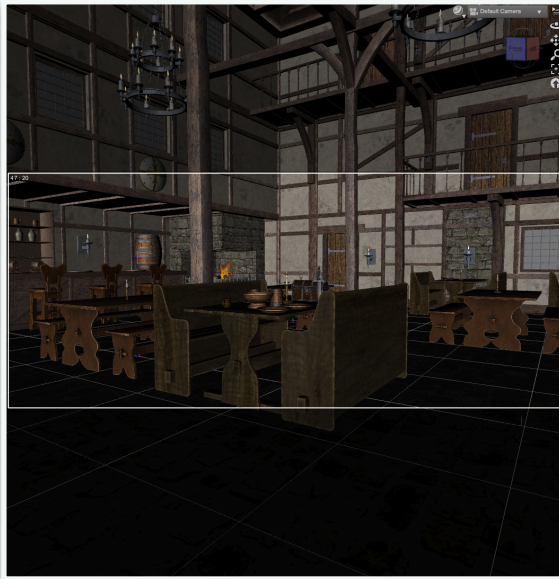


# Placeholder Manager - quick tutorial guide

Welcome to this quick tutorial for **Placeholder Manager**. This product is designed to be extremely easy to use. I will guide you through the usage of the product and I guess you will not ever need to open this tutorial again after you have walked through and followed the easy steps outlined here.

In this tutorial we will build a slightly crowded medieval tavern scene with a lot of figures. A type of scene that very easily brings your viewport to the knees, and Studio gets difficult to work with.



First, we load FG Medieval Tavern Preload into the scene, we use that as a starting point. You can use whatever similar set you like, but the idea is to have a base to build from. The scene has a lot of tables with items on, and chairs or benches.

Now, we need some setup figures, I bet you have loads of them saved in your work folders, so grab a few and place them around one of the tables in

your scene. I will use a load of fantasy figures I've used in different scenes over the years. So, I'll be back when I have added some patrons around one of the tables.

After adding, placing and posing four characters, the scene now looks like this.



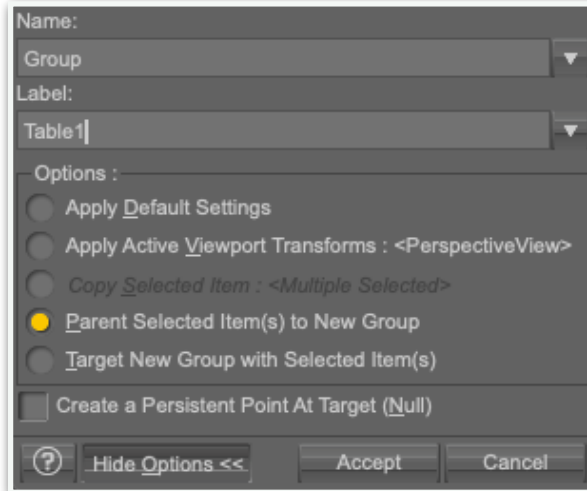
Now, we need to create a group of everything that we want to make this placeholder proxy for. In this case the table, benches, things on the table and all the figures. To do that select all the items that should go into the group.

Some sets have already things neatly put into hierarchies, other sets have every-thing just in a big pile of props, so it can sometimes be a little tricky to get it all in the first try.

This looks like everything. The table, benches, characters and the stuff on the table, all selected.



Now under the **Create...** menu, select **New Group...** and this will show a dialog like the one to the right. Name the group something useful. It is always good to name your groups so you can easily find them, much like giving descriptive names to your Photoshop layers. I name this group Table 1.



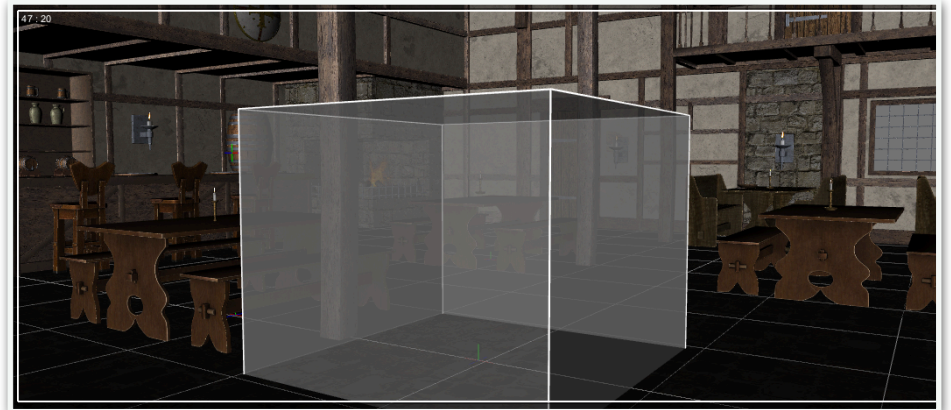
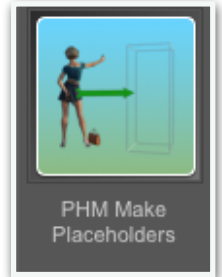
Click Accept and you now have a group with everything in it, or do we?

A tip is to click on the eye icon beside the Group to hide it, and you might see one or two items not in the group, that you missed. I missed spoon, a fork and a knife. Now you can select those missing pieces and move them to the group Table 1 by just dragging them there in the Scene list.



OK, we have a group, what now? Now it's time to create a Placeholder Proxy for the Table 1 group.

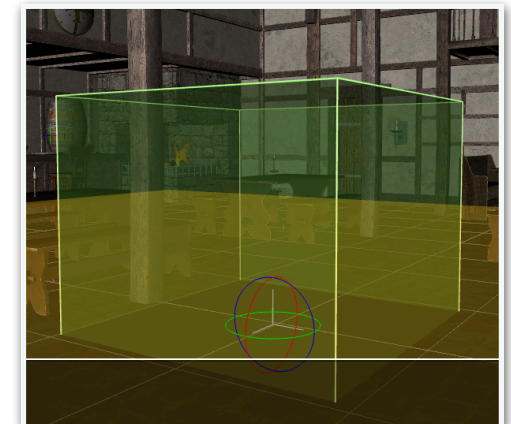
We do that by selecting the Group named Table 1, and then click on the **PHM Make Placeholders** script. It only takes a fraction of a second, and the full table with people and benches are now invisible, and is replaced by a Placeholder proxy, a transparent box with white edges.



And if you look in the list, you now have a new node, Table 1\_proxy. This is the Placeholder proxy that you just created.



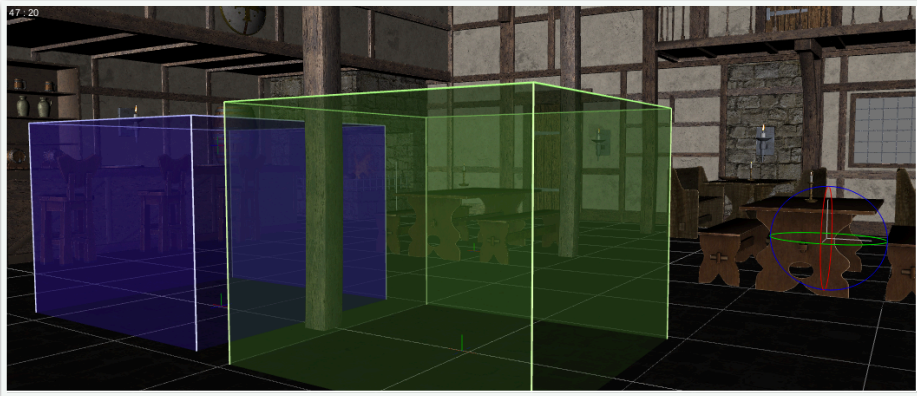
Now you can go to the **Materials** folder and use one of the available materials to change the appearance of the Placeholder proxy, I gave mine the green look and change the Opacity to 40%.





Now, let's add a second group of people at the second table. You might already notice that the viewport feels less lagging than it did when you had four characters in the scene.

OK, three more characters added and we select them, plus table, benches and what's on the table, same procedure as last time, and we call the group Table-2. Now we create a new placeholder from the group named Table-2 and set the colour to blue, just so we see which is which.

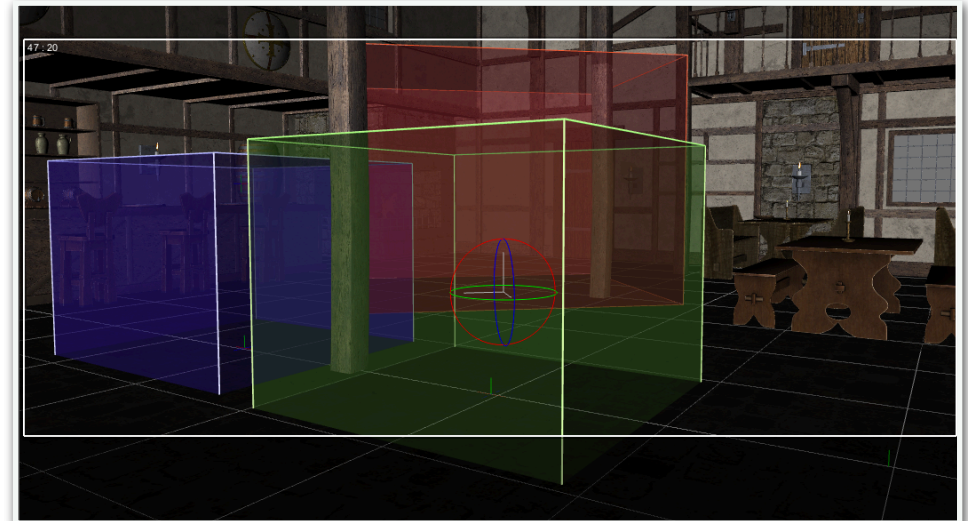
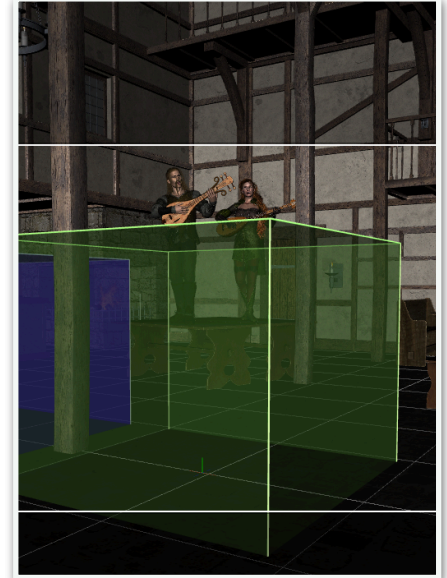


Ok, let's add a group of bards, the most popular bards in the town, they even have a band name, The Travelling Taletellers.

First, we make a stage by putting two tables close to each other and put them in to a group, so we have a group, called Bards. One of the bards is based on the V4 Congress, and as we now have a lot of figures in the scene, some figures might start to wiggle its bones and lose the carefully crafted pose when moved. I know, an annoying Daz Studio issue, that has a solution. After loading the figure that might wiggle, specially M4/V4 but also Dog 8 suffers from that bad habit, select it and click the **PHM Lock All Bones**-script. This will lock all bones in the current posed position and prevent any wiggle from happening. Now place that bard on the table. We now load a second bard, one bard is not a band, it's a solo artist.

You can of course add whatever you think goes here, but we do this simple. Add these two bard the group Bards. and make a placeholder proxy for this group too. I set the colour to red and as usual the opacity to 40%.

We now have three placeholder proxies and 9 figures in the scene and there is no lag what so ever panning around in the viewport. Ok, we need the crowd now, the die hard fans who travels to see their bards perform in every tavern.



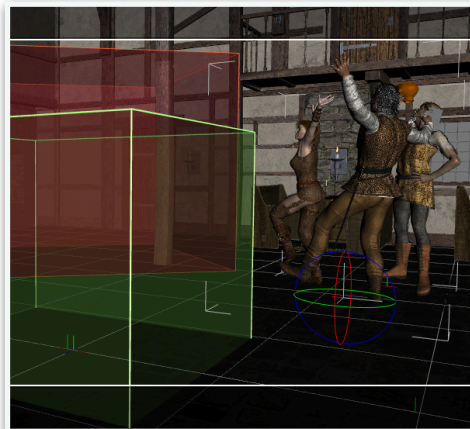
First we make a render of what we have so far, so we now what the scene looks like.



Now, we add three more characters, the cheering crowd of fans, same procedure as before. First we load the three figures and pose them a little, if needed. We're still making a scene after all.

The crowd is visible and is not severely covered by the green table, as the placeholder box shows the bounding box of all items in that group.

We now select the three in the crowd and create a new group, calling it Crowd, such great imaginative name don't you say? We create a box, and then we select the placeholder proxy and go to the materials tab and change the colours there.



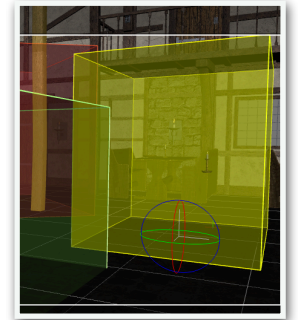
### Note on placeholder proxies materials

*This might be uncharted territories for some, but this is one way if you want more different colours than those that comes with the product itself. I will later show you another way of doing this, but it good to know that you can change the materials.*

*I do not recommend trying to apply textures to the placeholder proxies, for several reasons. First, it's just plain stupid to texture something like that, wasting memory, and second, they are dynamically created and not UV-mapped for texturing at all.*

There are two material zones on the placeholder proxy, **linemat** and **sides**.

The **linemat** material is for the polylines which are used for the frame of the placeholder proxy. The **sides** material is for, as the name says, the sides. If you hide the sides set the Opacity to 0%, only the frame is visible. For the lines, the Ambient Color is set just to make the lines stand out a little more.



So, for the example to the right, I used different shades of yellow for the **linemat** and the **sides**. So, what should we do next? I hope you have so far caught how you use this tool to power up your viewport when you put it under stress.

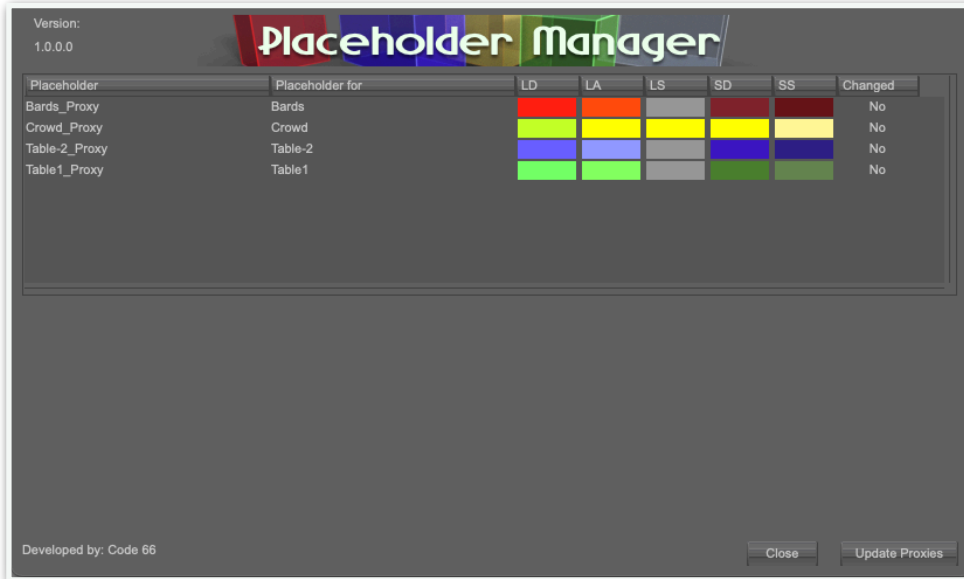
Now, you might wish there was a way to easily change the materials of the placeholder proxies, and at the same time see what items they are proxying for. In the next page you will learn about the answer to that.



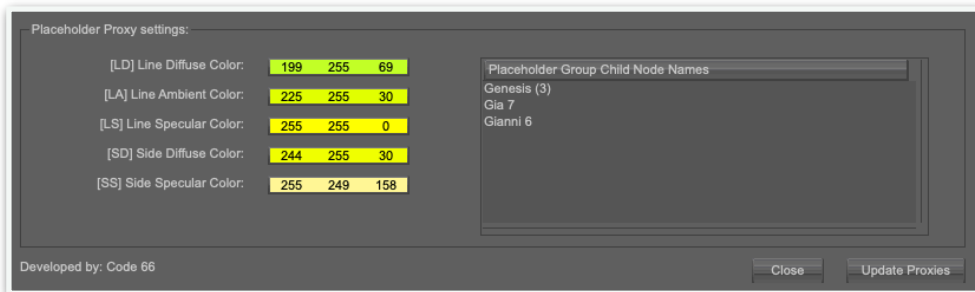


**PHM Placeholder Manager** is the script to manage your placeholder proxies.

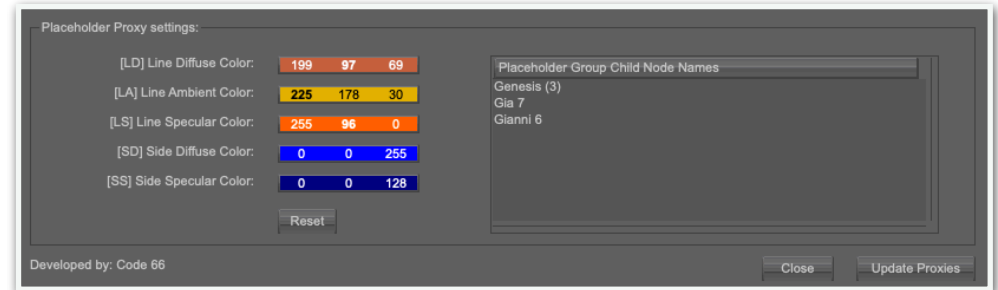
At the top you see the a list of all the placeholder proxies in your scene. The colourful boxes represent the colours you can change.



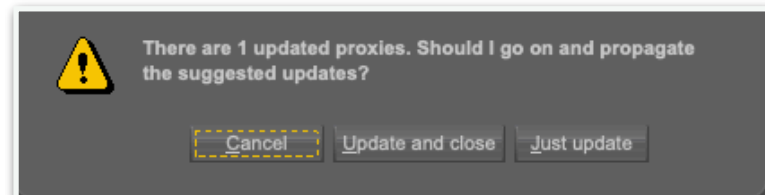
If you click in an item in the list, you will see the editable things.



The abbreviated column name in front of each setting to make it easy to see what is what. Just use the Colour control to change the colour, or click it to bring up the colour picker, just as everywhere else in Daz Studio.



We did change the colours of the **Crowd** proxy as above, and you can see in the list which items are proxied by that placeholder proxy. If you are unhappy with the changes for one of the proxies, just click the **Reset**-button to reset to what it was when it was loaded. In the Changed-column in the top list you see which placeholder proxies that you have changed the materials for. When you are done, just click the **Update Proxies**-button. This will show this dialogue:



If you want to see the changes before you exit the script, click the **Just Update**-button, which will update the colour settings of the placeholder proxies which you have changed the colour settings for, and you can see the update reflected in the viewport.

We click the **Update and close**-button, and when we look in the viewport the placeholder proxy for the Crowd group now looks like the image to the right, mission complete..

If you start the **PHM Placeholder Manager** again, you will now see the current colours as the current colours.

I hope you will find Placeholder Manager a useful tool for your large scenes that otherwise would bring your viewport to a crawl.

