PETER LUNENFELD CAREER NARRATIVE

I am a member of the core faculty of the graduate Media Design Program at Art Center College of Design, the founder of mediawork: The Southern California New Media Working group, the editorial director of the Mediawork Pamphlet series, the author of Snap to Grid: A User's Guide to Digital Arts, Media & Cultures (MIT Press, 2000) and editor of The Digital Dialectic: New Essays on New Media (MIT Press, 1999). My column, "User," appears in the international journal, artext.

Afterimage referred to The Digital Dialectic as "the first printed book you read about the virtual world that does not merely describe it, but puts you there." Snap to Grid has been covered everywhere from Italy's Flash Art to Britain's New Scientist, and the latter concluded its featured review by saying that artists working with digital technologies "now have their bible, their Stones of Venice, their Ways of Seeing." Mediawork Pamphlets, a series I inaugurated for the MIT Press which pairs major writers with contemporary graphic designers to produce 100 page "mind bombs" in the tradition of McLuhan and Fiore's The Medium is the Massage, was lauded on its release as a new operating system for the book. The first Mediawork Pamphlet -- Utopian Entrepreneur, by Brenda Laurel and designed by Denise Gonzales Crisp – was released in 2001, the next pamphlet will be Literature for Posthumans, by N. Katherine Hayles and designed by Anne Burdick.

I have a Ph.D. from UCLA in Film & Television, an MA in Media Studies from SUNY Buffalo and a B.A. in history from Columbia University. My thesis, Film Rouge: Genre, Postmodern Theory, and the American Cinema of the 1980s, was supervised by Dr. Stephen Mamber, who is now at the Laboratory for Advanced Computing Initiatives, School of Literature, Communication and Culture at the Georgia Institute of Technology. While I was writing my doctoral thesis on film, I was concentrating on digital media as well. From 1991 to 1992, I took a position as Applications Coordinator at the Academy Award winning hardware and software company Lyon Lamb Video Animation Systems in order to gain professional experience in the field. My responsibilities included

managing software developers, evaluating 3D computer graphics systems, doing demonstrations, and coordinating development and marketing of Macintosh, Windows, and UNIX based graphical user interface software systems for animation controllers. At the same time, I was also working as a *consultant for new technologies* with Creative Intelligence Associates, Inc., an architectural and design consortium based in Tokyo, Japan. In 1992 I was asked to join *the* Advisory Committee for the American Film Institute-Apple Computer Center for Film and Videomakers. The following year, 1993, I was asked to be the North American Representative for Media Futures: Policy and Performance International Conference, a major conference in Queensland, Australia. During this period, I was writing, publishing, editing, and travelling to conference and trade shows regularly. I guest edited "The N E Double U" issue of the journal Framework in 1993, and that same year served as chair for the panel "Theorizing New Media," at the Society for Cinema Studies Conference in New Orleans. Since then, I have lectured or been a featured speaker at Harvard, Yale, MIT, the Royal College of Art, the University of Stockholm, the Getty Research Center, UC Berkeley, UCLA, USC, UCSD, and the California Institute of the Arts, among others. I have published regularly in art/text, Afterimage, Film Quarterly, Artforum, Artbyte, The Journal of Film and Video, Wired, and numerous academic collections.

I arrived at Art Center College of Design in 1994, right after the establishment of the school's graduate program in computer graphics, and was from what I have been able to determine, was first person anywhere in academia to hold a position exclusively devoted to researching and teaching the history and theory of digital media. That same year I won the school's great teacher award. Since then, I have shepherded the program through a merger with the graduate program in graphic design, and am now a member of the Core Faculty of the graduateMedia Design Program. While at Art Center, I coordinated a number of allied initiatives, including the founding of Mediawork: The Southern California New Media Working Group and the Institute for Technology & Aesthetics (ITA). The ITA is an interdisciplinary space unique to Southern California for the development of new forms and theories of computers and culture; its mission is to ground the discourses of technologies in the constraints of their practice and to create

interdisciplinary collaborations that expand the parameters of visual intellectual culture. Public programming has included The Digital Dialectic: A Conference on the Convergence of Technology & Theory in 1995, "SCRIPTED SPACES: An ITA Conference on Entertainment Design, Narrative Architecture, and Virtual Environments" in 1998, co-sponsorship of "Unwriting the Word: A Festival of Music, Murmurs, & Media," 1999 at Loyola Marymount University, and sponsorship of Mediawork, a quarterly gathering at Art Center of specialists from a range of disciplines and institutions discussing their work and debating the impact of the computer on contemporary culture, and the Mediawork Pamphlet series.

Approach

Geert Lovink, the media activist and co-founder of the seminal listserve <nettime>, did an interview with me recently called "Enemy of Nostalgia," which will be coming out in his new collection, *Uncanny Networks: Collected Interviews with Media Theorists and Artists* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2002). In it he asked me to offer a summation of my work. My answer was as follows:

"I approach criticism as a way to elucidate that which I admire about art rather than simply trying to fit it into a preconceived straightjacket. I'd like to think that I've been able to explore that ferocious pluralism I mentioned earlier which so characterizes our era. This is disconcerting to those who pine for the certainties of movements, schools, or avant-gardes that marched in lockstep, one after the other. These days, you're on your own, it's up to the individual user to craft his or her own frameworks. Part of the job of the critic is to offer models for this process."