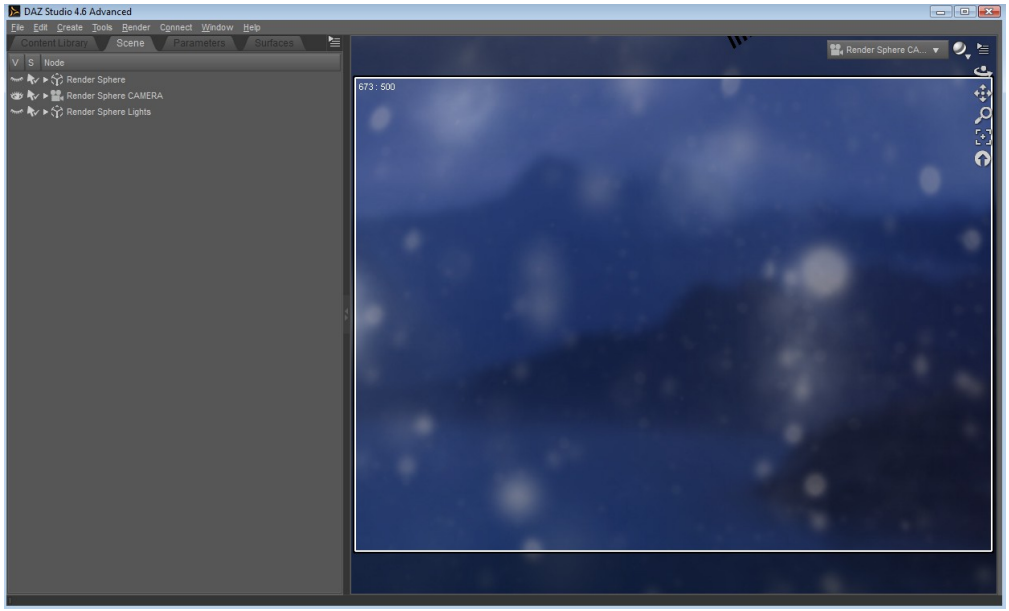
Render Sphere Quick Start User Guide

Render Sphere for DAZ Studio is a combined light set with a few spherical objects that surround your scene / characters and provide special effects / filters. It's made to be easy to use, ready to render out of the box and features special optional filters you can apply inside Photoshop / The Gimp to further enhance your images.

To load Render Sphere into your scene, go to the Scene Tab and locate the RenderSphere icon in the following location:

DAZ Studio formats → My Library → Dreamlight → Render Sphere

Once loaded, bring up the Scene Tab. You will see three items:

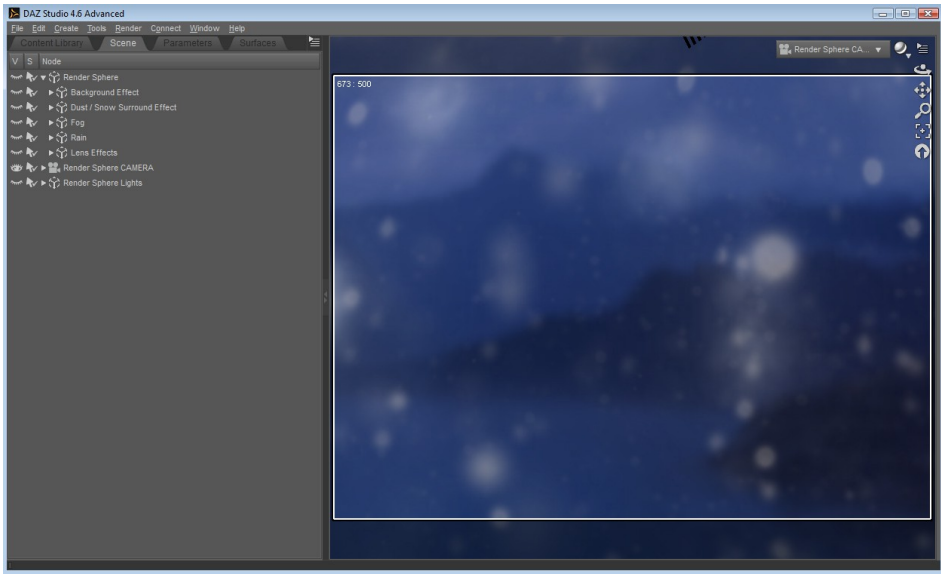


Render Sphere holds the main effects. Render Sphere CAMERA is the camera through which you want to render in order to make use of the attached camera light. You can use other cameras, but it won't have the same light, although the camera light is not very intense by default. Render Sphere Lights holds all the other lights.

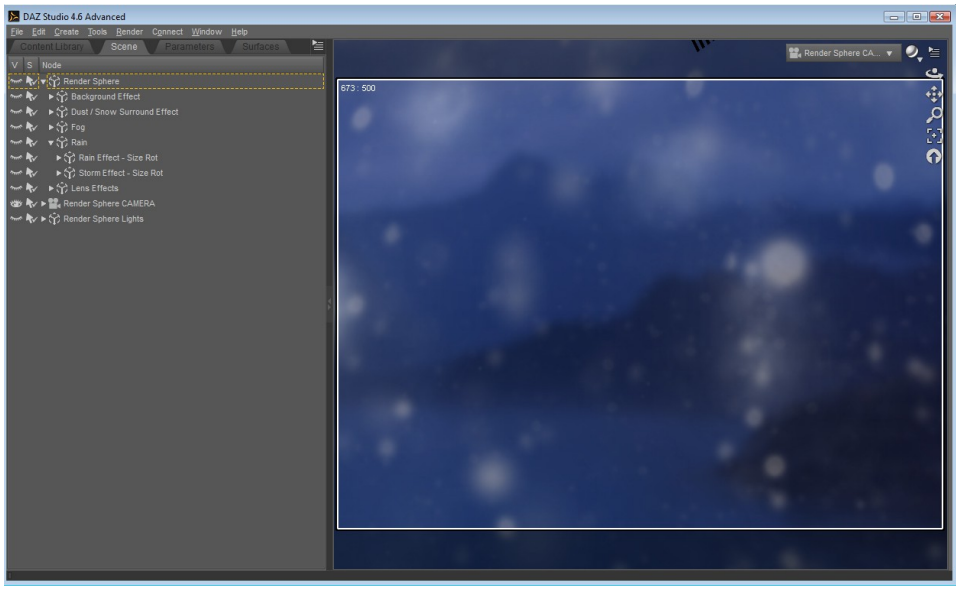
At this point you can populate the scene (add your characters / props), or if you added the Render Sphere after your scene is completed, you may need to adjust it to match your scene. Render Sphere is designed for character rendering, but can be used for smaller scenes and props as well.

Adjusting the Render Sphere is done primarily in 3 steps inside DAZ Studio: Size and rotation of the spheres, selecting what effects to use and how intense you want them to be and finally, adjusting the lights. Bear in mind, Render Sphere is ready to render out of the box.

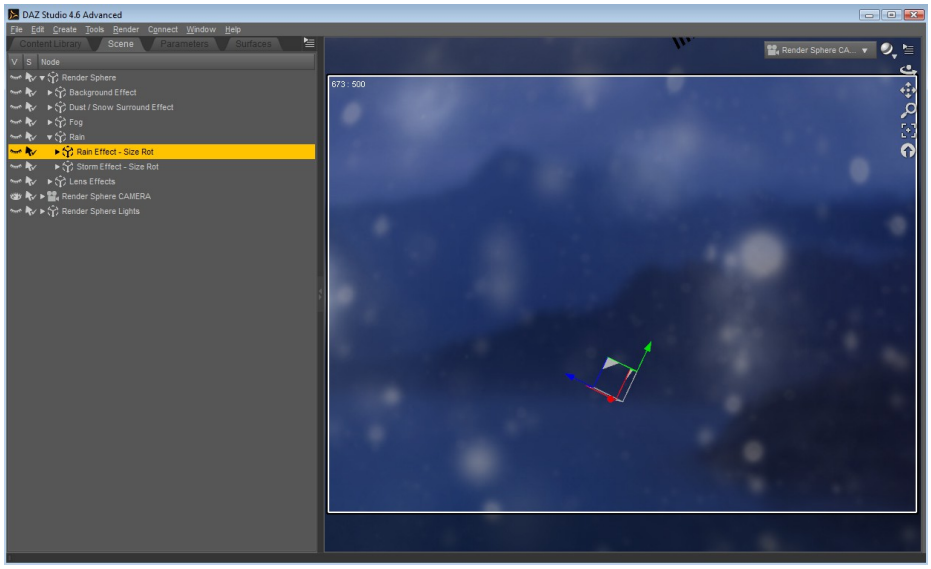
We'll be exploring all three next. Click on the small arrow next to Render Sphere in the Scene Tab. It will expand and reveal all the pieces inside:



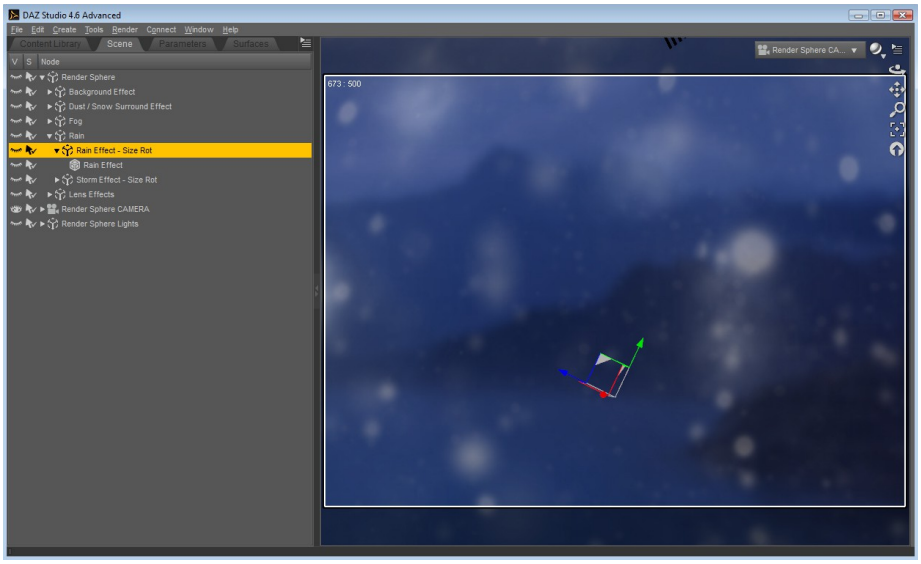
Inside you will find: Background Effect, Dust / Snow Surround Effect, Fog, Rain and Lens Effects. To adjust the size and rotation of any of the parts, you must first expand the main section of the desired part. For instance, to adjust the Rain, you must first expand the Rain folder. Click on the small arrow next to Rain to expand it:



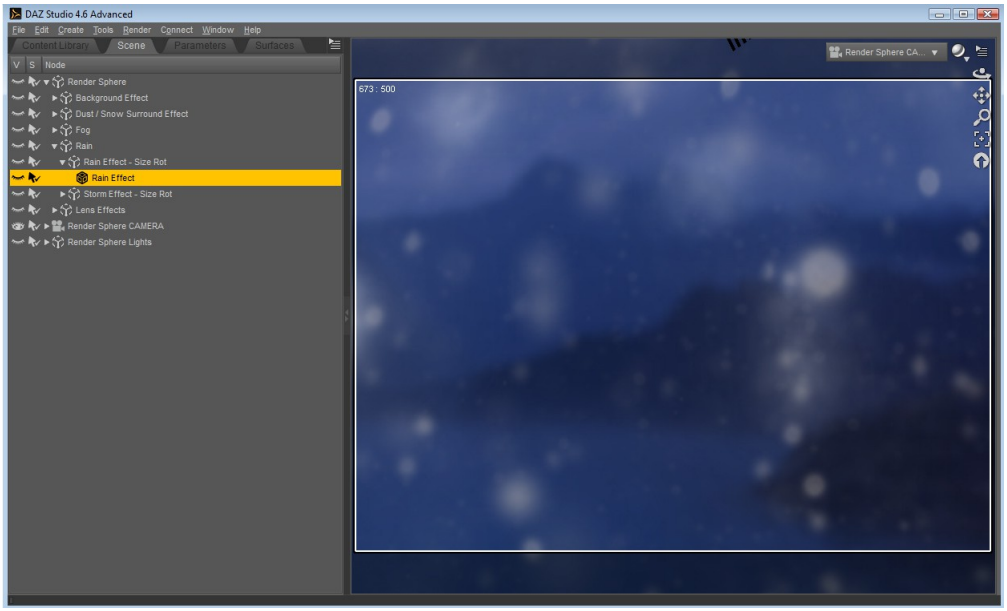
Inside the Rain folder you will find Rain Effect – Size Rot and Storm Effect – Size Rot. The Size Rot handle for any effect enables you to resize / rotate or even move that effect. You can adjust that in the Parameters Tab, once the desired effect Size Rot handle is selected. First, select Rain Effect – Size Rot handle. It should highlight like this:



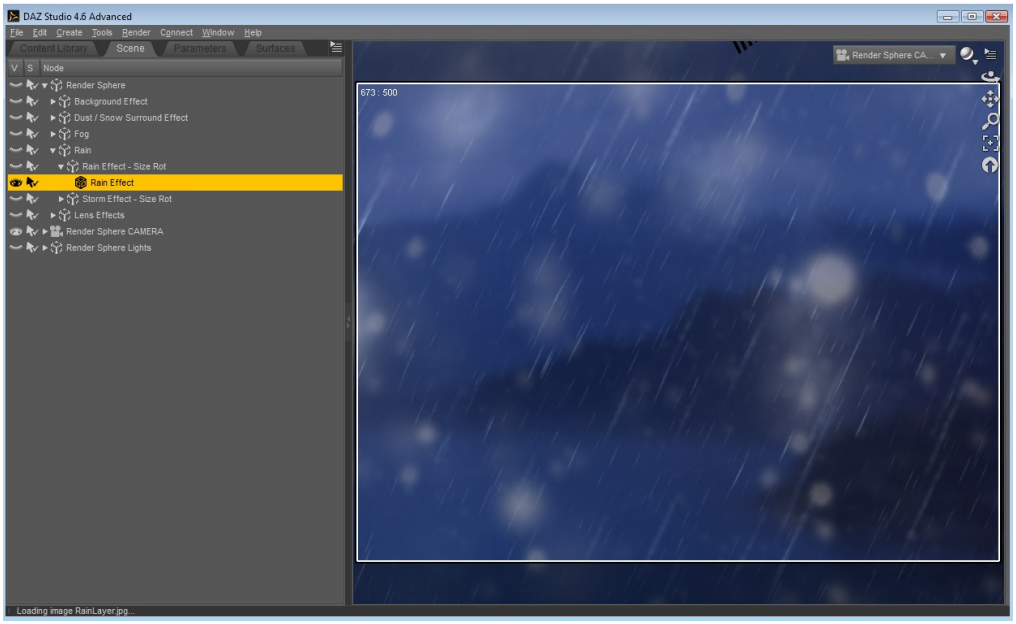
You can now adjust this handle in the Parameters Tab, however since the rain is currently turned off, you would not notice any changes. First we need to turn on the rain effect. To do so, expand the Rain Effect – Size Rot handle by clicking on the small arrow next to it. It should look like this:



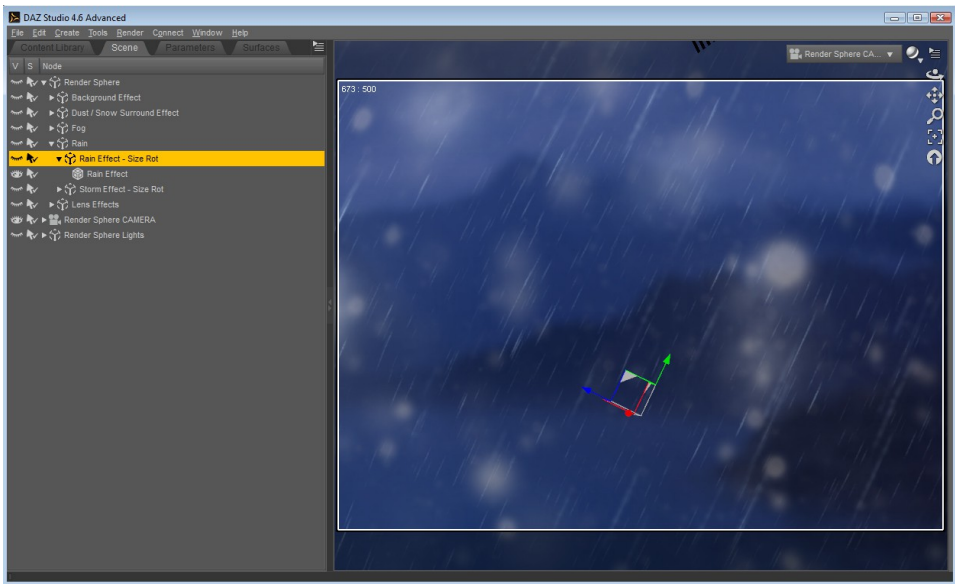
Now that you can see the Rain Effect, you also notice that the Eye Icon next to it is closed. In order to turn on the Rain Effect, click on the Rain Effect object itself. It will then become highlighted and your view should look similar to this:



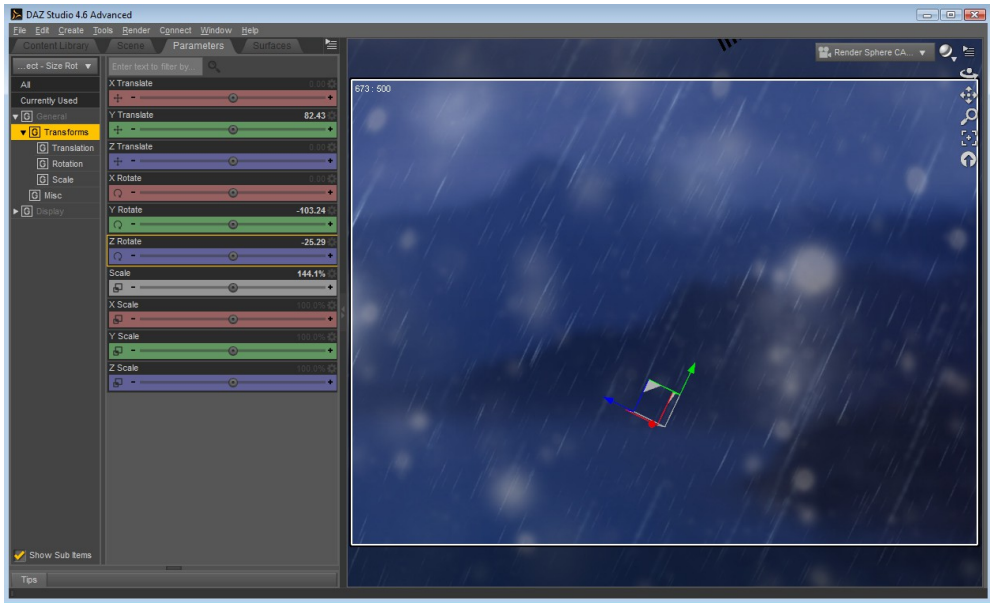
Next, we want to turn the Rain Effect on, by clicking on the eye icon next to it. Immediately when you click on the eye icon on the Rain Effect object, the rain will preview in the window on the right:



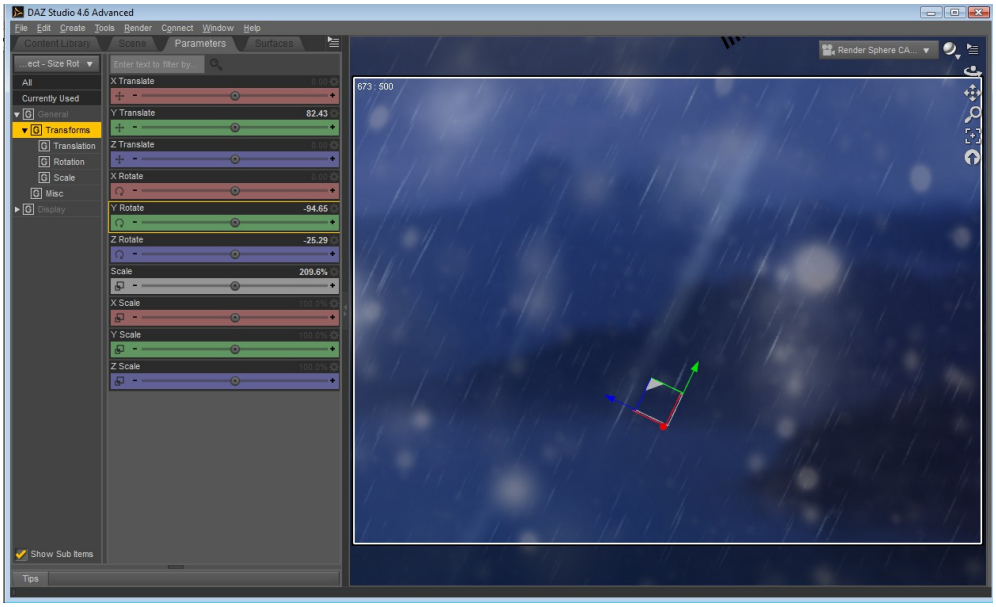
Once the Rain Effect is visible, select the Rain Effect – Size Rot handle again. It will then become highlighted just as before. Your view should now look similar to this:



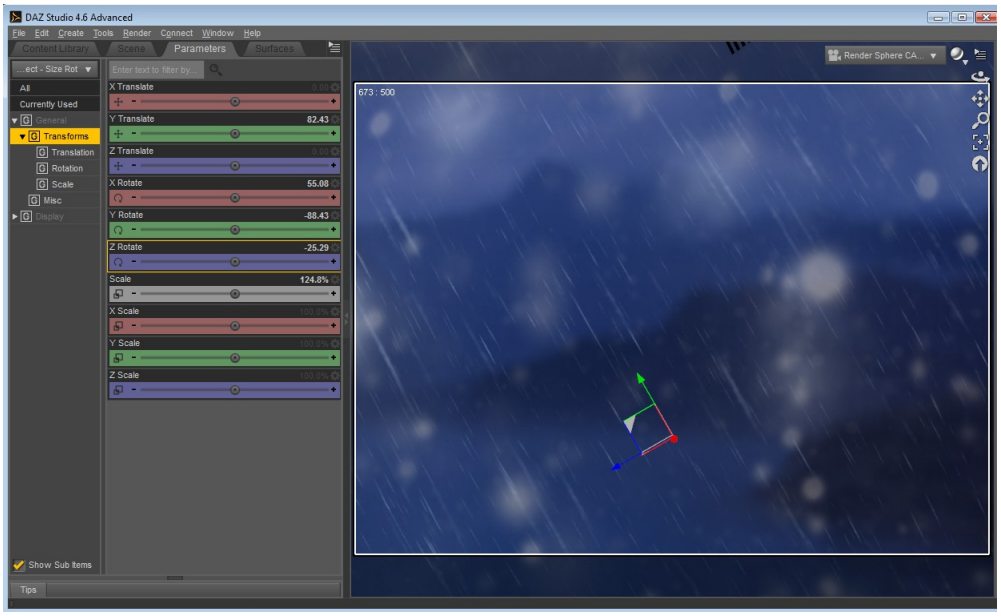
Now that the rain is turned on, and the Rain Effect- Size Rot handle is selected, you can head over to Parameters Tab, and adjust the Rain Effect – Size Rot handle. Do not adjust the Rain object itself, since that will not produce the desired effect. While in the Parameters Tab, your view should look something like this:



In this view, you can adjust any Rot Size handle in various ways. Some allow you to move (translate) the effect in X, Y or Z direction. Some allow you to rotate in X, Y or Z direction. And most allow you to resize using Scale, X, Y and Z Scale. Try resizing the Rain Effect with Scale and rotating it with Y Rotate. Your view may look similar to this:

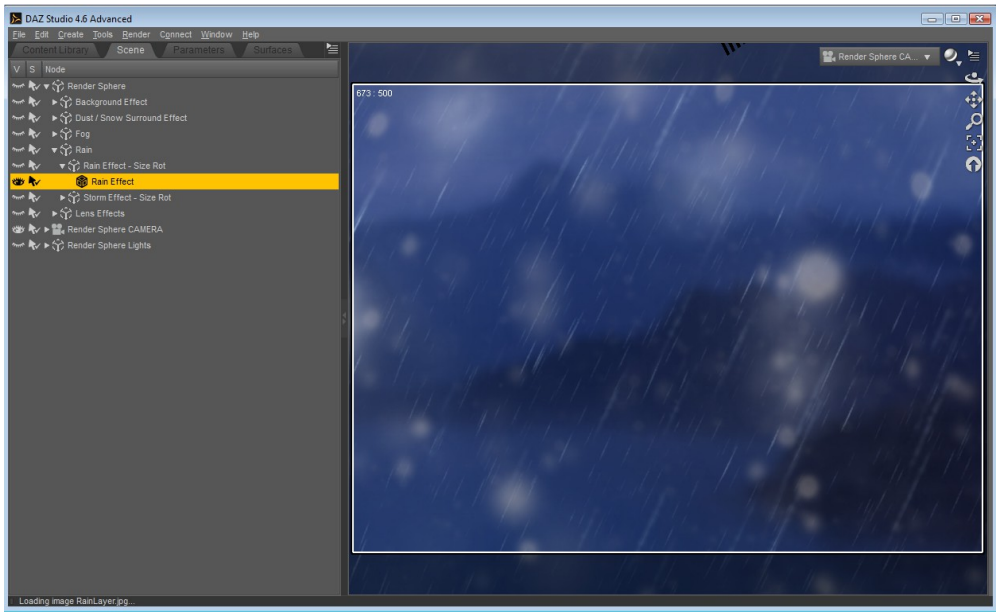


Next, what you can do is using X Rotate to align the Rain Effect in a different way, so that it attacks your scene from a left top diagonal facing bottom right. Like this:

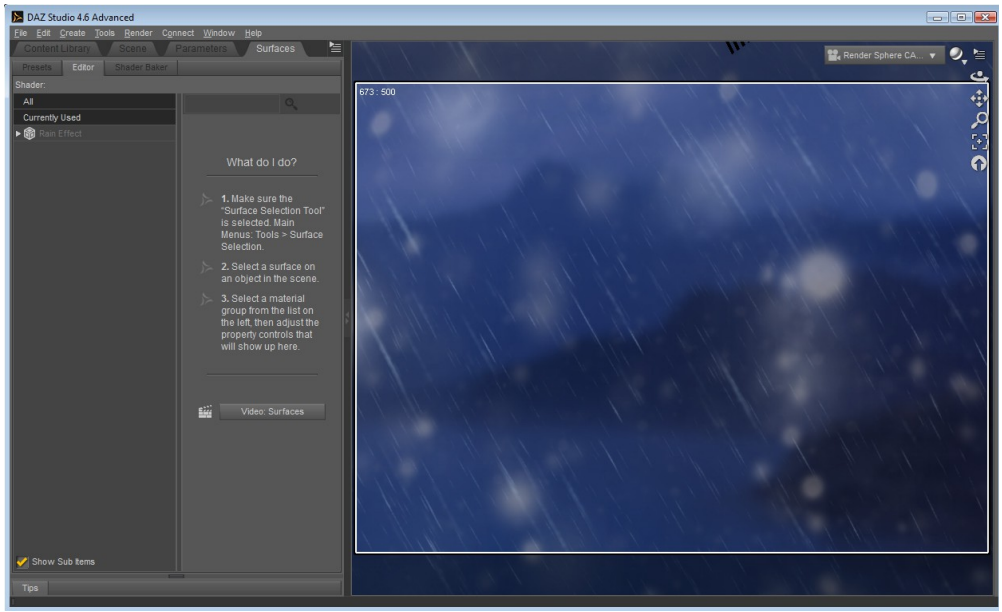


As you rotate the Rain, you notice the 3D effect, since the sphere surrounds your scene and gives effects both behind and in front of your characters, props or scene. Most effects work in the same fashion except for the Background Effect, which has fewer options and not meant to be resized that much.

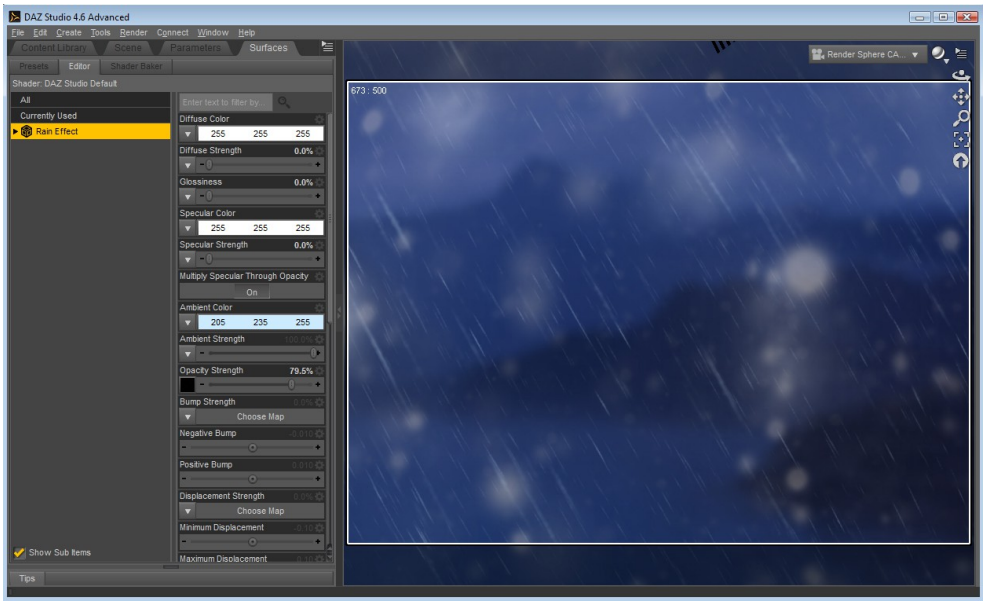
All effects have additional functions inside the Surfaces Tab. In order to access those effects, you need to deselect the Size Rot handle of an effect, and select the object itself. In this case, go back to the Scene Tab and select the Rain Effect object so it becomes highlighted:



Once selected, go to Surfaces Tab and the view should look similar to this:

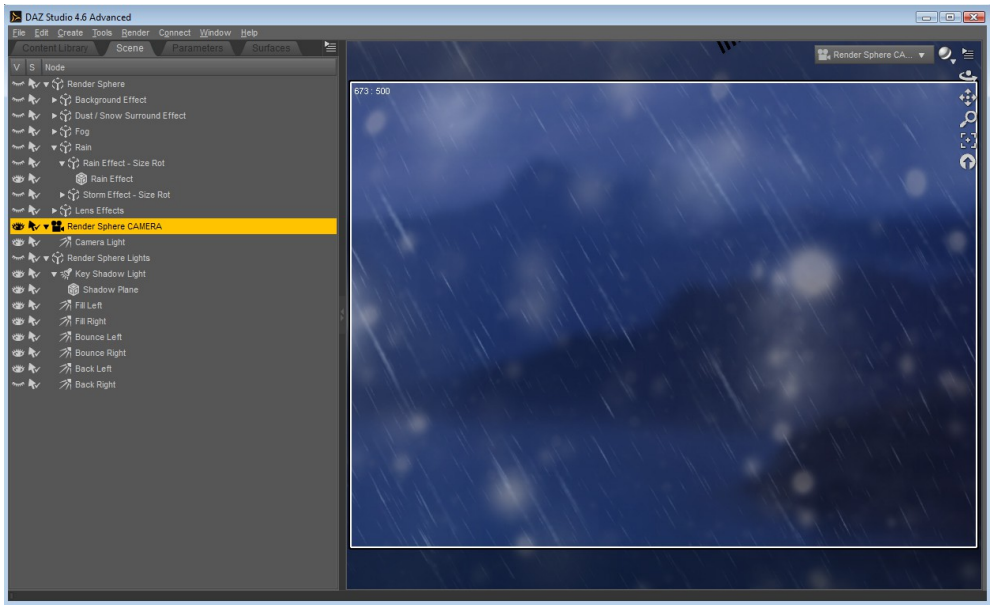


Select the Rain Effect surface in the Shader menu (top left) so that it highlights and displays all surface properties:



Every effect has mainly two (2) properties that you can adjust, Ambient Color and Opacity Strength. Ambient Color controls the color of the effect, while Opacity Strength controls how intense the effect is. Background Effect also uses a third property called Ambient Strength, which controls the intensity of the background. Background Effect doesn't use Opacity Strength, since it should not be transparent.

Next, head back to the Scene Tab, and expand the Render Sphere Camera folder. Expand the Render Sphere Lights folder and expand the Key Shadow Light, so you can see the Shadow Plane. Your view should look similar to this:

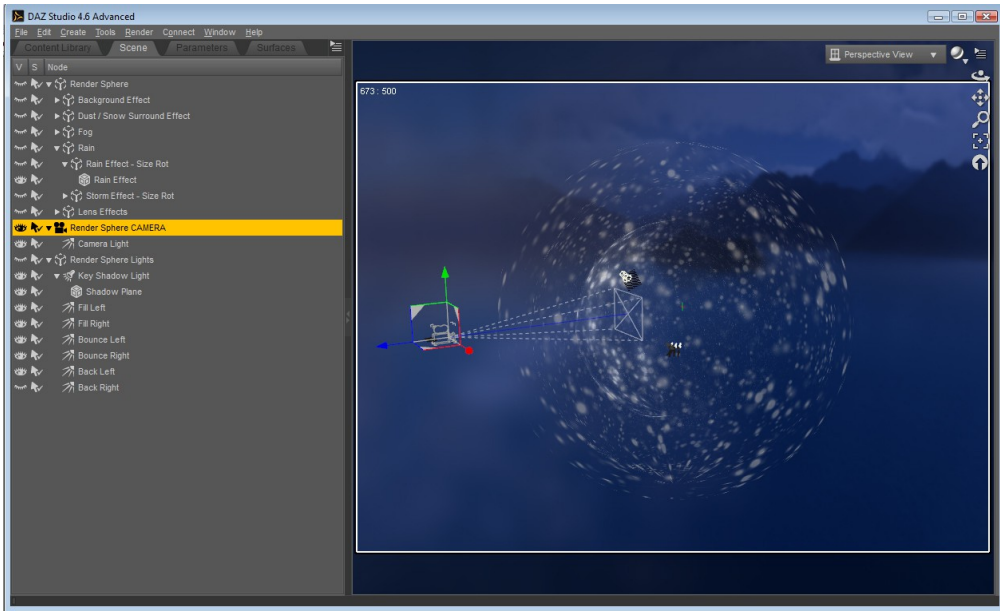


What you can see here, are the final function of Render Sphere. First, the Render Sphere CAMERA. Try rendering through that camera when you render, since it has a Camera Light attached (paranted) to it. This light gives additional lighting straight towards the scene / character(s) and might be useful. If you render through a custom camera, you will not have

this light added straight on, since other cameras might view your scene from a different angle than this camera and its Camera Light. Having that said, you can render via any camera you like, as long as it's a “camera”, and not any of the other views, just as perspective, left, front and similar.

You can move the Render Sphere CAMERA and zoom in / out just like any ordinary camera. Bear in mind that the Render Sphere CAMERA is designed to be at a distinctive distance towards the scene and all the effect spheres, so you can benefit from all the forground / background / surround effects.

If you take a look at the scene from the perspective view, and zoom out, you will see the camera outside the largest sphere:



You should keep the camera outside all spheres at all times, in order to benefit from all effects. However, you CAN move the camera closer to the center of the sphere, and therefore closer to your props / characters, just bear in mind that you might lose some of the effects as the camera passes through them and leaves them behind the camera.

A good way to make sure that the Render Sphere CAMERA is always outside all effect spheres, is to use the orbit icon (while having the Render Sphere CAMERA view selected), which is the top icon (left mouse button) in the camera control section.

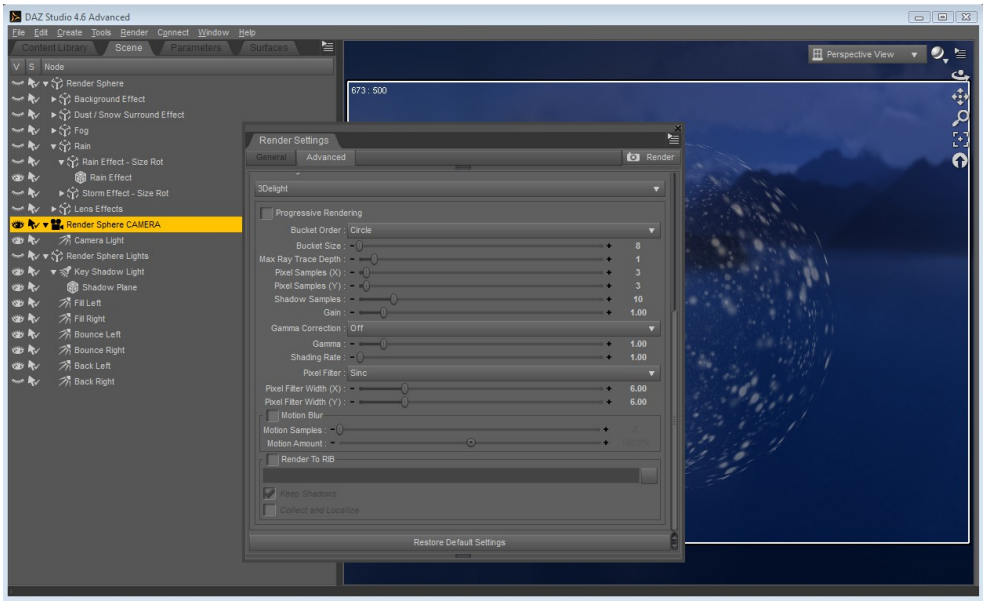
All the lights are pre-calibrated and ready to render for a single character with the camera coming from the front. If you want to adjust the lights, then all lights except for one are distant lights, and only a few render with shadows. All distant lights can be selected and adjusted like any distant light. They are easy to adjust since you can view through each distant light's camera and quickly rotate them in place. Distant lights cannot be moved.

Distant lights used are: Fill Left, Fill Right, Bounce Left, Bounce Right, Back Left, Back Right and Camera Light. Fill lights render with soft shadows. Bounce lights render without shadows. Back lights render with sharp shadows, and Back Right is turned off by default.

The last light in the scene is a little special. It's a spot light called Key Shadow Light and it has a Shadow Plane attached (parented) to it with a Stripe / Blinds Texture. This light can be moved, rotated and you can also adjust its spread angle in the Parameters Tab. While looking through this lights camera view, you can also see the Shadow Plane that will show right in front of it. This Shadow Plane can be selected in the Parameters Tab and then adjusted with X,Y,Z translate and X,Y,Z rotate and X,Y,Z scale to fit your scene and create the desired effect.

This particular light can create really spectacular shadow effects, such as this one:

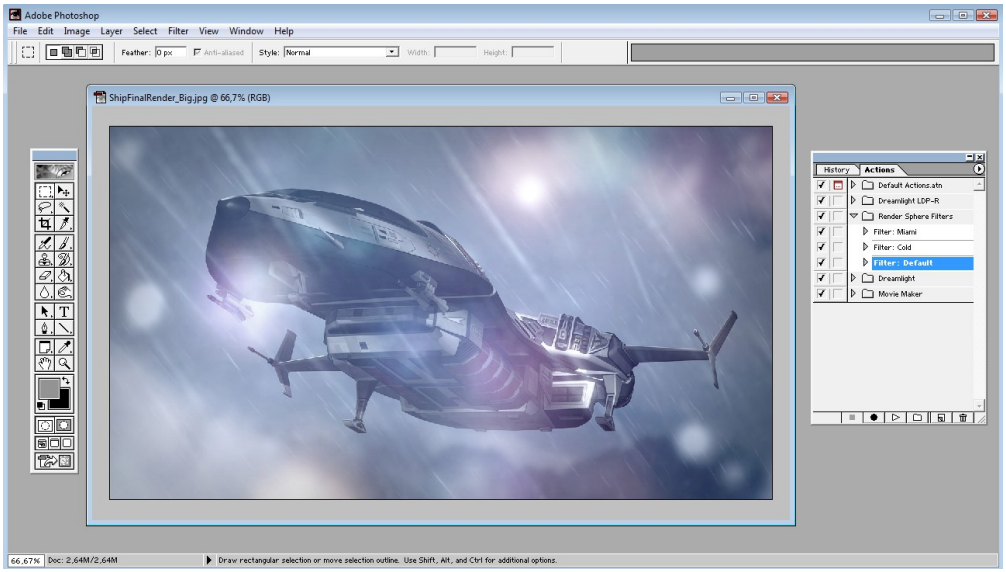
As far as render settings goes, here's a screen shot with the recommended ones:



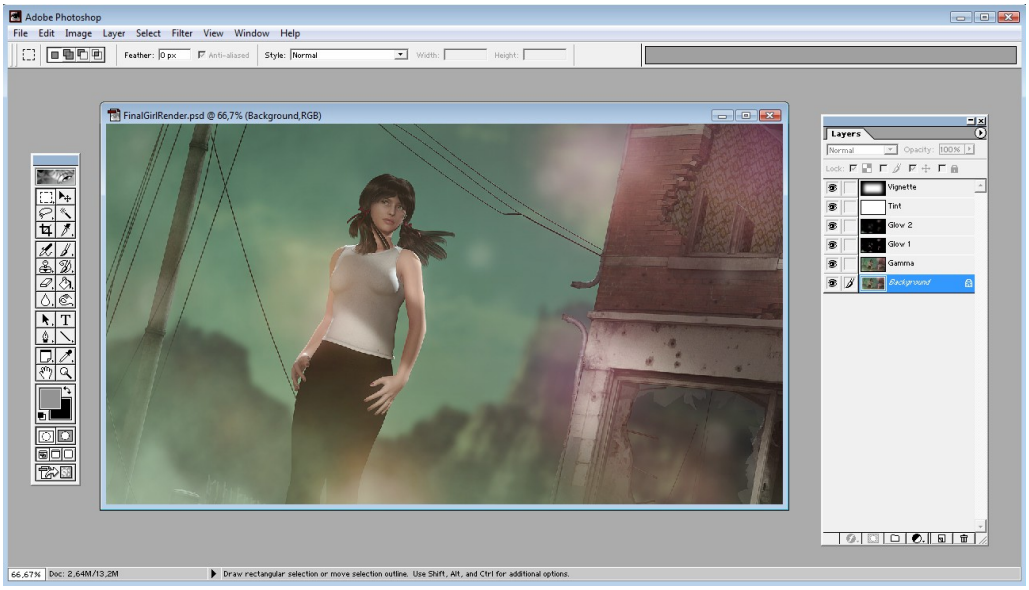
Once your render is finished, you can bring it over to Photoshop (or The Gimp).

Inside Photoshop, load the image and bring out the Actions Palette. Locate Render Sphere Filters and choose between Miami, Cold or Default. When using The Gimp, you will locate the filers within Light Dome PRO-R category and then use Miami, Cold, Default or Custom. The latter lets you choose the color of the filter.

In Photoshop, the actions palette looks like this:



Once the filter is applied, you can control Gamma, Glow 1, Glow 2, Tint and Vignette to suit your taste:



You can also duplicate layers to make them more intense or adjust the opacity to control their intensity. Once you're happy with your mix, you can flatten the image and share your work with others.

For more detailed information, watch the following YouTube video:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F4WX9C3oVo4&list=UUp3NJZNun7D3oRaSf-B7ZaQ

Dreamlight website:
http://www.basic3dtraining.com

Support:
http://dreamlight.kayako.com