Computer Animation I   Fall 2006

Final Project Milestone 6: Lighting Still(s)

Put the finishing touches on your motion. Then it's time to light your movie.

MILESTONE 6 due Wednesday December 6th at the beginning of class

Hand in a full-resolution (640x?), production-quality rendered still image (TIFF format, please. NOT IFF!) from each of the scenes in your final project. Name them appropriately ("PerryShot1.tif" and so on). We will have a lighting review in class.

Lighting without reference imagery is a **bad idea**. Return to the image(s) you found back when you proposed the project and seek out more reference sources if you like. The more the better.

Remember the lessons learned in the "head lighting" assignment:

- Start with the key light for the scene. Translate and rotate the key light based on where you want the highlights and the shadows to land in your scene. Get the intensity right and deal with the color later.
- Spotlights are a great to use because you can look through them. This makes it easy to position the shadows they cast.
- Tackle fill, rim, and bounce lights only after you're confident with your settings for the key.
- Fill lights are intended to **fill in** the shadowed areas left dark by the key. They should probably not have a specular component, and shouldn't cast shadows either.
- Rim lights are great for lifting objects out from the background and accentuating their shape. Turn the rim intensity up to an absurd number to get the positioning right, then sneak it back down to something reasonable. Rim lights generally live on the opposite side of the object from the camera, and they point almost directly towards the camera.
- Bounce lights are added to try and simulate diffuse inter-reflections between objects. If you want to have a bright object next to another object in your scene, you may want a bounce light.

Remember the objectives of lighting that we covered in class. We use light to:

- Direct the viewer's eye,
- Communicate where and when,
- Enhance mood, atmosphere, drama,
- Reveal character personality,
- and create depth.

And some other tips:

- Copy your latest animation scene file ("PerryShot1.mb") to an **entirely new name** for lighting ("PerryShot1_lighting.mb") BEFORE adding any lights. This ensures that if your file goes bad you can still salvage your animation from your old animation file.
- Once you've set up lights in one scene, select them, do Export Selected, and save the lights in a difference scene file. Then, reference this new file back in to the original. Reference your lighting rig in any scenes that need it.
- Use full-valued colors for your lights. Set the brightness of the light with the "intensity" option, not the color.
- Never use an R, G, or B value of 0 when choosing colors.