

Cygra 4

Cybernetic Graphics and Animation Group
Groupe de Graphisme Cybernetique et d'Animation
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CYGRA 4 was not born out of a decree of the University of Montreal but rather by the will of a group of individuals who shared dreams and synergized them into reality and videotapes at the occasion of the Free Video Festival at McGill in March 1971.

Later on the group received official recognition from the University as a service, the mission of which is to develop educational videos and filmloops for the academic community. The video and cinema facilities are provided by the Audio-Visual Department of the U. de M., the computer facilities by the Centre de Calcul.

CYGRA 4 is currently designing new graphic softwares and working in close collaboration with a technology-oriented artist. This latter experience is quite stimulating and rewarding for both parts. Moreover, we believe that, as Marshall McLuhan writes in his forthcoming book "The executive as drop-out", "every artist makes breakthroughs as soon as he meets a difficulty."

The tape we produced for the Free Video Festival was a 7 minutes one with two sequences "Ove" and "Stars" which consist in computer animation of intricate and always changing geometric patterns. At one moment a star that seems to be two-dimensional begins to turn in space and reveals itself to be a three-dimensional volume with ever evolving curves. It is just possible to describe in words but it's really a trip...

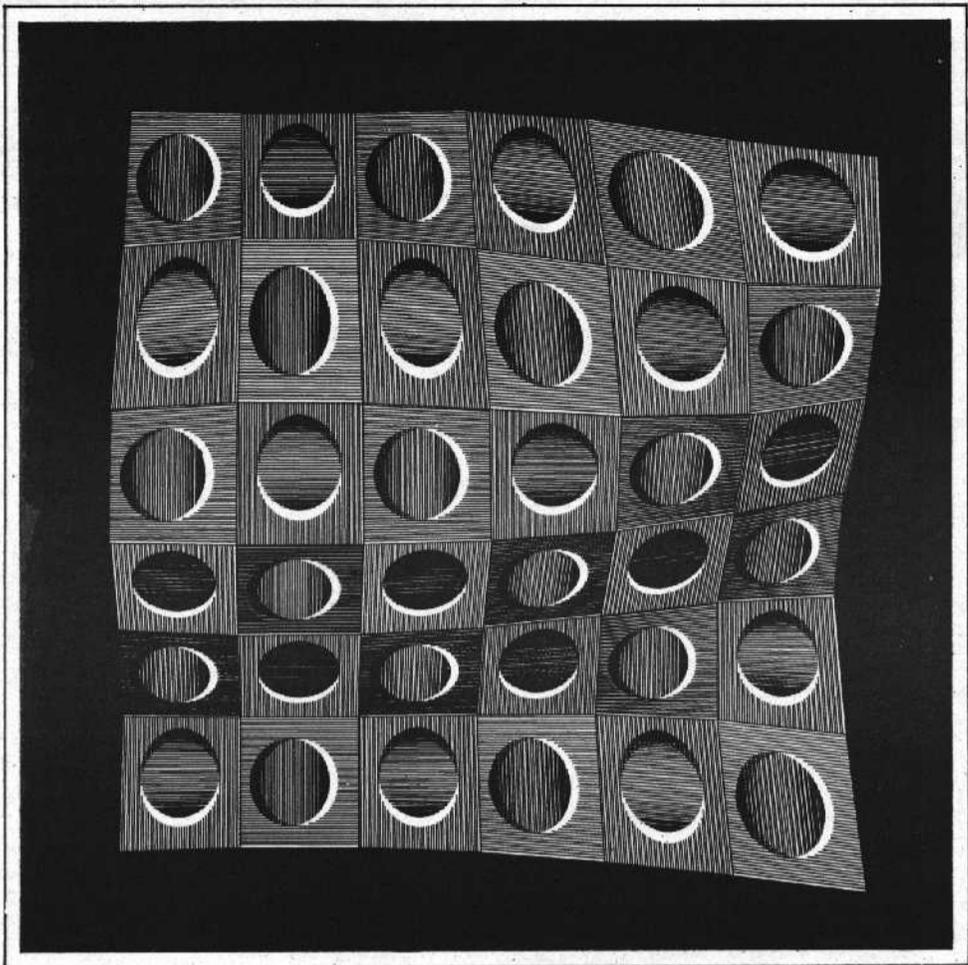
It took approximately 20 hours of work (starting from the brain cells and ending in the videorecorder) to prepare the computer animated tape shown at McGill. As for video-animation (opposed to film) we cannot work frame by frame, what we do is prepare the various basic pictures of the program on the screen of the computer and determine their order of appearance. Then the computer is programmed to bridge the gaps and calculate the intermediary pictures according to the number of steps that we assign for each basic picture to evolve into the next one. The cards are punched and as soon as everything is debugged, a computer tape is prepared by the machine. Now, if we would feed directly the bits from this tape to the digigraphic screen of the CDC 1700, the lapse between two consecutive frames would be far too important to give an animation effect in video. Therefore we have to firstly transfer the information into a disc memory which in turn will feed it in real time to the computer screen in front of which stands an ordinary Sony camera and a VTR. We have to use a one-inch tape as a montage will have to be made because the memory of our disc does not allow us to shoot more than two minutes in a go.

On our "free" (artistic oriented) videos, we have music which is also made by computer through our friend Denis Lorrain of the Informatique-Musique Group. For the future we seek a cybernetic means of translating the computer tape that generates our images into another digital tape that could be decoded into analogical music that would exactly fit the movement of the images.

We plan to use video both for itself and as a means of having a first draft in case of a projected computer film. After seeing the video, we can correct

movement in an animation sequence and decide for instance that we need some more intermediary frame in a certain part of the program.

Just one more thing: we have a lot of fun with the computer (la babasse) and plan to have more in the future.



Computer Graphic: Cygra 4

X-TV

CANADIAN PACIFIC • CANADIEN NATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS CANADIEN PACIFIQUE • CANADIEN NATIONAL	<p>CPCN TFL MTL TF RS STJEROME</p> <p>CPT FBA536 CN DOB830 NL CNT FD EDMONTON ALTA 3 PASKAL FONE 2242441</p> <p>BOX 151 SHAWBRIDGE QUE DOING AGITPROP TAPES ANTI WAR ACTION RADICAL LECTURES ALSO ALTERNATIVES INFORMATION EXCHANGE TAPES LOCAL YIPPIE FESTIVAL ALTERNATE CULTURE BUS TOUR TO RURAL ALBERTA WEEKLY SHOWINGS LOCAL COFFEE HOUSE. VIDEO EVENTS SOFT TV SET INVOLVING SEVERAL TELEBEAMS HELIUM LARGE INFLATABLE. MEDIA OVERLOAD TWENTY CAMERAS AND FRAGMENTED PSYCHE. DAY IN THE LIFE OVER EXPOSURE ON 48 MONITORS. SECTION OF ALBERTA SUPPLEMENT TO NFB BC ALMANAC. INVOLVED IN GETTING COMMUNITY CABLE CHANNEL. SCROUNGING EQUIPMENT FROM UNIVERSITY, GOVERNMENT, SONY IRREGULAR ACCESS TO EVERYTHING FROM HALF INCH TO TWO INCH QUAD NO MONEY. ELECTRIC LETTER ALREADY SENT TO RADICAL SOFTWARE TAPES ON VIET NAM ACTION CHARTRAND LEVESQUE IN EDMONTON AVAILABLE SOON</p> <p>X-TV 9740 87 AVENUE EDMONTON.</p>	LOCAL TIME HEURE LOCALE
CANADIAN PACIFIC • CANADIEN NATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS CANADIEN PACIFIQUE • CANADIEN NATIONAL	<p>CFM AGITPROP48 X-TV 9740 87 JUNE R 4/71 915AM EDT S1 CPCN TEL MTL TF RS STJEROME</p>	LOCAL TIME HEURE LOCALE

Youth Media Project

9 people in Vancouver with a grant from the Federal Government's Opportunity for Youth Programme. 1 Portapak, use of editing facilities and 1" step up equipment on loan from the Metro Media Council of Vancouver.

Dave Johnson

Loyola

We are video-oriented teachers at Loyola's psychology department who are mainly screwing around with recently acquired video equipment.

We have a Sony AV 3600 with camera and monitors and that's it. We are right now working on a technical tool—the macro lens. If you take telephoto

lenses for 35mm cameras and adapt them to C-mount video cameras, you get a doubling of focal length (roughly) in effect, due to the tiny vidicon surface. Add extension tubes and you have true macro capability which is even more enhanced when you play-back tapes on large monitors or projection systems.

Using this one tool we are now producing a tape of 1/2 hour length with, say, five minute segments of six things to do with the macro idea. We would love to swap tapes with other people, but we have to first make contact with somebody who has another deck for dubbing.

Jim Katz & Michael Climan