

Autobiographical Artist Statement

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Artist Statement:

I consider myself a fringe transmedia conceptual artist and have experimented with all kinds of forms: moviemaking, music, performance, writing, drawing, painting, sculpture, game design. I also believe that one can think of one's life as a work of art. In *A Man Without a Country* Kurt Vonnegut wrote:

Go into the arts. I'm not kidding. The arts are not a way to make a living. They are a very human way of making life more bearable. Practicing an art, no matter how well or badly, is a way to make your soul grow, for heaven's sake. Sing in the shower. Dance to the radio. Tell stories. Write a poem to a friend, even a lousy poem. Do it as well as you possibly can. You will get an enormous reward. You will have created something.

I accept the notion that we can think of art as a spiritual practice and I have practiced my art since I can remember. Part of my practice has always been encouraging others to get involved in the joy of creativity.

School of the Art Institute of Chicago

After receiving my Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC) in 1981, I chose not to pursue a master's degree. My choice not to continue my formal education in the arts arose from the idea that life would act as my art teacher and it would mentor me to my mastering of my art practice. SAIC hired me anyway (without an advanced degree) and I began to teach there as an instructional technician and adjunct professor in their video art department known at that time as the Video Area. The SAIC Video Area in the 1980s was a unique place. Founded by artist Philip Lee Morton, it provided students with two relatively new and very exciting media for artistic exploration: video synthesis and digital computers.

The Sandin Analogue Image Processor (initially designed 1971 to 1973 by Professor Daniel J. Sandin at the University of Illinois) is a video synthesizer that allowed artists to experiment with video techniques that were not generally available to art schools because of the high cost of television equipment at that time. The Image Processor is a very interesting device from a conceptual art point of view. It was a relatively low cost device which artists could build themselves and then use to make video art and program performances. I liken it to a video iteration of Buckminster Fuller's design science. The equivalent of many high cost tools of the television industry were now in the hands of artists.

The original version of GRASS was developed by Thomas A. DeFanti for his 1973 Ohio State University Ph.D. thesis. GRASS (GRAphics Symbiosis System) was a programming language created to script 2D vector graphics animations. It quickly became a hit with the Chicago artistic community who wanted to experiment with the new medium of computer graphics. A later version that was adapted to support raster graphics was known as ZGrass. The last version of GRASS was RT/1 (Real Time 1), an iteration of GRASS that separated the language from the display model and allowed it to be ported to other platforms. Versions existed for DOS, Windows, SGI using OpenGL, HP-UX, AIX, Macintosh, Amiga.

Chicago's home grown video art movement was based around the Sandin Image Processor (IP) and DeFanti's digital computer innovations. I became intimately involved with these technologies because one of my tasks as an employee of the SAIC Video Area was to maintain and upgrade the equipment. Our students and I made many works of experimental video art during those years.

I began working on collage video art mixed with image processing. I made works based on a theory I named "Video I Ching" (since shortened to V-Ching) where I would record material from TV and collect sequences from movies and TV distributed on VHS tapes. I would run these collected sequences through a technical process whereby the scenes would mix together randomly. I would then edit a "narrative" from what I found the most interesting and intriguing composites. I made many experimental works based on this aesthetic method. **History of the Moon** and **Electromagnetic Fields Forever** represent two examples. V-Ching still informs my art making.

Another project I worked on quite a bit during my time at SAIC was a role-playing game based on Dr. Timothy Leary's theories on the past and future evolution of the human nervous system. Leary approved of this project. With the working titles of **Black Wholes and Blobs** and **Destiny**, I was unfortunately not able to bring the game to complete fruition. I'd like to find time to finally finish this project.

Rising Star

After leaving SAIC in the mid-1990s I took up with a Chicago company called Rising Star, a creative computer technology reseller. Some of the people at Rising Star would become creative collaborators. They included John Steven Keith, Barbara Ann Perry, John S. Banks, Jesse Keeler, Steve Perry. It was also at Rising Star I met my art-life partner Trish Happel. Under the guise of our company Cyberscope Wizards, my wife Trish and I would create what I like to call stealth enlightenment programming. I signed up as a producer at the Chicago Access Network and we created the experimental television series **Abductions with the Alter Boy**. This CAN TV program has been featured in the documentary film *Access Nation*. The series is now available at Vimeo On Demand and Amazon. After Rising Star I continued my experimental video and audio art and worked as a freelance cinematographer, video editor, motion design artist, sound designer.

Cybernalialia

We're currently working on more video art and experimental TV, movie, music projects. In addition, every spring the Cyberscope Wizards host a celebration of art, electricity, chaos. We unleash our primal spirits, videotaping our performances and the transformative recycling of outmoded technology into high-voltage excitement. We call it Cybernalialia.

Organizations:

1994 - present

Cyberscope Wizards, Chicago. Founder. This organization serves as a think tank and support resource for artists working in the emerging digital media. We exist to encourage the creative combination of computer affected disciplines including art, publishing, musical composition, cinematography. See our videos at https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLva_BUBOGL647bGgAcTJ1mLgzo6JWCLv4 .

Circa 2000 - present

Cybernalialia, Chicago. Annual artists' holiday. Cofounding member, video archivist. See our videos at https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLva_BUBOGL67hdt3dGIXJ34UEaHmSkVjs .

Circa 2004 - present

Cyborg Club, Chicago. Founder.

Early - late 1980s

Leonardo da Video, Chicago. Leonardo da Video delivered ambient video to dance clubs around Chicago. See our videos at https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLva_BUBOGL66w4QQb5XygNn_w1JuEz7s6 .

Circa 1977 - present

Bohacz & Frenz, Chicagoland band. Founding member. Hear our audio at <https://on.soundcloud.com/NcejACKQUXq4InxCLA> .

Circa 1966 - present
Skull Club, Chicago. Founder.

Education:

Dec. 31, 1981
School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Bachelor of Fine Arts, Multimedia.

May 1978
Morton College, Cicero, IL. Associate of Arts, Fine Art.

Arts Activities - Achievements:

Oct. 28, 2025

- My video ***The Machines Possessed Me (Abstract v2) Part 1*** had its premiere and won an Award of Recognition in the Experimental category, IndieFEST Film Awards, La Jolla, CA.
- My music video ***Arise Robot Minds (v1.3)*** won an Award of Recognition in the Music Video category, IndieFEST Film Awards, La Jolla, CA.
- My TV series episode ***Abductions with the Alter Boy: Brain Taco Module 1.2*** won an Award of Recognition in the Experimental category, IndieFEST Film Awards, La Jolla, CA.

Jul. 3, 2025

War Pigs: Evil vs. Righteousness (v3), music video.

Dec. 14, 2024

My song ***Clyde Meets the Aliens*** won Best Psychedelic Song in the 2024 Psychedelic Film and Music Festival, New York, NY.

Nov. 20, 2024

Our songs ***Rise Robot Minds***, ***TV Madness***, ***Jewelled Indifference***, ***Clyde Meets the Aliens*** were official selections for the 2024 Psychedelic Film and Music Festival, New York, NY.

Oct. 11, 2024

My music video ***Arise Robot Minds (v1.2)*** received an honorable mention in the 2024 Be Epic London International Film Festival (BELIFF), England.

July 17, 2023

- My video ***The Machines Possessed Me (Abstract v1.5)*** won the Best U.S. Experimental Short award in the 2023 Austin International Art Festival, TX.
- My music video ***Arise Robot Minds (v1.2)*** came in as a semifinalist in the 2023 Austin International Art Festival, TX.
- My TV series episode ***Abductions with the Alter Boy: Robot Taboo Module 3*** came in as a semifinalist in the 2023 Austin International Art Festival, TX.

Nov. 29, 2022

My music video ***Arise Robot Minds (v1.2)*** won Awards of Recognition in the November 2022 Accolade Global Film Competition, La Jolla, CA, Music Video and Remixes / Mashups and Concept categories.

2022 - 2023

- My video ***The Machines Possessed Me (Abstract Version)*** came in as a semifinalist in the May 20, 2022 San Francisco Arthouse Short Festival, CA, Best Experimental Short category. It was also an official selection in the November 29, 2022 Accolade Global Film Competition, La Jolla, CA, Experimental category. In addition, it came in as a semifinalist in the December 20, 2022 Paris International Short Festival, France, for Best Experimental Short. It also came in as a semifinalist in the January 13, 2023 Berlin Shorts Award, Germany, for Best Experimental Short and as a semifinalist in the January 20, 2023 Palermo International Film Festival, Italy, for Experimental Short.
- My music video ***Arise Robot Minds (v1.2)*** was an official selection for the November 19, 2022 Psychedelic Film and Music Festival, New York, NY, Best Sci-Fi/Horror Psychedelic / Transpersonal

Short. In addition, it came in as a semifinalist in the December 20, 2022 Paris International Short Festival, France, for Best Music Video. It also came in as a semifinalist in the January 13, 2023 Berlin Shorts Award, Germany, for Best Music Video and as a semifinalist in the January 20, 2023 Palermo International Film Festival, Italy, for Music Video. It ran in the March 3, 2023 MidWest WeirdFest, Eau Claire, WI.

Nov. 21, 2021

Shatner Trooper (Studio Music) (Sketch v1.2) and **Shatner Trooper (Concert Music) (Sketch v1.2)**, music videos.

2020

- **Korrupt Killer Kop**, video.
- **Let Me Introduce Myself**, video.

2017

Abductions with the Alter Boy: Giovanni Module 4: The Clear Law, video. 3D version of this sequence from the show.

Oct. 1, 2016

Beverly Art Walk, 10934 South Western Avenue, Chicago: **Live Video Feedback**. I had a return performance of live video feedback.

June 24, 2016

- **Colorless Contrasts**, edit of video feedback created at *The Mullet Show*.
- *The Mullet Show*, 10934 South Western Avenue, Chicago: **Live Video Feedback**. I performed a live video feedback demonstration. I also showed our **Cybernaïla Retrospective** video.

Oct. 13, 2013

The Secret Book of the Skull Club Volume 1: Illustrated Writings of Terror-Children, paperback book published.

Sep. 10, 2011

A Recollection of 9/11, video.

2011 - present

Cyborg Gospel, written work in progress.

2010

Psychedelic Frankenstein, song and movie trailer video.

2008

- **The Skull Club: Halloween 08 with Big Chrome Bone and Flamin Bonin**, video.
- **The Skull Club: Halloween Greeting**, video.

2006

- **The Skull Club: A Visitation from Bonyard Dogbait**, video.
- **The Skull Club: Night of the Grateful Living Dead**, DVD.
- **The Skull Club: Tetra-Headron**, video.
- **The Skull Club: Living Dead Girl**, music video.
- **The Skull Club: Skeleton Dance**, video.

Feb. 1, 2006

Nada & Gojira, video.

May 2005

Arc Gallery, Chicago: **Cyberscope Wizards Now**.

The Cyberscope Wizards Mike Bohacz and Trish Happel presented their latest work in video. Their works ranged from abstract videos to the political **How to Love Your Enemy**, a video protest against the U.S. military's use of torture.

- **How to Love Your Enemy**
- **Abstract Anarchy**
- **Savage Shuffle**
- **Strange Attractors**
- **Alter Boy Visits the Underworld**
- **Sample Text 2.1**
- **Vivisecting Immediate Past**

Dec. 13, 2004

The Improv Kitchen, Chicago: **Video Art Night**.

The Cyberscope Wizards Mike Bohacz and Trish Happel presented their latest work in video. Their works ranged from abstract videos to an excerpt from the experimental TV show **Abductions with the Alter Boy**. DVD available.

- **Sample Text 2.1**
- **Savage Shuffle**
- **Strange Attractors**
- **Alter Boy Visits the Underworld**
- **Abstract Anarchy**
- **Cybernalialia**

2004 - present

Bohacz's Chronicles of Attachments, audio series.

2004

The Meaning of Cybernalialia, written.

2003 - 2011

Robots and Reptiles Theater, experimental TV series.

2002

Abductions with the Alter Boy, music CD from the TV series.

2001 - present

Cybernalialia, Chicago: I document and act as video archivist for this annual artists' holiday. Here's a list of videos made for or about Cybernalialia:

- 2025 - **Cybernalialia 2025**
- 2024 - **Cicada Brood Invasion**
- 2023 - **Cold War 2.0, the Sequel!**
- 2022 - **Diseased Video**
- 2021 - **Cicada Zoom Get-together**
- 2018 - **Quick Edit for AI's Cookout**
- 2017 - **T-RUMP: the Anus of the Body Politic, Commie Video**
- 2016 - **Cybernalialia Retrospective**
- 2015 - **Annematic & Moniker Prime at Cybernalialia 2015** and **Positively Lysergic (Dance Version)**
- 2014 - **Cycloptopus Rising**
- 2013 - **Positively Lysergic**
- 2012 - **Cybernalialia 2012** and **Zombies Mashup**
- 2011 - **Frankenstein Mashup**
- 2010 - **The Chair of Brain Transformation, Cybernalialia Celebrations, Brain at the Center of Your Mind, Labs & Friends**
- 2009 - **Dick Cheney Final Smackdown**
- 2008 - **Selected Raw Footage** and **Elements of Tarot**
- 2007 - **Vivisecting Immediate Past, Cybernalialia 7** and **Halloween Luminance**
- 2006 - **Cybernalialia Smash Hits** (DVD)
- 2005 - **Cybernalialia Ambience**

- 2004 - ***The 2004 Cybernalia Rites***

2001

2001: Our Time Odyssey, audio CD.

2000 - 2022

Abductions with the Alter Boy, experimental TV series originally produced at Chicago Access Network Television.

1997 - 1998

- Performed in Kathleen O'Shea's *Petting Zoo* at Randolph Street Gallery's Halloween celebration, Chicago.
- Performed in Kathleen O'Shea's *Intoxicated Band* at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago's Gallery 2.
- Performed in Kathleen O'Shea and MARTIAN's *Date Rape* at Poop Studio, Chicago. Also collaborated with Kathleen and Trish Happel on video art made with the Sandin Image Processor for the same piece.

1996

Mike's Brain, interactive self promotional.

Oct. 1994

The Doctor Has Tuned In, a conversation simulation. This interactive digitally simulated conversation with Dr. Timothy Leary took place at the *Light and Time* show at Chicago Filmmakers.

Sept. 1993

Amazing Gaze, video. Shown at the *Ambiguous Needs of the Flesh* show at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago's Gallery 2.

1991 - present

Cybernetic Aesthetics, written work in progress.

1991

- ***Cybernetic Aesthetics Manifesto***, written.
- ***Mostly Acoustic***, music recordings.

1988 - 1997

- The first finished version of my video ***Electromagnetic Fields Forever*** premiered at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago's Video Area on May 11, 1995. Thanks so much to Mira Gelley for curating my one-man show. A newer version ran at Chicago's Poop Studio in June 1997.
- Unfinished preview Chicago showings of ***Electromagnetic Fields Forever*** included Zebra Crossing Theatre (Nov. 1994), *Light and Time* show at Chicago Filmmakers (Oct. 1994), Chicago Access Network *Double Dog TV* (1993), *Revelations: Artists Look at Religions* show at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago's Gallery 2 (1991), *Strange Video* show at N.A.M.E. Gallery (Oct. 1988).

1986

History of the Moon, video made with the Sandin Image Processor, the Fairlight Computer Video Instrument, plus other visual effects devices and methods.

Mid - late 1980s

Videos made with the Sandin Image Processor, the Fairlight Computer Video Instrument, plus other visual effects devices and methods.

- ***Artificial Imagination***
- ***True Ambience***
- ***SAIC Video Area Impromptu Tour***
- ***GOD***
- ***Mom, Buddy, Mike and Others***
- ***Mystic-Twister***, music recordings.

1985

Videos made with the Sandin Image Processor, the ZGRASS programming language on the Datamax UV-1 computer, the Fairlight Computer Video Instrument, plus other visual effects devices and methods:

- **Video Portrait of Char and Mike**
- **Fairlight II**
- **First Fairlight**

1984

Videos made with the Sandin Image Processor:

- **Experimental Mini-Portrait of Charlene**, video made with the Sandin Image Processor, the ZGRASS programming language on the Datamax UV-1 computer, plus other visual effects devices and methods.
- **Bach and the Bombs**, video made with other visual effects devices and methods.
- **Strawberry Fields**
- **Now Then, Therefore.**
- Steve Goldsmith featured Leonardo da Video's Sandin Image Processor videos on an episode of his *Visions* TV series produced at Chicago Access Network Television.
- **Liquid Time #3**
- **Liquid Time #2**

1982

- **Trans-Mission**, video made with the Sandin Image Processor.
- **Liquid Time #1**, video made with the Sandin Image Processor.
- **Lost Loft**, video.

1981

Gen Locked Skull, video made with the Sandin Image Processor.

Early - mid 1980s

- **Gene Poole and the Chromosomes**, music recordings.
- **Tripping at Faith Chapel**, music recordings.

1980

- **What is the Question for Which Life is the Answer?**, video.
- **Ralph and the Mystic Bone**, video.
- **He's a Legend of His Own Media Mind**, video.
- **I Am Attempting To Raise Your Intelligence**, video.

1979

Pain of Selfhood, painting.

1978

- **The Wizard**, 8mm film.
- **Dimensions**, painting.
- **Meditation**, painting.
- **Mike and Trish with Sperm Whale**, painting.
- **C'est La Vie**, painting.
- **Extraterrestrial**, painting.
- **Parable of the Sower**, painting.

1977

Figure-Ground of Being, linoleum print.

1976

Sega Noea, 20 minute animated Super 8 film.

1974

Miller the Important, 8mm film.

1972 - 1973

- **Z-axis Experiment**, painting.
- **The Day of the Lord**, painting.
- **Me, Myself and Eye**, painting.
- **Dualism**, image concept.

1970 - 1972

The Adventures of Mr. Cookie, comics series.

Circa 1967 - 1971

Nick the Cliff Dweller, comics series.

Circa 1966

The Secret Book of the Skull Club, illustrated writings.

Late 1960s - circa 1978

Early Bohacz Music, music compositions and recordings.

Circa 1963 - present

Experimental Improvisational Bohacz Audio, audio recordings.

Circa 1963 - mid 1980s

Improvised comical audio recordings.