The Juker

Version 2.1

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Introduction

The Juker is a versatile MIDI jukebox. Songs can be queued to play at a sequential or random order. Songs queued can be saved in an album and played in later sessions. The Juker saves its settings and window location on exit to use them for the next session. It even saves the currently playing song, so can pick up exactly where you left off when you start again. The Juker can also play wave audio (WAV) files as well as MIDI (MID) files, though its main purpose is playing the latter.

Song progress is shown by a moving sound bar. Undesired songs can be removed from the queue and optionally deleted from disk. While a song is playing,   it can be stopped or paused and then resumed.

The Juker is meant to be unobtrusive, it can run all the time as an icon. The animated icon provides a pleasant visual feedback on the play progress. Song play can be paused and resumed simply by clicking the right mouse button on the icon. The name of the current song is shown is shown in the icon's caption, so it's always visible.

When another session of the Juker is invoked while the first is still running, it merely restores and raises the first one, no new session is started.
See also: Albums, Animated Icon

Installation

Unpack the distribution archive anywhere you like, then copy or move ctl3.dll to Windows system directory (e.g. \windows\system) if it is not already there.

Albums

Albums provide a convenient way of grouping songs into various categories. For example, you might want to put all your classic music pieces in an album, jazz in another, ..etc. Or, if different people share the same machine, each might have his or her own album, which can be tailored according the personal taste.

An album is simply a separate song queue. Earlier versions of the Juker allowed only for a single queue, which can be considered as supporting only a single album.

When the program is invoked for the first time, is opens a default album. You can create a new icon by making changes to this album by adding or removing songs from the queue and then saving it under a name you like using Save As. When the program is started the next time, it automatically opens the album of the last session (unless an album is specified on the command line, see Command Line).

Unless you want to create a new album, you normally need not worry about saving albums. They are saved automatically on program exit and when a new album is opened (thus closing the current one). Automatic saving can be disabled however, via the Auto Save AlbumAutoSaveAlbum check box.

Albums are loaded by simply dragging an dropping them into the Juker's window or icon. The program is smart enough to know whether the dropped file is an album or a song. See also Mouse actions.

If you do not want to take advantage of icons, you can forget about all the above and use the Juker with just a single song queue. Albums will be transparent to you in this case, and you need not bother with them.

Animated Icon

Since the Juker is meant to be unobtrusive, it is designed to be run most of the time as an icon. When minimized, the essential functions of the program can be activated via the system menu or the right mouse button (see Mouse actions), and the song play progress is visually conveyed via an animated icon.

The icon has picture of a saxophone sinking in the ocean. The percentage song progress is indicated by the top of the saxophone. At the beginning of the song, the instrument is fully visible. As the song is played, however, the saxophone slowly sinks in the ocean, until it is completely immersed at the song end.

Command Line

The program accepts a single album file name at the command line. If an album is specified at the command line, that album is loaded on startup instead of last session's or the default album. See Invocation Tips for more details.

Invocation Tips

Besides the usual way to starting the Juker (i.e. from the File Manager or Program Manager and then dragging an album if one different than last session's is desired), here are some ideas you might want to use:

Highlight any album (ALB) file in the File Manager. Select Associate from the File menu. Click Browse, and select the Juker's program file (juker.exe). Click OK. From now on you can start the Juker with your favorite album by simply double clicking on that album in the File Manager.

After doing the above, drag your frequently-used albums to the a group Program Manager. As you drop each album in the Program Manager, a new entry with the Juker's icon will be created. You can then start you favorite album by simply double-clicking on its icon in the Program Manager.

Mouse

Dragging and Dropping

Dragging a song (MIDI or WAV) file to the Juker's window or icon adds that song to the album queue. Dragging an album (ALB) file closes the currently opened album and opens the dropped album.

Note, however, that although it is perfectly fine to drop multiple songs into the queue simultaneously, you may not drop multiple albums, nor albums and songs together.

Left Button

Clicking the left mouse button on any song in the queue starts playing that song from its beginning.

Right Button

Clicking the right mouse button on the Juker's icon pauses the song currently playing or resumes playing it if already paused. The system menu is updated accordingly.

Keyboard

Tab

Switches between window groups and group members.

Arrow Keys

Switches between group members. For example, when in the queue list box group, switches between songs; when in the Play button group, switches between the three member buttons (Play/Pause, Stop, and Stick/Unstick).

Buttons

Play/Pause
Plays the current song from the beginning if stopped, resumes playing the current song if paused, or pauses the song if playing (as appropriate). This buttons changes its title according to its current function.

Stop
Stops the song play. In contrast to Pause, a song that is stopped cannot be resumed, it starts playing from the beginning if Play is depressed.

Stick/Unstick
Sticks to the current song: continuously plays the currently playing song until Unstick is depressed. This button is useful if during playing, a particular song appeals to and you want to listen just to it for a while. This buttons changes its title according to its current function.

Circulate
Plays the next song, or the next randomly-selected song if <u>Random Order</u> is checked.

Remove
Removes the current song from the queue, Plays the next song. If no songs are left in the queue, playing is stopped.

Clear
Removes all songs from the queue. Stops song play.

Delete
Deletes the song file from disk. Prompts the user for confirmation if <u>Confirm Delete</u> is enabled.

Save (Album)
Saves the current album to disk.

Save As (Album)
Saves the current album under a possibly different name. Use it to create new albums by saving the currently loaded one under a different name.

Help
Displays the help index.

About
Pops up some information about the program.

Exit
Terminates the program.

System Menu

Pause
Pauses or resumes playing the current song. A check mark indicates the current status. Equivalent to the Play/Pause button.

Stick
Sticks or unsticks to the current song. A check mark indicates the current status. Equivalent to the Stick/Unstick button.

Circulate
Equivalent to the Circulate button.

Remove
Removes the current song from the queue. Equivalent to clicking the Remove button.

Delete
Deletes the song file from disk. Equivalent to clicking the Delete button.

Check Boxes

The status of every check box is saved on exit and used in the next session, so there is no need to adjust it on every program invocation.

Continuous Loop
Continuous play. Loops to the first song when the last one in the queue finishes playing.

Random Order
Plays songs in random rather than sequential order. This also effectively yields continuous play.

Auto Save Album
Saves the current album on program exit or when another album is opened (e.g. by dragging it to the Juker's window or icon).

Confirm Delete
Prompts for confirmation for deleting disk file when Delete is invoked.

Status Bar

An informative status bar is displayed at the bottom of the window. It shows the following, respectively:
Name of the current song.
Name of the current album.
Order of the song in the queue.
Total number of songs in the queue.
Current time position in the song, which duplicates the information provided by the thumbnail.
Length of the current song in minutes.

Registration

This software is free. It needs no registration. Letting me know that you use it and appreciate it would be a nice touch though. Suggestions to improve the program are also welcome. If you can, please also fill in the survey included with the package and send to me. I appreciate the feedback. I can be contacted as follows:

Internet:
alsaggaf@athena.mit.edu

BBS:
Channel-1. If you download this program from Channel-1 and like it, I'd appreciate it if you leave me a note there.

Snail mail:
Muhammad M. Saggaf, 262 Sidney ST. #3, Cambridge, MA 02139,

or
P.O. Box 9863, Dhahran 31311, Saudi Arabia.

Free Windows Software Foundation

I recently switched from using Unix at home to using Windows and was appalled that everybody wants to make money of his/her programs -- however trivial it is. This is not good. If one pays for even the littlest of utilities, he would be tempted to charge money for the programs he writes, to recoup his losses, whilst the spread of free software encourages everybody to donate their own.

The **FWSF** is intended to promote free software. Any author of a free Windows program is entitled to join.

Other Free Software

If you use Unix as well, you may want to try the following programs I wrote:

Babaya
X Windows session manager

Mumail
MIME-compliant mail reader for X Windows.

Seyon
Full-featured communications program for X Windows.

Xrz3D
X Windows interface for Zmodem.

Other Free Software for MS-Windows

All3D
By Andreas Furrer: Adds 3D look to most applications.

Bang
By Rembrandt *et. al.:* Have fun as you fire a machine gun at your desktop.

Dropper
By Paul Butcher: A NeXT-like docking program launcher.

Fast File Find
By D. Munro: Searches for files.

PFE
By Alan Philips: A programmer's' editor. Good Notepad replacement.

Ftaskmanager
By Andreas Furrer: A replacement for Windows Task Manager.

WinEKG
by Gary Williamson: CPU usage monitor, *ala* xload for Unix.

Release Notes

The program now uses albums (multiple queues). You don't need to use albums if you don't feel like it (they will be transparent to you in this case). The only thing to note is that because of the change, the first time the program is started after the upgrade it will not *remember* the queue of the last session. Remake those selections and things will return to normal when you run the program the next time.

Song included in this release
Beethoven's Moonlight Sonata.

Revision History

Version 2.1
Fixed a bug in Album*Save functin.

Version 2.0
Removed Size and Maximize from the system menu since they're not needed here.
Now the program itself paints the icon, instead of letting Windows do it. More flexible this way.
Added an animated icon that provides a good visual feedback of song progress.
Introduced albums. Now different song queues can be saved and retrieved at will.
Maximum number of songs saved in a queue (album) is now 1000 instead of 100.
Replaced Save Queue on Exit by Auto Save Album.
Added a survey to the archive. To be filled by interested users for feedback on the program and suggestions for improvement.
The program now accepts an album file name on the command line and will load it on startup if specified.
Beefed up the help file quite a bit. Even added a sound clip.
The program can now play WAV files as well.

Version 1.4
The program now uses a private initialization file (Juker.ini). Program information left in win.ini by a previous version will automatically be cleaned by the new version. Win.ini is no longer used by the Juker. Using a private initialization file is faster, reduces the clutter in win.ini, and is in accordance with Windows guidelines.
Fixed the keyboard interface, which was broken in the previous version. Also, all buttons are now accessible by the tab key. Much more intuitive this way.
Some appearance changes (frames around the windows).
Now saves and restores the stick state.
Added upgrade information dialog box, to alert the user to important release notes.
Fixed a bug in pause/resume that would cause the next song not to play if the current one has been paused then resumed.
The Juker's window no longer sizes, since it's not supposed to.
Added an informative status bar at the bottom of the window.
Added Circulate, both as a button and in the system menu.

Version 1.2
Window and icon captions are now in capitals. Easier to read when iconified.
The program now starts at the song it was playing on exit in the last session.
Clearing the queue or removing the last item now stops song play.
Added stick/unstick as a button and in the system menu.
Unified the play and pause buttons.
Full song name are now aligned as a table to make it easier to read the song name.
Cleaned up the keyboard interface (tabs and arrow keys) to make it easier to use the program with just the keyboard.
Now consumes virtually no CPU time.

Version 1.1
Second invocation of the program restores (if iconic) and raises first one. Does not start a new instance.
More object-like (check boxes, ..etc. are now implemented as objects).
Added help and activated the help button.
If Random Order is checked, the program plays a random first item when starting (if some songs are present in the queue).
Closing the program from the system menu now saves the profile.
Added Delete button (remove disk file) and Confirm Delete check box.
Added Remove and Delete to system menu.

New 3D look using ctl3d.dll.
Clicking the right mouse button on the icon now toggles pause/play.
Song names are shown differently in the queue so that the base name of the file is always visible, even if the full song path name is too long.
The program now remembers its position even if it closed while iconified.
Smaller window and fonts
Rearranged the placement of the buttons.
Now uses time as the sequence format.
Songs names are now displayed in lower case.
The sound thumbnail is now unresponsive to mouse events.

Version 1.0b
Initial release.