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Columbia College Chicago

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PROFILE

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Interactive Arts + Media

INTERACTIVE ARTS AND MEDIA / FALL 2011 NEWSLETTER

Interviews
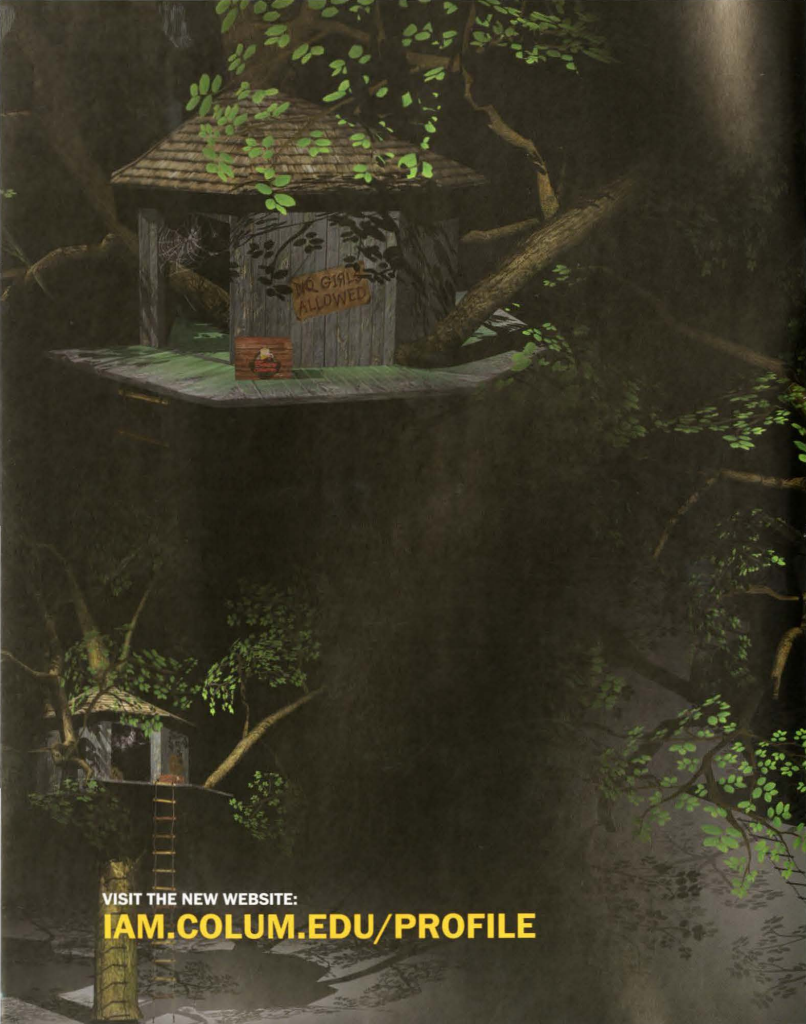
Freshman **Rory McSweeney**
Student **Elise Motzny**
Internship **Jeremy Freehill**
Alum **Garenne Bigby**
Staff **Philip Nadasdy**

NO GIRLS ALLOWED

Contents

Rory McSweeney

Interactive Arts and Media / Class of 2014

This event was made possible by the
First Year Experience Program

Who are you and what is your major?

Hi, my name is Rory McSweeney. I started my first semester at Columbia in the fall of 2011 as an incoming transfer student from the Digital Media Design program at Harold Washington College on the other side of the loop. Currently, I am in the BA program in the Interactive Arts and Media department, but I am in the process of switching to the BFA, which I think is more suited for the work I want to do.

What projects are you working on?

I'm working on an assignment for my 2D Imaging class that deals with gender We have to incorporate a digital image made in Adobe Photoshop and another element either etched or cut on the laser cutter (which, by the way, is a really nifty piece of equipment) into a single composition. So far it's been a fairly challenging task, both technically, in figuring out how to involve the design made on the laser cutter in a way that aesthetically makes sense, and conceptually, in terms of addressing gender issues through the piece. For my project I'm making a composite of images of body parts from magazines into a grotesque, hyper-sexualized figure that will be somewhat obscured by a stencil covering made on the laser cutter The viewer can open the stencil cover to view the image clearly, but I don't know if you'd want to—it's pretty weird looking!

> "...after attending a few other schools that I realized Columbia College was exactly where I needed to be."

Why did you choose to come to Columbia?

As a Chicago native I feel deeply connected to this city. But even if I wasn't, I think I would still find it so fortunate that I'm able to come downtown everyday and work in such an awesome environment. Also, a fun fact about Rory: I almost came to Columbia right out of high school—I even paid my deposit—but it was after attending a few other schools that I realized Columbia College was exactly where I needed to be. I have always loved making art and being creative. Yet, I was scared that being creative wouldn't be enough to get a "real job" and make ends meet. Coming to Columbia quelled any concerns. I've taken classes at several schools and considered programs at many more and nowhere else have I seen such a balance between a functional, technical education and having total creative freedom as I have experienced at Columbia.

Favorite classes?

I think the diplomatic answer would be that I love all of my classes, and honestly, I do. Although one class I've really been blown away by is my Media Theory and Design class. I definitely would not have bothered taking it had it not been required for my major, but I'm so glad I did. It has reaffirmed the notion that as lifelong consumers of media, as well as being the upcoming generation of producers of media, we have a responsibility to know what the heck we're talking about and figure out the best way to say it. This is essentially what the class is about. I highly recommend it to all Columbia students, regardless of major.

What is your favorite software and why?

I adore Adobe Illustrator for its usability— it's like MS Paint for big kids. But I'm really bummed that I don't own a copy of it. If anyone out there wants to hook me up, it would be much appreciated.

What is your greatest inspiration?

It would be hard to pinpoint one thing or person as my main source of inspiration. I glean the most inspiration from observing seemingly mundane things or events. Most of my ideas come to me when I'm on my way to school. Along with the mundane things, you see a lot of weird stuff downtown. For example, the other day I got off the bus and saw a lady with a live parrot on her arm. How could that not inspire you?

What are some of your goals?

Ultimately I want to teach digital art and new media at a place like Columbia, but I know in the meantime I need to make some cool stuff so a school will hire me. I'm still trying to figure out what that might be. When I started associating with people who shared my interests in interactive arts, I noticed a similarity: A lot of people had great ideas but did not know how make their ideas work, be it adding some interesting feature to a website or turning an idea into an installation. This impedance to the creative process of many of my friends drove me to want to learn more about the back end of interactive art so I could implement my ideas and help others with theirs. This is why I'm focusing on programming and plan to work in that field in some capacity after I graduate.

What's the best experience you've had at Columbia so far?

This doesn't quite fall under the category of best experience, but it's kind of funny: Earlier, I mentioned a project I am currently working for which I'm using cutouts from magazines. To obtain the materials I needed, I had to convince a 7-Eleven cashier to allow me to peruse his selection of pornographic and bodybuilding magazines, assuredly not for my own personal use, but for an art project. It was an interesting conversation to say the least.

What's the best advice you have for cultivating an artistic practice?

Start collecting things. I've always hoarded interesting odds and ends and bits of paper—I am continuously surprised by what small idea or object evolves into a larger project. Also, at Columbia there's lots of discussion about copyright and fair use policies, which is something one really needs to keep in mind when producing any sort of media. Carrying a camera around is a good idea too. If you're taking your own pictures you don't need to rely on pictures from Google searches, which is actually a pretty shifty first line of attack anyway. Carrying around a moleskin or a sketchbook is actually pretty useful, in addition to making you look hip and artsy.

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Elise Motzny

Game Design / Class of 2012

Describe how and when you first became interested in technology, games, programming and 3D modeling?

Video games were introduced to me when my father created a spaceship game for me when I was just a baby. Every time I smashed the keyboard the rocket ships exploded, putting a huge smile on my baby face. From then on it was Donkey Kong, Crusin' World and Unreal Tournament until Maxis released The Sims in 2000.

I first became interested in creating games and 3D modeling in 2000 when Maxis released the entertaining dollhouse series, The Sims. The game first caught my attention when it provided tools to create a house for the little Simmies to live in. They also released a tool to create wallpaper and floors to decorate your house. I also wanted my Sims to have more clothing options. With these goals in mind, I visited every fan site I could find and began to teach myself Adobe Photoshop and MilkShape (a 3D modeling program created by Mete Ciragan). Through entertainment I was learning how to create gaming content because I wanted to have more options available for my Sims. At the time, I was not aware that I was learning basic game art concepts because the process was fun and enjoyable, just as 3D modeling and texturing is for me today. Now when I play up a game, I often find myself staring at the 3D models and texturing techniques rather than being fully immersed in the game.

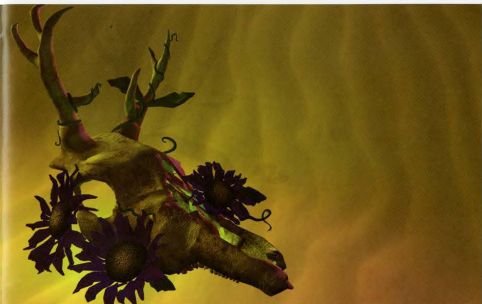**Why did you decide to attend Columbia? Describe some of your experiences at school.**

Columbia College Chicago was actually the last college on my priority list for my Bachelor's Degree in Game Art. I never thought about attending until I visited Columbia. Now I am even more pleased with my choice. My classes have helped advance my knowledge of 3D, drawing and creating videogames. My favorite class last semester was 3D Comp II. The teacher was tough and challenging, but that's how I learned a great deal about Maya. I have also found that advancement within my field depends entirely on my own self-motivation to learn and create. It's my responsibility to comprehend the media and information provided to me even if this means learning a new program to complete a project.

What are some of the projects you are working on?

Ancient Rome
This past summer I volunteered to lead a project that digitally recreated Ancient Rome. The project utilized Maya and the Unreal Development Kit. Organized by Joseph Cancellaro, the project's purpose is to create a glamorous showcase in Poland to demonstrate student expertise in 3D design. I delegated project responsibilities to our team of three, myself included. At the onset of the project, I had very little knowledge of how to use the Unreal Development Kit. With the deadline approaching quickly, I created the project while learning UDK. I scoured tutorials, books, and other media. Typically, when students are learning, they try to comprehend strategies before implementing them. For me, gaining achievement from self-motivation enhances the thrill of accomplishment.

> ## "My classes have helped advance my knowledge of 3D, drawing and creating videogames."

How has gender impacted your experience as a gamer?

Obviously, males and females in the gaming world should be on an equal level and offered the same opportunities, however this is not the case. Men are more typically found in the videogame workforce and degree field than women. The term "female gamer" defines a new minority. As a result, there are specific scholarships and events geared toward females and gaming, but not for men.

Playing videogames over the Internet is interesting. Once while playing Call of Duty, other players assumed I was a little boy. After convincing them that I was a girl, they responded with, "Wow, awesome." Overall, I have not experienced that many negative occurrences for being female. The feedback I receive from Call of Duty players is mostly positive. But, negative attitudes toward female gaming exist, and they can be hurtful and frustrating to deal with.

I love a good challenge. One of the best ways to learn in this field is by clicking buttons, asking questions and finding solutions to existing problems. This way, the content is learned not only though study, but also through action.

We are currently awaiting news from a grant committee in Poland that would send us to there to promote tourism by digitally recreating Wolfschanze, Hitler's infamous headquarters in Poland during World War II. I would be more than thrilled if this prospect becomes a reality— but it might make me pass out momentarily. Creating digital art is my passion— it feels like it is a real part of me.

Girls Got Game

TThis fall, I founded a student organization through Columbia named Girls Got Game. Our purpose is to promote more involvement in gaming activities within our community and beyond.   When I say beyond, I mean: Gen Con 2012 in Indianapolis (one of the largest and most prominent annual gaming conventions in North America); PAX East (a three-day game festival for tabletop, videogame, and PC gamers) in Boston, Massachusetts, and even the September 2012 Tokyo Game Show (an annual trade show for video game developers), in Tokyo, Japan. Through careful planning and proper fundraising, the goals of Girls Got Game are completely feasible within two years. The number of girls at Columbia and at my previous school in the gaming degree can be counted on one, maybe two hands. So, it's challenging to find girls who share the same interests in games. Though not female-exclusive, Girls Got Game specifically seeks out girls with gaming interests to create new friendships, networking possibilities and create awareness about the industry to girls.

How do you envision your future after graduation?

I would love to have had internship experience at a game company before graduation to understand what will be expected of me. The only experiences I can share are the few times I visited game companies in Chicago to playtest their videogames. But this does not inform me about the workplace. From what I could tell, some companies seemed fun and interesting; others felt like computer sweatshops.

Perhaps my expectations are naïve: I am not positive about what to expect from the gaming industry. What I am certain of is that I enjoy learning, creating 3D graphics and leading teams to complete projects. In the future, I would like to be directing an art team toward completion of a game.

Jeremy Freehill

Interactive Arts and Media/Class of 2012

Just as many of the great things happen in life, my internship at Ogilvy & Mather came about unexpectedly and, at just the right time. After discovering my love of web design several years ago, my goal was to one day turn that passion into a profession. I knew eventually getting a position at one of the many agencies in Chicago would catalyze my goals, be it through a swift gain of experience, networking opportunities, or at least provide another bullet point on my resume. Fortunately, my internship was more than I expected it to be and my experience so far has been much more fulfilling than merely another bullet point on a resume.
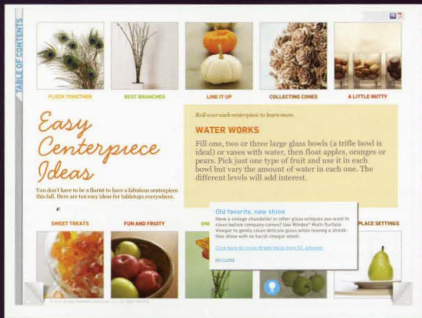
My journey to Ogilvy began with what I thought was an interesting email from Andrew Hicks, my first web development teacher and the chief web design guy in the Interactive Arts and Media department. Andrew mentioned that a company named Ogilvy was looking for somebody to make Flash banners as part of an internship. Two things ran through my mind that had me ever so close to declining the opportunity. The first was that my only familiarity with the word "Ogilvy" was the name of a train station, sister to Union Station, a very familiar place to me as a
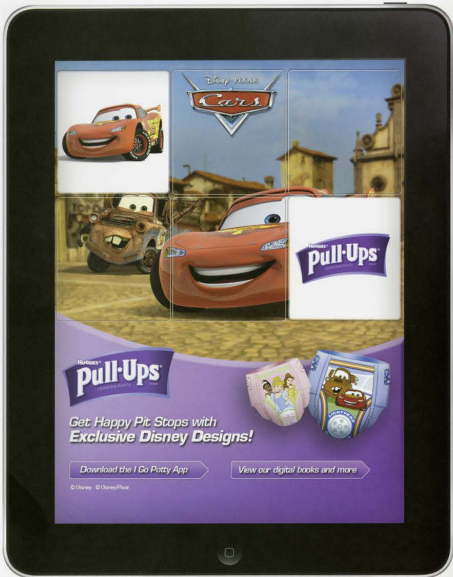
commuter. Second, although I can do Flash work, I don't enjoy it as much. Banner ad work didn't sound all that prestigious to me, as banners are sometimes considered intrusive reminders of Internet commercialization. But at the time, I was finishing up a semester as well as a

freelance website for the giftware company, Roman, Inc., and was ready for some serious summer work as long as it was remotely related to my field.

So, I decided to give it a shot, still thinking I was going to make Flash banners at a train

> ## "Fortunately, my internship was more than I expected it to be and my experience so far has been much more fulfilling..."

station. The night before my interview, I finally decided to look up this Ogilvy place. When I discovered where I was actually going to, an international agency that does work for companies like IBM, Coca-Cola and SC Johnson, my excitement rose ten-fold. I quickly learned that the train station is spelled O-g-i-l-v-i-e and is unrelated to the David Ogilvy of advertising fame. Seeing the Ogilvy sign after entering the 11th floor of the Sun Times building immediately put a grin on my face. My interview was a fairly typical rundown of experience, expectations and business talk. By the end my boss-to-be, Mike, was asking when could start! My day was sufficiently made.

Becoming accustomed to working with multiple people was a surprisingly easy transition for me considering my previous experience: The work of a web designer and developer can be solitary since you never really have to meet a client face-to-face. If your skill set is broad enough, you can do all the work yourself. I'm no recluse and get along with most people, so working with others at Ogilvy fit well with my personality. It's refreshing to come to a workplace where people have many of the same interests or at the very least, share a similar level of commitment.

The primary web development group (and really the only one) at Ogilvy & Mather Chicago is part of OgilvyOne, the company's primary digital branch where all things Internet or intranet-related are converted from Photoshop files to usable interfaces and packaged for delivery. Before me, the group consisted of five people—all Columbia alumni and one former student: Nate Krempel, Susie Jendro, Tom Astley, Stephen Flemister and Mike Armstrong. According to our email signatures, most of us are officially web developers but each person has their own strengths in various aspects of digital delivery. For example, Tom and Susie are particularly good at Flash development. Stephen has a talent for HTML emails—a skill that requires some old-school knowledge.

Although I was certainly assigned to make banners on the first day, it was more enjoyable than expected. The first involved animating Flash banners for American Family Insurance, including one that displays a clock bouncing across the screen on a dresser which is subsequently "saved" by a pointing-hand mouse cursor—clearly a metaphor for "saving time" by getting insurance from AFI. Not too shabby. After proving my abilities with banners, I was given the chance to work on something much more interesting and challenging: A Cars 2 and PullUps memory game that was to appear in the June iPad edition of Parents magazine. Score!

Since then, I've built another game and have been given various other responsibilities I wouldn't have imagined or expected before starting my internship. When you use and play the memory game, there's really not much to it but, to me, it's like hitting the big leagues—knowing something you made will be seen and used by at least a thousand people.

Sometimes that's all it's about: The silent victories of web design, development and coding; the moment after hours and hours of typing, debugging, retyping and revising when an interface finally works; the point when it works so beautifully that no one will ever know you were behind it all. It becomes a palpable object that reacts to their touch without much more than a passing whim. Sure, I'll still do Flash banners every now and then and will for some time. But, it's those small victories I'm always looking for

Since the Internship

Just before the internship ended, I was asked to continue working at Ogilvy & Mather in a freelance position. Of course I jumped (almost literally) at the offer and now work there as much as my schedule as a full-time student allows. Although the combination of work, college and daily commuting certainly is a draining experience, especially while transitioning to a career, the two things that will always keep a person on track are passion and intense curiosity. Right now I'm excited about graduation and I'm crossing my fingers for a full-time position. Maybe then, I can get out of the "burbs" and really experience life in the great city of Chicago.

Garenne Sanya N'kanta Bigby

Interactive Arts and Media/Class of 2010

During the application process to Columbia College, I originally planned to enroll in the graphic design program. However after a counselor noticed that my interests were not only in graphic design, but also in audio, video and the web, he advised me to enroll in the Interactive Arts and Media department. It made perfect sense, so I took his advice. Four years later I now own my own company, Indigo Design (**indigodesigncompany.com**), which specializes in open source CMS-based web development (WordPress, Joomla, Drupal). I am also the Lead Interactive Developer at the David James Group. DJG is a full-service marketing agency located in Oak Brook Terrace.

I started attending Columbia College in the fall of 2007 with goals, but no clear direction. At orientation, the words that stuck out most were, "Start freelancing now. It does not matter what your current skill level is, just put it to work." I took them to heart and they have had an extreme impact on my career
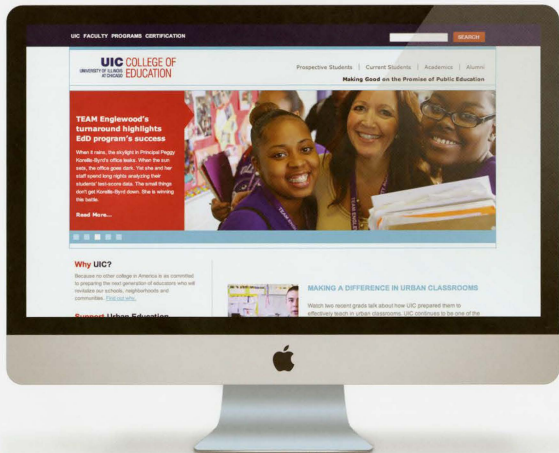
> "The Interactive Arts and Media major laid a solid foundation for my career… it provided me with the tools and resources to become a well-rounded interactive developer."

I immediately put myself out there, freelancing for every job I could find with no regard to payment. I scanned craigslist many times a day looking for anyone that needed help with web work and graphic design. I spent many sleepless nights learning what I had promised to do for the job because my response to the client was always, "No problem. I can do that."

The Interactive Arts and Media major laid a solid foundation for my career. It by no means provided everything I needed to know to attain employment, but it provided me with the tools and resources

to become a well-rounded interactive developer. My two favorite classes were Digital Image Design (DID) with Claudia Laska and Authoring Interactive Media (AIM) with Janell Baxter. In addition to sparking my interest in design, they also boosted my confidence by giving me a solid foundation in design and web programming. My internship with Summit Publishing provided the initial interest of my current focus on CMS systems. Senior Practicum with Matthew Green brought everything together by helping me present my freelance work and skills. Industry Night helped me catch the eye of

a Creative Circle representative, which led to my full time employment with the David James Group.

My future looks promising if the last two years are any indication. My goal is to keep expanding my knowledge of web development and to keep my skills up-to-date and relevant in our ever-evolving industry. I hope to expand Indigo Design and also prove to be a useful asset by building the interactive side of an award winning marketing firm.

Matthew Board

The development of Callsign: Osprey

Introduction

Callsign: Osprey is a retro- space shooter for the Apple iOS platform and developed with Unity3D. It has been in development for over a year I wanted to create a reasonably paced, skill based action game. As I am writing this, the game is currently in beta and submission to the iPhone App store is just around the corner.

I have worked on a few iPhone projects in the past, but only as an artist. For Callsign: Opsrey, I wanted to make the whole game myself. This process has presented a variety challenges and obstacles to share with developers. The first challenge was scripting. Luckily, I have a very kind and helpful network of programmers to give me advice and help me if I hit a wall. Although the challenge was always present, so were all of the small successes—once I was able to get various aspects of movement to function. For me, the scripting aspect was the largest risk to the project.

> "The decision to make a space shooter arose from a long time love of the genre."

Art Pipeline

The next challenge was developing a pipeline for graphics that looked great, but fit into the 20Mb limitation for an "over the air" application. At first, I made simple graphics in Adobe Illustrator that became 2D sprites. Unfortunately, the graphics did not carry the visual interest that had hoped for. Since I am predominantly a 3D artist, I decided to use 3Ds Max for the creation of the various ships and background elements in the game. Creating the ships included a simple concept art process where I drew a variety of simple silhouettes and then modeled the silhouette in 3D. Since the game is a 2D sides-scroller silhouette is important to add character to each form. After the model was complete, I set up simple shader network in 3Ds Max, a simple two point light rig and then made a high res render of the asset. Yet, the model render, even after shaders and lighting were added, still had a very basic look. This was a problem. So, I brought the render into Adobe Photoshop and used blending layers and various textures to fine-tune the look of the assets.

For the look of the ships, it was important to me that the scales of the ships look enormous even if they are on a small screen. This was an interesting design challenge that took some time to resolve. The final solution was applying liberal amounts of greebling to the ships. The greebling adds visual interest to the silhouette as well.

Since my game is has a lot of assets on screen at once, draw calls became a problem fast. Developing with Unity iOS means that we have to keep draw calls as low as possible. The solution for this was to take the individual renders and make sprite maps. Sprite maps were then imported back into 3Ds Max to make 3D sprites and to align the sprite UVs to the map itself. This process added to the overall quantity of assets in the game while simultaneously lowering draw calls.

Control Scheme

The decision to make a space shooter arose from a long time love of the genre. I grew up playing games like Galaga, Space Invaders and Zaxxon. I always had a desire to make my own. Since I chose to develop for iOS, which does not rely on traditional joystick-based control schemes, I wanted to leverage this feature in the design of my game. This desire also comes from playing other games of a similar genre and realizing the control schemes need something more for an immersive game experience.

Conclusion

This development process was a huge learning experience for me. Out of a process that I began clumsily, an experience resulted that has transformed my sensibilities and broadened my skills as a mobile developer. Workflow, pipeline and optimization gain new meaning now that I have filled the roles of artist, designer and programmer. It has been a struggle and a challenge, but the overall satisfaction of creating a game that is fun, great to look at and runs as smoothly as possible has prepared me for my next endeavor.

Philip Nadasdy

External Relations Coordinator

"The more I know about the work happening in our department, the more we can develop new opportunities"

From coordinating internships, Project Room exhibitions, Visiting Guest Lecturers, Manifest, and developing new programs, it's hard to sum up the job title of "External Relations Coordinator" succinctly. I like to think of it this way: External Relations is all about developing opportunities—outside and inside Columbia College—for the Interactive Arts and Media Department. It's about promoting the exciting work of our students and building collaborations with new partners in the fields of interactive media and game development. All of my responsibilities boil down to those goals.

I'm new to the position and the department this year and am constantly learning about the work of IAM faculty and students. I've been working in the arts in Chicago for more than five years with galleries, art centers and cultural organizations. More recently, I finished a master's degree in Arts Administration and Policy from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. I became very interested in arts programs and projects that looked to other disciplines (i.e. biology, social services, architecture) for better ways of reacting to a complex, contemporary society. With

this in mind, I initially became interested in the Interactive Arts and Media department because of its focus on media forms that are becoming more and more ingrained in our everyday lives, but through the lens of artistic and creative practice. Being at the leading edge of emerging technologies gives our students and faculty the chance to think critically about their application and I am constantly excited about the projects happening in the department.

I want to know more though. The more I know about the work happening in our department, the more we can develop new opportunities with organizations and the community. Are you developing your own game? Have an idea for an exhibition? Know of someone who would be great for a guest lecture? Thinking about an internship? Let me know.

Mi Parque

miparquelv.wordpress.com

Mi Parque, or Little Village, is a bilingual participatory placemaking web and smartphone application that helps residents of the Little Village neighborhood in Chicago ensure that their new park is maintained as a vibrant safe, open and healthy green space for the community.

Mi Parque was developed by an all-women team led by Pallavi Anderson from Motorola Solutions and Mindy Faber Academic Manager in the Interactive Arts and Media department and founder of the Open Youth Networks program. Experienced software engineers from Motorola Solutions, Orbitz, Pearson VUE and Thomson Reuters/Hubbard One mentored a team of students from Columbia College Chicago, Illinois Institute of Technology and University of Illinois Chicago.

In October 2011, Mi Parque won 2nd place in the Community round of the Apps for Metro Chicago contest and the Placemaking Award sponsored by Metropolitan Planning Council and IBM.

Old Adventure Is New Again

REVIEW BY TOM DOWD

ICO/Shadow of the Colossus Collection (HD REMASTERED)

PUBLISHER: Sony Computer Entertainment

DEVELOPER: Team ICO

PLATFORMS: Playstation 3

GENRE(S): Compilation (Action, Adventure)

ESRB RATING: T (Teen)

RELEASE DATE: September 27 2011

Another World 20th Anniversary Edition

PUBLISHER: BulkyPix

DEVELOPER: DotEmu

PLATFORMS: iOS (also, 3DO, Genesis, PC, Super NES, Macintosh, Amiga, Commodore 64/128, Game Boy Advance, etc.

GENRE(S): Adventure

ESRB RATING: not rated

RELEASE DATE: September 22, 2011

The end of September of 2011 saw an interesting circumstance: Two (well, three) classic video games were re-released in new high-definition form for a modern platform. Team ICO's ICO was originally released for the Playstation 2, almost ten years to the day earlier in 2001, and Shadow of the Colossus, also for the Playstation 2, in October of 2005. The "way-back" machine award, however, goes to Another World (which was released as Out of this World in North America) in 1991 and, in the intervening years, released on nearly every video game platform. All three are considered classics and all three were rebuilt with high-definition graphics and re-mastered sound (and in the case of ICO and Shadow of the Colossus with stereoscopic 3D support) for a modern video game platform and a modern audience.

ICO is not only considered a classic video game, but also one of the examples that video games can be considered art. The game is functionally a third-person action/platformer game that utilizes a locked camera in each area that pans to follow the main characters. As with many platform games, the main character can run, jump, climb, push and pull objects and so on. From a gameplay standpoint, what makes ICO more interesting is that the player-controlled character (Ico) has to protect a young girl named Yorda from the shadow creatures that attempt to keep her imprisoned in the castle where Ico finds her. Yorda, however, is controlled by the game itself and the player is only able to give her rudimentary commands ("stay here" and "follow me") or take her by the hand and directly lead her. Very often, the player is forced to separate from Yorda while attempting to solve a puzzle or figure out how to access a new area. With the shadow creatures constantly seeking Yorda, this dynamic produces moments of high drama and emotion for the player. That, coupled with ICO's immersive

environment and simple, stylized yet evocative graphics, creates a gameplay experience like few others—and a game whose influence is still felt today.

Shadow of the Colossus was Team ICO's spiritual and production successor to ICO. While not a sequel to ICO, Shadow of the Colossus, the influence of the prior game is clearly felt in the latter's minimalist narrative and environmental design, immersive gameplay and world, and emotional storytelling. In Shadow of the Colossus, the player controls Wander who undertakes an epic quest of defeating sixteen gargantuan colossi (some are hundreds of feet tall) in order to return a girl named Mono to life. There are no enemies in the game other than the sixteen colossi and each stands as a separate puzzle to solve as the player figures out the weakness of each behemoth and often quite literally climbs the colossus in order to defeat it. Key to gameplay is also Wander's horse, Argo, who is not only required to traverse the world of Shadow of the Colossus, but is also critical to the defeat of some of the colossi. The game stands as another beautiful work by Team ICO that also influenced many games that came after it.

Another World is a cinematic action/platformer that has appeared over the years on just about every video game platform. In the game, the player controls Lester Chaykin, a young physicist who is accidently transported to another world when the particle accelerator he's experimenting with is struck by lightning. Lester must make his way through this alien landscape evading traps, puzzles, hostile creatures and natives. Eventually, he must aid an alien captive with whom he escapes, bringing the game to its ambiguous ending. As with both ICO and Shadow of the Colossus, Another World's minimalist design, evocative world and immersive gameplay helped bring the game enormous critical success.

It is an interesting coincidence that high-definition re-masters of these three games were released within a week of each other. While other titles have received similar re-releases, these games are arguably among the best regarded and remembered—a fact that clearly contributed to the sales success of the newest versions. Like the motion picture industry, the game industry has come under significant criticism for producing sequel after sequel rather than new, original properties. While these re-mastered versions are unlikely to have any impact on that criticism, the critical and popular reaction to their release indicates that there seems to be little concern that the time and money placed into these products should have been directed toward new, original material. www.metacritic.com, the review aggregation website, records an average score of 91 out of 100 for the ICO/Shadow of the Colossus HD Collection, and 84 out of 100 for Another World—20th Anniversary Edition.

An interesting test of this "old as new" re-mastering trend comes on November 8th (after the time of this publication) when Sony releases a combined set of HD versions of the Konami games Metal Gear Solid 2: Sons of Liberty; Metal Gear Solid 3: Snake Eater and Metal Gear Solid: Peace Walker upgraded for the Playstation 3. (A new game, Metal Gear Solid: Rising releases sometime late next year.) Sony is also releasing re-mastered versions of Konami's Silent Hill 2 and Silent Hill 3 (seeing a trend here?) as a combined set on January 24, 2012. (Silent Hill: Downpour releases for the PS3 and Xbox 360 on March 6, 2012.) It remains to be seen how willing the video game market will be to re-visit classic games in new high-definition versions, but it is clearly a marketing strategy that Sony is using to show off the advanced graphics and sound (and in some cases 3D) capabilities of the Playstation 3.

1991   2011

Andrew Oleksiuk

Adjunct Faculty

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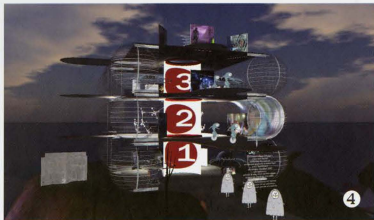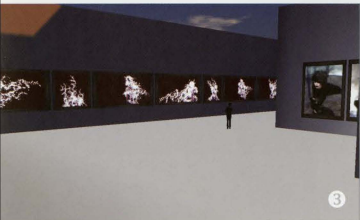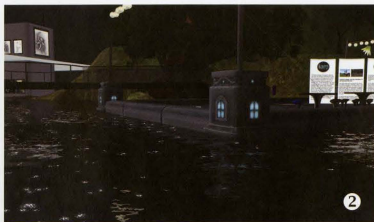
1. The "I Am Columbia" simulator is where students, faculty, staff and guests of Columbia College Chicago gather in the 3D virtual world known as Second Life. The simulator (pictured below) contains interesting 3D builds, exhibitions and displays that entertain and educate the guests and denizens of the virtual world. This photo essay is just a sample of some of the projects, spaces and processes developed by virtual world artists, guests, curators and researchers. To visit I Am Columbia in Second Life, log on with a free account and type "I Am Columbia" in your Second Life client.

2. Night scene on I Am Columbia sim in Second Life near the IAM welcome area.

3. Janell Baxter's virtual gallery and artworks feature virtual world generated artworks as well as paintings and drawings. The transreal blend of the real and virtual are extended to other curated installations such as Cold (2010), Transmediations (2010) and Discards (2011).

4. Patrick Lichty's various iterations of the BitFactory space, a fine example of virtual architecture, has been used for IAM's Manifest celebrations.

5. Andrew Oleksiuk's 2009 Instant Copies art installation featured working virtual color copy machines.

Updates

Faculty and Staff Updates:

Acting Chair **Joseph Cancellaro** composed the music score for the film Night River directed by Irving Gamboa, which was accepted into the short category at the 2011 Cannes Film Festival. Cancellaro also composed the score for the film documentary Lowlands released in 2009 and directed and written by Columbia faculty Peter Thompson. Lowlands received its East Coast premiere in October of 2011 and was also screened at the Gene Siskel Film Center in Chicago during the same month.

Department Chair **Annette Barbier** was a featured (invited) artist at the International Digital Media and Arts Association conference in October, as well as having two works (in collaboration with Drew Browning) in the IDEAS art exhibit (at the same conference): Puff, an interactive installation in which blowing on a wind sensor allows the participant to see delightful responses in his/her self-image, and video clips. It was created in PD/GEM real-time data flow language and uses an Arduino micro-controller and Modern Devices' wind sensor. Also exhibited Winds of Change, a video that addresses the housing boom and bust as seen through a metaphorical window in a formerly modest neighborhood.

Barbier, as a member of the collaborative unreal-estates, with V1b3 (Video in the Built Environment) and rootoftwo, received a Propeller Fund grant for their planned work: Expose, Intervene, Occupy: Re-interpreting Public Space, an augmented reality application for internet enabled mobile devices that will interrogate the meaning of public space using models, images, text and movies overlaid on locations in Chicago's loop.

Annette Barbier and faculty member **Niki Nolin** with collaborator Nancy Gaziano exhibited Brood in July 2011, in the Interactive Arts and Media Project Room. Brood featured birds as the central theme with multimedia works presenting real and metaphorical applications of birds, eggs, nests and cages as well as other installations.

Niki Nolin and **Nancy Gaziano's** work, titled Volatile Memories, is a series of fictional spaces or devices that represented the various connections between the tactile and ethereal natures of poetry and art. Works explored the use of combined disciplines—poetry and media arts—and incorporated reclaimed materials with other bird references including glass, hair, wood, lens, feathers, nests, bones, eggs, and salt.

Niki Nolin, **Suzanne Cohan-Lange** and **Sherry Antonini** also exhibited the collaborative work, Little Black Dress, at Frederick Meijer Garden and Sculpture Park, Grand Rapids, Michigan as part of Sculpture Today: New Forces, New Forms, which runs to December 31, 2011 as part of ArtPrize, September 21 – October 9, 2011.

Adjunct faculty **Sal Barry** was very active in 2011. During the spring semester, he taught web design skills to 7th grade students at Gray Elementary School in Chicago's Portage Park neighborhood. He curated the Interactive Arts and Media exhibit "Art of Play 4" in February, and an interview with Sal about the exhibit was broadcasted on Video Game Television (VGTVnow.com). At a July seminar entitled "Convergence Learning: Using Technology & Media to Engage & Activate Students," he gave a lecture on interactivity to a group of Chicago Public School teachers. Sal is a weekly guest on the XM Radio talk show "The War Room," discussing hockey in Chicago and hockey-related memorabilia, and is now a freelance writer for "The Hockey News." In addition to teaching at Columbia and Gray Elementary, Sal also teaches at ORT Technical Institute and DePaul University.

Adjunct faculty **Jenny Magnus** and **Stefan Brün**, both instructors of Story Development for Interactive Media, spent 2010 to 2011 in residence at the Museum of Contemporary Art, developing "Still In Play (a performance of getting ready)." Their work is an original performance written by Jenny Magnus and directed by Stefan Brün, using video (employing the Isadora Software) by Jeffrey Bivens; music by The Crooked Mouth (who released a CD of the same name); with set by Adam Rust and lights by Richard Norwood and featuring fifteen performers from the Curious Theatre Branch, a 25 year old Chicago theater company. After a year of development at the museum and a performance in the museum theater in September 2011, Magnus and Brün are now preparing a scaled down touring version, which will premiere at Links Hall in Chicago December 9th, 10th and 11th before a possible national tour

Adjunct faculty member **Joe Laiacona** under the pen name Jack Rinella, published his first novel, The Dionysian Alliance.

Adjunct faculty **Andrew Oleksiuk** premiered Magic Mushrooms, a 3D virtual world performance piece, in February 2011 for Fluxfest Chicago at the Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA). In June 2011, he was part of the Discards show curated by Janell Baxter. In September 2011, he presented a paper on network art at the Smithsonian Postal History Symposium. In October 2011, Magic Mushrooms traveled to Lithuania as part of the Kaunas Biennale.

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