

ONE DOOR LEADS TO ANOTHER

PHOTOGRAPHY

Photography began almost out of necessity in the mid 1800's. It was an answer to the ever increasing and overwhelming desire to reproduce "the reality". Two men were in the race for this prestigious discovery: Daguerre and Fox Talbot. Both helped in creating the opportunity for everyone to see the details in "reality" that were, up until then, not so readily perceived. Furthermore, it allowed artists of the time to study and interpret the elements of "the moment".

On the other hand, today photography is shot, produced, created, copied, stamped on, chewed up, spat out and manipulated. We have seen it in so many forms and via untold different perceptions that we are, in general, openly accepting of a wide range of creative formats. However, it stands to reason, that no matter how far the manipulation, the end result is still an exercise in creative control on behalf of the artists perception.

COMPUTING

Nothing symbolizes the modern world better than the computer. From its humble beginnings, in the 1940's to the first introduction of the PC in 1981 and the subsequent alteration to Time Magazines' annual tradition of "Man of the Year" to "Machine of the Year", we now allow our current lives to be controlled and manipulated by such an apparatus. It has reached a point that we are no longer consciously aware of its prominence, except in the circumstance of malfunction or inability to complete a task due to its own limitations. Clearly, this last factor gives rise to the further development in the computer field. It is truly a man-made wonder.

COMPUTERS, PHOTOGRAPHS AND ART

The presence of computers in art is ever increasing and due to the continual development and advancements in the technology the opportunities allow greater access for the artist. Naturally this has had an enormous impact on the art world. Unlike photography, which in its' infancy was greatly influenced by art; it is extremely difficult to pin point whether art and its' demands influence computer technology or visa versa. I personally believe, since computers have many other functions in their modern existence, that it is a far more complicated situation. Whether it be in art, science or other fields, the development comes from both: the everyday necessity to further improve the computer industry combined with the bettering of what is already available; and mans' unquenchable desire to achieve what is not yet accomplished.

In the last few years these two mediums have become so compatibly entwined that we can be certain that the enormous influence on art today will invariably be carried over into, and further evolved in the future.

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All modern conveniences after an initial introduction period become a matter of fact and greatly taken for granted. With the flip of a switch we can communicate with the other side of the world with ease. Now most of us see this as a normal accessory to our busy lives and it is no longer a luxury item. It is precisely this concept that intrigues me. Almost as if the increased demand for or continual use of something causes the desire to further discover new and exciting toys. Sometimes there is little time to appreciate the first development that was ultimately necessary for the future accomplishments. This process is not often within our control and yet we seem to blindly follow as though it were normal to do so. We wander unaided to each door placed along our path and, more often than not, unquestioningly open it. It leads to another. And so on.

THE ASSIGNMENT

I wanted to use a normal process involving the two mediums photography and computing. This is quite commonly practised today and is not at all out of the ordinary but my plan was to stop just before the final steps in this normal process and find another path on which I could travel. The objective was to produce the same end result not necessarily accurately visually but certainly perceptually.

I chose a familiar work pattern followed by 3-D animators whereby textures are photographed and prepared as a sort of "skin" for their structural objects within an animated scene. The space would not only reflect this connection between photography and computing but also suggest a sense of myself. I therefore elected to reconstruct items from my living room.

Just as the process dictates I digitally created photos of the pertinent structures. They were then manipulated in the computer to produce suitable textures for layering over a 3-D object. Before I could step from this path to another I had to make additional choices. How to interpret the perspective? Unlike Cezanne and Monet, who battled in their quest for the ultimate translation of a 3-D perception on a canvas that was flat and two dimensional, I wanted to visually reconstruct the 2-D computer screen image as a three dimensional reality.

In keeping with its original environment I used an old monitor shell. I decided to construct the objects to a perspective scale that was determined by the size of this casing. The objects were created from carton and measured to allow the further manipulation of the textures so that they illusioned a "perspective dimension".

The real computer was turned off and I exercised manual creation of what would normally be carried out with a mouse in my hand. That door had been closed and instead I wielded a stanley-knife, scissors and glue. And although I cut and pasted into the wee hours of the night, it was entirely independent of any computer program. All errors however were not reversible.

