File Menu

Open...

Opens a file dialog. You can select any of the supported animation or picture formats. After loading, the new projects will be displayed in **The Project List**.
The file dialog supports multiple selections, that means that several files can be marked for loading.

Close

Removes the currently selected **Project** from **The Project List** and frees all memory dedicated to the project.
This item is functionally identical with **Remove Project** of the **Project** menu.

Save As...

Opens the save window. The **All Frames** item of **The Save Window** will be checked.

Close All

Removes all currently loaded projects from **The Project List**.

Exit

Terminates **MainActor**.

Edit Menu

Copy to Clipboard

Copies the currently selected frame image into the clipboard.

The quality of this operation is dependent on your video mode, high / true color displays give better results, especially under Windows.

Select

Selecting one of the three sub menu items allows you to select all, or some of the frames in **The Frame List**.

Select All
　　Selects all frames available in the frame list.

Select Range ...
　　Allows you to select a range of frames, for example frame 10 to 50.

Select Compression ...
　　Allows you to select all frames with a specific compression. For example, if you loaded a FLI animation, you can select all frames which have a ClrBlack compression method.

Deselect

Selecting one of the three sub menu items allows you to deselect all, or some of the frames in **The Frame List**.

Deselect All
Deselects all frames available in the frame list.

Deselect Range ...
Allows you to deselect a range of frames, for example frame 10 to 50.

Deselect Compression ...
Allows you to deselect all frames with a specific compression. For example, if you loaded a FLI animation, you can deselect all frames which have a Dummy compression method.

Invert

Inverts the selection status of all frames in **The Frame List**.
All selected frames will be deselected and all deselected frames will be selected.

Edit Rexx

Edits the selected Rexx script.

Start Rexx

Executes the selected Rexx script.

Show Rexx I/O

Opens the Rexx I/O window. It displays the output of the Rexx scripts.
This window will automatically be opened when a Rexx script is started by MainActor.

Preview Video...

Opens the Video Preview window.

Capture Video ...

Opens the **Video Capture Interface** window. If you have a video capture card installed, you can capture video directly inside MainActor with this function.

Project Menu

Project Info...

Opens a dialog window which displays information about the currently selected **Project**.

Global Timecode...

Opens a window which allows you to change the global timecode of the currently selected **Project**.

Some animation formats (for example FLI/FLC) only support one timecode for all of the frames of an animation, that means that all frames will stop playback for the same amount of time. These animations often have **dummy frames** inserted into the animation to allow for better timing.

If your project does not have a global timecode or does support a timecode for each frame, this menu item will be disabled. If it does support a timecode for each frame, you can select the frames you want to change the timecode of and select the **Local Timecodes** menu item of the **Frames** menu.

Cache Data

Caches all the data of the currently selected **Project** in RAM, which results in better access and playback times for the project.

If the menu item is checked the data is cached in memory, if not the data will be loaded directly from disk (which is the default).

Note, not all loader modules support caching, if a loader module does not support caching, the menu item is disabled. This is the case for most of the picture loader modules.

Play Project

Plays the currently selected project.

Remove Project

Removes the currently selected **Project** from **The Project List** and frees all memory dedicated to the project.
This item is functionally identical with **Close** of the **File** menu.

Frames Menu

Save Frames

Opens the save window. The **Selected Frames** item of **The Save Window** will be checked.

Local Timecodes...

Opens a window which allows you to change the local timecodes of the currently selected frames.
This option is only enabled if the animation format of your current **Project** supports a timecode per frame or if the project is a picture (list).

Show Frames

Shows the currently selected frame.

Show Palette

Displays the palette of the current frame in **The Palette Editor**.

Sort Frames

Selecting one of the sub menu items sorts all frames in **The Frame List** according to the selected sort method. This menu is only available when the currently selected **Project** is a picture list.

Animations are mostly delta encoded and cannot be sorted, even when they are nonlinear, it would be too difficult to keep track of the different color palettes etc.

Sort Frames by Name (Normal)

The frames are sorted, case insensitive, by their names.

Sort Frames by Name (Inverse)

The frames are sorted, case insensitive, by their names in the inverse order.

Sort Frames by Size

The frames are sorted by their size. The pictures with the smallest size are at the top of the frame list, the pictures with the biggest size at the bottom.

Remove Frames

Removes the currently selected frames in **The Frames List**.

This menu item is only active when the current project is a picture list. You cannot remove frames from an animation.

Settings Menu

Timecode Settings

Selecting one of the three sub menu items allows you to change the time system in which the timecodes in **The Frame List** are displayed.

/1000 Sec
    This timecode setting displays the timecode for every frame in milliseconds.

HH:MM:SS:MS
    The timecodes will be displayed as time offsets of the frames relative to the beginning of the project in hours, minutes, seconds and milliseconds. The head of the timecode column will display the time of the whole project.

HH:MM:SS.FF
    In contrast to the first two settings, this setting is based on a frames per second basis. The timecodes are, again, treated as offsets. First, MainActor will determine the global frames per second rate of the project. Then it will display the timecodes, based on this fps rate, in hours, minutes, seconds and the frame offset. The frame offset is between 0 (the first frame of the second) and the frames per second rate minus one (the last frame of the second). The head of the timecode column will display the time of the whole project.

Playback Settings

Selecting one of the sub menu items allows you to change the global playback settings of **The Display Window**. The settings will always be used when the display window is invoked by MainActor. MainView will use them if no command line options are defined. If you need more detailed information of the settings, please use the online help of the display window.

Autostart
If this item is enabled, the project will directly start to play. Otherwise it will wait for a play command from the toolbar or the menu.

Control Toolbar
Specifies the position of the control toolbar relative to the display window.

Titlebar
Specifies the text to be displayed in the title bar. Either the project title, the current frame number or the current frames per second.

Repeats
Specifies how many times projects without sound shall be repeated while playing. Projects with sound will always only be repeated once.

Volume
Specifies the volume of the sound contained in projects.

The next items are ony available in the Windows version of MainActor and define the full screen mode characteristics of **DirectX**.

Full Screen
This item enables the full screen playback mode.

Scale To Screen
This item is only available in full screen mode. If this item is enabled, the DirectX system will always scale the image to fit the entire size of the screen.

Use Best Mode
This item is only available in full screen mode. If this   item is enabled, MainActor tries to find the best possible screen mode for the project which is available on your system. Otherwise, full screen playback will always use the screen mode of the Windows user interface.

Toolbar

Selecting one of the sub menu items allows you to control the behaviour of the toolbar.

Active
   If this switch is on, the toolbar is active.

Context Help
   If this switch is on, you will get help messages which describe the functions of the buttons of the toolbar. Simply deselect this switch to turn the context help off.

Language

Selecting one of the sub menu items allows you to change the actual language for MainActor.
The new language will be activated after MainActor has been restarted.

English
  Switches the actual language to english.

German
  Switches the actual language to german.

Custom File Requester

Enables **The Custom File Requester** for loading of files.

Mini Icons

Switches between normal icon sizes and mini icon sizes in **The Frame List**.
Mini icons can be useful when you want to see a large number of frames in the frame list.

Font ...

Opens the font requester.
Using the requester you can select the font which will be used by MainActor.

Help Menu

Context Sensitive Help

Activates context sensitive help. Help will be shown   for the next menu / toolbar item or window you select.

About Context Help

MainActor features context senstive help. Simply press **F1** for information on the current window or menu item.

You can also activate context help for the next selected menu / toolbar item or window by selecting the **Context Sensitive Help** menu item or toolbar button.

Help Index

Displays the index of the online help document for **MainActor**.

General Help

Displays a general introduction to the user interface of **MainActor**.

Using Help

Displays an introduction on how to use the online help facility.

MainActor Documentation

Shows the documentation of MainActor.

MainActor Rexx Reference

Displays a document which lists all MainActor commands available to **Rexx**.

Rexx Introduction

Displays an introduction to **Rexx**.

Rexx Reference

Displays a document featuring a reference of all available **Rexx** functions.

Loader Modules...

Opens a dialog window which displays the supplied loader modules of this version of **MainActor**, as well as the supported codecs of these modules.

The version numbers, copyrights and authors of the modules are displayed as well.

Saver Modules...

Opens a dialog window which displays the supplied saver modules of this version of **MainActor**, as well as the supported codecs of these modules.

The version numbers, copyrights and authors of the modules are displayed as well.

Registration

Shows an informational text on how to register **MainActor**.

Serial Number...

Allows you to register your copy of **MainActor** once you received your personal serial number from us.

Release Notes

Shows the latest information about this version of **MainActor**.

Product Info...

Opens a dialog window which displays the version number of **MainActor** and the registration status of your copy.

Misc. Menus

Save Animation/Picture/Sound as

These popup menu items cause MainActor to open **The Save Window** with the selected saver module.

Misc. Windows

Module Info

This window displays all loader or saver modules which are included in this version of **MainActor**.

Each module supports various codecs, the codecs of the currently selected module are listed in the **Codecs** list.

The author, copyright and version of the currently selected module are listed in the lower left of the window, along with the type field which identifies the format of the module, for example Animation or Picture.

Select Range

The Select Range window lets you select a specific range of frames in **The Frame List**.
Enter the first frame you want to have selected in the **From** field and enter the last frame in the **to** field.
After that, you can select **Accept** to select the frames or **Cancel** to cancel the operation.

Select Compression

The Select Compression window lets you select the frames in **The Frame List** which have a specific compression method.

Select the compression format and select **Accept** to select the frames with the specified compression method or select **Cancel** to cancel the operation.

Deselect Range

The Deselect Range window lets you deselect a specific range of frames in **The Frame List**.
Enter the first frame you want to have deselected in the **From** field and enter the last frame in the **to** field.
After that, you can select **Accept** to deselect the frames or **Cancel** to cancel the operation.

Deselect Compression

The Deselect Compression window lets you deselect the frames in **The Frame List** which have a specific compression method.

Select the compression method and select **Accept** to deselect the frames with the specified compression method or select **Cancel** to cancel the operation.

Project Info

The Project Info dialog window displays some of the more technical information of the current project.

Name
    The name of the current project.

Format
    The format of the loader module.

Width
    The width of the project in pixels.

Height
    The height of the project in pixels.

Frames
    The number of frames of the project.

Loop Frames
    The number of loop frames of the project.

Average Image Size
    The average size, in bytes, of the image data.

Average Sound Size
    The average size, in bytes, of the sound data (if any).

Bits Per Sample
    The amount of bits per sample, typically 8 or 16 bits. The sound quality improves with the number of bits. This field is empty when no sound is associated with the project.

Samples Per Second
    The samples which are played per second. More samples are equivalent with better sound quality. This field is empty when no sound is associated with the project.

Total Project Size
    The total size, in bytes, of the project.

Color Space Spec
    The color space format of the project.

Local Timecode

The Local Timecode window allows you to change the local timecodes of the currently selected frames.

The **Local Timecode** changes the timecodes of all currently selected frames in **The Frame List** to the new timecode. Note that only a few animation formats support a timecode per frame (for example all IFF-Anim formats). You can always change the local timecodes for pictures, but they will not be saved.

The timecode has to be entered in milliseconds.

The Save Window

The save window is the interface to the save modules which are shipped with the current version of **MainActor**.

You can select the format in which you want to save the frames in the **Modules** list. Most modules support more than one codec, select the one you want in the **Codecs** list.

If you are going to save pictures or an animation, you can select their new width and height in the **Width** and **Height** entry fields.

You can now choose if you want to save all the frames of the project, or just those which are selected in the **The Frame List**. If you want to save all frames, enable the **All Frames** button, otherwise select the **Selected Frames** button.

The **Index** entry field is used by the picture saver modules only, it determines the start index of the index appended to the pictures. This option is useful if you want to load pictures in a specific order into MainActor. To do this simply save the pictures, load them into MainActor and **sort the frames** by name.

You can edit the color palette which will be used for 8bit codecs by selecting the **Palette ...** button. The palette will be created and **The Palette Editor** will be opened to edit the palette. The editor is nice when you want to optimize the palette or want to set a specific color to the 0 index (for example to set it to transparent with the **GIF** saver). Using the editor, you can also load /save palettes. Although you can always edit the palette, it will only be used by codecs which use a color palette (8bit codecs).

The **Options ...** button will open **The Save Options** window, which allows some more specific save options to be defined.

You can start the save process by clicking on the **Save...** button. Choose the name of the new project in the file dialog requester. Note that the save modules will append their suffix to the file name automatically, like **".fli"**. Also, if you save a series of pictures, the picture index will also be appended, like **"0002.bmp"**. You can change the start index with the **Index** entry field.

While saving you can stop the action by clicking on **Cancel**. Cancel will also close the window if no save progress is currently running.

Save Options

The **Save Options** window contains some more specific options used while saving :

Interpolate pixels while scaling
    This option is only relevant when new x and y dimension have been entered in the save window. If enabled, MainActor uses interpolation when scaling the image to the new size, resulting in less blocky looking images.

Use error diffusion when reducing colors
    When saving 8bit animations/pictures, this option enables an error diffusion algorithm to dither the image data. This option is useful when saving deep, 24 bit projects to 8bit, as it reduces the visible artifacts of the color reduction.

Pressing the Module Options ... button will pop up **The Module GUI Interface** of the currently selected saver module (if any).

Personalisation

Enter your personal serial number into the entry field and select **Accept**. If you do not yet own a serial number (you do not have registered **MainActor** yet), select **Cancel**.

Global Timecode

The Global Timecode window allows you to change the global timecode of your current **Project**.

The **Global Timecode** changes the timecodes of all frames to the new timecode entered in the window. This option is important for those animation formats who only support one timecode per animation (FLI/FLC). These animation formats often use **Dummy** frames for timing.

The timecode has to be entered in milliseconds.

Repeats Window

Enter the number of times projects without sound shall be repeated while playing.

Module GUI Interface

This window is the user interface to the modules.

Description of the options of the various modules is available in **The Modules** section of the **MainActor Documentation**.

The Palette Editor

The editor enables you to view and edit the current palette.

The 256 palette entries are visible at the top of the window, the currently selected palette entry is shown right of the **Selected Color:** text. The **red**, **green** and **blue** values of the current color are displayed in the labeled entry fields. You can edit these values by entering a new value or by using the spin buttons.

Swapping colors is possible by entering the color index at the entry field right of the **Swap Index:** text. If you now select the **Swap** push button, the colors of the current index and the swap index are swapped.

You can save the palette or load a completely different palette by using the menu items of the **File** menu, making it possible to transfer palettes from/to other programs.

You can accept the changes by pressing **Accept**, **Cancel** will discard the changes to the color palette.

Video Capture Interface

If you have a video capture card installed on your system, this window allows it to capture video and load it directly into MainActor.

MainActor uses the system interface for capturing video. If you have more than one capture card installed, you can choose from the list of available drivers in the **Driver** menu.

The **Options** menu lets you change specific options of the currently selected capture card. The **Video Format ...**, **Video Display ...** and **Video Source ...** items open special configuration windows supplied by your capture card manufacturer. Please have a look at the online help of these windows for further information.

The **Preview** item enables the preview mode, the preview mode displays the video the same way as it will be captured, i.e. it uses the same frame rate etc.

The **Overlay** mode (if supported by your card), uses a specific overlay mode to display the video. This mode has nothing to do with the quality of the actually captured data.

The **Capture Audio** item controls if audio data is captured together with the video data.

The **Record** button will start capturing, you can select the name of the capture file first. The **Frames Per Second** button allows you to change the frame rate of the captured data. If you are in Preview mode, you can immediately see the changes take effect.

After capturing, you are asked if you wish to load the captured animation into **MainActor**.

Make sure that you choose a compression method for the captured video which is supported by MainActor. This can be done by selecting the **Video Format ...** item. If you want to have support for a video format of a specific manufacturer within MainActor, please contact us (and the manufacturer) to request support.

Goto Frame Window

Enter the frame number of the frame which shall be displayed in the The Display Window.

Speed Window

Enter the frame rate which shall be applied to The Display Window.

Sound Volume

Please enter the new sound volume.

The Custom File Requester

This requester offers some enhanced functionality over the system file requester.

You can select the drives in **The Drive List** and files and directories in **The File And Directory List**.

Pressing the **Load** button will load the currently selected files, pressing **Cancel** will close the requester without loading a file.

If the file requester is in single selection mode, the **Select** and **Deselect** submenu items of the **Files** menu will be disabled.

Please use the online menu help for descriptions of the menu functions.

The Drive List

The drive list contains the drives (disks) which are currently available on your system.

Selecting a drive will display the current directory of this drive in **The File And Directory List**. Double clicking a drive will display the root directory.

Note that the **Drives** menu is available as a popup menu inside of the drive list.

The File And Directory List

The file and directory list contains the files and directories of the currently selected drive of the **The Drive List**. The directories are located at the top of the list, the files at the bottom.

You can enter a directory by double clicking on its name. You cannot select directories, only files. Double clicking on a file will load it.

Note that the **Files** menu is available as a popup menu inside of the file and directory list.

The Drives Menu

The **Drives** menu contains the following items:

Refresh
> This item will refresh **The Drive List** .

Exit
> Closes the file requester without loading a file.

The Files Menu

Select

The submenu items of the **Select** item select all files or a part of the files in **The File And Directory List**.

Select All
        Selects all files.
Select To
        Selects all files up to the current file.
Select From
        Select all files starting from the current file.

Deselect

The submenu items of the **Deselect** item deselect all files or a part of the files in **The File And Directory List**.

Deselect All
>   Deselects all files.

Deselect To
>   Deselects all files up to the current file.

Deselect From
>   Deselect all files starting from the current file.

Load Files

The **Load Files** item will load all currently selected files in **The File And Directory List**.

Info Links

The Frame List

The frame list displays all frames of the currently selected **Project**.

Each frame is represented by an icon and several columns of information.

If the frame is part of an animation, information about the number of the frame, its timecode, compression and its size are displayed. Also, if the frame has sound information associated, the frame icon will have a small note symbol and the size of the sound data is displayed. If the frame icon of the frame is gray, it indicates that the frame is a key frame.

If the frame (or rather picture) is part of a picture list, its name, timecode, compression method and size is displayed.

You can change the way the timecodes are displayed by using the **Timecode Settings**.

Every frame has its own popup menu. Double-clicking a frame will display it.

A preview of the currently selected frame is available in **The Preview Window**.

The Project List

The project list displays all currently loaded projects and occupies the left third of the main window. The frames of the currently selected **Project** are displayed in **The Frame List**.

Double clicking an project will play it, the right menu button will bring up a popup menu which is identical to the Project menu.

The Preview Window

The preview window displays the current frame and its associated audio data (if any).

The displayed frame is synced with **The Frame List**, as soon as you select another frame, the preview window will display it.

You can also change the current frame by using the slider   beneath the graphic. The audio displayed is exactly the audio data which is associated with this specific frame.

The right menu button will also bring up a popup menu.

Project

All projects are displayed as icons in **The Project List**.

A project is either an animation / picture or one or more pictures of the same format. All pictures of the same format will always be grouped together in one project, this project is named after the picture format.

The frames of the currently selected project are displayed in **The Frame List**.

Each project has its own popup menu, double-clicking on a project will play it back.

General Help

MainActor is able to load, edit, play and save / convert nearly all animation formats, the most common picture formats and sound formats.

These formats are called projects, each loaded **Project** is displayed in **The Project List**. The frames of the currently selected project are displayed in **The Frame List**.

A preview of the currently selected frame is available in **The Preview Window**, the preview window offers video and audio preview.

You can load a new **Project** with the **Open** item of the **File** menu or by dragging the file icon into the project list.

Also, you can change the relative size of the windows by simply changing the location of the sliders which separate them.

Release Notes

This is the first official and non-beta release of **MainActor**.

We have added lots of features since the last release and now support all major animation formats, all animation relevant picture formats and WAV sounds.

Version v1.1 also adds complete MPEG support. MPEGs can now be generated with audio and lots of options. Simply convert your existing animations to MPEG.

We now hope to have a package which is able to deal with nearly all possible tasks in the animation processing / editing area. If you don't agree, tell us about it.

Of course there is always room to improve, so you will see regular updates in the future. We will especially emphasize the editing side in future releases, the long awaited Sequencer add-on with its transitions and effects will be the key point in this area. But we also have lots of other stuff coming, like a Script language to automate the processing of animations and many other new features are planned. New modules should also be integrated in nearly every release.

This version of MainActor contains several years of development work. If you use MainActor on a regular basis, please register.

We are quite sure to have fixed all reported bugs of the beta versions. If you still encounter any problems, please contact us.

```
--
Markus Moenig
markusm@mainconcept.de
```

Load Error

Either an error has been encountered while loading the project or you did cancel the loading process. You can see the cause of the failure in the window, as well as the project at which the failure occurred.

Error

An error has been encountered. The window displays the error message and the possible cause for the error.

MainView

MainView is the external player of **MainActor**. It should be used if you just want to play an animation or to view a picture.

During the loading process, the name of the project, its format and the width and height are displayed. The progress indicator displays how much of the project has already been examined. If the project has been loaded the frames field is updated with the number of frames of the project.

MainView will display warning messages of the loader modules in red at the bottom line of the window.

After loading, the project will be shown.

Registration

If you decide to register **MainActor**, we will send you a personal serial number which will be able to unlock all future versions of this software **on all available platforms**.
MainActor is currently running on OS/2 and Windows 95 / NT 4.0.
The fee for **MainActor** is $60 (99,- DM) or any equivalent sum in your local currency. Please no foreign checks (except EuroChecks). We do take Master/EuroCard and VISA.
You can contact us at :

```
MainConcept, GbR Moenig/Zabel
Hermann-Heusch-Platz 3
D-52062 Aachen
Germany

Tel:   +49-(0)241-4090444
FAX:   +49-(0)241-4090445
BBS:   +49-(0)241-4090446

Email: info@mainconcept.de
http://www.mainconcept.de
```

You can also order at BMT Micro. Please have a look at the file **bmtmicro.txt** included in this package.
Online registration for the Windows version is also available at http://www.buydirect.com.

Select all

Selects all frames in **The Frame List**.

Deselect all

Deselects all frames in **The Frame List**.

Rexx I/O

The Rexx I/O window displays the output of the Rexx scripts started by MainActor.
You can save the text, or copy it to the clipboard etc.
You can also stop the currently running Rexx script by selecting the **Stop Rexx** menu item.

Context Sensitive Help

Activates context sensitive help. Help will be shown   for the next menu / toolbar item or window you select.