entire sequence then it will open as a multitrack project. Over the course of a project, you will undoubtedly use both quite often.

General Interface

Soundtrack is designed with a simple default layout. It never takes more than a single mouse click or keyboard shortcut to access each tab, window, or specialized tool. In fact, the majority of the features can be accessed from the default single application window. Instead of using a system with various windows that are all disconnected, Soundtrack uses a single window that has a center section with three additional panes and a number of tabs in each pane.

Figure 4-3 Active tabs in the default layout.

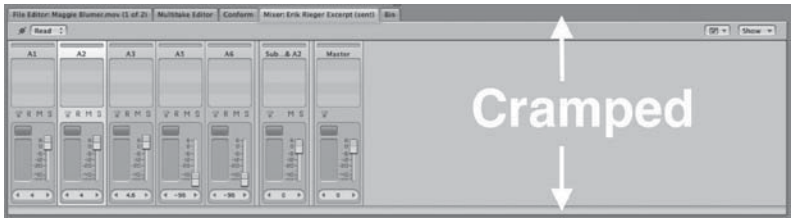

Figure 4-4 Cramped mixer tab.

One of the biggest issues with this system is screen space on a laptop system because using several of the important windows in a tab-style interface means that you will have very little

room to work efficiently. The primary feature to help with this involves saved layouts. There are two that come preprogrammed in Soundtrack, but it is possible to save custom layouts. This is handy when setting up a custom workspace. A critical part of creating custom layouts is pulling tabs out of panes to make them free-floating windows. These can be expanded to full screen which allows detailed editing and mixing functionality. Once you create a custom layout, use the **Window** > **Save Layout** … option to save the layout. One feature that is lacking here is the ability to recall layouts using keyboard shortcuts, beyond the two default layouts which are recalled using the function keys F1 and F2.

Default Panes

The center section of Soundtrack cannot be hidden or closed and represents the projects themselves. If you are working in an Audio File project, then the waveform is shown here. If you are working in a multitrack project, then the tracks containing the audio clips are shown here. You can have multiple projects open using multiple tabs. To switch between projects that are open, click on the tab of the project that you want to see.

The tools are visible immediately above this section. The panes to the right are typically more managerial in nature. You can browse your hard drives, search for Apple Loops, save favorite locations, meter your outputs, and set and meter your recording inputs. The panes on the left house the video, projects settings, and a few tabs that show information about tracks, effects, and restoration tools. The bottom pane is where the Mixer, Audio Bin, File Editor, Multitake Editor, and Conform tools are by default. The following section briefly describes each pane in order to provide you with enough information to navigate. Each section is described in a multitrack project context with the File Editor tab representing what the audio file project looks like because of their similarities.

As we go through the panes, the important areas will be emphasized and less time spent on areas that are of less consequence; while every area plays a role in Soundtrack, often there are two or three areas that do the exact same thing and it becomes messy if we spend the same amount of time explaining each one. The other thing to keep in mind is that I will be going through these panes and tabs based on the default window layout. In each pane there are various tabs which can be clicked-and-dragged to different tab areas, both within their original panes and onto other panes. You can also re-order tabs

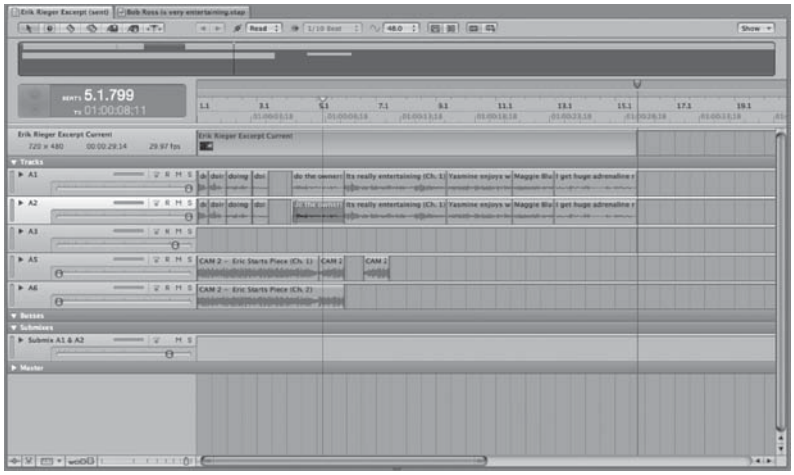

Figure 4-5 Center section with two open projects.

Dave's Video Editor Perspective

Cycle Region

The In and Out points on the Final Cut timeline constitute a good analogy of what cycle selection is in Soundtrack. With the timeline window active you create In points (I) and Out points (O) to insert precise locations on your timeline where you will be making an edit. Then, if you do an overwrite edit, it will only impact the portion of the timeline identified within the boundaries of those points. I also use these points on the timeline to activate other tools. For example, I might use the Blade tool to create an edit point. If snapping is active, the playhead will snap to these In and Out points and then I can take the Blade tool and cut the clip at these points if needed.

Figure 4-6 Center section items.

by clicking-and-dragging. One useful aspect of this is the ability to remove a tab from any pane so that it becomes free floating. Once the pane is free, it can be closed or expanded to full screen. To retrieve the default layout, press F1 on your keyboard.

The Center Section

The center section is the primary area in Soundtrack. The tracks can only be accessed in the center section. There is also a

Figure 4-7 Tools.

track for the video in this section. There is a ruler section (where you can set a cycle region for looping), a time code display, and above the ruler there is a global view that shows the entire project at a single glance. You can drag the box on the Global view to move the viewable area of the tracks below. Above the Global view is a group of important tools and other options.

The left set of items includes buttons for the primary editing tools (see Figure 4-7).

1. The Arrow tool lets you select clips and automation points, which you can then move around.
2. The Timeslice tool can make selections on the timeline that are not limited to individual tracks and/or whole clips. You can select contiguous portions of both clips and tracks and apply selection-specific processes. That means that you can select half of a clip with this tool and place an effect on it (similar to placing an audio filter on half a clip in Final Cut, which isn't possible without cutting the clip into parts).
3. The Blade tool cuts individual regions into smaller sections.
4. The Blade All tool cuts all regions across all of the tracks.
5. The Lift and Stamp tools store various pieces of information on a special clipboard that can be used to paste onto other clips.
6. The Scrub tool lets you click-hold-and-drag on clips in the timeline to hear the audio from the clip.
7. The first dropdown menu sets the automation mode (see Chapter 9 regarding mixing).
8. The Nudge menu lets you set the amount of nudge.
9. The Project Sample Rate menu lets you choose between the sample rates available. If you have a sequence from Final Cut, this is set for you and will match the Final Cut sequence sample rate.
10. The next two buttons determine how clips interact with each other. If the first is set, then clips will cross-fade when they are placed on each other. If the second option is set, overlapping files will cause the lowest file in the stack to be deleted. When you click-drag a file onto another file, the moving file takes precedence and the non-moving file loses whatever portion is overlapped.

11. The last set of options determines what happens to rubber-banded audio automation when clips are moved. In Soundtrack, automation rubber banding is attached to the track/timeline and not to the clips themselves. You can choose to have the automation move with clips that occupy the same track and timing by selecting the option here. You may need to toggle this quite often when editing because sometimes you may want the automation to slide with the clips, and at other times not.

The Video Tab

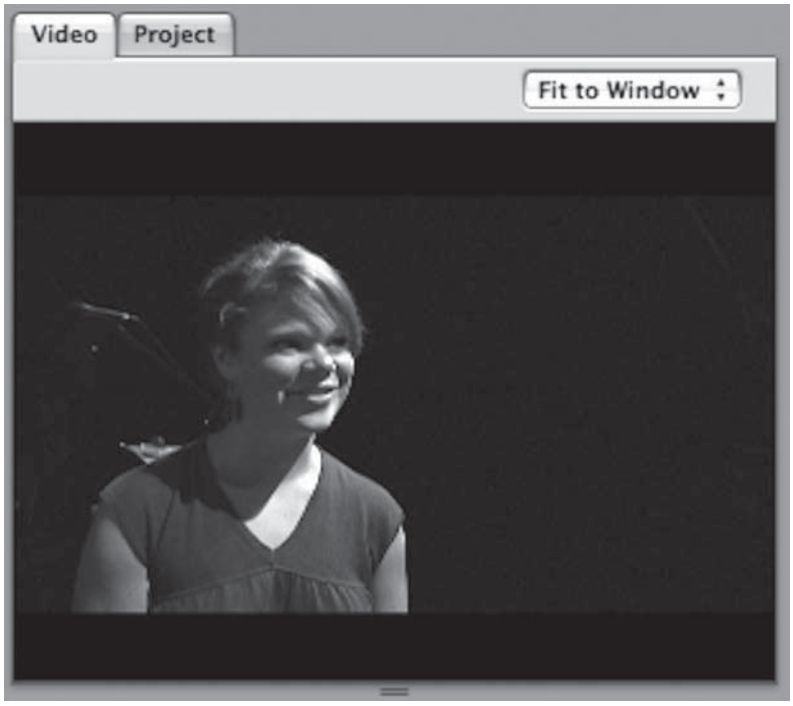

Figure 4-8 The video tab.

The video tab is the place where an imported video will play back. It can be quite small here, but in most cases that is okay because you will be working primarily on audio. You can choose the video zoom level using the dropdown menu. If you want to use an external monitor or an additional cinema display, there is a preference panel (Video Out) that provides these options.

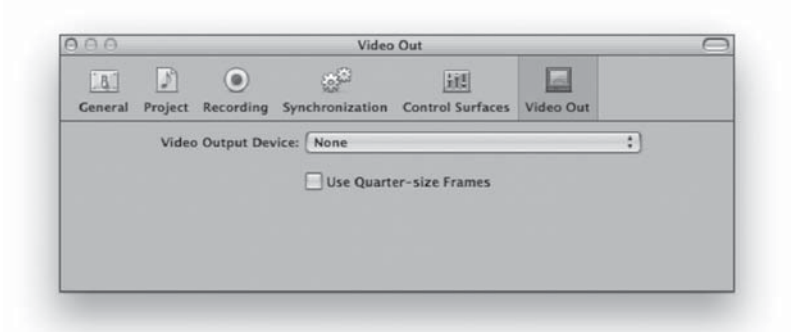

Figure 4-9 Video Out preferences.

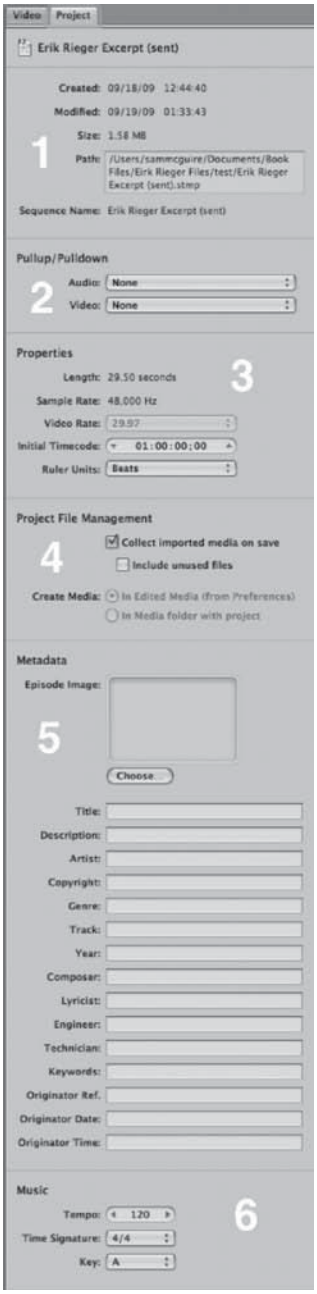

Figure 4-10 The Project tab.

You can choose any available device and also choose to make it quarter frame, which helps with larger files by making them play back at a lower resolution. I use a FireWire interface that has video outputs on it as the primary method of viewing video. The option shows up in Soundtrack as DV out FireWire (Digital Video Codec). The catch here is that the video will need to be converted to DV format for it to work. If you are using Soundtrack on the same computer as your original Final Cut session, you should be able to use the same interface (if any) that you were using in Final Cut. If you want to go full screen on your computer, the easiest way is to pull the Video tab off its pane and click the Expand button in the upper left corner.

The Project Tab

The Project tab is the place where you can view project settings and store metadata about the project. This tab is split into six sections.

1. The first section is a collection of information about the project file. This information is similar to that shown by pressing Command + I in the finder; it will show you the date created and modified, the size, and the file path. This can be useful when trying to find out if you are working on the correct version of your project.
2. The second section is the pull up/pull down section. This is a required function for all serious audio post-production software packages, but is not something that will normally be used in Soundtrack. For a good explanation of this concept see Tom Holman's book, *Sound for Film and Television* (Butterworth-Heinemann, 1997). The reason you will probably not use this feature is that it deals with audio that is connected with a film project that has been