Composition: Electronic Media II 025:251 Spring 2014 Menu Items in Max 6

- This handout addresses the menu bar in Max 6, privileging items you will use more regularly.
 Max File Edit View Object Arrange Options Debug Window Extras Help
- 2. The "Max" menu item provides you with this submenu bar:

Max	File	Edit	View
Abo	ut Max	ĸ	
Pref	erence	s	ж,
Serv	ices		►
Hide	e Max		жΗ
	e Othe	rs ר	сжн
Sho	w All		
Quit	Max		жQ

The "Preferences..." submenu item should not be explored or altered. If the patcher behaves unusually, it may be because someone has altered something in preferences. Contact Dan or Will if you suspect preferences have been changed.

3. The "File" and "Edit" menu items provide typical submenu items:

ile Edit View Object	Arrange O		
New Patcher	ЖN		
New From Template	•	Edit View Object	Arr
New From Clipboard	~ς ₩N	Undo Insert Object	
New Project		Redo	企業Z
New File Browser	жв		
New Text	企業N	Cut	жx
		Сору	жc
Open	жo	Copy Compressed	
Open As Text		Paste	ж\
Open Recent Patcher	▶	Delete	
Open Recent Project	▶	Duplicate	# [
Close	жw	Select All	жA
Modify Read-Only	~Σ₩M	Paste Picture	
, ,		Paste Replace	\ ₹ #
Save	жs		
Save As	<mark></mark> ት <mark>ዘ</mark> S	Encapsulate	Ωже
Save As Project		De-encapsulate	☆₩[
Build Collective / Application	on	Find	ЖF
Export Image		Find Next	жС
Link Francisco and Calensed	han Cilea	Find Previous	ት ዝር
List Externals and Subpatc Install	ner Files	Resume	ЖR

- a. File:
 - i. As in other applications, command N will create a new document; command O will prompt an open dialogue; command W will close the current document; and command S will save your file.
 - ii. Make a mental note on "Build Collective / Application..." This action will create a ".mxf" file which creates an interfacing version of your patch that no one can edit. That is, a user can interface with it, but cannot edit it. Users can run a .mxf file with either Max 6 or MaxRuntime, a free download hosted on the cycling 74 website. When you have a patch you are ready to share with your performer or the world at larg, ask Dan or Will to walk you through the steps of building a collective.
- b. Edit: As in other applications, command Z undoes; command X cuts selected objects; command C copies; command V pastes; command A selects all; and command F prompts the find dialogue, which can be useful if your patch has gotten difficult to manage and have forgotten where you placed a particular object.

4. The "View" menu item contains both typical and Max specific submenu items:

View	Object	Arrange	Options	Debu
New	View			
✓ Edit Pres	entation		۲	жE СжE
Para	her Inspe meters endencies		ť	1#1
Shov	n In n Out v at 100% gate Zoor			₩= ₩- ₩1
Grid				
Sidel ✓ Statu ✓ Tool	is Bar		ť	M#۲
Hide Hide	Connect Foregrou Backgrou Backgrou	und und	٢	C #L
Shov	v CPU Usa	age		
Defi	ne Fixed I	/ Location nitial Wind 'indow Loca		'n

Most of your work will be done in the "Edit" view. You will use "Presentation" mode when you are creating an interface for a user to interact with. Only the objects "added to Presentation" will appear in that view. Command = and command – will zoom in and out, respectively. "Show CPU Usage" monitors how intensive your patch is. The Status Bar and Toolbar appear at the bottom of the screen:

dac~: Audio	output and	on/off			 	 		
99		2	-	m				

The message "dac~: Audio output and on/off" appears in the Status Bar because I had selected the [dac~] before taking the above screenshot. Directly beneath the Status Bar is the Toolbar, which will be discussed later.

5. The "Object" menu item drops down with this submenu:

Object	Arrange	Options	Debug
Show	Object Exp	lorer	企業Ο
Fix Wi	dth		ЖJ
Name.			% '
Inspec	tor		жI
Show	Fonts		жт
Color.			
Set to	Default Va	lues	
Hide o	n Lock		жĸ
Show	on Lock		ЖL
Ignore	Click		
Respo	nd to Click		
Add to	Presentat	ion	企 ℋΡ
Remov	ve from Pre	sentation	∼жР
Send M	Message		
Save P	rototype		
Protot	уре		►

Of this submenu, the most useful are the "Inspector" and "Add to Presentation." The Inspector allows you to modify object-specific parameters while Add to Presentation will add the selected object to the Presentation view.

6. The "Arrange" menu drops down with this submenu:

Arrange	Options		W
Auto Al	ign	ж	Y
Align Distribu Scale Sp Scale	ite bacing		•
✓ Snap to Snap to		ъ	G
Route P	atch Cords	☆ ೫	Y
	onnections All Segme		Y
Bring to		<u> </u>	
Bring Fo Send to		瑞ኅፓ የሳ	
Send to Send Ba		瑞ኅ 瑞ኅፓ	_
	in Backgro from Back		

The most used action in this submenu will be "Auto Align" for tidying-up your patch. Consider the following skewed objects:



After selecting the above objects, clicking Auto Align results in a vertical alignment:

what a mess

A different scenario:

what a mess

After selecting the above objects, clicking Auto Align results in a horizontal alignment:

what a mess

If your goal is a tidy, clean looking patch, you will want to remember command Y as the shortcut key for Auto Align.

7. "Route Patch Cords" under Arrange (shift command Y) can be helpful as well. Consider this tangled web:



fix me

Select the patch cords by clicking on each while holding down shift. Once all are selected, type shift command Y:

8.	"Options" gives you this submenu: Options Debug Window
	Overdrive ✓ Auto Fix Width Segmented Patch Cords ✓ Assistance Help in Locked Patchers MIDI Setup Audio Status OpenGL Status
	Object Defaults File Preferences

You will not need to use this menu very often. Based on your preference, you may want to check or de-check "Segmented Patch Cords." With it selected, anytime you click when patching between one object and another, a segment will be created in the patch cord:



9. You will rarely if ever use the "Debug" menu item.

10. Window provides some useful information:



It tells me that my patcher "MenuItems" is unlocked and can therefore be edited. Also, the Max window is very helpful. By clicking on that, the Max window will open and will list everything sent to the [print] object or any errors. In the screenshots included in item 8, above, a message "huh??" is connected to a float object. Because float objects can only understand numerical values, the error will be listed in the Max window:

Object	Message
flonum	doesn't understand "huh??"
× O	

Click the error message and then click on the \leftarrow at the bottom, and the problematic object will be highlighted. Clicking on the x in the lower left hand corner will clear out the window. The clock will arrange the messages chronologically.

- 11. You will rarely if ever use "Extras."
- 12. "Help" is one of the strengths of Max. After selecting an object you need help about, click on Help and then "Open [object] help." A window like this will open:



This will help you better understand the behavior of objects you are unsure about.

You can also access the help window by control clicking on the object, and then selecting the help option:

Open flonum Help	
Open flonum Refere	nce
Cut	
Сору	
Copy Compressed	
Paste	
Delete	
Select Connected	
Paste Replace	
Inspector	
Bring to Front	
Send to Back	
Add to Presentation	
Remove from Preser	ntation
Color	
Save Prototype	
Prototype	•
Object	►

I cannot stress enough how powerful the help files are for a student learning Max.