

WMD SSF – Chimera

- [Manual PDF](#)
-

[Manual PDF](#)

Using WMD Chimera for Melodic Components

The attached manual page is for the **WMD Chimera**, a **metallic percussion synthesizer**. On its face, Chimera is a percussion/texture module, not a traditional pitched voice. But in a Eurorack patch, it can absolutely contribute **melodic material** when treated as a tuned metallic oscillator, resonant texture source, or articulated upper-voice layer.

What Chimera brings musically

From the manual, Chimera gives you:

- **PITCH** over a **5-octave range**
- **SURFACE** selection/morphing across **11 metallic textures**
- **DECAY** from short ticks to long granular washes
- **DENSITY** to control grain count in the sample window
- **(PITCH) ENVELOPE** for rising/falling pitch movement
- **FEEL** modes that alter dynamics/variation
- **FX:**
 - quality reduction
 - sample-rate reduction
 - comb filtering
 - CV inputs for:
 - **PITCH**
 - **ENV**

- **DENSITY**
- **FX AMT**
- **SURFACE**
- **DECAY**
- **VCA**
- **FX**
- Trigger/control inputs:
- **TRIG**
- **ACCENT**
- **CHOKE**

That means Chimera can act as a **pitched, triggerable metallic voice**, especially for: - bell-like melodies - tuned hat/chime lines - arpeggiated digital percussion - shimmering countermelodies - quasi-karplus or comb-toned plucks - evolving ambient metallic drones

Best melodic roles for Chimera

1. Tuned metallic lead

Because Chimera has a broad **PITCH** range, you can patch sequenced voltage to the **PITCH CV input** and tune it by ear to a scale or tonal center.

Patch idea

- Sequencer CV → **PITCH**
- Gate/trigger pattern → **TRIG**
- Moderate **DECAY**
- Lower-to-medium **DENSITY**
- Choose a stable **SURFACE**
- Use **FEEL mode 1** for consistent amplitude

Result

A bright, metallic voice that behaves like a tuned percussion lead. This works especially well for: - pentatonic lines - sparse techno melodies - minimal electro bleeps - gamelan-like motifs

Why it works

Short-to-medium decay preserves pitch clarity. Lower density tends to make the transient/body easier to perceive as a note rather than a wash.

2. Bell or chime melodies

Chimera is especially suited for **inharmonic but musical** tones. That makes it excellent for bell-like sequences.

Patch idea

- Quantized CV → **PITCH**
- Triggered rhythm → **TRIG**
- Longer **DECAY**
- Moderate **DENSITY**
- Explore **SURFACE** until you find a tone with bell partials
- Add a little negative or positive **PITCH ENVELOPE**

Result

A struck-metal melody with animated pitch bloom or fall. Great for: - ambient melodies - soundtrack-like high-register motifs - generative sparkle lines

Tip

Use very small pitch envelope amounts. A subtle downward sweep can simulate the unstable attack of struck acoustic metal.

3. Comb-filtered pseudo-plucks

The **FX** section includes **comb filtering**, and the **FX AMT** controls the comb position. That is especially useful for melodic work because comb filtering can emphasize resonant frequencies in a way that reads as pitch.

Patch idea

- Set **FX** to comb filter
- Tune **PITCH** to a usable register
- Trigger with short gates
- Short-to-medium **DECAY**
- Modulate **FX AMT** slowly or sequence it
- Sequence **PITCH** with a quantizer

Result

A sharp, resonant metallic pluck that can function as: - a top-line melody - an arpeggio - a synthetic kalimba-like line - a glassy counterpoint texture

Why it works

Comb filtering reinforces certain frequency relationships, often making the tone more distinctly note-like.

4. Granular shimmer pads with implied harmony

At maximum or long **DECAY**, Chimera can move from percussion into sustained texture territory. The manual notes that in the last **FEEL** mode, with decay at maximum, amplitude control deactivates and textures can “flow to infinity.”

Patch idea

- Long or max **DECAY**

- FEEL mode 3
- Slow CV to **PITCH**
- Slow CV to **SURFACE**
- Slow CV to **DENSITY**
- Optional manual or CV control of **VCA** for shaping

Result

A drifting metallic drone with changing spectral emphasis. This is less “melody” in the conventional sense, but very effective for: - implied harmonic beds - sustained root/fifth/octave tones - moving upper-register harmonic sheen

Melodic strategy

Instead of sequencing every note, send: - a slow quantized voltage to **PITCH**, or - stepped random through a quantizer

This creates sparse, evolving pitched events within a sustained metallic cloud.

5. Accented melodic ostinatos

The **ACCENT** input emphasizes selected notes and resets the rhythm of the second FEEL mode. That makes Chimera useful for melodic patterns with recurring phrasing.

Patch idea

- Pitch sequence → **PITCH**
- Dense trigger stream → **TRIG**
- Accent certain beats → **ACCENT**
- FEEL mode 2
- Medium **DECAY**
- Controlled **DENSITY**

Result

A melodic ostinato with internal groove and dynamic phrasing. The accent pattern helps define the motif, even if the timbre is complex.

Good use cases

- syncopated melodic hats
 - high-register sequenced hooks
 - broken-beat tuned percussion lines
-

6. Laser-zap melodies and synthetic fills

The manual explicitly says positive pitch decay creates “lazer gun excitement.” That means Chimera can do highly animated pitch envelopes that still track sequenced pitch.

Patch idea

- Sequencer → **PITCH**
- Trigger bursts → **TRIG**
- Positive **ENV**
- Short **DECAY**
- Bit/sample-rate reduction in **FX**
- Moderate **FX AMT**

Result

An aggressive, pitch-centered synthetic line that works well for: - fills - call-and-response motifs - IDM-style melodic percussion - arcade-like riffs

How to integrate Chimera with other modules for melodic use

Since you asked how modules can be used together, here's the practical Eurorack perspective: Chimera works best melodically when paired with utility and control modules.

1. With a sequencer

Use any CV/gate sequencer to turn Chimera into a tuned percussion voice.

Ideal support

- pitch sequencer
- trigger sequencer
- accent lane

Benefit

You separate: - **note choice** via PITCH CV - **rhythm** via TRIG - **phrase emphasis** via ACCENT

This makes Chimera behave much more like a proper melodic instrument.

2. With a quantizer

Chimera is not described here as tracking 1V/oct in a conventional oscillator sense, so a **quantizer** is valuable if you want musically coherent note relationships.

Benefit

A quantizer helps keep incoming modulation and sequencing in a scale: - minor pentatonic for metallic hooks - whole tone for eerie bell textures - chromatic for industrial lines

Even if exact tuning is not “oscillator precise,” quantized voltage gives much more intentional melodic structure.

3. With envelopes and VCAs

The manual states **VCA input** controls master volume attenuation separately from the DECAy dynamic. That is very important.

Why this matters

You can use Chimera’s internal strike/decay behavior for texture, while using an external envelope through **VCA CV** to impose a more melodic articulation.

Example

- Trigger muted to:
- Chimera **TRIG**
- external envelope generator
- Envelope output → **VCA**
- Sequencer CV → **PITCH**

Result

Cleaner note shaping, more phrase control, and better integration with other melodic voices.

4. With random/chaos modulation

Chimera’s **SURFACE**, **DENSITY**, **FX AMT**, and **ENV** inputs are excellent destinations for subtle generative motion.

Best practice

Use attenuated slow modulation while keeping **PITCH** under sequenced or quantized control.

Result

The melody remains recognizable while timbre evolves per note or per phrase.

This is one of the strongest uses of Chimera in a melodic patch: **stable pitch, unstable texture**.

5. With reverb and delay

This is almost essential if you want Chimera to carry melodic material.

Why

Metallic, short, bright voices can feel percussive first and melodic second. Reverb and delay help: - extend perceived sustain - emphasize pitch trails - turn strikes into motifs

Great for

- ambient bells
 - dubby metallic leads
 - sparkling arps
 - cinematic upper layers
-

Practical melodic patch recipes

A. Tuned hi-chime arp

Goal: bright repeating melody

- Quantizer/sequencer CV → **PITCH**
- Clock division or trigger pattern → **TRIG**
- FEEL mode 1
- Short/medium **DECAY**
- Low **DENSITY**
- Bright **SURFACE**
- Optional comb filter with low **FX AMT**

Use: top-end arpeggio over bass and drums

B. Gamelan-style line

Goal: struck metallic melody with organic pitch behavior

- Quantized sequence → **PITCH**
- Sparse trigger pattern → **TRIG**
- Medium-long **DECAY**
- Slight negative **ENV**
- Moderate **DENSITY**
- Explore darker **SURFACE**
- Send to long reverb

Use: modal ambient, experimental techno, soundtrack textures

C. Digital mallet counter-melody

Goal: articulate secondary melody

- Secondary sequencer row → **PITCH**
- Syncopated trigger sequence → **TRIG**

- Accent pattern → **ACCENT**
- FEEL mode 2
- Medium **DECAY**
- Sample-rate reduction FX
- External envelope → **VCA**

Use: interplay with a main oscillator lead

D. Infinite metallic drone with melodic shifts

Goal: sustained harmonic texture

- FEEL mode 3
- Max **DECAY**
- Slow stepped quantized CV → **PITCH**
- Slow LFO → **SURFACE**
- Random smooth CV → **DENSITY**
- Manual or sequenced **CHOKE** for phrase endings

Use: ambient and drone composition

E. Laser percussion riff

Goal: aggressive, pitch-forward rhythmic motif

- Fast sequencer CV → **PITCH**
- Trigger bursts → **TRIG**
- Positive **ENV**
- Short **DECAY**
- Bit/sample-rate FX
- Accent selected hits

Use: fills, intros, glitch melodies

Important limitations and realities

Because Chimera is a **metallic percussion synthesizer**, not a classic VCO voice, its melodic behavior is different from a sine/saw oscillator.

Expect:

- inharmonic overtones
- timbre-dependent pitch perception
- some settings to feel more “pitched” than others
- sweet spots where melodies are much clearer

For strongest melodic results:

- keep **DECAY** moderate
- avoid overly extreme **DENSITY** when you need note clarity
- use **FEEL mode 1** first
- tune by ear
- add external processing

The most musical strategy is usually not to force Chimera into being a precise lead oscillator, but to use it as a **pitched metallic character voice**.

Best overall melodic use case

If I were patching Chimera in a musical Eurorack system, I'd most likely use it as:

- a **high-register melodic percussion voice**
- a **bell/chime counter-melody**
- a **shimmering quantized texture line**
- a **comb-filtered metallic pluck layer**

It excels at melodic material that benefits from: - brightness - instability - transient detail - spectral motion

So rather than “main melody” in a traditional subtractive-synth sense, think:
**hooky metallic motifs, sparkling arps, tuned percussion phrases, and
evolving harmonic texture.**

Generated With Eurorack Processor