



## Undercover

Completed: 18-10-2020

In this series, a detective goes undercover in a luxury nightclub. It's a mysterious place - in an old mansion - where a group of very exclusive guests is entertained with a variety of erotic acts. But there's more going on than meets the eye, and before he knows it, the hero of the series begins to play a decisive role in a momentous event. The idea of this project was to experiment with topics like gender and bondage, with bright color settings and different genres (sci-fi, my-

stery, gangster). References to movies like *Blade Runner*, *Eyes Wide Shut*, and maybe a little bit of *Pulp Fiction*.

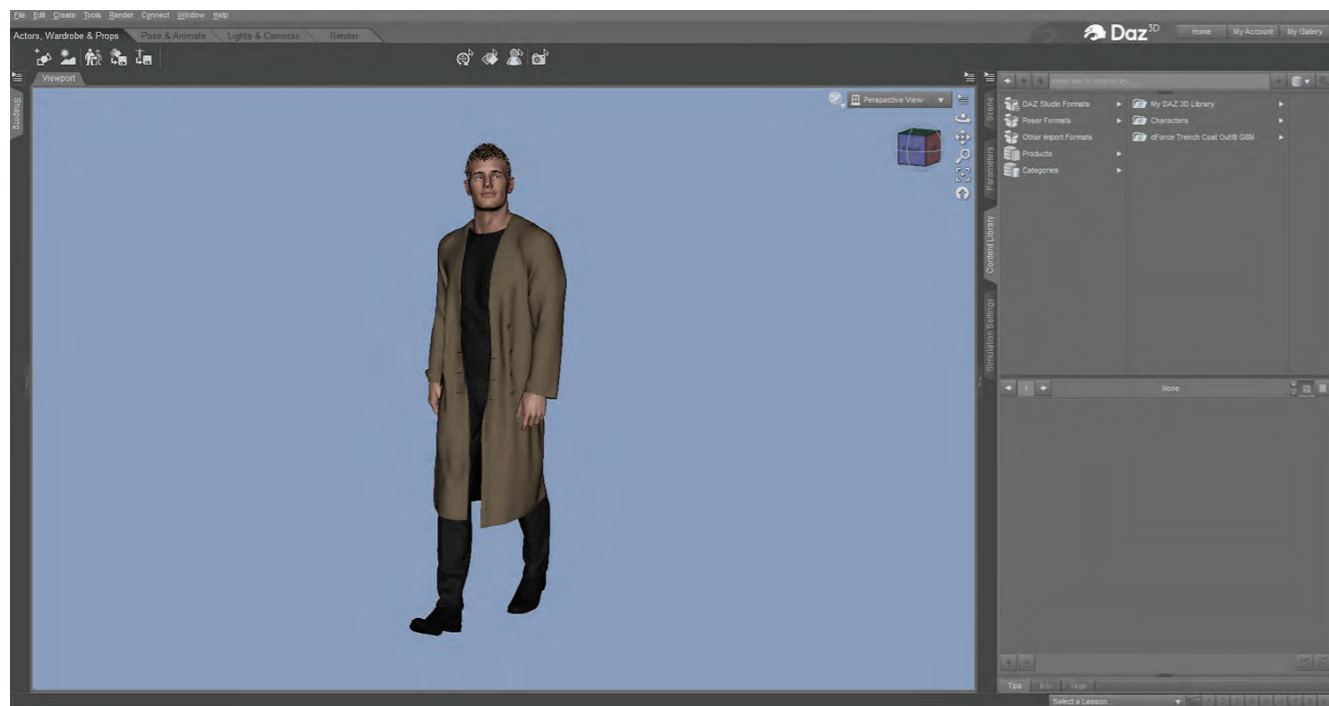
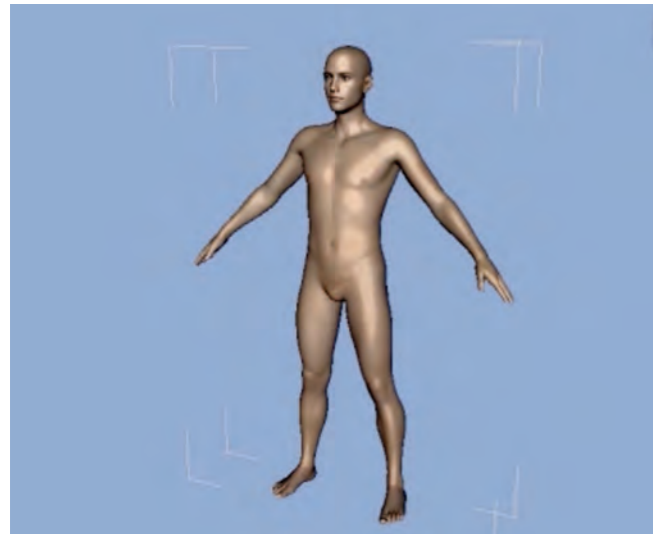
The result is perhaps a somewhat incoherent sequence of events, with some undeveloped scenes and loose ends. Maybe the whole thing depended on too many ideas to work properly. But I hope that it at least provided some entertainment, and it was a pleasure to work on this elaborate project.



## The Work Process

These images illustrate the workflow I used to create, pose, and render the main character in one of the settings. The character is created in a program called **DAZ Studio**. It's a free software

program that allows users to manipulate relatively ready-to-use models, arrange settings, and animate and render scenes. I only use this program to shape and pose the figure.

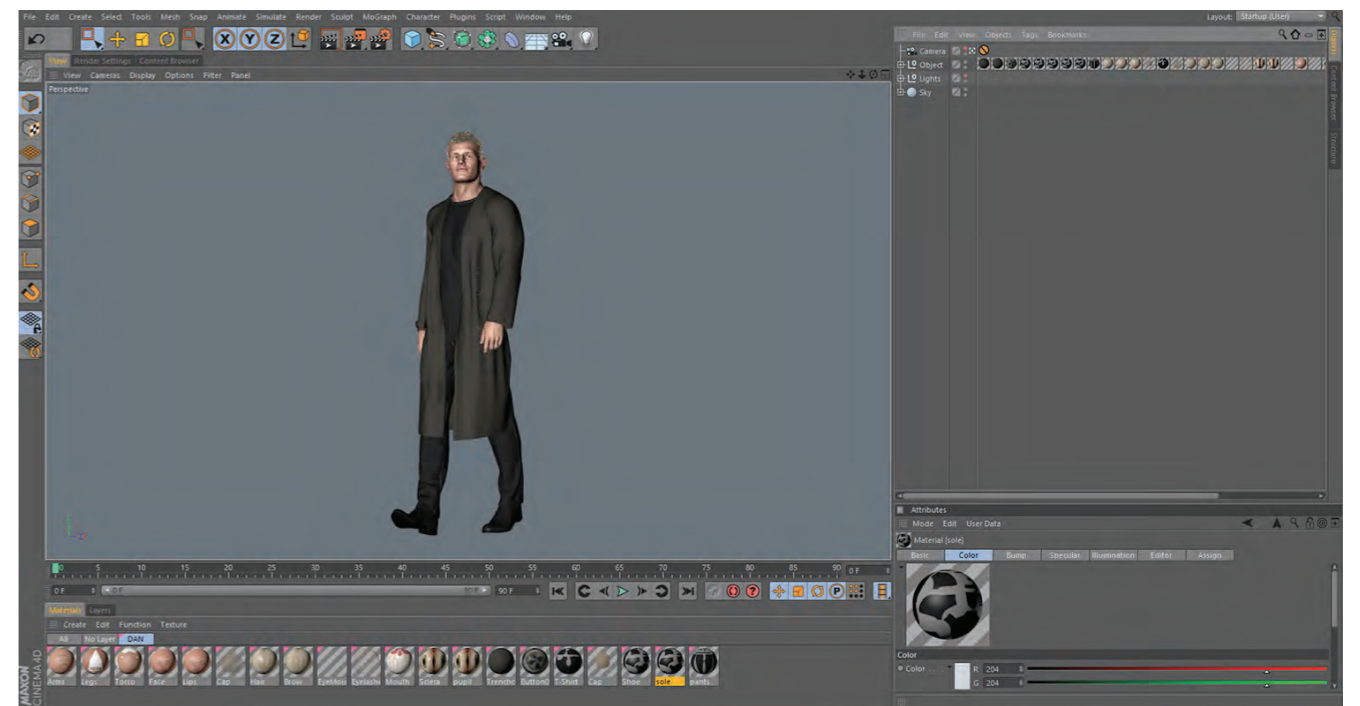
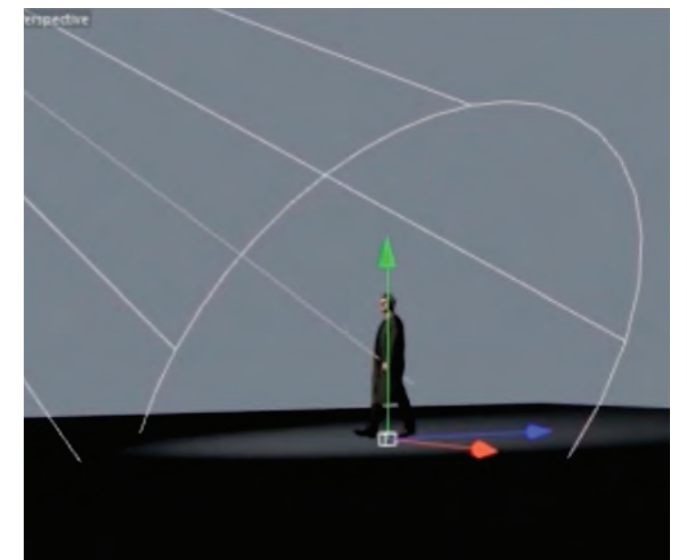
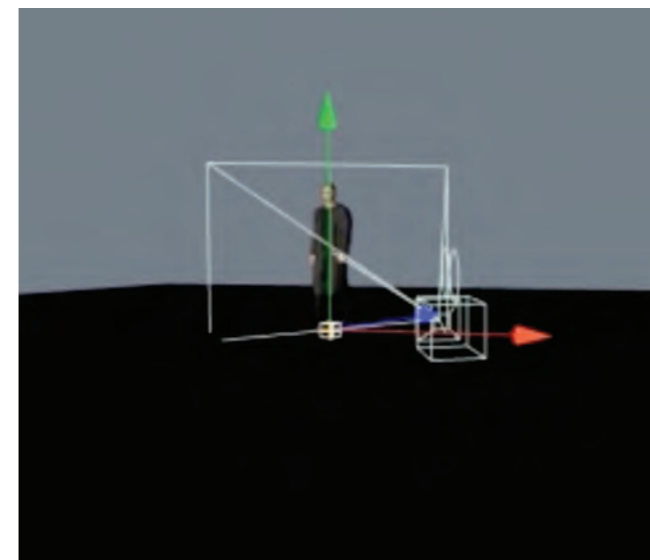
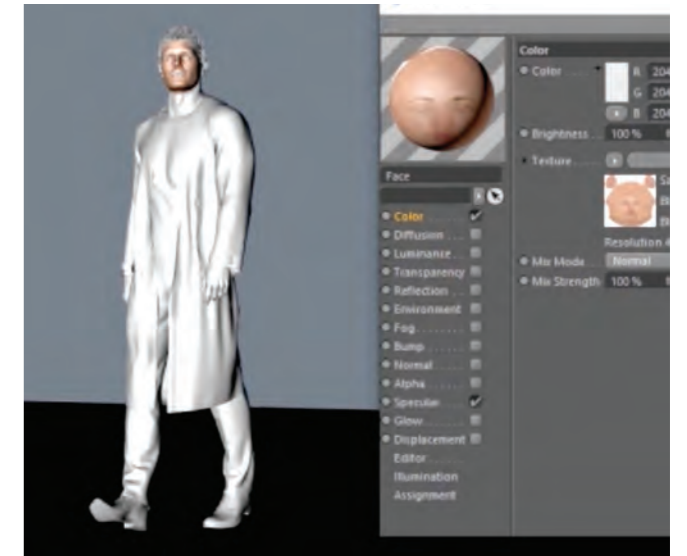


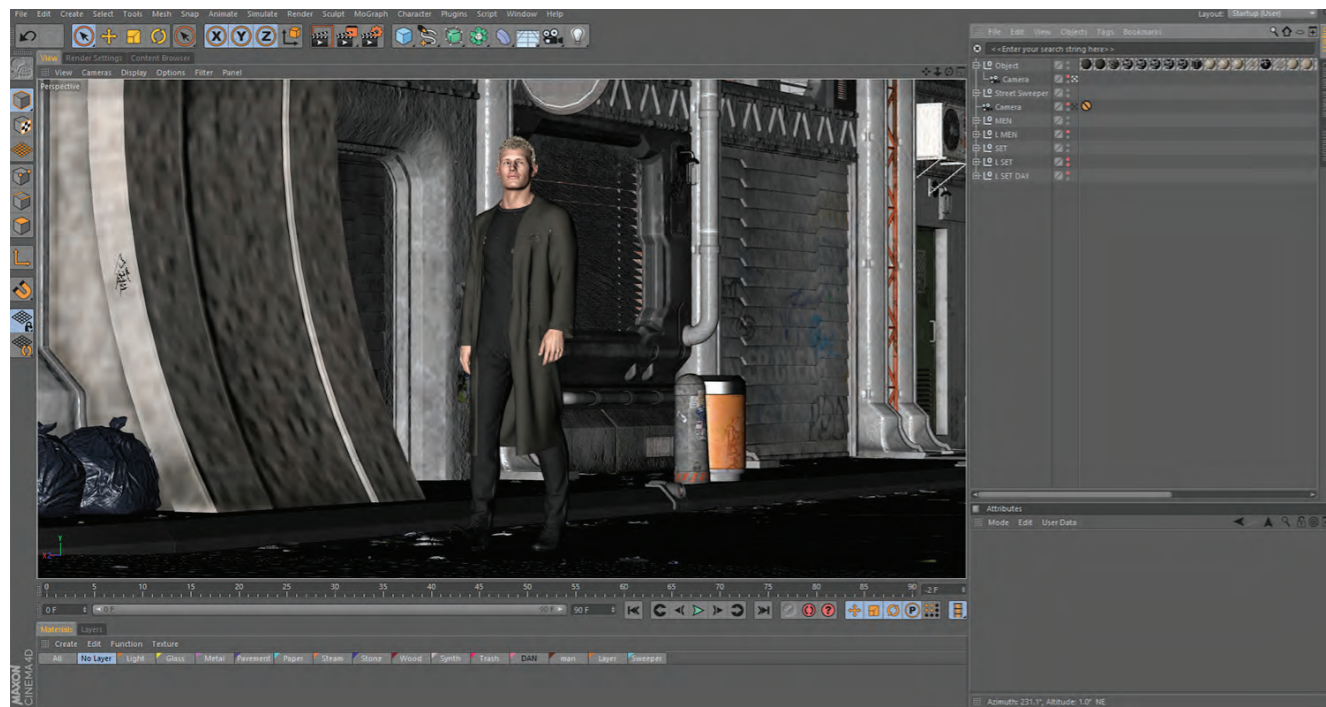
Then I export the character to **CINEMA 4D**, a popular 3D modeling and animation tool from *Maxon*.

This program is far more advanced and very sophisticated, much better suited for creating

detailed settings, complex animations, and high-quality renderings.

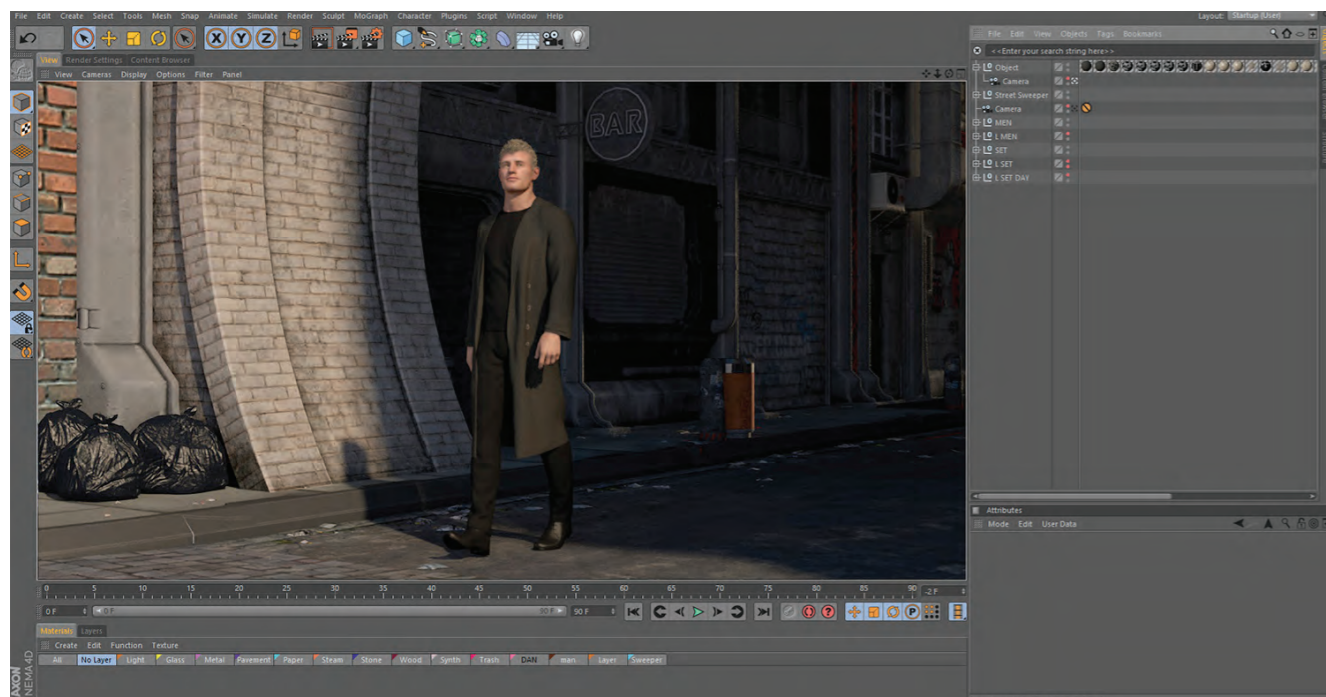
On average it takes about a day to create a new main character for a series. Creating a character from scratch for animation can take several days.





After completion, the figure is placed on the stage of action. The setting is usually also based on an existing DAZ model, with many adaptations or additions to adapt it to the series. Once everything is in place, I can create and render about 5 scenes per day on average. The render time depends very much on the image size, light intensity, focus length, complexity of the environment, and the number of things like transparency, reflection and blur in the scene. However, it mainly depends on the amount, color and detail of the character's hair. Smooth blond types render six times faster than dark-haired hunks. Hairy redheads have a perfect average render time. On a fast computer, rendering bright or outdoor scenes for my series

takes about 2 hours, darker or indoor scenes can take up to 6 or more hours. The finishing touches are made in **Photoshop**. After rendering is complete, there are always small details that need to be adjusted, and brightness, hue, and saturation are always a problem with digital images. This is mainly due to the big differences in screen quality, browser type, and PC settings. Even on a carefully calibrated monitor, the result on a web page on a random screen can be quite different from my version in Photoshop. Sometimes, when all the nuances and vividness washed out, the results can be really disappointing. Usually it takes about a day to get all the images ready for the weekly update.



## The Characters

Of all the characters in this series, the most remarkable is probably *The Saint*, the drag queen manager of the nightclub. Drag is all the rage now, and some of them are really great, so as a big fan I just had to put a queen in one of my series. For this character, I was inspired by some nice looks from *Mathu Andersen*, a remarkable make-up artist who is best known for his work at *RuPaul's Drag Race*.





Urban Future

## The Settings

Like many of my earlier projects, I used several existing models to create all the different settings for this story. The futuristic urban landscape was based on an *Urban Future* model by *Stonemason*. The interior of the club is partly based on the *Rural Chateau III* and the *Mafia Boss Room*.

The large hall is modeled on the dilapidated interior of the *Château Lumière* ("Castle of Light"). It was built by the wealthy Alsatian tobacco magnate *Maurice Burrus* (1882-1959) in the early 1900s. This impressive building is located in the small town of Sainte-Croix-aux-Mines (northeast of France). It has been abandoned for decades, and the once majestic residence now stands overgrown and decaying in a wild garden. The interior has a strong Neo-Baroque influence, and its most iconic feature is a stunning skylight that floods the three-story entrance hall.



Rural Chateau III



Mafia Boss Room



Château Lumière



## Urban landscape





Night club



Surveillance van