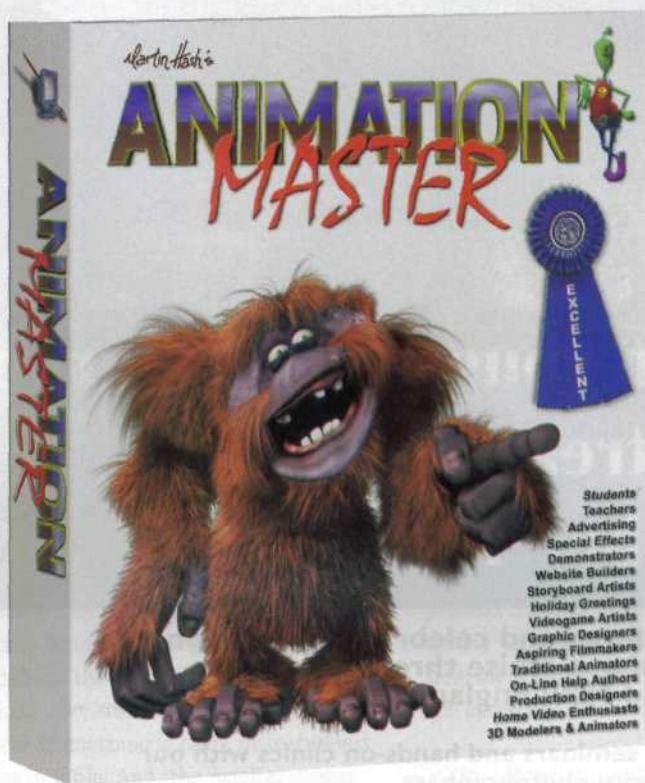


Accessible Animation At Last

Motion And Emotion Combined

If there is one corner of video that has been pretty well left up to the patient, experienced, and skilled professional, it is animation. Doing it the Disney way, with thousands of individually drawn cells takes masterful drawing talent and months to get just a few minutes. The 3D animation a la Lightworks and Industrial Light and Magic is equally costly and labor intensive. Doing it with Flash and SMIL is lots easier—if you think Flash is easy, that is. That's still a formidable learning curve on top of a fairly pricey program.

Until recently, anything that's cheaper and easier has really looked the part—up until Martin Hash (www.hash.com) created Animation Master, which has opened up the world of really convincing animation to the rest of us who would like some whimsical cartoon expression but haven't had the time to try to make it a career. So if you're tired of filming reality and would



Animation Master comes with a manual that is an education in itself.

Facts

- **Image Formats Supported:** Load—Targa, JPEG, TIFF, AVI, QuickTime; Save—Targa, AVI, QuickTime
- **System Requirements:** PC with Windows 2000 or XP, PowerMac with OS9.2, or OSX 10.3.4 or greater, and 450MHz or faster processor; 256MB RAM; local CD-ROM drive (*program CD required in drive when software starts*)
- **MSRP:** \$299



Pick an animated character and it's ready to start moving at your first command.

rather make up your universe from scratch, here's a gateway to creativity that opens easy but will let you into a realm of complex satisfaction that will take you as far as you want to run with it.

If you want to jump right in and make cool cartoons from the get-go, this software allows you to do just that—and come out with a fairly sophisticated result, albeit with pre-made characters you haven't created from scratch. But if you want to go further, you can make models of your own and create cartoon characters based on real-life photos and turn them into 3D toons. Put in a face, for instance, and the program reduces it into critical points of style and motion, connected by moving lines called splines, creating a mobile, wirelike framework under the skin

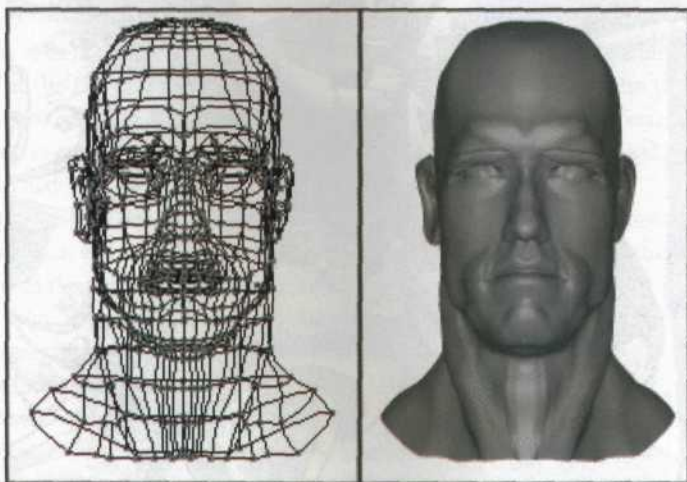
of your toon that underlies its motion, a flexible subsurface skeleton. Moving selected control points makes the whole unified fabric dance to whatever motion or emotion you decide upon. It's the basis for most of what you see done in Hollywood animation these days, but ready-made for turnkey operation.

The motions or emotions you decide upon, however, are critical to making any cartooning seem convincing or confusing, and that's where anyone new to the field needs an education in what works and what doesn't—how long to sustain movement, how to use balance and relative perspective, anticipation, lighting, camera angle, facial/body expression, and other primary artistic considerations. Not just for humans and animals, but plants and

machines (building and flying a convincing fighter plane is no small feat). In other words, you have to learn the long-established fundamentals of animation. The 184-page manual is as good a wrap on this as we've ever seen, and by the time you've finished it, you'll not only know what animation is all about, you'll be able to do it yourself right on screen.

You can go as far as you want with this, all the way to the movies, as you can see from some of the animation award winners on <http://amfilms.hash.com> that use the same technology. Hash's home site, in addition, has an active online animation community attached to it where you can get tutorials, exchange experience, and get pre-modeled characters and sets from the absurd to the seductive to work with and develop in your own projects.

The 3D animation we've been talking about is, of course, the solid spatial type you're used to on a standard, flat TV or movie screen, not the freaky stereo stuff that jumps out of the screen onto the floor and chases you down the aisle. But, yes, Animation Master can do that, too—the package even comes with a pair of red/blue glasses! ■



Animation Master uses spline framework to analyze and create subtle movements.

Contact

Hash Inc.
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www.hash.com

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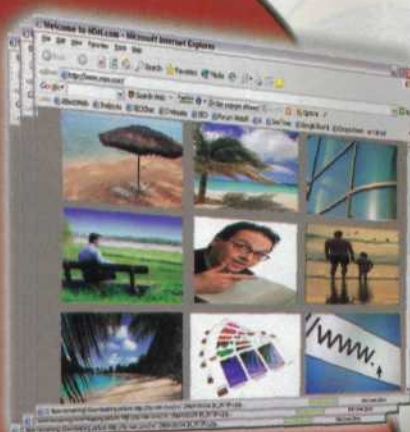
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