### Video Capture: Machinima, Documentation, and the History of Virtual Worlds

Henry Lowood Stanford University Re-Imagining the Archive, 13 Nov. 2010



### What is Machinima?

"Machinima is filmmaking within a realtime, 3D virtual environment, often using 3D video-game technologies." — Academy of Machinima Arts & Sciences

"Or, to put it in simpler terms, machinima means making movies out of games." -- Matt Kelland, *Machinima*, p. 8.

"Machinima is a mixture of [three] creative platforms — filmmaking, animation, and 3D game technology." — Paul Marino, *The Art of Machinima*, p. 1.

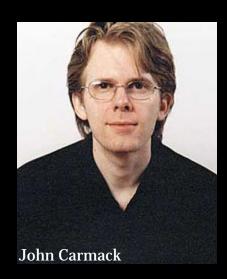


### Modes of Production in Machinima

Code Capture – *demo, replay* Screen Capture – *video* Asset Capture – *compositing scenes* 

Each mode yields an idea about historical capture

# I. Found Technology: The In-Game Demo



Thresh v. Billox



### NoSkill Memorial Site

April 22, 1978 - Dec. 26, 2001

[chunkk] ladies and gentlemen..its as simple as this... noskill is doomgod..and im right after him



Chris "NoSkill" Crosby and his son, Jacob \*

#### Who was NoSkill?

NoSkill was one of the earliest, high-skilled Doom2 Deathmatch players. He was known as the original "Doomgod" and was active around 1994-1996 (demos I have span May, 1995 through April, 1996). At the time he was best known for his Doom2 Map11, Map7 and Map1 games, and reportedly liked Map3. He played modem-to-modem doom, primarily.

#### Why is this a "memorial" site?

Noskill died in an unfortunate 1-car accident that occurred on December 25, 2001. He was a passenger in a car on a ramp leading from northbound I-65 to northbound I-65 around 4:50PM, in North West Indianapolis, and the car ran off the ramp. Local troopers believe that the car was going too fast for the ramp. NoSkill's name in real life was Christopher Crosby, and he was 23 at the time of his death. He was married to Nicole Crosby and had a son named Jacob.

Update: 4/23/02: Mynx emailed with some additional information that we did not have before. It turns out that Chris was actually wearing his seatbelt at the time of the accident (we were told before that he was not). However, the driver of the car, his friend David, was not. The new information as it was emailed yesterday by his wife, Nicole Crosby, reads as follows:

- >> Chris was wearing his seatbelt. David was not. David was partially ejected
- >>and landed with his rear end on Chris's head/side, his head and chest out
- >>the back of the 2 door car.
- >>
- >> Chris died on impact basically from being shook so hard his brain couldn't
- >>handle it. David survived and didn't get completely ejected because he
- >>landed on Chris.

How do you know it was him, for sure?





#### How do you know it was him, for sure?

The accident was described on the website of a local newspaper, The Indianapolis Star, and a long-time acquaintance of NoSkill named Mynx has verified both his name and the description of his family as it appears in the obituary. The newspaper's sites referring to the accident and the obituary are no longer available on the website due to their age, but screenshots of the websites have been preserved locally, and can be viewed here: accidentatif and obituary.gif.

#### Why was NoSkill special to Doom2?

He was among the first players to develop a sophisticated Map1 game.

He was among the group of players that first developed a highly-skilled Map11 game.

He was, to our knowledge, the first player to be referred to as "Doomgod". This was originally a singular term, referring to the one highest-skilled active player. The term has changed over the years to permit multiple Doomgods.

Thorough analysis of his Doom2 recordings shows that he used an extremely uncommon keyboard and mouse configuration known as "Mouse+Keys Assist". It had no official differentiation from normal "Mouse+Keys" until recently. The difference can be summarized this way: He used the mouse primarily for movement, and the keyboard as a comparatively minor aid. This config requires extremely high mouse sensitivity to be used skillfully. Detailed technical information about Mouse+Keys Assist configurations will probably be written about soon.

Are there any NoSkill recordings around?

These are all of the recordings available on Doom2.net to date.

Players and download	Dates	Мар
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NoSkill vs. "Meg"	May 21, 1995	Doom2 Map11
NoSkill vs. Avatar	May 27, 1995	Doom2 Map 1
NoSkill vs. Stoney	June 3, 1995	Doom2 Map 7
NoSkill vs. EvilGenius	August 10, 1995	Doom2 Map 1
NoSkill vs. "Sil"	September 16, 1995	Doom2 Map 3
NoSkill vs. Smight	October 15, 1995	Doom2 Map 1
NoSkill vs. TrueChamp	December 29, 1995	Doom2 Map 1
<u>NoSkill vs.</u> <u>Arcademan #2</u>	March 31, 1996	Doom2 Map 1
NoSkill vs. Arcademan #3	April 3, 1996	Doom2 Map 3
NoSkill vs. Hawk	around April 4, 1996	Doom2 Map 1

A zipfile containing all of the above demos can be downloaded here.

If you have material you would like to submit for use (pictures, unpublished demos, information, whatever), you are welcome to send it to bahdko@erols.com.



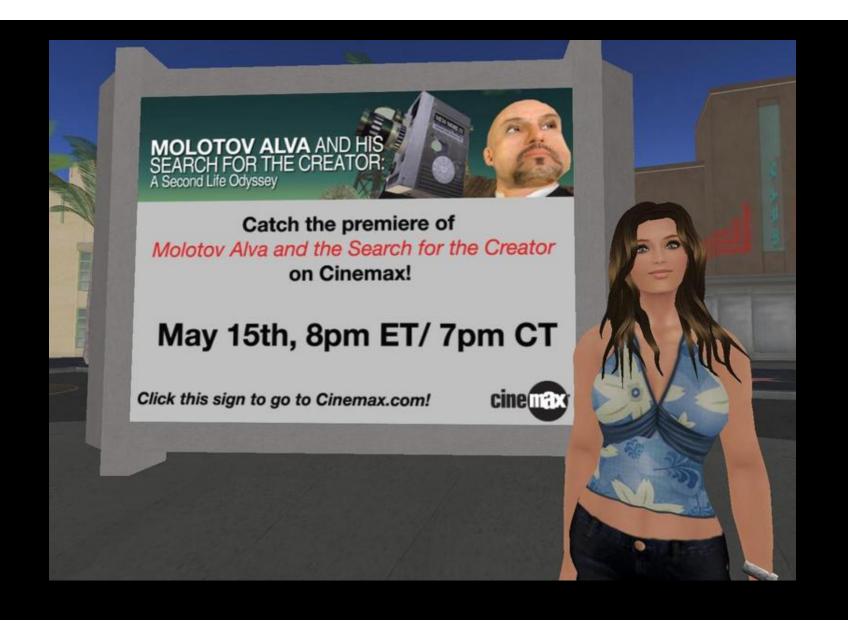
# II. Screen Capture



# **Screen Capture in WoW**



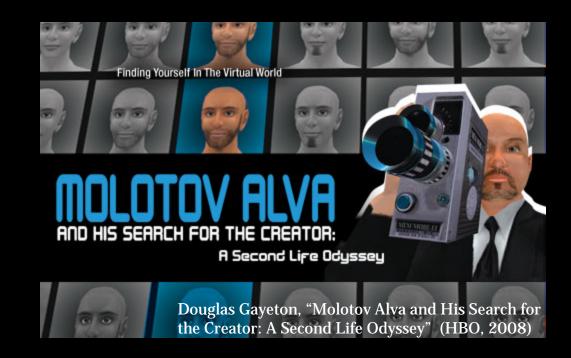
Pals for Life, "A Rough Go"



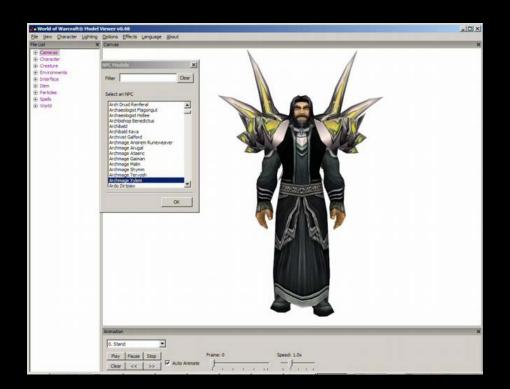


### Non-fiction or documentary machinima

"As for Molotov, I think he will offer people a window into something they wouldn't normally see on their own, yet would still be curious about. The film grew out of my realization that this was a groundbreaking moment, one that would make for a compelling journey." — Douglas Gayeton, interview with HBO



## III. Model and Map Viewers



# **Beyond Screen Capture**



Switch Series (Tristan Pope, 2005-2006)



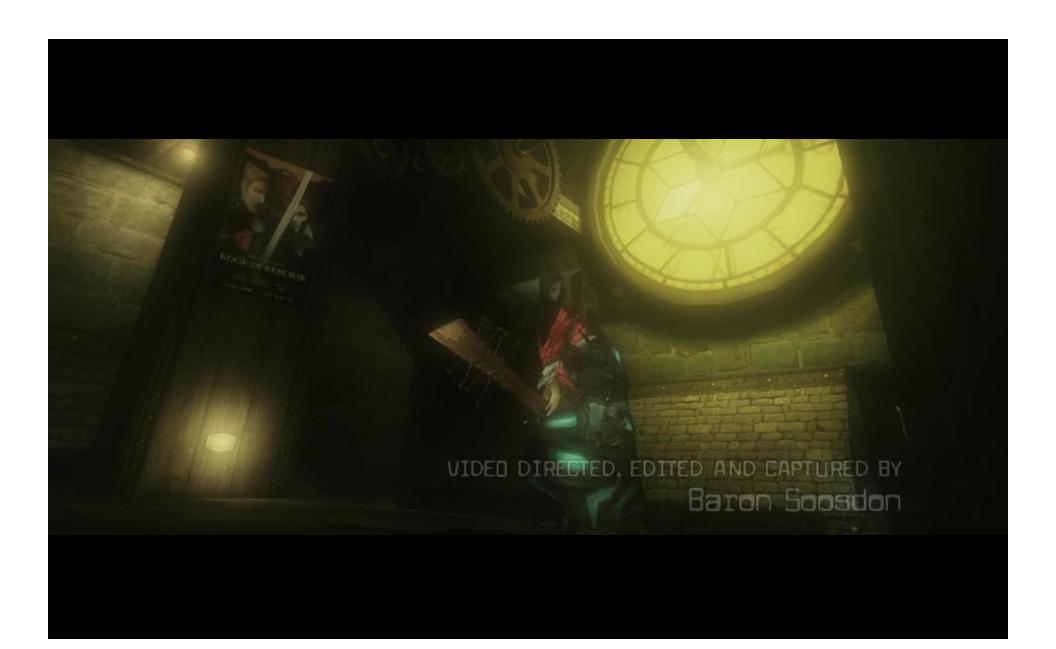
Zinwrath: The Movie (Myndflame, 2005)



Illegal Danish: Super Snacks (Myndflame, 2006) Guild meeting on the beach, scratch-built scene



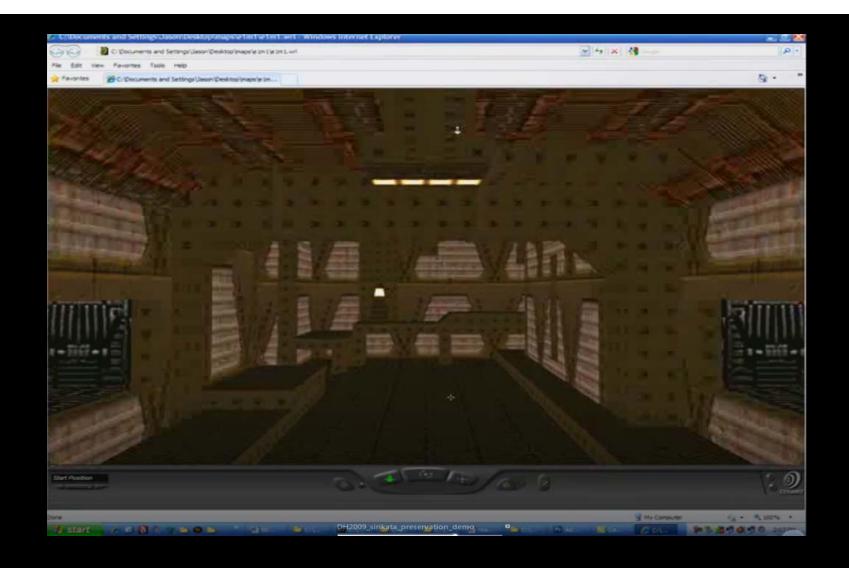
Ultimate Dreamscape (Snoman, 2007) Model and map editing.







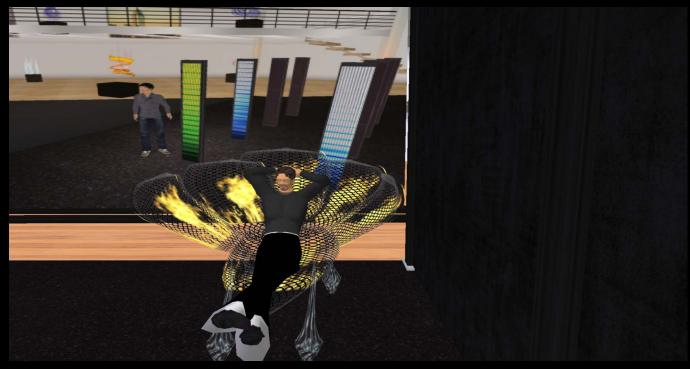




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