



## 40H *by Monome*

It seems as if there is a lot of buzz around a certain reconfigurable grid of 64 backlit buttons encased in a brushed aluminum box. The name might not hit you as the hottest piece of gear you probably didn't know you wanted, but the environmental conscious people of Monome have finally crafted it for consumer use. It's a variation of Daedalus' preferred implement of live musical deconstruction "The Box" and the 40h has MPCs everywhere feeling grey with button envy.

Situated in the city of brotherly love, the small collective of Monome are working hard establishing the market for short run custom electronics. Based on the much larger prototype currently gaining wide notoriety with Daedalus as he tours the world, the smaller 8" x 8" 40h is a beautiful piece of artwork as well as a durable companion for any laptop setup seeking a live performance tool for total artist control of their musical expression.

Void of any distinguishing marks or logos, the 40h is sleek and attractive right out of its post-consumer brown paper wrapping. About the size of a Mac Mini, the 40h fits unobtrusively almost anywhere with a recessed USB port ready for either Mac or PC connectivity. Applications span all forms of media and data and the 40h talks serial, midi, and open sound control. It is this open source, open sound control that separates this from any proprietary gear currently in your rig and allows for total control and utilization of the 40h in your own personal way.

Bound only by one's creativity, the 40h has buttons that can be configured as toggles, radio groupings, sliders, or organized into more sophisticated systems to monitor and trigger sample playback positions, stream 1-bit video, interact with dynamic physical models, and play games. The correlation is established by each application.

I suggest checking out the demo videos for a view of some of the 30 open source applications currently available ranging from step sequencers to more advanced live motion samplers. The most attractive application seems to be Mapd, facilitating communication between 40h and existing commercial software such as Ableton Live, and Logic Audio.

As a catalyst in the creation of a community shared musical exploration, Monome.org provides an informative environment where users can gather and exchange ideas, troubleshoot and talk shop about the 40h. Desiring to make more devices pushing open-endedness in design, and to facilitate community exploration, the Monome project is not content sitting idle while the 40h gains appreciation.

Currently working on future devices which directly communicate in OSC, (a flexible networking protocol, worlds better than midi), Monome hints that the notorious 16" x 16" 100h will see the light of day and should not be underestimated. With the versatility of the 40h we are seeing the beginning of some very good things not only from Monome but the community that has already embraced them. — Jesse Henderson