VERSION 8.0.1.XXX - DEVELOPED BY: AVOLITES MEDIA LTD. POWERED BY: SALVATION (TM)
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GREG, ADAM, OLIE, ALL AT AVOLITES AND YOU. SPECIAL THANKS MARK CALVERT. LETS ROCK!
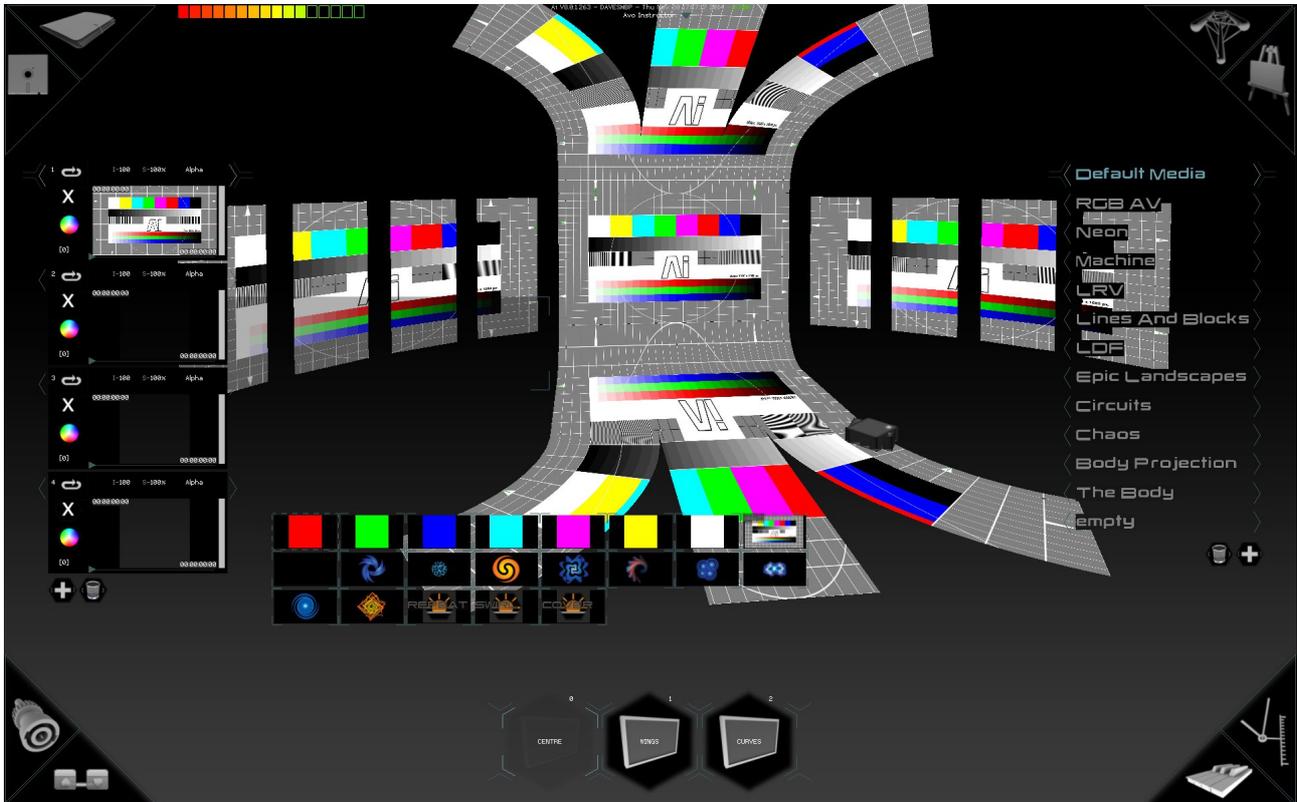
Performance Page

VERSION 8.X

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with Additions by Dave Green & Ciaran Abrams

Performance Page

Trigger your media and control your show

The performance page itself is roughly split into 5 main areas :

- On the left hand side we have the Layer Widget – this gives us an easy way to choose how our images are mixed, whether they have effects, adjust position and size and control many other functions.

- In the lower middle area you will see groups of rectangular boxes known as Media Tiles – these are individual pieces of media (Video / Live Input / Generative Patch) that can be dragged in and laid out as required and can have unique settings which will override the layer settings when played back.

- At the bottom we have the fixture icons – here you can select which of the fixtures you are working with and in turn which set of layers are displayed in the layer widget – you can select more than one fixture by dragging your mouse across multiple fixtures with the left button held down.

- On the right hand side we see the Media Banks – each of these is a unique collection of media which includes all of the media tile specific settings and can be saved and imported into any project just by dragging it into the list, making it quick to share an existing media library across projects.

- Towards the top of the screen you will usually see your 3d stage visualisation – this gives you a real time 3d representation of your show allowing you to know exactly what's happening at all times from any angle, which is really useful whether you are

pre-programming at home or running a full show in front of a big crowd.

At the top of the screen we are presented with some information such as the Performance Units Meter which allows you to have a good grasp of the power available to use in your project. You can also see a memory readout which tells you how much of your graphics memory is in use – the more red the number becomes, the less free graphics memory you have.

Many of the commonly used layer controls can be found on the layer widget. Using the dedicated controls you can choose the play mode, adjust the layer intensity via a number, alter the speed between 0 % and 1000 % (100% is the original speed of the media), choose the blend mode from a drop down list, or control the layer intensity with a fader. The X icon clears the layer and the colour wheel allows you to adjust the hue of the layer. At the bottom of the widget are two icons – a plus which adds a layer to the selected fixture and a trash can which deletes the selected layer. The widget itself can be scrolled up and down by dragging it whilst holding the left mouse button.

Right clicking on the layer preview shows the Layer Controller. (double left click the layer to expand and collapse the preview) which allows for further control of whichever fixtures are currently selected and includes access to the 2 effects units on each layer which make use of Ai's own SVFX format (see SVFX tutorial for further information) further layer controls and buttons to reset the layer parameters or open the mixer, ArtNet layer (the central hub for assigning ArtNet or midi to the full layer parameter set) and colour curves window. These settings can easily be stored and recalled using editable scene triggers which are created by pressing the Tab button on the keyboard (more info on Scene Triggers below).

Right clicking any of our media tiles brings up the properties window for that specific instance. In the centre of the window you can see a large preview of the clip or patch and below that a play head with manually adjustable in and out points and some reference information which tells you the current position, the clip name, resolution and format and also the total clip length. The right side of the window allows you to adjust clip specific parameters such as brightness, contrast, gain, colour, position, size cropping and per clip soft edging all of which can be quickly reset by using the button at the bottom.

On the left side you can see the control and triggering options. The first two boxes tell you the name of the clip and the location in which Ai last accessed the clip. Below this we have 2 buttons, one to open the folder containing the media and one to open the media in an external player such as Quicktime – both of these can be really useful if you need to confirm your media plays ok or need to locate it to pass on to someone else. The label box allows you to enter a name which will show on the media tile itself which makes it easier to tell which clip to use if you have several with very similar thumbnails. The ArtNet ID allows you to specify a channel which can be used to trigger the clip remotely from a console. The media speed slider lets you set an alternate speed which will override the layer speed when triggered. Thumb Frame lets you manually set which frame is used as the thumbnail for the media tile – by default this is set to the 25th frame of the video and Playmode allows you to set a clip specific playback mode which will also override the layer playmode (the playmode can also be selected from the list at the bottom of the cell properties window)

Buddy Group is a very useful feature – it lets you assign several media tiles to the same group, and when one of them is triggered, all clips in that group will trigger to their pre-

allocated layers and fixture – fantastic for times when you need several clips triggered at the same time without the use of a console or sequencer.

MIDI trigger Note lets you set a note value that will also trigger the clip – great for more standard midi controllers and keyboards or music sequencers when time code isn't an option.

If Time code is required, then a trigger time can be set in this next box – the format is hours, minutes, seconds, frames – a "safe" time of 24:00:00:00 can be set as a 24 hour clock never reaches this number, so anything set to that value will not trigger. (if a time code trigger is set, it is important to remember to set the play mode to MTC)

The in and out frames determine the start and end frame from which the video will be played back – alternatively you can drag the in / out points on the play head bar just below the main preview.

Ai can perform a fade on the layer as standard, the default time for which can be set in the system settings, however the Transition Period box allows you to specify an alternative amount of time to the system default cross fade period – when its set to -1 it will use the system value set in the system settings, otherwise it uses the value set here (in seconds) and Transition Mode lets you set a specific blend type for that clip to use when cross fading on the layer.

Fixture lock lets you tell a media tile to only playback on a certain fixture when triggered, regardless of which fixture is selected, very useful to make sure certain clips always go to the right place in your mix.

Follow On Actions allows you to create a sequence of clips within the performance page without the need to use a timeline. Each clip can have an action assigned to it that it will perform after it has played the clip through such as: first, last, up, down, left, right, random or goto_XXX (where XXX is the ArtNet channel set to trigger that clip). when using follow On Actions, the play mode needs to be set to play once (play mode 4)

Playing On Layers is purely for visual feedback and will tell you which layers and fixtures the clip is currently playing on.

Trigger on Layer lets you give a clip a specific layer as its destination regardless of the layer selected – when used in conjunction with buddy groups and fixture lock you can do some very powerful assignments for multiple clips which can all be triggered with a single click.

Scene Triggers

A powerful feature within the performance page of Ai is the ability to memorise your current state, save it as a single Scene Trigger, and then return to this look at any point simply by activating the Scene Trigger (a scene trigger has all the standard triggering options of normal media)

To save a state, simply press the tab button at any point. This will create a media tile with an icon that looks like a sun which will be added to your current media bank. A scene Trigger will remember all of the layer properties such as blend mode position and effects as well as the media being played, but if for some reason you wish to only recall certain properties you can right click on the scene trigger to open its control panel and then choose which of the parameters are enabled (will be recalled when triggered) or Disabled (will not be recalled when triggered)

the following image shows an example of the editable functions of a scene trigger with some of the options enabled and some disabled :