Spring 4-1-2008

Profile, Spring 2008

Columbia College Chicago

i am
Interactive Arts + Media

Spring 2008

PROFILE

STUDENT Ben Cabot
FACULTY Mirella Shannon
ALUMNI Michael Jarecki

Columbia
COLLEGE CHICAGO

student profile/

Ben Cabot
Junior, Digital Media Technology Major

I've noticed that people love to qualify what they experience; it's how they relate to each other and the world around them. This is good and this is bad; this is nice and this isn't. I think you can tell a lot about a person based on how they choose to qualify things. I am, of course, no different. I tend to see things as what is best and what isn't, very hierarchically.

Although I've only recently realized this, it's been true of me my entire life. Maybe it's my competitive attitude – or maybe megalomania— but I've always had a need for greatness. Attending Columbia College Chicago, particularly in the Interactive Arts and Media department, has provided me with the ideal opportunity to fully explore and realize this pseudo-compulsion of mine. For me, the best part about the IAM department isn't the generously stocked labs and classrooms, but rather how the classes are taught. The classes teach you skills and theories you will need, and they leave it at that. The instructor doesn't hold your hand, but instead is there to support you as you walk on your own. The classes are also designed to provide inspiration, affirmation and critique from teachers and fellow students as well.

Although I do love graphic design, and am currently working on a graphic design internship, my real passion and ambition lies in a different field: Game design. Although it is hardly a fledgling game design industry, it still has a long way to go before it is fully accepted and embraced as a legitimate form of art and media. I fully intend to be among the next generation of serious game designers who will usher the industry into a new era, perhaps even its golden age. The things that intrigue me most in game design are game play, perspective, ambiance and emotion. I look forward to experimenting more with these and many other aspects of games to create truly groundbreaking, industry-changing games. We need games to surpass the classic shoot 'em up model and become meaningful, thought-provoking pieces of art.

I couldn't be happier being a part of the first graduating class of Columbia's new Game Development Major. I've been able to learn in a way that will be unique from most other people, provide feedback that will shape the future of the major, stand out, excel and set the bar very high for students to come. ✳

alumni
profile/

Michael Jarecki
Interactive Multimedia Major, Class of 2004

I am proud to be a graduate of the Columbia College Chicago Interactive Arts and Media program (IAM) although five years ago, we didn't have such a fancy name. We were the Interactive Multimedia department (IM) and "we ruled" with our vast knowledge of all things multi and media. I am pleased to see the department finally grow and offer a broader curriculum.
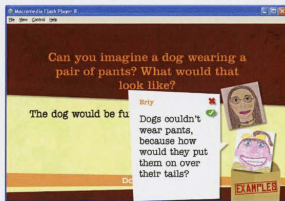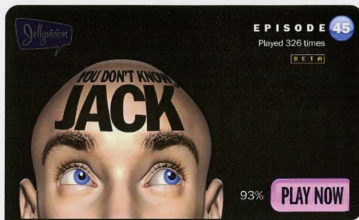
Currently, I work as a programmer at Jellyvision, Inc., in Chicago (www.jellyvision.com). Jellyvision is best known for their game YOU DON'T KNOW JACK™. I have the pleasure of working with this company for almost four years. At the moment, I am coding the new software engine that will power all of Jellyvision's future projects. I am very excited about this since, in order to do so, I will have to learn a new programming language. I love learning new stuff.

Although our web-based software is written in Flash™, Jellyvision is software agnostic. We do whatever it takes to get the desired result. At Jellyvision, this means knowing one technology really well is less desirable than being able to learn new technology quickly, when necessary and to apply it effectively. This approach stems from the core philosophy of the IM curriculum. Classes were focused on adaptability and "learning to learn." Students were strongly encouraged to explore new technology as tools and to go beyond the superficial such as learning keyboard shortcuts, etc. Acquiring this skill has been paramount to my success at Jellyvision, and with my personal endeavors as well.

My work mainly involves programming so usually I am writing ActionScript 2. But at Jellyvision, it's not uncommon to write in four or five other programming languages in a single day. Jellyvision is filled with creative, brilliant people. From artists and writers, to software engineers and our CEO, the folks at Jellyvision all rate 11 out of 10. This can be quite intimidating, but I feel my time at Columbia prepared me well for the challenge.

Many of my personal projects have been on hiatus because of how busy I am at work (oh, who am I kidding — many hours have been eaten by my PSP). I have worked on many fulfilling projects during these past few years at Jellyvision. The most exciting was creating a brand new, online version of YOU DON'T KNOW JACK™ (www.youdontknowjack.com). I was responsible for writing the entire game engine behind this version. It was quite tough and we had a very short build time. Talk about pressure! The Jack team had amazing creative energy and it was a pleasure to render their art, music and writing through code.

Another project that I am very proud of was developing educational software for students, K to12. This software was comprised of many individual modules and was a massive undertaking by Jellyvision. Each module was an entire program unto itself. My task was to write the code for a reading module named "ThinkAloud," that teaches students how to think while they read. The entire product, including the modules I coded, won several educational awards. We have received positive feedback from both the client, as well as educators who are using the software in the classroom. Although not formally tested, evidence suggests that after using this software, students became more successful in other subjects as well. Students who used it reported the experience as positive and also that it made a lasting impression. It is a wonderful feeling to know that some of my code is part of a project being used to improve childhood education.

It's been a wild ride since graduation, but I couldn't have done it without the skills I gained from the IM program. I am truly grateful to have the opportunity to get to know and study under such wonderful teachers. I'd like to extend special thanks to Janell Baxter, Dave Gerding, and Jeff Meyers for taking the extra time to listen to my questions, chat about various nonsense, and become real and valuable friends. Your guidance and support continues to be appreciated.

My advice to students in the IAM program now: Ask as many questions as you can, get to know your teachers and develop a strong network!

Creating Your World: The Official Guide to Advanced Content Creation for Second Life
by Aimee Weber, Kimberly Rufer-Bach, and Richard Platel

Second Life (SL) has an extremely supportive community. There are tutorials, open-source code, objects and textures freely available both in-world and online. So why then, would you want to buy a book about how to create content? Two big motivators: Aggregation and ease of use.

Although it is true there are many tutorials online, they are spread across thousands of websites and forum posts. Finding exactly what you are looking for, even with the help of search engines, can be frustrating. Additionally, in order to participate in the official SL forums (and to access some of the best online resources available), you need to have a premium account. For those looking to have a handy off-line alternative, this book pulls together essential information and tips into one convenient spot with an accompanying resource CD.

The text is full of examples, illustrations, descriptive information about content creation and easy-to-read—and easy-to-follow—tutorials. Three chapters in the book are devoted to Linden Scripting Language (LSL) and are a good reference for those familiar with programming. If you are new to scripting, you might have a trickier time picking up the language as this book condenses programming basics. However, there are plenty of code examples ready for you to copy into your objects to learn by example.

If you are interested in building in Second Life, visit the I AM Columbia island or sign up for the Virtual Worlds Concepts class (36-1950). Other classes in the Interactive Arts and Media department that have used Second Life include IAM Team (fall 2007) and Public Art (spring 2008).

by Professor Tom Dowd

Mass Effect
Bio Ware, Developer
Microsoft, Publisher
Single-player, action/RPG
Xbox 360 exclusive

If you are looking for an expansive, epic science fiction, role-playing game that reminds you of a less-gritty *Star Wars*, then *Mass Effect* is the game for you. While far from perfect, it contains more than enough polish and punch to satisfy a broad spectrum of gamers. Developed by BioWare, a veteran game-development house best known for some of the classic role-playing games of the last ten years —the *Star Wars*-licensed *Knights of the Old Republic*, the Far East-themed *Jade Empire*, as well as *Baldur's Gate* and *Neverwinter Nights* — *Mass Effect* is bold and ambitious. That BioWare may have over-reached itself, however, shows through in some places.

Mass Effect is the story of Commander Shepard, an elite "Specter" commando of the ruling galactic authority. Your mission — and you have no choice but to accept it — is to track down a rogue Specter agent who seems to be allying with an alien foe intent on absolute conquest. Yes, an overly familiar premise, no doubt, but the power comes from the telling and overall, *Mass Effect* does a stellar job. The story pulls the main character and his squad of allies through multiple story-chapters and across dozens of worlds. It also includes interaction with scores of beautifully-rendered and nicely, voice-acted characters.

That character interaction is, in many ways, what pushes *Mass Effect* beyond just being an extremely pretty game. From the start, you have the choice of tailoring Commander

Shepard as a male or female character and can alter the appearance of your Shepard with a wide variety of facial choices. (Both the male and female voice sets for Shepard are equally well done, but the nod probably goes to Jennifer's Hale's female Shepard.) Once you create the character, you can decide if you want to emphasize combat, tech, or biotic (special mental powers) skills. These choices don't greatly impact how the game-story plays out, but they do produce significantly different combat experiences.

The driving element of the game is that you chose from two paths for Shepard to follow – Paragon or Renegade. Whereas many games provide a black/white, good/evil dichotomy as moral options the main character can choose between – *Fable* and BioWare's own *Knights of the Old*

game review

Gianna Parasini: Allow me to introduce myself. Parasini, Sirvena Internal Affairs.
Who are you?
What do you want?
I don't have time for this.

The story pulls the main character and his squad of allies through multiple story-chapters and across dozens of worlds. It also includes interaction with scores of beautifully-rendered and nicely-voice-acted characters.

Republic are examples – *Mass Effect* assumes the main character works on the side of good. It's how Shepard executes his journey on either path that is up to the player.

The Paragon path presents choices and dialogue options that reflect a more white-hat, law-abiding world view, whereas the Renegade path is more shoot-from-the-hip, wisecracking and rule-breaking. The Paragon path does produce some good variations in encounters and situations (though the entertainment value of the dialogue definitely sides with the Renegade path), but it is more than a little predictable. Whether Shepard is on the Paragon or Renegade path is determined by your initial dialogue choices, and the interface clearly defines which is which: Paragon choices are always at the top part of the interface widget and Renegade choices are always at the bottom.

What is lost here is a sense of discovery, of making choices and then finding out which path Shepard is on. So what happens is, that instead of deciding which dialogue choices feel best, you choose either top (Paragon) or bottom (Renegade) based on which path you decided to follow. Occasionally, the game pulls an old switch-a-roo and shifts you in the exact opposite direction you would have anticipated based on the choices you defined at the start. I would characterize as this somewhat shaky logic.

The dialogue-choice system is intuitive, innovative and immersive. The character interaction scenes play out like movie sequences (admittedly, rather blandly staged) and you have to make dialogue choices for the character in real-time with a simple flick of the game controller. Once you make your selection, the scene continues without interruption, providing a great sense of flow and drama. Sometimes it's a little clunky, but overall it is used to great effect.

While the story and character interaction schemes soar head-and-shoulders above most other games, *Mass Effect* is unfortunately somewhat lacking in other areas. The in-game environments, while wondrously rendered, feel sparse and abandoned compared to the vibrant, teeming, character-filled world of *Assassin's Creed*. The galactic-exploration system is a somewhat boring point and go-here interface, broken up with repetitive, valueless cut-scenes. You have the ability to drive an all-terrain combat vehicle in *Mass Effect*, but the world exteriors are poorly realized and the entire process adds little to the game experience. The combat system is probably good enough, but could have been so much more. There is also a lack in situational awareness, teammate controls, variety of mission environments and enemy artificial intelligence. Finally, the game has some technical issues as well, with overly-long load times between levels and some indications that BioWare left little fudge-room for the Xbox 360 to handle *Mass Effect's* demanding graphics.

That said, however, *Mass Effect* is a great game, well executed and enjoyable to play.

Ti Mosienko

Ti Mosienko (Andrew Oleksiuk) is an avatar who works as an artist in Second Life (SL), a popular, virtual world. Her most recent work involves role-playing and creating historical images of famous American women.

Janell: How long have you been working in SL? What drew you to use it as a means of artistic expression?

Ti Mosienko: In the summer of 2006, I signed up for a free account and began to understand the potential of SL as an artistic platform and cyber-cultural phenomenon. The most important thing I did in the beginning was to become socialized in SL. I befriended several avatars with similar interests like music, and in doing so, also learned the basics of interacting in SL and moving through the SL space. The range of things one can do there is vast, and this is a real draw for me. One can create narrative, non-narrative, interactive or non-interactive work.

How does SL affect your artistic work?

The focus of my work in SL is to investigate and role-play identities. Doing figurative work is probably a major departure from my previous work, which tended to be abstract. I have worked in many various media such as video and performance art. But most of all, I like work that is informed by something humanities-based. I also enjoy artistic collaboration and SL is pretty good for that.

Why feminist art?

There seems to be cultural backlash against traditional feminism in popular media. Many take feminism for granted or perhaps being cynical about it has become somewhat "cool." The reality is that feminist critical theory and social feminism continue to impact everyday behavior for most people. Feminism influences the cultural record on multiple levels.

What's next for Ti Mosienko?

Currently, I am creating an interactive set of experiences for people to learn, via SL, about the history of American women. My goal is to construct over 150 interactive installations and encourage people to do the kind of role-play that I am doing now. I see this type of interaction as an engaging method of learning.

Ti Mosienko as Susan B. Anthony working for women suffrage, the voting-rights movement in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

I found my internship at Oncall Interactive through the ColumbiaWorks link on Columbia College Chicago's website.

It's been a great experience. Oncall is a software and web development company in Chicago. At Oncall, I get the opportunity to work on projects for big companies like NBC Universal and Tag Heuer. They always give me real work instead of making me run for coffee every morning like the average intern might have to do. I've gained a wealth of experience and knowledge during my time there and also have the opportunity to fill out my portfolio with great examples. During my internship, I've been able to work with a wide range of technologies like XHTML and CSS, XML, JavaScript, ActionScript, PHP and MySql, along with occasional graphic design work using Adobe Photoshop and Illustrator.

I've learned a lot at Oncall—things one can't really learn in school. I've learned that deadlines are to be met no matter what time you're supposed to leave work. I've learned how to work with pre-written code. And, I've been lucky enough to learn how to be a stronger team player.

Nothing, not even a college education, can teach the kinds of lessons you learn once you join the work force. It's a shocking but also very exciting experience.

www.benjaminwasilewski.com

Spring 2008 Schedule

/the Project Rm/

623 SOUTH WABASH AVENUE, ROOM 416

Exhibition Space for the Interactive Arts + Media Department

January 28 – February 29 / Reception: February 28, 4pm – 6pm

Complexity of Time, Artwork from Fall 2007 Sound and Motion class

This exhibit explores interpretations of Sound and Motion farmed from and framed by the talented minds of : Mathew Norton, Mike Danielson, Michaelia Kelley, Ben Wasilewski, Tim Kuttruff, Ryan Daly, Liz Rominski, Marc Dostie, Sanjay Cherian and Charles Youssi

March 10 – March 21 / Reception: March 21, 4pm – 6pm

Nimble Projections

IAM's Public Art class, offered for the first time this spring, explores the meaning and varieties of art created in and for public places, especially concentrating on work that uses technology and/or interactivity. Students in the class will occupy The Project Room for two weeks in March to investigate the properties of projected light and images in preparation for a work of public, exterior art to be created for the Manifest celebration in May. Students will work with projections adapted to irregular, unconventional surfaces while considering ideas that might be eventually expanded in scale, and that address some aspect of our natural, human, and/or built environment.

March 31 – April 25 / Reception: April 24, 4pm – 6pm

Authoring Interactive Media 2 Class Exhibition

Students in this course are challenged to take website projects-under-development to the Project Room and contend with this spatial situation, both embedding their projects into their surroundings as well as taking advantage of these seemingly incompatible channels of communication to enhance their works. The exhibition will be a work-in-progress that will culminate with a closing reception.

May 16 – Mid summer / Reception: May 16, 4pm – 6pm

Manifest

The Interactive Arts and Media department is pleased to present a showcase of cutting-edge technology-based work from this year's senior class. The Project Room and the Hokin Annex will highlight innovative interactive, installation, time-based and print media projects. Manifest artwork will also be presented in Second Life, a virtual reality on-line world. *Visit Manifest SL, on IAM Columbia Island (in Second Life) to view the virtual exhibition.*

Visiting Artists
Spring 2008 Schedule

All events take place at 623 S. Wabash Avenue, Room 405 unless otherwise noted. Free and Open to the Public

PRINCIPLES OF GAME DESIGN
Squirrel Eiserloh
February 7, 5:30 pm

Squirrel is a veteran programmer and designer seeking to find ways to help gaming discover its full potential as a medium. His path through game development has included a number of games from early online MUDs to action/adventure/role-playing games and shooters. An advocate of education, creative collaboration and rapid iteration, Squirrel is currently helping create casual games at Dallas-based MumboJumbo and serves as the Technical Director there. In his spare time he organizes a group of area developers who conduct 48-hour experimental "game jam" sessions and serves on the board of the local IGDA chapter. Published games include *Anachronox, Star Trek: Elite Force II, Counter-Strike: Condition Zero, Counter-Strike* for XBox, *25-To-Life, Quake 4, Medal of Honor: Airborne* and *Luxor 3.*
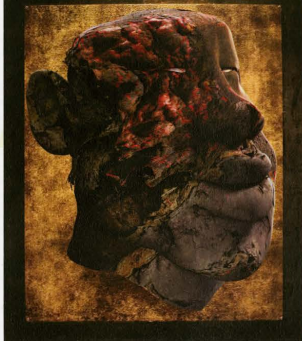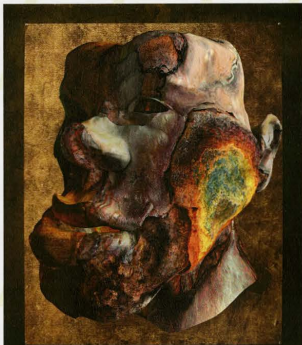
DIGITAL-PRIMITIVE ART
LiQin Tan
February 18, 5:30 pm
Professor Tan has portrayed his inventive and autodidactic energy as an artist, teacher and researcher for three decades while residing in China, Canada, Singapore and the United States. His works of art have been exhibited nationally and internationally including SIGGRAPH02-06, iDMAa04-07, Electronics Alive IV, iV04-06, Shanghai DuoLun Museum of Modern Art, National Center for Computer Animation in the United Kingdom, Centre D'Art Contemporaine in Montreal, Vancouver Art Gallery, Singapore Art Museum, Los Angeles Center for Digital Art, Noyes Museum of Art, Jiangsu Art Museum and National Art Museum in China.

Visiting Artists Spring 2008

PIECES OF HERSELF

Drag pieces to the body
Reposition them as you like.

SHOWER   BEDROOM   OUTSIDE   KITCHEN   LIVING RM   OFFICE   MAIN ST.

OUTSIDE:
As if she could ever really get "outside".

CLEAR   HOW TO PLAY | REPLAY INTRO | ABOUT THE GAME | CREDITS | CONTACT

NAVIGATING THE FEMININE
Juliet Davis
April 10, 5:30 pm

Juliet Davis is an inter-media artist, writer, and researcher, teaching theory and practice in interactive media, visual culture and media writing with particular interest in cyber-feminism. Prominent museums and festivals have exhibited her artwork internationally, including SIGGRAPH, ISEA, FILE, Institute of Contemporary Art (London), MAXXI Museum (Rome), and The International Museum of Women (USA). Neal Benezra, Director of the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, recently honored her work for its "freshness and originality" at the 2007 Art of the Digital Festival. In traditional scholarship, Davis recent article titled "Fractured Cybertales: Navigating the Feminine" is forthcoming in Leonardo, and her past writing has appeared in other peer-reviewed journals such as Journal of Film and Video (University of Illinois Press) and Media N (Journal of the New Media Caucus, CAA). Her book titled Exploring Writing for Interactive Media (Thomson Delmar) is forthcoming in 2008.

COMPUTER-ASSISTED CONTENT EDITING TECHNIQUES FOR LIVE MULTIMEDIA PERFORMANCE

Stefan Muller Arisona
April 24, 5:30 pm
February 7, 5:30 pm

Stefan Muller Arisona is a post-doctoral research fellow at Media Arts and Technology (MAT) of the University of California, Santa Barbara. His main interests are at the intersections of art and technology. His research focuses on novel real-time multimedia systems and on live composition and performance techniques. Stefan received an MSc in Computer Science from Uppsala University (Sweden, 1997) and a MSc in Electrical Engineering from ETH Zurich (Switzerland, 1998). He was visiting researcher at IRCAM Centre Pompidou (France, 2003) and completed his Ph.D. at the University of Zurich's Multimedia Lab (Switzerland 2004). From 2005 to 2007 Stefan was a post-doctoral researcher and lecturer at ETH Zurich's Computer Systems Institute. He also served as scientific chair of the Digital Art Weeks, an annual symposium and festival that explores new movements in digital art. Stefan has performed internationally and his art works have appeared at renowned locations such as the Ars Electronica Center (Austria, 2006 2008).

SPECIAL PERFORMANCE: THE EXPLODING, PLASTIC AND INEVITABLE REDUX

Stefan Muller Arisona, aka robot_mixeur and Steve Gibson
April 24, 7:30 pm
Conaway Center, 1104 S. Wabash Avenue,
First Floor

Steve Gibson, a Canadian media artist, composer, curator and theorist who now serves as Associate Professor of Digital Media at University of Victoria, Canada. Steve Gibson's installations and compositions have been performed in such venues as: Ars Electronica; the Whitney Museum of American Art; the North American New Music Festival; the Banff Centre for the Arts; the European Media Arts Festival; ISEA, Interface3, Hamburg; Akademie der Bildenden Künste, Nürnberg; and 6CyberConf

Nano-questions:
Why Should We Care?

I n October of 2007, I was an invited speaker at a workshop, "Images of the Nanoscale," hosted by the Science and Technology Studies Group in the University of South Carolina NanoCenter. In my presentation, I tried to identify some issues raised by nanotechnology—issues for the arts as well as for our culture. But first, an important question should be addressed: Why is this relevant for us, a department specializing in the new paradigms that computers make possible in creative enterprises, especially interactivity? Computers are at present the meta-medium uniting and creating synergy among previously disparate fields. But new technologies continue to develop, and our own field continues to advance. Artists and designers whose practice identifies and questions the role of new technologies need to be aware of developments outside our field narrowly defined, and we must grapple with our relationship to science and technology, which is of primary importance to our identity as a department. Some reflections, then, raised by a consideration of nanotechnology/nanoscience and their implications:

- **We are in the midst of a movement from virtual to embodied**
- **We are trying to understand the present using the paradigms of the past**
- **We live with an increasing mediation of the senses**
- **With enhanced knowledge of matter at the smallest scale, we can see that some patterns are universal**
- **Context and intention change our understanding of images**
- **To whom will technological advances belong?**

VIRTUAL TO EMBODIED

One issue facing us is that of simulation vs. embodiment. The past decade was centrally involved with creating experiences that resemble reality, or that create a new (virtual) reality. The present decade's concerns have shifted to manipulating reality itself and to understanding the impact that our powerful technologies and scientific advances are having on the real world.

I would offer as an example, Eduardo Kac's fluorescent rabbit "Alba" a well-known example of commenting on genetic engineering by engaging in it rather than representing it. Created in 2000, GFP Bunny "comprises the creation of a green fluorescent rabbit, the public dialogue generated by the project, and the social integration of the rabbit. GFP stands for green fluorescent protein. Transgenic art .is a new art form based on the use of genetic engineering to transfer natural or synthetic genes to an organism, to create unique living beings. This must be done with great care, with acknowledgment of the complex issues thus raised and, above all with a commitment to respect, nurture, and love the life thus created." Eduardo echoes the ethical issues raised by Mary Shelley in her 1818 novel "Frankenstein" about responsibility for the life we create using technology, and more recently and just as eloquently discussed by Neal Stephenson in his novel "The Diamond Age"

I would compare the work by Kac, which is one of many works of genetic modification by Eduardo himself as well as a number of other artists, to The "Judgment" series by Daniel Lee.[ii] Although the work wasn't created with genetic manipulation in mind, it has been included in group shows like "Gene(sis)" (organized by the Henry Art Gallery in 1997) which place it side by side with work that is frankly genomic because of the powerful and disturbing references to the combination of human and animal characteristics.

Even though these are examples not of nanotechnology but rather of genetic engineering, I call upon Larry Smarr's article in Wired magazine,[ii] in which he coins the phrase "bioinfonanotech" to talk about the convergence in technologies in seemingly disparate fields of inquiry to suggest that these fields are related and must be talked about in concert.

We might also compare two other works from the realms of embodiment and virtuality.

PRESENT VS PAST

Nano art may seem virtual because it cannot be directly seen or felt, but it participates in the physical world in a way that the great paradigm of the last decade, virtuality, does not. This is suggested by Neal Stephenson "The Diamond Age," in which he foresees a world fundamentally changed by the everyday use of nanotechnology, in contrast to one of his previous works, "Snow Crash," in which he envisions the Metaverse, the VR inheritor of the internet, as our primary means of interaction with the world.

"Flw,"[iv] Ken Goldberg's reproduction of Frank Lloyd Wright's architectural masterpiece "Falling Water," demonstrates the absurdity of considering the nanoscale with the paradigms and rules we assume when considering the world we can perceive with our senses. The world not only ceases to be habitable at the nanoscale, the principles of gravity inherent in the cantilevered design cease to be applicable. Goldberg gives a powerful message about the nano-scale: we do not belong here. He has taken the phenomenon of miniaturization that allows me to carry around the Eiffel Tower on my keychain and reduced it far past imagining. I don't speak the language, I don't have the currency, and I feel myself a Brobdingnagian in the land of Lilliput.[v]

A work that is actually a bit later in time but participating in the conceptual framework of simulation is "Home"[vi] by my creative partner Drew Browning and me. "Home" was both an on-line, navigable work in VRML[vii] that

Faculty + Staff Updates

2007 was another busy year for the Interactive Arts and Media faculty. We welcomed a bright new addition to our team. Janine Fron joined the IAM staff as Academic Manager. Jeff and Tina Meyers welcomed a new baby to their family. Xavier Alan Meyers was born on September 11th, 2007 weighing 7 pounds, 1 ounce. It was also a tragic year with the loss of two talented and distinguished young members of the faculty, Frank Crist and Christopher Sorg.

FRANK CRIST 34, died October 17th, 2007 After a six-year sojourn as a Web programmer in Silicon Valley, Frank came to Columbia to teach programming in the IAM department and pursue an MFA in writing from the Fiction Writing Department. He will be receiving that degree posthumously. A talented writer, Frank was a Weisman Award winner for an anthology of work, *My Angels and My Demons at War* which collected writing from twelve students and alums; a member of the *Hair Trigger 27* and *28* editorial staffs (in addition to being published in the pages of that magazine); and one of the main creators of UIC's interactive/immersive virtual reality project, *Special Treatment*, which enabled many, many people to tour the Birkenau camp at Auschwitz during the project's installation at a west side gallery in 2005.

CHRISTOPHER JAMES SORG, 36, passed away on July 25, 2007 Chris was a sound and visual artist, specializing in new media. He taught courses in new media and animation in the IAM department since 2001. He also taught at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and Loyola University Chicago. Chris worked as a freelance designer, illustrator, and developer on a variety of commercial projects in his spare time. In 2003 he was awarded an artist residency at Experimental Sound Studio in Chicago. His multimedia works have been shown nationally and he performed live and on the radio around the country. Chris was quoted in a paper written by Mitchell Whitelaw called Hearing *Pure Data: Aesthetics and Ideals of Data-Sound* from the School of Creative Communication at the University of Canberra: "What I have been particularly interested in is the idea that all data inside the computer is essentially the same, and that it just takes someone to "peel the skin" and peer inside, either with ears or eyes, or whatever senses we care to translate the switching of 1s and 0s into. To me the most interesting thing about "data bending" is letting the data speak for itself trying to listen to the data stream with as little interference as possible." Chris Sorg.

ANNETTE BARBIER's exhibitions include "Search Terms" in Echelon, Polvo Gallery, Chicago, IL, "Extreme Measures" in Web3dart 2007 Dana Centre Science and Art Museum, London, UK and University of Perugia, Umbria, Italy (www.takeawayfestival.com/node, www.web3d.org/web3d2007/), CrossMediale 2 at Gosia Koscielak Studio and Gallery and Organicism at Columbia College C33 Gallery. Her work was reviewed in the Chicago City Arts Review: "Annette Barbier and Drew Browning: New Media, Activism and Collaboration," Chicago City Arts Review (www.culturalchicago.com/magazine/annette-barbier-drew-browning-new-mediaactivism-and-collaboration). She presented "Images of Nanoscale" at the University of South Carolina (nanoinfo.net/images_workshop/index.html) and received a Columbia College Chicago Faculty Development Grant

DAVE GERDING was awarded a $1,000,000 grant from the Army Research Office for the creation of his serious game Construct Collaboration, Training, Assessment for Time Critical Teams.

PATRICK LICHTY's exhibitions include *Deconstructing Cicciolina*, Gosia Koscielak Gallery, Chicago, IL, *Bits, Switches, and Glitches*, Alogon Gallery, Chicago, IL, *Second Front Selections*; *Telecultures*, Pace University Museum, NYC, *Video Art in the Age of the Internet*, Chelsea Museum, NYC, *Second Front Selections*; *Telecultures*, Scope Art fair, Miami *Miami Now* Scope art fairs, Miami, FL, *Second Front: The Wrath of Kong*, Performa 07 Performance Biennale, Artists Space

Gallery, New York, NY, *Defenestration*, Conaway
Center, Chicago, IL, *goDiva of the iCommons*,
ISummit 07/USC Annenberg, Dubrovnik, Croatia,
Tower of Babelfish, Gosia Koscielak Gallery,
Chicago, IL, *Second Front: Binge*, Art's Birthday,
Western Front, Vancouver BC, *Tools of Culture*, Gosia
Koscielak Gallery, Chicago, IL, *The Art of Play*, The
Project Rm, Columbia College Chicago, Chicago,
IL, *Eschelon: Who's Watching You?* Polvo Gallery,
Chicago, IL. Professor Lichty's curatorial projects
include *Renascence 07: Disability and New Media*,
w/VSA Arts, Kennedy Center for the Performing
Arts, Social Fabrics, College Art Association,
2008 and *The Kinetic Image*, The Torpedo Factory,
Alexandria, VA. His papers and presentations
include *Youth and Social Media*, Columbia College
Chicago, *Affect and Virtuality*. SLSA, Portland, ME,
Contemporary Art and Second Life, SLCC, Chicago,
Collaboration & New Media, University Film &
Film Association, Denton, TX, *Notes on Digital
Minimalism*, ArtCamp 2007 Emily Carr Institute Art
& Design, *Second Front*, ArtCamp 2007 Emily Carr
Inst Art & Design, *Contemporary Art & Second Life*,
Second Life Community Conference, Chicago, *A
Model for Education in Second Life*, SLCC, Chicago,
Borders, Boundaries and Liminal Spaces (round
table), CADRE Inst. San Jose, Flash Art Milan and
Exibart, Rome.

NIKI NOLIN's exhibitions include *Beyond Boudaries*,
iDMAa, Philadelphia PA, *Artrageous*, Greenleaf Art
Center, Chicago, *Here Lies Truth*, A Collaboration by
Anida Yoeu Ali Sherry Antonini, Brendan Byrnes,
Niki Nolin, Eli Sabbagh, Cristal Sabbagh, Alycia
Scott and Jason Shipley, Site Unseen Exhibition,
Chicago Cultural Center, Solo Exhibition *A Look at
Chaos Shows This to be True*, With artist, Sherry
Antonini and sculptor Suzanne Cohan-Lange, State
Street Gallery, Robert Morris College, Chicago,
Perfect Kitchen (Performance), Rhinoceros Theater
Festival Prop Theater featuring artist Sherry
Antonini, *Hive*, Chicago Artists Month: Greenleaf Art
Center, exhibited and co-curator with David Joseph,
Here Lies Truth, A Collaboration by Anida Yoeu Ali,
Sherry Antonini, Brendan Byrnes, Niki Nolin, Eli
Sabbagh, Cristal Sabbagh, Alycia Scott and Jason
Shipley, Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago,
Sculpture Invasion, with Antonini and Cohan-Lange,
Koenline Museum of Art.

Northwest tour with band: Volume is Color, Stawdog
Theater, Elbow Room, Chicago, 10th International
Open, with Antonini and Cohan-Lange, Woman
Made Gallery, Chicago, and Faculty Exhibition, The
Project Rm, Columbia College Chicago

KEVIN RIORDAN exhibited his work in *Production,
Not Reproduction; Offset Printed Artist Books* at the
Center for Book Arts, New York, NY.

MIRELLA SHANNON presented two papers
this year. *From Unreal Tournament to High Rise
Evacuation: Using Game Engines as a Serious
Game Development Tool* was presented at the
iDMAa conference in Philadelphia, PA. and *Using
Video Game Engines to Recruit Women to Careers
in Computer Science* was presented at the CASTL
Institute, Chicago, IL.

TRACY MARIE TAYLOR's exhibition activities
include *Janina Ciezadlo and Tracy Marie Taylor*
Gosia Koscielak Gallery, Chicago, IL, *Snap to Grid*,
LA Center for Digital Art, Los Angeles, CA, *The Art
of Play*, The Project Rm, Columbia College Chicago,
Bridge Art Fair Chicago, IL, *Crossmediale 2* Gosia
Koscielak Gallery, Chicago, IL, *Faculty Exhibition*,
The Project Rm, Columbia College Chicago and
recent curatorial project *Bilingual, Art at the
Intersection of Painting and Video* at the Glass
Curtain Gallery, Columbia College Chicago, Chicago,
IL. Recent reviews and interviews include *Hybrid
Transmission*, Time Out Chicago, *Bilingual* speaks
eclectic, collective language of film in contemporary
art, The Chicago Tribune, and *Tracy Marie Taylor
and front Forty Press, Episode 113*, Bad at Sports
podcast. After six years working in the IAM
department, Ms. Taylor will be leaving her post as
Adjunct Faculty and External Relations Coordinator
in the fall to accept a position as Assistant
Professor at Lake Forest College.

Columbia
C O L L E G E   C H I C A G O

INTERACTIVE ARTS + MEDIA
600 SOUTH MICHIGAN
CHICAGO, IL 60605
WWW.IAM COLUM EDU

Dean of Students