



# *Dawnbringer*

Development log

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## ▼ Purpose of the animation:

- I have this idea of creating an animation depicting the transition between night and day. It revolves around the concept of a goddess, who serves as a symbol representing the external influencer responsible for altering the environment. The purpose of this animation is to test the ability to shape a stylized environment in Cinema 4d with the technique of multiple software, such as ZBrush, Maya, Blender, Substance Designer, Substance Painter.

## ▼ Animation description:

- "Dawnbringer" is an animation that centres on the mystical entity responsible for initiating the dawn, symbolizing the transition from night to daylight. This captivating tale unfolds in a world enveloped in the mystery of perpetual night. The narrative revolves around the arrival of a unique being, the bringer of dawn, who introduces the first light, heralding the dawn. The story weaves around themes of renewal, hope, and the natural cycles of time.

## ▼ Environment design:

- I want to set the location of the story in a house in a quiet forest next to a lake. There's a lot of plants around it. I want the whole scene to look peaceful and harmony.

## ▼ Character design:

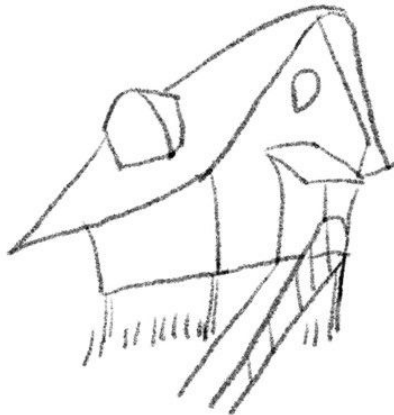
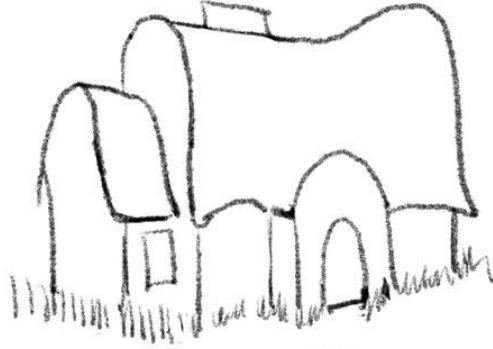
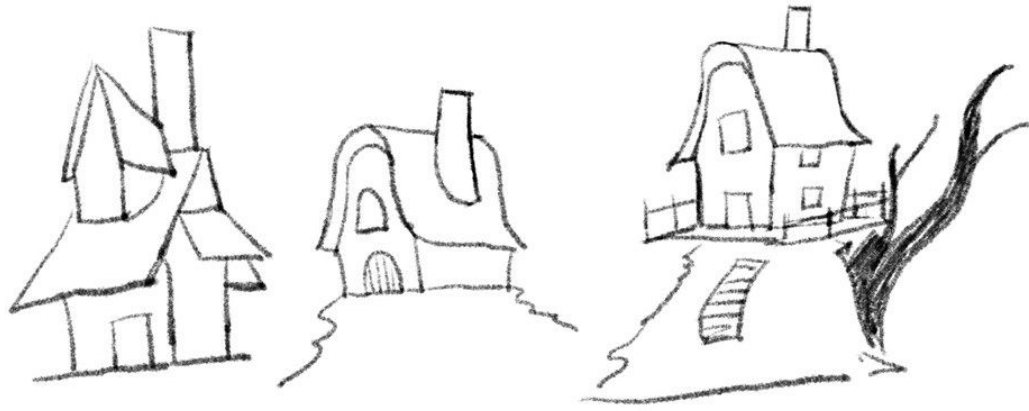
- The character is supposed to be goddess-like creature. I want her to have a sense of night and motherhood.



# ▼ Environment moodboard



## ▼ Environment design

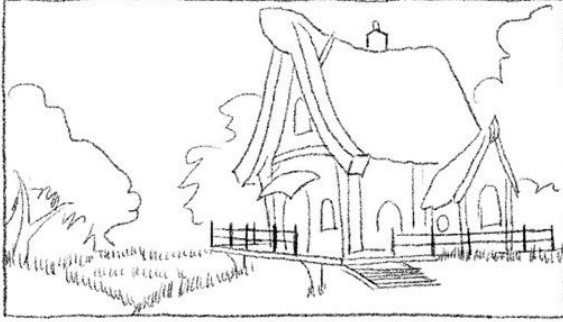




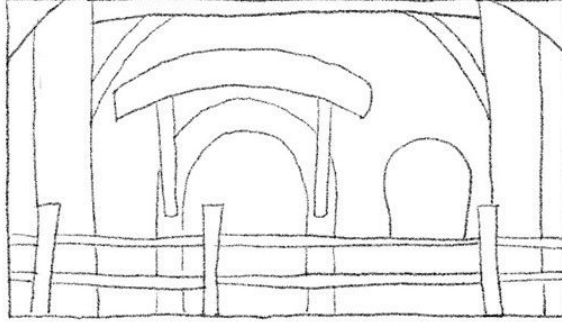
## The image contains three line drawings of a female figure. The top-left drawing is a profile view of the head and shoulders, showing the figure facing left with hair pulled back. The bottom-left drawing is a front view of the head and shoulders, showing the figure's face and upper torso. The right-side drawing is a full-length view of the figure, showing her standing with long hair and a long, flowing dress.

# ▼ Storyboard

Scene 1



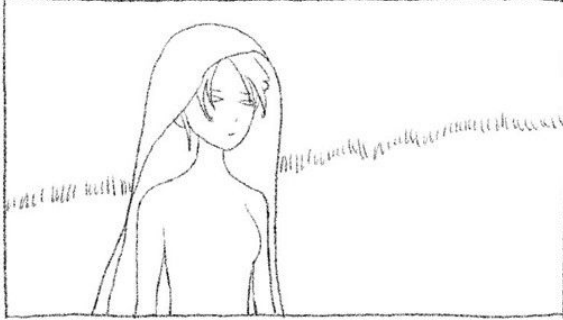
Scene 2



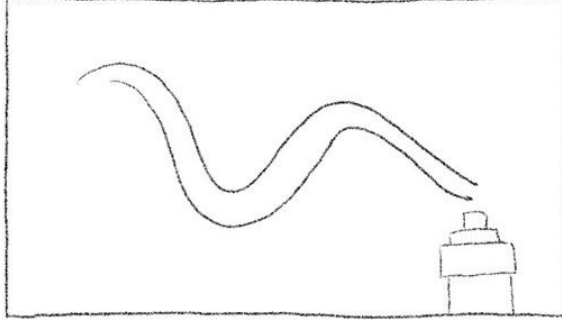
Scene 3



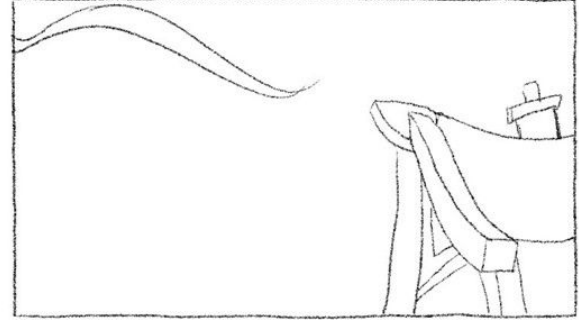
Scene 4



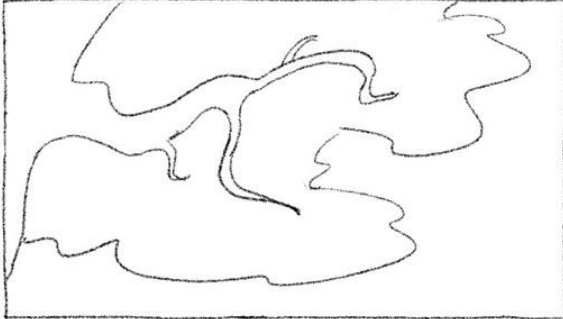
Scene 5



Scene 6



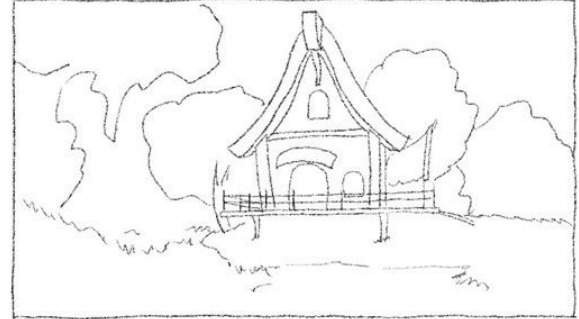
Scene 7

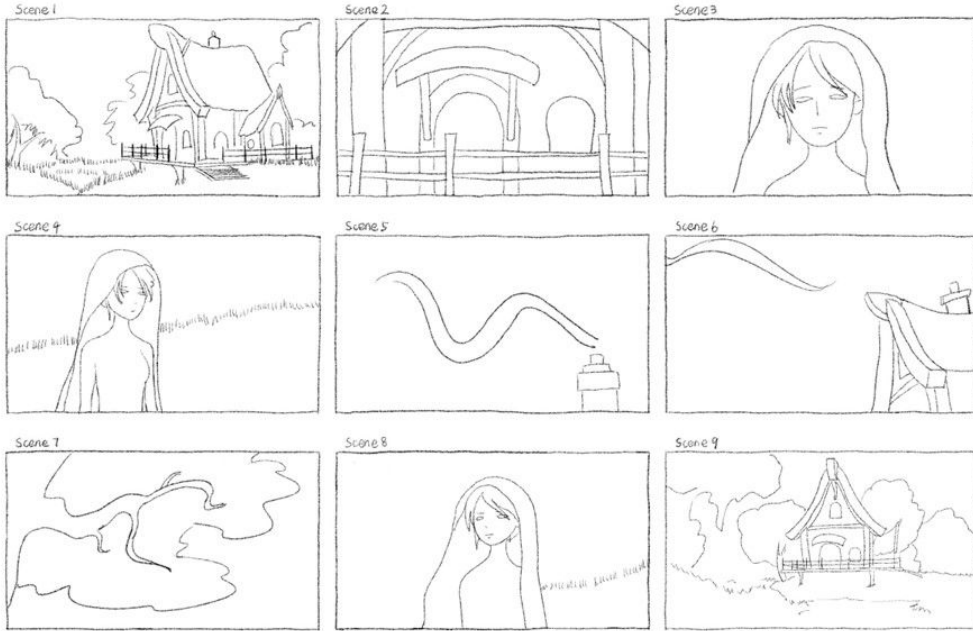


Scene 8



Scene 9





**Scene 1:** 1-10s the first shot is used to show the overview of the environment. I want to present the stage of the story to the audience.

**Scene 2:** 11-16s the second shot is to present the shift of environment through the change of light. The purpose of this shot is to reveal the arrival of the goddess.

**Scene 3-4:** 17-31s in this shot, the bringer show her presence.

**Scene 5-6:** 32-42s dawnbringer took away the light inside the house.

**Scene 7:** 43-53s the shift from night to daylight.

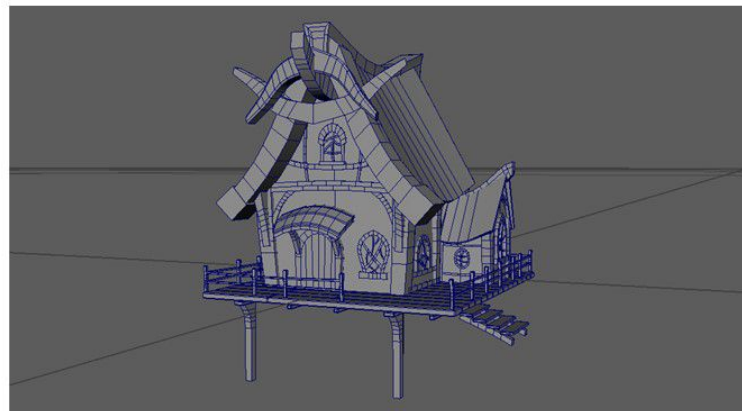
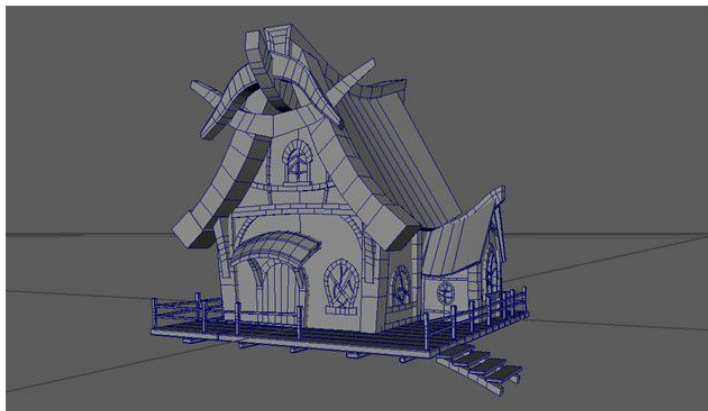
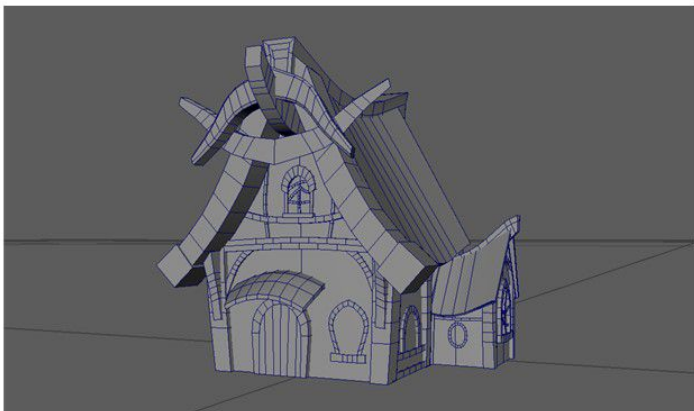
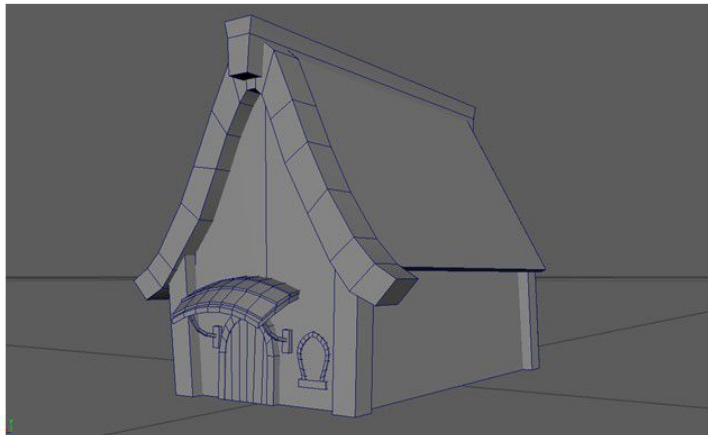
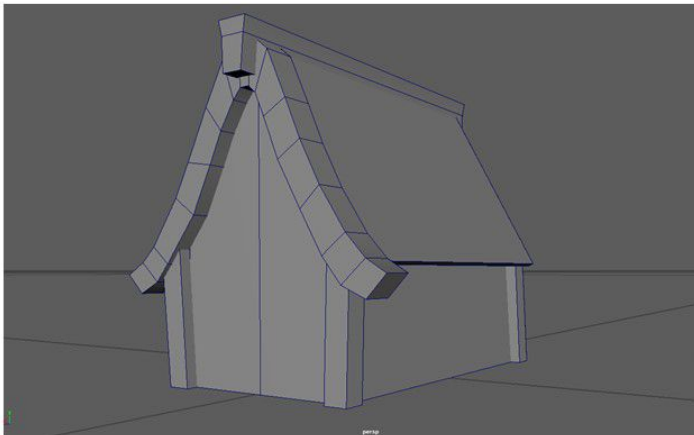
**Scene 8:** 54-60s the dawnbringer looks at the beautiful clear sky. She's happy that once again, the darkness fades and the light comes.

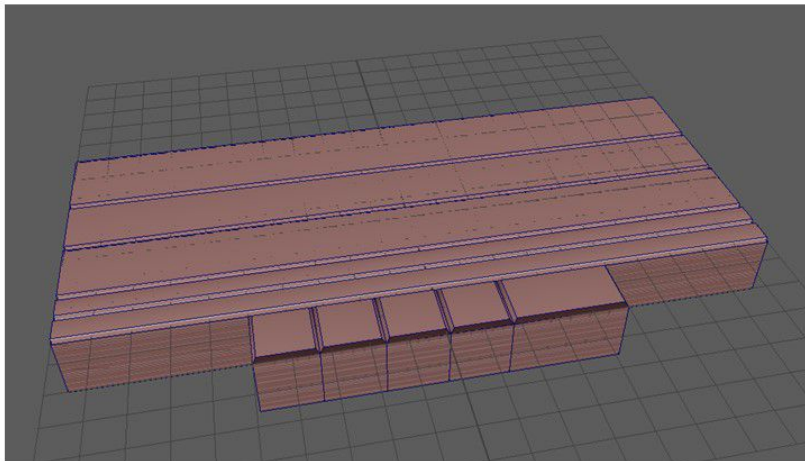
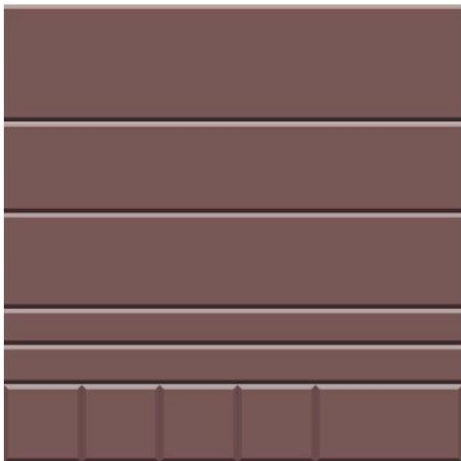
**Scene 9:** 60-65s the final scene of the environment. Everything looks harmony under the sun.



## ▼ Environment modelling:

- The key to a nice model for stylized environment is to keep it clean. The polygon count of the model has to be as little as possible while holding the shape of the model. That is why it is important to double check to make sure there's no extra polygon.





## ▼ Stylized wood trim sheet in ZBrush

- “Trim sheets are textures which tile in the Horizontal (U) or Vertical (V) direction. They are used to quickly add detail to an asset with otherwise simple geometry as they generally consist of multiple trim elements which can be UV mapped onto an asset to add the illusion of a higher level of detail which is not present on the model.”  
(<https://www.beyondextent.com/deep-dives/trim sheets>)

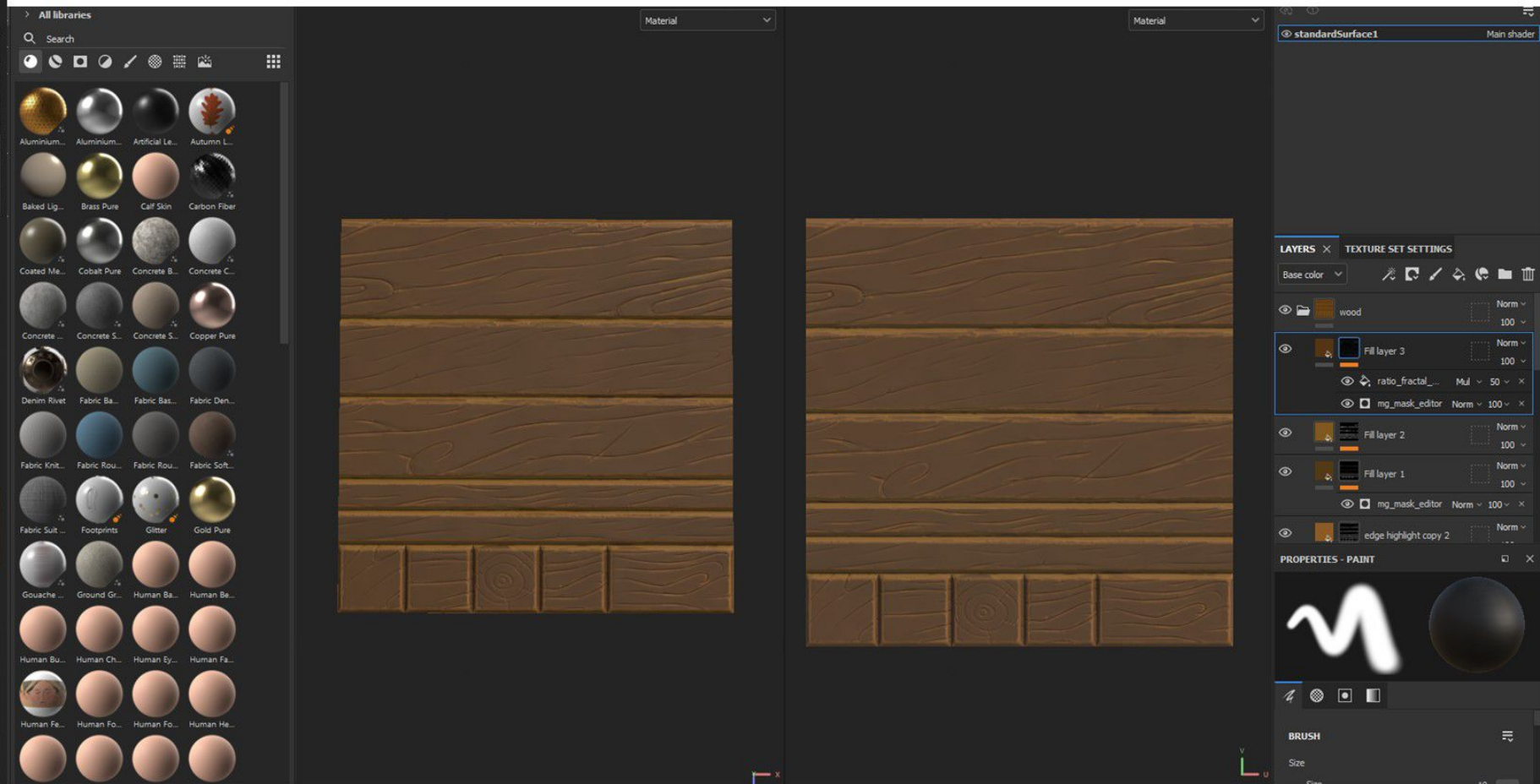
- To create a trim sheet, first thing I need to do is to plan the section for each part in photoshop. Then I move the plane to Maya so I can create a base model for me to sculpt and bake later.

- Then I import the low poly model in ZBrush to sculpt the high poly model. When it comes to the sculpting of stylized model, it is important to exaggerate the feature and keep it minimal. In this way the texture can have a nice, clean presentation.





## ▼ Texturing in substance painter



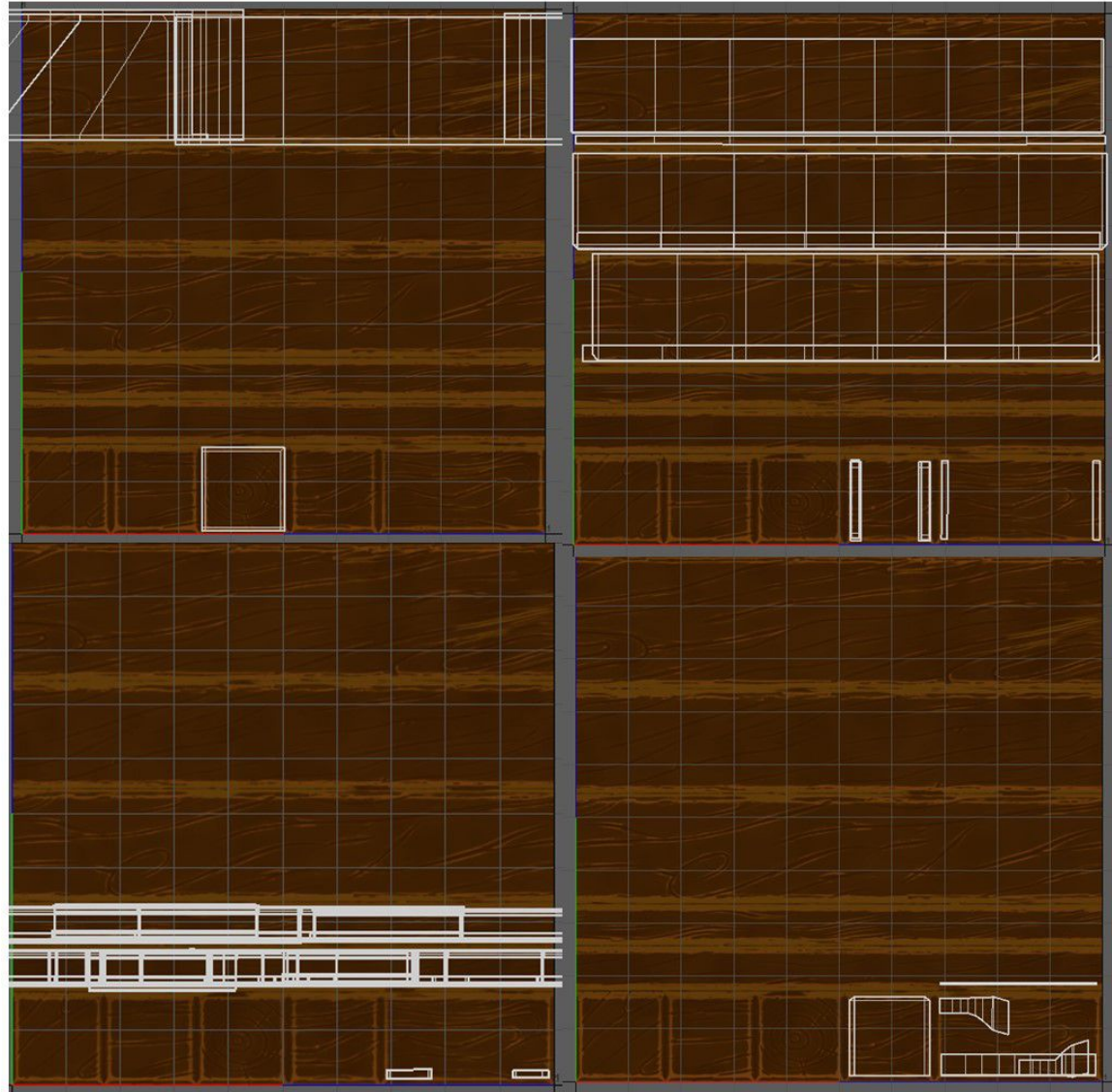
- I used the baked map from the high poly model to create the texture for the low poly model. Creating texture this way can help the engine to run faster and easier.



## ▼ Use UV to maximise the trim sheet



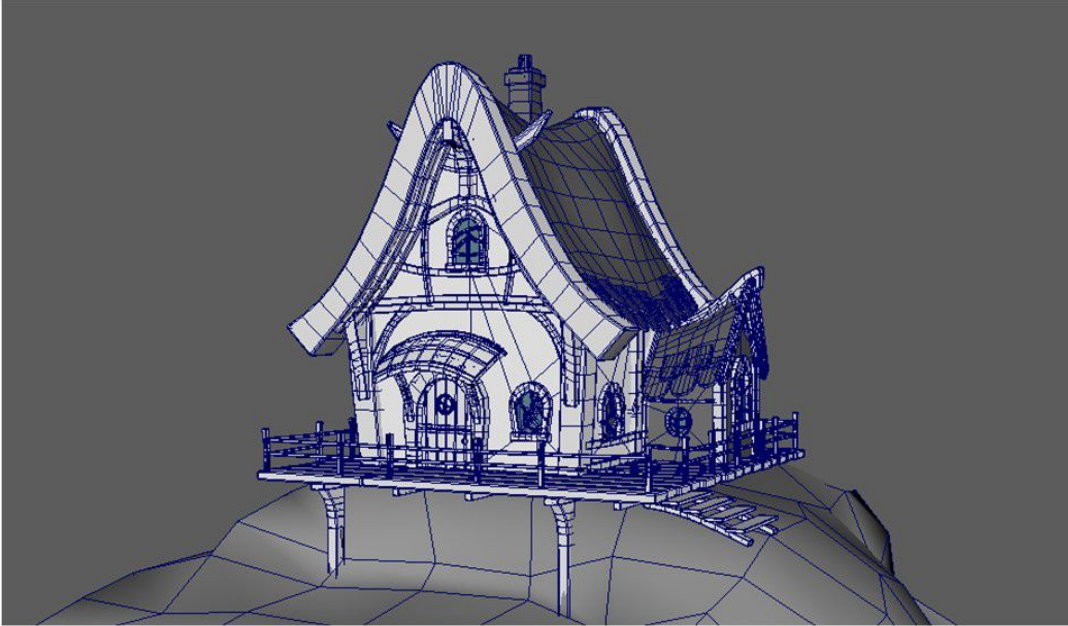
- The benefit of using trim sheets is that the artist only need to use one texture for a large collection of assets. In this way the artist can reduce the memory required to save and load texture.



- Textured model

## ▼ Model display:

- Topology

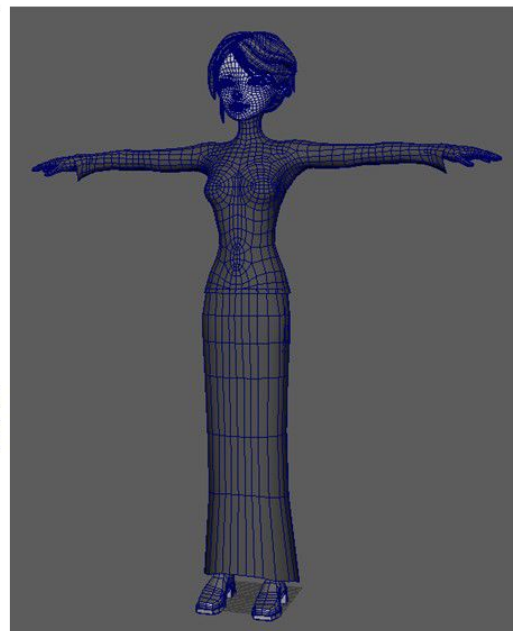
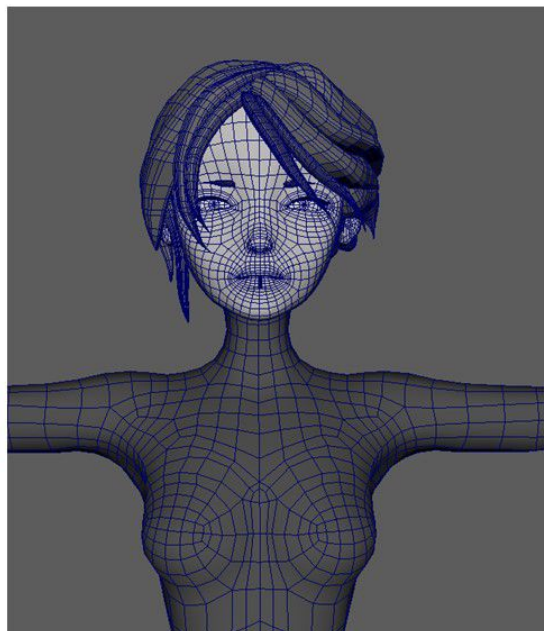


- White model



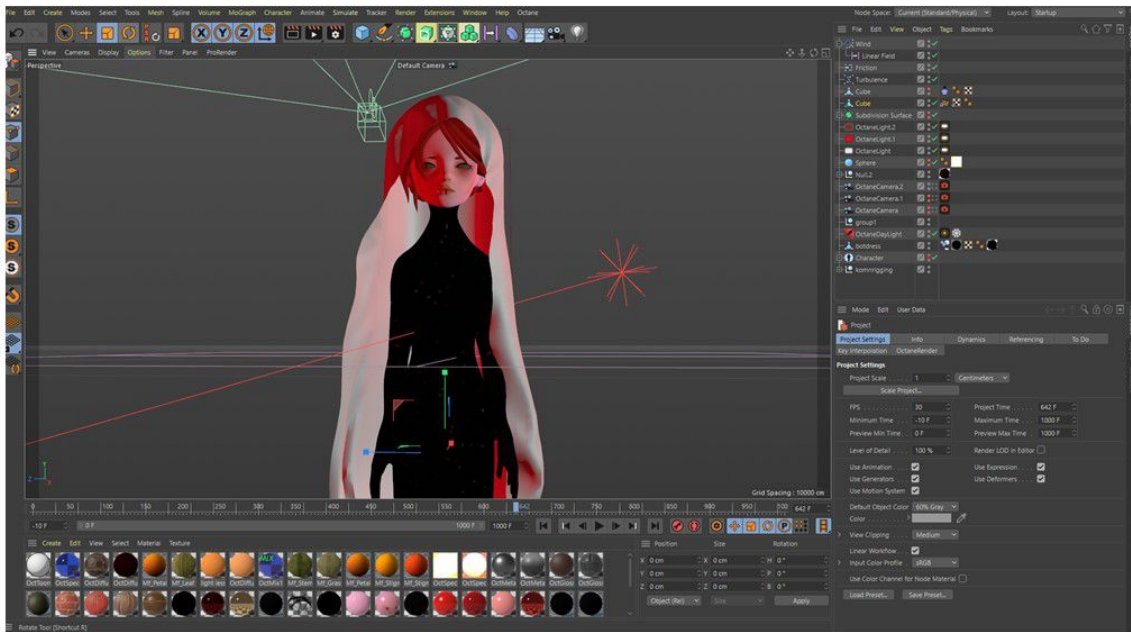
## ▼ Character modelling:

- It is necessary to have a lots of reference and concept art when making stylized model. In this way it is easier for the artist to have base body proportions well-defined.
- First thing to do when making a sculpture is always to make a nice block out. Then it is ok to start experiment the details on how to get the style right. It is also important to keep the intensity of the brushes low so the artist can have a better control of the detail. Crafting your own brushes and alphas is a good way to speed up the sculpting process as well, in the future I will look more into it.
- After finished the sculpture in ZBrush, I took the model to Maya for a better topology. A good topology can benefit the multiple sides (texturing, rigging, animating and rendering) on the creation of a character.



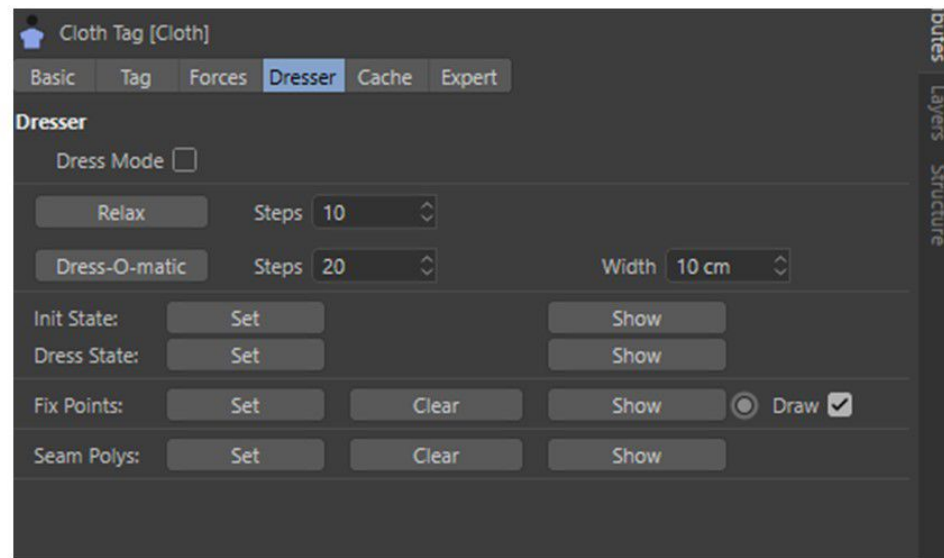
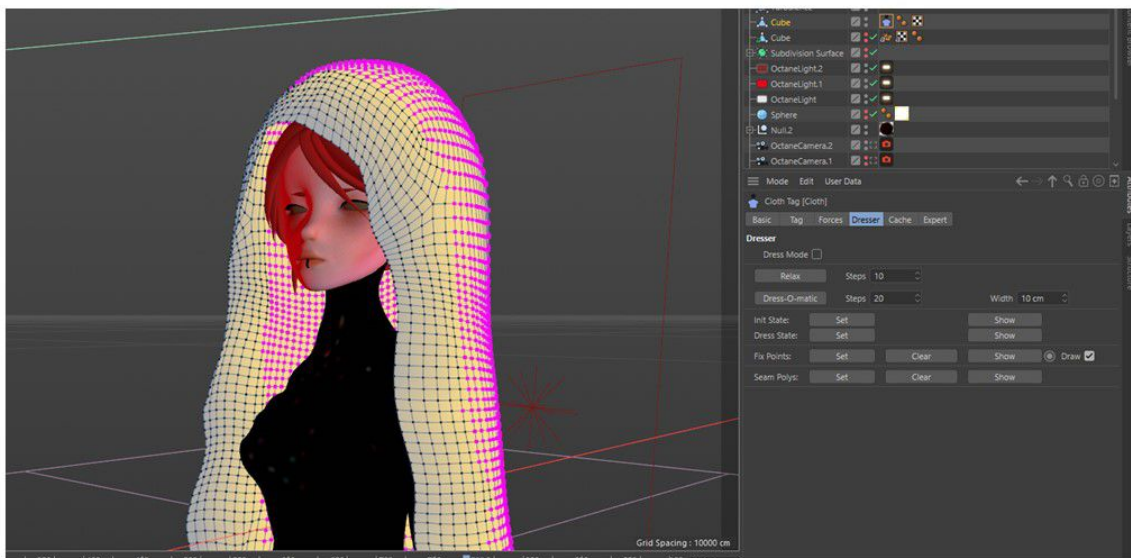






## ▼ Cloth and wind simulation in Cinema 4d:

- For the creation of the cloth, firstly I made a model in the shape of a veil and increase the polygon counts so the simulation goes well. Then I add a cloth tag on the plane. I set part of the points to fix points, so only the area close to the edge of the cloth is influenced by the force field (the wind). Then I add wind field, friction and turbulence to adjust the movement of the cloth. In the end, I baked the object as alembic, so the PC doesn't have to recalculate every time when rendering.





▼ Final character visual:





baked wood trimsheet

foliage + tile

foliage + hdri +  
mountain



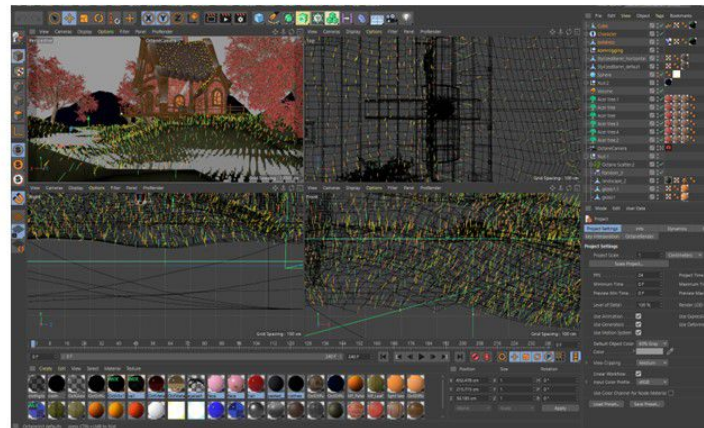
volume fog  
+  
base light map

emissive material

foliage + base map

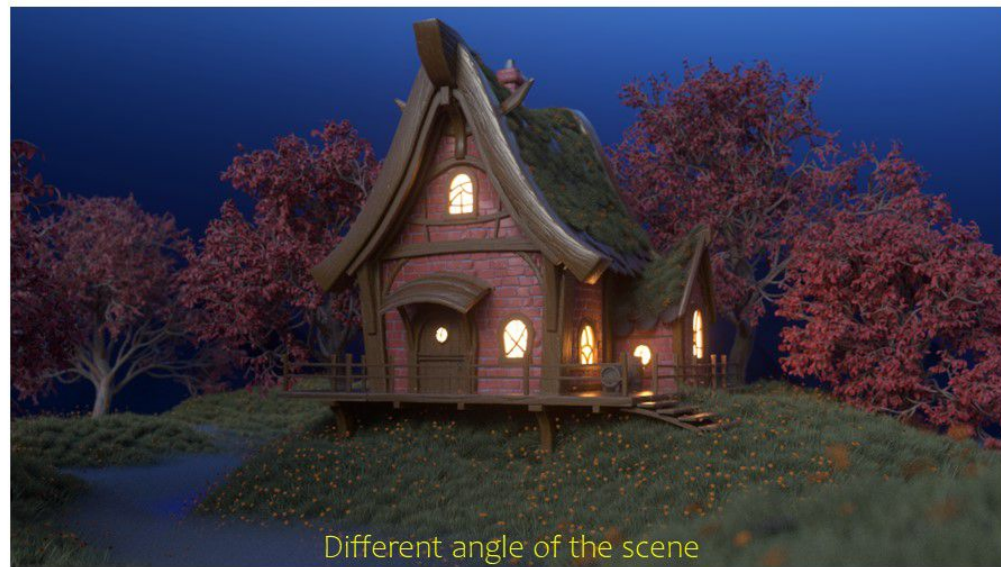
## ▼ Scene 1

- The first scene is very important for this animation because it is the introduction. I wanted the architecture to be in a misty night, surrounded by various vegetation and grass. I wanted the whole scene to have a natural and mysterious atmosphere, paving the way for the arrival of dawnbringer later.

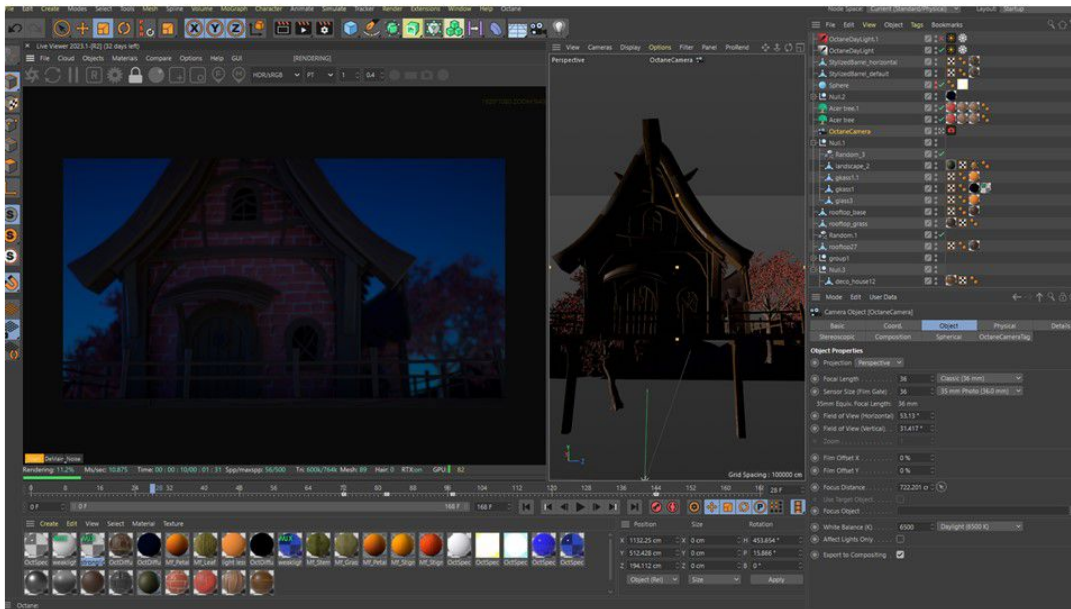




# ▼ Scene 1

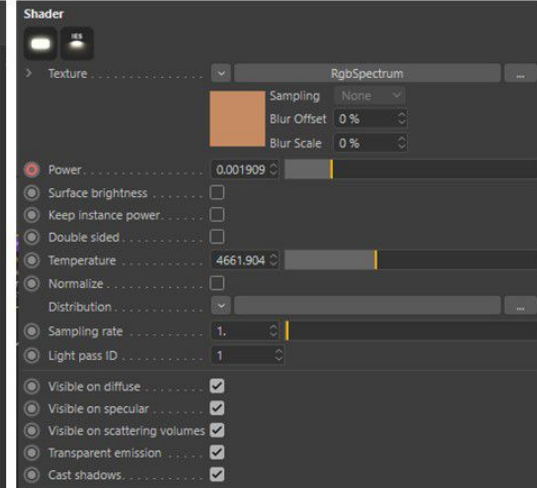
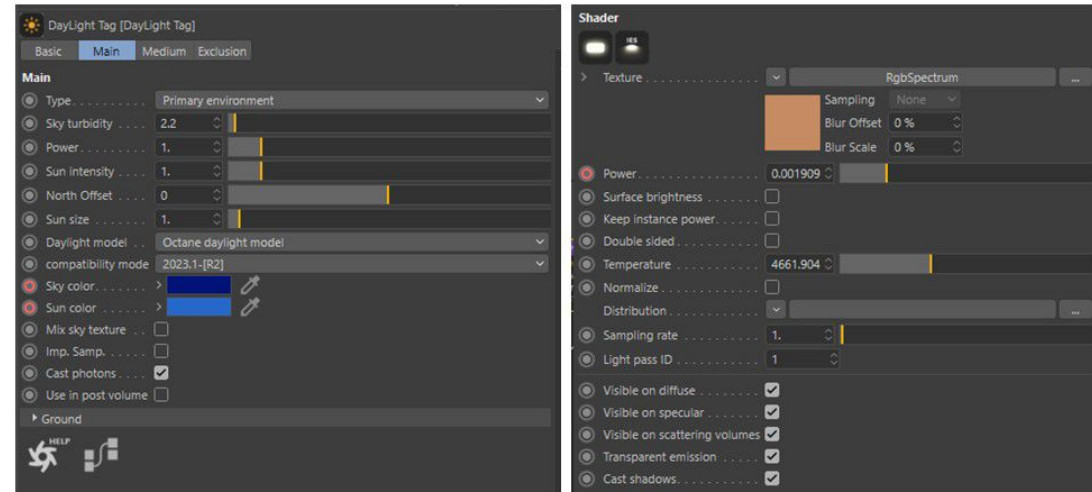
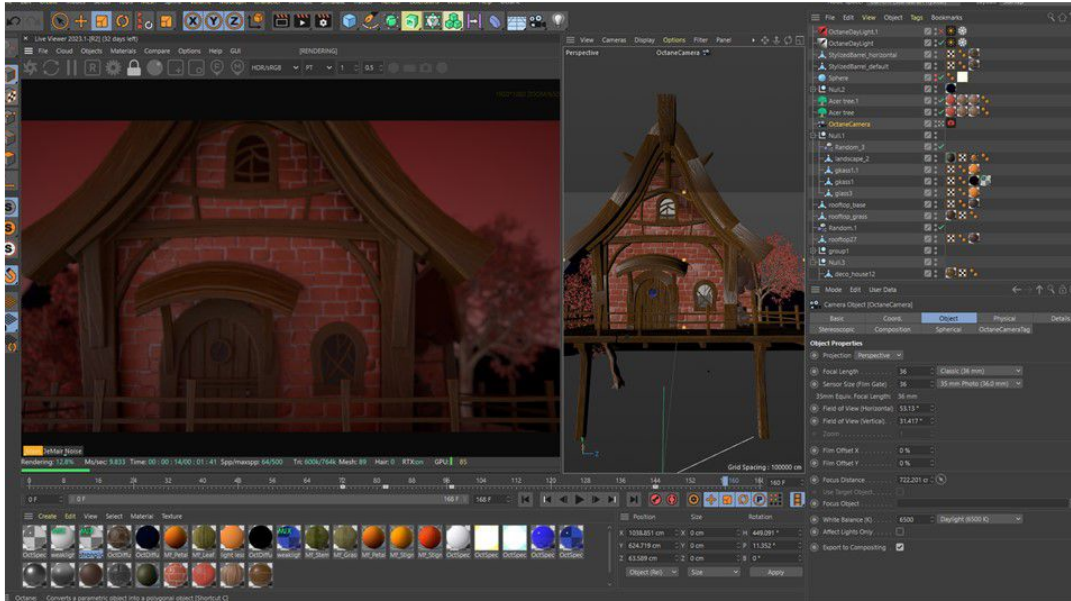






## ▼ Scene 2

- The second scene is mainly to reflect the arrival of dawnbringer. I set different keyframes in the power and colour of the light tag to reflect the changing sky colour with the arrival of the dawnbringer. The arrival of dawnbringer also indicates that the light in the house will be taken away. The lights in the house taken away here symbolize exchange and transform. Use inner light from the house to welcome the dawn of the outside world and illuminate the world. The red sky is a symbolization of the difficulty in changing and the courage to change.

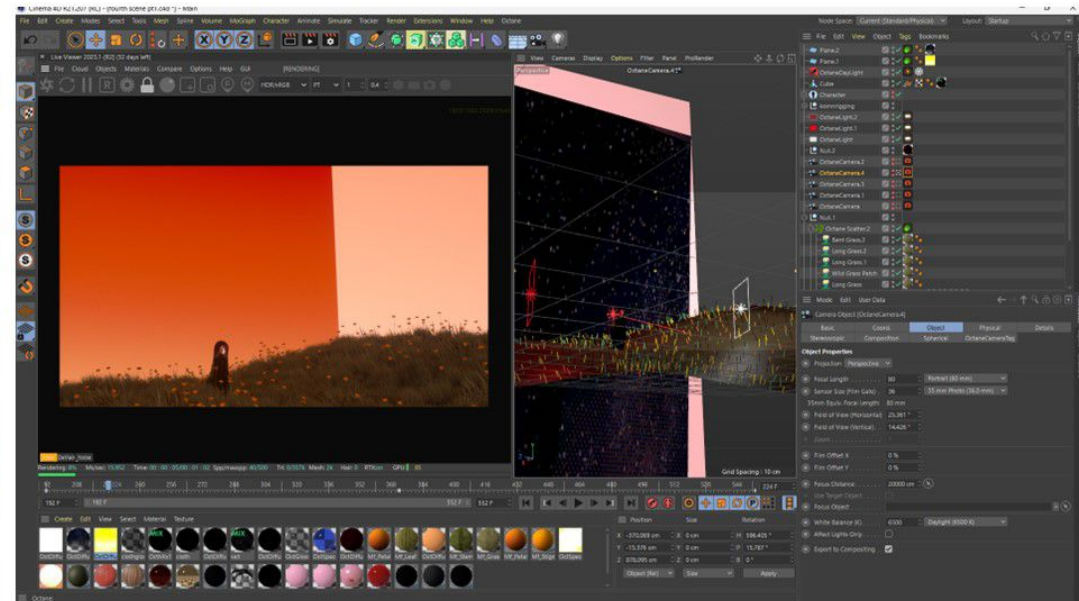
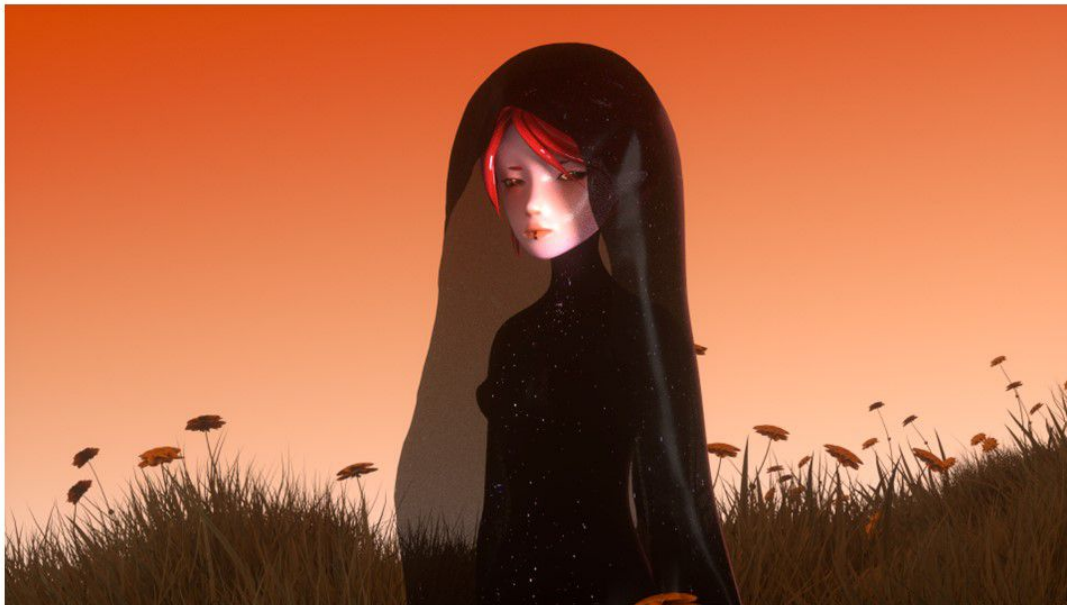


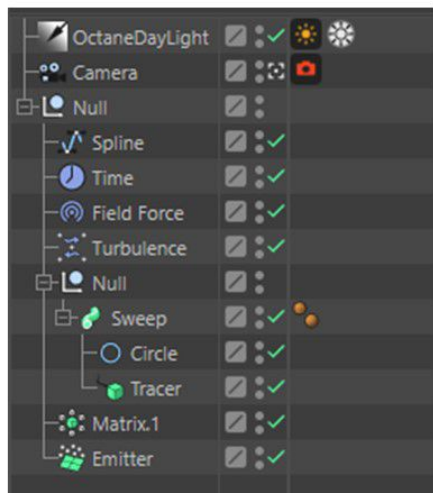




## ▼ Scene 3

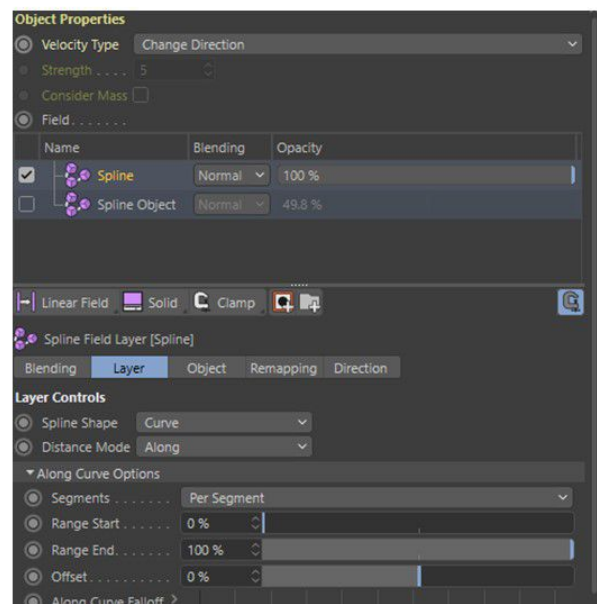
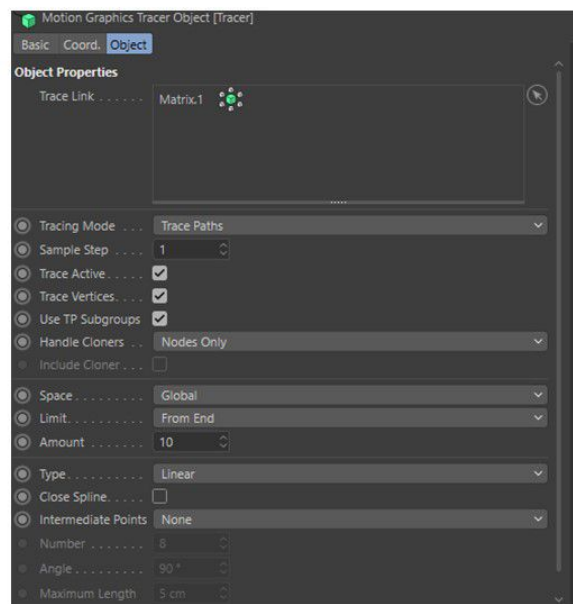
- In the third scene the dawnbringer finally arrived. I carefully adjust the light and the background graphic to fit in the atmosphere and show the influence dawnbringer has on the environment.
- For the appearance of dawnbringer, I mostly use low-angle shot. Low-angle shot has two main benefits: 1. In terms of composition, it can effectively highlight the subject in the picture and purify the environment and background. 2. To show a sense of power and control.





## ▼ Scene 4-5

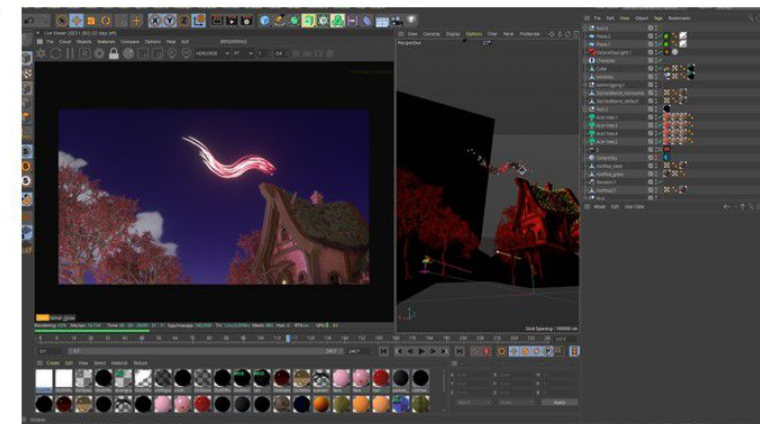
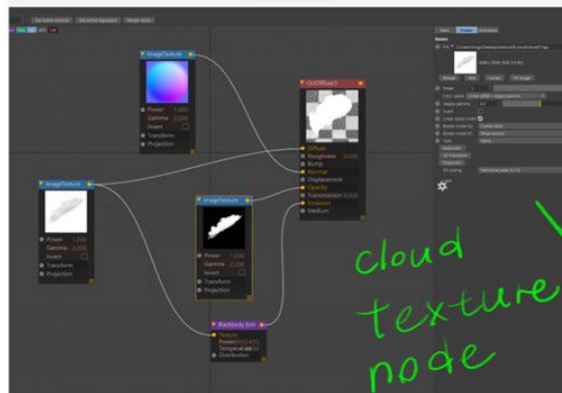
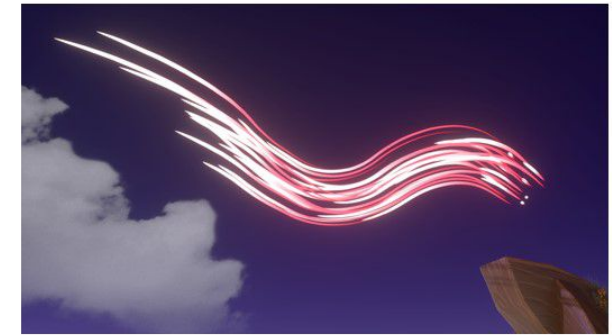
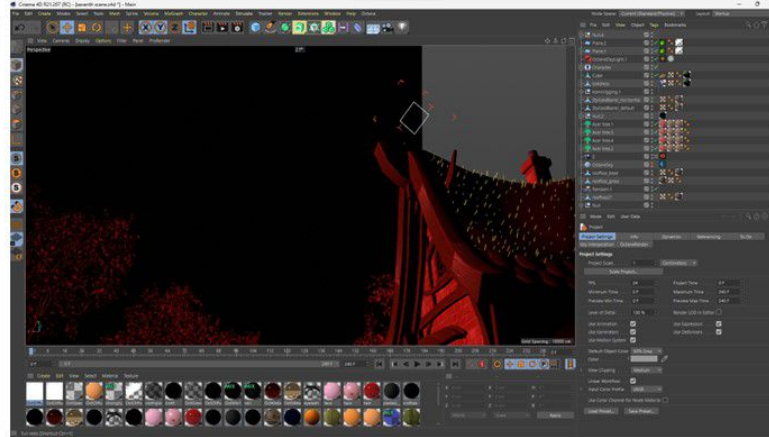
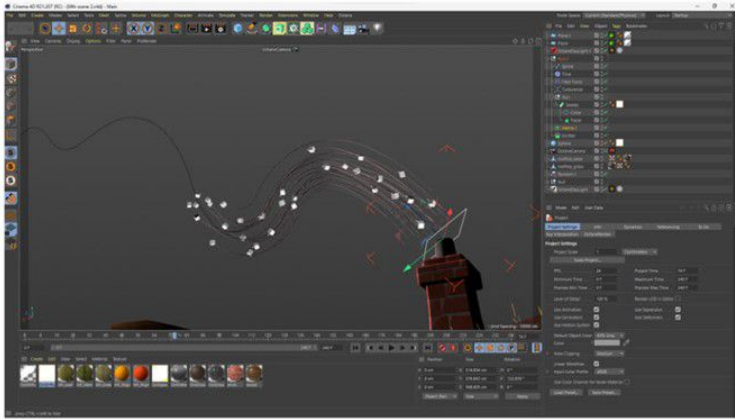
- In this part, I made a light path generator using spline, emitter and tracer to create the path of the light. I didn't use particle to create the trace because matrix is lighter to run on the software. With force field like turbulence, I can easily control it and get the effect I want.



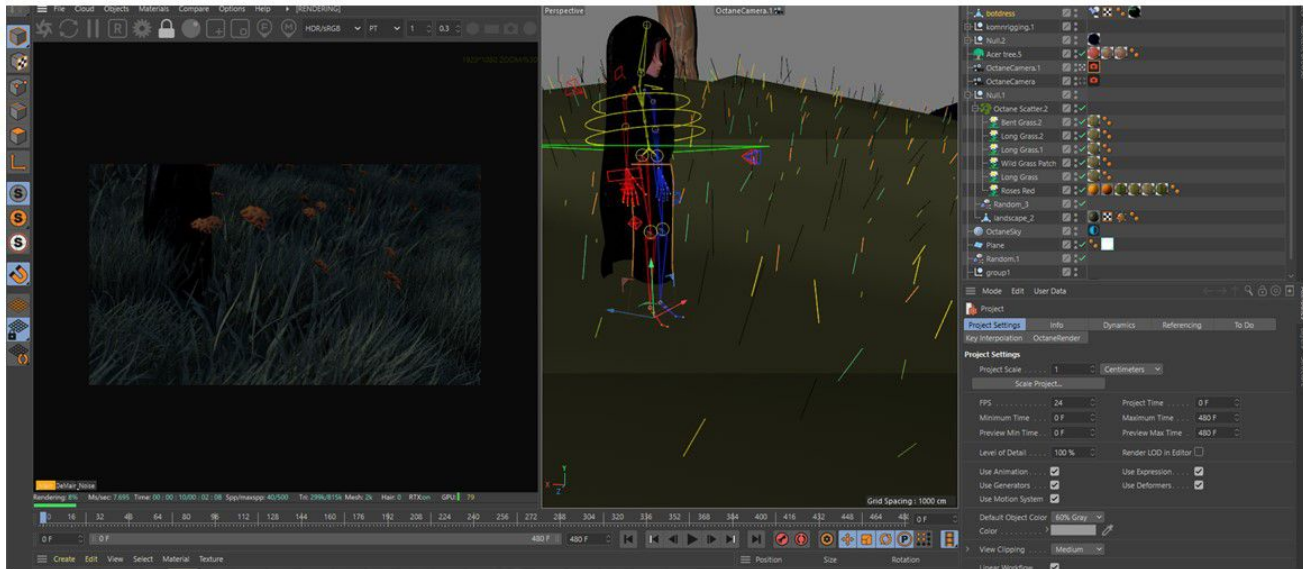


- I place the generator above the chimney because this is where the light goes away. For the cloud's texture I used technique I learned from Unreal Engine texturing. For the normal map, I used a blurry round shape. For the base map and alpha map, I create the image with the free resource I find online. In this way, the cloud blends better with the sky.

## ▼ Scene 4-5



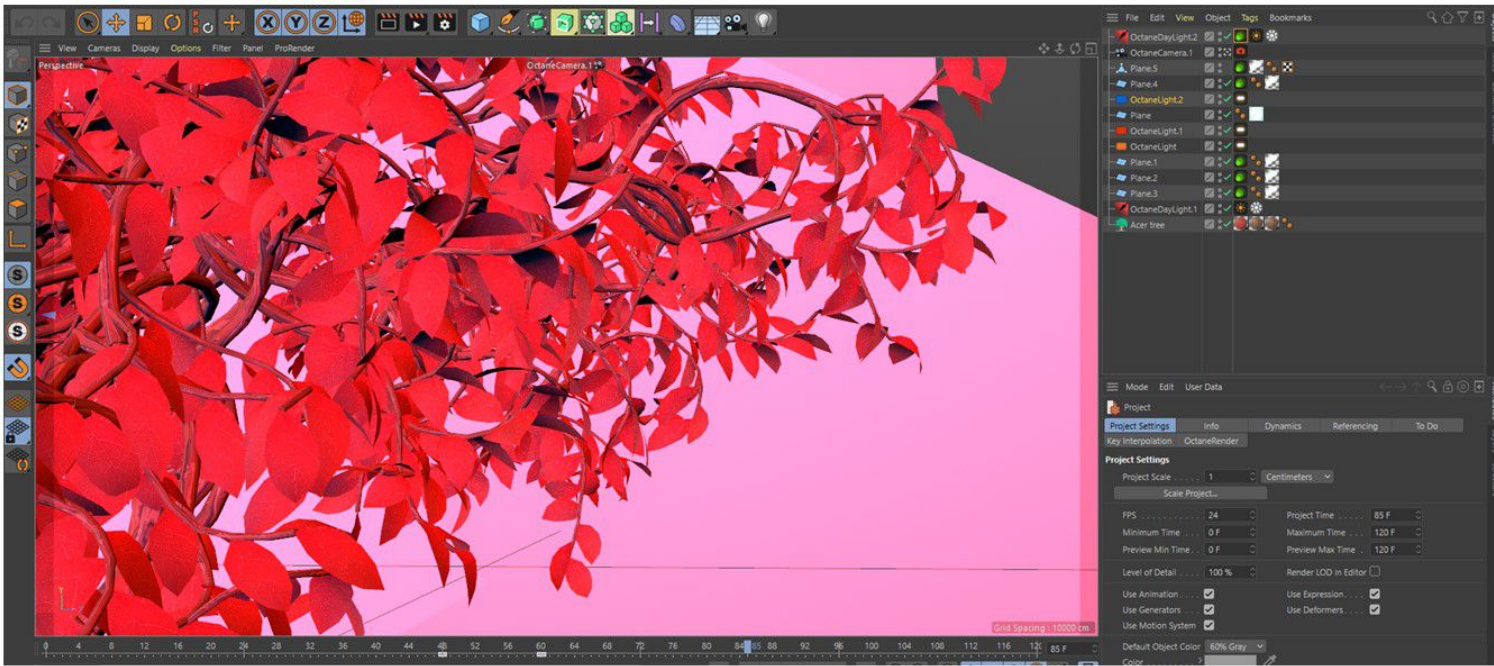




## ▼ Scene 6

This shot is a transition from night to dawn, and the next shot does the same thing. I wanted to use the shot of grass gently swaying in the wind to express the calm dawn after dark night.



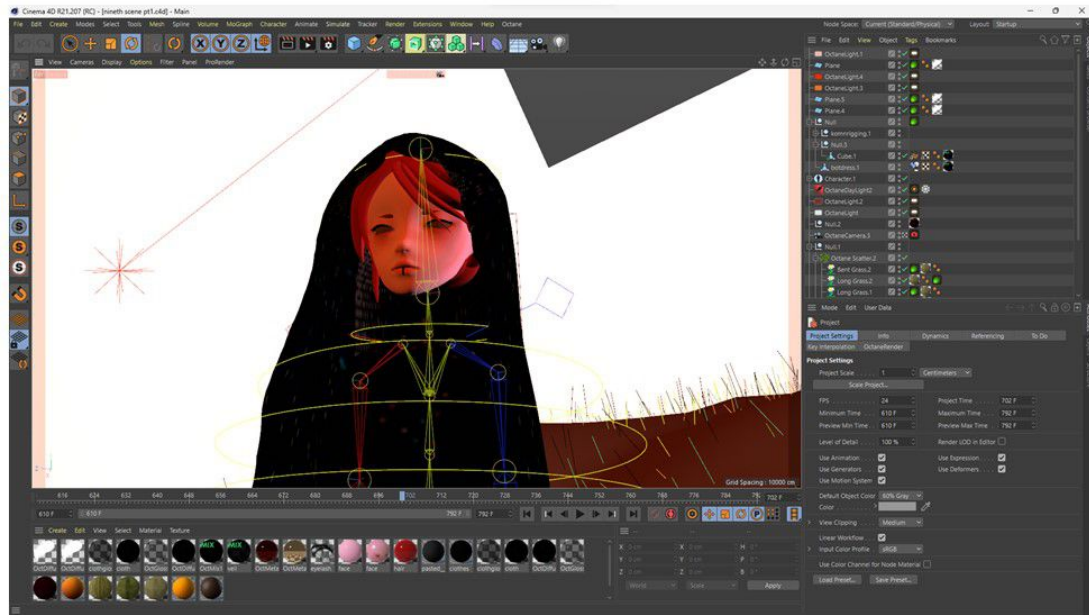


## ▼ Scene 7

Tree gently swaying in the wind as the day goes light.





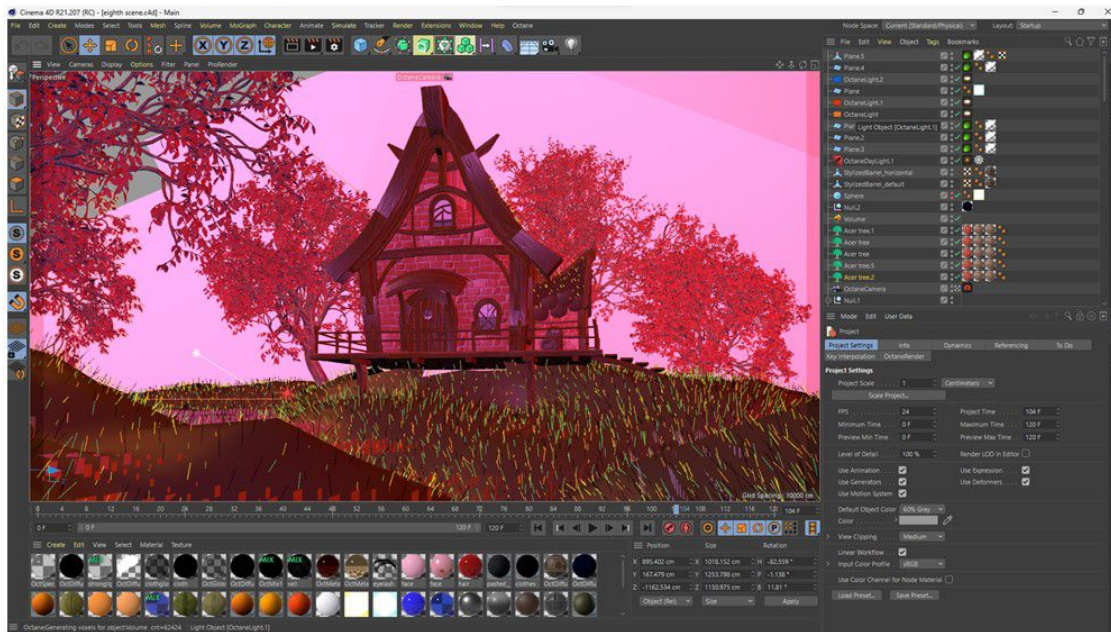


## ▼ Scene 8

The dawnbringer looks at the surrounding as the day goes to light, then she disappeared because her mission is done.







## ▼ Scene 9

The house looking peaceful and harmony under the sun.





# ▼ Final visual

