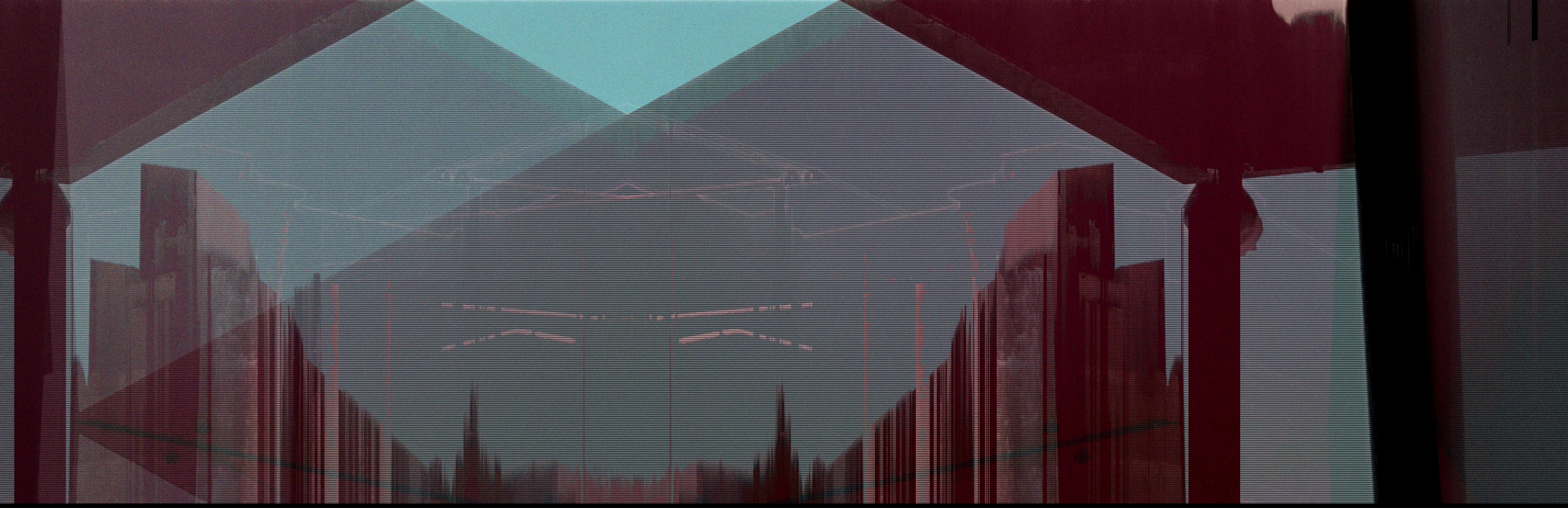

CONVERSATION ENGINE

MANUAL + USER GUIDE

CONVERSATION ENGINE

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Obligatory Legal Stuff

Thank you for purchasing this creative Max for Live MIDI effect!

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Important Info

Conversation Engine is a MIDI effect, which means it cannot be used on audio tracks, and must be placed before instruments so it can process the MIDI notes being fed into them.

Finally, this device requires Live Suite or Live Standard with Max for Live installed. We strongly recommend Live 12.1.x or higher with Max 9.0.x or higher.

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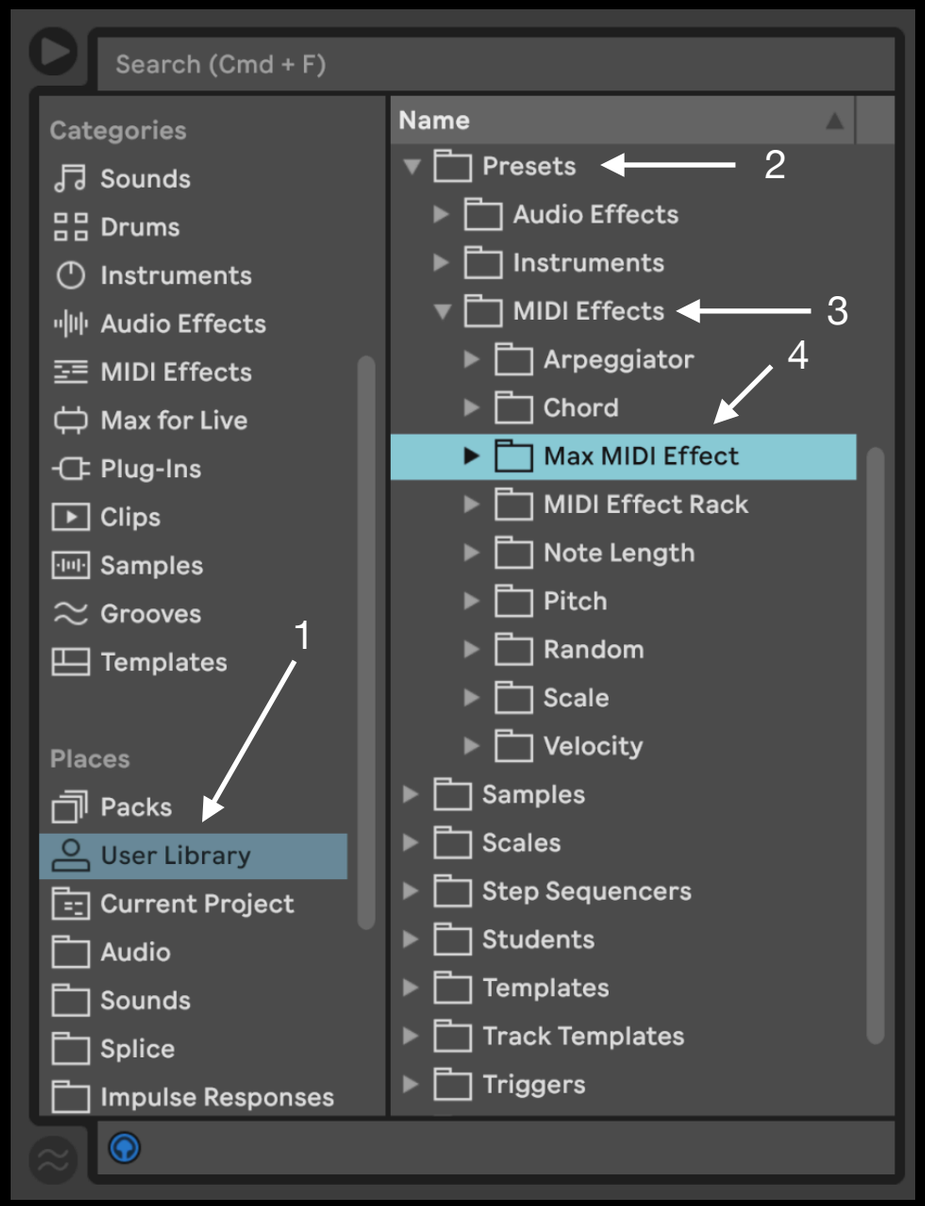
Installation Instructions



To install Conversation Engine, first open Live. Then navigate to the Conversation Engine folder accompanying this PDF from the ZIP archive it arrived in.

Open Live's browser and drag the entire Conversation Engine folder onto any appropriate location within Live's User Library. Feel free to select any location you want, but User Library (1) > Presets (2) > MIDI Effects (3) > Max MIDI Effect (4) would be ideal for Live's native folder structure.

You could alternatively move it anywhere on your hard drive, but placing it within Live's User Library ensures the Max for Live file is ingested to Live's Max for Live browser Category for easy future access.

If you've placed the folder in Live's User Library, you should also find the MFA Conversation Engine default Max for Live Device in the Max MIDI Effect folder of Live's Max for Live browser category.

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Device Overview

Call and response, in real-time.

Conversation Engine is designed to generate call and response between two different note voices, expressed through the current MIDI track or via up to 64 destinations with our included X-Relay utility. Each voice has its own pitch, velocity, length, and density, with individual hold, pause, and sustain - plus pitch and velocity deviation to bring patterns to life.

The large Dice button randomizes up to 64 eligible Step states to instantly produce new variations on a conversation sequence. The Global Probability Amount slider governs the chance of Step voices flipping for all Steps simultaneously — but Step Probabilities can also be set individually. By reducing a Step's Probability to 0% you can Lock it, excluding it from randomization for highly programmable control.

Enable Auto Dice mode to create infinitely evolving musical call and response patterns, randomizing all unlocked steps at the specified Interval, set in bars. This could be used to generate new conversational dynamics at, for example, Intervals of 2 or 4 bars, or for creating continuous variations on percussion patterns — with Locked Steps perpetually exempt.

Explore Euclidean and Count options to easily generate compelling starting points from which to periodically randomize as desired with the ability to reset to them as a home base. Then explore the lock and probability randomization controls and weighting. Experiment, have fun, and capture your results to new MIDI or Audio Clips by recording them to other tracks in Live.

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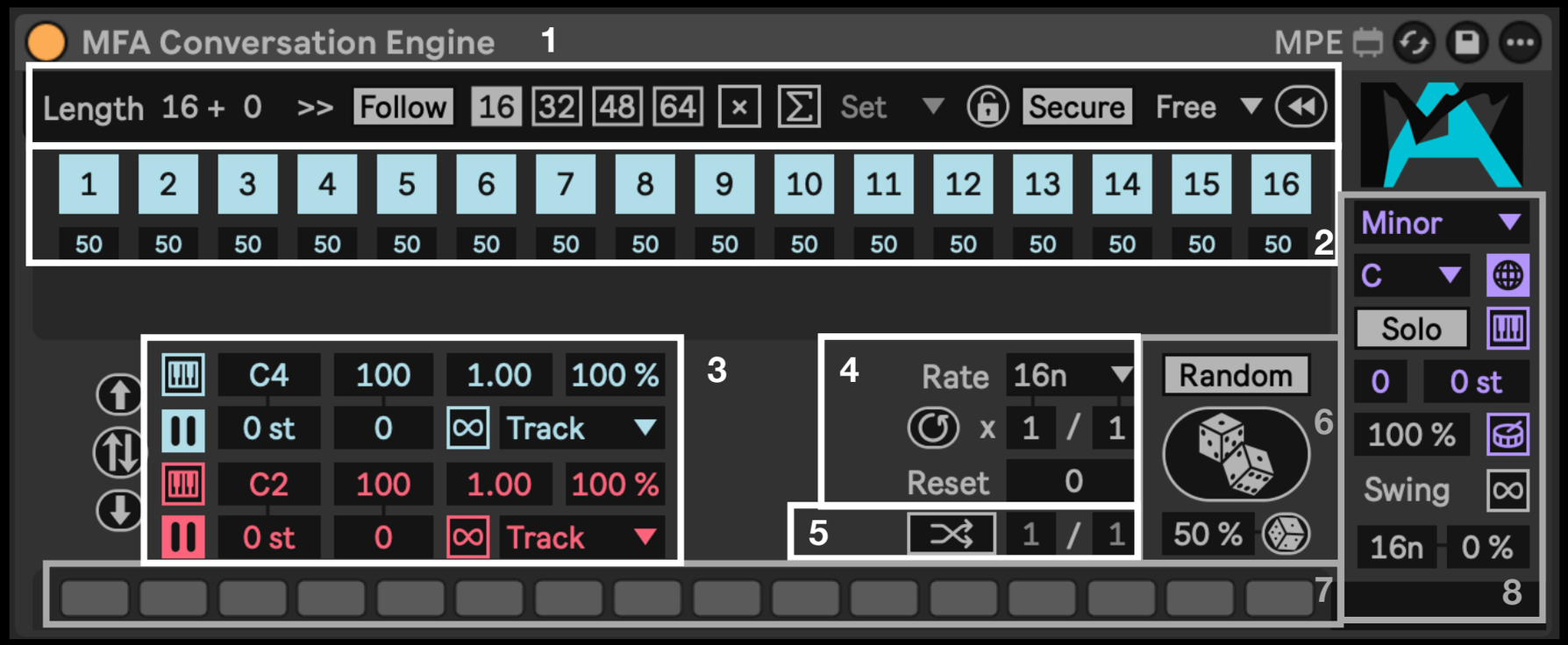
Visual Guide

1 · Along the top are global settings including pattern length in steps, with offset and direction. You can then follow the current view of 16 steps when the cycle exceeds this length, or toggle to edit to focus just on one area.



Next are the count and Euclidean editing modes, which get a lock mode chooser with Veto to clear current locks with their programming, Obey to adhere to current lock settings regardless of programming, or Set to create locks. In default Secure mode, Global Randomization does not affect Locked Steps; toggled into Force mode, the Global Randomization Amount will override step locks. Unlock toggles current Locks off; in the event all steps are locked, the Unlock toggle at left goes orange to invite unlocking.

2 · Step Toggles determine which voice is output, corresponding to the color in the voices area below. Step Probability sliders determine the chance that a Step Toggle's state will be flipped at the next randomization trigger; setting a Step Probability to 0% will Lock it, meaning it will never randomize and instead remain in its current assignment.

3 · Each voice has its own default pitch, velocity, length, and density, with pause and optional transposition. Pitch and velocity both get their own deviation option, with a hold sustain and output selection to route the output to the track's own MIDI output by default, or to up to one of 64 destinations anywhere in a set using the included X-Relay Utility.

4 · Grid Resolution determines the metrical resolution of the grid; however, it is limited to 16 steps: setting it to 32n will only process 1/2 bar of MIDI, while setting it to 8n will process 2 bars of MIDI in 1/8th note chunks. Finally, Reset polyrhythmic patterns in intervals measured in bars; 0 never resets.

5 · The Interval sliders determines the interval, in bars and divisions thereof, at which randomizations will be triggered in Auto Dice mode; click the shuffle arrows to toggle in or out of Auto Dice mode.

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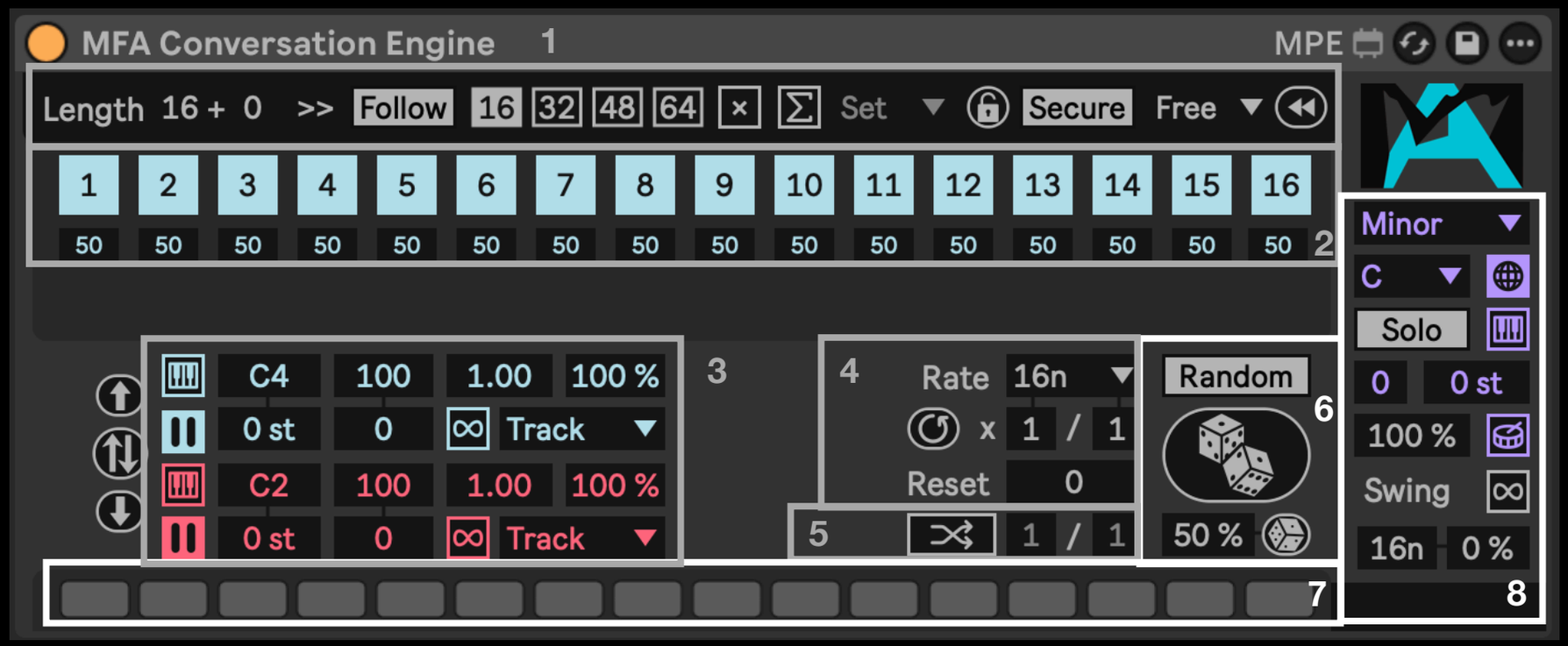
Visual Guide Continued



6 · In default Random mode, percentage determines the likelihood of randomization; in Weighted mode, probabilities determine the likelihood of steps randomizing to Voice 1 at higher values, or Voice 2 at lower values. The Global Randomization Amount slider controls the probabilities of all Steps simultaneously; the Dice button triggers randomization of all eligible, unlocked (greater than 0%) steps. In Auto Dice mode, randomizations automatically occur at each bar Interval set by the slider at left, easily creating automatic permutations.

7 · The playhead indicator shows where Live's Transport playhead corresponds to the 64-step cycle.

8 · Here we have the global output settings, starting with the scale and key automatically inherited from the Live Set or an instance of Global Hub in global mode; pin locally to set a discrete scale and key within the device. Click the piano to toggle both voice transpositions to the on position, and toggle Solo to Blend mode to allow incoming MIDI to be passed to the output. Transpose in octaves and semitones separately, and control both voice densities and holds together. Enable Drums mode to automatically set the device to a chromatic scale and key, pinned locally. Set the swing interval and amount, susceptible to the set's global groove when in global mode. At bottom we have the current note output display; click here to flush stuck notes if needed.

CONVERSATION ENGINE

Visual Guide

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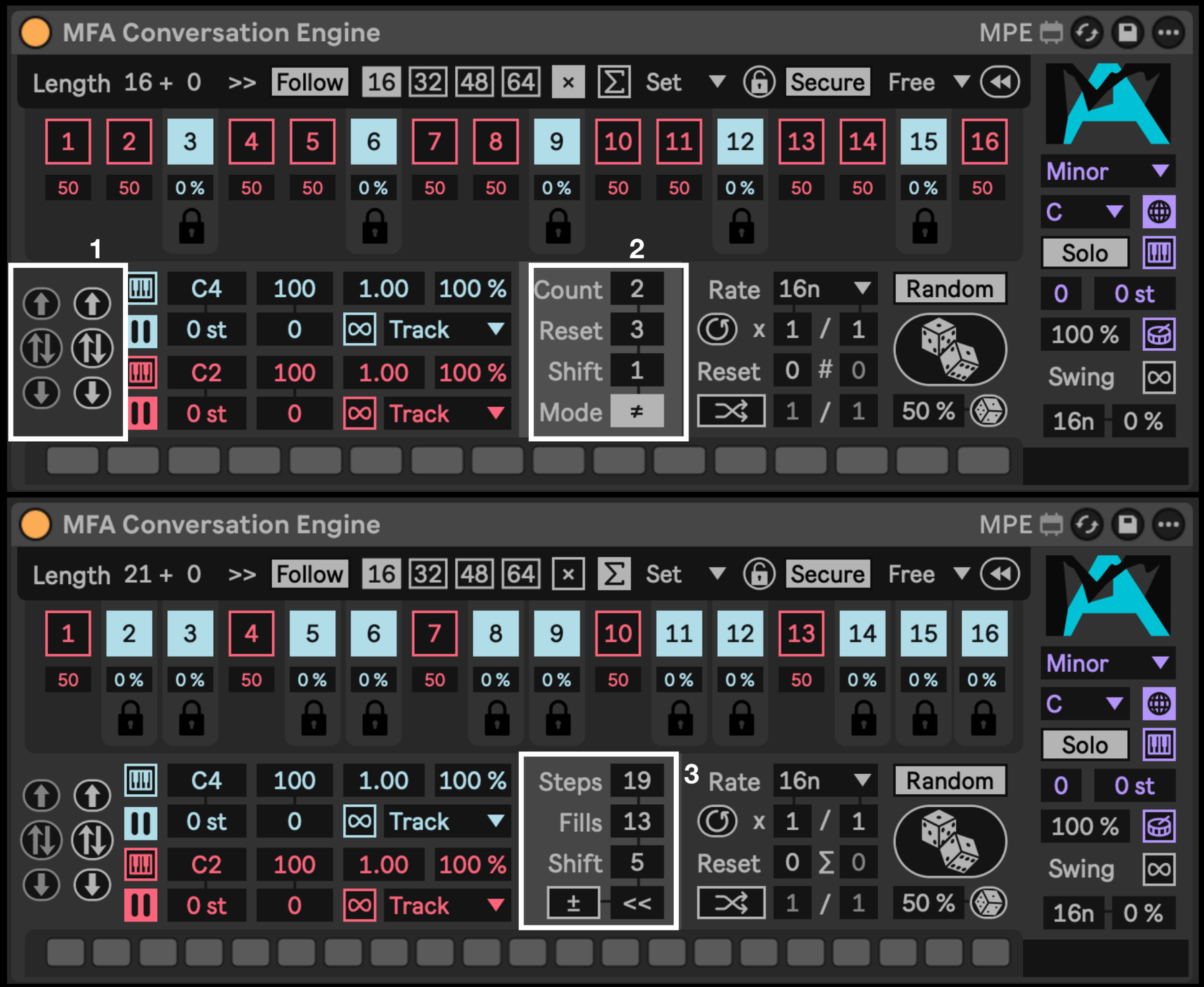

1 · At far left, these are the locked step toggles, which only appear when one or more steps have been locked: turn all locked steps on up top, off at bottom, or invert their current states in between. To the right are the unlocked step toggles: turn all unlocked steps on up top, off at bottom, or invert their current states in between.

2 · With count mode enabled, set a Count of steps to enable, Reset that count at a separate interval, Shift the count forward or backward, or invert the step states of the count with the Mode toggle.

3 · When Euclidean mode is enabled, you can set the number of Steps in the Euclidean pattern (limited by the length of the overall pattern), the number of Euclidean steps to be Filled (limited by the number of Euclidean Steps), a Shift control to offset the count start, an inversion to flip the pattern states, and a direction control to reverse or reflect the Euclidean pattern.

CONVERSATION ENGINE

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FAQ

What if I don’t want certain steps randomized?

Simply reduce a Step’s Probability slider value to 0% to exempt it from randomization, whether it be manual Dice randomization, or Auto Dice Interval randomization.

All Steps are Locked — how do I unlock them?

In Secure mode, the Unlock button goes orange — just click it to revert to normal behavior with all Step Probabilities set to 1% or the value of the Global Randomization slider, if you change it before clicking Unlock. Alternatively, you can also unlock steps by increasing their individual Probability sliders one by one. In Override mode, simply bring the Global Randomization Amount slider up to a non-zero value (1% or higher) and Steps will automatically unlock, as Override mode is designed to ignore step Lock functions.

Why is the Global Randomization Probability slider unlocking all my steps?

This is the designated behavior in Override mode, in which Step Locks are meant to be overridden by the Global Randomization Amount slider. To adjust the Global Randomization Amount slider without overriding Step Locks, toggle the Override button back to Secure mode.

Steps are greyed out and the loop seems off — why?

If the Cycle value is below 16, only steps up to the maximum Cycle value will play before looping; steps outside the Cycle appear greyed out but remain available for editing. This allows for polyrhythmic step exposure to create dynamic patterns from simple ones.

Steps aren’t randomizing at the Interval I specified.

To automatically generate new Step toggle states at specific Intervals, make sure you enable Auto Dice mode by toggling the button that says Manual.

When I click the Steps state buttons, why do certain Steps remain in their previous state?

In Secure mode, Locked Steps set to 0% will ignore the Steps On and Steps Off buttons so as to retain certain patterns while changing the state of unlocked Steps for dynamic playability. To deactivate Step Locks with these buttons, click the Secure toggle and switch to Override mode to force Locked Steps Off or On along with the unlocked Steps.

Voice step patterns aren’t saving with my Live Set — why?

In Auto Dice mode, unlocked Step states are hidden from Live to avoid a known conflict between Live and Max. Simply disable Auto Dice mode to enable specific patterns to be stored with your Live Set.

Thank you for supporting us by purchasing this device — we hope it inspires your creativity!

For more information, video tutorials, and other devices, please visit us online at: **manifest.audio**

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