January's Meeting

Justin Randell, one of our members, demonstrated *Reason.* a software emulation of real life MIDI hardware, drum machines, sequencers, and synthesizers. MIDI stands for Musical Instrument Digital Interface, a file of commands that tells the computer what notes, rhythms, and volumes to play. It also tells it what instruments are to play them. These virtual instruments are built into the Mac, and many music programs. Since this is only a file of commands, it is actually like a text file. This is the advantage of MIDI. The file is very small, so it is easily transported, stored, or e-mailed to another person. Since MIDI files are small, *Reason* has very light system requirements. It will run on a 166 MHz PowerMac with 128 MB of RAM. You will need a MIDIinterface, and a controller such as a keyboard. *Reason* costs about $399.99, which is far less expensive than the thousands of dollars the hardware equivalent would cost.

Justin explained the benefits of the program, such as: ability to change any aspect of a previously recorded song without having to record it over again; getting sounds from included samples or recording your own and/or creating your own electronic sounds; and electronically compensating for human errors, just to name a few.

Justin then demonstrated how to create a background track, and also played some completed projects. This is only some of what we saw during Friday's demonstration. Everyone seemed to enjoy it, and we would like to thank Justin for giving the presentation. ➤

Raffle, Raffle, Raffle!
Once again LIMac will be holding a special raffle. We will be raffling off a complete Power Mac G4 system. This system is a G4 "AGP Graphics" model, 500 MHz, 1Gb RAM, 20Gb hard drive, DVD RAM drive, Adaptec SCSI card and a NEC MultiSync 19"Color CRT Monitor. Only 100 tickets will be sold at $5 a ticket. Tickets can be purchased at the meeting or via mail by sending in a check made out to LIMac. Send all checks to: *Long Island Macintosh Users Group, Post Office Box 2048* Seaford, New York 11783-0180. ➤

February's Meeting
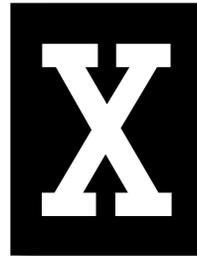
The General Meeting on the 13th will feature Bradley Dichter demonstrating Apple's latest Macintosh operating system, code named *Panther, Mac OS 10.3*, which has many new features that make it easier to use day in and day out.

Much has been said about the speed improvement of the user interface, and that's a good thing of course, but when offered a new tool, you have to take a few minutes to learn how to use it. There are the new *Search Field* and *Sidebar* on the new brushed metal look *Finder* windows. We will see how to make the most of these shortcuts. Also, we should be aware that the new version may break some things that worked fine under *Mac OS 10.2* – like some printing and scanning software. Utilities like *Norton Disk Doctor*, *Suitcase X1* and *FruitMenu* needed updates, just to mention a few.

Is it worth the $129 list price to upgrade once again? Find out on Friday the Thirteenth. And, of course, don't miss Q&A. ➤

Friday, February 13, at 7 p.m.
Building 300 (Anna Rubin Hall)
New York Institute of Technology

The Internet SIG: Bethpage Public Library, (516) 931-3907, on the third Monday of each month at 7:30 p.m.

Multimedia SIG: Introduction to *Final Cut Express 2.0* on the fourth Monday of each month at 7: 30 in Bernie Flicker's offices: ABC Industries, 100 Cleveland Avenue, Freeport, call (516) 867- 8400, ext. 325 (send your e-mail address for details).

SIGs immediately before or after the general meeting:

Beginners SIG: Instruction in AppleWorks's spreadsheet construction.

MacSkills SIG: No meeting information at presstime.

DTP/Photoshop SIG: Family photo image restoration techniques.

Photography SIG: No meeting information at presstime.
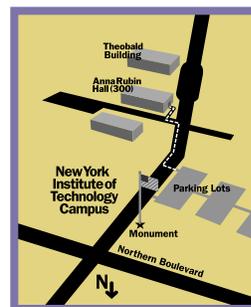
◀ LIMac meetings, unless otherwise noted, are held in Building 300 (Anna Rubin Hall) at the New York Institute of Technology on Northern Boulevard in Old Westbury, L.I.

▶ In bad weather, call (516) 686-7789.

▶ The next LIMac board meeting will be at the Plainedge Library, (516) 735-4133, on Wednesday, February 18, at 8 p.m.

(Continued from the December FORUM)
First, create a profile of your computer that lists:

▶ Your model of computer, how much memory it has, and exactly which version of the operating system you're using.

▶ Any recent changes to the system, such as upgrading the operating system itself or installing new drivers.

▶ Special extensions or add-ins installed, like a third-party *Firewall* or, in *Mac OS 9*, system extensions.

▶ Any add-on devices like a second monitor, third-party video cards, a SCSI card, audio/video hardware, scanners, etc.

▶ Version numbers for software or drivers that are relevant to the problem. Often, outdated or too-new drivers can cause all sorts of problems.

The easiest way to develop a profile of your system is to use *Apple System Profiler*, which is generally accessible in your Apple menu in *Mac OS 9*; it's stored in your *Utilities* folder in *Mac OS X*. *Windows* has a similar utility called *System Information* that's usually in *Programs/Accessories/System Tools*. Both of these tools let you save a report.

Once you've developed a profile that you can make available if asked, it's time to report the actual problem. Outline your problem briefly and note that you've done standard troubleshooting. Then briefly relate what you've tried already, but don't go into detail right away, since the fact that you're asking for help means that what you tested inherently wasn't right. How you proceed depends on how interactive the support medium is.

For support situations where the medium lends itself to fast interaction – in person, via

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Bradley Dichter
bdichter@cdr.net

QUOTES

Tips for reading a proof of your work:
There are several specific things to keep in mind when reading a proof. Adopting the following processes will help you reduce prepress expenses and have a more positive printing experience.

Take your time. Even if you're tight on a deadline, slow down! Rushing may cause further delays and added expenses later on.

Check features. Create a list of the features you're checking for and then start to proof. Try going through the proof once, checking only for typos. Then, go through the proof again and concentrate on items such as borders and rule alignment. Continue until you've completed your list. Check images.

Check that the correct images are in place and that they're cropped and scaled properly. Also, look for sharp focus throughout the images.

Bradley's Tech Session

▶ **I've noticed an *AppleWorks User Data* folder in the *~/Documents* folder and in there, in the *AutoSave* folder, I have 17 items. If I try to open one of them, I get an unexpected *End of File* message.** After a period of inactivity and unsaved changes in *AppleWorks 6*, it automatically saves a apparently randomly named file for each open file. It can try to recover from these files in the event of a power outage or a system crash. When you quit out of *AppleWorks*, these files should be automatically deleted. You can change the idle interval in *AppleWorks's Preferences*. You should not try to open them yourself. If *AppleWorks* is not running, and you find these files, you can delete them. They are likely to be small anyway. I suppose *AppleWorks* could be updated to clean up after itself and delete these files if it finds any. You might post a suggestion on Apple's Discussions Web site suggesting this. *http://discussions.info.apple.com/*. You should regularly toss any autosave files you find there and any aliases you find in the *Starting Points/Recent Items* folder to avoid stalling in the program. You might be suprised how many aliases you'll find there if you've been using *AppleWorks 6* for a long time. It remembers every file you've ever opened.

▶ **I bought an iPod, but my iMac has *OS 9.2.2* and *OS 10.0.4*. The iPod instructions says it needs *Mac OS 10.2* or better. Should I buy *Panther*? I understand it's $129.** You have limited choices as you can't find *Mac OS 10.2* aka *Jaguar* for sale any more at the usual outlets. I see *MegaMacs.com* has it for $119.99. I see a vendor associated with *Amazon.com* selling the retail boxed version for *$69.99*. Download the *10.2.6 Combo update* but avoid version *10.2.8*. Be careful of some deals offering the *Panther* upgrade CD package for a cheaper price than the retail version. The upgrade package can only upgrade from *Mac OS 10.2*, which you don't have. You should be able to find *Mac OS 10.3* for sale for $109.99 at *Amazon.com*. Using *Jaguar* is the safer choice as there are still some unresolved compatibility issues with *Panther*. None of them involve *iTunes* nor the *iPod*.

▶ **I find that the TD Waterhouse Web site**

President's Message

When I tell you about my personal choices for 2003, you might be surprised. I've always said that speed is everything and speeding up my G4 to 1.25GHz was a very impressive move last February. With *Jaguar* and now *Panther*, I see some very big steps and some small stumbles making the future possible.

Think back only a few years. Software has advanced incredibly. But as a big fan of literature with very little time to read, I love *Audible.com*. You can download whatever strikes your fancy, comedy, espionage, biography, the classics, short stories, even newspapers and magazines and you can do this wherever you like and it only takes a few minutes to do. As I understand it, it's yours forever – five years from now it will be as entertaining as it is today. You can listen to it on your Mac with *iTunes*; your iPod; or burn it on a CD and listen anywhere. The written word transcends all time. For me, *Audible.com* fills a huge void.

I also have a heads-up for those who are interested in *GarageBand*. Read the side of the box before you make your purchase. *GarageBand* will not run on a machine with less than a 1024x768 pixel resolution; you need *Mac OSX 10.2.6* or better; a DVD drive, 4.3 GB of hard disc space; a 60MHz G3 (the slowest machine useable) or, better, a G4 or G5 Mac. Unfortunately this cuts out many not-so-old machines. I don't see *GarageBand* as a program that will "drive the train," but it will surely add "bells and whistles." ▶

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can be incomplete, with a column seemingly missing. I use *Internet Explorer*. I spent two hours with their tech support. It's often the case where your default font is too large for the narrow spaces allowed by the tables designed on the Web page. You need to use a smaller type. You can change the preference but it's better to just add the plus and minus icons to the toolbar. From the *View* menu, choose *Customize Toolbars* and drag the larger (*+*) and smaller (*-*) icons to the current toolbar. Then click the *Go Back* button to start using them. You can then change the text size on the fly when needed. *Safari* users should go to the *View* menu and *Select Text Size* to add the small and bigger *A* icons to the *Safari toolbar*, just under the *Title bar*.

Bill Medlow
President
ArchBill@aol.com

Look for imperfections. Circle every spot, broken letter, and anything else that doesn't look right to you.

Check corrections. Check to make sure that all previous corrections made on earlier proofs have been made on the current proof.

List instructions. Write any comments boldly and clearly on the proof.

Make certain that you're using the correct colors. Double-check that you know which copy prints in what color.

Concern yourself with the overall view. Take a step back to view the proof as a whole.

Ask questions. Ask, ask, and ask again! If there's anything that seems incorrect, speak now to avoid expensive corrections later on or errors in the final piece.

Know the costs. Talk to your service provider about the associated costs for correcting any of the changes that need to be made and make sure you understand the costs you're responsible for.
–Element K Journals

the phone, instant messaging – let the support person ask questions and guide you through the process, since they likely have ideas about where the problem is. If you launch into a detailed retelling of what you've tried right off, you may overwhelm them with unnecessary trivia. Don't be offended if they ask you about whether lights are lit or the power's plugged in. It can be irritating, but it's their version of methodical problem-solving.

When you're asking for help in a situation where interaction is slow – direct email, mailing list posting, *Usenet* news posting, or a Web support forum posting – follow your brief summary of what you tried with a more detailed list of the tests you performed and your system configuration. There's no need *to explain wh*at happened with each test if it failed to shed any light on the situation, but it is important to list them all so people trying to help don't end up

asking about tests you've already performed (in these slow interaction forms of communication, a back-and-forth interchange can take a day or two, so you want to keep the number of messages as small as possible).

In either situation, try to answer questions from the experts as quickly and completely as possible. From our perspective of helping people over the years, there's nothing worse than getting incomplete answers to questions,

forcing us to ask the same question in slightly different ways and just stringing out the entire interchange.

Be Nice! Actually, there is something worse than providing incomplete answers to questions, and it's a little hard to say this, but don't be a jerk! You wouldn't believe how many people assume that the problem is somehow the tech support person's fault**.** ‡

(Continued in the March FORUM.)

More Of Bradley's Technical Session

TIPS!

Unfreezing your iPod:
iPod locking up? To fix this, hold down the *Menu* and *Play/Pause* buttons together for ten seconds. The iPod will reset and then display the Apple logo. If it still freezes up, reset it again and then hold down the *Forward* and *Rewind* buttons. This forces the iPod into *Disk Mode*. Then, just drag the iPod's icon to the trash to unmount it.

Locking specific folders in *Mac OS X*:
Remembering that *Mac OS X* is *Unix*-based, each file and folder has its own permission levels. To illustrate this, select the folder in the *Finder* and then choose *File > Get Info*. Then, toggle the *Ownership & Permissions* option open to display the options available for that directory. If you want to

*Windows'*s default is for type with a higher resolution (96 DPI) than Mac's default of 72 DPI. *Safari* has no control over this, but *Internet Explorer* tries to compensate for this.

‣ **I open a *Word for Windows* file in my copy of *Microsoft Word 2001*. It comes in with what looks like formatting code at the end of the text. Why is that happening and how do we get rid of it?**
It's probably because of Microsoft *Word's* option of allowing *Fast Saves* which puts all changes at the end of the file, rather than re-writing the whole file. I would suggest the *Windows* user turn this option off. If they don't, a *Save As...* as a new or same-named file will straighten out the file. It could also be a consequence of the difference in the version of your *Word* and the *Word for Windows*. If there is a large disparity, then the conversion will have errors. Related to this is the conversion may not be perfect as the conversion is limited in scope and some items, like tables, footnotes, etc., are not expected to be converted. The limitations are detailed in the *Online Help* documentation. The same can be said of import filters for page layout programs. They are imperfect.

‣ **Several converted *Word* files have punctuation marks, like quote marks, replaced with the letter "ì" with a accent mark.**
This is a problem with a difference with ASCII characters above 128 between how *Windows* maps the 256 character set and how Apple and Adobe defined the extended set. For more information see *http://partners.adobe.com/ asn/tech/type/chrsten.jsp* The *Smart Quotes* feature can trip you up in cross-platform work. You can do a series of *Find and Replace* to fix the problem. Consider using *VINC* from Recosoft to help the translation as it corrects for character set differences. See *www.recosoft. com/products/vinc/*.

‣ **If you are sending a document or e-mail to a *Windows* user, what typeface should**

you use?**
Times New Roman is a nice compact font found on both the Mac and *Windows. Internet Explorer* puts them in just for cross-platform concerns. You can use *Courier* (not plain *Courier*) for a monospaced look. Good looking font choices would include *Arial* and *Verdana*.

‣ **Why did Apple introduce the *Airport Extreme* with 54Mbps speed when cable modems top out at 1.5Mbps?**
Airport base stations are useful as bridges for laptops or remotely located desktops to wirelessly connect to local file servers and network printers, where the extra speed of IEEE 802.11g, AKA *Airport Extreme*, is desirable. The new *Airport base stations* have advantages over the old models even if the clients are only old fashioned *Airport* (*Wi-Fi or IEEE 802.11b*) equipped. They support greater security and in the case of the more expensive model with the built in dial-up modem, a connection for an external antenna. Dr. Bott offers a unidirectional antenna that improves the useful range of the base station in every direction, which is good for roaming laptop users. If you have a desktop located quite a distance from the nearest network connection and running long wires is impractical, you can consider a directional antenna to give a extra strong signal in one direction towards the *Airport*-equipped desktop. This can be particularly good for connecting two buildings were you are not permitted to run wires. With the right kind of antennas, and an unobstructed line of sight, you can go a mile point to point. ‡

(**User Group News** *continued from Page 4)*
Flea market - Harold Silvers
Mac Skills - Bradley Dichter
Membership - Donald Hennessy
Nominations - Al Choy
Party - Max Rechtman
Program - Rick Matteson
Public Relations - Rich Scillia
Raffle - Bill Medlow
Web site - Bradley Dichter ‡

(**Sore Eyes** *continued from Page 4)*
there is an *Airport* setup, the speed of the 56K modem is enhanced as well. We're really living in a new world. ‡

keep yourself from removing the files from the folder, yet keep the ability to copy them to other folders, choose *Read Only* from the *Owner Access* pop-up menu. Then, click the *Apply To Enclosed Items* to make each file and folder within that folder *Read Only* as well. It will then ask you whether you're sure you want to make the change (and give you an ominous, though incorrect, statement about the change not being undoable). Once you click the *OK* button, close the dialog box, and then drag something from the folder onto the desktop. When you do, the item is automatically copied, leaving the original intact. Should you want to make changes to the folder, simply repeat the above process, but instead change the owner's access to Read & Write.
–ElementK Journals

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Friday, February 13, at 7 p.m.
Building 300 (Anna Rubin Hall)
New York Institute of Technology

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Helen and Sheldon Gross
shel9@bellatlantic.net

Note: Sore Eyes site referrals are for your information only. Neither the Grosses nor LIMac endorse any of the sites or their products.

Sore Eyes

Let's talk about communication. Our first modem was 300 baud and attached to the old Apple II plus. We rapidly switched to a 1200 baud and that hung around for a long time. During that period of time, we bought a CB radio for car travel, so that we could get help in emergencies, and our home phones were not cordless. Whoever heard of such luxury?

As technology and computers progressed, we moved up the speed scale. Our CB radio was replaced by cell phones, and the Apple II, by increasingly newer Macs. Interestingly enough, the price of Macs didn't zoom as much as other items. Our first Mac was over $2000, and others have, through the years, hovered around this price. We keep adding capability, memory, drives, and such items that we never dreamed about in the past, but cannot live without at this time.

Now our cell phone allows us to call from any part of the U.S. to any other part. For an additional $10 per month, Canada can be added, while we are traveling there. Actually, we were in Canada only 12 days, and when I called Verizon to turn off Canada for the next month, they gave me a $5 rebate for the unused portion of the month. PDAs have telephone connectivity, and even pictures available if you wish. But the big deal, as far as we are concerned, is wireless. Our DSL connection in New York City is more than 600KBS. We use an *Airport* for wireless transmission, and wander around various locations throughout the country. Verizon has free locations. So does Starbucks, T-Mobile, and other companies. Many motels are offering this service, along with Kinkos and many public libraries.

Just like to add that when we go to locations that still have dial-up service only, if
(**Sore Eyes** *continues on Page 3*)

User Group News

▶ Several members have alerted us that some e-mail sent to board members was going unanswered. Members should include the name *LIMac* on the subject line of an e-mail in order to avoid having that e-mail wind up in the junk mail box of a board member. You need to somehow indicate that you are not sending spam when you are contacting a person for the first time. This is absolutely true when the receiving individual does not recognize the name of the sender.
▶ In case of bad weather please check our Web site before heading out to the meeting in order to be certain that the school is open and that we are proceeding with our regularly scheduled program.
▶ Once again LIMac will be holding a special raffle. We will be raffling off a complete Power Mac G4 system. This system is a G4 "AGP Graphics" model, 500 MHz, 1 Gb RAM, 20 Gb hard drive, DVD RAM drive, Adaptec SCSI card and a NEC MultiSync 19" Color CRT Monitor. Only 100 tickets will be sold at $5 a ticket. Tickets can be purchased at the meeting or via mail by sending in a check made out to LIMac. Send all checks to: *Long Island Macintosh Users Group, Post Office Box 2048 Seaford, New York 11783-0180.*
▶ At our last executive board meeting, the board formed several committees to help run our group more efficiently and increase member participation. We are looking for people to volunteer a few hours a year by serving on a committee. It is not possible for the LIMac board to do everything; therefore we need your help by signing up at the next meeting for one of the following committees. If you have any questions contact the committee leader or a LIMac board member.
(**User Group News** *continues on Page 3*)

Max Rechtman
maxlimac@
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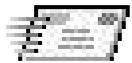
TIP!

If you're the forgetful type and you can settle on a suitable time period to keep e-mails, you can have *Mail* erase the messages automatically. Though *Mail* is a very efficient application, a bloated *Trash* folder can slow the application down. To do so, choose *Mail>Preferences* and then select the mailbox with which you want to work. Click the *Edit* button and select the *Special Mailboxes* tab. Then, in the *Trash* section, choose the time frame you're comfortable with in the *Erase Deleted Message When* :...pop-up menu.
–*Element K Journals*