



November, 1994

Volume Two, Number Ten

## JOSE FLORES' PIECE OF SHOW AND TELL

Several months ago Jose Flores, one of our graphic designers, had the opportunity to go to Japan to learn some of the tricks of video game development. He is back in town for a while after a very successful stint working on state-of-the-art graphics workstations. We will see a sample of the work he did at our Show and Tell meeting on the November 7th. This is some of what he found (not including the \$25 list price for *Wired* magazine in Japan!). He also offers an opportunity for others interested in working in this field. Welcome back Jose!

Hello again fellow CyberArtists! I'm happy to be back in Seattle and I'm very excited about all the new projects that are happening, and the projects the Northwest CyberArtists are involved in.

My trip to Japan went better than expected and was very educational. I learned and discovered many things about Japanese society, made new friends and enjoyed Japanese food (which is excellent).

In Japan's technological aspect there are many interesting gadgets and places that are certainly inviting to the cyber-aftonado.

For example the variety of CD-ROM game platforms that are currently in the living rooms of Japanese families, including the brand new 64-bit SEGA-SATURN with the capacity of rendering 50,000 polygons per second in real time! The SATURN system is an

## CyberArtist

attempt by Sega to get ahead of Nintendo in the home entertainment business. This platform will be available in the American and European markets next summer. All the games that are out for the SATURN are pioneers, and SEGA is trying to get game developers interested in the SATURN. Personally I'm very excited about this system as it sets a new standard in video gaming and interaction.

Some of the most interesting games for the SATURN are:

**PINBALL ARENA** (*The Last Gladiator*): This game features 4 different pinball machines, *Knight of Roses*, *Gladiator*, *Sons of the Dragons*, and *Warlock*. The player has the option of playing each machine individually or to play for CONQUEST, in this mode the player has to beat each machine in a series of challenges with a final 7 multiball battle.

**CHINESE DETECTIVE**: A mystery interactive movie set in Hong-Kong where you have the chance to explore highly detailed computer generated rooms in real time in order to discover clues and solve a murder case.

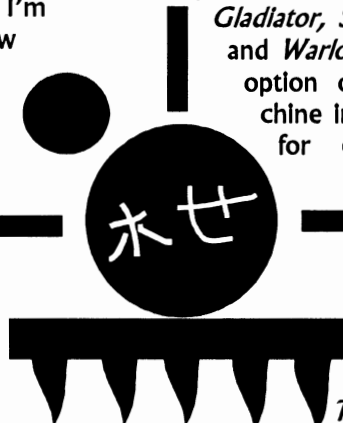
**CLOCKWORK KNIGHT**: An adventure game where the characters are toys moving around a boy's bedroom. The characters are Silicon Graphics generated models and come right out of SEGA's own development department.

**RAMPO**: This game is based the script of a movie that is currently playing in theaters in Japan. There are 5 different movie versions playing at the same time and produced by the same studio.

The other new CD-ROM based game platform that is a big breakthrough in the 64-bit realm is *Sony Playstation* which is the fastest of its kind, with a rendering engine of 80,000 polygons per second in real time. This is currently only available in Japan and I don't see it coming anytime soon to the U.S.

Another high-tech piece that caught my eye is HDTV technology, I can't wait to get one and finally watch the movies the way they were supposed to be watched: in hi-res wide-screen.

I could take a couple newsletters to talk about my trip to Japan, I just



JOSE



**NOVEMBER MEETING:  
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 7**

**THE ART INSTITUTE  
OF SEATTLE  
ROOM 608  
2323 ELLIOT AVENUE  
7:30PM**

**NOVEMBER'S GUEST:**

**YOU!  
(SHOW AND TELL)**

**BRING A PIECE OF  
YOUR CYBERART**

**(CUE 'EM UP!)**

# PUBLISHER'S CORNER

by Steve Turnidge

Northwest CyberArtists are the sum of their parts. We are a difficult group to define. Our physical manifestation, where you can see us, is presented by a small fraction of our actual content. We have no by-laws or board of directors. We have only a common goal, of making the world a better place. We achieve that goal in as many ways as we have members.

As I write this it has been two years to the day since I attended the CyberArts International conference in Pasadena, the event that spawned this group. There I saw intelligent specialists become intelligent generalists. The sharing of specialized information, the discovery of *cross-discipline* truths.

I am finding in my explorations of new and different media transferable aesthetics. Principles that make a synthesized sound a good synthesized sound can be applied to make a computer graphic a good computer graphic.

For instance, I had the opportunity to attend Craig Anderton's seminar at Beyond Fast Forward. He was asked how best to synthesize the sound of an acoustic guitar. He gave a simple recommendation: "If you really want the sound of an acoustic guitar—use an acoustic guitar." He went on to suggest some of the best applications for synthesizers are to create sounds which do not exist in the natural world, like a *Tubassoon* flute or (fill in the blank).

A few nights later, I went to a screening of "The Gate to the Minds Eye", the

latest in Miramar's series of computer graphics videos, this one with music by Thomas Dolby. While watching some of the finely crafted photorealistic imagery, I thought back on the point Craig made. I saw parallels between synthesizing realistic sounds to listen to and synthesizing realistic images to watch. The way people can communicate meaning in a different way when they stretch the reality of what they see.

Now that we have the ability to accurately represent what we see and hear, we may want to consciously stretch into multi-dimensional representations of reality in our art.

On a different note, I've made some discoveries on adopting evolutionary technology. Computers are radically changing the way we work and create art. there should be some clue as to the right time to buy into rapidly changing hardware and software.

Here's a tip that requires imagination. Identify existing technologies that will transform your work for the better, even (and especially) if they are currently priced out of your range, or the level of obsolescence is practically immediate.

Now prepare your strategies and methods to use that enabling technology, even before you get it.

Monitor the trends of the technology and watch the standards being set in your area of interest. When it appears the curve of change is flattening out (or you can afford it), buy it. Now you are can apply the enabling technology to your plans already in place. Just like a battery in a toy car, you'll have a car to put your battery in, and others who are unprepared will just have a battery. 🐾

graphic designers, that would like to collaborate in upcoming projects. If you are interested you can send your demos to my Seattle address with your personal data or you can give it to me personally at the upcoming CyberArtist meeting.

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**JOSE**

**FROM 1**

wanted to give you the scoop about what is happening over there.

By the way, I know a company in Japan that is currently looking for freelancers that are familiar with digital media in any field, from musicians to

# FICTION BY BURT WEBB

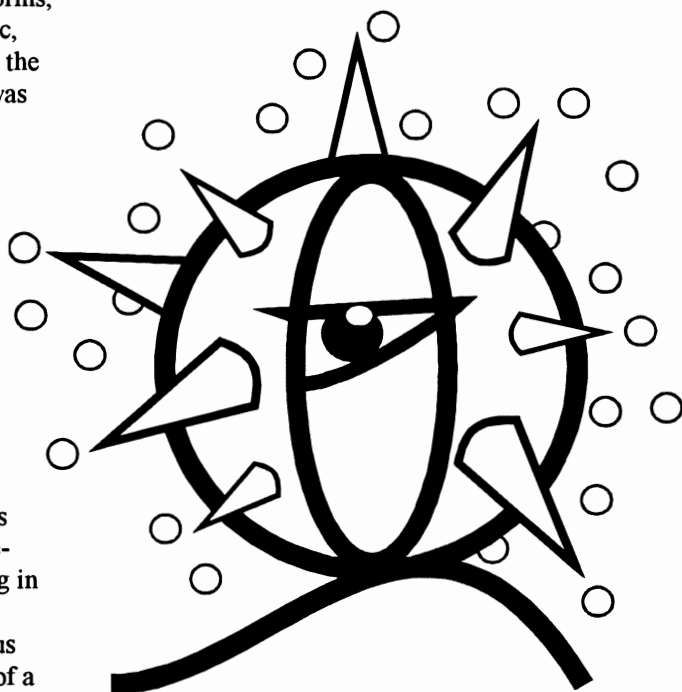
The following excerpt is from my novella titled "A Portrait of the Artist." The story takes place in Seattle about 75 years in the future. The elite of that time have massive nanotech implants which allow them to alter their physical form at will. They also have a host of brain enhancements which allow them to control their internal biochemistry and emotional state. They can spawn and reassemble autonomous software agents to act as their representative at remote sites. Artistic "phases" sweep this society periodically and people change their forms, architecture changes, music, language, etc. to following the latest fad. The last phase was based on the remains of the Brazilian rain forest. A new phase is in full swing based on abstract patterns of light and sound which elicit emotional states.

The main character is an artist named Kamar who enjoyed success during the Rain Forest Phase. He is now experience creative block and has taken a job with a multimedia publication specializing in the arts. He is attending a gallery opening by a famous artist who wears the form of a sphere and expresses his emotional state through complex abstract patterns on his surface. Kamar doesn't like this artist or his art form and is researching the artist's past, hoping to uncover something embarrassing. He has just had a rather nasty verbal exchange with an image of the artist who now projects a visual icon representing his latest work toward Kamar:

Anger moved in his patterns as he said, "Then you should see this piece." An icon moved out of the sphere and expanded as it approached. It continued to expand and engulfed me.

Light exploded around me, then all was darkness. A single point of brilliant white light appeared and split into a swarm of polychromatic points. They moved in

complex patterns, faster and faster, emitting pulsating waves of sound that swept around me like a maelstrom. I felt my emotive balance slipping and was disturbed to find that I could not regain stability in my internal systems. My anxiety increased as I found myself unable to access any of my personality controls. Emotions boiled over me. Even with the earlier upload of Holstrom's appreciation assembly, I was unable to give names to hundreds, then thousands of conflicting



experiences. I felt my sense of self reeling away in a hurricane of emotion. In a panic, I tanged the reset and felt control return as all external communication was severed and all internal parameters were reset to default values

The room blinked back into view. I was shaken by the experience but I was damned if I would give Holstrom the satisfaction of knowing that. I paused a moment, then let bored indifference spread over my face as I said with an edge of sarcasm. "An amusing exercise but hardly the sort of profound aesthetic experience we have been led to expect by your extravagant reputation."

I was surprised to see satisfaction ripple

## Internet Corner

### How to join the on-line CyberArtists List:

send email to [listproc@u.washington.edu](mailto:listproc@u.washington.edu). Leave the subject line blank and include only the following in the message body:

subscribe cyberartists yourname

### How to join the on-line Electronic Cafe interest group List:

Same as above with the following in the message body:

subscribe ecafe yourname

### How to join the Northwest Elektro-Industrial Coalition List:

Same as above with the following in the message body:

subscribe NEC yourname

Call me at work if you have any problems getting signed on. Please pass this on to all others interested in these topics

Edward M. Galore,  
[lemaire@cac.washington.edu](mailto:lemaire@cac.washington.edu),  
(206)543-5970

quickly across his surface to be replaced by his usual irritation and impatience as he vanished. Was it my imagination or had Holstrom himself just been incarnating his image? With hundreds of patrons to divide his images and agents between, why would he have personally controlled this image? Perhaps the art form he had shared had been more than just the usual sample purveyed to a buyer or critic? I had intended my remarks to annoy him upon assimilation of his agents later in the evening but maybe I had been jousting with the artist himself and not just one of his agents. 🐉



# Mr. Einar's Neighborhood



So it's show & tell at the Northwest Cyberartists meeting. I was talking to Steve – sort of feeling out how elaborate the evening will be. He suggested bringing in a Dreaming Head, something that maybe a lot of people haven't played with. We'll see. My problem is most of my stuff is big on its own, and since they're mostly MIDI controllers, you have to have sound modules, etc... Hmm. now I remember why I enjoyed portability so much.

As an alternative, Steve suggested that I bring in some recent music that I have been working on.

Sigh.

His fun suggestion caught me by surprise. Every Cyber thing that I've done has grown out of my first love – electronic music – and now I haven't even touched a keyboard, created a sound, or slapped out a "killer" rhythm in over two months. I miss those late nights laying down tracks of weird sounds and playing the fresh new songs for my family in the morning. Before

I go to bed.

Lately, to keep busy I have over-volunteered myself on some fun projects. At Beyond Fast Forward I built the big keyboards to drive Mike Storle's *Wasserspieler* (Musical water fountain). I also built an array of twelve push buttons mounted on a piece of shiny black plastic that I can't wait to use as a live controller at the next gig. My wife recorded a segment of the KING 5 Five O'Clock news, in which there were a few seconds of footage of kids and adults playing my "Einway" pianos and push buttons and drum triggers to drive Mike's beautiful fountain. I can't tell you how that made me feel. Building things for kids is very rewarding – especially when I can show the footage to my Mother-In-Law.

On Friday November 4th I'll be setting up the *Speaking Orbs* to help out at a benefit for the Audubon Society. Bob will also be contributing. If you haven't "done" CyberArt before, and you love nature, here's your

chance. The Orbs will be playing bird songs.

Anyway, not doing music really disturbs me. All my late nights have been spent soldering and sawing and trimming and programming samples and other very boring tasks. So I mentioned to my lovely wife, Juli, that I was frustrated, and her answer was "You need to add something to the studio to spark you again." Wow. To all you musicians out there, I wish you a spouse with that kind of attitude! So I ran off to a local music store and bought a new set of waveforms for my O1/W. It was the cheapest way to get a whole new instrument that I already knew how to use.

And so this Saturday morning I am typing this article a day or so behind schedule because I was up late working on music again.

Feels good.

I need a nap!

See ya, Einar

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