LIFE

(Little Infinite Frequency Expander)

OWNER'S MANUAL

Readme

SECOND EDITION JANUARY 1997.

Thank you for purchasing ***LIFE***. I hope you get as much pleasure and inspiration from it as everybody else will.

CONTENTS

WHAT IS *LIFE* ?

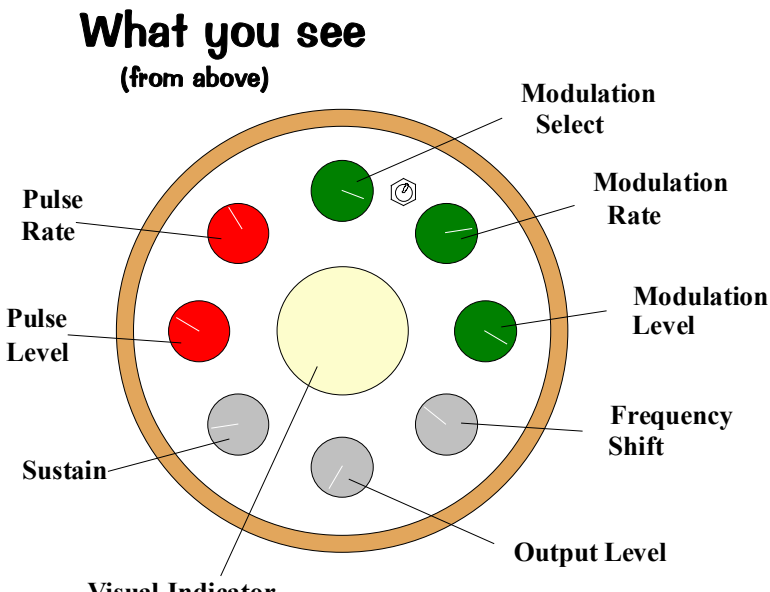
LIFE is essentially a compact hand held (you can put it down if you want to) inspirational tool for everybody interested in the creation of sound. It is difficult to describe the sounds that ***LIFE*** can produce but now you have one, you can find out for yourself .

THE MYSTERIES OF *LIFE*

The Controls.

A rough idea of what the controls do is indicated on the diagram opposite. The names used are just for reference, for example, rotating the control marked as *'Sustain'*, will in some instances also change the pitch or the resonance depending upon the settings of the other controls.
To orientate ***LIFE*** with respect to the diagram make sure that the grey controls are at the bottom, the green controls are on the right and the red controls are on the left. The green control at the top should now be the switch (it clicks when rotated, the others don't). It is a five-position switch, rotating it to its most clockwise position isolates the green controls. The other four positions select different

modulating signals. Rotating the *Modulation Rate* clockwise increases the speed of the modulation signal.



The effect the modulation signal has on the sound is increased by clockwise rotation of the *Modulation Level* control.

Clockwise rotation of the *Frequency Shift* control will increase the pitch of the output signal, while anticlockwise rotation of this control will lower the pitch of the output signal. The *Output Level* controls the level of the signal generated by ***LIFE.*** (See my warning later).
I've mentioned *Sustain* before, so I'll jump to the two red controls. They behave in much the same way as their green counterparts, clockwise to increase, anticlockwise to decrease. The switch (on some versions) found between the *Modulation Select* and the *Modulation Rate* controls selects normal (switch towards the outer edge of ***LIFE***) or slow (switch towards the visual indicator) modulation speed.

A Warning.

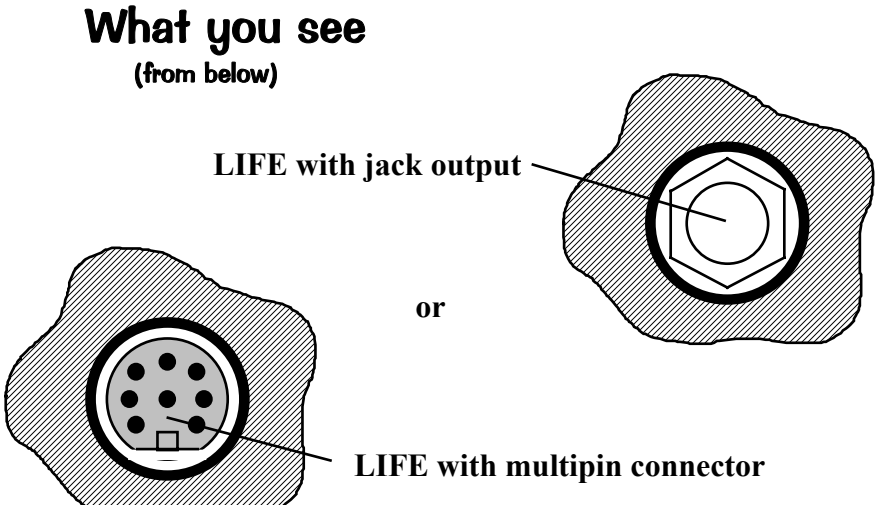
Whenever you plug, unplug, turn on or turn off a piece of equipment that somewhere terminates in a loudspeaker, MAKE SURE THE VOLUME CONTROL ON THE AMP CONNECTED TO THAT SPEAKER IS TURNED DOWN or you could destroy the speaker. The signal output from ***LIFE*** can vary greatly. To prevent any damage being caused by this signal it makes sense to rotate the middle one of the grey controls *(Output Level)* anticlockwise whenever plugging or unplugging any connection to ***LIFE***.

YOU HAVE BEEN WARNED !

MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR *LIFE*

Making Connections.

If you look at the bottom of your ***LIFE*** you will find a hole. What you see will depend on which ***LIFE*** you have.



Inserting the correct plug into the base of ***LIFE***, turns that ***LIFE*** on.

If you have a ***LIFE*** with a jack output the only connection you can make is via a quarter inch mono audio jack from a signal lead connected to your amp, mixer, effects unit or whatever.
If however you saw a multipin connector, then your ***LIFE*** has many more possibilities.
Did your ***LIFE*** come with a small box called ***BOB*** ? If so, read the section 'Introducing ***BOB***' (page 12). If not, you will have received a connecting cable with a multipin connector on one end and a quarter inch mono jack plug at the other end, this is the only connection you can make for now, but your ***LIFE*** is ready to be connected.

Why Connect ?

LIFE works well by itself but when connected to another (or several more) ***LIFE*** units or to another compatible sound generating source the sonic possibilities more than double, such is the beauty of ***LIFE***.

Sampling *LIFE*.

LIFE is an excellent, near limitless source of sounds for sampling. A little reminder here about the output levels possible with ***LIFE***. Take care that you do not overload the input stage of the sampler you are using (unless this is an intentional part of your creative process).

I shouldn't have to tell you how to use your sampler, but here are a few ideas. Sample ***LIFE*** high (repeating pattern, evolving texture, single sound.. 'whoop' or 'blip') and play low. Layer sounds, crossfade, stretch or add effects. Play it backwards, or forwards, or backwards and forwards. I think you get the picture.

CARING FOR YOUR *LIFE*

Love of your *LIFE*.

A lot of care went into the creation of each ***LIFE*** and I hope that you will take care to look after your ***LIFE***. The base of your ***LIFE*** is crafted from real wood and would appreciate the occasional application of wax polish, which will help to protect and enhance it.

How to Re-energise your *LIFE*.

(Or changing the batteries).

LIFE is powered by two 9-volt (PP3 type) batteries, which are to be found inside the base of ***LIFE***. The batteries will last a long time under normal operating conditions, but when the time comes to change them, please replace both at the same time, even if one

seems to be ok.

How will you know if the batteries need changing ?

LIFE will still operate even when the voltage from the batteries is reduced to 60% of their normal voltage. There will be a slight change in the output signal, but the most significant change can be observed from the *visual indicator*. If, when you rotate the *Pulse Rate* control fully clockwise, the red element from the visual indicator disappears, the batteries will have to be changed.
(Users of ***BOB*** may come across a similar effect if they have a jack plugged into *SYNC IN*. Just unplug all connections to ***BOB*** to confirm if the batteries are at fault).

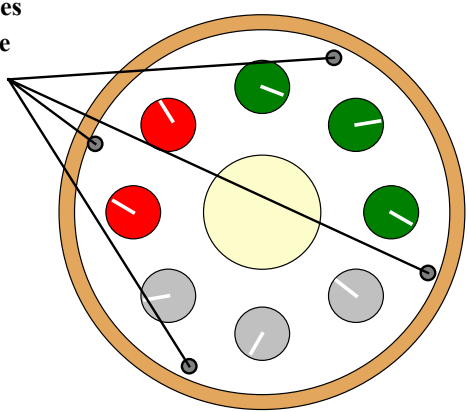
If your ***LIFE*** is not to be used for an extended period of time, please remove the batteries and re-install them when you wish to use your ***LIFE*** again. This is a wise precautionary measure to stop any leakage from the batteries damaging your ***LIFE*** whilst not in use.

To change the batteries you will have to remove the four screws that hold the control panel in place. When you lift the control panel away from the base, be careful of the signal wires connecting the circuit board to the components in the base. You will see the batteries in the base, carefully remove and replace them.

To replace batteries locate and remove these screws.

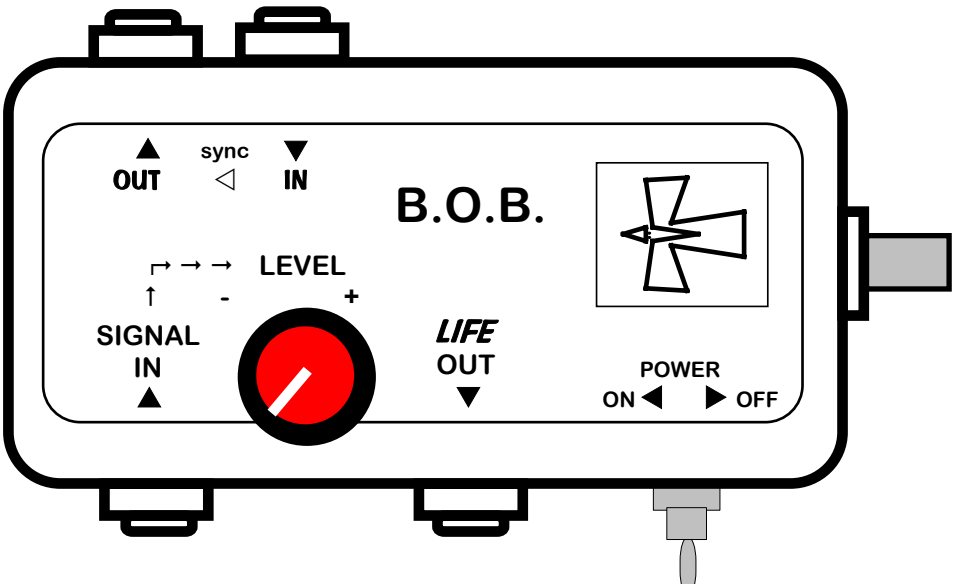
Take great care when replacing the batteries.

Use the correct tools for the job and if you are unsure about doing this, seek help.



When the batteries have been replaced, take the same care when replacing the control panel and the four screws. Plug an appropriate lead into ***LIFE*** to make sure the new batteries are working ok. If there is a problem, **DON'T PANIC**, methodically check what you have done, if you still can't get ***LIFE*** working contact your supplier for advice.

INTRODUCING *'BOB'*



BOB is the **B**reak **O**ut **B**ox used to interface ***LIFE*** to some aspects of the outside world. ***BOB*** also houses a *Power* switch to turn ***LIFE*** on and off without the need to remove the connector from the base of ***LIFE.***

What Connections can I make ?

All of the connections via ***BOB*** are made with ¼" mono jack plugs.

LIFE* OUT.** This is the audio output from the connected ***LIFE. The level of the audio output can vary depending upon the settings on ***LIFE***.

The Sync Sockets.

SYNC IN. Inserting a jack plug into the *Sync In* socket renders the control on ***LIFE*** named *Pulse Rate* (see page 5) inoperative. The external signal-generating device you are using (another ***LIFE***, the trigger output of a synthesiser or other device) will now become an active part of the sound generating process within ***LIFE***. This signal should preferably be a positive going waveform between zero and three to nine volts (i.e. the trigger or gate outputs of synths or MIDI converters, sequencers, an LFO, the pulse from an electronic drum pad or anything else I can't think of at this moment).

SYNC OUT. The output from this socket switches between zero and (depending on the battery condition in the connected ***LIFE***) approximately plus seven volts. Its frequency depends upon the

control on the connected ***LIFE*** named *Pulse Rate*, (see page 5) the control named *Pulse Level* has no effect on the output from this socket. If you have connected a signal to the *Sync In* socket, this signal will be routed to the *Sync Out* socket (and will have been 'squared up').

SIGNAL IN. Any audio signal up to line level can be inserted here for processing through the ***LIFE*** unit connected via ***BOB***. The level of the signal to ***LIFE*** can be adjusted with the control labelled *Level*.

BOB gets its power from ***LIFE***. Never take ***BOB*** apart. (It serves no purpose and you would be wasting your time, which could be better spent getting the most from your ***LIFE*** !)

Those of you that have made good use of your ***LIFE*** may now have a few ideas about getting more from your ***LIFE***. Perhaps you are not alone, others may be interested in your ideas or suggestions. If you have anything you want to share, get in touch, you'll find the address on the back of this booklet.

LIFE CAN BE FUN.

Ideas. (other than creating sound)

Put a disconnected ***LIFE*** base down on any flat horizontal surface and watch it "Rock'n'Roll" and right itself.

Turn ***LIFE*** on its front (knobs down) and use as a pen or pencil holder.

With the help of a friend, suspend ***LIFE*** (knobs down again) near the sky and take some pictures. Send the pictures to your local paper or a UFO magazine. (Send me a copy as well).

And for all you saddies. Get two ***LIFE***s, place them knobs first on your chest and caress gently.

Do you have any ideas ?

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