

Motif PLG150-AN Voice sets

Getting into the ANALOG-head.

Back in the day, it was the "Age of Analog" (circa 1971-1984). Analog synthesis evolved from humble beginnings. The first commercially affordable, and therefore popular, synth was the MiniMoog (Moog rhymes with rogue, vogue). 'Affordable', is always relative – but to give you an idea: the MiniMoog retailed for \$1495 at a time when a Volkswagen 'beetle' retailed for \$1995. That is not a misprint – those were the good old days! Principally used for bass or leads. Hey, it was monophonic, not touch sensitive (that wasn't invented on synths yet), had no preset sounds, didn't have an effect processor, was only 44 keys in length and weighed almost as much as a Motif 6. You, if you are in generation d (digital), may wonder what all the fuss was about. It wasn't the polyphony – that's for sure. It was the sound and the behavior of that sound. Certainly, in the entire history of the Age of Analog, polyphony never really advanced much beyond 5, 6 or 8 notes (yes, I know about the Prophet 10 and the Matrix 12 but they were really just 2 synth engines in one box.) In 1971 - the MiniMoog, then shortly after that the ARP Odyssey with its 2-note polyphony, wow! – and the polyphony wars were on. In the mid-seventies, the Yamaha CS80 with its 200+ pounds of synth – it had the front panel duplicated in miniature several times under a little lid so that you could instantly go from sound to sound. It also had a ribbon, aftertouch, and even polyphonic aftertouch! You could also heat a small home with one of those. Shortly after that, for \$5000+ you could play a fist-full of notes with the Sequential Circuits Prophet V (5) and it also let you choose from a huge bank of 40 presets (later expanded to 120, wow). This advance meant that you could play someone else's sounds – programmed at the factory. You do realize, up until this point in time, every synth player was a programmer by default. Until the introduction of the 'preset' the synth community was very small. If you wanted to play synth – you **had** to program, period. Nowadays, you know the excuses, "Hey, I'm not a rocket scientist, I just want to play" and "The manual sucks!" Once "the preset" was a reality, manufacturer's could hire crack musicians to program sounds. Soon, user's lost the fear of programming because they didn't have to start from scratch each time. You could start with a preset and turn a knob, not really knowing what it is supposed to do and if it messes up the sound you put it back. However, if it **is** a big improvement, you can store it and take credit for having come up with a new sound! Okay, I'll ease up on the sarcasm but that is really the truth. Many never understood VCO-VCF-VCA and became "programmers" (the quotes are intentional). But if you are willing to dig in, you can have a lot of fun with sound design and an analog synth engine. With the PLG150-AN you have a physical model of an analog synth. The latest technology used to recreate (mathematically) the routing and reaction of an old voltage-controlled synth. In fact, the AN engine can recreate synth sounds from the very beginning – through the mid-'70's – right up through the end of the era where cross-modulation was the thing. To completely create analog Voices from scratch you will need the AN Expert Editor (which will be covered in a future installment). But before you go there, let's learn about how the PLG150-AN integrates with the Motif. Included with this file are three banks of sounds made from the preset Board Voices. When you purchased the PLG150-AN you actually get 256 pre-programmed sounds – these are the 'raw' data from which you can build Motif Plug-in Voices. Because you placed the board in a Motif (part of the Modular Synthesis Plug-in System) you can use its parameters to add effects and controller routings to perform these sounds. Yamaha gives you 64 already programmed PLUG-IN sounds to get you started – they automatically appear when you boot up and the Motif detects the PLG150-AN in a slot. They appear in the **PLGPRE1** bank. Hey, but what about the other 192 sounds where are they? Well, here they are. These AN sounds are originally found in the Board banks **036/000** and **036/001**. You can build from them. You can load them in (64 at a time) to the PLGUSR bank and use the "VOICE EDITOR for MOTIF 6/MOTIF 7/MOTIF 8" provided on the TOOLS CDROM that comes with the Motif to edit them with Motif parameters.

On the PLG150-AN there is also a Board bank called **036/002** – this special bank is a USER bank for the Expert Editor – more on this in a future document.

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The Files: [Save any personal data - before loading this data!]

From Computer

Make the appropriate connection to your computer with the Motif. If you are using the USB(MIDI) connection, be sure to select USB in [UTILITY]/[F5] MIDI/[SF4] Other. If you are using a regular MIDI interface be sure to connect both to and from the Motif and to set the parameter mentioned above to MIDI. Files included:

SET1 for Slot 1/2/3

SET2 for Slot 1/2/3

SET3 for Slot 1/2/3

for example: set1slt1.w2e and set1slt1.w2e are for units with the AN board in slot 1

The 'ghost' .w3e file is a housekeeping file generated and used by the Motif. They are called ghosts (hidden) because you will not see them when you view your SmartMedia or SCSI device via the Motif screen. Just always treat them like a pair and you and your Motif will be very happy.

The files can be opened by the VOICE EDITOR FOR MOTIF program (included on your CDROM) and can be loaded to the Motif from your computer. It is very important that you get the file for the slot that you have the PLG150-AN installed. When you have the proper data, open the file. Each contains the original Normal User Voices, the User Drum kits, and one bank of 128 AN sounds in the PLUG-IN tab corresponding to the slot number. You can click on the MIDI Out Transmit icon, then select Transfer Type: Plug-In x, where x is your slot number.

The Motif screen will indicate that it is "Receiving MIDI bulk...". When completed you must close the dialog box in the Editor to release the Motif, then recall a Voice to refresh the Motif screen.

I am not setup to use the "Voice Editor for Motif" program how can get these sounds to my PLG150-AN?

Alternatively, the Motif Voice Editor files can be opened directly in the Motif. Download the files for the slot containing your PLG150-AN. Then transfer the files to a SmartMedia card (or SCSI drive). There are several ways to do this. Use a USB SmartMedia card Reader/Writer, if available. And if not, you can use the "Motif File Utility" also included on your CDROM to drag and drop the files directly to a SmartMedia card that is inserted in the Motif.¹ When you load this type file called VOICE EDITOR it will overwrite all of your USER sounds (Normal, Drum, and Plug-in User banks – therefore save any data before loading this data.)

Remember: the PLG150-AN must be in the Motif, in the correct slot because the mathematical calculations that happen in the physical model require the hardware on the board itself. The Voices are nothing without the board. (So emailing them to a friend who doesn't have the PLG150-AN will do them no good).

The PLG150-AN has a total of 256 analog sounds from which you can build 64 Motif integrated Plug-in Voices. These are three sets of 64 Voices representing the other 192 preset sounds on the PLG Board. They will load directly into the 64 PLGUSR (Plug-in User) bank locations. (PLGPRE1 loads in automatically when a PLG150-AN board is detected on power up.)

In general, Set 1 has bass and lead sounds. Set 2 has Brass/Strings/Pads and Set 3 includes Musical effects/Sound effects/sequences. These are very tweakable – only a minimum of effect programming has been done. You are invited to work from the VOICE EDITOR For MOTIF² or from the front panel of the Motif to add insertion effects, controller setups etc. Work with these voices and the editor or front panel to get a better understanding of how the Element level parameters on the Board and the Common level parameters of the Motif combine to make the finished PLUG-IN Voice stored in the PLGUSR bank.

Next time, we will take a look at the AN Expert Editor and build analog synth voices from scratch. Which is another whole thing. Happy programming! pc

¹ The Motif **File Utility** lets you view the SmartMedia card and any connected SCSI devices from your computer. Double click on the Computer icon on the tool bar to search your computer – locate the files and drag them onto the SmartMedia icon.

² This program lets you archive your USER sounds whether (Normal, Drum, or Plug-in).