



# Our Standards of Artistic Excellence

**"THE OBJECT OF ART IS NOT  
TO REPRODUCE REALITY,  
BUT TO CREATE A REALITY OF  
THE SAME INTENSITY."**

Alberto Giacometti

# Our Standards of Artistic Excellence

Chapter I – The Brief

Chapter II – Shapes and Volumes

Chapter III – Textures and Materiality

Chapter IV – Artistic License

# III. Textures & Materiality

Texturing is the next important step in the development of an asset.

This is when we showcase the materials specific to the asset, from more than one point of view: visual, physical, art, story. This way, it can truly become a part of the project's universe.



# III. Textures & Materiality

The pillars on which texturing is based are the observation, understanding and knowledge of reality and the mastery of plastic principles.

They are always complementary to volume, enriching it or emphasising what is already shown in space. It adds clarity to the surface of the object, its materiality and functionality.

It's difficult to discuss this production step just from a technical point of view. „Corectness” or „realism” are usually not the only desired results. We need to go past credibility and add an important dose of visual impact. That's because the end result is viewed by us, humans, not measured by a machine.



# Key Elements

- A. Texture/Material/Shader
- B. The intrinsic structure of the material used as reference
- C. The surface, its details and origins
- D. Material aging & other layers that overlap visually



# Texture/Material/Shader

A lowpoly volume with a texture lacking in shades and contrasts can easily become monotone and boring. Both the materiality and the details need to be well-supported on all the texture channels given by the asset material. We need to pay extra attention to the way in which we combine them. We always need to think about what we want the viewer to experience.

To illustrate the importance of the texture channels of a material, we rendered an asset with and without the roughness map.



# The intrinsic structure of the material used as reference

Technology offers more and more ways of crafting material structures, regardless of their type. One of the most used solutions is “PBR.” But actually implementing the model varies from one project to another, depending on the game engine or other technical aspects.

There are many “presets” or “formulas” to obtain a starting point that’s as close to reality as possible. However, they alone are not enough, and so an artist’s intervention is needed to bring assets to the optimal result.

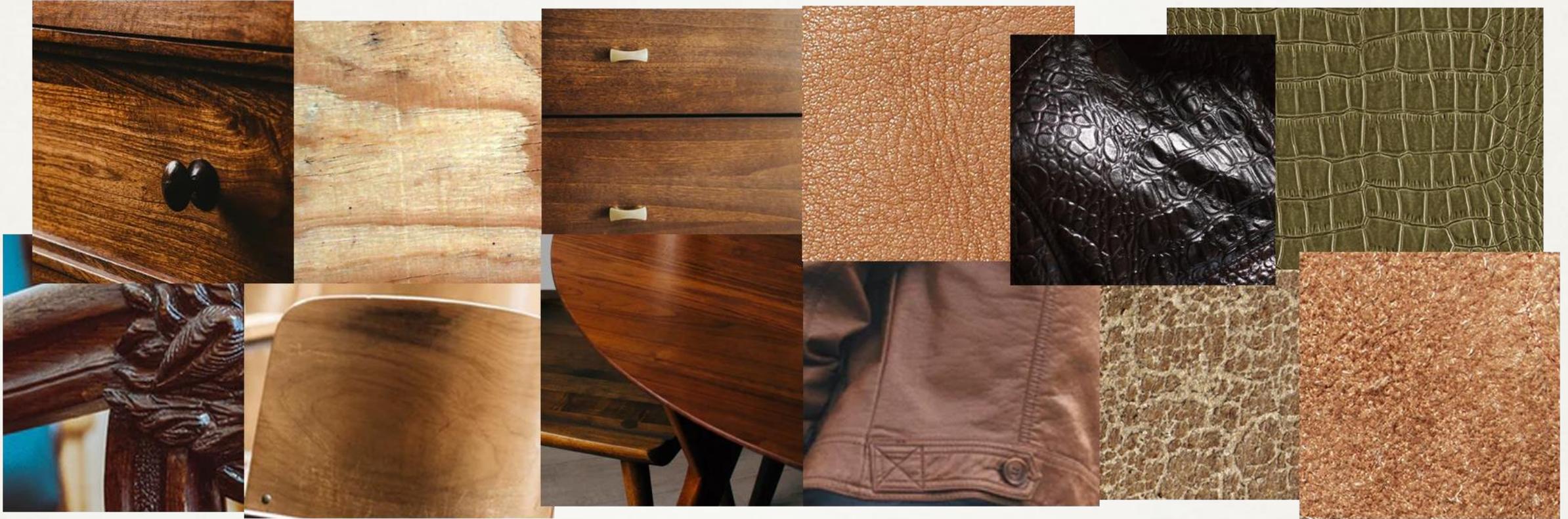
**Tip:** Avoid procedural looking generators (uniform edge-wear, unnatural straight lines or patterns).



Texturing of a variant of “The Kiss”, original by Constantin Brâncuși.  
Textures by Alexandru Croitoru and Diana Costin, Junior Environment Artists.

# The intrinsic structure of the material used as reference

The best and shortest way to ensure success is to dedicate enough time to understanding what we want to show. By that, we mean first and foremost understanding what the principal or most representative element of our chosen material is.



Each asset comes with its own material set, and each material has its own particularities and variants. That is why it is important to observe and understand where to begin from. What kind of wood essence we'll choose for a piece of furniture or what type of leather to use for a piece of clothing. It's never enough just to add a "checkmark" to wood, leather, plastic or any other material without being faithful to the asset, the technology used or the era in which the asset is placed, amongst others.

# The surface, its details and origins

Aside from the natural structure of any material, another highly important aspect is the way in which the object we're working on was processed or made.

There are raw materials (stone, wood, metal), and there are their final states.

These final states usually show very visible and particular details generated by manufacture, depending on the use and functionality of the object.

**Tip:** Pay attention to the layering found on the real materials and recreate it accurately. Don't just drag smart materials in your layer stack without analyzing their content. Some (if not most) layers will be useless.

All of these aspects must be added, in order to add genuineness and plasticity to the asset, and must be illustrated as best as possible. Such details represent the defining mark of the asset. It's also usually an area that allows for a great deal of diversity and particularity.



# Material aging

Material aging is an important component of the overall visual message.

Aging is a natural process, and it overlaps all that was mentioned above. Regardless of the level of exposure to natural elements, this component is innate to all materials. This can be a loss of shine, a change of the initial colour, oxidation, little cracks on the surface, rust etc.

It's paramount that we do not neglect this component, as it is very important for the final result.



# Material Aging

Because natural causes can affect various objects in various ways, sometimes this can drastically change an object. Its degradation can have multiple steps, all the way to a ruined state - which must also be done within the model's geometry.



**Tip:** Imagine how the object would wear down in real life (or observe already worn similar objects) - think where mechanical wear usually appears (interaction with the environment, regular usage, etc), where mold appears based on how moisture forms on the shapes and so on.

# Our Standards of Artistic Excellence

Final reflections

Every asset has a story, and the texturing step is what completes it. It might seem daunting at first, but it really becomes more intuitive as we gain more experience.

It's important to try and make a habit of observing the stories all around you. When you pass by an abandoned rusty car, stop for a bit and notice the patterns of degradation. Why is the rust in those places? Why did the paint chip away in some parts and not others?

So, remember. Let yourself be curious and go explore. Happy texturing!