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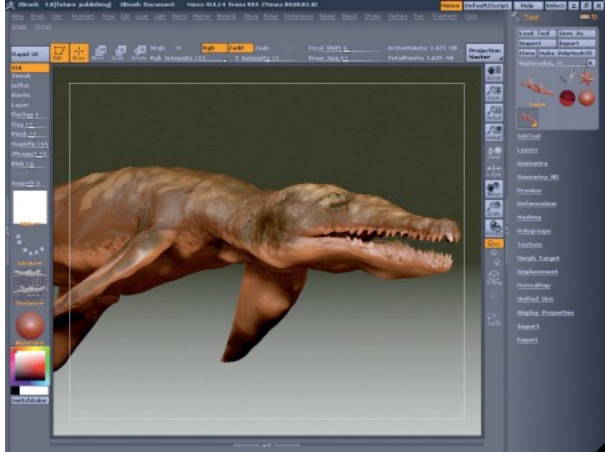
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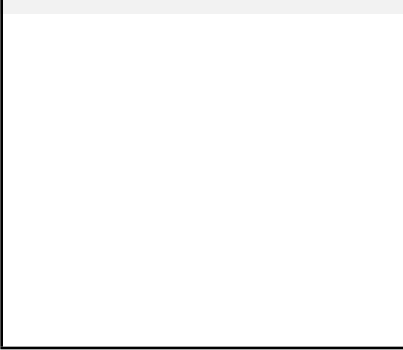


ZBrush 3

It may be unique in the 3D sculpting market, but is ZBrush any good?

Over an extremely short time, *ZBrush* has become one of the top professional 3D modelling tools, while simultaneously building up a reputation among non-experts as an approachable and intuitive package. Using a combination of ergonomic brushes and tools, *ZBrush* enables you to sculpt and texture organic models containing millions of polygons in real-time. You can then output your finished creation for rendering in your favourite 3D package.

As a relatively young program, *ZBrush 2* still left a lot of room for improvement. You couldn't work on more than one object in a scene, or easily re-position your objects. Neither could you pick up and put down objects, or add detail to parts of an object without making things more complex. Thankfully, these problems have been largely solved.



HD sculpting is one of the most instantly attractive new features in *ZBrush 3* and enables you to work on models of up to a billion polygons (although not all at once). You can create a HD model and use it to paint in extremely high levels of detail, but the more detailed the model, the smaller the area of it you can work on at any given time. Add to this the new ability to paint using alphas (textured paintbrushes) in a much more interactive way and you've got an exceptionally powerful set of modelling tools for fine detail.

The new Transpose tool enables you to select a portion of your model and create a manipulator with which you can re-pose that part of the model. You no longer need to export your model, create bones and pose it – you can do your posing directly in *ZBrush*. If you're painting textures, you can now work much more interactively between *Photoshop* and *ZBrush* without continually switching between applications. You can also now work with sub-objects one at a time, treating different parts of your model as separate objects by turning them on and off in layers.

Another neat feature is Matcap, which enables you to generate a material based on the angles at which light reflects from an object in a photo. By simply clicking to define the object's normals, *ZBrush* enables you to build up a picture of the way light affects the material, although this only really works on single colour materials and not on textures.

On the downside, you might find that other packages have difficulty handling *ZBrush*'s complex models. But the ability to produce finished artworks within *ZBrush 3* itself overcomes this. A host of new features means that the most sophisticated and easiest-to-use modelling tool on the market has just got better – it's probably the closest thing in the digital world to real-life sculpture.

INFO

Release price: £305.70
Publisher: Pixologic
Contact: +1 888 748 5967

FOR

- Alpha painting
- Billion polygon handling
- Transpose features

AGAINST

- Not much

VERDICT

If you model organic objects in 3D, *ZBrush* is for you. This third version would have taken it way beyond its competition, but for one thing: it has none



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