

Plugin Release & Developer Notes: SceneTextureSwitcher v1.3

I've been using SketchUp professionally for nearly 25 years in set design, working on close to 90 full-scale productions many of them incorporating projections and, more recently, LED surfaces.

As a designer who visualizes all technical and content aspects directly inside SketchUp, I often need to swap imagery on panels and screens depending on the scene. Until now, I've done this by layering individual images onto surfaces and toggling their visibility with tags and scenes.

That approach worked until I hit a show with **26 different visual states**. At that scale, manually hiding and revealing images becomes unmanageable.

Initial Goal

I was looking for a plugin that could:

- Switch out a texture **based on the active scene**
- Use a **shared index** across multiple mapped materials (like `Surface01`, `Surface02`, etc.)
- Work with **scene change events**, not just manual clicks
- Keep the whole system **project-folder based and portable**
- Require no tagging, object duplication, or visual overlays

And with guidance and iteration from ChatGPT this tool now exists.

SceneTextureSwitcher v1.1

A lightweight SketchUp plugin for per-scene texture switching ideal for set designers, media planners, and projection/LED-based designs.

What It Does

SceneTextureSwitcher lets you:

- Assign a **scene-specific texture cue number** (0199)
- Automatically update textures on multiple named materials when switching scenes
- Load textures from your **project folder**, not the plugin directory fully portable
- Support `.png`, `.jpg`, and `.jpeg` formats (with **.png prioritized**)
- Retain individual scale and UV mapping per material

Folder Setup

Textures must live **relative to your `.skp` file**, in this structure:

...

```
MyProject/  
  MyModel.skp
```

```
textures/  
  Surface01/  
    01.png  
    02.png  
  Surface02/  
    01.jpg  
    02.jpg  
  ...  
...
```

You can use **any number of `Surface##` materials** (up to 99), each with their own folder. All materials share the same scene-wide cue number.

How To Use

1. Install the plugin `.rbz`` via **Extensions > Extension Manager > Install Extension...**
2. In your model, name any materials you want controlled as:
 ...
 Surface01, Surface02, Surface03, ...
 ...
3. Assign any texture from your projects texture folder to each of those materials initially.
4. In SketchUp, open:
 ...
 Extensions > Scene Texture Switcher
 ...
 Choose a cue number from the dropdown and hit OK.
5. Just switch to another scene or create a new one the cue is saved automatically.
6. Repeat for other scenes the plugin stores the cue number per scene.
7. **Switch scenes**: textures update automatically.

Works across projects
Works with external drives
Works with `.png`` transparency
Requires no object duplication, tagging, or overlays

Designed For

- Theater, film, and live performance set designers
- LED-based stage visualization
- Projection cue planning
- Architectural mood setups or material cycles

Requirements

- SketchUp 2021 or newer (tested on macOS and Windows)
- Ruby Console recommended during setup (for logs)

Known Limitations

- Texture selection is currently **manual** via number input
- No GUI for previews (future version may include thumbnails)
- Materials must follow `Surface##` naming (future: custom mapping via config file)

Future Plans

- Visual thumbnail grid to choose cues
- Cue editor panel with copy/delete/preview options
- Auto-generation of texture folders
- Custom naming and mapping of materials

> This plugin was developed in collaboration with [@samtsham2] and ChatGPT through iterative real-world testing in production design contexts. Free to use, adapt, and share with attribution.