

Maxwell's Demon

Maxwell's Demon is conceptually an outgrowth of the hand drawn animation I have been producing but technically I have redirected myself to create a completely computer generated work. Great attention to surface qualities and color depict complex social structures in which characters eke out an existence shaped by their culture.

Maxwell's Demon is the story of animal-like characters who have been corralled on an industrial reservation when their world economy shifted to being information and service based. The reservation is built on a polluted lake, which is a tourist attraction. Locals run souvenir stands selling plastic things (Frisbees, hula-hoops and such) as remnants of their past industrial culture. When the last living fish commits suicide because of bad water conditions it sparks a confrontation between Fashionette and Maxwell, the one armed owner of the reservations largest boutique. In the course of the argument the lake more or less accidentally gets set on fire, freeing the inhabitants of the reservation but destroying their home in the process. Fashionette begins to plan a new life for herself and the reservation but no one knows where to begin putting out a large scale chemical fire.

This animation project is not a traditional cartoon, but rather lushly drawn moving images with characters that have cartoon-like attributes living in a world that is less forgiving and more complex than the Warner Brothers ideal. Trying to combine knowledge and naivete this work is often a humorous look at the human condition that holds deeper meaning for those willing to explore beneath the surface.

The process of doing an animated project is an involved one, usually developed over the course of several years. I spent the first year of this project doing preproduction work on the computer and organizing actors and musicians for the production of the components of the soundtrack. After eight months of creating the movements extremes for the characters and the environments I began the actual animation and dumping images to tape. The "inbetweening" allowed me to finely tune the techniques I initiated in creating the extremes while exploring new and innovative ways to create computerized movement. In the tape you will notice that the complexity and density of the movements increase as the project progresses. The entire film took three and a half years to complete.

Biography:

James Duesing is an animator and video artist who lives and works in Cincinnati, Ohio. His work has been exhibited widely, in over a hundred international festivals and exhibitions. He is currently Assistant Professor at The University of Cincinnati in Electronic Art. His work is distributed by The Museum Of Modern Art Circulating Film Library and Expanded Entertainment among others and has been nationally televised in the United States and through out Europe.