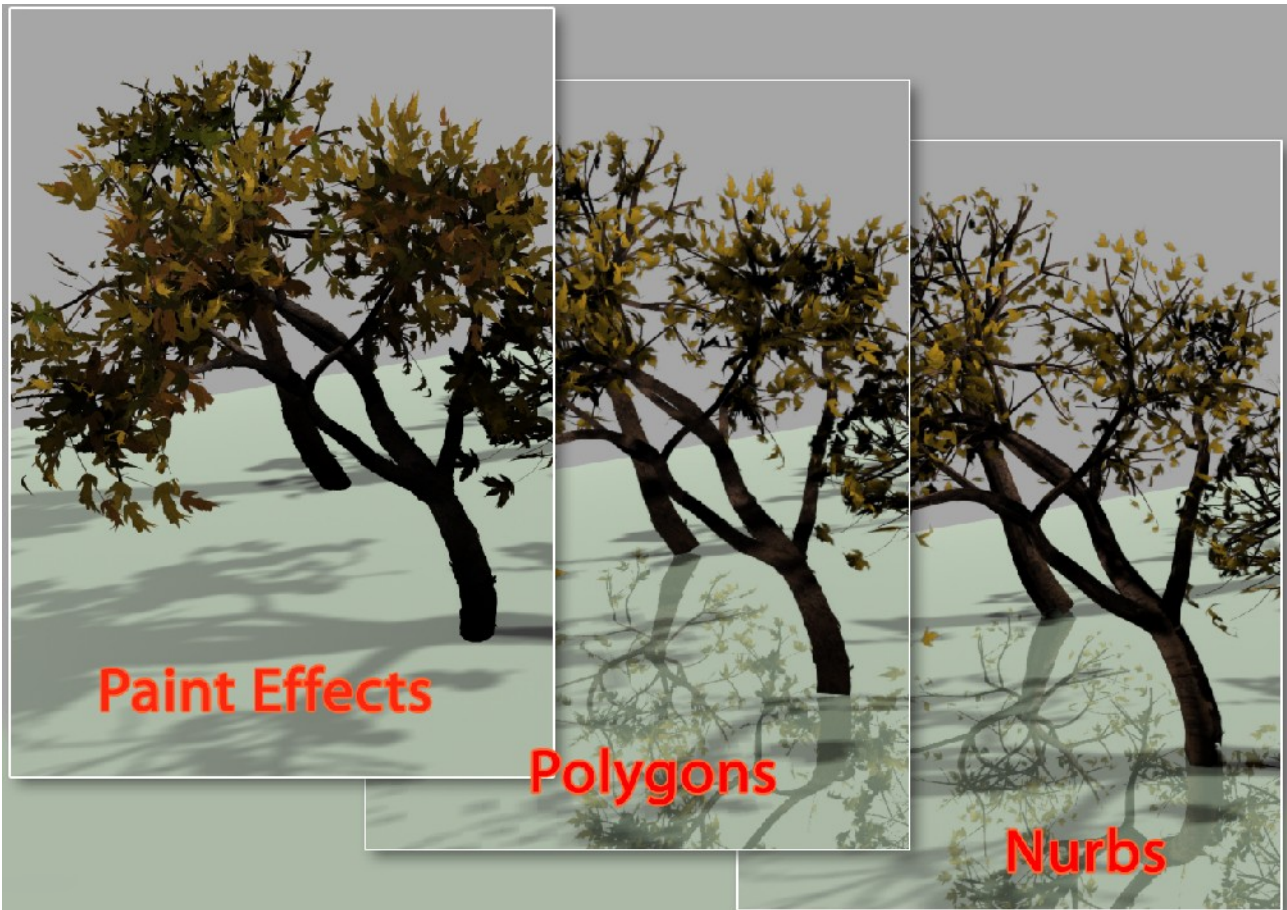


Maya
QNA_114

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Question:

Is there a way to stop Paint Effects flickering during camera moves? - David Wright, via email



Paint Effects are cool. How many other packages apart from Maya are there which allow you to make something as simple as a blob of paint turn interactively into a convincing tree blowing in an artificial breeze? How many? Oh, that's right, that would be a resounding none. From galaxies to tower blocks, you can create some really interesting stuff. However, and it is a big however, when it comes to rendering them out they can look pretty shaky, especially if they are in a scene with a camera move. The sampling of Paint FX is something that even the most undiscerning of us wince at. A friend has a word for this lack of sampling: Spazzle. No matter what sampling you set in your render globals, your Paint Effects keep spazzling. There are oversampling settings specifically for just Paint Effects in the Render Globals but even these are sometimes not enough.

There are a few different solutions, though. The first sits in the Modify Menu. As well as Converting nurbs to Polygons, polygons to Subdivision surfaces and so forth, down towards the bottom is one for converting Paint Effects to polygons or Nurbs. Not only that, but it has complete history so you just adjust the

Paint Effects stroke in your scene and the polygon model updates too.

The only problem with this method is that a Paint FX heavy scene can potentially grind to a juddering halt. Your best option then would be to go with the actual post-processed images, which leads us back to the original problem with the sampling. The solution is, actually, surprisingly simple. You render out your Paint Effects twice the size you would do normally, and then scale them back down at the compositing stage thus adding a secondary level of filtering to your Paint Effects sequence. Remember, the bigger the image, the better the detail, and scaled back down your compositor smooths out the results even more. Simple yet effective every time.



Rendering at double resolution gives you four times as many pixels thus providing another level of sampling to your animations at the compositing stage.

Quick tip

If you only have Maya Complete, Paint Effects, whilst not as good as Unlimited's Hair or Fur, is your route to a reasonably quick Hair solution.