Composing with MOD2PSG2

by admin on Apr.24, 2009, under Music Creation
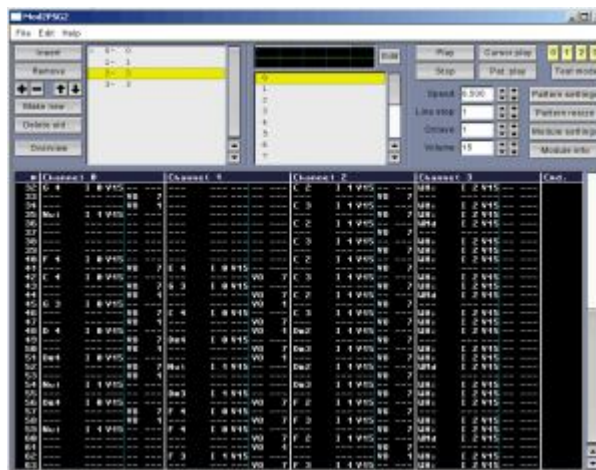Source : http://www.x68000.de/music-creation/composing-with-mod2psg2/

Introduction

MOD2PSG2 is a tracker for Microsoft Windows which allows tracking the SN76489 Soundchip, which again is found inside lots of 8-bit systems, most notably the Master System, Game Gear, Sega Computers, the Colecovision or the BBC Micro.

You can export all your tunes to the .vgm format. This is the standart (rip) sound format for the systems mentioned above. There is even a programming library coming with the tracker so you can use the tunes inside actual Master System and Game Gear applications.
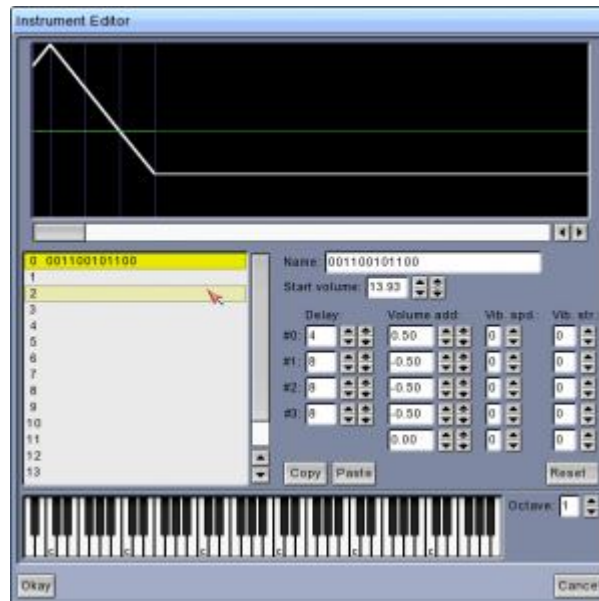
Getting started / The Interface

The Interface starts at the top left with the Pattern List. You can Insert/Remove Patterns. Change their order and make completely new ones. To the right of this is the Instrument List and a small Preview of the Envelope. "Edit" sends you to the Instrument Editor. Again to the right you can find Play/Stop Buttons, Set the current Playback Speed (which is not saved, go to "Module Settings" instead), Line Step, Octave and Volume. Finally you can Mute Channels and go to the Pattern Settings (lengh, name etc.) and Module Settings (Speed, Name, Notes, PAL/NTSC etc.) Dialogs.

Below this is the usual Tracker-Style Pattern Editor, which is like *NOTE – INSTRUMENT NO. – EFFECT*. Channel 0-2 allows you to play Squarewaves while Channel 3 is for Noises with several prefedined envelopes. On the very right side is the "Commands" Column, where you can set the playback speed or change stereo values while the song is running.

The Instrument Editor

As the SN76489 Soundchip is pretty limited, there is not much you can do here. Besides giving the instrument a name and a starting volume, you can create an ADSR-Style Envelope with the Delay and Volume Add Buttons. Next to the right you can adjust a Vibrato. At the top of the Editor is a preview of the Envelope/Vibrato you made. A list of all your instruments (up to 16) and a Piano Roll finish this editor.

Effects & Commands

- **Effects**

V – Volume from 00 – 15
P – Pulse Vibrato Strengh

- **Commands**

SP – Speed in Number of Frames per Line
ST – Stereo

01: Channel 0, left
02: Channel 1, left
04: Channel 2, left
08: Channel 3, left
10: Channel 0, right
20: Channel 1, right
40: Channel 2, right
80: Channel 3, right

Note that the Master System does not have any Stereo, this is **only for Game Gear**. The Author also notes that this is currently not exported correctly to .vgm Files in the latest version of MOD2PSG2. This makes the Stereo-Command only interesting if you are interested in making an actual Game Gear Application.

File Formats & Replaying the songs

Importing: MOD2PSG2 features the importing of several file formats, starting with Midis and Mods you can also import VGM / VGZ Files aswell as .BAS Files (from MS QBasic).

Exporting: Again, several file formats are supported. You can export your Notes to Midi Files, actual .VGMs and so called PSGMOD Files. The PSGMOD files are needed if you want to use the tunes inside your Master System / Game Gear Applications (and its the native MOD2PSG2 Format)