

SpaceDock-IM

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COLLABORATORS

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Chapter 1

SpaceDock-IM

1.1 SpaceDock - an object for Imagine v3 by Carmen Rizzolo

Carmen Rizzolo proudly presents...

Yet another mind-bogglingly huge Imagine object!

My interpretation of....

SPACEDOCK - As seen in the series of Star Trek films

Introduction
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Second Skin?
Thanks!
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1.2 Introduction

INTRODUCTION:

Thanks for downloading this archive. Sorry it's so big. I did try to keep the object(s) as small as possible, but without sacrificing good looks and detail. Not only does that make for a smaller object, but it also uses less memory and it will render faster.

When I started modeling this object, I had no idea it would turn out as well as it did. I was sure it would look "cool" with all those darn lights on it, but I thought I would have to do without the slick, blue "glow" that occurs here and there on the real thing. I stumbled on to a trick that allows me to do this, and without having to use a light-source bundled into the object! This trick here makes

this object stand apart from my other modeling efforts. And I plan on using it much more in the future.

SEE: Second Skin?

For a while there, I had given up on 3D. I was constantly dissatisfied in my putt-putt 68030, and with Imagine v2.0 at the time, it seemed as if the whole world of 3D programs was leaving me in the dust. I finally bought Imagine 3.0, about 6 months after it was released. Once I saw the new perspective modeling, and the "states" functions, I was bitten by the modeling bug yet again. Most of the modeling for this object was done within a week's time. This is amazingly fast for me. I still can't believe it. But it was a lot of fun to make, and I hope you have as much fun using it.

ENJOY!

Carmen Rizzolo
February 24, 1995

1.3 Public Domain?

PUBLIC DOMAIN?

Like the Enterprise, this object is released as totally free, no strings attached. It's a gift. On the other hand, it's probably actually the property of Paramount Pictures. So don't go using this thing in a commercial project, or you could wind up in trouble. You've been warned. Now if only I don't get sued... [gulp!]

As a favor to me for my troubles, please only distribute this object in its original archived form. This way, other people can take advantage of this documentation just as you are now. In the past I have noticed that my objects were uploaded to other places without the documentation or any of the other stuff that belongs with it. If I see this happen again, I will gleefully stop distributing my models. Fair enough? Sysops: Please delete any non-authentic uploads of this object. Thanks to all for your cooperation in this matter.

As another secondary favor.. If you could perchance give me a little modeling credit in anything you do with this object, it would be greatly appreciated. I don't ask all that much, do I? :)

1.4 Why did I do it?

WHY DID I DO IT?

Because it was there.

1.5 Points of Interest

POINTS OF INTEREST:

- * Uses NO brushmaps
- * About 1.3 megs in size
- * Uses a few of the standard Imagine textures [linear & Radial]
So you'll need those properly installed.
- * Requires the use of "Essence II" textures package

SEE: How to get EssenceII

- * Requires Imagine 3 to animate the spacedoors and spacedoor lights because they use the "states" functions.
- * Was modeled to look as hot as possible in the Scanline rendering mode, but can be used for RayTrace too [if you're a glutton for punishment].
- * Object is modular. So only load in the modules that will be visible in your scene.
- * Comes with a .fake version to make scene creation fast and easy [more on this later].
- * Uses my new "Second Skin" light technique [More on this later].
- * Comes with bonus object "StarSphere.obj"

1.6 Requirements

REQUIREMENTS:

All the object parts together are about 1.3 megs, so you'll most likely need about 10-12 megs of memory to render this sucker.

The objects will load into Imagine 2 and render okay, but to animate the Doors and the DoorLights, you'll need Imagine 3.0 or higher.

I strongly recommend using Essence II with this object. It is possible to take these textures out of the object, but it just won't look as good as it should without them.

SEE: Removing Textures

1.7 Removing Textures

REMOVING TEXTURES:

If you don't have Essence II, buy it. But if you can't afford it right now, but want to render the object, you'll need to take all references to Essence textures out of the objects. Don't worry, it's not all that difficult. I must stress again that this really does need Essence II to look right.

1: Enter the Imagine3 Details Editor.

- 2: Load the object "SpaceDock-A.obj"
- 3: Once the object is loaded, press F1, or use "Pick Select" in the pulldown menu. The object should then change colour.
- 4: Hit F7 or use "Attributes" in the pulldowns. The Attributes requestor would then pop up.
- 5: In the lower-right area of the requestor is a window with several items in it. These are EssenceII textures. Click on one, then click on the INFO button below, then click on the DROP button. Do this until all the "hullplate" textures are gone, and all that remains is a "<new>" item.
- 6: Hit the OK button to leave the Attributes requestor.
- 7: Make sure you are in PICK GROUPS mode, and the object you just loaded is still picked. If you followed these steps exactly, this is already the case. Save the object as "SpaceDock-A.obj" and yes, you want to overwrite the original [be sure to keep the original archive you downloaded tucked away somewhere]. DELETE the object from the Details Editor [NOT FROM YOUR DISK!] before loading the next object.
- 8: Repeat steps 1 thru 7 for the objects "SpaceDock-B.obj", "SpaceDock-C.obj", and "SpaceDock-Interior" with an additional step for the "B" module:
- 9: For SpaceDock-B.obj, use "Find by Name" in the pulldowns and type [no quotes] "Pod.1" then hit return. A piece of the object should change colour way at the bottom of the object in the FRONT VIEW. Hit F1 to PICK that object. Then enter the Attributes requestor and kill off the other EssenceII textures like you did before. There is also a Pod.2 , Pod.3 , and a Pod.4 that needs the same treatment. Then when you're done, click on the top-most object in the FRONT VIEW, and all of the B-module objects should turn the picked colour. Now you're ready to save.

1.8 Second Skin?

SECOND SKIN?

There are NO lights built into this object. So how to do those bright windows cast a glow like that? That's my secret.

Ah, I'm just kidding you. Here's how I did it. For the light-less blue glow, I duplicated the chunk of the hull that would have the glow on it, and scaled it only in the X and Y direction EVER SO SLIGHTLY!! Just enough so that it's not taking up the same space as the actual hull. Then I made it a BRIGHT object, so that it accepts

no shading. Gave it the colour of the light, then added a LINEAR texture or RADIAL texture [depending on the situation] so that the object grows more transparent the further away it gets from the so-called "light source." It's so simple, but sooooo effective. If you don't model, then you don't have to pay any attention to this. Just enjoy the object. But if you do model, I hope you will get some amazing results with this little trick. Remember my little motto: Sometimes only way to get your software to do what you need is to cheat as much as possible.

If I were to use real light sources, all in a ring as it should appear in the object, the rendering would slow waaaay down, and it's really impossible to do a true "ring" of light, since the light sources only come from a single point. Pthththf.

1.9 Thanks!

THANKS!

Special thanks go out to Brad Pennock, for his input and encouragement. Thanks to Marlin Schwanke for donating a little section of his BBS for my collection. Thanks to Harv Laser for his work running Portal and his constant encouragement and support. Thanks to Steve Worley for his amazing textures. Thanks to all my fans out there who push me to continuously out-do myself. And um, thanks in advance to Paramount Pictures [nudge nudge, know what I mean?].

1.10 How to Contact Me

HOW TO CONTACT ME:

At present, my phone number is [USA] (619) 573-0285. But that may change soon if I have to move. My roommate left me, and I need a new one!! [any takers?] A better way is my internet address which is:

CarmenR@cup.portal.com

To get the latest stuff by yours truly, look on either Aminet, portal, or:

ftp to dplanet.xbbs.com

cd to misc:carmenr

This is my little ftp area. My collection is there and all new stuff first appears there. You can also telnet to dplanet.xbbs.com and log on the Daily Planet BBS. This way, you can Email me there or post messages in the [F]iles: miscellaneous/CarmenR area.

The direct phone number for the Daily Planet BBS is

(619) 232-4919.

1.11 How to Use the Objects

HOW TO USE THE OBJECTS:

The SpaceDock object is modular. So you only have to load in the objects that are visible in your scene.

In the STAGE EDITOR, load the object "SpaceDock-Fake.obj" and you will be greeted with a simplified version of the entire space station. This "fake" model contains no faces, so it's invisible when rendered; it's also very small. This way you can leave it in the scene. Position it, move your cameras where you want, all that fun stuff. When you're ready to render, go into the ACTION EDITOR and add all the modules you need.

IMPORTANT NOTE: *ALL* modules for the SpaceDock objects have a parent axis that is in the same position. So if you moved the "fake" model around at all, be sure that the POSITION and ALIGNMENT bars for the modules are IDENTICAL to the "fake" model. Actually, in Imagine v3, you can just make sure the models have the same POSITION and ALIGNMENT info for the first frame of an animation. Then add ASSOCIATION bars for all the modules, using the "fake" object as the parent of all the associations.

If all this wasn't complicated enough, the DOORS and DOORLIGHTS objects are a little more complicated. They do require the same POSITION info as the other objects [SpaceDock modules], but the "Doors.obj" object is loaded four (4) times and each is at a different angle. Once you add the "Doors.obj" file four times in your scene, and make sure the POSITION and ALIGNMENT bars are identical [this is tremendously easy if you haven't touched the POSITION and ALIGNMENT of the "fake" object in the first frame] to the "fake" object, go back to the STAGE EDITOR. Use the "Find Requestor" thingy in the pulldown and find the second DOOR object [Door.2] and then hit F1 to pick it. Then enter the TRANSFORMATION requestor from the pulldowns and click on ROTATE. ROTATE in LOCAL mode. Enter 90 in the Z value. Then hit the PERFORM button. Do the same to Door.3 and Door.4 but with Z values of 180 and 270 respectively.

The DoorLights.obj file only needs to be loaded [read: have an actor bar for that frame] when a door object is currently opening or closing. So odds are you'll only need one of those loaded at any given time [unless it's a busy day at SpaceDock!]. The DoorLights are built into the "A" module, in the OFF position. If you need these lights to blink as they should when a door opens or closes, simply load the DoorLights.obj in on top of the lights built into the "A" module. It's set up so that the DoorLights loaded in will cover the ones on the "A" module. Nice, eh? Of course, Rotate the DoorLights.obj on the Z axis in local mode to match up with the door that is currently opening or closing.

Doors and DoorLights use the STATES feature in Imagine 3. So when

you load either of these objects, hit the BROWSE button on the "Object File info" requestor. Then choose a state.

In the ACTION EDITOR is where you animate these STATES. Unless I'm doing something wrong, the "Transition Frame Count" option was taken out of Imagine 3.0, so you'll need to add two actor bars each time you change a state. One bar for the change, another bar for that actor to remain in the scene in it's new state. I've found that it's wise to turn SPLINE INTERPOLATION OFF when adding that second actor bar.

For the DOORS, it's easy. There are two states. OPEN and CLOSED. Remember this object is supposed to be enormous, so nothing that big moves that quickly. Give the opening and closing a good 5 seconds or so to open or close.

For the Doorlights, it's a little more complicated. The DEFAULT State was just there for my reference. Don't use it. The other options are "OFF" and seven version of "IN" and "OUT." Actually, OFF isn't required either, since you can just remove the object's actor bar from any frames where the lights aren't blinking and it'll look like it's OFF.

When a starship is coming IN to the SpaceDock parking area, you will "animate" the DoorLights object by changing it's state every 3-6 frames. Whatever number you choose there is up to you. If you're doing 30 frames a second animation, 4 is a good number. If you're doing fields that will later be change into frames, then 8 is a good number. If you're doing an amiga-native animation [roughly 20 fps], then 3 or 4 is good. But for now, let's assume you're choosing 4. And let's assume that you want a starship to enter the SpaceDock parking area.

Starting with frame 20, the SpaceDoors open up. So also starting on frame 20, we add an actor bar for the door lights. The bar begins and ends on frame 20. The State is "IN.1" and there is NO SPLINE INTERPOLATION!! Then we add another bar from frame 21 to 23. This one has the same state of "IN.1" again WITHOUT SPLINE INTERPOLATION. Then on frame 24, we add an actor bar that starts on 24 and ends on 24. This one has a state of "IN.2" Then another actor bar from frames 25 to 28. This also has the "IN.2" state. I think you see where I'm going with this. Continue this process for the entire duration that the Starship enters the SpaceDock, up until the point where the doors begin to close.

When you've completed adding an actor bar with "IN.7" it's time to loop the process on the next frame, starting over at "IN.1" You can use the COPY and PASTE function to COPY the entire sequence of actor bars from the beginning of the loop to the end. Then PASTE it down so that it picks up where the previous one ends. This will same some time. Animating these blinking lights is worth the little extra effort, because the finished product looks really, really nice. Good luck!

The Interior module "SpaceDock-Interior.obj" only needs to have an actor bar on frames that any of the door objects are opening or opened. It's not a very elaborate object. It's made to look good

from the outside looking in. It doesn't really look that hot from the inside looking in. In the future, I may make an updated interior module with more details of the interior. But for now, I don't know what it really looks like in there. :)

You might want to experiment with morphing or changing the position of your light sources when "filming" a closeup of a starship entering the interior. The lighting is quite different inside there. Go render it and see for yourself. Be sure to take your parking stub.

Also included is an object called "StarShere.obj" Which is a simple starfield. What you can do is load this up in the detail editor, change the colour to a different grey value, and save it in a different name, and load all the different starspheres in your scene for multi-coloured stars. As-Is, the StarShere looks best when rendered in Hi-Res. For Lo-Res renderings, either render in Hi-Res, then scale the picture down in an image processor [recommended route for better anti-aliasing], or change the size of the star "triangles." The way to do this is to load the StarSphere up in it's own project and apply the Explosion F/X to it. in the effect requestor, don't give it any travel distance, but have it scale the trangles as desired [by a factor of 2?]. Then go to the last frame of the explosion, snapshot the object and save it to whatever filename you like.

1.12 How to Get Essence II

HOW TO GET ESSENCE II:

Let it be known that I'm not part of Apex software in any way. I just enjoy their products. But here's some info:

Apex Software Publishing
405 El Camino Real Suite 121
Menlo Park, CA. 94025

Phone: (415) 322-7532
Fax: (415) 322-2059

And for Portal info, call [voice]: (408) 973-9111