

MOTIF XS

-Tweak of the Week Series-

PRESET 1: 001(A01) Full Concert Grand

You can learn a lot about a program from a close inspection of the screen. Let's begin this series of articles with an overview of the VOICE screen and learn how to intelligently approach exploring it and/or any VOICE in the Motif XS. Shown below is the Main screen of the "PRE 1:001(A01) Full Concert Grand" Voice.



The "tab" in the extreme upper left corner will always indicate what MODE you are in currently: [VOICE] mode. You can also see the current transmit channel and the current Octave transposition.

The "tabs" along the bottom of the screen will tell you what screen you currently viewing; these are selectable via the six [F] or Function buttons:

- [F1] PLAY
- [F2] PORTA (Portamento)
- [F3] EG/EQ (Envelope Generator/ Equalizer)
- [F4] Arpeggio

[F6] Effect> Goes to Edit mode. You may notice that if has a different look than the others – this is to denote that actually drop into EDIT when you press it – just as if you had actually pressed [EDIT] and navigated to the EFFECTS screen.

The first five [SF] Sub-Function buttons, 1-5, select the Arpeggio phrase (these will only sound if additionally the [ARP ON/OFF] button is illuminated).

The [SF6] button's function will change depending on the screen you are viewing – on this main PLAY screen it is the [INFO] or INFORMATION button. This button can be very helpful in fully understanding what is going on in this particular Voice. At times you will see it as the "LIST" button. We will come back to this later.

In the screen you can see eight knobs and eight sliders icons. Notice that a red arrow indicates the stored value for that knob or slider... while the graphic fader and knob icons mimic the actual position of the physical knob or slider. In the screen shot there is only one red indicator by the SUSTAIN knob, yet all 8 Control Sliders have a red indicator – the red indicator by the SUSTAIN knob is at +0 showing that the stored value for the "sustain" parameter is 0, however, the actual knob of this particular XS is turned slightly to the right (about at 2 o'clock). The red indicator will appear initially only when the knob or sliders position is different from the stored value. Only when you move a knob or slider past the red indicator it will "hook" it and the knob/slider will indicate the actual value. So turning the Sustain knob clockwise will **not** be effective – you would need to turn it initially counterclockwise to the 12 o'clock position at which time the parameter value will be "hooked", the red arrow will disappear, and the knob will become active. As long as the red arrow appears the control is not active. Try it. Move a slider until you reach the stored value – the red indicator disappears as soon as you reach that value.

In a VOICE the Knobs will show a row of parameters. To the left of the actual knobs you will see a button labeled "SELECTED PART CONTROL" pressing it will select one of three rows of functions: Tone 1 (which is the one that is selected and shown in the graphic above), Tone 2 or ARP FX. The row that is selected when the VOICE is stored is the row that will be active initially when the VOICE is recalled. The CS, or Control Sliders, in VOICE mode will always control individual Element Level. This is accomplished by sending System Exclusive messages to the Tone Generator. (An Element is simply a multi-sample component of the Voice).

A possible question here might be: Why is this done with System Exclusive messages? In Voice mode there is no MIDI control number that would specifically address the individual Elements. After all, Elements are an 'exclusive' feature found in Yamaha keyboards. A MIDI control message like Expression (cc011) or Volume

(cc007) would control the entire VOICE's volume (all Elements together) as those types of messages are "Channel messages" (everything on the same MIDI channel would respond in kind to a channel message).

In the screen, below the CS icons and their stored values, you will see what six of your physical controllers are assigned to do. This is always a good clue as to what you can immediately do to change the Voice during a musical performance. You may not initially know what all the different parameters mean, yet, but you can remind yourself to move them and listen to their impact on the VOICE.

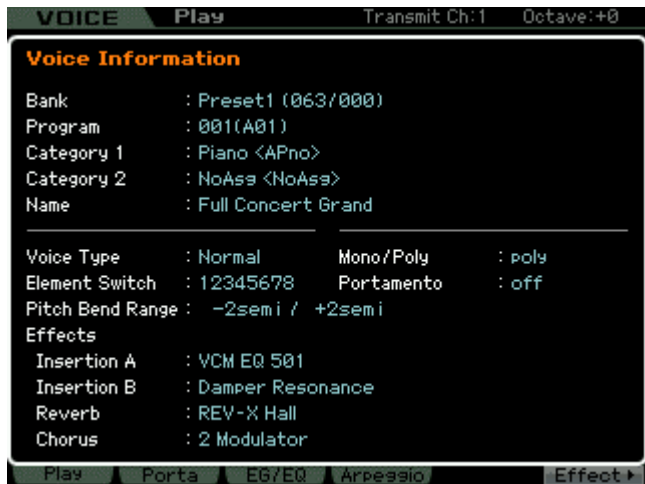
MW (Modulation Wheel) = Chorus Send amount. On the this Voice it is a dual modulator Chorus device
RB (Ribbon Controller) = Cutoff. Move your finger to the left to close down the filter, to the right to open it
AF1 (Assignable Function 1) = Reverb Send. Pressing this button will recall a preset amount of reverb
AF2 (Assignable Function 2) = AEG Release. Recalls a slightly shorter release
AS1 (Assignable Knob 1) = Insert Effect "A", High Shelving Gain – increase high frequency output
AS2 (Assignable Knob 2) = Element Level – increases Key-Off noise (element 8)
The manual goes into great detail about the various definitions of Effect parameters (please see page 73 of the Owner's Manual for details).

Pressing the [AF1] button, for example, recalls a predetermined amount of reverb. This could be useful if you have a piano solo and want to instantly reposition the piano in the mix. It is programmed (assigned) on the CONTROL SET screen within the VOICE.

A "Control Set" is where your physical controllers like modulation wheel, pitch bend wheel, foot controllers, etc., can be directed to specific parameters within the Voice. These are customizable and allow a great deal of flexibility when it comes to performing a particular program. They can target both parameters within the Voice itself and/or help you control your Effect processors in real time.

As soon as you alter a VOICE from its originally stored condition a pink letter "E" will appear in the extreme upper right corner. "E" for Edited (but not yet stored). Any changes to a Voice can be stored but only to a USER VOICE location. You can quickly return a Voice to its stored status by pressing the Program button number [1]-[16], while on the [F1] PLAY screen. This will recall the original Voice data and the "E" will disappear.

The Controllers and the parameters they are assigned to can all be customized, and your changes can be stored to any of 384 User Voice locations in USER 1, USER 2 or USER 3 banks – but for now let's just explore the assignments made by the programmers.



Shown at left is the Voice Information screen. This appears when you press the [F6] INFO button. Here you can find out the vital information about the current program. Of interest is this VOICE is an eight Element Voice (Element Switch indicates that Elements 12345678 are active. Also the four Effects associated with this VOICE are shown:
Insertion A: VCM EQ 501 – modeling 5-band EQ
Insertion B: DAMPER RESONANCE – string resonance w/sustain
Reverb: REV-X HALL – SPX2000 grade reverberation
Chorus: 2 Modulator – dual modulator chorus

The Damper Resonance can be heard when you hold down the sustain pedal. It adds the feel of a real acoustic piano's soundboard.

Each article in this series will talk about some unique things you can find and do with a Preset sound. The purpose of this series to help you explore and take advantage of some of the programming in the Voices and hopefully help you learn to customize the Voice data to your own particular requirements. A PRESET Voice can be edited and your custom edit can be stored as a USER VOICE to one of the three USER Banks. Each

User Voice bank has 128 locations for you to store your edits. You do not have to worry about overwriting the data currently in the USER banks as they all appear elsewhere in the Preset banks.

When you are in [EDIT] you will want to be able to explore the Element parameters. Here's how:

- Press [EDIT]
- Press Track Select button [1] to view Element parameters
- Press [F1] OSCILLATOR

You can toggle the view between viewing a single Element and viewing a list of the parameters of four Elements at a time by pressing [SF5] 1 ELM or [SF5] 4 ELM, respectively. Use the Track Select buttons [1]-[8] to select an Element – its data will be recalled in the screen. Alternatively, you can move between Elements with the cursor arrows [<] and [>].

You can press the [MUTE] button while in Element Edit to isolate combinations or you can press the [SOLO] button to isolate a single Element to hear its contribution. Also the CS (Control Sliders) will correspond to the eight Elements, CS1-CS8, allowing you to control the output level of each Element.