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NOVEMBER 2000 • VOL. 1.4

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CONVERGENCE

WHERE THE BODY MEETS THE MIND

The fusion of Earthdance and hybrid DVDs is the fusion of spirituality and technology, the same combination that created dance culture.

BODY

Imagine a million people dancing.

All over the world, at the same time, sharing one vision. Earthdance founder Chris Deckker had this same idea three years ago, when he conceived the first global dance party for world peace. Four years later in October 14, Earthdance 2000 combines the powers of spirit and technology to unite 80 cities in 40 countries around the world in support of global causes such as Tibet, indigenous tribes, the environment, and children. Promoters in each city support the local charity to which "they feel most aligned."

In its first three years, Earthdance built an orphanage in Eastern Tibet in association with Germany's Tadra project and donated over \$200,000 to its other core charities, which now include saving Brazilian rainforests and indigenous tribes.

Internet webcasting invites the whole world to join the Earthdance rce; even Tibetans exiled to Northern India can log onto the broadcast via Radio Free Asia. Last year's webcast got 1.2 million hits in 12 hours and linked users to streamed simulcasts of each party, all of which are connected by reciting a shared Prayer for Peace at 12:00 a.m. Greenwich Mean Time.

Deckker, 37, says both Earthdance and rave culture get thumbs up from the Dalai Lama, with whom he has had two personal audiences. The most recent took place at last March's Earthdance Conference in India, where 26 promoters from 13 countries discussed strategies for using dance as a vehicle for peace.

Today, Earthdance remains on the cutting edge of technology, featuring an interactive CD-ROM/DVD released by Higher Octave Music. Earthdance 2000 features tracks donated by Moby, Underworld, and Groove Armada.

"Dance culture has come of age and matured, so we can use its power as an awareness-raising and healing form to change the planet," explains Deckker, a long-time advocate of consciousness through clubbing who moved from England to San Francisco to spearhead the Earthdance organization.

"Thanks to the Internet, there are no more boundaries. Dance music is a planetary genre." □

MIND

"Hyperthinking" is one of Joseph Matheny's favorite words.

A 10-year veteran of the multimedia software industry, this 38-year-old entrepreneur, scientist, and philosopher has been fascinated by "immersive environments" since birth. "It's all about connectivity," says Matheny, his face bathed in laptop light. "That's the essence of everything."

Matheny is very connected. His Santa Cruz-based Immersion Media has invented cool new technology that allows you to play a special DVD in your computer's CD-ROM drive while simultaneously following related URL links that pop up during the video. The go-minute *Earthdance 2000* is the first such "hybrid" movie released on Higher Octave Music.

Matheny believes the Internet has created a generation of "hyperthinkers," citing the '80s art of "channel surfing" as an early example of this multi-thought process. "With active media, you can put information into a modular form so it can be presented differently to each individual. A word becomes a button. Each bit represents a thread of information you can follow if you want. Once the written word is in print, it's set in stone. I can't 'click on this' and find out how something's changed."

Matheny says the global communication network constructed by the human race can be therefore likened to a "planetary brain." "It has all the elements of a mass consciousness. We're building it instinctively and may not be completely conscious of why we're doing it." He goes on to explain that technology and spirituality are, in essence, one and the same. "In history, science and magic used to be the same things. Newton used to study alchemy. The division between things considered scientific and things considered magical is very recent."

From this perspective, it's easy to see why Matheny chose to donate his work to Earthdance. "I was attracted to the concept of a planetary happening; of everybody on the planet praying for peace at the same time. That's putting the human planetary mind to good use!" □

www.earthdance.org

www.immersion-media.com

www.cyberoctave.com

www.incunabula.org