



Submission to Prix Ars Electronica 2001

"Dice Raw – Thin Line between Raw and Jiggy" **Written, Drawn, and Animated by One Infinity**

The Dice Raw project is a 100% Flash animated, broadcast-quality music video. By playing the video on the big screen at Resfest 2000, on television via BET, and the Internet on sites such as Sputnik7.com, Shockwave.com, and Heavy.com, One Infinity successfully created one of media history's first convergent entertainment productions.

Fortunately, we did not let our goal of technological innovation get in the way of telling a good story with excellent narrative, artwork, and animation.

Below you will read a background on the story told within the video itself, and below that, a broader look at Dice Raw's status within the transmedia movement in entertainment production.

Background on the Story within the Video:

Dice Raw is an international terrorist operating out of the jurisdiction of worldwide governments. No one knows exactly what Dice's next act of terrorism will be, but reliable sources indicate that he has targeted the Moon.

A rival faction named the Jiggy Clan hastily assembles their best warriors to stop Dice Raw and his renegade posse. Comprised of a highly trained ninja horde led by a mysterious platinum-suited warrior known as The Agent, "Operation: Boxcar" is masterminded from a secret base by the Queenpin, the ruthless leader of the Jiggy Clan.

After losing an arm and one of her eyes in a freestyle battle against Dice Raw, the Queenpin vowed to grow her afro out until she could exact bloody foamy revenge. This rage fueled her swift, brutal ascent to the top of the Jiggy Clan. Now she has the sheer numbers that might be enough to stop Dice Raw.

Fortunately, Dice has assembled his own group of ass-kickers. His field lieutenants Black Thought and Malik B. are superb fighters. Black Thought utilizes his famed Righty-Tighty-Fist technique while Malik B. downs foes with his deft Microphone Nunchuk styles. They have an elite force of Diceheads - animatronic ninjas with dice for heads - programmed with lethal breakdance moves. Weeks of surveillance pay off for the task force – Dice Raw, Black Thought and Malik B. are spotted hurrying towards the North Philadelphia subway station, a reputed base of operations for the group. The Agent prepares a massive ambush to take care of Dice Raw once and for all, while the Queenpin remotely monitors activities through the Agent's cybernetic eyes.

True hip-hoppers versus phony rappers. The "Thin Line (Between Raw and Jiggy". This is only the beginning.

Dice Raw as it relates to "convergence" (cut from a magazine interview with One Infinity):

We knew going into this project that nobody had ever come close to making what we intended with Thin Line. We wanted to make a broadcast quality video using Flash technology, because we knew it was theoretically possible to use this Internet technology to make a truly "transmedia" content production. That is, we could work with Flash art assets, which are incredibly small and streamlined for use across worldwide networks. Using those assets, we could then be freed from the artistic constraints imposed by the Internet, meaning limited motion and frames per second allowable because of limited bandwidth and slow computer processors. That meant we would go crazy with our ideas while keeping TV, film, and the Internet in mind during our creative process, making an animation at par with other TV animations, created at a framerate of 30 frames per second.

A comparison can be made to creating a pristine audio recording in a huge studio with all the tools. If you have a digital master copy of your songs, with all the different instrument and vocal tracks kept separate, you can burn them onto a CD or compress them into MP3 for posting on the web. But by having the pure digital master first, there is never any deterioration of quality in consequent reworkings or remixes of the songs.

In the case of Dice Raw, by using Flash, we had a final digital file that was ready to be laid off to digital tape for perfect playback on digital big-screen projectors such as Resfest, as well as television screens like BET. More importantly, every single art asset and scene inside that file was also purely digital, and more importantly, object-based, so along with the song metaphor, we could go back in there and rework the tracks and assets, essentially remixing the video for other media. We did exactly this to make a web version of the video that would play smoothly on the standard computers and modem connections existent today. This is where our video bleeds at the cutting edge, because there are few studios and artists out there thinking within the Internet paradigm, making content that can cross between media but still remain a high-quality story that's fun to watch. The suspension of disbelief and a transparency of the technology used to make these types of content is the ultimate goal of One Infinity productions. We're here to tell great stories and do it by every artistic and technological means available.

This may or may not make sense to people now, but when we started this project, we were treated like mad professors by most people considering the possibility of our project goals. We were coming from far outside the animation industry; we discovered this sentiment via responses to our posts online looking for talent to build out our project team. We knew we wanted to have fight sequences, a lot of syncopated camera cuts, robots and spaceships, different scene environments, and high-quality 30 frame per second motion in our animation. People thought we were out of our minds. The team we wound up building to make this project were all outside the industry animation loop, all fresh minds, because these were the only people we found who were not scared to take on this project.

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Background on the Collective and our recent Works

One Infinity is a digital artist collective specializing in superior interactive design and motion graphics. Since our inception in 1999, we have completed projects for a wide range of clients, including Shockwave.com, Tommy Boy Records, MCA Records, Okayplayer.com, and most recently, the Frog's Leap Winery website.

Our first project spawned from the tension building around the end of 1999, which represented the end of the Christian millennium. While the mainstream media converged to report a homogenous collection of commercialized hype, we spent our time in the streets of San Francisco looking and listening for a true vision of the American zeitgeist. Our local field recordings led to a nationwide project; a Shockwave.com sponsored animated series of shorts called "Why2k@Large". Our street soldiers soon traveled to San Francisco, New York, and New Orleans armed only with a mic and Minidisc recorder. We did the walking and let the people do the talking. We then brought the tapes back to the studio, listened for hours on end to dreaded philosophers, socialist cabbies, retired soldiers of fortune, and outrageous beer stand vendors. Pulling quotes and grabbing some beats, we created a pastiche of streetwise prophecy and internet soul. Three versions appeared on Shockwave.com throughout December, 1999, while two of our personal favorite director's cuts were made into a site of their own, www.usatlarge.com.

Upon completion of the Why2k project, One Infinity created two Flash eCards for hip-hop legends De La Soul to promote their latest album, *Art Official Intelligence: Mosaic Thump*. Working with Tommy Boy, we were granted an inside look at the strategies of music marketing, and a bit of hip hop credibility to boot, both of which helped us immensely on our next project: a full-length, broadcast quality music video for Dice Raw, the prodigal son of the Philadelphia's hip hop royal family, The Roots.

Based on a rough concept proposed by Dice Raw, One Infinity developed a script, then produced and directed the music video for Dice Raw's debut single - "Thin Line (between Raw and Jiggy)" for MCA Records. This project represents one of the most complex animations ever completed using Macromedia's Flash software. The resulting video stands up to traditional broadcast animation but costs a fraction of the price. In addition, because the video was born and bred in the digital realm of vector graphics and animation, it was easily modified for play across the Internet as a streaming Flash file. Immediately upon its completion, the video was accepted into RESFEST 2000, the world's preeminent digital film festival. Resfest organizers recognized the Dice Raw video as one of the first content pieces of its kind to occupy a hybrid media space between the television, film, and computer screens: true digital convergence. The video played within the Music Video category at SXSW 2001, and DJ Spooky the Subliminal Kid included the video within his feature presentation at the Oberhausen Short Film Festival, 2001.

Most recently, One Infinity completed work on the Frog's Leap Winery website, located at www.frogsleap.com. The site exhibits a thorough investigation and application into the outer limits of Flash interface and content design. Using animated, pictorial and iconic navigation throughout, the site combines back-end connectivity with live information and consistent user interaction through a fantastic virtual environment.

One Infinity excels at developing both broadcast-quality linear narratives and immersive interactive online environments. We have a thorough understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of television, film, radio, and the Internet, with a unique ability to cross media spaces effortlessly. This has translated into exceptional output for these media that will only improve as we readily move into a new era of digital transmedia.