GODRAYS Expanded: Celestial Bodies

By Sickleyield and Marshian

Users Manual

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Introduction

Thank you for purchasing Godrays Expanded: Celestial Bodies by SickleYield and Marshian! This product is intended to provide an easy solution for adding the visible crepuscular rays that are created by light shining through dust and particles. This set of lights and props is very easy to use, renders quickly, and has no issues with layered transparency in any lighting.

This set adds unique additional functionality with a sun and rays that you can turn in any direction with a camera, plus many planets, moons and colored rays to use with the base setup. The rays do not penetrate objects and characters for additional realism in your scenes.

To add to the celestial possibilities, there are star and cloud spheres with presets to create different kinds of skies. These are suitable for outer space scenes, but their very best use is earthbound, for creating skies above your characters. To that end, there are both realistic terrestrial and fantastical alien skies and planets included. They load as smartprops of the sun and rays, so you can move them with the camera as well.

This guide exists to help you find and use all of the features of the product, including some that you might not notice at first. As such, it is recommended that you read all of it before rendering. The product was developed for use in DAZ Studio 4.6 and up, and the instructions are current to that version's menus.

1. Finding the Product

Expanded Godrays for DAZ Studio contains the following items (found in Light Presets/MASY):

Folder: Expanded Godrays:

- Divine Light combined prop/light preset
  - Ambient light
  - Raytraced spotlight
  - Rays prop
  - Camera for posing the array
  -

Folder: Materials:

- Folder: Star sphere (8 sky materials in .duf format)
- Folder: Cloud sphere (6 Cloud materials in .duf format)
- Folder: Rays (28 Sun/planet/ray materials in .duf format)

2: Using the Smartpropped Environment set:

Click: "Load First then select" icon. This will load the default sun, rays, spotlight and camera.

Then select the camera

Click "Load Second" this will parent or lock the default starphere to the lightray/camera rig.

Click "Load Third" this will parent the default cloudsphere to the rig.

This set will be added to any lights already in your scene without deleting them, although the rays work best when used with the preload spot/ambient light or extremely dim ambient lights.

If you've loaded the full set look through the camera "ScaleFromHere". Do you see the light? It's awesome right?

Go to another camera or perspective view and back up until you see the rays and sun. All scaling and transitions should be done either looking through the camera or by going out side it, selecting it and dragging it around.

Unless you were very lucky you'll probably want to scale and position the camera from the outside (perspective view) and then fine tune it by looking through.

Looking through the camera, you'll get a sense of where the rays will be. If any of them are passing through and object they will not be seen in a render. This is the beauty of it as the rays interact with your props and models. You'll need to orbit, pan and/or scale the camera until the rays can pass through openings. It might be helpful to transition the array from outside the camera. In the image above the rays hitting the two center columns will show in a render.

Looking through the spotlight can show you where the rays will pass through and collide:
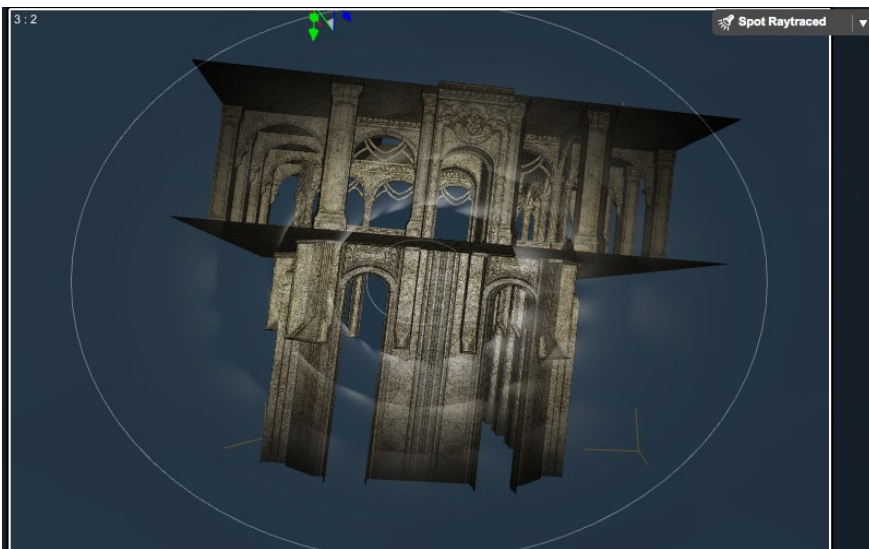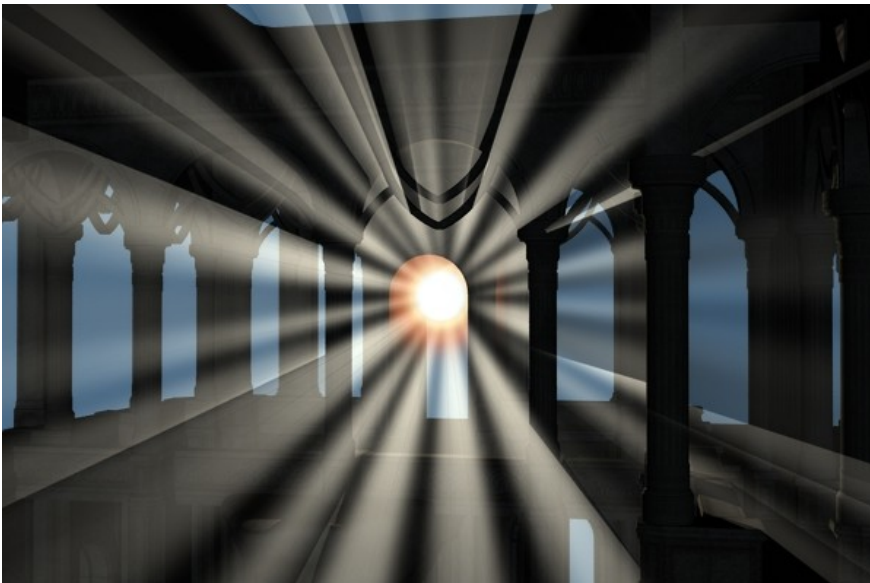

You can scale the whole array until the sun begins to peek through the openings:
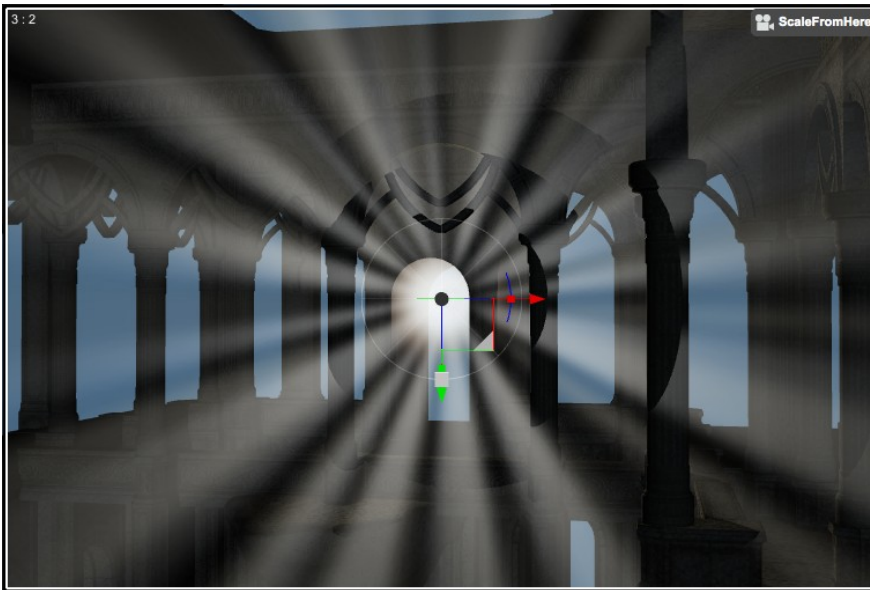
In this image the sun has been scaled so it's just inside the arch.

Rendering like this:

The celestial bodies and rays work best when rendered through the "ScaleFromHere" camera but will work

outside, when viewed from an angle as well. You may want to hide or turn off (opacity 0%) the celestial body at extreme angles as they are on a 2D plane.

Outside the default "ScaleFromHere" camera:

2: Using The Material Presets

In the Scene tab:

Select the object to which you would like to apply the materials and click an icon in its corresponding folder. It doesn't have to be selected in the Surfaces tab, as these are materials and not shader presets.

The Cloud and Star spheres can be rotated on the X, Y and Z axis. By default, you should select the raytraced spotlight before loading them, so that they will load parented and aligned properly not to have clouds behind the "sun."

Presets in the Rays folder affect the celestial body and rays only. The file "RainbowRays.duf" will add rainbow rays to any of the celestial bodies. This folder is also where you will find the various presets for transforming the rays prop into planets and moons, with or without visible rays.

3: Process & Fine Tuning

By default, the spotlight is set with raytraced shadows. Along with progressive rendering checked, and a shading rate of 2.00 in the render settings tab, you can quickly get a feel for how the rays will pass through or collide with props and figures. Once it is in position you may find softer more realistic shadows by:

- Turning off Progressive Rendering

- Switching the spotlight to Deep Shadow Map

- Adjusting the Shading Rate in the render settings tab to .20

• Option for very quick render:

When viewing through the "ScaleFromHere" camera your scene is backlit and may look great with shadows turned off.

• Be careful here:

The included ambient light is fine tuned to bring a small amount of bounce light back into the scene, lighting the shadow areas. Be careful when adjusting this as the rays might start to penetrate your props and models. It projects at the same angle as the camera view so turning shadows on will not have much of an effect.

The materials settings for the rays are fine tuned and set up to be quick and easy; you shouldn't need to adjust them at all. Adjusting the settings may cause the rays to penetrate objects.

Multiple array/light rigs can be loaded at one time but rays may start to penetrate objects.