ABLEREAL V1.0

Director Manual

Every control on the camera panel

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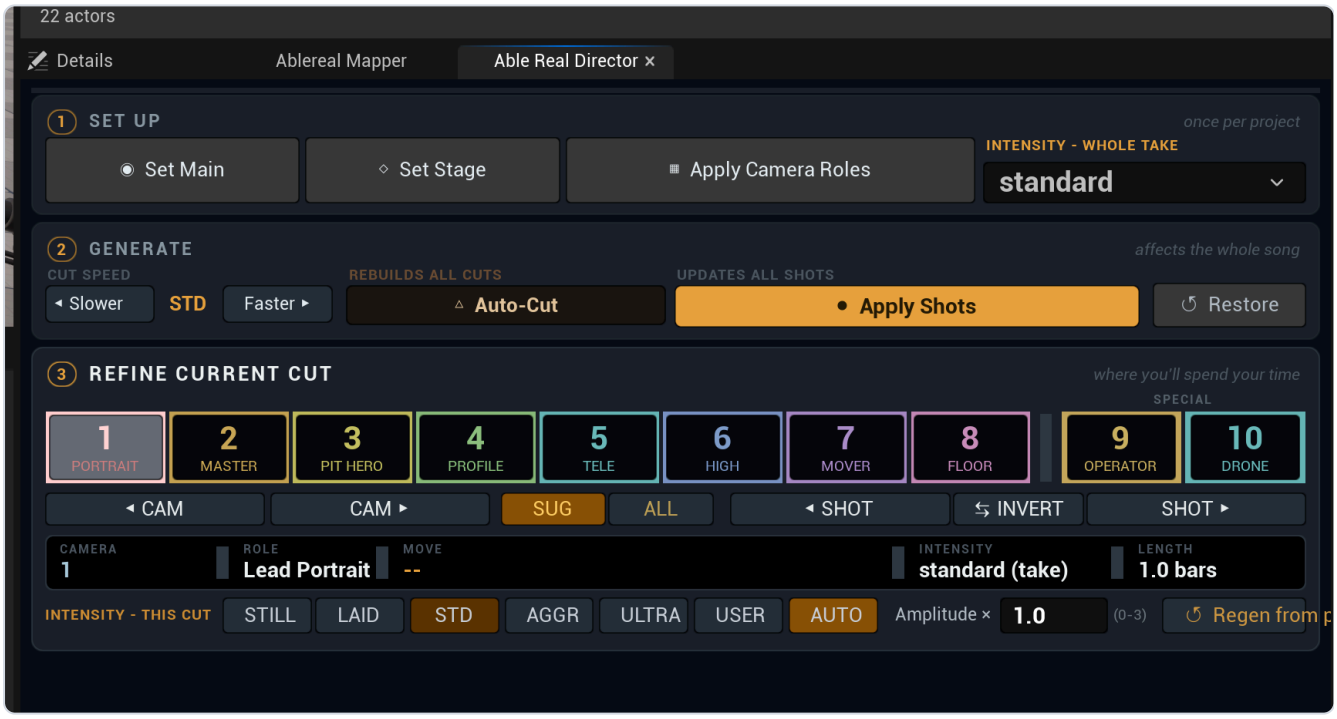
The Mapper gets your song into Unreal. **The Director is where you turn it into a film.**

You can press things here without fear. **Restore** steps back through your last ten Auto-Cuts and Cut Speed changes, and brings back the cuts, their cameras and every per-cut choice as they were.



The Director panel: SET UP, GENERATE, REFINE CURRENT CUT

How to think about it

The panel reads top to bottom, and so does the job:

1 · SET UP	once per project	tell AbleReal what to film
2 · GENERATE	once per take	let it direct the whole song
3 · REFINE CURRENT CUT	as often as you like	reshape one cut at a time

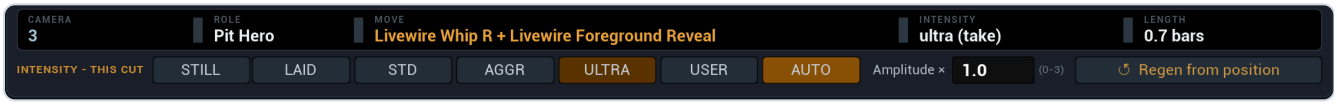
You will spend 30 seconds in section 1, 10 seconds in section 2, and the rest of your life in section 3.

Open it from the menu bar: **AbleReal Shots → Open AbleReal Panels**.

The status strip

Across the middle of the panel, five fields tell you what the playhead is sitting on:

```
CAMERA     ROLE          MOVE              INTENSITY     LENGTH
  3        Pit Hero      crown (inverted)  aggressive    4.0 bars
```

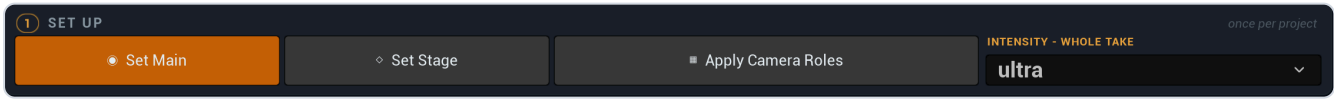


The status strip on a cut: camera, role, move, intensity, length

Field	Means
CAMERA	which camera owns this cut
ROLE	what that camera is for
MOVE	the shot currently on this cut — `(inverted)` if mirrored
INTENSITY	the style this cut is drawing from; `(take)` means it follows the whole-take setting
LENGTH	how long the cut holds

If the strip is blank, your playhead is between cuts. Scrub onto one.

1 · SET UP



SET UP: Set Main, Set Stage, Apply Camera Roles, and the Intensity – Whole Take dropdown

Set Main

Select your performer in the level, then click. This is the single most important thing in AbleReal — every camera move is built relative to this actor. It places a marker called `AbleReal_Target_Main`.

Until there is a MAIN target, the button is lit amber and the status strip reads **Start here: select your performer → Set Main**. If you imported before setting it, the first Set Main also runs **Apply Camera Roles** for you, so the waiting cameras land in their roles in one click.

You can skip the button entirely: if there's no MAIN target yet and your performer is selected when you click **New Sequence from AbleReal**, the import sets Main on it first.

Set Stage

Recommended whenever there is a show to film. Select what the show is built around (the video wall, the back of the stage, the lighting rig) and click **Set Stage**. Two things happen:

- **The wide cameras frame it.** Camera 2 (Proscenium Master) and camera 6 (High Geometry) aim at the stage marker instead of the performer, so the lights, the screen and the crowd get their shots. Focus stays on the performer, and every other camera keeps following the performer.
- **It sets the front.** The cameras go to the side the stage faces from. Without it, AbleReal reads the front from the performer's own mesh.

The marker is a normal actor (`AbleReal_Target_Stage`): move it and click **Apply Camera Roles** to re-frame the wides. A point within 3 m of the performer can't set a direction or frame a show: AbleReal says so and the cameras stay on the performer; pick a point further back.

A far panorama. To film the whole show from the back of the crowd, move camera 2's or camera 6's **Position** null there (the camera follows), give the camera a wider lens in its Details panel (Current Focal Length, 18–24 mm), then click **Apply Shots**. Apply Shots keeps your lens; Apply Camera Roles puts the role lens back.

Apply Camera Roles

Positions your cameras into their roles around the subject and sets each one's lens. Run it once after Set Main, and again any time you move your performer somewhere new.

It also makes sure the two money cams (9 and 10) exist, creating them if they're missing. New Sequence from AbleReal does the same on import, so normally you already have all ten.

Cameras 1–8 have fixed personalities:

#	Role	Lens	Tracks subject
1	Lead Portrait	135 mm	yes
2	Proscenium Master	32 mm	yes
3	Pit Hero	24 mm	yes
4	House Profile	65 mm	no
5	Cross Tele	180 mm	yes
6	High Geometry	28 mm	no
7	Three-Quarter Mover	50 mm	yes
8	Floor Icon	32 mm	no

The long lenses (1 and 5) compress depth and magnify sideways motion — they give you intimacy. The wides (2, 3, 6) give you scale. AbleReal knows this and picks accordingly.

> **Apply Camera Roles only moves cameras AbleReal spawned.** Cameras you placed and named yourself are never moved — your framing is yours.

> **All takes in a level share its cameras.** New Sequence reuses the cameras already in the level, so your earlier takes keep working. But a camera you move by hand (or its Position null), Set Stage and Apply Camera Roles change that camera for every take in the level. To keep a finished take exactly as it is, start your next song in a copy of the level (**File** → **Save Current Level As...**).

Intensity – Whole Take

Sets the **take's style tier**, which decides what vocabulary the whole song draws from:

`laidback` → `standard` → `aggressive` → `ultra`

Choosing an intensity does not touch the cuts or the moves in your take. It takes effect the next time you press **Auto-Cut** (re-cuts) or **Apply Shots** (restyles).

It does reset **Cut Speed**: the label returns to the new intensity's own pace, and any per-section speeds you had set are cleared (a label that read **MIX** reads one rung again). The status line says so when it happens. Pick the intensity first, then sculpt the cut speed.

This is the demo. Run the same song at `laidback`, watch it, then run it at `ultra`. Same cuts, same cameras, completely different film.

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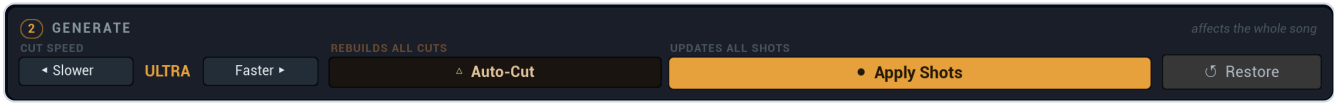
2 · GENERATE



GENERATE: Cut Speed, Auto-Cut, Apply Shots, Restore

Cut Speed

◂ **Slower** and **Faster** ▸ with a label between them. This is the cutting *rhythm* of the whole take, walked as twelve rungs — each tier at three densities:

```
LAID−  LAID  LAID+   STD−  STD  STD+   AGGR−  AGGR  AGGR+   ULTRA−  ULTRA  ULTRA+
```

`−` cuts more slowly than the tier's natural pace, `+` faster.

If the label reads **MIX**, you've given different sections different cadences — the take is sculpted rather than uniform. That's a good place to end up, not a problem.

Each step re-cuts the take straight away, without a dialog. What happens to the choices you made on single cuts:

- **A style chip** follows the music. Where a cut moved, was split or was merged, the new cut over the same stretch of the song takes the style.

- **A STILL** follows its camera. It is carried to the new cut over the same stretch if that cut is on the same camera, and dropped otherwise.
- **A camera you picked and a SHOT you cycled to** stay only on cuts whose start did not move. The re-cut hands out cameras and moves again.

The log says how many choices were carried and how many were dropped. **Restore** undoes the step and brings every choice back.

Auto-Cut

Rebuilds the cut structure from your song. It reads your locators, works out each section's mood, and lays down a cutting rhythm that matches — slow through the intro, hard through the drop.

This is the button that makes AbleReal feel like it understands your music.

Every cut lands exactly on the beat. Cameras 1–8 share the rotation; right after the cuts are laid down, AbleReal also places the money moments on cameras 9 and 10 (see *The money cams* below). Each Auto-Cut replaces the previous one's money moments, so they never pile up.

Auto-Cut rebuilds the whole cut track. If you have already refined cuts by hand, those choices stay only where a cut's start did not move. The take as it was is stored first, so **Restore** brings all of it back.

Apply Shots

Gives every cut a camera move from the current shot library. On a fresh project, AbleReal picks its built-in *standard* library the first time you press it; the **Intensity – Whole Take** dropdown switches libraries.

Run it as often as you like. Every run reshuffles within the rules, so if a take doesn't sing, run it again and you'll get a different one. This is a feature, not a workaround.

Restore

Goes back **one step**: the take as it was before your last Auto-Cut or Cut Speed change. The cuts, their cameras, every per-cut choice and the per-section cut speeds of that moment come back, and the shots are applied again. Press it again to go further back, up to ten steps. After the last stored step it returns to the cuts as they were before the first Auto-Cut.

One thing to check after a Restore: a cut that comes back on camera 9 or 10 has its camera, but its move was drawn by the Auto-Cut that placed it. Scrub to that cut and click chip **9** or **10** to draw the move again. The log says how many cuts this concerns.

The steps are kept per take in `YourProject/Saved/AbleReal/CutHistory`. They follow the take when you rename or move it.

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3 · REFINE CURRENT CUT

Scrub to any cut. Everything here reshapes **that one cut** and leaves the rest of the song alone. The one exception is **Amplitude ×**, which belongs to the camera and so changes every cut that camera takes.



REFINE CURRENT CUT: camera chips, CAM and SHOT arrows, SUG / ALL, INVERT, Intensity – This Cut, Amplitude

The camera chips (1–10)

Click a number to hand this cut to that camera. Each chip carries its camera's identity colour and its role, so you're choosing "Pit Hero", not "number 3". ◂ **CAM** and **CAM** ▸ step through them one at a time.

A chip only recasts the cut: it doesn't change what's selected, so the Sequencer and the Scope stay on whatever you were working on. With no cut at the playhead, nothing changes and the status line says so. To move a camera, pick it (or its Position null) in the Outliner.

Chips **9** and **10**, under *Special*, are the money cams — see below. Until they exist, they're dimmed and read **SET MAIN**: Set Main creates them.

SUG / ALL

A toggle. **SUG** offers only the shots that suit this cut's mood, camera and length. **ALL** opens the whole library.

Start on SUG. Switch to ALL when you know what you want and SUG won't give it to you.

◂ SHOT / SHOT ▸

Cycles the move on this cut, backwards or forwards. The fastest control on the panel — park on a cut you don't like and tap until you do.

INVERT

Mirrors the move. Same motion, opposite side — a push from camera left becomes the identical push from camera right.

Use it when two neighbouring cuts both enter from the same side and the edit feels lopsided. Press it twice and you're back where you started.

Intensity – This Cut

Overrides the style for this cut alone:

`STILL` · `LAID` · `STD` · `AGGR` · `ULTRA` · `USER` · `AUTO`

- **STILL** pins the camera where it stands for this cut: no move at all. Press it again to release the cut back to its library move. A still survives every Apply Shots.
- **LAID** to **ULTRA** draw this cut's move from that tier's library.
- **USER** draws from your own shot library (create it from **AbleReal Shots → Create / Open USER Shot Library**).
- **AUTO** clears the override and hands the cut back to whatever the section or the whole take decides.

Amplitude × and Regen from position (per camera)

The **Amplitude ×** field (0–3) scales how *big* the moves are on the selected camera — or, with no camera selected, on the camera of the cut at the playhead (so: click a chip, then set Amplitude). It's a multiplier on a basis AbleReal worked out from that camera's distance to your subject. `1.0` is what it chose; below is subtler, above is bolder.

Regen from position recomputes that basis from where the camera is sitting *now*. Move a camera closer and its moves stay correct in scale instead of becoming enormous.

Amplitude is stored on the camera, so it persists across takes.

Cameras 9 and 10 — the money cams

Two cameras that don't take part in the normal rotation. They exist for the shot you want once or twice a song, not every eight bars.

9 · Operator — the handheld-feeling hero move. Approaches, presses in, finds the face. Gold chip.

10 · Drone — the wide, floating, architectural move. Teal chip.

In the level they're `AbleReal_Camera_9 - Operator` and `AbleReal_Camera_10 - Drone`, next to cameras 1–8. They work with or without BlackEye. With it, they're BlackEye rigs and can shift attention between your subject's head, torso and hands mid-move. Without it, they're plain cameras and AbleReal bakes the same moves directly onto them. If you already have your own camera 9 or 10, AbleReal uses yours.

Unlike cameras 1–8, they have no *Position* null: their moves are baked in world space around your performer, so there's nothing for a null to anchor. A new import keeps them; it only rebuilds cameras 1–8.

Where they appear on their own

After every Auto-Cut, AbleReal picks the moments itself:

	Takes	Needs	Per take
9 · Operator	the entry of a chorus or showcase, then the longest cuts	a cut of 4+ bars	laidback 1 · standard 2 · aggressive 3 · ultra up to 5
10 · Drone	calm stretches: intro, verse, breakdown	a cut of 4+ bars	laidback 1 · everything else 2

Each money cam's own moments are at least six cuts apart, and the Drone never takes a cut the Operator already has. A fast intensity has fewer 4-bar cuts, so *ultra* can end up with fewer money moments than its limit; that's by design. A money move squeezed into a short cut reads as a smear.

Placing one yourself

Scrub to any cut and click chip **9** or **10**. ◂ **SHOT / SHOT** ▸ then cycle through the money moves that fit that cut's length. Here you decide, so any cut long enough for the move is fair game, not just 4-bar ones.

Use them the way you'd use a crane on a real shoot: sparingly, and on the moment that deserves it.

Who wins: the style priority order

When three things disagree about a cut's style, this is the order:

1. **Intensity – This Cut** — your explicit per-cut choice
2. **A `[style]` tag in the locator name** — that whole section
3. **Intensity – Whole Take** — the take's default

AUTO on a cut drops it out of the contest and lets the level below decide.

Three workflows worth knowing

The 20-second take. Set Main → Apply Camera Roles → Auto-Cut → play. Auto-Cut applies the shots itself. That's a complete, watchable film of your song.

The one-bad-cut fix. Scrub to it, tap **SHOT ▸** until it works. If nothing works, change the camera. If that doesn't work, INVERT. Still not right? STILL holds the shot and lets the edit breathe.

The sculpt. Get a take you mostly like, then walk the cut speed on individual sections until the label reads MIX. Slow the verses, push the choruses. This is the difference between a generated take and a directed one.

Related

- **Quickstart** — installing and your first take
- **Locator Glossary** — how section names become moods, and `[style]` tags
- **Mapper Manual** — the other panel: driving your scene from the song