

# Mecca or Black Hole for the Arts

All the buzz about the Internet has made some people feel anxious they are missing the boat. Others are skeptical. Are there huge opportunities for artists and arts consumers on the Internet? Or is it time to cry out, "The emperor has no clothes!" and challenge the net-heads of the world?

**P**roblem: it's hard to say who, exactly, is naked when you're talking about virtual reality.

In time we will see if the Internet becomes the mainstay of communication, or, will it be as big a flop as Vancouver's first french-fry machine franchise.

In the meantime, there is a constant amount of information about the arts and for artists being put up on the Internet.

Vancouver is the base for more than 40 web sites for bands, eight sites for individual performers and a host of grouped sites for record labels, venues, galleries and net magazines. Arts Alive looks at some of these sites in an attempt to see what is useful for artists and what is just unseen installation art about to come down.

## MAGAZINES

There are a growing number of magazines, or "zines," available for Net users. Using Netscape software to browse the World Wide Web (WWW) is one good way to surf around and find what appeals to you. Vancouver's first Internet server, Wimsey Information Services Inc. has a Magazine Shop Home Page ([http://www.wis.net/Magazine\\_shop/](http://www.wis.net/Magazine_shop/)) which lists The Arts; General Publications, ranging from travel publications to articles for vampires; and on-line newspapers, including the Kamloops Daily News and the British Daily Telegraph.

Nine sites are listed under The Arts section. Here are some highlights.

**Euphony Magazine**, which lists itself as the gateway to arts and entertainment in the Pacific North West, has a rapidly growing readership. ROCK 104 FM in Florida described Euphony as "setting the standards of on-line entertainment ... a must see if you are interested in the future of media."

The magazine does not exist in print. It launches a new issue each week (Friday morning around 9 am). Interactive feature articles include profiles of such cultural figures as Art Bergmann, Dianna Atkinson, Bill Bissett, the Barenaked Ladies, Matthew Sweet and Joe Jackson.

There is also photography and visual art essays, spoken word, poetry and prose and hard news; artists promotions featuring graphics, video and text and audio installations; and an extensive database of event and nightclub listings.

One cool feature on their site is the free (honest) real-time interactive classified ads (they also have paid ads that are much sexier).

Euphony is becoming linked electronically to the Arts Community. They were a media sponsor for the Jazz and Comedy Festivals designing web pages for both events.

