

MediaKaos

A conversation with Joe **Matheny** of MediaKaos is what I imagine it would be like inside an MC. Escher painting: just when you think you've arrived at the end of one train of thought, you realize that you're actually back at the beginning.

Inspired as a youth by the 1969 trial of Abbie Hoffman and the Chicago Seven, **Mad** magazine, and studies of the occult (like those done by Alistair Crowley), 33-year-old Matheny has pulled public pranks in Chicago and San Francisco but has now shifted his pranking to cyberspace.

On-line, Matheny teamed up with Peter Lamborn Wilson to report their discovery of a parallel universe that some missing persons have already visited. According to **Matheny a few humans** have returned to recruit the lucky few who will join them in this other dimension, called Earth 2.

Weaving "bits of every modern conspiracy theory, as well as quantum physics and chaos mathematics theory," Matheny says, he and his co-conspirators offer several fantastic stories to cyber-literates eager for salvation and plan to expand to other media soon. Each month approximately 500 to 800 people download the Incunabula files from the Sausalito-based WELL. Matheny says many people also engage in his on-line debates as to whether or not this alternative dimension could explain the many different cultures on earth. "I love messing with consensus reality," he says. "And whatever makes people believe in authority figures."

(Incunabula can be found on the WELL's gopher site at well.com keyword

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