

Introducing

YAMMEX

We review an expander module from V3 Sounds that is designed to be compatible with the Genos, Tyros and PSR-S Yamaha keyboards plus CVP501, CVP701 and CGP1000

Recently a small package was delivered to my door which I eagerly signed for in anticipation of several hours of enjoyable exploration and experimentation. I'd been told that the V3 Yammex Expander was a doddle to use and that I'd have it set up and ready to play within minutes.



I've heard that before - but in this instance, the product lived up to its reputation. If it connects to the Yamaha Tyros and PSR-S models as easily and with the same level of compatibility as it connected to my Genos (and I have no reason to believe that it won't) it will be a fabulous little add-on for all those people who simply cannot get enough sounds for their keyboard.

I won't bore you with the set-up process - because basically I just followed the simple instructions provided in the box. Except that you will need to download the interface software to be able to unlock the sounds in the module from your keyboard. I was assured that the data can be supplied on a USB stick for anyone who doesn't have access to the internet or who isn't too happy downloading.

On the back of the small, light (200g), shield shaped module you'll find provision for headphones, audio leads (to route the sound through your keyboard), MIDI lead (to connect the controls of the keyboard to the module), a USB port and a power lead. There are only two controls on the 'front' panel; one controls the volume of the module (so that you can balance it with the volume of the keyboard) and the other is an overall reverb control (although reverb is controlled from the keyboard itself).

Although V3 Sound, who produce the Yammex module, is based in Austria, amongst the 770 sounds it contains are GM voices, Hammond, Theatre, German and Pipe organs, 100 Accordions, Classic Orchestra Strings and Brass and.... a selection of very authentic Scottish Pipes and Pipe Band voices especially for our friends north of the border..

Let's get started

- 1 Once all the connections have been made switch on the V3 Yammex module and your keyboard (Genos in this instance).
- 2 Then press the Right 1 VOICE SELECT button on the keyboard's panel to call up the Right 1 voice page. Now touch the 'User' icon at the top of the page (fig.1).



Fig.1: Touch the User icon at the top of the Right 1 Voice selection page.

- 3 Each folder on the page contains a category of voices stored within the V3 module. I, of course, headed for the Organ category to see what treats were on offer here... so I touched the Organ folder on the screen (fig.2).

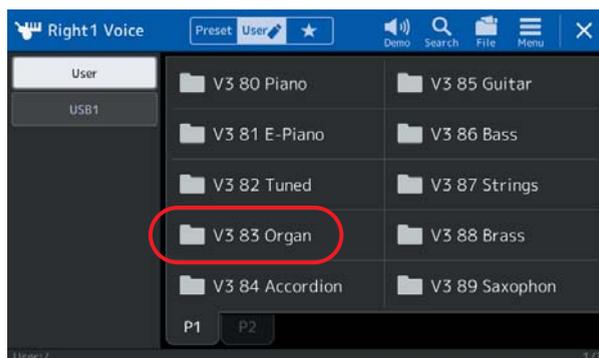


Fig.2: I headed for the Organ folder first...

V3 SOUND

YAMMEX

More sounds for YAMAHA keyboards

TYROS 2, 3, 4, 5, GENOS, PSR-S970/975/900/770/775

YAMMEX is a MIDI expander with 770 sounds for Yamaha keyboards. YAMMEX was specifically developed as an integrated part of the keyboard itself.

You can call up all of the sounds directly from your keyboard and also adjust the parameters, such as volume, reverb, chorus or panorama. You can save and retrieve the sounds as easily as if they were part of the original keyboard.

YAMMEX offers 4 GB flash memory, 15,000 samples, and 256-voice polyphony created with cutting-edge sampling technology.

For more details:
www.royhendriemusic.co.uk
ALL BRAND/PRODUCT NAMES ARE REGISTERED TRADEMARKS OF THEIR RESPECTIVE HOLDERS

- 4 The first two pages (there are nine in this category) are filled with Hammond organ samples described by numbers - such as OS776555678 circled in fig.3. OS tells us that the sound is an Organ with a slow rotary speaker effect and the nine numbers represent the positions of each of the nine standard Hammond organ drawbars.

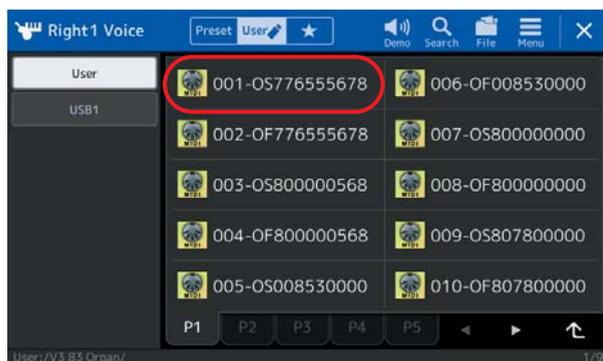


Fig.3: Hammond organ samples with numbers to describe the drawbar positions.

- 5 There are some terrific sounds here that complement the keyboard's own voices yet that are different enough to make you want them. I discovered more of these as I explored further. Voice number 30 in the organ category is a wonderful percussive sound

from the vintage Hammond L100 - and fans of the late virtuoso Klaus Wunderlich will recognise this instantly from some of his early recordings (fig.4).

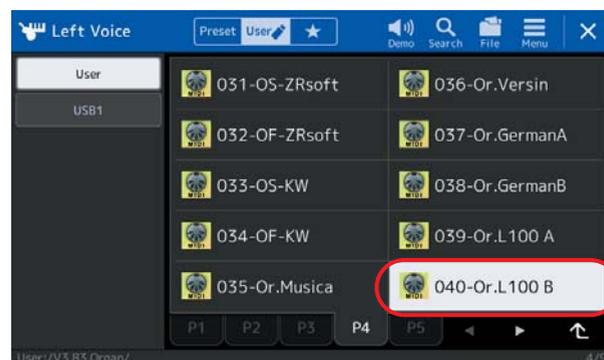


Fig.4: A great sample from the vintage Hammond L100 organ

At this point I switched on the Left Voice part and selected another organ voice from the module to use for the accompaniment.

I could have played for hours... and Genos's panel controls work just as they do on the keyboard's internal voices - so mixing the sound to just the way you want it presents no problem at all. Furthermore, storing settings for the module in the Registration Memory works exactly the same too.

genos/tyros/psr/-s/cvp501/cvp701

I must move on, so let's leave the organ section with one final comment... The very popular 'Blackpool Tower Wurlitzer' samples created by Reg Rawlings at Total Transformation Technology (TTT) are included in the V3 module's specification too so the theatre organ enthusiasts should be as pleased as punch.

- Nearly all the sounds have wave cycling (the sound is slightly different each time you press a new key) and the voices are polyphonic. The effect is very subtle - but I spent a very happy quarter of an hour or so totally absorbed in playing the banjo (fig.5).

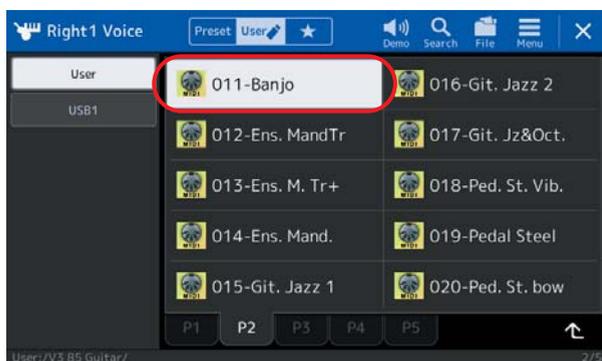


Fig.5: The V3 module has a rattling good banjo!

Tip: I turned up the Ukulele in the Genos Quickstep Style and added a Duet Harmony to the V3's Banjo and the result was spot on! Bill Bailey almost did come home.

Other good Standard Wave voices to try out include the fiddle, xylophone, dulcimer, solo trumpet, solo cornet, the guitars and solo violin (on the open strings you have a note off with more resonance).

- Auto Variation (AV) enhances the wave cycling and offers up to eight different samples per voice. Again these are polyphonic. Grace notes and other musical 'ornaments' are added to the voice as you play (giving a similar effect as some of Yamaha's Super Articulation voices).

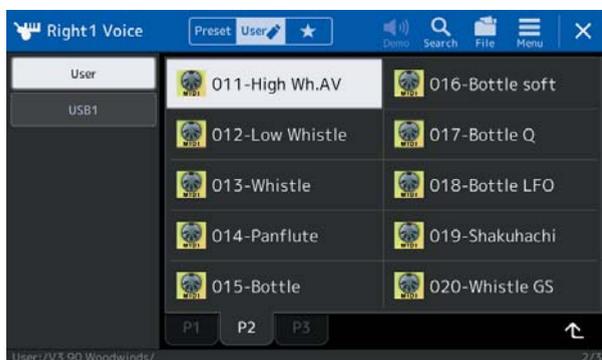


Fig.6: The AV Tin Whistle is excellent for both jigs and slow ethereal ballads.

The AV Tin Whistle took me back to one of the audience favourites from when I was playing regularly back in the 1980s. It's a lovely Scottish waltz called The Dark Isle and it sounded lovely with the Ethereal Ballad Style as the accompaniment to the haunting sound of the whistle.

As with the Yamaha Super Articulation voices you don't have to think about where, or how, to add the embellishments as they are added automatically as you play.

Other good examples of this kind of voice include the Bagpipe (also used in The Dark Isle), the Uilleann Bagpipes and the very 'Miles Davis sounding Mute Trumpet.

There is so much more that I could write about this handy little add-on but I've run out of space. If you look online you'll find some demos - but, to be honest I don't think they really do it justice. It is wonderfully compatible with the Genos keyboard and, I expect, equally so with all the instruments it is recommended for use with. At £540 it isn't cheap but it is packed with sounds, easy to use and it's small, compact and, weighing in at just 206g it's very light if you're a gigging player.

My thanks to Roy Hendrie of Roy Hendrie Music for the loan of the V3 Yammex module.

For more information, or to make a purchase please contact Roy...

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