

This interactive case turns your modular synth setup into a light show

Los Angeles-based Strange Electronic has launched a Kickstarter for a new kind of Eurorack synth module that doesn't make or control any sound at all. Instead, it integrates full-spectrum LED lighting into a modular setup, and is meant to spice up live performances by adding a visual component.

Called Lightstorm, the product is actually comprised of two parts – the actual Eurorack module, which has multiple parameters for controlling light, and a frosted acrylic case with a power supply and built-in LEDs. The module can be bought separately if you want to hook it up to your own lighting rig, but the plug-and-play nature of using a case that can light up is incredibly appealing.

The module has ports for LED output on both the front and the back, and five lighting parameters to play with: pattern, speed, color, saturation, and brightness. There's also a separate trigger input toward the bottom of the module, which has different effects, depending on the selected pattern. Each of these parameters has a modulation input, which means that the same signals used to make music can be used with Lightstorm to produce a colorful light show. Any control voltage can be patched in and used as a signal for different parts of the light experience, so an LFO could control brightness, or a sequencer could trigger color changes.



Lightstorm Eurorack module

Image: Strange Electronic

It comes with multiple banks of patterns, which can be toggled through via a button at the top, and if you're versed in Arduino sketches, it can be reprogrammed to your liking. But that's an advanced option – the Lightstorm was made to give modular musicians an easy way to integrate lighting into their setup without having to learn additional technology.

There is a slight curveball. If you use an LED strip of your choosing, there's a chance you'll have to tweak the software if the light count is different from the strip that comes with the module. But Strange Electronic says it plans to make tutorial videos to coach people through this and other ways to customize the Lightstorm.

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The case itself is beautiful when seen in action. Crafted for live shows, it has a downward slope so the audience can see your hands and what's going on during a performance. Inside, it comes with a power supply, ribbon cable, and built-in LEDs. And, of course, because it's made from a milky-white acrylic, the case becomes an actual light show when used in tandem with

the Lightstorm module. It's an interesting solution that gives artists an easy way to add a visual experience to their modular setup.

Strange Electronic has made several products in the past, including flight cases for equipment and professional playback systems, so this isn't their first go at designing and manufacturing something. But, it is a small company, so both the Lightstorm module and case will be handmade (for now). That means they come with price tags to match. The module can be preordered for \$250 and comes with an LED strip, LED power supply, and LED extension cable. If you want both the module and the case, that bundle can be pre-ordered for \$1,100 and comes with built-in power and lighting.

The company promises Lightstorm will be ready to ship in June of this year, but as with all Kickstarters, keep in mind that production issues could delay delivery time and use your best judgment before shelling out cash.

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