

The Northwest CYBERARTIST

The Newsletter of Northwest CyberArtists

May 1993
Volume One
Number Four

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**NOTICE! Our May Meeting is on May 10th,
the SECOND Monday of May! This is to
accommodate the schedule of our Guest
Speaker — Craig Anderton.**

You Too, Can Check Out The BBS Scene

by Bob Hausenbuiller,
AKA Bobby Keyes

Bob Hausenbuiller was kind enough to supply us with an article about some of the local NW BBS services that support MIDI users. I spend a lot of time on CompuServe myself in the MIDI forums, and must say that this global village of ours can be fascinating. I one time responded to a question about O1/Ws and wound up in a conversation between me in Seattle, a fellow in Jakarta, and one in Austria. With access to a lot of helpful and kind people throughout the planet, even the most difficult situations can get cleared up rapidly!

But the international global village has one drawback for me. I realize that it is not likely that I will ever meet the wonderful people I'm communicating with. So I, for one, am very interested in learning about the local boards with hope that some of us Cyber folks who see each other at least once a month can find an electronic home or two in which to share our information. Perhaps we can meet new people who will be looking for a group like ours jump into.

Thanks for the article, Bob!
(Einar Ask)

One source of BBS numbers is the publication entitled **The Puget Sound Computer User**. This is a free publication which can be found in the advertising stands located near the entrances of most large grocery stores and malls. They can also be had from most computer hardware and software outlets. A listing of BBSs can be found in the last few pages of the issue, along with lists of special interest groups (SIGs) among which is listed Northwest CyberArtists. It was this list, I should hasten to say, that directed me to NEMUS.

Many of the bulletin boards also have accessible lists of other bulletin boards in the area.

I generally try to call only the local boards, as long distance charges add up rather quickly when your mind becomes immersed in data bits and downloads.

Music Cool is the Northwest's access to **MIDIlink**. Through MIDIlink one has direct access to conferences and discussions with actual technical people working with:

Apple/Mac	Keytronics	Steinberg-Jones
Atari	Kurzweil	Turtle Beach
Careers	Law & Music	Twelve Tone
Commodore	Mackie Designs	Voyetra
Cool Shoes	Main(MIDIlink)For Sale	
MusicQuest	IBM	Power Chords
Jammer	Sound cards	and many more...

Music Cool's Sysop, Gordon Leck-enby, is a musician himself, as well as an experienced electronics/computer repair technician. He is well-versed in electron-

ics, digital and MIDI. The phone number for Music Cool is 248-9453.

There are four categories of membership:

...continues on page 2

Last Meeting

- Einar Ask and Paul Wynia set a record for equipment loaded in to our meeting! Thanks for the great demo and hard work!

Next Meeting:

- May 10, 7:30 pm at the Art Institute of Seattle, Room 611/612, 2323 Elliot Avenue, Seattle.
- As noted above, Craig Anderton is our guest speaker for May. Craig is a columnist for EQ, Guitar Player, Keyboard, Pro Sound News, among many others. He is currently writing a major book with our own Bob Moses entitled "Digital Projects for Musicians" and creating killer Techno Music.

A Look Ahead:

- June 7th brings us Craig Rosenberg with a presentation of the tools, techniques and issues relating to development and use of virtual worlds technologies.
- Upcoming dates may include: Mackie Designs, Silicon Graphics, Lone Wolf and more!

continues from page 1...

Level 1

Registered, but non subscribing
fee - none
time limit - 30 minutes/day
(25 minutes for the first call of
the day).
download limit - 50k
file limit - 10 files/day
limited to public domain files
(some MIDI files)

Level 2

Subscribing member
fee - \$20/year
time limit - 30 minutes/day
download limit - 300kbytes/day
file limit - 20 files any area.

Level 3

Subscribing member
fee - \$30/year.
time limit - 40 minutes/day
download limit - 20 files

Level 4

Subscribing member
fee - \$40/year
time limit - 60 minutes/day
download limit - 600kbytes/day
file limit - unlimited

There are many downloadable programs on Music Cool. Many of them are MIDI sequences, but there are also programs to aid sequencing, library/editor programs, utility programs for the musician. Some programs designed for specific machines and keyboards such as Atari or Mac and Sound Canvas or Yamaha.

There are a few other musician-oriented BBSs in the Puget Sound area that I must mention.

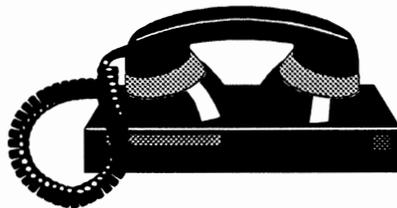
First, there is **The NW Best BBS**, which has a library of nice public domain MIDI sequences. There are two numbers for this BBS. For modems that operate at 14.4 baud call 939-6337; 2400 baud modems call 939-6813.

This is a subscribers' BBS, but new users are allowed to look around and download a few files, including MIDI. The subscription rate is low (around \$10/year, I believe — not bad when you consider what some of the sequence companies charge per tune through the mail).

The Sysop is Al Perez and his voice number is 931-8492 if you want to chat with him.

Another musician's board is **American Music**. The board is a part time BBS only online from 6pm to 9am. I assume it is still in operation, but I haven't been able to contact it in the last several days. It is, as its namesake implies, supported by the American Music store chain. It has a few downloadable MIDI files and support conferences, but I haven't been impressed by what they have, especially when you take into consideration that they are supported by a retail business. Anyway, their BBS number is 632-2485.

There is also a BBS called **MIDI Exchange** at 383-8072 which is either Mac or Atari, I don't recall which, but since I have a PC it doesn't really matter to me; I can't use it.



There are other bulletin boards out there in our area that have musical interests at heart. Some of them are incompatible with my system, others just don't advertise the fact they have music files (like the NW's Best BBS, above). It is just a matter of calling the local BBS systems and checking through their menus one at a time.

You too, can check out the BBS scene!

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Member Information and Events

Introducing the **Northwest Electro-Industrial Coalition** — a group of local industrial music artists. They meet the first Wednesday of each month — contact **Doug Lemmon** at (206) 328-3780 for location. This group (in conjunction with BJM Productions) has a permanent Sunday night performance slot at The Rendezvous (2nd and Battery, Seattle.) The line-up this month includes:

May 9 **Shallow Head** (with Paul Wynia) and **The Same** (Einar Ask)

May 16 **Synthesia Murder Program** with **Anti-Christ Whipped**

May 23 **Kill Switch...Klick** and **Sex with Sarah**

For more information call the Northwest Electro-Industrial Coalition at (206) 628-9243

Mona Lisa Overdrive with **The Hungry Crocodiles** April 30 The Off Ramp (628-0232), Seattle

Upcoming gigs for **RIMFIRE**, (formerly Bobby & The Jets:)

April 30 & May 1st; May 7 & 8 — El Tapatio Lounge, Skyway

May 14 & 15; June 4 & 5 — Garden House Lounge, Port Orchard 876-6688

May 20, 21 & 22nd; June 10, 11 & 12 — Bourbon Street Lounge, Lakewood 888-4788

May 28 & 29 — VIPS Lounge, Bremerton 377-2924

June 18 & 19 — Green River Tavern, Palmer 886-2400

From The Editor

by John Hokenson

Watching the thought processes evolve with our regular columnists has been an interesting experience for me. I am usually one of the first to see the monthly pieces as they are submitted and it's neat to see how problems are raised, then solutions offered! I commented in a previous editorial on the need to find "work-arounds" for less-than-cooperative electronic instruments and equipment to avoid stifling the creative instincts.

Witness **Bob Moses'** observation of the intriguing collaboration between Brian Karr, David Schoenbach, Craig Rosenberg and Allen Claxton in his article on performing. And **Einar Ask's** solution to the live-performance dilemma — to sequence or to tape...

At the risk of beating a dead horse, I want to re-emphasize the importance of transcending the medium. What Brian, David, Craig and Allen are doing is an excellent example of the whole being greater than the sum of the parts.

In Einar's case, he recognized the problems inherent in solo performances by electronic musicians and figured out a work-around that will maintain the "look-and-feel" of a fully live performance —

wearing a headset for increased mobility on the stage, using a DAT machine to retain the "feel" of the music and avoiding the potential pitfalls of not having a separate sound man.



I am pleased to see the return this month of our *Member Information And Events* section. Previous issues of *The Oscillator* had regular listing of who was doing what and I believe the members enjoy knowing who has upcoming gigs and about future events. We can't collaborate if we don't know what the others are doing!

Please, if you have a gig coming up, a demonstration scheduled, et cetera — send me an e-mail message so we can add it to the calendar. This newsletter reaches a lot of people — you never know who might show up at one of your performances!



Thanks are in order to **Bob Hausenbuiller** for his efforts researching the various bulletin boards in the area that offer material of interest to the CyberArtist. The Northwest CyberArtist would also like to extend its thanks to **Julie Ask** for copy

editing this month's newsletter (the editor has hopes she will consider becoming our permanent Copy Editor). Julie and Einar recently had a new addition to the family, and your ever-sneaky editor decided that perhaps as Julie was at home for a while, maybe she would consider "helping us out." Anyway, thanks for your help, Julie.



Steve Turnidge has been posting *The Northwest CyberArtist* on CompuServe every month and it has attracted the attention of a programmer in Edmonton, Mohamed Bhimji. He has developed *The Incredible Magazine Machine*, which is essentially a hypertext-based electronic magazine which runs on any PC with an EGA-or-better video display. Mohamed's electronic magazine features *Cyberworlds Journal*, *CyberArts*, virtual reality and assorted electronic media topics. He wants to include the text from *The Northwest CyberArtist* in his magazine!

We (Steve and I) gave him the go ahead — with the proviso that no one be charged for any of the CyberArtist information. Our influence is spreading! More on this next month...

A Northwest CyberArtists Performance?

by Bob Moses
(Production Manager)

Several months ago I circulated a survey at a Northwest CyberArtists meeting in which I asked for people's ideas about a performance. To date, I have received four responses. Now, I wasn't really expecting a lot of feedback. I rarely answer surveys. Even the ones that come in the mail with one dollar bills attached to them. I usually pocket the dollar bill and throw the survey away. I mean, come on. Do they really think the 20 minutes of my time it would take to fill out their survey is worth one dollar? This is insulting.

Sometimes people are motivated to do things without a monetary incentive. These people have alternative motives — having fun, or expressing their ideas or feelings. These are the motives I'm hoping will cause a group of energetic

people to join together and put on a Northwest CyberArtists performance. We're not going to get rich or famous, but we'll have a lot of fun and we'll have an opportunity to present our art. So, if you have something inside you which is burning to come out, I urge you to come forward and share it.



What type of "performance" could we do? Actually, I think *performance* is probably the wrong word. One of the underlying ideas behind *CyberArts* is the collaboration between people with very different backgrounds. Instead of a *performance*, we might show an *exhibit*, or maybe create an *experience*. And we don't have to do one big thing, we might facilitate a number of individual projects. Already, several very interesting collaborations have grown out of our group.

For example, **Brian Karr**, who shared his expertise in three-dimensional audio processing at our January meeting and **David Schoenbach**, who shared the *Rokeytizer* (Video-to-MIDI) in March have teamed up with **Craig Rosenberg** (one of our computer graphics gurus) and **Allen Claxton** (one of our loudspeaker and woodworking craftsmen) to create a "Virtual Reality Garden". These guys are going to do something that's never been done before. That's really cool.

Whatever we do, I don't feel rushed to push it. It will happen when it's ready. "When it's ready" is determined when enough people come forward — inspired, committed, and able to make it happen. If you feel anxious, look me up. I'll act as the Northwest CyberArtists match maker. Getting people together to collaborate in wildly new ways is what turns me on. So — turn me on!

OUT OF MY MIND

by Einar Ask

Decisions, decisions. Life should not be so complicated. I'm bored with sitting in my basement and playing with knobs and screens and switches and plugs and keyboards. I have many years worth of music that I would like to perform. I want to be up on stage again. So here I go figuring it's no problem what with all the portable equipment I have, except that now I wonder how interesting it could possibly be to watch a guy like me sing along to a bunch of pre-programmed music. Not very, I would think.

So I decided that I need to incorporate some interesting visual elements into this performance coming up. The last time I was on stage I was a bass player in a traditional band with a drummer and everything! Those were the days. All I had to do was get along with everyone and play what sounded right. No worry about what might be happening on stage. The audience came to see a live band play their instruments and to hear how everything went. There is a joy in knowing that each performance is different and that you might be catching a band on a good night - or not! Now, as just one guy with preprogrammed music, I have to make a decision about what I want people to see me doing.

First off, I can't physically play all the parts live, so every song will either have to have sequenced bits playing, or a backing tape. This is difficult. People say sequencers take all the human element out of music. There are even fewer positive things said about backing tapes. I

have given this careful thought to find the lesser of the two necessary evils.

Sequencing live with multiple instruments/modules on stage offers many wonderful noises to be controlled by a good sound man at the end of the room. He could adjust each sound for the acoustics of a given room, boost or alter kick drums and bass lines to drive a crowd wild with dance fever etc... But I don't have a sound man, let alone anyone who knows my music, and I don't (especially after last month) have a passion for driving my equipment around. Another complication is that each instrument trades off playing bass, lead and noises etc. which means that the poor guy at the board would never really know what channel was making what noise. Ahhh, synthesis!

Backing tapes offer me a chance to guess at the best overall mix for a club and just show up with whatever equipment I might wish to play live with over the tape. Especially since this is my first show in eight years, I feel this is a wise choice. I have a DAT deck so I know I can bring quality signal into the club.

And here's why I need visual stimulation. Just me and a tape deck and a mike? I think not! I get uncomfortable speaking in public — I need to hide behind something. So I'm thinking of low cost ways to join the in-crowd of performing artists, and here's some of the things I've come up with.

I bought a used Roland Pad-8. This will give me eight little squares to smack with sticks as I sing, and the squares in

turn will trigger whatever special noises I want to bring along. Much more interesting than me standing there like a bump. This Pad-8 also has six trigger ins, so I'm given an option of buying, or more interestingly, building my own "drum kit". I have some ideas here that I can't let out just yet!

I might possibly have a volunteer projectionist as well, showing clever little films over the entire stage. This makes me more comfortable since there will be something moving in the background at all times, and it will be constantly changing.

I will bring one or two analog keyboards for creating interesting sounds along with the music as well — thus adding to the illusion that I'm really doing something!

Another thing that sounds interesting to me is making my own home made video of images that match the music. I wouldn't sync it to the backing tape, but rather make it abstract enough that it might actually accent some of the songs in unintended ways.

I have ordered a headset microphone to help with mobility. I didn't want to be tied down to a specific location behind a keyboard. I like this idea a lot. I wish I could juggle knives or flaming mallets while singing, but since I can't, I will at least walk around and be social!

Next Month I'll let you know how this learning experience turned out —

— See Ya.

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