PAINTING AND

The deal might be dragging on, but that doesn't mean Discreet and Kinetix' products don't already display a high level of integration. Mike Salmond explores

COVERS	Using MAX R2 with Discreet Logic's paint*
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Discreet Logic's paint* and effect* products bring the world of post-production and 2D graphic styles to the world of 3D Studio MAX. Many would might find paint* not unlike using Adobe Photoshop with After Effects or Premiere, but the advantage of having Discreet Logic's paint* is that it's integrated directly for use with 3D Studio MAX R2.

In this tutorial I'll give you a quick overview of paint* and it's useful MAX R2 plug-in that will let us create an animated material map for use on a model in 3D Studio MAX.

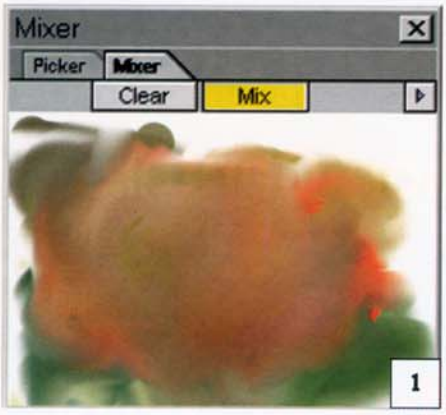
ANIMATED MATERIAL MAPS

● First you need to create a texture in paint* option 2, (like version 2 but more 'arty')

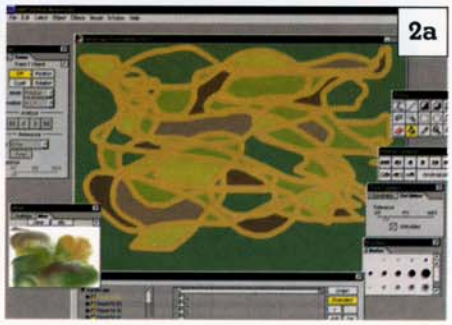
Open a new project (paint files are called .ipp files). Select an image size that will suit your model. (You'll notice that many of the canvas sizes are proportioned towards television picture sizes.)

● Next create a pattern. I've done some great squiggly lines in the hope of producing a sort of camouflage motif using fills. It looks a bit primitive, but you can play with your brush sizes or create custom brushes to your heart's content.

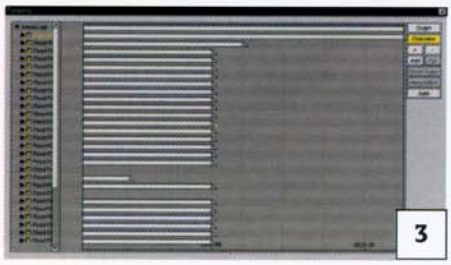
It's worth noting that paint* has a nice 'mixer' tablet/palette that allows you to mix colours much in the same way as on a real world's artists' palette and you can then select the colours from your mix for your own brushes – that's really taking its background from traditional arts practices **(see picture 1)**.



● Using the fill tool I've filled the areas in-between the lines. (For that oh-so-trendy camouflage effect) **(see pictures 2a and b)**.



Each fill you add becomes a vector-based object in it's own right and can be manipulated separately (or grouped of course). The easiest way to achieve this manipulation is in the Timeline window (these palettes can be opened via the windows/palettes/drop-down menu) **(see picture 3)**.



● So you've got some scribbles (or, indeed artwork – you can import JPEGs, bitmaps etc. to have as a background), now you need to start on the animation itself. (The fills are going to flash on and off – by using the duration of the individual fills on-screen; nothing too fancy but it's a great way to start with the effectiveness of paint*.)

I've set the duration of this animation to 10 seconds. You can do this in Document/Settings (cntrl-shift-D) at any point in the proceedings to increase or decrease your animation length **(see picture 4)**. Each vector fill you've created has it's own channel and 'object bar' in the Timeline window – each of these can be dragged across the Timeline to position the vector in time and duration on-screen.

(Note: Once you change the duration of your clip/animation to see the end point/last frame of your animation you can either drag the timeline screen with your mouse to see the whole deal – which is a bit clumsy – or use the plus and minus keys to zoom in and zoom out of the timeline.)

● So now do your animation! You can have colours appearing and disappearing to your hearts content – be adventurous!

(Note: holding down the shift key whilst selecting will allow you to multiple select your fill objects – but this does tends towards dragging the entire object bar and not just the duration of the object.)

Dragging individual fills around the image itself forms animated keyframed paths that can be manipulated in a manner of ways too. paint* automatically creates keyframes for any movement of vectors, and the paths for them – so you can have your colours zooming around as well as blinking on and off.

● Further methods of vector editing can be achieved by using the Timeline objects themselves. The individual vectors and brush strokes all have little arrows to the left of their