

9/11/11

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

Computergraphics

Prix Ars Electronica

Name: Char Davies

Title: The Drowning (Falling from One into the Other)

All of my work, including the paintings I made for many years before using 3D software, is concerned with communicating a particular vision of the world. I do not consider these images, 'The Drowning (Falling from One into the Other)' and 'The Yearning', to be computer graphics or computer art, but rather art created *through* computer technology. I call them 3D still-images for they are essentially frames of 3D virtual worlds. They were made interactively with the 3D animation software SOFTIMAGE. In my research I am constantly pushing the software's capacity as an intuitive and emotionally expressive instrument, for it is this capacity that I value most.

In terms of content, these images are the fruits of an ongoing quest for an underlying unity of nature and psyche. Fueled by a desire to compensate for living in a world that has become de-sacralized and increasingly bereft of untainted wild places, this work is an attempt to express and re-affirm our spiritual embeddedness in nature. As such, these images are intended to have a hierophanic (ie 'manifestations of the sacred') quality.

Interactive 3D software (and I should specify SOFTIMAGE because my creative method is dependent on it and was in fact born from it) enables me to virtually embody the metaphorical content of these images, bringing them across a threshold from the realm of dim intuition into a 'real' world of light and three-dimensional form. By working extensively with simulated light and shadow in virtual 3D space, combining photo-realism *and* abstraction, solidity *and* transparency, volume *and* spatial ambiguity, I am able to integrate subjective and objective, metaphysical and physical realms, in a way that technique and content become synonymous.

Simply stated, my creative method consists of making volumetric forms and positioning them with lights and camera in a three-dimensional scene. Working through the software's user interface with a wide range of parameters, particularly those related to material surface, light, and camera optics, I develop a

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ARTIST'S STATEMENT cont'd **Computergraphics** **Prix Ars Electronica**

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composition that expresses my intended meaning. The image evolves over many alterations and previews, a process of varying degrees of control and serendipity. When I arrive at an optimum result, I do a final rendering at high resolution, and record the digital data onto film.

On another level, my method involves circumventing the conventions of linear perspective, Cartesian space and objective realism (probably inherent to the computer as progeny of western civilization) in order to collapse a culturally-created distance between subject-viewer and world. In this light, my research is philosophical, as it attempts to express a non-dualist worldview which envisions the human self *inside* the 'natural' world, alive and flowing, enveloping like a womb.

At the present time, I prefer to exhibit these images as backlit transparencies in lightboxes suspended in darkness, in order to recall the luminosity of the computer screen and suggest the radiant numinosity of archetypes. It is conceivable that in the future, I may attempt to extend these images from 'windows' into 'doorways' through which a viewer may enter virtual worlds - but for now, as far as I am aware, real-time rendering of such ephemerality is beyond current hardware capacity.

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