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ISSUE #17

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critic's choice

"Relevant Ripples" commemorates the leadership and consequence of the University of Western Australia's innovative *3D Art Challenges*, page 44.

"Creative Contrast" takes a look back on the artistic accomplishments inspired by the themes, page 46.

"Art Accessible: What Have We Learned from UWA?" explores their legacy and continuance, page 88.

the aesthete & the artist

Carmsie Melodie selected work to demonstrate her development as an artist in SL. Visited by critic Eleanor Medier, Carmsie shows how she owes inspiration to the *3D Art Challenges*. Her award-winning creations represent the significance of defined parameters and expanding creativity in "Passion with Purpose," page 16.



Jayjay Zifanwe

FreeWee Ling

Carmsie Melodie

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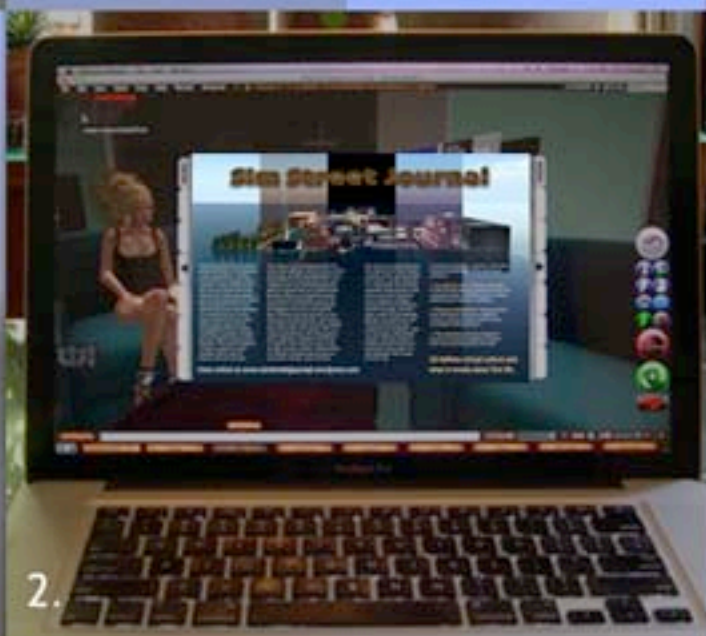
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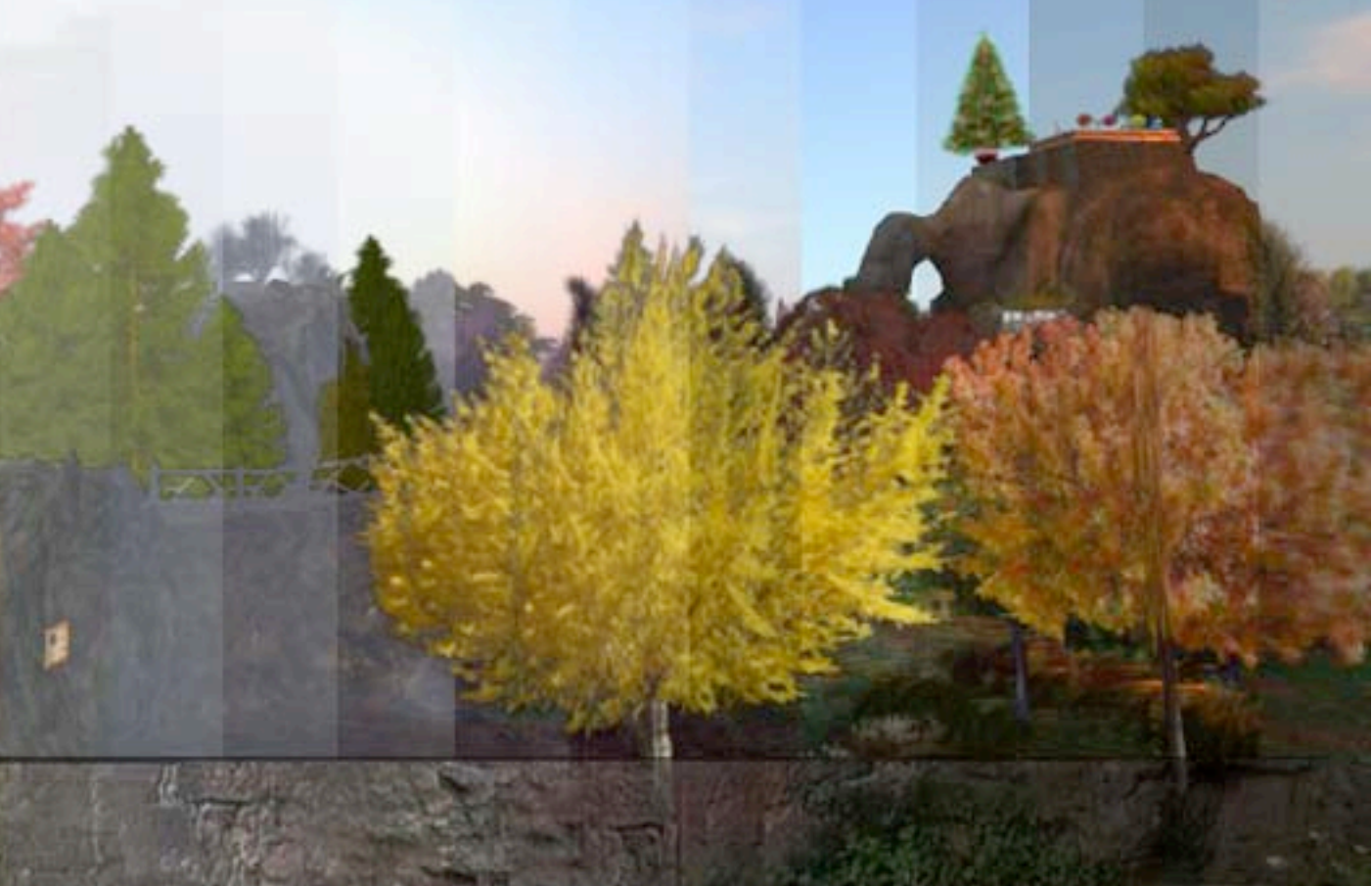
The Expressive Development of Carmsie Melodie

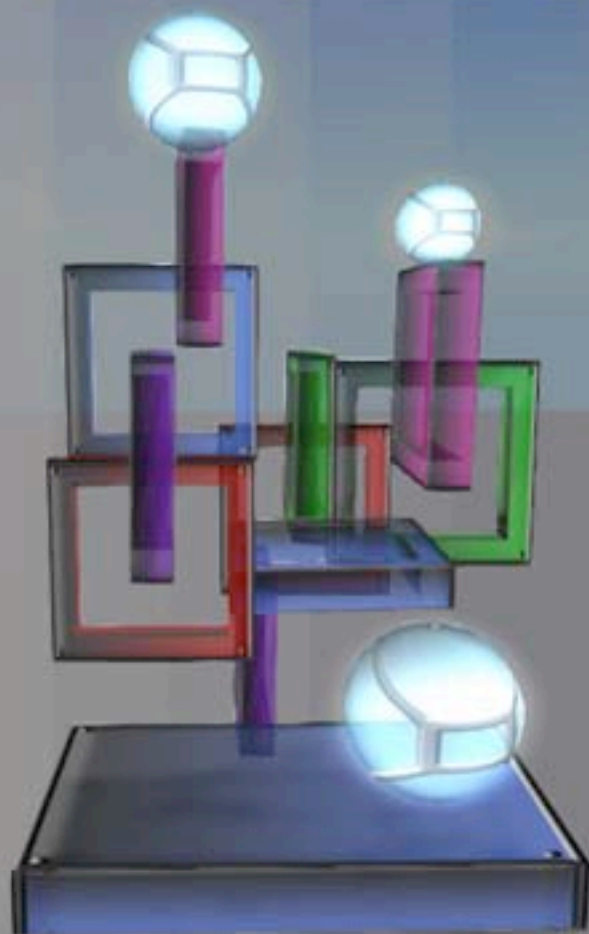
Eleanor Medier, art critic, discusses creativity
and selected artwork with the artist



Absorbed in the environments that Carmsie creates, the viewer sees through her eyes. All of her concepts begin from a feeling, and she presents contrast, even extremes, through an aesthetic eye. Carmsie's forms can elevate sadness to beauty and present wisdom gained through experiences. Compassion towards those victimized needlessly, some social scolding, and bittersweet narratives, are ingredients that give her explorations both clarity and virtual power. Her path inspires.

Winning many awards in the University of Western Australia's *3D Art Challenges*, her work has evolved with the shows. Carmsie has selected several pieces that best illustrate her progress. In this article collaboration, Eleanor Medier is happy to lend a critical eye and provide commentary, as well as to have served as a judge in the recent competition *Pursue Impossible*. Carmsie explains how these challenges have inspired her to expand as an artist. She shares how she continues to master the virtual.





"Glassiass" 2009 by Carmsie Melodie, with rotating translucent spheres.

"I learn things on an as-needs basis, such as how to incorporate sound or animation. It's empowering: once you gain a skill, you do more and more with it."

Eleanor: "With new skills, you *think* more expansively too. Does it not go both ways? You think of something new and so you figure it out, or you have new skills that lead to new ideas?"

Carmsie: "Once you pull together a strong skill set, the builds get more and more interesting. I have *just* received a sim to develop as part of the Linden Endowment. Up until now, I have been honing my skills. I waited to apply for this grant until I could make something worthwhile, and do a full sim justice. My *dream* is to have 15k of primmage!"

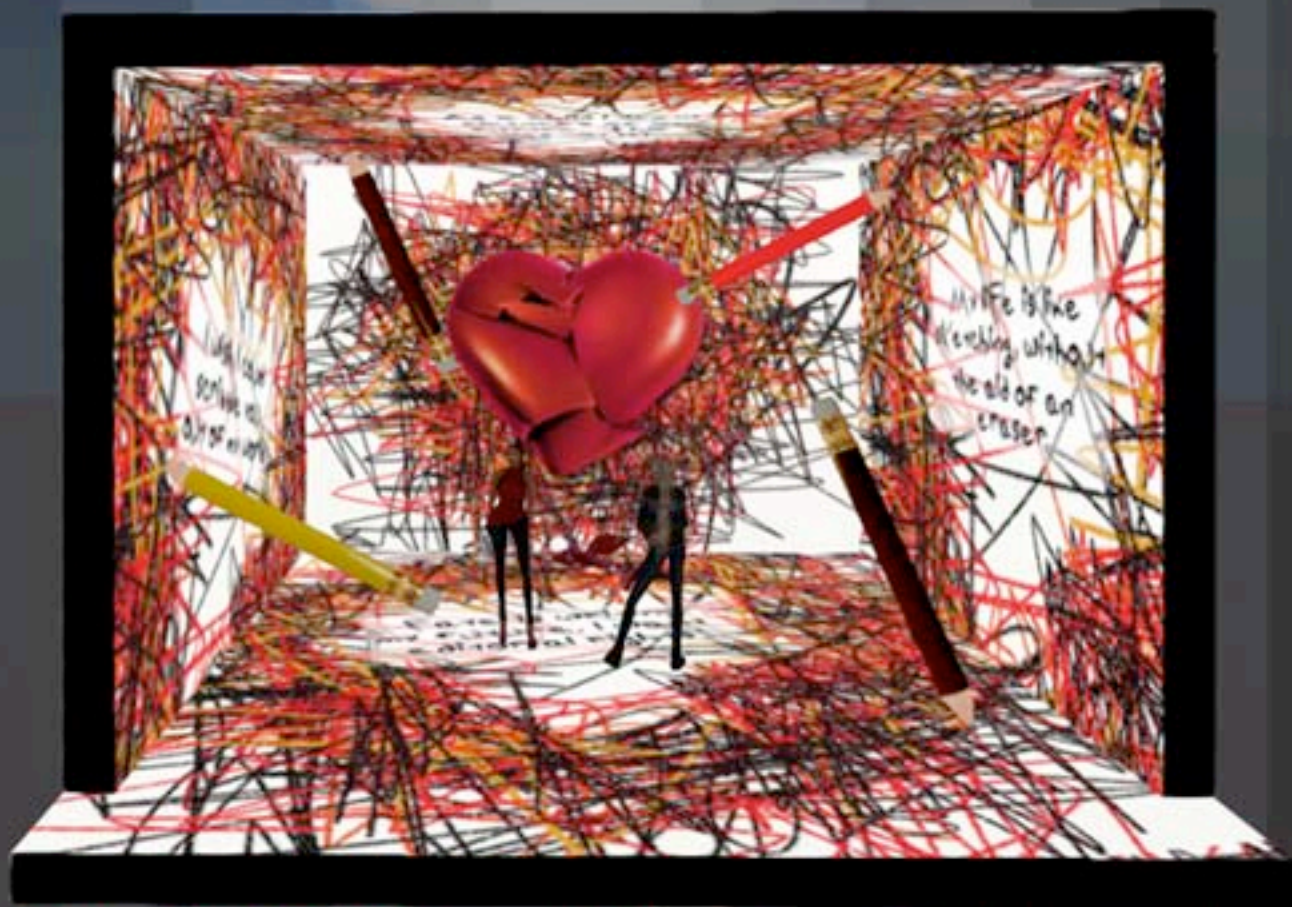
Eleanor: "The full sim really stretches the artists, and takes time to build up. The *overall* concept has to come through."

Carmsie: "I started out with UWA's mini-art events, and began with very crappy skills! My inventory is full of failures and bits I started, then abandoned. Some people have a walk-in wardrobe, others a walk-on wardrobe; I have a walk on *inventory*! Landscaping my own sim, Daydream Island, also helped me learn scale and flow."

Carmsie's Keys to Creativity

1. IDEAS PUSH SKILLS

Carmsie: "Here is my *first* ever build! All the textures are from within SL, as I did not know Photoshop back then. It took *forever* to align prims! I made all 'right' angles by eye, so everything is a bit wonky. I found tutorials on texturing that explained movement, glow, etc. Because I am in Australia, classes are hard to take, as so few run in 'my' time. We *all* have to start with tutorials. There is no other way to learn — other than to pester those who do know. Fortunately, it's a very helpful community. Builders love to share new discoveries.



"Self-portrait" 2009 by Carmsie Melodie, with animated scribbling pencils.

2. APPRECIATE LIMITATIONS

Carmsie leads Eleanor to the next piece:

"This (I'm *not* really happy to admit) is a 'self portrait' that reflects a long-past 'me.' There's a *big* gap between this and the earlier work because I spent time setting up Daydream Island, before returning to art.

"Please step inside with me. See? The feeling is enclosed, trapped."

Eleanor, mesmerized by the animated pencils, gingerly follows inside: "It may not be 'you' now, but it is gracefully developed. It expresses a spontaneous quality of 'living with no eraser.' The piece is serious, yet humorous—a unique combination."

Carmsie grins: "This cube is black on the outside because all the planes are wonky here too. I learned how to get good at disguising the errors!"

Eleanor: "Well, I submit that limitations make you more creative—you will come up with ideas you never would otherwise. The narrower the design parameters, the more creative you must become! So, how do you set limitations? Here is a world that is limitless. Your pieces can be so detailed, they take many hours—are there not limitations here too?"

Carmsie: "The *only* limits for me in SL are prims, my skills, and creativity."

Eleanor: "And time to execute ideas?"

Carmsie: "Yes, that too. Except the UWA Challenges give us months to create. But time is *always* an issue with real life work."

Eleanor: "There is a tension between an idea and the ability to execute it. We can be motivated to learn what others *can't* do."

3. USE A THEME FOR INSPIRATION

Carmsie: "This piece is a bit political. It is another BIG leap in my skill development by incorporating sound, animation, and teleport building to four levels. The wall is the message — I feel sorry for the earth. The animations are not really needed. I just put them in because I like them — hehehe — trash can diving!"

Eleanor: "It seems you work both ways — from conceiving a direction, to responding from what you find. You think of ideas that fit your skills. And, your skills advance to make something you envision."

Carmsie: "But add a theme — a purpose — a reason to create, and it *gives* direction. It helps me focus."

Eleanor: "Doesn't that focus give a framework to the tension of what you can create and what you need to learn? There is a saying that if all you have is a hammer, everything around you looks like nails."

Carmsie: "It also helps to know *what* you need to learn — 'I want a XXX here because the theme/concept is XXX. So how to do that?' Sometimes it's frustrating: I know what I need, but I can't make it, and I can't find it on Marketplace, so I have to redo, invent, or look for a different way. It motivates."

"Cherish & Renew" 2012
by Carmsie Melodie



“When just playing, you avoid trying to learn something because there’s no imperative. When there’s a theme, you may *have* to learn to get what you envision created. It expands your skills.”

Eleanor: “So the starting point is the idea, and finding the elements that fit is the most educational.”

Carmsie: “Sit down. Can you hear forest noises?”

Eleanor: “Yes — birds twittering — and — a chain saw?? YIKES!”

Carmsie: “This level is about deforestation. The board has pictures of many countries to show that we *all* harm forests, not just in the Amazon. A slideshow was the best way to depict multi-nations efficiently. Do you see the poor dead owl on the ground?”

Eleanor: “Awwww, sad. The photos do expand the sense of destruction.”

4. PRIORITIZE PERFECTIONISM

Eleanor follows Carmsie through the small door into the next room and gasps: "Oh my! I can't breathe!"

Carmsie hands Eleanor a gas mask and instructs: "Now, do not look closely at the factories: you'll see how poor my skills were building in scripted particles! Some of the smoke comes out the sides of the chimneys. It was an experiment. But in the overall scene, it doesn't really matter."

Eleanor: "What matters is the effect. It is important to not to over-work. You have to ask when it matters for the message and when it is just an exercise in perfectionism. Why waste time?"

Carmsie: "Art can be forgiving! But, I often find it hard to know when a piece is done. I have ruined many by doing too much."

Eleanor: "That is something I learned in art school— when to stop—to find that moment when all the parts suddenly snap together, and nothing more is needed—that magic moment when the piece begins to sing!"

Carmsie: "I learned that in art school too. I just forget to look with an eye that wants to finish..."

Eleanor: "I do this with pages—I can sense when it is enough. The best ideas start to pull you, rather

than you pushing them. The piece becomes the boss, and you must comply with what it needs. This is a sign that I am doing my best. With the potential for great detail, how do you know when enough is enough?"

Carmsie: "You'll laugh! I know when enough is enough when I reach the prim limit! And, I when like it visually too, of course."

A virtual world landscape featuring a city skyline in the background, a large white cloud in the foreground, and a person standing on a stone path. The scene is set against a warm, orange-hued sky. The word "Earth" is visible in the upper left corner, and "xigga" is visible in the upper right corner.

Earth

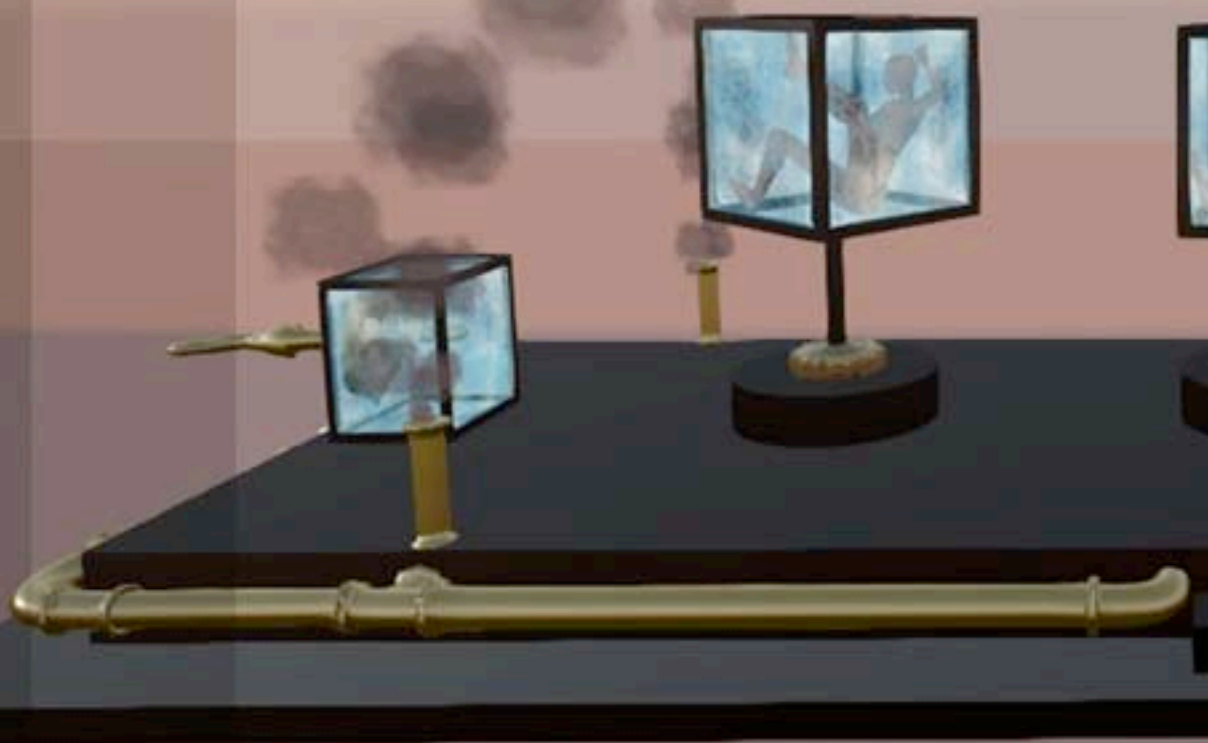
5. BUILD UPON OTHER SHOULDERS

Carmsie: "I do some collaborative works with scripters. There are many great developers in SL who *only* make stuff so people like me can build on them. They do the hard work, and I utilize it, often in unexpected ways. I am grateful."

Eleanor: "Why reinvent the wheel? Why create a clock, for example, when you can find one?"

Carmsie leads on: "This next piece was my first work with a scripter. I *like* collaborating this way! The tricky part is communication: to give the scripter a vision, the steps of what's needed, and then the scripter saying 'it can't be done,' or 'maybe we could... ?'

The right people need to work together. Combining the compatible personalities is as important, or even more so, than the building skills."



Eleanor: "Dealing with people is much harder than developing technique! Also, is there not *always* more to learn?"

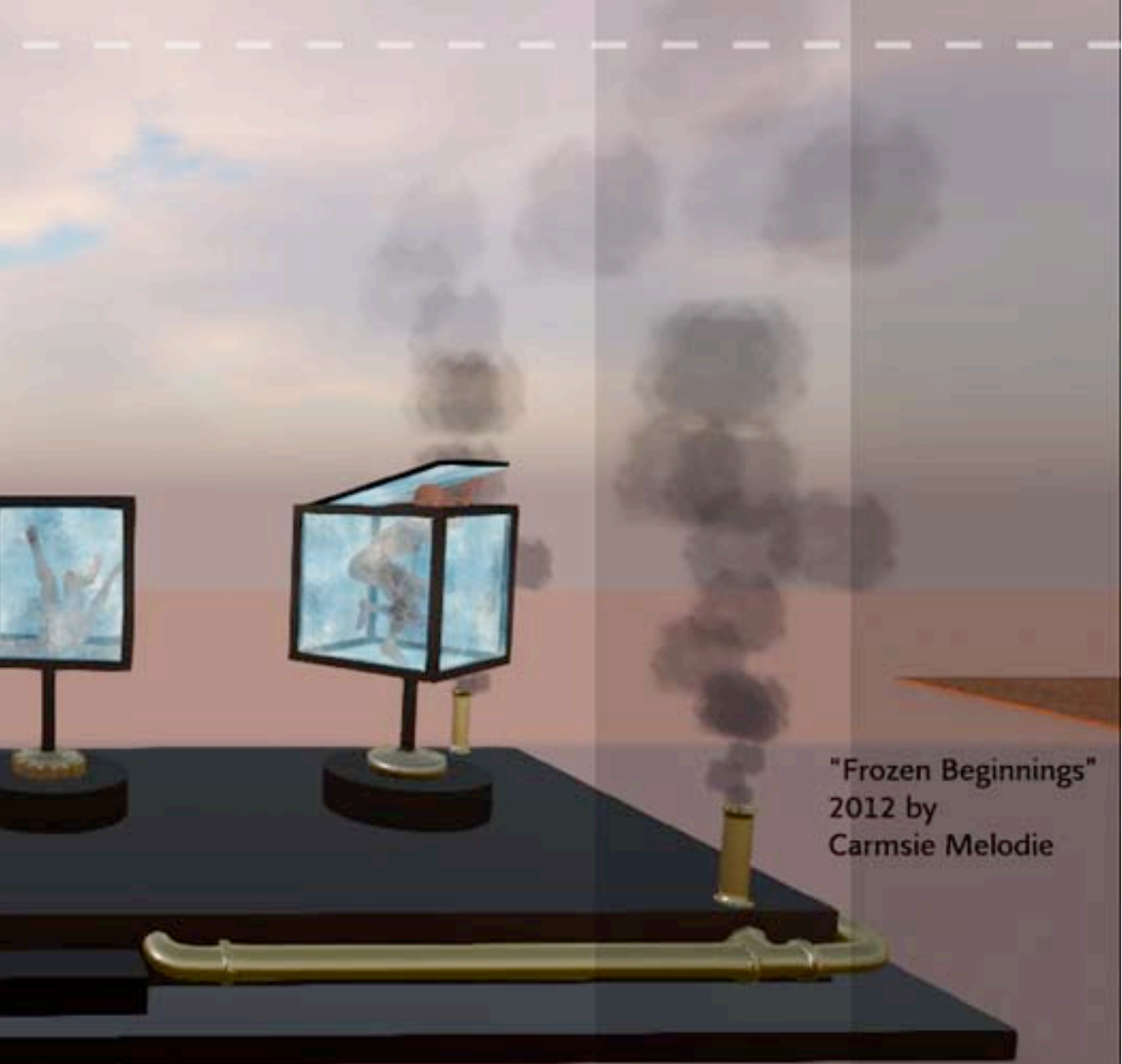
Carmsie: "That is the utter beauty of SL — a bottomless pit of learning! If you can't or won't learn, you can work with others — from the other side of the globe too!

"Scripting is Math — my least favorite subject at school. Scripters can weave magic! They don't want to make art, but they do *love* making my art come to life. It's a win-win."

Eleanor: "You have to combine the analytical with the creative here! You have a great variety, yet a consistency of approach — between the cool intellectual (the mechanical) and the emotional (the trapped people)."

Carmsie: "Here, I prepared the sounds and the smoke for when the key is turned, which gives the possibility of escape."

Eleanor: "*Can* they escape? I sense they cannot — that they are preserved like specimens in jars. They can't be happy



"Frozen Beginnings"
2012 by
Carmsie Melodie

being in there. I interpret them as at different phases of capture."

Carmsie: "The back story is that the three figures are one girl, split into different parts of herself. The last one lifts the lid and peeks out timidly, so maybe she *can* escape. The middle one is happy being trapped and safe. But she also yearns for freedom. Don't ask how I know this. I didn't make it with all this in mind, but know it now. I probably need a shrink to help me work out why I see it this way!"

Eleanor: "Isn't it amazing how we see what we have done differently after time passes?"

Carmsie: "Ask people if they would like to live in fish bowls, to be looked after, and fed. Or would they rather live in the ocean and fend for themselves, but be free? The question seems to have a 50%/50% response."

Eleanor: "Look at a zoo: it *can* preserve species. You have a talent for contrast—for finding the emotional extremes."

Carmsie: "It is great to hear viewers' different impressions. I have had so many different comments for this piece!"

Eleanor: "Masterpieces have the quality of being seen in many different ways—on many levels— this has such strength."

6. USE FEEDBACK

Carmsie: "Non-artsy people make great suggestions and are enthusiastic." When building, I often drag in friends, and listen. If they don't like something, or have another idea, it is part of my process to consider their feedback in my choices. So I suppose my works are *always* collaborative. I love just hearing how they interpret."

Eleanor: "The non-artist readers are discriminating in different ways than the creators. Artists are communicators, first and foremost. If the audience doesn't react, what is the point? Art is more than self-expression. Your subjects tackle societal/situational positions."

Carmsie: "This idea lived in my head for a long time, but I could never make it in the real world, so I made it here."

Eleanor: "Some of the best ideas are the ones that haunt you, that never fade. Building in the virtual world is rather addicting too, don't you agree?"

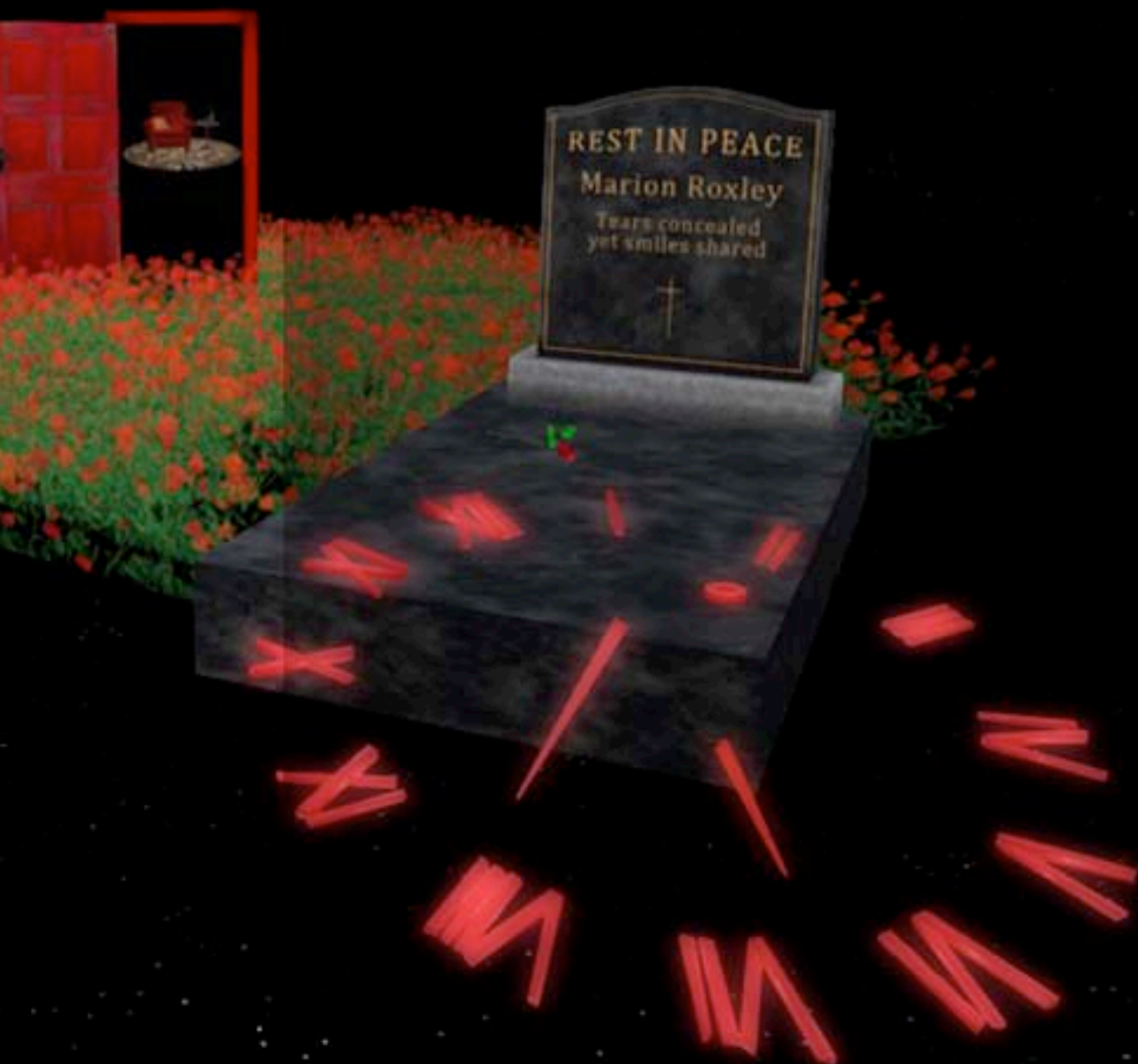
Carmsie: "I am veryyyy addicted! But real life artists scoff at SL— have you noticed that?"



Eleanor: "They scoff at what they don't know. Eventually the international arts community developed here will gain outside credibility. UWA helps!"

Carmsie: "This piece, about domestic abuse, has three levels. And I have a fully 'invented' back story on Marion. The middle part is her ghost—showing her life—and the other is her funeral, with whispering people."

Eleanor: "You take on big subjects! Most artists become predictable, but not you!"



"Looking Back" 2014
by Carmsie Melodie

Carmsie: "My pieces must have meaning, a purpose, a need to speak. It helps that I studied art—helps with positioning, dimension—and realizing concepts."

7. BECOME SURPRISED

Carmsie: "Being limited in what I can make myself (I don't know sculpts or mesh), I often felt like a lower standard

of artist. It means I am always challenged to find others' elements. Now I build on this idea of repurposing and validate the use of others' pieces to create something worthy."

Eleanor: "Getting ideas from what you collect is not the same as starting from a blank sheet of paper. You stand on the shoulders of others, and thus are influenced by them too."

Carmsie: "My creativity is very fluid. I start with one idea and it can morph completely by the time it's done."

Eleanor: "That gives the work more depth, because you respond as you go. Those who have an idea all formed, and then just execute it, do limit themselves."

Carmsie: "SL lets me surprise myself. The unexpected makes it fun!"

Eleanor: "And it is the surprise that makes you grow. You see beyond what you expected."

Carmsie: "When I rez the bits I collect for a piece from my inventory and see them together, my main focus is positioning and visual cohesion — capturing the flow. Some bits don't survive and others are modded into something totally different. It's a *lot* harder to do this in real life!"

Eleanor: "When you see segments together, you must get more ideas, refine scale, and adjust relationships."

Carmsie: "Land formation becomes vital too — and .. and .. and ...!"

Eleanor: "You have the developed eye that comes with education. With SL, we can get lost in variations — too many options, ideas that get too complex, or elements that become fragmented."



Carmsie: "To make a fragmented concept look less so, one way is to repeat elements in different ways and in unusual locations. So even if one part looks unrelated, suddenly there's an unexpected tie."

Eleanor: "Perhaps those connecting elements are the underlying theme?"

Carmsie: "Or, perhaps they are my way of disguising an error! LOL"

Eleanor: "Hehehe — we viewers will never know! You have to take risks. What challenge is it to play it safe?"



back. The flops are the ones where I build for ages, yet lose the thread."

Eleanor: "Well, if you don't have 'failures' you aren't working hard enough! Or maybe you just need a break to find another approach."

Carmsie: "Yes, but sometimes I have built something to death."

Eleanor: "But you always learn from it. You progress even from the pieces that don't work. It is an organic process versus a linear one."

Carmsie: "Always! The flops and the experiments are all part of creativity. When something looks too busy, disjointed, or over-done, that means I lost my way a while back. I had tried to add instead of remove. Taking away is as important as adding. Like on a page, white space can be dynamic. I need to keep 'powerful blank' in mind."

Eleanor: "What is the balance between following a strong idea, versus being spontaneous? How often do you create something that really fits your initial mental concept? How often are you surprised or change mid-stream?"

Carmsie: "For me, it all starts with the 'feeling.' The planning is the last part. I build to an emotional rhythm. The catalyst for this piece was the story of a poor girl in India that was raped on the bus, and died later in hospital."

Carmsie: "The risks are part of the fun! I had a lot of confidence making this piece, *after* I knew how to approach it."

Eleanor: "Confidence shows, and helps to not over-work or over-think a piece."

8. DEVELOP FROM FEELINGS

Carmsie: "To have a concept, a 'feel,' and to hold onto it as you move forward, keeps the idea alive. If the mood goes, the art dies. There's no going



"Achieve Impossible"
2015 by Carmsie Melodie

Eleanor: "Do you gauge the effectiveness of a piece by its emotional rhythm?"

Carmsie: "Yes, and if I am 'into' the build, the mood gets stronger. If it slips, like a dream that as you wake fades, I can't continue. Each piece has it's own atmosphere, even before it's created."

Eleanor: "The feeling leads you along, and determines the decisions you make. Yet, spontaneity is not like a faucet you can turn on and off. Feeling

is underwritten by your knowledge, and when the two combine, the decision becomes right."

Carmsie: "Yes — the feeling is my benchmark and additions to my build are measured against it. I do it note by note. By the time I am done, I have *long* invented back stories as the mood becomes realized. I love stories."

Eleanor: "People best remember through stories. Your piece for the 'impossible'



theme is clear, compelling. It's scale is startling—from the gigantic to the tiny—all those thought-light-bulbs with the different scenarios of invention. The viewer must zoom *way* in or *way* out. The lighting animation accents."

Carmsie: "Proportion was tricky. Even deciding on Edison was a process, as I researched loads of inventors. Three are included, but I could have added many more. I wish to 'look back,' mostly

because, these days, fewer ideas/inventions seem implausible."

Eleanor: "The piece does reflect an authenticity of content. You are saying, then, that the impossible is relative?"

Carmsie: "In a time-sense, yes. I started with a huge Edison—that is the 'real' him. I endeavored to illustrate his thinking process. So the smaller 'hims' are his ideas, and the ideas that spring from ideas."

Eleanor: "Ideas do build on ideas. It feels like process versus just depiction."

Carmsie: "The scale changes allow me to add failed ideas (the broken globes) which are vital to the theme."

Eleanor: "Where is the line between authenticity and expression? You portray success *and* failure. Edison had many 'failures.'"

Carmsie: "He was famous for his number of failures! He said: 'I have not failed; I have just found 10,000 ways it does not work.' I *love* that!"

Eleanor: "But Edison was more than an inventive genius — he was a master at public relations and getting support. One of my favorites from him: **'Keep on the lookout for novel and interesting ideas that others have used successfully. Your idea has to be original only in its adaptation to the problem you are currently working on.'**"

Carmsie: "He was all about utility — making things that solve a problem. He often based it on others' initial work. He was an all-rounder, inventive genius, promoter *and* an adept business man. It's why he was successful when others were less so. And I want to show that inventors spring-board ideas from each others' works."

Eleanor: "What would Edison think of SL?"

Carmsie: "I thought of that while making him! He'd be one of the dudes to take the virtual further, have an awesome profitable store, and probably, an animated magazine with a blog too!"

Eleanor: "Might we have some young Edisons here now?"

Carmsie: "We do for sure!"



9. USE SL TO EXPAND IDEAS

Carmsie: "SL allows me to create 3D pieces I can envision in real life, but can't create. Ironically, in first life, my thing now is 2D montages using hand made paper I purchased when living in Korea. Since discovering SL, I do more 3D works here than the 2D works. I'd love to make SL pieces real, but it's not possible. I'd need cranes

and acres of land! In here, I can lift boulders, and shape the earth. It lets me be free to realize what I imagine."

Eleanor: "Many artists simply upload pieces done in real life. You respond to the medium. This piece would take ten years to create in real life, with major grants and a museum installation! Do you feel that SL takes away from real life, or does it enhance?"

Carmsie: "IF I could make my things in real life, and I used SL instead, it would 'take away.' But as I can't really make these ideas, it is definitely enhancing, because without the virtual world, they would only ever live in my head. I have thousands of ideas that can only ever be realized here, without the necessary money, space, help, and equipment I would really need."

10. CREATE WITHOUT WORK

Eleanor: "Are you building audience for those works in real life as you build an audience within SL?"

Carmsie: "Although I am an artist, I feel in my heart I am 'playing.' I don't view my art in a career sense because it's my opposite of career; it's my escape; it's my way of having fun (in real life and in SL). It's not a job. If I feel it is work, I probably won't continue. My profession is as an instructional designer: I create online learning programs for businesses, and I love the work. I try to find a balance. I have 'art' in a space in my head that's labelled fun/relaxation/freedom; I do not associate any of those words with work."

Eleanor: "If you attach the idea of 'work' to creativity— that hurts inspirational freedom?"

Carmsie: "It doesn't hurt as much as limits. With 'work,' I meet an external objective— a set of requirements. With art, I am free of such limitations."

Eleanor: "Do you spend most of your SL time creating? Or do you do other things here too?"

Carmsie: "My Daydream Island nature sim has a group of over 2,000. I love to landscape, and my store, Pixel Bits, pays for the sim (in theory)."





probably should. SL is my place of less stress. If someone is annoying in real life, you you can't just turn them off, or instantly teleport somewhere else."

Eleanor: "When you first came here, did you intend to be an artist?"

Carmsie: "Yes. I migrated here from another virtual world, There.com. It has only a few build tools. People there kept talking about SL, in a negative way. So I didn't check it out until I got bored in There. As soon as I landed in SL, I found myself in Heaven! I even dragged friends from There in here and they are still here too. Within months I owned a sim. Because I have a full time job in real life, weekends are 1200% SL. My real life friends think I am crazy."

Eleanor: "I discovered how strong the arts are here, which is what I seek. Sadly, SL's reputation holds back its potential."

Carmsie: "Linden Labs makes a lot of money from the seedy side ... in a money-sense they are committed to the deviant stuff."

Eleanor: "But, if you start with X-rated content, you will always limit potential. LL promotes as a place for fantasy, but it is much more than that too!"

Carmsie: "For me it is more than a 'second life' — it is freedom."

"As a social butterfly since the beginning, I am also now a builder. I have *many* wonderful friends in SL, though none I have met in real life. Though I spend too much time in here, I have not become a SL hermit. I still venture out bravely into the real world, see friends etc., just not as much as I



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The logo for 'Homes at Woodland Lake' features the word 'Homes' in a large, white, serif font. Below it, 'at Woodland Lake' is written in a smaller, white, cursive font. The background is a vibrant, abstract design with purple and blue light trails and a green, glowing orb.

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Relevant Ripples

Gratitude to UWA

Influence. Everyone wants it. But few gain such consequence from innovation. The classic story is of a lone genius who toils for years in experimentation. Suddenly, as if overnight, there is a breakthrough, and dreams of glory produce rose-colored glasses. Because SL is a fantasy world, created by many innovators in concert, like a symphony, it owes existence to the blend of many contributors. Credit to one person, or even one organization, for its vitality is impossible.

As the world become a smaller place in the virtual dimension, there are a few contributors who stand out by leading communities.

Jayjay Zifanwe and FreeWee Ling are culture-inspiring innovators. Through their *3D Art Challenges*, they have ignited a unity within the most diverse creative landscape possible! Artists from all over the real world, of every age, culture, style, philosophy, and experience, meet in one place. They offer their best work, participate in the interpretive themes, and achieve a communicative respect for one another.

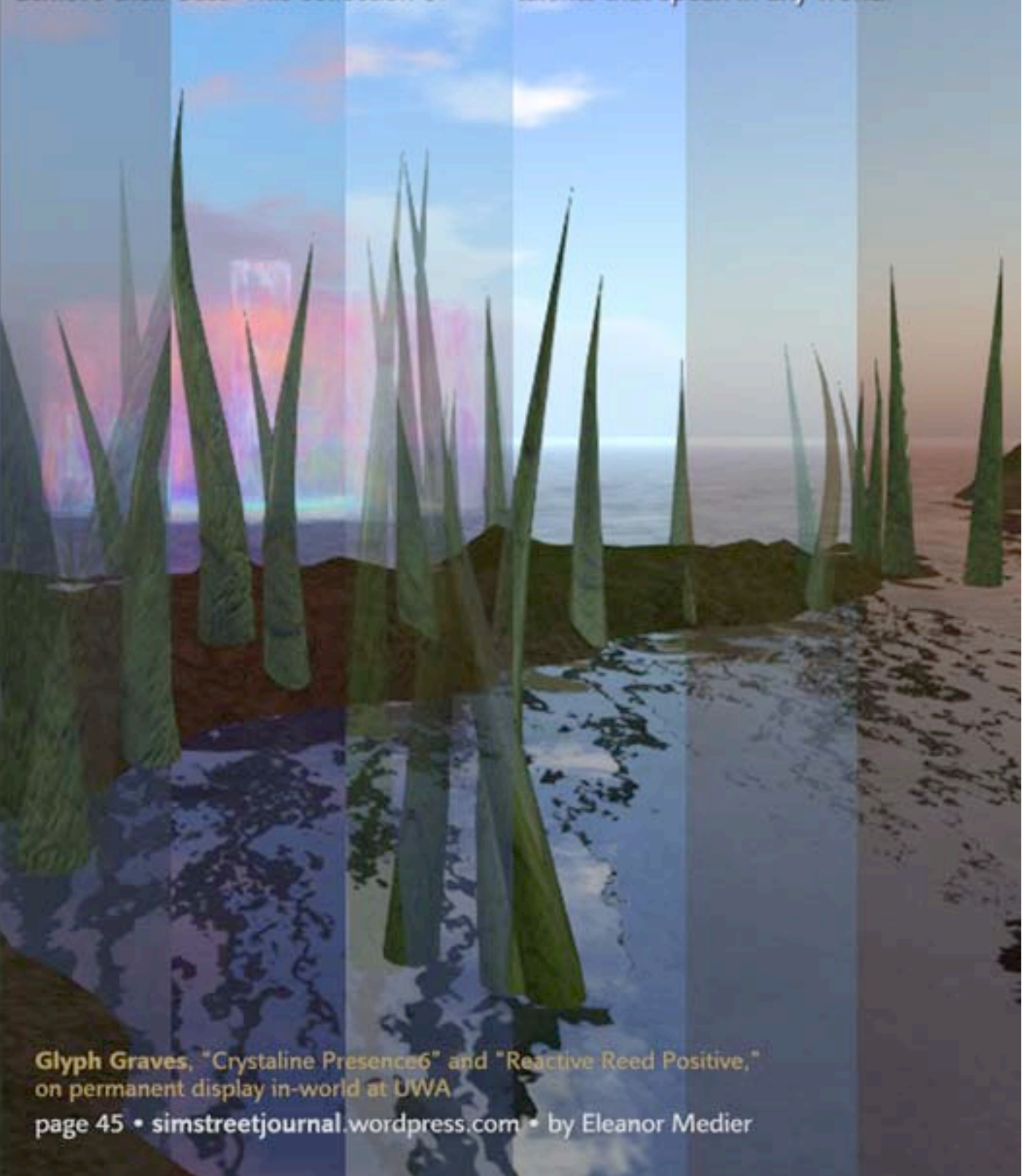
It is doubtful that Jayjay, and those encouraging at UWA, had the goal to set the stage for art in SL. Their goal was to recognize what is being done, provide an opportunity for display, discussion, and awards. They wished to sponsor an even playing field where all can participate, while excellence can be promoted. Just *this* is a lofty mission! Yet, they have done more.

The media has a similar role: to bring forth what is worth knowing, to expand knowledge, and to represent accomplishments. The *3D Art Challenge* program concludes on this consistent high note with *Pursue Impossible*. Artists from sims everywhere express the limitlessness not only of *their* lives, but of society as a whole. Though there are monetary prizes (always great fuel for the inspirational fires) the show democratically represents immersive art. It is a coming together of *all* cultures, in a language that needs no translation or deals with time zone separations.

The accomplishments of UWA will continue, even though the series ends. FreeWee Ling takes the leadership role. Many eyes watch for what is to come. But while UWA redefines, the community has taken off, and artists everywhere know of others' works, share philosophic approaches, and rise not only to the challenges set forth by UWA, but are pushed out of the nest. **Carmsie Melodie** is a perfect example of this nurtured, grow, discussing a retrospective of her work in "Passion with Purpose" page 16.

Supporting the *UWA 3D Art Challenges* since before the first issue, *Sim Street Journal* hopes to extend the ripple effect of this era, while giving thanks to the innovative creators that gave the community what the artists themselves cannot, and pushes them to achieve their best. This collection of

mini-reviews is not meant to take the place of seeing the work, but to discuss its impact, and show moments not to be seen again. FreeWee Ling has produced an amazing catalog for each show, with representative photographs. Readers outside of SL will find messages from talents that speak in any world.



Glyph Graves, "Crystalline Presence6" and "Reactive Reed Positive," on permanent display in-world at UWA


page 45 • simstreetjournal.wordpress.com • by Eleanor Medier

CREATIVE CONTRASTS:

Retrospective Reviews

a tribute to the University of Western
Australia's *3D Art Challenges*

by Eleanor Medier,
art critic and editor



The *UWA 3D Art Challenges* are leaders in the development of virtual visual art. Since 2009, they give a focus and center to the community in SL. The program does much more than inspire art. It sets a standard for excellence at every level, from organizing, appreciating

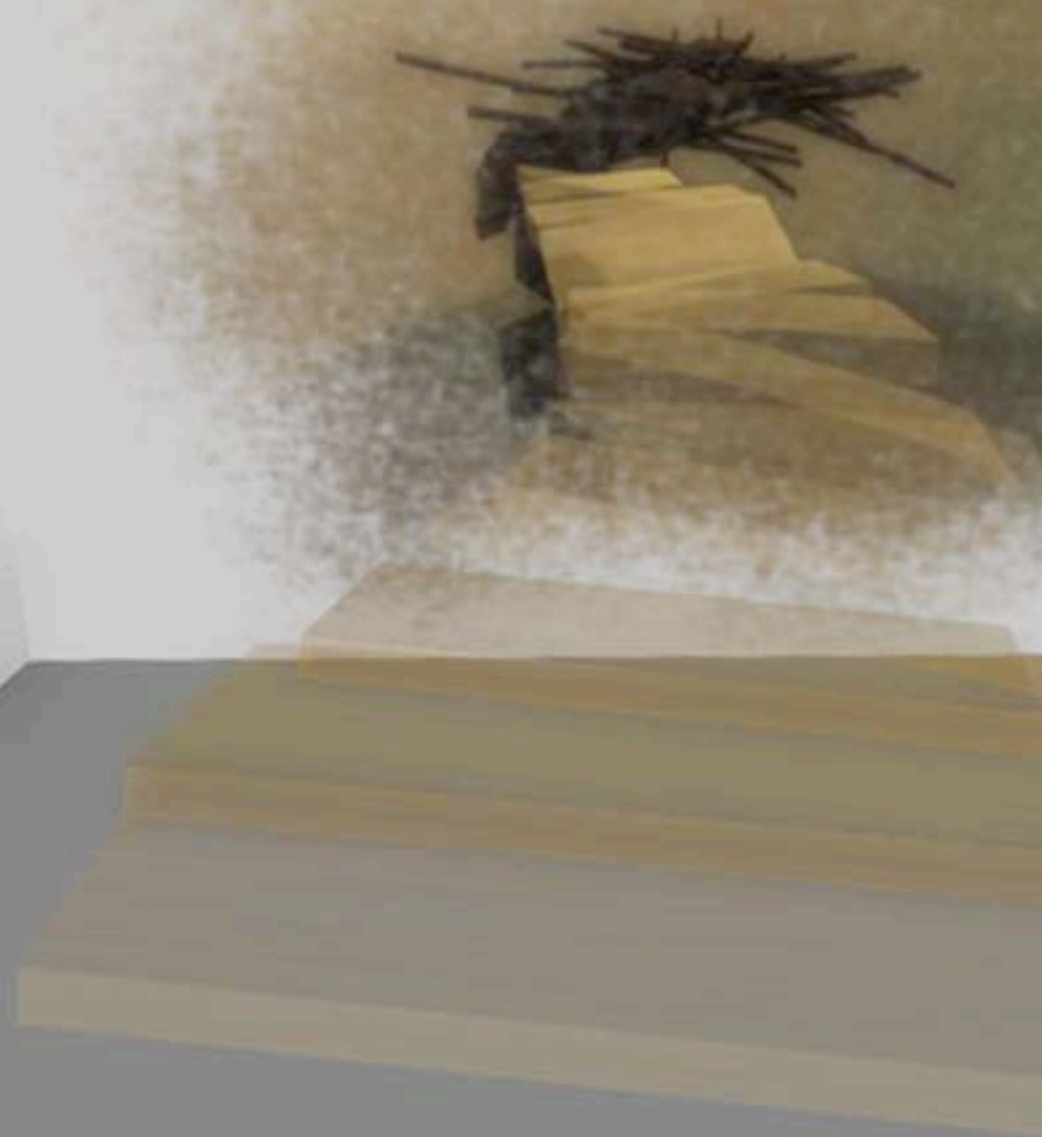
volunteers, handling promotion, and inspiring new ideas. With the passion to love art and the vision to see its virtual potential, the effect of Jayjay Zifanwe's and FreeWee Ling's contributions also spill onto these pages from the first issue. It is an honor to be so influenced.

Takni Miklos, "Windows into Other Rooms,"
from UWA 3D Art Challenge: Reflections




If geometry can have personality, Takni Miklos' shapes seem to come alive in "Windows into Other Rooms." When first approaching a still pool, the viewer is greeted by a frame and a few little stars. But the sculpture 'knows' that a guest has arrived. It suddenly grows and sprouts more

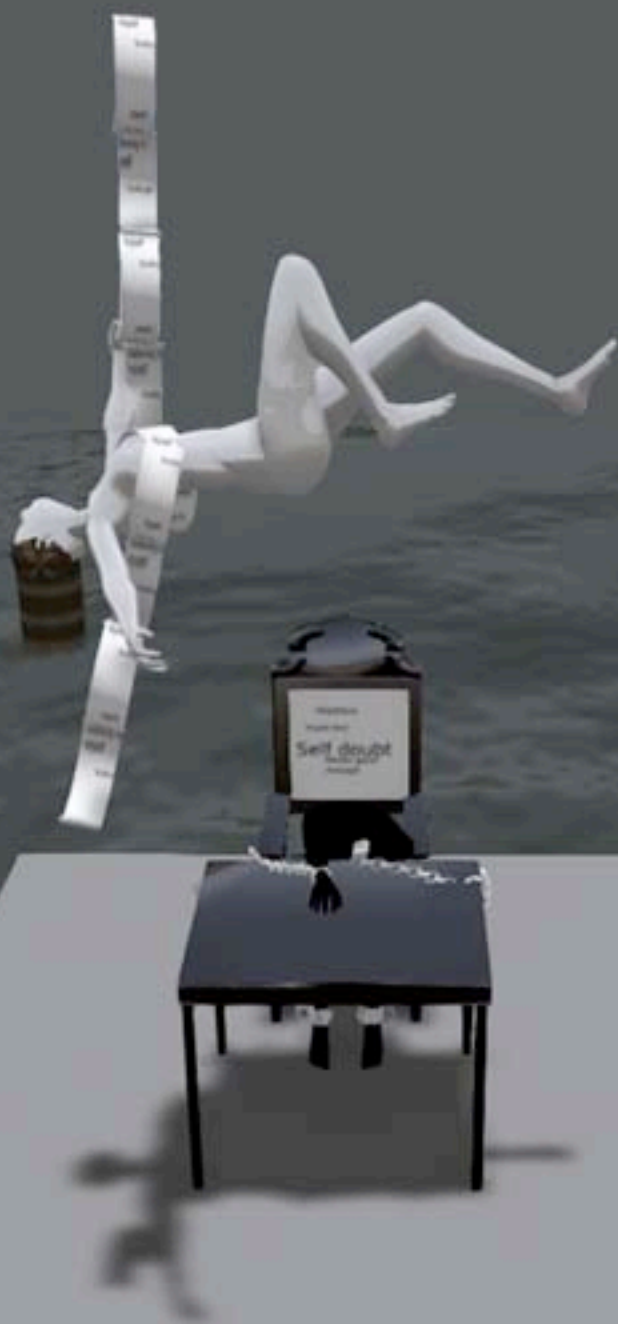
and more geometric shapes. The forms expand and encompass both the pool and the visitors. Takni is a master at using responsiveness to build forms that are never the same twice. The mystery to see what happens next is addicting.



Pale Illusion, "The Void,"



Mystery and color draw viewers into a work of art first. With simple tones in a stark surreal white room, "The Void," by Pale Illusion, tackles the most enigmatic subject of all: death. One side of the room invites the visitor to follow a vague path, while other side has fallen pillars accented by green flames. Encased in this other-world of slippery icons, the enormity of the unknown becomes miniaturized. The images invite an entrance. But where these gateways lead seems to be a one-way adventure. Pausing to consider, mortality is always affected by choices made.



Drama gives light/dark contrast new meaning. Sometimes the emotive content of art may be subtle, but not in Tarquin Evermore's piece, "Belief in Myself." Lack of confidence is a common affliction that is crippling and tragic. The chained dark figure

expresses its effects more powerfully than the words used. The virtues of self-esteem are equally demonstrated in the floating figure, anchored by her affirmations. Executed with restraint, just enough detail is provided for the message.



Scale and contrast are used masterfully in UA Blue's "Find the Ultimate Blue." A piece that takes advantage of virtual freedom, the artists' studio is *inside* the elephant shape. Concentration on the color blue represents the creative process. Monumental


to the viewing avatar, the painter is the same size. The relationship between the skeletal structure of the cage form, the room inside, along with the tiny elephant model, any symbolism lovers can keep busy discussing this for hours!



Shenn Coleman, "Sunrise Spirit"

from the UWA 3D Art Challenge: *Transcending Borders*

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Movement and immersion are characteristics within the virtual world not possible in the real. Shenn Coleman elevates these techniques to a spiritual level in "Sunrise Spirit." As an entrance into the theme of *Transcending Borders*,

the ethereal and the imaginary are visualized within meditative and dream-like settings. Upon entering this celestial environment, the mental universe is defined. If thoughts could be made visual, this is their manifestation.



Contrast can be confrontational, as in Giorgio Nexen's "Sharing Ideas Face to Face." Had this work incorporated more virtual dimension such as animation or involving the viewer, it would gain in recognition. It has a quiet strength in the expression of

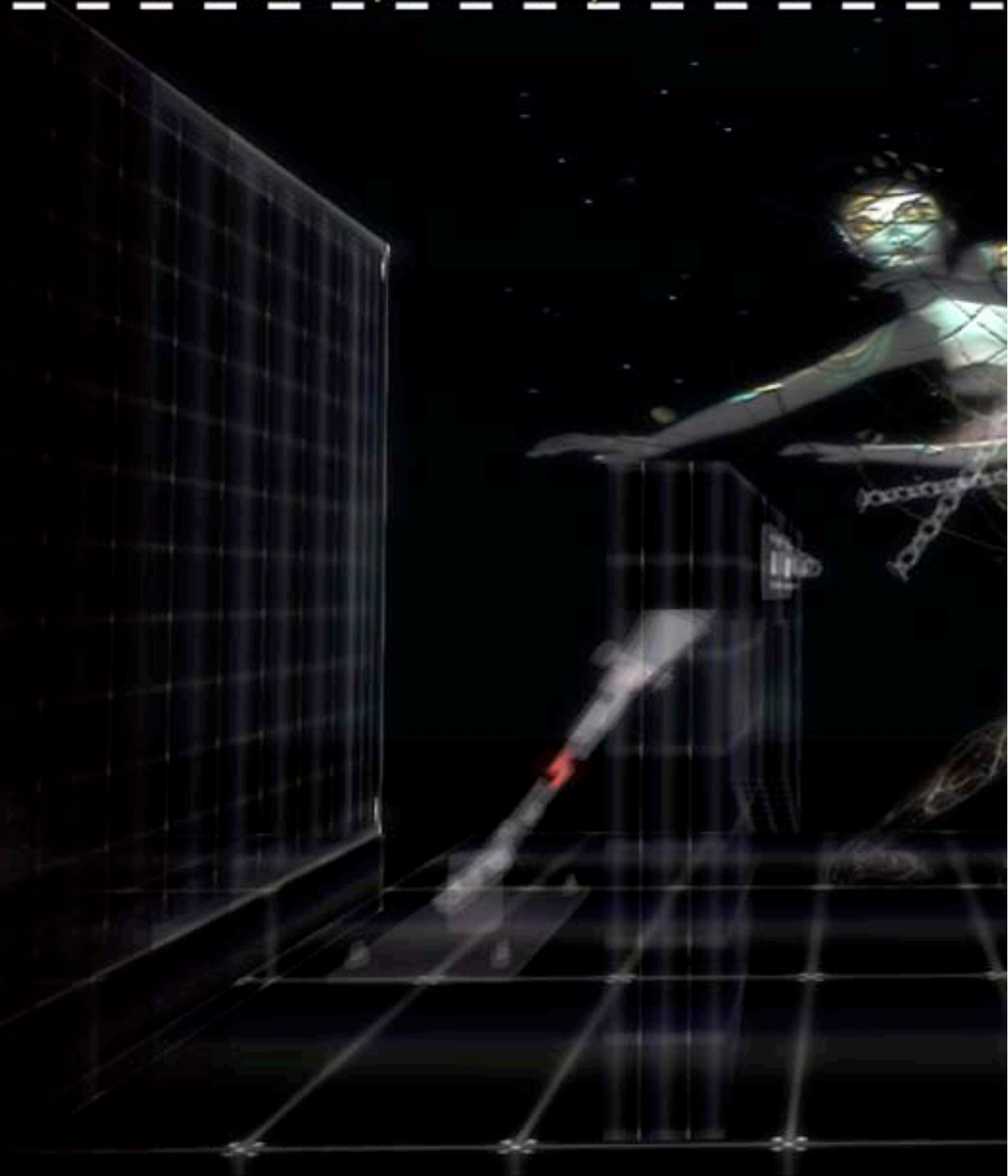
how people are mostly alike; differences are in viewpoints and approaches. Provided the same situation with the same tools, individuals will still never think alike. As an optimistic statement, the rainbows seem to symbolize potential harmony through creative understanding.



Scale allows contrast to be subtle, such as in Roc Furse's "Set Yourself Free." Presented in miniature, the viewer must zoom in to perceive the perpetual nature of the figures running in circles. Movement is shown by repeating the same

bathing-suited woman evenly dispersed on the continual climb. Yet, sitting at the dark and mysterious building entrance is a single casual figure, imparting a level of daydream. Is she the one imagining? Or does the viewer imagine her, who then imagines? There are more questions than answers.

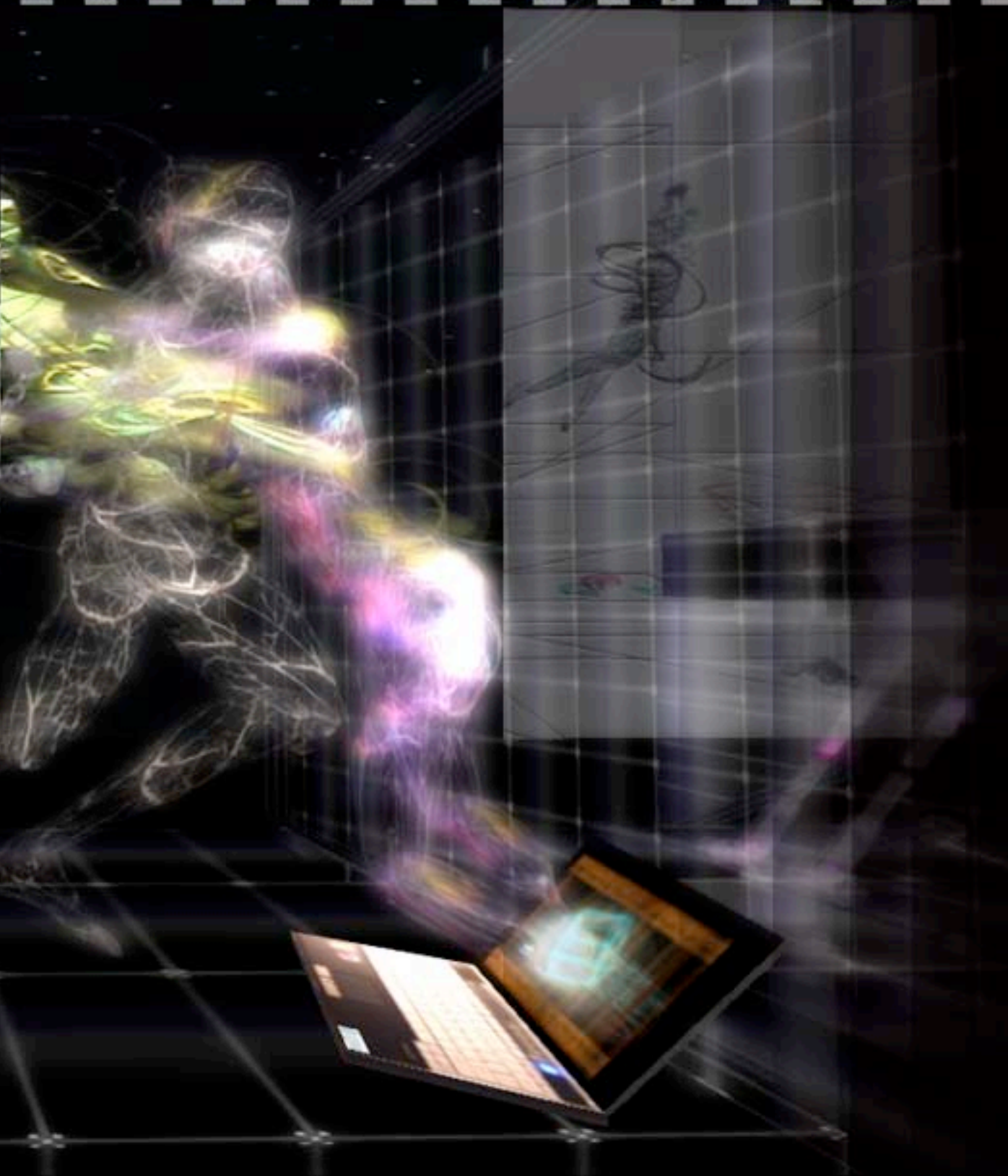
Roc Furse, "Set Yourself Free," from *UWA 3D Art Challenge: Transcending Borders* page 55 • simstreetjournal.wordpress.com • reviews continue online



Control versus randomness are contrasts often expressed with geometric versus organic forms. In Barry Richez's "Freedom of Creativity," the ghost-like figures flow out of the computer. Animated and continual, they stretch through their grid-like home, which shifts through a dark/light cycle.

Barry Richez, "Freedom of Creativity"

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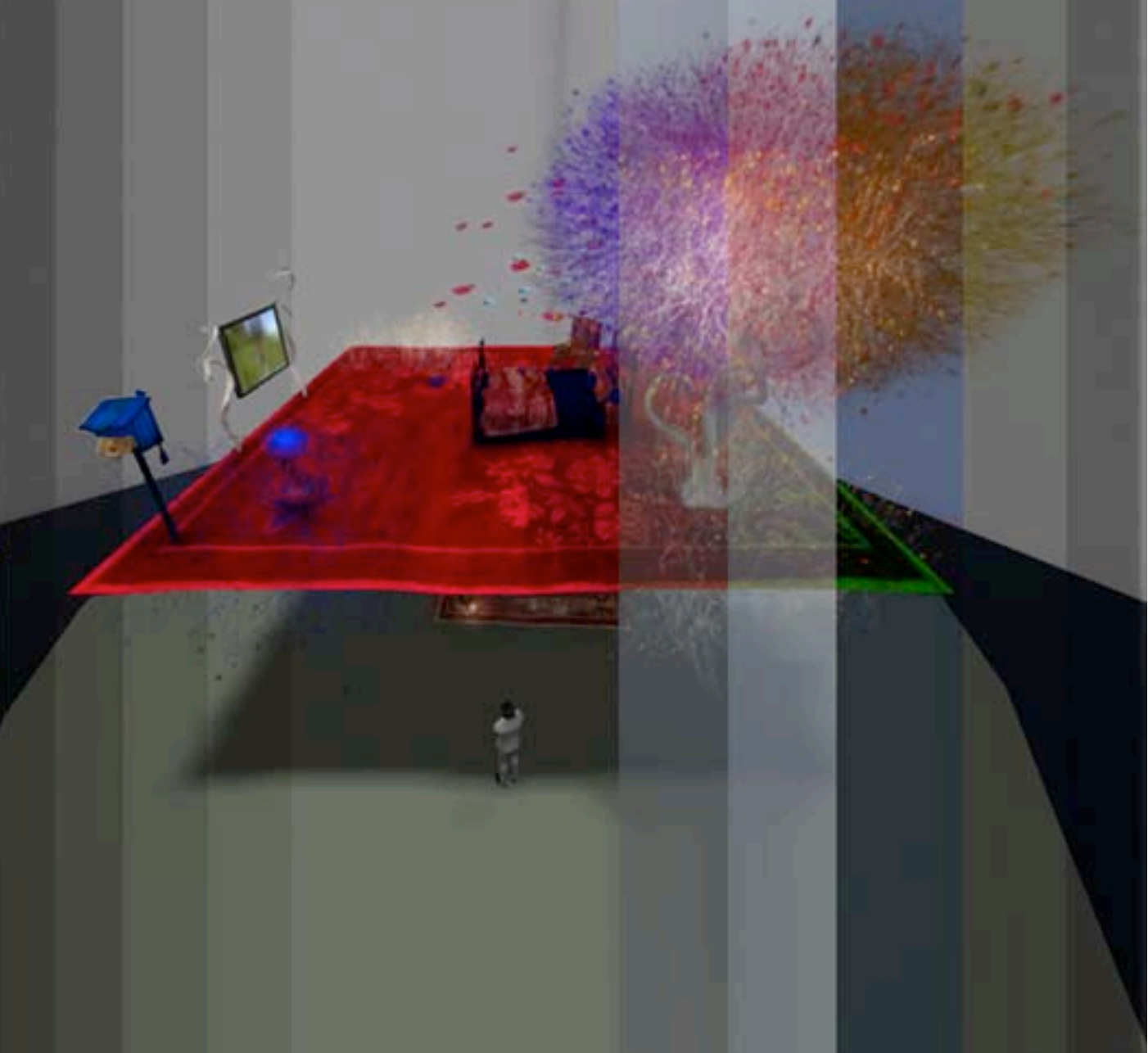
By sequencing several frozen moments of movement is created, and such a formal presentation dissolves into scribbles — much like the formation

of ideas. Caged within parameters, utilizing technology, both become platforms for allowing the imagination freeform. Both transform expression.



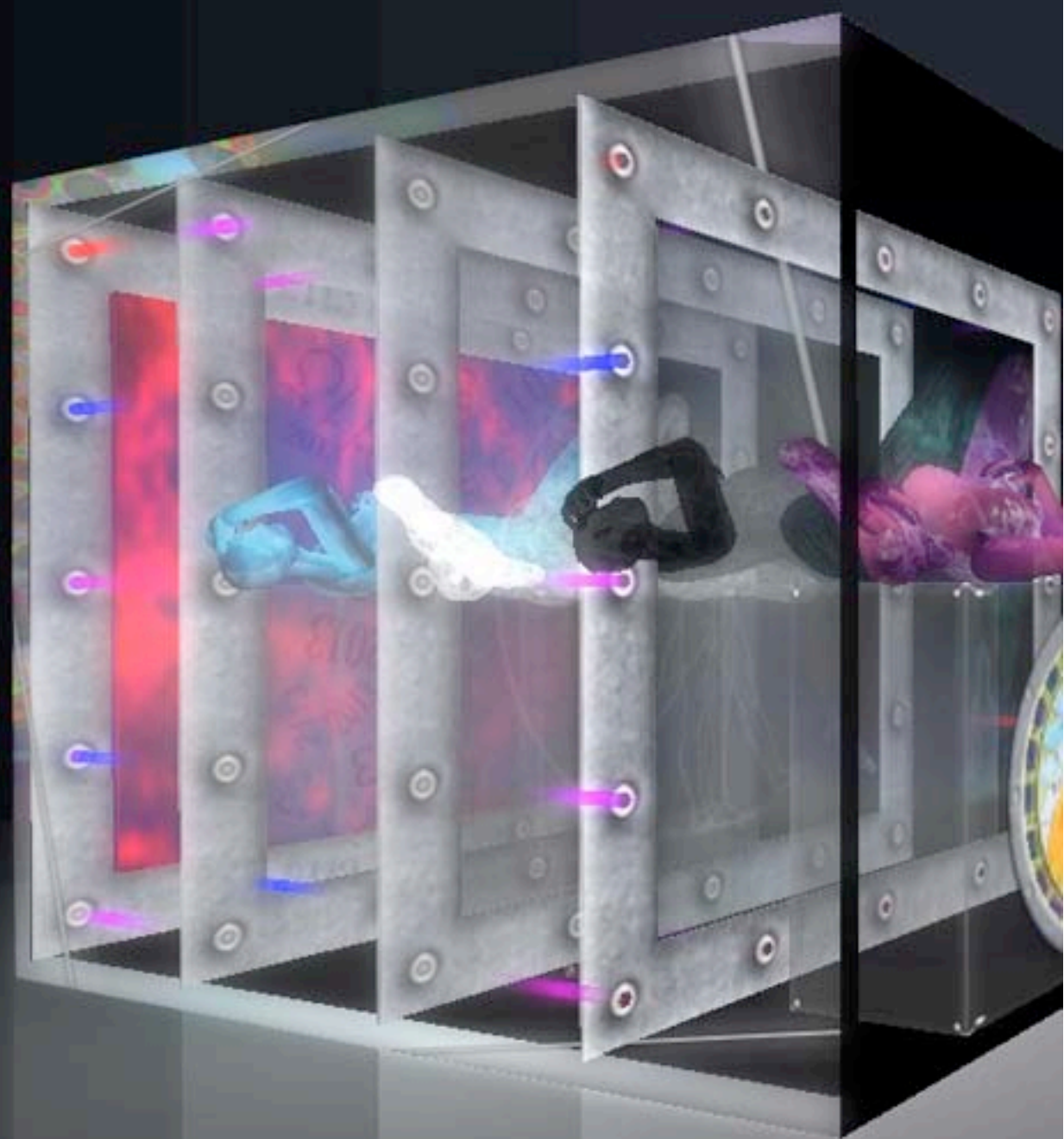
Symbolism and dichotomy give contrast to the enigmatic "Passage," by Ama Avro. Although *SSJ* did review in #8 page 70, Heavy Writer is always unhappy with the photograph. So, here is an effort to better represent, though to show it does stretch the medium.

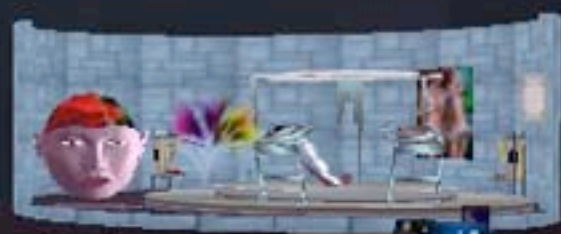
As an ode to Magritte, Ama pushes the reference into an original architectural setting. The viewer *must* walk through the doors, sit on the chair, examine the papers strewn about. The objects and mural seem to come alive with their personalities.



Thematic contrast often plays with opposites. Willothewisp, in "Cyberwings," expresses freedom (as have many in the exhibition) to be about physical constraint giving way to imaginative opportunity. The floating carpet boundaries a room complete with a video-window, bird house, comfor-

table bed, visitor's chair, and a tree. It is the edges of the owner's world. Yet, there is change, perhaps seasons, for the colors evolve through the rainbow spectrum. The carpet offers a complimentary color to the tree as they cycle chromatically, and the video screen brings the outside in.





Contrasting the human form against a geometric backdrop captivates many artists. Finding a fresh approach to this motif means incorporating it within a developed visual style. Barry Richez, in "Quantum," offers a surreal situation of translucent frames that animate through colorful texture changes.

Figures, frozen like captured butterflies, describe a mechanized message of humanity overpowered by the unintended consequences of technology. It is verified by an official-looking seal on the front. Who is in control? Beautiful and haunting, it is frozen while moving.

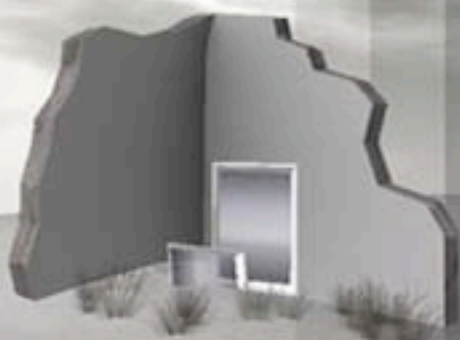
from the UWA 3D Art Challenge: *Reflections*

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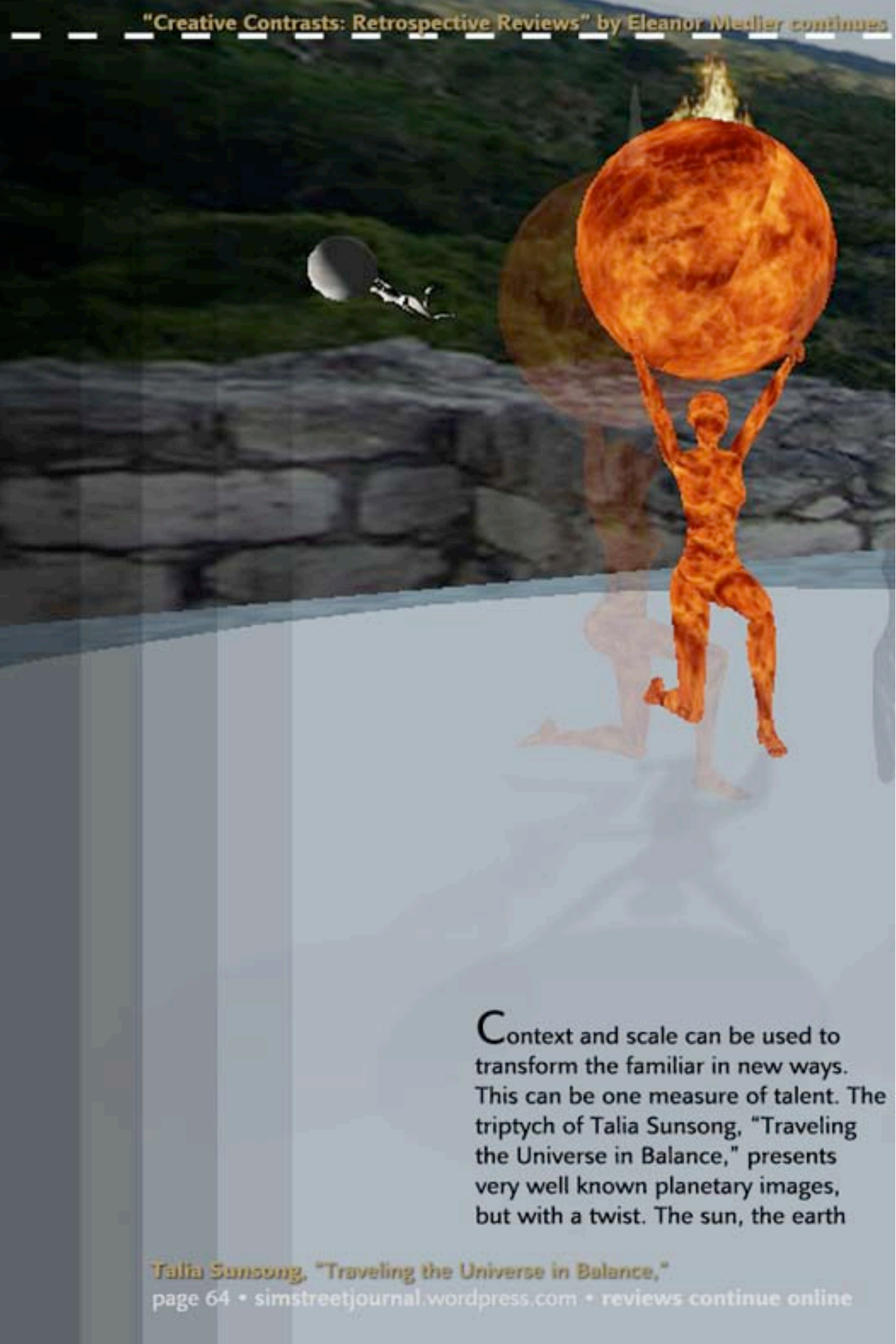
Impactful works of art always fuse concept with technique. A stylistic decision must be made about the detail level necessary to express the message. Fae Varriale, in "The Journey—Reflections of an SL Artist," conveys artistic experiences from creation to

installing exhibitions, demonstrating the entire process. Traveling from the depth of content, to the act of painting, to editing, to designing the exhibition, being an artist in SL is similar to that of being one in real life. It is necessary to excel at each point, from in to out.



Creating an immersive environments gives the artist an ambient control. Works are experienced, not just viewed. Chic Aeon, in "I Have Walked This Way Before," uses a minimal landscape of floating items: framed portraits, mirrors, walls. Accented with a few reality-boosting items such as

trees and grass, the setting becomes dream-like. Monochromatic, the viewing avatar becomes the contrast of color. Wandering among the mirrors and fragments of daily life, permanence and possibility are easily pondered. Where is this place of reflection?



Context and scale can be used to transform the familiar in new ways. This can be one measure of talent. The triptych of Talia Sunsong, "Traveling the Universe in Balance," presents very well known planetary images, but with a twist. The sun, the earth

Talia Sunsong, "Traveling the Universe in Balance,"

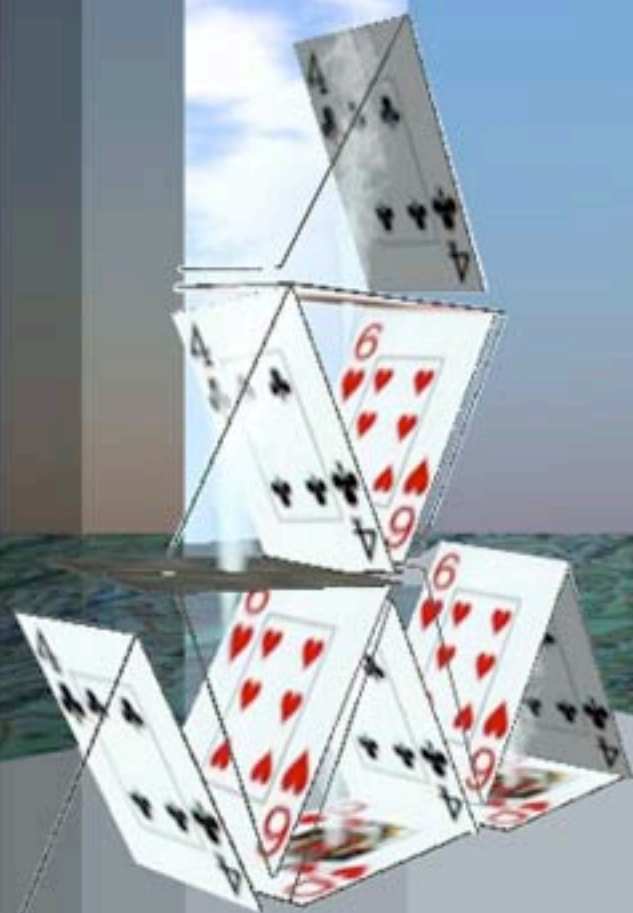
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and the moon move through their orbits carried by God-like figures, reminiscent of ancient celestial beliefs. Swirling textures, running through paces, and choreographed paths becomes mesmerizing. How simple, yet how functionally complex!

from the UWA 3D Art Challenge: *Triptych*

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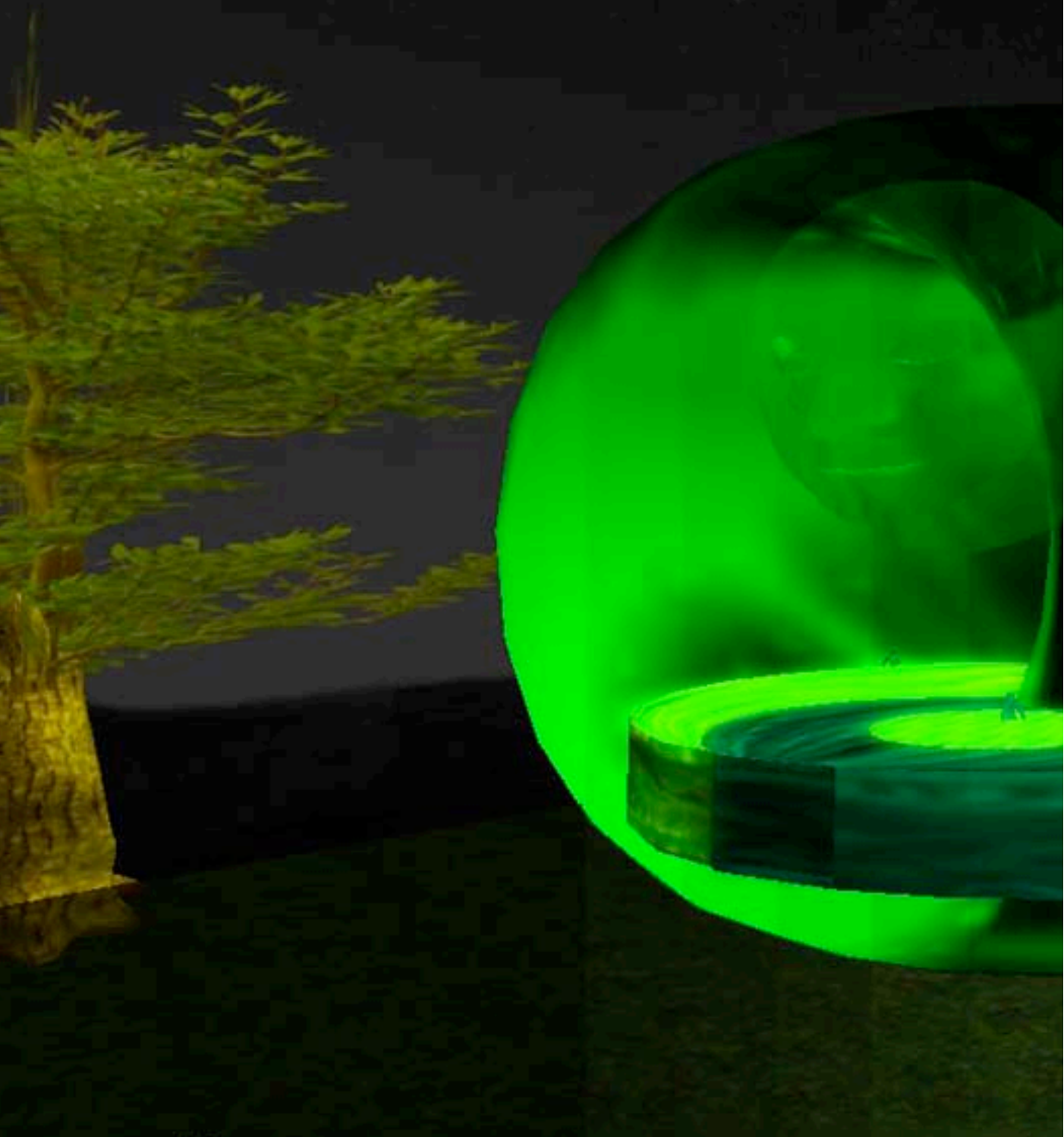


Owning a theme by translating it into a visual style gives the artist uniqueness. Then the exhibit has a theme that gains an overall cohesion, Visiting becomes an interpretive adventure. The *Triptych* theme is playfully interpreted by Misprint Thursday, in "Three Card Poker." Trios of cards flip around this sculpture, begging for a pattern, but stubbornly appearing random. Constrained by the triangle, the elusive pattern is also interrupted by surprise shapes that sneak in. Rather than be a recognizable game, the rules are challenged and broken, so the 'game' is how the combinations constantly relate.



Experience expressed gives a work of art both a personal context as well as one the viewer can relate to. An assemblage about creativity has a documentary quality, showing a continuum from concept to presentation. Krystali Rabeni, in "The Artists' Studio,"

presents a progressive experience from a setting to sketching to formal exhibition. Each miniature scene has a doll-house scale, lending it preciousness. The snap-shot scenes display phases of a single concept, ending more colorfully than it begins.



Drama, enhanced by scale, can represent the importance between components. In "Universe Tao Ming," by Lucignolo, the glowing cycles within this green sphere

lend a hierarchy to social positions. The dominant large head of power hovers over a quasi-landscape where a sketchy figure controls a planet, while

Lucignolo, "Universe Tao Ming"

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the ground is populated by tiny running silhouettes. Abstraction and size allows each level of humanity to be presented differently. Continually moving,

often the large green glow overtakes the entire sphere and inhabitants, making this mini-world one of a continual power struggle between what each level can and cannot control.

from the UWA 3D Art Challenge: *Earth*

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Man versus nature has occupied a conceptual corner in art since the first cave paintings. Technology always offers new metaphors, several powerful ones are used by Herbie Haven in "Earth (The Big Squeeze)." Spinning, while bulging from a belt

too tight, the mechanization of harnessed energy seems illusively endless. Is this the fate of mankind? To dominate nature so completely that the moon is tethered like a balloon? Perhaps a cautionary image, it inspires greater conscientiousness.



Contrast pushes the extremes. Dragon Lord, in "Please Recycle," presents the earth far from its natural state. It explores the human construct imposed upon it—to measure, dissect, contain, and even draw off the power to reconstruct itself. The earth becomes

an object to be used. In stark contrast to the dominant greens and earthy tones in the rest of the exhibit, this work makes the viewer ponder how far perception can be from reality. How much utility can overcome nature, and mask a long-term healthy potential?

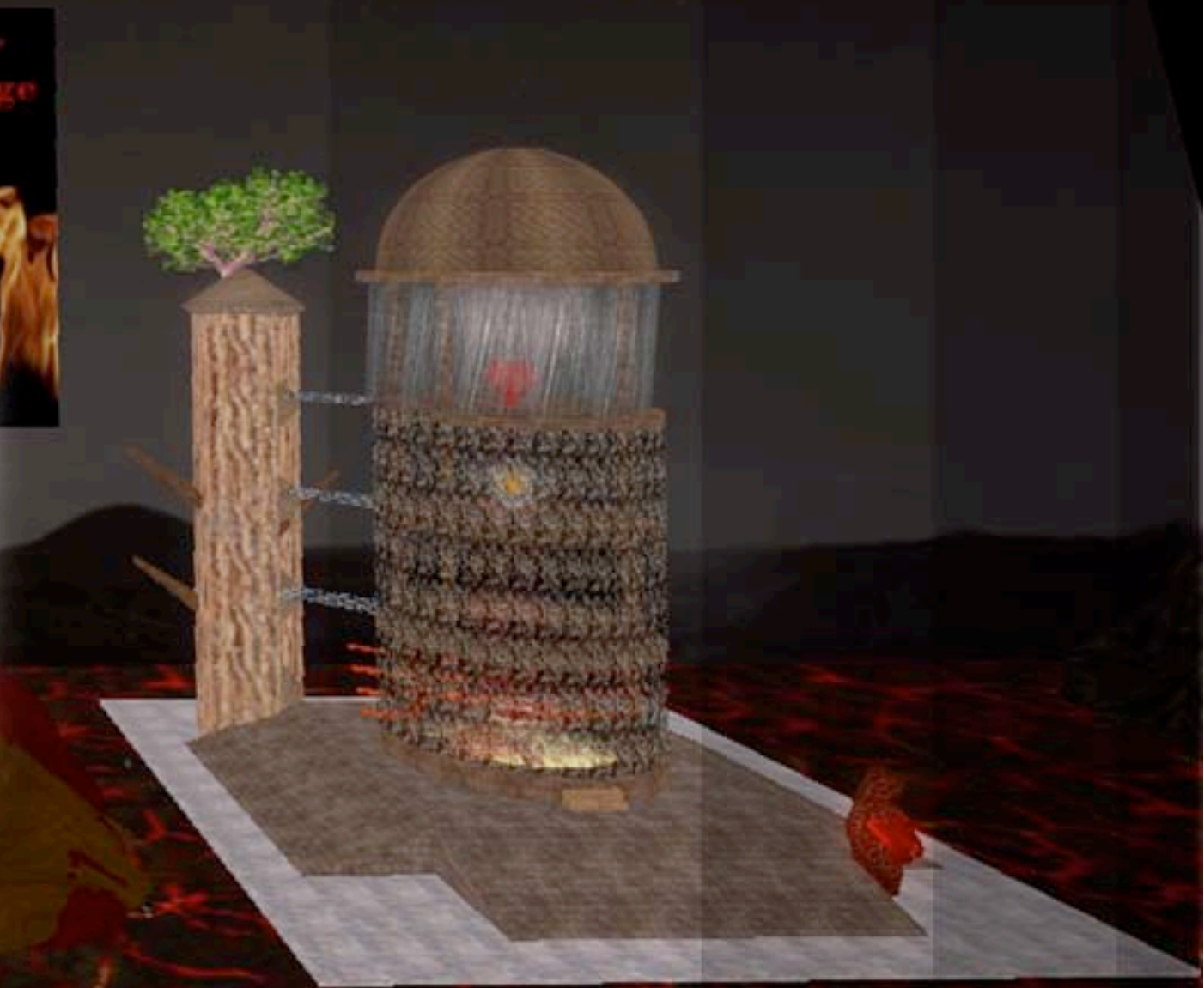


Bold and engulfing, the UWA *Fire* exhibition design was a work of art in itself that accentuated the art it displayed. Walking upon cracked lava streams, dodging

flames that could erupt seemingly anywhere, getting lost in crevices and valleys only to discover a sculpture of escape, the show could not have been more dramatic!

Agualgo and MellyDee Magnifica, "Firey Flames of Passion," and Dragon Lord, "Sanctuary of the Hart: A Soul on Fire"

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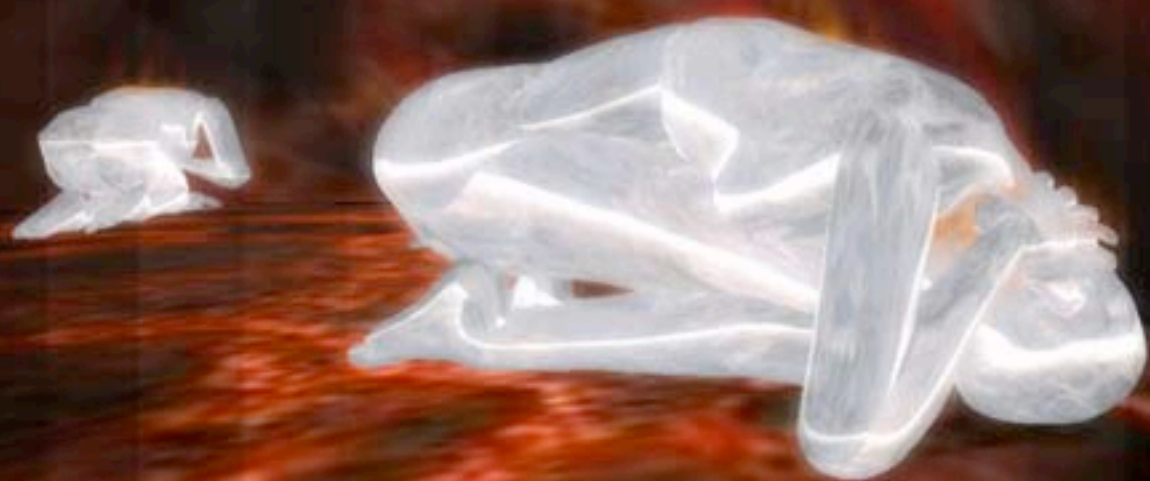


Visually cohesive, the display united a great diversity of pieces. Works such as "Firey Flames of Passion," by Agualgo and MellyDee Magnifica, contrasted *and* blended with a very

different symbolic work such as "Sanctuary of the Heart: A Soul on Fire," by Dragon Lord. To build such ambience is in itself a 3D art challenge!

from the UWA 3D Art Challenge: *Fire*

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Opposites attract. What artist could resist contrasting hot with cold? But this time, in "Down to My Last Six Tears," by Secret Rage, it is defensive. Overwhelmed by a world in flames, single figures hide to survive, like the frozen corpses of those caught in

Pompeii during the ancient eruption of Mount Vesuvius. But the fate of these virtual figures is unknown, beyond these pages. Immortalized, they are caught, never to relax, never to melt. Perhaps this is a testimony to denial, and just as fatal.



The only species to harness the power of fire is the human. However, as other species know, fire is also destructive. Kristali Rabeni expresses this elemental danger to people through a surreal representation in "Tragedy." The animated skeleton reacts to this fate.

Here, the dead don't act like the dead. In the virtual world, an impossible situation can come to life. Fire, as a great benefit, is a great threat. Yet, though it will not console this poor victimized skeleton who will burn forever, fire is part of evolution.



Occasionally, an artist creates an image that becomes like an icon. For Rebeca Bashly, "Mother" is a motif that gives her name recognition. This is not only because the piece is in UWA's permanent collection, but because it is powerfully memorable. Bold and clearly sym-

Rebeca Bashly, "Mother"

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bolic, it is simple, yet complex. This depiction of the earth is one not seen before. Expressing the energy within is obvious, but the use of animation for sparks, traveling in the connecting tentacles, gives a dynamic uniqueness to this interpretation of the planet.

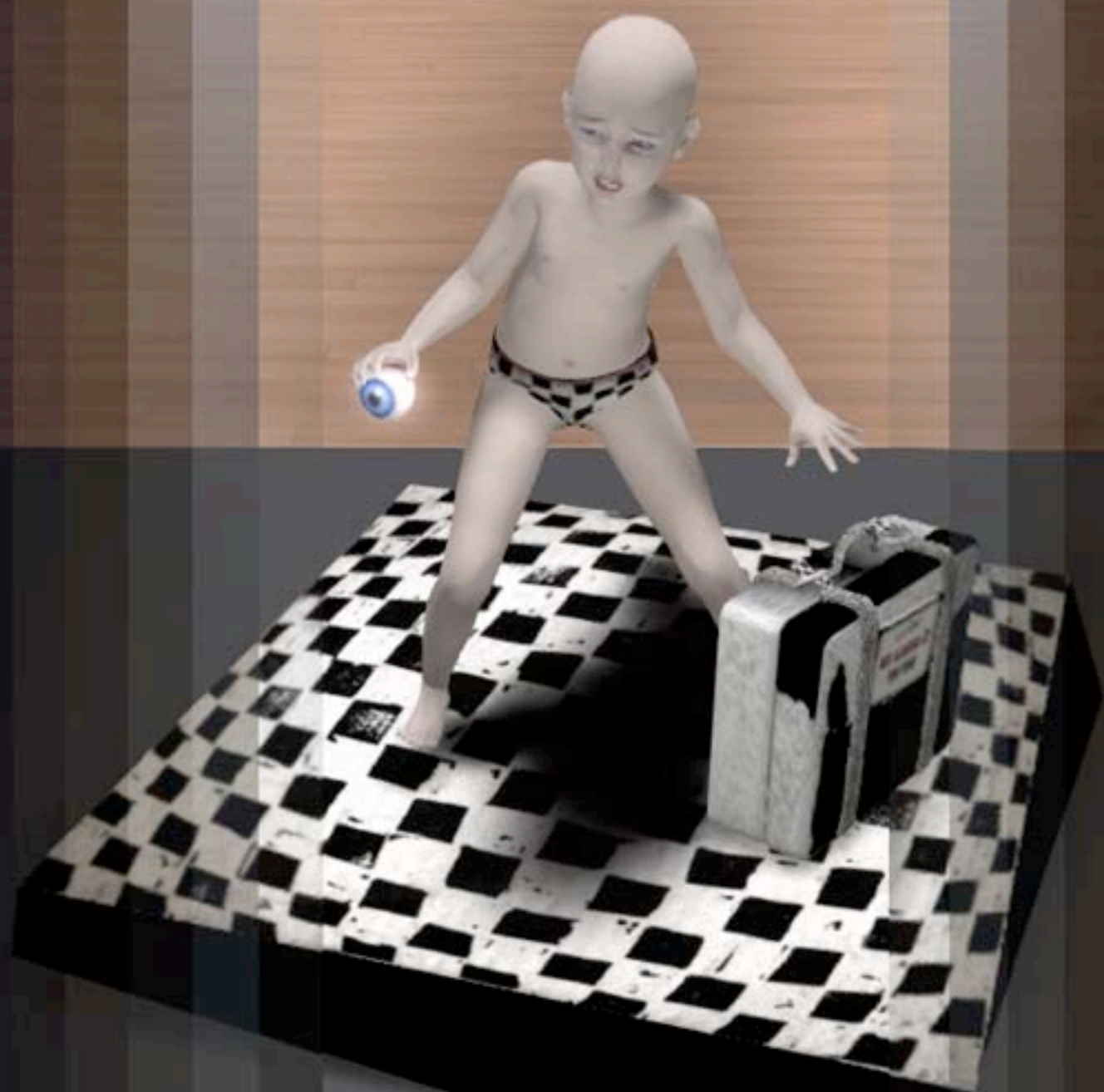
from the UWA 3D Art Challenge: *Permanent Collection*

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When an artist makes an image tiny, the forms become precious, even endearing. From a distance, in "L'histoire de Petit-Gris," Lollito Larkham presents an arm reaching out of the floor, with a hand balancing a box that contains a doll-house sized room. At first, the room

seems empty, but shifting from bed to chair to window is a shadowy, alien-like character. The objects in the room remain stationery, but this weird creature who vanishes and reappears, seems to be captive. The power to disappear is not the power to escape.



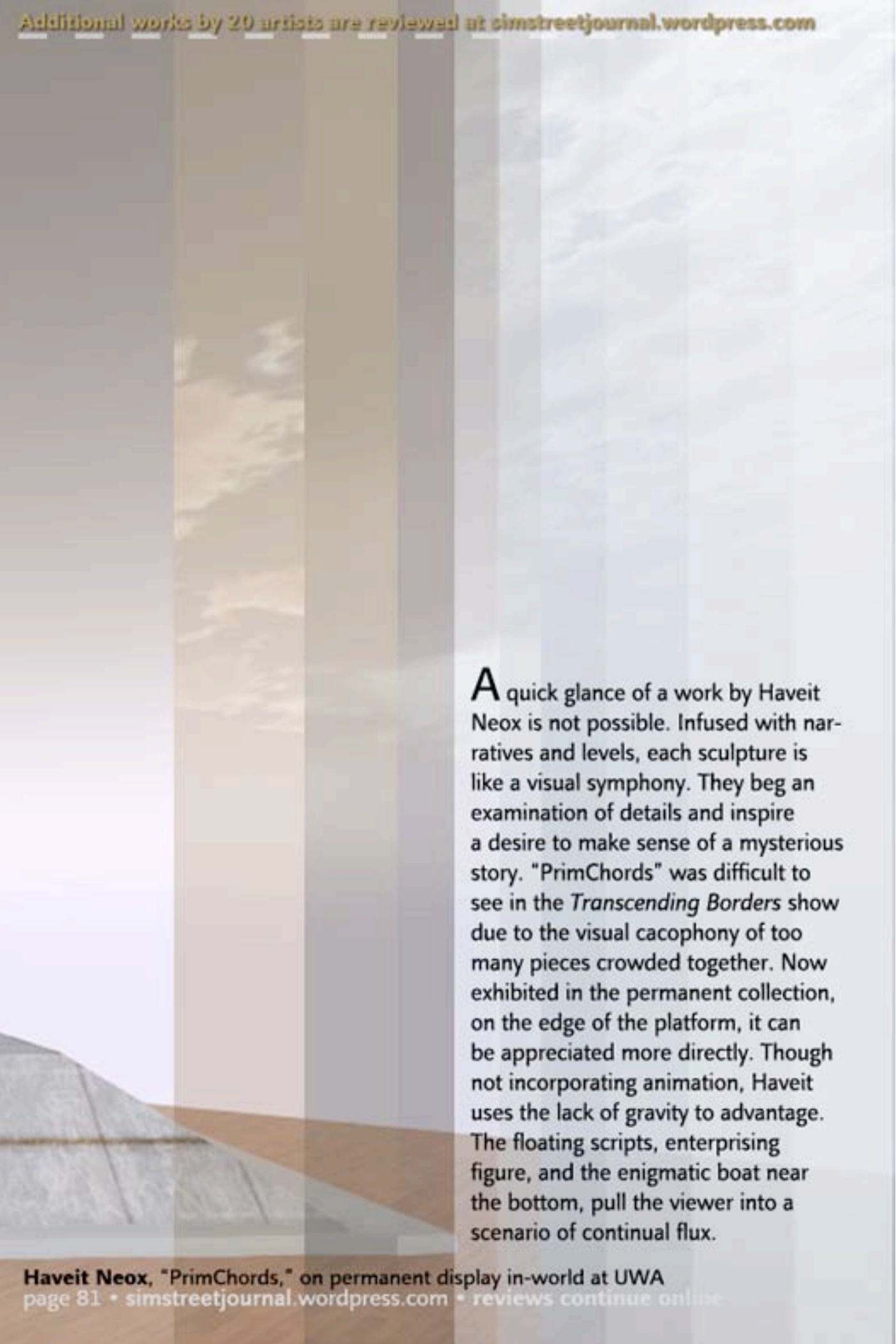
Heightened realism finds a place with Rose Borchovski's haunting characters. Both narratively and visually rich, she captures anguish — always from victims caught in tragedy caused by human aggression. To identify with the poor displaced child in "Susa 2" is to know

the despair of the helpless. Impeccably crafted, this snapshot in time is controlled by the eye, held in the child's hand. Often, Rose uses eye forms to follow viewers around her larger works, demonstrating how individualism is always under threat from the powerful.

Rose Borchovski, "Susa 2," on permanent display in-world at UWA

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A quick glance of a work by Haveit Neox is not possible. Infused with narratives and levels, each sculpture is like a visual symphony. They beg an examination of details and inspire a desire to make sense of a mysterious story. "PrimChords" was difficult to see in the *Transcending Borders* show due to the visual cacophony of too many pieces crowded together. Now exhibited in the permanent collection, on the edge of the platform, it can be appreciated more directly. Though not incorporating animation, Haveit uses the lack of gravity to advantage. The floating scripts, enterprising figure, and the enigmatic boat near the bottom, pull the viewer into a scenario of continual flux.



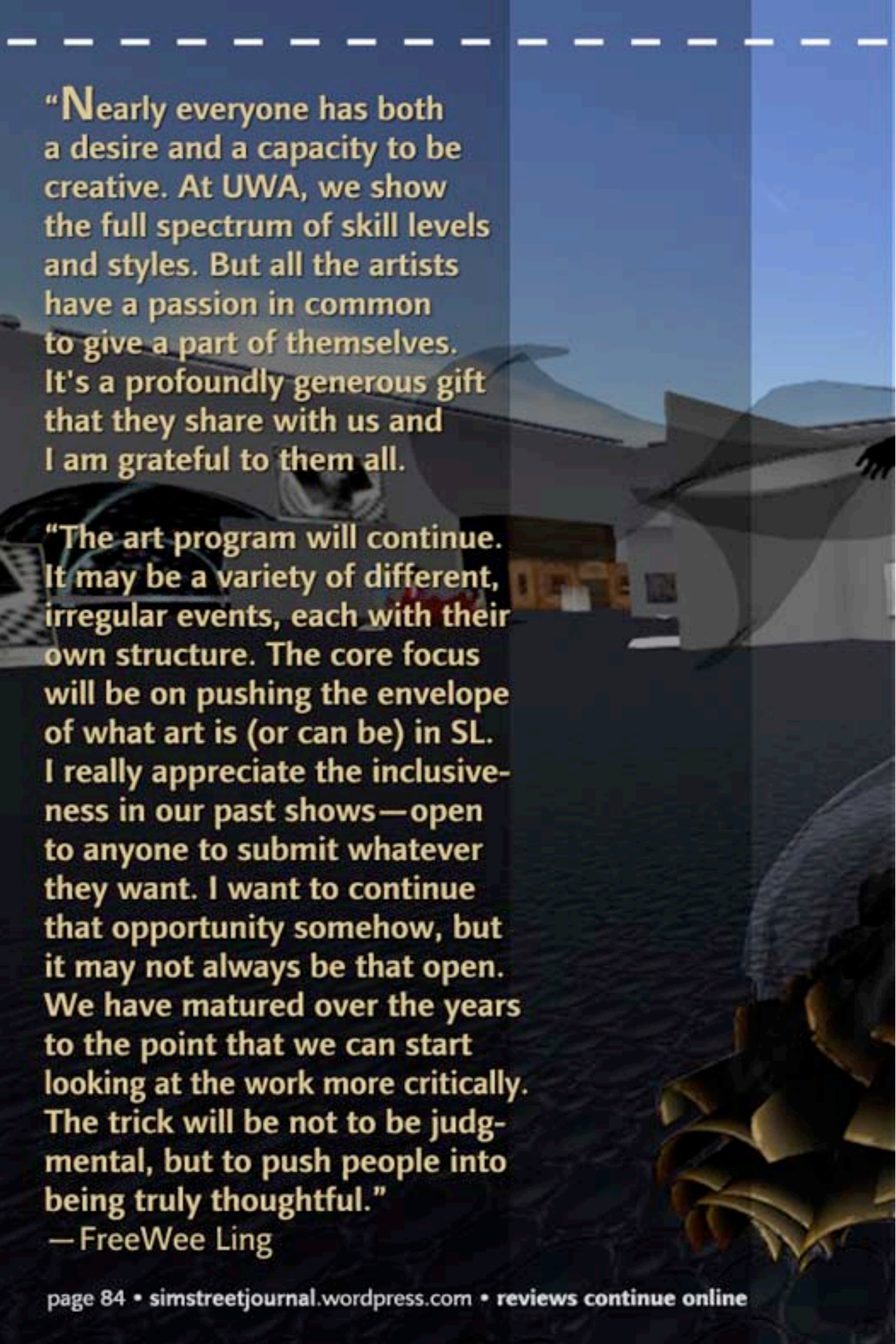
“The University of Western Australia’s challenge is to go beyond the virtual world as a 3D toy, into something with a solid foundation. The art competitions have impressive financial prizes, and are juried by a panel of in-world cultural experts, thus involving various aspects of the cultural community. Machinima breaks the real life/virtual barrier because it reaches a



broad audience without their need to log in. We are recognized as the leader of 3D virtual projects at UWA and I often give talks on SL to students. Marketers invite me to present on how perceptions in the virtual world impact upon the real. We give people an idea of the vibrancy and potential of creative applications in this new society.” —Jayjay Zifanwe

See ONLINE: **“Managing the Mosaic of UWA”**

page 83 • simstreetjournal.wordpress.com • by Jayjay Zifanwe



“Nearly everyone has both a desire and a capacity to be creative. At UWA, we show the full spectrum of skill levels and styles. But all the artists have a passion in common to give a part of themselves. It's a profoundly generous gift that they share with us and I am grateful to them all.

“The art program will continue. It may be a variety of different, irregular events, each with their own structure. The core focus will be on pushing the envelope of what art is (or can be) in SL. I really appreciate the inclusiveness in our past shows—open to anyone to submit whatever they want. I want to continue that opportunity somehow, but it may not always be that open. We have matured over the years to the point that we can start looking at the work more critically. The trick will be not to be judgmental, but to push people into being truly thoughtful.”

—FreeWee Ling



FreeWee Ling at
the *Freedom* show.

RETROSPECTIVE REVIEWS ON THESE PAGES INCLUDE:

Takni Miklos, "Windows into Other Rooms,"
from *UWA 3D Art Challenge: Reflections*, page 46

Pale Illusion, "The Void," from *UWA 3D Art
Challenge: Pursue Impossible*, page 48

Tarquin Evermore, "Belief in Myself," from
UWA 3D Art Challenge: Pursue Impossible, page 50

UA Blue, "Find the Ultimate Blue," from
UWA 3D Art Challenge: Pursue Impossible, page 51

Shenn Coleman, "Sunrise Spirit," from *UWA
3D Art Challenge: Transcending Borders*, page 52

Giorgio Nexen, "Sharing Ideas Face to Face,"
from *UWA 3D Art Challenge: Transcending Borders*,
page 54

Roc Furse, "Set Yourself Free," from *UWA
3D Art Challenge: Transcending Borders*, page 55

Barry Richez, "Freedom of Creativity," from
UWA 3D Art Challenge: The Freedom Project, page 56

Ama Avro, "Passage," from *UWA 3D Art
Challenge: The Freedom Project*, page 58

Willothewisp, "Cyberwings," from *UWA
3D Art Challenge: The Freedom Project*, page 59

Barry Richez, "Quantum," and Bethlise
Lorgsval, "Scene Reflexion," from *UWA 3D
Art Challenge: Reflections*, page 60

Fae Varriale, "The Journey — Reflections
of an SL Artist," from *UWA 3D Art Challenge:
Reflections*, page 62

Chic Aeon, "I Have Walked This Way Before,"
from *UWA 3D Art Challenge: Reflections*, page 63

Glyph Graves, "Crystalline Presence6"
and "Reactive Reed Positive,"
on permanent display in-world at UWA

Talia Sunsong, "Traveling the Universe in
Balance," from *UWA 3D Art Challenge: Triptych*,
page 64

Misprint Thursday, "Three Card Poker,"
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Krystali Rabeni, "The Artists' Studio,"
from *UWA 3D Art Challenge: Triptych*, page 67

Lucignolo, "Universe Tao Ming,"
from *UWA 3D Art Challenge: Earth*, page 68

Herbie Haven, "Earth (The Big Squeeze),"
from *UWA 3D Art Challenge: Earth*, page 70

Dragon Lord, "Please Recycle," from
UWA 3D Art Challenge: Earth, page 71

Agualgo and MellyDee Magnifica,
"Firey Flames of Passion," and
Dragon Lord, "Sanctuary of the Hart: A Soul
on Fire," from *UWA 3D Art Challenge: Fire*, page 72

Secret Rage, "Down to My Last Six Tears,"
from *UWA 3D Art Challenge: Fire*, page 74

Krystali Rabeni, "Tragedy," from
UWA 3D Art Challenge: Fire, page 75

Rebeca Bashly, "Mother," on permanent
display in-world at UWA, page 76

Lollito Larkham, "L'histoire de Petit-Gris,"
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Rose Borchovski, "Susa 2," on permanent
display in-world at UWA, page 79

Haveit Neox, "PrimChords," on permanent
display in-world at UWA, page 80

Glyph Graves, "Crystalline Presence6"
and "Reactive Reed Positive," on permanent
display in-world at UWA, page 86

RETROSPECTIVE REVIEWS ONLINE INCLUDE:

Rebecca Bashly, "Fruit of Time,"
on permanent display in-world at UWA

Cherry Manga, "Cogito ergo sum,"
on permanent display in-world at UWA

Bryn Oh, "Cerulean,"
on permanent display in-world at UWA

Sevio, "World Peace,"
from UWA 3D Art Challenge: *Pursue Impossible*

Janine Portal, "Pursue Impossible:
Leonardo DaVinci,"
from UWA 3D Art Challenge: *Pursue Impossible*

Miso Susanowa, "360 Degrees of Freedom,"
from UWA 3D Art Challenge: *Transcending Borders*

Mistero Hifeng, "I... Io,"
from UWA 3D Art Challenge: *Transcending Borders*

ParkArt Collaborative, "Park Art Gallery,"
from UWA 3D Art Challenge: *The Freedom Project*

Roc Furse, "Escape,"
from UWA 3D Art Challenge: *The Freedom Project*

Krystali Rebeni, "Silent Reflections,"
from UWA 3D Art Challenge: *Reflections*

LalexI Devin, "Ephemeral Reflection,"
from UWA 3D Art Challenge: *Reflections*

Imprint Thursday, "Echo's Reflecting Pool,"
from UWA 3D Art Challenge: *Reflections*

Dyso, "Choice,"
from UWA 3D Art Challenge: *Reflections*

Secret Rage, "Primarily,"
from UWA 3D Art Challenge: *Triptych*

Talia Sunsong, "Examining Different Aspects
of Myself," from UWA 3D Art Challenge: *Triptych*

Silent Christen, "Modern Sacrifice,"
from UWA 3D Art Challenge: *Triptych*

Nexuno Thespian, "Earth Passion,"
from UWA 3D Art Challenge: *Earth*

Brunequildalalinda Birdsong, "Madre Tierra,"
from UWA 3D Art Challenge: *Earth*

Finn Lanzius, "A Match Made in Heaven,"
from UWA 3D Art Challenge: *Fire*

FreeWee Ling exhibit design
from UWA 3D Art Challenge: *Fire*

SIM STREET JOURNAL RELATED REVIEWS:

- *Sim Street Journal* #1 page 60
reviews of works from UWA's permanent show
- *Sim Street Journal* #5 page 50
FreeWee Ling's approach to managing the competitions
- *Sim Street Journal* #8 page 66
The Freedom Project breaks new ground for less advantaged artists
- *Sim Street Journal* #13 page 66
Eleanor Medier's selections as a judge for the *Transcending Borders* show
- *Sim Street Journal* #13 online
wisdom from Jayjay Zifanwe in the development of the *Challenges*
page 87 • simstreetjournal.wordpress.com • **reviews continue online**

ART ACCESSIBLE

What can be learned from UWA? by Eleanor Medier

Without visionary leaders to recognize it, each creative development remains an island. Artists compulsively venture into unknown territory. Ideas lead them like addictions lead the indulgent. Once discovering a spark of originality, the artist is off on a life-long adventure—extended by opportunities presented from technology. So, it is inevitable that creatives will flock to the virtual world, given its freedoms and flexibilities. They were probably the first customers to install a Second Life® viewers!

When Jayjay Zifanwe of the University of Western Australia came to SL, the art community was in its infancy. He found a rich varied landscape of ideas, observed how quickly galleries were popping up, and discovered flourishing originality in this new medium. He was captivated by the immersive capabilities and interactive work with unlimited possibilities. Ignited by the developing ideas, the UWA gave support for a program as original as the work it was designed to present.

The 3D Art Challenges gave the community an accessible structure. Artists focused upon the various themes with great enthusiasm! Until this point, they

had socially congregated in small clusters, centered around work spaces and small galleries. Not only could they come together through the *Challenges*, but they could gain visibility, and even win prize money!! It was irresistible.

Now, years later, UWA leads the community, influences thousands of creative projects, and is respected as leaders! They are an example of sustained excellence. As Jayjay retires, and the large competitions become redefined by the most dedicated FreeWee Ling, a look back on the art the *Challenges* inspired is both a tribute Jayjay and FreeWee's contribution, and highlights the artists they nurtured.

Sim Street Journal does not attempt to present the art as a viewer can experience. Rather, moments of time from the last few years of exhibitions is shown in a way the viewer can *not* see—an insight, view, or detail that captures an essence of the work. Taken from *SSJ*'s archives, this collection extends, and links to, the reviews already published, yet presents ones not previous shown. It is a retrospective viewpoint of the exhibits from the few last years, and an exploration of what viewers gained.



When taking a journey down the aesthetic memory-lane, what can be learned by the legacy UWA provides? How have they set the stage for further inspiration and projects? From a critical viewpoint, one of observing and supporting, the ingredients for their excellence seem to include:

1. Artists must self-select. An announcement for the next exhibit reaches everyone through notices in-world and online. The deadline of a few months gives creators a reasonable amount of time to pro-

duce. As they develop pieces to fit the theme, they put their best work forward. Then, entry of one or two pieces per artist is open to anyone. Each artist chooses what to enter, resulting in a fair diversity.

from permanent display in-world on ground level at UWA

page 89 • simstreetjournal.wordpress.com • by Eleanor Medier

2. Jury is democratic and qualified.

The organizers keep their eyes open for others who present and critique art, whos' qualifications will blend with other viewpoints. Following clear jury instructions, each chooses ten favorites in both the 3D segment and for the Machinima entries. (Viewers can also vote in additional award categories.) The winners are the competitors with the most points.

3. Promotion has momentum.

From their *Call for Entries* to the exhibition events to active groups and to social media, UWA inspires participation. Notices, informational notecards, collaborations with journalists, and excellent documentation, they utilize all the channels.

4. Volunteers are appreciated. The organizers, as well as many talented contributors, have set a momentum that attracts more participators. Fund-raising for the prizes, the non-paid team are aware of how important the infrastructure is to supporting the arts. Most creators in SL struggle to pay rent and upload fees. But the prizes for the competitions give them motivation to thrive. Artists have the motivation to initiate new ideas. But to keep them going and to build on them takes more than desire. In a "non-commercialized" environment, UWA combines money and art in a way that complements the altruists's sensibilities.

5. Platform integrity defined.

The *UWA Challenges* profile 3D and multi-media creations. These works can only exist digitally and use the virtual characteristics in their concepts. This is not a place to see art that was created in real life and uploaded into SL for presentation. Rather, to consider them, even when shown in these pages, is to imagine being *within* them. Thus, the *Challenges* propelled more artists to *think* in new ways.

6. **Organized to respond.**

Whenever communicating with JayJay or FreeWee, their dedicated attention is evident by how quickly they respond and how they participate in the community.

7. **They make art accessible to a new audience.** The virtual community is the first truly international meeting of individual artists and art lovers.

As this is a glowing list of accomplishments, there are also things to learn by what could be done better. (Even the virtual has limitations!) The biggest criticism is due to constraints of space. Unfortunately, exhibiting fairly means that the show floors are crowded, and some pieces become hard to see. When FreeWee can use the theme in the presentation, like the *Fire* show, the viewing experience is enhanced to another immersive level.

The strongest show for creative entries was *Reflections*. These works were the hardest to jury! What was it about this theme that ignited such output? Maybe it is the very nature of the virtual world to be a reflection of the real, the fascination of a life in parallel. SL holds up a mirror

to ideas — pushing the innovator to consider what is possible and where.

It is fitting that *Pursue Impossible* is the last *3D Challenge*. Carmsie Melodie's piece on inventors also represents the artistic process. The large central figure is the artist in the real world that has to balance practicality with potential. Then there are the small figures that experiment, risk, fail, and succeed — like avatars who are not limited by gravity, materials, money, geography, or even connections.

The virtual art community has received a boost from UWA — where art is like the diving board into the pool of enrichment. Here, viewers can see the best of the best in what virtual artists produce. No where is the variety greater or the quality higher. Galleries may show more of each artists' vision, the Linden Endowment for the Arts will continue as the premier provider of immersive opportunity through their full-sim awards. But the *3D Challenges* are the most vibrantly involving, due to representing the community, making art accessible, and inspiring innovation.

on permanent display in-world at UWA

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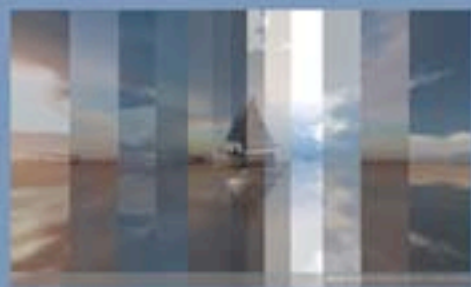
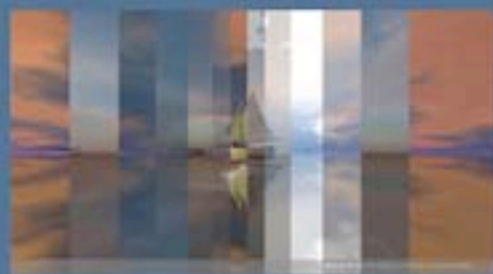
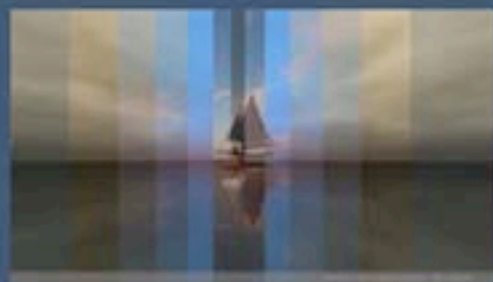


Exhibit of kinetic collages



by Eleanor Medier



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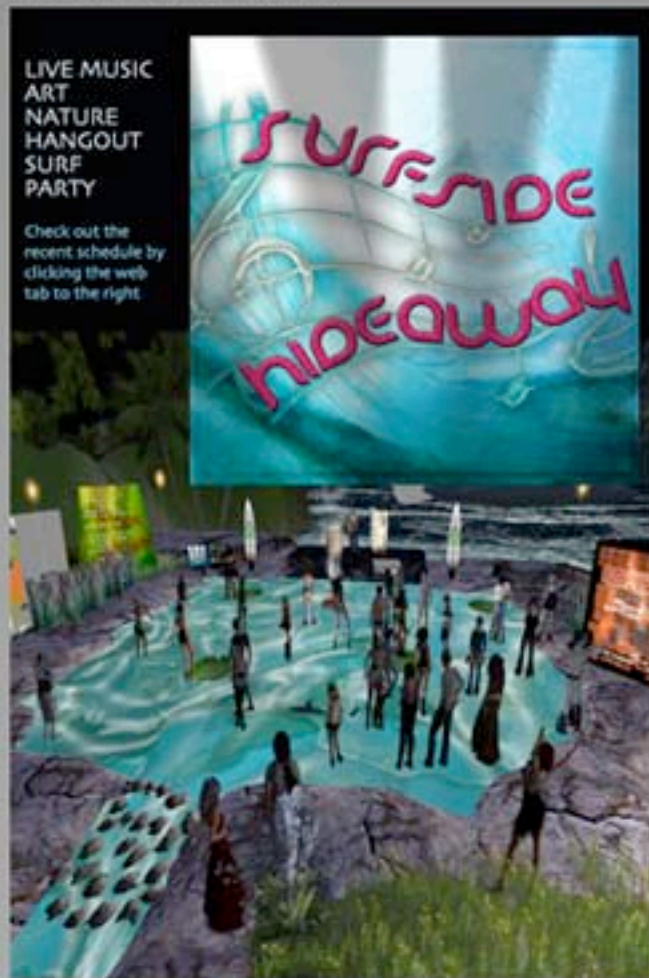


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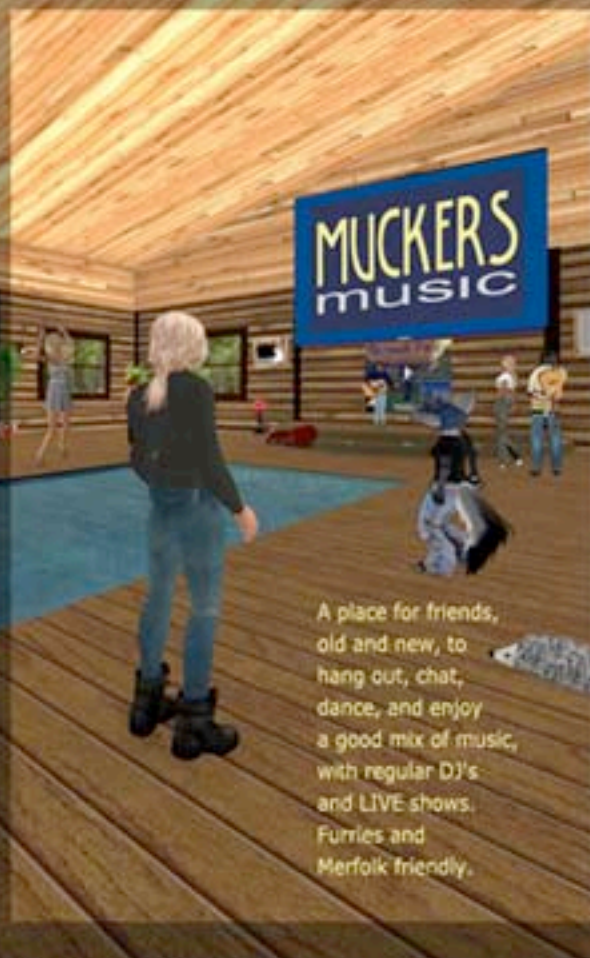
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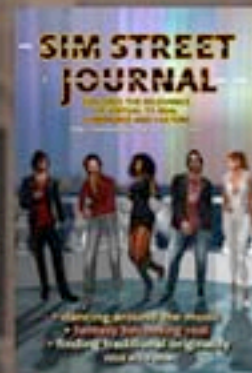
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FIND BALANCE

Readers of *Sim Street Journal* are fascinated by the virtual world culture and how it relates to the real one. They are serious about both their second and their first lives, and how each is enhanced. Authors, and those profiled in the journal, speak from the heart. They share, from experience, how they integrate their two worlds.

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Locations of photos: Business Park, Cica Ghost's "Rust", and Second Life's 10th Anniversary Celebration Island.

Virtual World Warning Label

As a world vision expands, so do the experiences of euphoria and tragedy. Though the virtual world is, hopefully, a refuge from a harsh real one, it really isn't. Amidst a current of idealism, as avatars can build dream houses and fulfill fantasies, there lurks a dark side. Everyone wishes for a kinder, gentler world. But, sadly, human nature is human nature. The criminal element is real. Social and virtual media are tools for illegal activity as well as legal. Generally, threats in the real world are visible. But in the virtual one, threats are invisible.

Defensive behavior is necessary and needs new defense skills. Avatar anonymity is a myth. Any talented criminal can find out an avatar's real identity. There are hackers, stalkers, and scammers. Each use different tactics and gains in new ways to cause mischief.

Avatar Awareness: Be Cyber Streetwise

Think of a virtual world as if a big city. Everyone knows there are pickpockets and worse out there, so people must be conscientious about where they go and who they trust. The same has to be true in the cyber world with some additions. This advice may not protect from all trouble, but these are policies that can cut down on it:

1. *Choose to visit high-traffic public areas wisely.* Often in the busiest locations, the unsavory hang out. Many are just curious people, but the criminal element needs prey, and high traffic spots offers good targets.
2. *Read Profiles.* Older avatars are generally the most reliable, with honor in age/status. However, some are particularly skilled at gobbling up time and resources of newcomers.



3. *Recognize seductions.* It is easy to get pulled into various communities or activities, so make choices carefully. Role play, games, shopping, etc. are great if real life permits the time to participate. But those with demanding real lives need to limit in-world responsibilities.

4. *Verify partner identities.* Any close relationship needs transparency between participants. To do business, to own property together, or to make any kind of time or talent commitment, set up a foundation of communication. It is a red flag when a partner will not reveal real contact information.

People can be streetwise in real life, and yet not be cyberwise. Hopefully, everyone wishes for a better world. And, in most ways Second Life® is a better world. There are freedoms, opportunities, and experiences not possible to have in the real one. Virtual worlds will continue to grow in prevalence because the technology is so useful. The awareness of victim-avoidance must grow too.