

FOCUS ON . . .

HENRY DRYOVAGE

By Zachary Shess

With a daily commute that consists of walking down a hallway, and a large green bird as an officemate, computer animator Henry Dryovage has a job many people would envy.

Not everyone gets the opportunity to work at home. According to Dryovage, "It's something I'll always do, although someday if I feel it's right to get an office, I'll do it," said the 31-year-old Michigan native.

His office, decorated with his paintings, is his living room. Keeping him company is Pebbles, an Amazon Bluefront perched over his shoulder. Dryovage heads San Jose Computer Animation (sjca). Specializing in three-dimensional animation, sjca creates computer-generated images and logos for corporate and industrial markets.

Dryovage has done work for Apple, Tandem, ESL, Hewlett Packard and Northern California Honda. Most of his business comes from advertising agencies approaching him to do computer-generated graphic work that has "a professional look."

Generally Dryovage takes about two weeks to work on a project. The time is divided into three parts; the design period, the production period, and the render time which is the computer producing the image and laying it out to videotape.

Dryovage creates his projects through a Cubicomp computer using software he writes to set the ideas in motion.

"Once I get the program written, the program not only controls the tape machine, it controls the movements and the transition of color and light source," Dryovage said. "It's a video studio in itself."

Dryovage began his 3-D career at Illusion Studios in San Francisco in August 1985. Although the field of computer animation has come a long way since then, locally the area is still in its infancy.

Today computer animation for both Dryovage and the client is "much easier to understand."

"Five years ago there were fewer places you could go to get animation and the cost was extremely high," he said. "Another big hang-up has been to operate one of these things (Cubicomp computer). You had to have a background in Math or Programming." This meant years back additional creative and sales teams were needed because programmers weren't capable



Henry Dryovage owner of San Jose Computer Animation.

of marketing the products as well.

At sjca, Dryovage does it all himself. He said clients feel "very comfortable" with him because he is an artist who understands a company's creative needs.

"I am a designer first and computer graphic animator second, I have learned that skill in the last five years."

Growing up in Garden City, Michigan, he was known as the "school artist." Dryovage graduated from Eastern Michigan in 1982 with a Fine Arts degree in Graphic Design. Computer animation to him at the time seemed far away and unrealistic.

"I really didn't know much about what computer graphics or computer animation was," Dryovage said. "Being from Michigan, computer graphics was seen as stuff that was done in Hollywood."

After years of practice, he has discovered a formula to running a successful business. "The trick is to find something and be able to bring it to a point where its a usable product. I believe my years of working with computer graphics, the public and the market, has enabled me to know what I need to do to make this a good business, so that clients will get a product they are pleased with and affordable."

Formula or no formula, Dryovage is not jaded about 3-D animation art and is constantly reminded of its untapped potential.

San Jose Computer Animation (sjca) is located at 398 Boynton, Suite #14, San Jose, CA 95117. If you have any questions please call Henry Dryovage at (408) 244-0502.