

FLAKES

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ABOUT //

>FLAKES is an audio playback device that combines the functionalities of an analog cassette tape player and a digital sample playback module¹.

Merged together in the case of an old desktop cassette recorder, this hybrid machine allows both different audio playback techniques to consolidate each other's technical limitations, make use (and abuse) of their capabilities in order to emphasize their 'unique' characteristics.



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Despite both only being capable of playing lo-fi² samples, the analog device can make recordings and play them back directly and the digital module's behavior is fully programmable, allowing to make use of feedback, phasing, gate triggers, pitch control functions, and configurable functionalities as desired.

By connecting the available outputs to inputs and using the adjustable knobs on the interface, the user has the options to mix, modify and let the samples from both analog and digital sources interact with each other to create new, unexpected sounds.

1) The modular synthesizer is a type of synthesizer, which exists in both physical and virtual forms, consisting of separate specialized modules. The modules are not hardwired together by the manufacturer but can be connected with patch cords, a matrix patching system, or switches by the user to create a patch. (Source: Wikipedia).

2) Analog low fidelity: hiss, fluctuations in tape speed, limited audio frequency range. / Digital low fidelity: low bitrate, dithering, glitches and limited audio frequency range.

cassette>
tape loop



3) In a tape loop, the sound is recorded on a section of magnetic tape and this tape is cut and spliced end-to-end, creating a circle or loop which can be played continuously.

The starting point for making this device was to somehow 'reveal' the similarities of the inner workings between the digital software-based module and the analog origins of sample playback technique by using cassette tape loops³.