

Lay it all out!



Last week...

1. What is Layout?
 2. Why is Layout important?
 3. Where is layout in production?
 4. What's the difference between Layout and Pre-Visualization?
 5. What are common responsibilities for layout artists?
 6. How is layout tied to cinematography?
1. Layout is laying out the movie.
 2. There are a lot of assets to keep track of and efficiency is important.
 3. Layout is between storyboards/pre-viz, and animation.
 4. Layout focuses shot-by-shot, Pre-Viz focuses on sequences.
 5. Setting up the shot, placing assets, camera animation, etc.
 5. Layout is cinematography, just in animation.

What you need to know

- Shot composition
 - Lens choices and camera effects
 - Continuity
 - Screen direction
 - How to tell the story with your shots
- How long the shots are and padding
- Where the assets will be

All shots tell the story. Layout artists need to be aware of how compositions and assets will support the entire film.

A GUIDE ON SURVIVING THE TYRANT

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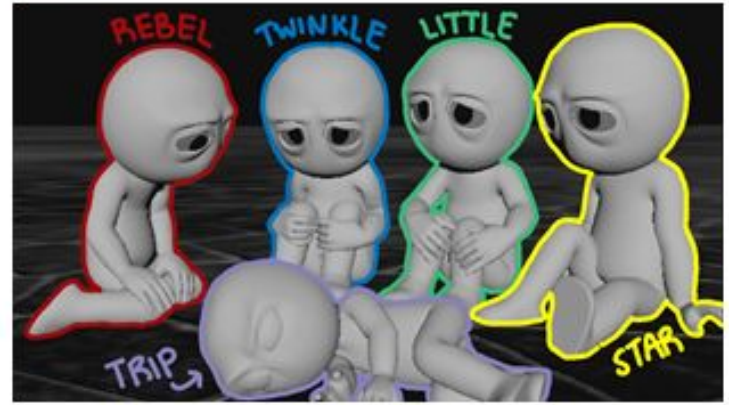
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POSITIONS OF CHARACTERS

GENERAL RULES:

- Tyrant should generally be on the left side! [the evil side]
- Follower camera should always be slightly above, looking down at them
- Star People should always be on the right side!

STAR PEOPLE:



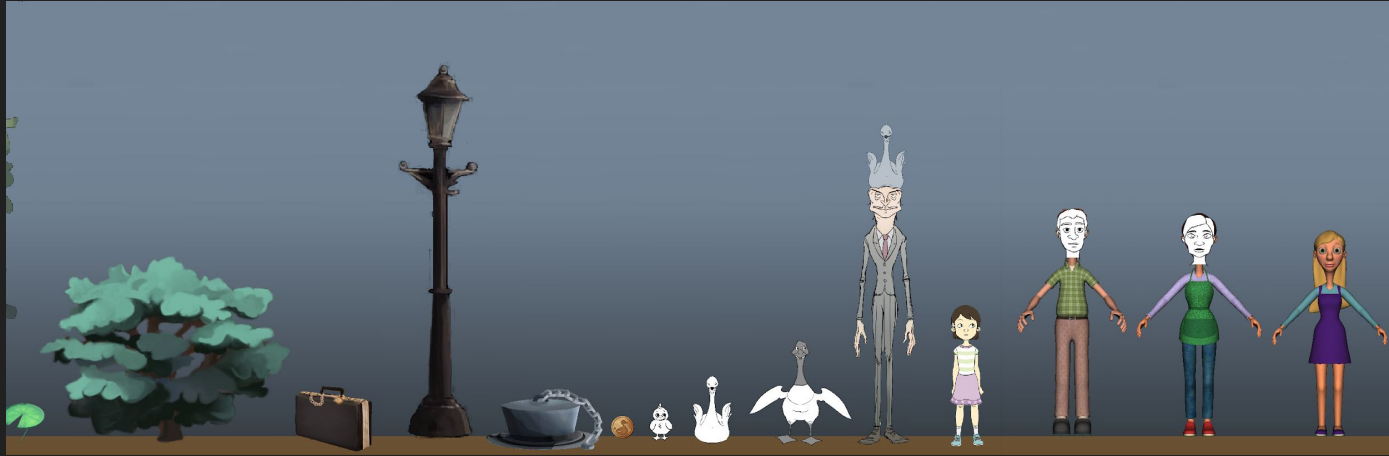
Being good means being both imaginative AND grounded in reality!



What is where?

Characters in relation to each other

- What is the relative size of your characters?
- What size does your set need to be?
- Maintaining the “Family Tree”
- Knowing the status and location of all current characters



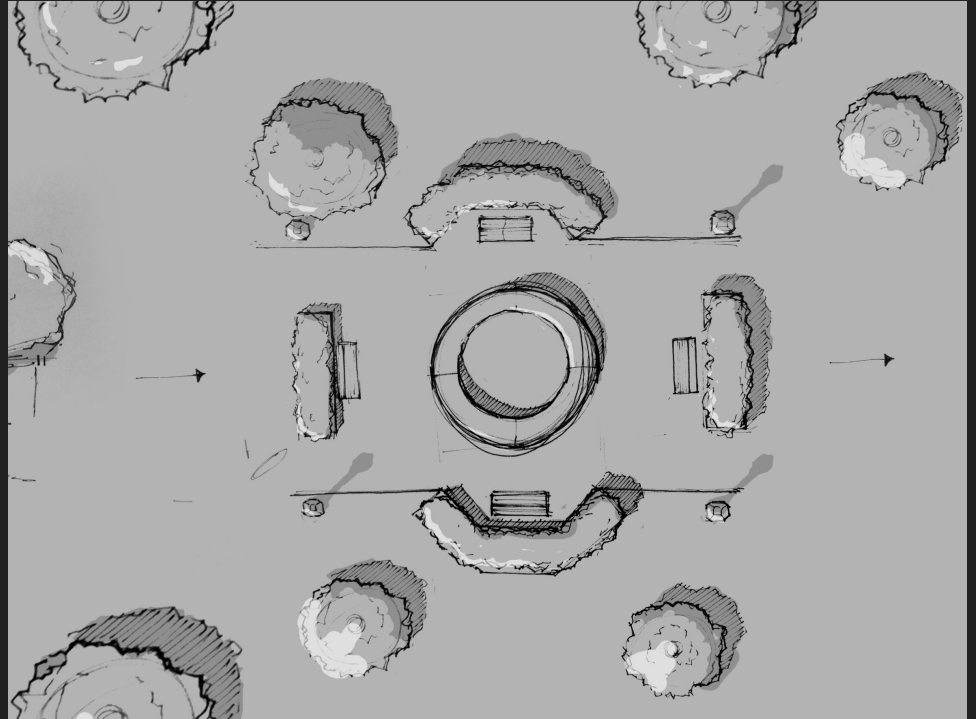
“Short Changed” Family Tree

Family Trees!



Set in Relation to Itself

- What does the set look like?
- Where are all the:
 - Props
 - Scenes
 - Locations
 - Main Lighting Points
 - Shots
 - Characters
 - Beginnings
 - Endings
 - Beats
 - And so on!
- Maps!



Set layout from "Short Changed"

Characters in a Set

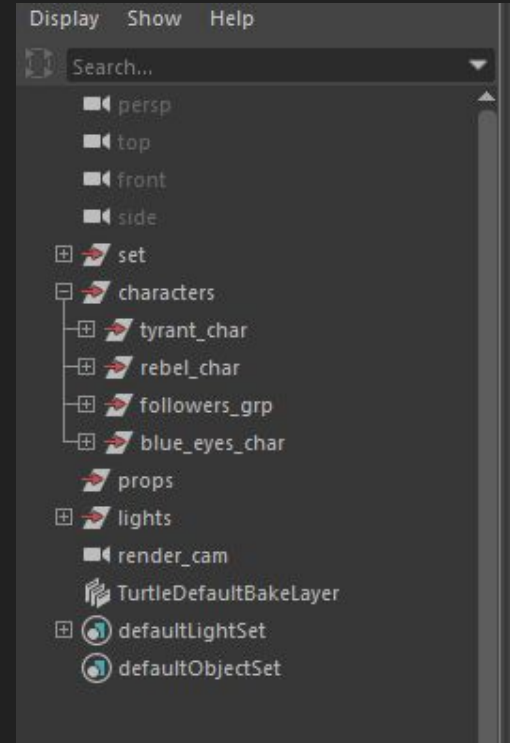
- How do the characters fit with the scale of your set?
- What size does your set need to be?
- Are there any constraints on the size of your characters or props?
- Do the right people know about those constraints?



“Short Changed” - Corruption scale in the fountain set

Characters in a Maya File

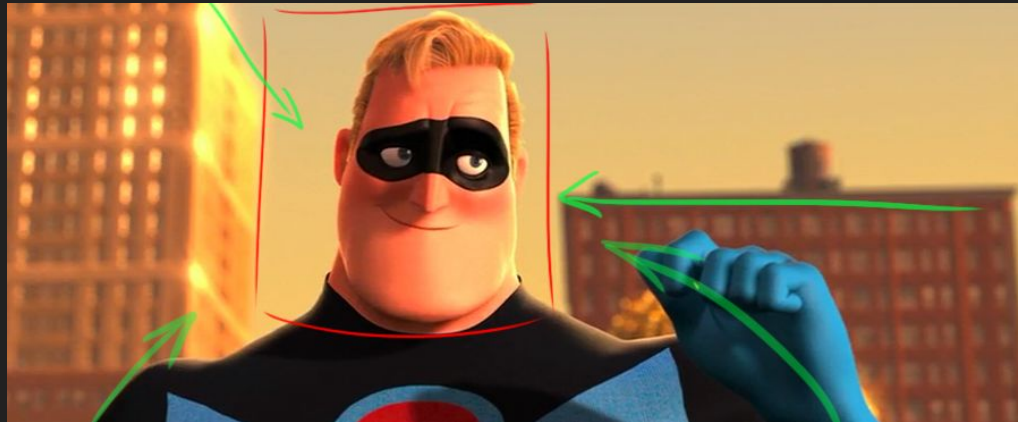
- Is the outliner clean and easy for the animators to use?
- Are the lights, effects, props and characters all grouped correctly?
- Are all your shaders, materials, groups, assets, and elements properly named?
- Are your Maya files running too slowly?
- Are your characters and props all up to date with the latest version?
- Is anything currently broken?



Typical "Tyrant" Outliner

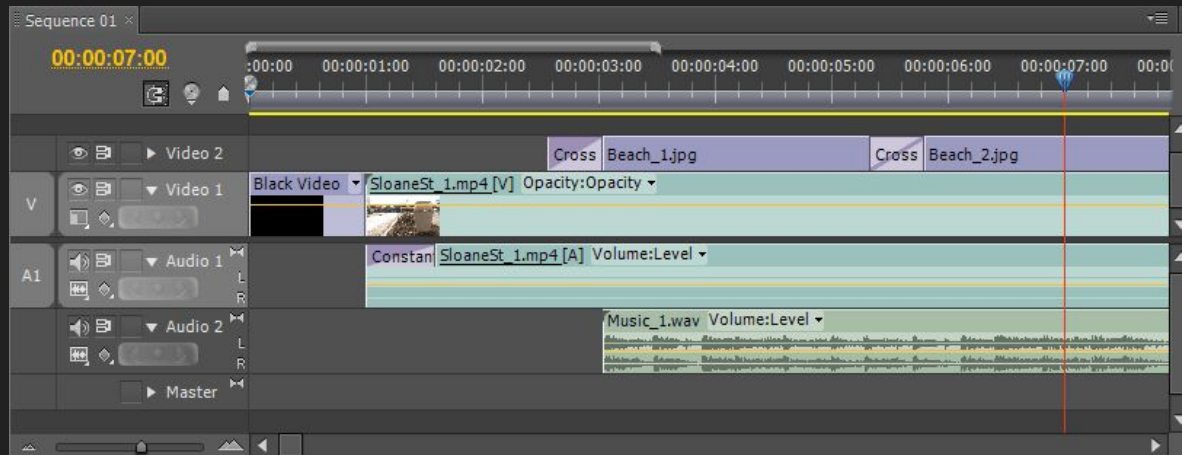
Setting up your Render Camera

- Cinematography
- Are you obeying basic laws of composition?
- Is the camera correctly working for the storytelling?
- Are all of the story beats visible?
- Are all of necessary characters visible?
- Are focus, blur, flare and other camera effects used correctly and efficiently?



Shots in Relation To Each Other

- How long are each of your shots?
- Where is this information accessible?
- Do your editors need buffer padding?
- Are your animators working in padding?
- Do the editors have the most updated version of the shots?
- Is there any particular shot lagging behind?
- Do people know it's lagging behind?

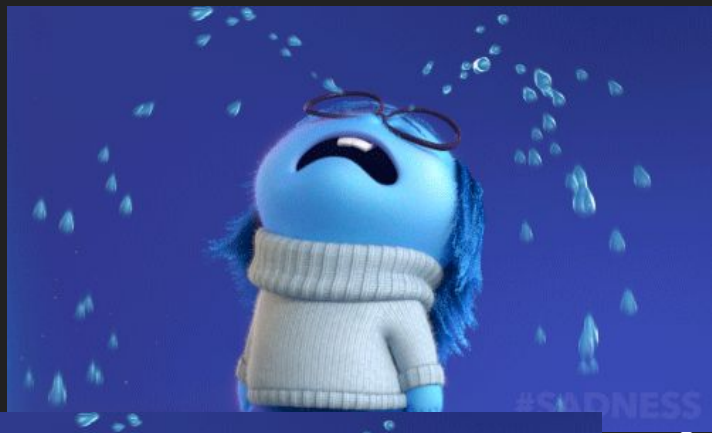


Files in the File Hierarchy

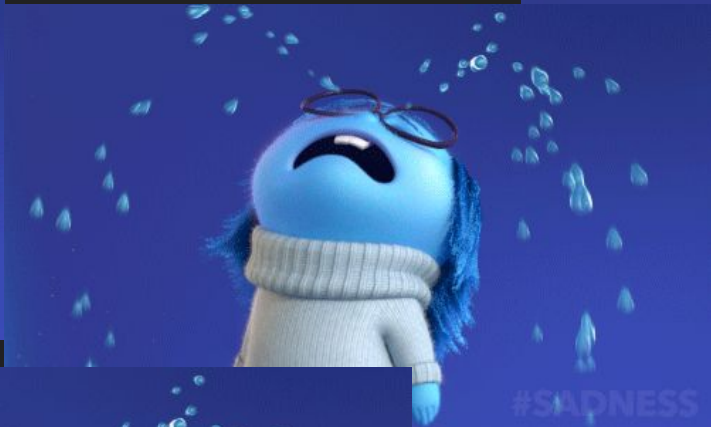
- Are all of your folders properly named?
- Is there an appropriate number of branches in your file tree?
- How long does it take someone not in a group to find a file from that group?
- Are any teams using cloud storage?
- Is everything on the server?
 - (It should be)
 - (It really, really, should be)
 - (Or layout will be very, very sad)



(This sad)



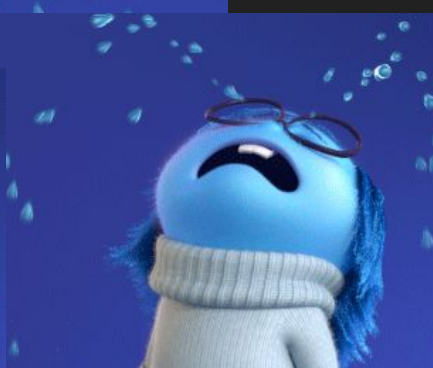
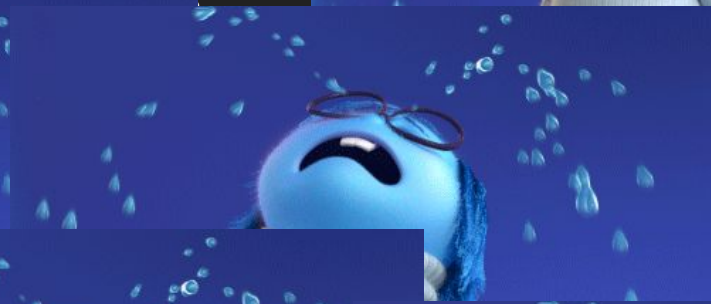
#SADNESS



#SADNESS



#SADNESS



Saving Files

- Save **everything**.
- Save **often!**
- Save **iterations**.
 - The save-it button is your friend.
- Keep record of your iterations.
- Save in the appropriate file.
 - Example: props should go into the prop folder!
- Save in the network.
 - But do not save on your desktop or personal folders (documents, temp, etc.)



What about that Shadow-y place?

That's the O:/ drive. You must never go there.

SAVE IN //CSENETID.



Naming Conventions

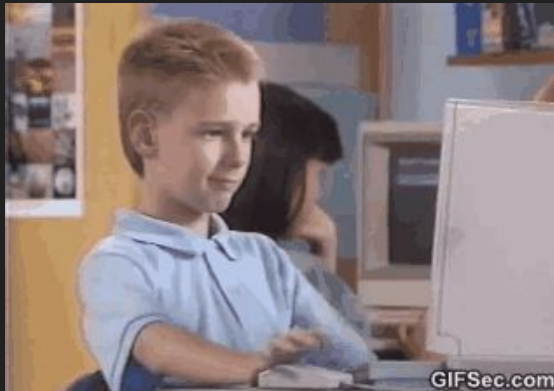
- Use lowercases and underscores!
Example: `sequence_01_intro_0100`
- Shots should have four digits!
 - For extra wiggle room.
- Do not use:
 - Uppercase letters
 - Spaces
 - Dashes
- Do not start your file with a number also!



Why do we do this? The network and our render system is very specific!

Import vs. Reference

- Importing counts as a complete copy.
- Referencing continuously copies every second you update the source file.
 - Referencing is good for assets like props, characters, and sets because it updates immediately when the original file changes.



- **Do not double reference.**
 - When you double reference something, it's referencing a file within a file. So, when that happens, it causes renders to not know where the file is coming from. Basically, it will not render.
- **Do not reference lights**
 - Will cause render issues, difficult to locate problems or bugs and lighting is buggy already. Also bad artistic practice.
- **Do not reference cameras.**

Camera Tips!

- Cameras need to be motivated in each shot.
 - *The Tyrant* example: To make viewers understand the scale, the camera needs to react to its environment.
- Make the camera shifts seem natural.



Resources

- Pixar's Khan Academy
- David Badgerow's [Article on Layout](#)
- [What the Heck is CG Layout?](#)
- [Camera Animation Article](#)
- [Cinematography](#)
- [Autodesk's Camera Help](#)
- [Disney's Multiplane Camera](#)

