

Getting the most out of Finale

Prepared by Professor Dan Cavanagh, September 2007
for the Computers in Music course

- I. Things I Had the Most Calls About When I Worked There
 - a. Page Layout
 - b. MIDI setup and getting MIDI to work
 - c. Things that had nothing to do with Finale! (misunderstandings about how computers work, etc.)

- II. Great things to know about in Finale (i.e. timesavers)
 - a. Selection Tool – Super tool can do anything (escape key is your friend)
 - b. Plugins!!! (demo some plugins, incl. meas. numbers, scoring/arranging, etc.)
 - c. take some time to familiarize yourself with Document>Document Options
 - d. If you use Finale a lot, get to know the keyboard shortcuts. They're usually listed next to the menu item
 - e. The user manual is good. Search it as you would search Google.
 - f. The tutorials found in the user manual are actually good (much better than the quickstart videos). Go through them.
 - g. Document styles and staff styles
 - h. Use templates! They help when you're doing the same stuff over and over

- III. Approach using Finale from Finale's perspective
 - a. Think like Finale – to get things done in mass-fashion, select them and then run a command on that selection
 - b. Don't worry about page layout until the very end. Work in Scroll View most of the time.
 - c. Let Finale do the work for you. Usually, the defaults are pretty good. As far as that goes, make sure you keep Automatic Music Spacing and Automatic Update Layout turned on (Those are program options under the "Edit" heading)
 - d. If you really want to know what each tool can do, select that tool, and take a look at the menu that appears up in the menubar.
 - e. Order of entry is important. Enter notes first, add articulations

- IV. Remember, you're not going to break anything, so click a button and see what happens! Undo is your friend (cmd-Z or ctrl-Z).