

Maya and Alias MotionBuilder in a Production Pipeline

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OVERVIEW

This course covers a typical pipeline using both Maya and MotionBuilder. Whether you need to produce a feature film or come up with the latest game, most likely you will need a place for animation in your pipeline. Animation is the process of taking 3D characters or objects and moving them over time. This procedure usually takes time due to many artistic and technical issues. Typical technical issues can be a model's weight in geometry, hardware limitation or poor playback speed. This is where MotionBuilder can come in very handy.

First, we will go over some features of MotionBuilder, and then, with a practical example, we will explore how to use both Maya and MotionBuilder together.

I. Maya and MotionBuilder United

While Maya was made to take care of an entire pipeline, MotionBuilder was designed to deal mostly with animations. Since one enhances the other, it is possible to unite them into a single pipeline.

There are two basic animation techniques: keyframe animation and device animation. Both Maya and MotionBuilder exploit these techniques, but MotionBuilder has many powerful tools to help you tweak your animations.

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| I. What is MotionBuilder? | 15 min |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Main differences and advantages | |
| II. Using a Maya / MotionBuilder Pipeline | 10 min |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What goes in and out• Pros and cons | |

II. Maya / MotionBuilder Example

The basics of a Maya / MotionBuilder pipeline are simple but require some extra work to be done prior to converting your model to MotionBuilder. In this example, we will use Clemor and Harley, characters from the Hypnotix game studio. They will be animated in MotionBuilder using motion capture and keyframing, and then brought back into Maya for final tweaking. Doing so allows for creating and modifying our animation in real time using the powerful display engine of MotionBuilder.

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| I. What Needs to be Done in Maya? | 15 min |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Modeling• Rigging• Naming• Texturing | |

- Exporting

II. Using MotionBuilder

30 min

- Setting up your character
- Motion capture
- Character rig
- Keyframes and layers

III. Back to Maya

10 min

- Importing the data
- Workaround
- Rest of Maya pipeline
- Reusing and blending animations from Maya

III. Tools and Scripts

Advanced users with coding knowledge can push the limits even more by using embedded scripting languages and software development kits. Even though both Maya and MotionBuilder are quite different programmatically, they both have the possibilities of creating scripts, macros or custom tools for your pipeline.

I. Custom Tools

5 min

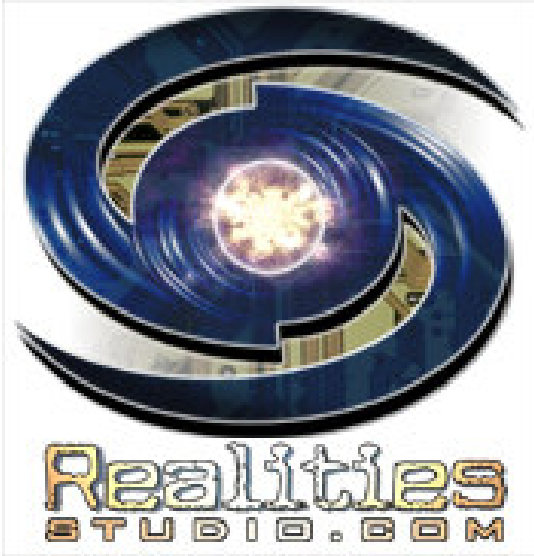
- Scripting languages
- Software Development Kit (SDK)

IV. Conclusion

2 min

Based on what you've just experienced, you probably understand better the advantages of combining tools from both Maya and MotionBuilder. Although it depends on your needs, using such a pipeline can drastically speed up any animation tasks. It is now up to you to exploit those tools to your advantage.

For more information about Realities Studio, visit <http://www.RealitiesStudio.com>. If you have any questions, comments or concerns about this course or our plug-ins for MotionBuilder, you can post on the Realities forum at <http://forum.RealitiesStudio.com>.



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