

LAYERS

Switch between the different layers, for sound sources and modulation control

DUAL OSCILLATOR

The beating heart of each synth layer: a multifaceted dual VCO

PRESETS

Mariana ships with an excellent set of categorised patches

CV

Access to virtual CV routings

MODULATION

Assign additional modulation routings from this pop-out window

NOISE

Not content with just White noise, Moog give options for a whole host of noise colour

FILTERS

The incredibly comprehensive filter section splits into three sections

KEYBOARD

Especially useful on the iPad version, the keyboard enables immediate playability

SUB

The Sub oscillator will provide even greater depth to your patch

MIXER

Blend it all together using the mixer stage



Moog Mariana

PC MAC iOS

£30 (iOS) £99 (PC/Mac)

Looking for absorbent synth bass sounds? Moog's new software synth bass plumbs new trench-like depths, **Roland Schmidt** submerges...

> Whether you know it or not, it's a pretty safe bet to assume that you'll have heard a Moog synth playing a bass sound somewhere on a recording at some stage in your listening life. From modulars to Sub Phatty, via the Minimoog and the legendary Taurus bass pedals, it's clear Moog have synth-bass form.

Moog's latest release stays in the software domain, while also encouraging us to stay in a bass register. Mariana is capable of providing that legendary Moog sound at a sensible price, but we're intrigued to know how it differs from its previous softsynth outings.

20,000 leagues...

At first sight, the control panel is unmistakably Moog; the pots glisten, appearing three dimensional on a flat screen. It's also uncluttered, which is largely because the synth's panel is laid out across five pages. These pages break down sensibly, forming two synth layers.

We'll begin with the layer called Synth 1; our sound starts with a dual oscillator, through five traditional subtractive waveforms. Once you select a waveform, this is shared across both elements of the dual oscillator, with independent tuning control for each. Oscillator 2

can be set at the same pitch, or one/two octaves above, but with hard tuning up to a perfect 5th above or below your triggered note, you can pretty much set the oscillator pitch wherever you want. The shared nature of the waveform might feel restricting, but the Duty Cycle control provides a form of pulse width modulation, across all chosen wave types.

It doesn't end there though, because a further sub oscillator is also onboard, switchable in octave range only, but offering a sine, saw or square wave, along with a phase pot, to alleviate phase cancellation issues.

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Adding subtraction

All of these source components are blended at the Synth 1 layer level, using the mixer, which also provides a level pot for noise. This occurs before moving on to the incredibly comprehensive filter section, which is comprised of three independent sections; low-pass, high-pass and sub filter. All three have resonance and envelope modulation control, while the sub filter is switchable between high, low and band-pass modes. Unsurprisingly, the filters sound exceptionally good, with true Moog colour. The band-pass is a particular favourite, with its wispy quality, which is ideal for those classic reduced band-width bass parts.

Alongside the Synth 1 layer, the Control 1 Layer has plenty of modulation sources, which include three individual LFOs, each syncable and with a phase control, and three envelopes. Two of these ADSR envelopes are hooked directly to the amplifier and filter sections, while the third envelope offers five stages, with an additional delay trigger. You'll also find two random generators, with sync and slew.

This compendium is pretty complete, but as Mariana offers a second Synth and Control layer, you do have to double the capacity for sonic creation, with two of everything. This means that there's a ton of tonal options for a monophonic synth (which can also be switched to a duophonic mode) but also that there are several layers to compete with when editing.

The final page which ties all of this together is the Output page. The central Summing mixer blends the signals, applying compression and effects too, with the effects added at the synth layer level.

Finish all of this off with an Animoog-style keyboard and you have the most fantastic-sounding Moog package, which can provide a ton of synth bass detail, and a lot of other synth lines too, if you play that little bit higher. **cm**

Web moog.com



The Output page will sum the layers together, adding compression and effects too



Apply your criteria for modulation routings from the pop-out window

Modulation and more

The undeniable Moog sound presented by Mariana is pretty exceptional, but providing a fixed timbre is only half the story. Alongside the traditional modulation control, within each control layer, there are a host of other options. The Modulation page opens to reveal assignable sources from all over the synth, with full detailing at each level, as a pop-up window gives access to the modulation settings for each source and destination. It's beautifully engineered onscreen, and a useful

method for controlling elements such as the filter cutoff controls, from a single source such as the modulation wheel. Meanwhile, MIDI CC Mapping can also be applied as required. One of the more exciting prospects is its ability to apply virtual CV (control voltage) connections. If you have any of the Moogerfooger software effects pedals, you can instantly engage this element, as the Moogerfoogers can trigger elements such as LFO or envelopes, and vice versa.

Alternatively

Universal Audio Moog Minimooog £199 (or via the UA Spark sub)
UA's licensed Minimooog will provide a classic Mini sound, which is perfect for basses

Cherry Audio Lowdown \$49
Based on the legendary Taurus pedal-synth, this extends to the lowest of depths

Verdict

For Provides a huge Moog sound
It's very comprehensive, especially in modulation and filtering

The output page perfectly sums the signal together

The iOS version is a total bargain at £30!

Against Moving layers can be a faff
Audio output cannot be set globally
The GUI is not resizable

This is Moog and far more, thanks to its substantial subtractive hierarchy and modulation options

9/10