RENDERSTUDIO 2014 – Module #1 – Environments...

Welcome...

It's all about the quality of the light. The mood that the light portrays is the most essential part of any visual art.

That is what I try to achieve with my lighting products and RenderStudio 2014 is the next step in the endless quest for light quality and mood.

So let's start...!

Firstly you need to load up Poser. Any version from Poser 8 onwards will be able to utilise all of RenderStudio 2014. Just a quick word on Poser 8. You will need to load the included scene files manualy. They are located in: Runtime:Libraries:Scene:! RenderStudio2014.

So you have Poser open and you need to look in your props library. Navigate to Props:! RenderStudio2014:IDL_Utilities.
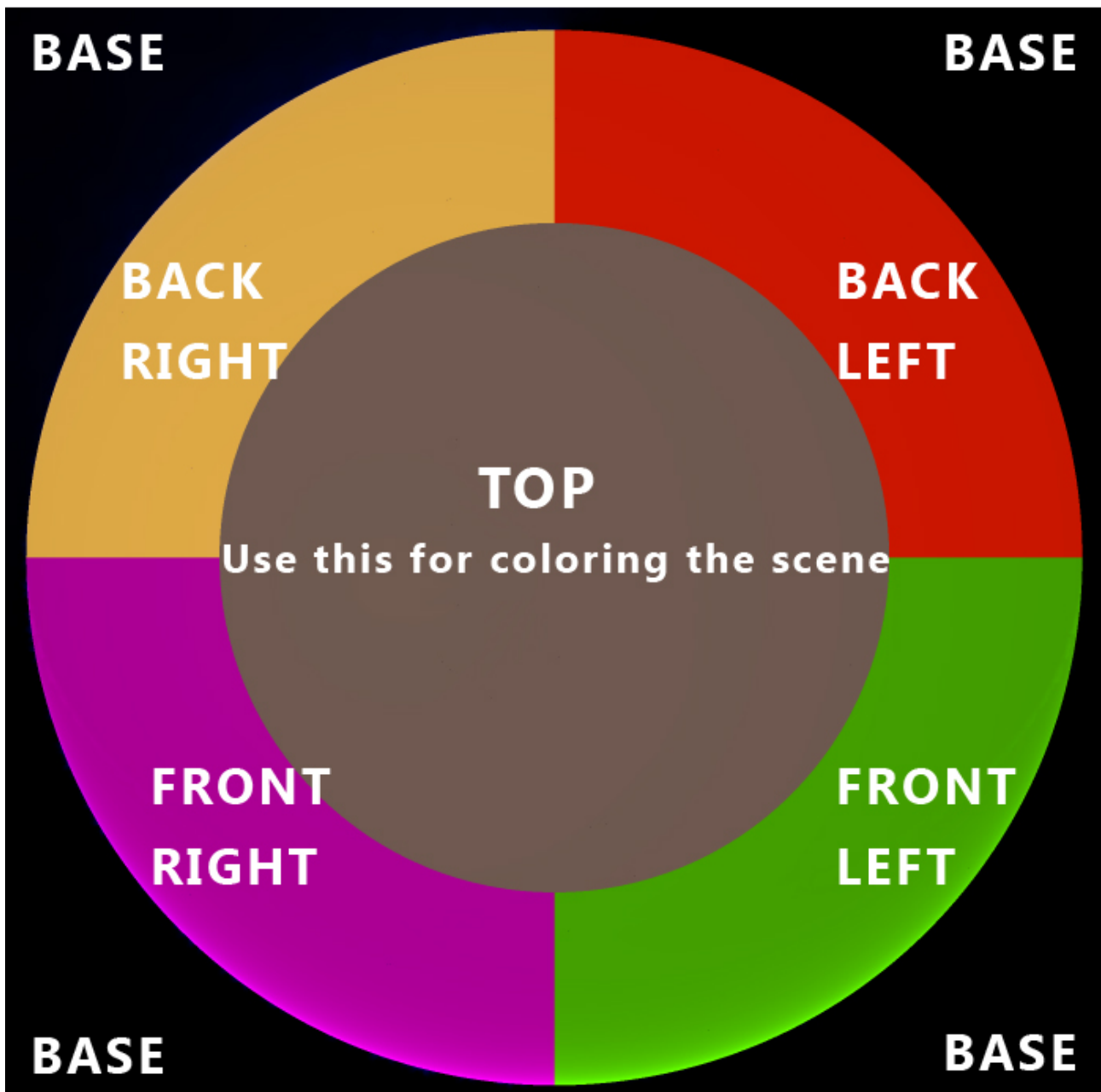
Here you will find all of the bits and pieces that you will be using to make your renders with RenderStudio2014. There are two Dome props, an Infinity cove and a SkyDrop. Here is a bit about each:

IDL_Dome:

This is the power behind RenderStudio2014. Take a look at the image below.

DIRECTIONAL DOME LIGHTING...
This is the view from the TOP...

BASE · BASE · BACK RIGHT · BACK LEFT · TOP Use this for coloring the scene · FRONT RIGHT · FRONT LEFT · BASE · BASE

The dome is split into five sections and a base. Each with their own material group. This allows us to use all or just some of the dome to project IDL light. The front of the dome is divided in two (left and right) as is the back. There is also a top section and a base. Each one can project light.

If you want the light to only come from the right at the front of the dome you would setup that within the material room by setting the ambience in the Poser Surface tab to the intensity of the light you require. Thankfully I have done most of this work for you. Here is a screen grab of the Poser Surface tab with the front right section casting the light.
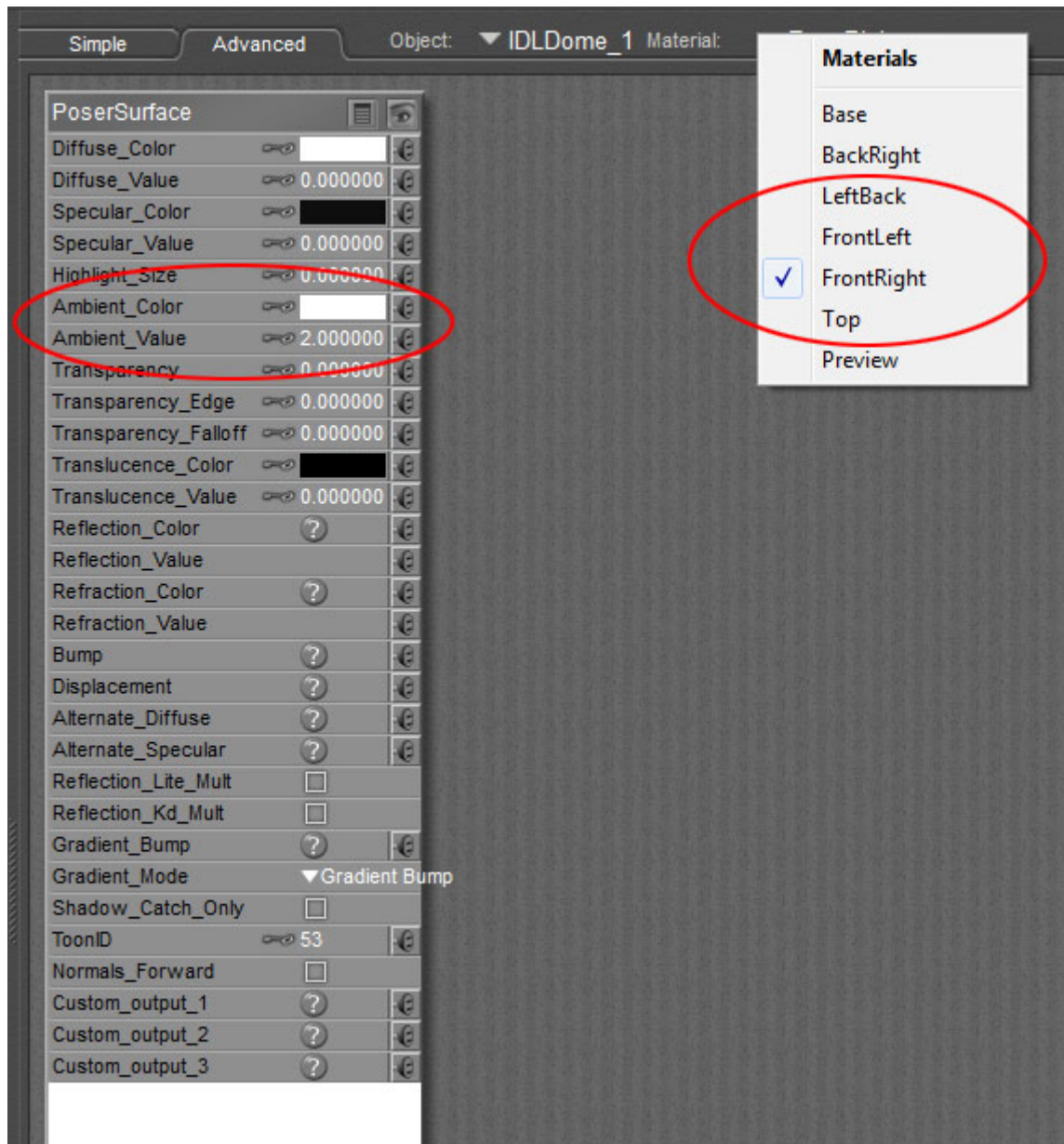

Where it says 'Ambient Value' this is the intensity of the light. The color of the light is set in the 'Ambient Color' section. So if you want the light to be brighter than 2.000 then you could set it to 3.000 or above. Same if you want less light. You would set it to 1.000 or less.

You can see in the Materials drop down that the 'Front Right' part of the dome is what we are looking at. You can change the intensity and color of any of the other materials listed.

So that's the IDL_Dome principle. You can find lots of pre-sets for different lighting scenarios in the Material library under Materials:! RenderStudio2014:IDL_Dome. There are

two sub categories. Standard Pre-sets are the basis of lighting any scene and include many different options with left and right set-ups where required. There is also Low lighting, Bright lighting, Medium, and High Key lighting set-ups that you can use and customise yourself.
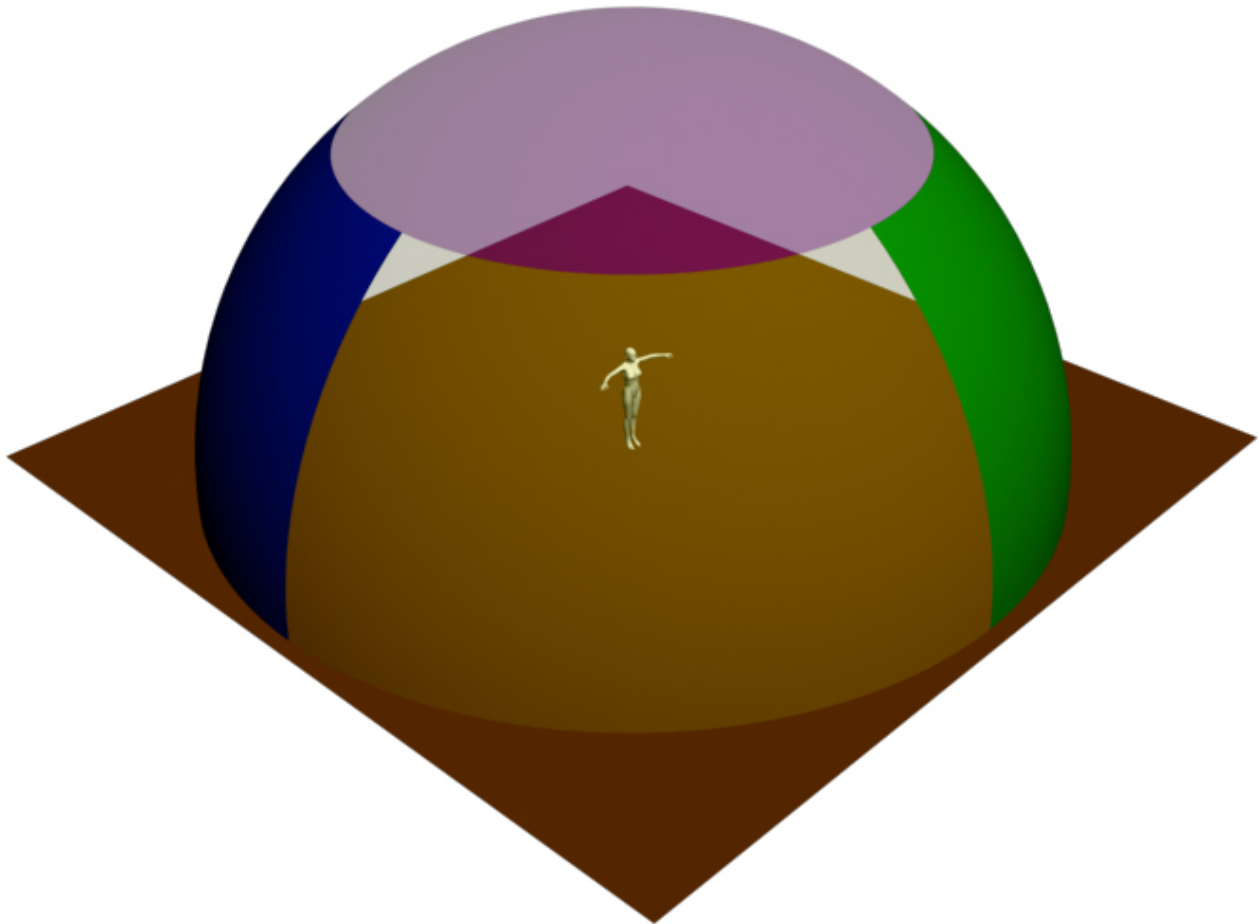
The other subcategory is 'Color Pre-Sets'. This section utilizes the 'Top' material group on the IDL_Dome and casts a coloured light down onto the scene. You could actually cast color from any of the Dome sections. The choice is yours and the lighting world is 'infinite' (Sorry about the pun)...

This would a good place to talk about the 'Infinity Cove'. I could go on about how I built a huge real life one of these in out of chicken wire and paper mache but I promise that I won't. Infinity coves have been used in photography since the invention of the camera. They can be solid structures in a studio but the most common type in the big roll of paper that hangs down behind the subject and onto the floor giving the extremely effective impression that there is infinite space behind what is being photographed.

We use the infinity cove prop for exactly the same reason here. Plus it also hides the back of the IDL Dome if the left and right materials are different colors or different values of intensity.

You can color the cove or load any image you like onto it as a background. You will most likely have to scale the cove smaller on the X axis when using a photograph to avoid distortion. It is worth noting that what color or image that you chose to load onto the cove will also influence the quality of the light as that is what IDL is all about.

There are some basic pre-sets in the Materials library under 'Infinity Cove Mats' They are all useful for different scenarios. The black one and the 'low key' one are great for making very moody renders with dark shadows. The high key one is for that really blown out white look. The medium one will give you a middle grey background and the default one is almost white.

Now for some info about the 'Environment Dome'...

ENVIRONMENT DOME:

The Environment Dome is a much simpler beast to understand but that doesn't make it any less powerful.

Basically it has only two material groups 'DOME' and 'BASE'...! You can change these to any ambient value or color that you desire and it will give you perfectly even global illumination. In the image above it is simply 'White'. There are a few pre-sets in the Materials library. One for the white look and one has a blue shader on the dome to give the impression of sky. This is important even if the sky is not in the final render as you may want the color of sky to influence your image using the IDL system in Poser.

The Environment Dome is perfect for small scenes. You can actually scale it up as big as you want. Don't forget to drop it to the floor or the base will be under the ground. That is 'CTRL+D' on a PC and 'COMMAND+D' on a Mac.

You can use the SkyDrop prop to great success in the environment dome. Just load it up from the IDL Utilities folder in the props library. There are three basic sky materials that you can load (More to come). You can find these in Materials:! RenderStudio2014:SkyDrop-Mats...
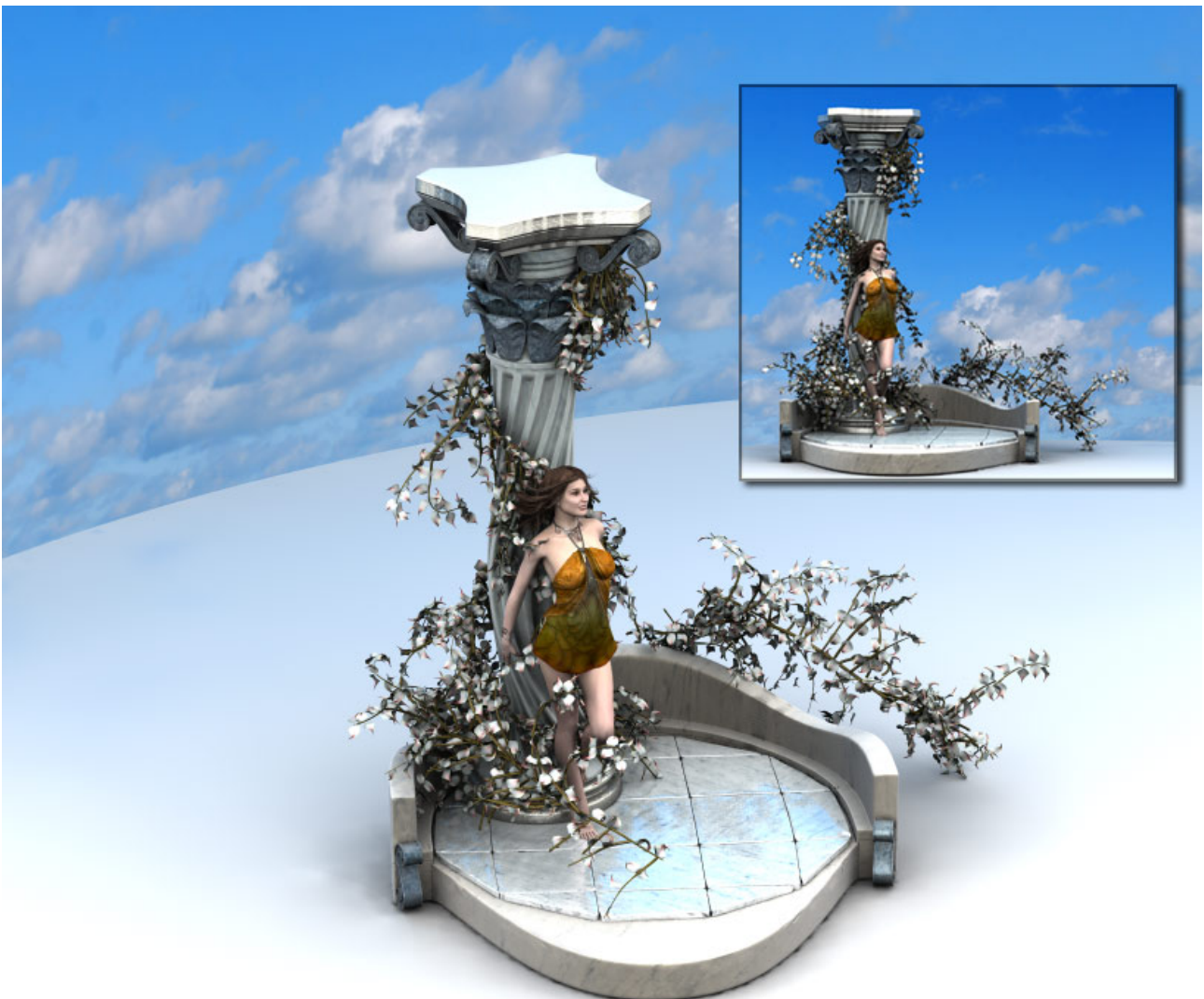
Now that we have covered so much about the utilities lets have a look at the Auxiliary lights...

AUXILIARY LIGHTS

One of the most important lights in this set is the 'Specular' light. Not only will it enhance any shiny shaders in your scene but due to the fact that IDL light does not cast any light in the viewport window while you are setting up the scene it will give you some illumination to work with. Otherwise you would be fumbling around in the virtual dark looking for a light switch. So the basic rule is: When you open Poser and start a new RenderStudio scene load the 'Specular' light first!!!

The beauty of the auxiliary lights is that there are only a few. A few is all you need. Any more and it will become a chaotic mess.

The Dome-fill light is great for enhancing your IDL scene if you are using a set-up where you are casting IDL light from one side only and you would like the shadows to be just a little less. You will need to adjust the intensity of this light to suit your scene.

The Dome-Rim light is the light that makes your figures stand out from the background by casting a very intense rim of light around the head and shoulders and any other body part in it's path. I very seldom do renders without this included. It's intensity is set to 1000.000. It needs to be this bright in my opinion to have the desired effect in Poser.

The Sun... Pretty self explanatory really. It simulates sunlight in your scene. You may want to move this to the left and right in your scene or even behind your subject to get nice long shadows that the sun would cast. You can make it really low on the horizon too for simulated sunsets.

The '! AuxLights-All' will load all the auxiliary lights into your scene at the same time.

AND THE GOOD NEWS IS? Take a look in the scene library and you will find five complete Auxiliary light scenes ready to load with everything all set up for you...! Just add your stuff into it.

THE SCENE LIBRARY:

Also included in the scene library is a default Dome and Cove pre-loaded scene and in the 'Environment_Dome folder you will find two more scenes loading the environment dome and the Skydome.

Don't forget that Poser 8 users will have to load the scenes from the File/Load menu in Poser.

This brings us to the end of 'What's in the box'. I will tag on some suggested render settings for you at the end of this document.

I hope you enjoy RenderStudio 2014 Module #1 as much as I have enjoyed making it.

This is only the beginning. There will be plenty more RenderStudio 2014 modules to build and collect until you have the whole set. By then you will know just as much about lighting as I do.
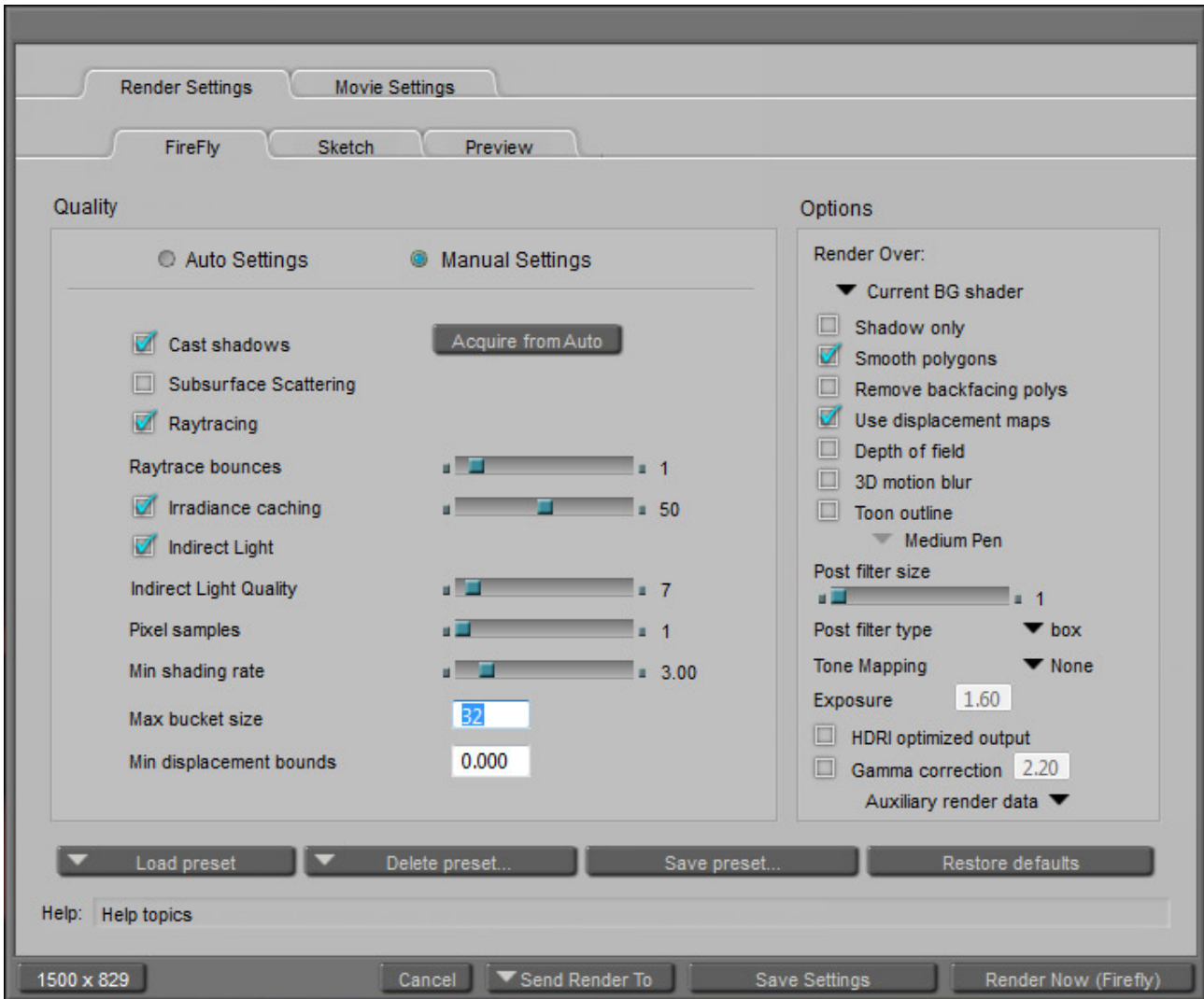
Take care all.

Happy IDL Rendering and see you next time.

Colm.:-)

Render Setting start on the next page:

This one is what I use when I am doing test renders. It is really really bad quality but if you make the hair invisible in your test renders it only takes a few seconds to render most scenes.

Garbage Render Settings but fast…. (USE ONLY FOR TEST RENDERS)…

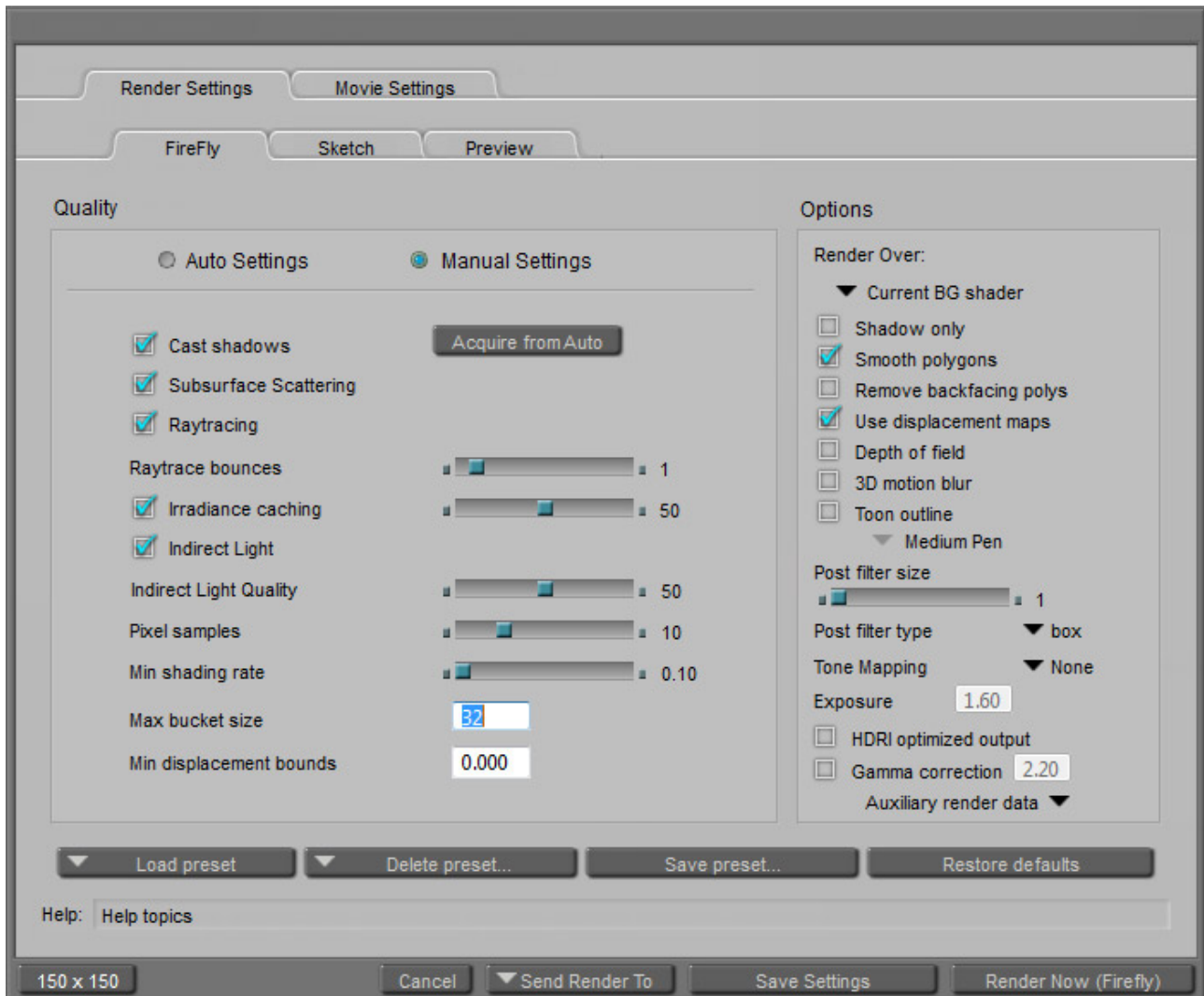NEXT PAGE… For More…

The setting are good for a final check of things. These settings are a little bit better quality and also use Sub Surface Scattering. These are not good enough for a final render...
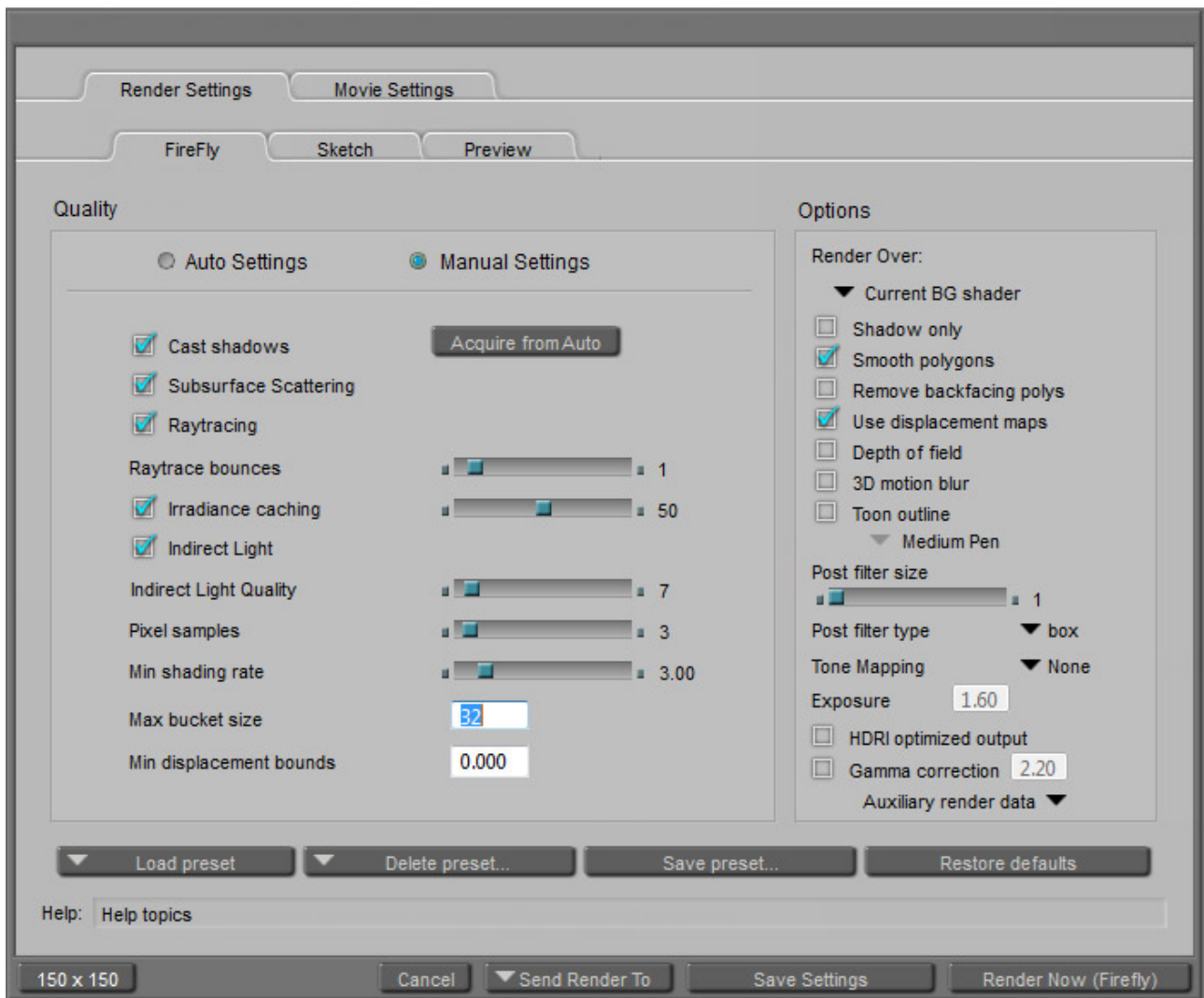
One more time please....

Here are the settings I use for a final render. Depending on the power of your computer and what you have in your scene you may want to go and have dinner while you are waiting. It's worth the wait though....

THAT'S ALL FOLKS......