Rasterization Rendering Effects Review

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Overview

• Surface shaders
• Light shaders
  – Shadow maps
• Reflections
  – Planar reflections
  – Environment maps
• \([z,w,g,a,k,f,n]\)-buffer review
• Billboards
  – Hair, foliage, smoke, etc.
Approach for This Lecture

• Since many of you are more familiar with ray tracing than rasterization...

• This lecture describes how basic material, illumination, and visibility problems are solved in real-time rasterization-based renderers (compared to how they are solved in a simple ray tracer)
(Surface shaders)

Surface Properties
Surface Shaders

• In ray tracing
  – Your “materials” class defines the BRDF and provides the surface properties to the BRDF such as diffuse color, specularity, etc.

• In rasterization
  – A batch of primitives with the same “material” are rendered at the same time
  – “Material class” implemented in pixel shader
Direct Illumination

(Light shaders)
**Direct Illumination**

• In ray tracing
  – “At a ray-surface intersection, trace rays to all lights and combine with BRDF to compute final color”

• In rasterization
  – Query visibility data computed in pre-pass for each light (pixel shader)
    E.g., shadow mapping
  – Combine lighting result with BRDF to compute final color (pixel shader)
Shadow Mapping
The Shadowing Problem
The Shadowing Problem
The Shadowing Problem
Shadow Mapping

- Render depth image from light position
- Shadow lookup
  - Transform eye samples to shadow map
  - If shadow map value closer to light, pixel in shadow

Williams
SIGGRAPH 1978
Projective Aliasing

• Occluder normal nearly orthogonal to light rays
Perspective Aliasing

• Mismatch between sampling distribution of eye-space samples and shadow samples
Light Space Sample Distribution (Shadow Rays)

- Samples colored; yellow = denser samples
Naïve Shadow Mapping

• Wastes lots of space that is never sampled
Naïve Shadow Mapping

- Perspective aliasing near the camera
Naïve Shadow Mapping

• Projective aliasing on surfaces aligned with light rays
Shadow Map Techniques

• Hundreds of shadow map papers address perspective, projective, and depth representation aliasing. For example:
  – Perspective shadow maps (and many follow-up ideas)
    – Warp shadow map to match receiver samples
  – Adaptive quadtree shadow maps
    – Generate hundreds of small shadow maps at the correct resolution to match receivers
  – Cascaded shadow maps (“Z-Partitioning”)
    – Render small number of shadow maps (~2-4) that split eye-space view frustum so each shadow map covers a smaller depth range and is therefore a better fit for the receivers in that partition
  – (and the list goes on, and on, and on)

• The only approaches that directly address both perspective and projective aliasing are
  – Irregular rasterization
  – Adaptive grid-based methods
Z-Partitioning

• Split camera frustum in Z
• Use a different shadow map for each frustum partition
Z-Partitioning
Z-Partitioning

Scene from Left 4 Dead 2, courtesy of Valve Corporation
Z-Partitioning

Scene from Left 4 Dead 2, courtesy of Valve Corporation
Z-Partitioning in Light Space
Z-Partitioning Light Space Partitions
Reflections
Planar Reflections

• Ray tracing
  – “When hit specular surface, shoot new ray in direction determined by sampling specular lobe of BRDF”

• Rasterization
  – If planar surface (e.g., rear-view mirror in car), render image from back side of surface, clipped by bounding box of planar model (pre-pass)
  – In final rendering pass, query reflected-surface texture (pixel shader)
Reflections from Arbitrary Surfaces

• Ray tracing
  – “When hit specular surface, shoot new ray in direction determined by sampling specular lobe of BRDF”

• Rasterization
  – Render environment map (cube, dual paraboloid, etc) in pre-pass
  – In final rendering pass, query environment map based on reflected ray direction
Graphics*-Buffer Glossary
Overview

• Single depth layer
  – Z buffer
  – W buffer
  – G buffer

• Multiple depth layers
  – A buffer
  – K buffer
  – F buffer
Z-Buffer (aka “Depth Buffer”) 

• Purpose
  – “Render geometry in any order and capture front-most depth layer”

• Key Attributes
  – Fixed memory regardless of amount of geometry
  – Accelerated in all current GPUs
**W-Buffer**

• **Purpose**
  – “Just like z-buffer but store depth in eye space (linear) rather than post-projective screen space.”

• **Key Attributes**
  – Similar storage to z-buffer (but always floating point)
  – Different precision distribution across depth range
G-Buffer

• Purpose
  – Deferred rendering
  – “Render to an image-space buffer that captures per-pixel surface information such that the lighting can be computed in a post-processing image-space computation pass”

• Key Attributes
  – Fixed memory requirements
  – Decouples geometry from lighting
A-Buffer

• Purpose
  – “Render translucent and opaque geometry in any order, capture all depth layers, and resolve to final image”
  – Also capture per-sample coverage information for anti-aliasing

• Key Attributes
  – Unbounded memory requirements
  – Used in REYES / RenderMan
K-Buffer

• Purpose
  – “Render geometry that will generate fragments that are no more than k out of order, and use k-buffer to do final streaming sort”

• Key Attributes
  – Fixed memory requirements
  – Requires read-modify-write operations on framebuffer or custom blending logic
F-Buffer

• Purpose
  – “Capture all rendered fragments in a linear output stream”

• Key Attributes
  – Unbounded memory requirements
  – Indexed by re-rendering geometry
  – Does not support random indexing by pixel position without sorting entire f-buffer
  – (Much like geometry shader’s “stream out”)
**N-Buffer**

- **Purpose**
  - Pre-blurred images that don’t suffer from down-sampling artifacts

- **Key Attributes**
  - Recursively blurred stack of images that are all the same size
  - Like mipmaps, but with no down-sampling
  - Takes huge amount of memory unless image size is small
Billboards

• Fine geometry (sub-pixel) and volumetric media are usually handled with "billboards"
  – A "billboard" is a camera-aligned, texture-mapped, partially transparent quad
  – Used for hair, fences, smoke, foliage, grass, ...
  – No depth test. Alpha blending. Must render billboards in depth order.
Billboards

Winter 2011 – Beyond Programmable Shading
Summary

• Many of the illumination and surface material effects supported in ray tracing or REYES can be implemented in the current programmable shading pipeline
  – Often involves a pre-pass to cache non-local visibility
  – These caches almost always introduce artifacts, but greatly speed up rendering

• Boundaries between rasterization and ray tracing are blurring
  – (Limited) ray tracing in pixel shaders is increasingly common
  – Ray tracing framebuffers is common
  – Rasterization is highly-optimized special-case ray tracing
Homework 1

• Will be on the web page this evening
• Due Monday, 1/24 (1.5 weeks)

• Join the class mailing list to get help from me and support each other with logistics/systems problems
Backup
Sample Distribution Shadow Maps

Slides by Andrew Lauritzen, Intel
Sample Distribution Shadow Maps

• Needs of real-time applications
  – Real-time applications need to constrain memory and time: “Authorable performance”
  – RMSM and IZB guarantee quality but vary time/memory

• SDSM idea
  – “What is the best shadow quality we can deliver using a fixed amount of memory and time?”
  – Automatically place a fixed number of shadow map partitions based on shadow receiver samples (same input as IZB and RMSM but different optimization)

• Addresses perspective aliasing directly and projective aliasing “when we get lucky”
Z-Partitioning

• Split camera frustum in Z
• Use a different shadow map for each frustum partition
Z-Partitioning
Where to Partition Z?

• Logarithmic is the best [Lloyd et al. 2006]
  – But only if the entire Z range is covered!
  – Needs tight near/far planes

• Parallel-Split Shadow Maps [Zhang et al. 2006]
  – Mix of logarithmic and uniform
  – Requires user to tuneable a parameter
    – Optimal value related to tight near plane...

• In practice, artists tune for specific views
  – Tedious and not robust to scene/camera changes
  – Ultimately suboptimal for arbitrary views
Where to place shadow maps?

• Axis-aligned bounding box of frustum segment in light
• Does not consider vast segments of the shadow map that are occluded
Static Partitions (PSSM)

Too little resolution far!

Too little resolution close!
Sample Distribution Shadow Maps

• Analyze the light-space sample distribution
  – Find tight Z min/max
  – Partition logarithmically based on tight Z bounds
  – Fully automatic; adapts to view with no need for tuning

• Compute tight light space bounds for each partition
  – Min/max of sample coordinates in light space
  – Avoids including occluded samples in shadow map
  – Greatly increases useful shadow resolution
Example: PSSM

Scene from Left 4 Dead 2, courtesy of Valve Corporation
Example: PSSM Partitions

Scene from Left 4 Dead 2, courtesy of Valve Corporation
Example: PSSM Light Space
Example: PSSM Light Space Partitions
Example: SDSM

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