StormCat User's Guide

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# Introduction

## What is StormCat?

**StormCat** is a little tool for:

1. Creating and managing multiple independent catalogues of Moviestorm addons, either installed or present as addon files.   
   Catalogues can be searched for specific assets according to a series of criteria.  
   Further, asset lists created as the output of a search can be exported as Microsoft Excel 2007 workbooks.
2. Checking the validity and, optionally, listing the contents and details of your valid Moviestorm addons and content packages, either installed or present as files.
3. Checking the version of the Sketchup files to be imported in Moviestorm with the Modder's Workshop
4. Optionally restoring Moviestorm addon files disguised as archive files

**StormCat** is the natural successor to **MSAddonChecker**, a previous application conceived essentially for checking purposes (entries 2 to 4 in the previous list). While **StormCat** completely preserves (and eventually fixes some problems still present in the last version of **MSAddonChecker**) the functionalities of its predecessor, its main focus is on cataloguing the Moviestorm addons in your collection.

Although many of the repositories of free addons for Moviestorm have gone down over the last few years, there are still a few of them out there with a good deal of nice stuff available for downloading.

So if you happen to be a veteran Stormer (or an avid addon collector) you've probably managed to gather a few hundreds of addons for your collection. Most probably, you've used only a fraction of them along your lifetime as a Stormer and even most probably you can't say whether a specific asset you need for the project you're working right now is already readily available somewhere in your addon collection. Here is where **StormCat** comes in help, providing you with a handy tool for cataloguing all the addons and the individual assets in your collection.

## StormCat Terminology

In this section, a few terms used throughout this guide will be introduced and defined.

* A ***Moviestorm Addon*** (or simply, ***Addon***) is a set of assets recognized by **Moviestorm** so they can be used by the application during the production of movies. In a ===> section, those assets will be described more thoroughly.  
  Sometimes the term ***Content Package*** will be used. From every point of view they are undistinguishable from common addons, but I reserve this term for the official addons created by *ShortFuze/Moviestorm*.  
  Addons can be present in two "states":
  + As addon package files: they are files with a file name followed by an extension .addon. This is the usual format addons are distributed. However, they need to be installed, either manually or by using the option in the **Moviestorm** application to this purpose.  
    From a technical point of view addon files are simply .zip archives with their extension changed.  
    NOTE: addon files for every official content package acquired by the user are stored inside the folder {Moviestorm\_Installation\_Folder}\download , that is, for a typical installation of Moviestorm on a Windows 64-bit, the folder at C:\Program Files (x86)\Moviestorm\download
  + As installed addons: they appear as folders inside one of the two addon installation folders, ie:  
    Official content packs: {Moviestorm\_Installation\_Folder}\Addons (for a typical installation of Moviestorm on a Windows 64-bit, the folder at C:\Program Files (x86)\Moviestorm\Addons)  
    User/Third-party addons: {Moviestorm\_User\_Data\_Folder}\Addons (for a typical installation of Moviestorm on a Windows 64-bit, the folder at C:\Users\[*Your\_Username*]\Moviestorm\Addons)
* An ***Addon Catalogue*** (or simply, ***Catalogue***) is a collection of addons created with **StormCat**, including information about every addon:
  + General information about the addon, such as name, publisher, datatime of last compilation, size of the mesh, statistics about the assets
  + Detailed information about every asset inside the addon, such as name, type and subtype, tags, etc.

Catalogues are locally stored as files with a extension .scat and located in the same folder than the application executable.

It's advisable to create a number of different catalogues for different purposes. For example, you may create a catalogue for gathering all the information about the currently installed addons, and another one for every available addon in your collection.

* The ***Catalogue Index*** is a special file automatically created and managed by **StormCat** with very minimalistic information (its name and description) about every Catalogue created by the user and currently existing, plus about the name of the current Catalogue loaded by default. The Catalogue Index is stored as a file named CataloguesIndex.xml in the same folder that the application executable.

## Moviestorm Stuff

A wide range of different types of assets can be found inside Moviestorm addons, which can be used for producing our movies.

In this section will describe every kind of Moviestorm asset and what relevant information is associated to each one of them.

### Moviestorm Puppets

Puppets are the actors in our Movistorm movies. Currently, there are only two official puppet models available:

* **Female01** - which is the base on which every female actual actor is modeled on
* **Male01** - the base for male actors

Every Puppet model is defined essentially by its own specific Puppet Skeleton, made up from a number of bones and which allows a puppet to be animated.

Puppets are complex entities, for they are made from a few types of assets we'll see later, which are associated to a specific model of puppet in such a way that there's not a straightforward way to use an asset specifically created for a puppet model with another different model.

Also, animations other that pure solo prop animations are associated as well to a specific model of puppet, so each and every puppet model comes with its own set of animations, which can be easily used with another model (for their skeletons are different).

### Types of Assets

So let's see what are the different types of assets a movie is made from in Moviestorm:

**1. Body Parts**

Body Parts are the main component our actual actors are made of.

There are a few subtypes of Body Parts:

* + **Heads**: they're are... well the heads of our actual actors
  + **Bodies**: the made
  + **Hair**:
  + **Accessories**: everything else the actors can wear. An actor can be applied an undefined number of Accessories. Too bad, Accessories can be made neither morphable nor animated.

A few considerations to take into account in relation to Body Parts:

1. Every puppet model comes with its own set of body parts, which are rigged (bound) to the bones of the model's skeleton, so there's not an easy way to use a body part: trying to do so would require a very involved and time-consuming process of re-rigging the mesh of the body part to the skeleton of the destination puppet model (only Accessories use to be easily copied to another puppet model, for they usually are bound to a very low number of bones, mostly just one).
2. Most of subtypes of Body Parts, with the only exception of Accessories can be made morphable, that is, their dimensions and positions can be adjusted inside some limits defined by the creator of the part.

**2. Decals**

**3. Animations (and Verbs)**

**4. Materials**

* Decals:
* Animations:

Props

...

Other (not part of addons):

Set: Walls, Ceiling, Terrain, general Lightning

No set: cameras.

Puppets, Props and Everything Else

Types of Assets

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