

iCLONE 5 PRO, REALLUSION

\$199.95



Characters: You can alter the characters to create people of different ethnic backgrounds.



y goodness! Where do I start with iClone 5 Pro? I was blown away by the press launch presentation last year... In a nutshell iClone 5 Pro has everything you need to become a professional animator! In short when you look at the cost to value ratio it can be summed up in one word: ADNESS!!!!

Many moons ago I did a course in Multimedia that included 3D Studio Max – I can't remember which version number... It was hard to get to grips with; I must have spent a few hours just to make a ball bounce! It was a fun experience; however I found the 3D process laborious. Besides the cost of 3D Studio Max was out of the question! I have messed around with a few budget programs that weren't really up to much save for a few 3D fonts! Fast forward several years later... Last year I reviewed iClone 4 Pro and was suitably impressed with how fast I was able to put together an animation with a couple of characters, background and object. Version 5 Pro is magnificent!

NEW

There are fantastic new features that will delight!

Digital Actors

The human actors look better than in the previous version because of a higher polygon count thus adding more detail to make them look more realistic. You can use photos to real life characters – perfect for poking fun at the rich and famous! In fact iClone is used by TV production companies!

Device Mocap

I'm sure you have seen the behind the scenes documentary of how popular 3D games and films are made using motion capture suits with numerous ping-pong balls attached to it. Well, by using the Xbox Kinect's Motion Capture system you can do away with the need for such as suit and various cameras to achieve this effect. You can control a character with your movements! Awesome! But you will need the Mocap plug-in that will cost you \$99. If you don't own an Xbox Kinect you can always pick one up at computer exchange shops for a reasonable price and / trade in old games, etc.

I have tried Mocap using a Kinect and it works – just as long as I didn't cross my arms! Kinect motion detector and Mocap were not able to process my arms being crossed. Other than that, it was a joy to use! Simple to set-up!

Body Motion Puppeteering

You may use a mouse or any other handheld device to create an unlimited number of motion variations to reflect your character's personality. Users may select body parts and add puppet behaviors while they control their animations during playback or real-time recording. You may also manually control the puppeteering speed and direction, or let the animation loop with slider alterations. Animators are now able to create frequent motion alternatives with 55 different male & female puppet profiles found in 4 categories.

Rigid Body

Rigid body dynamics enable you to simulate objects with a high degree of realism such as fall, collide and bounce. All these movements are controlled by physics properties such as mass, elasticity, friction, damping, impulse, collisions, constraints and others. You may even add rigid body physics to any prop or character in order to add another dimension of interactivity between subjects.

Soft Body

Soft body dynamics focus on realistic physical simulations that deform whole objects and singular planes such as clothes. Animations are now incredibly life-like as objects can accurately represent their elastic properties like rubber, squashed balls or jelly puddings. You may even simulate cloth effects, from a singular plane, with different material stiffness such as silk, linen or any other materials that will be affected by air resistance.

Post FX & Toon Shading

Cartoon rendering and cell shading allows animators to create a flat-looking 3D image with a cartoonish look, typically exemplified in artistically animated movies. With enhanced post FX rendering options, iClone5 users can render and create key-able visual effects like blur lens, sketch or black & white. This allows for a wide range of amazing post effects that transform any 3D animation into top-notch, studio art motions.

There are so many new attributes to mention, but I don't want to overwhelm you – if you are new to the RealLusion concept of 3D animation! From experience, I know how daunting 3D modelling and animation can be... it may be hard to get your head around it! But I can tell you that the animations are done in real time; when I was learning 3D the computer had to render the scene and animation created. If a scene was complex the rendering could take ages. The beauty of iClone is that all the scene creation – including props and characters – are done in real time! This means no waiting for a scene to render!

iClone 5 is designed for maximum efficiency and therefore can render complex landscapes with more detail!

Characters can interact with Smart Props – everyday objects such as a bicycle for example. It is very much like building the interaction in a game. Now, if RealLusion could add a game engine to iClone... WOW!!!!

Plug-ins / Content

With the 3DXchange 5 plug-in allows you to add content created by other 3D software! You'll be blown away with what you can find there... Star Wars models, famous buildings, etc. The costs for this plug-in varies in accordance to your requirements:

Standard, \$99.95. Pro, \$199.95 and Pipeline, \$499.95.

Another plug-in that is a sure fire hit is the Physics Toolkit, \$79.95. What the Physics Toolbox does is to allow the animator to create real world physics with objects and build machines / vehicles with complex movements and interactions with the environment around them. Physics Toolbox consists of a collection of predefined movements for motors, hydraulics, springs, sliders, tracks, vehicles, forces (bomb, push and firearm), tracks, transformations and more! It's a must have to create accurate real world animations – it'll be brilliant for the science fiction creator!

Output

Export your animations in full HD 1920 x 1152 AVI, WMV and MP4 with stereo 3D as an option! Of course, still images can be outputted in the form of JPEG, BMP, PNG and TGA.

Who is iClone 5 Pro aimed at?

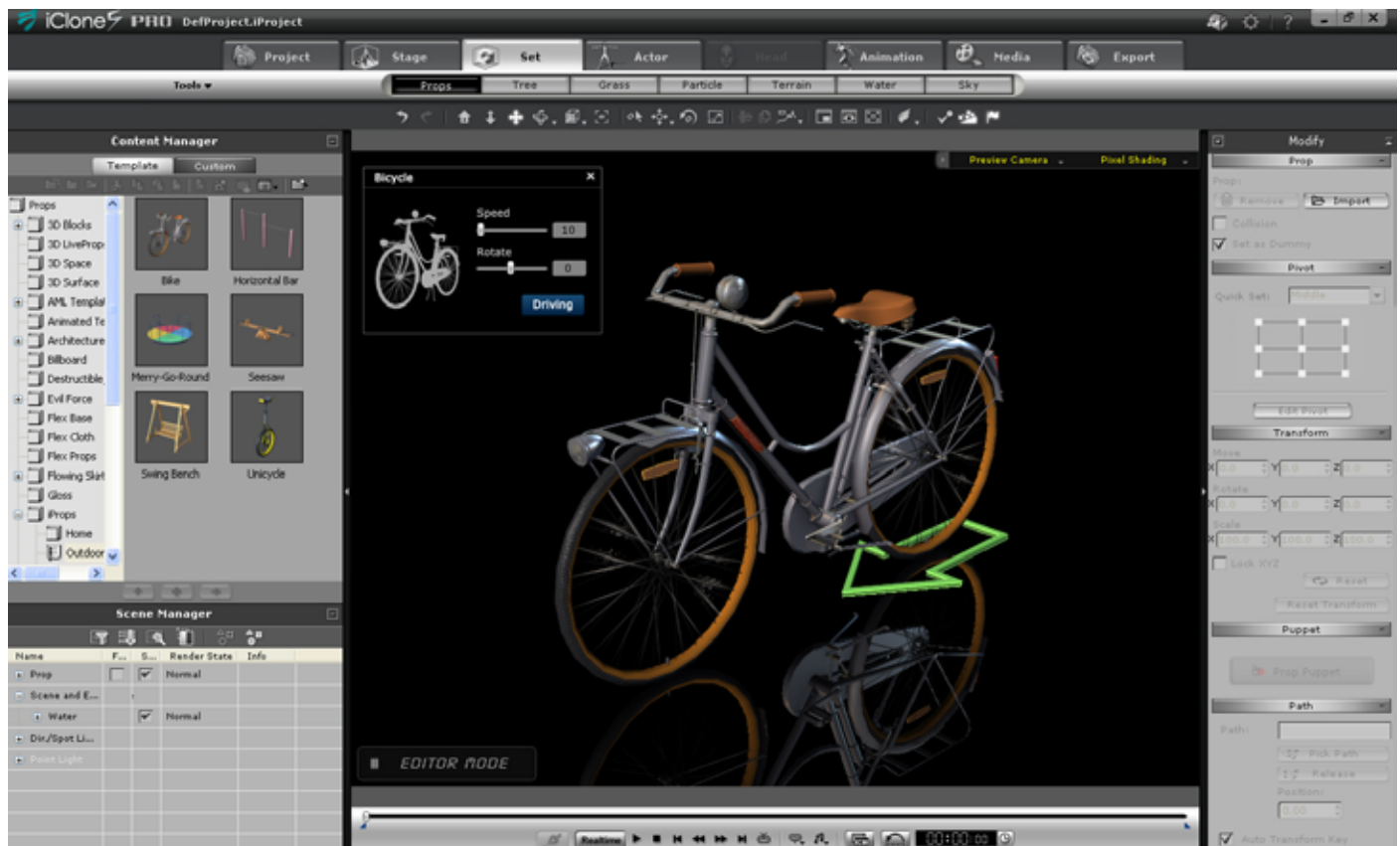
Well, once you take into consideration the cost, \$199.95, pinch yourself, puts quality 3D animation into anyone's hands! Although there is a standard version which sells for \$79.95, I would recommend that you go for the pro version because you have more options that you'd want to tap into such as advanced facial expressions and voice & lip track for eerie accuracy!

Perhaps you have a son or daughter heavily into games; iClone 5 Pro (or standard) will certainly stimulate his / her

imagination.

It is great for those with an interest in digital media production from TV, film, advertising, etc. The film industry has used iClone for storyboarding – working out shots for a movie.

Sure, the quality of the results won't be James Cameron's 'Avatar', but it's very, very capable. TV production companies use iClone to create comic satire on events of the day – other software would take weeks, months... .. not practical.



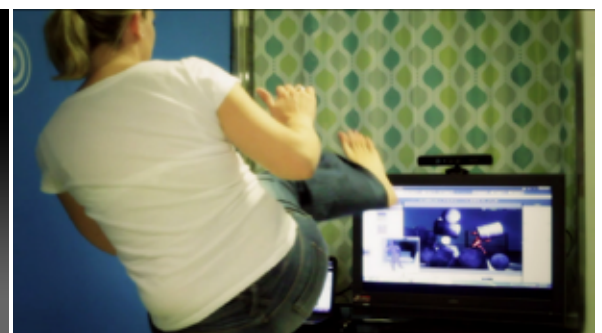
iScript Prop: Set the values for any prop in any scene and determine how the characters will interact with it / them.

Ease

I am a fan of iClone because it is very, very easy to use. The interface is quite logic and intuitive. If you get stuck there are brilliant video tutorials from beginner level to advance. Have no fear!

Conclusion

iClone 5 Pro is a fantastic, super-amazing value 3D animation program that you or the intended will absolutely love!
iClone 5 Pro (and standard) is a phenomenon!



Mocap Device: Using a motion cature device such as the Xbox Kinect you can control a character like a puppet master! Imagine the possibilities of doing a live show! It's a game changer!

Next: Are you in the market for an affordable smartphone?