

StagePlayer

User Manual

Organic Sound Labs

Version 1.0

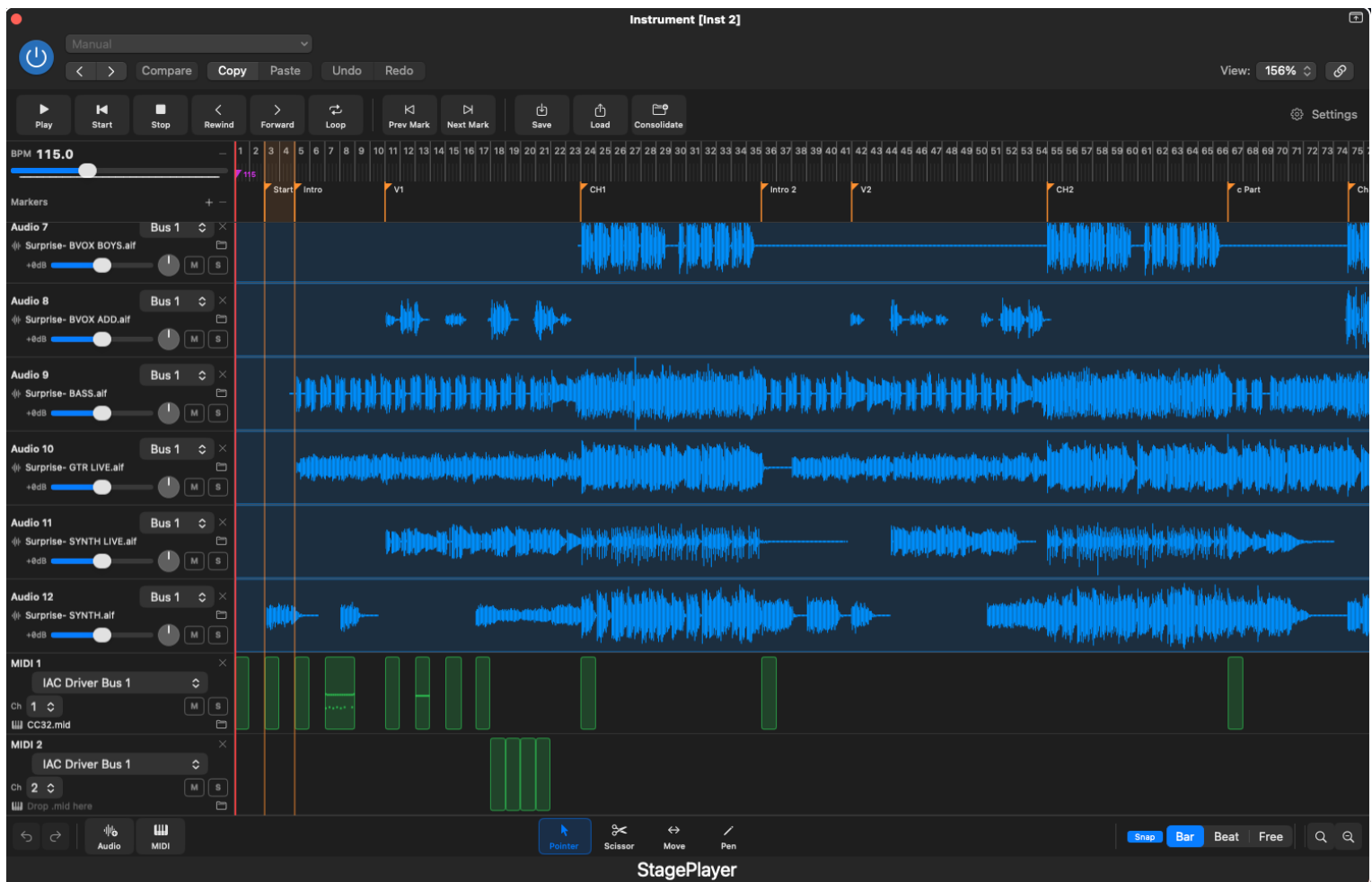


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1. Introduction

StagePlayer is an Audio Unit v3 (AUv3) instrument designed to run inside Apple MainStage as a self-contained, multitrack backing-track and MIDI-automation sequencer.

It provides 16 independent audio tracks and 16 independent MIDI tracks, an internal transport, marker-based looping, a full tempo map, and per-track MIDI routing — letting a single instance drive backing tracks, MainStage automation, lighting and video software, and outboard hardware, all in sync.

StagePlayer was built for live performance: it does not rely on MainStage's own transport, so it can be triggered independently and predictably from a footswitch, a mapped control, or MIDI, exactly as a performer needs it to behave.

2. Requirements

- macOS 26.0 or later
- Apple MainStage (or another AUv3-compatible host)
- Apple Mac with M-series processor
- IAC Driver enabled (required for MainStage automation and IAC-based MIDI routing — off by default on macOS; see Installation for setup steps)

3. Installation

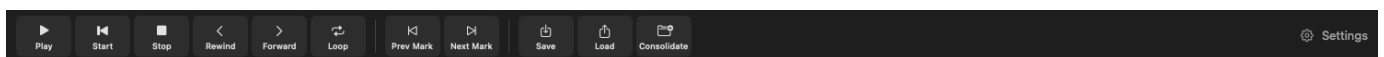
- Open the StagePlayer disk image (.dmg).
- Drag StagePlayer.app into your Applications folder.
- Launch StagePlayer.app once. This registers the plugin with your system — you can close the window immediately afterward.
- Open MainStage, and add StagePlayer as an instrument on a channel strip, the same way you would add any other Audio Unit.
- Enable the IAC Driver (needed for MainStage automation and IAC-based MIDI routing): open **Audio MIDI Setup**(Applications → Utilities), go to **Window** → **Show MIDI Studio**, double-click the **IAC Driver** icon, and check "**Device is online.**"

4. Interface Overview

StagePlayer's window is organized into five areas, top to bottom:

4.1 Top Transport Bar

Play, Stop, Loop, Forward, Rewind, Prev Mark, Next Mark, Save, Load, Consolidate, and Settings.



4.2 BPM / Bar Ruler Row

Shows the current tempo and lets you adjust it, alongside a bar-numbered timeline ruler.

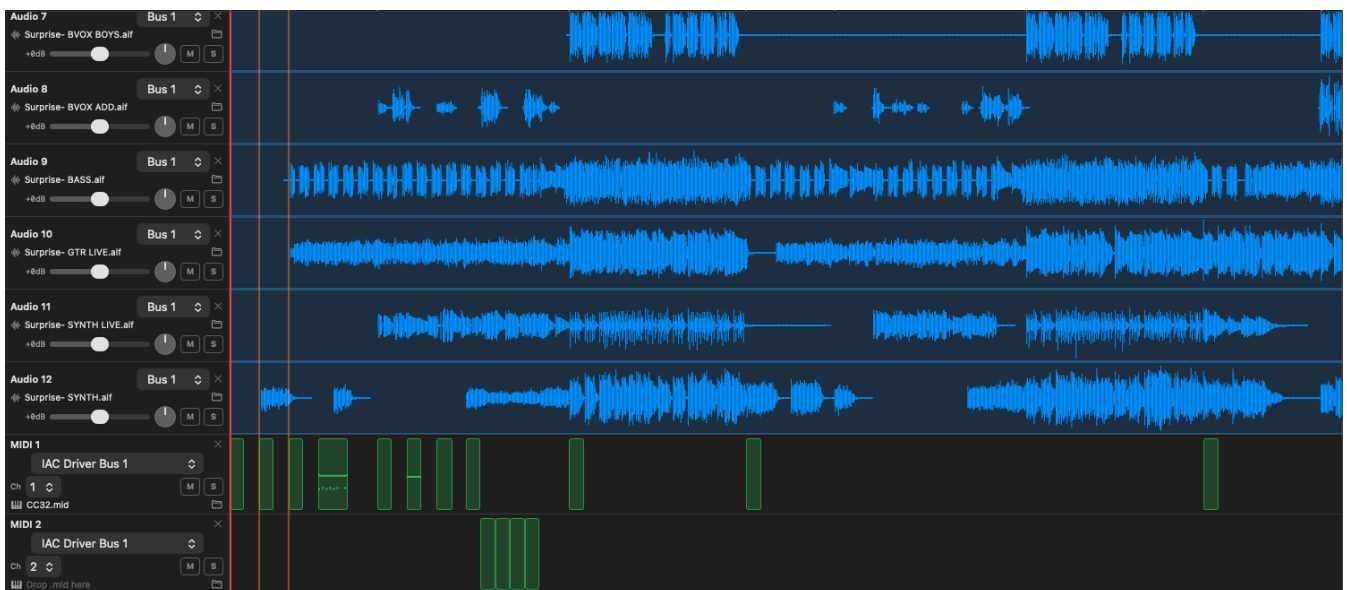
4.3 Markers Row

Displays markers along the timeline, with controls to add or remove them.



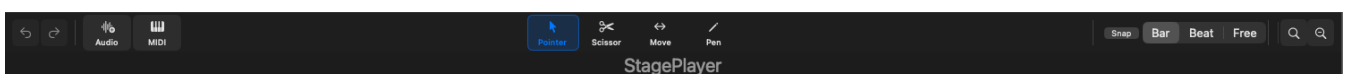
4.4 Track Rows

One row per active track — audio tracks show a waveform; MIDI tracks show their event regions. Tracks are added on demand, not shown all at once.



4.5 Bottom Toolbar

Always visible regardless of scroll position: Add Audio/MIDI Track controls, the editing tools (Pointer, Scissor, Move, Pen), Snap controls, and Zoom.



5. Transport

StagePlayer's transport is entirely internal — it is not synchronized to MainStage's own native transport in any way. This is a deliberate design choice: it keeps StagePlayer's behavior fully predictable, and avoids any dependency on how a specific host implements its own transport.

5.1 Controlling Play from MainStage

To trigger StagePlayer from MainStage's own interface (a footswitch, a Screen Control, etc.), map that control to StagePlayer's “Play” AU parameter using MainStage's own MIDI Learn / Assign & Map function.

5.2 Loop

When Loop is enabled, playback cycles between the two markers currently selected as the loop's start and end points. Markers function as real, playable loop boundaries — not just visual labels.

5.3 Forward / Rewind

Move the playhead by bar by default. Hold Shift while pressing Forward or Rewind to move by beat instead. The exact increment also respects the current Snap setting (see Section 4.5).

5.4 Marker Navigation

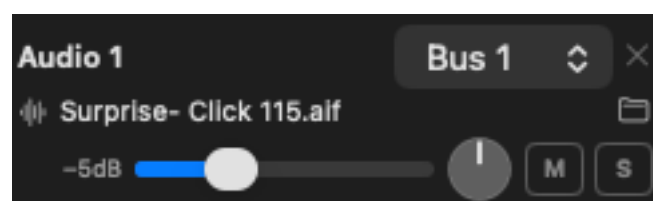
“Prev Mark” and “Next Mark” jump the playhead directly to the adjacent marker in either direction.

6. Tracks

A new StagePlayer project starts with no tracks. Use “+ Add Audio Track” or “+ Add MIDI Track” (bottom toolbar) to add tracks one at a time, up to 16 of each type. Tracks can also be removed.

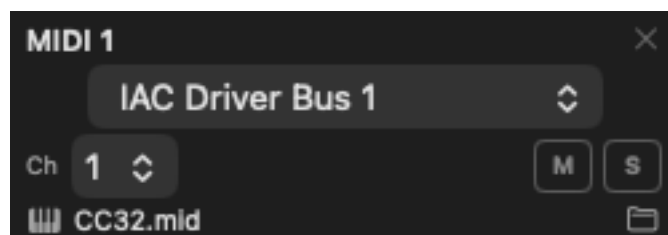
6.1 Audio Tracks

- Rename a track by clicking its name.
- Load an audio file by clicking the track, or by dragging a file directly onto it.
- Volume and Pan controls, with independent Mute and Solo per track.
- Each audio track has its own independently selectable output bus, so MainStage can route different tracks to different physical outputs or channel strips.



6.2 MIDI Tracks

- Load a .mid file by clicking the track, or by dragging a file directly onto it.
- Independent Mute and Solo per track.
- Each MIDI track has its own independently selectable destination: a MIDI port (MainStage automation, an IAC bus, or a connected hardware interface) and a channel (1–16) within that port.



7. Markers & Looping

Markers can come from two sources:

- Automatically, read from cue points embedded in a Logic Pro-exported AIFF file when it's loaded.
- Manually, using the + and – controls in the Markers row, at the current playhead position.

Markers can also be renamed. When Loop is active, playback cycles between the currently selected pair of markers.

8. Tempo

The BPM control inserts or edits a tempo-change point at the current playhead position — a StagePlayer project can contain multiple tempo changes across its length, not just one fixed global tempo. Tempo points can be deleted the same way as markers.

9. Region Editing

Four tools, available in the bottom toolbar, work identically across both audio and MIDI regions:

- Pointer — select a region.
- Scissor — cut/split a region at the click position.
- Move — drag a region to a new position.
- Pen — create a new region, or draw MIDI data directly (see Section 10).

Standard editing operations — Cut, Copy, Paste, Delete — are available via keyboard shortcut (see Section 14), and a single, unified Undo/Redo history covers every edit across both track types.

9.1 Trimming

A region can be trimmed by dragging its edge with the Pointer tool.

Known Limitation

MIDI regions can currently be trimmed from the right edge only. To adjust a MIDI region's start position, use the Move tool, or edit event positions directly via the Event List (Section 10).

10. MIDI Event Editing

Clicking a MIDI track with the Pen tool creates a new, empty MIDI region. Double-click that region to open its Event List, where individual events can be added or removed with exact values and positions:

- Note — pitch, velocity, and duration.
- CC (Continuous Controller) — controller number and value.
- Program Change — program number.

MIDI Events — MIDI 1					Done
Position	Type	Data 1	Data 2	Dur (beats)	
7.1.1.000	Note	C2 	127 	0.17	
7.1.1.010	Note	D#4 	91 	0.17	
7.1.3.003	Note	D4 	23 	0.17	
7.2.1.000	Note	D2 	123 	0.18	
7.2.1.007	Note	D4 	127 	0.18	
7.2.3.010	Note	D4 	28 	0.18	
7.3.1.000	Note	C2 	127 	0.17	
7.3.1.009	Note	D4 	127 	0.17	
					
Add:	Note	CC	Prog. Change		

11. MIDI Routing & Automation

Every MIDI track's destination — chosen independently, per track — can be:

- MainStage automation (via an IAC bus, mapped to Screen Controls or channel strip parameters).
- Lighting or video software (e.g. Resolume Arena), via an IAC bus that software listens on.
- Outboard hardware, via a connected physical MIDI interface.

A single StagePlayer instance can drive all of these simultaneously, with each track independently addressed.

Automatable Parameters

The following are exposed as AU parameters, available for automation or control-mapping from MainStage: Play, Stop, Forward, Rewind, Loop, Volume / Pan / Mute / Solo (per track), and Current Marker.

12. Important: Required MainStage Setting

Set “Respond to hardware move” to Jump, not Pickup

Any MainStage control mapped to a CC/automation output from StagePlayer must have this set to Jump. Pickup mode requires an incoming value to physically cross the control's current position before it responds — since StagePlayer sends direct target values, Pickup mode will silently fail to respond. This setting is found in the control's inspector, or globally under MainStage Settings → General → Parameter Values.

13. Saving, Loading & Project Portability

- Save / Load — standard project save and load, via the buttons in the top transport bar.
- Consolidate — bundles every audio file used in the project into a folder alongside the saved project file, making the whole project portable. Use this before moving a project to another Mac — copy the project file and its accompanying “Audio Files” folder together.
- MainStage's own concert/session save also automatically preserves StagePlayer's full state — no manual action needed for that specifically.

13.1 First-Time Setup on a New Machine

Because of macOS's security model, StagePlayer needs explicit permission to read audio files it hasn't encountered on a given Mac before — even when a project has been properly Consolidated. This permission only needs to be granted once per machine, not once per song.

If your songs are organized inside one top-level show folder (e.g., a folder containing all of a set's individual song folders), grant access at that top level and every song underneath it will be covered automatically.

One-time setup:

Open MainStage — all StagePlayer instances will load with audio missing.
 In any one instance, open Settings and click "**Grant Show Folder Access...**"
 Select your top-level show folder.
 Every loaded instance updates immediately — no need to repeat this per song or per instance.
 Save your MainStage concert. On every future launch on this machine, access is restored automatically, with no manual step required.

14. Keyboard Shortcuts

Shortcuts respond only when StagePlayer's own view has keyboard focus. Space is reserved by MainStage for its own transport and is intentionally not used by StagePlayer.

/	Play
Shift + / or \	Start
,	Rewind
Shift + ,	Rewind by beat
.	Forward
Shift + .	Forward by beat
C	Loop
Z	Previous Marker
X	Next Marker
1 / 2 / 3 / 4	Pointer / Scissor / Move / Pen
6 / 7 / 8 / 9	Snap toggle / Bar / Beat / Free
Shift + A	Add Audio Track
Shift + M	Add MIDI Track
Cmd + Z	Undo
Cmd + Shift + Z	Redo
Cmd + Left	Zoom Out
Cmd + Right	Zoom In
Delete / Backspace	Delete selected region

15. Known Limitations

- With many simultaneous instances loaded (10 or more), a brief interface hitch can occur if a plugin's window is left open while it is actively playing. This does not affect audio or MIDI output, and does not occur during normal live use, since MainStage's own performance controls — not StagePlayer's own window — are what's used during a show.
- MIDI regions can be trimmed from the right edge only (see Section 9.1).

16. Troubleshooting

16.1 StagePlayer doesn't appear in MainStage's plugin list

- Quit and fully relaunch MainStage.
- Confirm StagePlayer.app has been launched at least once since installation.
- Confirm your Mac is running macOS 26.0 or later.

16.2 A mapped MainStage control doesn't respond to automation

- Check that the control's "Respond to hardware move" setting is Jump, not Pickup (Section 12).

16.3 Audio files don't load after moving a project to another Mac

Use Consolidate Project before moving projects between machines, and keep the project file and its "Audio Files" folder together (Section 13).

On a new machine, grant folder access once via Settings → "Grant Show Folder Access..." (Section 13.1) — this is required even for a properly Consolidated project, since it's a one-time macOS permission step, not a StagePlayer bug.

17. Support

StagePlayer is developed by Organic Sound Labs.
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