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.

Distribution and Registration

Under the Shareware system you may freely try out this program, but if you continue to use it you are expected to register with the author and pay the 50$ registration fee.

When you register, please let me know what version you have and I'd also be interested in knowing where you got it from. Please make sure to put your name an address on the letter! Or, you can use the instant registration form in the file "order.frm". Just copy the file to your printer.

To obtain the current release of The*Drums with all of its latest enhancements, register by sending the order form with your **money order** or **traveler's cheque in US$** to:

      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

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. The format 0 has been choosen because the file will always contain
 only one track of MIDI data, and almost all the sequencers on the market are able to read from format 0. 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/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.

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.

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 <u>Standard Midi File</u>.

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 <u>Song Vector</u>, 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

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.