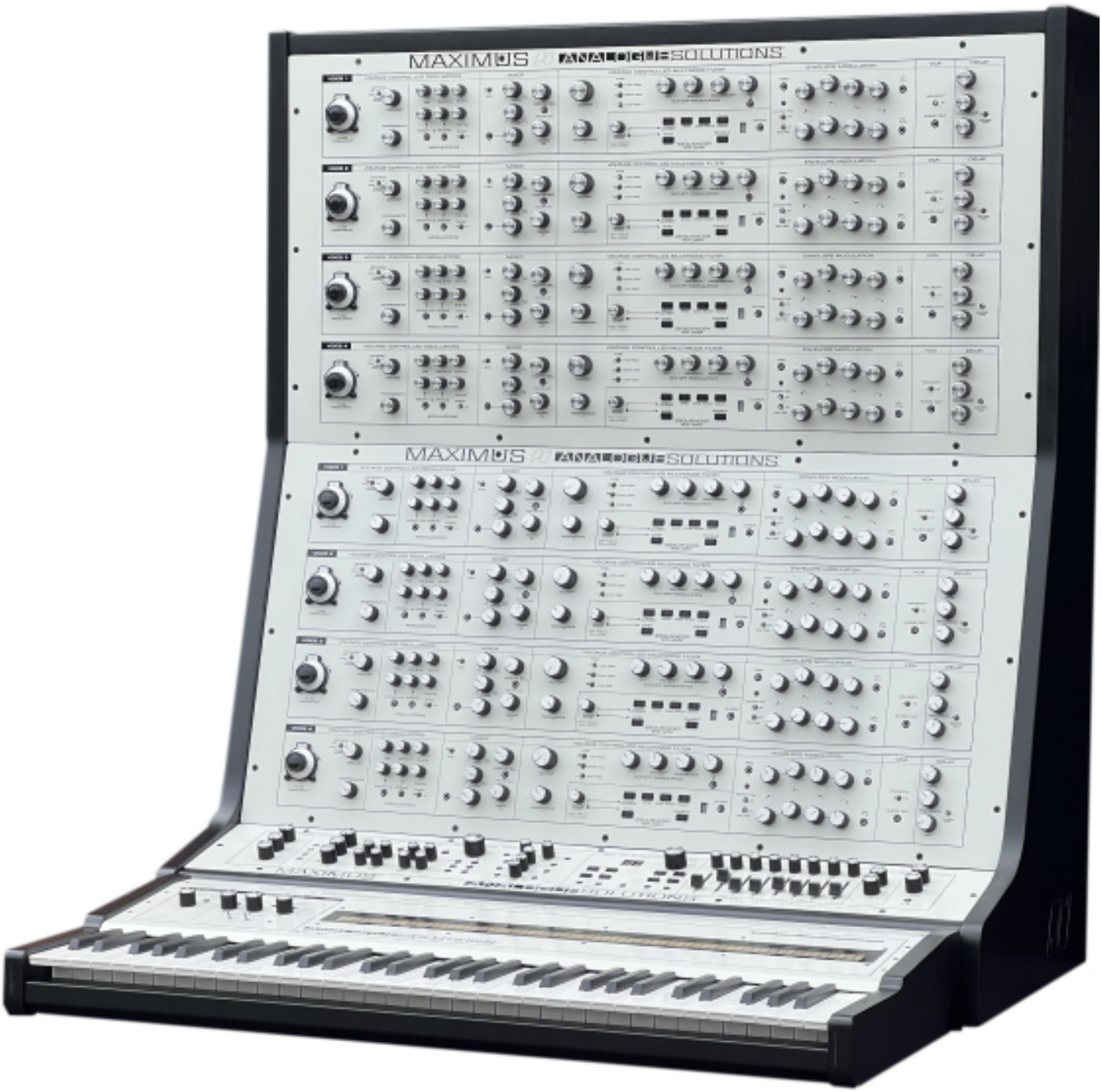
Analogue Solutions Maximus



After stealing the show at SynthFest 2023 in Sheffield, UK on October 7, 2023 with a successful showcase soft-launch that opened eyes and ears to its maximal size and sound, British boutique electronic instruments innovator Analogue Solutions announce that it has sold out of the first batch of its Maximus AS300 - announced as a ‘filmic’ mega-polysynth produced by company founder Tom Carpenter to a design

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ethos that truly draws its inspiration from the dawn of analogue synths, yet is so much more than a polysynth or even a powerful analogue ‘workstation’ since it includes independent controls for each of its eight voices to provide more freedom to unleash unique styles of polyphonic sounds that traditional ‘flat-panelled’ polysynths simply cannot create, not forgetting that it is, after all, also art, architecture, and even exquisite studio furniture fabricated into a high-quality-constructed synthesiser, the likes of which surely only comes around once in a decade or, possibly, a generation - and orders for the next batch are already being directly taken for upcoming shipment slots, as of February 16…

Diminutive dimensions definitely do not apply to the main unit of the STEREO 16 VCO / 8 VOICE POLY SYNTH that is Analogue Solutions’ no-expense- spared Maximus AS300, as evidenced by its three eye-catching, snow-white-coloured, solid metal panels perfectly wrapped in a contrasting black solid hardwood enclosure measuring 947 mm (W) x 435 mm (D) x 1060 mm (H) - hence its apt naming. Needless to say, said unit packs a maximal sonic punch, which is hardly surprising since each of its eight identical voices provide the following - eye- and ear-opening - features replicated across two of those panels that literally leave nothing to the imagination: two analogue VOLTAGE CONTROLLED OSCILLATORS, tuneable using a multi-turn TUNE FREQUENCY vernier dial, plus a DETUNE control (for VCO 2), PORTAMENTO, KEY/MIDI CV (control voltage) OFF and ON switch, and generous pitch modulation options (including from external CV); audio MIXER (including external audio input and analogue - white - NOISE generator); analogue SEM-style VOLTAGE CONTROLLED MULTIMODE FILTER, featuring HIGH PASS, BAND PASS, and LOW PASS types, versatile CUT-OFF MODULATION options, plus CUTOFF and RESONANCE controls; 16-step mini-SEQUENCER offering pitch and filter cutoff sequencing and ONE-SHOT trigger mode; ENVELOPE MODULATION with dual ADSR (Attack, Decay, Sustain, Release) and several triggering options; VCA (Voltage Controlled Amplifier) with VELOCITY dynamics and separate AUDIO OUT; lo-fi ECHO and delay unit; and last, but by no means least, a healthy implementation of audio and CV I/O connections.

Creativity clearly knows no bounds as those eight voices can be individually programmed since they are each essentially complex dual-VCO (Voltage Controlled Oscillator) analogue synths in their own right. Reality dictates that they can all be programmed pretty much the same so that they each produce a similar sound - albeit not quite identical, due to their individual nature that actually adds to the overall sound character - or they can be programmed completely differently from each other to create more unusual polyphonic sounds. Speaking of which, Maximus AS300 does not have patch memories - just like the first generation of analogue polysynths, so every sound created will be unique. Ultimately, Maximus AS300 is more than capable of producing traditional ‘pads’ but it is better suited to creating unorthodox polyphonic sounds. Saying that, it also excels at unusual analogue loops and rhythms when played in a cyclic mode - setting each voice to a different type of sound results in interesting patterns when cycling through them, in other words.

Those two panels (each featuring VOICE 1, VOICE 2, VOICE 3, and VOICE 4) are

complimented by a lower-positioned third, the so-called master panel, which is where global modulation (applying to all voices), global sequencer control, keyboard and MIDI setup, final audio mixing, stereo reverb, and master outputs are all dealt with via specific sections — namely, MASTER OFFSET (to control three parameters on all voices: PITCH, changes the pitch/tuning of every oscillator on all voices; DETUNE, detunes the second oscillator on every voice; and CUTOFF, changes the cutoff frequency of every voice filter); MULT (splits CV signals); LOW FREQUENCY MODULATION & EXTERNAL CONTROL (featuring three different Low Frequency Oscillators - LFO1 being differentiated from LFO2 by having a DELAY feature, for example, while LFO3 is independent and has to be patched in; GLOBAL CONTROL offers additional CV inputs for modulating those VOICE parameters, controlling all voices); MIDI & SEQUENCE CONTROL (for setting MIDI channels, controlling the mini-SEQUENCER, keyboard modes, and some I/Os for clocking and control); eight-channel STEREO VOICE MIXER (for mixing each VOICE, providing control over their levels and stereo spread via a dedicated LEVEL fader and PAN pot - so much better than the fixed relative levels and often mono signals found in other analogue polysynths); and STEREO REVERB / OUTPUT (featuring two triple-spring real-spring reverbs - the self-explanatory SPRING L and SPRING R - wired in series after the STEREO VOICE MIXER, alongside a MASTER level control for the two stereo output jacks on the rear panel and a PHONES level control for the stereo headphones jack).

And as if all that was not enough to be getting on with, Analogue Solutions also offer an accompanying AS400 TOUCH / KEYBOARD CONTROLLER. Custom designed specifically for Maximus AS300 as an optional keyboard, it includes 61 full-size, weighted keys with velocity aftertouch and a 64-pad touch controller that can also be split into 32 pads, plus some neat CV modulators. Musically, it will transmit note and velocity information via Maximus AS300’s MIDI Out connection, while the TOUCH PADS and AFTERTOUCH outputs are analogue and do not transmit MIDI.

Analogue Solutions is directly taking orders for the next batch of its Maximus AS300 STEREO 16 VCO / 8 VOICE POLY SYNTH (expected to ship at the end of November 2024) via its dedicated webpage. (An accompanying AS400 TOUCH / KEYBOARD CONTROLLER is optionally available to order directly from Analogue Solutions.)

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