

MAYA PLUGIN DEVELOPMENT

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# Junkbox Tool

## Documentation

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Digital Graphics  
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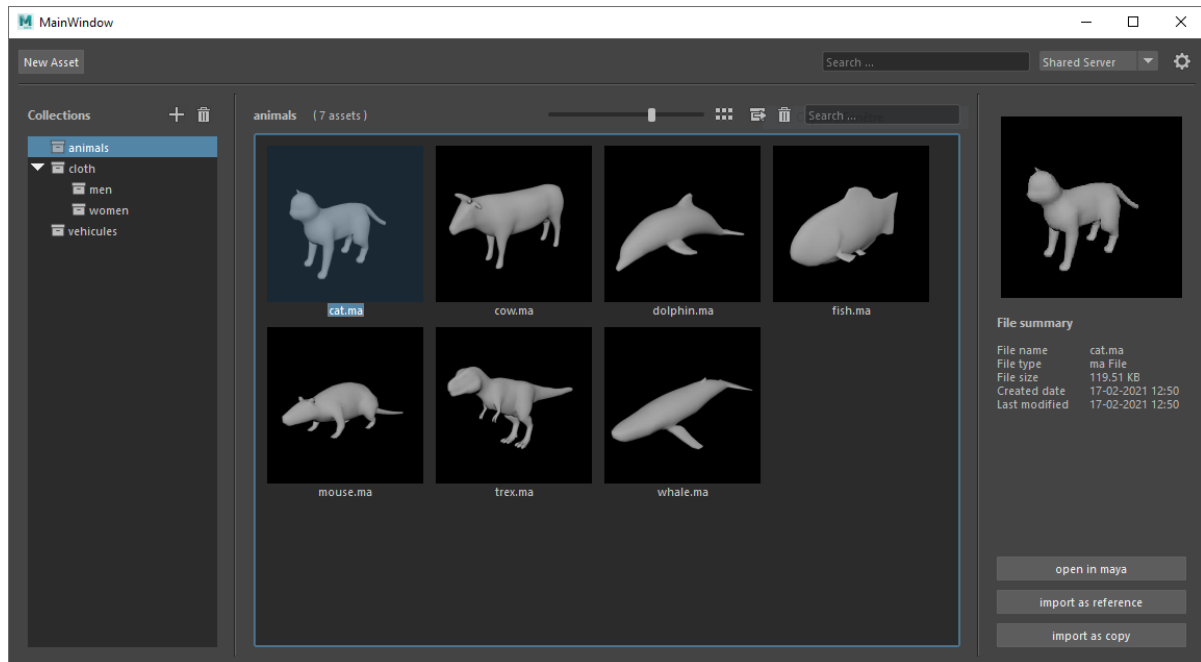


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## 1 Plugin description

The Junkbox Tool is a plugin developed for Maya to organise and ease the manipulation of Maya assets.



## 2 Manage the collections

Collections are used to store assets in an organised manner. This section describes how to create and remove a collection from the Junkbox.

### 2.1 Create a collection

To create a new collection, click the  button on the Collections Panel (see figure 1).

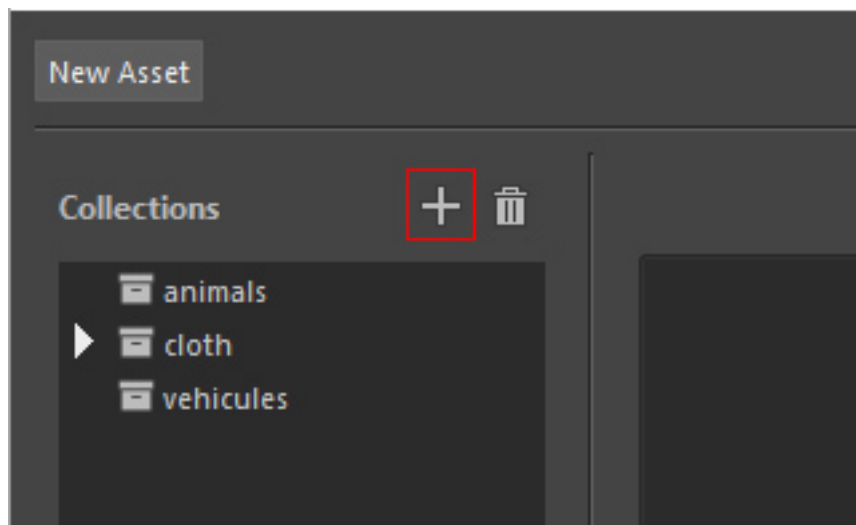




Figure 1: Add button to the Collection panel

By default, the new collection will be created at the root. To create a collection as child of an existing collection, select the parent collection before clicking the  button.

In the following dialog (see figure 2), enter the name of the new collection.

 Please avoid special characters for the name as the panel wont allow it.

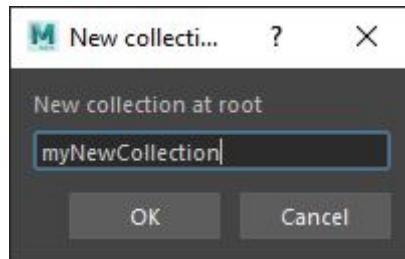


Figure 2: Panel to insert the name of the new collection

Once the name validated, a new collection appears in the **Collections Panel** (see figure 3).

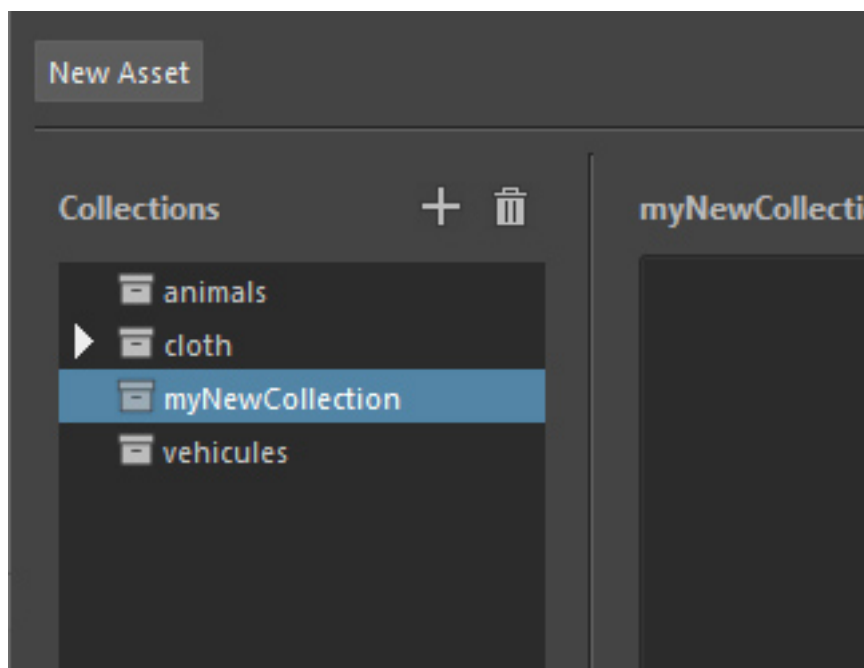



Figure 3: New collection inserted in the Collection Panel

## 2.2 Remove a collection

To remove a collection from the **Collections Panel**, select the collection to remove and press the  button (see figure 4).

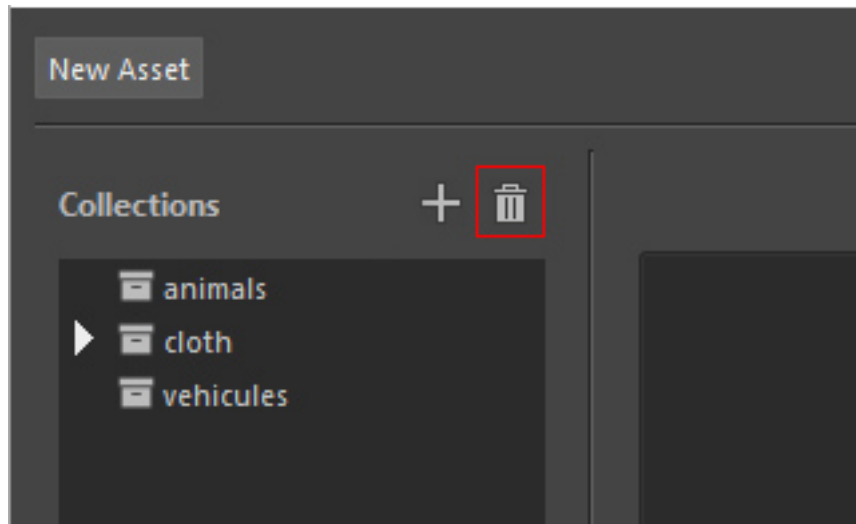


Figure 4: Remove button from the Collection Panel

⚠ Once a collection removed, its content will be permanently deleted.

## 2.3 Search a collection

The general search bar of the Junkbox Tool can filter assets but also collections (see figure 5).

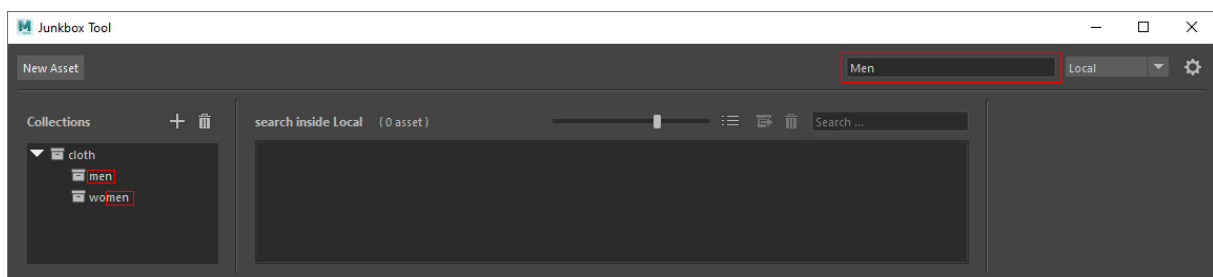


Figure 5: Global search to filter collections


① Filtering is done by checking if the searched keyword is included inside the collection name. It is also case insensitive.

## 3 Manage the assets

An asset is a set of reusable Maya objects. This section will describe how to store a selection of objects in a collection, how to load an asset from it, how to move assets from one collection to another, and how to modify a asset already stored.

### 3.1 Create an asset

To create an asset, click on the **New Asset** button from the Junkbox Tool.

With the new dialog (see figure 6), select the name of the new asset and browse the destination collection by clicking the  button.

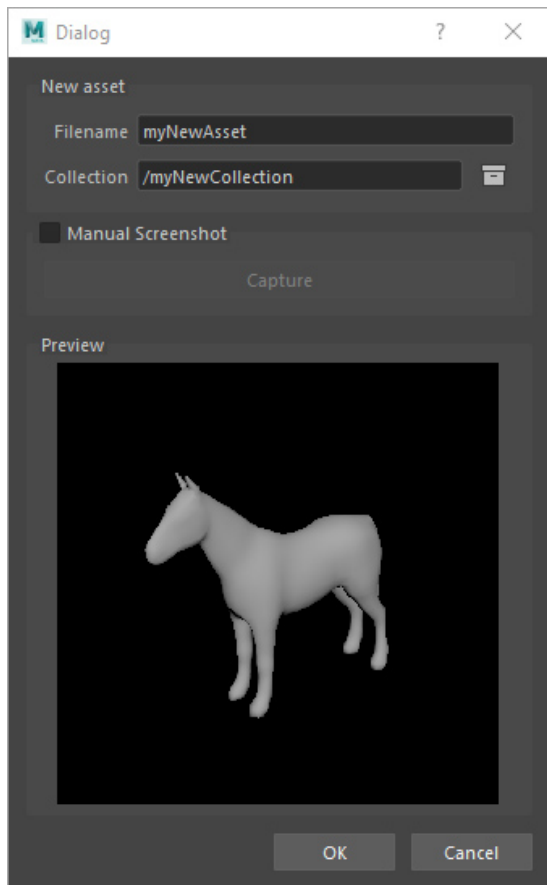


Figure 6: Dialog to create a new asset

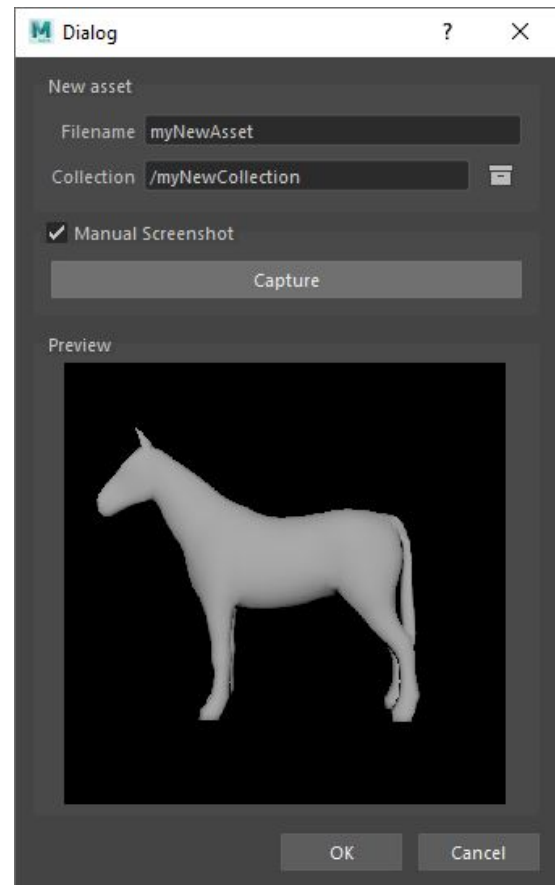



Figure 7: Dialog to create a new asset with manual screenshot

A thumbnail will automatically be created with default settings ( Lambert, default light and smooth shade). To modify the thumbnail angle, check the **Manual Screenshot** box, orient your current Viewport accordingly and pressed on the **Capture** button (see figure 7).

- ① A thumbnail is automatically updated when the Maya selection changes.
- ① If **Empty Selection** is displayed instead of the thumbnail, please ensure that objects are selected within the Maya Viewport.
- ① If the name already exists within the collection, the name will be incremented alphabetically.
- ⚠ The Manual Screenshot better works on Single Perspective View. If the configuration is not met, the Junkbox Tool will force the Single Perspective View.

Once the dialog configured, press OK.

### 3.2 Remove assets

To remove some assets, click on the collection that contains the assets and select them. Then, press the  button from the **Assets Panel** (see figure 8).

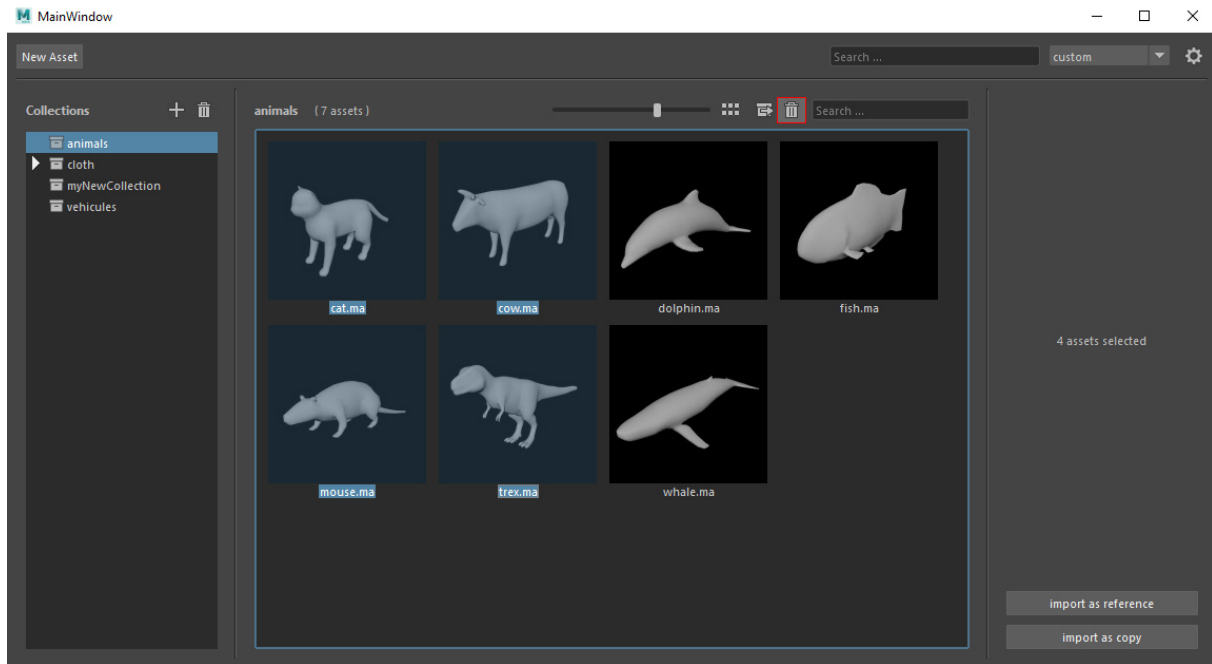



Figure 8: Remove button from the Assets panel

### 3.3 Move assets

To move some assets from a collection to another, open the source collection and select the assets to move. Then, press the  button (see figure 9).

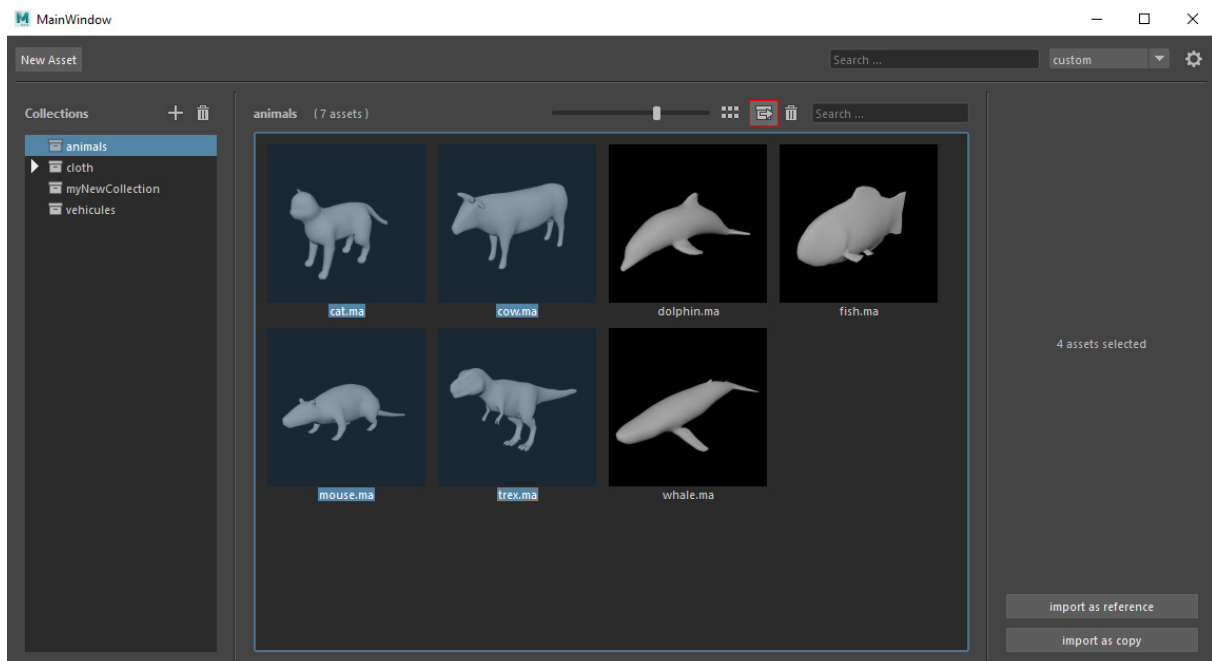


Figure 9: Move button from the Assets Panel

Finally, choose from the new dialog the destination collection and press OK.

### 3.4 Load assets

To load assets into the current Maya project, select an asset (or multiple ones) from the **Assets Panel** and from the **Preview Panel**, press :

- The **import as reference** button to load the selected assets as references.
- The **import as copy** button to load the selected assets as a copy.

### 3.5 Edit an asset

The Junkbox Tool allows to open in Maya an asset from a collection.

To do so, open a collection from the **Collections Panel** and click on a single asset. An **open in Maya** button will appear in the **Preview Panel** (see figure 10). Click on it to load the selected asset into Maya.

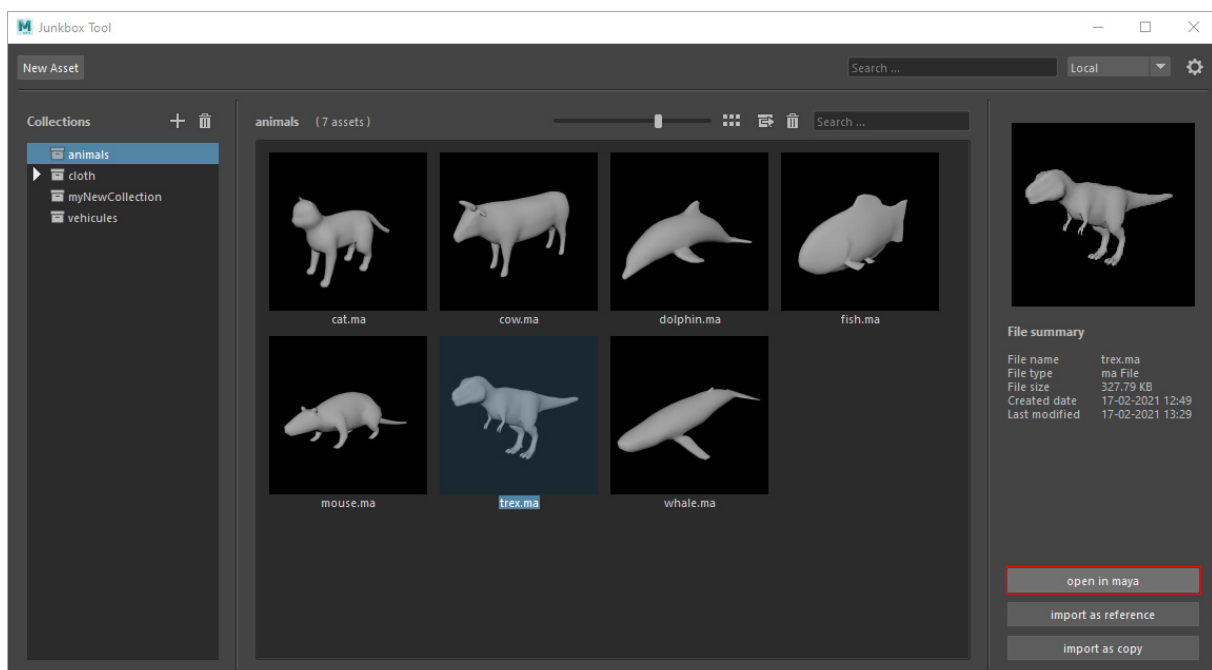




Figure 10: Button to open the selected asset in Maya

 The loaded asset is the original file. All the Maya projects that have a copy **as reference** of that asset will be influenced by the asset modification

### 3.6 Refresh a thumbnail

Once created, an asset can update its thumbnail by clicking the  button on the **Preview Panel** (see figure 11). This will open the original asset in Maya and will ask to capture a new thumbnail via the thumbnail dialog (see figure 12).



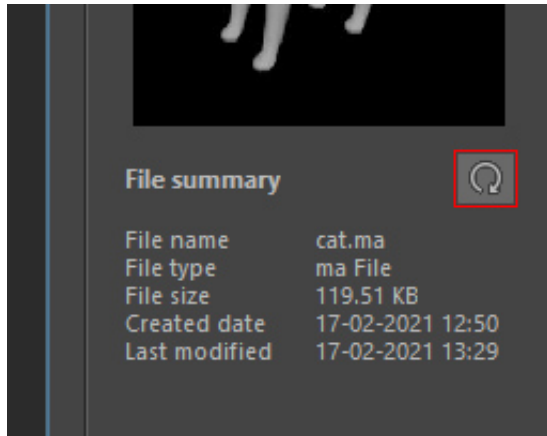


Figure 11: Button to update the thumbnail of the selected asset

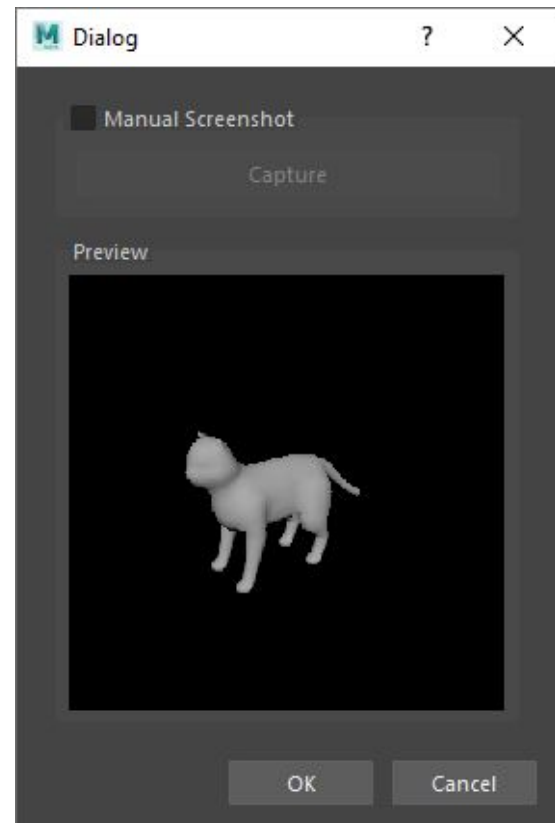


Figure 12: Dialog to capture a new thumbnail

### 3.7 Search assets

Two searching method are available to filter assets:

- The global search, as seen to filter collections, is also capable of looking for all assets (from all collections) whose name contains the searched keyword (see figure 13).

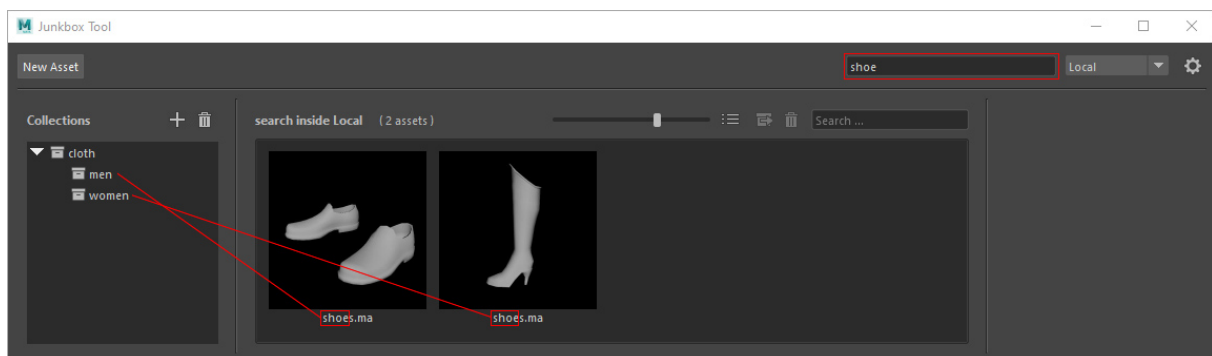


Figure 13: Global search to filter assets from all collections

- The local search allows to filter assets within the open collection (see figure 14).

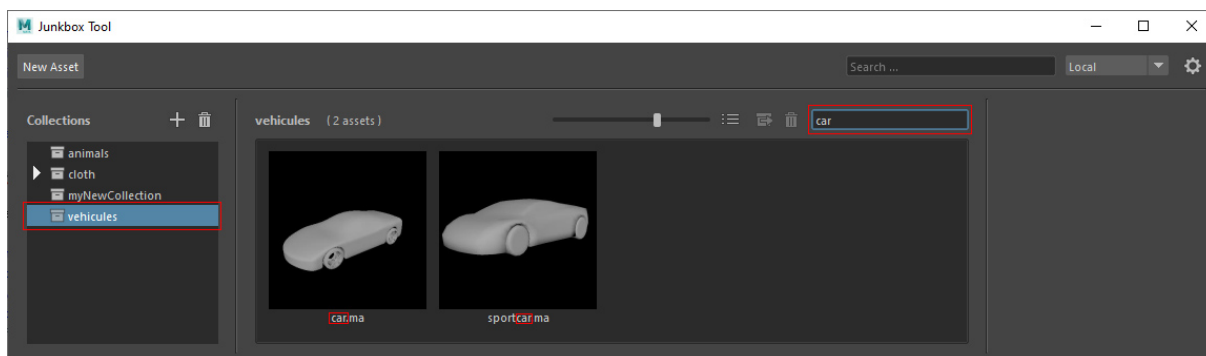




Figure 14: Local search to filter assets within a collection

### 3.8 Modify the assets visualisation

The **Assets Panel** can customise the way of listing the assets. Customisation can be done by modifying the thumbnail size using the slider (see figure 15) or by pressing the  |  button.

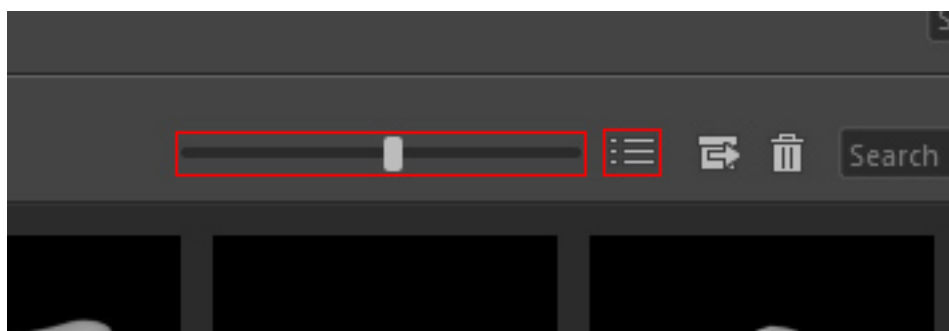


Figure 15: Button and slider to modify how assets are displayed

① When changing from thumbnail view to list view (or reverse), the asset selection remains.

## 4 Manage the repositories

A repository is a folder stored on the hard drive of the computer that contains collections (sub-folders) and assets (Maya files and thumbnail pictures).

By default, the shared repository (located on the digital graphics server) is loaded and is accessible by everyone (see figure 16).

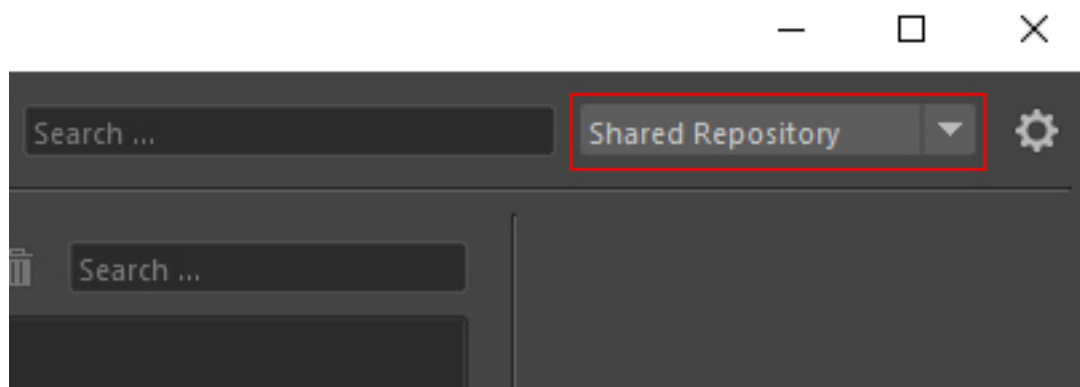


Figure 16: By default, the shared repository from digital graphics server is loaded

Private repositories can also be created and loaded. This section will explain how to add a new repository and how to switch from one to another.

## 4.1 Create a repository

To add a new repository to the Junkbox Tool, click on the  button. The new dialog displays all user repositories with their shortcut names (see figure 17).

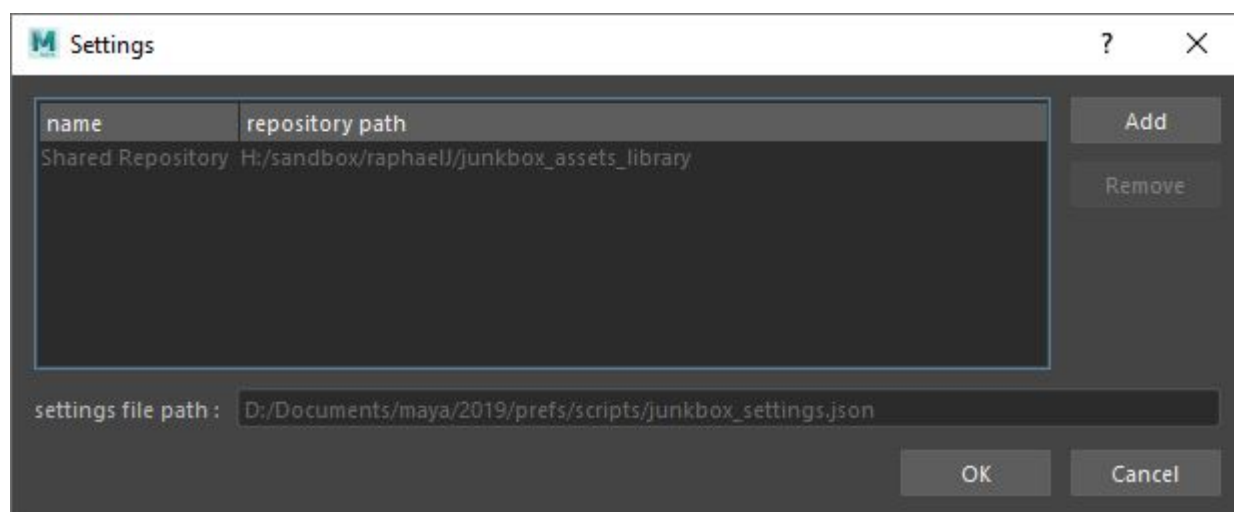


Figure 17: The settings panel allows to load additional repositories

① The first repository from the list is the shared one from Digital Graphics. It cannot be modified or deleted by users.

To add a new repository to the list, press the **Add** button and select browse an empty folder that will become a repository.

## 4.2 Add an existing repository

To add an existing repository to the Junkbox Tool, proceed as explained in the previous section 4.1. However, when browsing a folder, select the one that represents the repository stored on the computer.

### 4.3 Switch repositories

To switch from one repository to another, use the repository menu from the Junkbox Tool and select the wanted repository (see figure 18). Only added repositories will be shown in the menu (see previous sections 4.1 and 4.2).

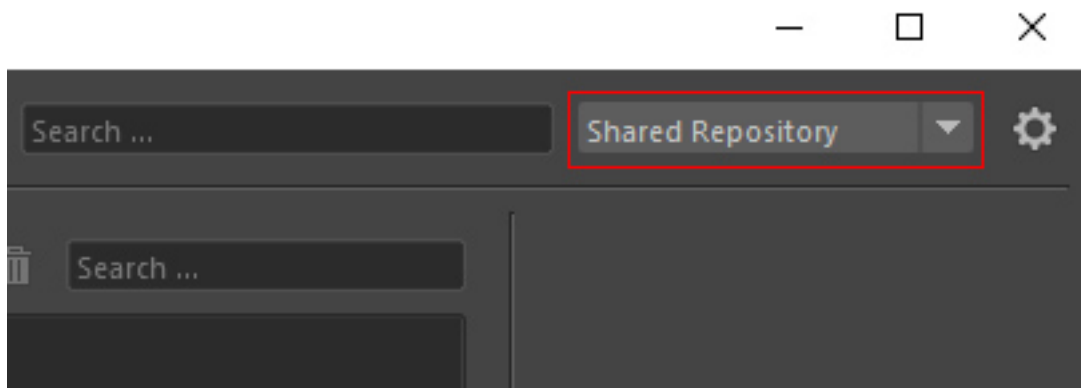



Figure 18: Menu that allows to switch repositories

### 4.4 Remove a repository

To remove a repository from the Junkbox Tool, open the settings by clicking the  button. Then, select the repository from the list to remove and press the **Remove** button (see figure 19).

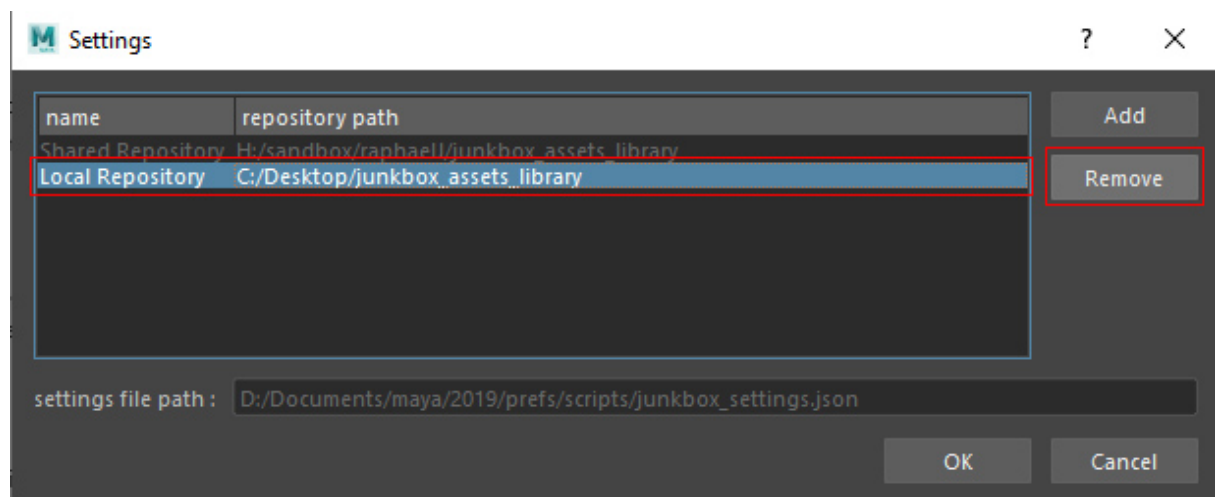



Figure 19: Menu that allows to switch repositories

 Repositories that are removed from the list are not deleted from the computer or server. To permanently delete a repository from a computer or server, remove manually the folder that represents that repository.