

3DELIGHT 7.0

3Delight For Maya

- The plug-in is better integrated into *Maya*. It now registers itself as a standard Maya renderer and is thus accessible through the Render Settings. Batch rendering and command line rendering (through the standard *Maya Render* command) is now possible.
- Improved HyperShade Translation:
 - *3Delight For Maya* tracks HyperShade network modifications and only translates and compiles shaders which have changed.
 - The following hypershade nodes are now supported: `ocean`, `remapValue`, `lightInfo`, `layeredTexture` and `volumeLight`. The `Image Sequence` options of the `File` texture node are now supported.
 - HyperShade networks for light sources are correctly translated into their RenderMan SL equivalent.
 - The RenderMan Code shader can now declare output variables and those can be output using secondary displays (advanced).
- Support for RIB archives creation and reading using a user friendly, yet flexible, interface.
- Out-of-the-box support for *Shave & a Haircut* and much improved *Maya Fur* support.
- Object Instancers are fully supported.
- Shadow Maps can be rendered using arbitrary cameras. This allows for better shadow map view framing and thus better quality.
- More output variables added to secondary displays.
- *Maya* 2008 support.

Rendering Features

- New Image Based Lighting Algorithm. A more flexible and powerful approach to image based lighting is introduced.
- Point Based Occlusion and Color Bleeding.
- Brick Maps (3D Textures) for efficient and anti-aliased 3D data lookup.
- Display subsets. A unique feature that enables rendering of many layers, each with its own alpha channel and output variables, in one render pass.

3Delight Performance

- Multi-threading efficiency has been improved for scenes with high depth complexity.
- Point cloud files are not read in memory all at once any more: proper caching enables memory-efficient access to point cloud data.
- Subsurface scattering has been optimized and the pre-processing step is now run in multi-threaded mode.
- Deep Shadow Map creation is now multi-threaded.
- `occlusion()` and `indirectdiffuse()` have been accelerated through the use of adaptive sampling.

Texture Converter (tdlmake)

A new `-preview` option makes `.tdl` textures appear as TIFFs of lower resolution to software such as *Maya*; this enables you to use a single texture for both *Maya* previews and final renders. Additionally, `tdlmake` now supports the TARGA file formats.

New Tools

- `ptc2brick` is a tool to convert point cloud files to brick maps.
- `ptcview` is a tool to view point cloud files.
- `ptcmerge` is a tool to merge point cloud files.

Pipeline

- A new API to access point cloud files has been added.
- A C++ API for DSO plug-ins is now available.

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- *Maya Fur* support using efficient procedural geometry.
- Enhanced Hypershade support. Hypershade networks that contain animated attributes are now handled correctly.
- Secondary displays can now output many useful components from Hypershade materials, such as diffuse, specular, etc.
- A “rendermanCode” Hypershade node has been added. It can be used to execute RenderMan SL code in Hypershade networks.
- Support for *Maya 8.5*.

3Delight Performance

- Ray tracing speed is greatly improved. Some heavy scenes will render up to 50% faster.

64-bit Support

- *3Delight* now supports Windows 64-bit.
- *3Delight For Maya* now supports *Maya* 64-bit.

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- HyperShade support. 3DFM now automatically converts HyperShade networks to RenderMan shaders. 3DFM produces clean, human readable code and is easily extensible to support specific HyperShade nodes.
- Shader collections. A powerful feature that enables a per-pass RenderMan shader assignment mechanism.
- Complete geometry support. Paint effects, Maya hair, Maya subdivision surfaces and particles (including blobby particles) are now supported.
- Direct rendering to Maya's render view.

RenderMan

- Output variables can now be output in “exclusive” mode: each output variable can have its own alpha, independent from all other output variables.
- `RiNuCurves` can be used to render curves specified as NURBS.
- `RiHierarchicalSubdivisionMesh` to render hierarchical subdivision surfaces.
- `RiPoints` can be rendered as patches or smooth blobbies.
- `RiResource` can be used to save and restore the graphics state in whole or in part.

Rendering Features

- Photon mapping to render caustics and to accelerate global illumination (final gathering). Photon mapping can be performed in a single pass or using a two pass approach.
- 3D data baking using `bake3d()` and `texture3d()` shadeops.
- Ray tracing hider to trace primary rays instead of using REYES.
- Multiple shadow maps can be *aggregated* into one single shadow map file for easier access. This can serve, for example, to store six shadow maps in one file for point light shadows.
- 3Delight offers a powerful and flexible interface to render outlines such as those necessary for toon rendering.

Pipeline

- Ri Filters add extra flexibility to the RenderMan pipeline, enabling the user to modify the Ri commands stream at will.
- Conditional RIB commands contribute to create re-usable, context sensitive, archives.
- Network Cache has been extended to support network *writes*, drastically improving server load on large render farms.
- A filtering mechanism has been introduced to filter out specific error messages.

Shading Language

- Shaders can communicate with light sources using *forward message passing*.
- Variable length arrays are supported.

New Display Drivers and File Formats

- `i-display` framebuffer is now available for Mac OS X platforms.
- Added reading and writing capabilities for *Photoshop* PDF files. Outputting image channels to layers is supported.
- Added support for IFF, SGI and *Softimage* files.

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3Delight For Maya

The package now comes with a Maya plugin (*3Delight For Maya*) that uses 3Delight for rendering. The plugin provides a user friendly interface to many 3Delight features and comes with a RenderMan MEL binding for increased flexibility.

3Delight For Maya is developed in conjunction with soho vfx (www.sohovfx.com). It is based upon their Build A RIB File (BARF) tools developed by Berj Bannayan and used in production since 2003.

Multi-Threading and Multi-Processing

- 3DELIGHT can now render images using threads. This automatically speeds up renders on multi-cpu, multi-core and hyperthreaded machines.
- Multi-processing and network rendering now use a load-balancing algorithm for improved efficiency.

RenderMan

- Area lights are implemented through the `RiAreaLightSource` call. Area light sources can be specified using arbitrary geometry.
- Arbitrary output variable functionality has been extended for greater flexibility. See `RiDisplay`'s documentation for details.
- The `gather()` shadeop can now return arbitrary variables for ray hit positions.
- `RiGeometricApproximation` now accepts a 'focusfactor' parameter to control the shading rate of out of focus geometry.
- Network cache functionality is available through the Rx library. This enables users to cache arbitrary network files using 3DELIGHT's powerful caching system.
- The `hider` can render scenes without motion blur but with correct time derivatives. This is useful for performing motion blur as a post-processing step.

Performance

- Accelerated motion blur and depth of field sampling.
- Trim curves render faster and require less memory thanks to an improved algorithm.
- Ray tracing of complex scenes is now faster (up to 10%).
- Overall memory consumption has been reduced.
- `i-display` framebuffer is now faster on Windows.

Image Quality

- 3DELIGHT now offers an improved motion blur sampling that better mimics the shutter of a real camera. This generally produces smoother motion blur when enabled.
- A new 'extrememotiondof' `hider` option improves sampling in scenes combining large motion blur and out of focus regions.
- Cubic environment map lookups now support oversampling for better filtering.
- Shadow map filtering for low resolution shadow maps has been improved.

Image Based Lighting

- `gather()`, `occlusion()` and `indirectdiffuse()` can use arbitrary ray distributions for more realistic renderings using HDRI maps. Ray distributions are specified using an environment map and help produce images with correct shadows and lighting with respect to the environment.
- `tdlmake` can create cubic environment maps from lightprobes or two fisheye lens images.

Shader compiler

- Shaders can contain user defined annotations. This can be used by shader generators to embed information about parameter ranges, comments and other meta data. The SLO library has been augmented to retrieve annotations from shaders.
- `shaderdl` warns when mixing incompatible coordinate systems in arithmetic.
- Additional code optimization is now performed at the `-O2` optimization level. Shaders need to be recompiled.

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RenderMan

- 3DELIGHT now fully implements the CSG RenderMan capability.
- Enhanced arbitrary output variables support: each output variable can now have its own filter.
- The `zthreshold` option, useful for shadowmaps, is now implemented.
- Improper displacement bounds are now reported as a warning.

Performance

- 3DELIGHT's performance has been improved with better depth culling and more efficient handling of depth-complex scenes.
- Atmosphere shaders can be evaluated more efficiently, this leads to faster rendering of volumetric effects.
- Improved texture lookup speed and cache usage. This also has a beneficial effect on network traffic.
- Some very complex implicit surfaces (made of thousands of nodes) now render faster.
- Both scene loading and RIB output are about three times faster.
- A new display variable, `'__CPUtime'`, can be used to identify shading bottlenecks.

Image Quality

- `calculatenormal()` now returns better normals and exhibits more details in finely displaced geometry.
- Smooth derivatives are implemented and contribute to better antialiasing of textures and procedural patterns.
- Improved DSM filtering, those should now be more coherent with conventional shadow maps.
- Atmosphere shaders can now work correctly with layered translucent surfaces.

Shader Baking

A new shadeop, `bake()`, can now be used to easily bake shader computed values into a `'bake'` file. Additionally, `tdlmake` can now read `'bake'` files and convert them into a texture.

Shader Compiler

The optimizer has been further improved to generate smaller and faster code, especially for very large or automatically generated shaders. This can significantly improve rendering times.

New Tools

- `ribshrink` is a tool to factor RIB archives out of a set of RIB files. The purpose of this tool is to save storage space and network traffic.
- `ribdepends` is a tool to list RIB dependencies such as textures, shaders and archives, it can also be used to create site independent RIB packages.

Linux builds

3DELIGHT is now linked against `glibc 2.3` so issues when linking with other applications (such as `liquid`) should be gone.

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Fixes

1. Improved 'licutils hostid' compatibility on windows systems.

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Multiprocessing

3DELIGHT is now able to render a single image using multiple processors located on a single computer or on remote computers or a combination of both. This powerful feature makes it possible to distribute rendering of a single image on a render-farm without the need for external software.

Performance

Loading speed and memory usage for complex scenes has been further improved. Additionally, improvements to the shading system yields an overall 20% increase in rendering speed for complex scenes. This is the first step of a continuing optimization of the shading system.

Other features

- Rendering times are now reported in the statistics with detailed information for each part of the rendering process. This eases the identification of performance issues.
- Lightweight particles are now correctly shaded using surface shaders.
- Motion blur of RiAttributes is now properly handled.

Shader Compiler

The shader compiler `shaderd1` now supports variable size arrays. Some optimization options have been moved from O3 to O2 for better code generation. Compilation time has been improved for large shaders.

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Fixes

1. Fixed a glitch with RiCurves rendering when motion blur was used.
2. Removed some annoying error messages that were displayed during some Windows renderings.

The `i-display` `FrameBuffer`

This utility is now more efficient in terms of CPU usage. ‘Draw as Textured Polygon’ is now the default.

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Ray Tracing

The ray tracer uses more accurate ray differentials (derivatives), leading to higher quality filtering. Oversampling can now be specified on a per shadeop basis to improve ray tracing quality.

Level of Detail

LOD is now supported and works for all primitives. This feature, combined with 3DELIGHT’s procedurals, can contribute to dramatically lower memory usage.

Particles

In addition to the ‘`sphere`’ and ‘`disk`’ rendering modes, `RiPoints` can now be rendered using a lightweight primitive suitable for very small particles such as dust. Particles are rendered as circles using a specialized algorithm.

Primitives

Tessellation algorithms have been improved for ‘`catmull-clark`’ subdivision surfaces, leading to better quality and performance. `facevertex` variable interpolation has been greatly improved. All quadrics and the torus are now native primitives, resulting in improved performance.

Subsurface Light Transport

The `subsurface()` shadeop has been further improved: it is faster and gives noticeably better results (even with higher shading rates).

RenderMan API and RIB files

The following RenderMan calls have been implemented: `RiArchiveBegin`, `RiArchiveEnd`, `RiArchiveInstance` (Inline archives) and `RiClippingPlane`. Additionally, 3DELIGHT can transparently read and write RIB streams compressed with `gzip`.

New Framebuffer

`i-display` is now the default framebuffer. The old framebuffer can still be enabled by modifying the ‘`rendermn.ini`’ file distributed with the application. (Not available for MacOS X)

Network Caching

This feature now works on MacOS X platforms.

Shader Compiler

Overall compiler’s performance has been improved. Script named ‘`shaderdl`’ (and ‘`shaderdl.bat`’ on Windows) has been removed. The binary may now be invoked directly. It is now possible to compile multiple source files at once; specifying a directory will build all contained source files. Additionally, it is now possible to embed the shaders’ source file inside compiled shaders, triggering automatic shader “on the fly” recompilation when binary backward compatibility is broken.

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New Windows Installer

This should fix all reported path problems.

Motion Blur

3DELIGHT now supports unlimited multi-segment motion blur for geometry deformation, transformation and camera movement.

Improved Image Quality

A new sampling strategy reduces noise when rendering motion-blur, indirect diffuse lighting, ambient occlusion, shadow maps and ray-traced shadows (when blurred). Environment map lookups give smoother looks than in previous releases.

Improved Visibility Culling

3DELIGHT now discards geometry more aggressively with the "opacity threshold" attribute. This proves beneficial for scenes with a large number of layered semi-transparent surfaces (e.g. hair).

Deep Shadow Maps

New analytical filtering of shadow lookups gives beautiful, precise shadows even for very thin geometry such as hair. A new compression algorithm roughly halves DSM storage requirements.

Ray Tracing

The new `gather()` shadeop provides a flexible interface to hemisphere sampling. Ray-tracing performance improved significantly, especially for subdivision surfaces.

Geometry

Algorithms for dicing subdivision and implicit surfaces (blobbies) are three times faster on average. In addition, polygonal models made of triangles render better due to an improved dicing scheme.

Sub Surface Light Transport

`subsurface()` is now more robust, faster and uses less memory. A 'shadingrate' attribute gives more control over algorithm's performance.

Rx Library Calls

The renderer now provides DSOs with access to some useful internal SL functions such as `option()`, `attribute()`, `texture()` and `noise()`.

Network Cache

In addition to its network texture caching functionality, 3DELIGHT now caches RIB archives stored on network drives (e.g. NFS).

Shading Compiler

Error and warning reports are less intrusive and more accurate.