

2: Producing With MIDI

INTRO

A MIDI file contains...instructions to play a particular series of notes on an electronic music synthesizer. A MIDI file is more like a piano roll in a player piano than any type of sound recording.

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INTRODUCTION

For over 40 years, the Musical Instrument Digital Interface (or MIDI for short) has been the primary method of creating electronic music. An update on the ancient concept of a player piano's "Piano Roll", this method of music production lets the producer record and play back note information, rather than recorded sound. Among its many benefits, it provides musicians with a wealth of abilities to record ideas quickly, edit the timing and playback of every note, and change the sounds of the production after the fact.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

From this lesson, students should be able to:

- Understand the role of MIDI in Electronic Music Production

- Record their first Bass and Synth MIDI parts into their Song
- Integrate Pre-Existing Loops into their Song

10-15 MINUTE LESSON INTRODUCTION

Open the demo session and play this weeks finished demo track for the class.

Solo and Mute the tracks to demonstrate the differences between the song with just a basic beat, and the one with the additional Bass and Synth tracks.

This allows the students to see how they can improve their own beat by adding additional MIDI elements.

TEACHING TIPS

End every class meeting by having the students perform their tracks out loud for one another. Being able to perform and receive validation from their peers will encourage them to continue putting in effort outside of class to improve their skills).

GUIDED DISCUSSION

Video Lesson: Week 2-Producing with MIDI - GRAMMY-BBTTTC

Play the video for the class to demonstrate how the demo was created.

After watching the video as a class, have the students work in groups for the Hands On Experience.

VIDEO: Producing with MIDI



HANDS ON EXPERIENCE

Have the students work in their groups in the studio or lab until the last 5 minutes, creating their own examples of the topics covered in the video lesson.

Instruct the Students to:

- Collaborate with their team to add a simple bass line to their song.
- Integrate a pre-existing loop into their track
- Quantize their notes to the grid
- Loop their bass line throughout the song
- Attempt duplicating a loop instead of looping
- Have each group play their finished work for the class.
- Ask them why they choose specific sounds, and what inspires them about their choices.

5 MINUTE LESSON SUMMARY

Briefly review the concepts of MIDI discussed in the videos by asking the students to point out something they discovered or learned.

Take the time to have each group play their work-in-progress for the rest of the class. Encourage their efforts and point out any elements that they created that get a response from the rest of the class.

Assign the students to watch the following videos before the next class meeting, and come to class with one question prepared about a concept they didn't understand.