StagePlayer

User Manual

Organic Sound Labs

Version 1.1

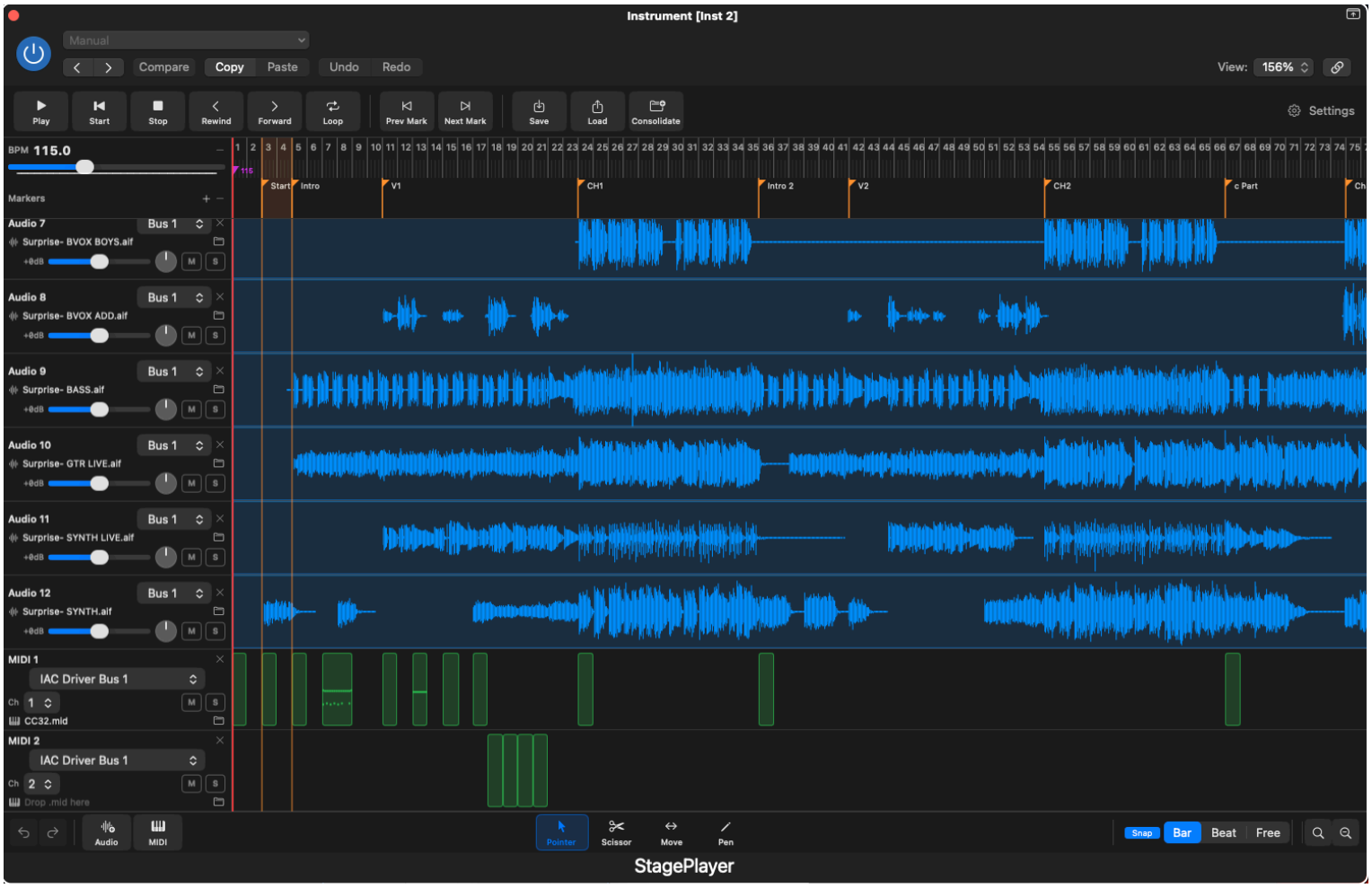


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1. Introduction

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

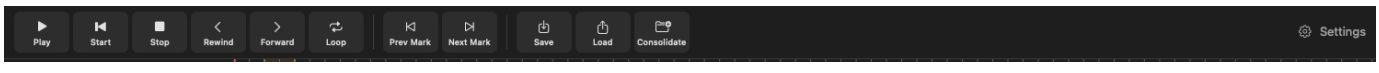
- Open the StagePlayer disk image (.dmg).
- Drag StagePlayer.app into your Applications folder.
- Launch StagePlayer.app once. This registers the plugin with your system — you can close the window immediately afterward.
- Open MainStage, and add StagePlayer as an instrument on a channel strip, the same 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.

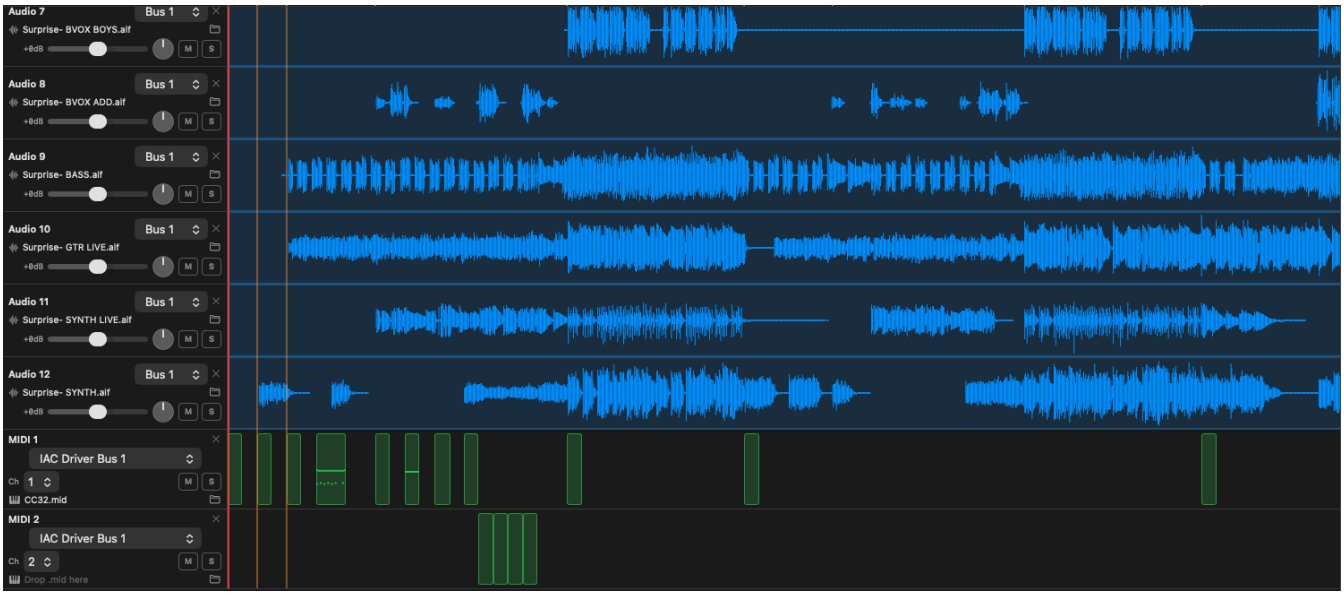
4.3 Markers Row

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



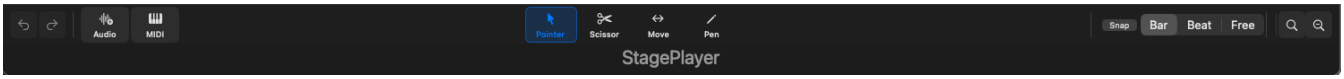
4.4 Track Rows

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

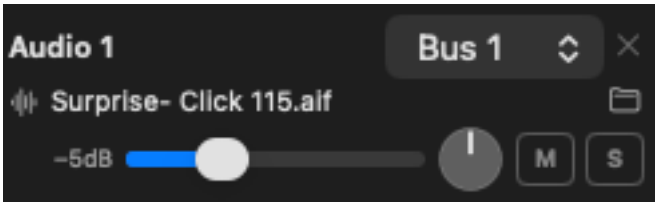
A new StagePlayer project starts with no tracks. Use "+ Add Audio Track" or "+ Add MIDI Track" (bottom toolbar) to add tracks one at a time, up to 16 of each type. Tracks can also be removed.

6.1 Audio Tracks

- Rename a track by clicking its name.
- Load an audio file by clicking the track, or by dragging a file onto the main area. The file lands on the track under the pointer, at the playhead position.Volume and Pan controls, with independent Mute and Solo per track.

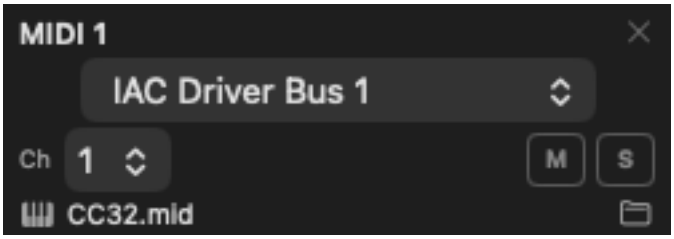
  A track can hold several audio files. Each file you add is placed at the playhead next to the existing regions. Adding the same file again does not use more memory.

- 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 onto the main area. The file lands on the track under the pointer, at the playhead position.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 — click select a region. Click and drag to move it
- Scissor — cut/split a region at the click position.
- Move — drag a region to a new position (the Pointer tool does the same).
- 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.

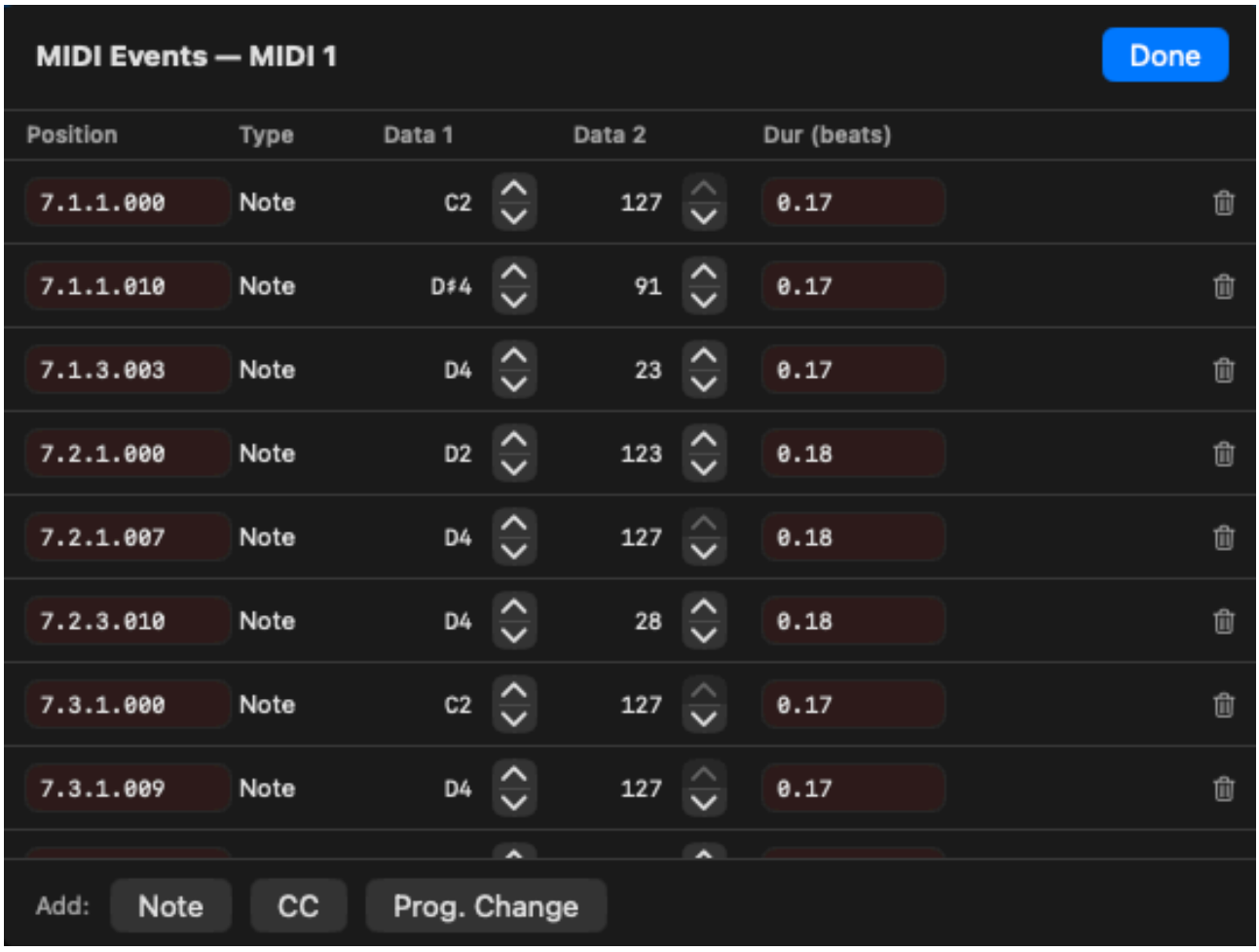
9.1 Trimming

A region can be trimmed by dragging its left or right edge with the Pointer tool. This works on audio and MIDI regions. When you trim a MIDI region, the notes, CCs and program changes keep their positions; only the visible part of the region changes

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.



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.

Missing files — if an audio file cannot be found when a project loads, the regions that use it stay silent. Locate the file before saving again, or use Consolidate, because saving a project without the missing file drops those regions.

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

- StagePlayer does not resample audio. Set MainStage's sample rate to the sample rate of your audio files. A file at a different rate plays at the wrong speed and pitch.MIDI regions can be trimmed from the right edge only (see Section 9.1).

  Audio files are held in memory while a project is loaded, roughly 21 to 23 MB per minute of audio per instance. Plan for this when loading many long files across many instances. A file added to the same instance more than once is stored once.

  The transport is internal and does not follow MainStage's clock or tempo. To stay in time with other instruments, set StagePlayer to the same tempo as the MainStage session.
  A project that uses several files on one track cannot be read correctly by version 1.0.x.

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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