

GroundControl 1.1



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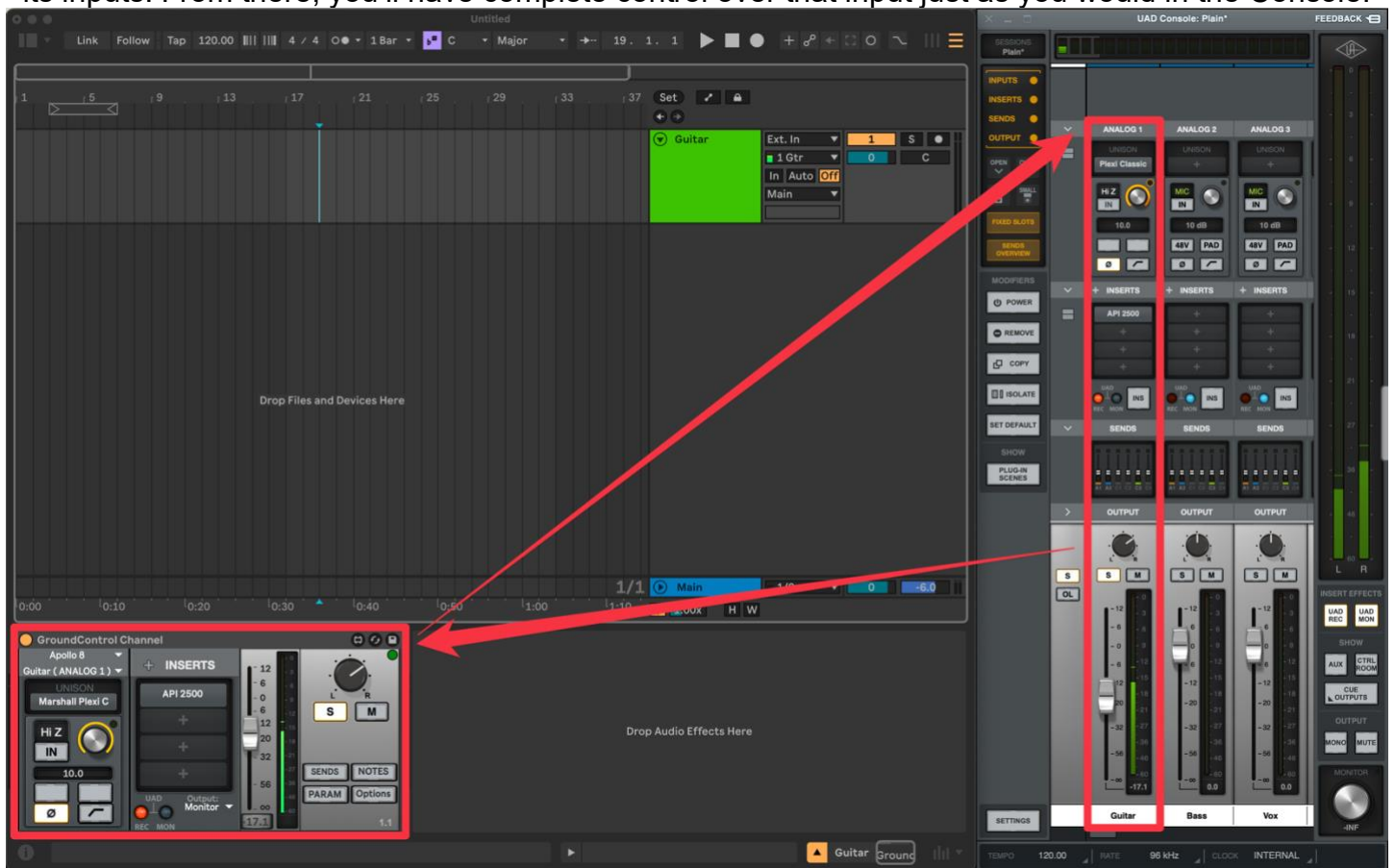
INTRODUCTION

EXPLANATION

GroundControl is a pair of MaxForLive devices designed to fully integrate Universal Audio's Apollo Console application into Ableton Live. Its primary function is to give you full control over your Apollo interface's input channels directly from Live's device view—without needing to open the Console application separately.



With GroundControl, you can control every aspect of your Apollo's input channels, including preamp settings, monitoring, inserts, and sends, all from within Ableton Live. Simply insert the **GroundControl Channel** device into an audio track, select your Apollo interface, and choose one of its inputs. From there, you'll have complete control over that input just as you would in the Console.



One of the standout features of GroundControl is the ability to **create multiple configurations for the same input channel across different tracks** in Ableton Live.

For example, you might use the same microphone for both guitar and vocal recordings, but set up the guitar track with one configuration and the vocal track with another.

When switching between these tracks in Live, GroundControl will automatically recall all relevant settings (preamp configuration, plugins and their parameters, monitoring section, sends, etc.) for the selected track.

There's no need to manually save or load presets—just select the track, and everything is ready to go.



This capability also makes **GroundControl** an excellent tool for preserving recording sessions. When you reopen a Live Set, GroundControl recalls all Apollo settings for each track, ensuring that you can easily resume work with the exact setup you used.

You can even save GroundControl Channel presets into Live's browser for easy reuse in future projects.



GroundControl communicates **bi-directionally** with both the Console application and your Apollo interface. Any changes made in GroundControl are reflected in the Console application and on your Apollo hardware, and vice versa. This ensures perfect synchronization between your DAW and your interface.

FEATURES

Place the **GroundControl Master** device on the master track, and the **GroundControl Channel** device on any audio track in Ableton Live. Select your Apollo interface and its input channel directly within the Channel device:

- **Automatic Input Assignment:** GroundControl automatically assigns the selected Apollo input channel as the input source for the Live track.
- **Control:** You can adjust any parameter in the **Preamp**, **Insert**, **Monitor**, and **Sends** sections from within the device, just like in the UA Console application.
- **Plugin Management:** Browse, load, and manage plugins directly within the GroundControl device. You can:
 - Add or replace plugins on any channel
 - Open, close, delete, bypass, or rearrange plugins



- Tweak plugin parameters without needing to switch back to the Console application



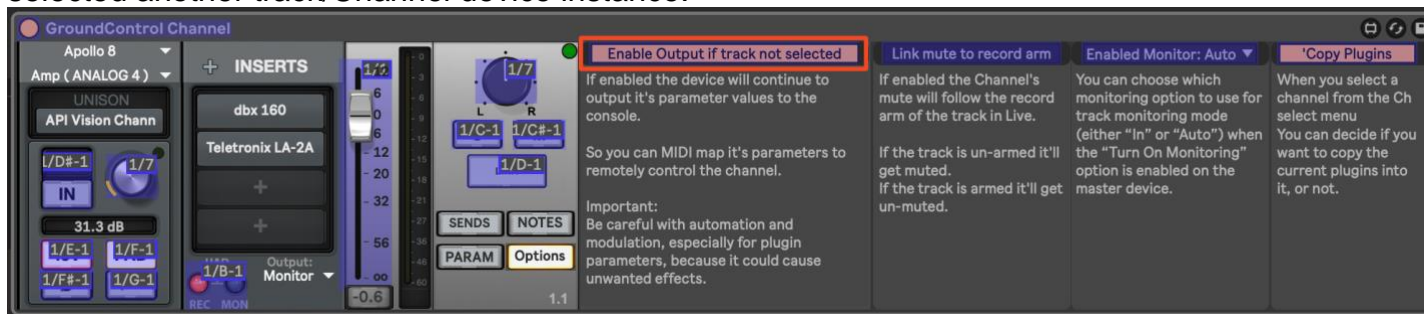
- **Quick Control Slots:** Assign up to 8 quick control slots to frequently used plugin parameters for easy access. These controls can be MIDI mapped, automated or modulated within Live, allowing for creative recording workflows.



- **Preset Saving:** Save presets of your GroundControl setup, including all input channel settings, plugins, and configurations, directly into Live's browser for future use. This allows you to easily recall specific setups across multiple projects.
- **Session Preservation:** GroundControl makes it easy to preserve recording sessions for later use. When reopening a project, GroundControl will recall all the input channel settings for each track, so you'll know exactly how your inputs were configured.
- **Notes:** Add notes or images to the device, such as details about the microphone used or settings on your hardware to document your setup for future sessions. You'll know how you approached the recording even years later!



- **MIDI map for remote access:** Midi map any parameter to remotely access them even if you selected another track/Channel device instance.



- **Additional Features:**

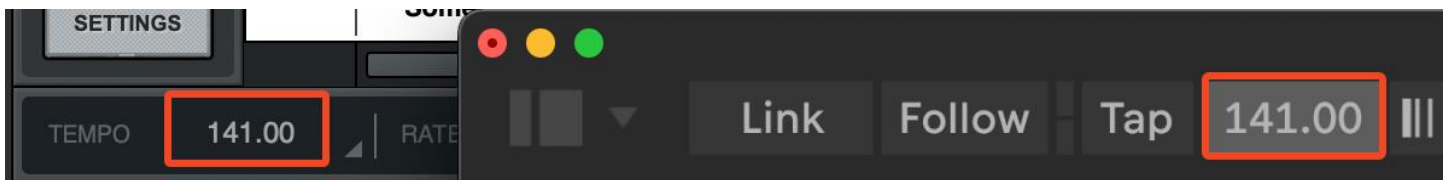
Auto Channel renaming: GroundControl can automatically rename the selected Apollo channel to match the Ableton track name, to keep your session organized.



Input monitor linking: If the Channel's monitor fader is on, the Audio track's monitoring will automatically turn off, and if the Channel's monitor fader is off the Audio track's monitoring will turn to Auto



Tempo Follow: The Console application will automatically follow Ableton Live's tempo including Tempo Automations.



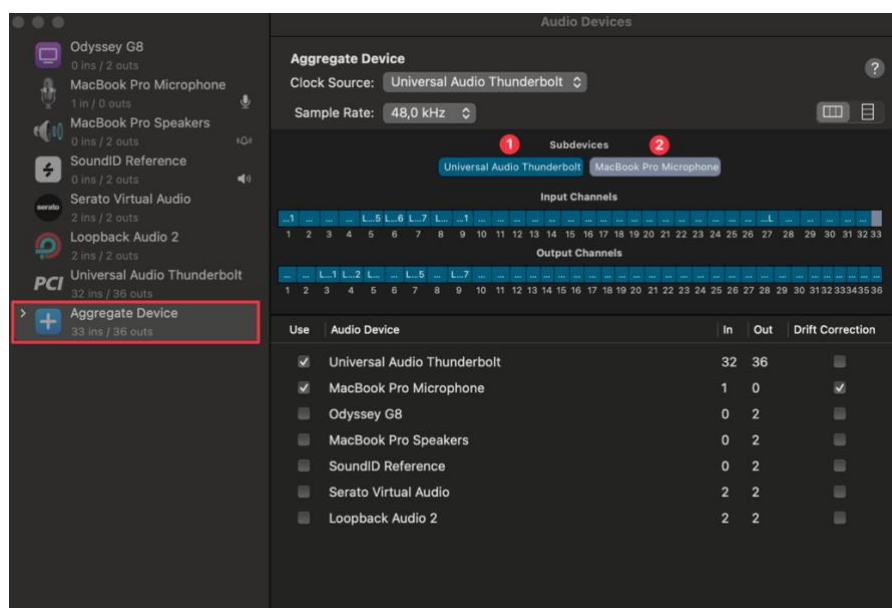
COMPABILITY

- GroundControl is a **MaxForLive device**, so it only works with **Live Suite or Live Standard with MaxForLive**.
- Works with **Live 10 Live 11, Live 12.** *
- Requires a **Universal Audio Apollo interface** (FireWire or Thunderbolt).
- Compatible with every **Universal Audio Apollo interface**.
- **Not compatible with Volt interfaces.**
- Available for both **Windows and Mac..**

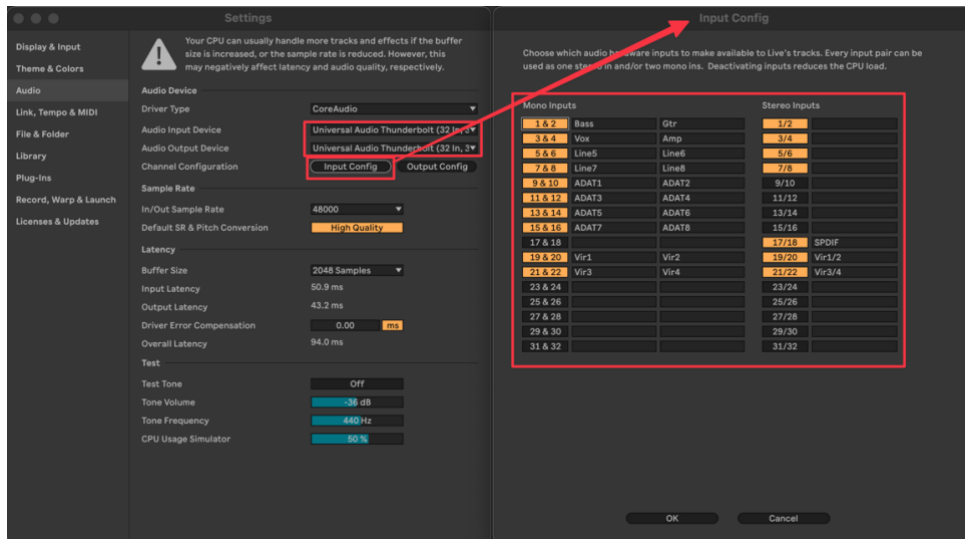
* For Live 10, and 11 make sure you're using at least Max 8.6.4 instead of the bundled Max application!
<https://help.ableton.com/hc/en-us/articles/209070309-Using-a-separate-Max-for-Live-installation>

INSTALLATION/SETUP

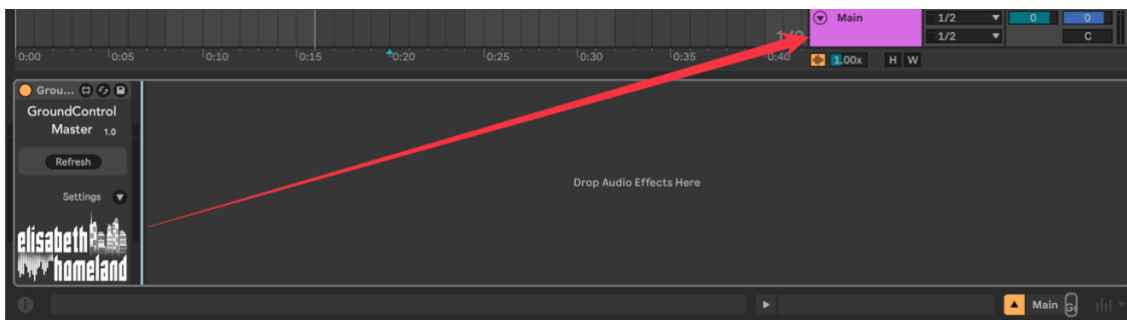
- Place the devices in your **Ableton Live User Library**:
- Default User Library locations:
 - **Windows:** \USERS\[USERNAME]\DOCUMENTS\ABLETON\USER LIBRARY
 - **Mac:** MACINTOSH HD/USERS/[USERNAME]/MUSIC/ABLETON/USER LIBRARY
 - Allow Live time to analyze your library after adding devices. You can still drag and drop devices from the library in the meantime.
- Ensure that all **Apollo interfaces** you plan to use are connected and powered on before launching Ableton Live.
- In **Live's Audio Preferences**, make sure the selected audio interface is your Apollo. This step is essential to ensure that GroundControl's **auto input switch** feature functions correctly. If using aggregate devices on Mac, make sure Apollo inputs are at the top.
- If you're using an aggregate device on a Mac, make sure that your Apollo interface's inputs are listed at the top of the aggregate device's input configuration. This will prevent conflicts and ensure the correct inputs are available for GroundControl.



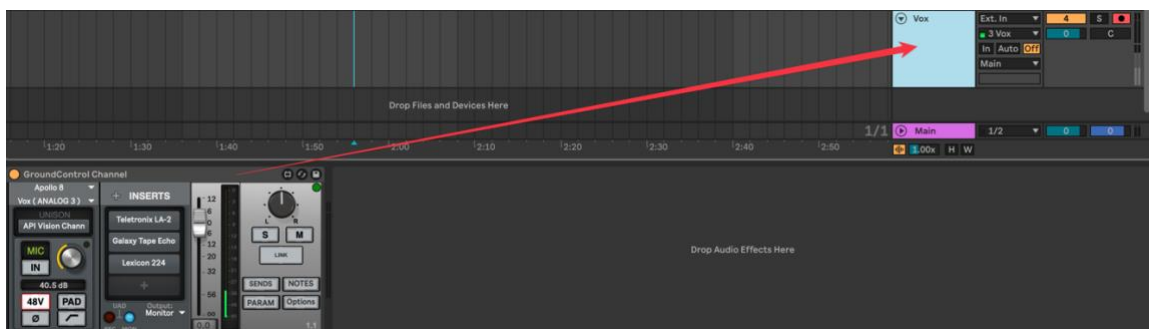
- In **Live's Input Config Preferences**, enable the inputs from your Apollo interface that you intend to use. You can disable unused inputs to declutter your workflow. Feel free to rename the inputs in Ableton for clarity, as this won't affect GroundControl's functionality.



- Insert the **GroundControl Master** device onto your **Master Track** in Live.



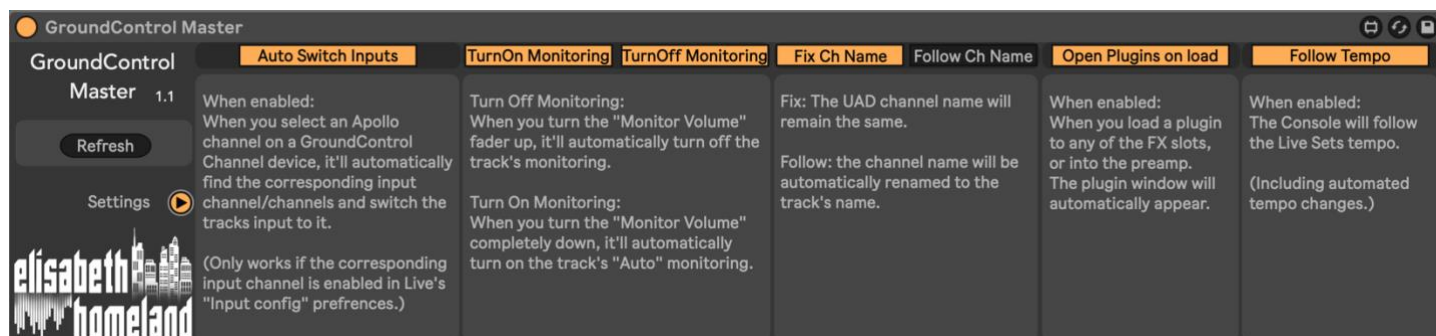
- Add **GroundControl Channel** devices to any audio tracks where you want to control Apollo inputs.



Note:
I recommend integrating the **Master** and **Channel** devices into your **default Ableton Live template**. This will save you setup time, as the devices will automatically be ready when you start new projects.

Always ensure that the **Master Device** is present in your Live Set; otherwise, the **Channel Devices** will not function properly.

Avoid placing multiple **Channel Devices** on the same track, as this can cause issues with **Undo History** in Ableton.



The Master Device affects the behavior of all Channel Devices. It must always be present in your Live Set. (Otherwise the Channel devices won't work.)

Below are the key controls and settings:

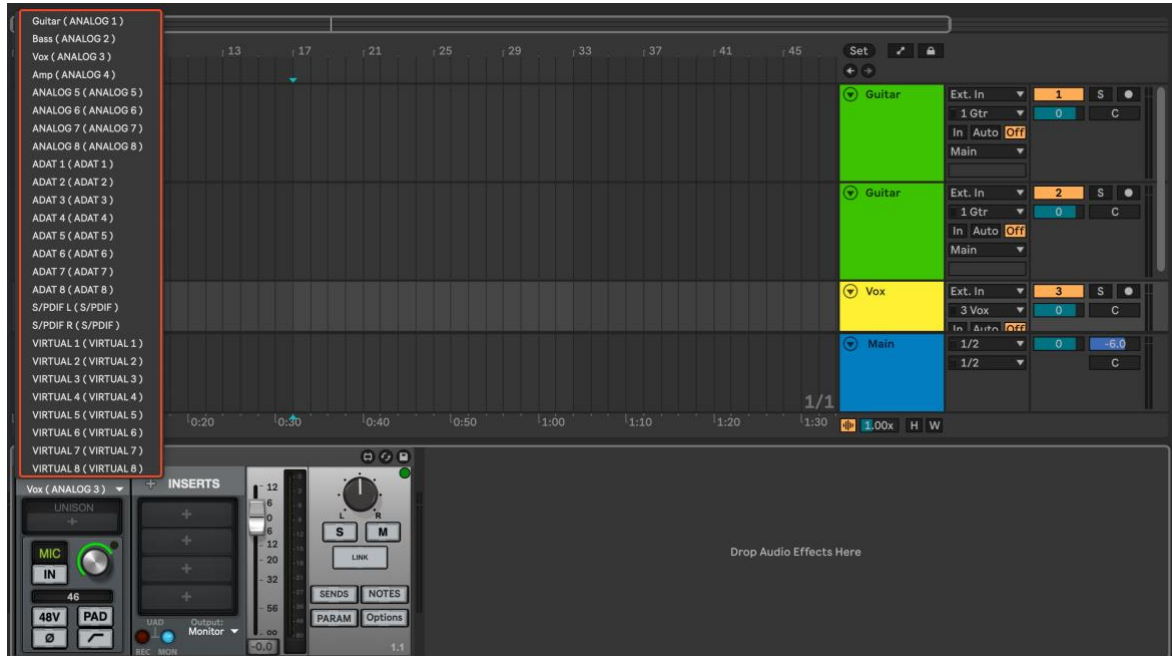
- **Refresh:**
In certain scenarios, you may need to refresh the Master device to ensure all changes are properly reflected across your session. For example:
 - If you've created new plugin or channel strip presets in the Console after inserting the GroundControl Channel device.
 - If you've loaded the Live Set with the wrong audio driver (e.g., you accidentally started Live with your laptop's mic and speakers, then switched to the Apollo driver).
- **Auto Switch inputs:**
When you select an Apollo channel on a GroundControl Channel device, it will automatically switch the track's input in Live to the corresponding Apollo input channel. This feature only works if the respective input channels are enabled in Live's Input Config preferences.

Note: This automatic input assignment will not occur if the track is actively recording to avoid disrupting your session.
- **Turn Off Monitoring:**
When you turn the **Monitor Volume** fader up in the GroundControl device, (Or in Console) the track's monitoring in Ableton Live will automatically be disabled. This prevents double monitoring (hearing the audio from both the Apollo interface and the Live track simultaneously).
- **Turn On Monitoring:**
If you turn the **Monitor Volume** fader all the way down, the track's monitoring in Ableton Live will switch back to **Auto**, enabling monitoring from Live. This feature gives you convenient control over when to monitor from the Apollo interface and when to monitor directly from the DAW.
- **Channel name:**
Fix: The channel name in the UA Console will remain unchanged.
Follow: The Apollo channel name will automatically sync with the Ableton Live track's name, keeping your projects organized and reducing confusion between tracks and their corresponding hardware channels.
- **Open Plugins on load:**
When this option is enabled, any plugin loaded into a preamp or effect slot will automatically open its floating window in Ableton Live.
- **Follow Tempo:**
Enabling Follow Tempo ensures that the UA Console will sync with your Ableton Live set's tempo (Including automated tempo changes.)

CHANNEL SELECTION

GroundControl automatically detects all connected Apollo interfaces and their available input channels.

Simply select the interface and the channel from the device you want to work with.

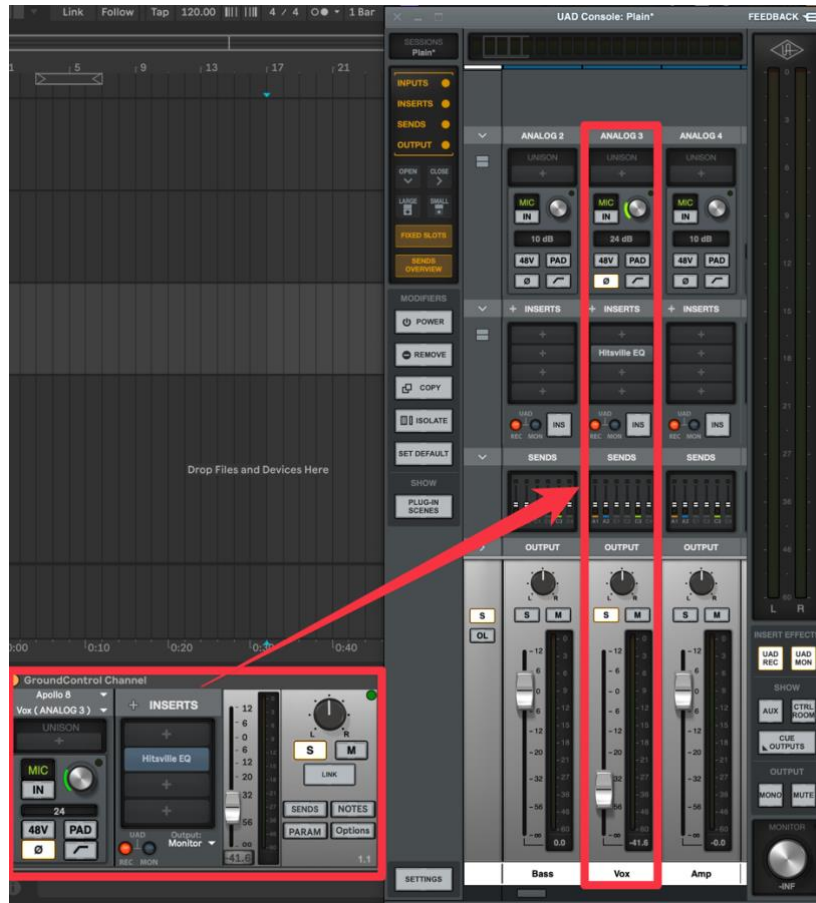


You'll see that :

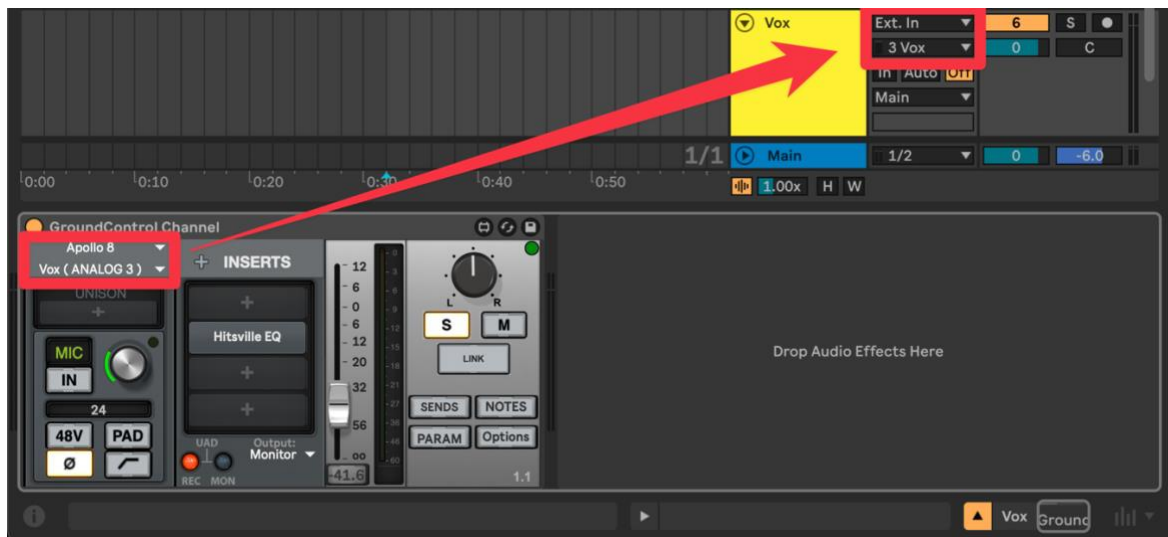
- The **Preamp section** dynamically adapts depending on the selected channel type. For example:
 - If the selected channel supports **Unison**, all preamp controls will be available.
 - If it's an **ADAT** channel, the preamp controls will disappear, reflecting the different channel capabilities..



- All settings of the Channel in UA Console will change to match the settings of the device.



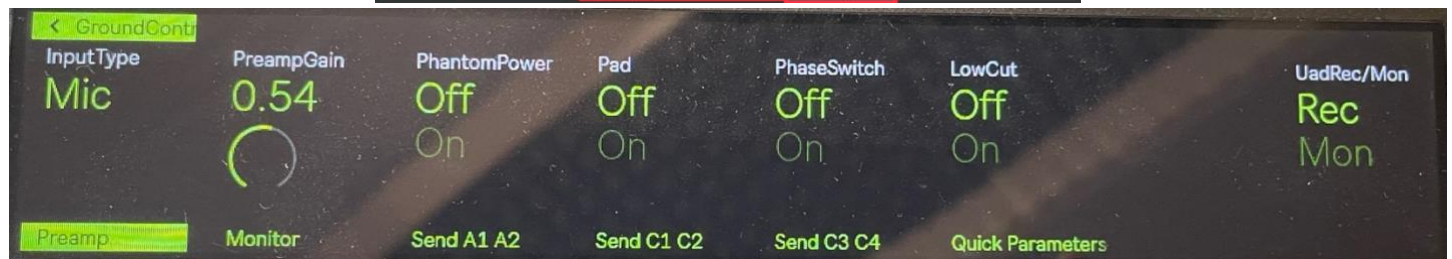
- GroundControl automatically assigns the corresponding Apollo input channel to the track's input in Live (if it's enabled in Live's input settings). Keep in mind that the input won't change if you're currently recording something in Live.



The channel selector section is not available on Push.

PREAMP/MONITOR SECTION

The **Preamp/Monitor** section mirrors the controls found in the UA Console application. All parameters behave exactly as they do in Console, and can be automated, MIDI-mapped, and controlled via Push.

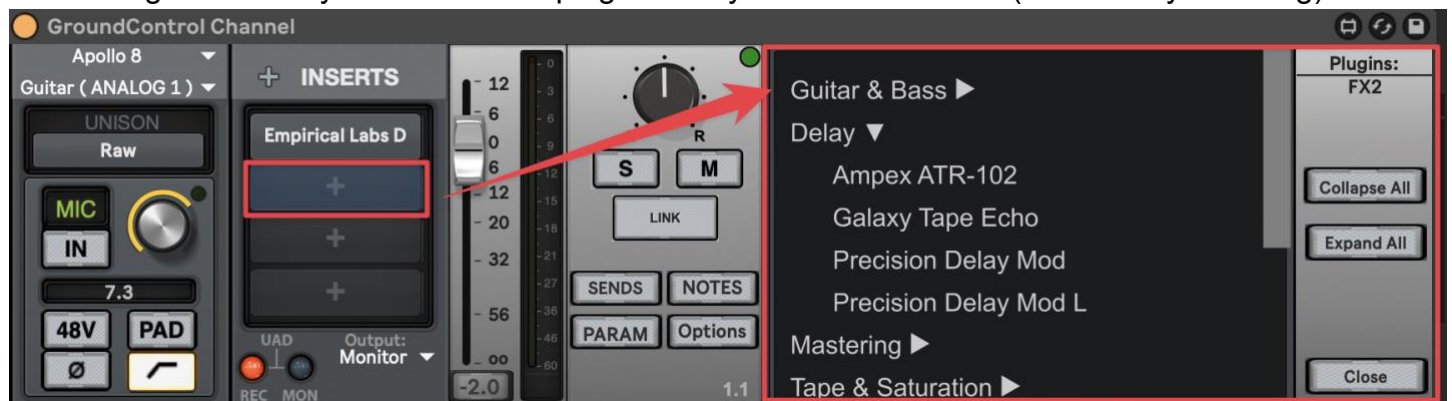


EFFECT SLOTS

You can add or replace plugins, presets, or full channel strips just like in Console.

If a slot is not populated just click on the plus icon to reveal the plugin browser:

In the Plugin browser you'll see all the plugins that you have access to (or currently demoing).⁴



(When you want to add effects to the Unison slot, the browser will only show unison capable plugins.)

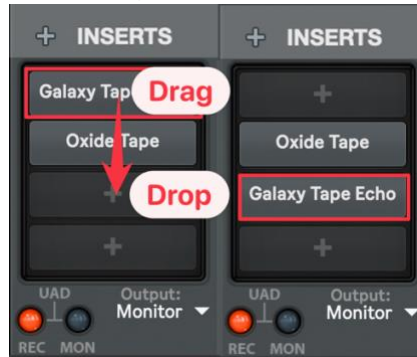
If you click on the „+” icon before the INSERTS text, you can browse and load full channel strip presets.



Once a slot is populated with a plugin you can just hower your mouse over it to:



- Replace it by clicking on the plus icon
- Select a specific preset by clicking on the „P” icon.
- Open the floating window by clicking on the Plugin icon.
- Bypass/Enable the plugin with the on/off button.
- If you want to replace the order of the plugins you can simply drag&drop it to another slot.



- If you want to remove a plugin just drag it and drop it out from the slots window anywhere.



SENDS

The **Sends** section in GroundControl works exactly as it does in the UA Console application. You can MIDI map, Automate/Modulate these parameters, and access them from Push.



QUICK CONTROL PARAMETERS

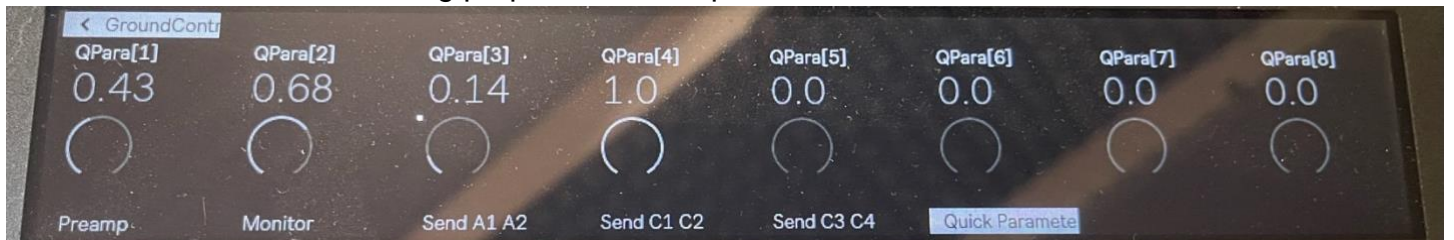
If you need quick access to specific plugin parameters without opening the plugin's floating window, you can assign them to one of the 8 available quick control slots.



To assign a parameter, select the desired plugin slot, then choose the specific parameter you want to control. The parameter will now be adjustable directly from the GroundControl device interface.



Once a parameter is assigned to a quick control slot, it can be MIDI mapped or automated/modulated for creative recording purposes. These parameters are also accessible via Push.



Note: Be aware that assigned parameters will be cleared if the associated plugin is removed or if its position in the effects chain changes.

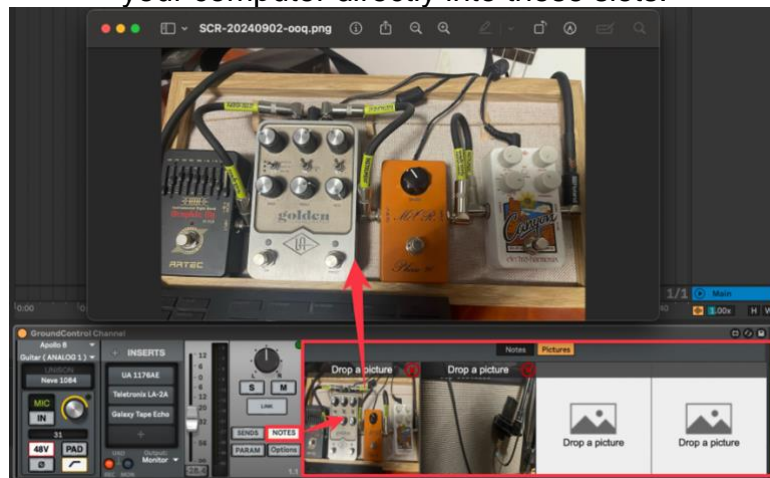
NOTES

GroundControl allows you to save **written notes** or **images** directly within the device, making it easier to recall important details about your session, even years later.

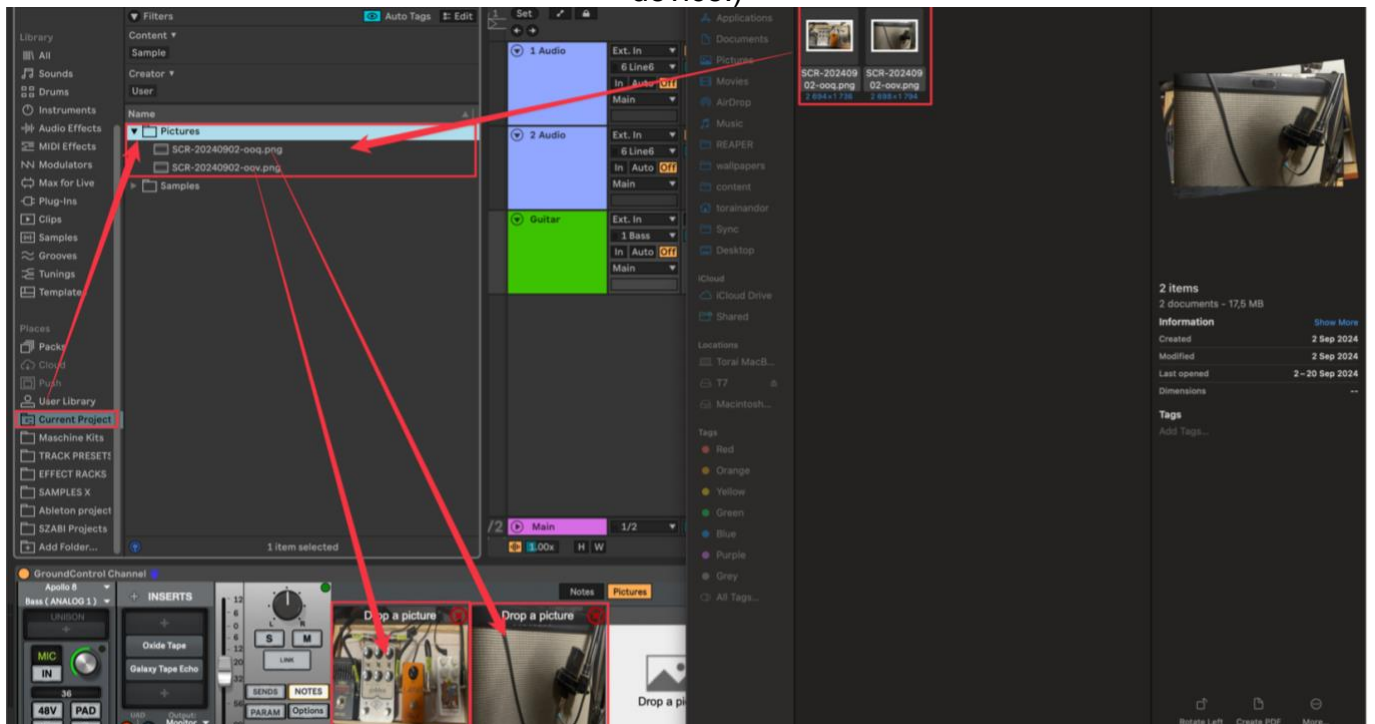
Written Notes: The notes section lets you document essential information such as microphone types, preamp settings, or any specific recording setup. Simply type what you need, and it will be saved within the GroundControl device.

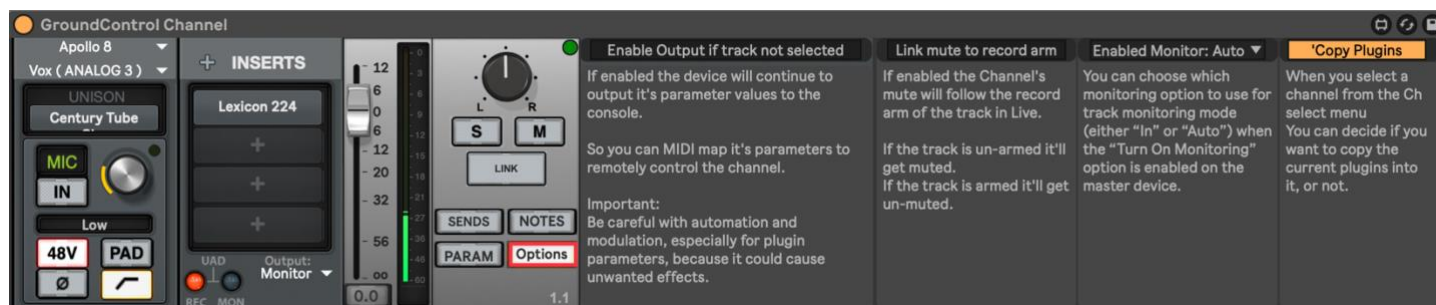


Adding Images: GroundControl supports up to four image slots. You can drag and drop images from your computer directly into these slots.



For better file organization, I recommend to create a folder called "Pictures" within your current LiveSet's folder in the Live browser and place your images there first. This ensures the images are saved with your project and don't get lost over time. (Then you can drop these images into the device.)





These options adds specific behaviour for the Channel device instance.
(so they don't affect other channel devices)

- **Enable Output if track not selected**

If enabled the device will continue to output it's parameter values to the console. So you can MIDI map it's parameters to remotely control the channel.

Important: Be careful with automation and modulation, especially for plugin parameters, because it could cause unwanted effects.

- **Link mute to record arm**

If enabled the device will mute the Channel if the track's record arm is disabled in Live. And it'll un-mute it once the record arm is turned back on.

- **Enabled monitor mode**

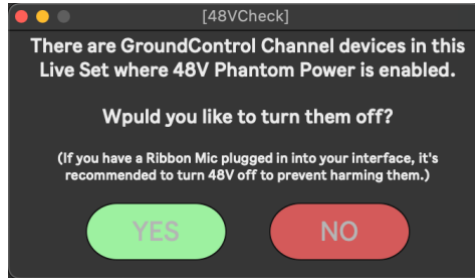
If the TurnOn/TurnOff monitor option is enabled in the master device, you can choose which monitoring option you want to use for the track: Auto or In

- **Plugins Channel switch behaviour**

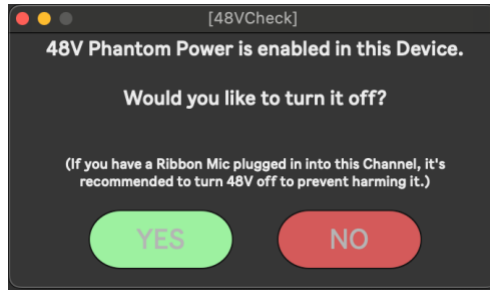
When you select a channel from the Ch select menu You can decide if you want to copy the current plugins into it, or not.

48V WARNING

GroundControl will automatically scan your project when reopening a LiveSet. If any channels have **+48V phantom power** enabled, you will be asked whether you want to disable them before proceeding. This feature ensures your equipment is protected



Also, if you load a preset of a GroundControl Channel device that had +48V enabled, you will again be prompted to decide whether to disable it before it interacts with the Console and your Apollo interface. (Only if the Phantom Power is not already enabled on that channel.)

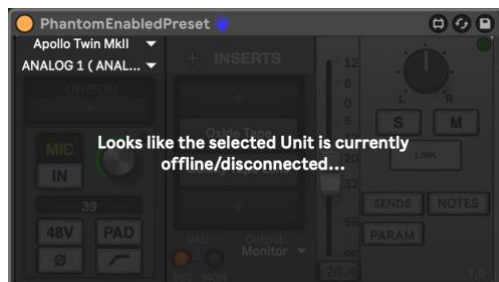


MISSING UNITS

If you reopen a LiveSet and the Apollo interface previously used in a ChannelDevice is no longer present in your Console setup (For example if it's been sold) the Channel device will notify you that the interface is missing. You can either reconnect the interface or select another Interface/Channel for the device.



A similar message will appear if you open a Live Set with the interface turned off or disconnected. You can choose to ignore this if you're just inspecting the project, or select another interface/channel for the Channel device.



SWITCHING DELAY

When switching between tracks in Live where you used the GroundControl Channel device, keep in mind that it may take a few seconds for the Console application to recall all the settings for the selected channel.

This delay depends on how many settings need to be recalled, and your computer's performance.

Once the settings have been fully recalled, the red indicator on the Channel device will turn green, signaling that the device is ready for use. At this point, you can safely begin recording with all the correct settings in place. :)



CONTACT

If you have any questions or you encounter any difficulties with the device, feel free to reach out to me at:

elisabethhomeland@gmail.com

Or

<https://twitter.com/ElisabethHom>

Have Fun! 😊

<https://elisabethhomeland.gumroad.com>

