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A CreativeCOW Cinema 4D Tutorial

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Jannis Labelle demonstrates:

## Modelling a Bird and Animating its Flight

Part Three: Back to Cinema 4 D to Set up the Bones

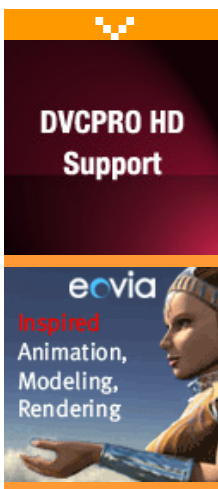


**Jannis Labelle**

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### Article Focus:

In this tutorial, Jannis Labelle demonstrates modelling and animating a bird in flight. This is a follow up of his head tutorial so he will not go into a great detail of describing techniques in minute detail, instead he will try to introduce you to some alternatives in modeling, texturing and animation. It is a tutorial for intermediate level users, you would need to know your way around the view ports, tools, the Attribute Manager and be comfortable with using Photoshop. Still, even as a beginner you will find a lot of information here, so with a bit of effort you should get going. The task will be to model a bird, texture it and animate it, using some shortcuts to demonstrate that there many ways to skin a cat, or a bird for that matter.

Jannis has included a file of the finished model for you to [download here](#) and use as you wish. If you are comfortable with your modeling you can skip this part, grab the mesh and go to the texturing, rigging or animating part, so you can use the tutorial to suit your needs. What ever part you choose to do Jannis hopes that you have fun and learn something. If you do use his model a small mention will be appreciated. But try to make your own, modelling comes only from persevering.

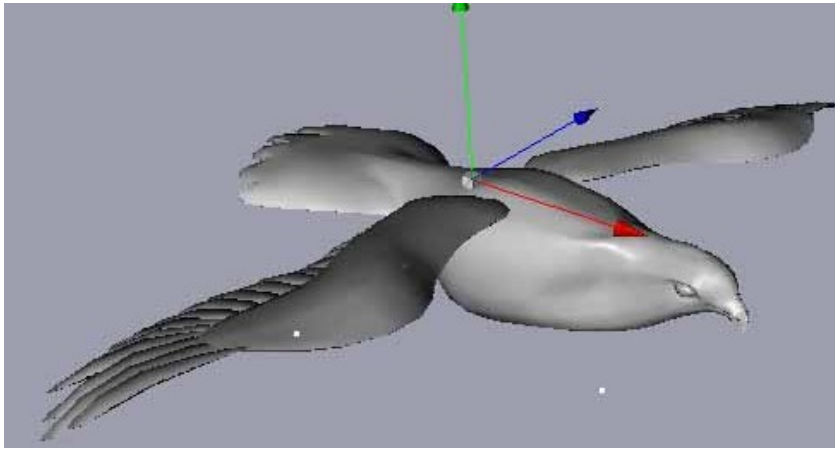
### Setting Up Bones

Setting up bones in Cinema R8 is easy, you only need to understand a few basic things to make sure everything will run smoothly. Of course there is Mocca, but you don't always need it and sometimes soft IK over complicates things. Anyway, we want to keep things simple for now, so let's get started with setting up a basic rig for the bird. What I want you to learn from this is that you don't always need to set up a complete rig, but a rig that will provide you with all the motion you need.

You can get the finished rigged file from [Here](#)

1. Import the file you have made of the bird model or (01) you the one already provided. If you have a slow computer make a copy and delete all the materials, if you have completed the texturing part of this tutorial. The reason for this is that even if you use display tags to hide materials, your ram will still be slowed down somewhat, so it is easier to have a textured file and an animated file and bring them together at the end. My advice is to do that anyway even if you have a fast computer.
2. In the Object Manager turn off everything but the **Null Wing** null. This contains wing and feathers meshes (02)



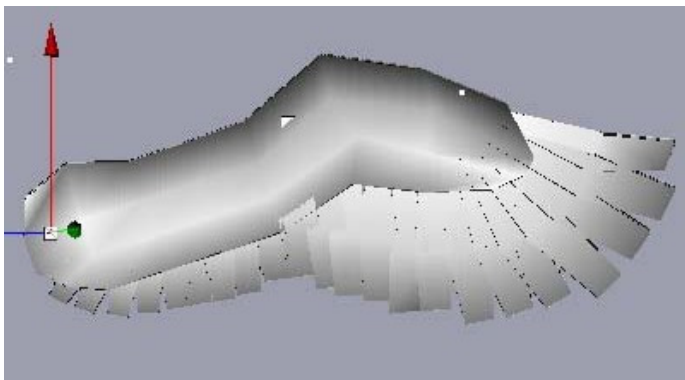


01



02

1. Use the top view (03) and from deformers choose **Bone**, using **coordinates** or the **move** and **rotate** tools (**Don't use the scale tool!**) create a bone and place it at the root of the wing name it **Shoulder**.
2. Using the little orange point drag out three children bones (05), **Tip 1**, **Tip 2**, **Tip 3** (04).

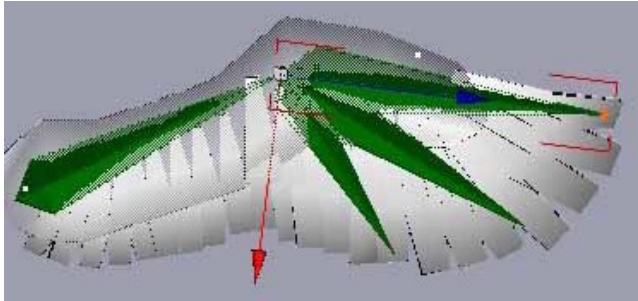


03

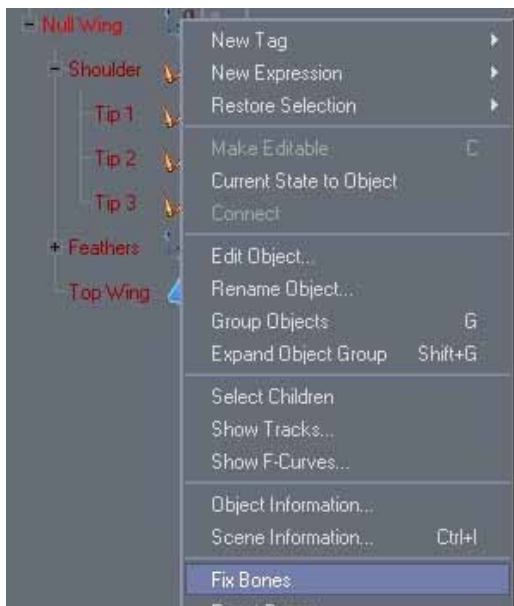


04

1. Select the **Shoulder** bone and drop it inside the **Null Wing**. Bones have to be either a child of the mesh they are to effect or a child of null in which the mesh should also be.
2. **Right click** on the **Shoulder** bone in the **Object Manager** and choose **Fix bones (06)**. Bones have to be fixed, that means that they have to be given new coordinates from which they effect the mesh. This is good because you can mess them around and from the same menu you can use Reset bones to return them to their starting position, edit them and fix them again in this new position- rotation coordinates.

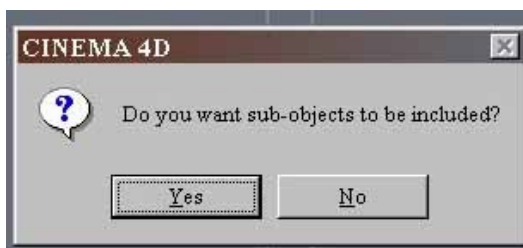


05

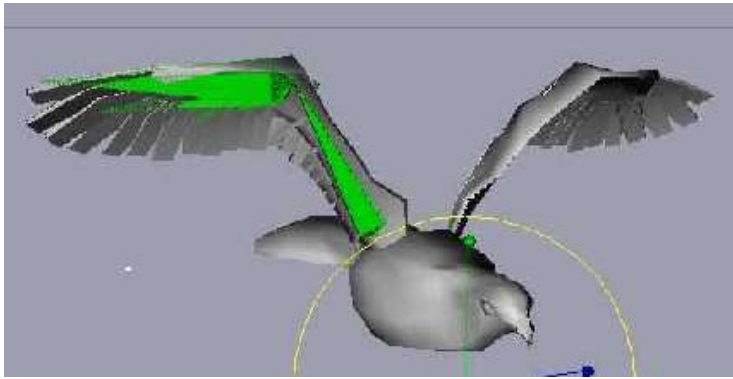


06

1. You should now see a dialog box asking if sub-object should be included (07). This gives you editing freedom to fix some bones and play around with others. In this case and in most cases choose yes.
2. Your bones are now fixed and you can use the rotate tool to see your bird flapping its wings (08). Because we made the wings separate to the body we didn't need to set up vertex maps, neither do we have to be worried about distortion to the body mesh. This is a case of saving yourself from too much work.

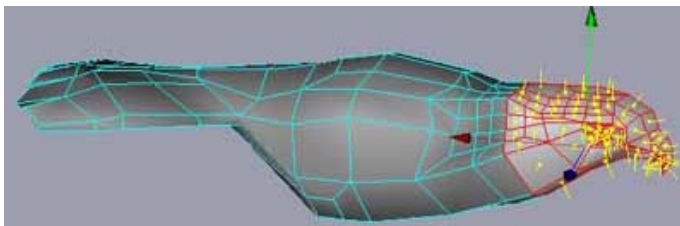


07



08

1. Hide everything in the *Object Manager* except for the body mesh, on **poly** mode select all the polys for of the head (09).
2. From **Selection**, choose **Set selection** and in the **Attribute manager** call name it **Head** (10).

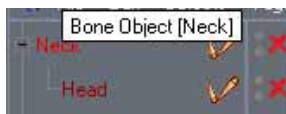


09

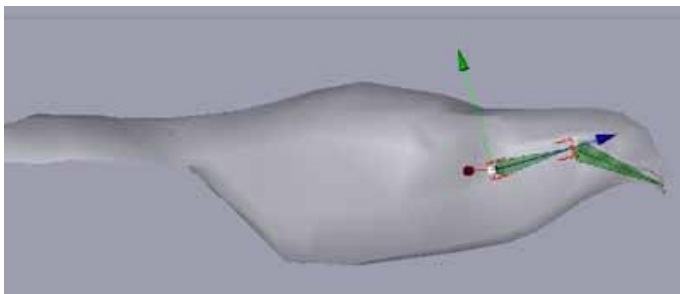


10

Create two more bones and call them Neck and Head (11) and put them in place (12)



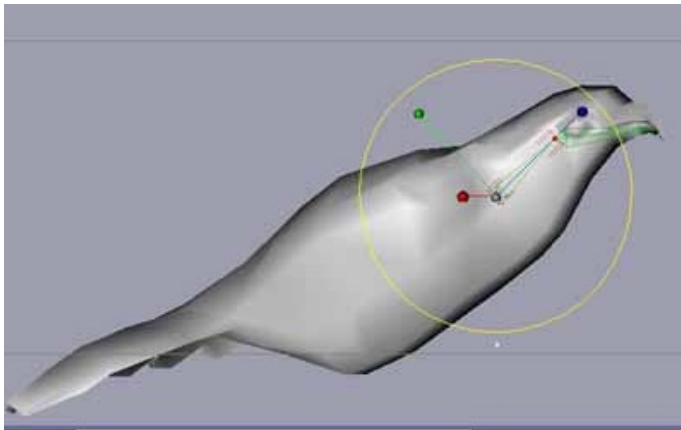
11



12

1. Again right click on the **Neck** bone and choose **Fix bones**.
2. As you rotate the bones you will see that the whole of the bird is rotated (13), that is because the bones affect the whole of the mesh by default.

3. To fix this **right click** again on the **Neck** bone and choose **Restriction** tag (14). Type **Head** in the input and make sure that you type the Capitals because restriction tags are **case sensitive**. Restriction tags restrict the effect of the bones to a selection of or a vertex map leaving the rest of the mesh unaffected.
4. In the **Object manager**, **Control drag** the **restriction** tag to duplicate it for the **Head** bone.

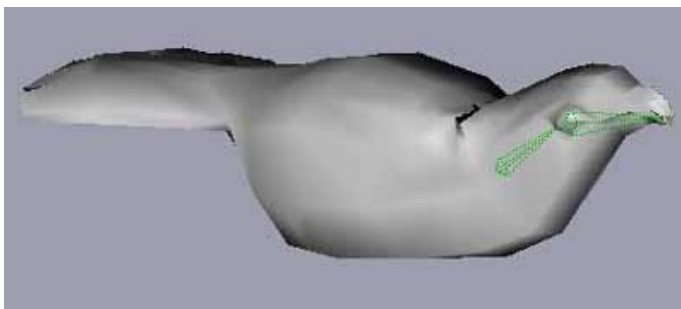


13

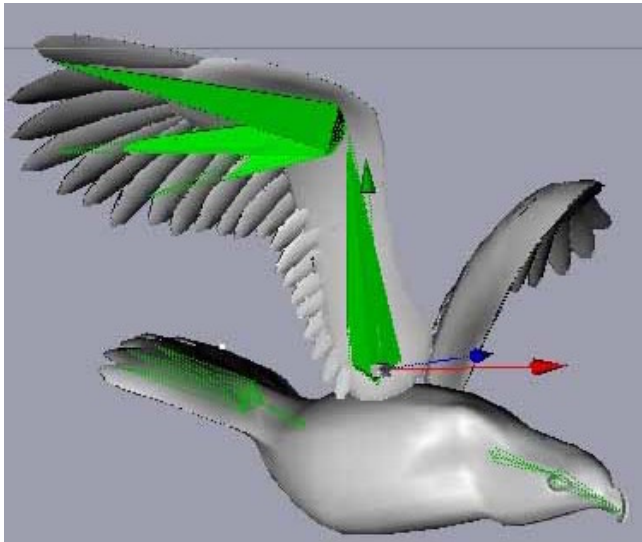


14

1. Now the bones are working fine.
2. Use the same steps to create a **Tail** selection and a tail rig with restriction tags.
3. You can see the whole rig (16) posing the bird in mid flight.



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16

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