

## **Carrara Portrait Studio** by PhilW

This pack contains three types of file:

Scenes - these contain 16 lighting setups, more details below.

Shaders - these contain a large variety of shaders for the Backdrops.

Poses - there are 12 bonus poses for V4 (plus mirrors where appropriate, making 22 poses in total), both seated, kneeling and standing, to get you started!

The scene files contain my render settings for 16 traditional, dramatic and creative studio lighting setups. You just load your character, pose and render to produce great, realistic images.

There are three cameras, setup with different focal lengths suitable for full length, upper body or face/head&shoulder shots. They are initially positioned for a character sitting on the posing stool. You can use this as a guide where to position your character if using your own poses, then move or delete the stool if it is not needed.

You can drag and drop shaders onto the Backdrop Screen for many different creative looks. There is also a Backdrop Curtain, which is initially set to invisible - simply check Visible to use it. The same shaders can be used on this, although it probably is best used with the plain color set.

The lighting for each scene consists of a soft key light, an optional soft fill light, and none, one or two rim lights. You will see a "Focal Point Object" in the scene - simply move this to the head of your character and the lights will automatically move and/or rotate to aim at this.

If you want to change the angles of the key light and fill light, it is best to select the KeyLight Master or FillLight Master and rotate them, the axis for rotation is the Focal Point Object, so that the proper lighting is maintained. Lights can also obviously be deleted, colored etc for many different looks. There is also a backdrop light which gives a soft halo effect, this can be turned off if required.

You can move and resize the Key and Fill lights, just be aware that unlike normal lights, their intensity is affected by their size, so making them smaller or moving them further away will reduce the intensity of light on your subject (just like a real light in fact!). If you just want to reduce the intensity, you can control it using the shader glow channel rather than normal light settings.

The KeyLight group also contains a light called HairSpot. This helps give hair (both Carrara dynamic hair and traditional transmapped hair) a nice shine. You should use the restriction panel to add the name of your hair so that it only illuminates this. The set will work with transmapped hair, but transparency can sometimes be slow to render so you may want to reduce the render settings a bit in this case to make it faster. You may also want to delete or reduce the rim lighting if it looks too artificial - it usually looks great on Carrara hair though!

Eyes are a vital part of any portrait, and I have included a shader which can be applied to the EyeSurface of a character to give great highlights and reflections in the eyes. It would also be normal to have the subject looking at the camera, so you can add a PointTo modifier and have the Y-axis pointing to the camera you are using. I also recommend increasing the "Cornea Bulge" parameter to 1.0. If you are setting up your own shaders (for example for Genesis which does not have the Eyesurface material zone), ensure that there is a little reflection (10% is a good starting value) and not just specular highlights, as the way the main lights are done, they need reflection to produce highlights.

The lighting in the scene is critically dependent on full Indirect Lighting being on - I know some people normally have this turned off in order to render faster, however with this set this will also turn the main lights off!

There is no Sky Lighting in the scene as the Studio is an enclosed set, so no light from the sky or environment maps would reach the subject. If you want to use Sky Lighting, you will need to delete the Studio Room object.

For a final sheen of realism, try adding a camera bloom effect using a free Photoshop plugin called virtualPhotographer by optikVerve (Windows only). Try applying the Ambience preset and then using Fade to back it off to around 30%. It has lots of other useful effects too and is definitely recommended.

I really hope you enjoy using the Carrara Portrait Studio and that you are knocked out by the renders of your characters!

Happy Rendering,

Phil