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Feedback

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Magazine

A Look at Experience Music Project's Hands-on Workshops

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Teachers Go to Rock 'n' Roll Camp





A visitor explores Fakespace Music at “Strats, Studios & the Seattle Sound.” This virtual reality music experience, by Fakespace Music Corp. in California, is based on content from the EMP collection and made possible by Silicon Graphics computer hardware.



Press Release 1996

**MUSIC-BASED VIRTUAL REALITY ADDS TO
EXPERIENCE AT SEATTLE'S PACIFIC SCIENCE CENTER**

Fakespace Music (TM) Creates A Dynamic New Virtual Environment To Be Shown As Part Of Experience Music Project's Exhibit "Strats, Studios and the Seattle Sound"

Seattle, Washington -- December 12, 1996 -- Visitors to the Pacific Science Center in Seattle will be able to immerse themselves in a unique virtual reality (VR) music experience produced by Fakespace, Inc., and presented as part of the Experience Music Project's critically acclaimed exhibit, "Strats, Studios and the Seattle Sound." The exhibit at the Pacific Science Center, open to the public from December 13 to January 20, 1997, offers a hands-on look at the history of rock and roll music from the Pacific Northwest, the region which has produced talents ranging from Bing Crosby to the Ventures, and from Jimi Hendrix to Nirvana.

In one of its first public installations, Fakespace Music offers visitors the chance to explore spaces in a state-of-the-art virtual environment created specifically for the exhibit, which highlights the many contributions made by musicians hailing from the Pacific Northwest. Visitors are taken on an immersive voyage of sound and dynamic 3D computer graphics that is unlike any other. Based on content from the permanent collection of the Experience Music Project, these artificial spaces defy the basic laws of physics, challenging accepted definitions of three-dimensionality.

Music-based VR opens up several possibilities for new types of artistic and entertainment experiences, in addition to fully immersive 3D music videos. Musicians can create interactive landscapes which transform in direct relationship with their live music. Location Based Entertainment centers will be able to offer these experiences as a new form of entertainment for their guests, more emotionally engaging and spatially challenging than traditional video game style experiences.

In the Fakespace Music installation, objects gyrate in real-time to the music. Kaleidoscopic mandalas pulse to the beat. Melodies draw colorful trails across the sky as the visitor moves through the environment, discovering new visions at every turn of the head.

"The music and the rhythm actually fuel the virtual environment itself, transporting visitors into a world in which the images are completely controlled by what they hear, providing a truly synaesthetic experience," said Mark Bolas, president of Fakespace, Inc. (a leading supplier of 3D immersive visualization systems for professional VR).

Fakespace Music implemented technology, that provides artists and entertainers with tools for incorporating VR into creative works, for this special exhibition. This temporal artwork was produced with the Soundsculpt Toolkit (TM), from Fakespace Music, as a demonstration of how VR can fulfill its promise as a tool for aesthetic expression and entertainment. The Soundsculpt Toolkit links the worlds of music and VR to create unique audio/visual experiences.

Fakespace Music, an operating group within Fakespace, Inc., provides the

Soundsculpt Toolkit to producers and artists in traditional music and emerging electronic entertainment markets.

The Soundsculpt Toolkit uses cues extracted from recorded music to create geometry and control object behaviors within a virtual world. Virtual objects respond in sync with the music, creating a rich, multi-sensory experience. Using Soundsculpt, which is based on Silicon Graphics' Performer (TM), artist Christian Greuel created this musical world, which will be presented at Pacific Science Center using a Fakespace BOOM 3C (TM) high-resolution stereoscopic viewer and an Onyx RealityEngine2 (TM), provided by Silicon Graphics, Inc. "These tools allow directors and designers to develop visually active, immersive environments that merge three-dimensional models with sound," said Greuel, a 3D artist with Fakespace Music. "It's like nothing ever seen before, a music video where the user is completely immersed and free to explore a world generated by the music."

The seed for music-based VR came several years back when Mark Bolas was developing prototypes for VR research under contract with NASA Ames Research Center. There he was visited by his brother Niko, a record producer who has worked with such diverse musicians as Neil Young and the Circle Jerks. Slipping into a VR simulation of the Space Shuttle while blasting tunes on his personal stereo, Niko immediately realized the possibilities of cross-fertilization, observing that "This rocks!"

"Strats, Studios and the Seattle Sound" premiered last summer at the Tacoma Art Museum and can be seen again at Pacific Science Center from December 13, 1996 until January 20, 1997. Experience Music Project, Seattle's forthcoming interactive music museum, will open at Seattle Center in 1999. For more information about "Strats, Studios and the Seattle Sound", visitors can call the EMP event hotline at 206/990-0575.

Those who would like more information on Fakespace Music may visit their website at <http://www.fakespacemusic.com>.

Note to editors: For review tickets to "Strats, Studios and the Seattle Sound", contact Jason J. Hunke at EMP, 206/450-1997 or jasonh@vnw.com