

KaleidoSonics
presented by
Masque Publishing
created by
John W. Ratcliff
and
Rob Wallace

"Interactive Art and Relaxation Software"

"Mesmerising interactive graphics, breathtaking imagery, and a hauntingly beautiful music score, make KaleidoSonics the best showcase piece for any MPC machine."

"After playing with KaleidoSonics for an hour I just felt like taking the whole day off. Very relaxing!" Craig Knouf, Technical Consultant for CompuServe

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Full General MIDI score on the following sound cards:

Adlib
Adlib Gold
Sound Blaster
Sound Blaster Pro
Pro Audio Spectrum
Pro Audio Spectrum 16
Roland MT-32
Roland Sound Canvas
Creative Labs Wave Blaster
Gravis Ultrasound
Turtle Beach Multisound
Sonic Sound
Midi Maestro
Tandy Sensation
Logitech SoundMan 16

supports any standard CD-audio compact disc with CD-ROM drive.
(requires commercial version of KaleidoSonics)

Requires:

Requires 386 (486 recommended) or better machine and VGA. Sound Card or CD-ROM drive recommended but not required.

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"What is KaleidoSonics?"
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KaleidoSonics fully utilizes current day multimedia hardware like VGA, sound cards, 386 and 486 machines, and CD-ROM to create a stunning piece of interactive art. Designed by computer graphic artist John Ratcliff and award winning multimedia composer Rob Wallace, the KaleidoSonics presentation is filled with dazzling sights and sounds; that you control.

Relax and unwind after a hard day at work. Insert the KaleidoSonics CD into your CD-ROM drive, a CD by your favorite performing artist, or simply use the sound card you purchased with your MPC machine, and feel the stress float away. You will explore hundreds of visual effects possible in six realms of stunning imagery, each accompanied by an originally composed sound track.

Using state of the art texture-mapping, 3d graphics, image warping, and fractal image recursion the visual effects produced by KaleidoSonics are truly spellbinding. Realms to explore are Desert, Sea, Sky, Space, Earth, and Majesty. The visual effects you create are saved for every screen, so that you can show off your presentation to friends in a self running demo.

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Type: KS to run.  SETUP to configure audio hardware.
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                        The KaleidoSonics Keyboard Chart
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Some of the key assignments on KaleidoSonics are 'case-sensitive'. Make sure that you have the CAPS-LOCK key turned off when you run the KaleidoSonics. To select an upper case assignment of a key, simply hit the shift-key in combination with that character. Generally speaking the upper case key assignments are used to cancel or reverse a particular effect.

Also, be sure to have your NUM-LOCK key turned off so that you can use the cursor-keypad to to move the imagery around interactively.

Control A -> pause effect.
Control P -> restore default preferences.
Control F -> Clears all effects for all screens.
Control X -> Quit program without saving prefs.
Control Q -> Quit program without saving prefs.

a -> Lower case: Enable auto-advance mode. This will allow the KaleidoSonics to automatically advance to the next picture if you don't touch the keyboard for an extended period of time.

A -> Upper case. Disable auto-advance mode. Will cause the KaleidoSonics to stay on the picture you are at even if you don't touch the keyboard for a long time.

b -> Advance to next bit map for 3d models. When 3d modeled objects are on the screen (by pressing the U key) you can map a number of surfaces onto that object. This key will cycle forward through each of the possible pictures, ending with the background screen itself.

B -> Go to previous bit map for 3d models. This will back up to

the previous bit mapped image.

- C/c -> Toggle MIDI music on/off If you have setup KaleidoSonics for a particular sound card configuration, and it has successfully loaded the sound driver, this will turn music playback on or off. If you have an audio CD in your CD-ROM drive, MIDI music will be turned off by default when KaleidoSonics starts up, so that you can hear the audio-CD instead.
- D/d -> Toggle dim mode on/off. Controls whether or not lead sphere or circle is dimmed.
- E/e -> This key will anchor the current image in the middle of the screen.
- F/f -> Fix it. This key resets the current picture, turning all effects off.
- g -> Increase zooming speed for 3d objects. The first time you hit this key, any 3d objects displayed will begin zooming in and out slowly. The more times you hit the letter 'g' the faster the objects will zoom.
- G -> Cancels zooming effect for 3d objects, causes the object to come to a rest at full size on the screen.
- H/h -> Bring up help screen
- l -> (lower case L) Increase image delay factor. Slows things down on very fast machines.
- L -> Cancel the delay factor, KaleidoSonics will go as fast as it can.
- m -> Advance to next mirror mode. KaleidoSonics has 4 different mirror and/or reflection modes. Hitting this key will cause it to advance to the next mirror mode. Every mirror mode creates unique effects, be sure to experiment a lot with these modes.
- M -> Backup to the previous mirror mode.
- N/n -> Advance to the next picture
- P/p -> Go to the previous picture.
- q -> Increase bottom screen width in texture map mode #1.
- Q -> Decrease bottom screen width in texture map mode #1.
- r -> Increase screen roll.
- R -> Decrease screen roll.
- S/s -> Set's 3d to map background screen.
- T/t -> Advance to the next texture map mode.
 - texture map mode 0 -> no texture mapping, just display image.
 - mode 1 -> sweep image left/right.

mode 2 -> random warp on one corner of the image
at a time.
mode 3 -> random warp on all 4 corners simultaneously.

u -> Next 3d shape.
U -> Previous 3d shape
w -> Increase wave action in mirror modes 1 and 2.
W -> decrease wave action.
x -> Increase x-axis rotation of 3d object.
X -> Cancel x-axis rotation of 3d object.
y -> Increase y-axis rotation of 3d object.
Y -> Cancel y-axis rotation of 3d object.
z -> Increase z-axis rotation of 3d object.
Z -> Cancel z-axis rotation of 3d object.
/ -> Toggle number of digital sound effects played simultaneously.
F1 -> one object
F2 -> two objects
F3 -> three objects
F4 -> four objects.
F5 -> turn mirror mode off.
F6 -> reflection mirror mode.
F7 -> spheres.
F8 -> circles
F9 -> rings
F10 -> rings and spheres.
+ -> In texture map mode #1, move horizon up, otherwise, increase
brightness of image.
- -> In texture map mode #1, move horizon down, otherwise,
decrease brightness of image.
' -> (single quote key) Next track on CD if CD-audio in CD-ROM drive.
(Commerical version of KaleidoSonics only)
; -> (semicolon key) Previous track on CD if CD-audio in CD-ROM drive.
(Commerical version of KaleidoSonics only)
[-> (left bracket key) Decrease size of 3d object.
] -> (right bracket key) Increase size of 3d object.
0 -> Turn object display off.
1-9 -> Set object movement speed.
<, -> Decrease number of loops in circle (if circle or rings up)

.> -> Increase number of loops in circle (if circle or rings up)

SPACEBAR-> Toggle image recursion.

ENTER -> In texture map mode #2 or #3, first time hit, will cause zoom to occur, if hit twice, will zoom back to entire image. In all other modes, hitting the enter key toggles object motion on and off.

CURSOR KEYS -> Move lead object around the screen.

ESC -> exit to title page.

Sound Card notes:

CD-ROM drive owners: (requires Commerical version of KaleidoSonics)

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If you have purchased the CD-ROM version of KaleidoSonics you almost certainly want to play the music from the CD rather than through your sound card. All of the music on the CD was composed on a Roland Sound Canvas (SC55) in conjunction with a Kurzweil K2000. These are two of the highest quality MIDI synthesizers available to composers today. The music has been professionally mixed and mastered to provide the highest quality performance of KaleidoSonics music possible.

Simply have the KaleidoSonics audio CD in your CD-ROM drive when you start your computer. When you run KaleidoSonics it will automatically begin playing the music from your CD player, allowing you to match music to the visual effects. Make certain you have speakers hooked up to the output of your CD-ROM drive. Wearing headphones while listening to KaleidoSonics will create the most immersive experience possible.

You can use any audio CD with KaleidoSonics. Simply insert an audio CD into your CD-ROM drive, be it classical, jazz, new-age, or even rock-and-roll. You will find it interesting to match the visuals with the music of any CD you play.

Sound Cards:

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To configure KaleidoSonics for your sound card run SETUP. You will be asked to select your DIGITAL audio source and your music source. If you do not have a sound card, do not run SETUP. Simply run the program without sound effects or music. I have you have a problem with any sound card configuration type 'REMOVE' while in the JROB directory.

PC Speaker:

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If you have not purchased a sound card for your computer you will not be able to hear KaleidoSonics music out of the PC speaker. You will be able to enjoy the KaleidoSonics graphics, but not the music or sound effects. We strongly recommend that you purchase a sound card to enhance the enjoyment of your computer. Sound Cards that support the general MIDI standard like the Roland Sound Canvas provide the best quality music.

Adlib Personal Music System:

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If you have this sound card, you will get music, but not sound effects.

Choose 'no digital sound card' for digital, and Adlib for music. The Adlib uses an FM synthesizer that has very limited music capability. But we believe you will find the Adlib music to be some of the best you have ever heard, because it utilizes the general MIDI instruments developed by The Fat Man for Yamaha (the maker of the YM3812 FM synthesizer in the Adlib).

Adlib Gold

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The Adlib Gold uses a more sophisticated version of the same FM synthesizer found in the original Adlib card. This synthesizer is known as the OPL3 and supports stereo and a richer sound for instruments. KaleidoSonics fully supports the OPL3 FM synthesizer, providing rich stereo sound. Even though the music is not as strong as that found in true MIDI devices we strive to push the synthesizer to produce the richest possible OPL3 sounds. The Adlib Gold has full stereo digital sound support for the sound effects available in some realms. Sound effects require the presence of an EMS memory manager. (Typically DEVICE=EMM386.SYS in your CONFIG.SYS file.) Sound effects will not be available unless KaleidoSonics finds enough EMS memory available and a digital sound driver loaded.

Tandy Sensation

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The Tandy Sensation uses the same basic architecture as that found in the Adlib Gold. The Tandy Sensation provides OPL3 FM synthesis and mono digital sound effects.

Creative Labs Sound Blaster and Sound Blaster Clone

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This extremely popular sound card provides OPL2 (YM3812) FM synthesis for music and mono digital sound for sound effects. SoundBlaster cards come in a variety of configurations. The KaleidoSonics SETUP program will auto-detect the presence of a SoundBlaster or compatible sound card, but you must be absolutely certain you configure the driver for the correct IRQ and base address settings by pressing the letter 'C' to configure. This is very important, because specifying an incorrect IRQ will cause your computer to lock up.

Creative Labs Sound Blaster Pro

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This is a very popular version of Creative Labs SoundBlaster card that features stereo digital sound and an OPL3 FM synthesizer. As noted before make certain you configure your sound driver for the correct IRQ and base address settings.

ATI Stereo FX Card

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This sound card is SoundBlaster compatible but features it's own method of providing stereo digital sound. Select SoundBlaster for music, but ATI Stereo FX for digital sound. Once again be sure of your configuration settings.

MediaVision ProAudio Spectrum

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This is a popular stereo sound card from MediaVision. It features an OPL2 FM synthesizer, SoundBlaster compatibility and it's own native mode stereo digital sound. Select ProAudio Spectrum 8 for digital sound and ProAudio Spectrum for music. The ProAudio Spectrum supports it's own configuration information, so you will not need to configure the driver

for base address and IRQ settings.

MediaVision ProAudio Spectrum 16 and Logitech SoundMan 16

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Both of these cards utilize the Yamaha OPL3 FM synthesizer and support stereo digital sound.

Turtle Beach MultiSound

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The Turtle Beach MultiSound is a very high end MIDI synthesizer. It is very important that you upload the general MIDI presets to your Turtle Beach before you try to run KaleidoSonics. If you have installed your Turtle at anything other than the default settings you may not be able to run KaleidoSonics successfully. KaleidoSonics provides fully orchestrated general MIDI music on the Turtle Beach Multisound and stereo digital sound effects.

Microsoft Sound System

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This is a sound card provided by Microsoft that has features very similar to those of the Adlib Gold. It sports an OPL3 FM synthesizer and rich stereo digital sound.

Advanced Gravis Ultrasound

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To run KaleidoSonics with a Gravis Ultrasound requires that you have loaded the ULTRAMID general MIDI and digital sound driver from Gravis.

If you do not have ULTRAMID then you must run the Gravis as a SoundBlaster compatible with SBOS. We HIGHLY recommend you get the ULTRAMID drivers from Gravis. With ULTRAMID you will hear a fully orchestrated general MIDI score and stereo digital sound effects.

Roland MT-32/LAPC1

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This is a once popular MIDI synthesizer from Roland. The KaleidoSonics music will play on an MT-32/LAPC after it has downloaded a bank of general MIDI instruments to the card. The MT-32/LAPC is a music only instrument. You must select 'no sound card' or some other digital sound device for sound effects with KaleidoSonics.

Creative Labs Wave Blaster, Ensoniq SQ-1000, or other MPU401 compatible general MIDI synthesizers.

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The MPU401 interface is a standard interface for MIDI synthesizers and general MIDI is a standardized specification for music. In addition to the Creative Labs Wave Blaster and Ensoniq SQ-1000, there are a number of MPU401 compatible general MIDI synthesizers on their way to the marketplace. Simply select MPU401 general MIDI for any of these cards. This is a specification for music, not for digital sound, you will have to select 'no digital sound' or some other digital sound card specification to get sound effects.

MidiMaestro, SonicSound, or other Aria based MIDI synthesizers

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Those sound cards based on the Aria chip-set from Sierra Semiconductors are SoundBlaster compatible as well as support general MIDI utilizing wave table synthesis. If you want to hear the general MIDI music with your Aria based sound card, you must make certain the 'SET ARIA=...'

command has been placed in your 'AUTOEXEC.BAT' software by the sound card's installation software.

Roland Sound Canvas - SCC1 and SCC55

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We have found the Roland Sound Canvas to be the BEST general MIDI synthesizer available. Due to Roland's tremendous patch set, and chorus and reverb modules this device produces amazing studio quality music. The music in KaleidoSonics sounds better on this device than any other. The Roland Sound Canvas does not provide digital sound so you will have to select 'no digital sound card' or some other digital sound device for sound effects. KaleidoSonics provides custom orchestrations of all of the music on the Roland Sound Canvas that closely approximate the orchestration found on the audio-CD portion of KaleidoSonics.

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John answers some questions and tries to explain some of the visual effects created by KaleidoSonics
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"John, why are there so many keys in KaleidoSonics? I thought you knew how to do user interface design, what gives?"

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KaleidoSonics is capable of producing an infinite number of visual effects. Even after messing with this program for over six months I still create cool new effects I have never seen before. The KaleidoSonics program is a collection of high-speed graphics routines that have many controllable variables. Changing these variables will create unique and surprising results. Assigning keys to each of these variables is what allows for an infinite number of visual effects to be created, and gives rise to limitless possibilities of exploration for the user. You are a multimedia explorer, sort of a performance artist, and it's up to you to create visuals that are appealing, satisfy, and make you feel whole. (Not asking much of a collection of graphics routines, am I?)

KaleidoSonics is meant to be an active experience. Sure you can just sit back and watch some preset visual effects, but it is far more interesting to create visuals that match your mood, music, and personal sense of aesthetic. If KaleidoSonics didn't offer you control over all of these variables it would be fun to watch as a passive experience, but you would never be able to create screens and effects that only you can imagine.

Another reason to provide an infinite number of settings is the huge performance difference between machines. Something that might look cool on one person's computer might run too slowly (or too quickly) on someone else's. The primary gating factor with KaleidoSonics is going to be the speed of your video card. On local bus VGA KaleidoSonics is so fast it's scary. (Ok, it's not actually scary, but it does go really fast.) In the future people will own 586 machines with super local bus, (I assume that's where the video card actually sits in your lap) and all kinds of new visual effects will be possible as new and faster multimedia hardware comes along.

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"What's recursion? Is it catching? Do I really need recursion or can I

live without it?"

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Most computer programmers know recursion as a bizarre little programming trick we were taught in college that we could rarely find a practical use for. Having learned recursion in college, it's only natural that I would find a completely impractical use for it in KaleidoSonics.

Recursion is when the input of a function is obtained from the output of the same function, forming a feedback loop. (But that's impossible you say. How can the result of a function be equal to the function itself? Well, like I said, we could rarely find a practical use for it.) The KaleidoSonics uses graphics recursion, where the output of a graphic routine is fed back in as the source. We have all seen the hall of mirrors effect where a reflection is cast into infinity when two mirrors are placed such that they each reflect the image in one another. Likewise KaleidoSonics does the same thing; and the results are astonishing. Hitting the function key F8, and then the letter E key in KaleidoSonics will bring up in the middle of the screen, with graphic recursion, a 'circle of death', (ok, it's just a spinning series of concentric circles but 'circle of death' sounds much cooler). Hitting the SPACEBAR will toggle recursion on and off. With recursion turned off this is a neat little graphics effect which maps the background image into a circle. But with recursion turned on the graphic feeds on itself producing a swirling mass of colors and patterns that may and or may not produce a hypnotic state, if it does just remember the key phrase "oranges". Pressing the arrow keys on your keyboard allows you to control the direction of the motion inside the 'circle of death'.

You will also get recursive effects (sometimes known as 'graphics bio-feedback'), when displaying the moving spheres or the 3d objects which reflect the background screen. You can increase the amount of feedback going on by adding more objects or by turning the texture mapper and/or mirror modes on. Don't be afraid, it looks much cooler than it sounds.

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"What is a 'texture mapper'? Is it good for anything other than making me feel queasy to the stomach?"
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A texture mapper is a graphic effect that will take a photgraphic image, often containing a texture like brick, tile, or weave, and will map it onto a two-dimensional surface. Pretty much every cool computer animation or effect you have seen in movies or commercials makes heavy use of texture mapping to sustain the illusion of a living, breathing, creature, or a realistic scene. Whether it's mapping brick onto a wall, or reptile skin on a dinasour in Jurrasic Park, texture mappers are at the core of most computer special effects.

The texture mapper in KaleidoSonics won't bring dinasours to life, but it will offer you the opportunity to experiment and interact with one of the most fascinating graphics toys ever created from an unrolled, optimized, assembly language loop. (That's techy computer terminology to impress my programming buddies.) The texture mapper in the KaleidoSonics was written by John Miles of Miles Design, purveyor of graphics technology to the stars. What's unique about John's texture mapper is that it's fast. I mean REALLY fast. And with a REALLY fast texture mapper, you can do some REALLY cool things. And so I have.

You control two things with a texture mapper. The surface you are mapping the image onto, and the graphic image that is being mapped. Of

course KaleidoSonics let's you do both. KaleidoSonics has three base texture map modes that have a fixed surface and moving image points. The fixed surface is the screen itself, or half of the screen in any of the mirror modes. What moves are the texture map points. Those are the points in the background image that are being stretched to fill the screen. KaleidoSonics also uses the texture mapper to wrap imagery onto real-time 3d modeled objects. Pressing the letter 'U' key on the keyboard will cycle through the various 3d shapes available. Pressing the letter 'B' key will cycle through the number of texture map images available.

Texture Map Mode #1:

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In texture map mode #1 (invoked the first time you hit the letter 'T') the background image will move side to side, creating a perspective effect. This is greatly enhanced by pressing the F6 key to invoke a mirror reflection. You can change the rate at which the texture moves back and forth by pressing the keys 1-9 to set a speed. Most people will want a slow sweep using the speed of one.

Now this is pretty, but texture map mode #1 has a trick up it's sleeve. At first the base of the texture is the width of the entire image. But you can change that. By putting your finger on the letter 'q', and holding it down, you can watch the base of the image expand; lifting your finger off the key to stop. On some images this will create the illusion of racing down the highway at high speed, as if you were looking out the passenger side window. Pressing shift-Q (the upper case Q key) will r this effect. Different widths of the bottom of the screen in this mode, with different imagery, and with different mirror modes, provides for many interesting places to explore unique visual effects. When you are in texture map mode #1, and you have a mirror reflection turned on, press the plus and minus keys on your numeric keypad. This adjusts the horizon level of the image being reflected.

There is one side effect (read that 'feature') of texture map mode #1. If you go into texture map mode #3, then back into texture map mode #1, the region of the image that is moving back and forth contains information left over from texture map mode #3. Sometimes this is interesting to look at, sometimes it is not. To reset it, hit the ENTER key.

Texture Map Mode #2:

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In texture map mode #2 (invoked when you hit the letter 'T' the second time) you get a chance to explore the infinite number of effects a texture mapper can make. Once again the surface of the texture mapper is the whole screen, or half in mirror mode. But the points in the image being mapped move at random. Initially all four corners of the image map to the screen. Then the computer picks one of the four corners and moves it at random. After moving that corner for a while, it picks another one, gins moving it. Over a period of time you will watch the background image stretch and warp like so much silly putty in the hands of a person with a serious inner ear problem.

After a while of warping the image about, KaleidoSonics will cause the image to unfold itself back into it's original state. Then it starts the whole thing over again. Hitting the ENTER key once while the image is warping will cause it to pick a location at random to warp to. Hitting the ENTER key twice will cause it to unfold itself. Running texture map mode #2 in any or all of the various mirror modes is a

serious visual trip.

Texture Map Mode #3:

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If you thought texture map mode #2 was strange and disorienting, then maybe you don't want to hit the 'T' key the third time. Texture map mode #3 pulls out all of the stops. Texture map mode #3 is almost identical to texture map mode #2, with one big difference. Instead of doing a random walk on one of the four corners, it moves all four corners at once!

The background image will spin, turn, twist, dissolve, and generally wreak visual havok on your computer screen. This effect with mirror mode turned on is, as Johnny would say, 'wild and crazy stuff'. Hitting the ENTER key works the same as in texture map mode #2. Virtually every possible image warping effect that can be created with a texture mapper is performed at some time or another if you let texture map mode #3 run long enough. Hitting the letter 'T' will take you out of texture map mode so you can go take a pill and reorient yourself. Texture map mode #3 is not for the surrealistically challenged. Bringing up the 3d cube, reflecting the background, with recursion turned on so that the image warping is reflected recursively in the cube and with mirror mode turned on will probably keep you hypnotized for a while.

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"Why doesn't the music on my SoundBlaster sound like the music on the KaleidoSonics CD?"
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The music on your SoundBlaster is being played on an FM synthesizer that cost the manufacturer a couple of dollars. KaleidoSonics does it's best to play the highest quality music possible on a low cost FM synthesizer. The KaleidoSonics music on the audio portion of the CD was created using a Roland Sound Canvas wave table symphonic MIDI synthesizer with chorus and reverb effects, a Kurzweil K2000 wave table MIDI synthesizer with digital signal processor, and a digital effects processor all digit stered in a professional studio. The music hardware alone cost almost ten thousand dollars. Enjoy.

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"My screen is going crazy! How do I fix it!"
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Press the letter 'F' to fix it. It will reset that image with everything turned off. If KaleidoSonics is going to be able to create lots of cool effects it can sometimes seem to get out of control and create way too much 'stuff' going on. I added the 'F'ix it key, just for this purpose.

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"KaleidoSonics is going too fast, how do I slow it down?"
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On some 486 machines, especially those with local bus video, you may find that some of the graphics effects go too fast for your taste, even with the speed set to one. Pressing the lower case 'L' key once will force KaleidoSonics to not exceed roughly 60 frames per second. Hitting it twice will slow it to 30 frames per second, and another time 15. At 30 or 15 frames per second the graphics will begin to look jerky. Hitting SHIFT-L (upper case L) will reverse the slow down effect, and KaleidoSonics will run as fast as it can.

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"I have a really cool picture on the screen, but it keeps automatically moving to the next picture. How do I make it stay on just one screen?"
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KaleidoSonics defaults to auto-advance mode, where it will advance through all of the pictures in KaleidoSonics. If you want to disable auto-advance mode, hit SHIFT-A (upper case A) to cause it to stay on just the one picture. To allow it to return to auto-advance mode, hit lower case A.

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"Ok, this is my last question. Why did you do this John, why?"
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Now that's a fair question. I created KaleidoSonics for a number of reasons. First, money. Mediavision, maker of the ProAudio Spectrum line of sound cards sponsored a programming contest for the product that best showcased their 16 bit digital sound card. Now even though I live off of a huge government sponsored research grant, I can always use some pocket change. So I decided to enter the 'programming' contest with a co-ordinated plan.

My secret weapon was to create a product that showcased one the most talented and original composers in the country, Rob Wallace. I offered Rob half of any prize winnings in exchange for composing the music and providing the digital sound effects. Since Multimedia is the rage, I decided to pull visuals from the wide array of utilitarian multimedia CD products available, like Media Clips and Wraptures. These CD's contain breathtaking imagery that you can incorporate into your own multimedia presentations, and allow you to act cocky as if you had created it yourself. Since I'm cocky by nature, and I love to leech off of the creative talent of others, I purchased every single MediaClips and Wraptures CD available and used only the most breathtaking photographs from each.

After acquiring this great music, and beautiful photographs, I applied my vast knowledge of the assembly language instruction 'REP MOVSD' to make some killer visual effects. I don't know why watching computer visual effects is so captivating, but for some reason it is.

At this point KaleidoSonics had grown to be a much bigger product than something just for a programming contest. (It took 3rd place, following a couple of very clever Windows programs) Since I am such a huge fan of Rob Wallace's music I started scheming up ways we could produce a 'CD-ROM' as an excuse to master Rob's first album. As the first official Rob Wallace groupie, as well as president of the Rob Wallace fan club. I searched for a publisher that would let us produce, market, and promote a Rob Wallace album, with KaleidoSonics software as a visual accompaniment. For those of you who get to hear the digitally mastered KaleidoSonics soundtrack I think you will be amazed at what Rob can do with a MIDI synthesizer. This may well be the first music CD produced and mastered in a 100% MIDI studio.

I hope you get as much enjoyment out of KaleidoSonics as Rob and I have had creating it. If it is a success we look forward to producing a new album, and a new piece of visual art to go with it. Please enjoy.

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Bio: John Ratcliff
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John Ratcliff is a graphic artist, designer, and programmer who lives in St. Louis with his wife, Terry, and four children, Douglas, Johnny, Lauren, and Alex. John's diverse background includes development of numerous educational software products, a 5 year stint as a cardiovascular researcher at St. Louis University, and more recently as a computer game author. His entertainment products include 688 Attack Sub and Seawolf from Electronic Arts and KaleidoSonics from Masque publishing. John has contributed video, communications, music and sound technology to over 100 entertainment, educational and multimedia products. He is already starting on new projects in virtual reality simulation and interactive art and music.

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Bio: Rob Wallace
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Rob Wallace lives and works in a MIDI studio he has built in his home in Glendale, Arizona, which he shares with his wife, Jean Marie, and two sons, Bobby and David. Rob Wallace has produced music for dozens of computer games and multimedia products. He has done work for The Software Toolworks (Miracle Piano Teaching System, Mario's Missing Deluxe) MECC, Masque Publishing, Compu-Teach, Accolade, and many others. KaleidoSonics is Rob's debut album. (Available on CD or tape) a rich combination of new age and jazz fusion performed on MIDI synthesizers such as the Roland Sound Canvas and Kurzweil K-2000. In addition to being the industry's leading interactive media composer, Rob has supported theatre, music groups, and public radio as well as composing for film and television. Rob is looking forward to doing a follow up album to KaleidoSonics as well as doing more composition supporting the visual arts.

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