Gig Performer 4 Mackie Control Unit Protocol Extension

Purpose:

This extension is designed to expand and simplify using an external control surface utilizing the Mackie MCU protocol with Gig Performer.

Requirements:

To function correctly there are four requirements:

1. Download the appropriate extension file for your platform (Windows or Macintiosh)
2. Download the required Panel template
3. Copy both to the appropriate directory for Gig Performer extensions
   1. On Windows systems this is C:/Users/Public/Documents/Gig Performer/Extensions
4. Launch Gig Performer and enable the MCU extension when prompted

Optional enhancements:

There are a several Open Stage Control templates that replicate the MCU protocol. These can stand in as a substitute for a hardware MCU unit when a physical unit is not available, or as an adjunct display to use in combination with a hardware unit.

Open State Control is an open source OSC platform that runs on Windows, Mac, and Linux. Generally one would run the Open Stage Control server application on the same system as Gig Performer and can then run OSC templates on any modern web browser on any device on the same local network. This can be used to control Gig Performer by a mobile phone, tablet, or another PC.

Once Open Stage Control is launched and configured the relevant MCU templates can be loaded through its web interface.

Basic Theory of Operation:

The Gig Performer MCU extension allows:

1. assigning Gig Performer widgets to the knobs, faders, and buttons on the hardware
2. entering and exiting Setlist mode
3. selecting among songs in a setlist, and song parts within a song
4. changing between Rackspaces, and variations within a Rackspace

As is customary with many DAWs, the MCU extension works with the concept of “banks” of controls. While there are only 8 knobs and 9 faders on the MCU hardware, by using “bank selects” the user can assign any number of knobs and faders to the MCU and move between them freely by changing banks.

A typical use would be to assign one bank of faders to the upper register drawbars on a Hammond B3 VST, a second bank to the lower register drawbars, and a third bank to master volumes in the Global Rackspace.

When a Rackspace is loaded the MCU extension searches through all widgets in the Rackspace and Global Rackspace to find widgets designated by their “OSC/GPScript Name” as relevant to the MCU extension.

The naming convention for such widget Names is fairly straight forward. A typical such name would look like “mc\_k\_3\_7”. The underscores serve as separators between fields. Most widget names require four fields to specify how the MCU extension should interact with them.

The first field is simply the “mc” designation, which indicates the MCU extension should look at this widget. If the widget name does not begin with “mc” the extension will ignore it.

The second field indicates the type of control on the MCU the widget should be mapped to. These are:

* k – knob
* f – fader
* r – button on the Record row
* s – button on the Solo row
* n – button on the Function row
* v – button on the Views row

The Mute and Select button rows are reserved for changing between Rackspaces and Variations when not in Setlist mode, or Songs and Song Parts while in Setlist mode.

The third and fourth fields indicate the Bank and Column number for the widget. The Column number must be between 1 and 8 for buttons and knobs, or 1 – 9 for faders. Fader 9 gets assigned to the master fader on the MCU.

A fader widget given the Name “mc\_f\_1\_1” will be assigned to the leftmost fader on the control surface, and be actively controlled while bank “1” is selected. A fader widget with the name “mc\_f\_2\_1” would be assigned to the same fader, but controlled when bank “2” is selected.

It is suggested to use a bank numbering scheme that is logical, memorable, and flexible whenever possible.

Some forethought may be required for users that tend to use many widgets and re-use panels across different Rackspaces. This is because widget Names must always be unique in a Rackspace. If, for example, you have a Hammond B3 panel where you assigned Faders in banks 1 and 2 for the drawbars, and knobs for Leslie controls in bank 4; and you later add a panel to that Rackspace that has Vox Continental drawbars also in fader bank 1 then Gig Performer will detect the naming conflict on the fader widgets and rename them.