CSE 40655 – Technical Aspects of Visual Effects
Spring 2018

PROJECT 2

Overview: In this project you will work on animation in Maya. Your job is basically to “animate something”. Your animation is left completely up to your imagination, but the following rules apply:

- Your animation will be optimally about 12-15 seconds, but you may make it up to 20 seconds long (not longer). So if you want to play your sequence of images at 24 frames per second, this limits you to 480 frames max.
- Use of dynamics is not allowed; nor is the use of MASH. We will leave all that for the final project. Therefore, if you want to simulate a physical phenomenon, you must hand-animate it, using the many methods that you have already learned (keys, graphs, deformers, expressions, etc).
- A small exception to the above is that you may use some particles or nParticles in this project, but it may not be the major animation component of your scene.
- Texturing and lighting for this project are not the main focus for the animation. Yes, they’re always important, but they’re secondary for this particular project. You have already shown your skills in those areas in the first project. If you have time and want to fully texture and light your scene, that’s wonderful, but do not let these processes interfere with your animation. A good animation with a default light is much preferable to a poor animation with great textures. You’re being graded for the most part on animation, so concentrate on that.
- Your models need be only as complex as your scene requires. If you are doing organic animation, your model must contain enough detail so as to properly demonstrate bulging and deformations. If you are doing rigid (robotic) animation, low-resolution geometry can probably get the job done. Again, feel free to build a complex model if you wish, just don’t let it interfere with the quality of your animation. Recall that you’re being judged mostly on the animation. And no need to make it too complicated, especially given that you may not use dynamics. You will have an opportunity to expand and to show your skills in the final project.
- Rendering frames is only necessary at the final stage of production. Make use of Maya’s timeline-scrubbing functionality at first, then use playblasts to help you gauge final timing. Do not render out tons of iterations of your animation, as your render times and disk space will suffer massively.

In this project, you may use third-party textures, models, images, etc. But make sure you reference everything that you use by placing a readme text file as part of your submitted files.

As always, be creative. The guidelines for this project are intentionally non-rigid so as to allow you to explore possibilities on your own. Have fun!

Deliverables:
The render resolution for this project will be 320x240.
Submit your final scene in .mb format, and your frames as .jpg images.
You will also need to generate and submit your animation video created from your images.
More precise details on the submission guidelines will soon be given in a separate handout.

Due Date:
Friday 3/9/18 10 PM