025:250 COMPOSITION: ELECTRONIC MEDIA I
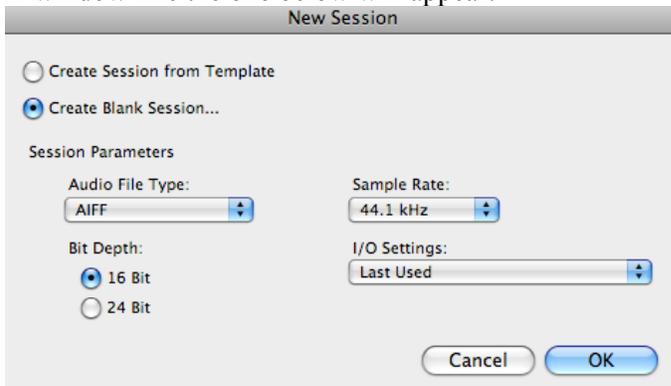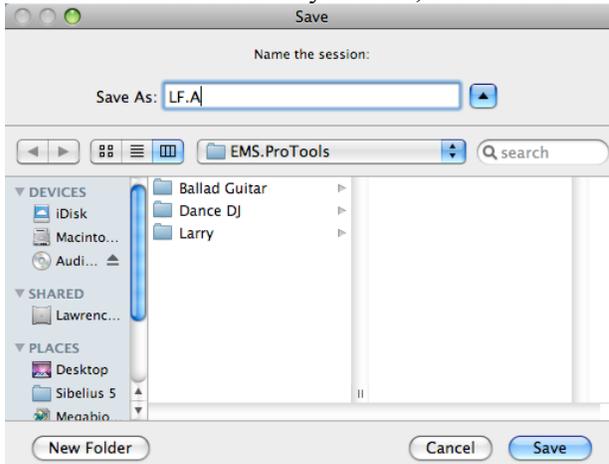**Fall 2009**
Intro to Pro Tools

1. Pro Tools overview:
   a. Standard for most recording in music and film.
   b. In film, there is a person whose job is to run Pro Tools.
   c. Pro Tools 8 uses 48 tracks (mono and stereo)
   d. Uses up to 8 channels (see the studio mixer)
   e. Digidesign has a business relationship with Avid, a video company, and Sibelius, a notation program.
   f. Movies can be imported and synced with audio.
   g. MIDI tracks with piano roll or standard notation can be used for compositions for instrument and electronics, as will be discussed in class.
   h. Pro Tools is considered the standard for multi-track editing in time-bound arts, even throughout the University of Iowa.
   i. College-level teaching jobs for composers sometimes ask non-specialists to teach electronic music and establish or upgrade studios.

2. To launch Pro Tools, do the following:
   a. Create Type 2 source files as discussed in the previous class meeting. Label these in any way that you wish, but use your initials at the beginning of the file name, like "YI.1a". This will help you find lost files easier.
   b. Create a folder named "YI.Type 2" and place all of your source files from Step 2b above in it.
   c. Power up the studio and confirm that the mixer is on and the speakers are on.
   d. Bring up the desired faders on the mixer
   e. Launch Pro Tools by double-clicking on the its icon in the dock, like the one below:
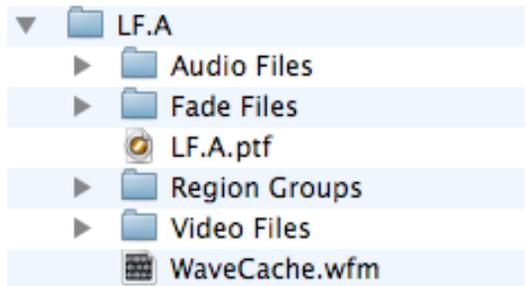

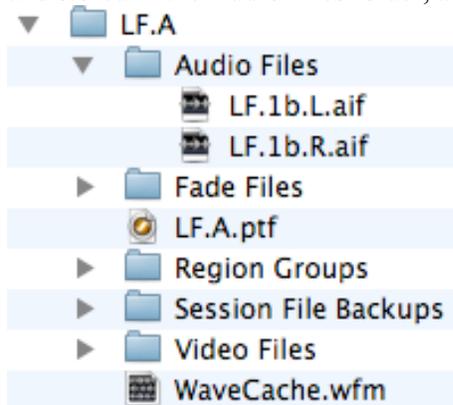   f. A window like the one below will appear:

   g. Set the values to the ones you wish, then click OK. A window like the one below will appear.
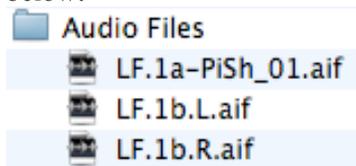

h. Navigate to your folder and name the session "YI.A". Click Save. A window will appear. For now, close all open windows. Find the file that contains "YI.1a" and open it. You will see sub-folders and files like the ones below:

▼ 📁 LF.A
   ▶ 📁 Audio Files
   ▶ 📁 Fade Files
      🔘 LF.A.ptf
   ▶ 📁 Region Groups
   ▶ 📁 Video Files
      🗔 WaveCache.wfm

3. The Type 2 source files that are stored in "YI.Type 2" are used in Pro Tools in the following manner:
  a. Mono source files are treated differently than stereo source files.
  b. If you drag and drop a Type 2 mono file named "YI.1a" onto the Pro Tools icon, it will become visible in one of the Pro Tools windows. When played in Pro Tools, the program will link to the location of the mono file "YI.1a" every time it is played.
  c. If you drag and drop a Type 2 stereo file onto the Pro Tools icon, each one will be converted to 2 mono files and stored in the Audio Files folder, as shown below:

▼ 📁 LF.A
   ▼ 📁 Audio Files
       🎞 LF.1b.L.aif
       🎞 LF.1b.R.aif
   ▶ 📁 Fade Files
      🔘 LF.A.ptf
   ▶ 📁 Region Groups
   ▶ 📁 Session File Backups
   ▶ 📁 Video Files
      🗔 WaveCache.wfm

  d. If you process a soundfile with a plug-in, the resulting file is stored in the Audio Files folder, as shown below:

📁 Audio Files
   🎞 LF.1a–PiSh_01.aif
   🎞 LF.1b.L.aif
   🎞 LF.1b.R.aif
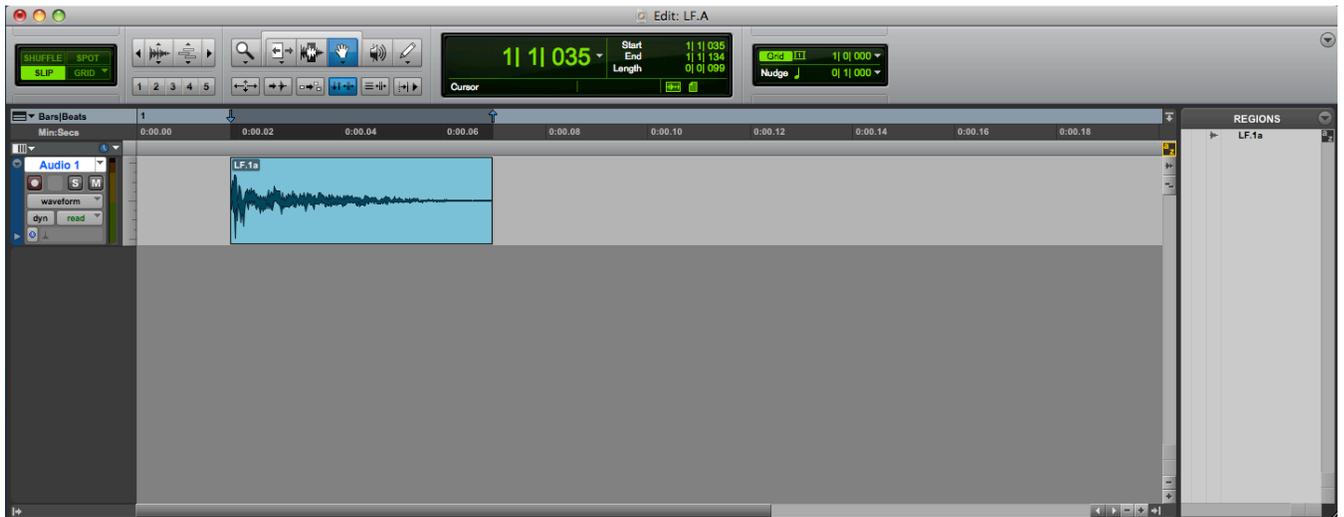
e. Consider the following:
   i.   The Type 2 source sounds that are stereo will be converted to 2 mono files stored in the Audio Files folder.
   ii. The Type 2 source sounds that are mono are not stored in the Audio Files folder and can be stored anywhere on the computer that you wish.
   iii. The Type 2 sounds, both stereo and mono, that are processed are stored in the Audio Files folder.
   iv. If you quit the session and transport it to another computer, Pro Tools will easily find the sounds stored in the Audio Files folder. However, there may be problems finding the Type 2 mono sounds created in Step 2a-b, above.
   v.   Option 1: Create a mega folder called "YI.Mega" and move the "YI.Type 2" folder and the "LF.A" folder into it.
   vi. Option 2: Move the "YI.Type 2" folder into the "LF.A" folder.
   vii. Option 3: Move the files in the "YI.Type 2" folder into the "LF.A" folder.
   viii. All of these options will work. If you don't do this, then you may run into a problem such as one below:
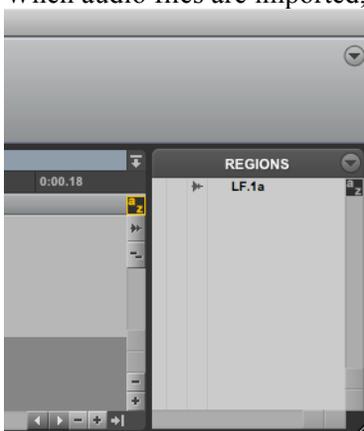

   ix. If you get this messages, it means that you imported "LF.1a.aif" into the session but did not store the file under Options 1-3. The solution is to find "LF.1a.aif" and store it under Options 1-3. Missing fades and render files will be discussed later.
   x.   I have used Options 1-3 with great success on my desktop computer at home. However, I do not move files between computers.
   xi. My personal recommendation is Option 3. The audio files folder won't be much bigger after doing this.
f. The "Fade Files" folder contains the fades created in the session. Most composers do not use fades, preferring automated volume to control the loudness of a sound.
g. The file "LF.A.ptf" is the name of the session. You can save sessions under other names, such as "LF.A1", "LF.A2", etc. Saving sessions gives you a history of your actions.
h. The "Session File Backups" folder contains sessions that are backed up according to criteria set in the prefences.
i. The "WaveCache" folder contains graphically-rendered waveforms that make launching the app faster.
j. Other folders may be created if certain actions are done in Pro Tools.

4. In Step 2h, above, you closed all open windows. The following windows should now be opened:
   a. Window>Mix
   b. Window>Edit
   c. Window>Transport
   d. Window>Big Counter
   e. Move the Mix Window to the left computer monitor and re-size it to fill the screen.
   f. Position the Edit Window in the right monitor and re-size it to fill the screen.
   g. If the Edit window covers the Transport or Big Counter, you can bring them into view by doing Steps 4c-d.
   h. On second thought, let's leave them covered for now, but not before we ooh and ahh them.

5. To prepare for the next discussion, Dr. Fritts will import LF.1a, create an audio track, and drag LF.1a into the audio track. He will also minimize what is displayed in the Edit window. These procedures will be discussed later.

6. Overview of the Edit window:

   a. The top part of the window contains controls, displays, editing tools. The right side of the window contains the Region List. The top part of the editing area contains rulers. The main editing area contains track information and is where audio files are placed. The left of the window contains track information.
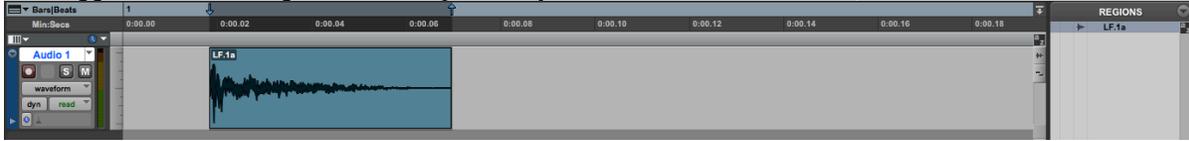   b. When audio files are imported, they appear in the Region List, as shown below:

   i. The Region List can be closed by clicking on the arrow in the lower right corner of the snapshot below:
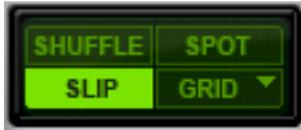
ii. The width of the Region List can be changed by placing the cursor in the lower left part of the Region List, but not touching the scroll bar:

c. What was originally called a Type 2 source sound, in our terminology, is now called a region. The region can be dragged from the Region List and place anywhere in one of the tracks, as shown below:

c. The top of the window shows controls, displays, and editing controls.
d. On the far left are the edit mode buttons, shown below:

i. Shuffle
ii. Spot
iii. Slip
iv. Grid
v.

e. To the right of the edit controls are the zoom controls, shown below:

i. On the left is the zoom out command, or cmd [
ii. On the right is the zoom in command, or cmd]
iii. To the right of zoom out is change height of waveforms without changing the loudness or track size.
iv. To the right of this is change height of MIDI view.
v. The 5 buttons on the bottom are to create, save, and access view presets.

f. To the right of the zoom controls are the edit tools, to be discussed in detail later.

g. The displays below show the counter, edit selection indicator, and grid and nudge values, to be discussed in detail later.