



The Barbarian

Completed: 31-05-2020

This series is placed in ancient Rome, during the annual gladiatorial games at the Colosseum. The young emperor - a spoiled and bored ill-mannered little brat - shows little interest in all the gruesome entertainment in the arena. But once informed about a specific quality of one of the outstanding fighters, his mood suddenly changes. For an official testifies that this barbarian gladiator is astonishing well-endowed. The hung champion is summoned to the palace later that day, where an impatient emperor - dying of curiosity and always eager

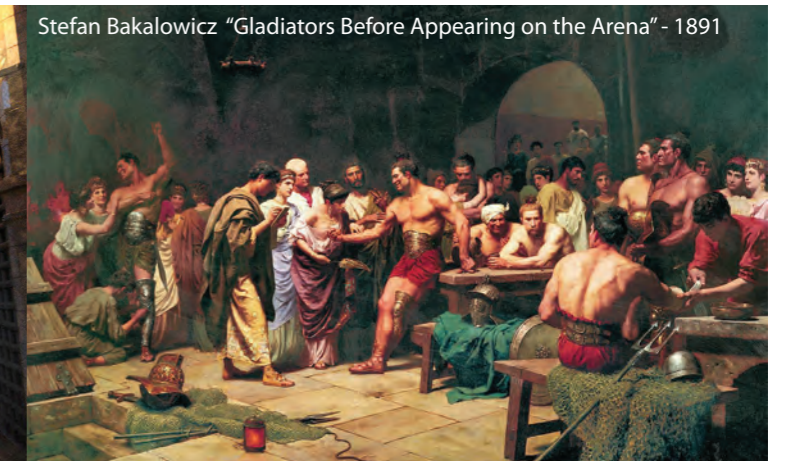
for some fun - orders the reluctant fighter to fall on his knees and remove his loincloth. The Barbarian bluntly refuses. The enraged emperor - never been refused before - slaps his face. When the gladiator strikes back, all hell breaks loose. The whole court is in terror, but the Barbarian doesn't even blink. He is more than well-endowed to give the young brat a lesson he'll never forget. In the Add-Ons section of this project, we'll go back in time, to the early years of the Barbarian, to see how this hunky hero became horse hung.



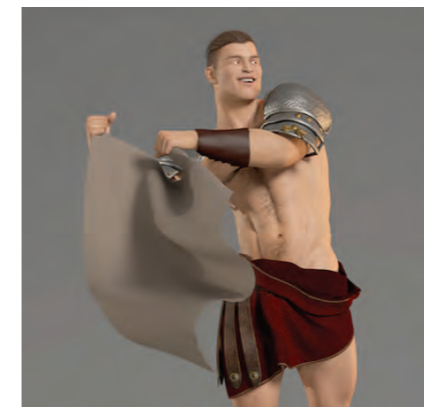
Chapter 1 The Gladiatorial School

We start the series with the unexpected visit of an official from the imperial court at the gladiatorial school. It's a large vaulted room where the fighters are preparing for battle. I imagine that such a place must have been a dark, damp, and noisy space, somewhere beneath or nearby the Colosseum. On the sides of the room are large cages for the prisoners and ferocious animals that are to be slaughtered during the games. In the

middle of the room are large tables with weapons and meals for the fighters. A fertility altar in the back corner is there to ensure the fighter's strength and victory, examples of graffiti from Pompeii on the walls praise and mock the champions of the day. It's here that we meet the Barbarian and where one of the major wonders of the world is fully exposed for the first time. That is, to the Romans. Not to us. Not yet...



The model for the room was based on a pre-set of the MICK (*Medieval Interior Construction Kit*). The setting is also inspired by the painting "Gladiators Before Appearing on the Arena", by Stefan Bakalowicz (1891).



For this chapter, I had several scenes from different movies and tv-series like *Gladiator* and *Spartacus* in mind.

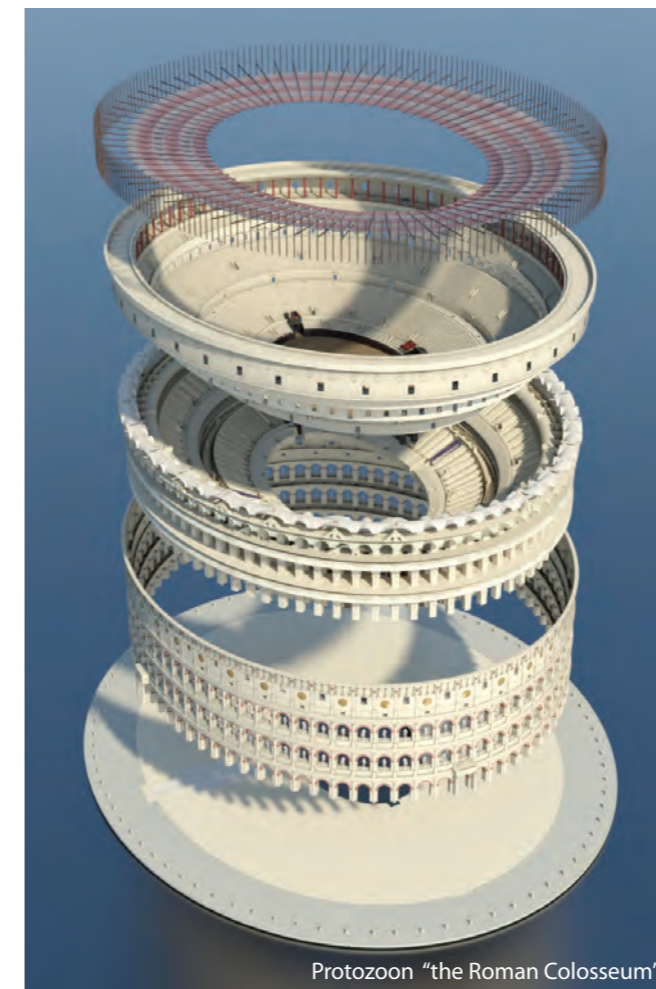


Some render tests of the characters

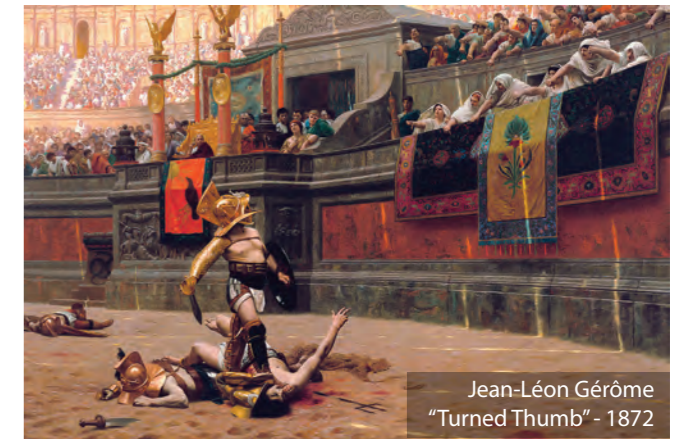


Chapter 2 The Colosseum

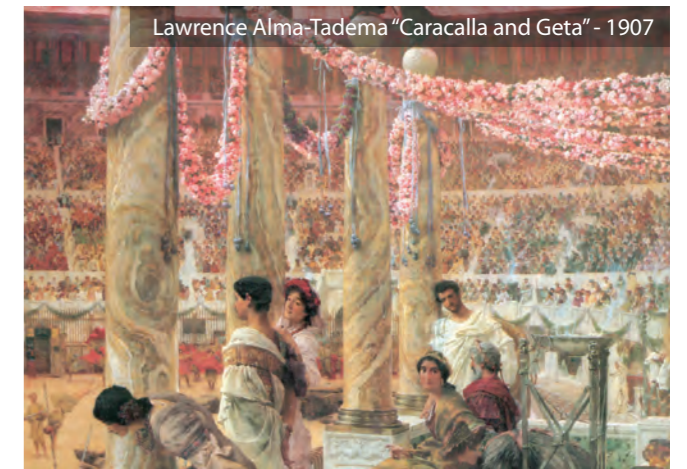
The gladiators enter the arena of the Colosseum. It's the place where we meet the second main character of the series, the ill-mannered and mischievous little emperor. I imagine he's something like a young Caligula, Nero, or Elagabalus, the three most notorious characters in a long line of mad and dysfunctional Roman emperors. This emperor is universally feared and despised, and everybody at court is hoping that someday somebody is brave and bold, or desperate enough to bring down. That day finally arrived on the opening day of the gladiatorial games.



Protozoon "the Roman Colosseum"



Jean-Léon Gérôme
"Turned Thumb" - 1872



Lawrence Alma-Tadema "Caracalla and Geta" - 1907

The basis for this setting is a model of the Colosseum by a 3D artist called *Protozoon*. It looks great, a complete reconstruction of the entire building with lots of details, but it's very big and not very practical to use. It took me a long time to adjust it for the project, adding many more details inspired by historical paintings and scenes from the movie *Gladiator*. In the end, the whole setting turned into one of the biggest models I have used, bigger than the original one, reaching the limits of what the system can handle and making rendering very difficult. Perhaps I have overdone it a bit for a stage that is just used for a short introduction of the emperor, but it's wonderful to have a chance to have a closer look at this magnificent and at the same time gruesome building.



The Colosseum in movies

Chapter 3 The Palace

In the third part of this series, we arrive at the royal palace where the champions of the gladiatorial games are received for an audience with the emperor. They're welcomed by one of the top court officials who, fed up with his master's cruelty and living in constant fear, is eagerly awaiting the moment to be able to topple the regime. Knowing his emperor's inclinations and the working of his perverted mind, it seems

that with the arrival of the fearless Barbarian his opportunity to take decisive action has finally arrived.

The settings for the large formal marble halls of the palace are inspired by 19th-century drawings and more recent digital reconstructions of the imperial palace on the Palatine Hill, Nero's Golden House, and the Baths of Caracalla.



The many sculptures I used are collected from several 3D printing marketplaces, of which the "Scan The World" (*) project is one of the most interesting at the moment. It's an ambitious community-built initiative whose mission is to share 3D printable sculpture and cultural artifacts, producing an extensive collection of free to download digital cultural heritage. Many scans are of exceptional quality, very manageable and perfect for my projects. Very interesting and if you're interested in ancient sculptures, you should really have a look at this wonderful page!

(*) www.myminifactory.com/scantheworld/



Some render tests for this part of the series. The Throne Room and the Atrium.



Add-Ons Series

In the Add-Ons section of this project, we'll go back in time, to the early years of the Barbarian, to see how this hunky hero became horse hung. Legend has it that, while hunting far away in a dark forest, he found a small temple in the woods where he was seduced by a mythical creature. The loss of his virginity in an eventful amorous encounter was rewarded with a massive member.

The setting for this part of the story is a small round temple in the middle of a dark forest. A younger version of our hero stumbles by accident on the shrine while hunting a fawn. It seems to be dedicated to an equine spirit, symbolized by many horses depicted in bas-relief on the walls, surrounding a small round altar in the middle.

The round temple is based on "The Heart of Darkness" model by the 3D artist called Stonemason.

The sculptures are Sketchfab models of the famous Elgin Marbles. The drum in the middle is also a scan from the British Museum, the spirit is a centaur version of the Maxx character.



My first experiment for these settings turned into a very dark place. Not something one would associate with a mythological creature from the Roman era. Perhaps more the stage for a kni-

ght or explorer, so I'll keep this one for another project. The second version turned out much lighter and more classic, fitting much better into the style of the rest of the series.

