



**Version: 1.1**

**Plugin and User's guide last update: 03-2018**

**Compatibility: After Effects CS6 and later**

**'Layer Sculptor'** is a plugin for After Effects built to distort layers based on maskpaths.



## Parameters description:

### 1\_MASK PARAMETERS

**Mask 1, Mask 2...:** lets you select the masks used to distort the layer.

**Inbetweeners:** creates and sets new masks for better distortion control.

**Mask mode:** can be **Selection time** or **Reference mask** (see **How the plugin works** below).

**Ref mask 1, Ref mask 2...:** lets you select the masks used as a reference to distort the layer (appear only in **Reference mask** mode).

### 2\_SHAPE PARAMETERS

**Num samples:** number of samples along the masks.

**Num sub-samples:** number of samples from one mask to the next.

**Fill last mask:** fills the last mask with layer's texture.

**Bezier tension:** defines the tension of the curve interpolating between masks (requires at least 3 masks).

#### **Centroid mode:**

Centroid calculation method. Can be:

\_ **Auto (bicubic):** centroid is computed from polygon's mass and verts average, with bicubic interpolation.

\_ **Auto (linear):** centroid is computed from polygon's mass and verts average, with linear interpolation.

\_ **Manual (bicubic):** centroid is defined by user, with bicubic interpolation.

\_ **Manual (linear):** centroid is defined by user, with linear interpolation.

**Verts average <-> mass centroid:** defines the centroid calculation method (Auto mode only).

**Centroid:** defines the centroid (Manual mode only).

**Preserve last mask alpha:** keeps last mask's alpha like After Effects does.

**Selection time:** defines the 'no distortion' time of the masks.

**Invert overlaps:** inverts polygon's drawing order.

**Overlaps method:** defines polygon's drawing order. Can be:

\_ **Distortion amount:** polygon is drawn from the least distorted to the most distorted parts of the layer.

\_ **Distance from centroid:** polygon is drawn from the furthest to the closest of centroid.

### 3\_SOURCE PARAMETERS

**Source:** source layer to be distorted. If set to 'None', the layer source is used.

**Source time mode:** sampling time of the source. Can be:

\_ **Current time:** layer is sampled at current time.

\_ **Selector:** layer is sampled at 'Source time selector' time (in frames).

**Source time selector:** defines sampling time of the source (in frames).

## OTHER PARAMETERS

**Composite mode:** can be None, Over original, Over source (alpha test) or Under source (alpha test). The 'alpha test' modes composite the source with the distorted layer, computing overlaps and transparency.

**Opacity:** distorted layer's opacity.

**Transparency overlaps:** transparency calculation method. Can be:

\_ **Fast transparency:** fastest method, can create artefacts with low transparency pixels.

\_ **Double pass:** pixel perfect transparency, requires 2 rendering passes (slower)

## HOW THE PLUGIN WORKS:

**Layer Sculptor** distorts your layer according to masks positions.

The default mask mode is **Selection time**, with default time set to 0.

It means your layer will be distorted according to masks' animation, **compared to their shape at time 0**.

You can set and animate the **Selection time** to define the shape that will be used as comparison.

For example, if your mask morphs between a square at time 0 and a circle at time 100, a **Selection time** of 0 means your layer will morph from a square to a circle, the square being your undistorted layer texture. With a **Selection time** set to 100, the layer will morph from square to circle, but the layer's texture will undistort from square to circle, the circle showing undistorted texture.

This method requires **keyframes** to see any distortion.

**New in v1.1**, you can use **Reference mask** method.

Instead of comparing each mask to its shape at **Selection time**, the plugin will compare each mask to a **reference mask**. The **reference mask** can be the same than the distortion mask, in this case the texture won't be distorted by this mask. This is a good way to define a limit to your distortion.

This feature allows you to distort a video based on animated masks.

If no reference mask is selected, the default **Selection time** behavior will be used.