

**MainActor:Docs/MainActor**

COLLABORATORS

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## Chapter 1

# MainActor:Docs/MainActor

### 1.1 MainActor:Docs/MainActor.guide

MainActor 1.2 Documentation

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Warm Up

Disclaimer  
Installation  
Introduction

Disclaimer and legal stuff  
How to install MainActor  
What is MainActor ?

The User Interface

The Menus  
The Windows

All about MainActors menus  
and windows

Reference Chapters

The Modules  
The Arexx Interface  
MainView

Description of the modules in 1.2  
MainActors arexx interface  
All about MainView, MainActors  
external player

Other Stuff

Tutorial  
Tips and Tricks  
Registration  
The Future  
Credits  
Index

Starting the easy way  
Useful things to know  
How to register MainActor  
Thoughts on MainActors future  
The author wants to thank ...  
Index of this document

### 1.2 MainActor.guide/Disclaimer

Warm Up

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MainActor is shareware. The program may be freely distributed and copied as long as the following conditions are acknowledged:

- The sales price must not be higher than the cost of an (empty) disk plus a nominal copying fee plus costs for shipping. The total price must not be higher than 6 US\$ or 10 DM.
- All parts of the program and the documentation must be complete. The distribution of single parts is not allowed.
- MainActor or parts of it must not be sold in combination with commercial software without the written permission of the author.
- Program and documentation must not be changed in any ways. The repacking of this distribution with different packers is however allowed.
- Permission is granted to include this archive in Public-Domain collections, especially in Fred Fishs Amiga Disk Library (including CD ROM versions of it).
- The author is not responsible for misuse, or damage caused by MainActor.

## 1.3 MainActor.guide/Installation

### Installation

\*\*\*\*\*

Just copy the MainActor drawer to a device of your choice and add an assign to your user-startup, like

```
assign MainActor: <Path>
```

The Locale, Rexx and Docs directories should stay in the MainActor directory.

The default configuration file will clone your Workbench, the positions of the windows are however saved according to my setup and may look strange on yours.

If you have an older version of MainActor installed, make sure to delete it before installing the new version (except perhaps the preferences files).

Note that MainActor v1.2 is not able to read the preferences files of older releases.

## 1.4 MainActor.guide/Introduction

### Introduction

\*\*\*\*\*

MainActor is a full featured animation program. You can create / edit / time / play animations of any size on your native amiga chipset or your graphic card (if supported).

What is MainActor ?

Features

New features in v1.1

New features in v1.2

The concept of MainActor

Features of MainActor

New features of version 1.1

New features of version 1.2

## 1.5 MainActor.guide/What is MainActor ?

What is MainActor ?

=====

MainActor is a modular animation package for the Amiga. There exist four different kinds of modules:

- 1) Animation Loaders
- 2) Animation Savers
- 3) Picture Loaders
- 4) Picture Savers

this can change in the future.

You can handle up to five projects; every project can have an animation or picture loader, as well as an animation or picture saver. This makes it possible to convert everything in any ways, the number of available modules can be easily upgraded.

## 1.6 MainActor.guide/Features

### Features

=====

- Intelligent caching/tracking, MainActor can cache your animations and picture lists, if you have not enough memory it will directly access your data from any device. This makes it for example possible to create/edit/play a 400MB animation on your 2MB Amiga.
- If you run OS 3.0 or higher, you will get an extra speed bonus on animations through the use of the new graphics routines. For

OS2.0/2.1 users there are specific routines in the modules, which will give them the best playback speed possible on their system (and my knowledge :)).

- Under OS 3.0 you will get the extra features of showing pictures or playing animations in a scrollable, resizable window on your MainActor or Workbench screen. The colors will be properly adjusted to your screen attributes.
- The modules have play routines of their own, so it will be possible to redirect the input/output of special modules to graphic cards or other hardware.
- The play routines support a timecode per frame option. A Sound Module (per frame) option will be there in one of the next releases.
- MainActor has a totally user reconfigurable GUI. The settings of your sessions can be saved, this includes the size/position of windows as well as the status of the projects.
- MainActor has an arexx port, nearly all functions can be accessed through it. You can for example scale or dither whole animations on the fly through the use of an image processor, scripts are included.
- MainActor lets you setup and save nearly everything concerning the display mode for playing an animation or showing a picture. For example you can set the X/Y offsets, the display mode ID of your screen (view) and so on.
- MainActor supports localization.

## 1.7 MainActor.guide/New features in v1.1

New features in v1.1

=====

- You can now map your arexx scripts to the function keys.
  - New IFF-Anim8\_32, IFF-Anim8\_16, PCX modules.
  - The new Universal modules allow you to easily load all of the supported graphic formats. The Universal\_Picasso-II modules remap the output of all modules directly to the Picasso-II graphics board from Village Tronic.
  - MainActor has now an powerful external player named 'MainView', it can view all animations/pictures for which MainActor has the proper loader module. It is executeable from the wb or cli and supports, per tooltypes or cli arguments, all of MainActors view options.
  - MainActor now (optionally) saves icons for your newly created animations or pictures, enabling you to view the
-

animations/pictures by selecting their icons. These icons support the same tooltypes as MainView.

- You can now control how many times MainActor/MainView play animations.
- The new 'Flash' option allows you to profile your animations.

## 1.8 MainActor.guide/New features in v1.2

New features in v1.2

=====

- MainActor/MainView now have a center option which allows highly accurate centration of your images or animations.
- New BorderBlank option.
- MainActor has a new window called Project Information Window. The new functions included in the window are:
  - \* An information window which will give you detailed descriptions of your current animation or picture list.
  - \* You can now view the size and time profiles of your projects as a graphical representation.
  - \* You can compare the decompression times of your projects through new timer functions.
- New GIF/FLI/FLC/DL loader modules and FLI/FLC saver modules.
- Chunky pixel modules (GIF/FLI/FLC) will fly if loaded through universal modules which support graphic cards (like Universal\_PicassoII etc.). You can of course also view them on your native chipset as normal.
- Introduction of a new (light) registration package. It does not have the handbook or the disk based updates but is cheaper.
- You can now use the save/append functions again, even if you have not registered MainActor. You will have to deal with requesters though.

## 1.9 MainActor.guide/The Menus

The Menus

\*\*\*\*\*

You are able to access most of MainActor's functions through the

various menu items and their equivalent shortcuts. Some functions can only be accessed through the menus.

Project Menu	The Project Menu
Text Buffer Menu	The Text Buffer Menu
Miscellaneous Menu	The Miscellaneous Menu
Arexx Menu	The Arexx Menu
Windows Menu	The Windows Menu

## 1.10 MainActor.guide/Project Menu

Project Menu  
=====

Open New Project

will open a new project window. You can open up to five project windows, see Project Window.

The attributes of the project window will be set, according to the defaults selectable in the MainActor Preferences Window.

Project

Consists of several submenu items, their functions are identical to the gadgets of the Project Control Panel Window.

Open Prefs

Opens an asl-requester which lets you choose a MainActor preferences file, saved with one of the two following menu items. When you have chosen a prefs file, the display AND all projects and their contents will be closed, MainActor will then be reopened with the settings of the preferences file.

You can also activate MainActor by simply clicking on the icons of the preferences files.

Save Prefs As ...

Saves your current setup of MainActor; nearly everything will be saved : the projects informations( All view settings, the actual project name, the size and position of all windows, the settings of the system preferences ...).

An self-executing icon will be created for the preferences file. You should save every setup you use frequently !

Save Prefs As Defaults

This will save your setup as the default preferences file, which will be automatically loaded when you start MainActor. The default preferences file is MainActor:Prefs/Default\_Prefs. Replace the default

by your most used setup.

#### Iconify

MainActor will be terminated and the MainActor icon will be placed on your workbench. If you want to reactivate MainActor, just click on the icon.

#### About

Gives you some informations of the current version of MainActor and its author.

#### Quit

Will close all projects and quit MainActor.

## 1.11 MainActor.guide/Text Buffer Menu

### Text Buffer Menu

=====

MainActor uses the Text Buffer Window for presenting feedback to the user.

#### Print Buffer

Prints the informations stored in the Text Buffer Window.

#### Save Buffer As ...

Will let you choose a file into which the contents of the Text Buffer Window will be saved.

#### Clear Buffer

Will clear the Text Buffer Window and delete its buffer.

## 1.12 MainActor.guide/Miscellaneous Menu

### Miscellaneous Menu

=====

The menu items of this menu will only be accessible when a project is loaded in the source project. The Set Timecode item will only be activated if an animation project is loaded in the source project.

#### Select All

Will select all items frames/pictures in your source project.

### Select Range

A requester will pop up, just enter the start/stop frame for the range of items to be selected.

### DeSelect All

This item will deselect all frames/pictures in your source project.

### DeSelect Range

A requester will pop up, just enter the start/stop frame for the range of frames/pictures to be deselected.

### Project Info

This menu item is identical to the Project Info function of the Project Information Window.

### Project Profile

This menu item is identical to the Project Profile function of the Project Information Window.

### Set Timecode

Enter the timecode in the requester which you want to be applied to all selected frames in the source project. Remember to hit return after you typed a new value into the integer gadget. The new timecode will be set immediately. All timecodes are entered in 1/60 of a second, MainActor calculates the right timecode for your vertical beam frequency itself.

## 1.13 MainActor.guide/Arexx Menu

### Arexx Menu

=====

See The Arexx Interface, for more informations of MainActors arexx capabilities.

### Install Arexx Scripts

This menu item will open a window through which you can map your most used arexx scripts to the function keys. The cycle gadget in the upper part of the window will let you choose the function key on which you want to install an arexx script. The function keys are displayed as F1 ... F20, F10 ... F20 mean the function key + one of the shift keys. You can choose the function key by clicking on the gadget or (the faster method) by simply pressing the appropriate function key. (Remember that you have to press F1 together with the shift key to get the F11 key).

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Below the cycle gadget are the Select Script ... gadget and a string gadget. The arexx script which is currently associated to the actual function key displayed in the cycle gadget is visible in the string gadget. You can enter a new arexx script or edit the name of the existing one through the string gadget. You can use the Select Script ... gadget to choose the arexx script via an asl requester.

The three gadgets in the lower part of the window are labeled Save, Use and Cancel.

Save

saves your definitions of the function keys, they will be automatically reloaded the next time you start MainActor.

Use

will keep the definitions, but will not save them

Cancel

ignores the changes you made to the definitions.

Start Arexx Script

Will let you choose an arexx script, which will then be executed.

## 1.14 MainActor.guide/Windows Menu

Windows Menu

=====

This menu will let you open/close the different MainActor windows by simply selecting the desired menu item.

## 1.15 MainActor.guide/The Windows

The Windows

\*\*\*\*\*

The windows are MainActors main interface to the user. Their use is however optional, you can close all of them (except the Project Windows) and only use the menus. The choice is yours. The position and status of the windows will be saved in the preferences files.

The following is a detailed description of MainActors windows and their gadgets.

Project Window

Project Control Panel Window

Project View Settings Window

Project Information Window

The Project Window

The Project Control Panel Window

The Project View Settings Window

The Project Information Window

System Preferences Window	The System Preferences Window
MainActor Preferences Window	The MainActor Preferences Window
Text Buffer Window	The Text Buffer Window

## 1.16 MainActor.guide/Project Window

Project Window  
=====

A new Project Window will be opened by selecting the Open New Project menu item in the Project Menu.

You can open up to five Project Windows, the number of your Project Window will be displayed in the title bar, in front of the project name, like 1: HAM8\_Animation. If no project is loaded, the title is Unused Project.

The Project Windows are mainly controlled by the Project Control Panel Window.

Project Mode Gadget

Depending on your projects mode, it will be labeled Source Project, Destination Project or DeActivated Project.

The Source Project

You can only have one source project. This is the project on which all actions from the Project Control Panel Window will be executed. The gadgets of the Project Control Panel and the Project View Settings will be sett up according to the source project.

The Destination Project

This is the project into which all selected data from the source project will be appended through the Append gadget of the Project View Settings Window.

There can only be one Destination Project.

The DeActivated Projects

These projects are waiting to be switched into the source or destination mode. There can be more than one DeActivated Project.

You can change the project mode by clicking on the Project Mode Gadget, for example if you click on the source projects Project Mode Gadget, it will be changed into the destination project and the former destination project will changed into the source project.

If you click on a DeActivated projects Project Mode Gadget, it will change into the source project.

If only one Project Window is open, you cannot change the Project Mode Gadget.

Everytime you switch on the source project, the gadgets in the

---

Project Control Panel Window and the Project View Settings Window will be adjusted to the settings of the new source project.

### Caching

This is a simple toggle gadget. If it is checked, it means that your project is cached or is going to be cached in ram.

If you have not enough ram, you will have to disable it. That means that for example animations will be directly played from your harddisk, which will be much slower than playing them directly from ram.

You can only toggle the status of the Caching gadget when the project window is unused. As soon as you load a project, it will become ghosted.

### Select Load Module

When clicking on this Button Gadget, a requester will appear in which you can select the loader module for this project.

The cycling gadget in the requester will let you switch between Picture Loaders or Animation Loaders.

When hitting the Load gadget in the Project Control Panel Window, MainActor executes the animation/picture loader you have selected for the source project.

The name of the current loader module is visible in a text gadget directly under the Select Load Module gadget. Next to the name is a small recessed box with an A or P in it. They stand for Animation or Picture loader.

The Select Load Module gadget will be ghosted as soon as you load a project.

### Select Save Module

When clicking on this button gadget, a requester will appear in which you can select the saver module.

The cycling gadget in the requester will let you switch between Picture Savers or Animation Savers.

When hitting the Save gadget in the Project Control Panel Window, MainActor executes the animation/picture saver you have selected for the source project.

The name of the current saver module is visible in a text gadget directly under the Select Save Module gadget. Next to the name is a small recessed box with an A or P in it. They stand for Animation or Picture saver.

The Select Save Module gadget will only be accessible when a project is loaded.

### The Scrolling Frames/Picture List

---

The scroll list will let you choose the frames or pictures you want to execute a certain operation on.

If you have an animation loader for this project window, the scroll list will show you the numbered frames of the animation along with their timecodes.

If you have a picture Loader, the scroll list will show you the names of the pictures you have loaded.

Just (de)select the frame/picture by clicking on its text. For multiple selection do not release the mouse button and move over the items to be selected. The list will scroll if you come to the top or bottom border.

See MainActor Preferences Window, you can select how many items shall be displayed in the scroll list. You can also select a special font for it. (The default is Topaz 8 for the font and 8 for the number of items which shall be visible).

## 1.17 MainActor.guide/Project Control Panel Window

Project Control Panel Window  
=====

This window executes its functions on the current source Project Window.

Load

If you have an animation loader selected for the source project, an requester will appear in which you have to select an animation of the appropriate type.

If you have a picture loader selected, the first requester will ask you about the first picture, after selecting this picture the second requester will ask you about the last picture. MainActor will now alphabetically sort the pictures and load them. For example, if you have a picture list:

```
Amiga_Pic.00001
Amiga_Pic.00002
.
.
Amiga_Pic.00155
```

and select Amiga\_Pic.00055 in the first requester and Amiga\_Pic.00100 in the next, all pictures from Amiga\_Pic.00055 to Amiga\_Pic.00100 will be loaded. The second requester is optional, that means you can abort it by clicking on Cancel if you just want to load one picture.

MainActor checks the icon (if there is one) of the project for the

following tooltypes: Window, FrameInfo, NoCaching, BBlank, XOffset, YOffset, Repeat. If you saved the project with MainActor these tooltypes will restore the settings of the Project View Settings Window.

The Load gadget is only available if you have not loaded a project into the source project yet.

#### Unload

Is the gadget directly under the Load gadget. It will unload the current project of the source project.

It is only available when you have loaded a project in the source project.

#### Play

Is next to the Load gadget. It is only available when you have loaded an animation project in the source project.

If you play your animation on a screen, there are two routines available. MainActor checks automatically if you run an OS Version lower than OS 3.0 and will play it the old fashioned way. If you have OS 3.0 or higher you will profit from the new double buffering routines.

The animation will be played according to the settings of the Project View Settings Window.

The following keys can be used to control the playing of the animation:

#### ESCAPE OR A MOUSEBUTTON

will abort playing the animation

#### SPACE

will stop playing the animation. While the animation is stopped you can use the TAB key to flip to the next frame.

#### RETURN

will enable the timecodes you see in the scroll list of the source project and which you can change (These timecodes are default).

#### THE CURSOR KEYS

scroll the display, the offset changes will be shown in the Project View Settings Windows x and y offset gadgets.

#### N

#### M

If you have activated the Frame Info option, you can cycle the color of the info text using N and M up and down.

#### THE FUNCTION KEYS

are used to set the frame rate, they override the defaults. You can reactivate the defaults by pressing RETURN.

#### F1

sets the timecode to 1/60 Second (60 fps)

---

F2  
    sets the timecode to 2/60 Second (30 fps)

F3  
    sets the timecode to 3/60 Second (20 fps)

F4  
    sets the timecode to 4/60 Second (15 fps)

F5  
    sets the timecode to 5/60 Second (12 fps)

F6  
    sets the timecode to 10/60 Second (6 fps)

F7  
    sets the timecode to 20/60 Second (3 fps)

F8  
    sets the timecode to 40/60 Second (1.5 fps)

F9  
    sets the timecode to 60/60 Second (1 fps)

F10  
    sets the timecode to 120/60 Second (0.333 fps)

#### Show

Is the gadget under Play. It will display all the frames/pictures you have selected in the source projects scroll list. This gadget is available for both animation and picture projects.

The frames/pictures will be shown according to the settings of the Project View Settings Window.

The following keys can be used to control the showing of the pictures:

#### ESCAPE OR A MOUSEBUTTON

will abort showing the pictures.

#### SPACE

will show the next pictures you have selected.

#### THE CURSOR KEYS

scroll the display, the offset changes will be shown in the Project View Settings Windows x and y offset gadgets.

#### Save

If you have an animation saver activated in your source project, it will ask you about the name of the new animation. Then it will build up the new animation in the appropriate animation Format. It will only save the frames you have SELECTED in the source projects scroll list. If you just want to convert or resave the animation, you have to select

---

all the frames in the scroll list.

If you have a picture saver activated in your source project, a requester will appear in which you have to select the directory and the base name of the pictures.

Example: You have activated an animation loader and a picture saver and loaded an animation. The animation is called Example\_Anim. Now you select the first ten frames of the animation and click on the Save gadget. In the requester you type Ram: for the Directory and Example\_Pics for the base name. The ten pictures will then be saved as

```
Ram:Example_Pics.00001
Ram:Example_Pics.00002
.
.
Ram:Example_Pics.00010
```

This is also valid if you have a picture loader and a picture saver.

If you have an animation saver, some more requester will appear and ask you for some specific attributes of the new animation, like Palette per Picture and Looping Animation.

The following combinations are possible:

1. Animation Loader and Animation Saver
2. Animation Loader and Picture Saver
3. Picture Loader and Animation Saver
4. Picture Loader and Picture Saver

In this way, you can easily convert any picture/animation format into any picture/animation format.

## Append

You can append the frames/pictures you have selected in the source project to the destination project. The destination project has to be an animation project.

The source projects animation saver has to belong to the destinations loader module. (For Example the IFF-Anim5 loader and saver). The destination project must NOT be cached.

Some animation types have to fulfill some other attributes, for example the IFF-Anim5 format can only append to non-looping animations. When you want to append frames to a loop Anim5 animation, just resave it and select NO in the loop animation requester, then append the frames.

If you want to add a loop to a non-looping animation, just append two pictures which are identical to the first two, then reload the animation.

See The Modules, for more information about the specific attributes

---

of the modules.

## 1.18 MainActor.guide/Project View Settings Window

Project View Settings Window  
=====

This window controls the output of the Play and Show gadgets of the Project View Settings Window. The values will be set individually for each project and will be saved with the preferences files.

### Select Display

You can choose the view mode for your project with this gadget. This will override the old value, if you resave the animation/picture, the new view mode id will be saved. This gadget will be disabled if you view your project in the window mode.

### X/Y Offsets

With these two integer gadgets, you can select the offsets for your project. If you scroll a frame (while playing an animation or showing a picture), the values of the gadgets will immediately be set up to the new values. These gadgets will only be enabled if the Center option is disabled and you don't use the window mode.

### Display Mode

This cycle gadget will let you choose between the screen and window mode. In the screen mode the animation/pictures will be shown on a screen (view) of its own.

In the window mode your project will be shown in a resizable, scrollable window on your MainActor screen.

THIS OPTION IS ONLY AVAILABLE ON SYSTEMS RUNNING OS3.0+.

The more colors the MainActor screen has available (see System Preferences Window), the better is the dithering of your frame/picture. If you show a 256 color picture on a 4 Color screen, you will be disappointed by the result. The timecodes of the animation will be ignored, the animation will be displayed as fast as possible.

### Number of Repeats

This integer gadget controls how often MainActor will play an animation. If it contains for example a "1", MainActor will play it one time. Possible values are 1 to 9999.

This gadget is only enabled if the source project contains an animation.

### Frame Info

This switch (when activated) will give you informations about the current frame while playing animations, it is only available if the source project contains an animation.

If playing on a screen you will see the info on the top right edge of the screen. When you see no info text, use the M and N keys while playing to cycle the color of the info text up and down.

When playing in a window, the windows title text will display the infos for the current frame.

This gadget is only enabled if the source project contains an animation.

#### Center

If you enable the center option, MainActor will automatically center the display for your project. The x and y offset gadgets will be disabled but will contain the values for centration. The gadget will be disabled if you use the window mode.

#### BBlank

If you enable the BorderBlank feature (BBlank), MainActor/MainView will set the color of the border of your display to black.

#### Example:

You have an 320\*200 animation with blue as color 0. Without the BorderBlank option the whole screen has blue as color 0. If you enable the BBlank option only your animation (320\*200) will have blue as color 0, the border (the rest of the display) will be black.

The BBlank gadget is only available if you view your images in the screen mode.

## 1.19 MainActor.guide/Project Information Window

### Project Information Window

=====

This window will supply you with informations about your current source project.

#### Project Info

This gadget opens an information window which should give you all needed informations about your current source project. The window opens centered on the visible part of your working screen. Its title bar shows you which project you are informed about (the actual source project that is).

#### Width, Height :

This line shows you the width and height of your project in pixels.

**Number of Pictures/Frames :**

Shows you the number of frames in your animation or the number of pictures in your picture list.

**Number of Colors :**

Shows you the number of Colors of your project.

**Special Flags :**

This line shows you special attributes of the project (if there are any). The flags can currently be:

---

for no flags

HAM

for HAM pictures or animations

EHB

for extra halfbrite images

**Size of Project in Bytes :**

Shows you the size of your animation or the total size of all pictures in your picture list in bytes.

**Supports Chunky Pixels**

This line will only appear if your source project is chunky pixel based. Chunky pixel based formats are for example : GIF/FLI/FLC. If you dont have a chunky pixel device (like Retina or the Picasso-II), decompression time of these formats are higher, as they have to be converted to the amiga's bitmap format. You can prove that for yourself through the BitMap/Chunky Pixel Time functions.

**Animation Text**

This line will only appear if your source project is an animation. It informs you if you have a color palette per frame or only one color palette per animation and if the animations has a loop or not.

**Picture/Frame List Gadget**

This gadget (the one under the black line) lists your frames or pictures. You can only select one at a time, the size and compression attributes of the currently selected picture are given in the two gadgets below. If you have a looping animation, this gadget will contain two more pictures which are not given in the Number of Pictures : line ! These two pictures represent the loop. Some animation formats (like the IFF-AnimBrush loader) need only one picture for the loop information.

**Size in Bytes**

This gadget shows the size of the currently selected picture or frame in bytes.

**Comp. Method**

Informs you about the compression method used for the currently selected picture. For example ByteRun for IFF images or Delta5 for

IFF-Anim5 frames. Consider that the first frame of an IFF-AnimX animation mostly has an IFF-ByteRun image for the first frame.

#### Size Profile

This function opens a window and shows you the sizes of the images in your animation/picture list as a graphical representation. The largest picture has the biggest vertical image, the smallest picture the smallest one. The graphic is layed out to be 600 pixels in width, so the horizontal pixel width for every frame is calculated by :  $600 / \text{Number of Pictures}$ . If there are more than 600 Pictures in your source project the pixel width will be 1 for every picture and you may have to scroll with the windows scroll gadgets to see the whole graphic.

#### Time Profile

This function opens a window and shows you the time needed to decompress the images in your animation as a graphical representation. The image which has the slowest decompression time has the biggest vertical bar, the fastest the smallest one.

The bars can have two different colors:

##### black

This indicates that this image could not be decompressed in the given timecode. If for example image nr.3 of your animation has a timecode of 3/60 of a second, its bar will be black if the decompression time is bigger than 3/60. The first frame of your animations have mostly black bars, as these images can not be stored with delta compression.

##### blue

Everything is ok. This image could be decompressed within its timecode.

Things you have to consider:

- \* If you have black bars, consider that these images will decompress fast on fast machines and slow on slow machines. Try to increase the timecode of these frames until they have blue bars.
- \* If you want to be sure your animation runs smoothly on an A1200, remember to check the color of the bars on an A1200, your current machine (A3000 etc.) could be faster.
- \* The Time Profile function will always decompress the animations in their native format : Bitmap based animations will be decompressed in bitmap mode, chunky animations will be decompressed in chunky mode.

The graphic is layed out to be 600 pixels in width, so the horizontal pixel width for every frame is calculated by :  $600 / \text{Number of frames}$ . If there are more than 600 frames in your animation the pixel width will be 1 for every frame and you may have to scroll with the windows scroll gadgets to see the whole graphic.

The Time Profile function is only available if your source project

is an animation.

#### BitMap Time

If you select this gadget MainActor will decompress the whole source project one time in bitmap format. That means that chunky formats like FLI will take more time due to the conversion to the amiga's bitmap format.

If the source project is an animation, MainActor will decompress the animation (without the loop frames) one time, if the source project is a picture list, MainActor will decompress each picture in the list one time.

The time needed for decompression is given in the text gadget below the BitMap Time gadget. The time is displayed in seconds.

Note that the time given for decompression has nothing to do with the time needed to actually play the animation on a screen. The decomp. time function will just decompress the frames as quickly as possible and does not care about time codes or vertical blank interrupts. It is therefore quite accurate.

It is quite useful to be able to compare the decompression time of animations who have different animation formats. Choose the format who has the best decompression time and compression ratio and suits you best.

#### Chunky Time

This gadget will only be enabled if the source projects module format supports chunky pixels (i.e. FLI/GIF etc.).

If you select it, MainActor will decompress the whole source project one time in chunky format.

If the source project is an animation, MainActor will decompress the animation (without the loop frames) one time, if the source project is a picture list, MainActor will decompress each picture in the list one time.

The time needed for decompression is given in the text gadget below the Chunky Time gadget. The time is displayed in seconds.

## 1.20 MainActor.guide/System Preferences Window

### System Preferences Window

=====

This window handles everything concerning the outer appearance of MainActor.

#### Select Font

---

Choose your font for MainActor. This font will then be used for all windows, gadgets, menus. Only the list items of the Project Window will be displayed in a different font, you can select it in the MainActor Preferences Window.

The actual font and its size are displayed beneath the gadget. The Select Font gadget is not activated when you clone the workbench screen.

OS 2.0 will display the font requester only on the workbench screen and not on the MainActor screen.

#### Select Display

ONLY AVAILABLE AT OS 2.1 +

Choose your display mode for your MainActor screen. The current display mode is displayed beneath the gadget.

This gadget is only activated when

- \* MainActor has a screen of its own
- \* You dont clone the workbench screen

#### Use own Screen

If enabled, MainActor uses a screen of its own, if not, MainActor will use the workbench screen or the actual public screen.

#### SHANGHAI Windows

If enabled, MainActor uses the SHANGHAI public screen mode, that means that for example shell windows will automatically pop up on the MainActor screen.

This gadget is only activated when you run MainActor on a screen of its own.

#### Screen Size

This gadget is only available when you have enabled the Use own Screen gadget. You can choose MainActors screen size and its overscan mode with this cycle gadget. The screen size of the current mode is displayed in the two integer gadgets to the right of the Screen Size gadget. The screen size depends on the screen mode you selected with the Select Display gadget.

You can select the following screenmodes:

#### WorkBench

Clones the workbench screen properties (screen size, overscan mode, display mode, font)

#### Custom

Enter MainActors screen size in the two integer gadgets to the right.

---

#### Standard

Use the standard screen size, without overscan ( for Example 640 \* 512) at Pal: HighRes Interlace).

#### Text Overscan

The normal overscan mode which the workbench uses.

#### Video Overcan

Tries to open as big a screen as possible. Flickers on normal displays at the right border.

#### Max Overscan

Slightly smaller than the Video Overscan mode, but as useless on normal displays due to its flicker.

#### Palette Size

Select the colors of your palette with this gadget. The value left to the slider gadget shows the current colors available on your MainActor screen.

This gadget only makes sense if you display pictures or play animations in the window mode. More colors == better dithering of your frames/ pictures. (the window mode is only available under OS 3.0 +).

This gadget is only activated when

- \* MainActor has a screen of its own
- \* You dont clone the workbench screen.

#### Use System Preferences

If you want to enable the changes you have made to your display just click on this gadget.

## 1.21 MainActor.guide/MainActor Preferences Window

#### MainActor Preferences Window

=====

This window lets you choose/enter some special MainActor attributes.

#### Select Default Load Module

Lets you choose the default load module. Everytime you open a new project window, the default load module will be the one choosen for this new projects load module.

#### Select Default Save Module

Lets you choose the default save module. Everytime you open a new project window, the default save module will be the one choosen for this new projects save module.

---

### Select List Item Font

Choose the font for your list items in your Project Window, this font must have a fixed width, the current font and its size are displayed to the right of the gadget, the default is topaz.font 8.

### Number of List Items

You can enter how many list items will be displayed in the project windows with this integer gadget, the default is 8.

### Save Icon

If you enable this gadget, MainActor will save an workbench-icon for every animation/picture you create. You can then view them by double clicking on their icons. The icons support the same tooltypes as MainView, see MainView. The initial settings of the tooltypes clone the settings of the source project (from which you create the new animation/picture).

### Use MainActor Preferences

Will enable the changes made to the MainActor preferences.

## 1.22 MainActor.guide/Text Buffer Window

### Text Buffer Window

=====

This window shows and buffers messages for feedback to the user. You can use the cursor up/down keys to scroll the text one line up/down. Control+cursor up/down will move to the start/end of the buffer. You can also use the windows scrollbar to scroll through the buffer.

See Text Buffer Menu, for more functions concerning the text uffer.

## 1.23 MainActor.guide/The Modules

### The Modules

\*\*\*\*\*

MainActor has animation and picture modules of which each has loader and saver modules.

The Animation Modules

The Picture Modules

## 1.24 MainActor.guide/The Animation Modules

The Animation Modules

=====

```
Universal
Universal_PicassoII
Universal_Retina
```

MainActor 1.2 is able to read/write the following animation formats:

```
DL
FLI
FLC
IFF-Anim5
IFF-Anim7
IFF-Anim8
IFF-AnimBrush
Picasso
```

## 1.25 MainActor.guide/Anim Universal

Anim Universal

-----

This module examines the animation format and executes the proper animation module. You should mostly use the universal modules as they are able to directly redirect the output of the modules to special hardware (PicassoII, Retina etc.).

Peculiarities:

- The Append function will not work if the destination project has an Universal loader.

## 1.26 MainActor.guide/Anim Universal\_PicassoII

Anim Universal\_PicassoII

-----

This module examines the animation format and executes the proper animation module. It redirects the output of the modules directly to the Picasso-II board from VillageTronic.

Peculiarities:

- It is faster to view animations of the bitmap formats (like Anim-5/7/8) on the native chipset as these formats have to be

converted to the picassos chunky pixel mode.

- Animations of the chunky formats like FLI/FLC are of course much faster on the Picasso-II than on the native chipset.
- The frame info, display mode etc. options have of course no meaning for this module, the handling of the time codes is however correct and you can still stop the animation and flip to the next frame like normal. The function keys also control the speed of the animation.

## 1.27 MainActor.guide/Anim Universal\_Retina

Anim Universal\_Retina

-----

This module examines the animation format and executes the proper animation module. It redirects the output of the modules directly to the Retina board from MacroSystems.

Peculiarities:

- It is faster to view animations of the bitmap formats (like Anim-5/7/8) on the native chipset as these formats have to be converted to the retinas chunky pixel mode.
- Animations of the chunky formats like FLI/FLC are of course much faster on the Retina than on the native chipset.
- The frame info, display mode etc. options have of course no meaning for this module, the handling of the time codes is however correct and you can still stop the animation and flip to the next frame like normal. The function keys also control the speed of the animation.

## 1.28 MainActor.guide/DL

DL

--

DL animations are ChunkyPixel based and dont support data crunching. MainActor supports type 1 and type 2 DL animations. Type 1 animations are fixed to an resolution of 160\*100, type 2 animations can contain resolutions of 320\*200, 160\*100 and 80\*50. The image depth is fixed to 8 bit.

Peculiarities:

- DL animations have a rather strange format, for example every frame has an odd offset. That is the reason why examining the animation

and playing from hd is so slow : AmigaDos does not like odd offsets.

- Images are stored as raw data, no loop frames are needed.
- MainActor plays DL animations in a linear fashion, the playlist at the end of DL animations is ignored.

## 1.29 MainActor.guide/FLI

FLI  
---

FLI animations are created by Animator Pro, an animation program only available on pc computers. It is quite old, it can only contain 320\*200 animations and its depth is fixed to 8 bit. The successor of FLI is FLC. I have included the FLI modules because a lot of animations (especially on CD-ROM) are in this format.

Peculiarities:

- FLI animations always contain a loop, so it is not possible to append to FLI animations. The FLI saver is therefore not able to append to FLI animations.
- FLI animations have only one (global) timecode, it applies to all frames of the animation. The Set Timecode function will therefore only be able to set the global timecode and will not set a timecode per frame as usual.
- Because of the missing timecode per frame feature, a lot of animations contain 'Dummy' frames. These are empty frames which shall time the animations. N Dummy frames will for example delay the playback of the animation for  $n * \text{global timecode}$ . You can recognize Dummy frames in the Project Info Window, they have a bytesize of 0 and a compression type of Dummy.

## 1.30 MainActor.guide/FLC

FLC  
---

FLC animations are created by Animator Pro, an animation program only available on pc computers. FLC is the successor of FLI. FLC animations are not fixed to 320\*200 resolutions like FLI and have faster DELTA chunks.

Peculiarities:

- FLC animations always contain a loop, so it is not possible to
-

append to FLC animations. The FLC saver is therefore not able to append to FLC animations.

- FLC animations have only one (global) timecode, it applies to all frames of the animation. The Set Timecode function will therefore only be able to set the global timecode and will not set a timecode per frame as usual.
- Because of the missing timecode per frame feature, a lot of animations contain 'Dummy' frames. These are empty frames which shall time the animations. N Dummy frames will for example delay the playback of the animation for  $n * \text{global timecode}$ . You can recognize Dummy frames in the Project Info Window, they have a bytesize of 0 and a compression type of Dummy.

## 1.31 MainActor.guide/IFF-Anim5

IFF-Anim5

-----

The IFF-Anim5 specification was created by Electronic Arts.

It is a "good at compressing but slow at playing" format.

Peculiarities:

- You cannot append to looping animations. You can bypass this by resaving it to a non-looping animation and then appending the frames. You can make a non-looping Animation to a looping animation by appending two frames which are identical to the first two. (You have to reload the animation to make the loop appear)
- There are some bad animation packers out there, who do not save the first ANHD chunk before the BODY chunk. In this case MainActor cannot insert the timecode for the first frame and will give you an error message (the other timecodes will be set). If you want to time the first frame, just resave the animation with MainActor to avoid this problem.

## 1.32 MainActor.guide/IFF-Anim7

IFF-Anim7

-----

The IFF-Anim7 specification was created by Wolfgang Hofer.

It is a quite good compromise between speed and animation size. The IFF-Anim7\_16 modules use words (16 bits) the Anim-7\_32 modules longwords (32 bits) for compression. Therefore the 16 bit variant compresses slightly better than the 32 bit modules, but playback is

slower.

The IFF-Anim7\_32 modules are, in my opinion, the best choice for timeable, fast animations.

Peculiarities:

- You cannot append to looping animations. You can bypass this by resaving it to a non-looping animation and then appending the frames. You can make a non-looping Animation to a looping animation by appending two frames which are identical to the first two. (You have to reload the animation to make the loop appear)
- There are some bad animation packers out there, who do not save the first ANHD chunk before the BODY chunk. In this case MainActor cannot insert the timecode for the first frame and will give you an error message (the other timecodes will be set). if you want to time the first frame, just resave the animation with MainActor to avoid this problem.
- The modules do NOT support animations with a DLTA chunk instead of a BODY chunk for the first frame.

## 1.33 MainActor.guide/IFF-Anim8

IFF-Anim8

-----

The IFF-Anim8 specification was created by Joe Porkka of ASDG.

Peculiarities:

- You cannot append to looping animations. You can bypass this by resaving it to a non-looping animation and then appending the frames. You can make a non-looping Animation to a looping animation by appending two frames which are identical to the first two. (You have to reload the animation to make the loop appear)
- There are some bad animation packers out there, who do not save the first ANHD chunk before the BODY chunk. In this case MainActor cannot insert the timecode for the first frame and will give you an error message (the other timecodes will be set). if you want to time the first frame, just resave the animation with MainActor to avoid this problem.
- The modules do NOT support animations with a DLTA chunk instead of a BODY chunk for the first frame.

## 1.34 MainActor.guide/IFF-AnimBrush

## IFF-AnimBrush

-----

The IFF-AnimBrush specification was created by Dan Silva of Electronic Arts. Anim Brushes are used/saved by DPaint.

Peculiarities:

- There is no saver module at the moment.

## 1.35 MainActor.guide/Picasso

### Picasso

-----

This animation format was especially created for the Picasso graphic board from VillageTronic. The modules can handle resolutions of 8/16/24 bit. These modules are only available to registered users and legal owners of the Picasso graphic board.

Peculiarities:

- The functionality of the Picasso modules are the same as that of the IFF-AnimX. That means that you can add a loop to animations, select if you want to have a color palette per frame (of course only in 8 bit mode), set the timecode for each frame etc.
- If you want to create a 24-Bit animation you will be asked if the resolution shall be dithered down to 16-Bit. 16-Bit is faster than 24-Bit and offers nearly the same image quality so you should give it a try.

## 1.36 MainActor.guide/The Picture Modules

### The Picture Modules

=====

Universal  
Universal\_PicassoII  
Universal\_Retina

MainActor 1.2 is able to read/write the following picture formats:

GIF  
IFF  
PCX  
Workbench-Icon

## 1.37 MainActor.guide/Picture Universal

Picture Universal  
-----

This module examines the picture format and executes the proper picture module. You should always use the universal modules.

## 1.38 MainActor.guide/Picture Universal\_PicassoII

Picture Universal\_PicassoII  
-----

This module examines the picture format and executes the proper picture module. It redirects the output of the modules directly to the Picasso-II board from VillageTronic.

Peculiarities:

- The frame info, display mode etc. options have of course no meaning for this module. The only options you have is to press space for the next picture or press escape to abort viewing.

## 1.39 MainActor.guide/Picture Universal\_Retina

Picture Universal\_Retina  
-----

This module examines the picture format and executes the proper picture module. It redirects the output of the modules directly to the Retina board from MacroSystems.

Peculiarities:

- The frame info, display mode etc. options have of course no meaning for this module. The only options you have is to press space for the next picture or press escape to abort viewing.

## 1.40 MainActor.guide/GIF

GIF  
---

A widely spread image format, designed by CompuServe. Revisions 87A and 89A are supported.

---

Peculiarities:

- This format is chunky pixel based, so it will be fastest if viewed through the universal modules which support chunky pixel devices (like Universal\_PicassoII etc.), otherwise the module will convert the image to your native chipsets bitplane mode, which will take somewhat longer.
- No saver module yet.

## 1.41 MainActor.guide/IFF

IFF

---

This is the standard Interchangeable File Format (IFF), the specification was designed by Electronic Arts.

Peculiarities:

- Starting from MainActor Version 1.02, the IFF modules can load/save IFF24 (24-Bit) pictures.

## 1.42 MainActor.guide/PCX

PCX

---

PCX is a picture format heavily used on pc's, it was designed by ZSoft.

Peculiarities:

- No save module yet

## 1.43 MainActor.guide/Workbench-Icon

Workbench-Icon

-----

These modules support the workbench icons.

Peculiarities:

- The saver module will append ".info" to the save name.

## 1.44 MainActor.guide/The Arexx Interface

The Arexx Interface

\*\*\*\*\*

MainActors arexx port name is MAINACTOR.

Format:

<>

Parmaters in these angle brackets have to be supplied

[]

Parameters in square brackets are optional

|

Vertical bars mean OR and are used to seperate options of which you can choose one : [ON | OFF]

The result variable contains the result of the operation, its possible contents are listed in the command reference.

Look at the MainActor:rexx directory for examples. Note that MainActor does not support blanks in filenames which are arexx arguments.

The arexx commands integrated in MainActor 1.2 are:

```
Append
DeSelectAll
DeSelectRange
DeSelectRangeRequest
GetSPInfo
GetSPLoader
GetSPName
GetSPSaver
LoadProject
OpenNewProject
PlayProject
Quit
PrintTxt
PrintAndStoreTxt
RequestFile
RequestInteger
RequestSaveFile
Save
ScreenToBack
ScreenToFront
SelectAll
SelectRange
SelectRangeRequest
ShowPictures
SetSPLoader
SetSPSaver
SetTimecode
```

```
SwapDeActivatedToSource
SwapProjects
UnloadProject
Version
WBToFront
```

## 1.45 MainActor.guide/Append

```
Append
=====
```

Format:

Appends the selected frames/pictures of the source project to the destination project.

result: -

## 1.46 MainActor.guide/DeSelectAll

```
DeSelectAll
=====
```

Format: DeSelectAll

Deselects all frames/pictures in the source project.

result: -

## 1.47 MainActor.guide/DeSelectRange

```
DeSelectRange
=====
```

Format: DeSelectRange <from> <to>

Will deselect all frames/pictures in the source project from the integer value from to to

result: -

## 1.48 MainActor.guide/DeSelectRangeRequest

---

DeSelectRangeRequest  
=====

Format: DeSelectRangeRequest

The DeSelectRange requester will appear, letting you choose the frames or pictures to deselect.

result: -

## 1.49 MainActor.guide/GetSPInfo

GetSPInfo  
=====

Format: GetSPInfo

Returns information about the current source project:

The width of the source project, followed by its height, followed by the amount of Colors (HAM6, HAM8, EHB will be given back literally for AdPro compatibility), followed by the number of frames/pictures in your project, followed by CACHING=NO or CACHING=YES depending if you have caching en/disabled, followed by LOOP=YES or LOOP=NO depending on the loop status and at last CPF=YES or CPF=NO depending on your color per frame status.

Picture lists have LOOP disabled and CPF enabled.

result: width height colors #ofpics caching loop cpf

Examples:

result=320 256 HAM6 220 CACHING=YES LOOP=YES CPF=NO

result=320 256 16 10 CACHING=YES LOOP=YES CPF=YES

## 1.50 MainActor.guide/GetSPLoader

GetSPLoader  
=====

Format: GetSPLoader

Returns two arguments, the first is ANIM or PIC depending of the loader module type of the source project. The second argument is the name of the module itself.

result: ModuleType ModuleName

## 1.51 MainActor.guide/GetSPName

GetSPName  
=====

Format: GetSPName

If the source project has an animation loaded, it returns the full animation name with path, else it returns two arguments, the first is the name of the first picture with full path, the second is the name of the last picture without its path.

result: Name of animation or name of first and last picture.

## 1.52 MainActor.guide/GetSPSaver

GetSPSaver  
=====

Format: GetSPSaver

Returns two arguments, the first is ANIM or PIC depending of the saver module type of the source project. The second argument is the name of the module itself.

result: ModuleType ModuleName

## 1.53 MainActor.guide/LoadProject

LoadProject  
=====

Format: LoadProject <Name1> [Name2]

LoadProject will load an animation or picture list, according to the type of the load module of the source project.

Name1 is the name of the animation or the name of the first picture of the picture list.

Name2 is only needed when you want to load a picture list, it is the name of the last picture.

Examples:

```
LoadProject Graphics:CountAnim.00001 Graphics:CountAnim.00010
```

```
LoadProject Graphics:CountAnim.00001 CountAnim.00010
```

```
LoadProject Graphics:Test/mandel7_32
```

---

```
result:-
```

## 1.54 MainActor.guide/OpenNewProject

```
OpenNewProject  
=====
```

```
Format: OpenNewProject [CACHING]
```

Opens a new project window (up to five) If you supply the CACHING parameter, the project window will have caching enabled, otherwise it will be disabled.

```
result: -
```

## 1.55 MainActor.guide/PlayProject

```
PlayProject  
=====
```

```
Format: PlayProject
```

Plays the animation contained in the source project, will fail if the source project is a picture list.

```
result: -
```

## 1.56 MainActor.guide/Quit

```
Quit  
=====
```

```
Format: Quit
```

Closes all projects and quits MainActor.

```
result: -
```

## 1.57 MainActor.guide/PrintTxt

```
PrintTxt
=====
```

```
Format: PrintTxt <text>
```

Displays text in the Text Buffer Window.

```
result: -
```

## 1.58 MainActor.guide/PrintAndStoreTxt

```
PrintAndStoreTxt
=====
```

```
Format: PrintAndStoreTxt <text>
```

Displays and buffers text in the Text Buffer Window.

```
result: -
```

## 1.59 MainActor.guide/RequestFile

```
RequestFile
=====
```

```
Format: RequestFile <text>
```

This command pops up an ASL-File requester, text will be displayed in the requesters title bar.

Example:

```
RequestFile "Select File Name"
```

```
result: full path of selected file
```

## 1.60 MainActor.guide/RequestInteger

```
RequestInteger
=====
```

```
Format: RequestInteger <InitValue> <text>
```

This command pops up an integer requester, text will be displayed above the integer value which was initialized with InitValue.

Example:

```
RequestInteger 640 "Enter new Width"
```

result: integer value

## 1.61 MainActor.guide/RequestSaveFile

RequestSaveFile  
=====

Format: RequestSaveFile <text>

This command pops up an ASL-Savefile requester, text will be displayed in the requesters title bar.

Example:

```
RequestSaveFile "Select Save File Name"
```

result: full path of selected file

## 1.62 MainActor.guide/Save

Save  
=====

Format: Save <Name> [CPF=YES|NO] [LOOP=YES|NO]

An animation saver will save the selected frames into a new animation under the name you put in the Name parameter. CPF decides wether you want a color palette per frame or not, LOOP decides if you want to have a looping animation. LOOP and CPF overrule the normal behaviour, if you dont supply them, everything will be saved as though you had activated the Save gadget.

If you have a picture saver, Name is the base name for the pictures, LOOP and CPF have, in this case, no meaning.

result: -

## 1.63 MainActor.guide/ScreenToBack

ScreenToBack  
=====

Format: ScreenToBack

---

Flips the MainActor screen to the back.

result: -

## 1.64 MainActor.guide/ScreenToFront

ScreenToFront  
=====

Format: ScreenToFront

Flips the MainActor screen to the front.

result: -

## 1.65 MainActor.guide/SelectAll

SelectAll  
=====

Format: SelectAll

Selects all frames/pictures in the source project.

result: -

## 1.66 MainActor.guide/SelectRange

SelectRange  
=====

Format: SelectRange

Will select all frames/pictures in the source project from the integer value from to to

result: -

## 1.67 MainActor.guide/SelectRangeRequest

```
SelectRangeRequest
=====
```

```
Format: SelectRangeRequest
```

The SelectRange requester will appear, letting you choose the frames or pictures to select.

```
result: -
```

## 1.68 MainActor.guide/ShowPictures

```
ShowPictures
=====
```

```
Format: ShowPictures
```

Shows the selected pictures/frames of the source project.

```
result: -
```

## 1.69 MainActor.guide/SetSPLoader

```
SetSPLoader
=====
```

```
Format: SetSPLoader <ModuleType> <ModuleName>
```

Sets the load module of the source project to the module type ModuleType with the module name ModuleName.

EXAMPLES:

```
SetSPLoader PIC IFF
```

```
SetSPLoader ANIM IFF-Anim5
```

```
result: -
```

## 1.70 MainActor.guide/SetSPSaver

```
SetSPSaver
=====
```

```
Format: SetSPSaver <ModuleType> <ModuleName>
```

---

Sets the save module of the source project to the module type ModuleType with the module name ModuleName.

EXAMPLES:

```
SetSPSaver PIC IFF
```

```
SetSPSaver ANIM IFF-Anim5
```

result: -

## 1.71 MainActor.guide/SetTimecode

SetTimecode  
=====

Format: SetTimecode <Timecode>

Sets Timecode (a value from 1 to 999) to the selected frames of the source project.

result: -

## 1.72 MainActor.guide/SwapDeActivatedToSource

SwapDeActivatedToSource  
=====

Format: SwapDeActivatedToSource

Flips the first deactivated project to the source and the source project to the destination project.

result: -

## 1.73 MainActor.guide/SwapProjects

SwapProjects  
=====

Format: SwapProjects

Flips the destination project to the source and the source project to the destination project.

result: -

---

## 1.74 MainActor.guide/UnloadProject

UnloadProject  
=====

Format: UnloadProject

Unloads the current project of the source project.

result: -

## 1.75 MainActor.guide/Version

Version  
=====

Format: Version

Will return the actual version string of MainActor.

result: MainActor xx.xx (xx.xx.xx)

## 1.76 MainActor.guide/WBToFront

WBToFront  
=====

Format: WBToFront

Flips the WorkBench screen to the front.

result: -

## 1.77 MainActor.guide/MainView

MainView  
\*\*\*\*\*

MainView is MainActors external player. It can display all animations/pictures for which MainActor has the proper loader modules.

The key commands while playing animations or showing pictures are the same as if you would view them directly with MainActor. Thats the reason for not listing them here again, have a look at the Project Control Panel Window under Play and Show.

If MainActor saved an icon for the animations/pictures to view, MainView will take the view settings from this icon (overruling its own settings) ! You can change this behaviour through the IgnoreIcons option.

MainView will use MainActors center option (which centers the display of your animations or pictures) by default. If you specify an X or Y Offset the center option will be disabled and the specified offsets will be used instead.

You can start MainView from the workbench or from the cli.

#### Starting MainView from the Workbench

If you start MainView from the wb (per icon) you can select the file(s) to view in an asl-requester. For multi selecting just press one of the shift keys and select the files with the mouse. (Starting from OS 2.1+)

MainView supports the following tooltypes:

#### Window

This tooltype enables the window mode, all animations or pictures will be displayed in an window on the current public screen. It is disabled by default.

#### FrameInfo

FrameInfo enables the FrameInfo mode. It Is disabled by default.

#### NoCaching

Disables caching, with caching disabled MainView plays direct from the harddisk (or whatever). This allows you to play big animations even if you have not much ram. It is disabled by default.

#### IgnoreIcons

Ignores the icons of the animations/pictures It is disabled by default.

#### BBlank

Enables the BBlank option. It is disabled by default.

#### XOffset=<Value>

You can directly set the start x offset. 0 is the left border. If you specify an XOffset centration will be disabled !

#### YOffset=<Value>

You can directly set the initial y offset. 0 is the top border. If you specify an YOffset centration will be disabled !

#### Repeat=<Value>

Repeats the animation <Value> times. For example Repeat=1 would play the animation one time. Defaults to 100.

#### Directory=<Path>

This is the initial directory for the asl-requester.

#### Anim\_Module=<Module>

---

Chooses the default loader module for animations. Default is the Universal module.

Pic\_Module=<Module>

Chooses the default loader module for pictures. Default is the Universal module. If you want to view all pictures for example on the PicassoII gfx board, choose the Universal\_PicassoII module.

Starting MainView from the cli

Starting MainView from the cli will give you enhanced functionality. You can for example define patterns for animations or picture lists.

Usage is : MainView [-<options>] <file>

You can enter as many files as you like.

MainView supports these options :

```
-w          : enables the window mode
-fi         : enables the frameinfo option
-nc        : turns caching off
-i         : ignore the icons for the animations/pictures
-bb        : enables the BorderBlank (BBlank) option
-xvalue    : value describes the initial x offset
-yvalue    : the same for the y offset.
-rvalue    : value describes how often the animation
              should be repeated
-amodule   : where module is the default animation loader
              for example -aUniversal selects the universal
              loader (default).
-pmodule   : where module is the default picture loader
              for example -aUniversal selects the universal
              loader (default).
              If you want to remap your pictures to the
              PicassoII board enter -pUniversal_PicassoII
```

Examples:

MainView -nc -rl Graphics:Pics/#? Animation/#?8\_32 will show all files in the Graphics:Pics/ directory as well as all files in the Animation/ directory which end with '8\_32' and all animations will be directly played from the harddisk (one time).

MainView -pUniversal\_PicassoII Graphics:#?\_24Bit will display all pictures which names end with '\_24Bit' on the Picasso-II board.

## 1.78 MainActor.guide/Tutorial

Tutorial

\*\*\*\*\*

This tutorial will try to (quickly) explain the tasks you can perform with MainActor. It is just meant to give you the idea behind

MainActor, you have still to read all of the documentation to get the most out of MainActor.

This tutorial will tell you how to

- Load Animations
- Load Picture(s)
- Play Animations
- Show Pictures
- Create-Convert Animations
- Save Pictures From Animations
- Convert Picture Formats
- Append To Animations
- Time Animations
- Execute Arexx Scripts
- Show Pics-Anims On Graphic Boards

## 1.79 MainActor.guide/Load Animations

Load Animations  
=====

You need an unused Project to load an animation into MainActor. Select the Select Load Module gadget of the Project Window and select the proper animation format (if you, for example, want to load an IFF-Anim5 animation, select the IFF-Anim5 loader or the Universal loader). If you want to cache the animation (buffer the animation in memory), enable the Caching gadget. Now select the Load gadget of the Project Control Panel Window and select the animation in the opening asl requester. MainActor will now examine the animation and load it into memory (if caching is enabled). After that the frames of the animation are listed in the scroll list area of the project window, also all gadgets (except the Load and perhaps the Append gadget) of the Project Control Panel Window are now enabled.

## 1.80 MainActor.guide/Load Picture(s)

Load Picture(s)  
=====

You need an unused Project to load a picture or a picture list into MainActor. Select the Select Load Module gadget of the projects window and select the proper picture format (if you, for example, want to load an IFF picture, select the IFF loader). If you want to cache the picture(s) (buffer the picture(s) in memory), enable the Caching gadget. Now select the Load gadget of the Project Control Panel Window and select the first picture of the picture list in the opening asl requester, if you want to load only one picture, you can cancel the second requester, otherwise select the last picture of the picture list

in the second requester. MainActor will now load the selected picture(s) and buffer them into memory (if caching is enabled). After that the picture(s) are listed in the scroll list area of the project window, also all gadgets (except the Load and Play and perhaps the Append gadgets) of the Project Control Panel Window are now enabled.

## 1.81 MainActor.guide/Play Animations

Play Animations

=====

You have to load an animation first. Just click on the Play gadget of the Project Control Panel Window. For further details have a look into the documentation.

## 1.82 MainActor.guide/Show Pictures

Show Pictures

=====

You have to load an animation or a picture list first. Select the pictures you want to show in the source projects list view gadget, after that simply press the Show gadget of the Project Control Panel Window. For further details have a look into the documentation.

## 1.83 MainActor.guide/Create-Convert Animations

Create/Convert Animations

=====

You have to load an animation or a picture list first. Select the pictures who shall be included in the new animation in the source projects list view gadget. After that select the Select Save Module gadget and select the proper animation format. Now click on the Save gadget of the Project Control Panel Window and enter the name of the new animation. MainActor will then create the animation, you may have to answer some requesters (looping or non looping animation and so on). For further details have a look into the documentation.

## 1.84 MainActor.guide/Save Pictures From Animations

### Save Pictures From Animations =====

The procedure is exactly the same as before, just select a picture save module instead of an animation module. For further details have a look into the documentation.

## 1.85 MainActor.guide/Convert Picture Formats

### Convert Picture Formats =====

The procedure is exactly the same as before, just load a picture or a picture list and select another picture formats save module.

## 1.86 MainActor.guide/Append To Animations

### Append To Animations =====

Load an animation or picture list into the source project and an animation into the destination project. The name of the source projects saver module has to equal the name of the destination projects saver module (Beware of the Universal loader !!) The Append gadget of the Project Control Panel Window should now be enabled. Select the pictures you want to append (to the destination project) in the source project. After that select the Append gadget, MainActor will now append the selected pictures of the source project to the animation in the destination project. For further details have a look into the documentation.

## 1.87 MainActor.guide/Time Animations

### Time Animations =====

Load an animation and select the pictures you want to give a new timecode. Now select the Select Timecode item in the Miscellaneous Menu and enter the new timecode into the integer gadget. MainActor will now write the new timecodes to the animation, you can check the new timecodes by playing the animation.

---

## 1.88 MainActor.guide/Execute Arexx Scripts

### Execute Arexx Scripts

=====

You can directly execute arexx scripts by selecting the Start Arexx Script item in the Arexx Menu and selecting the arexx scripts. You can map arexx scripts to the function keys through the Install Arexx Scripts item (again in the Arexx Menu). You can really speed up your work by using them, take a look at their header to get a short description of what they do.

## 1.89 MainActor.guide/Show Pics-Anims On Graphic Boards

### Show Pics/Anims On Graphic Boards

=====

Just use the Universal\_PicassoII or Universal\_Retina loader modules, they remap the output of every module to the proper gfx board. Note that it is faster to view animations of the bitmap formats (like Anim-5/7/8) on the native chipset as these formats have to be converted to chunky pixel modes. Chunky pixel animation formats like FLI/FLC are on the other hand faster on the graphic boards as on the native chip set.

## 1.90 MainActor.guide/Tips and Tricks

### Tips and Tricks

\*\*\*\*\*

- \* Remember that the Amigas native display is bitmap based ! Chunky pixel based animation formats like FLI/FLC/DL or the GIF picture format have to be converted to bitmaps ! This is slow ! You have to have a chunky pixel based display (like the Picasso-II or Retina gfx cards) to be able to view them full speed (use the Universal\_#? loader). On the other hand bitmap based formats like IFF-Anim5/7/8 are slow on these cards as they have to be converted from bitmap to chunky pixel.
  - \* Always try to create animations with only one color palette per animation (CPA). They are faster than animations with color palettes per frame (CPF), especially if you have deeper (8-bit) displays. CPF animations also have slower playback rates from hd.
  - \* Remember that FLI and FLC animations are always identified as CPF animations, even if they dont have a color palette per every frame. Try to convert them to an CPA animation first if you are not sure if the color palette changes inside of the animation.
  - \* The preferences files are \*SNAPSHOTS\* of your current setup of
-

MainActor, that means that if you save a prefs file and start MainActor later with it you will have exactly the same environment as before.

## 1.91 MainActor.guide/Registration

### Registration

\*\*\*\*\*

If you want to register MainActor you can choose between two different packages :

#### Package One

The registration fee for this package is \$50 (85 german marks) or any aquivalent sum in your local currency.

What you get for this package:

- \* A packet consisting of:
  - A TeX set, printed handbook
  - The latest version of MainActor
  - A keyfile
- \* Two free disk based updates
- \* Additional updates are \$20 (30 DM) with and \$10 (15 DM) without a new handbook

#### Package Two

The registration fee for this package is \$25 (40 german marks) or any aquivalent sum in your local currency.

What you get for this package:

- \* A packet consisting of:
  - The latest version of MainActor
  - A keyfile
- \* Additional updates are \$20 (30 DM) with and \$10 (15 DM) without a new handbook

You can send cash or international money order to

Markus Moenig  
Im Johannistal 36  
52064 Aachen  
Germany  
Tel.: (49)-241-71844

If you prefer direct transfer:

Markus Moenig  
NO. 20020251  
Stadtsparkasse Aachen  
BLZ 390 500 00 (Germany)  
Usage: MainActor  
PLEASE INCLUDE YOUR NAME ON THE TRANSFER ORDER !!

If you transfer money to our account from the outside of europe, the price for MainActor is \$55 or \$30, bank cost included.

If you have questions/suggestions feel free to contact me through email:

Fido 2:242/7.13  
Internet moenig@pool.informatik.rwth-aachen.de  
ADSP markusm@tolkien.adsp.sub.org

## 1.92 MainActor.guide/The Future

The Future

\*\*\*\*\*

Future enhancements which are on my list:

- Harddisk playback of the IFF-Anim5/7/8 formats has to become \*much\* better, planned for the next upgrade.
  - If you want to play animations directly from hd, MainActor has to examine the whole animation to store the offset of frames and examine the loop status of the animation. This information should become saveable within MainActor. MainActor/MainView will then be able to directly start playback from hd, planned for the next upgrade.
  - An animation loader/saver for VRLIs Vista Pro format (VANIM) and for Real 3Ds animation format.
  - MPEG and JPEG loader.
  - More picture and animation modules (in general).
  - Far more arexx scripts (sinus (de)-acceleration scripts and more).
  - German documentation.
  - Syncing sound (through sound modules) to animations.
  - Special modules for commercial hardware (digitizers,gfx cards ..) are possible.
  - The modules are designed to be expandable, that means that future expansions like image processing modules or multimedia effect modules are not only possible but were planned from day one of the
-

development.

Your suggestions are always welcome.

## 1.93 MainActor.guide/Credits

Credits

\*\*\*\*\*

This package was developed by usage of the following products:

- Dice, from Obvious Implementation Corp
- Devpac 3.04, from HiSoft
- WShell2.0 and Arexx, from Wishful Thinking Corp
- TurboText from Oxxi
- ToolManager from Stefan Becker
- MultiTool II from Boris Jakubaschk

Thanks for producing high quality software.

Special thanks to:

- Stefan Becker for his Amiga knowledge, without him this project would not have been become possible
- all GAMMA and BETA testers
- Norbert Bogenrieder for the icons
- Jesper Juul for his suggestions
- all registered users for their support and trust in my work

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