

5th Brisbane International Film Festival

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This year the Brisbane Film Festival introduces a new aspect of motion picture art to its program - interactive CD-ROM. Throughout the ten days some 20 CD-ROM titles will be available for perusal at The Hub Cybercafe, one of the many imaginative initiatives taken by the restaurant and catering industry to not only encourage more people to drink more coffee but also share with others, in this the Year of Webness, the booming on-line phenomena of the World Wide Web, where upwards of 40 million pages of information and some entertainment await your perusal.

The difference between on-line and off-line delivery of what we now refer to as 'interactive multimedia' (IMM) can be compared at The Hub during this short season. Broadly speaking, the on-line Internet, (which carries the World Wide Web), is at a stage of its development which restricts the amount of digital data that can be delivered from one computer, the Web site - what you are looking at, to another, the Browser - where you are. The off-line CD-ROM, because it is on the same machine as you, does not have those restrictions and can deliver lots of images and sounds almost as fast as you can interact with its interface. Put succinctly by a producer recently, 'the distinction (is) between whether you are seeking information or experience...'

For ten years now film-makers in Hollywood have poured huge resources into the special effects sub-genre and thereby spun-off further research and development central to the interests of the technologists down the road in Silicon Valley, keen to universalise the computer as the 'mediating tool'. The ubiquity of this machine in the office and the home has helped pay for the emergence of IMM, or the so-called new media, the convergence of film, video, sound, graphics and text. Over the next few years IMM will move off the test-bed of CD-ROM and the Internet and through all manner of on-line services further redefine our private and social environments.

Clearly the experience of the physical space in which the cinema image is received and the image from a computer monitor is distinct, as is the mise en scene experience; linear form in cinema and non-linear form in interactive multimedia.

The CD-ROM discs selected for this preview of IMM are those related to the aesthetics of cinema, and in particular, the traditions of the narrative form. Games CD-ROMs often follow the plot lines developed for the thriller/horror genre of cinema, some of them directly referencing famous films. Others explore notions of what 'interactive cinema' might be and whilst remaining within the genre introduce devices specific to IMM, for instance, the subjective point-of-view camera, the player, being presented with dialogue options for plot development. The Music CD-ROM extends developments of the documentary genre of cinema and links with the Experimental area, demonstrating and exploring ways in which a new aesthetic is beginning to emerge from interactive multimedia. The titles available will include:

GAMES

Bad Day On The Midway

"It is a delightfully subversive and wholly original attempt to meld multimedia storytelling with the more traditional interaction of the RPG. There is also admirable attention to detail in the way the developers have constructed entire histories for each of the grotesques that inhabit this carnival of the damned. And throughout this interactive narrative the distinctive Residents vision shines through for all to see". MAT TOOR CD-ROM MAGAZINE

Critical Path

"Combines video, sound and awesome graphics to create a science fiction saga described by the manufacturers as the world's first interactive movie. Hmm...

Aside from the opulent graphics, however, the gameplay is sparse. This is doubtless a consequence of the interactive movie format - which forces you to watch what is happening on the screen until you reach a decision point and then make a decision based on information gleaned from General Minh's insane scribbles. The puzzles are not desperately taxing either, especially for more experienced players, which means that the game shouldn't take more than a few hours to complete". JIM MORGAN CD-ROM MAGAZINE

Cynema: An Interactive Playground

AT THE HUB, 125 MARGARET ST, CITY

Dark Eye

"A first-person-view adventure with a dated graphical style, Dark Eye is like a cross between Myst and The 7th Guest. The game is based around the stories of Edgar Allen Poe, which along with disturbing stop-film animations, ... with occasional narrations read by William 'Naked Lunch' Burroughs, there's more atmosphere here than you can shake a blood-dripping stick at". DAN GILBERT CD-ROM MAGAZINE

Discworld

"Join Eric Idle, Jon Pertwee, Tony Robinson and friends for what may be the best adventure game ever.... it complements its pedigree well, is well structured and the voice characterisations are superb. Just for once a licence-based game is worth every penny. John Davidson" CD-ROM MAGAZINE

Frankenstein: Through The Eyes Of The Monster

"While Frankenstein does little to disprove my theory concerning interactive movies, I have to say that it's considerably better than a lot of the rubbish we've had in the past year".

JOHN DAVISON CD-ROM MAGAZINE

Marathon 2: Durandal

"Doom II provides more of a short-term, frag-filled adrenaline rush while Marathon 2 is a more immersive cinematic experience. In the end, though, the one real winner is the Mac gamer..."

MAT TOOR CD-ROM MAGAZINE

Rebel Assault

"LucasArts mixes Star Wars with CD-ROM to create the closest thing yet to an interactive movie..."

From the moment you boot up this CD-ROM, and the sublime John Williams score - performed by the London Symphony Orchestra - wraps its brassy fingers around your heart, you know you're in for something special ... everything revolves around controlling your space ship ... and shooting everything in sight What makes it so enjoyable is the intelligent use of video and sound footage sourced from the original films".

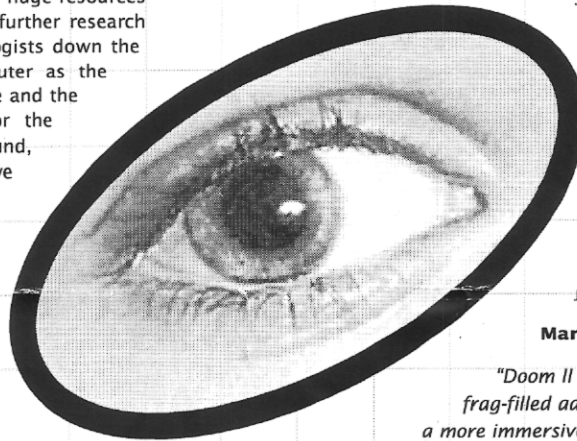
MAT TOOR CD-ROM MAGAZINE

Kids on Site

This is the interactive cinema of home movies with the corny capers of wobblecam giving you the opportunity you've always wanted - to operate the heavy construction equipment on a 'major construction project'. Trundle the steamroller - the one without brakes. Swing the demolition ball. Dig that backhoe. Empty the contents of the shovel on yer mates. Kids on Site whatever your age, provides slapstick options the like of which the Home Video Show can only dream. ML

Bad Mojo

Point-of-view, fly-on-the-wall, even worm's eye-view, are jargon for where you, the camera, observe the world. In this adventure maze, your viewpoint is that of the cockroach Mojo, negotiating the thousand and one terrors and dangers that constitute the human environment. And you, by simply using the arrow keys, are Mojo. A series of optional small movie screens relate the anxieties of the home occupier who shares and snares the cockroach underworld of drains, fridges and cookers. Curiously fascinating, especially for all breeders of anxiety. ML



MUSIC

Jump: The David Bowie Interactive CD-ROM

"If you enjoyed Peter Gabriel's Explora disc, you will love David Bowie's interactive CD-ROM. ... JUMP includes a lot of material that will delight Bowie fans ... - it comes with a host of well-implemented interactive features as well as slick graphics and some groundbreaking technology".

SARAH MASON CD-ROM MAGAZINE

Puppet Motel

An anthology of Laurie Anderson's obsession with the exotic byways of the everyday. A kind of rural daydream in Main Street which tests ones graphic memory as well as ones powers of intuition. At what appears at first to be '20 Ways into Salvador Dali Land', soon adjusts expectations to accept elegant and colourful objects as a matrix for entering a world of sound and recitation. The spoken words teeter on the brink of New York (or New World?) Portentious but seduce the 'player' to openly Enjoy, with a series of Oooohs and Aaaahs as each morsel dissolves in front of ones senses. ML

REFERENCE

Rob Roy: Legend Of The Mist

The script, 21 movie extracts, interviews with the stars and film-makers from the 144-scene film starring Jessica Lange and Liam Neeson are the more predictable, but no less engaging, outcomes of a bit of movie industry re-purposing of expensive property. What is less expected are the fruits of the researcher's labours, with cogent summations of the historical background for the events depicted, something the film version made little time for. Along with the location stills was a wonderful account from the chef to the crew of the variations of Scottish fare he lavished on the unit each day - recipes are included for you to enjoy! ML

EXPERIMENTAL

We Make Memory by Abbe Don, a media artist, one of the pioneers working in this field in San Francisco, made an essay contribution in 1990 to the seminal, *The Art of Human Computer Interface Design*, edited by Brenda Laurel, published by Addison-Wesley. Her interactive documentary completed in 1994 explores the 1890-1990 history of a Jewish family's women using short anecdotes related, or told by some of the women using Quicktime movies, (the small screen movies set into the frame of the multimedia piece and which can be controlled using the same graphic symbols as are used on a VCR). The elegant 'home page' of the interface design uses photographs of the individuals viewed either by control of a panning movement or by using a date indicator to lead into the histories, which thereby are both the history of the individual and of the group.

Surfing on Electronic Surfaces by Elisa Rose and Gary Danner who run a technokultur studio in Frankfurt, Germany, is a documentation of one of the oldest electronic art events, *Ars Electronica*, held each year in Linz, Austria. This CD-ROM presents the material that has accumulated over the last fifteen years from when it started as a sound event, through the computer-mediated installations, and on to IMM and work on the Web. It will be possible to make an interesting comparison between this title and the Web site run by *Ars Electronica*.

These artists and another, George Legrady, have some more work appearing in *Burning the Interface* <International Artists' CD-ROM>, which this writer curated with Linda Michael and will be at the Brisbane City Hall Art Gallery and Museum during April 1997 as part of a national tour organised by the Museum of Contemporary Art in Sydney. George Legrady's short piece [the clearing], explores the Media coverage of the conflict that occurred in the old republic of Yugoslavia, as reported from within the separate regions and from overseas. Whilst having a pedagogic intent, the foreboding atmosphere created by the interplay of stills, sounds and texts resists any flippant interaction using the mouse.

Nigel Helyer is a Sydney-based sound sculpture artist whose work is regularly exhibited world-wide and together with guru interactive designer Lloyd Sharp, has produced **Hybrid**, a complete document and documentary about the installations, objects and performances he has produced over the years. As you roll the mouse over various parts of images, shattering sounds burst out. The dazzling redefinition of what form an icon might take, to enable you to move from place to place and part to part of the interactive is reflected in the Web site that Lloyd has established and which will be 'bookmarked' on the Browsers for your further examination and comparison.

Christine Tamblin has visited from the USA with her well known piece, *'She Loves It, She Loves It Not: Women and Technology'*. In her most recent title, **Mistaken Identities**, the biographies of ten famous women are presented through material from 'virtual' albums, 'virtual' books, puzzles, tv, morphologies, bibliographies etc. As with the earlier work, there is wry humour in the background here and a droll approach to visual design.

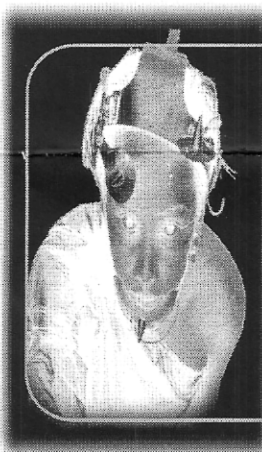
Another American woman, Susan E. Metros in **good daughter, bad mother, good mother, baddaughter : catharsis + continuum** examines the detritus of child-rearing as seen from the perspective of a daughter. References are accumulated as interaction proceeds through fragments from diary, photos, film, spoken quotes and sounds.

The artisanal production approach of Chris Hales, **The 12 Loveliest Things I Know**, is a multi-imaged introspective meditation upon the experience of childhood. It includes mischievous interactive intervention which at one stage can cause, or not cause depending on your mood, a child to fall off a sliding toboggan! Using hi8 video and working from his London home when not teaching, whimsical portraits of friends and children are woven together on the computer into an example of 'interactive cinema'. In **Jixed**, you can get to cause all kinds of accidents to occur to a job applicant, trying to get out of his house in the morning.

Hales avoids the 'classic narrative' interactive approach, revisiting instead the cinema of pathos and slapstick comedy.

Another Londoner, Graham Harwood, spent the last three years making **Rehearsal of Memory** in association with the patients and staff from Ashworth Maximum Security Hospital. The work records the lives of the patient and staff group "that act as a mirror to normal society and stimulates us to examine our societies excesses". Interactive access is via the extraordinary body images of the subjects, complete with scars and tats, and the stories you quite literally trigger as you move the mouse over them.

Mike Leggett

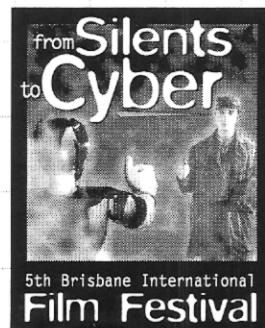


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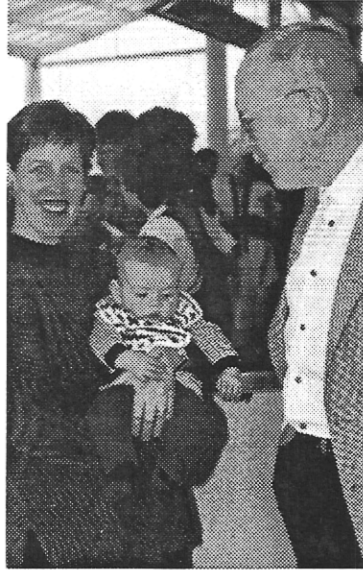


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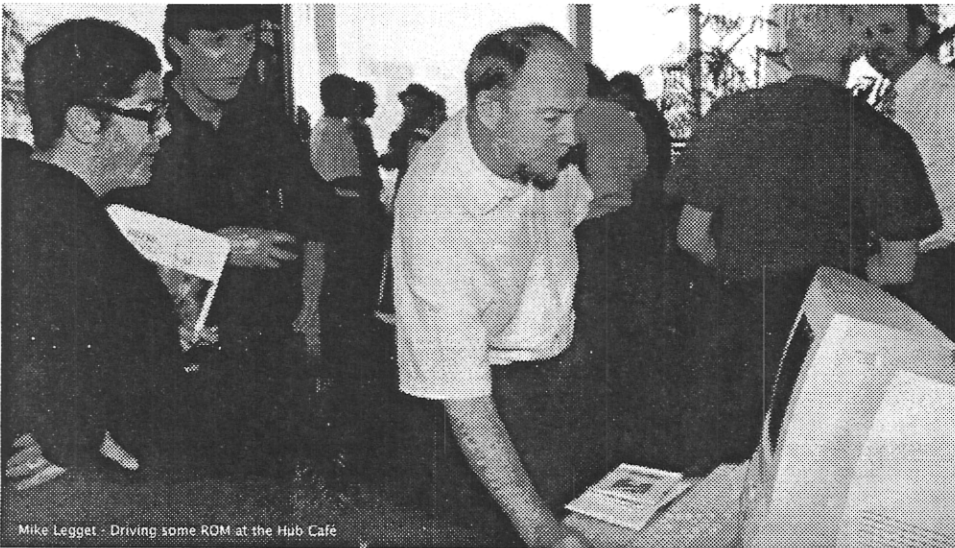
FESTIVAL CELEBRATIONS CONTINUE...



Sue Mulcahy - Ticket Manager

TICKETS SELLING FAST!!

For Festival tickets call the BIFF Hotline (07) 3220 0444 or call into the ticket office in Broadway on the Mall or Hoyts Regent Box Office.



Mike Leggett - Driving some ROM at the Hub Cafe

CYNEMA: PERSONAL INTERACTIVE ENTERTAINMENT

At the Hub Internet Cafe last night, *Cynema: An Interactive Playground* launched 20 interactive multimedia titles on CD-ROM. Interactive multimedia (IMM) is a fast developing field that combines the creative minds of filmmakers, computer programmers and artists. Curator for *Cynema* is Mike Leggett, who also curated the successful *Burning the Interface* exhibition at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Sydney.

Before the launch Mike Leggett described the IMM display as "a version of cinema that involves the viewer or user, a computer monitor and the mouse, requiring them to interact and respond to a variety of film and video footage, sound and graphics".

The IMM titles on display at the Hub Internet Cafe until August 11, blend a number of

cinematic genres with computer genius. The CD-ROM discs selected for the Film Festival include; interactive games - similar to the film genre of thriller and horror, *Rebel Assault*, *Dark Eye* and *Marathon 2*; *Jump*, a David Bowie interactive musical feature; *Puppet Motel*, an exotic anthology of everyday life by Laurie Anderson; *Rob Roy*, a complete behind the scenes collection of the movie; and experimental titles that involve the user to weave the narrative.

Mike Leggett said the role of the computer in conventional cinema and the increasing need for computer generated special effects, has led to IMM becoming its own form of entertainment. "The computer is playing an active role in enhancing the cinema experience, rather than immersing a viewer in a single story. IMM and the computer medium allow users to determine their own path and in their own time."

CD-ROM entertainment and IMM are the cutting edge of technological entertainment, so get down to the Hub Internet Cafe over the next 10 days and make your own movie. MATT L

TODAY'S FILMS

10.00am The Man who Reads Music from Plates

A surrealistic fable of love about an old farmer who has cared for a side show freak for years.

12.20pm Animated Women

A tribute to the diversity and originality of emerging women film artists in the field of animation.

2.20pm Dr. Strangelove or How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb

Nightmare comedy of a mad US General who sends his squadrons of B 52's to H-Bomb Russia, while the Soviets and Americans try to stop the planes. A classic Kubrick film. Introduced by John Baxter, his biographer.

5.00pm The Quiet Room

Rolf De Heer's new film takes the viewer into the mind of a seven year old girl whose parents are separating. A sensation at Cannes.

7.00pm Like Grains of Sand (REGENT VENUE 2)

A realistic account of high school students, centred on a gay boy's crush on his straight best friend: an atmospheric mix of teenage flirtations, bullying, rivalry and longing.

7.15pm What I Have Written

A visually extraordinary film about the mystery and complexity of relationships by Australian director, John Hughes. In competition at Berlin.

9.20pm Love Serenade

An oblique vision of love and sex in an isolated Australian town. Director Shirley Barret received the Camera D'Or Award at Cannes.

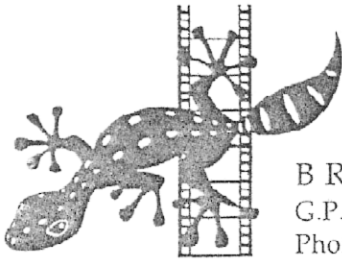
11.35pm Police Story 2

A gang extorting money from a big business is dealt a blow by a reinstated detective. Loads of Jackie Chan charm, martial arts skills and daring stunts.



Pop quiz: You really want to be exposed to some of the films BIFF has on offer but you do not know where to park. What do you do?... What do you do... It's easy. Wilson's parking are offering BIFF patrons a special parking rate of \$8.00 per day, Monday to Thursday nightly rate of \$5.00 per entry and Friday nightly rate \$6.00 per entry at the Wintergarden carpark, Wintergarden Centre, entry off Elizabeth Street. Present your ticket at the Hoyts Regent Showcase to receive the discount rate.

AD - AMY DAVOREN MATT L - MATTHEW LANLGER
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MEDIA RELEASE

5 July 1996

FESTIVAL PRESENTS THE FUTURE OF FILM

A new form of motion picture art on interactive CD-ROM will be exclusively presented at the 1996 Brisbane International Film Festival (BIFF), sponsored by Griffith University.

CYNEMA: AN INTERACTIVE PLAYGROUND is a collection of interactive multimedia (IMM) titles that merge film, video, sound, graphics and text into an existential and interactive experience for the user.

This free multimedia exhibition is presented by BIFF in conjunction with Griffith University as part of the institution's 25th Anniversary celebrations.

Twenty interactive CD-ROM productions exploring traditional narrative cinema in different ways will be available for perusal on computer terminals at the Hub Internet Café in Brisbane's Margaret Street for the duration of the Festival.

The curator for **CYNEMA: AN INTERACTIVE PLAYGROUND** is Mike Leggett, who also curated "Burning the Interface" at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Sydney earlier this year. Mr Leggett said that IMM development is very similar to the early days of cinema.

"What we will be able to access via a computer for information, entertainment and all manner of services is yet to be invented, and is as undefined as cinema was with the new technologies of sound, colour and electronic matting,

"It is very early days yet for these machines and these tools to fully reveal the potential they have for creating a sea of change in the modes of our receiving, with pleasure, information, education and entertainment, in the private domain as well as in the public social arena of cinema."

This year BIFF focuses on "From Silents to Cyber," showcasing cinema art from late nineteenth century silent films to the future of motion pictures.

BIFF General Manager, Gary Ellis said, "In 1996 the celebration of 100 years of cinema concludes. Cynema is the beginning of a new medium and offers a future perspective of cinema style. BIFF will present Cynema as an opportunity for filmmakers and visual artists to broaden their scope on IMM in the international arena."

/more...

Mr Ellis said that the emerging trends of new motion picture art, specifically multimedia, seek to redefine the relationship between the producers of IMM and the audiences. "Audiences are now defined as participants, and IMM producers are encouraging the viewers to determine his or her own narrative."

Terry Hadnutt, Griffith University's 25th Anniversary Project Coordinator said, "As an educational leader in film and multimedia studies, Griffith University is proud to sponsor CYNEMA as it embodies the merging of these teaching areas and represents possible future directions in cinema.

"Having recently launched the Pacific School of Screen Production, Griffith University is firmly committed to strengthening its links with the Queensland film industry. The University's sponsorship of BIFF offers the ideal opportunity to support the celebration of excellence in film."

CYNEMA: AN INTERACTIVE PLAYGROUND will take place at the Hub Internet Café, 125 Margaret Street, Brisbane. Opening hours are 9am to 2am Saturday to Thursday, and 24 hours on Fridays. **ENTRY IS FREE.**

The Brisbane International Film Festival runs from August 1 to 11 at the Hoyts Regent Theatre, the State Library, Grand Orbit and Hub Café, showcasing the best and most diverse new independent films from Australia and around the world.

BIFF HOTLINE NUMBER: (07) 3220 0444

For further information: Debbie Kruger (07) 3220 0333