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## Creating lanscapes with the Gimp: Part 1 by [Vincent Stoessel](#)

This tutorial demonstrates how to use the Gimp's ifCompose plugin to create height maps that can imported into Blender to make great landscapes. This tutorial does not require a C-key. It does however, require the GIMP. The GIMP is a great and free image manipulation program which run's on most unixes.

You can download a copy from [www.gimp.org](http://www.gimp.org)

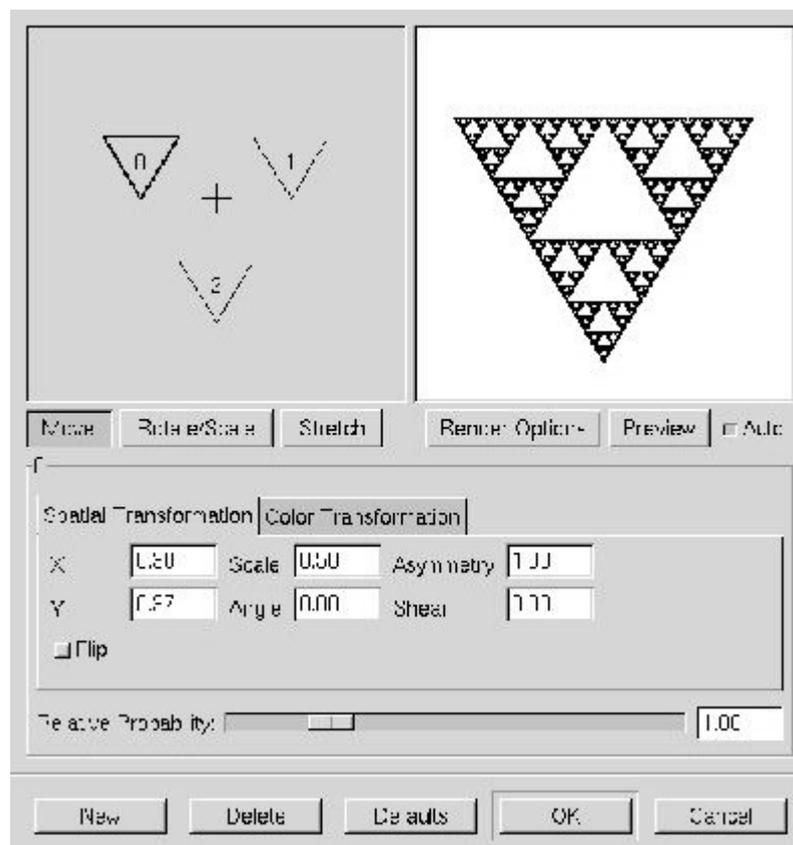


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The first thing you want to do with the gimp is open a new document. The default 256x256 blank image is cool. With the cursor over the image press the right mouse button

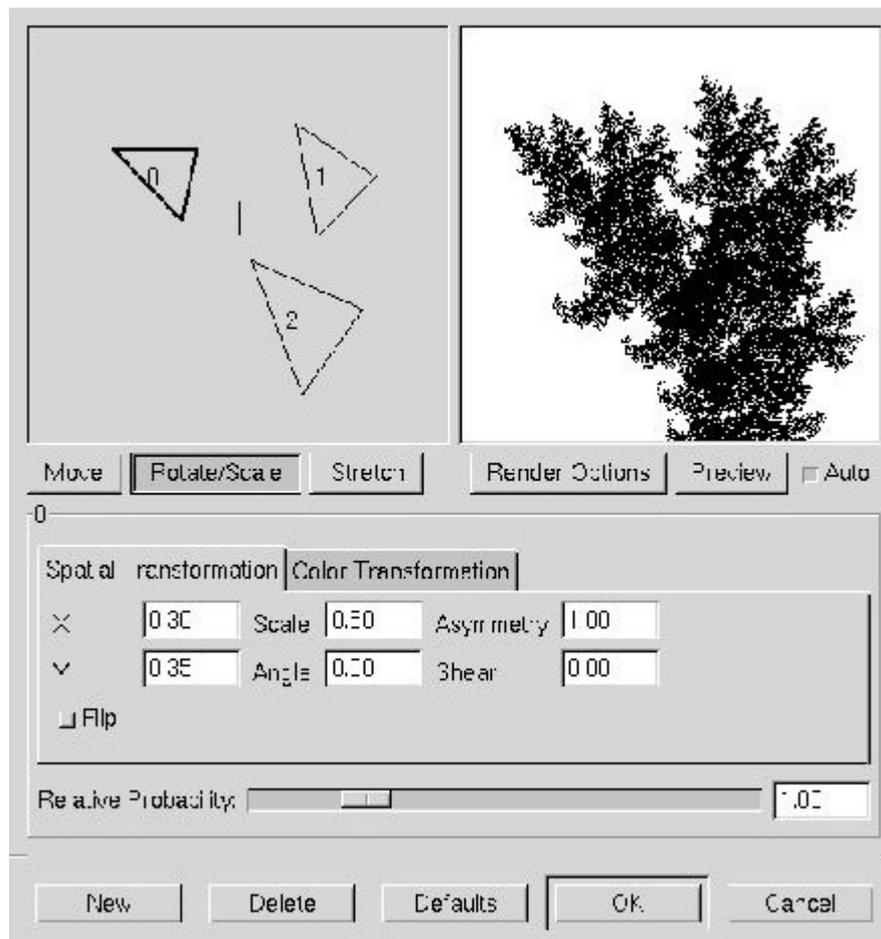
to get the pop-up menu. Select Filter->Render->Ifcompose you should get the ifcompose window. There is a screen of the window below. ifcompose works by adjusting the positions the 3 triangles on the left to change the image on the right. There are also numeric inputs for more precise control.

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The basic idea is to create a goo height map. A height map is a grayscale/color image that can be used build an elevated 3d mesh. When a height map is applied to a flat plane the

colors will raise the points of the mesh while the darker colors will keep vertices close to the floor. White will cause the highest elevation of course while black will be the lowest. I got this with a little bit of tweaking the rotate/scaling triangles.

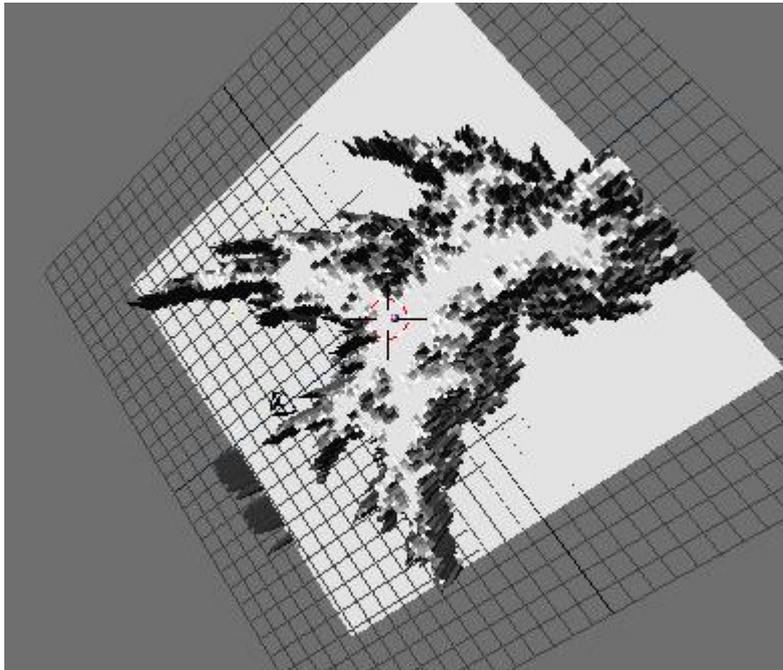


I created a bunch of cool height map but let me talk about the one I have below. When I open blender I have a simple mesh and some lamps as my default. Cntrl-U saves your default settings by the way. Select your plane, go to the material buttons (F5) and create a new material for the plane. Give it a name or hit the "auto" icon to have blender generate a unique name for it. Next go to the texture buttons (F6) and create a new texture. Choose an image texture and use the image selector to load the image you saved in Gimp's ifcompose.



It should look something like this in the texture window.

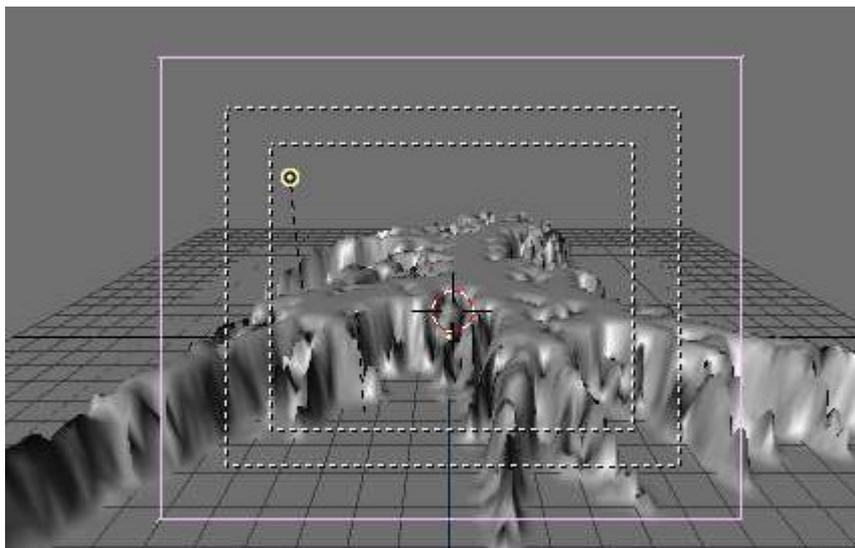




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Hit the z or shift-z to get an idea what the mesh looks like. With the mesh still selected hit the "set smooth" button. You should have a mesh that looks something like this. Now all you have to do is add a rocky or grainy texture and add a water layer (see my ocean view tutorial). DON'T FORGET TO GET RID OF the original heightmap texture,

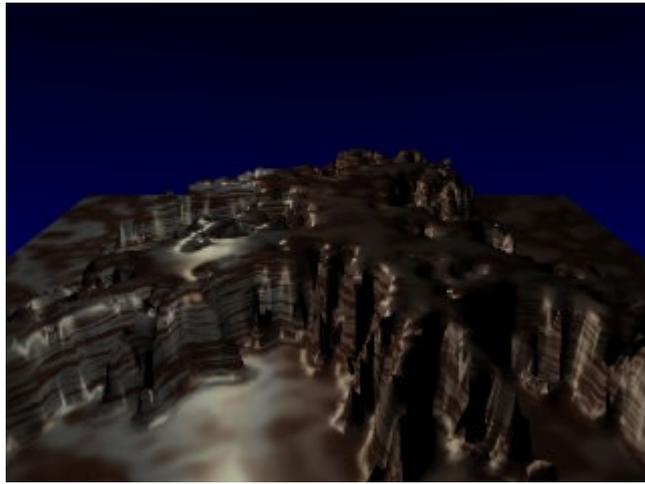
you don't need it any more and it will have an influence on the color of your mesh if you leave it there. For mountains I usually use a noisy marble or wood texture combined with an image texture.



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Here it is with some textures I slapped together but I'm sure can do much better.

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Just add water and that's it.

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