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## Preview of CyberArts Review Scheduled For December Meeting

By Steve Turnidge

The third annual CyberArts conference, "The Conference And Exposition On The Technique And Technologies Of Tomorrow's Art And Entertainment" occurred between October 29 and November 1 in Pasadena. The subtitle is quite a mouthful, but the experience matched the grandeur of the billing.

With speakers like Bob Moog, Todd Rungrén, and Craig Anderton along with a lavish sampling of the professionals at the forefront of their respective fields, this was an information rich meeting to attend. There were over 25 sessions on the future of creativity, musical interfaces (alternate controllers), computer animation, virtual reality production, multimedia music, and more. Each session had three or four experts in their field. Since these people are so specialized, the "big picture" presented at the conference was an amazing info-rush for everyone involved.

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***... Tomorrow's Art And Entertainment... is rapidly becoming today's art and entertainment.***

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Exhibits covering the range of new technologies covered the show floor. From bio-feedback systems to various controllers and computer interfaces, audio mixing systems, video walls and virtual reality, animation and holograms. This gave a good indication of the current and available state of the art.

The thing about "Tomorrow's Art And Entertainment" is that it is rapidly becoming today's art and entertainment. Computers are blending and advancing the fields of MIDI music, graphic art, interactive performance, multimedia performance, and virtual reality. This is a good time to be alive and at the cutting edge of the arts. The need for pioneers defining and connecting these fields is expanding rapidly, providing opportunities for all of us.

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***... The CyberArts conference ...[is] a meeting place for artists and technologists to share their advances.***

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There is a challenge here, however. In the keynote presentation by Stewart Brand (Whole Earth Catalogs, The Well BBS, Electronic Frontier Foundation), the description of the cutting edge of technology was "all blade and no handle." He asks "Which gains more, the media or the artists? Does anything escape the black hole of accelerating technology?" In a domain of perpetual arrival and universal extinction, how does anything evolve? Has technology swallowed art, and so it is gone? Or are we now so inside technology that from here, it is all art?"

Artists at the beginning of a new art form are unchallenged at first, and inventing and playing with the form is new, novel, and unique. As the art and artists in these fields mature, the compelling content of the work increases, the novelty of the medium fades as the message takes over. The original participants are left behind and generally

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## Core Group Members—

Daniel Casado

Guest Speaker Co-Ordination

David Crowther

Promotion

John Hokenson

Newsletter Editor, Classified Advertisements

Steve Olson

Computer BBS Information (Voice Line)

Rod Sakrison

NEMUS President

Steve Turnidge

NEMUS President-Elect

## Where Do We Go From Here?

By John Hokenson

Thanks to Steve Turnidge, the *Oscillator* has a different look this month. Steve applied his graphic talents to designing the sample masthead you see at the top of page one. This work becomes the first contest entry for the new logo for NEMUS.

All members are encouraged to apply their graphic talents and imagination toward submission of their vision of what the NEMUS logo should be. The winner will have his or her work appear as a permanent fixture of the *Oscillator*.

Speaking of contests, we have a genuine Rane tee-shirt that will be given away at the December meeting. The ground rules are simple—any NEMUS member who renewed their membership dues at the November meeting or does so at the December meeting will have their name entered in the drawing. We will pull out the name of the lucky winner at the conclusion of the meeting. Don't miss it!

NEMUS is in a period of transition. For a period of time membership was on the decline and now is on the rise again. As members of the organization, your input is needed to determine the path NEMUS will follow in the months to come. We sincerely hope

you will come to the December meeting and work with us to chart that path.

In the vein of member participation, I am formally putting out a request for a volunteer to take over duties of membership roster maintenance and treasurer. While we are not exactly flush, the mailing list needs to be tended to and what money we do have disbursed as required. Any takers? If you are interested, see me at the December meeting.

In conclusion, Steve Turnidge will have a fascinating presentation for us at the December meeting. Just back from Pasadena, Steve was immersed in "surfing the Cyber-Wave" for most of a week. See the cover story on page one for details of the upcoming event. See you on the high-tech beach.

## Playing In The Future

by Steve Turnidge

Those of us who have been reading science fiction all our lives have been preparing ourselves for the future. It has arrived, and is constantly arriving. The time between "New Technology" and "Outdated Technology" is shrinking constantly. Two years ago technology was current for a year. Last year's technology was outdated in six months. The computer I bought three months ago is no longer new technology.

We, as electronic musicians, have been living in the future for quite a while. We caught the electronic music wave, and rode its evolution from a hobby with 1 or 2 drifting oscillators to digital audio workstations.

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The NEMUS *Oscillator* is funded and sponsored by:



The logo for RANE, featuring the word "RANE" in a bold, stylized, black font. The letters are contained within a thick, black, rectangular border that has a slightly irregular, hand-drawn appearance. The 'R' is particularly large and prominent.

### Future-continued

Similar technologies are evolving and blending in the arts and sciences. Interactive media, computer art, virtual reality, all coming together with the common denominator of the computer. These waves of technology are arriving faster and faster, and a state of perpetual future shock is becoming the norm. Knowledge and understanding of current technology is one way to combat future shock. As each new wave of technology rolls in we need to gauge its impact, determine when it will trickle down to the everyday user, and understand how we can prepare to use it to make the most of its potential. It's time to start surfing the cyber-wave.

How can we do this? It is up to us to accept reality, choose independence, and take action. We accept the reality of perpetual change. We choose to recognize this change as a force that will shape our future. Our personal understanding and informed knowledge of it is key to our survival. We can take action by meeting and sharing the aspects of the technology that we have discovered. NEMUS can be an excellent technology and information sharing community and a point of reference for the amazing changes that face us in the next 5-10 years. Our careers and our lives will depend on our ability to assimilate and use this information.

We should consider the name of this organization. The definition of "electronic musician" is starting to blur. "Electronic" implies technology, "musician" implies art. We have been aware of this connection from the beginning. Now that virtually everyone has access to synthesizers, what distinguishes the electronic musician? We need a new framework in which to see ourselves. I propose a forward-looking group that retains the focus on the art of music in a technological setting, while opening ourselves up to other artists who use technology to realize their art. We can all learn to swim in the digital river that is flowing through us and by us. I recommend we invite multimedia artists, virtual reality explorers, and those

who will share with us their discoveries as we share ours with them.

The change and evolution of our role as electronic musician is healthy and full of opportunities. In the fields where MIDI is beginning to catch on such as video games and multimedia presentations, those of us familiar with MIDI are in hot demand.

We all have something valuable to offer, and we have a great opportunity to start playing in the future!

### CyberArts-continued

forgotten. This reminds us to create work of substance in these new fields, not just demonstrating the technology required to produce them.

In the first days of the conference my feeling on CyberArts was that it was "A movement in search of a message" but by the ending night the message emerged and grew strong. We have a direct view of where the entertainment industry is going and it will go with or without us. It is our responsibility to stay informed of the latest technology so we can anticipate the shape of the future, and help shape it.

The CyberArts conference will continue through the years and be a meeting place for the individual artists and technologists to share their advances. I strongly recommend that anyone interested in these matters attend the annual event. The first two years' conferences are documented in the book *CyberArts*, edited by Linda Jacobson. This is an excellent introduction and indicator of what exists now and that which is to come.

If you are interested in a more detailed report of this years conference, come to the December meeting! I am looking forward to sharing as much information as possible. See you there!

## Next Meeting: .

December 7, 7:30 pm, Room 601, Art Institute of Seattle, 2323 Elliott Avenue, Seattle.