Swatches

User Guide

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OVERVIEW

The aesthetics of your environment make an impact on your state of mind and creative output. Swatches helps make your Live set look beautifyl and organized by setting rules for how your clips and and tracks are colored. As you work on your track or send it off in a collaboration, make everything look as great and fresh as possible.
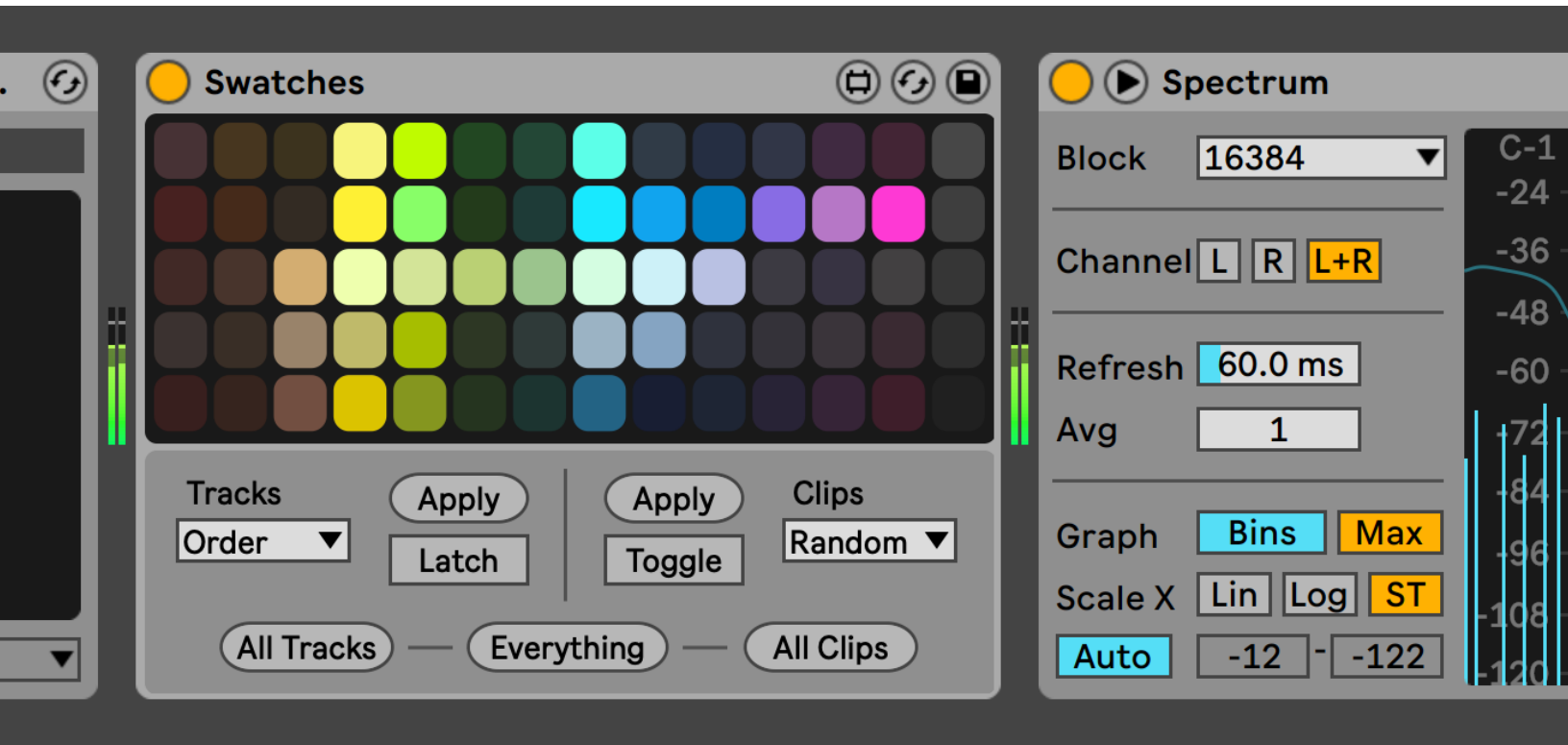
Installation

Install Swatches as you would any other Max for Live device. You can simply drop **Swatches.amxd** on any track in Live from the Browser or directly from your system's file explorer.

You may prefer to place the .amxd file in the User Library manually. Find the Max Audio Effect folder in the following location:

Windows Vista, Windows 7, Windows 8, Windows 10
\Users\[username]\Documents\Ableton\User Library\ Presets\Audio Effects\Max Audio Effect

Mac OS X
Macintosh HD/Users/[username]/Music/Ableton/User Library/Presets/Audio Effects/Max Audio Effec

The easiest way to access this folder is to just right-click on the User Library Place in the Live Browser and click "Show in Finder/Explorer".

USAGE

The following pages cover how to get started with Swatches and its basic functionality.

Figure 6.1 Swatches has a lot of buttons, but you may only need a few of them, depending on how you like to apply your colors.

Applying Colors

Swatches includes many different means of coloring your set's tracks and clips.

Apply colors the currently selected clip or track. This is particularly handy when key mapped, as you can quickly re-assign the color at your discretion.

All Tracks and **All Clips** are a lot like Apply, only they apply to all tracks and all clips, respectively. **Everything**, naturally, triggers the two. Note that coloring all Arrangement View clips is a Live 11 exclusive feature. You can still color individual clips in Arrangement View in all other versions of Live.

To apply color to every clip you select, toggle on **Toggle**.

You can use **Latch** to update colors any time changes are made to the set's tracks. This means adding a new track, changing the track order, or changing a track's name will not disrupt the order you've created. Colors will also update if you change the available palette and and remove a color that is currently applied to one of your tracks.

Selecting a Palette

By default, all the colors available in Live will be used when applying colors. One of the coolest features of Swatches is that you can set a limited number of available colors (a palette) and the device will only use these when changing colors in the set.

Colors can be toggled in and out of the palette simply by clicking their associated squares in the interface.

The most pleasing palettes tend to use adjacent colors, and there are several shortcuts to help you work with these faster. Double click toggles on and off all colors. Hold shift and click to toggle the entire row of colors. Hold Command (Ctrl on Windows) and click to toggle an entire column of colors.
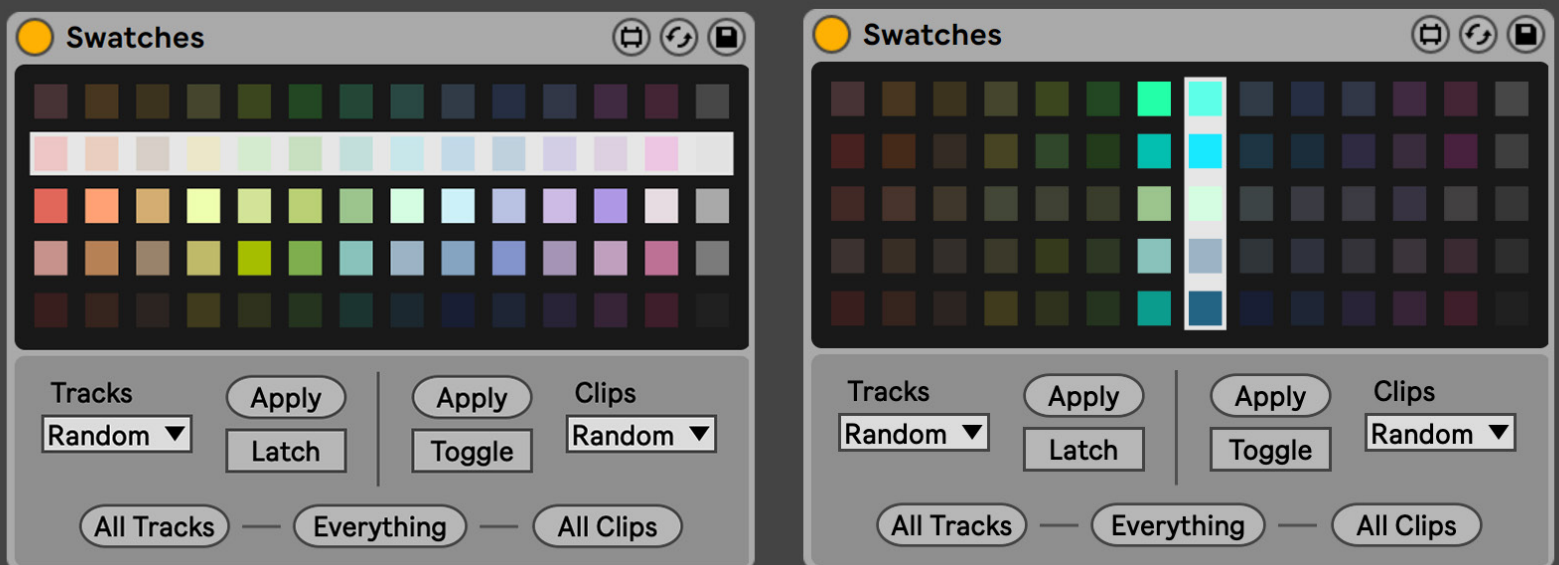
Figure 7.1 Holding Shift and clicking will toggle all the colors in that row (left) whereas a Command + click will toggle the entire column (right).
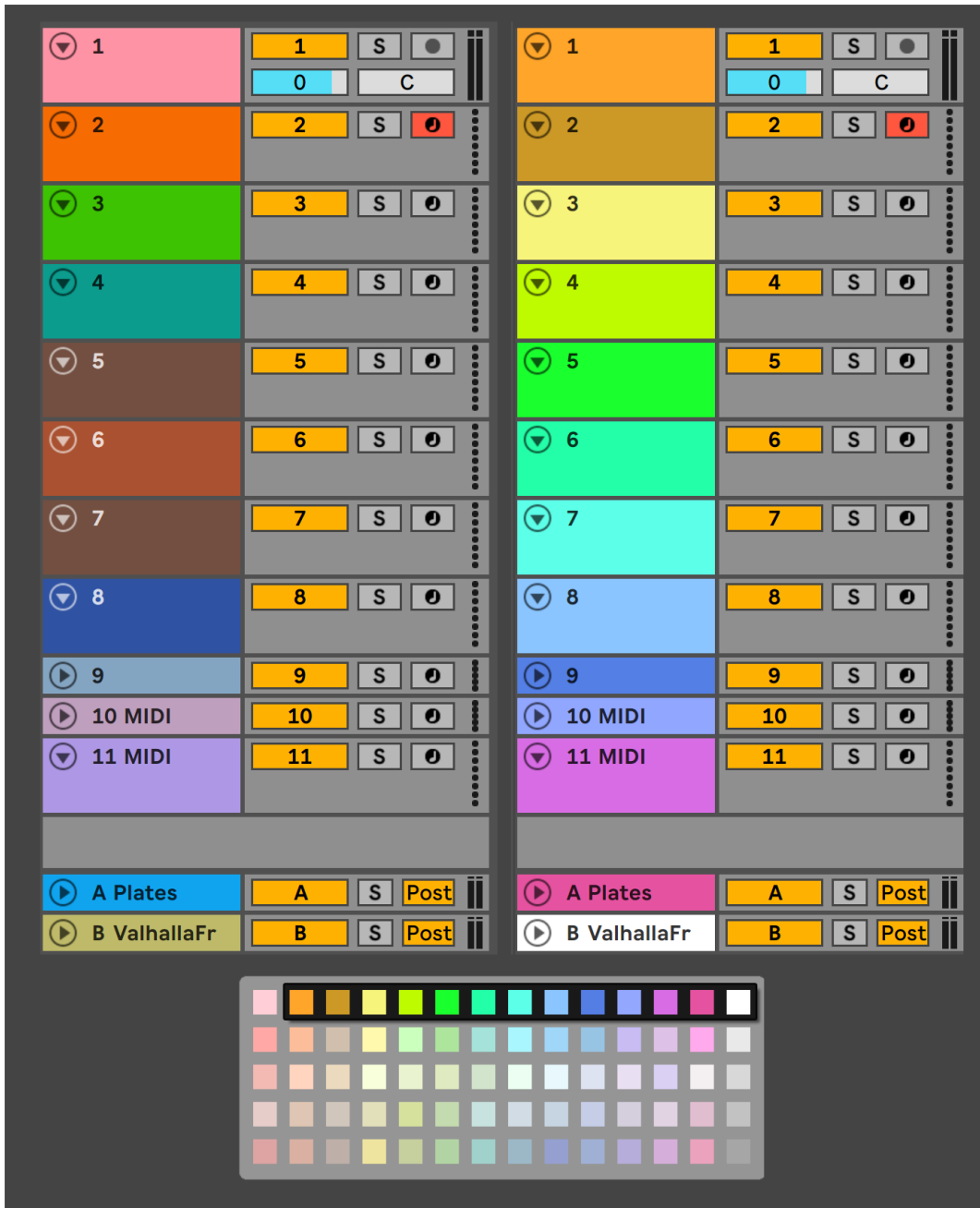
Random Mode

Random mode does just what it says on the box -- colors are applied at random, though chosen only from the palette you make available.

Figure 8.1 Before (left) and after (right) pressing the **Everything** button while **Tracks Mode** and **Clips Mode** are set to "Random". A limited palette of warm colors are selected.

Figure 9.1 Before (left) and after (right) pressing the **All Tracks** button while **Tracks Mode** is set to "Order". Notice the colors used are an ordered set from the palette (bottom).

Order Mode

Order mode applies a random color to the first track or clip, then advances one step in the available palette for every subsequent track or clip. The result is a beautifully ordered set.

It's particularly nice to set **Tracks Mode** to Order and **Clips Mode** to Match, then press **Everything** and watch as your set become more aesthetically pleasing!

Figure 10.1 Before (left) and after (right) pressing the **Everything** button while **Tracks Mode** and **Clips Mode** are set to "Uniform".

Uniform Mode

The simplest mode, Uniform just applies one randomly selected color from the palette. Randomization takes place when the device is loaded and when the set is loaded and when **All Clips** and/or **All Tracks** is triggered.

If you want a specific color to be applied, remove all others from the palette. Of course, you get the same effect when doing this and choosing any other mode.

Match Mode

Available only to Clips, Match mode ignores the palette and just applies the color of the clip's track.

It's worth noting that the **Everything** button applies colors to Tracks first, so setting "Match" for **Clips Mode** will essentially follow whatever mode is set for tracks.

Figure 11.1 Before (top) and after (bottom) pressing the **All Clips** button while **Clips Mode** is set to "Match". Notice the colors of the clips adopt their track's color.
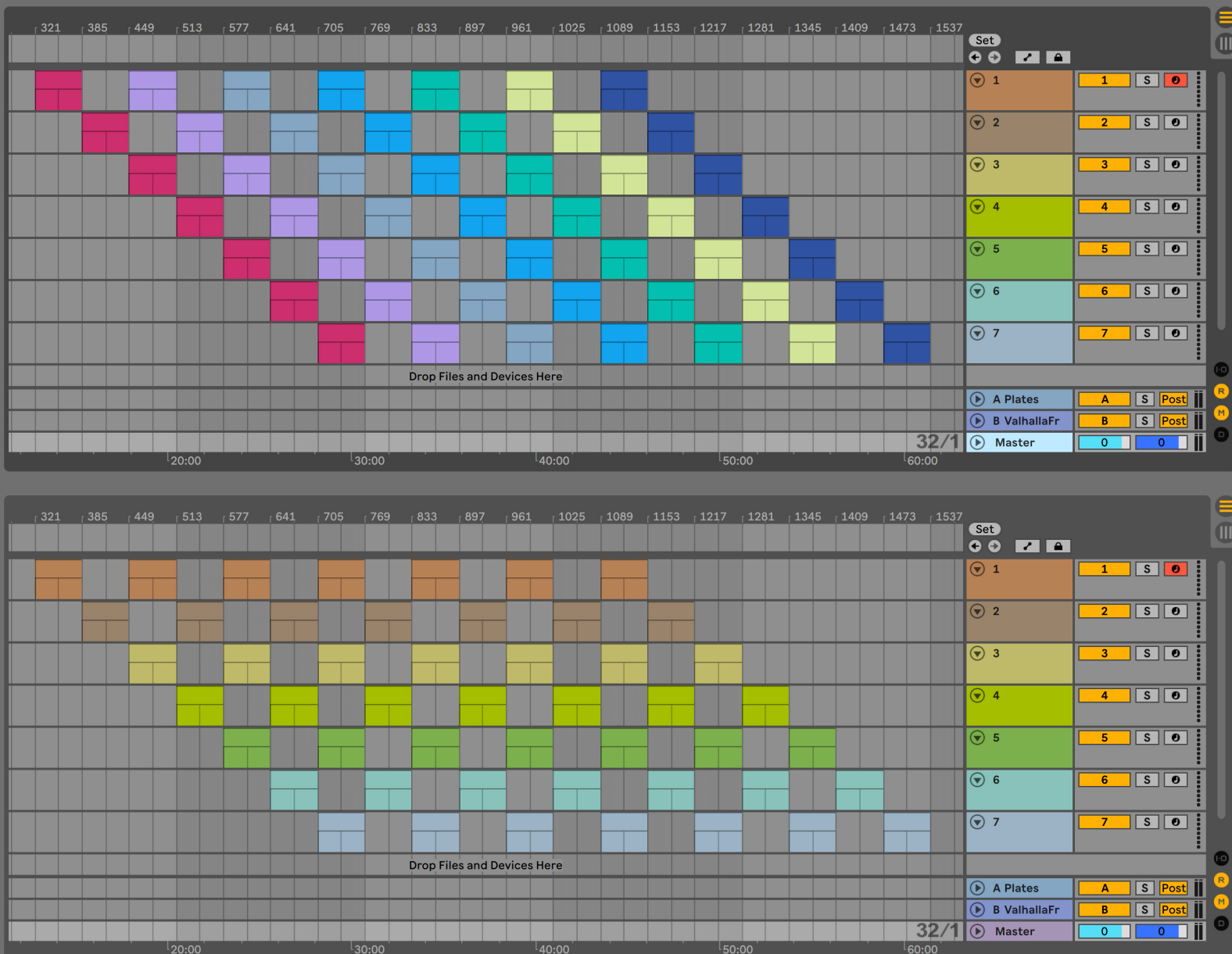
Easter Eggs

While it has no functional consequence, you can redesign the look of the palette interface. When holding Option (Alt for Windows), the X axis will resize the color blocks from smaller to larger and the Y axis will round the edges of the color blocks.

To be honest I had a hard time committing to a final design and this is just a way I could have it all ways ;)
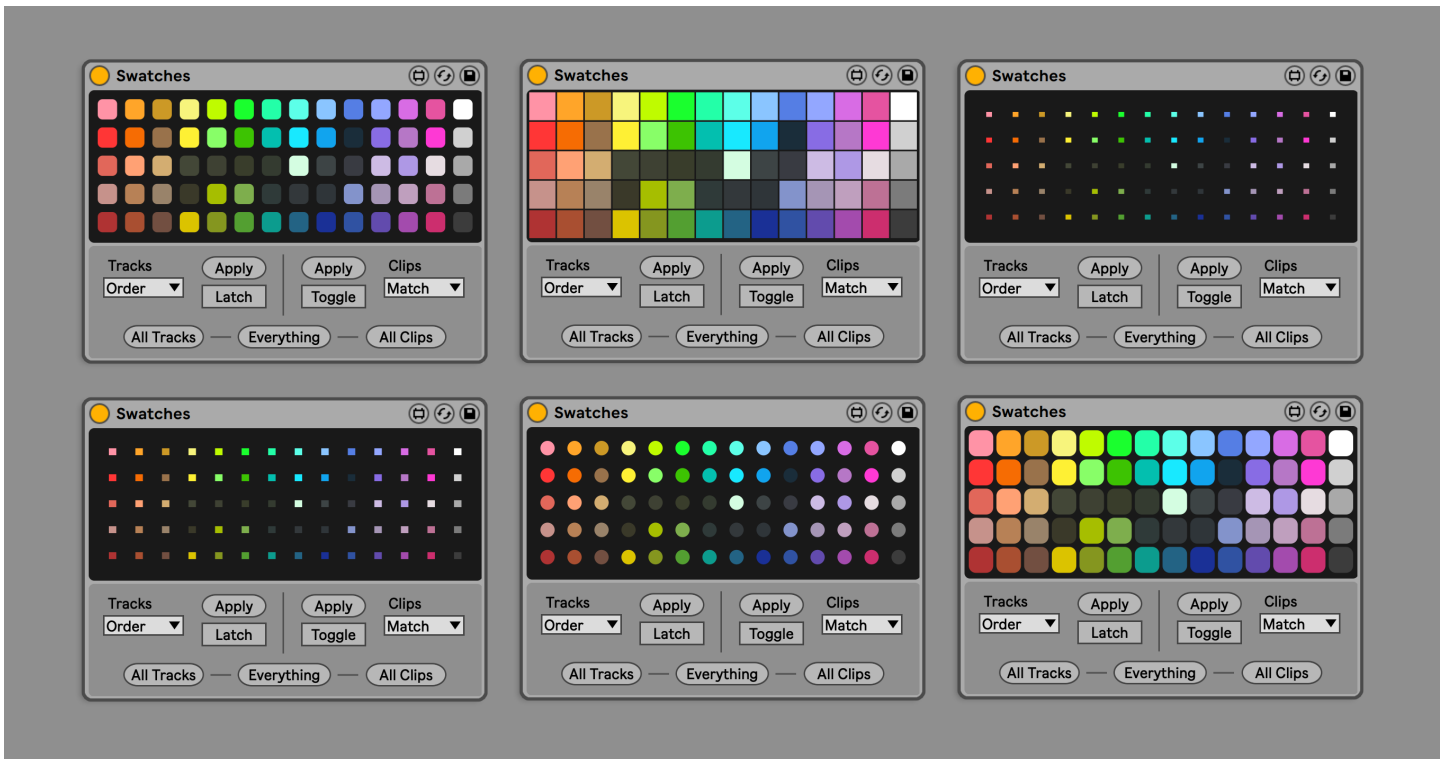
Figure 12.1 The two most critical controls for Cartographer -- **Follow** and **Advance By** -- can be found atop the main interface panel.

GLOSSARY OF CONTROLS

The following pages detail each control in the device with more technical descriptions. View these any time in Live's Info View by hovering over a given parameter.

Tracks Mode

Sets rules for how colors will be applied.

- "Random" applies random colors from the palette
- "Order" applies colors in order from the palette
- "Uniform" applies a single color from the palette
- "Name" applies colors from the palette based on the first word in the Track name

Apply (Tracks)

Apply the rules of the Tracks Mode to the currently selected track.

Latch

The rules of the Tracks Mode will be applied whenever changes to the set's tracks take place.

All Tracks

Apply the rules of the Tracks Mode to all tracks in the set.

Clips Mode

Sets rules for how colors will be applied.

- "Random" applies random colors from the palette
- "Match" applies the color of the parent track
- "Order" applies colors in order from the palette
- "Uniform" applies a single color from the palette
- "Name" applies colors from the palette based on the first word in the Track name

Apply (Clips)

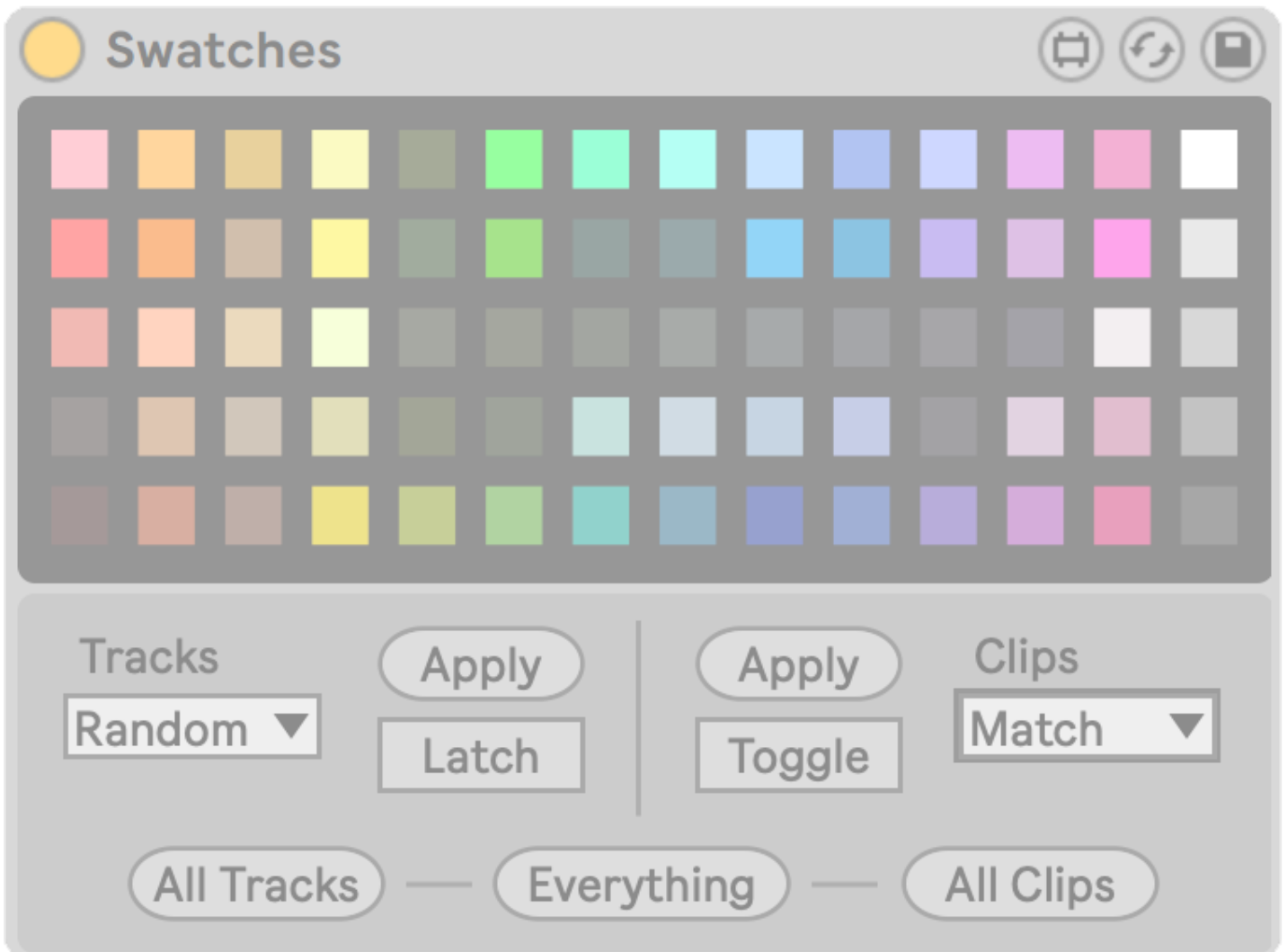Apply the rules of the Clips Mode to the currently selected clip.

Toggle

The rules of the Clips Mode will be applied each time a new clip is selected.

All Clips

Apply the rules of the Clips Mode to all clips in the set.

Session View clips only in Live 10 and under.

INFORMATION

Version 1.0.0

Download

The download link for this device is https://www.patches.zone/max-for-live/swatches
More Max devices from pATCHES can be found at
https://www.patches.zone/max-for-live

Support

Working on these devices is a labor of love, and there's a huge list of WIPs and ideas I have that I want put out there. If you want to help make those reality (and get discounts, news, and other perks…), consider supporting me on Patreon!

Sign up at https://www.patreon.com/patcheszone

Contact

Comment or query? Suggestions? Just want to say hi?
I'd love to hear from you!

Send an email to contact@patches.zone

Manual written and designed by Dan Hilse.
Swatches is a product of patches.zone, a website dedicated to creating resources for music producers.

www.patches.zone

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