Beginner

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Render Tips for SWF

2. Lighting

The default light settings work well for most projects. When creating a project designed to render out as a SWF flash file, it is best to use only one light source since. Amorphium Pro only renders one light for Flash. If there is more than one light in the scene, you force the program tool pick one and ignore the others during the render. Also if you have shadows turned on, try moving your light source to a harsher angle, this will give you more dramatic shadows.

Figures 16 & 17
In this example you'll notice that the light is close to straight on the object, so the shadows are not as defined.

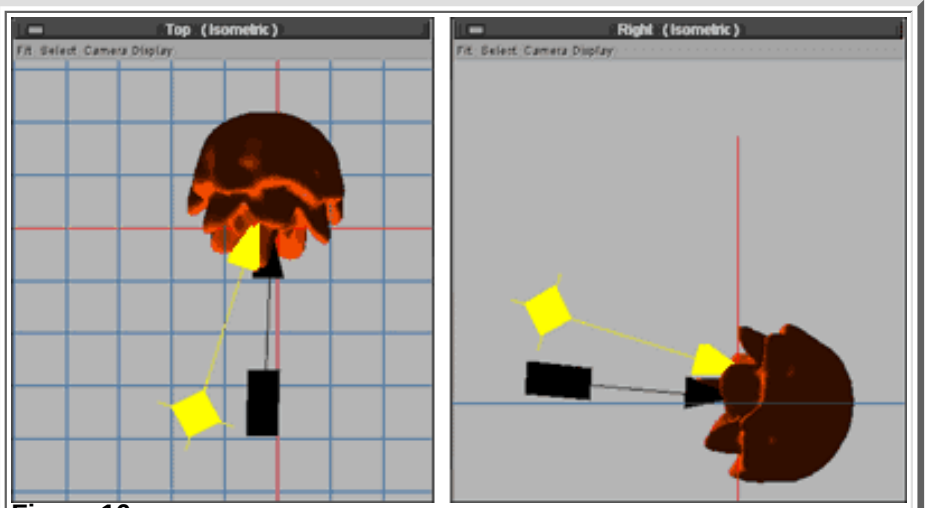

Figure 16

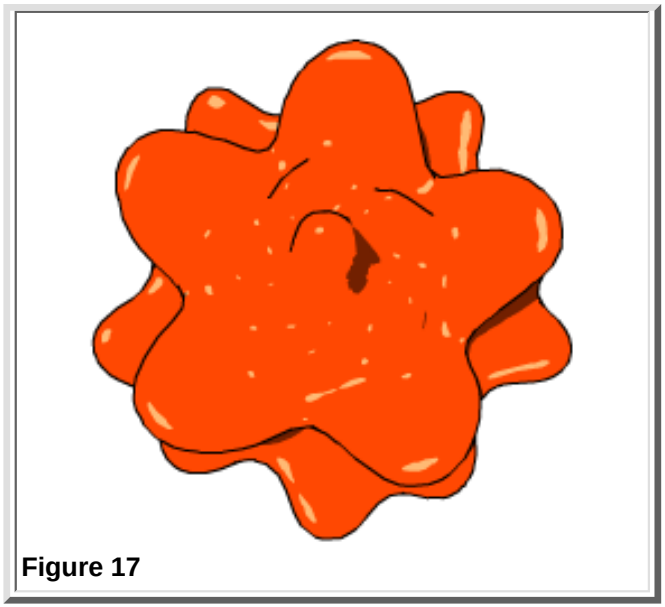

Figure 17

Figures 18 & 19
In this example the light is more of an angle from the upper left, creating more dramatic shadows.

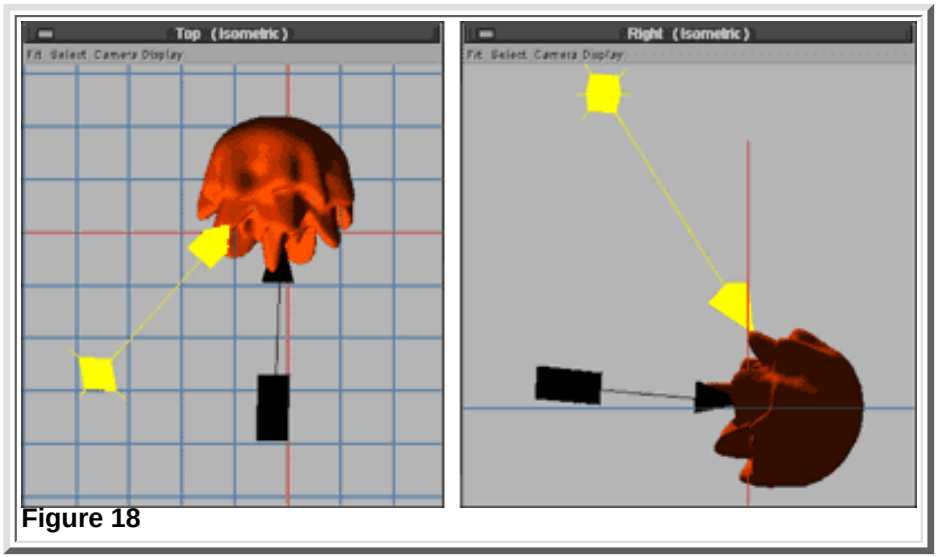

Figure 18

Figure 19

3. Render Setting

OUTLINES: (Figure 20)

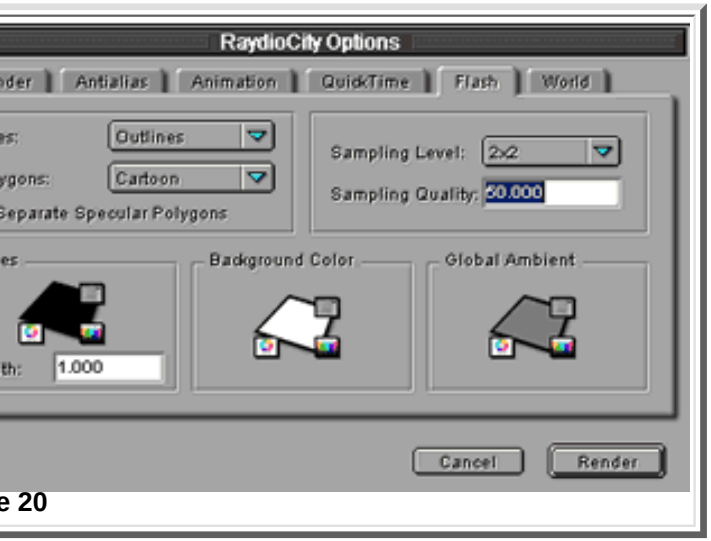

Figure 20

These work best with hard edged objects such as boxes, etc. It helps define where your edges are. however, if you're doing something like a character head, unless you have drastic defining features the outlines may not always show up. But outlines are nice for the "hand drawn" cartoon look. Try playing with the line thickness and color as well.

WIREFRAME:
Wireframe works best with any object that you want only wireframe to be viewed. To get really small Flash rendered files (files that will be easy and quick to download) turn "faces" to "none". For organic shapes with really dense meshes, try reducing the polygon count by using "MeshMan Decimate" tool. Also, when rendering to wireframe, it is best to set your flash sampling level to 1 x 1. This will make the final file size smaller and will not be a noticeable change in the quality of

vector since it is just a wireframe. Again, try selecting different line widths and color.

CARTOON:
This works nicely with organic objects with shadows turned on. For hard-edged objects, you may want to turn outlines "on". It will help you discern the edges of your objects.

GRADIENT:
Gradients can be tricky. It takes some testing to insure the results you want. Gradients give the effect of a specular highlight on an object. They works best with round objects such as globes which are close to spherical nature, also with flat edged objects like boxes, robots, 3D text, etc. The more organic your objects are, the less chance it has of rendering well in gradient mode.

SEPARATE SPECULAR POLYGONS:
When this option is turned on separate vector shapes are created to give the illusion of a highlight on the object. This works best in Cartoon mode.

SAMPLING LEVEL:
This setting sets the edge quality of the vector lines. Higher sampling levels use more points to define a curve giving a smoother look, but the more points in a curve, the larger the file size. The files are usually not much larger but if you have any intricate model with the outlines or wireframe turn on, you may see a noticeable difference in file size. So play with the settings and render test frames to find out what the best sample level is for your particular model, usually you won't have to go higher than 4 x 4.

Figure 21
Sampling level 1 x 1.

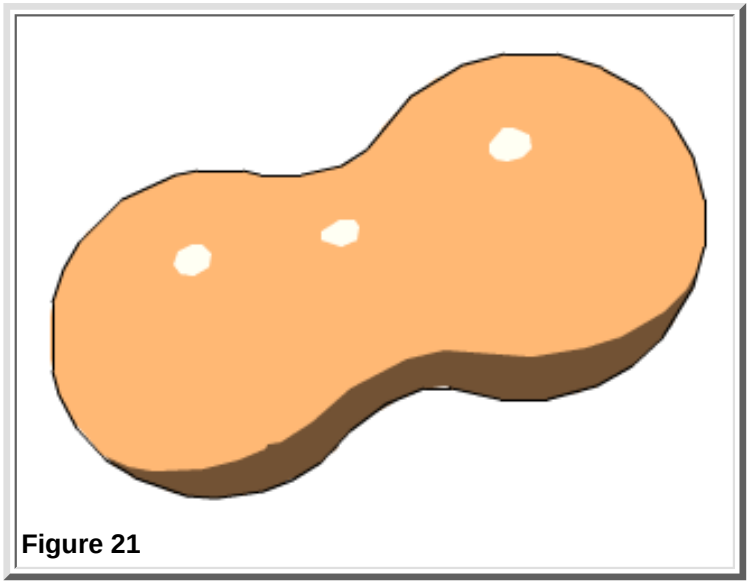

Figure 21

Figure 22
Sampling level 4 x 4.

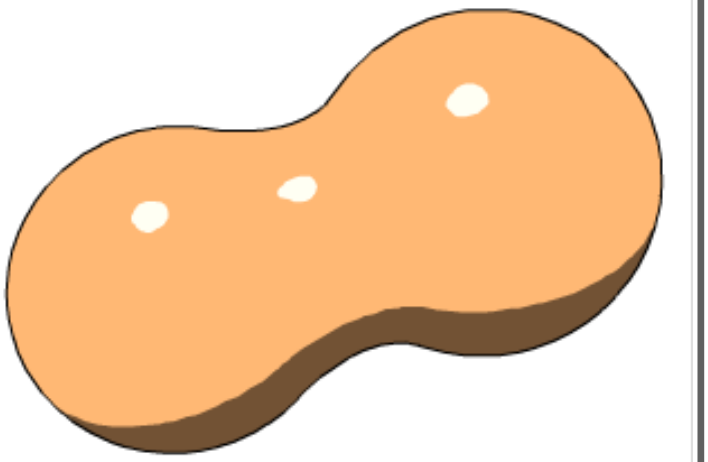

Figure 22

SAMPLING QUALITY:
This parameter adjusts the overall sampling algorithm quality. The default setting is 50. It is not recommended to change this setting. It was originally used for adjusting the quality before the sampling level parameter was added.

LINE COLOR:
Use this to change the color of a wireframe and outlines object.

LINE THICKNESS:
Use this to adjust the weight of the outlines. You can numerically input the thickness.

BACKGROUND COLOR:
This feature is default set at "white". It is best to leave it as such if you plan to import it into Flash, because Flash does not import a background color.

GLOBAL AMBIENT:
This defines the darkness of your shadows on your objects. A 50% gray works best. If you want your shadows to be darker, add more black. If you want them lighter, add more white.

SHADOWS:
Amorphium Pro is the only SWF 3D tool that will render with shadows and it works very well for most projects. Using this option in combination with hard angled light can give objects more definition and it gives the 2D vector file a very powerful 3D depth look.

OUTPUT SIZE:
Since Flash SWF is a vector-based format, the output size is not that crucial. I find that 320 x 240 output size works well for most applications. You can then import the resulting SWF file into Flash where it can be scaled to the size is needed.

FRAMES PER SECOND:
A good setting for this is 12 to 15. This will make the file size smaller and it will still look smooth.

4. Importing Into Flash
In Flash, under the "file" menu, choose "import". Once you have imported the Flash file, you will notice that it is a sequence of individual vector images. Creating a symbol will make it easier to work with the animation as a whole. Copy and paste the animation frames into a new symbol. Now you can scale it down and place it where you want it in your Flash movie.

5. Examples
Looking at the Amorphium Pro gallery on the www.amorphium.com web site provides a good indication of the various types of SWF renders you can create with the different settings. As you'll see, Amorphium Pro really excels at rendering to the vector format its quality and shadows make it a very powerful tool in your arsenal. The best way to create stunning new SWF files is to expirement with different settings and shapes. Try importing objects or using in conjunction with the program's unique organic deformation tools and you'll soon be dazzling your clients and audiences. Happy rendering!

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