SkyTracer2

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What Is SkyTracer2?

• A tool for creating sky backgrounds
• Easy to use
• Long render times
  – SkyBaker
Finding SkyTracer2 (Part 1)

• Setting the menus:
  – Layout
    • Interface
      – Edit Menu Layout
        » Presets

• Change presets to the desired menu style
  – Styles based on program version

• Scene Tab
  – Effects Toolbox
    • Backdrop – (CTRL + F5)
Finding SkyTracer2 (Part 2)

• In the *Effects* window, select *Backdrop* tab
• Click (and hold) *Add Environment*
  – Un-click on SkyTracer2 to add environment
• Open SkyTracer2 by double clicking link
The SkyTracer2 Window

- **Dissolve**: blending the sky into the scene
- **Planet Radius**: Default is set to Earth
- **Atmosphere / Haze Tabs**:
  - Controls the light scattering
    - Adjust after the clouds have been perfected
    - Adjust settings to get the feel desired
- **Quality Settings**:
  - *Low* setting for faster, test renders
  - *High* setting for final, day-long renders
The SkyTracer2 Window

• The *Clouds* tab:
  – Low Altitude Clouds – *Enable / Disable*
  • The Texture Editor
    – The most popular sky texture – STClouds
      » Texture along the Y axis instead of Z
  • Use VIPER for a real-time rendering
    » Start tinkering with settings for the desired effect
  – High Altitude Clouds – *Enable / Disable*
  • Same as Low Altitude Clouds
The SkyTracer2 Window

- Use Volumetric Rendering of clouds for best effect
  - High quality rendering takes hours instead of minutes
  - Ability to change cloud heights in atmosphere and their shadows (Texturing Shadows)
The SkyTracer2 Window

• The Sun tab:
  – The light source for the sky
    • Choose between a Sun or Moon
    • Have 1 or 2 suns, (or a sun and a moon)
  – The Sun position
    • A paradise for people who like to adjust settings
    • Easiest way of changing things up:
      – Month
The SkyBaker Window

• Use as high a resolution as possible:
  – 2048 is adequate
• Choose an image type (JPEG for most)
• Mapping – Spherical
• Antialiasing – Use at great risk to render times!
• Start baking!
Using the SkyBaked Image

• Create a sphere in Modeler
  – 250 radius on each axis
  – Create the surface for the sphere
  – Face surface normals *inwards*
  – Open the Surface Editor
    • Open the Texture Panel for the Color channel
      – Load the baked JPEG file as an image map
        »Projected as Spherical
        »Turn off Texture Antialiasing
        »Set Texture Axis to Y instead of Z
        »Set Diffuse to 0% and Luminosity to 100%
        »Turn on Smoothing
What Has Been Covered

• SkyTracer2
  – Powerful tool with long render times

• SkyBaker
  – Used to save a SkyTracer environment as an independent image file
Thank You
Have a Nice Day