

Using Mainstage... Don't be Scared!

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Things you'll need...

1. Apple Laptop (Macbook)
 - a. Preferably a 2012 or newer
 - b. SSD Drive recommended
 - c. At least 8 GB for RAM
 - d. An minimum dual core i.5 processor (i.7 preferred)
2. Audio Interface
 - a. USB connection (preferably not firewire)
 - b. Multiple output preferred (minimum of 4)
 - c. Non bus powered (has external power cable)
3. USB Hub
 - a. Non bus powered (has external power cable)
 - b. USB 2.0 (Can use 3.0 but there is no advantage)
 - c. No buttons that can be turned on or off
4. MIDI Controller
 - a. Can be a synth you already have
 - b. USB connection preferred
 - c. Non bus powered (has external power cable)
 - d. Additional pads for mapping is recommended but not essential

Setting up your computer.

1. Download Mainstage from the AppStore and Install.
2. Once installed download the additional content found under the Mainstage tab.
3. Also download any correct drivers you need for the devices you are working with.
4. I highly recommend setting up a cloud storage account (Dropbox/Drive) to store files.

Getting everything to work together.

1. Connect everything via the USB hub
2. Make sure you can see your MIDI messages from the controller coming in.
3. Make sure your interface is selected under the audio preferences.
4. Head to the Layout tab to configure your MIDI device inside Mainstage.
5. Head to the Edit tab to edit sounds and map controls.
6. Make sure when you trigger the MIDI device you can see the response on the screen.
7. Slowly turn up the audio on the mixer, you should be making sound!
8. For a multiple output interface, assign the channels you want to specific outputs.

Things to keep in mind...

1. If you are in a hot area - protect the computer! The computer creates heat when working hard and does not do well when it is trying to cool itself from the processor and the sunlight at the same time. The best thing to do is get the macbook shade! Cooling pads and fans help but not as much as getting it out of direct sunlight.
2. Make sure you have a backup file handy! Many people have macbooks at shows. If something should happen you want to be prepared to load your show quickly! That means saving the file and necessary samples on a flashdrive. Also make sure to have regular backups to the cloud.
3. Train your students! They will be your best resource if something should go wrong. Make sure that you are on the same page with what to do in a show emergency. Play the "What's wrong" game where you send the electronics kids away, change something, and have them come back to figure out what the problem is. Start easy and increase in difficulty. Also have your students read handouts and watch videos on Mainstage.
4. Plan some time learning what Mainstage and your equipment are capable of. This helps create new ideas and setup success for you and your students when you have them time and not later in the heat of the moment.

View this handout and even more resources at cristiangood.com/resources

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