

# Afterward: Things Worth Doing

By now you've learned enough to be dangerous. Now comes the hard part - figuring out what's worth doing. So much is possible with VRML - almost anything you imagine, you can do, given enough time and effort - that it forces a rethink.

Here are some guidelines:

- 1) Don't bite off more than you can chew. Although plenty of us have *Neuromancer*-like visions of a global cyberspace, all of the previous attempts toward this Grail have failed miserably. We need to move from the baby steps of simulation into a fully-realized virtual world, gently, and piece by piece.
- 2) Keep in mind how evocative simulations can be. Certain pieces, like *OSMOSE*, can produce a nearly religious ecstasy in the people who visit its world. One of the basic rules of thumb is this: **the creation of a world necessarily implies the creation of a world-view**. When creating a space people will inhabit, the creator has a responsibility to make it place fit for humanity.
- 3) Share your work. One of the maxims of the Web goes as follows: **a resource shared is a resource squared**. Both VRML and the Web grew quickly because people shared their results freely across academic institutions, across companies, and across the many communities of the Internet. Sharing your work returns rewards in feedback and important input, but it also implies a loss of control - which is a frightening thought to many people.
- 4) Participate in the process that creates and improves VRML. The VRML community is a world-wide collection of researchers and enthusiasts who use VRML regularly - that gives them a good idea of how to make it even better. For more information, visit the VRML Consortium's Web site at <http://www.vrml.org/>
- 5) Work from your heart. When you encounter problems in your work - and you inevitably will - the drive that comes from *loving your work* will keep you focused and determined on your goals. That feeling drove Tony and I to create VRML.

Now that we're four years into VRML, there are many outstanding works, representing the best efforts of an entire community. These can serve as a starting point for your own exploration. You've learned everything you need to begin projects - even big projects - using VRML. Work from your heart - toward the things you'd love to see - and those works will do you proud.

It's up to you now.

*Mark Pesce*  
*Montreal, Santa Monica and Banff, Alberta*  
*March 1997 - January 1988*