

October 7, 2014

Retronyms Announces Wej. Bluetooth music controller bridge & performance base.

Retronyms, developer of popular iOS music apps, including *Tabletop*, *ReBirth*, *iMPC Pro*, *iMini* and *iProphet* has announced that they are making their first venture into music hardware with a Bluetooth LE MIDI bridge called Wej.

Wej is a non-skid musical performance platform that lets you connect USB MIDI controllers to iOS music apps wirelessly using Apple's new MIDI over Bluetooth protocol. Wej features 48 ultra bright RGB LEDs so that you can add ambiance to your studio or blast a portable light show. It is based on a user-hackable Arduino compatible application processor, and Retronyms will open-source their sketch when they ship the device.

Wej is designed to act as musical performance pedestal for all iOS devices, and it can connect to any iOS device with Bluetooth LE, including iPhones, iPads and iPods. Because Apple is adding MIDI over Bluetooth to OS X Yosemite, Wej can also communicate with any Mac that supports Bluetooth LE.

The body of Wej features a slightly angled surface made of soft, non-skid Silicone. It sports two USB ports that can charge an iPad or host power-hungry USB MIDI controllers. Wej is designed to connect controllers to an iOS device, and it can handle two-way MIDI to any class compliant USB MIDI controller. The lights can be triggered via MIDI or by audio from any app that supports sending to Hosts or Effects via Apple's Inter-App Audio, including Garageband and all of Retronyms' apps.

“We're building Wej because we think it improves the creative music experience for iOS. Having a sturdy base that supports expressive gestures plus a better way to connect controllers makes your iPad more intentional, capable, and enjoyable.” — Zach Saul, Retronyms

Because Wej is built with an Arduino, you can hack it to reprogram the lights, remap / modulate MIDI messages or host other types of USB devices that aren't MIDI controllers. Retronyms has a page dedicated to information about the hackability of wej at <http://preorder.retronyms.com/hacks.html>.

Retronyms is funding production of the device with a 20% off preorder campaign through Nov 7, and they have announced that they will only go forward with the project if they meet their preorder

goal. Wej is \$99 on preorder through Nov 7, and it will ship in the first half of 2015. Retronyms has a crowd-funding style video and more info at <http://preorder.retronyms.com>.

Tech Specs

Body

Material: Soft, 30 durometer, silicone body in Tabletop Grey.

Width: 200mm.

Depth: 134.4mm.

Height: 25mm - 35mm.

Microcontroller

Arduino-compatible Application Processor.

LEDs

48 full-color RGB LEDs, individually addressable from Arduino.

Animations triggerable from Tabletop-ready iOS app via MIDI or inter-app audio.

Communication

2 powered USB host ports — Two way MIDI.

Bluetooth LE configured with a service that provides Apple's MIDI over Bluetooth protocol.

About Retronyms

Retronyms is a software studio focused on enabling creative expression. It strives to make fun and powerful products that allow people to create, collaborate, and engage through digital media. Retronyms is interested in how next-generation devices and technology can be used to explore these ideas.