

Computer Art Forum

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The Visual
Computer

The idea to attempt a completely collaborative piece of animation for the 1985 SIGGRAPH conference led to "A Comic Zoom" – our parody of the Charles Eames film "Powers of Ten". The animation is one continual camera pull that begins with a logical atom-to-solar system transition. It quickly, however, moves into a series of transitions from one absurd and logically unlinkable scene to another. "A Comic Zoom" began as an experiment. We were curious to see what would happen if every animator, plus a few other PDI-ers, and every computer were to work on a single collaborative project for one entire weekend. We began bright and early Saturday morning with a pre-conceived

storyboard with each animator in charge of some part, or the entirety of, a given scene. It was glaringly obvious the following Monday morning that someone should also have been in charge of the transitions. The animation was very disjointed both stylistically and with regard to motion, but there was obviously a seed of wonderful potential in that first low-resolution test.

From that point on, the refinement and finishing of the piece was largely carried out by one of the animators, Roger L. Gould. He coordinated the efforts of all those involved to blend the different scenes together smoothly and achieve a consistent pacing for the animation. The audio track was

the last thing to be done by Glenn Entis and Richard Cohen. They mixed together a myriad of musical scores and sound effects, as eclectic as the animation, that somehow added a sense of coherency to the piece.

The animation was produced using PDI's in-house proprietary software system and eight Ridge 32 computers. Nine people in all contributed as animators and modellers to "A Comic Zoom" including six animators, Roger L. Gould, Glenn Entis, Richard Chuang, Richard Cohen, Don Venhaus, Thaddeus Beier; president, Carl Rosendahl; storyboard artist, Joe Palrang; and production manager, Shari Folz.

