



Scott Anderson

So what happens when the world goes digital and you've been working for a decade or two with film and video and photography? If you're like Scott Anderson, you learn, or, more accurately in 1994, you teach yourself. Scott Anderson Productions, located on the Westside, has been producing educational and marketing media projects since 1986. Around 1995, the business went entirely digital — using the Internet, CD-ROMs, and DVDs to carry the information. Anderson's personal artworks underwent a similar shift. His nature-based films and videos were featured in festivals across the United States and in Japan until Anderson created his alternative design company, Outside-in, in 1997, with the launch of his internet site, Seiwa-en — a tour of the Japanese garden at the Missouri Botanical Garden. In conjunction with the site was the release of a CD-ROM version of the tour, including detailed information on all aspects of Japanese gardens. All this virtual production is well grounded in a solid art school education; Anderson earned his painting degree from KCAI and a master's degree in filmmaking from Syracuse University.

Regarding the fine arts/design continuum, Anderson says, "I have always attempted to keep a balance between my commercial and personal media projects but, since the predominance of the Internet, that distinction has become blurred. I used to produce and exhibit my personal video and film work on a regular basis, but within very limited venues. After the completion of my first site came the realization that more people saw it in a week than had seen all my films and videos over 10 years."

You can see Anderson's Seiwa-en site, along with some of his other media work and web design, at www.outside-in.com. Anderson explains that "The garden site and CD-ROM attempted to span my interests and reach a larger audience. I think of the idea of bringing the outside into the desktop

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as analogous to how the traditional Japanese architecture of the *sukiya* style embraced exterior gardens into their interior spaces, through moveable walls and verandas. In a similar manner, the architecture of the Internet and other digital media allows us to slide open our walls to access vast landscapes of information while retaining our individual integrity."

One of the exciting developments in web design is a software program called Flash. According to Anderson, "It has grown from simple vector based animation software into a mature programming language that is being used to produce the most creative work done today. Whereas in the past I would only do animated introductory pieces with it, I recently completed an entire site in Flash for a local furniture designer."

Anderson's current Internet work has evolved into creating complex backends that allow users to access secured information that is updated by databases. On one site, a major publisher allows their clients to access the progress of jobs being printed, along with other services not available on the public side of their site. A CD-ROM developed for the same client allows users to make design decisions on book cover materials, color, and fonts, which can be saved as a text file and e-mailed to their plant. Anderson feels that this kind of interactivity is now essential to large-scale media projects designed today.

Summing up his philosophy regarding the overlapping of his art and business, Anderson says, "The challenge in media design is to maintain a balance between one's aesthetic concerns and the time demands of rapidly changing software updates and client deadlines. To produce work that provides solutions while remaining personally satisfying is the goal."

— Susi Lulaki

