


LEKHOLM INSTRUMENTS

DM48 

DIGITAL CHROMATIC HARMONICA

USER MANUAL

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Important general notes

Please read these notes carefully before using the DM48X multichannel MIDI wind controller.

- Note that the on-board battery only charges when the backside connector is in the “on/charge” position (indicated by a flash symbol). This allows charging to be switched off when connecting to low-power devices such as iPhones or iPads. These can power DM48X itself but do not supply enough current for charging.
- The red light on the back of the instrument will go off when charging is finished. When charging is disabled, the red light will simply indicate that the DM48X is connected and powered via USB.
- Make sure the USB cable is properly connected: a slight “click” may be felt when connecting the micro-USB connector. Carefully ensure proper orientation of the connector to avoid damage. Do not expose the USB connector to mechanical forces. A hole in the chassis at the backside of the instrument allows the USB cable to be secured using a cable tie for safer live playing.
- Bluetooth (BLE) MIDI is typically connected from within your music app (“MIDI settings” or similar – please see relevant manual)
- The DM48X is designed to be played in the same pressure range as an acoustic chromatic harmonica. When properly setup, it should respond swiftly to gentle blowing force. While the pressure sensors are rated to handle pressures beyond what can be experienced during normal play, in no way must they be exposed to unnatural excessive air pressure, such as pressurized air from compressors or “canned air” containers.
- Do not expose the slider or top buttons to unnecessary force.
- Similar to a normal chromatic harmonica, the DM48X should be handled with care and not be exposed to falls or strong forces. Store and transport it in its protective case. Be careful not to scratch the protective black anodized surface on the mouthpiece.
- The mouthpiece can be cleaned using a damp cloth. We recommend cleaning it before first use. Cotton swabs can be used for cleaning inside the channels. The mouthpiece can be detached using a screwdriver, although this is generally not needed or recommended. When reattaching the mouthpiece, do not over-tighten the screws. Pull it just enough to ensure it sits airtight against the chassis (test this by blocking each hole with a finger on the back of the instrument).

Introduction

Overview of the DM48X

The DM48X is a MIDI controller without sound synthesis. From the point-of-view of a music production application or synthesizer, it behaves like a MIDI controller keyboard. However, rather than keys, it makes use of twelve pressure sensors to present the user with a chromatic harmonica-like control interface. Similar to a MIDI controller keyboard, knowledge of MIDI, synthesizers, and computer-based sound synthesis/production is useful to make good use of it.

A single USB cable supplies both communication (using the so called “class-compliant USB MIDI” standard) and power. The supplied USB cable allows the DM48X to be connected to a Mac or PC, and using a suitable converter such as an Apple Lightning to USB-A or USC-C to USB-A adapter it can also be connected to iOS devices (iPads and iPhones). When the backside switch on the instrument is in the “on/charge” position (toward the flash symbol), the USB connection will allow the onboard battery to be charged. Note that iOS devices can power the DM48X but do not provide enough current for charging, and the charging switch should in this case thus be in the “off” position.

A suitable software or hardware synthesizer is needed for sound synthesis, and examples and affordable suggestions are given below (see *Setup examples and guidelines*). Bluetooth Low Energy (BLE) MIDI allows wireless playing. On iOS, this connection is typically established from within each music app (please see relevant manual for your software).

Quick start guide

Connect your DM48X via USB to a computer (Mac or Windows) or iPad/iPhone (either via Bluetooth or using an Apple USB Camera Adapter). Select an instrument of choice in your music software (e.g. GarageBand or similar) and start playing. The DM48X is usually recognized immediately, and if not, check the MIDI settings in your software and choose *DM48X* as your input device.

Upon startup, the DM48X will show the *Global preset* page. Press the round button to enable toggling between presets using the arrows. Use the *Wind* preset when playing wind instruments sounds such as saxophone. Use the *Keyboard* preset if playing piano-type or other plucked sounds. That’s it!

The DM48X is a lot more advanced than this, but in most situations this should get you started. Detailed information about configuration and relevant MIDI concepts is found in the pages that follow.

General configuration and operation guide

Introduction to MIDI and the DM48X

Even if you are familiar with MIDI – and even MIDI wind controllers – we recommend reading the following notes, which go deeper into some special considerations and some more advanced aspects of the MIDI data generated by the DM48X. However, it is by no means necessary to have a full understanding of these concepts to get a lot out of the instrument, and many users may only need to consider the *Quick start guide* above.

There are two main types of MIDI messages: note on/off events and “Controller Change” (CC) events. A MIDI controller keyboard can work well using only the former, which is enough to trigger notes at different velocities (depending on the force applied to the key) and stop notes when keys are released. While MIDI wind controllers also send note on/off messages, sometimes with variable velocity depending on configuration, they primarily make use of MIDI CC events to modulate the intensity/volume of the sound. Such messages are transmitted continuously at a high rate also *after* a note has been triggered. This allows the intensity of the sound to be modulated during the full duration of the note, as the player changes the applied air pressure. MIDI pitch bend messages are likewise transmitted continuously during the duration of the note.

By default (the *Wind* global preset loaded at startup), the DM48X is set to monophonic mode (see *Mono/poly* below), meaning that no more than one note is ever triggered at a time. Velocity is set to a fixed static value (see *Velocity sens* below), while breath MIDI CC data will be transmitted continuously (see *Breath sens* below). Most users will find that this gives good playability with wind instrument sounds. A second preset is provided (*Keyboard*), where velocity is dynamically determined depending on breath force, breath MIDI CC data is turned off, and polyphonic mode is active. These settings are suitable for piano-type sounds, where sound intensity modulation occurs only at note triggering. It is often *not* desirable to combine dynamic velocity (velocity sensing) and breath MIDI CC data, an exception being patches/sounds specifically adapted for wind controllers, which may sometimes accurately handle both types of information simultaneously.

MPE (MIDI Polyphonic Expression) patches/synths is another case where combined dynamic velocity and breath pressure data is highly beneficial. These are sounds meant to be controlled by expressive controllers such as ROLI Seaboard or the Linnstrument. An appealing property of these sounds are that they are designed to be modulated by a continuous pressure signal, much like wind controller patches, and may therefore be interesting to explore with the DM48X. A specific preset (*Mpe*) provides settings suitable for MPE sounds, which are further discussed below.

In polyphonic mode, when multiple notes can be triggered simultaneously, there are some additional considerations. An important property of the MIDI

standard is that MIDI CC and pitch bend messages affect *all* triggered notes on a given MIDI channel. For a saxophone-type MIDI controller this is not a limitation, since the instrument is monophonic. In the case of a MIDI harmonica, this means that notes in a chord will be played at the same breath intensity, and that bending affects all triggered notes equally. If neighboring holes are triggered by mistake, these will be played at the same intensity as the target note (there is also more advice in *Setting up your DM48X* below). Velocity does not have this problem, as velocity values are sent for each note individually.

The limitation described above applies when the DM48X is set to *Polyphonic* mode and transmits all data on a single MIDI channel (1 by default). The issue can be overcome by instead using multichannel mode (see *Main channel* below). In this configuration, each hole transmits MIDI data on a separate MIDI channel (1-12). With proper setup on the synthesizer side, the holes can then be modulated completely independently of each other, as on an acoustic harmonica. This is not complicated in principle, but does require a more complex setup on the receiving end. Some synthesizers (see *Multichannel setup with ThumbJam* below) will work immediately with the DM48X in multichannel mode, while others require a more complicated configuration, sometimes involving multiple instances of a synthesizer on multiple tracks where each one is set to only receive on a single MIDI channel (see *Multichannel setup in Reason* below). “Reduced” multichannel configurations are also possible, such that for example four channels are used (the twelve holes will in this case transmit on channels 1-2-3-4-1-2-3-4-1-2-3-4 or 2-3-4-5-2-3-4-5-2-3-4-5). This reduces the number of required synths/tracks.

One simple way of achieving true polyphonic “per hole” pressure modulation is to use some of the above mentioned MPE synths and patches, as these are normally designed to receive polyphonic pressure data on multiple channels. Using an MPE sound source, proper polyphonic pressure modulation can often be achieved simply by selecting the *Mpe* preset on the DM48X (see notes regarding using the ribbon controller in conjunction with MPE synths under *Main channel* and *Ribbon chan* further below).

With C solo tuning (and many other tunings) and using polyphonic mode, it is possible to trigger two identical notes (typically “C”) simultaneously – something that cannot be achieved with a keyboard. Many synths will handle this correctly and will play double notes, including standard wind instruments in GarageBand or Logic. However, some, including most monophonic synths, are not prepared for this. When two notes are triggered and one of them is released, this may cause the second one to go silent, too. By default, the DM48X is therefore set to block double triggering of the same note. This is controlled by *Double notes* parameter (see below). However, when using a synthesizer that correctly handles double notes, or when using a multichannel configuration, it is more appropriate to allow double note triggering.

Setting up your DM48X

By connecting the USB cable, the DM48X should immediately become selectable as an input MIDI device in your favorite music software without any special drivers. Alternatively, connect via Bluetooth MIDI, which is done within your music app (iOS) or in Audio MIDI Setup (MacOS).

The default settings on the DM48X give a good starting point and few changes should be needed for an initial setup. Parameters will return to default as soon as you turn it off and on again, so there is no need to be afraid to explore different settings.

The most important parameter that may need to be changed is *Breath CC#*, which determines what MIDI CC number is used to transmit breath pressure data to the receiving synthesizer. This parameter defaults to 11 (Expression), which works for many standard instruments, for example in Logic or GarageBand. However, some synths may instead expect 2 (Breath Controller) or a specialized message called *Channel pressure* (also called aftertouch), which is also supported by the DM48X and selectable on the same menu page.

Breath sens determines the pressure sensor gain. Less force is required during playing when this parameter is increased, but this will also make it easier to saturate the intensity of the sound, resulting in loss of expressiveness/dynamics. Many times it is rather the playback volume on your amplifier that needs to be increased – try that first! *Note trig level* determines the amount of pressure required to trigger a note. Lowering it makes the DM48X more responsive, but also increases the risk of triggering a note by mistake. *Velocity sens* should normally be *off* and set to a static value around 100-127 but this depends on the type of sound being played, as discussed above. *Asstd poly* (assisted polyphonic mode) makes it easier to play clean solo tunes by actively suppressing triggering of neighboring holes, while still allowing chords. This feature is accessible from the *Mono/poly* menu page, as is also monophonic mode (default), which is usually preferable if only single notes are to be played. Many sounds are more interesting outside of the default note range – try *Octave transp* to shift down an octave or two.

Changing and restoring default settings

Once you have found settings that you like, you can make these your new defaults such that they will be loaded every time you power up the controller. Go to the *Global preset* menu page and hold down the round button for two seconds. Select one of twelve possible “slots” and press the round button. The name of the slot will now be editable using the arrows, slider and round button. To save without changing the name, keep pressing the round button several times until a confirmation message is shown.

The DM48X can be restored to factory default settings by holding down all three menu buttons during power-up. Release when a confirmatory message is seen on the display. Note that custom tunings will still be

maintained. A full restore, including tunings, will be achieved if the three buttons are kept pressed even longer, until a confirmation about restored tunings is shown.

Battery and charging

A built-in battery keeps your DM48X running wirelessly for up to 5 hours. Charging is done via USB and takes about 2 hours from empty to full battery. The backside switch on the instrument has dual roles, depending on whether there is a USB connection or not. Without USB, it serves simply as an on/off power switch. When USB is connected, the switch decides whether the battery should be charged (indicated by a battery and flash icon on the back) or not. This is to allow connection to low-power USB devices such as iPads and iPhones, which would otherwise inactivate the connection due to overloading of the USB port. *Remember to put the switch in charge position when charging is desired!* The red backside LED on the DM48X will turn off when charging is complete. When charging is turned off using the backside switch, the LED will simply indicate an active USB connection. A warning is displayed on the DM48X screen when the battery is low. When the battery is basically empty, operation of the instrument will stop and the user will be advised to immediately start charging via USB.

Firmware version and serial number check

By holding down the slider during power-up, the version of the currently installed firmware as well as the electronic serial number of your DM48X will be shown on the screen. Keep holding the slider a little longer and the DM48X will enter “update mode”, meaning it is ready to receive a firmware update via USB. Further information about this is provided in the firmware update files that are distributed through the Lekholm Instruments homepage, where the latest version is always available for download.

Menu reference

This section lists all parameters and features on the DM48X, all accessible through the on-board menu system, which is organized into submenus. Simultaneously pressing the slider and the round button will quickly take you out of a submenu, and this shortcut can also be used to quickly reach the *Global preset*, *2nd/3rd slider* and *MIDI program* pages (a curved arrow icon will be briefly shown when using this key combination).

Global preset

The DM48X provides 18 “slots” for storing global settings. Note that the first slot (*Wind*) is always loaded at startup. A *Keyboard* preset is also provided for Keyboard-type instruments, as well as an *Mpe* preset for MPE (MIDI Polyphonic Expression) synths/patches (see *Introduction to MIDI and the DM48X* above). The *Swam* and *Geoswam* presets provide settings suitable for standalone SWAM apps and SWAM instruments in the GeoShred iOS app, respectively. Stored settings are recalled immediately when selected on this menu page, and corresponding tunings will also be loaded. Additionally, MIDI program change messages will be sent in cases when loading a preset causes the *MIDI program* parameter to change (see below).

By holding down the round button for two seconds, this page will also allow the current settings to be saved to one of the available slots. After a slot is selected, the name of this slot can be edited. The arrows are used to change the character at the cursor, and the round and slider buttons are used to move to the next and previous character, respectively. Press the slider and round button simultaneously to quickly reach this page.

A shortcut key combination is available to quickly reach this page as well as the *2nd/3rd slider* and *MIDI program* pages: press the slider and round button simultaneously and keep holding to toggle between the pages.

Breath control submenu

This submenu contains settings for adjusting the general playing response as well as selection of the MIDI CC number used for sending breath data.

Breath sens

Controls dynamics and volume depending on how hard and soft you play. Specifically, this is the sensitivity/gain for controller (MIDI CC) messages that determine sound volume/intensity. Controller messages are sent at a high rate, such that the volume/intensity can be modulated post triggering a note based on the applied pressure. When set to a lower (less sensitive) setting, more pressure needs to be applied to reach maximum sound intensity. If set too high, the instrument becomes less dynamic as maximum intensity is quickly reached. Set *Breath sens* to *off* to completely turn off breath MIDI CC data. Note that many times it is the playback volume that needs changing rather than *Breath sens* – try this first.

Breath curve

Response curve for volume/intensity MIDI CC messages. A non-linear curve that reaches higher intensities sooner may provide a more harmonica-like feel/response. However, it should be noted that this also depends on the characteristics of the downstream synthesizer. *Sensitivity* (above) may need to be reduced to compensate for a more aggressive response curve.

Breath CC#

This is a critical parameter that determines what type of MIDI CC message is used to modulate sound intensity. By default this parameter is set to 11 (Expression), and many synthesizers will respond to this controller message and adjust the volume/intensity accordingly. However, some synths instead expect it to be set to 2 (Breath). A last resort is to use 7 (Volume). This is usually not desirable, as this can also affect the volume of added effects such as reverb, but it is still better than no volume modulation. On this screen, you can also set the DM48X to transmit “channel pressure” messages (*Aftertouch*) rather than MIDI CC, which is expected by some synthesizers. Furthermore, the DM48X is capable of transmitting polyphonic aftertouch (*Poly aftertch*) data. With compatible synthesizers and patches, and when combined with *Polyphonic* mode, this makes it possible to achieve polyphonic pressure modulation on a single MIDI channel. When *Poly aftertch* is active, *Double notes* is automatically set to *Block*, regardless of the actual setting for that parameter (see below). This is because polyphonic aftertouch data is tied to specific notes, making it incompatible with a situation where multiple holes are triggering the same note (as can happen with standard Solo tuning).

Note trig level

Pressure threshold for triggering MIDI “note on” messages. Lower values makes the instrument more sensitive, but increases involuntary triggering of neighboring holes.

Velocity sens

Sensitivity for velocity (essentially the force with which a note is triggered). By turning the sensitivity down to *off*, velocity becomes static rather than dynamic, and a fixed value (adjustable using the arrows) is transmitted with every note trig event. Note that latency is slightly increased when dynamic velocity is active. Set to *off* when not needed, for maximum responsiveness.

Mono/poly

When this parameter is set to *Monophonic*, only a single note is triggered at a time, and the hole with the highest pressure will determine what note is to be played. This is often the mode of choice. When set to *Polyphonic*, multiple holes/notes can be played simultaneously. In this mode and when using a standard single MIDI channel setup (the default), the DM48X is more sensitive to mis-triggering of neighbor holes compared to an acoustic harmonica. This is due to a limitation in the MIDI standard (see *Notes on MIDI and wind controllers* above). Continue stepping through the options

and *Asstd poly* (assisted polyphonic mode) will appear on the screen. This feature attempts to aid in playing clean solo tunes by suppressing triggering neighbor holes, once a note has been triggered. The strength of this effect can be adjusted gradually from 1 to 10.

Hole sens bias

By opening the DM48X, it is possible to adjust the breathing resistance such that lower holes have less resistance, similar to an acoustic harmonica (see *Lid removal and breathing resistance adjustment* below). This will however reduce the pressure in the lower chambers (or vice versa should the resistance be increased on higher notes). This parameter makes it possible to compensate for the effect, by applying a higher sensitivity/gain to lower notes and vice versa. Should normally be in the neutral position as indicated by a horizontal line.

Bend/mod submenu

This submenu provides settings for pitching bending and modulation, using the ribbon controller as well as by breath pressure.

Ribbon func

Changes the functionality of the ribbon controller. In *Bend abs* mode, the ribbon is used for pitch bend only, using absolute positions, i.e. pressing at a certain position will always give the same result. *Bnd/mod abs* provides bending to the left and modulation to the right, again using absolute positions. Alternatively, the two *grab* modes instead use a “grab and pull” action: the point where the finger first touches the ribbon becomes the neutral/zero position.

Rib bend sens

Determines bending sensitivity for the ribbon controller. *Off* turns inactivates ribbon bending. Negative values will reverse the bending, while modulation is unaffected by the sign of this parameter.

Rib mod sens

Determines modulation sensitivity for the ribbon controller. *Off* inactivates ribbon modulation.

Ribbon center

Sets the center positions of the ribbon. Only relevant in the *abs* modes, selectable under *Ribbon func*, and has no relevance when using *grab* mode.

Rib smooth

Makes the ribbon action smoother and makes it bounce back to neutral position more slowly when the finger is released (“rubberband effect”).

Rib mod CC#

Determines the MIDI CC number used for sending ribbon modulation data.

Brth bend trig

The DM48X provides a pressure-activated bending feature: by blowing harder than a certain threshold value, bending occurs through transmission of MIDI pitch bend messages. This parameter determines how hard you have to blow/draw before bending kicks in. Increase it if involuntary bending happens.

Brth bend sens

Once you reach the bending threshold (see above), this parameter determines how aggressively the instrument will bend. Bending is pressure controlled in a continuous way, and this is simply the “gain”. Negative values mean that bends will happen in the downward direction (as on a regular harmonica), will positive values will result in upward bending. When values are close to zero, more pressure is required for bending. Set it to *off* to disable bending.

Brth mod trig

The DM48X can send “modulation” MIDI CC messages (controller 1), which on most synths will result in a vibrato effect. This parameter determines how hard you need to blow/draw before modulation is activated.

Brth mod sens

Once you reach the modulation trigger threshold (see above), this parameter determines how aggressively the instrument will increase the modulation intensity. When values are close to zero, more pressure is required. Set it to *off* to disable modulation.

Brth mod CC#

Determines the MIDI CC number used for sending breath-controlled modulation data.

Bend range

Scales the pitch bend signal, such that e.g. only 50% or 25% of the total range is used. Many synths offer pitch bending over a range of +/- 2 semitones by default, and setting *Bend range* to 50% will thus result in bending “bottoming out” at -1 semitones. This setting applies to the ribbon as well as breath-pressure-based bending. Note that the maximum bend interval will not be reachable when bend sensitivity is set too low (*Rib bend sens* or *Brth bend sens*).

Setting *Bend range* to *Smart* will dynamically adapt the bend range depending on what note is being played. Specifically, it is always equal to the interval change produced by the slider button for a given note, as dictated by the current tuning. This feature only works in monophonic mode. Smart bending requires an assumption regarding the bend range of the receiving synth: e.g. for +/- 2 semitones use the *Smart +/- 2* setting. Also ensure the synthesizer responds linearly to pitch bend data (e.g. in SWAM apps/plugins, inactivate “Pitch Bend Curve”, since this feature gives a non-linear pitch bend response).

Smart bending makes it possible to replicate the note-specific bend range characteristics of a Richter tuned blues harmonica. The *RichBend* default tuning is provided for this purpose. The *SoloBend* tuning is an adapted version of Solo tuning with note-specific downward bends. Smart bending is based on an idea by Brendan Power (UK) who also contributed these special tunings.

Sliders submenu

Provides various settings for the main slider button as well as the down/up buttons, which can be used as extra (2nd and 3rd) sliders. In addition to transposition, all three slider buttons can be used as MIDI control keys by configuring them to send MIDI CC messages.

Slider interval

When pressing the slider, all notes will be transposed by this many semitones. With the default tuning (*Solo*), this transposition is already built into the tuning scheme, so it should therefore normally be set to 0. With Richter tuning, for example, this setting allows the slider to be used for instant transposition: a setting of +5 would make it possible to shift from C to F at any time.

Slider delay

Introduces a time delay when releasing the main slider button. For players not yet adapted to the short stroke-length of the DM48X slider, this parameter may help in compensating for the quicker response time compared to a mechanical slider.

2nd/3rd slider

When this menu page is activated (by pressing the round button), the left and right arrows are transformed into real-time control buttons that acts as extra sliders (see above). In contrast to the other menu pages, this is thus not a parameter.

A shortcut key combination is available to quickly reach this page as well as *Global preset* and *MIDI program*: press the slider and round button simultaneously and keep holding to toggle between the pages.

2nd slider intv

On the DM48X, it is possible to use to use the arrow keys as a extra slider buttons (see *2nd/3rd slider* above). This setting determines the interval, in semitones, by which the second slider (left arrow) will shift the current tuning.

3rd slider intv

On the DM48X, it is possible to use to use the arrow keys as a extra slider buttons (see *2nd/3rd slider* above). This setting determines the interval, in semitones, by which the third slider (right arrow) will shift the current tuning.

Sliders CC#

When this feature is activated and the extra slider buttons are active (*2nd/3rd slider*, see above), the arrow buttons will send MIDI CC messages when pressed. Optionally, the main slider can also transmit MIDI CC data, and this will then happen regardless of what mode is active. CC numbers (consecutive only) are selectable on this screen. Increase this parameter starting from the *Off* position to activate and select CC numbers for both arrows, and decrease it to enable CC data for left arrow only. Continue increasing/decreasing the value to the very end of the range to also enable CC data for the slider (always CC #119). MIDI CC values will toggle between 0 and a user-selectable value (default 127; see *Sliders CC value* below) when buttons are held. Setting any of the slider intervals to zero allows the corresponding button to be used purely as a MIDI controller key.

The fact that the buttons can send MIDI CC messages means they can be used to control specific parameters in your music production software or software synthesizer plugins. A video is available on our homepage to demonstrate this. Note that by setting the left arrow to send CC #1, it can be used to activate modulation, while at the same time leaving the right arrow to be used as an extra slider. In this case, be sure to inactivate breath-controlled modulation (see *Modltn sens* above).

If two MIDI control buttons is not enough, *Sliders CC#* may be set to *VB*, found at the far end of the value range. With this setting, the left arrow can be used to activate *Virtual buttons*; a special mode allowing the 12 holes to act as breath-activated MIDI control “buttons”. The holes will now transmit MIDI CC messages ranging from 102 to 113, always with a value of 127 and without toggling. Several messages can be sent while the left arrow is held down, as long as air pressure is released in-between each activation.

Sliders CC value

When MIDI CC messages are sent by pressing the buttons (see *Sliders CC#* above), this parameter determines the parameter value to be sent with the CC messages. The value is always 0 when keys are not pressed, and will toggle to the value selected here when pressed.

Key transp

Transposition in semitone steps. Also shows the current key, based on the assumption that the tuning has been entered in the key of C.

Octave transp

Transposition in whole octave steps.

Tuning

Shows the current tuning scheme. 18 “slots” are available, all of them customizable using the tuning editor (see below). All default tunings are in the key of C. The two first slots are called *Solo* (standard chromatic tuning) and *Richter* (the typical tuning for 10-hole diatonic/blues harmonicas, here mapped to holes 2-11). *Orchestra* (Orchestra tuning), *Diminish* (Diminished),

Wholeton (Wholetone), *Bebop* and *Pentaton* (minor and major pentatonic scale on blows and draw, respectively) are also included. Additionally, *RichBend* provides a version of Richter tuning where the slider mimics the typical bend intervals for the specific notes, while *SoloBend* is a special version of Solo tuning adapted for downward bending using the slider (provided by Brendan Power, UK; see *BendRange* below for information on how the ribbon can also be used for note-specific bending).

By holding down the round button for two seconds, the Tuning page will also allow the current tuning to be saved to one of the available slots. After a slot is selected, the name of this slot can be edited. The arrows are used to change the character at the cursor, and the round and slider buttons are used to move to the next and previous character, respectively.

Tuning editor

Use this to modify the current tuning. Simply use the arrows to select hole, blow/draw and slider position, and press the round button to edit the selected note. Select *Done* to step out of the editor by using the arrows. All changes are effective immediately and can be played without saving anything, while still editing. By stepping past the last hole, a screen will appear with options for transposing the current tuning up or down.

Additionally, functions for exporting and importing tunings is available on this screen: *Send tuning* will send the current tuning as MIDI notes, to be recorded and saved for example as a MIDI file that can be shared with others. After selecting *Receive tuning*, the DM48X is ready to receive a tuning which will replace the current one. Simply choose *DM48X* as your output MIDI device in your sequencer and then play back a previously recorded tuning. Remember to save (see *Tuning* above) it if you want to keep it permanently in your DM48X.

Navigation in the tuning editor is “circular” – step past the last option on the last page to return to the first page.

MIDI submenu

Basic global MIDI settings, including a real-time MIDI program change page.

MIDI channel

Channel used for sending MIDI messages (normally *1*). This setting also allows the DM48X to be set to multichannel mode. In this configuration, the holes will transmit MIDI data on different channels. The number of channels can be selected, with for example *Multich. 1-12* indicating that twelve separate channels will be used, one for each hole. *Multich. 1-4* indicates that four channels will be used, such that the holes will transmit MIDI data on channels 1-2-3-4-1-2-3-4-1-2-3-4. “Base 2” multichannel ranges are also available, for example *Multich. 2-5* or *Multich. 2-13*, which can be useful together with synthesizers that support the MPE (MIDI Polyphonic Expression) standard, as channel 1 is then not to be used for note triggering. Note that *Double notes* (see below) should typically be set to *Allow* in

multichannel mode. This allows, for example, double C notes to be played when using Solo tuning. Note that MIDI over Bluetooth (BLE MIDI), which has low data bandwidth, may have latency issues in combination with multichannel mode, in particular when using the ribbon controller without enforcing the ribbon data to a single “master” channel as described below (*Ribn MIDI ch*).

Ribbon chan

When set to *Same/default*, the ribbon controller sends pitch/CC data on the same channel(s) as other MIDI note messages (see *Main channel* above). In multichannel mode, the ribbon messages will in this case be duplicated across all active channels (e.g. 2-13), thus generating a lot of data which may overload a wireless BLE MIDI link. The default behavior can be overridden, forcing ribbon data to be sent on any single channel. This is useful with some MPE synthesizers, which may use channel 1 as a “master” channel for pitch and modulation data. The *Mpe* global preset makes use of this feature. Note, however, that not all MPE synths will support this. In these cases, use the *Main* setting here, while being aware that this can lead to latency issues using BLE MIDI (reducing the number of channels in the *Main channel* setting can alleviate the problem).

MIDI program

Can be used to remotely select a specific patch (sound) on a connected synthesizer or synth app. Note that not all synths will respond to MIDI program change messages.

Double notes

Many tuning schemes allow double simultaneous triggering of the same note (e.g. C in Solo tuning), but not all synthesizers can handle this on a single MIDI channel (see *Important notes on MIDI and wind instruments* above). This setting controls whether double triggering of the same note is allowed (*Allow*) or blocked (*Block*). This parameter has no relevance in *Monophonic* mode (see *Mono/poly* above).

Display

Allows the display to be set to automatically turn off after about 10 seconds of inactivity (*Auto off*). The other option is *Auto dim*, which reduces display burn-in by dimming after 10 seconds. The display will always turn off after about 5 hours, to avoid screen burn-in.

Setup examples and guidelines

The DM48X does not synthesize sounds and is thus not a musical instrument, but rather an instrument controller. The synthesizer to which it is connected is therefore a critical part of the setup. This section contains a few examples and step-by-step guides to complete setups, including affordable software synthesizers that are suitable for a wind controller like the DM48X.

MacOS including GarageBand and Logic

When connected via USB, the DM48X will immediately become usable as a MIDI input device in music production software such as GarageBand or Logic (if not, check the settings in *Preferences, Audio/MIDI* in Logic, or equivalent in other software).

You may also connect the DM48X wirelessly in MacOS via Audio MIDI Setup, found in the *Utilities* folder under *Applications*. If it is not already visible, click *Show MIDI Studio* in the *Window* dropdown menu. Clicking the Bluetooth icon shows available devices, which should include the DM48X when it is powered on and within range. Click *Connect* to make the DM48X available as a MIDI device throughout MacOS. Most likely it will work immediately in your favorite music software, but in some applications you may need to specifically select the DM48X as input device.

Some of the sampled wind instruments in Garageband or Logic on MacOS are decent, and there are plenty of synthesizers and patches that can be adapted to work with a wind controller. GarageBand on iOS works too, but offers a less impressive selection of instruments. GarageBand instruments expect *Breath CC#* on the DM48X to be set to 11 (Expression). They can also correctly handle double triggering of the same note, meaning that *Double notes* should preferably be set to *Allow* (see *Introduction to MIDI and the DM48X* above).

Remember that there is no “decay”, as on a piano tone, on blown instruments – the tone can be kept alive as long as there is still air in the lungs. When adapting non-wind instrument patches for playing with the DM48X, try thus to change the “decay” parameter that is available on most software synthesizers. The Sculpture modeling synth, included in Logic, is good for wind instruments. To enable polyphonic playing (chords), increase the polyphony parameter on the upper part of the Sculpture panel.

Reason and Acoustic Electro Waves

EWI Reason Sounds provides an excellent set of software synthesizers for wind controllers in the form of plugins (refills) for Reason, including one called Acoustic Electro Waves. We found these to be excellent together with the DM48X, on both MacOS and Windows machines. These instruments expect *Breath CC#* on the DM48X to be set to 2 (Breath). They do *not* correctly handle double triggering of the same note, meaning that *Double notes* should be set to *Block* (see *Introduction to MIDI and the DM48X*

above).

Multichannel setup with ThumbJam

The ThumbJam app is a nice low-cost option for getting started on iOS devices (iPhone/iPad) and it works immediately with the DM48X without any additional settings. Even better, it will respond correctly to multichannel data right from the start. You only need to activate this on the DM48X by setting *Main channel* to *Multich. 1-12* and *Mono/poly* to *Polyphonic*. You can also set *Double notes* to *Allow* (see *Introduction to MIDI and the DM48X* above), to allow triggering of double identical notes (e.g. adjacent C notes in solo tuning).

Yamaha VL70-m and other hardware synthesizers

Due to the DM48X being a class-compliant USB MIDI device, it cannot directly control a hardware synthesizer with a typical 5-pin MIDI connector. However, most music production software can be used to route the DM48X MIDI signals to an external synthesizer. A USB MIDI interface will be required, but these are available at low cost. Additionally, using a so called “USB host to MIDI” device, manufactured for example by Kenton (MIDI USB Host MkII) or Mode Machines (Cerebel USB), it is possible to eliminate the computer altogether. We have tested the DM48X together with the Kenton device and the acclaimed Yamaha VL70-m hardware modeling synthesizer, which sounds great, but one should keep in mind that this is a monophonic synth and chords are thus not possible. *Breath CC#* needs to be set to 2 (Breath) for the VL70-m. Monophonic mode (see *Mono/poly* above) may be preferable. If polyphonic mode is used, some degree of *Asstd poly* is recommended (see *Mono/poly* above). In this case, the VL70-m will not correctly handle double triggering of the same note, meaning that *Double notes* should be set to *Block* (see *Introduction to MIDI and the DM48X* above).

Lid removal and breathing resistance adjustment

We generally do NOT recommend removing the lid, and we cannot take responsibility for any possible harm caused during this procedure. However, advanced users do have the possibility of adjusting the breathing resistance individually for each hole by means of 12 screws inside the DM48X. By adjusting these screws, one can mimic the uneven resistance pattern encountered on a regular harmonica (less resistance on the lower holes). Changing the breathing resistance will also influence the pressure in the chambers. Thus, lessening the resistance will make it possible to blow or draw more strongly without saturating the sensors. Conversely, the instrument can be made very sensitive by tightening the screws, to allow pressure to build up more easily. The *Gain skew* setting (see above) can be used to compensate for the loss of signal that would result from opening up screws on lower-numbered holes or tightening high-numbered holes.

By default, all holes have been calibrated for equal response, and in most cases there should be no need to alter the screw settings. Breathing resistance adjustment is an advanced feature that requires opening up the instrument:

1. Remove the two bottom screws using a torx driver.
2. Gently slide the lid backwards away from the mouthpiece, while at the same time lifting it a few mm upwards to avoid damaging the display. If necessary, a screwdriver or similar may be inserted in between the mouthpiece and the lid to help gently wiggle it backwards a few mm. All maneuvers should be done with great care to avoid damaging any of the parts and components.
3. Having slid it away a few mm from the mouthpiece, lift up the lid at the front end (facing the mouthpiece), tilt it backwards a little bit, and slide it backward away from the instrument. Do this very gently to ensure that components come free from the lid.
4. The individual holes can be adjusted using a hex key (a torx driver works too).
5. Reverse the procedure above when replacing the lid, again taking great care not to damage the display. Do not over-tighten the screws, as this can damage the plastic chassis.

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