FX Composer Beta 2

21 January 2004

Welcome to FX Composer Beta 2!

Please mail any questions/feedback to: fxcomposer@nvidia.com

Getting Started

Please install the DirectX 9 2003 Summer Update release to enable all example projects and effects to run. Please also use a graphics card with DirectX9 support, such as the GeForce FX or Quadro FX series GPU's.

The User Guide will walk you through all the key features of FX composer, and should be your first stop along the way to understanding what is available. You'll find it in the Start menu next to FX Composer.

Next, try loading some of the example .fxcomposer files in the MEDIA\fxcomposer directory, located just underneath the main fxcomposer executable. These projects demonstrate various effects and features of FX Composer. We suggest you load as many of these as possible, and report any problems to us at the feedback address above.

Please also play around with the over 100 sample .FX files under the MEDIA\HLSL directory. Simply right-click the materials panel and choose 'open material' to load an effect. You can use SHIFT and CTRL modifier keys in the Open dialog box to load many effects at the same time.

Changes since Beta 1
- Fixed crash in Shader Perf module
- Cleaned up sample .fx files
- Fixed support for IO Streaming of single shape properties
- Fixed path loading behavior

Major changes since the alpha
For full details of these features, please see the User Guide.

- Much improved error reporting/handling. Compilation errors now produce sensible messages, and clicking on the errors will jump the cursor to the correct place in the .fx file. A list of current compilation errors is available in the task panel.
- FX Composer projects are now supported, and contain everything about the current scene you are working on. Project files are essentially .zip files with a .fxcomposer

extension (you can use winzip to see inside them). Note that all media, .fx and textures are stored within an .fxcomposer project, so this is all you need to enable other users to try your projects. If a project is opened on a machine other than the one where the media assets are stored, then the assets within the project file will be used instead, and placed into a temporary cache directory while they are being used.

- The properties panel now supports editing of matrices & vectors. A new slider widget is also available, and displayed when the correct annotations are provided in the .fx file (see the examples in MEDIA\HLSL).

- If a parameter in a .fx file is associated with a light value, the properties panel now enables you to assign a scene light to the parameter. FX Composer maps scene objects to material parameters using a small virtual machine. When selecting the light, you will see the function used to calculate its value.

- Full scene controls are now supported. Objects can be rotated/translated and scaled. Zoom extents is enabled.

- Creation of simple shapes and lights is now supported

- The scene command syntax has been added for full screen material effects. Several projects show off this feature, and materials beginning with scene_* in the MEDIA\HLSL directory can be loaded and applied to scenes.

- Various UI features/artwork have been improved.

- Scene cameras are now enabled, and can be imported from .nvb files.

- Many options have been added to the right-click menus in the scene window.

- Many previously hidden properties for objects are now available. As an example, right clicking the scene window and choosing Scene->Properties will give you a display of the scene extents, matrices, etc. Similarly, using the scene graph panel you can look at transformations in the scene, and individual object properties such as camera focal length, look direction, etc.

Thanks for helping us make FX Composer a great tool for developers!

If you make any interesting projects, we'd love to see them!

Best regards,

The FX Composer Team
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