

Jean-Marc Gauthier [jean-marc.gauthier@nyu.edu]

About projects

“The beauty of nature lies in detail; the message, in generality. Optimal appreciation demands both, and I know no better tactic than the illustration of exciting principals by well-chosen particulars.” (From Stephen Jay Gould. *Wonderful Life: The Burgess Shale and the Nature of History*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1989.)

Gould’s ideas about how to describe the living environment of some of our planet’s first animals can be a source of inspiration for someone who attempts to recreate animation of living creatures. Like in Gould’s first sentence, the designer’s special attention to details conveys a sense of beauty to the viewer; but the vision of virtual spaces needs to be much broader.

I have found ways to express myself as an animator, moviemaker, designer, writer, and architect but still felt the need to communicate ideas that did not fit into any of these domains. New possibilities for expression emerge in the design of motion. Designing animated characters inside virtual worlds helps me convey ideas in ways that cannot be expressed the same way in writing, movies, photographs, architecture or other visual art. Surrealist artists from the 1920s (Man Ray, Marcel Duchamp, Louis Bunuel) felt that movies could tackle situations or emotions that could not be depicted in writing or in the traditional visual arts of their times. For similar reasons, topics covered in my work stretch beyond the strict domain of animation. They relate to larger concepts like the future of cinema, the place of virtual spaces in tangible public spaces, defining new experiences for the viewer of an animation, or developing new types of associations between several media that may involve both the virtual and real. I hope that my work will help you to look at virtual spaces as an immense territory for experimentation where you can build, explore, and play more easily and faster than in the physical world.

Jean-Marc Gauthier (Revised 2008)