

Foreword

Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire.
— W. B. Yeats

Years ago when I was in college preparing for My Future — is it the Future already? — I learned some valuable information that has been the foundation on which I have built my skill set. I learned about design, layout, and other visual communication skills. Oh yeah, and lighting. I learned lighting by accident.

My last year in school I had a few credits to burn, so I signed up for a photography class thinking it would be a great way to capture images and create my own reference material from which to paint. I thought I would spend most of my time learning about developing film and operating the camera. Instead, we spent the entire semester learning about lighting for photography. Little did I know that I was about to learn the most valuable information about working in 3D. I was convinced that all I needed to do was point and click the camera, and I would have a perfect picture. If there is one thing that I took away from that class, is to always pay attention to lighting conditions when creating a photo — lighting plays a key role in getting a quality shot.

Unfortunately, most young 3D artists approach lighting the same way I approached photography before that class. Many artists spend days working on a model and countless hours texturing it — only to spend just a few minutes lighting it. For many, lighting is a second thought. The three steps of 3D for most people are Model, Animate, Render. What many people forget is that without great lighting, even the best models and textures won't give you a great final product.

As a member of the 3D community, I spend many hours of my free time in community forums talking about LightWave®, sharing tips and tricks, and visiting the many online image galleries. Common replies to gallery posts are “great model,” “awesome textures,” “killer animation,” and other praise for every area of 3D, but very few replies mention lighting. What would those “killer” images be without “killer” lighting?

Throughout the years I have had the honor of meeting many talented artists, but I have never met someone more passionate about lighting than Nicholas Boughen. Who better to teach you the skills of lighting than someone who has over 20 years of experience, and puts it to use on a daily basis? Remember that you are learning from someone

who not only has the ability and knowledge to apply it in a real-world production environment but also has the unique talents required to pass that knowledge on to others.

Get ready to attend lighting school.

LightWave 3D 8 Lighting will teach you how to work with lights inside of LightWave and how to break down real-world lighting so that you can recreate it in your virtual world. This book will take your lighting to a whole new level and give your work that edge you've been looking for. I'm sure you will be left with the same impression I had when I finished this book — "Priceless."

— William Vaughan

Freedom is just chaos, with better lighting.

— Alan Dean Foster, *To the Vanishing Point*

• • •

William "Proton" Vaughan is a seasoned LightWave veteran who currently is NewTek's LightWave 3D evangelist. Not only does he love working in LightWave and promoting it around the globe for NewTek, he is also the recipient of several New Media Addy awards.

William Vaughan brings broad-based experience to his position at NewTek, having done 3D work for print, web, multimedia, games, and broadcast. Over the past ten years, Vaughan has established a strong reputation for his award-winning work for clients such as Compaq, New Line Cinema, Halliburton, and many others. He has also worked in the LightWave community as an instructor at North Harris Community College.

Vaughan's other activities in LightWave user education include training entire companies to use LightWave, such as NASA, Fulbright & Jaworski, and KHOU Channel 11, the CBS affiliate in Houston.