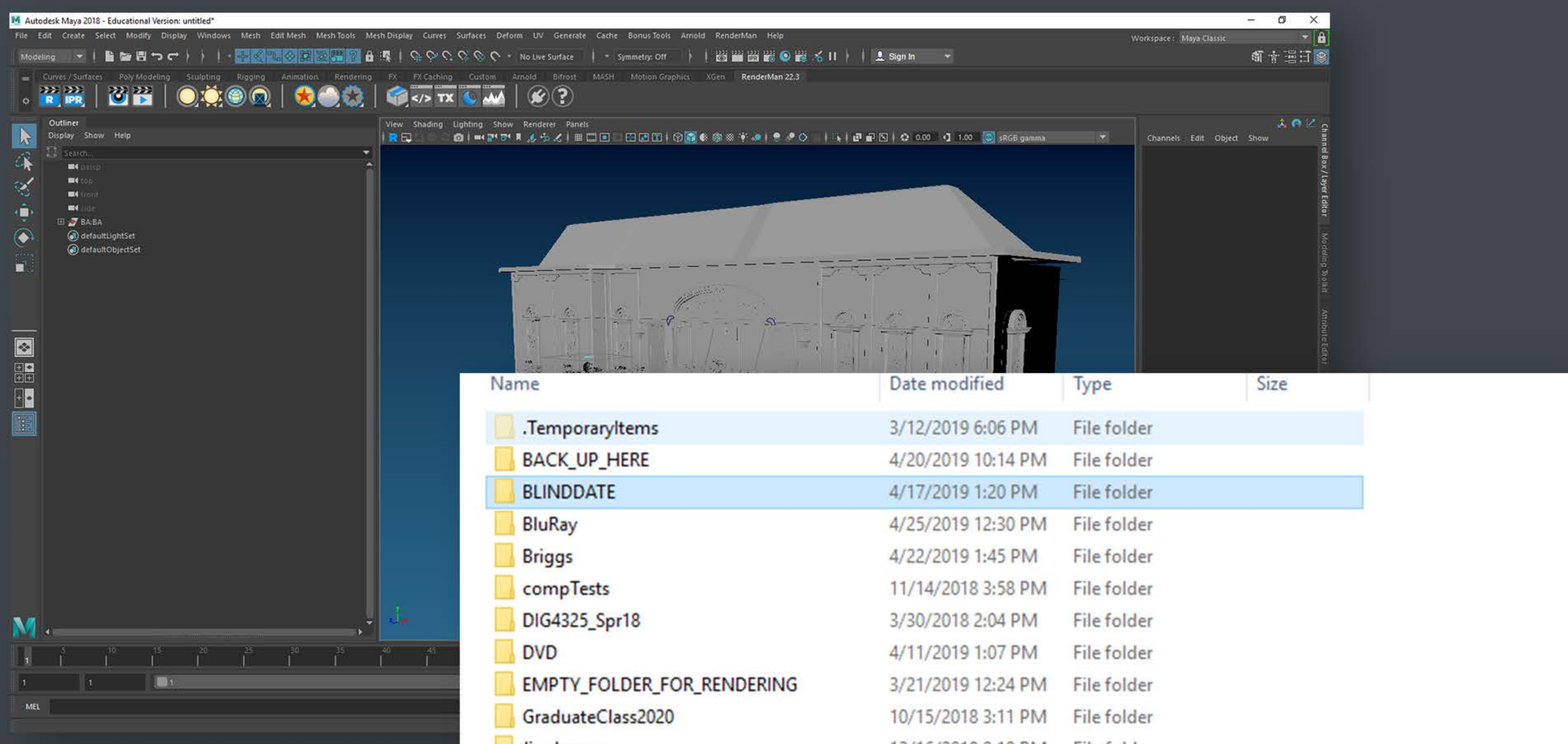


Environmental Disasters (And How to Avoid Them!)



> So, you're working with the environment. You don't want to mess anything up, before sending it out to the rest of your team- or worse. But for some reason, things keep going wrong. You can't save it as an ASCII, placing objects without them penetrating or floating off the floor is a bothersome balancing act, and from some reason, your namespace is going into Outer Space. You would like a handy Step by Step guide to your Environment's set up. If that sounds like you, then you've come to the right place!

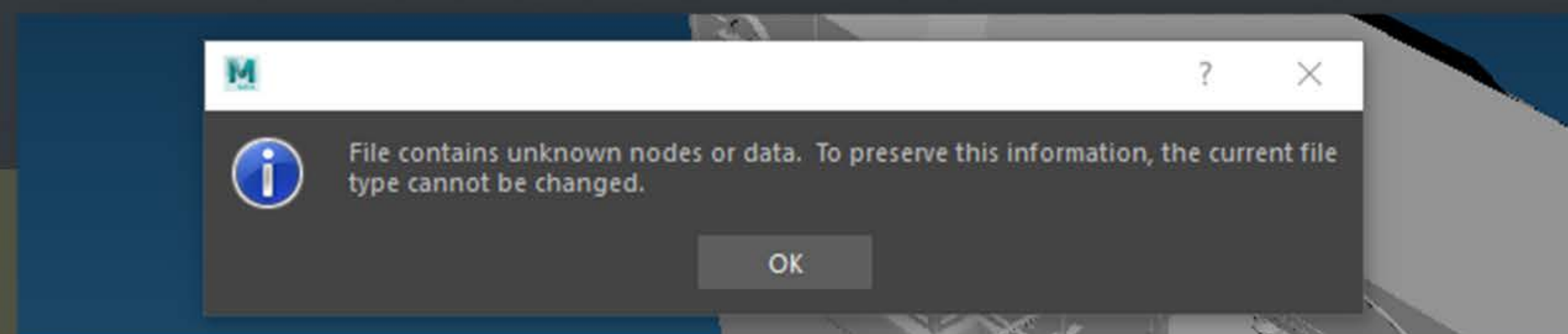
> First, like all files, set your project! Copy the Server's folder for your film onto your desktop. In the Pre-Production folder, set your Maya file there, and immediately save it as an ASCII. For saving your file, create a new folder just for yourself in the scenes folder. (You can name it anything you want, but "08_Environment" is a suggestion)

> In that folder make two more folders. The first is for yourself where you'll save your referenced Environments, and the second is for everyone else where you'll save your imported environments. Never work in the second file, always use the Referenced Environment. And always save your referenced version before saving your imported version.

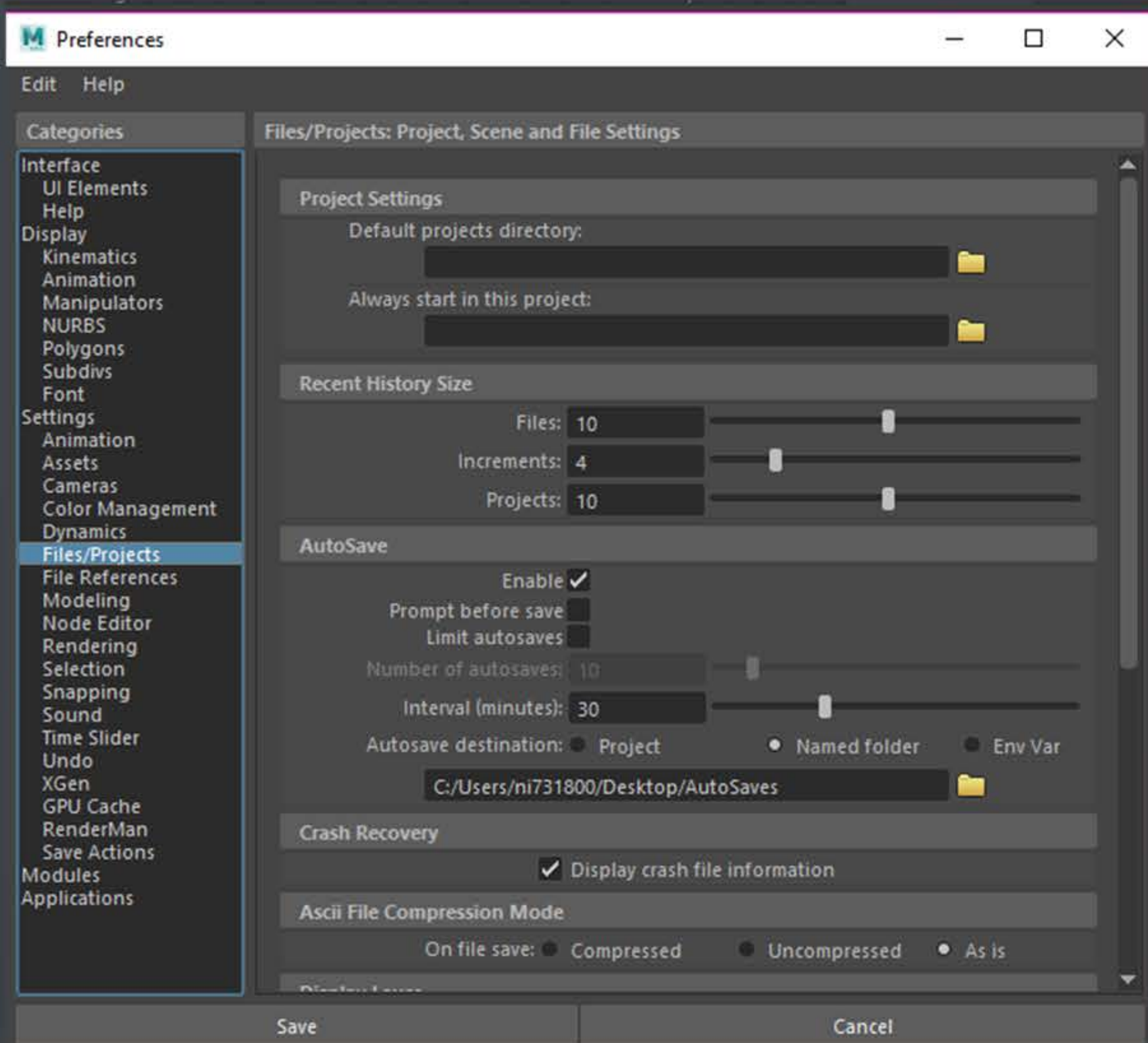
Help! I can't Save the Environment!

> If for some reason, you realize that you can't save it as an ASCII, it's not too late! There is a fix for it, but it's a bit roundabout. First, try saving it as a Binary. Save a new file, and immediately save it as an ASCII.

Then import your other file into the ASCII version. And save it again! This works whenever your files decide they stubbornly don't want to be ASCII's anymore. Remember, **this works for any and all files that only save as Binary.**



Environmental Disasters (And How to Avoid Them!)

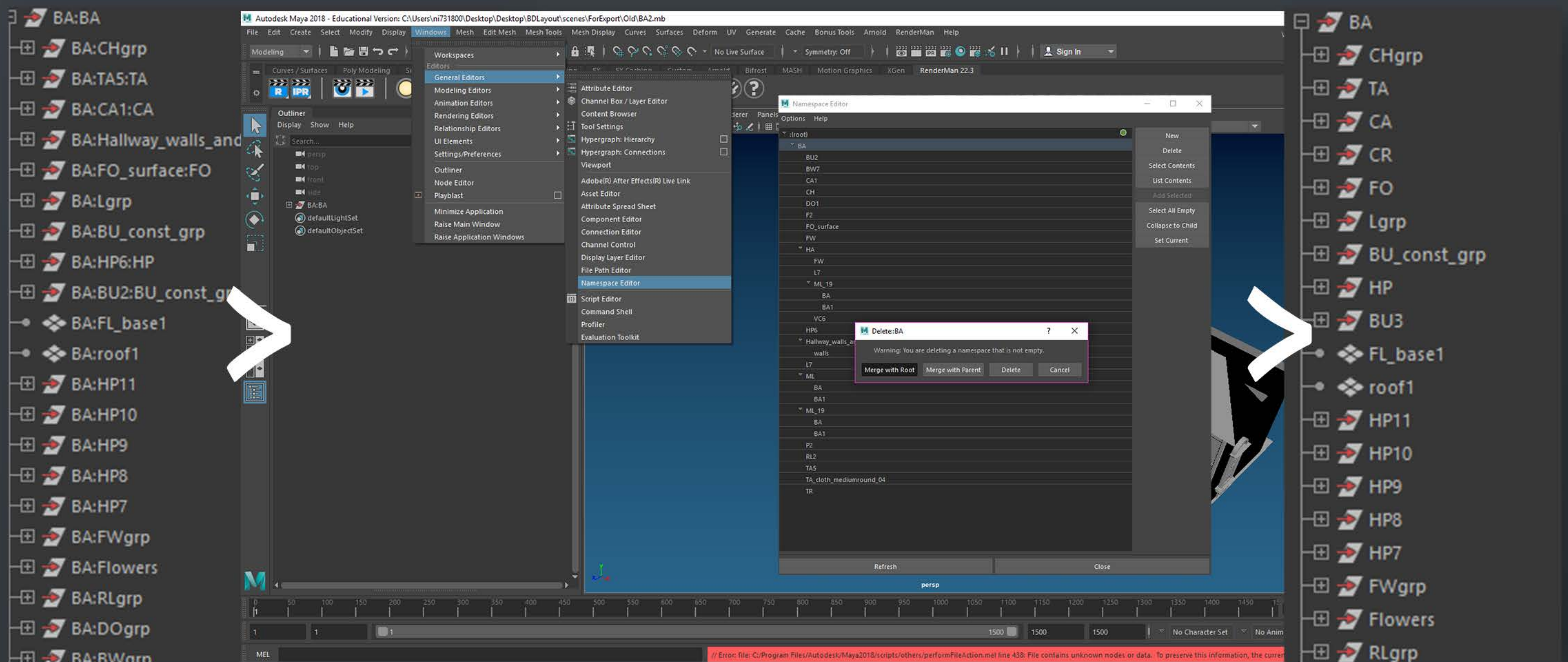


> Placing assets in your scene can be a big task, especially when you have over a hundred unique assets to place. It's your job to make the environment feel alive, while also keeping up with the various updates. Start with placeholders, and primitives to get a quick mockup for your future assets.

When you get your major assets, make sure the scale is correct, and history is deleted. If you notice anything is wrong, then, it's recommended you send it back to the original modeler and have them update it properly to scale.

TIP: Hold the ALT key and use the arrow keys to nudge a piece of selected geometry pixel by pixel. Be careful! It will move it according to the camera. To keep your assets from moving diagonally, use the Orthographic views.

> Save your file periodically. I suggest using the AutoSave feature in Maya. To enable it, go to Preferences>Files/Projects>AutoSave. Click the Enable check box, and to be safe, have Maya save your iterations in a new folder called "AutoSaves".



Help! My Name Spaces are Getting Longer than I can Read!

> Deleting your Namespaces can be a tedious task if done by hand. Luckily Maya has a few features to help with this process. First and easiest is going to Windows> General Editors> Namespace Editors

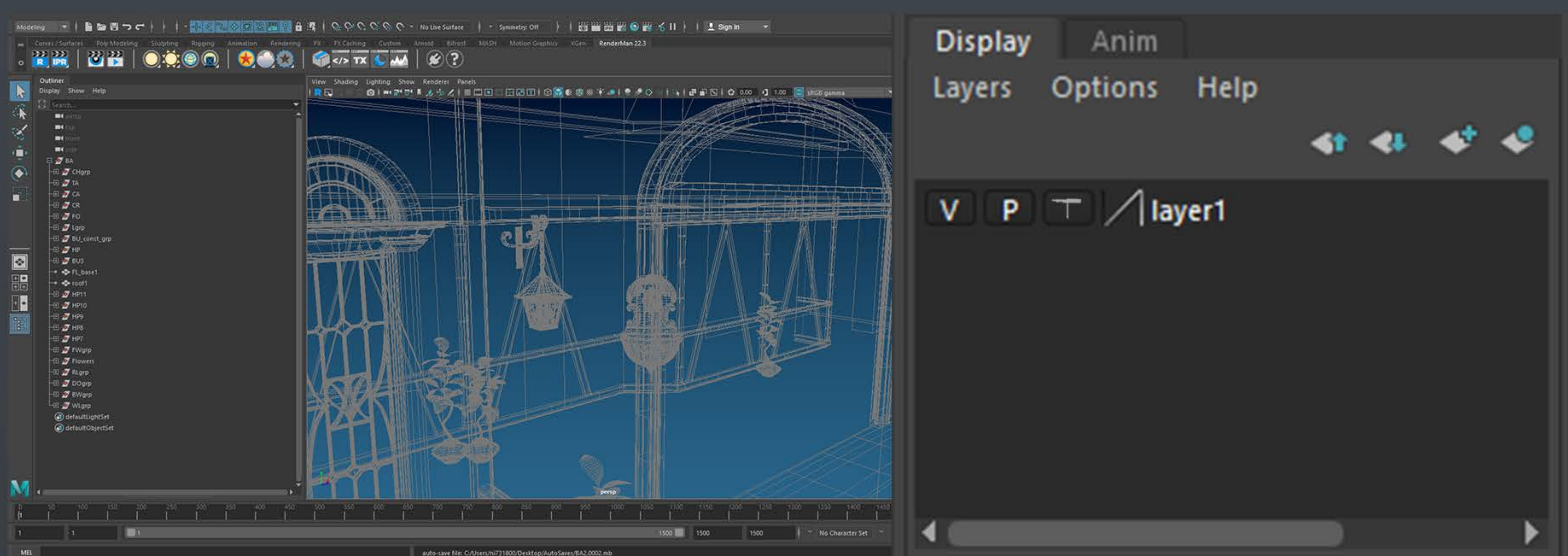
> Then click Delete> Merge with Root.

> Rinse, Repeat, and Fixed!

Environmental Disasters (And How to Avoid Them!)

- > When it's time to send out your environment to the rest of the team, save it once more with References before importing all your assets. Simply go to your Reference Editor, and Import All References. Immediately "Save As" your scene in the second folder "For Export". Make sure to clean your file, before sending it out to the public. Delete all NameSpaces, Optimize your file, and delete any textures in your Hypershade (the base environment should be untextured for animators and layout).
- > And you're Done! Upload your Imported environment to the Server.

TIP: It's a good idea to keep an "Update Log" in the Environment folder, so the rest of the team will be able to know what fixes and update you've made.



Help! My Referenced Asset(s) Went Back to the Origin, and I don't Remember where Everything Was!

- > First of all, be careful with your references. Make sure everything is named correctly and is coming from the origin. Work with your Modeling Lead to make sure each and every asset was properly named with frozen transformations and deleted history. If nothing fixes the problem, then move on to just replacing the models in the right locations.
- > But now you've run into a new issue. Where exactly did you place everything? Maybe people have already started animating with certain compositions, and the last thing you want to do is mess everyone up and force them to shift to match your various bushes. The solution is to import your imported version of the Environment, and then go to your Layers tab in Maya.
- > Select your imported Environment and add it to the Layers tab under a new Layer. Then click the third box twice until you are under T. Now you have assets in the correct positions, visible in wireframe format, that you cannot accidentally select/move. Feel free to use it as a guide to replace and set missing objects, and when finished, delete the duplicate environment, and clean your file.