ARCHIVE

Sunday, 30 March 2008

A Cautionary Tale

The other night, whilst on the Scala conducting a top secret, 'need to know' experiment, so top secret I didn't know about it until I'd finished, something happened that filled me with unspeakable terror the likes of which I would never want to experience again. OK, I've exaggerated a little bit, but what happened was a cause for concern which I'd like to share with you.

I had downloaded a couple of sample sounds and a few Yamaha-format styles from a site where someone was offering them for nothing. I intended to use the styles with the OAA. The sounds seemed to load OK and mapped to the appropriate sections. They played OK and, so far, no problems.

Then........

I loaded the styles and, when I tried them, a dialog box popped up which basically said they were not going to work. No matter what I did, they would not load and the box kept popping up. I had, a couple of months ago, downloaded some Tyros styles and they worked OK. I decided to delete the ones I had just loaded and gave up on the idea of creating some new styles. That's when things started to go wrong.

There was nothing worth watching on the TV so I set about playing a couple of tunes. I loaded one of my Total Presets and played a chord on the lower section of the lower manual (which was split). Silence. I had drawbars set to this part of the keyboard and not one would play. I selected a different Total Preset and the same thing happened. Beads of sweat appeared on my brow. Pressing the rhythm start button produced a rhythm, which should have been a midi file, that Fred Astaire would have had trouble dancing to. It eventually stopped after pressing the button 4 times! BUT....started to play again when I pressed a note on the upper manual!!!

Sweat trickled down my neck. Whatever sound I put on sounded like the proverbial cat stuck in a washing machine. My hands started to tremble. What was going on?? Would the Scala ever make a proper sound again??? Restarting OAS made no difference and I was really beginning to panic. I could feel the palpitations begin to surface. I turned the organ off and sat staring at it with visions of a complete re-install bouncing about in my head. With more than a hint of trepidation, I turned it on again. After waiting an hour for it to boot up......OK, it was only about a minute but it seemed longer.....everything was, to my abject relief, back to normal. I think I was lucky, but the consequences could have been fatal. I'd have been left with no option but to format the hard drive and re-install everything again. (I've been there, done it and got the T-shirt to prove it).

It is nigh on impossible to tell if a piece of software is good or bad until it's been installed and I'm not suggesting that the files I had downloaded were corrupt in any way, but I would urge everybody to perform a backup BEFORE installing any files that have not come from a source you know and, more importantly, trust.

Terry

3 comments:

1. Hi Terry

A cautionary note for others

I would always recommend performing a backup before altering anything. (The one integrated into OAS is fine for this) that way if anything goes wrong, you just load in OAS as a new installation (Instead of upgrade) and then reload the backup. (Depending on the size of the backup it shouldn't take more then 10 minutes or so)

Seems like an idea for an article there

Bill

www.wersiabacus.plus.com

2. This tail looks familiar to me. Have got them to. It seems that not all yamaha styles are 100% compatibel at the moment. Yamaha format styles can be converted from many sources or keyboards and there is software enough to convert freeware and payware, even software to correct some problems.

What went wrong was that the style used some commands the wersi was not programmed for. Maybe the style was to long.

Normaly the use of a style can not corrupt your software unless there is a virus in so always use a virus scanner in combination with your brouser and always scan your email and files before you upload them. the worst ting that can happen then is that you must restart your instrument. This lays not on the OAA or style but there are so many yamaha type's of instruments and so many different style types that it canhappen that one . . . . yep! To test styles in sty format you can use emc styleworks or a free program you can find on the net "styleplayer". do a search on the net or go to a yamaha group or website. Then you have a first barage for those tiny . . . . ;-)

Roger

3. Forget to mention a site where you can find links to all sorts of software for yamaha styles and software to correct problems, to make or convert styles to yamaha format and that is great because The OAA converts and plays yamaha sty styles directly. You will also find styles enough to fill the rest of the year ;-)

link:http://www.jososoft.dk/yamaha/software/

Also note that most of this very good software is free and supported by yamaha enthousiast. the software is good because I have use it for more than 7 years that I owned a yamaha keyboard and stil use to listen to new styles and correct problems with it.

Roger

p.s. always scan things you download or upload with a virusscanner with up tot date virus definitions, especialy things you want to load in your wersi because most wersi's have no virus scanner running on the background so the can not defend the system against virusses