

Notes on MicroCosm™ Screen Mockup Tape

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The accompanying video tape contains some screen mockups we did to get a preliminary idea of the visual style of **MicroCosm**. The mockups were done using a simple paint program on an Atari 800. Due to the limitations of the paint program and the differences between the Atari 800 and the Commodore 64, there are some important differences between these images and what we envision the final product will look like.

The major difference is that the images here were restricted to four colors. Both the more sophisticated color display features of the Commodore 64 and various programming techniques will enable us to create a much more colorful display in the eventual product. Also, the animation capabilities of the paint package used to render these pictures are quite primitive, and so only one of the screen mockups has animation, and that is of the most rudimentary sort. The final product will also contain much a more animated display. For an impression of our basic animation capabilities, you should look at the Lucasfilm games *The Eidolon* and *Koronis Rift*. In particular, *The Eidolon* demonstrates our Cel Animation Engine that we will use to bring the avatars to life.

All four of the images on this tape are renderings of scenes from the collection of **MicroCosm** storyboards. Comparing the pen and ink storyboard illustrations with the corresponding screen mockups will give an impression of how well the visual designs translate onto the computer screen.

The first image on the tape is the living room illustration, shown both with and without an avatar figure standing in the room. In the actual system, the chairs and couch would be foreground objects, so that the avatar could, for example, walk behind them or move them around.

The second image shows a number of different avatars gathered in a public place. Again, the picture is shown with and without the avatars. This picture illustrates some of the variety of avatar figures that is possible.

The third image illustrates several avatars interacting with each other and manipulating objects of various kinds.

The fourth and final image is a study of a single avatar figure. The forward facing figure is animated to wave his hand. In the eventual system the figure would be fully articulated and would be capable of a wide range of motions, including walking, picking things up, gesturing in various ways, and so on.