

WET DREAM II

Marcus Jackson

for electric guitar, drumkit, lighting, and live-generated score

programme note

The first thing I learnt to play on piano was a cover of Celine Dion's 'My Heart Will Go On'. My grandparents had bought me an electric piano, which had keys that would light up, showing you how to play different songs. This song was one of the pre-loaded tracks.

WET DREAM II follows in this line of karaoke performance and electronic pedagogy. The work draws on the history of rock music—specifically guitar and drum solos—in which the performers would riff climactically near the end of a song.

The work is synthesised through the analysis of a database of YouTube videos, all chosen by searching "crazy drum/guitar solo" in the search bar. The audio of these videos is analysed, in a somewhat faulty attempt to create a meta-solo: the craziest rock solo ever, for each of the instruments.

Music pedagogy on YouTube is an interesting area of the internet. A large collection of videos allow musicians to learn the ways of their rock idols, detailing how to achieve various performance styles, both by how you play and what you are playing with. There are a number of tutorials on how to riff in various idioms, and evermore videos describing the instrument and pedal setups of one's favourite performers. Naturally, the result is a large number of videos displaying the output of rock musicians on the internet: a kind of digital show-and-tell.

Somewhere between documentation and caricature, *WET DREAM II* suspends these rock solos by zooming in on their acoustic features and extrapolating them into a considerably longer work. The result is, as performers of the work have noted, a solo that goes on for too long, and then a little longer.

The work should be performed in complete darkness. a technician will be required to execute and terminate the piece, in the MaxMSP patch.

A technical rider and suggested setup is provided in the following pages.

This piece should be incredibly loud, and it may be necessary to provide the audience with ear plugs.

A series of practise videos, with which the performers can play along, can be found at https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLz-6BO_AqTsrJ6x5Pc3I-ZPVA731kMhVh

electric guitar

This work is delivered in real-time to the guitarist through a monitor, which displays an animated **score**. this score presents an impossibility, and as such, the performer should attempt to realise as much as possible of what is displayed on the screen.

The performer should use their typical **pedal** setup, as long as it includes some combination of a delay pedal, a distortion pedal, a pitchshift pedal, and a foot-operated volume pedal. Other pedals may be included in the setup, including multiples of what is already asked for. In this case, the performer should contact the composer to have a new score generated for them, incorporating these pedals. The score will indicate that these pedals be modulated during the course of the piece.

A **tone** should be sought that is similar to a rock style that the performer is fond of. Generally, the tone should be quite distorted and bright, and not resemble the acoustic sound very much. The output on the **amplifier** should be incredibly loud, just below the point of damage for the audience.

The performer is free to improvise within the constraints of their ability to perform as much as possible. Attempting fidelity to the score must at all time be the foremost concern, however. The energy of the performer should be high throughout, and should bounce off of the drummer.

drum kit

The score for the drum kit part of *WET DREAM II* is delivered visually, by **LED strips** placed around the circumference of the each drum head. These are individually controllable by the computer, which will live-generate a new **score** with each performance. This score presents a skeleton from which to improvise. The improvisation should be intense and incredibly loud throughout the piece. The energy of the drummer should feed off of that of the guitarist.

The performer may use any **mallet or stick**, as long as the sound is loud.

The LED strips should be attached around the rims of the drums, and around the poles of the cymbals.



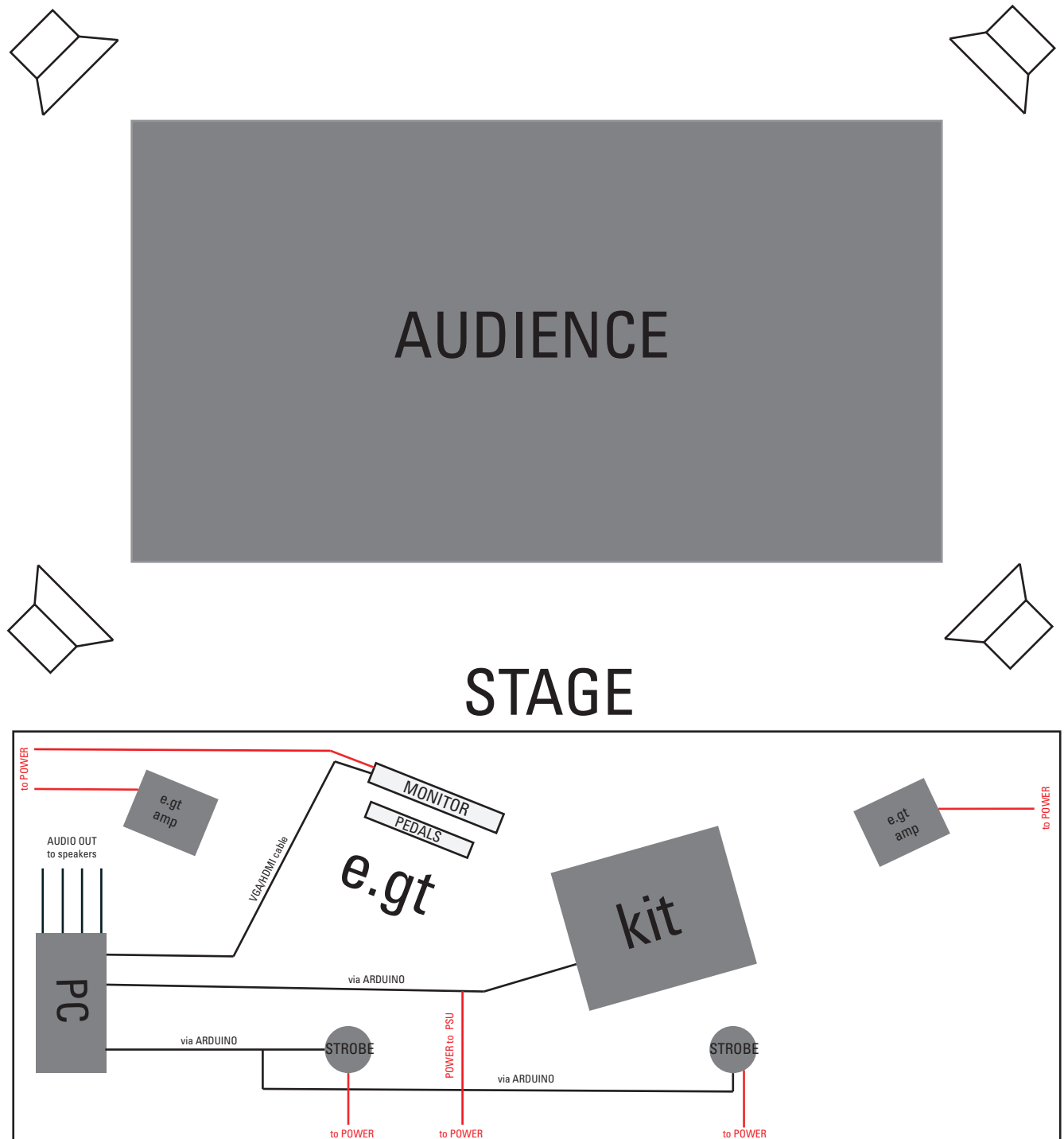
WET DREAM II was performed by Jameson Feakes (e.gt) and Ben Stacy (kit) during the Proceedings of the Australasian Computer Music Conference, in Perth, Australia, in December 2018.

My thanks go to Jameson and Ben for their immense effort and wonderful openness to experimentation.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NoxWlw0rQxU>

The material for the piece, including code for the scores can be found at <https://github.com/mrcsjksn/wet-dream-ii>

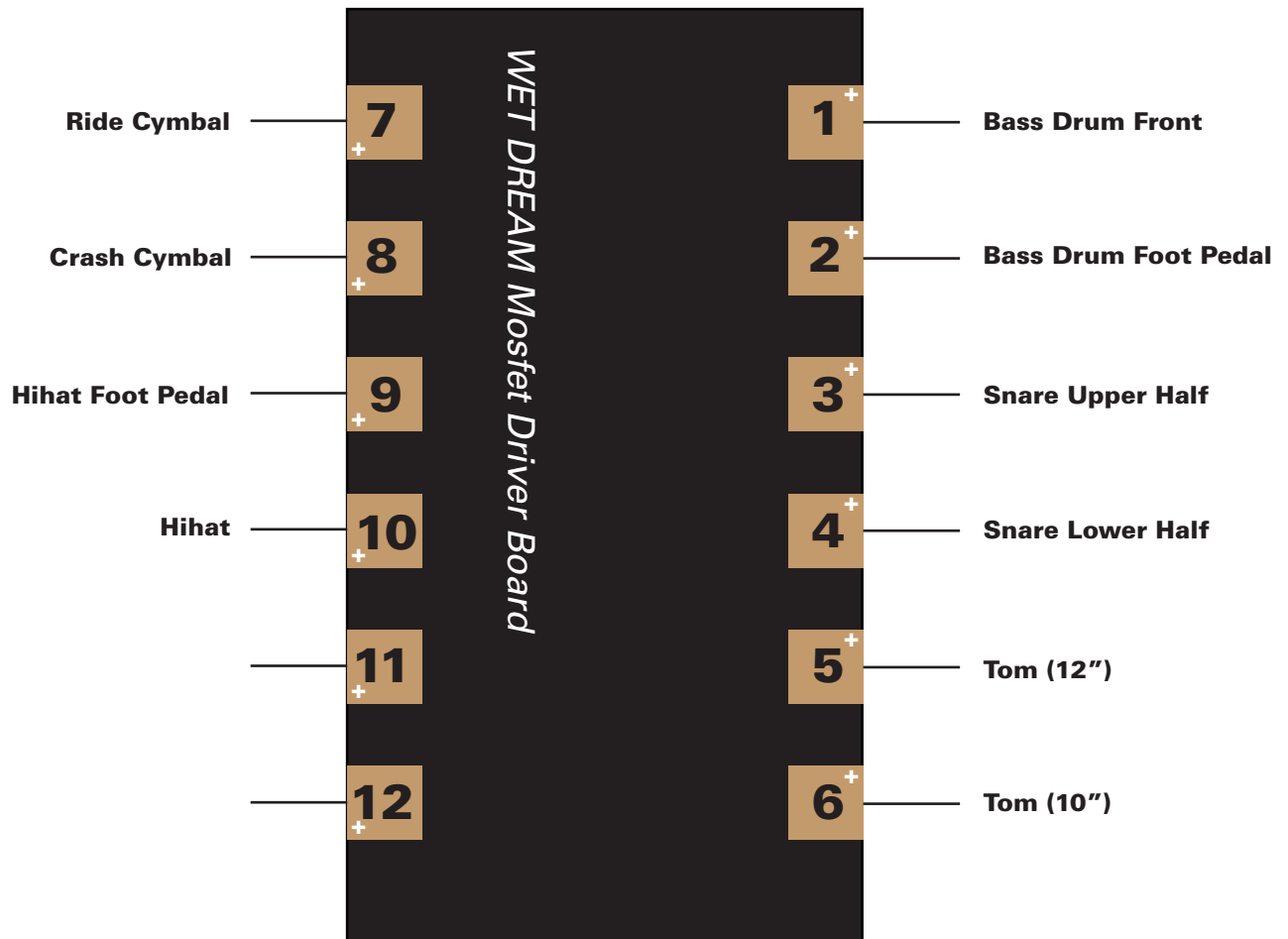
STAGE SETUP



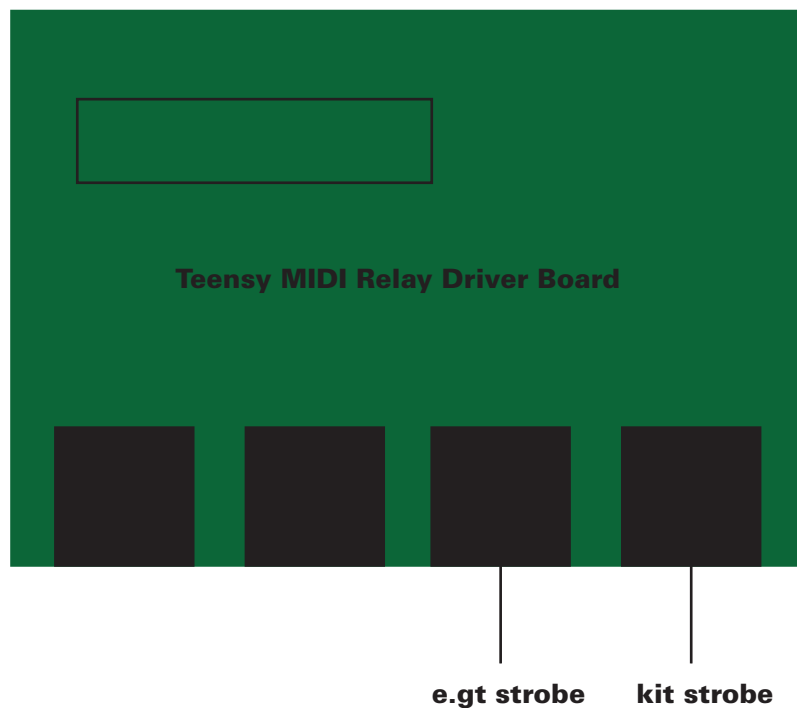
Technical Rider

- Drumkit (min. kick, snare, two toms, hi-hat, ride, crash)
- Electric guitar (with whammy bar)
- Two guitar amps (player's discretion)
- Two volume pedals
- Delay pedal, Fuzz pedal, Overdrive pedal, Pitch-shift pedal, Tremolo pedal (to player's discretion)
- Two strobe lights, Arduino and Relay Board (to supply)
- Arduino Mega and MOSFET Driver Board (to supply)
- LED System for drums (to supply)
- Computer monitor and appropriate cables (for guitarist's score)
- PC with Max (Version 7.3.3 or more recent) and Processing (Version 3.3.7 or more recent)
- Audio interface with four channel output (with Thunderbolt or USB connection)
- 4 speakers and necessary cables (to audio interface)

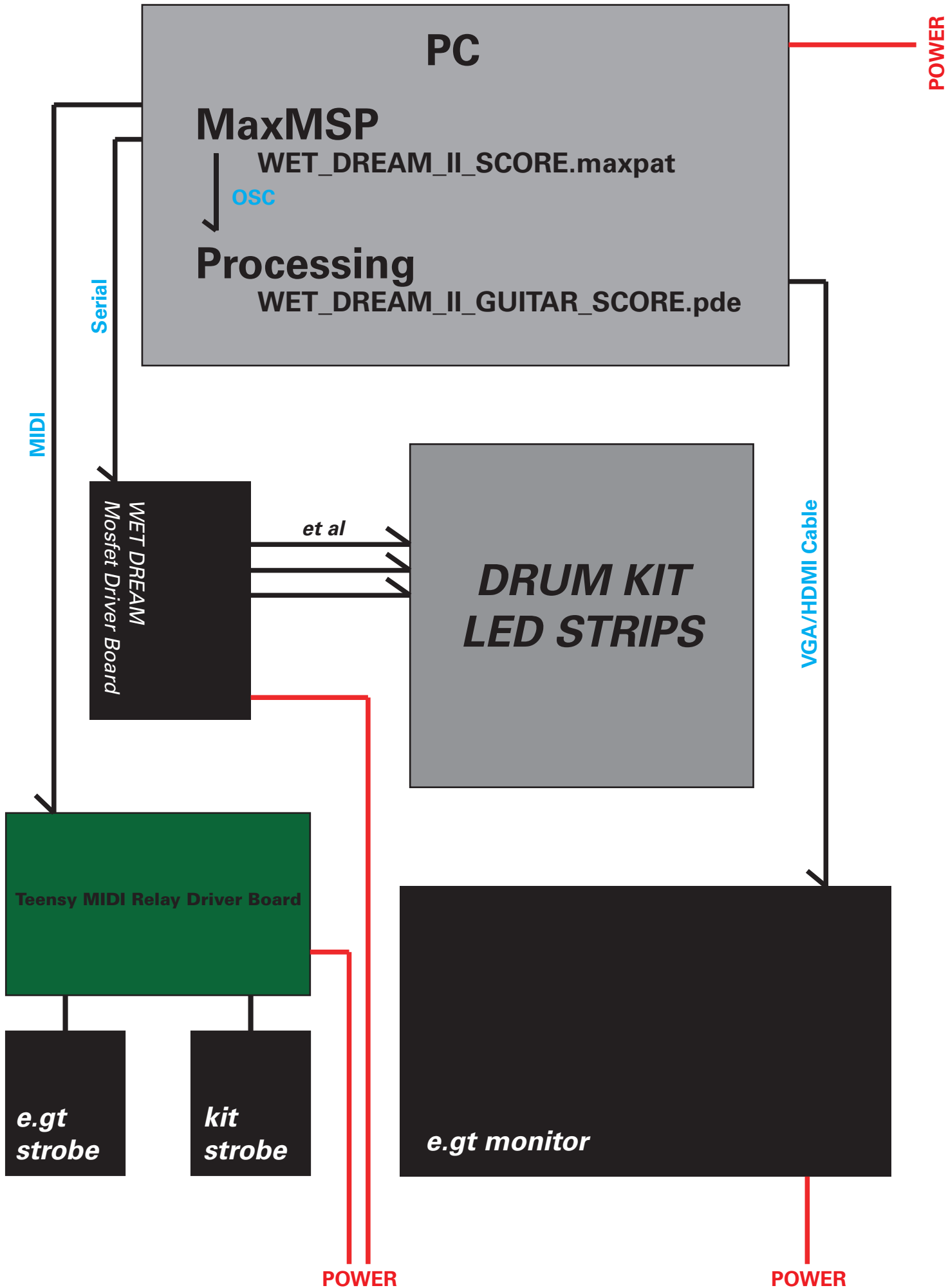
DRUM KIT LED STRIP SETUP



STROBE SETUP



SIGNAL FLOW DIAGRAM



SIGNAL FLOW (ctnd.)

