

3Disciple

www.3Disciple.com | Issue: 01 | December 2019 | Featuring Archviz Artists and Studios. SiNi Tips and Tricks

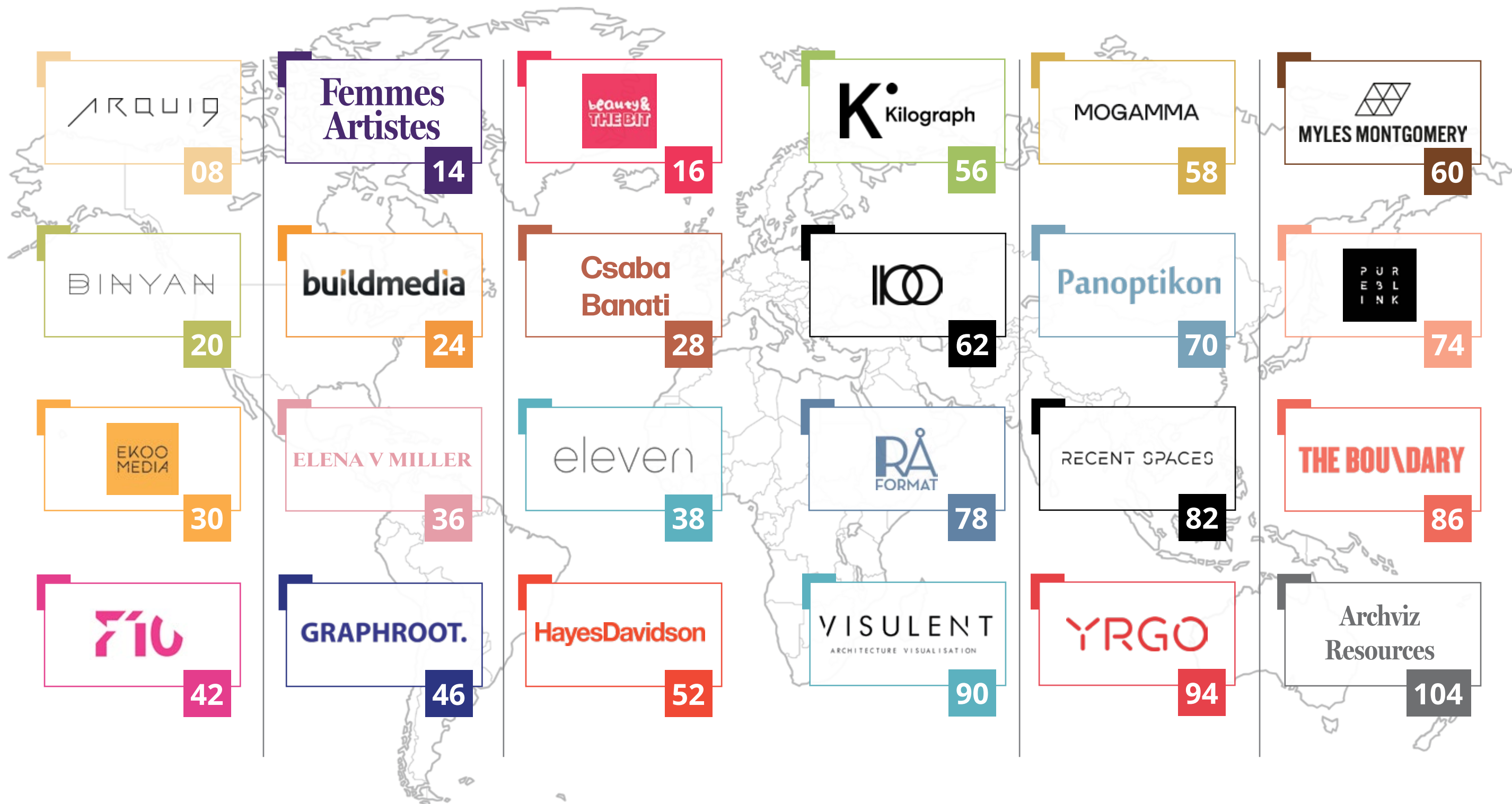
Get to know the artists and studios
behind some of the most iconic
Archviz imagery of 2019



Image copyright © Arqui9

Content

Artist Spotlight



Content

Tips & Tricks

On these pages you will discover tips and tricks to get the most from the collection of 3ds Max SiNi plugins.

If you haven't yet tried them, download the 30-day trials and test for yourself. www.sinisoftware.com



The Basics

Get an overview of the Sign-up and Registration process, and setting up 3ds Max to use the SiNi collection of plugins.



After Importing

Many of the SiNi tools have been designed to work with imported CAD and BIM geometry. Here are a few features that will relieve the daily stress associated with this workflow.



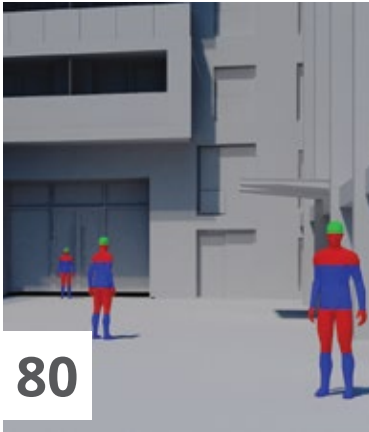
Optimising Scenes

Continuining on from importing tasks, many 3D artists like to optimise their scenes, rather than re-building them from scratch. These techniques will help get 3D scenes ready for use in record time.



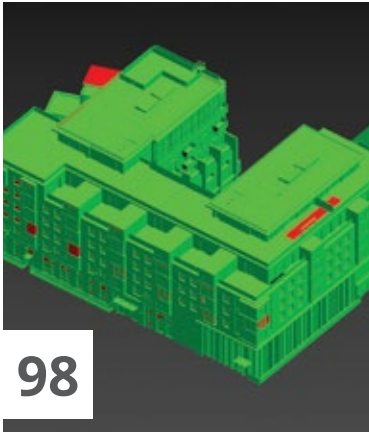
Using Proxies

It's difficult working on large 3ds Max scenes without the use of proxies. Here are a few handy tools designed to work with Chaos Group V-Ray and Corona proxies, as well as SiNi's universal proxy.



Under Pressure

Everyone is under pressure to work smarter and more efficiently. The SiNi features on these pages have been designed for speed workflow.



Exporting your Work

As the industry moves rapidly to embracing Real-Time technologies, SiNi has plugins to prepare 3ds Max models for exporting clean geometry, with the objective of one-directional workflow, meaning the likelihood of discovering bad geometry in game engines is removed or minimised.



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Landmark Film. Copyright © 2018 Beauty and The Bit

Exclusive



We feature an exclusive 3Disciple interview with Nicolas Fonta, Head of 3ds Max Product Management at Autodesk.

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Editorial



Editor In Chief

Nigel Hunt

‘It’s humbling to publish so much archviz talent in this first issue!’

- | | |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| Olga Banaszyk | Martin Houra |
| Csaba Banati | Neil Hughes |
| Iain Banks | Nicoleta Ivascu |
| Valentina Baruffo | Kristina Jasutienė |
| Jason Bergeron | Tim Johnson |
| Victor Bonafonte | Sarah Vande Kamp |
| Aaron Casey | Patrick King |
| Keely Colcleugh | Nancy LaRue |
| Carlotta Cominetti | Susanna Määttä |
| Fernando Da Silva | Elena V Miller |
| Gabriel Diaz | Jennifer Mills |
| Andrei Dolnikov | Myles Montgomery |
| Si Donaghy | Jeff Mottle |
| Pedro Fernandes | Fabio Palvelli |
| Nic Fonta | Cristina Patanè |
| Ola Frödel | Karina Ponce |
| Sergio Garzón | André Ravenna |
| Aneta Gesiorska | Bogdan Sasu |
| Henry Goss | Joana Sobrinho |
| Joshua Gruitt | Jose Uribe |
| Peter Guthrie | Tudor Vasiliu |
| David Hillier | Britta Wikholm |
| Nick Homer | Alex York |

When I started on this journey to produce a brand magazine, I initially thought ‘I wonder if I can get a few of SiNi Software’s annual subscribers interested in contributing?’. As it turned out, I recieved an overwhelming response and ended up, regrettably, having to turn people away.

As someone who has spent the past 30 years working in architecture, computer graphics and archviz, I am deeply humbled by the industry enthusiasm for 3Disciple and I am totally inspired by the quality of work submitted from the artists and studios from around the world. The original purpose of the magazine was to help users discover more features from the 3ds Max SiNi plugins. As time flew by designing 3Disciple, the focus moved from software to the artists who use the SiNi tools in their work.

I hope you enjoy the stunning imagery and discover new artists and studios that you may not have known before reading this. I believe in supporting our community and have included industry resource pages to allow readers to connect with fellow artists at the many global conferences, events and meetups, as well as participating in the industry competitions and award opportunities.

Nigel Hunt

editorial@3Disciple.com

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Thank you to all our contributors who have helped make 3Disciple become a reality.



Evocative Archviz

Winner of the 2019 CGarchitect Architectural 3D Awards Non commissioned Image



Arqui9 Visualisation is an award-winning studio, located south of London, United Kingdom. The studio is dedicated to the art of crafting architectural visualisations for the (un)built environment, and its cinematic style has enabled it to partner with many of the world's leading architects and developers and grow a loyal following of archviz artists eager to learn from its experience.

As well as client commissions, Arqui9 runs a popular training website, www.arqui9learn.com

The design process is one of constant flux and flow. So we've tailored our process to be able to complement and extend beyond this, allowing for early concepts to flourish into finished spatial representations through the process of adaptation and change that is architecture.



Facts



ARQUI9

Arqui9 Visualisation

Studio Size: 9

Location: Reigate, United Kingdom

Main Work: Stills, VR and Animation

Main Software: 3ds Max, Corona, SiNi, iToo, Adobe CC

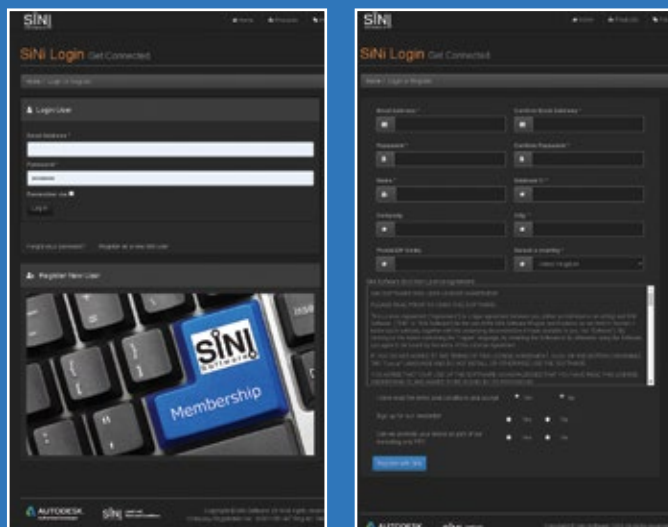
Contact Details: info@arqui9.com

Website: www.arqui9.com

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Tips & Tricks

The Basics

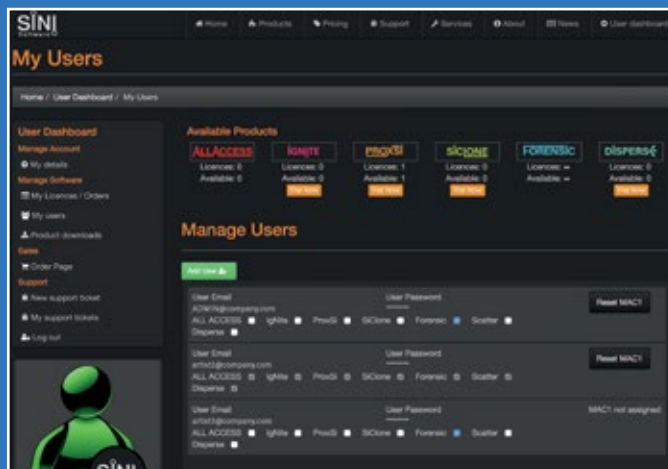


Registering online with your correct details

When you sign up and register your details on the SiNi website, always ensure you add your correct information for your own benefit, especially adding the right country!

The login information is used by DeSipher to activate the plugins in 3ds Max as well as update notifications and purchasing.

To complete the registration process and get started, you will receive an activation email, sent to the email you provide.



Controlling your licenses, and adding Users

1. Use the 30-day trials. To activate, click on the Orange tabs in your online User Dashboard.
2. Add as many Users to your account as you wish. We can only add a User if a license is available. Unchecking the license of an existing User releases it to apply to another User. Repeat as necessary.
3. To swap a license from one User to another, simply uncheck it and apply it to the other User.

Configuring the IgNite Utility Plugins

The Config tab on the main IgNite springboard plugin is where you set your User directory paths.

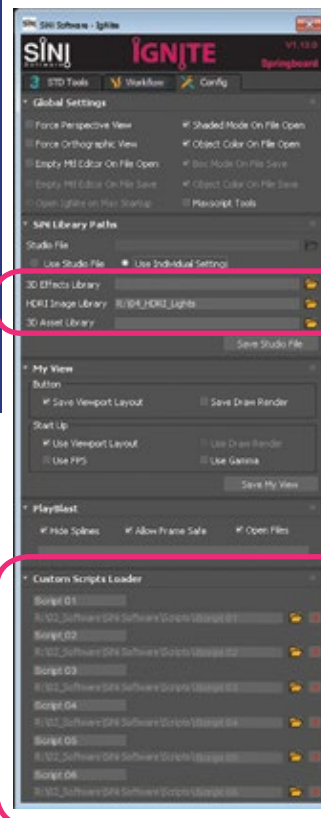
Illumi HDRI plugin. Set the path to your HDRI libraries so the plugin can link the files and generate thumbnails.

Add your favourite MAXScripts to IgNite.

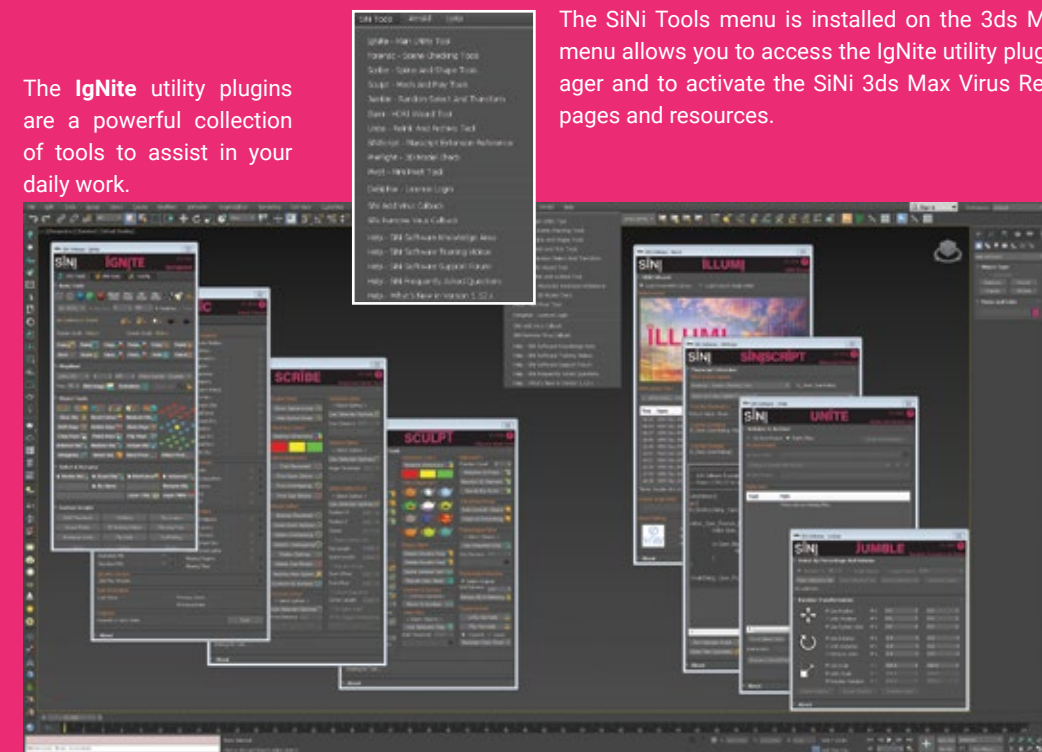


Log in to SiNi inside 3ds Max

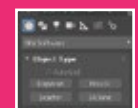
The DeSipher License Manager plugin in 3ds Max controls your access to the SiNi plugins. Always use the same login details as when you log in to the website.



The IgNite utility plugins are a powerful collection of tools to assist in your daily work.

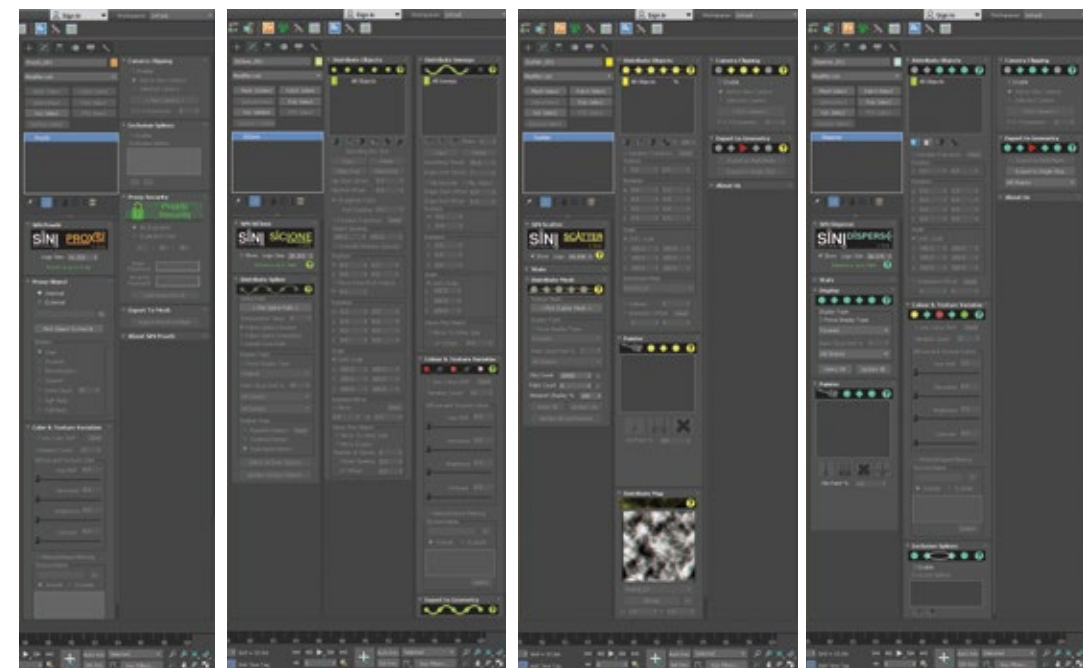


The SiNi Tools menu is installed on the 3ds Max main menu. The dropdown menu allows you to access the IgNite utility plugins and DeSipher License Manager and to activate the SiNi 3ds Max Virus Removal and links to online Help pages and resources.



The SiNi Object plugins are located in the Geometry dropdown menu.

To activate, click and drag the plugin icon in the viewport.



There are four object plugins.

Disperse, a 3D paint and object replace tool.

Scatter, random scattering of objects. (FREE).

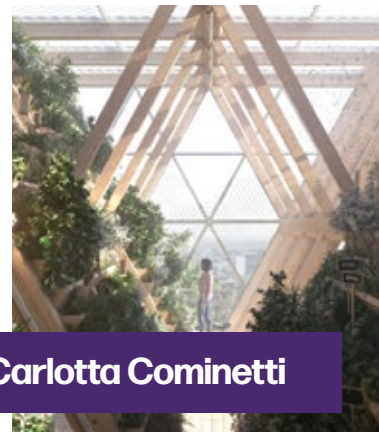
SiClone, a parametric modeller that allows you to build simple repetitive 3D assets.

ProxSi, a universal proxy with round-trip editing and asset lock. The asset lock is useful when sending your models to third parties, as you can lock them with a password.



New Role Models

The artists below have been curated from a long list of worthy candidates, all of whom are members of the Facebook group Women in Archviz. Its mission is to promote leadership, talent and female role models, encouraging more women to join and thrive in the global archviz industry.



Carlotta Cominetti

Carlotta is a cofounder of Paris-based studio Virginlemon.

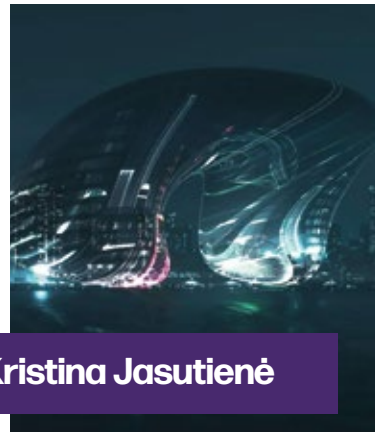
Carlotta forms part of the talented 'Guardians of the 3D Galaxy' team, commonly referred to by clients as real-life 3D graphics superheroes and otherwise known as the RenderMen and RenderWoman!

Carlotta studied photography before studying architecture, and attempts to reproduce skills learned using her analogue Nikon FM2 in her CGI work. Photography is the best skill for composition and lighting, but at Virginlemon the most important skill for a 3D artist is real-world observation.

Nominated for Best Commercial Film CGarchitect 3D Awards 2019

Contact Details
carlotta@virginlemon.fr
www.virginlemon.fr

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Kristina Jasutienė

Kristina is a senior 3D artist at WAX in The Hague.

Kristina's mother is a role model, having taught her early in her career to follow her passions and dreams. She loves to be surrounded by talented artists who encourage her to push herself forward, developing new skills every day. 'I'm just trying to relax and do things step by step, experimenting and learning new tricks, and seeing how far it gets me. Our Facebook group is a great platform to share ideas and concerns relating to archviz. It's inspiring to see how other women succeed working in this industry.'

Contact Details
www.facebook.com/kristina.valeikaite.9

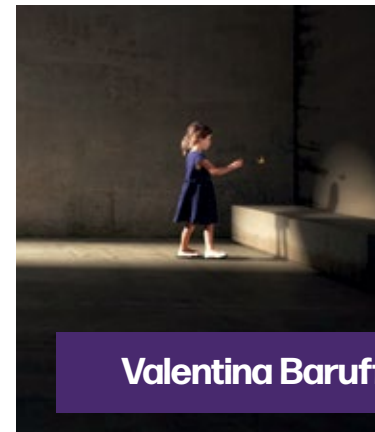


Susanna Määttä

Susanna is a visual storyteller located in Helsinki.

As an aspiring Finnish writer, Susanna has turned her attention to creating photo-realistic artwork for an online Instagram image-literate audience, mixing fairy-tale stories with strong visuals, to entice the imagination. She draws inspiration from surrealist photographers and concept artists, aiming to produce images that transcend this world.

Contact Details
susanna@pixiston.com
www.pixiston.com



Valentina Baruffo

Valentina is a senior artist working at Pixelflakes in London.

As an Italian architect with a photographic background, Valentina has been working in archviz for two years, having worked for studios Eve Images and Brick Visual before moving to London. 'Being a member of the WIAV group has given me a great chance to get to know so many other women artists like me', she says. 'We inspire each other'.

Contact Details
www.facebook.com/valentina.baruffo



Cristina Patanè

Cristina runs her own studio in Catania, Italy.

Cristina is an architect/engineer who worked across Europe at Expressiv in Vienna and Bloomimages in Berlin before deciding to start her own business. Being selected on this list is a real honour, especially being listed alongside such prestigious studios and amazing talent. She is driven by a desire to learn new things and ways of working. 'I admire the abstract work of Darcstudio as it is more sensational than clinical photorealism. I am enchanted by this approach and try to achieve this in my work'.

Contact Details
info@cristinapatane.com
www.cristinapatane.com



Karina Ponce

Karina is a cofounder of Lemons Bucket in Madrid.

From the very beginning, Lemons Bucket aimed to develop high-quality images, considering communication and the ability to adapt to each project the main key to success. The studio collaborates globally with design firms and has been invited to provide speakers for various archviz and architectural conferences.

When asked about role models, Karina named both Josune Lozano Gárriz and Adán Martín as influences in her career. She would like to spend all her life working in this industry and her determined passion drives her to keep learning and improving.

Contact Details
info@lemonsbucket.com
www.lemonsbucket.com

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3Disciple



Artists



Tips



Feature



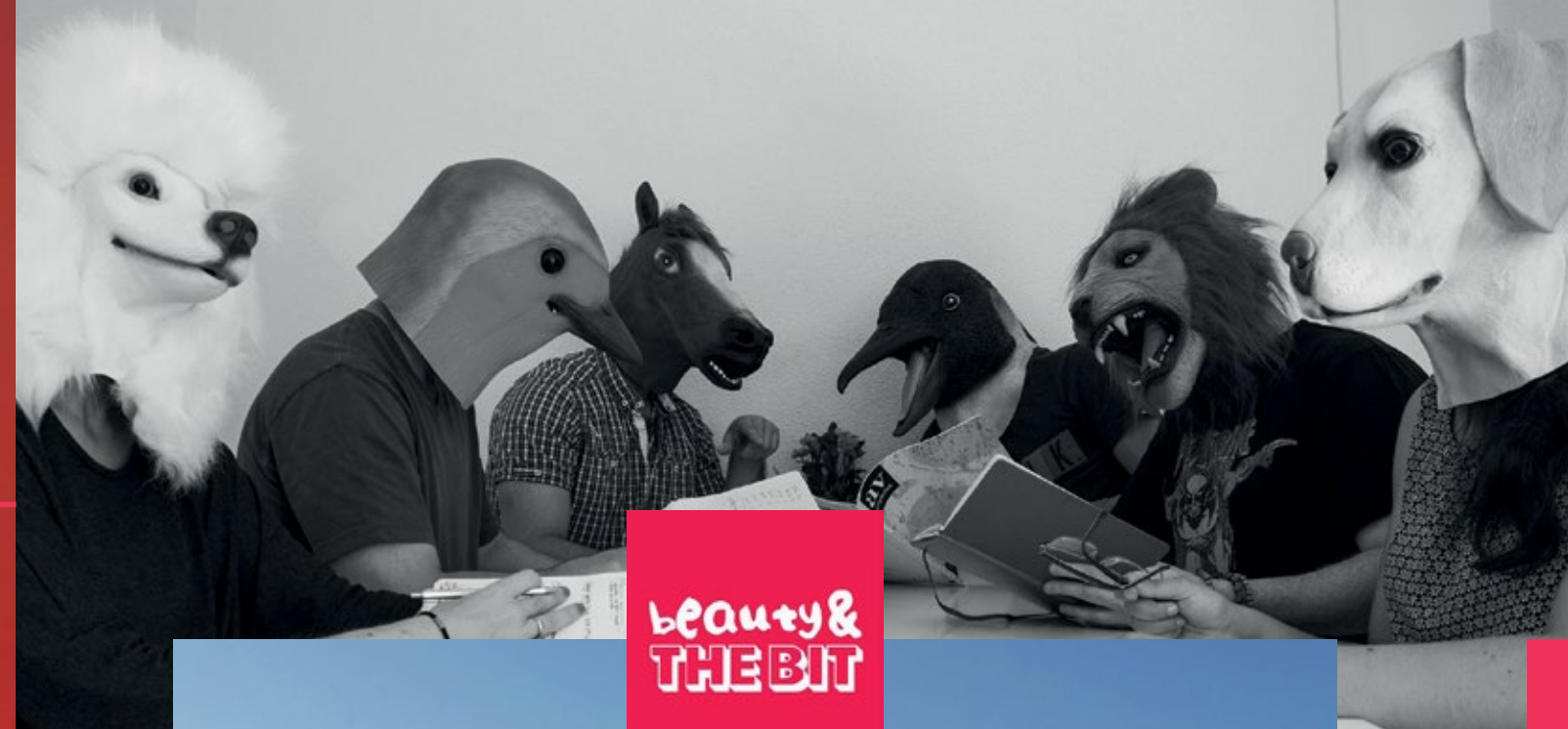
Resources



SiNi



Animal Imagery from Beauty and The Bit



Beauty And The Bit specialises in narrating, suggesting and evoking architectural spaces through images. Our mission is clear: getting to know and helping as many architecture studios (regardless of their size), architects and organisations as we can all over the world.

The secret of our product resides in a special ingredient: PASSION.





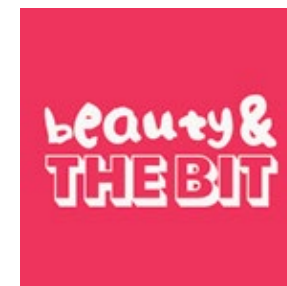
Victor Bonafonte
Founder, Architect, Art Director

Victor founded B&TB in a room at home years ago, and from that moment, the company has evolved into what it is today. He prefers to gather inspiration from cinema, painting, traditional photography, video-games and concept art instead of architectural visualisation. He hates the word 'render', and while he's not taking care of business he enjoys playing his collection of guitars.



Lina Garau
Founder, CFO

Lina has been on this wonderful adventure with Victor from the very beginning. She is the genius in the shadows and takes care of the clients, administration, booking and the team's morale, always wearing a huge, lovely smile on her face. She loves reading, hiking and visiting her hometown in the mountains of Mallorca.



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Beauty and The Bit

Facts



Beauty and The Bit

Studio Size: 8

Location: **Madrid, Spain**

Main Work: **Stills, Film, VR**

Main Software: **3ds Max, Corona, SiNi, iToo, Adobe CC**

Contact Details: **Victor Bonafonte.**

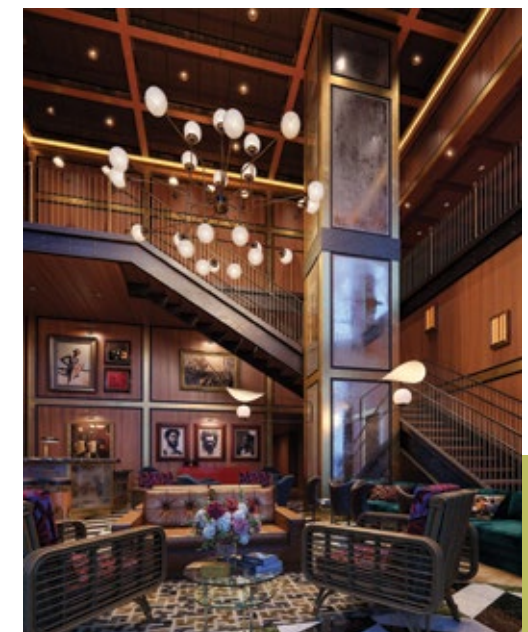
info@beautyandthebit.com

Website: **www.beautyandthebit.com**





Global Influences



Binyan's mission is to become the world's leading creators of architectural 3D rendering, animation and creative content.

We want to work on the best projects wherever they may be. And we want to create ground-breaking work for our industry and beyond. We aim to reshape our industry for the better, to lead, to advocate and to draw positive attention. We want to achieve this by inspiring, motivating, training and rewarding our incredible team and working together to shape a world-class environment, culture and career pathway.

We do this so we can grow, learn and build together.

BINYAN





OUR ARTISTS ARE OUR ESSENCE

At our very core we are a People Business, a family of like-minded individuals working together for a greater purpose.

At Binyan, everyone brings unique and creative skills to the team. We are unified by our commitment to meticulous detail and quality, our collective eye for beauty and our careful consideration of the subtleties that make each project distinctive, translating these assets into stunning results.

Facts



BINYAN

Binyan Studios
Studio Size: **98**
Locations: **Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, New York, London**
Main Work: **Stills and Cinemagraphs**
Main Software: **3ds Max, Corona, Vray, SiNi, iToo, Adobe CC**
Contact: **Andrei Dolnikov.**
adolnikov@binyan.com
Website: www.instagram.com/binyanstudios

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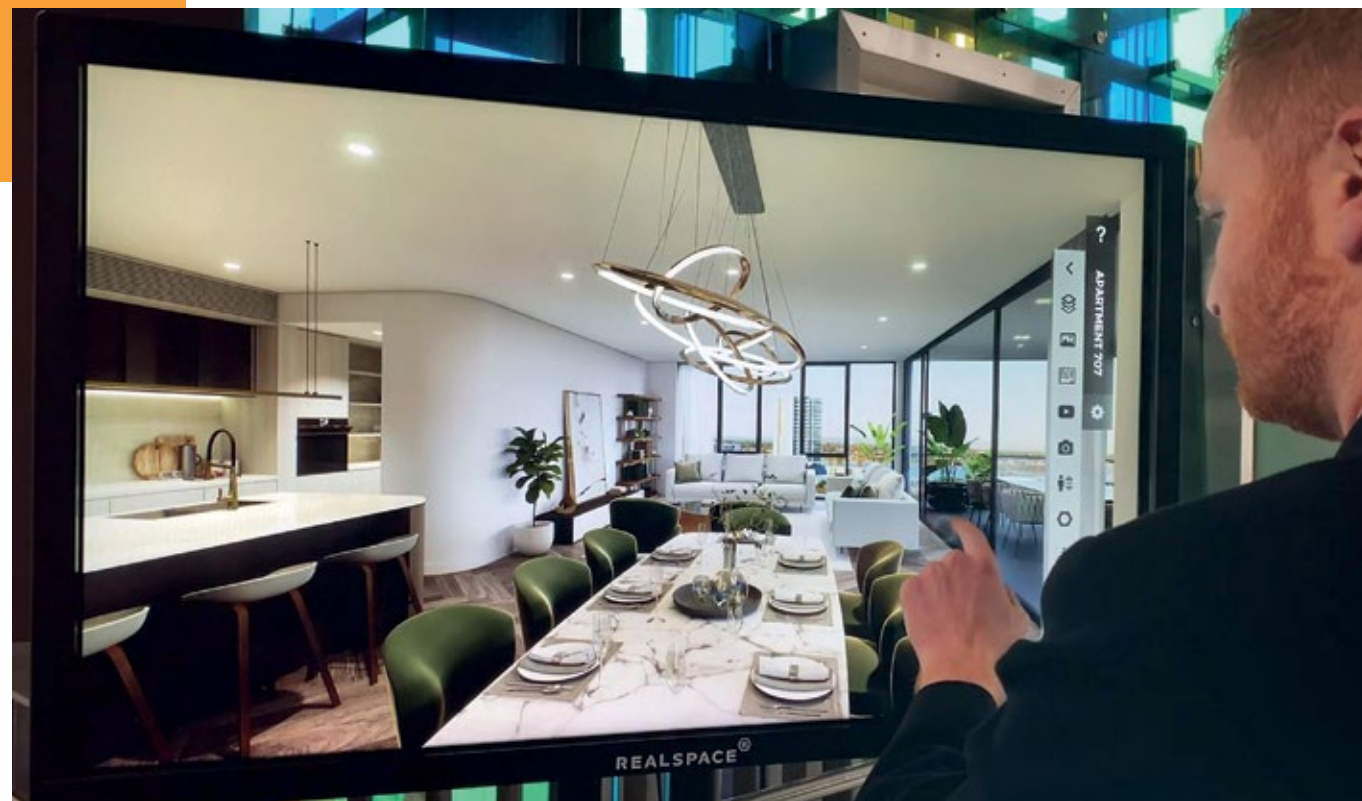
buildmedia

Buildmedia is an award-winning 3D rendering, animation and interactive studio located in Auckland, New Zealand. It is a world leader in real-time architectural visualisation and rendering.

Established as Cadimage Solutions in 1989, the company originally specialised in 3D architectural communication, visualisation and software supplies. In 2003, the company re-branded, reinventing itself as Buildmedia, a specialist studio focusing solely on marketing 3D visualisation. From this pivotal moment, it has continued to grow in size and reputation, becoming an industry pioneer in the adoption and development of cutting-edge techniques and visualisation technologies.

N gā ringatoi e whakaputa pikitia ana i te wā tūturu

New Zealand Māori translation of 'Artists producing pictures in real-time'



REALSPACE

INTERACTIVE DISPLAY SUITE

Realspace is an interactive digital display suite designed by Buildmedia that showcases and assists in selling real estate property, built on the latest cutting-edge real-time technology from Epic Games Unreal Engine.

Realspace allows buyers/agents to freely explore off-the-plan designs and gain unparalleled confidence in the project, configure spaces and create an infinite amount of marketing material.

Real-time rendering is disrupting the way archviz artists create content and Buildmedia is reaping the rewards by embracing this technology as an early adopter.



CRAFTED IN
REALSPACE



Facts



buildmedia

Buildmedia

Studio Size: 15

Location: Auckland, New Zealand

Main Work: Stills, VR/AR

Main Software: UE4, Unity, 3ds Max,

Corona, SiNi, iToo, Adobe CC

Contact Details: Gareth Ross, Tim

Johnson. info@buildmedia.com

Website: www.buildmedia.com

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Facts



Csaba Banati

Studio Size: 1

Location: **Vienna, Austria**

Main Work: **Stills**

Main Software: **3ds Max, Vray, SiNi, iToo, Adobe CC**

Contact Details: banati.csaba@gmail.com

Website: boringmike.artstation.com

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Csaba Banati

Csaba Banati began his archviz career at ZOA Studio (Hungary) before moving to Brick Visual (Hungary) and most recently to MIR (Norway), where he spent five years learning the craft. In late 2019 he set up a new base in Vienna, Austria.

'Since image-making is a highly creative process, I like to keep my work-flow and tools simple, fast and effective. This way I can swiftly follow my mind wherever it takes me without getting slowed down on repetitive or tedious procedures.'

To achieve this I use SiNi Ignite. I like how everything is in one compact interface and can save a few seconds on a lot of tools I use every other minute. It might not sound much at first but it quickly adds up and can literally save you hours at the end of the day'.

IGNITE literally saves me hours every day!





Los magos de la infografía 3D de América



Ekoomedia builds graphic media and technology for architecture, real estate and urban planning.

For its founders and employees, Ekoomedia is not an everyday job. It is an adventure and an opportunity to create extraordinary products for exceptional clients. A way to expand and connect with the rest of the world, speaking the universal language of image aesthetics.

Sergio Garzón Gomez, Ekoomedia's founder and Executive President, started the company in 2007 in Bogotá, Colombia, with the belief that there was a path to be developed by merging technology and architecture. He is a visionary architect with a background in design and construction. In 2009 he was joined by Sandra Arciniegas, Executive Director of Ekoomedia's two Colombian studios and the cornerstone of the company's growth. She brought balance, pragmatism and optimism to the team of talented architects, interior designers, graphic specialists and engineers.

We grew to international markets organically, through the quality of our products and the trust we built with clients, and this drew us to New York City. The Big Apple has given us exposure to world markets and challenges our talent and intelligence through fierce industry competition, but it has now become a second home and a playground of fun and inspiration for our team.

We don't take our relationship with our clients for granted - their objectives are the drivers for our work. In every project, we listen to and support their aspirations and needs, and so become an integral part of the team. In many instances, we participate in decision-making processes and help the client achieve excellence in its designs.





Originating in Colombia, a country that has gone through tremendous struggles, we pride ourselves on being a solid and inclusive family. Our diversity makes us strong. We invest in equality, and in the professional and personal well-being of all of our team members. We believe that giving support to our employees who may be experiencing difficult personal circumstances is the only way to build durable, healthy, creative artists and this support, in turn, results in great deliverables on client projects.



Facts



EKOO
MEDIA

Ekoomedia

Studio Size: 35

Location: New York, Bogotá, Medellín.

Main Work: Stills, VR, Comms Strategy.

Main Software: 3ds Max, Vray, SiNi,

iToo, Adobe CC

Contact:

Sergio Garzón, sgarzon@ekoomedia.com

Sandra Arciniegas, sandra@ekoomedia.com

Website: www.ekoomedia.com

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Tips & Tricks

After Importing



CAD BLOCKS

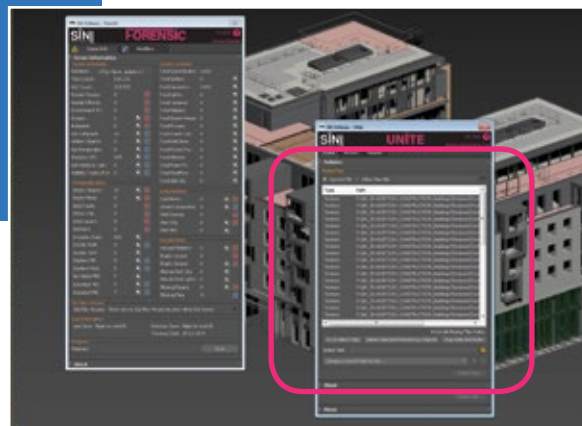
If CAD Blocks are present in your scene you must remove these FIRST before all other Forensic functions can work. If Forensic is greyed out, delete the CAD Blocks to activate the plugin functions.

Problematic Items

Often, when you import geometry from Revit or other BIM or CAD software, it contains Note Tracks, Motion Clips, Animation Layers and Retimers. DELETE THEM! It's likely they will be the cause of many 3ds Max scene problems.

Relink Textures

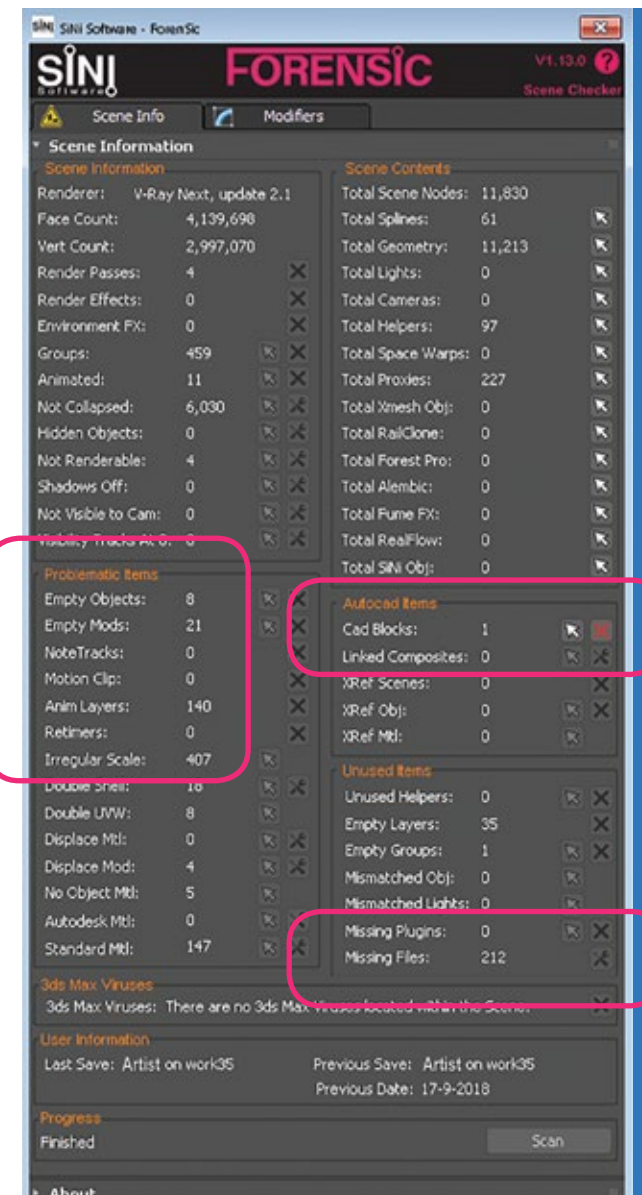
If textures and other file types are missing, click on the link to open Unite (IgNite only). In Unite, point to the directory that contains your textures and other linked files and it will repath everything with one click.



Forensic Plugin - Free and IgNite

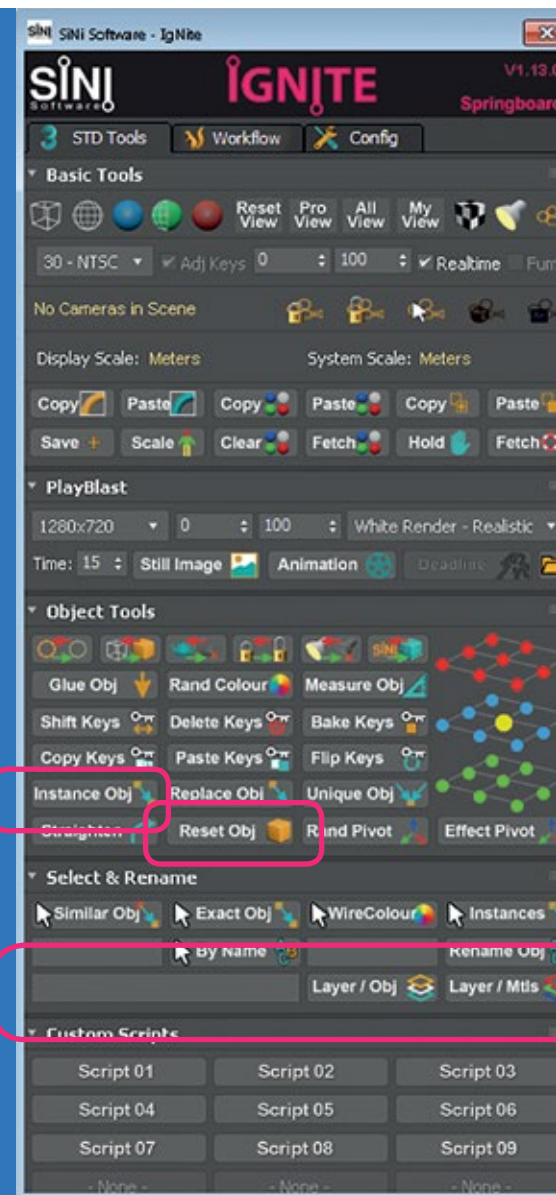
The Forensic plugin should be used every time you open a scene to check its integrity. It will present you an overview of the 3D scene and allow you to clean up and fix issues before getting to work.

The difference between the free and IgNite versions is the links to IgNite plugins to fix issues, such as relinking files.



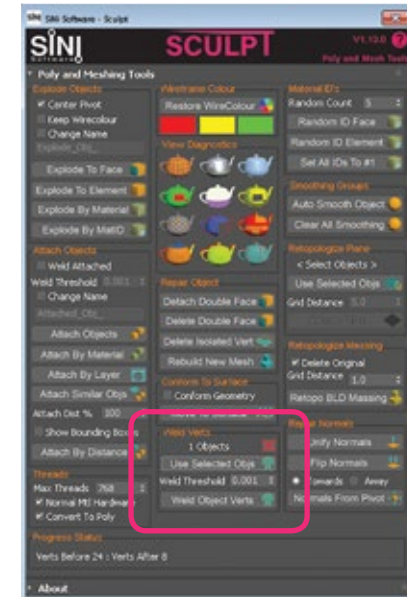
IgNite Springboard Plugin

The Standard (STD) Tools tab contains many tools you will find useful after analysing and fixing the scene with the Forensic plugin.



Sculpt Plugin

Sculpt is a specialist 3D geometry plugin for meshing tools, repair, cleanup, optimising 3D geometry and dealing with imported BIM and CAD models (Revit, Rhino, Sketchup etc), giving you multi-treaded functions to rapidly prepare models for 3ds Max use.



Weld Objects

We find a handy function in the Sculpt plugin is the Weld function. Select all the 3D objects you've imported and weld them all simultaneously. This is performed live so you can review before committing.

Instance Objects

IgNite Springboard has an automatic instance objects function. Select everything in the imported 3D scene and it will instance everything it can find that shares the exact values.

Reset Objects

XForm and then collapse the modifier stack. Alternatively, use the Rebuild New Mesh in Sculpt, which rebuilds the objects from scratch.

Create Layers

Importing FBX files? Do they import all the geometry on the default layer only? If you like working with layers, there are two create layer tools to use. The first, Layer by Object, creates layers based on Object Names. The second creates layers by Object Materials. This is a fast method for creating layers in seconds from imported FBX Revit files.





Elena started working as a designer in a printing house when she was still a fine arts student, and rapidly worked her way up to an art director position and then on to managing teams in corporate environments. But her passion has always been artistic and creative work. Taking a leap forward, she attended a master-class in illustration and animation, diving into the world of 3D. As a 3D artist, her work has received critical acclaim through awards and has been published internationally.

Elena is also focusing on educating and mentoring new artists, helping them to develop their skills. She is especially interested in equality and encouraging women into archviz, and moderates the Women in Archviz Facebook group, to promote and support women working in the archviz industry. #womenforarchviz



Facts



EVNVIS DESIGN
Location: **Milton Keynes, UK**
Main Work: **Direction, Stills**
Main Software: **3ds Max, Corona, SiNi, iToo, Adobe CC**
Contact: **Elena V Miller.**
elena@evnvis.co.uk
Website: **www.evnvis.co.uk**

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EVNvis Design

'An absolutely peaceful sense of lighting. Simply beautiful'.
- Alex Roman



Eleven is a London-based visualisation studio, born out of our life-long passion for 3D rendering and design. Through many years of experience working with the best architectural, interior design and 3D visualisation studios, we have learned to combine our technical skills and artistic perspective to help portray the vision of the designer.

Aneta Gesiorska

Aneta graduated from the University of Technology in Krakow/Manchester University with an MA in Architecture and developed a career as a 3D visualiser at Foster + Partners and later The Boundary.

Joana Maduro

Prior to starting Eleven Visualisation, Joana studied Communication Sciences and Technology at Aveiro University and obtained a Masters Degree in Computer Animation. She has worked as a CG artist at Frato Interiors, Foster + Partners and The Boundary.

Turn the dial up to... eleven



Having the opportunity to build creative collaborations, not just with clients but also with other individuals and experts, is what excites Eleven the most.



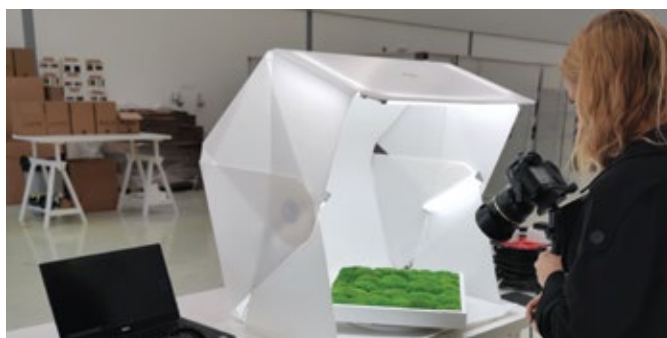
Getting involved in a hotel and winery project in the stunning Douro Valley in Portugal gave us the perfect opportunity to fully engage with the idea of starting our own business, allowing us to devote two months of our lives to producing material that would best showcase our visualisation skills and could be used as our online portfolio. Because of the unique nature of the collaboration with OODA architects, we were free to do whatever we wanted, however we wanted.

'Every artist out there knows that nothing feels better than a lack of constraints'.

It was a project with a lot of 'firsts' for us.

- First site visit by ourselves
- First photoshoot and drone flight by ourselves
- First time tracking drone footage

The Douro project felt like a good reminder of what's important when leading jobs - a good understanding of the designer's vision, a strong vision of your own and the courage to always punch just a little above your weight.



Photogrammetry is a subject we've been exploring for a couple of years and we see it as a truly powerful technique to bring an extra level of reality into CG environments.

It doesn't necessarily require high-end equipment to achieve remarkable results. The aspect that we enjoy the most is the freedom of being able to create highly personalised items for each of our projects. We've recently collaborated on bringing 3D scanned assets into an AR environment and we definitely have a lot of enthusiasm for exploring these techniques further.

eleven

Facts



Eleven Visualisation

Studio Size: 2

Location: London, United Kingdom

Main Work: Stills and Cinemagraphs

Main Software: 3ds Max, Corona, SiNi, iToo, Adobe CC

Contact Details: info@elevenv.com

Website: www.elevenv.com

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F10 Studios is a creative architectural visualisation studio producing world-class imagery

Focusing on excellence, F10 works in close partnership with leading residential and commercial developers, architects and interior designers, bringing visions to life with detailed and engaging imagery.

Established in 2008 in the heart of Brighton, England, the studio has been building lasting client relationships and collaborating on great projects around the globe ever since.



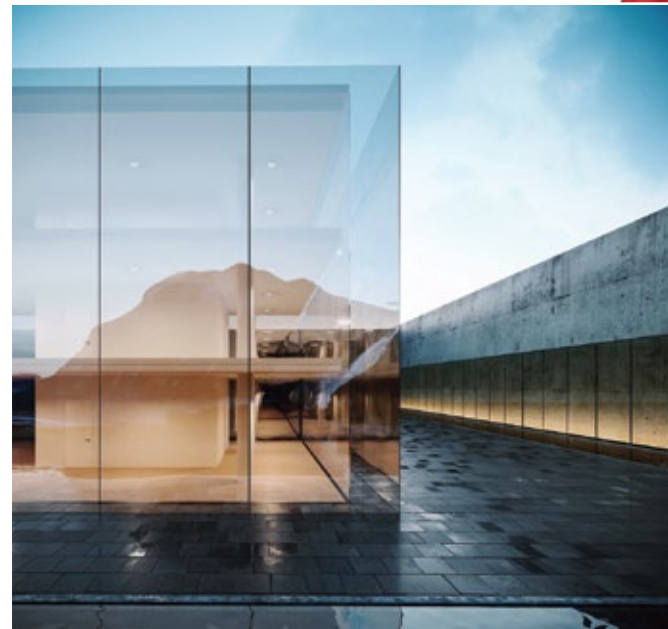
Facts



F10 Studios
Studio Size: 9
Locations: Brighton, UK
Main Work: Stills
Main Software: 3ds Max, Corona, Vray, SiNi, iToo, Adobe CC
Contact: Nick Homer,
nick@f10studios.co.uk
Website: www.f10studios.co.uk

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BRIGHTON ROCKS!



Great Talks about Photo Realism by Bogdan Sasu is a book that promises to unveil the stories of some of the best international visualisation artists in the industry. If you've ever wondered about the secrets behind creating photo-realistic images, you

now have a chance to peek inside the great minds who have already captured attention in the field. The book is the very first such project uniting world-renowned artists in the 3D community. It has been a challenge, but we are very proud to have been able to bring this project to life.



Visit the website to learn more:
<https://www.greataaboutphotorealism.com>



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Who are GRAPHROOT?

GRAPHROOT delivers Visual Strategy for the built environment using photo-realistic CGI content. Our mission is to develop the best visual scenario by fitting project strengths with showcasing needs.

Having a multi-disciplinary team with diverse backgrounds in advertising, graphic design and architecture gives us a unique insight into what visual set-ups best deliver our client's message depending on objective and type of output.



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We believe good CGI products communicate the concept to the target audience because they are specifically built to match the project highlights to end-receiver relevance and needs. Since clients have bespoke visual approaches, which means they need to be correlated to project delivery specifics and decision-maker profiles to ensure our CGI products fit the objective.

GRAPHROOT was the first Romanian studio to be nominated in the Best Commissioned Images category in the 2018 CGArchitect Architectural 3D Awards and the youngest studio to receive the nomination. In less than two years, the studio has worked on projects for leading architecture practices and property developers from Europe, Australia, the US and Dubai. As a direct result of the studio's visual strategy techniques and far reach on the international visualisation market, Nicoleta Ivascu, the managing partner, was invited to "Balkan Conference 2018" as Romania's entrepreneur representative for the "Making a difference with entrepreneurship Panel", to share how GRAPHROOT's strategic approach to architectural visualisation helped the company develop high-end products.

Nicoleta is also leading the development team of WireFame, a tech start-up focused on optimising and automating the assessment process and client workflow in creative production.



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Facts



GRAPHROOT

Studio Size: 5

Location: Bucharest, Romania

Main Work: Stills

Main Software: 3ds Max, Corona, SiNi, iToo, Adobe CC

Contact Details: Nicoleta Ivascu, office@graphroot.com

Website: www.graphroot.com

GRAPHROOT.

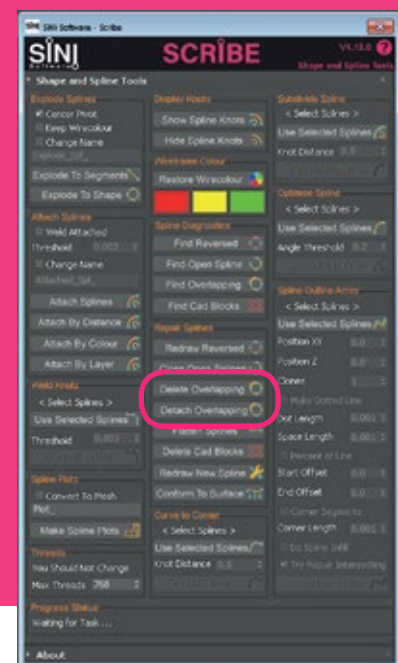
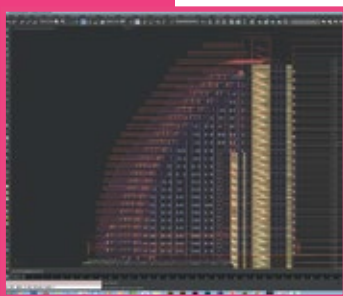
Images copyright © 2019 GRAPHROOT



Tips & Tricks

Delete Overlapping Splines

Quickly clean up an imported CAD drawing before working with it, using the Delete Overlapping or Detach Overlapping tools. First select the splines then select either of the tools. The tool will scan the selection and remove the duplicates.



Scribe Plugin

The Scribe plugin is similar to the Sculpt plugin but designed for 2D splines. It features Attach tools and Repair Splines tools, plus Optimise and Spline Outline Array.

As with the Sculpt Diagnostic features on the opposite page, the Scribe Diagnostic tools are designed to fix imported data or drawings, cleaning them up and redrawing splines if required. You can also flatten drawings to ensure everything is level.

Unite - Relink (List all missing paths) before opening in 3ds Max

The Relink Tab in the Unite plugin allows you to relink scenes without needing to open them. This means you can scan a scene and link all the associated files before you open it.



Jumble removing Small Objects

The Jumble plugin has a feature to Select by Percentage and Volume. This allows you to select objects in imported scenes that you may not need, i.e. on a large building Revit model, select the small volume objects such as door handles that you won't see and delete them.



Optimising Scenes

Attach 3D Objects

We designed our Attach tools to work fast!

Using multi-threading, a typical imported high-rise building 3D model should attach in a few seconds. (Please ensure the 3ds Max Layer Manager is off or undocked).

Attach Objects - attaches all selected objects only into one object. The materials are combined into a multi-sub material.

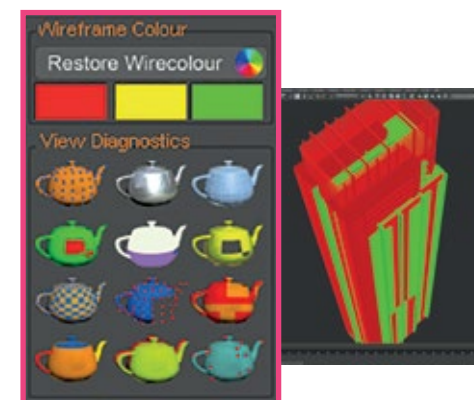
Attach By Material - attaches selected objects by materials.

Attach By Layer - attaches selected objects by layers.

Attach Similar - attaches based on certain object parameters.

Sculpt Diagnostics

The diagnostic tools are designed to review, check and fix 3D geometry. By clicking on each Teapot you are presented with different checking processes, such as flipped faces. The Red/Yellow/Green colours show a visual guide to help quickly select objects and fix them.



Sculpt - Delete Double Faces

The tools are inside the Repair Object section of Sculpt. Select the 3D geometry you want to check - SiNi recommends clicking Detach Double Faces before deleting, as it shows all the double faces in the model. You can then delete them.

Other functions in Repair Object include Delete Isolated Verts and Rebuild New Mesh.

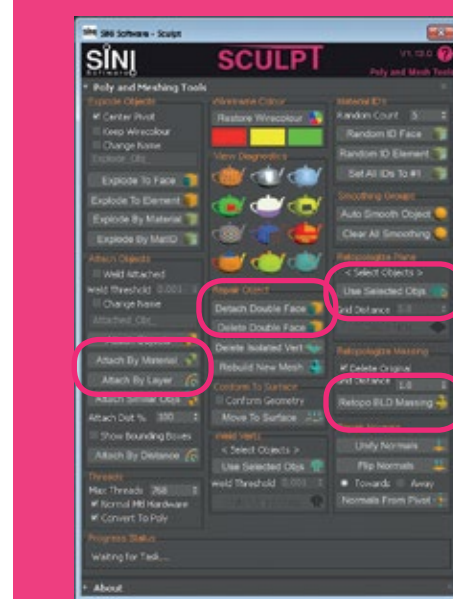


Sculpt Plugin

Many of the Sculpt tools have been designed in production to repair and fix 3D geometry imported in 3ds Max. The functions featured on this page will potentially save you hours of work.

TIP! Undock the Layer Manager to increase Sculpt speed

SiNi Sculpt functions use multi-threading to process complex tasks such as attach objects. For best performance SiNi recommends undocking or switching off the layer manager.

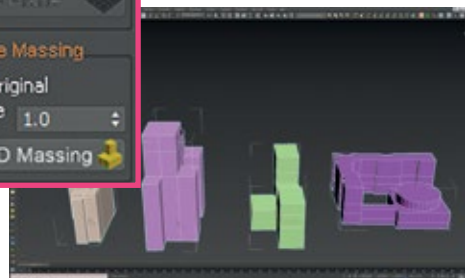
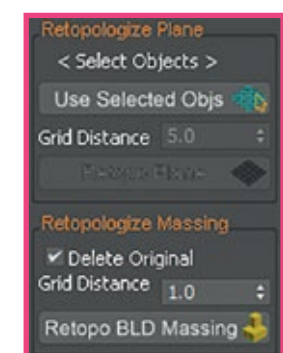


Retopology

There are two retopology tools in Sculpt. Both perform different functions on imported or messy 3D geometry.

Retopologize Plane - Drapes a new 3D surface over messy objects. You set the grid distance for complexity of mesh.

Retopologize Massing - Some imported 3D block models are a mess, having been created as stacks and overlapping boxes. This rebuilds the models.





HayesDavidson

Facts



Hayes Davidson
Studio Size: 35
Location: **London, United Kingdom**
Main Work: **Stills, Film, Interactive**
Main Software: 3ds Max, Corona, SiNi, iToo,
Adobe CC, Nuke, Unreal
Contact Details: studio@hayesdavidson.com
Website: www.hayesdavidson.com

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Hayes Davidson is a 100% employee-owned studio that specialises in the visualisation of architecture and the built environment, collaborating with many of the world's top architects, designers and developers.

The studio has produced over 30,000 images since it was founded in 1989, working on projects around the world. The team is known for maintaining the highest standards of work and client service and has had the privilege of working on prestigious London projects including The Shard, King's Cross, BBC Television Centre, Bloomberg, One Hyde Park, Earl's Court and Tate Modern.

We visualise unbuilt architecture using technology and artistry and our clients are architects, developers, planners and city authorities. We understand how buildings are perceived and we know how people will react to images and film.

We are very proud of our studio. With 30 years of experience, we have built long-standing relationships with clients and much of our new business is generated from recommendations and our reputation within the industry.

◀ Our submission to 2019 '10x10' Charity Auction for Article 25



Culture

Hayes Davidson has a multi-disciplinary team with expertise from many different fields. At the heart of the studio are the artists, who are from a wide range of backgrounds but share a commitment to the highest artistic standards in architectural illustration. Day to day, the atmosphere in the studio is informal and friendly. The team at Hayes Davidson are extremely sociable inside and outside of the working day with regular team lunches, evenings out and exhibitions, as well as the occasional party - keeping things fun.



Charity

Hayes Davidson supports and encourages charitable giving. The team regularly undertakes charitable fundraising and the studio donates to a wide range of worthy causes. One of the studio's key charity events is the HD5K - a run in Hyde Park in aid of the Motor Neurone Disease (MND) Association. This annual industry event has raised over £120k since 2018. It also honours the memory of Alan Davidson, the founder of Hayes Davidson. Alan was diagnosed with MND in 2012 and sadly passed away in August 2018. Alan was present at the inaugural run in May 2018.



Future

Hayes Davidson is committed to the on-going education of the team. We hold a weekly seminar series to which experts from different fields are invited to share knowledge. We have a dedicated R&D team and we invest heavily in technology. We run a yearly Summer Placement for students. This is an eight-week learning program with a focus on visual representation of architectural projects. We are delighted that with each year we have seen an increase in applications.

111 West 57th Street, NY, Shop Architects, JDS Development Group ►



Keely is a designer with over 18 years of experience in the fields of architecture, graphic design, film, visualisation and animation. She holds a Bachelor of Architecture degree from McGill University and a Masters Degree from the Southern California Institute of Architecture. Keely founded Kilograph with a desire to combine leading-edge visualisation techniques with animation, interactive design, graphics and branding.

She is also a board member at the A+D Museum of Los Angeles, President of the American Society of Architectural Illustrators (ASAI), and a repeat member of the Jury for the Architizer A+ Awards.



Keely Colcleugh
Founder



K
A Possibilities Company



Facts

Kilograph
Studio Size: 32
Location: LA, USA. Alicante, Spain
Main Work: Stills, Film, VR
Main Software: 3ds Max, Corona, SiNi, iToo, Adobe CC
Contact Details: info@kilograph.com
Website: www.kilograph.com

Kilograph

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Architect-founded, we are, at our core, interested in communicating design vision in new and exciting ways. We work with our clients to develop unique and compelling narratives that help them reach their audiences. Our artists create 3D illustrations, films and animations, Virtual Reality experiences, custom mobile apps, brand identities and interactive websites, and anything else required to bring the vision of your projects to life.

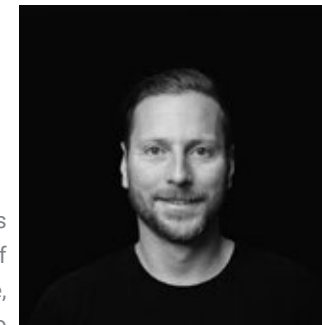
Since 2010, our studio has collaborated with leaders in the architecture, real estate and development and retail industries to achieve visual communication materials with measurable impact. At Kilograph, we believe in producing everything in-house. This allows us to respond quickly to changes, exercise control over our quality, and give our clients the flexibility we know the design process needs.

Kilograph is WBE-, SBE- and LSBE-certified with the state of California, County of Los Angeles, and Metro.

MOGAMMA

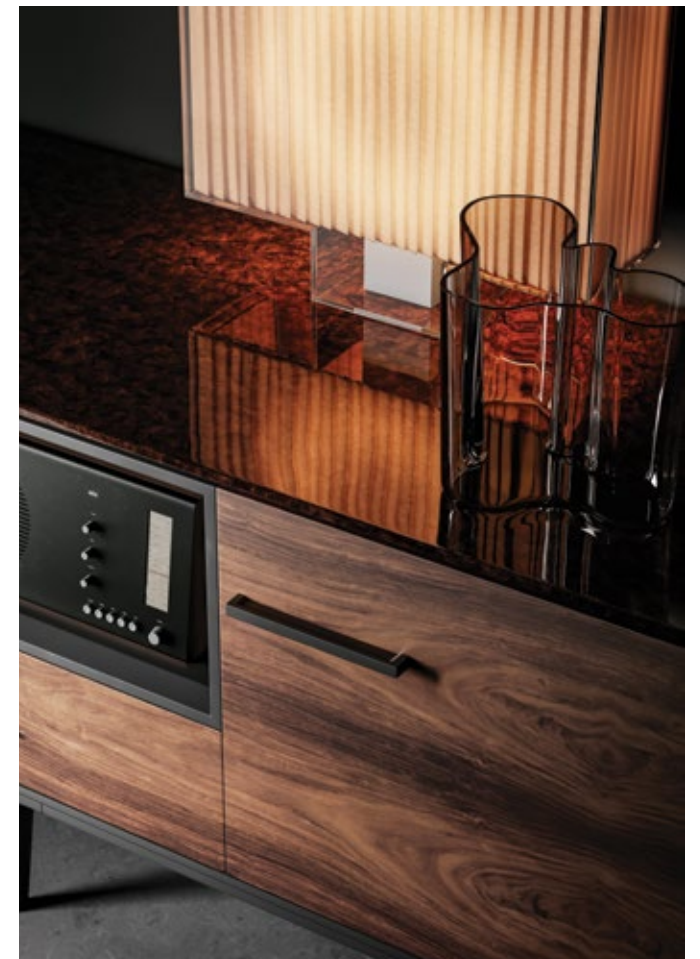
Peter Letten

Managing Director. Peter brings a holistic perspective, a wealth of creative and technical expertise, strategic savvy and the ability to make the complex run smoothly.



Martin Houra

Creative Director. Martin applies his impeccable craftsmanship, cutting-edge techniques and global experience to oversee, execute and maintain the exceptional quality of output from the studio.



MOGAMMA is a boutique Architectural Visualisation practice with studios in Sydney and Melbourne.

We work as a tight-knit team on every project to ensure communication, accuracy and attention to detail are paramount. The impressive blend of skills at our senior level maintains a rigour in our processes, consistently resulting in work that clearly demonstrates how we understand the technical and creative intricacies that go into each development.

Facts



MOGAMMA

Studio Size: 8

Location: Sydney, Melbourne, Australia

Main Work: Stills, Film, VR

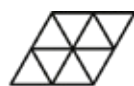
Main Software: 3ds Max, Corona, SiNi, iToo, Adobe CC

Contact Details: hello@mogamma.com.au

Website: mogamma.com.au/

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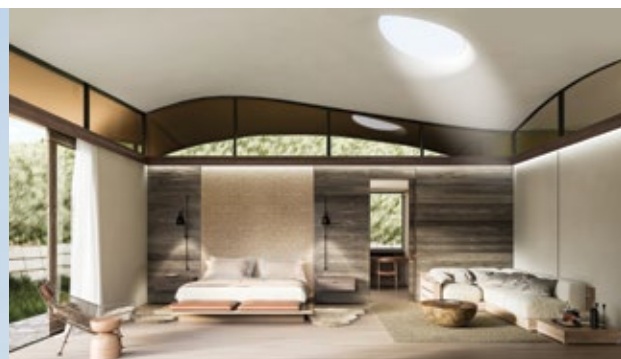




MYLES MONTGOMERY

Myles Montgomery is a boutique architectural and interior visualisation studio, focusing on delivering uncompromised quality through our attention to detail, originality and emphasis on lighting and composition.

The studio was founded in Melbourne, Australia in 2005 by Myles before he made the lifestyle decision to relocate to the province of Nelson, New Zealand in 2018. The team has since grown to provide commissioned 3D artwork both nationally and internationally, with clients looking for renowned high-quality work.



Facts



Myles Montgomery Visualisation

Studio Size: 4

Location: Nelson, New Zealand

Main Work: Stills, Cinemagraphs

Main Software: 3ds Max, Corona, SiNi, iToo, Photoshop

Contact Details: Myles Montgomery.

hello@mylesmontgomery.com

Website: www.mylesmontgomery.com

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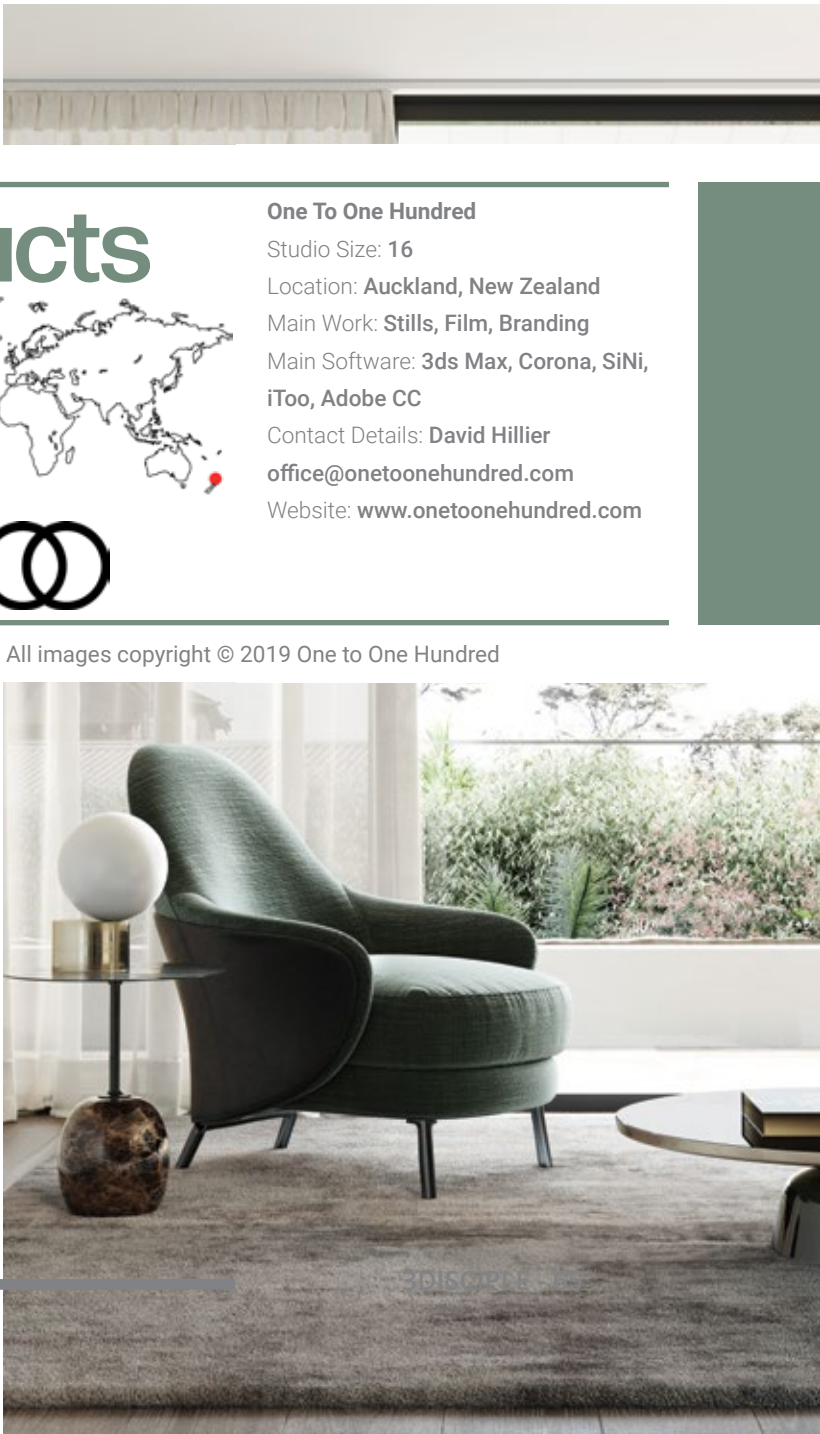


There are two distinct but symbiotic sides to our company - an architectural visualisation studio and a creative agency. Founded in 2004 by Jamie Holmes and David Hillier, One to One Hundred was an archviz studio for the first ten years before introducing branding and design services for property developments. As a studio, we continue to produce a lot of work not associated with multi-unit res-

idential, but we have found our niche in the combination of rendering and marketing. We enjoy being able to tell a story across all collateral and believe that the final outcome is ultimately more considered, creative and successful because of this approach.

You will find us in Auckland, New Zealand but we are comfortable working with clients anywhere in the world.





Facts

100

One To One Hundred

Studio Size: 16

Location: **Auckland, New Zealand**

Main Work: **Stills, Film, Branding**

Main Software: **3ds Max, Corona, SiNi, iToo, Adobe CC**

Contact Details: **David Hillier**
office@onetoonehundred.com
www.onetoonehundred.com

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Oneforall, our sister marketing brand, has proven to be very positive on a number of fronts: a complete end-to-end service to take developments to market, innovative collaboration across our talented teams, greater influence over the success of a project, and greater autonomy over the creative direction of the renders.

Before we were just following a brief, now we generate the concept and make sure it is reflected in the lighting, colour, styling and grading to deliver a cohesive set of renders.

3D Awards 2019

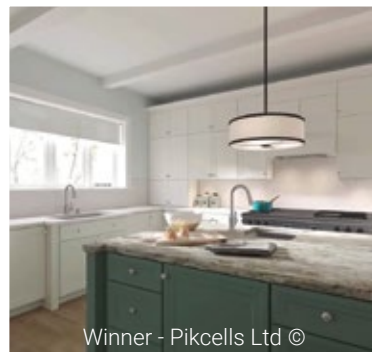
The CGArchitect Architectural 3D Awards are the largest and most prestigious awards for the architectural visualisation industry. The awards were introduced in 2004 to recognise outstanding achievement in the field of architectural visualisation, and 2019

marked their 16th year, with more than \$350,000 in prizes and the awards ceremony taking place at the D2 Conference in Vienna, Austria.

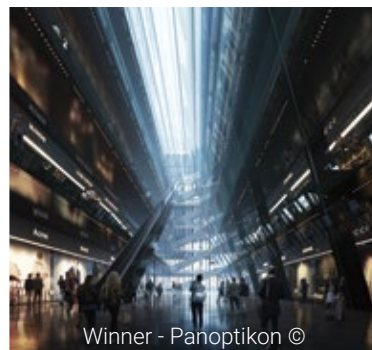
Over the past sixteen years, many extremely talented individuals and com-

panies have gone on to form new alliances and partnerships and advanced their careers from the exposure received from winning and being nominated in the awards.

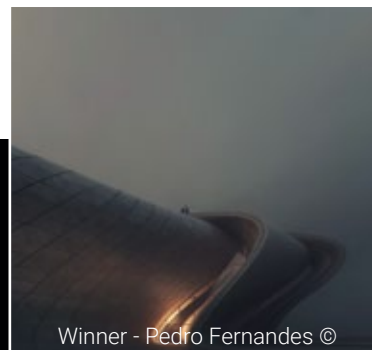
Many of these artists and studios are featured in this issue of 3Disciple.



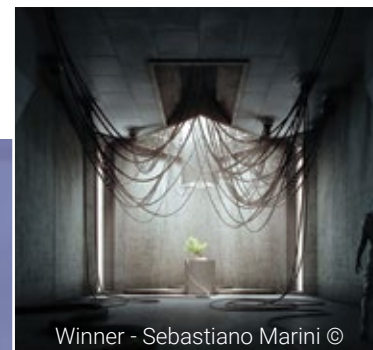
Winner - Pikcells Ltd ©



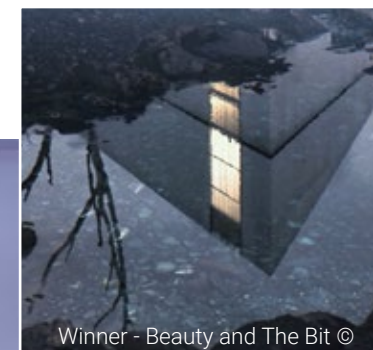
Winner - Panoptikon ©



Winner - Pedro Fernandes ©



Winner - Sebastiano Marini ©



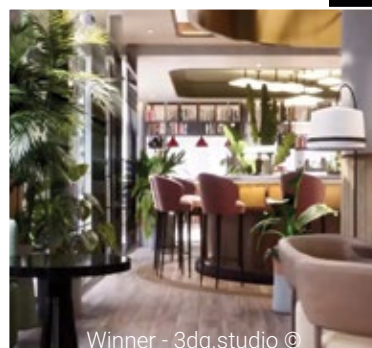
Winner - Beauty and The Bit ©



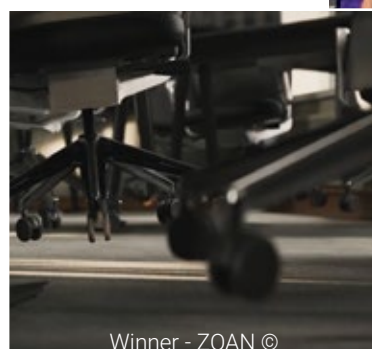
Winner - Dans Digital ©



Winner - Cheng Lei ©



Winner - 3dq.studio ©



Winner - ZOAN ©

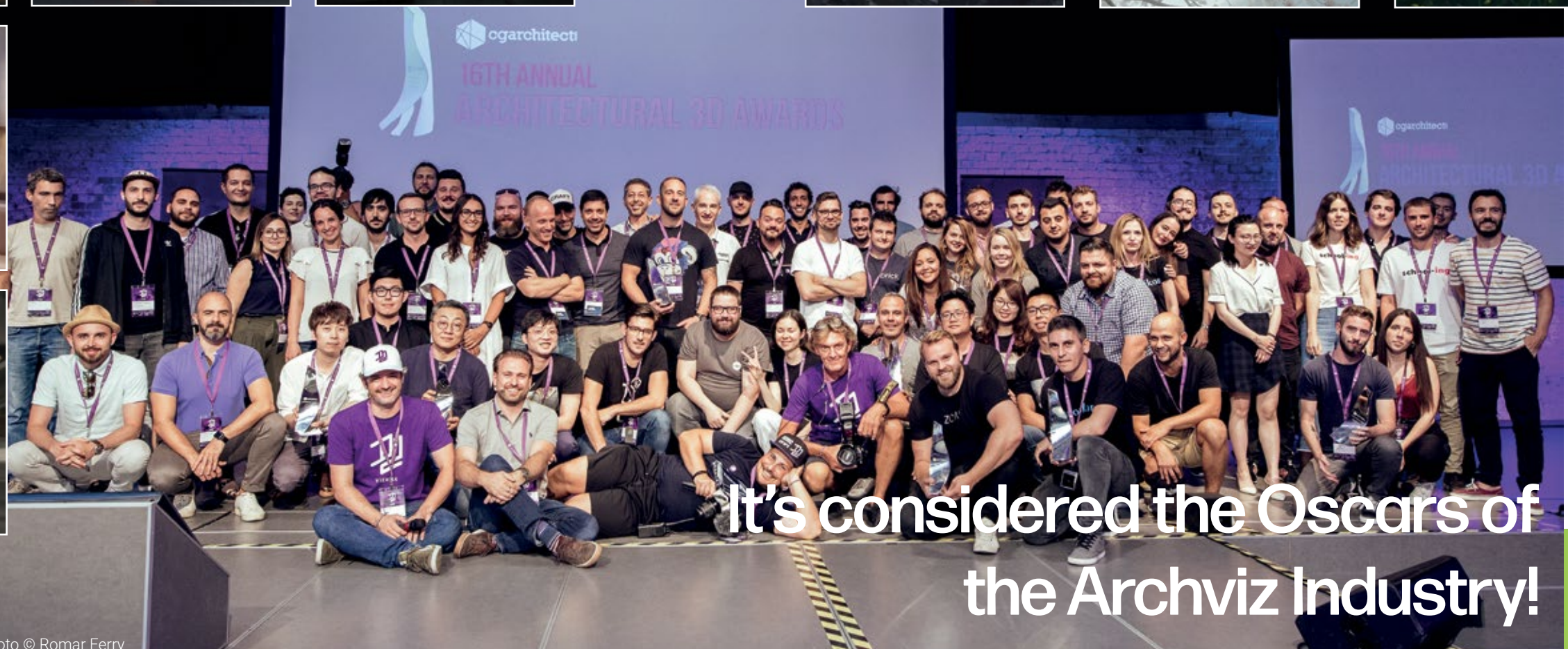
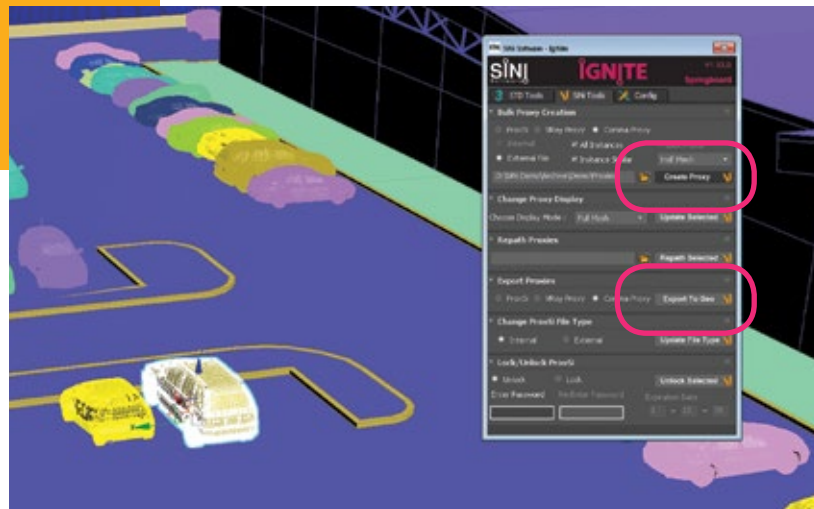


Photo © Romar Ferry

It's considered the Oscars of the Archviz Industry!

Tips & Tricks

Using Proxies

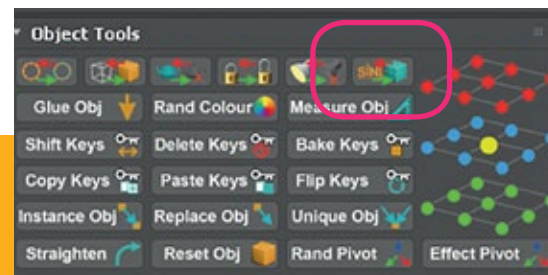


Roundtrip editing of proxies, and converting from V-Ray to Corona, or vice versa!

You have laid out a massive scene with proxies and you (or your studio) wish to change from V-Ray to Corona or vice versa. Simple!

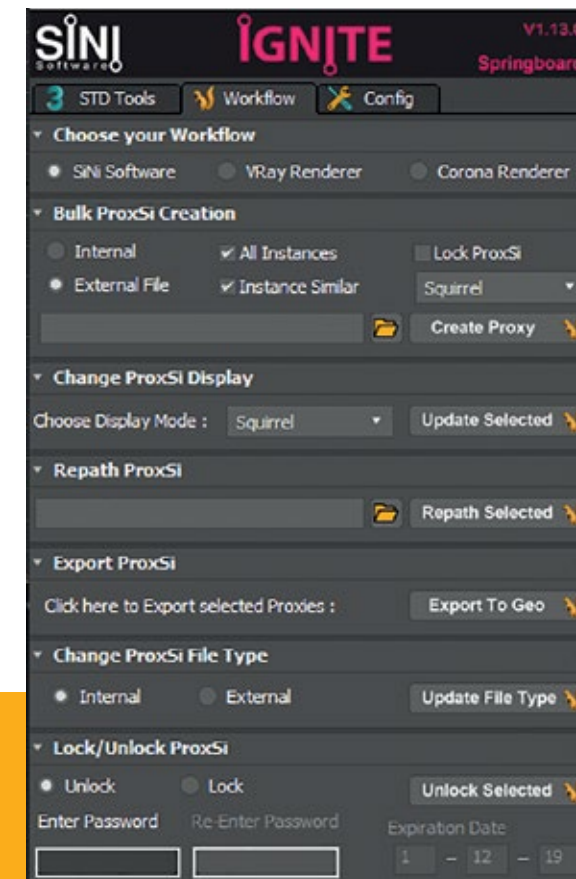
Simply select the proxy, export to Geometry, and switch to the other proxy on the top Bulk Proxy Creation. Select the format and Create Proxy. If you have All Instances turned on, it will create them as well.

Please note: you can use this method to switch to Edit Mesh to modify or replace the 3D model and then return it to Proxy, as often as you like.



Display performance and other tools

On the Spingboard UI under Object Tools, you will find the display buttons. Click on the Proxy Display High/Low to change the display setting of every proxy selected.



The Workflow tab is where you find all the bulk tools for ProxSi, V-Ray Proxy and Corona Proxy

The Workflow Tab is located on the Ignite Springboard plugin. Here you will find all the bulk and global fuctions relating to the SiNi universal ProxSi, plus V-Ray and Corona proxies.

Selecting your proxy preference on the top row reconfigures the functions below to support the selected proxy.

One of the most powerful and useful features is the ability to change proxies from one to another via edit mesh, without losing any of the scene transforms, instancing or location.

At the bottom of the UI are the ProxSi bespoke functions. The most useful is the Lock/Unlock tool. If you have client-sensitive 3D models you wish to protect, adding a ProxSi security password means nobody can modify the 3D model and you can set an expiry timelimit if you send the file to someone. You can override this by entering the password.

Replace Objects

If you have to replace a proxy for some reason, the easiest method is to use the Replace Object function.

Click on the Replace Object button in Ignite Springboard/Object Tools.

The Replace Object dialogue box will Appear. First, select the proxy. If it is instanced, this will replace the instances as well. Second, select the object you wish to replace this with. In this case the car is replaced with a teapot. Done!



Panoptikon

Facts



Panoptikon

Studio Size: 7

Location: **Bucharest, Romania**

Main Work: **Stills, Video**

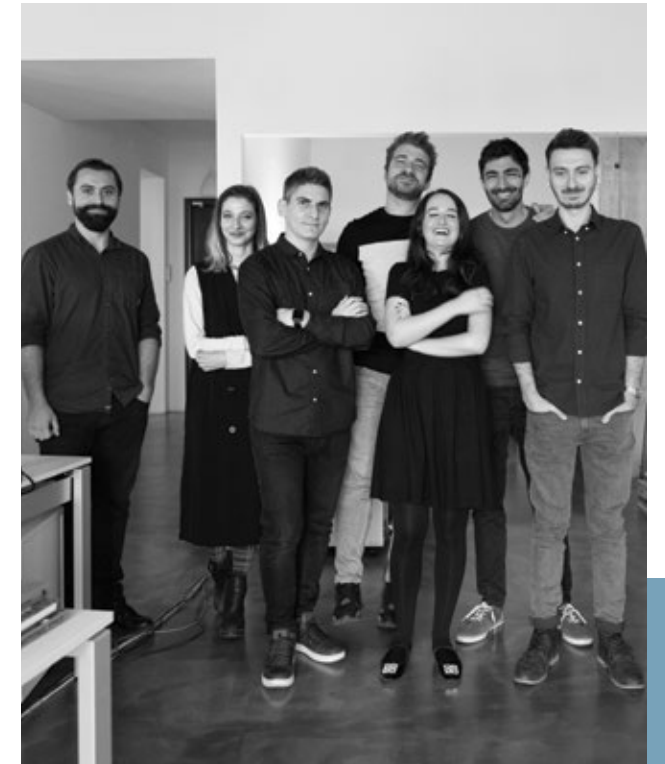
Main Software: **3ds Max, Corona, SiNi, iToo, Mirza, Adobe CC**

Contact Details: **Tudor Vasiliu.**

office@thepanoptikon.com

Website: **www.thepanoptikon.com**

Images copyright © 2019 Panoptikon



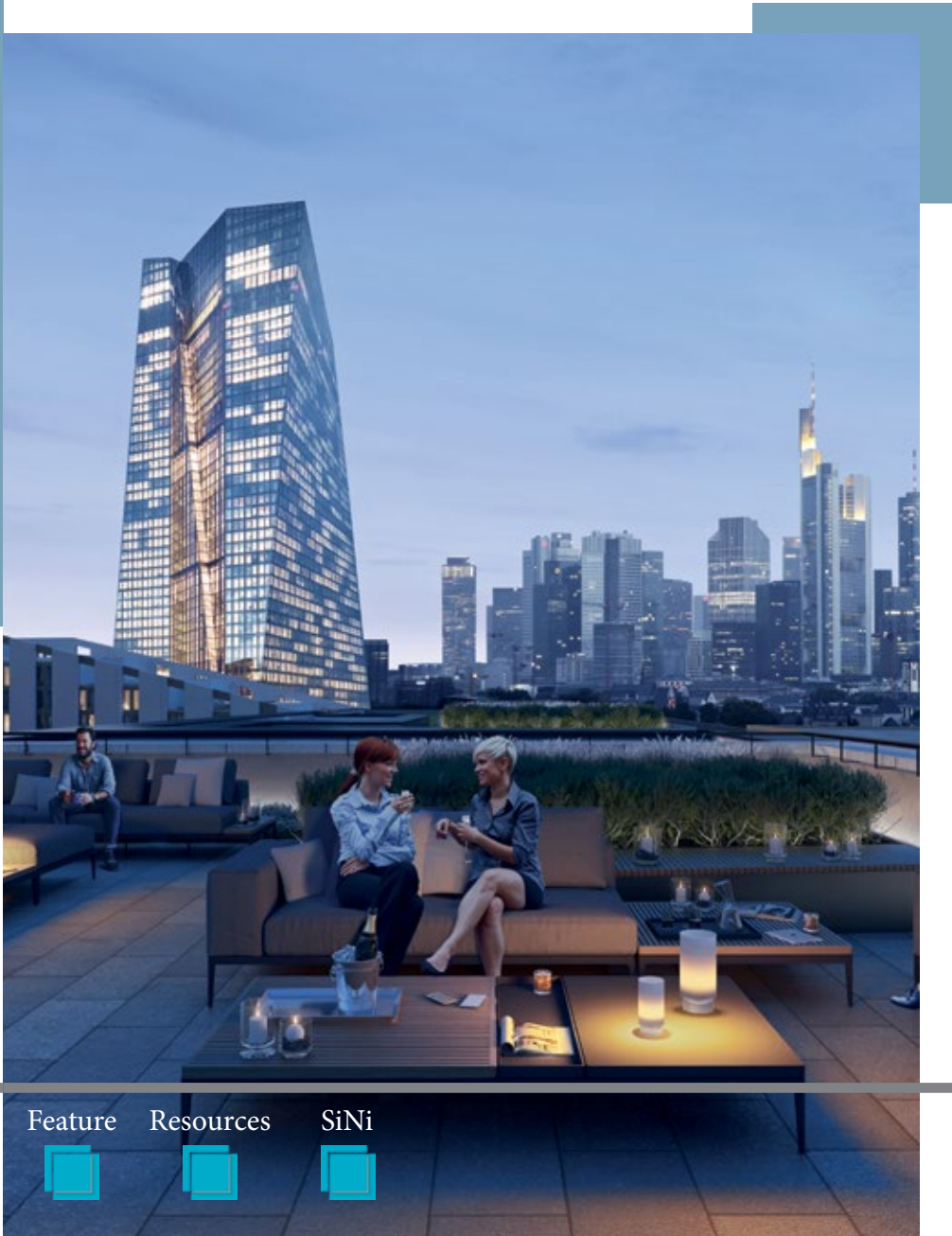
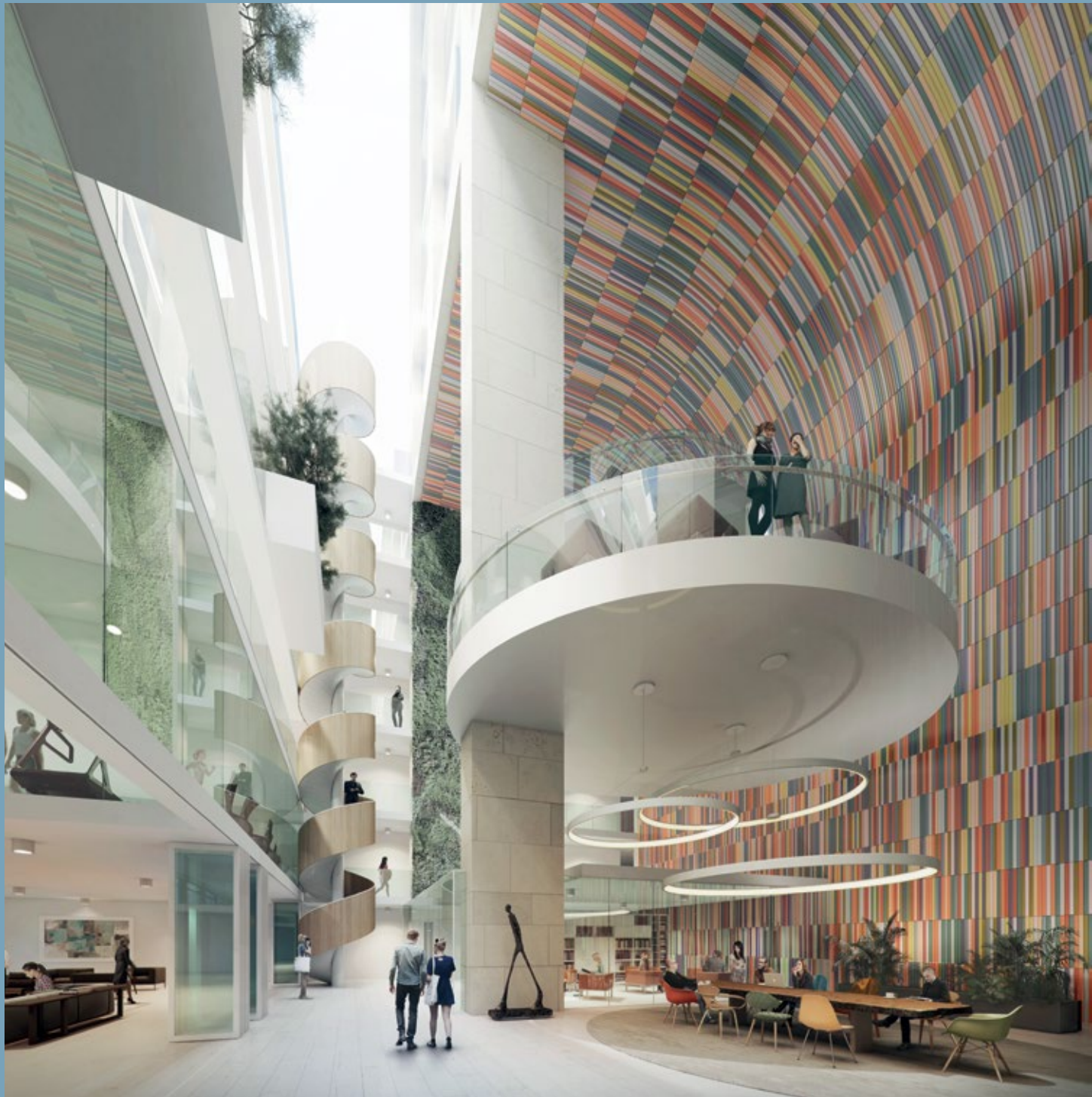
Panoptikon is an award-winning visualisation studio based in Bucharest, Romania. We cater for architecture design studios, property developers and designers worldwide.

Conceived in 2006 and fully established in 2013 by Tudor Vasiliu, Panoptikon slowly grew as a tight-knit and friendly bunch, driven by the same desire to capture the manifestations of architecture as outstanding visual experiences.

Architects by training, we draw inspiration from life, photography and film-making, and act as photographers in a virtual world where natural elements can be manipulated into submission.

This freedom also acts as a wonderful limitation during our efforts to emulate various instances of reality.

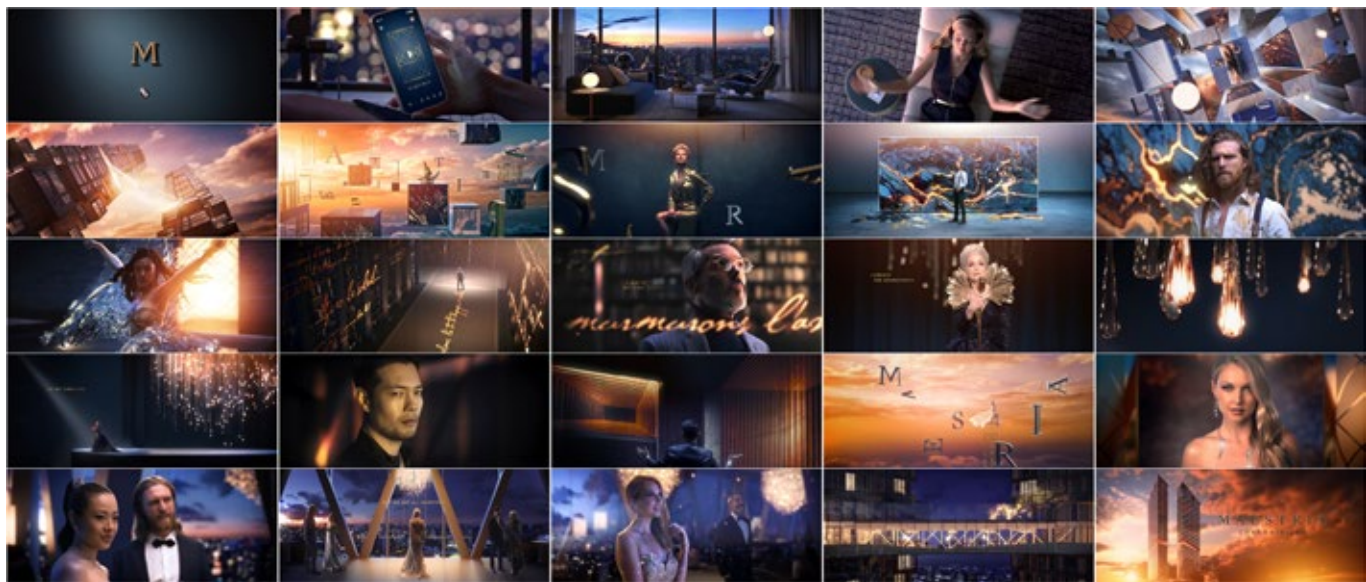




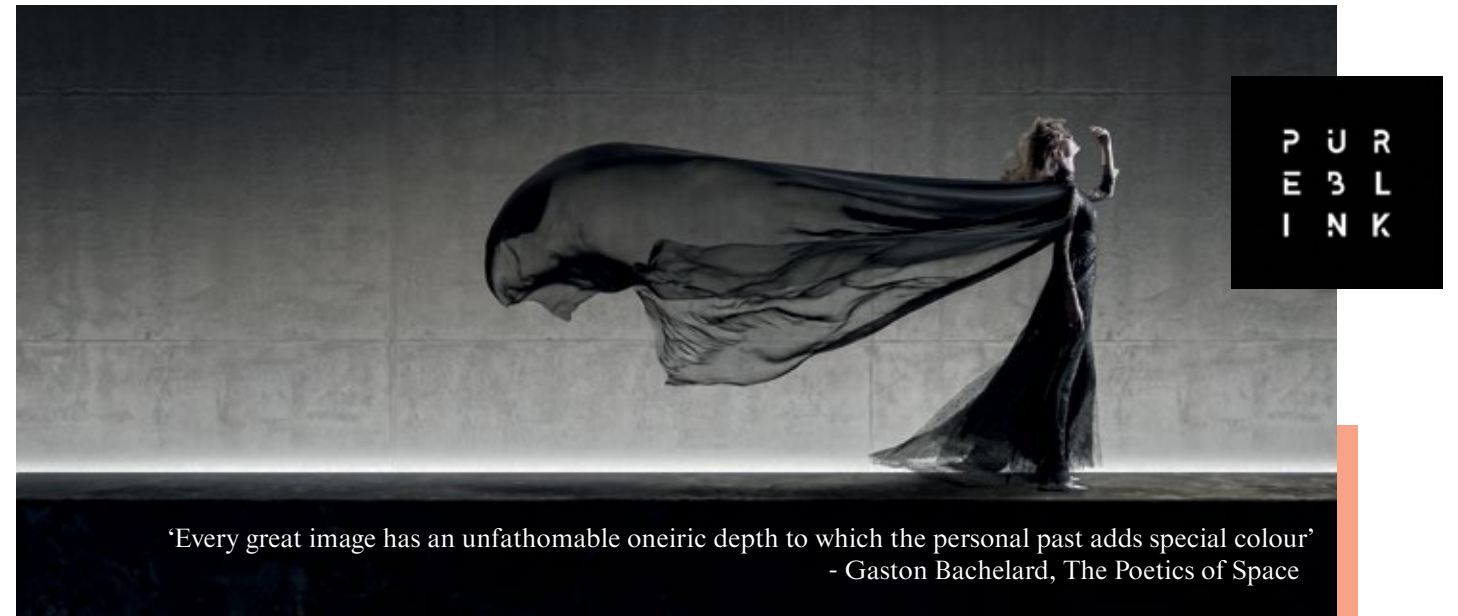
Winning the CGarchitect Architectural 3D Award for the Best Architectural Image of 2019 took us by surprise. Aside from the recognition of our commitment to producing quality work, one of the great takeaways was getting to know the good people in the archviz community, which we are now more and more involved with.

We cannot stress enough the role Jeff Mottle has had in bringing up this industry, a contribution for which we are extremely grateful.





Maestros of Cinematic Viz



Purelink was established with a strong desire to showcase unbuilt architecture in an impactful, imaginative way. The studio believes the poetics of space transcend form and function, and to best represent that idea, you need a story that connects with your audience on a visceral level.

Through its unique Purelink perspective, the team starts projects from a clear marketing objective and defines strategies that use the power of storytelling to devise narratives that better represent the projects it is engaged with. From a still image that stops you in your tracks, to a cinematic film that transports you, to an interactive way of dynamically communicating with the audience - Purelink is always aiming to pique viewers' interest, generate desire and evoke emotions.

Purelink understands the unrelenting march of technology and has been chameleonic in how it adapts. The studio has an insatiable thirst for creating something that's never been done before, so it established its internal R&D team, which keeps it on track and is the foundation for its interactive applications.

At its core, this is a passionate group that avoids the beaten track. They work hard for the love of what they do. And they have lots of fun because life is short and having fun is awesome. Overachievers + creative junkies = awesome sauce. And BBQs, they love having those too.

That's Purelink's ethos: fun, passion and staying hungry.



SiNi has been instrumental in making the pipeline more efficient. From 70% efficiency in optimising models to quicker methods to clean up files, adjust topologies and organise meshes, SiNi has made the team's life easier, and allowed more time for BBQs!!



PURE
BLINK

Facts



Pureblink

Studio Size: 28

Location: Toronto, Canada. Bogotá, Colombia

Main Work: Creative, Film, Stills, Interactive

Main Software: 3ds Max, Corona, Vray, SiNi, UE4, Blender, iToo, Adobe CC, Nuke

Contact: Jose Uribe

jose@pureblink.com

Website: www.pureblink.com

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Facts



RÅFormat Visualisation

Studio Size: 5

Location: Gothenburg, Sweden

Main Work: Stills

Main Software: 3ds Max, Corona, SiNi, iToo, Photoshop

Contact Details: Ola Frödell.

ola.frodell@raformat.se

Website: www.raformat.se

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We have fun together and see the craft of 3D visualisation as art!

Råformat consists of a group of creative dedicated professionals, all striving to push boundaries and perfect their craft. Our diverse backgrounds and experiences allow us to offer a unique approach and expertise to each project.

Formed in April 2015 by seasoned professionals with 20 years in the industry, it is our strongest conviction that architecture and brand building through visualisation is a key factor in making a (real estate/architectural) company successful. To deliver on this belief, we work with a passion for details, composition and light.

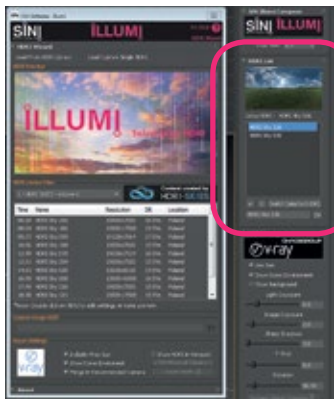


Tips & Tricks



Look-Dev using HDRIs

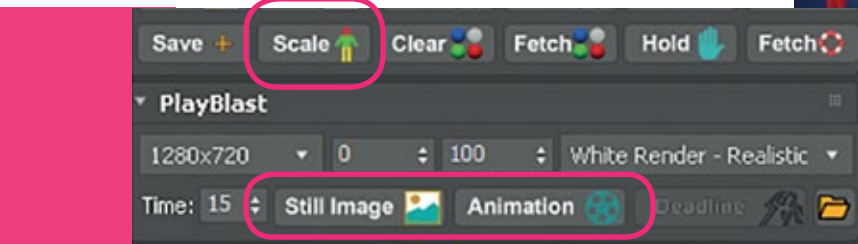
The Illumi plugin is designed to quickly play with your HDRI library files, adding as many as you like and testing the lighting. Illumi will automatically configure itself to conform to the render settings in 3ds Max. The tool provides suggested optimal settings that you can adjust as you wish, perfect for fast look development.



Under Pressure

Scale Reference Person

Use the Scale tool to add 3D placeholder people to your scene to guide you if you are placing 2D cutout people in post-production. The stripes on the people have a height of 500 mm. Rendering the people out means you have correct shadows and any lens distortion and parallax to match.



Playblast Previews

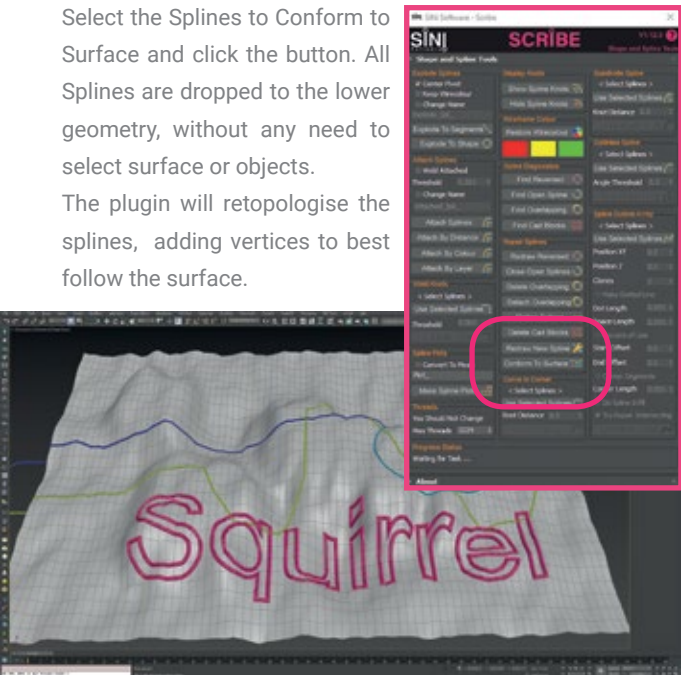
The PlayBlast is an alternative to 3ds Max capture viewport, and is independent of monitor resolution, allowing you to render out any resolution Stills and Animation previews.



For the best render quality, the tool offers a time setting to render the viewport.

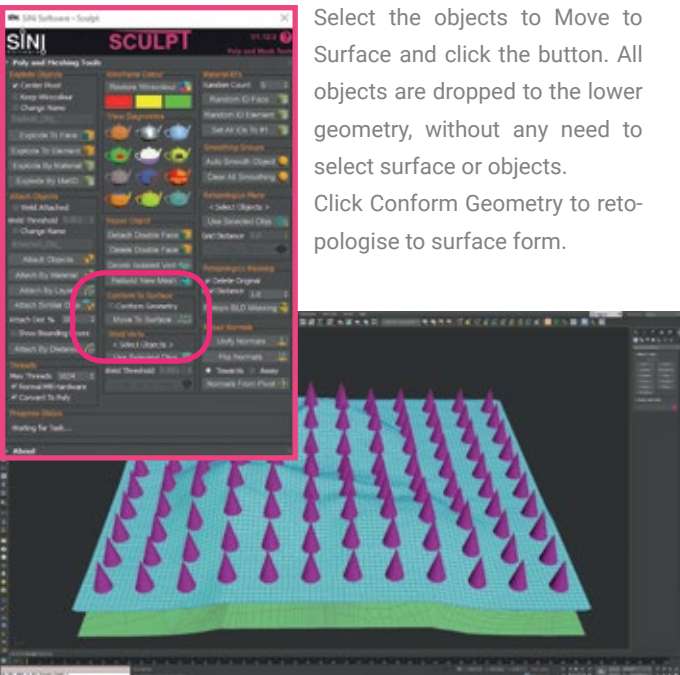
Gluing 2D Splines

Select the Splines to Conform to Surface and click the button. All Splines are dropped to the lower geometry, without any need to select surface or objects. The plugin will retopologise the splines, adding vertices to best follow the surface.



Gluing 3D Geometry

Select the objects to Move to Surface and click the button. All objects are dropped to the lower geometry, without any need to select surface or objects. Click Conform Geometry to retopologise to surface form.



Disperse - 3D Speed-Painting

This scene was painted in around two minutes, once the 3D assets were imported and transforms set.

Disperse has two brushes - paint single objects or multiple objects. You can erase painted objects by selection or all, as well as replacing selected objects with new, similar to the Replace Object tool in IgNite Springboard.

The scene is optimised as one mesh or export to edit mesh, and is ideal for exporting to game engines and further editing.



Space Inviters!

Recent Spaces was forged in 2016 by two of London's most sought-after archviz artists, Alex York and Iain Banks. The partnership allowed both to combine their long-term experience and photo-realistic skills. Together they started a new chapter working on commissions for clients in the high-end luxury market, primarily in London and New York, and more recently expanding their offering globally.



The boutique London studio embraces talented, passionate artists who share their ambition and determination to push their creative thinking further, each taking daily inspiration from the visually rich worlds of architecture, feature films, games and design.



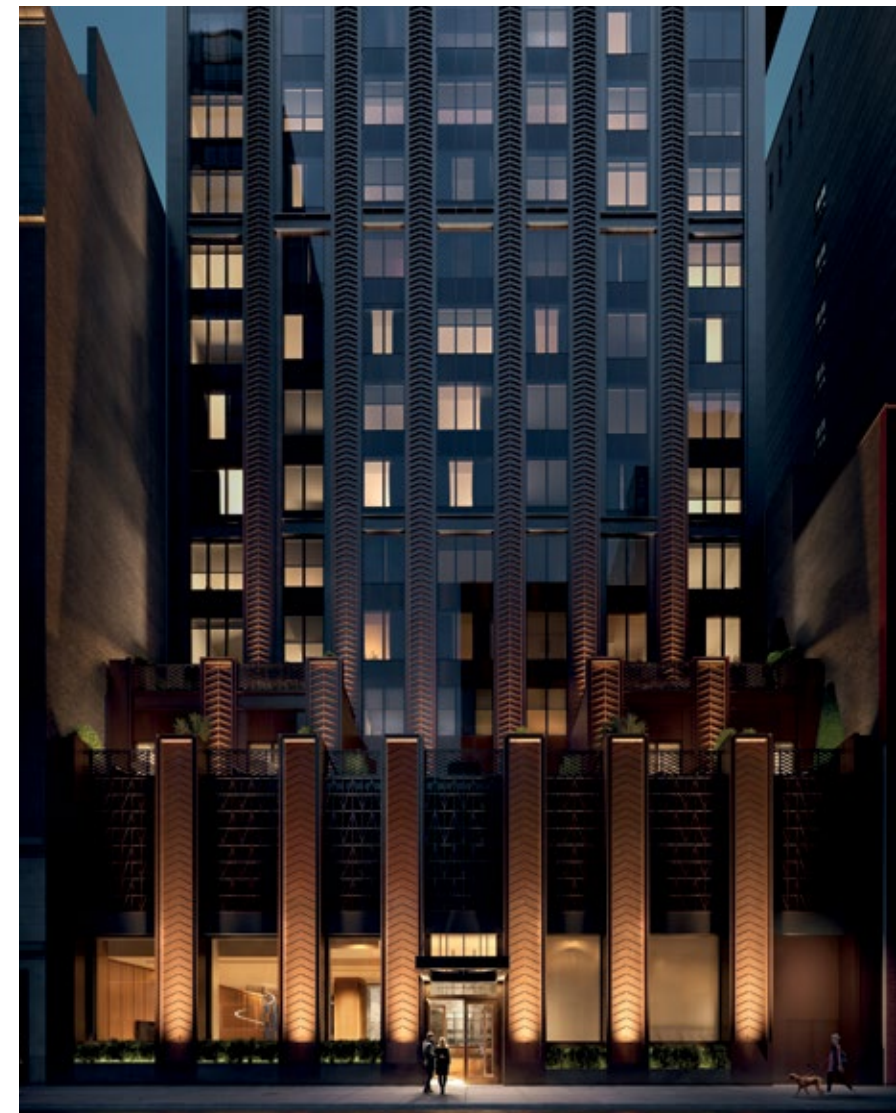
SPACES
—
IN
LUXURY



‘Our meticulous attention to detail adds to the illusion of real-world photography’.



Winner of the CGarchitect 2018 Architectural 3D Awards Non commissioned Image



Facts



RECENT SPACES

Recent Spaces

Studio Size: 9

Location: London, UK

Main Work: Stills, Animation, VR

Main Software: 3ds Max, Corona, SiNi, iTto, Adobe CC

Contact: Iain Banks.

studio@recentspaces.com

Website: www.recentspaces.com

All images copyright © 2019

Recent Spaces

THE BOUNDARY

Step inside...

The Boundary aims to create an environment in which creativity is fostered and people are enabled and empowered to produce the best work of their lives.

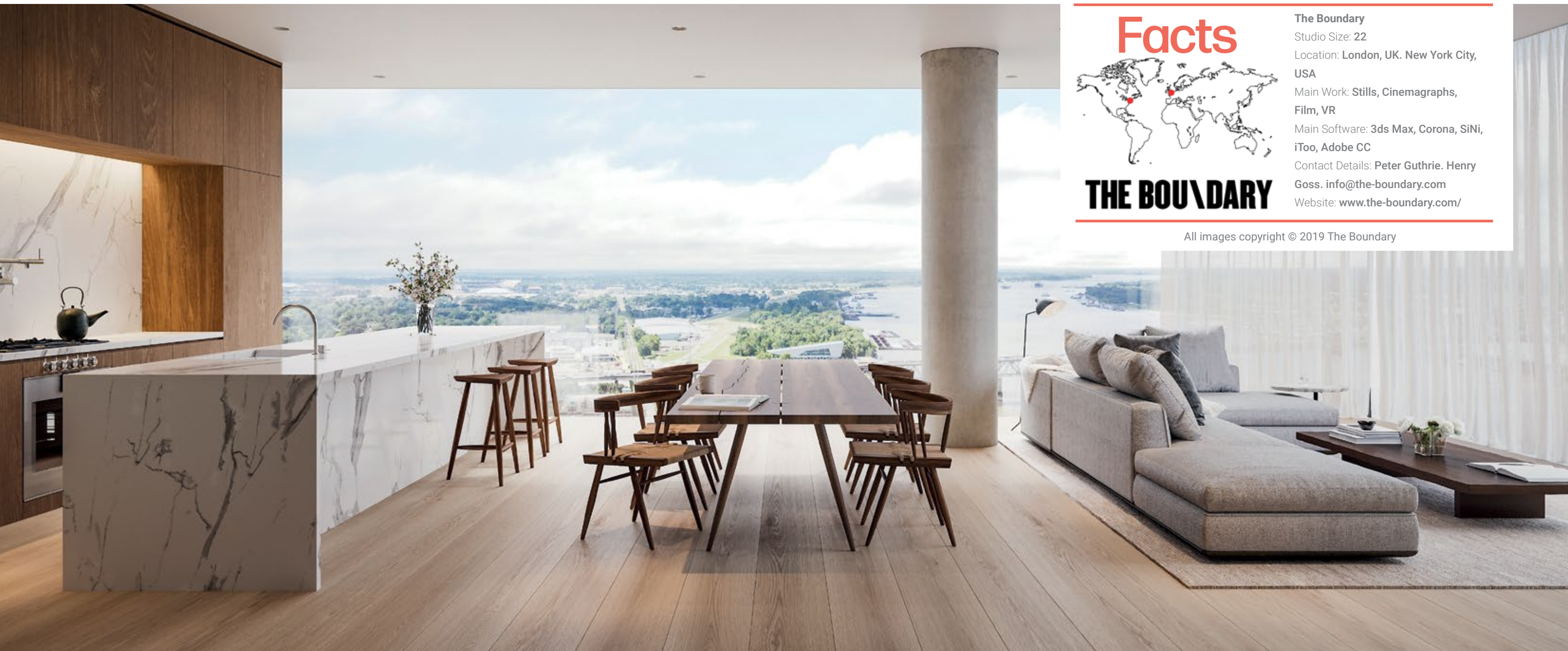
Creativity is rarely a solitary exercise. The social cohesion of the team is as fundamental to the success of the studio as the ever-broadening and deepening technical and artistic skillset. Be it lunchtime gym sessions, days out in London, trips abroad to international conferences or just a few drinks in the local, the team is everything.

Many of the studio's clients have also become involved with the social aspects of the studio, leading to closer and more productive relationships and resulting in some of their flagship projects. Individuality is also encouraged within the team, with everyone being credited for their contribution and celebrated both internally and in the wider community.



Henry Goss, Partner, studied at the Welsh School of Architecture in Cardiff, graduating with a first-class BSc (Hons) degree in 2005. He was awarded Distinction in his Diploma of Architecture and later went on to win the young European Architect of the Year Award from the Leading European Architects Forum (LEAF) in 2009.

Peter Guthrie, Partner, graduated from Edinburgh College of Art with a Diploma in Architecture (RIBA Part 2) in 2000. Following a five-year period working at Richard Murphy Architects, he established Peter Guthrie Visualisation, becoming a world leader in architectural visualisation.



The Boundary
Studio Size: 22
Location: London, UK. New York City, USA
Main Work: Stills, Cinemagraphs, Film, VR
Main Software: 3ds Max, Corona, SiNi, iToo, Adobe CC
Contact Details: Peter Guthrie. Henry Goss. info@the-boundary.com
Website: www.the-boundary.com/

All images copyright © 2019 The Boundary

VISULENT

ARCHITECTURE VISUALISATION

Visulent was founded in mid-2018 by art director, Britta Wikholm, with her vision to intensively focus on creative and artistic visualisation. In 2019, she was joined by visual designer Emilia Edwartz.

Visulent provides innovative creative images to the architectural industry, delivering high-quality 3D visualisations, with a growing list of global client commissions.





PROCESS WALKTHROUGH. The most important thing in our process is the creative and innovative start-up session. We try to work as fast as possible to set up and get everything running with our 3D scenes and the SiNi plugins are invaluable during this process. We try to move on to post-production as quickly as possible. We want to get an idea of where to push our images and to tell the story early in the process. Through almost the whole process, we usually jump back and forth between Photoshop and 3d.

Facts



VISULENT

Visulent Architectural Visualization

Studio Size: 2

Location: **Gothenburg, Sweden**

Main Work: **Stills**

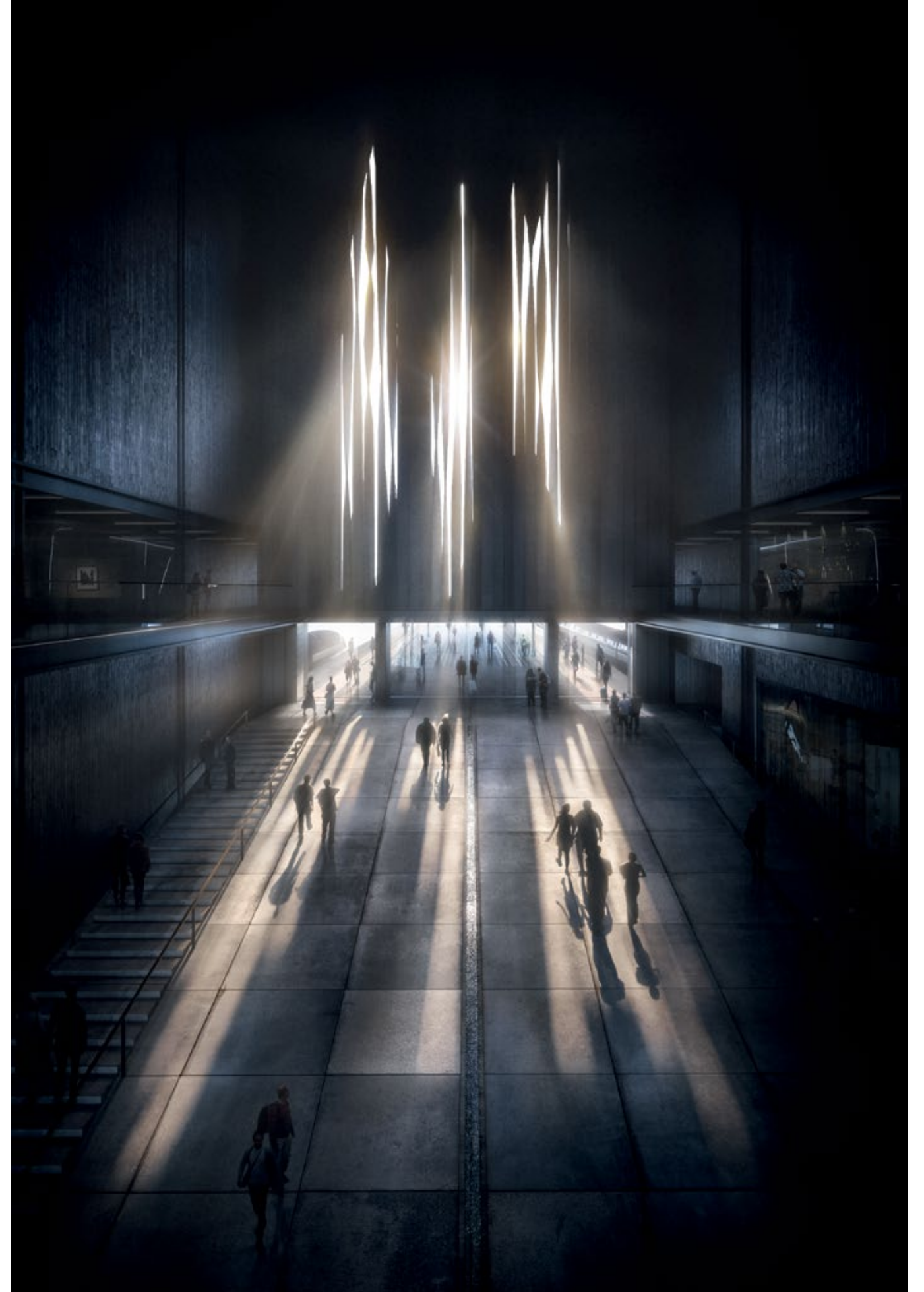
Main Software: **3ds Max, Vray, Corona, SiNi, iToo, Photoshop**

Contact: **Britta Wikholm. Emilia Edwartz.**

info@visulent.se

Website: **www.visulent.se**

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"We strive to find new ways of working and love to explore artistic composition through light studies, in the process discovering unique styles to represent our client's projects.

An important question we always ask ourselves and the client is "what could we do on this project if there were no limits?".

Our goal is to dig deeper with each project, to truly understand the design intent and client. We communicate through art'.

- Britta Wikholm





Image © Annette Frödel



Image © Gustav Asteberg



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3Disciple

Artists

Tips



Yrgo is a higher vocational college situated in Gothenburg, Sweden. The program's main focus is architectural visualisation, and the students spend two years studying both practical applications and theory and doing internships at companies and studios around the world.



In 2019, the archviz school and students achieved second place in the World Ranking in coveted The Rookies Awards.

Where to find the alumni? **Aesthetica Studio, Arquí9, AVR London, Bloomimages, Eve Images, Miller Hare, Pixelflakes, RåFormat, Tomorrow AB, White Arkitekter, Wingårdhs, Zynka.**

YRGO

Facts



YRGO School of Archviz

The Rookies World Ranking - No. 2

School Size: **60 Archviz Students**

Location: **Gothenburg, Sweden**

Main Skills: **Stills**

Main Software: **3ds Max, Corona, SiNi,**

iToo, Photoshop

Contact Details: **André Ravenna,**
andre.ravenna@educ.goteborg.se

Website: **[https://yrgo.se/utbildningar/
byggteknik-och-samhallsbyggnad/
arkitekturvisualisering/](https://yrgo.se/utbildningar/byggteknik-och-samhallsbyggnad/arkitekturvisualisering/)**

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Feature

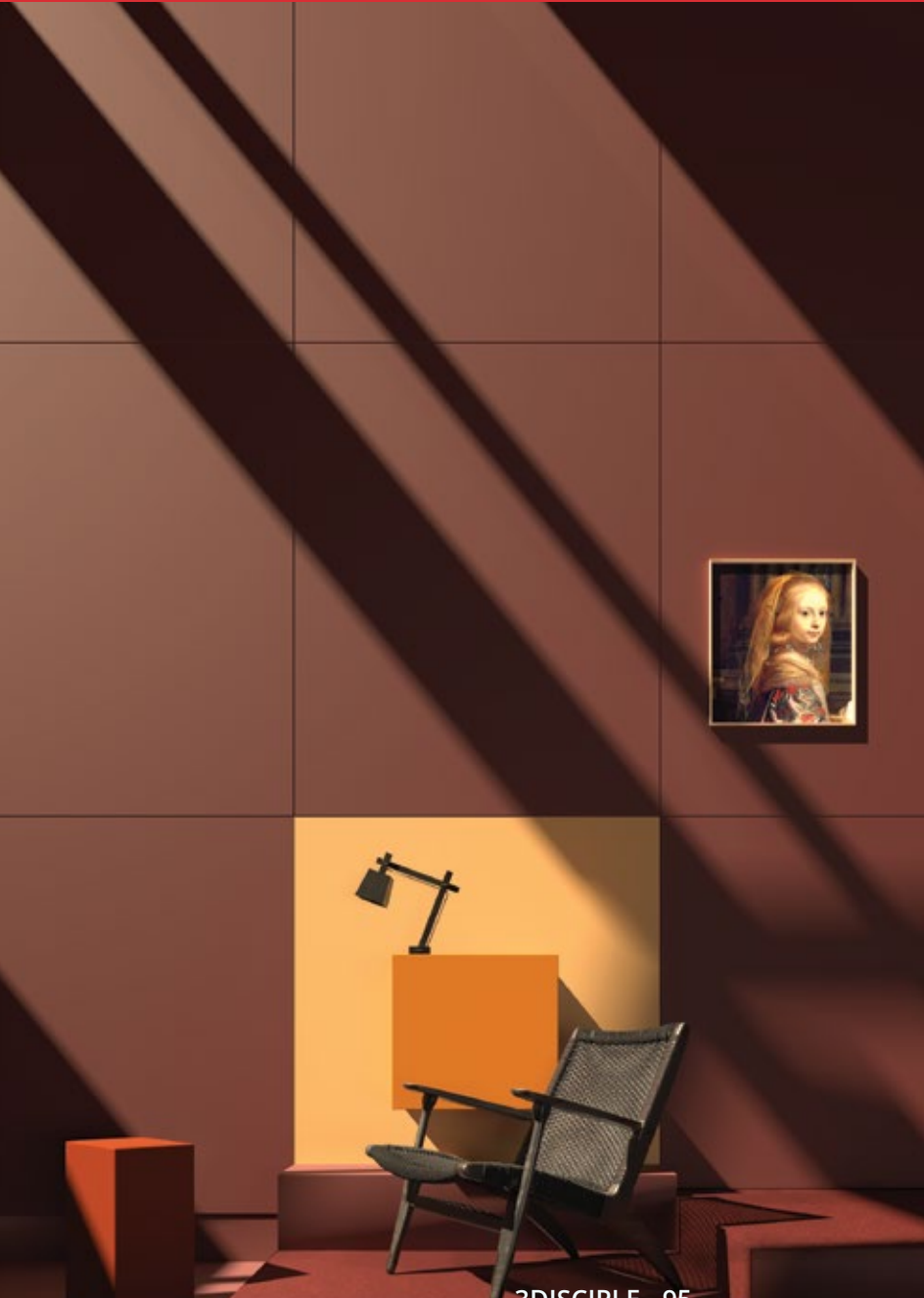
Resources

SiNi



Image © Pernilla Sjöstedt

Image © Johanna Andersson



3DISCIPLINE - 95

The Rookies 2019 Archviz Winners



Mads Lind Nicolaisen
3D College

Winner - Best Archviz Image

I picked up Photography and Graphic design in my teenage years and at 19 I discovered the magical world of CG.

It started out as a hobby for me and I really enjoyed it, so I decided to start at the school, 3D College In Denmark. And that's when I got really hooked and decided a career in 3D was for me.

This was the second win in a row for Mads.

www.therookies.co/contests/groups/rookie-awards-2019

Sara Haugen, YRGO

Winner - Studio Internship Oceania

BVN REAL, Sydney

This amazing opportunity is open to aspiring Archviz artists wanting to work with a team that produces award-winning projects. The aim is to help an artist kick start his or her career, working among renowned artists and gaining valuable insight into the working life inside this studio.



The Best Architectural Visualisation in the World Rankings

The Best Architectural Visualisation in the World Rankings is something we take very seriously and no external influences or payments are entered into at any point. Our rankings focus on the quality of students' portfolios submitted to our judging panel which best reflect the recruitment interview process.

We feel that traditional school rankings that include peer and employer reviews, faculty-to-student ratio, citations and other data are not adequate when ranking the best creative schools.

<https://discover.therookies.co/schools/best-architectural-visualisation-schools-in-the-world/>



The Rookies 2019 School Ranking

- No. 1 - 3D College, Grenaa, Denmark
- No. 2 - YRGO, Gothenburg, Sweden
- No. 3 - CICE, Madrid, Spain
- No. 4 - The One Academy, Malaysia
- No. 5 - Academy of Art University, San Francisco, USA

About The Rookies

Founded in 2010, The Rookies is a community for non-professional digital artists. A place for artists with a passion for film, games, animation, immersive media, archviz, motion graphics, product design and other creative industries.

It doesn't matter whether you are a hobbyist, student, self-taught or even wanting to change careers. All that matters is that you want to become a better artist, learn new skills and be surrounded by people on the same journey as you.

www.therookies.co



The awards are open to young creatives in 3D visualisation, visual effects, animation, games, virtual reality and motion graphics. There is simply no better way to launch your career and start sharing your amazing work online.

The Rookie Awards are open to all amateur artists. If you are trying to break into the creative media and entertainment industry, you are eligible. Students, recent graduates and self-taught artists are allowed to enter.

The goal of these Awards is to help encourage and motivate artists to share their work. It's not just about winning. It's about building your confidence and finding out how your skills stack up against other artists around the world on the same journey.

The Rookies
OPEN FOR SUBMISSIONS
1 March - 31 May 2020



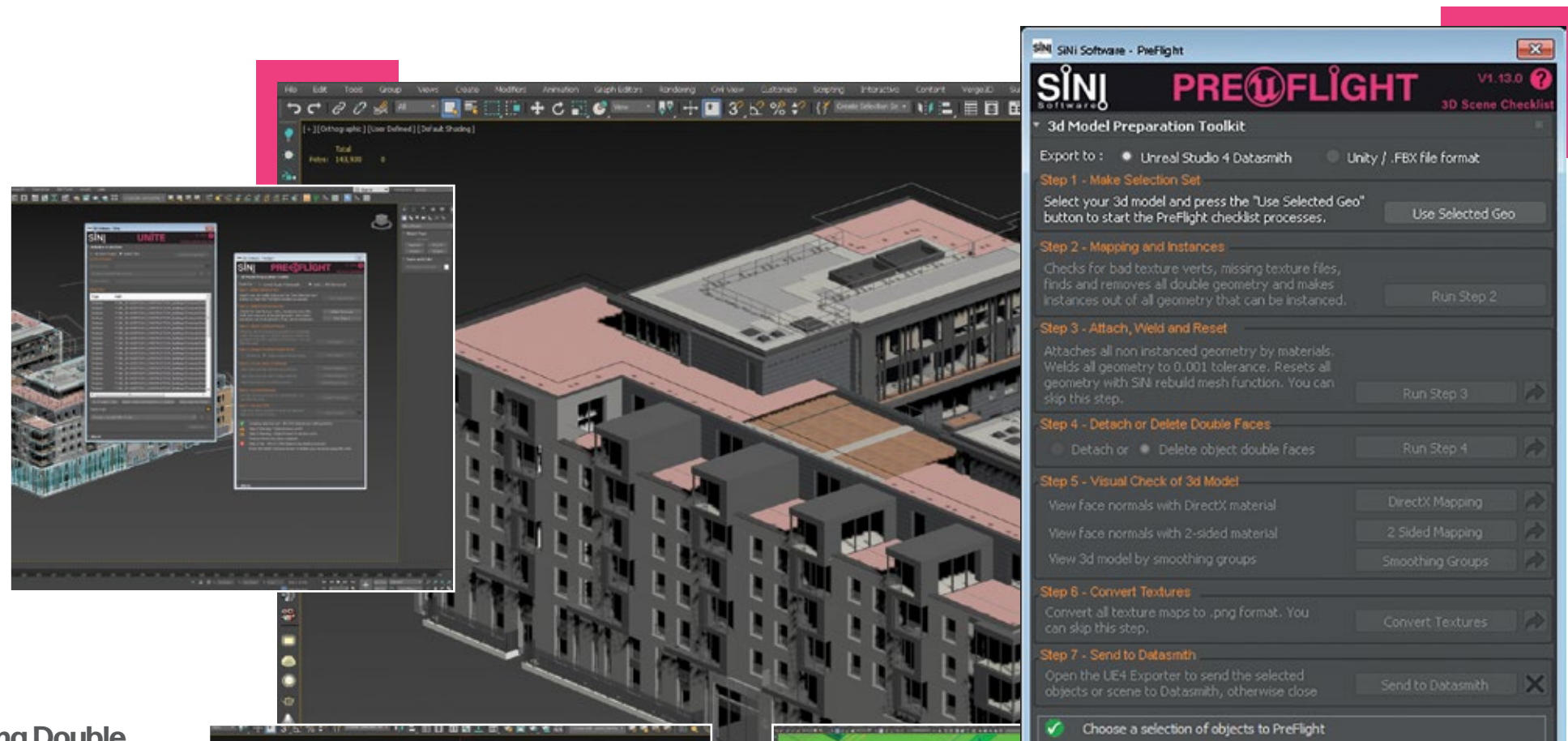
Tips & Tricks

Export your work

Step 2: Mapping and Instances

Preflight will not allow you to continue on the checklist if textures are missing. It will prompt you to open Unite and link the files before continuing. If your model does not have textures, it will bypass this.

Further steps include auto-instancing 3D objects to make the scene game-engine friendly.



Preflight plugin for exporting to Unreal and Unity

Preflight was designed as a simple and fast way to prepare 3D models for exporting to games engines. The idea was to create a checklist of tasks, many performed by other IgNite plugins as well, but consolidating them to a 'one-click' automation, allowing Users a very fast solution to get models out , reducing the likelihood of bad geometry discovery inside the game engine.

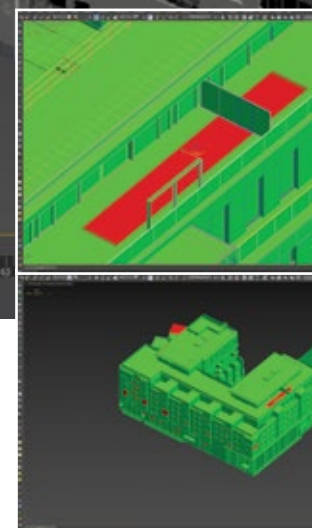
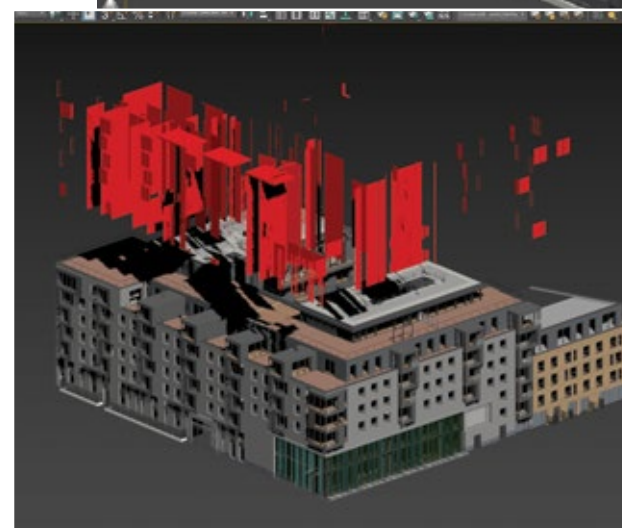
Step 7: Send to Datasmith or Unity/FBX

The final step allows you to send directly to Datasmith (if installed) or you can switch to FBX and save out for Unity or other.

Step 4: Deleting Double Faces

Deleting double faces is a necessity for exporting clean 3D geometry and prevents flicking faces in both animation rendering and real-time games engines.

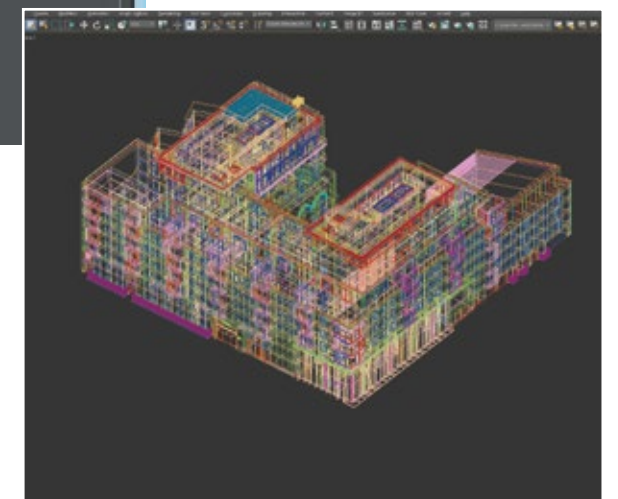
This automatic process is limited to one million polygons per object. If you have more, we recommend the Sculpt plugin, which handles an unlimited number.



Step 5: Visual Checks

The Visual Checks stages allow you to check face normals and smoothing groups. This allows you to locate issues and fix before continuing.

You can skip a stage if not required by clicking the forward arrow.



Meet the makers..

An exclusive interview with Nicolas Fonta, Head of 3ds Max Product Management at Autodesk.

By Nigel Hunt



Autodesk Meeting. Friday 29 November 2019

**Nicolas Fonta, Head of Product Management, Autodesk 3ds Max
Nancy LaRue, Industry Marketing Manager, Design Visualization
Nigel Hunt, 3Disciple Editor-in-Chief, SiNi CEO and 3ds Meetup
Group Organiser**

When Autodesk accepted my offer to be interviewed for 3Disciple I made it clear I wanted an honest conversation. I wanted to get to know who is responsible and if they care about us, the 3D community. To help guide the conversation, I proposed a series of questions for them to contemplate and hopefully answer during our meeting.

I wanted to allow Autodesk a chance to make its case to a potentially disgruntled 3D community, who, on the face of it across social media, are losing patience with 3ds Max. On a personal level as a plugin developer, I wished to know if our investment developing 3ds Max tools has a future.

The following interview is from a very long conversation with the Head of Product Management for 3ds Max. By the end of our discussion, I was convinced he has the right intent and passion to develop exciting and great software, and he revealed honestly what's been going on behind closed doors. However, I will leave you to draw your own conclusions once you have read the following interview.

Please note: The full interview is published in the online version of 3Disciple Magazine only.

Question: Tell us about the 3ds Max team, who you are and where you are based?

Nic Fonta So, most of the team is based here in Montreal, Canada. Actually, most of the M&E folks at Autodesk are in Montreal and Toronto. But there is a big hub in Montreal. We also have people in The States and in Europe. But the core and the heart of 3ds Max, in terms of who is developing, is here, with a few people working from home in The States and a few people that you probably know, in Europe.

Nigel Hunt I know a few. Are you in Montreal because of the Discreet legacy?

Nic Fonta So, there are a few reasons I think that led us to be where we are today. Discreet back then, and now the V.P. for M&E, who oversees all of M&E, is here, and there are also a lot of people in Montreal who are passionate about 3D. We have a large community of studios that are popping up in the city, game studios, VFX studios, etc. So there are a lot of people here. And if you look at Unity and Unreal, both have established offices in Montreal as well, and add to this the fact that A.I. is becoming a thing for Montreal. So there's a lot happening here!

It was an advantage before being in Montreal, but now everybody's competing to find resources. So it's a challenge as well at the same time, but it's drawing in people with talent and cool creative artists.

Nigel Hunt Where do most of your development team come from? Are they coming from a gaming background or do they come from different industries? Do you have connections to local universities?

Nic Fonta Yes. Obviously we have experienced coders and developers. But we put a lot of emphasis on relationships with the universities, and we really try to nurture the internship programs.

I've been at Autodesk for almost six years and we've really doubled down on product owners and product designers and UX people. On the 3ds Max team, we were the ones in M&E who did that first. So, my team is product managers (PM) and product owners (PO), who provide the direction of where we want to go. We build the vision and the direction of the product, and then lead the Agile and the Development teams on what we want to do and where we want to go.

Nigel Hunt Could you explain the difference between a product manager and a product owner?

Nic Fonta So the product managers are all in the same organisation (org). Our goal, as an org group, is to guide and direct what we're doing and where we're going.

Michael Russo, who is in charge of all the engineers, QA and everybody else who makes this possible, is in charge of actually doing it. So that is the difference between my group and Mike's group.

Within my group, the difference between the PM and the PO is just the level at which we're working, or operating. The product managers are, if I want to oversimplify, looking at strategy and why, and the product owners are focused more in a specific area, on a workflow or a product, not the whole product. They are looking at the what.

I'm asking more of the product owners on my team to be customer-facing, to spend time with customers more often. They're helping me and my PMs scale. They're helping us craft a strategy for their specific areas. So you can think of a PO, or a product owner, for rendering, a product owner for modelling and animation, etc.

So we have a very close relationship and alignment within my whole org. It is crucial to the success of 3ds Max. Some of the product owners on my team are 15 years+ users of 3ds Max. Almost all of them are veterans using the software.

A while ago, we started going into the community, our customer base in some cases, and hiring some of these folks to bring the knowledge of the industry and the people that have lived and breathed 3ds Max in production in the real world, to help craft the future of the product.



Nigel Hunt It's an observation, but 3ds Max is sometimes seen as an old product, being almost 30 years old. Are you looking at bringing in new talent to shake things up, people who may look at 3D software in a different way, not how things were being developed 20 years ago?

Nic Fonta Yeah, it needs to be a balance. And that's true when it comes to people who are 'more in a leadership position'. So myself, my team and the product designers.

We do have people who are actually not 3ds Max users, and they're bringing a totally different perspective to the team. But it's also true when it comes to people we hire, in terms of developers, that we want to make sure that they now have knowledge about A.I. and other new technologies.

Nigel Hunt Are you able to tell me how big the 3ds Max team is? I expect this is confidential!
However, can you give me a rough figure, is it closer to one hundred? closer to ten? There are rumours that it is around eighty people?

Nic Fonta So to answer your initial question, I can't give you the number. But the rumour is pretty close to the reality. So it's definitely not ten people!

Nigel Hunt It's a big team then?

Nic Fonta It is a big team. I can tell you a little bit more about this, not in terms of numbers, but just to give you a sense of where we came from and where we're at. Hopefully that will answer your question?

So, there was a big restructure or a reorg two years ago at Autodesk. You probably heard about it?

Nigel Hunt Yes. I heard the old guard moved over to Epic Games?

Nic Fonta Some of the old guard are at Unreal and Unity, actually. Most people know that we've had a reorg. Most people don't know the core reason why we had it.

So you might know the new CEO Andrew Anagnost wanted to re-focus the efforts of the company and felt that we were too spread over tons of different projects and not enough of them would lead to new business or new value to our customers. The reorg was really to trim down efforts on our side and refocus on our core business, which means for us, as the 3ds Max group, getting more people into the 3ds Max team.

‘The Autodesk 3ds Max team has expanded 30% in the last two years’

As a result of cutting more than a thousand people at Autodesk, the 3ds Max team grew bigger by around 30%.

Nigel Hunt So the MAX team has grown by 30% in the last two years?



Photo © Nicolas Fonta, Autodesk

Nic Fonta Correct.

The first result out of the reorg was bringing in more people. But also, without going into the details, we are now organised internally with my previous boss, who was only in charge of 3ds Max, now in charge of all of M&E. And he now sits at the same boardroom table as the other Autodesk VP's such as AutoCAD, Revit, Inventor etc. As a result of this, and it might be pertinent to this conversation, I have had more freedom on the destiny of the product over the last two years than we ever had before.

So, we took a step back, looked at where we had success before and why, as opposed to being confined within a certain framework and certain industries, and now we have the freedom to push where we believe there is value and where we see our customers needing and wanting to see the product evolve.

Nigel Hunt I can see that happening from 3ds Max 2019. It seems a different 3ds Max than it was four years ago.

Nic Fonta Yes. We had a tough time for about four or five years until two years ago, and 3ds Max users felt it. And since then, we're reinvesting in core values, core capabilities. I know some people are seeing it. Hopefully the users and the community can see the new areas of investment in the program that they hadn't seen for years. We're trying to reconnect with our communities, both artists and developers.

I've started posting product road maps and I want to do more of that. We are making an effort with the team working specifically on the developer experience and there is a lot that we're starting to do

there. So we're really excited about pushing forward!

Question: The history of 3ds Max goes back to the late 1980s with Gary Yost and Tom Hudson. What's happened to them?

Nic Fonta OK, so this question is a sidestep but Tom Hudson is still with us. Tom is like, HE'S THE GUY, right!

Nigel Hunt I thought you had shelved him? I was in my early 20s when I started using 3D Studio, DOS version back in the early 1990s. The software has history and I feel it's relevant to try and reveal this? Maybe I'm just old and young people coming through today don't care about why and how things have evolved. They just want to make cool stuff!

Nancy LaRue They're actually really inspired by career paths. So that's something that we're also pushing within our Area communities.

Nic Fonta So, yes, Tom is one of the guys who started 3ds Max around 30 years ago. And going back to your question, Nigel, I think you're right. Some people don't care, but a lot of people do.

Question: 3ds Max has been the software of choice for the majority of the archviz industry. What are your thoughts on why it's been so popular amongst this community?

Nic Fonta Where do I start? 3ds Max is known as being probably the best tool to ingest and bring anything into 3D.

I would also add the possibility of outputting to anything, whether it's traditional rendering or for real-time now. So it's known as an aggregator that grabs anything, which seems to be a reality in archviz quite a bit. You get tons of stuff from many different sources. It's not exclusive to archviz, but definitely it plays in archviz.

Nigel Hunt Another thing that has been really important over the years has been the modifier stack.

Nic Fonta When I ask customers or users, what if you had to pick one thing in 3ds Max that you love? What do you think makes a difference? Nine times out of ten it's the modifier stack.

I guess, as a 3D artist yourself, Nigel, I'm not teaching you anything here, but to others, as an artist you have the vision that you want to communicate. You have an idea in your mind. And the reason why people use 3ds Max is that, as an artist, you can tweak every little detail to get to the exact artistic intent that you want to communicate. And that's true when importing tons of stuff.

Or maybe you want to tweak the edge of a table or a building or clean the data up, because when you bring it in it looks like rubbish, since the architects and the designers do not have the same priorities in mind.

So you could go and tweak every little detail, whether it's the materials, the lights or the feel that you're trying to get in your scene to inspire you or your client.

I would add as well that artists can do it faster with 3ds Max than they can with other DCC products. And that's the reality in archviz, as they have very little time to figure things out with very tight deadlines. So those are some of the reasons why I believe it's been successful.

‘3D artists can do it faster with 3ds Max than they can with other DCC products’

Nigel Hunt Speaking from my personal experience, it was one of the first programs you could natively bring 2D CAD into. The relationship between AutoCAD and 3D Studio/3ds Max and now with Rivet has always been strong. It seems a complete ecosystem?

Nic Fonta Absolutely. We've reinvested in the Revit importer in 2020 and SketchUp recently, along with FBX. We know that's a key element of who we are and how people can be successful.

Nigel Hunt I believe most people working in professional archviz who produce marketing images and films want a one way trip from Revit into 3ds Max.

Nic Fonta It is. And later we can talk about USD a little as well.



Question: The community strongly believes ‘big brother’ Autodesk no longer cares about them and focuses mainly on the AEC sector. Is this correct?

Nic Fonta So actually, I want to talk about this one. There are a few things that the community should know.

So, it is true that AEC is a bigger part of our revenue at Autodesk. And particularly that construction is becoming a focus for future growth. Now, that being said, there are a few things I’ve talked about earlier, now that we’re sitting at the Autodesk boardroom table.

‘Autodesk M&E accounts for 5% of overall company revenue’

Autodesk CEO Andrew Anagnost really loves M&E. I think that he really understands M&E, and what our customers in M&E do is inspiring both for us, the Autodesk employees, and more importantly, for our customers.

A case in point was at Autodesk University 2019 on the mainstage. During the main keynote, Andrew invited a few folks, including guys from Walt Disney Imagineering, to talk about the new Star Wars theme park. And they discussed the production of this theme park using M&E products. This is an amazing M&E story.

Nigel Hunt Interesting to know. If we go back a few years, it appeared that Autodesk stepped back from our 3D community and didn’t care about us. When I met the team at the D2 Conference in 2019, it was the first time I’ve seen someone from Autodesk in archviz in years. Being visible in the community really helps with your public image!

Nic Fonta Yeah, so I agree and understand. Hopefully, as you mentioned yourself, you’re seeing more of us in the last year than happened before. I have ideas I want to pursue further. We need to find the right way to do this or the efficient way to do it, and we need to do more of it.

Question: What do you have for the archviz community to be excited about?

Nigel Hunt I know about the public road map. It’s great to have visibility and it’s nice to know where 3ds Max is going. But let’s face it, just like in politics, you’re publishing a manifesto which we can now hold you accountable for. Will you deliver?

Nic Fonta I totally realise that. So hopefully you’re seeing that, over time, we’re starting to deliver on some of these things that we’ve been talking about, and some of them take longer. But in terms of cool and exciting things that are coming for the future, to name a few:

Universal Scene Description (USD) is a big thing that we’re investing in. In 3ds Max it took us longer than the MAYA team, just because of the nature of our core users, and at some point we asked, is there a real need? And then at some point, ‘voila!’, everything ticked!

Now everybody wants to see USD, so we were ready and we’re definitely investing in this.

There are a few other cool things that we’re doing, researching projects around machine learning for UV mapping and for retopology.

Nigel Hunt That will be useful to export to UE4 and Unity, hopefully saving a considerable amount of time.

Nic Fonta Yeah. If you look at what we’ve been working on: baking textures, retopology, UV unwrapping and layout. If you put these three together, there’s a lot of value in prepping your data. And the idea is to automate some of those repetitive tasks so that the 3D artists can be spending time in the creative process and not just tackling layout and then detecting seams on a UV map, for instance.

There’s also PBR (physically-based rendering). Obviously you’re starting to see that. In the viewport we are aligning the whole pipeline to be PBR. The viewports will be faster, more realistic and nicer, so it’s as close as possible to the end target.

Also, Arnold GPU and procedural world-building with Bifrost, our procedural engine. So Autodesk is serious about Bifrost. There is a lot of investment and a lot of development going into it. The 3ds Max and MAYA teams are working jointly on this.

Nigel Hunt An issue I constantly get surprised by in the archviz community is that not many artists know MAXScript. Most artists look for simplicity and Bifrost will need to have some form of presets to be applied to scenes and then tweaked.

Nic Fonta Yeah, absolutely! For 3ds Max users it’s even more important than for the MAYA users.

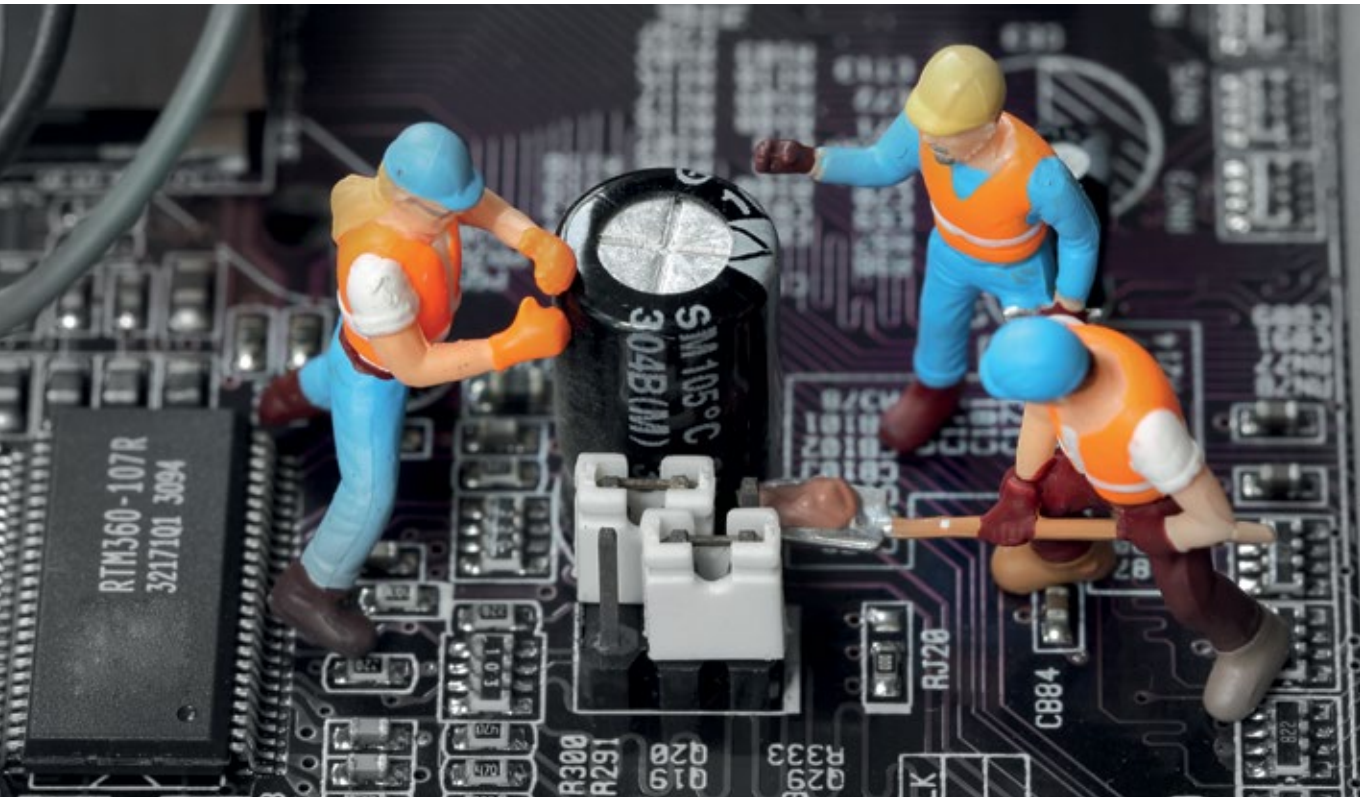
So, having precooked recipes that are procedural and can then be easily tweaked is key. And if you look at our implementation of fluids in 3ds Max, it’s this approach, and the user experience, that is very different from the one in MAYA, and it was for that very reason, simplicity.

Nigel Hunt That also leads me onto Arnold. It’s a powerful renderer but the actual take-up in the archviz community is slow to non-existent, compared to Chaos Group’s V-Ray and Corona.

What’s Autodesk’s view on this?

Nic Fonta So, on the topic of Arnold, I agree with everything you’ve said. There is a lot of work that we needed to do within 3ds Max to make the experience, or the rendering pipeline, streamlined and PBR-based, and aligned with Arnold as a default. Plus, there are things that we know we have to do in Arnold and MAXtoArnold as well to make it a kickass renderer. So my goal is definitely to have a very compelling offer in the box.

Chaos Group will remain a key partner. I’m not trying to push Chaos out, but I want to provide our users with options and I want to pro-



vide users with good options.

‘Chaos Group will remain a key partner’

Nigel Hunt I understand what you’re trying to achieve. Is there anything else you wish to add to this?

Nic Fonta There is one thing I haven’t talked about, which is super-important and it’s the stability of 3ds Max.

Our quality, stability, performance, they go hand-in-hand. When we changed everything and I took charge of the direction for 3ds Max, it was clear that we had to focus on this, and we had to increase it. It was, at the time, a 27/28-year-old product. There’s a lot of value in it already.

Of course, we want to push out new things and we always want to keep doing that. But we have to make sure that our base is solid and maybe we haven’t done that as much in the past, for whatever reasons. So we’ve started pushing it and putting the onus on the product owners to only deliver when ready.

But there are many things that helped us get there. First, we have more people. So that’s awesome. Second, we moved away from our standard release process, which was new features only once a year and then service packs along the way for stability stuff. That was a challenge because all of these people were coding all together and doing a check-in of all the codebase in one shot, for one window of opportunity. It’s a disaster waiting to happen.

So now we can put new features out and not break the SDK in update releases, at any time, when a product owner is ready. You don’t ship for the next update because you are not missing the window of opportunity and having to wait an extra year. It’s coming in a few months.

Nigel Hunt That’s how we work at SiNi as well. It is more responsive for our users.

Nic Fonta Yeah, exactly. That’s the reality of a production environment. So, therefore, we’re pushing new things out over the course of the year. No longer a big bang approach where everything comes in and everybody’s hair is on fire because nothing works. I’m empowering the POs in my team to make the call, and if they don’t think it’s ready, I’m not going to force them to do it.

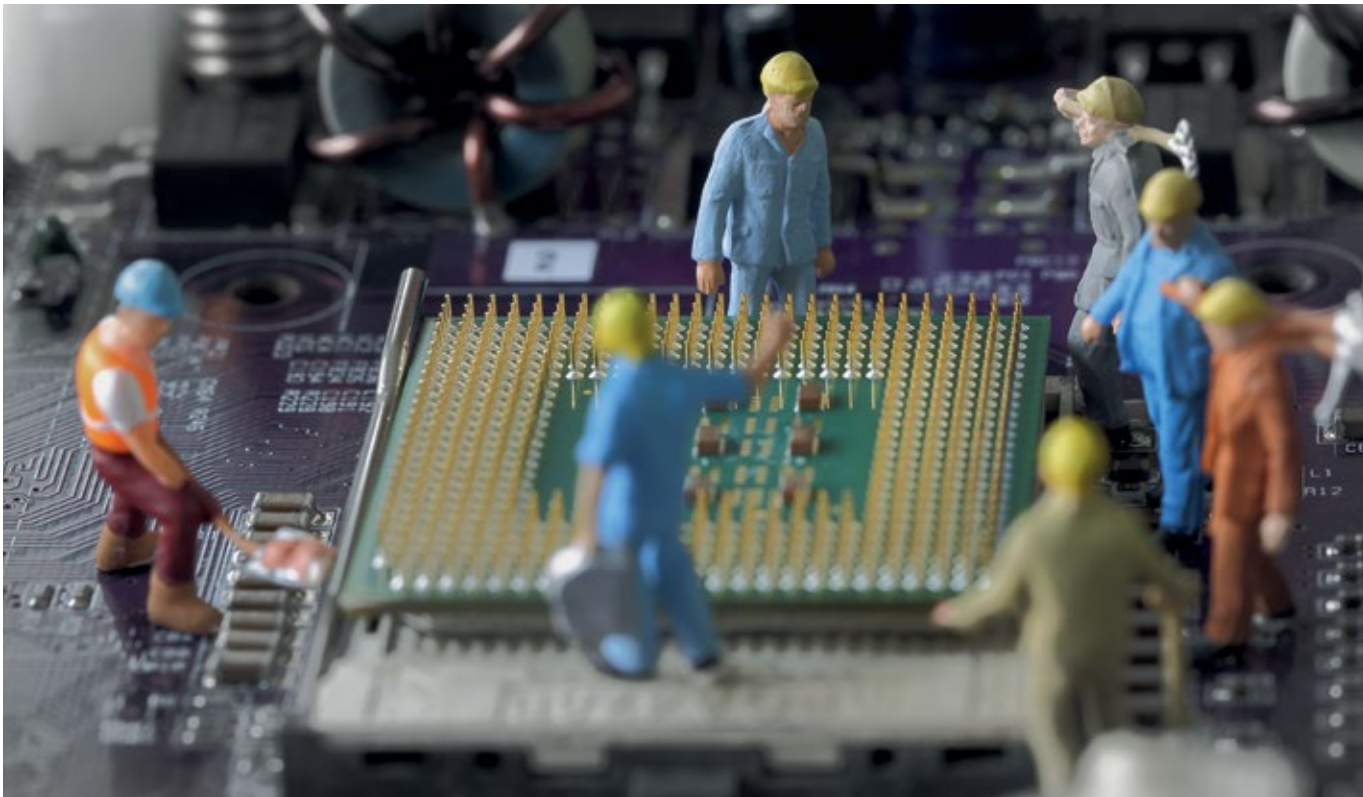
Nigel Hunt I believe we, as a community, have seen stability in 3ds Max getting much better in recent years.

Nic Fonta That’s really good to hear. And when we hear it from the 3D community it’s awesome!

But we also have metrics on stability. I mentioned earlier that we know when and how many people are using 3ds Max. We also have stability metrics and crash reports. Starting with 2019, it’s really much more stable than it was previously, so it’s not just an impression.

So there’s one more thing that I wanted to say around things that I can’t talk about, but I still kind of want to talk about it.





And it is the fact that, I can't give exact numbers, of course, but we know how many people use the software, which rough commands they use and which countries they are from. We don't collect any data on who they are, nor do we collect any of their data. And we're tracking all of our products at Autodesk and how many monthly active users we have.

And looking at the graphs for 3ds Max, it's super promising because the number of active users is going up month after month. There's a dip in the summer a little bit. There's a dip in China's New Year a little bit, but overall, if you look at the trend, it's going up!

‘The number of active 3ds Max Users is increasing month after month!’

Nigel Hunt Do you believe the 3D community across the world is growing? Are there more people entering the industry, with more working, especially businesses wanting to get into the 3D market?

Nic Fonta That is true for sure. There are a few things, such as urbanisation. There are a lot of buildings that have to be built and therefore a lot of architects need to tell their stories and a lot of 3D artists need to build compelling visuals and experiences that sell the ideas and convince people that this is the right product to work at, or live in.

There is also a desire for digitising everything that is happening in the world, whether it's buildings and digital twins or e-retail online. So there's a real need to go 3D and 3ds Max is the best tool that we know of to do that with.

So we're seeing pockets of new opportunities popping up, also in the core or key areas that we've played in before.

Question: One of the core strengths of 3ds Max has been its flexibility to extend the product through bespoke third-party plugins such as SiNi. With more than 250 plugins available for 3ds Max presently, does Autodesk support the use of these products?

Nic Fonta Yeah. Definitely don't want to skip this! The question is, does Autodesk support the use of these products? And my answer is, oh my God, yes!

Nigel Hunt Surely the plugin community, who have invested so much development knowledge into working with Autodesk 3ds Max, would be a fantastic resource to bring together? In a similar way to how you bring the artist community together?

Nic Fonta Yeah. So I totally agree with you. I am absolutely convinced that our plugin developer community is one of the key reasons why we've been successful. You can find almost anything that you want with something that's in the box or extend it using MAXScript and additional plugins that complement your workflow. People build custom pipelines by putting all these pieces together.

‘I am absolutely convinced our plugin developer community is one of the key reasons why we’ve been successful’

So there is no doubt that plugins are and will continue to be key to our success. We now have Agile people in the 3ds Max team whose mandate is to make the developers' lives easier, more streamlined and more efficient. That team has to understand what the needs are for developers, meet with developers and enhance the value of the SDK and whatever we need to do to help you guys build the tools that you've been building.

It's awesome because some of you, like SiNi, have been making a business out of this. On the flipside for us, all of our users are benefiting from the value that you've built and are distributing to the rest of the community.

So that's been a change in the last two years and now it's taking form officially. And yes, I would be very open to considering doing a developer event. The question would be where does that happen? Is it here or is it at a conference that we leverage?

Navigating this reality for developers is a little bit complicated or maybe stressful in some cases. I recognise that for you to know what we're working on and where we're going is super-interesting because you, the developers, want to be complementing our core product.

Nigel Hunt Absolutely. Out of interest, do you see plugin developers as competition for Autodesk, and not just between our rivals?

Nic Fonta It is true to a certain extent that we are competitors. We do have gatherings, like the Inside-the-Factory that we held in October, where we bring customers from all over the place, across all industries and firm sizes. And yes, some of them are competitors. But they find it extremely valuable to learn together and get a sense of where we're going. But there is still value in sitting down together, discussing trends and challenges that we see and that you guys see for your business, without feeling that you're giving away your IP.

Nancy LaRue One idea that I'm thinking of right now for D2 2020 is to hold a pre-conference mini Inside-the-Factory?

Nic Fonta A user group or whatever we want to call it, we want to do that! We just need to make sure it scales. But I think there's more we can do.

Question: The industry has changed in the past ten years, with real-time rendering set to become standard practice in the near future. At its core, 3ds Max is single-threaded and old code. Are there plans to rewrite the core product to take advantage of modern technology and ever-increasing CPU and GPU power?

Nigel Hunt I always describe the 3ds Max SDK as being like a dog-eared novel manuscript that's filled with post-it notes of corrections, updates and changes. Do you have plans to fix the core?

Nic Fonta Sure. We have a senior software architect on the team. He's one of my peers and, unfairly, I asked him for an architectural

roadmap and he said 'Well, the hell with you!'. 'Tell me where you want to go with the product and I'll tell you how the architecture can support it.' I said 'All right, fair enough'.

So we built this vision and direction with my team and vision and direction for the product. And now I'm turning back to him and saying 'All right. Show me how we need to work on the foundation of the software to support this'.

Now, there are areas of the product that we know are key and core to our future success and therefore we know the foundations are maybe not ready yet.

So he came up with the architecture roadmap to support the vision that I laid out. And there are teams now who are working on some of those foundational pieces. So that ultimately, 3ds Max will become more robust and cleaner.

Also for developers, all of this has consequences and repercussions on the SDK. The way you work with it, and what you see, will help us provide more performance and stability in the future. And it's a lot of investment, as you probably know as a developer, as I am as well, a software engineer. But going back to a 28-year-old piece of software to re-architect the software from the ground up is no small task.

‘We won’t rewrite 3ds Max from scratch. There’s no way’

Nigel Hunt Stepping forward, future-proofing for where the industry is going, with larger and larger 3D data sets, do you think 3ds Max is robust enough? For example, will what you're doing now ensure that, in five years' time, 3D artists can use the software to build cities or other complex models?

Nic Fonta I don't know if you agree with me, but we are told that 3ds Max is one of the only tools that can handle massive amounts of 3D data being manipulated and worked on within a scene. Of course, USD will assist with complexity, as well as the core fundamental philosophical approach of how USD is built and what it's meant for.

Question: There are many in the industry who feel dissatisfied with 3ds Max in recent years. What would you say to users looking to move from 3ds Max to other DCC software?

Nic Fonta I hope we've covered a lot of things already?

To recap, you have the stability improvements, definitely all of the investments that we're making. Hopefully when we tell our story of what we have started doing and what we want to do, I hope that resonates with users.

When I go face to face with customers and I do a detailed roadmap presentation, the reaction that we're getting is very, very different from what we used to get a few years ago.



‘People are definitely more excited now with 3ds Max’

The last five-six years of this more difficult period, during which we had fewer resources and struggled a bit, is behind us now.

Oh my God, people are definitely more excited now, both internally and externally.

Nigel Hunt I think that time really damaged your brand quite a bit, but we are now seeing the positive action from Autodesk.

Nic Fonta But we can't stop. We have to continue delivering what we've been talking about. I am confident about our ability to do that for many reasons.

And one thing I haven't said or haven't discussed is people are really noticing changes and getting more excited in the 3D community. I was on a call with Jeff Mottle from CGarchitect earlier this week and he brought that up himself.

And I see it as well. We hear people talking about 3ds Max much more. I saw recently on a social media post 'If only the MAYA team could do as much as 3ds Max'. I thought, wow, that's a new thing!

Nigel Hunt It's interesting that you mention MAYA. Where is the MAYA team based?

Nic Fonta Montreal and Toronto and a little bit dispersed in other places. The heads of product for both 3ds Max and MAYA are here. The V.P. of this is here, the head of product Flame is also in Montreal. So all three major products for M&E are in Montreal. The development team, the product teams as well.

Nigel Hunt How do you get on with the MAYA team?

Nic Fonta Much better than before. I'm serious!

The reorg that we went through had a fundamental and deep change, and an impact in the way we work at Autodesk. We're sharing resources, we have common projects in development, we're sharing codebase, USD, Bifrost, retopology, UV machine learning.

All of these advances we're working on together to push out.

Nigel Hunt It's interesting to learn you collaborate so much. I do find it frustrating about the 'Them and Us' comparison. And MAYA capturing more of the gaming community from 3ds Max.

Also, dropping this in here, do you have any view regarding the industry suspicion that Autodesk is going to do a 'Softimage' and kill off 3ds Max?

Nic Fonta Yeah, of course. T.J. Galda, my Autodesk peer on the MAYA side, we talk every week. And periodically, some of what we do on the MAX side has at least partial value for him, but the imple-



mentation might be different. So we share, when it makes sense, and then we make each other aware of what each team is developing. It's a very different operating model than what it used to be. Autodesk killing off 3ds Max? There's no way this will happen.

‘Autodesk killing off 3ds Max? There's no way this will happen’

Let's do the last question, the indie one now. So the question was 'what's the catch?' And my answer is 'why should there be a catch?'.

Question: 3ds Max Indie, what's the catch?

Nigel Hunt Since writing the questions, I discovered why the trial only went to English-speaking countries. I recall when the trial launched in 2019, many artists around the world got upset, quite naturally, as they were excluded. If it does eventuate, it appears a great way to get people onto the 3ds Max ladder?

Nic Fonta Yeah. So I'm happy that you said 'trial' because this was a pilot and a lot of people didn't see it that way or didn't understand. And it was mostly our fault, maybe for not messaging it properly. But this is a pilot. We're trying to understand what is the impact to our core business. How do people react? Do they find that it is suited for what they're looking for? What should be the right price point and what's bundled in the offering?

So we need to figure out all of these things, before we massively deploy it. We realise that in M&E, for both MAYA and MAX, there is a challenge with getting students to have access for free to our software, then moving directly into a full-blown offering, which is a

big gap in terms of pricing. And when you're a student, you're learning the software. When you are fresh out of school, you're trying to figure out how you're going to make a living and then maybe you start a business or you work for a summer. And not everybody works for Disney or Ubisoft or the big architecture firms or large archviz studios.

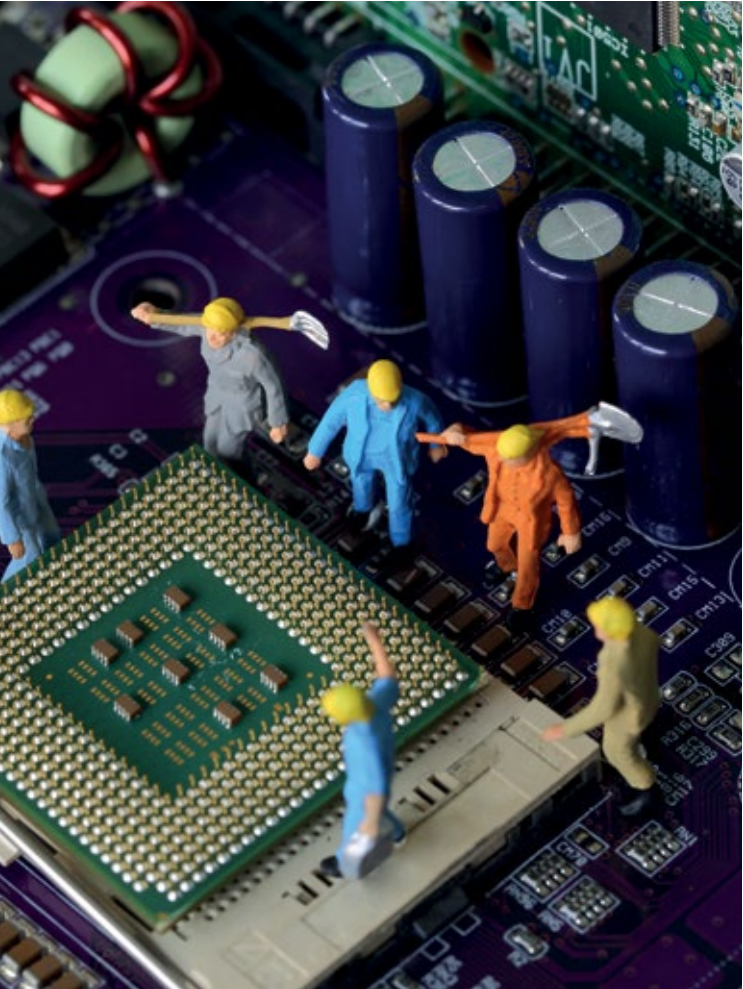
So we know we have a gap there in our offering and we're trying to figure out how to solve that. So that's why we're doing this as a trial.

Nigel Hunt When I looked at it from a legal point of view, I wondered how Autodesk could finance-test the users without them having to submit confidential bank statements? That's a very large challenge that you've set yourself.

Nic Fonta We're relying on our users being honest with us and telling us.

Nigel Hunt But surely another approach would be to virtualise the software?

Nic Fonta Oh, yeah, there are tons of approaches that we are considering. I don't know if indie will be delivered in its current shape or form in the final offering. But we know we have to find something to bridge the gap.



Nigel Hunt In the old days, many people would have used a crack version to get on the ladder.

Nic Fonta Oh, there are many of them doing that today. I can tell you that because we know!

There is a lot of cracking and non-compliance still happening. 3ds Max is the second most-pirated software at Autodesk. I'm sure you can figure out which one is the most.

Nigel Hunt Yes indeed, that's a whole new conversation, I'm sure!

I believe we've covered everything for this issue. I've found it extremely informative and I thank you, Nic and Nancy, for taking time out to talk with me. I hope the community enjoys learning more about you and the direction of 3ds Max.

Nic Fonta OK. Nice and happy. It was a pleasure to speak with you, Nigel. Very cool.

Nigel Hunt Yes, you too. Bye.

Thank you to Nic and Nancy at Autodesk for this first interview.

If you wish to comment on points raised in this interview with the architectural visualisation community please feel free to get involved by posting to the following links.

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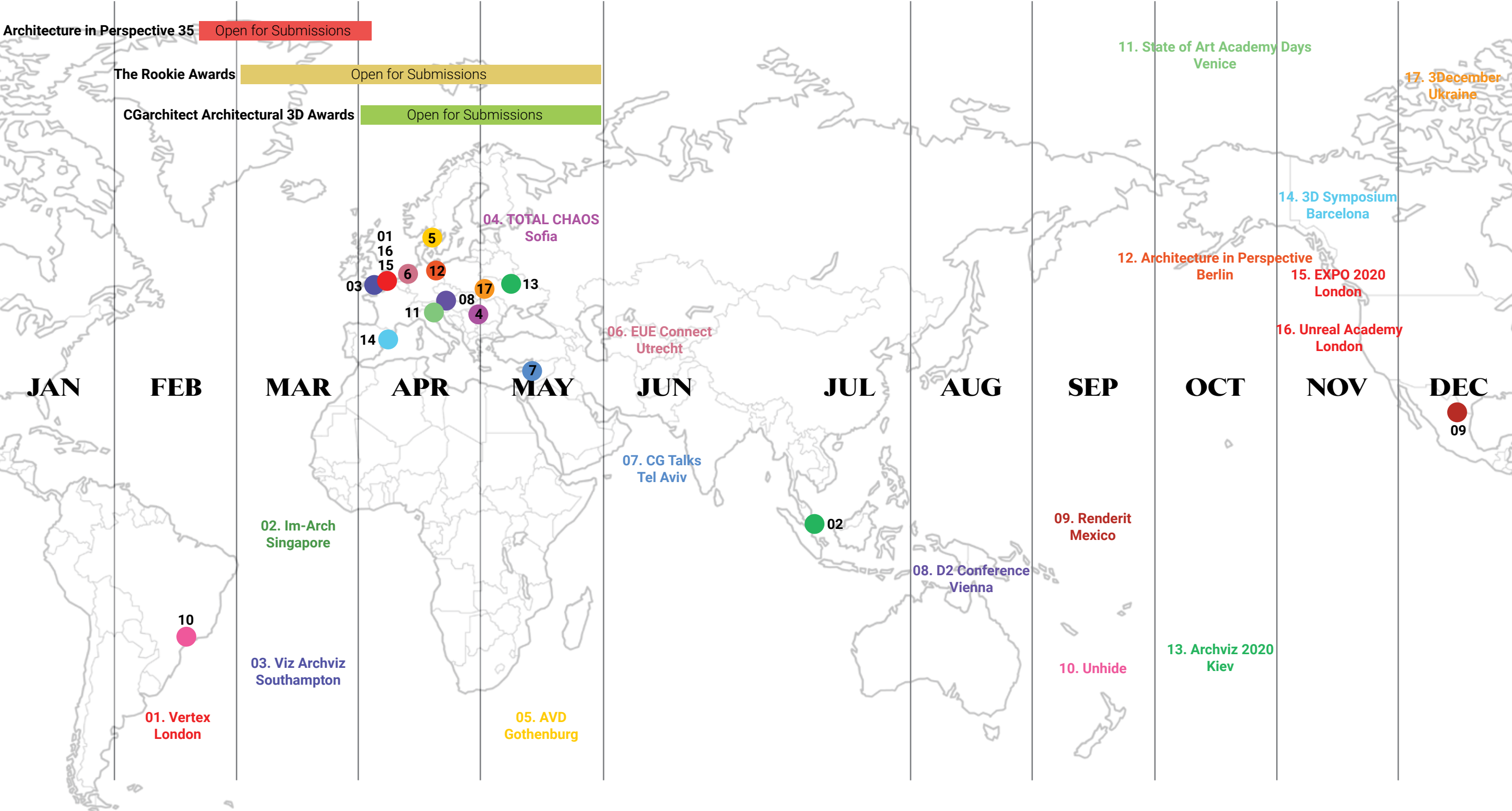
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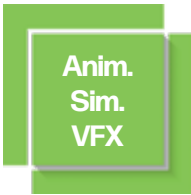
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