

A Celebration with a Capital "C"

Observing her 100th birthday this past April, Mary Crosby ('08) was the guest of honor at a RISD celebration arranged by the Alumni Relations Office. Here, Mary is inspecting the array of handmade birthday cards submitted by RISD students, faculty, and staff members as part of the festivities. Gathered around her are (from lower left) Ellen Swanson, Alumni Relations staff member; Robert F. Sheeran ('80), Acting Director of Alumni Relations; Nancy Brouillette, Alumni Relations secretary; David R. Chapman ('62), President of the Alumni Association; and Glen Klein ('88), a graduate student in the Jewelry and Light Metals Program. Mr. Klein's birthday card design won first prize in the student competition for this event and received an award of \$100 for his creativity and effort. Photograph by Christine Corrigan.



Rhode Island School of Design

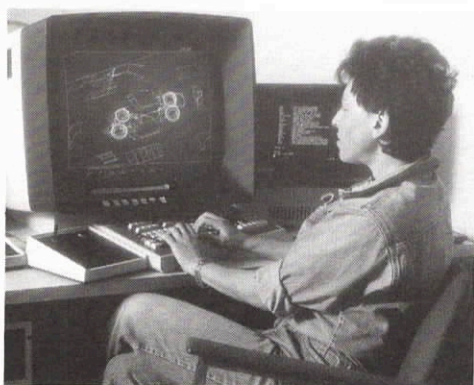
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Alumni Profile

Shelley Lake ('76)



Shelley Lake is a fine artist with something extra. For 11 years, she has worked in the field of computer-generated art. "Frankly, it has been a difficult struggle working with high technology in the art world," she confides. "Although my work has been well received by the technological community, many people in the art world believe that science is the opposite of art and never the twain shall meet."

Difficulties have never stopped Shelley from doing what drives her. The images she has created on a \$12.6 million Cray XMP, the fastest computer

in the world (capable of one billion calculations per second), have made the technological and art community sit up and take notice.

One image, "Teapot," placed first in an international art contest sponsored by AT&T. She has won three Clio Awards since 1984, including the Best in Computer Animation. She has taken gold and silver medals home from the International Film & TV Festival of New York. In between, there have been exhibitions from coast to coast and abroad in Germany and Japan.

So how did Shelley, a 1976 RISD graduate in Illustration, come to work on the fastest computer in the world?

After graduation, she studied computer science at Brown University. Her interest stirred, she enrolled in the Department of Science and Visual Studies at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, a program she describes as outstanding in the field. She completed her master's degree in 1979 and stayed on under a fellowship at the Center for Advanced Visual Studies.

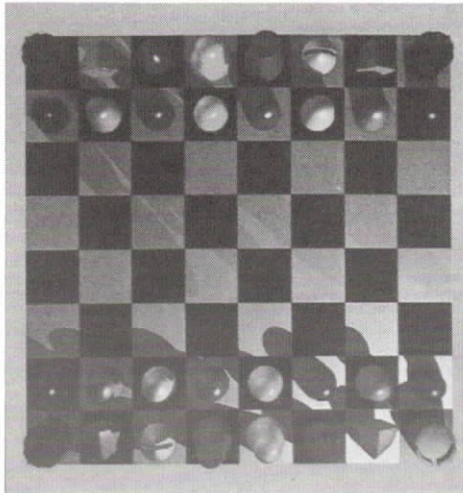
In 1981, she moved to Los Angeles. The following year, she began working for Digital Productions. The company had a Cray supercomputer and did computer animations for the



feature film industry. Shelley worked as a technical director during her last four years there, and then went independent a year ago.

One of her latest commissions is an 8' x 12' mural for Apple Corporation. Generated solely on a personal computer, the mural images the environment of a computer and celebrates the art of software.

Shelley recently completed a three-minute video called "I Am My Job". It will be screened at the SIGGRAPH (Special Interest Group for Computer Graphics) convention to be held this August in Atlanta. The convention draws up to 20,000 participants from around the world, and includes a two-hour video gala.



As far as Shelley is concerned, computers in the arts are very much here to stay. "The next generation is growing up with computers. The computer won't even be an issue to them, but an integral part of their lives." She feels it is critical for art schools to embrace these issues in their curricula now.

"I've noticed," she adds, "because I read art criticism and have paid attention to the way the art world perceives this work, that there is always an emphasis on how it is made: What machines are used, etc. Rarely does anyone address the image for its content." But, she's beginning to see progress. A writer recently reviewed a show of her computer art. He put aside everything about technique and focused instead on what the images had to say.

It sounds like a breakthrough for this artist who has long recognized the immense importance of the computer in art and has approached it as a willing and creative partner.

Nancy Bodo

RISD's Museum of Art

Traveling Exhibitions

18th-20th Century European and American Painting and Sculpture: Highlights from the Collection of the Museum of Art, Rhode Island School of Design.

IBM Gallery of Science and Art, NY,
NY,
July 5-September 10

This major presentation of 70 works of art celebrates the quality of the RISD Museum's collection, while providing an overview of important landmarks in the development of European and American art of the last two centuries.

The Grosvenor School: British Linocuts Between the Wars.

The Cleveland Museum of Art,
August 9-October 2

Santa Barbara Museum of Art,
October 22-December 18

Featuring colorful and energetic images of London life in the 1920s and '30s, this exhibition marks the first time that a gathering of linocuts from this period has been shown by American museums.