



# WebGL Up and Running

Tony Parisi

<http://www.tonyparisi.com/>



# Get the Code

```
git clone https://github.com/tparisi/WebGLBook/
```

```
svn co svn://iscene.com/svn/webglbook
```

```
http://iscene.com/WebGLBook/webglbook.zip
```



# About the Example Content

- Models purchased from Turbosquid  
<http://www.turbosquid.com>
  - Do NOT redistribute
  - Before using in your own applications, join the service, download and/or purchase, and convert. Read TOS.
- Models from Blendswap <http://www.blendswap.com/>
  - CC licensed
  - Before using in your own applications, join the service, download yourself and convert. Read TOS.
- Images
  - Variously attributed; if you don't see attribution, please email me

# About Me

- Serial entrepreneur
- Founder, stealth game startup
- Consulting architect and CTO
- Web3D co-creator, VRML and X3D
- Author, WebGL Up and Running (O'Reilly 2012)

## Contact Information

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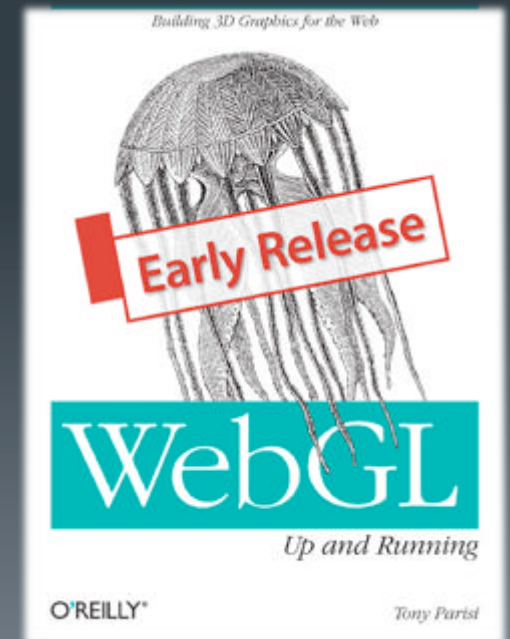
## Get the book!

eBook/Early Release: May 22, 2012

Print version: July 2012

<http://shop.oreilly.com/product/0636920024729.do>

Discount Code: WEBGLPRE





# Agenda

1. An Introduction to WebGL
2. Your First WebGL Program
3. Graphics
4. Animation
5. Interaction
6. Integrating 2D and 3D
7. WebGL in Production
8. Your First WebGL Game



# 1. An Introduction to WebGL



# The New 3D API Standard

- OpenGL ES™ in a browser
- JavaScript API bindings
- Supported in *nearly* all modern browsers
- Supported on many devices
- Shipped since early 2011

...and it's Awesome.



# WebGL - A Technical Definition

*WebGL is a royalty-free, cross-platform API that brings OpenGL ES 2.0 to the web as a 3D drawing context within HTML, exposed as low-level Document Object Model interfaces. It uses the OpenGL shading language, GLSL ES, and can be cleanly combined with other web content that is layered on top or underneath the 3D content. It is ideally suited for dynamic 3D web applications in the JavaScript programming language, and will be fully integrated in leading web browsers.*

<http://www.khronos.org/webgl/>



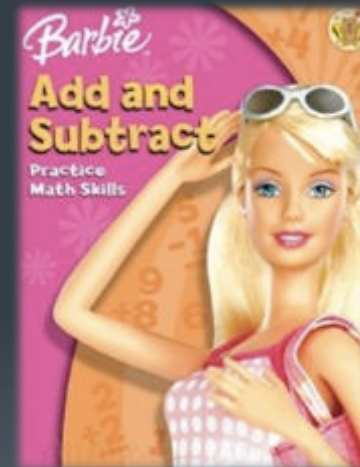


# Deconstructing WebGL

- WebGL is an API
  - No file format, no DOM
  - Uses new kind of Canvas element drawing context
- WebGL is based on OpenGL ES 2.0
  - It's what's in your phone
- WebGL combines with other web content
  - Integrates seamlessly with other stuff on the page
- WebGL is built for dynamic web applications
  - Runtime is the web browser, resources are URLs
- WebGL is cross-platform
- WebGL is royalty-free

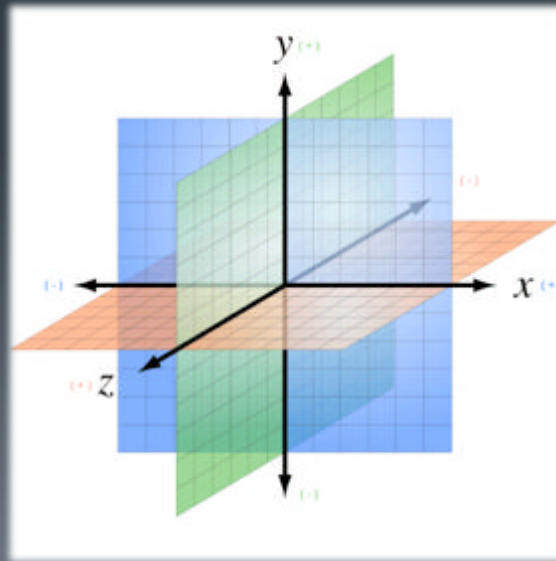
# 3D Graphics in Four Pages: A Primer

*"Math is hard... I like shopping!"*  
-- Barbie



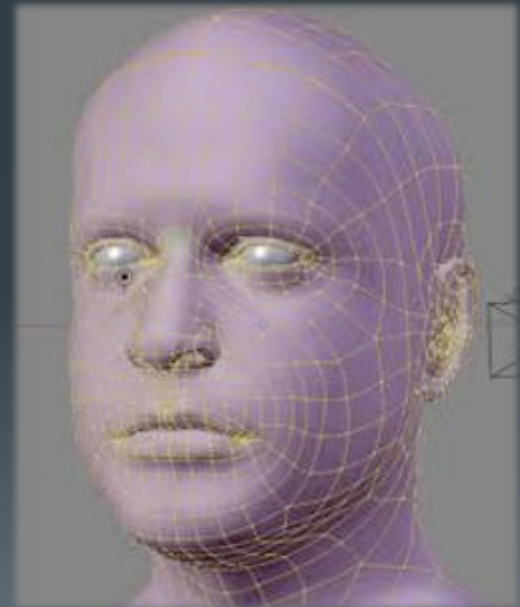
# 3D Coordinate Systems

- Similar to (2D) Canvas coordinate system
- Adds  $z$  coordinate (not same as CSS z-ordering)



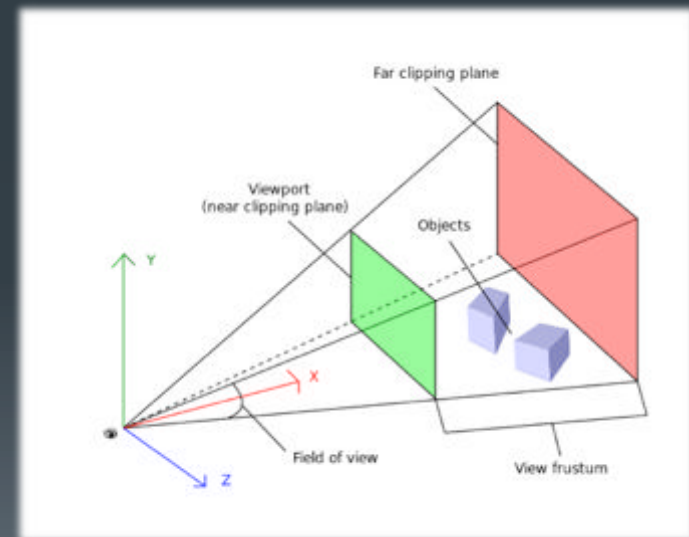
# Representing Visuals

- **Meshes** - 3D shapes composed of **polygons** (three or more **vertices**); the most common type of rendered 3D object
- **Materials** - define surface properties (color, shininess, transparency, shading)
- **Texture Maps** - bitmaps applied to an object's surface
- **Lights** - illuminate scenes and shade objects



# Transforms, Matrices, Cameras and Viewports

- Before drawing, objects can be *transformed* (moved) in x, y, z
- Transforms *compose* – are inherited from ancestors
- Transforms are implemented using *matrices*
- 3D information is *projected* onto a 2D *viewport*
- The *camera* defines projection
- Projections also use matrices



# Shaders

- Programs written in a high-level C-like language (GLSL ES)
- Originally developed to implement highly realistic effects
- **Required** for WebGL development





# The WebGL API



# The Anatomy of a WebGL Application

- Create a Canvas element
- Obtain a drawing context
- Initialize the viewport
- Create one or more buffers
- Create one or more matrices
- Create one or more shaders
- Initialize the shaders
- Draw one or more primitives

Code

[Chapter 1/Example 1-1.html](#)





# The Bottom Line

- A lot of work – very low-level API
- Amazing power - you can do almost anything down to the hardware
- Frameworks, toolkits, libraries will be a big help



## 2. Your First WebGL Program



# Three.js – A JavaScript 3D Engine

- Represents WebGL at a high level using standard 3D graphics concepts
- Feature Rich – math, graphics, animation, interaction, file loaders
- Object-oriented
- Renders to 3D WebGL or 2D standard Canvas
- Fast, robust, well-maintained
- Chock full of examples
- Not a game engine
- Not an application framework

<https://github.com/mrdoob/three.js/>



# The Square, Revisited

Here's That  
Square Again.

Code

*Chapter 2/Example 2-1.html*

# A Real Example





# Using a Light to Shade the Scene

```
// Create a directional light to show off the object
var light = new
    THREE.DirectionalLight( 0xffffffff, 1.5);
light.position.set(0, 0, 1);
scene.add( light );
```



# Creating a Shaded, Texture-Mapped Cube

```
// Create a shaded, texture-mapped cube and add it to the scene
// First, create the texture map
var mapUrl = "../images/molumen_small_funny_angry_monster.jpg";
var map = THREE.ImageUtils.loadTexture(mapUrl);

// Now, create a Phong material to show shading; pass in the map
var material = new THREE.MeshPhongMaterial({ map: map });

// Create the cube geometry
var geometry = new THREE.CubeGeometry(1, 1, 1);

// And put the geometry and material together into a mesh
cube = new THREE.Mesh(geometry, material);
```



# Rotating the Object

```
// Turn it toward the scene, or we won't see the cube shape!  
cube.rotation.x = Math.PI / 5;  
cube.rotation.y = Math.PI / 5;
```





# The Run Loop and `requestAnimationFrame()`

```
function run()  
{  
    // Render the scene  
    renderer.render( scene, camera );  
  
    // Spin the cube for next frame  
    if (animating)  
    {  
        cube.rotation.y -= 0.01;  
    }  
  
    // Ask for another frame  
    requestAnimationFrame(run);  
}
```



# Handling the Mouse

```
function addMouseHandler()  
{  
    var dom = renderer.domElement;  
  
    dom.addEventListener( 'mouseup', onMouseUp,  
false);  
}  
  
function onMouseUp    (event)  
{  
    event.preventDefault();  
  
    animating = !animating;  
}
```



# Review

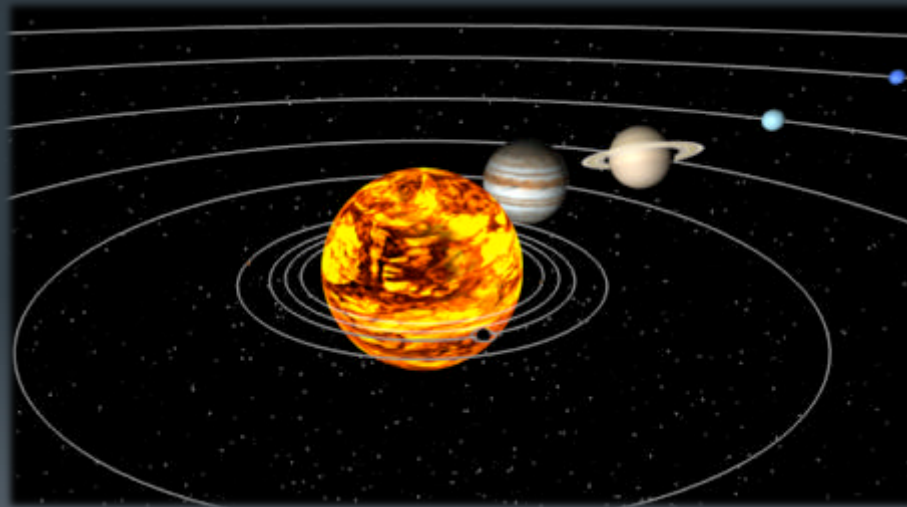
- Three.js gets us going in 40 lines instead of 200
- Create an HTML page, easily add 3D content
- Pretty it up with textures and shading
- Bring it to life with animation
- Make it interactive with DOM mouse handler

***We're Up and Running!***



# 3. Graphics

# Let's Build a Solar System



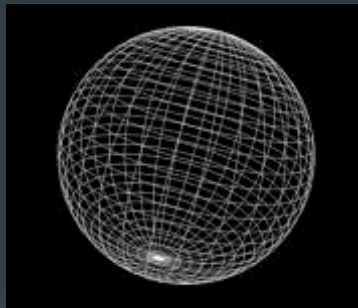


# Sim.js – A Simple Simulation Framework for WebGL/Three.js

- Wraps common Three.js setup and teardown
- Implements the run loop
- Sets up handlers for mouse and keyboard DOM Events
- Provides foundation objects (Application, Base Object and PubSub)
- Handles browser detection and context lost events
- Coming soon to Github

<https://github.com/tparisi/Sim.js>

# Creating Meshes



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Code

*Chapter 3/graphics-earth-basic.html*

# Using Materials, Textures, Lights and Shaders

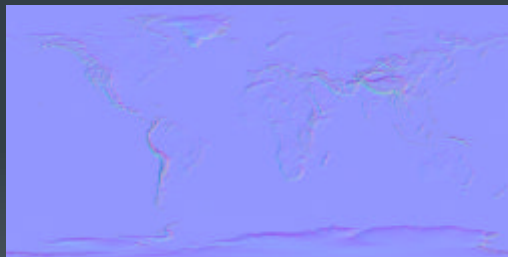


Code  
*Chapter 3/graphics-earth-shader.html*



# The Texture Maps

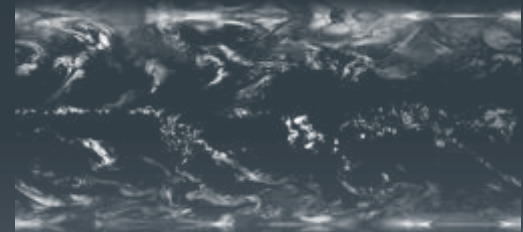
Normal Map (Elevation)



Specular Map (Highlights)



Cloud Layer (Transparency)



Code

*Chapter 3/graphics-earth-shader.html*

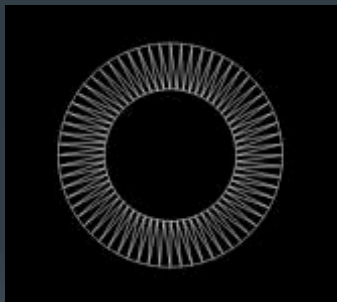
# Building a Transform Hierarchy



Code

*Chapter 3/graphics-earth-moon.html*

# Creating Custom Geometry



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# Rendering Points and Lines

- Points and lines are API drawing primitives in WebGL
- Three.js has built-in point and line support
  - `THREE.ParticleSystem,`  
`THREE.ParticleBasicMaterial`
  - `THREE.Line,` `THREE.LineBasicMaterial`



# Writing a Shader

- Put GLSL ES source in a script element, JavaScript string variable or external text file
- Use Three.js `ShaderMaterial` object for your material
- Update `uniform` parameter values during run loop



# The Vertex Shader

```
<script id="vertexShader" type="x-shader/x-vertex">

    varying vec2 texCoord;

    void main()
    {
        texCoord = uv;
        vec4 mvPosition = modelViewMatrix * vec4( position, 1.0 );
        gl_Position = projectionMatrix * mvPosition;
    }

</script>
```

# The Fragment Shader



```
<script id="fragmentShader" type="x-shader/x-fragment">

    uniform float time;

    uniform sampler2D texture1;
    uniform sampler2D texture2;

    varying vec2 texCoord;

    void main( void ) {
        vec4 noise = texture2D( texture1, texCoord );

        vec2 T1 = texCoord + vec2( 1.5, -1.5 ) * time * 0.01;
        vec2 T2 = texCoord + vec2( -0.5, 2.0 ) * time * 0.01;

        T1.x -= noise.r * 2.0;
        T1.y += noise.g * 4.0;
        T2.x += noise.g * 0.2;
        T2.y += noise.b * 0.2;

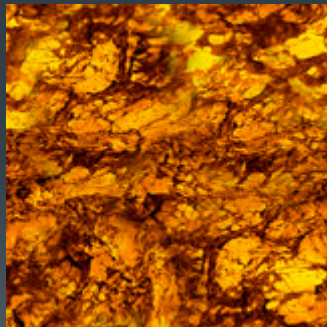
        float p = texture2D( texture1, T1 * 2.0 ).a + 0.25;

        vec4 color = texture2D( texture2, T2 );
        vec4 temp = color * 2.0 * ( vec4( p, p, p, p ) ) + ( color * color );
        gl_FragColor = temp;
    }

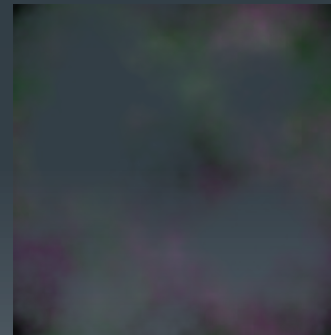
</script>
```

# Texture Maps for the Shader

Color Map

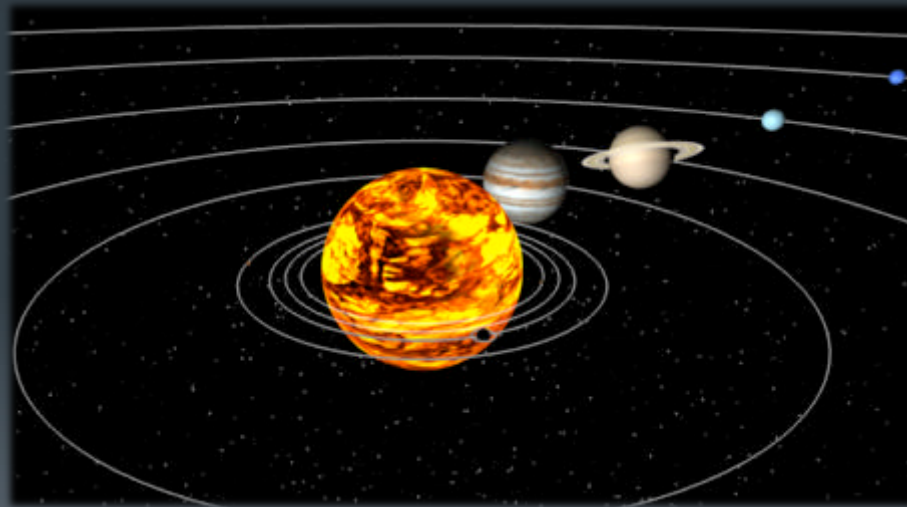


Noise/Alpha Map





# Another Look





# Review

- Creating meshes
- Shading, materials, textures and lights
- Building a transform hierarchy
- Creating custom geometry
- Rendering points and lines
- Writing a shader

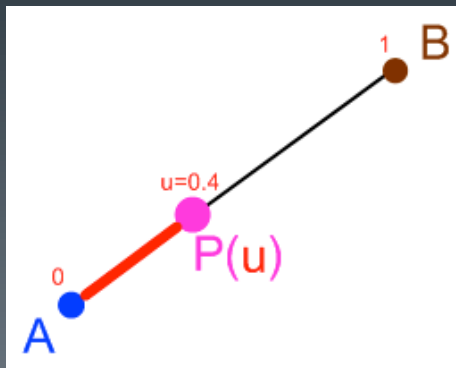


## 4. Animation

# Animation Basics

- Frame-based vs. Time-based
- Interpolation and Tweening
- Key Frames
- Articulated Animation

Interpolation



Sample Key Frame Data

```
var keys = [0, 0.25, 1];  
var values = [new THREE.Vector3(0, 0, 0),  
              new THREE.Vector3(0, 1, 0),  
              new THREE.Vector3(0, 2, 5)];
```



# Creating a Tween

```
MovingBall.prototype.animate = function()
{
    var newpos;
    if (this.object3D.position.x > 0)
    {
        newpos = this.object3D.position.x - 6.667;
    }
    else
    {
        newpos = this.object3D.position.x + 6.667;
    }

    new TWEEN.Tween(this.object3D.position)
    .to( {
        x: newpos
    }, 2000).start();
}
```

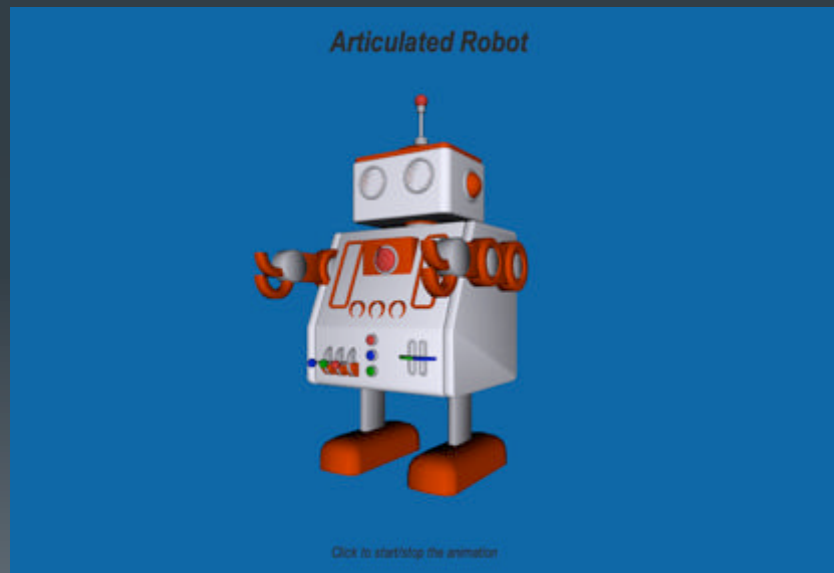
# Tweens with Easing



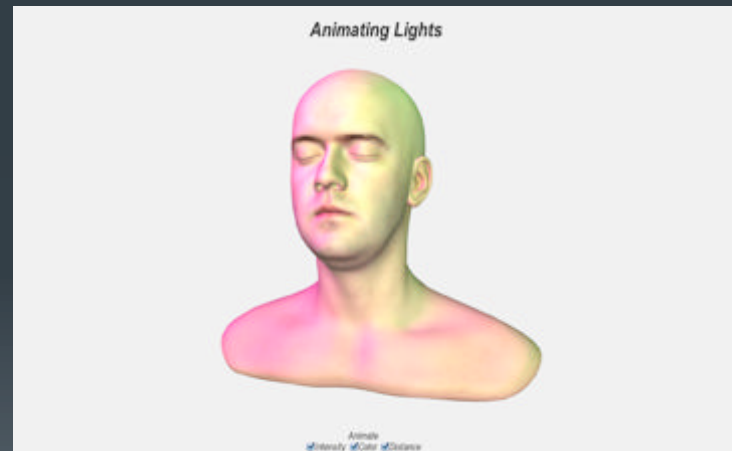
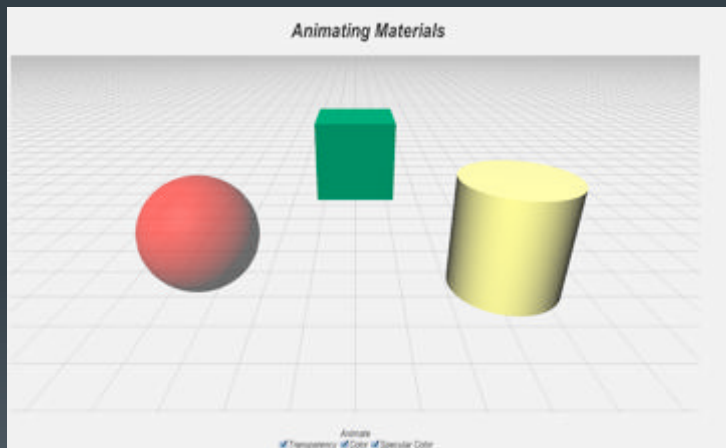
```
MovingBall.prototype.animate = function()
{
    var newpos, easefn;
    if (this.object3D.position.y > 0)
    {
        newpos = this.object3D.position.y - 6.667;
        easefn = MovingBall.useBounceFunction ?
            TWEEN.Easing.Bounce.EaseOut :
            TWEEN.Easing.Quadratic.EaseOut;
    }
    else
    {
        newpos = this.object3D.position.y + 6.667;
        easefn = MovingBall.useBounceFunction ?
            TWEEN.Easing.Bounce.EaseIn :
            TWEEN.Easing.Quadratic.EaseIn;
    }

    new TWEEN.Tween(this.object3D.position)
        .to( {
            y: newpos
        }, 2000)
        .easing(easefn).start();
}
```

# Animating an Articulated Model with Key Frames



# Animating Materials and Lights

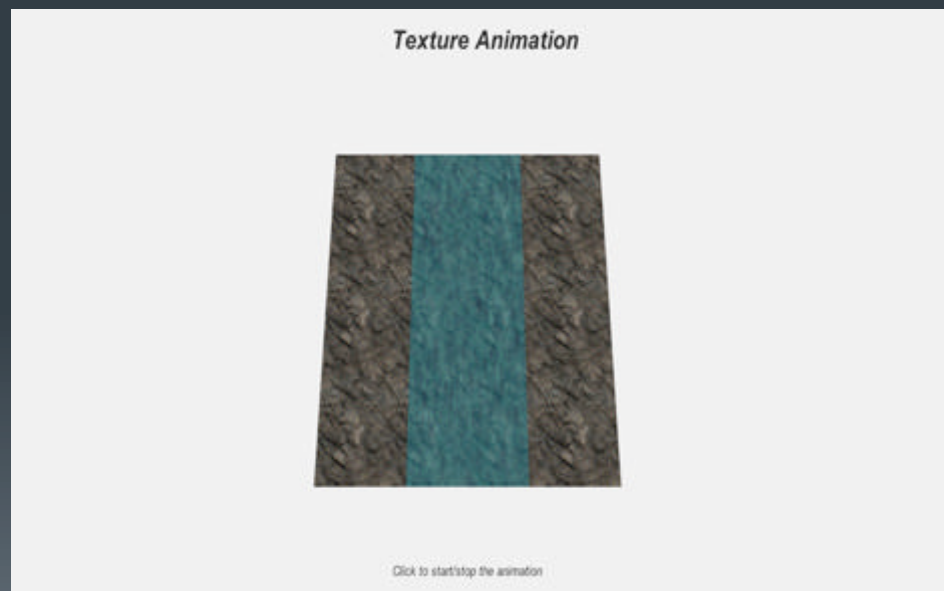


Code

Chapter 4/keyframe-material.html,  
Chapter 4/keyframe-lights.html



# Animating Textures





# Review

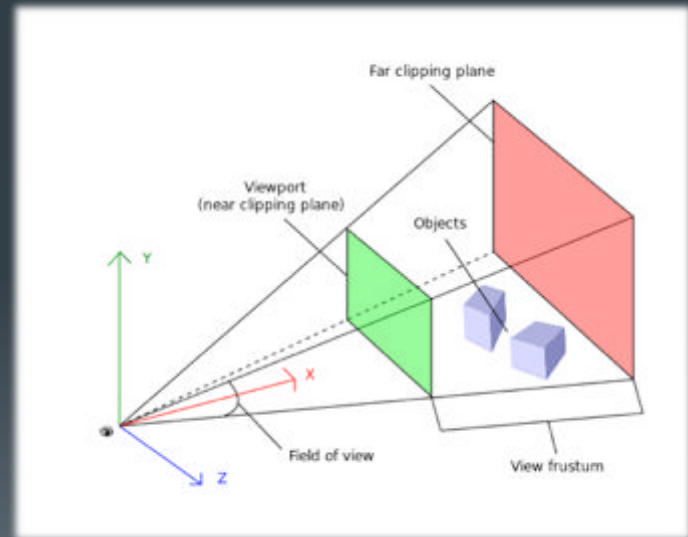
- Basic animation concepts
- Creating tweens
- Animating an articulated model with key frames
- Animating materials and lights
- Animating textures



## 5. Interaction

# Hit Detection, Picking and Projection

- WebGL has no built-in hit detection
- Three.js has hit detection helper – it does the inverse of 3D->2D projection to find object under the mouse





# Implementing Rollovers

```
Control.prototype.handleMouseOver = function(x, y)
{
    this.mesh.scale.set(1.05, 1.05, 1.05);
    this.mesh.material.ambient.setRGB(.777, .777, .777);
}
```

```
Control.prototype.handleMouseOut = function(x, y)
{
    this.mesh.scale.set(1, 1, 1);
    this.mesh.material.ambient.setRGB(.667, .667, .
667);
}
```

# Implementing Clicks



```
Control.prototype.handleClickDown = function(x, y, hitPoint)
{
    if (!this.selected)
    {
        this.select();
    }
    else
    {
        this.deselect();
    }
}

Control.prototype.select = function()
{
    if (!this.savedposition)
    {
        this.savedposition = this.mesh.position.clone();
    }

    new TWEEN.Tween(this.mesh.position)
    .to({
        x : 0,
        y : 0,
        z : 2
    }, 500).start();

    this.selected = true;
    this.publish("selected", this, true);
}
```



# Implementing Dragging

- PlaneDragger class
  - Uses `THREE.Projector` to find hit point in scene
  - Pick against invisible plane geometry
- Use Tween with drag to make UI feel more natural and intuitive

# Camera-Based Interaction

## Trackball Camera for Model Viewing



## First-Person Camera for Scene Navigation



Code

*Chapter 5/interaction-camera-model.html,  
Chapter 5/interaction-camera-navigation.html*

<http://www.tonyparisi.com/>

May 23, 2012  
WebGL Up and Running





# Review

- Hit detection, picking and projection
- Implementing rollovers and clicks
- Implementing dragging
- Camera-based interaction



## 6. Integrating 2D and 3D



# WebGL's Secret Weapon

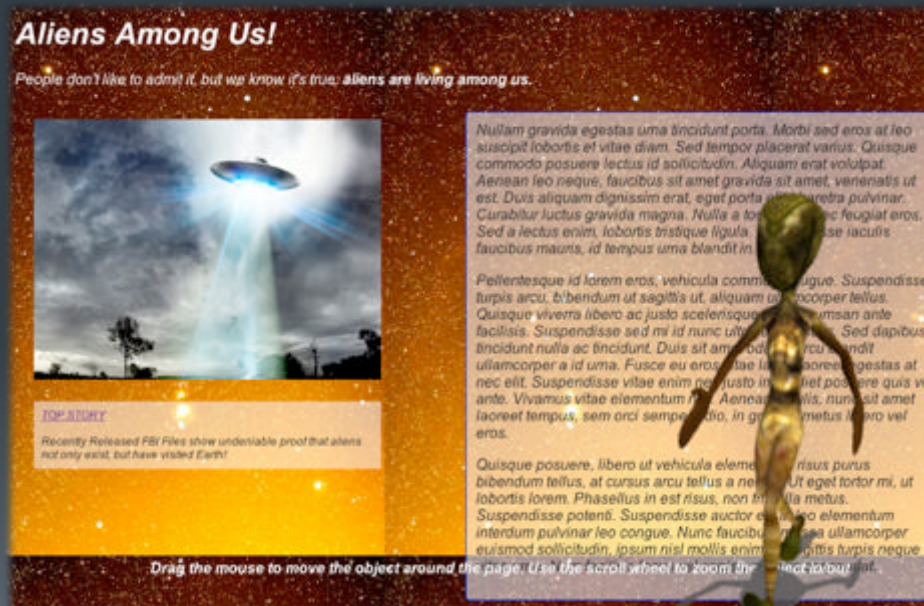
*WebGL is a royalty-free, cross-platform API that brings OpenGL ES 2.0 to the web as a 3D drawing context within HTML, exposed as low-level Document Object Model interfaces. It uses the OpenGL shading language, GLSL ES, **and can be cleanly combined with other web content that is layered on top or underneath the 3D content.** It is ideally suited for dynamic 3D web applications in the JavaScript programming language, and will be fully integrated in leading web browsers.*

- ✓ Breaks down window boundaries
- ✓ 2D overlaid on 3D
- ✓ 3D overlaid on 2D
- ✓ Canvas2D as a texture
- ✓ Video as a texture
- ✓ The ultimate mashup technology

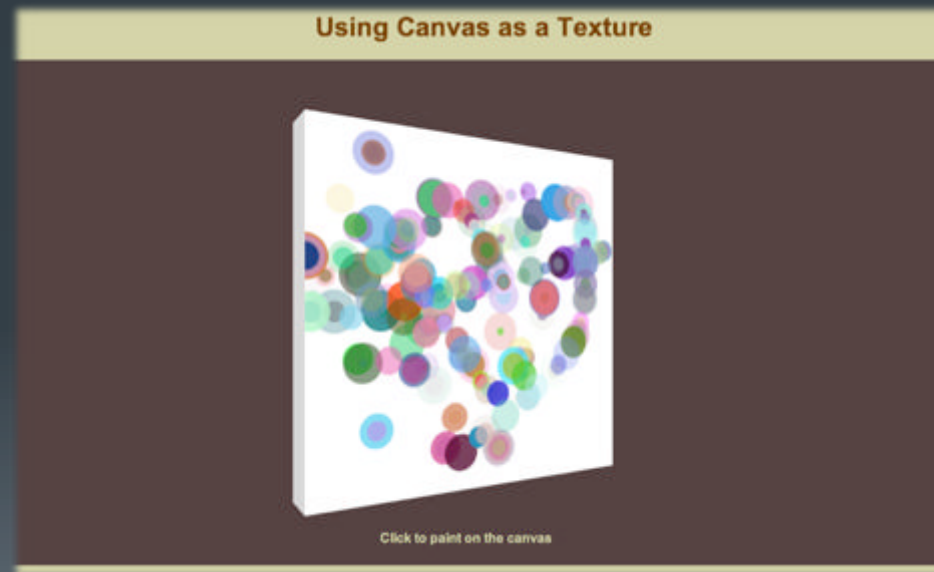
# Combining Dynamic HTML and WebGL



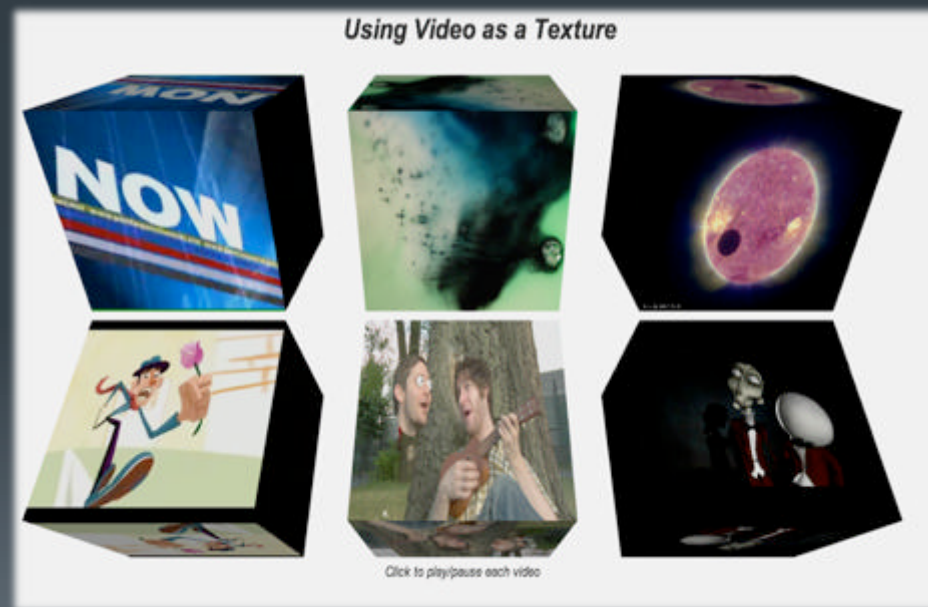
# Overlaying 3D Visuals on 2D Pages



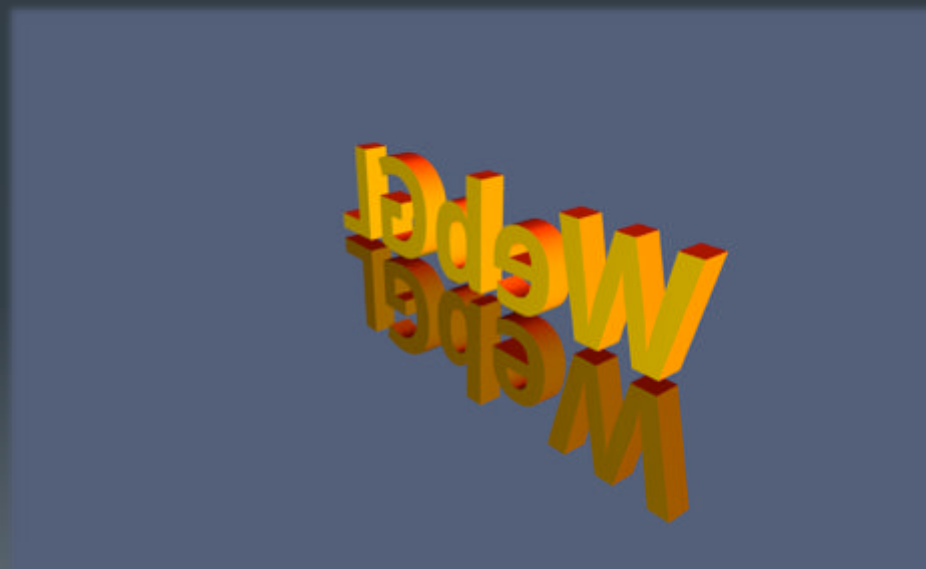
# Creating Dynamic Textures with Canvas 2D



# Using Video as a Texture

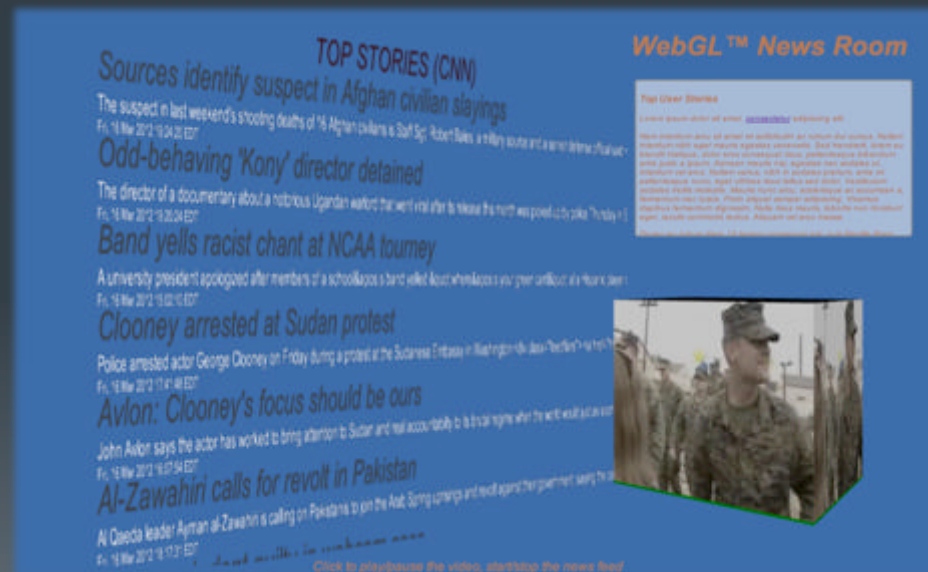


# Rendering Dynamically Generated 3D Text





# WebGL for Ultimate Mashups





# Review

- Combining Dynamic HTML and WebGL
- Overlaying 3D visuals on 2D Pages
- Creating dynamic textures with Canvas 2D
- Using video as a texture
- Rendering dynamically generated 3D text
- WebGL for ultimate mashups

*The tyranny of the rectangle is officially over.  
Multimedia developers of the world, unite!  
You have nothing to lose... but window borders!*



## 7. WebGL in Production



# Choosing a Framework

- Open Source rendering engines/frameworks
  - Three.js
  - CubicVR
  - SceneGL
  - GLGE
- Emerging game engines
  - Gladius
  - KickJS
  - Skybox
- Roll your own?

# Loading 3D Content

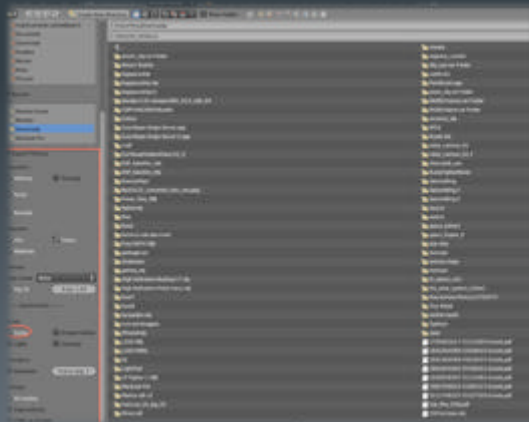
- WebGL has no built-in file format
- Three.js loads several types
  - COLLADA
  - Three.js JSON format
  - Three.js binary format
  - Three.js JSON scene format



# Creating 3D Content

- Exporting art from blender
- Converting Wavefront OBJ to Three.js
- Other file format converters

```
python <path-to-three.js>/utils/  
exporters/convert_obj_three.py -i  
alien2.obj -o alien2.js
```





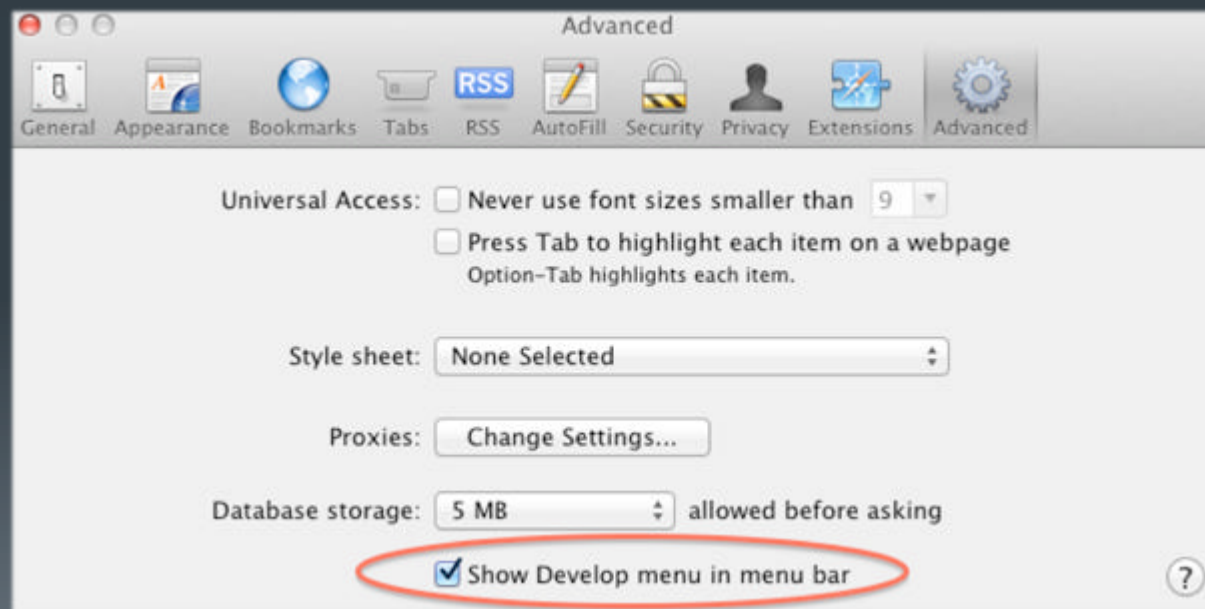
# Browser Realities

- The elephant in the room: Not supported in IE
- Detecting WebGL support in your browser

```
var canvas = document.createElement("canvas");

var gl = null;
var msg = "Your browser does not support WebGL.";
try
{
    gl = canvas.getContext("experimental-webgl");
}
catch (e)
{
    msg = "Error creating WebGL Context!: " + e.toString();
}
if (!gl)
{
    throw new Error(msg);
}
```

# Turning WebGL on in Safari







# Handling Context Lost Events

```
ContextApp.prototype.handleContextLost = function(e)
{
    this.restart();
}

ContextApp.prototype.addContextListener = function()
{
    var that = this;

    this.renderer.domElement.addEventListener("webglcontextlost",
        function(e) {
            that.handleContextLost(e);
        },
        false);
}
```



# WebGL and Security

- Security holes in early implementations – now fixed
- Khronos, WebGL implementers and hardware manufacturers have done extensive security work
- Loading cross-origin resources
  - Use a server-side proxy
  - Use JSONP (not supported by all services)
  - Server that supports CORS headers (still new, support not widespread)



# Review

- Choosing a framework
- Loading 3D content
- Creating 3D content
- Browser realities
- Handling context lost events
- WebGL and security



## 8. Your First WebGL Game

# Let's Build a Racing Game

## Review Topics

- Graphics
- Models
- Animation
- 2D/3D integration
- Building a robust application

## New Topics

- Creating a particle effect
- Keyboard input
- Sound



# Camera, Character and Control

The “Gray Box” Prototype



# Keyboard Controls

- Keyboard handling is DOM-based, like any Web app
- Sim.App defines key codes (see <http://www.javascripter.net/faq/keycodes.htm> )

```
/* key codes
37: left
38: up
39: right
40: down
*/
Sim.KeyCodes = {};
Sim.KeyCodes.KEY_LEFT  = 37;
Sim.KeyCodes.KEY_UP    = 38;
Sim.KeyCodes.KEY_RIGHT = 39;
Sim.KeyCodes.KEY_DOWN  = 40;
```

- Game object defines `onKeyUp( )`, `onKeyDown( )`, passes it to Player object



# Updating the Camera

```
Player.prototype.updateCamera = function()
{
    var camerapos = new THREE.Vector3(Player.CAMERA_OFFSET_X,
    Player.CAMERA_OFFSET_Y, Player.CAMERA_OFFSET_Z);
    camerapos.addSelf(this.object3D.position);
    this.camera.position.copy(camerapos);
    this.camera.lookAt(this.object3D.position);

    // Rotate particle system to view-aligned to avoid nasty alpha sorting artifacts
    if (this.exhaust1)
    {
        this.exhaust1.object3D.rotation.x = this.camera.rotation.x;
    }

    if (this.exhaust2)
    {
        this.exhaust2.object3D.rotation.x = this.camera.rotation.x;
    }
}
```



# Key Frame Animations

```
Car.crashPositionKeys = [0, .25, .75, 1];
Car.crashPositionValues = [ { x : -1, y: 0, z : 0},
                             { x: 0, y: 1, z: -1},
                             { x: 1, y: 0, z: -5},
                             { x : -1, y: 0, z : -2}
                           ];
Car.crashRotationKeys = [0, .25, .5, .75, 1];
Car.crashRotationValues = [ { z: 0, y: 0 },
                             { z: Math.PI, y: 0},
                             { z: Math.PI * 2, y: 0},
                             { z: Math.PI * 2, y: Math.PI},
                             { z: Math.PI * 2, y: Math.PI * 2},
                           ];

Car.crash_animation_time = 2000;
```



# Texture Animations

```
Environment.prototype.update = function()
{
    if (this.textureSky)
    {
        this.sky.material.map.offset.x += 0.00005;
    }

    if (this.app.running)
    {
        var now = Date.now();
        var deltat = now - this.curTime;
        this.curTime = now;

        dist = -deltat / 1000 * this.app.player.speed;
        this.road.material.map.offset.y += (dist * Environment.ANIMATE_ROAD_FACTOR);
    }

    Sim.Object.prototype.update.call(this);
}
```

# Collision Detection



```
RacingGame.prototype.testCollision = function()
{
    var playerpos = this.player.object3D.position;

    if (playerpos.x > (Environment.ROAD_WIDTH / 2 - (Car.CAR_WIDTH/2)))
    {
        this.player.bounce();
        this.player.object3D.position.x -= 1;
    }

    if (playerpos.x < -(Environment.ROAD_WIDTH / 2 - (Car.CAR_WIDTH/2)))
    {
        this.player.bounce();
        this.player.object3D.position.x += 1;
    }

    var i, len = this.cars.length;
    for (i = 0; i < len; i++)
    {
        var carpos = this.cars[i].object3D.position;
        var dist = playerpos.distanceTo(carpos);
        if (dist < RacingGame.COLLIDE_RADIUS)
        {
            this.crash(this.cars[i]);
            break;
        }
    }
}
```

# Art Direction

## The Art Direction Study





# The Heads-Up Display

- WebGL's 2D/3D integration in action
- Open source speedometer widget by Marcello Barnaba
  - Fully configurable
  - All HTML5, CSS, JavaScript!
  - <https://github.com/vjt/canvas-speedometer>

# The Model Previewer

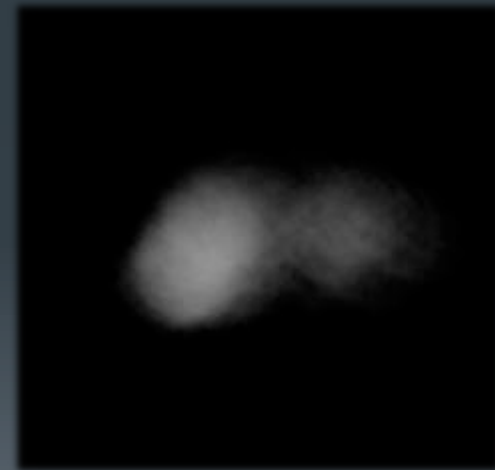
- Models from Turbosquid
- Previewer to get sizes, inspect normals, get model stats
- Overall, Tools and Exporters Still Primitive



# Building a Particle System

The Particle System Lab

- Three.js has a basic built-in particle system
- But It's very basic: No emitters or physics models
- You have to animate it all yourself



# Adding Sound

- Use new `<audio>` Element
- Fairly well supported in browsers
- Other APIs (Moz, Chrome) not supported uniformly

## The Sound Lab







# Making It Robust

- Detecting WebGL support in the browser

```
var canvas = document.createElement("canvas");

var gl = null;
var msg = "Your browser does not support WebGL.";
try
{
    gl = canvas.getContext("experimental-webgl");
}
catch (e)
{
    msg = "Error creating WebGL Context!: " + e.toString();
}
if (!gl)
{
    throw new Error(msg);
}
```



# Making It Robust

- Detecting a lost context

```
RacingGame.prototype.handleContextLost = function(e)
{
    this.restart();
}

RacingGame.prototype.addContextListener = function()
{
    var that = this;

    this.renderer.domElement.addEventListener("webglcontextlost",
        function(e) {
            that.handleContextLost(e);
        },
        false);
}
```

# Putting It All Together





# The Bottom Line

- WebGL Is really solid
  - OpenGL ES under the hood (It's what's running on your phone and tablet)
  - Huge development, testing and conformance effort by browser writers
  - Strong standards group maintaining it ([www.khronos.org](http://www.khronos.org))
- A few enhancements will help
  - Transferables, Built-in Matrices
- Production capability is still very crude
  - Tools and frameworks are young and evolving
  - Export from pro tools lacking
- **The real issues facing game developers**
  - JavaScript runtime (e.g. garbage collection)
  - Device input
  - Audio and video API chaos
  - Formats and delivery - streaming, compression, binary



# Where To Go From Here

- WebGL development – not easy; but not rocket science
- Small feature set with huge capabilities
  - This talk is the tip of a deep iceberg
- WebGL has moved from the infant to the toddler stage
  - The standard is well thought out and well vetted
  - Implementations are fast, robust and work identically across browsers
  - Tools are still rough
- Three.js is one of many frameworks
  - Look around, or build your own
- The possibilities are limitless!



# Resources

- WebGL Specification
  - <http://www.khronos.org/webgl/>
- Learning Sites
  - <http://learningwebgl.com/blog/>
  - <http://learningthreejs.com/>
- News and Info
  - <http://www.reddit.com/r/threejs>
  - <http://www.webgl.com/>
- Engines
  - <https://github.com/mrdoob/three.js/>
  - <http://www.glge.org/>
  - <http://www.scenejs.org/>
  - <http://www.cubicvr.org/>
- Demos
  - <http://www.chromeexperiments.com/webgl>
  - <https://developer.mozilla.org/en-US/demos/tag/tech:webgl/>
  - <http://chrysaora.com/>
- Tools
  - <http://www.ambiera.com/copperlicht/index.html>
  - <http://www.sunglass.io/>

# Thanks!

## The Code

<https://github.com/tparisi/WebGLBook/>

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## Get the book!

eBook/Early Release: May 22, 2012

Print version: July 2012

<http://shop.oreilly.com/product/0636920024729.do>

Discount Code: WEBGLPRE

