THEDRUMS

THE*DRUMS for Windows

Generalities

The*Drums is a complete universal sequencer/editor for all your drum parts. You can edit your patterns on the screen editor and chain them into a song.

Customize the instrument table up to 25 different instruments, choose the right Divisions/Beat ratio, select the MIDI channel and save the defaults into the configuration file. You'll have up to 9 patterns to play in the sequence you define into the Song Vector; then save the standard Midi File song and import the file in your personal Midi sequencer, to add the rest of the orchestra.

NOTE: Only registered copies are able to generate Standard Midi Files.

Registration

Registration

The un-registered version of The*Drums doesn't allow you to save Standard Midi Files.

To register The*Drums send me a note and a traveller's cheque or money order (or VISA/MASTERCARD through Software Excitement! - see below) for $50 US. Please include in your note your name, mailing address, current version number and computer/MIDI setup. The current version
information is found in the File About dialog box. If you would like a copy mailed to you, please add an additional $5, and I will send you the most recent version available.

I will send your registration keys, which you can then use with the File Register command to unlock the program. If you have a CompuServe or BiX account, I will send the registration keys immediately via
CompuServe or BiX mail, otherwise I will have to send you an old fashioned letter or a fax (if available c/o you).

How to contact me:

Fabio Marzocca
Via Canale dello Stagno 40
00124 Casalpalocco (ROME)
ITALY

You can also reach me:

at my phone: (39-6) 566.4448
at my fax: (39-6) 566.8406
on CompuServe: User ID 100015,2217
on BiX: fabio
on McLink: mc3796

Software Excitement!
The*Drums is distributed in the States also by "Software Excitement!". They will accept registration fee (50 $) by credit card payment (VISA and MASTERCARD).

Please contact:

Software Excitement! Inc.
Attn: Registrations
6475 Crater Lake Hwy
Central Point, OR 97502

Phone (503) 826-8083
FAX (503) 826-8090

or type GO SE at CompuServe prompt.

Getting Started

GETTING STARTED

What do I do first?

1. Copy the diskette on an hard disk directory.

2. Type THEDRUMS and press ENTER

3. Edit the instrument table to fit it with your keyboard

4. Set the MIDI channel where you have the drum part

5. Set your favourite Divisions/Beat.

6. Set your preferred default tempo

7. Save previous settings in the default file, so you will have them all each time you start The*Drums.

8. Load an example file and press F1 (or click on PLAY) to play the selected pattern, or click on PLAYSONG to play the whole song.

Hardware requirements

HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE REQUIREMENTS

Hardware:

- 80286, 80386 or 80486 CPU
- 1 mega RAM
- VGA video card
- Mouse
- Roland MPU-401 or compatible

Software:

- Microsoft Windows 3.0 or 3.1

The File Menu

This is the menu of command related to file storing and retrieving on/from the disk.

File/New

This blanks the current workspace and re-load the default configuration file. If you have made changes to your work that have not been saved to disk, you will be asked if you would like to proceed
with the command. If you choose to proceed, the work in memory will be completely erased.

File/Open

Load a "The*Drums" file (.td3) from the disk into the workspace. If you have made changes to your work that have not been saved to
disk, you will be asked if you would like to proceed with the command. A dialog box will pop-up with a list of files.

File/Save

Updates the current opened file with the new changes. If no file
has been opened, you will be prompted to enter the file name.

File/Save As

Save the current workspace into a new file. You are prompted to input the filename (without any extension). On the new patterns file, following data will be saved:

9 patterns data
the tempo setting
the instrument settings
the Divisions/beat

Standard MIDI File

Save the current song in a Standard Midi File - format 0 or format 1. The format 0 will save all your song into one track, as usually done by most of the commercial sequencers. The format 1 will generate a separate track for each played instrument.

To allow this function you have before to set the song vector pattern list. The resulting standard MIDI file will take also care of the quantization setting, channel and tempo.

File/Registration

This is the function to enter your registration fields, you will receive after the registration will be processed. Be careful to enter correctly the uppercase/lowercase sequence. This function will be inhibithed upon correct registation will be entered.

File/Quit

Quits the program.

The Screen Editor

The graphic Screen Editor workspace will let you create your own patterns to be linked into the song.

First of all, you'll have to decide the best Divisions/beat ratio. Clicking over the proper button in the tools space, a dialog box will pop-up with a large variety of choices.

If you don't have already configured your workspace, load an instrument file (if your synth is in the instrument list) or edit the displayed instruments. You can edit them through the Instruments Editing function, or double-clicking with the left mouse button on the instrument name.

Once you have fixed the Divisions, you can start building up your pattern, clicking into the boxes. To change the volume of the specific instrument tick, click over the loudness button. You'll have then 3 choices of loudness: 60, 90 and 127 with three corresponding colors.

Give a name to your pattern, in the pattern name edit box (over the pattern map), in order to better remind the job of the specific pattern (i.e. INTRO, FILL-IN, MAIN, etc)

The Song Vector

In the Settings Menu, you have the Song Vector choice. You can reach it also pressing on the Song Vector button in the right part of the workspace.

When you need to build up the drum part for your song, you have to enter the pattern sequence into the Song Vector map. Each pattern is represented with its one-digit number, while the end of the song is indicated by pattern number '0'.

Example: my song requires pattern nr.3 to be played 4 times, then 1 time pattern nr.1, then 3 times for pattern nr.2 and then again 4 times of pattern nr.3. The Song Vector will be:

3 3 3 3 1 2 2 3 3 3 3 0

If you don't set up a song vector, you will not be able to save a Standard Midi File.

Playback

When you click over the **Play** pushbutton, the displayed pattern will start playing, at the set tempo rate. The pattern will play back in an infinite loop, until you stop it.

If you have already set up a Song Vector, you can play all the song clicking over the **Play Song** button. In such a case, The*Drums will play all your song until the end, and then it will stop.

Keyboard Shortcuts:

You'll have two keyboard shortcuts: **F1** key will replace clicking over the Play pushbutton, andr the **Space bar** will replace the Stop pushbutton.

Instruments editing

If you don't find your synth in the .kbr files in the distribution disk, you can create your own settings with the Instruments choice in the menu bar.

After the editing pop-up dialog box appears, you are requested to enter the name and the corresponding synth key setting for that instrument (in decimal value). This value should be easly found on your synth manual.

After having completed all the settings, save the file with a name. If you want to make these settings as default at program start, save also the configuration with the Settings choice in the menu bar.

Configuring MIDILIB.DLL

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Configuration
Before you can play a song the MIDI hardware must be configured. The first time you run The*Drums, a configuration box will pop up. You must do this before you can play or record. The dialog box displayed is used to select the proper I/O base address and interrupt number for the MIDI adapter. At this point, MIDILIB.DLL only supports a Roland MPU-401 (or compatible).
Once you have successfully configured The*Drums, this configuration information is remembered in the THEDRUMS.INI file, so you should only have to configure once. The configuration is also tested whenever
The*Drums is started, to make sure your equipment has not been changed.

Choose Default First
The original Roland MPU-401 came fixed at one spot: base I/O port of 330H and interrupt number 2.

For this reason, the vast majority of machines with MIDI ports have them installed at this default location.
Unless you know for certain that the MIDI device had to be moved, choose Default in the dialog box. This will probably work correctly.

Configuring for Non-Standard Installations
If you know what your configuration is, simply select the appropriate settings and press Ok. When Ok is
pressed, the device will be tested (a reset is performed), and if all is well, the device is configured.
If you don't know what your configuration is, you will have to resort to the old trial and error approach. You can try various settings until you find the correct one. Note that The*Drums will probably detect an incorrectly set base I/O port address, and give you the message: "Configuration Failed." If your machine simply hangs without giving you any warning (big red switch time), then the base I/O port is probably correct but the interrupt number is wrong. Try again with the same base I/O port address and another interrupt number.

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The Edit Menu

AUTO-GENERATOR

This feature allows to fill an instrument pattern automatically and random. This will help in giving a new "Human Feel" to your patterns, by selecting the percentage of the instrument presence. Build the essential parts of your rhythm, and then auto-fill a snare, a cup, or whatever you think could give you much realistic sounds. Input in the dialog box the percentage of instrument fill and the loudness at which you want the new notes entered.

COPY PATTERN

It could be easier to edit an already made pattern, than to create a new one from a white paper. So, when you have built the main rhythm, copy the pattern into a blank one. This command will let you 'clone' one pattern onto another.

BLANK PATTERN

Blanking the pattern will erase the entire displayed worksheet. Other patterns in your file will not be erased.

CLEAR BEAT/CLEAR INSTRUMENT

Selecting these options you could erase the notes of a single instrument or a single beat.

TheSettings Menu

Timebase

This command sets the number of "ticks per beat" used in a drum song. This effects the resolution of a song's timing. In standard time (4/4), the number of ticks per beat is the number assigned to a quarter note.

The default timebase is 120. The Roland MPU-401 supports timebases from 48 to 192. The other supported timebases are mapped internally by MidiLib to one of these timebases. The normal minimally acceptable timebase is 96.

Song Vector

See the SONG VECTOR paragraph in this file.

Save Defaults

When program starts, it reades the file td3.cfg which contains:
- Instruments key setting
- the MIDI channel
- the default Divisions
- the default tempo

To modify this file, set up your preferences and use this option to save the file.

Commands

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Play a single instrument

While editing, you can point on one instrument line and press the RIGHT mouse button. This will sound one shot of the selected instrument. Nice to hear at the instrument sound if you are not sure about how it feels.