3D POTM   December 18

Some Christmas browsing.

This time of the year can be perplexing. For a lot of it we find ourselves charging about, doing things that we didn't know we needed to be charging about doing. There's Christmas nights out, childrens' and grandchildrens' nativity plays, then there's pressie shopping, drink shopping, food shopping, drink shopping, pantomime (my house certainly is!) and on and on. And yet, on the other side of the ledger there are great tracts of time when there is very little happening, TV schedules fill up with 'Xmas specials' and endless repeats of Xmas specials from previous years, or to put it another way, there's nothing in TV. And again, if Christmas and Neerday happen to be in the middle of the week, then there seems to be about five weekends on the trot. It can all become very disconcerting.

   This year, my contribution to this is to offer some ideas for websites to browse in some of those spare hours that are about to appear on your agenda. Specifically some sites that are of interest to folks looking to 3D printing for model railways. There are lots of sites, and millions of models, so there can be quite a bit of duplication, and some sites can be quite specialist, but there's a glut of ideas on the pages listed below, and all for free.

    What appears below is my personal opinion, feel free to go and have a look and then come back and disagree with me. Discussion is good!

Have a happy merry and a good new, thanks for your patience in 2018, and I look forward to helping you in any way I can in 2019

Cults 3D   https://cults3d.com/en

Cults offers its users the perfect range of 3D models – from maker-inspired 3D files all the way to professional high-quality designs. Cults checks each 3D design for printability and organizes them into different groups such as fashion, art, jewelry, home, architecture, or gadgets. The mix of a modern visual interface, a well-arranged database, and a focus on smart, useful & beautiful designs makes browsing through their website a lot of fun. While many models come for free, others come at very affordable prices. A search for 'model railway' threw up a good range of relevant models, particularly buildings, some free and some at reasonable prices

Pinshape   https://pinshape.com/

Pinshape offers its visitors the opportunity to browse through a great selection of more than 13,000 (free and payable) STL files. Finding great 3D printable models on the website is child's play: both the visual representation and logical organization of the website are top-notch. The 'model railway' search produced less than a dozen hits, and most of these are duplicates from other sites.

3DShook   www.3dshook.com

The 3DShook website is somewhat similar to Pinshape and Cults but the designs tend to be more focused on 'fun' 3D prints for hobbyists. Some models are free but most require a fee. However, 3DShook does offer designs at a very competitive price.

Thingiverse   www.thingiverse.com

Thingiverse is probably one of the biggest and most popular databases. It has a very active maker community behind it and offers free-to-use STL files only. You don't even need to open an account in order to download a 3D model from their site. Sometimes the database can seem slightly less organized than the cleaner and simpler design of sites like Pinshape and Cults.

Grabcad   https://grabcad.com

GrabCAD is different than the databases we have looked at so far. Firstly, GrabCad provides you with technical, engineering, and scale models only. Secondly, it lets you filter its database based on the 3D modeling software that the designs were created in. It's the place to be for anyone looking for more than 27,000 technical 3D files. However, take into account that this website is not primarilly intended for 3D printing.

3D Warehouse   https://3dwarehouse.sketchup.com/?hl=en

The 3D Warehouse simply screams 'geometrical'. Whether you are looking for architecture, product design or scale models, 3D Warehouse offers anything that was created with the popular 3D modeling software SketchUp. Luckily they also let you filter their database for 3D printable models by selecting 'Only Show Printable Models' in their advanced search function. All other models can be made printable thanks to a connection with the 3DPrintCloud.

CGTrader   https://www.cgtrader.com/

CGTrader offers a dedicated database for 3D printable objects. So far there are more than 13,000 models to choose from. We noticed that there are many printable jewelry designs in particular on this website. While many models are downloadable for free, others come at affordable prices.

TurboSquid   www.turbosquid.com

TurboSquid is the place to be for downloading the most stunning 3D designs. It doesn't get any more high-end and professional than this. The problems: the designs are great visually but are not optimized for 3D printing. There is also no filtering option for finding 3D printable models. Furthermore, all models on TurboSquid are premium (payable) files. Quality comes at a price.

3DExport   https://3dexport.com/

3DExport is similar to TurboSquid: This is also a database that focuses on the visual aspects and offers amazing premium 3D models. In addition to this, 3DExport offers its users a filter for finding 3D printable models only.

Yeggi   www.yeggi.com

Last but not least in terms of sites, I need to mention Yeggi, a search engine for 3D printable models. Yeggi scans all the databases mentioned above, and many more, for 3D printable files. So if you want to search the 'Google' of 3D models, this might be the right website for you.

Remix 3D — https://www.remix3d.com

Remix 3D is more than a 3D model database, It is the Microsoft community of modellers who want to share their creations. The models on the libraries are organized by categories and they can be used and of course "remixed" on Microsoft Paint 3D and their VR/AR app, 'Mixed Reality', which can be downloaded.

. . . and finally — 3D POTM on Dropbox.

As you probably know I maintain a dropbox account where I share any presentation material, files, ads, website addresses etc. I have now added the pdfs of the 3D POTMs there too, so you can see previous 3D POTMs, even once they have disappeared from the WOSAG website. If you email me at chic@computer.org telling me you'd like access to the dropbox, I take your email from the email you sent me and add it to the dropbox account. Dropbox then send you details of how to access the material.

  If there's something more you think I could put up there, let me know.

Chic