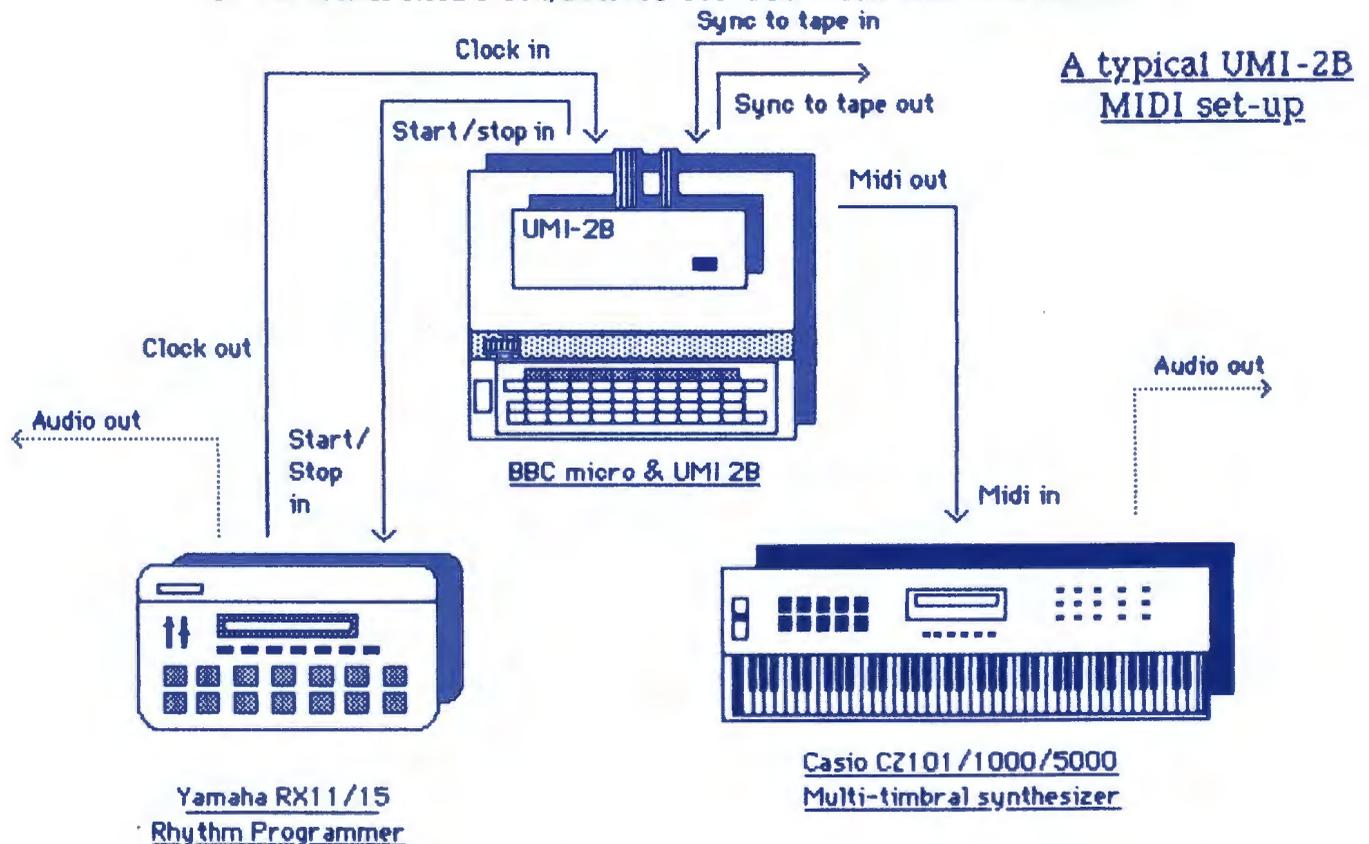


The UMUSIC UMI-2B System

A 16 track MIDI sequencer for use with the BBC micro



This professional sequencer/DX-7 patch/bank dump package for the BBC B microcomputer and MIDI musical instruments is fast becoming accepted as the most user-friendly on the market. Not only can UMI-2B sequence MIDI keyboards with patch (sound memory) changes but it can also be used to control MIDI effects units (such as the Yamaha D-1500 digital delay, Yamaha Rev-7 digital reverb, Roland SDE-2500 DDL & SRV-2000 MIDI digital reverb) and MIDI drum machines with full velocity control step-by-step or in real time.

Only a few years ago this type of computer sound mixing could only be dreamed about, but now it is a reality and musicians are finding new ideas for creativity with the UMI system.

UMI-2B consists of a custom hardware MIDI interface unit and a software sequencing programme on sideways ROM inside the BBC micro. It is exclusively available from The London Rock Shop who will advise on the purchase of a BBC B and disk or cassette system and fit the software ROM inside your BBC at no charge. The programme remains resident inside the BBC B at all times and need not be removed unless other sideways ROM programmes are required to run (such as a word-processing system to type your session invoices!). Should you require several programmes resident inside the Beeb then a simple sideways ROM extension board can be fitted inside the lid or micro. This is one of the great advantages of using the BBC B as the basis for your computer-controlled set-up.

cont.....

Turn on your BBC B mains supply, type * UMI and you will be up and running in the sequencer programme within 1 second....it's as easy as that!

UMI is available in two versions: with (£495 inc. vat) or without an Aries 20k RAM memory expansion board (£575 complete inc. vat). The version without an Aries board will allow for future UMI software updates to be fitted in the spare ROM socket, whilst the ARIES-fitted version uses that spare ROM socket to 'see' the extra memory capacity and would therefore need a ROM extension board (approx. £45) for future software expansion. No wonder Paul Colbert (editor of 1,2 Testing magazine) said that UMI was "unusual, professional, immensely expressive and big on memory" in their Dec. '84 issue. Once the Aries board is fitted you can forget about it as you will find it difficult to fill up the complete memory (which can't be said about some other Midi hardware and software sequencers now on the market..... just read the reviews).

Above all else, the UMI system is easy to use with simple, single letter or function key commands and does not require the musician to understand the language of computers at all. "A well-designed, comprehensive and straightforward software package that was designed for, grows with, and never talks down to the impatient, ignorant and decisive beast that is the modern musician" is how Dan Goldstein described UMI in Electronics and Music Maker.

HOW POWERFUL IS UMI?

UMI can control 16 completely independent polyphonic tracks at any one time, just like a tape recorder (except that it records the MIDI control codes not the actual audio sounds). One Yamaha DX-7, say, can play 16 notes over its keyboard at the same time but not 16 different sounds. The new breed of multi-timbral synthesizers can play several different sounds at the same time (e.g. the Casio CZ-101 & CZ-1000 will play up to 4 different monophonic voices or two duophonic voices or 1 plus 3 voices etc.). These different sounds are accessed via UMI by programming them to play on differing tracks with different MIDI channels. Each of the 16 different UMI tracks can be assigned to play on any or all of the 16 different MIDI channels.

For example, all the 16 UMI tracks can be assigned to play on one Yamaha DX-7 at home and then re-assigned to different MIDI channels to play other MIDI keyboards in the studio. This assumes that each part (i.e. bass line, chords, harmony parts & top line) of your composition is written into UMI on a separate track; you have 16 tracks to play with just like a multi-track tape recorder.

"Compared to the Fairlight, which can only sound eight notes simultaneously, this (UMI-2B) is a considerable advance in compositional power and with the use of units (*that sample*).....you could even challenge the Fairlight on its own home ground.....the UMI-2B is clearly a powerful and professional system." Tony Mills in *Electronic Soundmaker & Computer Musician* July 1985.

Vince Clark (owner of Splendid Studio and of Depeche Mode and Yazoo fame says "It's really easy to use and very fast - you can load a song just like that, and if all your synth voices are ready you can include patch changes as well. Live work with UMI is quite feasible - nowadays I just work at home and bring the UMI with me to the studio."

HOW DO I COMPOSE A SONG ON UMI?

By simply writing in various patterns (either with real-time playing as you would recording in a studio but bit by bit or in step-time mode) and then stringing them together end to end in song chain mode. You can repeat certain patterns within the song chain just as in a conventional music score. Using just one keyboard and the sync-to-tape facility on a multitrack tape-recorder you can even build up all the parts one by one so that the final arrangement will sound just as you imagined it in your head!

WHAT DOESN'T UMI DO?

[1] It won't print your music out in conventional music notation format; to do this professionally you really need a more powerful microcomputer such as the IBM. [2] At the moment, you cannot edit step-time pattern data in the same format as you put it in; this is essentially what we call micro-composing and can only be achieved usefully, but slowly, on the Yamaha QX-1. [3] Once you have created several backing tracks in song chain mode (e.g. bass and chords) wouldn't it be nice to play the top line in one take without having to build it up from patterns? Yes, but this is essentially recording and not sequencing. There has to be some kind of trade-off between using the best-supported and best value home micro in England and the ultimate demands of the working musician/arranger. The reason that UMI is unique is that it is based on a very powerful but budget computer and is upgradeable by software improvements.

WHAT ABOUT FUTURE SOFTWARE DEVELOPMENTS?

[A] A universal patch dump software for Yamaha, Roland, Oberheim, Casio and other keyboards (maybe even drum machine data) using building blocks to cater for your own precise set-up. [B] Context play whereby you can hear a series of, say, four patterns before you drop into record mode for the fifth. [C] Editing and possible sample dumping for the amazing Ensoniq 'Mirage'. [D] Yamaha DX-7/UMI voice library: 500+ new sounds for your DX-7 on 10 pre-formatted UMI disks - NOW AVAILABLE only £79 !

UMI-2B SPECIFICATION:

July 1985

UMI CUSTOM MIDI HARDWARE INTERFACE:

MIDI Input x 1

MIDI 1 Output x 2 (ACIA 1) *Dual ACIAs are MIDI channels wired in*

MIDI 2 Output x 2 (ACIA 2) *parallel since MIDI is serial data*

Start/Stop manual switch and start/stop auto jack socket for output only.

Clock pulse input socket (variable in software between 24,48 & 96).

Clock output 5v at 24 pulse per quarter note and Sync 24 (Roland) output.

Trigger 5v output for arpeggiators (sends same time base as clock selected)

Sync-to-Tape Output and Input.

Click Output for amplifying of metronome output when internal clock used.

34 & 20 way ribbon cables connect to BBC's 1 MHz bus and user port.

SOFTWARE ON SIDEWAYS ROM:

Variable clock pulse (24, 48 or 96 external clock) or Internal clock.

Variable pattern length (max. 64 beats) for *each* of the 127 patterns.

Variable 'beat'- crotchet (for 3/4 or 4/4) or quaver (for 5/8 or 7/8).

Cassette or Floppy disk storage (if Acorn Disk Filing System [DFS] fitted) of songs and Yamaha DX-7 individual patches and/or banks of 32 patches.

Variable metronome click (switchable on/off).

Variable count-in period (for real-time input).

After-touch can be ignored for each pattern if required since it uses up a large amount of MIDI data.

Step-time pattern write (variable beats per bar and steps per beat) with MIDI keyboard polyphonic note entry, individual note key velocity (1 to 127) and gate length (100, 75, 30, or 10%).

Real-time pattern write (variable up to 64 beats length) with auto-start from keyboard or with count-in (internal clock) whilst listening to up to 4 other patterns and external drum machine.

Play pattern mode can re-route to any of 16 MIDI channels instantly.

Edit pattern allows note display (not notation) and deletion step-by-step, overdubbing (try or commit) in real-time, auto correction (variable time base), byte count, pack (compress) or erase modulation wheel data, pack or erase pitch bend data, re-record, retrieve original after incorrect auto-correction or 'pac', copy from one location to another and erase pattern.

Notes page saved with song for track/ MIDI channel and voice assignments.

16 (A-P) track Write/Edit Song Chain pages with pattern transposition, routemap pointers (repeat, 1st. & 2nd. time bars, coda, D.S.), play from link number etc.

Further details may be obtained from the exclusive selling agents:

THE LONDON ROCK SHOP 26 CHALK FARM ROAD LONDON NW1 8AG

Tel: 01-267 7851 / 5381 / 1771

UMI-2B is manufactured by UMUSIC and was devised by Lynton Haiff and Paul Ludgate. The UMI specification is subject to change without notice.