

Rig painting in After Effects

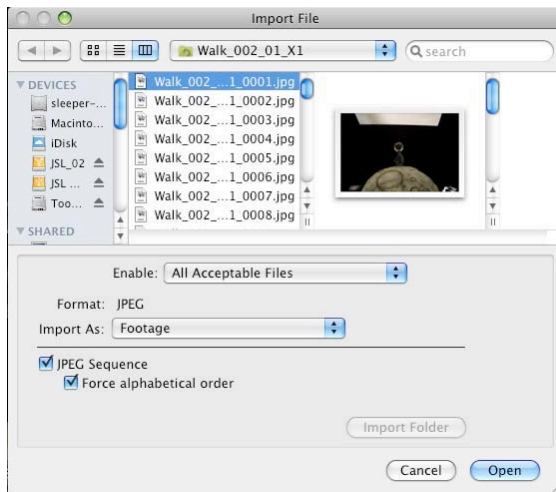
1. Open AE and click on New Composition:

Enter the name of your project in "Composition Name" Preset should be at HDTV 1080 24 If your project is longer than 30 seconds you can change the "Duration" Click OK

2. Save AE Project:

File/Save...

3. Import Image Sequence:



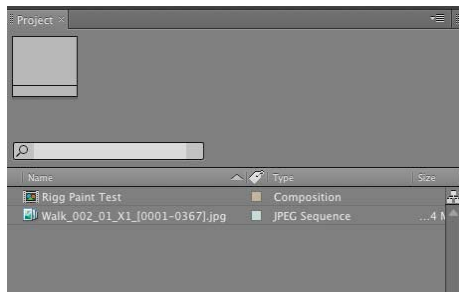
File/Import/File...

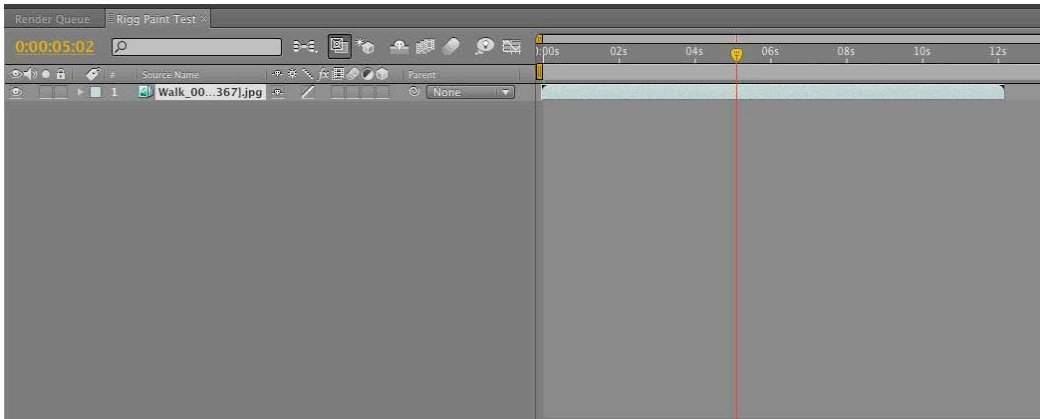
Browse to folder with animation frames and select the first file in the sequence. Check the JPEG Sequence box and Force alphabetical order box in the lower right and click open.

A single file will appear in your Project window.

4. Load Image Sequence into Timeline:

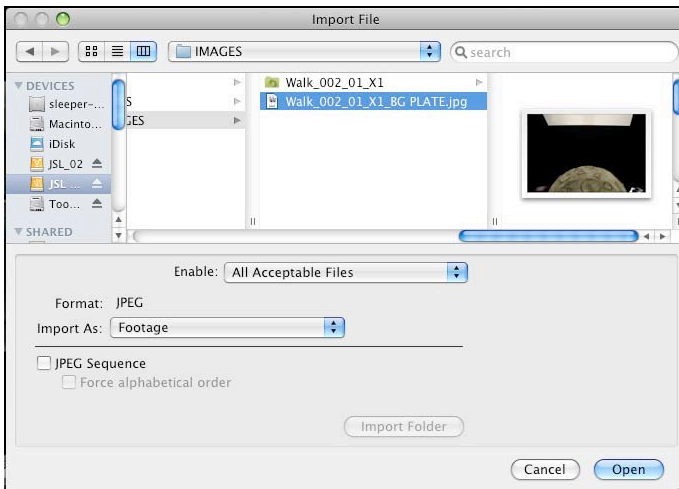
Click and drag file into the Timeline.





5. Import Background Plate:

File/Import/File... Browse to background plate file and select file.



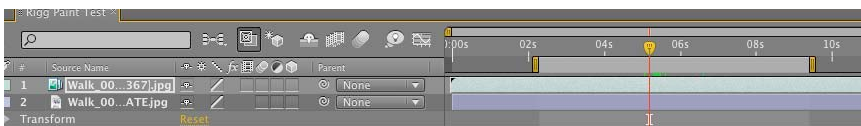
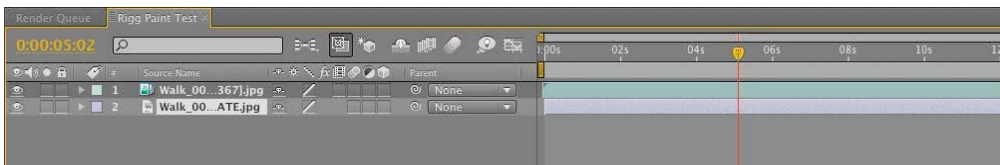
Make sure JPEG Sequence in NOT checked. Drag the plate file from Project window to the Timeline.

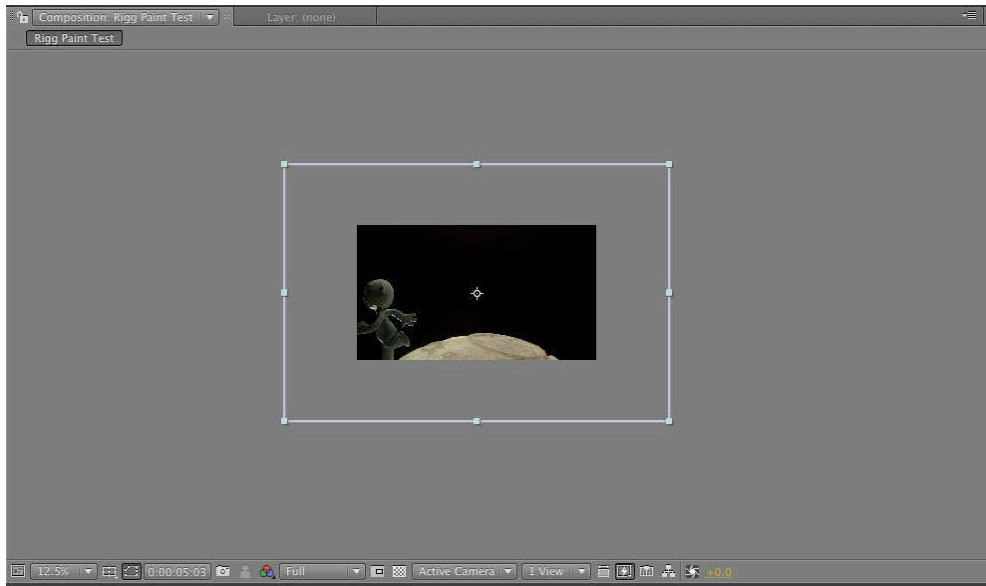
6. Set Work Area:

Grab yellow tabs at either end of the Timeline set your Work Area. Keeping your Work Area relatively small will help your Ram Preview load faster.

7. Size Image to Frame:

Click in the Composition window and use the scroll wheel to zoom out beyond the boundaries of you images.



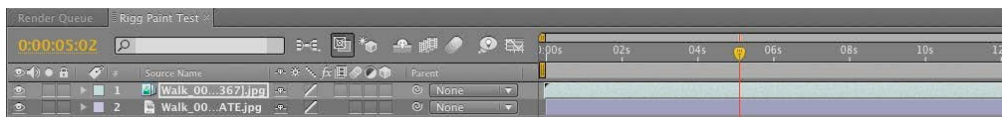


Shift Select both image sequence and BG plate. Then grab a corner point of the Bounding Box, holding the shift key to maintain aspect ration, and



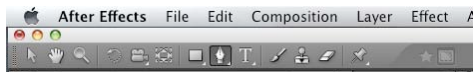
drag the corner until you have the framing you desire. You can also click in the bounding Box to translate image within the frame.

Use scroll wheel to zoom back in to create masks.



8. Choose Frame to Edit:

Select the image sequence in the Timeline by clicking on the Source Name and then move the timeline cursor to a frame that has a rig exposed.



9. Drawing Masks:

Select the Pen Tool from the tool bar in the upper left of the screen.

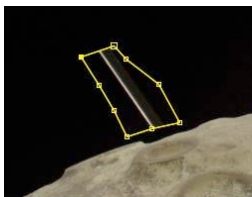
In the Composition window click the Pen tool to create points around the revealed rig. Continue to place points around the rig using extra points to make the mask flexible to accommodate changing shapes later.

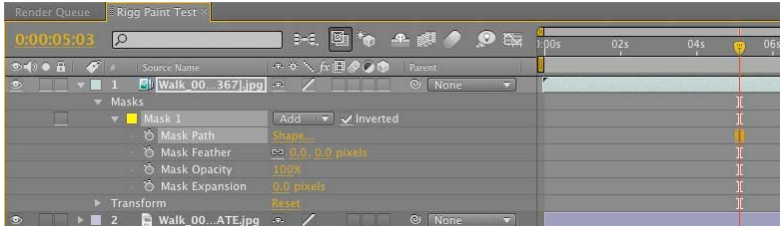


Close Mask by clicking on first point. Once you close the mask your foreground image will disappear revealing your BG Plate except for what is inside the mask. This is the opposite effect that you want.

10. Invert Mask:

In the Timeline open your image sequence controls by clicking on the arrow next to the Source Name. You will see Masks listed as the first layer. Click on the arrow next to Mask 1 to open controls.



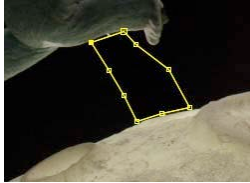


Click the Inverted box to invert mask

11. Edit Mask Points:

With the Pen tool still selected hold the Option key down click the pen tool to move points.

and drag to adjust the point handles to refine the mask. With the Command key down you can use the pen tool to move points.



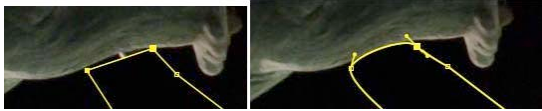
12. Set Keys on Mask Shape:

To set keys on the mask you have just created click on the stopwatch icon next to Mask Path in the Timeline layers under Mask 1.

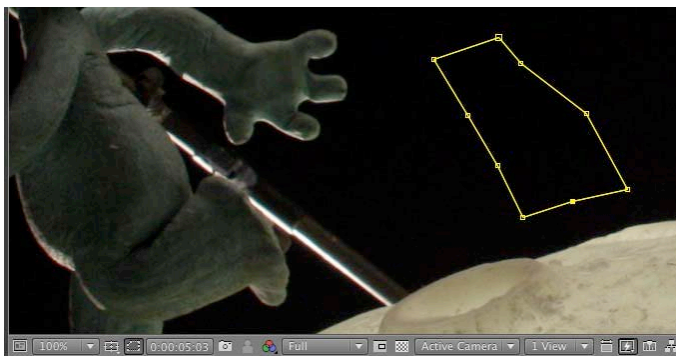
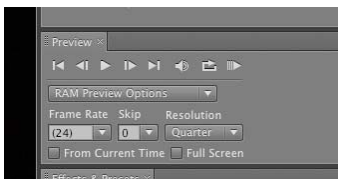
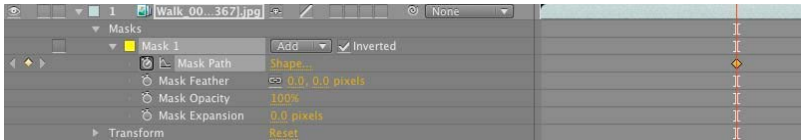
13. Advance to Next Frame:

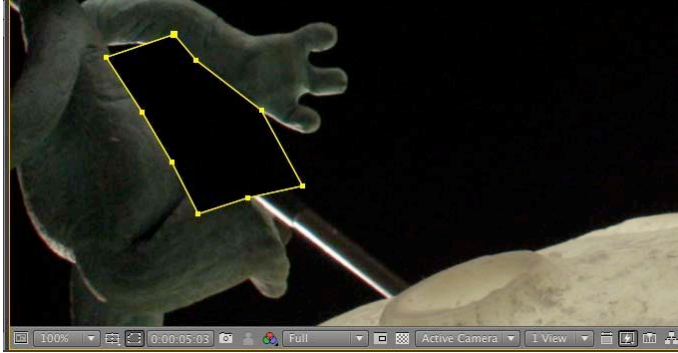
Advance to the next frame by clicking on the Next Frame arrow in the Preview window (upper right screen).

14. Move Mask as a Single Shape:



With Mask selected in the Timeline use the Selection tool (V) to move the entire mask as a single shape.





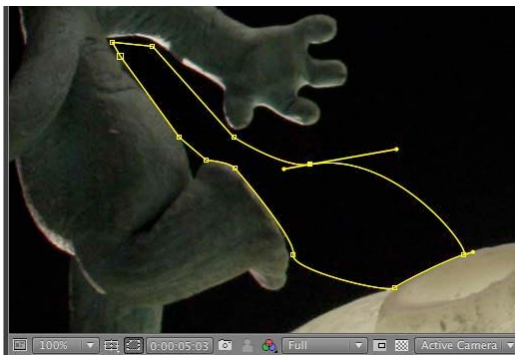
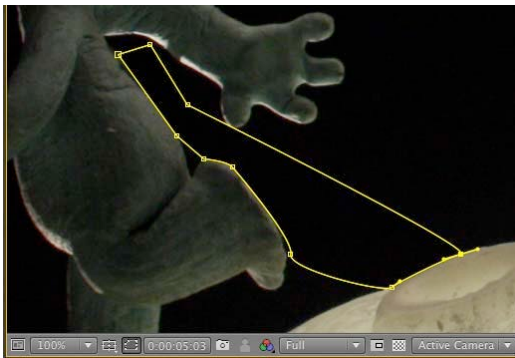
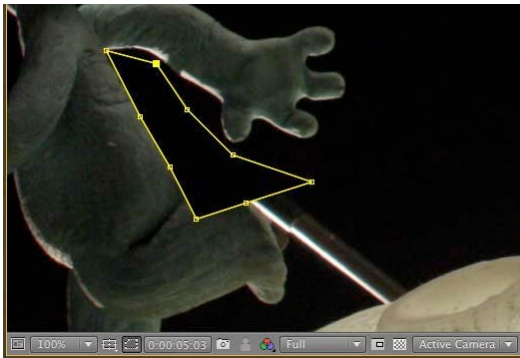
16. Animating individual Points:

Click inside the mask and use the Selection tool (V) to move individual points.

Rearrange points to best fit the puppet to the mask. Use the Pen tool (G) with the Option key to access point handles.

Be careful adding points once keys have been set to you Mask Shape. It may effect previous mask positions.

Advance to the next frame and continue the process.





17. Hiding Mask When Not Needed:



Use the Previous Key button to back up in the timeline to the frame before you created the mask or to any other frame that does not require the Mask you've created. Use the scroll wheel to zoom out well beyond the edges of the frame.

With the Mask selected use the Selection tool (V) to drag the mask outside the frame. Leave it there until you need it to mask out a rig on another frame.

18. Locking off Keys:

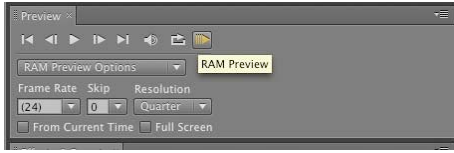
AE will automatically set a key every time you move an object. But if there are frames between the set keys AE will "tween" the position of objects. Make sure you lock off any object positions that will have a tendency to float.

19. Multiple Masks:

Create as many Masks as you need, hiding, animating, and revealing them as necessary.

20. Preview Project:

To save time with RAM Preview make sure you have the Work Area set to preview only the parts of the scene you have been working in (see step 6). In the Preview window click on the RAM Preview button and wait until rendering is complete.



Fix any floating masks by placing animation keys.

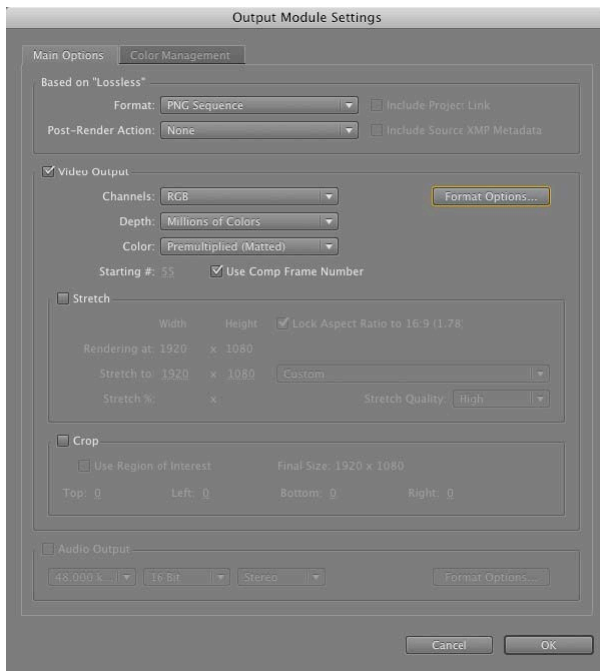
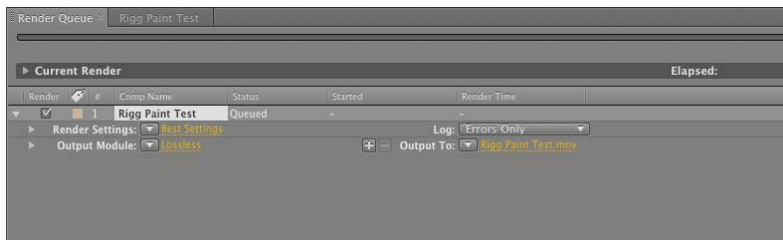
Rendering/ Export Composition

1. Send Composition to Render Queue:

Go to Composition/Add to Render Queue in the top menu panel. The Render Queue will open where the Timeline was and you will see your composition has been added to the queue.

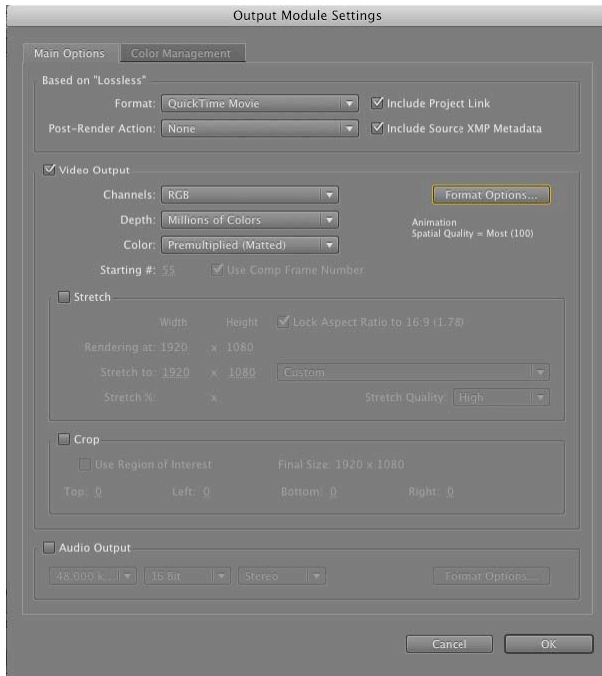
2. Export Settings (3 Options)

a. Export Image Sequence (Best working format if you wish to preserve a frame sequence workflow) Change Output Module PNG Sequence-Lossless:



b. Export Movie (Archive Quality) Change Output Module Settings-Lossless:

Click on Lossless to open Output Module Settings.



Click on Format Options and change compression settings. The default setting is Animation which is very high and good for archiving and maintaining lossless quality but it will not playback in realtime.

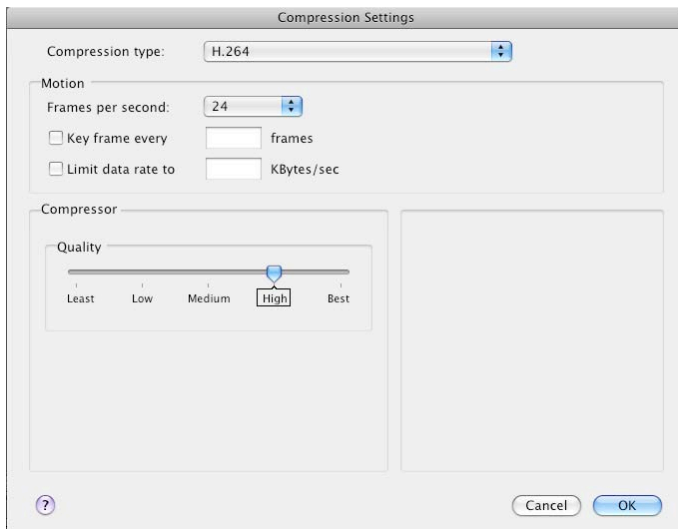
c. Export Movie (Screening Quality)-Change Compression Settings to H.264:

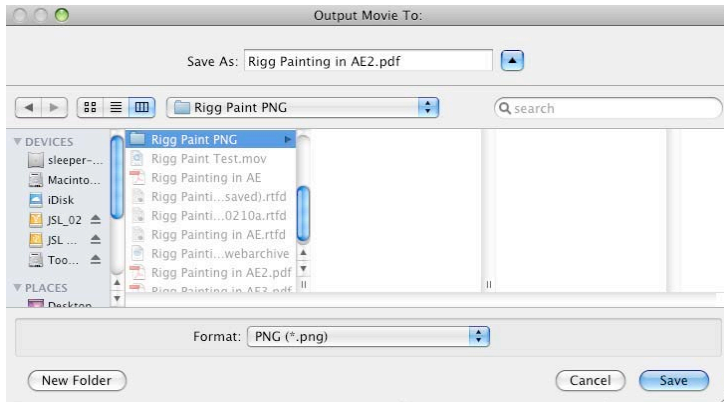
For screening your work choose H264 and change quality to High and FPS to 24.

3. Set Output Destination (2 Options)

a. Set Export Destination-Image Sequence

Click on yellow title after "Output To" and browse to desired location. Create a new folder for your PNG Sequence and set the Name of your files.





b. Set Export Destination-Movie

Click on yellow title after "Output To" and set the Name and destination of your rendered Movie.

24. Send to Render:

Click Render button in the upper left of the Render Queue window.

