

Visual Learning with Computer Art Graphics

Artwork Description

Anna Ursyn

Associate Professor of ArtUniversity of Northern Colorado

azursyn@bentley.unco.edu - <http://arts.unco.edu/visarts/egallery/ursyn.html>

In my work, I use the computer on different levels. For my two-dimensional works, I have been programming in Fortran IV then Fortran 77 using Cyber, then VAX mainframes and Interactive Graphic Library (IGL). I have been setting color combinations, transforming light intensity, applying grid patterns and moir effects in order to gain composition. The two-dimensional programs serve as a point of departure for photolithographs after computer programs and photo silkscreened prints on canvas and paper; they are included both into my two-dimensional and three-dimensional works. Scanners, digital camera and PC/PPCs serve for further image manipulation. All of these approaches are combined for image creation with the use of painterly markings. Printouts have been obtained in several ways: first, black-and white plots from the Versatec plotter and color slides via the Computer Output Microfilmer (COM) recorder, then the Apple, Hewlett-Packard, and Novajet printers/plotters.

Some of my computer graphics explorations result in a figurative three-dimensional design based on an image of transformed manikin. It served as a point of departure for a series of prints and sculptures. The repetition of human figures depersonificated for the purpose of fulfilling the goal has been put into the ordered, endless landscape. I have unified the meaning of men and a landscape using the same approach: rigid order created with a computer.

For three-dimensional works, I have been programming in Fortran to make representations of masses in a vector mode. Later, the wireframed objects are transformed by scaling,, rotating, stretching, assigning various perspectives and changing the point of view (the center of direction of projection). I use computer programs as an inspiration for creating wooden and mixed media sculptures. The wireframe design serves as a guide in their construction. To initialize a sculpture, I multiply, superimpose the transformed images, and often incorporate the factor of time into the sculpture, giving the viewer illusion of movement.

My actual work have been inspired by my interest in the common nature of human and animal world in the surrounding environment. I transform an image of an animal into a simple image, an iconic object such as a rocking horse or a symbolic picture of a man or a bird, to present them in dynamic movement as the visible texture of the sky and the ground. In our visual planes of multiple horizons, every time one can see the same familiar crowd on the floor of ground and the wall of sky, soft and hard inhabitants sharing lots and acres, having common goals, joining tasks, ongoings.

I draw inspiration from processes and events in nature and in science while working on my computer generated images. At the same time, this approach supports my instruction in computer art graphics. Students create an artwork inspired with science, with the themes of the computer art assignments enriched with their learning process, when they analyze a concept to show their understanding of it. Inspiration with geology resulted in my several works.

Some data about myself: I earned my MFA (1988) and Ph.D. (1994) at the University of Wyoming. My research and pedagogy interests include integrated instruction in art, science and computer art graphics. I was awarded with several grants: SIGGRAPH 1990 grant for educators and six grant awards for developing computer graphics technology. I had several articles published in professional journals, about 20 single art shows and participation in over 70 juried and/or invitational fine art exhibitions including: Eurographics 1991, 1996 (award), 1998 (artistic merit award); Immaginando 1997 (award), ACM/SIGGRAPH 1989, 1990, 1994, 1995, 1998, 1999; Der Prix Ars Electronica 1988-1999; ISEA 1990, 1992, 1994, 1996; SCAN 1990, 1992, 1993; ArCADE England 1995, 1997; Digital Art Work Visualization Ð IV 1997, ÖComputerkunst/ Computer Art 1996, Gladbeck, Germany, New York Digital Salon 1995, 1996, 1998; 7 years lasting 20th Century Matrix, Tokyo, Japan.