfire Audio is proud to announce the availability of GAIKA - WAR ISLAND. Introducing an astonishing new sample library made in collaboration with multidisciplinary sound artist and composer GAIKA. A collection of expansive industrial soundscapes, making multidimensional, evolving sounds from the beating heart of London's industrial underground accessible, intuitive, and interactive. Available in AAX, AU, VST2, and VST3 format compatible plug-ins that loads into all major DAWs (Digital Audio Workstations) without the need for any additional software. Inspired by sounds that its instigating namesake heard while growing up in South London, the comprehensive toolkit captures the intense, industrial quality

of GAIKA's specific sonic world, with its rich cultural backdrop of idiosyncratic musical styles. From Gothic hip hop to sound system culture, as well as retro-futuristic influences, GAIKA has produce a range of intense, abstract atmospheres resonating with earth-shattering depth. Developed amid the dystopian backdrop of London in lock down, GAIKA - WAR ISLAND offers 42 presets split into six sections: Pads — five moody, metallic, and heavy darkwave synth drones made from a range of contemporary and classic analogue and virtual analogue synths, including a SOMA Laboratory LYRA-8, Oberheim Matrix 6, Oberheim Matrix 12, and Roland JP-8000, plus many more besides; Basses — known for massive, jaw-dropping villainous bass, GAIKA provides seven crunchy low-end examples to compliment the nuance of this sound domain; Leads — 12 manipulated and processed tones providing infinite capabilities for layering a unique user sonic footprint; Atmospheres — capturing a unique air of disquiet and metropolitan malaise, each of these seven blissfully discordant offerings set up an unsettling atmosphere; Drums — six punchy, layered sounds made from old school drum machines with extensive processing to create dance, rap, and techno sensibilities within a classical framework for achieving vast rhythmic possibilities; and Vocals — glitchy and melodic vocal samples inspired by jungle music to capture the sound of a retro yet modern urban landscape. Ⓜ

For more information visit:

http://spitfireaudio.com



Aquatic and Other Worlds is the debut album of Oksana Linde, an electronic composer from Venezuela. It features a collection of pieces she composed from 1983 to 1989 in a small home studio comprised of a Casio CZ-1, a Moog Polymoog and Source, and a TEAC reel to reel recorder. She studied with Angel Rada, visiting his studio on many occasions and learning various techniques. By 1989 Oksana had composed 30 pieces and many of the ones on this album were painstakingly digitized from the original tapes that were in poor condition. Now, at age 74, she is sharing these recordings with the world.

The opening track reminds me of Tangerine Dream's *Green Desert,* with it's sparse arrangement and flowing chord progression but, throughout the whole album I hear similarities to Edgar Froese's solo work. There are similar tones and the same feel to many of his pieces. She weaves multiple melody lines through thick synth strings and droning bass lines creating playful tunes that are optimistic and instill a sense of promise. What I love about this album is that it demonstrates what can be accomplished with even the smallest amount of equipment. These compositions do not rely on the latest technology or a vast selection of synths but, creative use of what was available. Yet another fine example that limitations spawn creativity.

Aquatic and Other Worlds is a lovely collection of tunes that instantly transports you back to a time of discovery and wonder. A time when electronic music was being invented from the minds of visionaries and sounds made from synthesizers captured the imagination of the listener.

Available on March 25th, with a limited vinyl release on May 25th.
For more information visit:
https://buhrecords.bandcamp.com

Raum is the second LP release of the current Tangerine Dream lineup, consisting of Thorsten Quaeschning, Hoshiko Yamane, and Paul Frick, who have carried on since the band's founder, Edgar Froese passed away in 2015. In both cases, the band has taken demos and unfinished works of Froese and completed them. Their hope is to express the original ideas that Edgar had when starting the pieces and stay true to his vision. I believe Edgar would be pleased with the final results of their efforts. Raum represents the natural progression of the TD sound. It isn't a recreation of the classic sound, it is an evolution of sound! The tracks are modern, with amazing clarity and layers of synth sounds that ebb and flow. However, throughout the album there are the unmistakable Tangerine Dream trademark arpeggios and sequences that remind us why the band has been a staple for more than 50 years.

The first half of the album is upbeat and rhythmic while the last few songs are much more experimental. *What you Should Know About Endings* is reminiscent of *Hyperborea* and *Along the Canal* features the classic sound of the mellotron from their earlier albums.

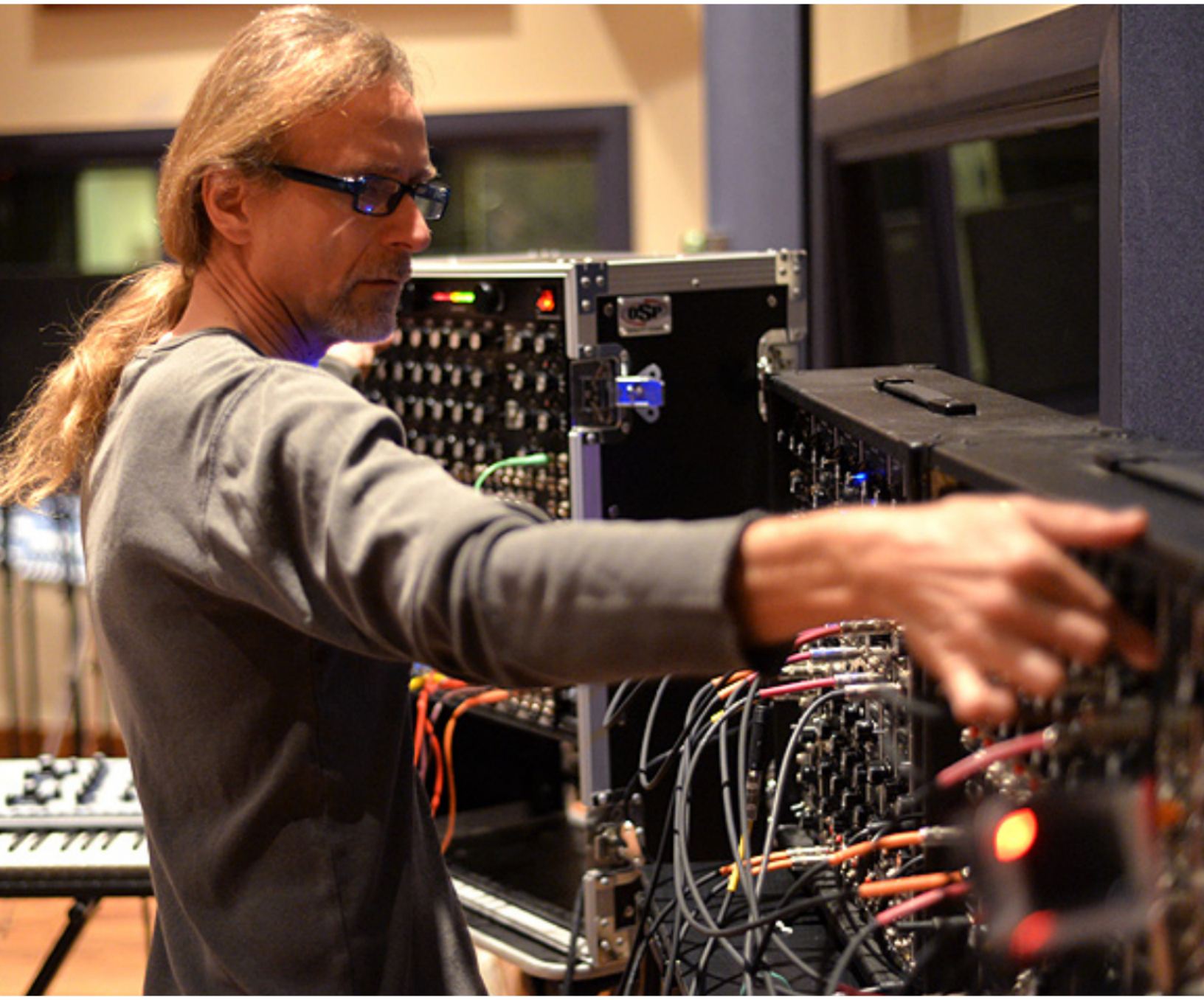
Each track has something to offer the die hard TD fan but, at the same time represent an excellent introduction to the world of Tangerine Dream for newcomers.

As someone who has listened to TD since the early '80s, I am very excited that the current line up is still creating new music that delivers the essence of that classic Tangerine Dream sound to a new generation of listeners.

For more information visit:

https://www.eastgatemusic.shop/en/products

STAR'S END



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Thomas Geleyn

Thomas has always been interested in music. “I had an old Casio keyboard under my bed that I would play every once in a while but, it never amounted to anything”, the Belgian says. That was until he heard the song *Clubbed to Death* by Rob Dougan. “I heard that song and I just had to learn it”, he explains. Thomas began learning to play music by ear and once he discovered that he could connect his digital piano to his iPad a whole new world opened up to him. “I started recording cover songs from Radiohead, Low Roar, and others and posting them to Youtube and Soundcloud”, he continues. “When the pandemic hit I started working on my own songs, developing a style between Pop, Alternative, and Orchestral. I recorded everything on the

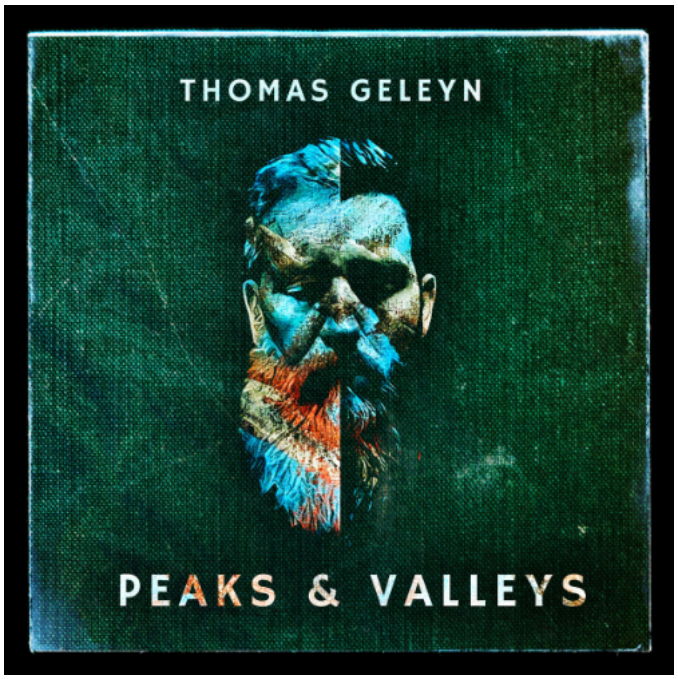
iPad using Garageband and my simple setup. The vocals were mastered by Jade Starr, using the Lurssen Mastering Console app".

Kit List:

2018 iPad
Garageband
Audio interface: Steinberg UR22 mk2
Mic: RØDE NT-USB
Headphones: Sony MDR-7506
Digital piano: Roland RP102

For more information on Thomas and his music visit:

https://thomasgeleynmusic.bandcamp.com/releases



Organ Bass Pedal Midi Controller

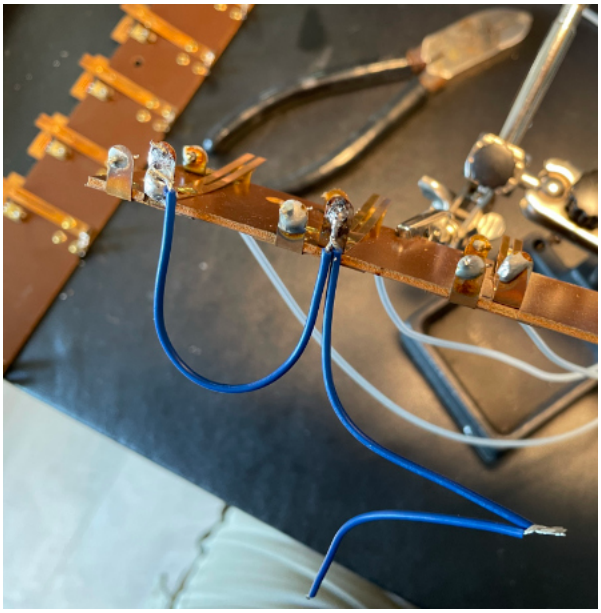
Re-purpose a set of organ bass pedals into a midi foot controller. In this month's DIY we show you how.

If you have ever wanted a set of bass pedals but couldn't afford the outrageous prices they sell for, then this DIY project is just what you have been looking for. This month we take a look at a set of organ pedals that I turned into a midi pedal with the help of a kit from Basyn.

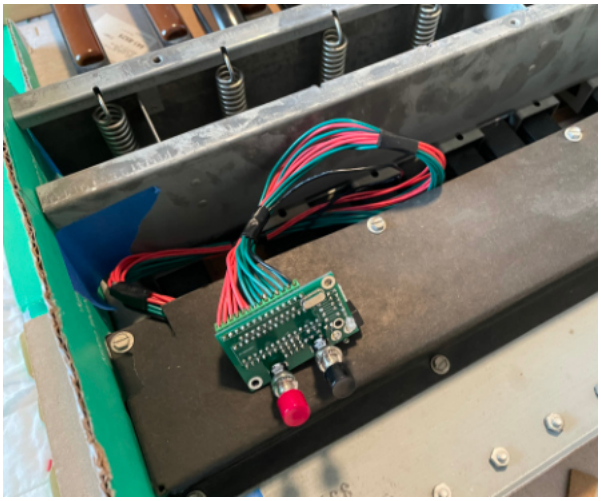
I have always been impressed with musicians who use pedals in their performances. From guitarist to synth players to organ players, who actually play a bass line with their feet, I have been intrigued by the possibilities of a midi foot controller. I first started thinking of building my own after seeing the prices of midi pedals on the second hand market. I was looking for reviews on Youtube when I came across some videos on how to convert organ bass pedals to midi controllers. The cost for used pedals is quite low and the Basyn kit was under $100, so I decided to give it a shot. Unfortunately, the Basyn kit is no longer available. If you are lucky enough to locate one I would highly recommend it. It is pre-programmed to convert the pedals into midi notes. Luckily for us there are other ways to do the same thing with an Arduino board and I have included some links for you to learn more about that process.

To build your own foot controller you will need a set of organ bass pedals, some insulated wire, soldiering iron and soldier, drill and bits, material of choice to build your enclosure, and your control board.

Although this may look like an advanced project, it is actually very simple to convert these pedals to send midi signals. First, if your pedals come with the old wires still attached, make sure you disconnect all of them and throw them out. I made the mistake of trying to reuse mine and that caused me a lot of headache. It is better to just start from square one. Locate the switch contacts that make contact when the pedal is pushed. There should be a spring loaded metal contact that closes the circuit when you press the pedal down. When you determine which ones make the connections, you need to soldier all of the ground connectors together and attach one long wire at the end of them all to go to the ground socket on the Arduino. Next, you need to soldier new wires to the positive connectors of your pedal switches and number them, to keep them in the right order. On the Arduino, you will soldier each wire in order on the digital sockets. In the link below you will find a similar project that will show you how to connect everything up and it includes the code you will need to get the Arduino to function as a midi controller.



After you have your wires connected and your power and midi jack connected to the Arduino you need to build your enclosure. I purchased all of my parts from my local hardware store and made some simple side panels out of wood. For the top panel, I used some metal brackets on the inside of the wooden panels and attached some sheet metal to them with screws. I drilled holes in the top panel and back panel for my midi connector and power connector and I wired in a switch to my power circuit as well. I painted the metal and stained the wood to finish it off.



This is a very interesting project. I learned a lot about circuits and soldiering and just how simple a midi controller can be. This pedal can be used to control any device with a midi connection. I have used mine to play notes on my keyboards and my tabletop synthesizers, like the Moog Werkstatt, to get that Moog bass pedal sound but, things started getting interesting when I connected it to my iPad. With the iPad, I was able to use apps like Tonality and Keystage. With

Tonality you can assign chords to each pedal, among other things. When you press a pedal it sends a complete chord to your synth. Since I also play bass guitar, this is a great way for me to play synth chords with one foot, while playing a bass part on the guitar. With Keystage, you can program which octave the pedals play and if they play chords or single notes, as well as, which sound they play on the synth they are assigned to. It is a very flexible app that allows you to change your routing and settings at the press of a button.

I know that this is just an introduction to this project but, I wanted to give you an idea of what is possible and some resources to get you started if, you wanted to give this one a try. I am very happy with the results of my pedals and I think you will be happy as well. They are very versatile and I have only begun to scratch the surface of what can be done with them. As you will see, if you follow the links, you can make practically any switch a midi controller. After all, the organ pedal is just a big switch you can play with your foot. Don't be afraid of the Arduino. There are many resources available and you can make a lot of interesting projects with the provided codes online.

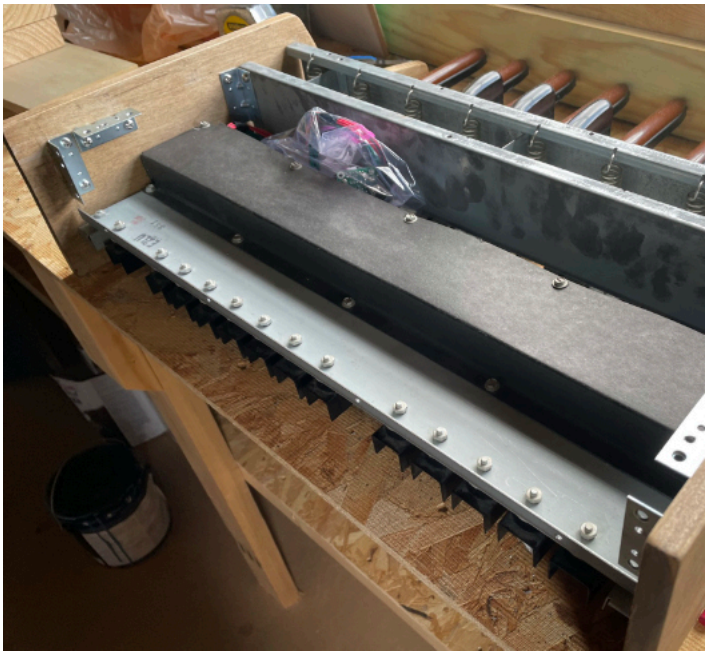
I hope you enjoyed this build and if you try one for yourself, let me know how it goes. You will find more information on simple midi controllers you can build by following these links.

Look Mum No Computer's project page:

https://www.lookmumnocomputer.com/projects#/super-simple-midi-keyboard

Gustavo Silveira's musiconerd Arduino page:

https://www.musiconerd.com/making-music-with-arduino



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FIELD GUIDE

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'll explore mixing and effects.

In last month's issue we discussed tempo syncing all of your individual synths and apps. This month let's take a look at mixing your audio signals and how we can route certain one to effects processors.

There are many ways to get the audio from your synthesizers and mobile devices to your recorder, amp, or PA system. The obvious way would be to run audio cables from each instrument out to a mixer or recorder inputs. This is how many musicians do it but, it isn't very mobile or convenient. One of the goals of my rig is to have a contained system with only one output, similar to a modular system. So I have all of my synths and effects processors connected to a mixer within my case.

In the mix

There are many reasons why you would want to have your own mixer within your mobile case. One reason is that having a dedicated mixer gives you control over the individual volume levels for each of your synths and devices. Most of your instruments will have a volume control but, some like the Moog Werkstatt doesn't have a volume control, so you have to control it's volume level with the mixer. Having everything running into your own mixer also gives you control of the overall volume level with one knob or slider. This comes in handy when playing with other musicians to help you get the overall mix level correct. Another great reason to have a mixer within your case is that it allows you to connect everything ahead of time so that you are ready to play whenever the opportunity arises. You can workout your routing so that you know which channel each piece of gear is routed to and which effects processors are connected to each piece of gear as well. You can adjust e.q. and panning for each synth and even route audio through an on-board recorder. Many small mixers have effects loops that allow you to send individual channels to the same effects pedals, which is nice if you want to add the same reverb to all of your instruments, for instance. The Vixen mixer that I have also has a built-in power distribution system so I

can power my Korg Volcas from the mixing board power connection. This is very helpful when you have limited power connectors in your mobile case.

Cause and effect

Let's discuss some options for routing audio signals through effects pedals or into your IOS device for processing or recording. Many compact mixers feature effects sends and returns. If you are lucky enough to have a mixer that has this feature you can simply connect your effects pedals to the send and return jacks on your mixer and adjust how much of the signal you want to send from each channel. The nice thing about this setup is that you can send multiple instruments to the same pedal. You can also route the effect send and return to an IOS device, like the iPad, and use an app for effects or to record your audio with. This is very handy when you use a looper app or a guitar pedal board app. The options are limitless really because you can use the iPad in so many ways. There are other ways to use effect pedals and the iPad without having dedicated effects send and returns on your mixer. For years I used a simple 8-channel mono mixer in my mobile case. In fact, I still use some 4-channel mixers in some of the smaller rigs I have put together. If your mixer doesn't have a dedicated effects loop, you can simply route individual instruments through individual pedals. For instance, you could route one synth through a reverb pedal and add reverb to that one synth. You can also route the output of your mixer through your pedals and add the effects to the whole mix. One interesting way to add effects to some of the instruments but not all of them is to pre-mix the ones you want to send to the effects pedal and then route the effected signal back into the same mixer. I have

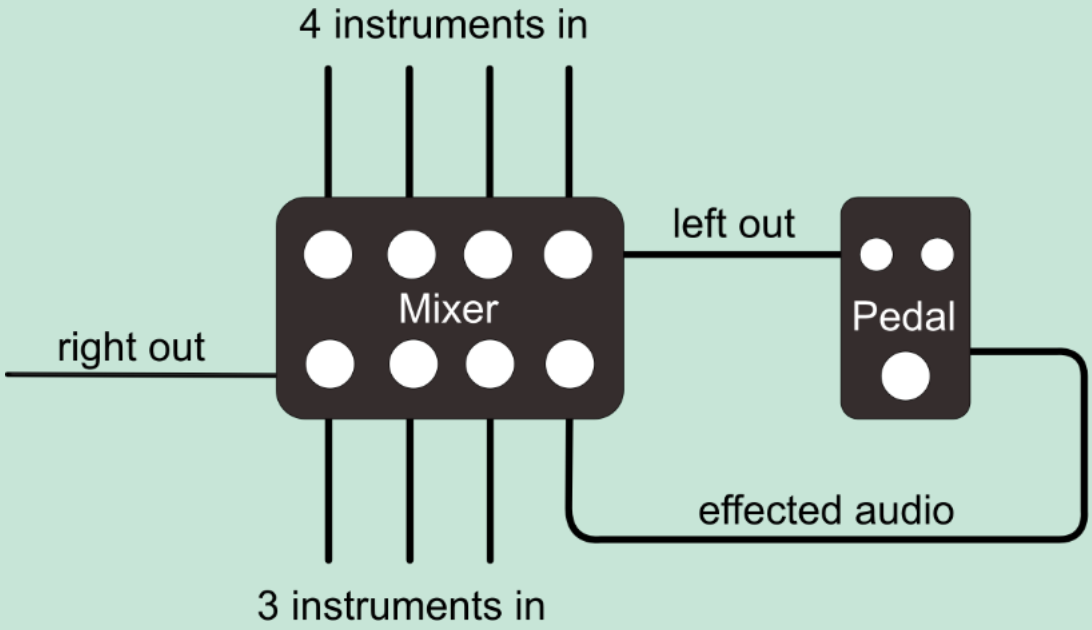

Figure 1, pre-mixing audio to send to pedal

created an illustration that shows what I mean, see figure 1. This illustration shows how you could do this with an 8-channel mixer but, you could do the same thing with two 4-channel mixers. You will need to use stereo-to-mono adapters to make this work however. Another option I haven't mentioned is using a multi-channel interface with your iPad as a mixer. I have not tried this option myself but, you could route your individual instruments to the individual inputs of the interface and use an app like Cubasis or AUM that supports multiple inputs. Then you could add effects to the individual channels and record or loop to your hearts content. Interfaces are becoming more compact so this could be a great option. In fact, the Roland Go mixer Pro-X would be a good option for this. A similar situation would be to use a stand-alone digital recorder as a mixer. These recorders would require a lot of space in your mobile case but, many of them have multiple inputs and built-in effects so they would allow you to mix, add effects, and record all in one device.

Choose your own route

Whichever route you choose, there is a solution that will meet your needs and your budget. You may have to get creative but, that is all part of the fun. You could route everything through a passive mixer and simply use the volume control on your instruments to control the mix or you could go with a full featured digital mixer that offers you every option you could imagine and more. The choice is up to you. Having the right mixer within your mobile case will give you the flexibility you need and the convenience of a self-contained system that is ready to use when inspiration hits.

I hope you found this article useful. It is my goal with the Field Guide to share with you the knowledge I have gained through trial and error in my own journey with desktop synths and mobile devices. Until next month, keep those sequencers going and the bass lines thumping.

Win a Behringer UCA222

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PATCHWORKS

SPACEY PATCH FOR THE VOLCA KEYS

The Korg Volca Keys is an amazing little synth (see our review in our February 2022 issue). Surprisingly for such a simple design it is capable of some incredible sounds. In this month's patchworks we look at an awesome ambient bell type sound that can get as crazy as you want it to.

First, lets turn the tempo all the way down and punch in a rhythmic pattern in the sequencer. This can just be a few of the same notes, because with this patch pitch doesn't matter too much. Select the poly ring setting and detune the oscillators all the way. Turn the EG INT all the way up as well.

Next, lets move to the VCF settings. Here we want to turn the cutoff all the way down, the peak all the way up, and the EG INT all the way down as well.

Next, set your LFO rate anywhere you like. Turn the PITCH INT all the way down and the CUTOFF INT all the way down too. Set the attack all the way down and the decay/release and sustain all the way up.

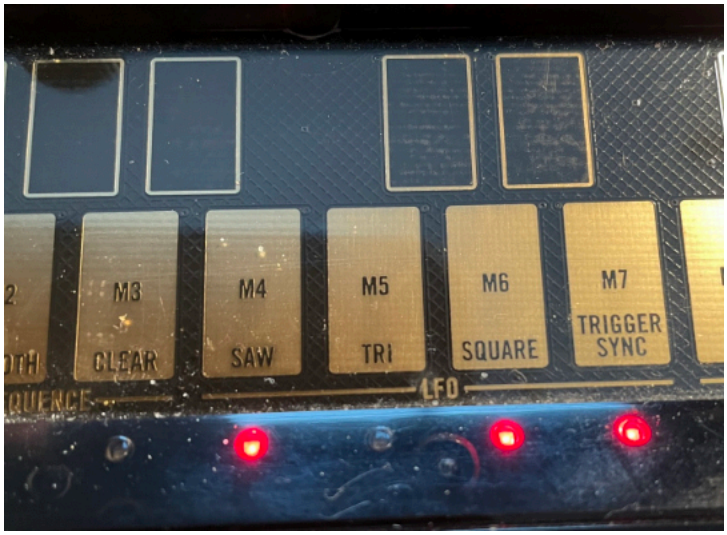
For the delay effect, make sure that it is set to follow the tempo by turning on the tempo delay key on the keyboard. Then turn the time up a little and the feedback all the way up.

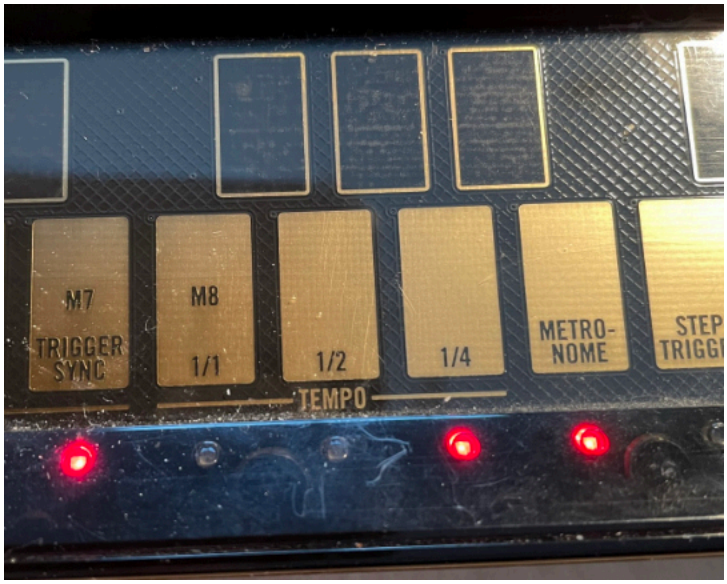
At this point you can start the sequencer and see what kind of sound you are getting. You might not hear much at first

but, begin slowly turning up the cutoff and you should start hearing a bell like sound. Depending on your sequence you should be getting a long echo between notes. You can start playing around with the EG INT and CUTOFF INT to get all kinds of harsh hits. The LFO rate changes the sound quite a bit too and your can select different wave forms by selecting the corresponding keys on the keyboard. I like the sound of the square wave the best in this patch.

Changes to the decay/release also changes the sound a lot and brings out the rhythm of you pattern more.

There is so much more that you can do with this patch so experimentation is the key here. One thing I like to do is adjust the playback speed all the way down to ¼, this is where the delay effect really shines by echoing between the notes. You can get very ambient with this patch and create some crazy sounds. Have fun with it!

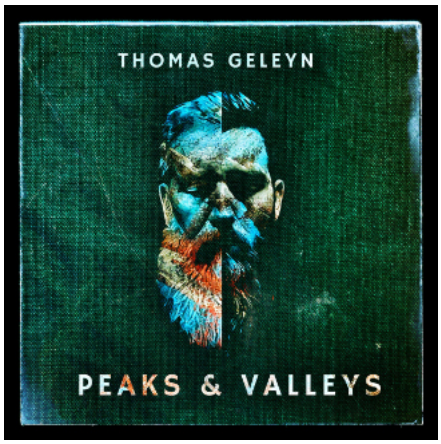




Listening Booth

We are constantly discovering new music and new artists and we want to share our favorites with you. Here are some of our top recommendations.

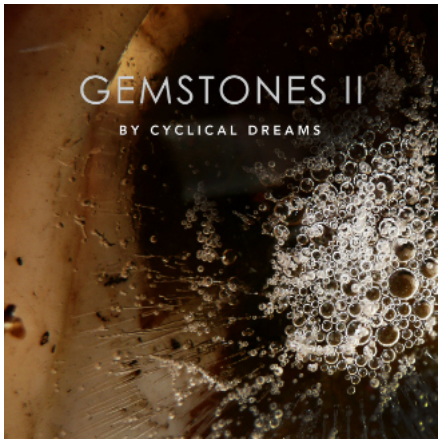
Memory Box
Rodney Cromwell



Peaks & Valleys
Thomas Geleyn

Stylophonika
Stylophone Orchestra

Love and Other Machines
Mari Dangerfield



Gemstones II
Cyclical Dreams

Volca Externus
Gary P. Hayes

Raum
Tangerine Dream

Buchla Concerts - 1975
Suzanne Ciani

Memory Space
Chuck Van Zyl

Plantasia
Mort Garson

Various Tracks
Oksana Linde

Miami Sky
The Synth Freq

1986
Justin Roberts

Oasis of the Wind II
takashi kokubo

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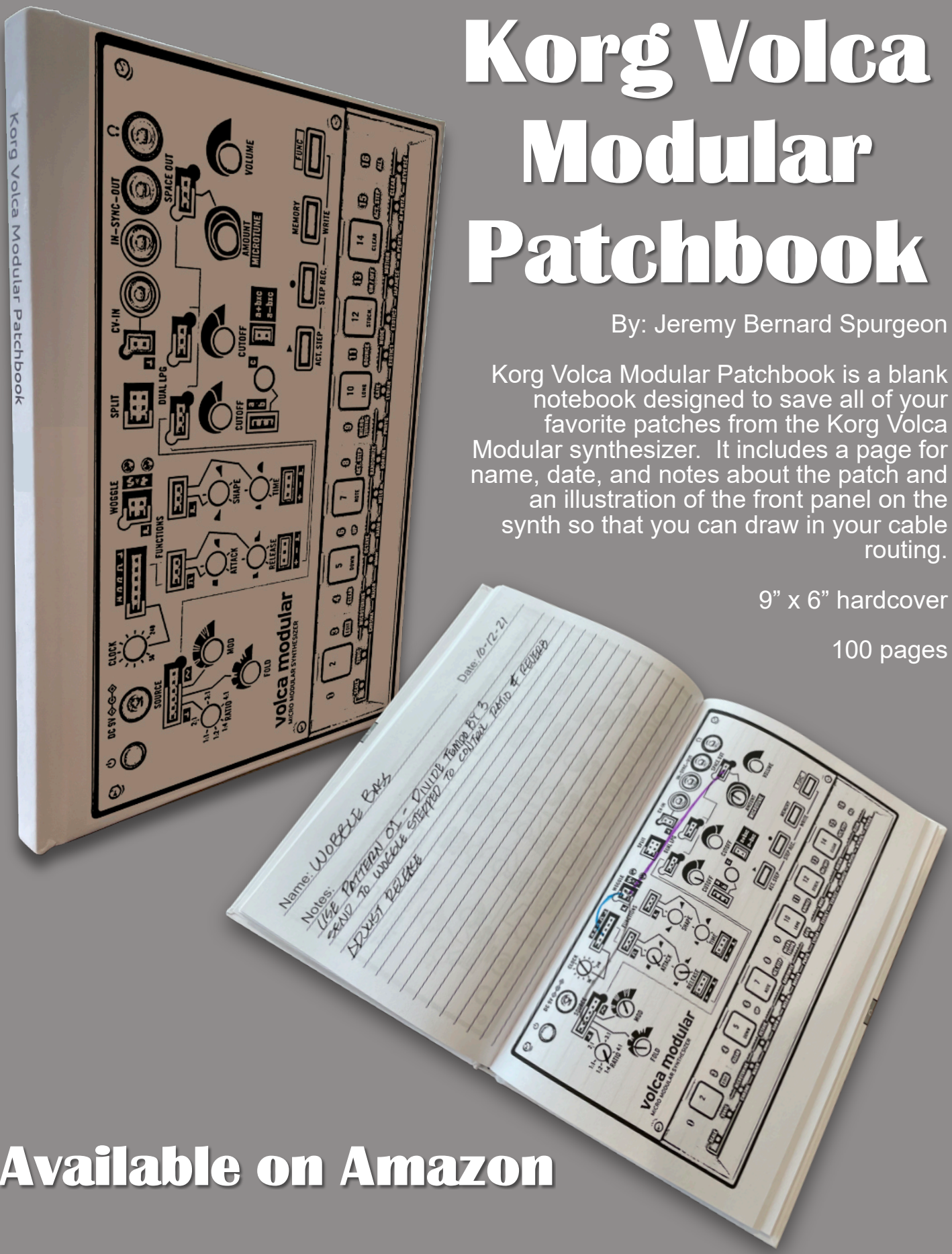
Korg Volca Modular Patchbook

By: Jeremy Bernard Spurgeon

Korg Volca Modular Patchbook is a blank notebook designed to save all of your favorite patches from the Korg Volca Modular synthesizer. It includes a page for name, date, and notes about the patch and an illustration of the front panel on the synth so that you can draw in your cable routing.

9” x 6” hardcover

100 pages



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