

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 — at the time, frankly, the prospect of all that academic writing held no appeal for me. Looking back across the decades since, I came to see the choice differently: life acted as my art teacher and mentored me toward the 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 faculty, students, and I made many works of experimental video art during those years.

I began working with video art mixed with image processing, including an early portrait piece, Video Portrait of Char and Mike (1985).

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 my years at SAIC 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 available free on YouTube and on DVD at 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.

Cybernalìa

The Cyberscope Wizards continue producing video art and experimental TV, movie, and 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 Cybernalìa.

Teaching

Alongside my studio practice, I teach video and motion design at three Chicago institutions. This fall I'm teaching Digital Media Toolkit and two sections of Motion Graphics I at Columbia College Chicago, where I have also previously taught Motion Graphics II. I teach Digital Video I and Digital Video II at Harold Washington College / City Colleges of Chicago, and I teach editing at Chicago Filmmakers. My public instructional series Post-production Instruction with Professor Bo supports my students in learning Adobe Premiere Pro and After Effects. My pedagogy is grounded in my own practice: Cybernetic Aesthetics, V-Ching, video feedback, and AI-assisted work with disclosure.

Organizations:

Circa 1965 - present

Skull Club, Chicago. Founder.

Circa 1977 - present

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

Early - late 1980s

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

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 .

2001 - present

Cybernalina, Chicago. Annual artists' holiday. Member of the founding group, providing spiritual inspiration and acting as video archivist. See our videos at https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLva_BUBOGL67hdt3dGIXJ34UEaHmSkVjs .

2008 - present

Cyborg Club, Chicago. Founder.

Education:

Dec. 31, 1981

School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Bachelor of Fine Arts.

May 1978

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

Arts Activities - Achievements:

Sept. 23, 2026

My video The Machines Possessed Me (Abstract v2) Part 1 was selected as an Official Selection at The Psychedelic Film and Music Festival, New York, NY, screening October 17, 2026.

Sept. 15, 2026

My video The Machines Possessed Me (Abstract v2) Part 1 was selected as an Official Selection at the International Experimental Film Festival, Athens, Greece, screening October 15, 2026.

Summer 2026

Stills from Untitled (1984) and Video Portrait of Char and Mike (1985) featured in SandZine #1, a print compilation of Sandin Image Processor video art by 12 artists spanning 1984–2026, edited by SAIC printmaking student AI Silva. Produced in connection with James Connolly's SAIC Spring 2026 Art History: Media Genealogies course.

Aug. 31, 2026

Our AI-assisted video SurgiQuik Liposuction Hut was selected as an Official Selection at AI Film 3 - AI Film and Art Festival, Arizona (Year III), screening in Phoenix September 17–19, 2026.

June 2026

Cybernalnia 2026: Mad Science, Mistakes and Mutants, the recap video documenting the 25th annual Rite of Spring, published on YouTube and Vimeo.

May 15, 2026

The Skull Club: A Short Documentary, a Columbia College Chicago student film about the Skull Club directed by Becca French, premiered at the Columbia College Chicago Manifest Arts Festival. The original short version was recognized with a Jury Prize in the Columbia College Chicago Take 1 Student Shorts Fest.

April 25, 2026

Cybernalnia 2026 premiered the first of our AI-assisted video art: SurgiQuik Liposuction Hut, Prayers For Our President, and Bobby Brain Worm. Special credit goes to David Bright for scripting Prayers For Our President.

April 1, 2026

Celebration of Faculty and Staff Creativity Film Screening at Columbia College Chicago. Abductions with the Alter Boy: Arise Robot Minds.

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 Accolade Global Film Competition, La Jolla, CA, Music Video and Remixes / Mashups and Concept categories.
- My video The Machines Possessed Me (Abstract Version) was an official selection in the Experimental category of the Accolade Global Film Competition, La Jolla, CA.

May 20, 2022

My video The Machines Possessed Me (Abstract Version) came in as a semifinalist in the Best Experimental Short category of the San Francisco Arthouse Short Festival, CA.

Nov. 19, 2022

My music video Arise Robot Minds (v1.2) was an official selection for Best Sci-Fi/Horror Psychedelic / Transpersonal Short at the Psychedelic Film and Music Festival, New York, NY.

Dec. 20, 2022

- My video The Machines Possessed Me (Abstract Version) came in as a semifinalist for Best Experimental Short at the Paris International Short Festival, France.
- My music video Arise Robot Minds (v1.2) came in as a semifinalist for Best Music Video at the Paris International Short Festival, France.

Jan. 13, 2023

- My video The Machines Possessed Me (Abstract Version) came in as a semifinalist for Best Experimental Short at the Berlin Shorts Award, Germany.
- My music video Arise Robot Minds (v1.2) came in as a semifinalist for Best Music Video at the Berlin Shorts Award, Germany.

Jan. 20, 2023

- My video The Machines Possessed Me (Abstract Version) came in as a semifinalist for Experimental Short at the Palermo International Film Festival, Italy.
- My music video Arise Robot Minds (v1.2) came in as a semifinalist for Music Video at the Palermo International Film Festival, Italy.

March 3, 2023

My music video Arise Robot Minds (v1.2) ran in the 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 Cybernalia 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.

Works screened:

- 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.

Works screened:

- 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. Member of the founding group. I've participated every year since Cybernalialia began in 2001, providing spiritual inspiration for the holiday and acting as video archivist.

Cybernalialia videos in recent years:

- 2026 - Cybernalialia 2026 premiered the first of our AI-assisted video art: SurgiQuik Liposuction Hut, Prayers For Our President, and Bobby Brain Worm. Special credit goes to David Bright for scripting Prayers For Our President.
- 2025 - Cybernalialia 2025
- 2024 - Cicada Brood Invasion
- 2023 - Cold War 2.0, the Sequel!
- 2022 - Diseased Video
- 2021 - Cicada Zoom Get-together

The complete Cybernalialia video archive, 2004–present, is on the Cybernalialia YouTube playlist.

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 Fairlight Computer Video Instrument, plus ZGrass-generated imagery from the Datamax UV-1 and 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, incorporating ZGrass-generated imagery from the Datamax UV-1, 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 Vinci'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

Videos:

- 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 1965

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.