Lab #3—TA Sheet

8-23-91 Jeff Blum

This lab has the potential to be quite a bit of fun. Seeing computer novices at work using powerful graphics tools should prove interesting, especially if they have never done *any* computer graphics before.

Expect several people to bog down on the PostScript section of this lab. Since this is probably their first exposure to any sort of programming, the key is for each student to get results quickly. Encourage typing in one of the example programs from the CheatSheet and changing parts of it. Students will probably become more hyped if they see the results of their actions as soon as possible. After everyone seems able to get results on screen, encourage experimentation. Quantity over quality in the PostScript section of this lab may not be entirely bad. The next lab (Presentation) will focus on more aesthetic presentation work, so this lab can be more free and fun.

TopDraw should be a welcome relief to most students after they tire of PostScript. It is quite powerful and easy to experiment with. Once again, let them go wild. If it seems natural, you may want to start them cutting and pasting into other applications to get them used to the idea. This will be important in the next lab, so why not start early?

For color graphics on the NeXTdimensions, the best effect we have found is real-time video. Just get a VCR and 2 RCA cables from Media Services in East Pyne, hook it up to the NeXTdimension board in the back of a color cube, and run /**NextDeveloper**/**Demos**/**NeXTtv**. This will allow you to display the video directly off of the VCR— it is *digitized* in real time! For sound, you can either digitize it through the microphone jack on the sound box, or use something like digital ears. Otherwise, you can fudge and hook some (amplified) speakers up directly to the audio output jacks on the back of the VCR. Cheap, but it works. The latter may work out better since it is easier to implement and avoids digitizing delays that will throw the audio out of synch with the video. Good luck, and arrive early to set this one up!

Getting the VCR from Media Services needs advance planning. Ask several *weeks* in advance since you will have to fill out a bunch of forms and work out logistical details with them. Trust me. It is worth the trouble. Of course, if you own a VCR, it would be easy to just drag it along for the labs, but I leave these decisions to you.

The last part of the **Above and Beyond** section is optional on your part. Since at this time any really cool demos for the NeXT are hard to come by, and the IRIS computers have a plethora of nifty ones, you may consider it worthwhile to take a group over to ICGL for an optional get-together. You should go over and pre-select the neat demos so you know what you are doing before shoving 20 impatient novice computer folks into a small room with you. Just a thought. :-)

In case you did not know, **Buttonfly** is the key to viewing most IRIS demos. The people that staff ICGL are very helpful, so you can ask them for assistance if you get stuck. BTW—If you have not seen the IRIS demos in action and flown in **Flight** then you are in for a surprise as well!

6/23/92 - Wolff Dobson

TopDraw has gotten rather unstable in its old age, so I've redone the lab to use Create! from Stone Design instead. Create!, in my opinion, is easier to get results from in a hurry, though TopDraw is sometimes more precise.

What Jeff says, goes, in terms of the demo, the movie and ICGL, though playing with Create! in color might interest some people. Still, ICGL rules graphics. Hopefully, there will be a fair number of new 3-D demos out for system 3.0, but we won't know that until later.

There is also a new release of "Flight" (commonly known as dog) available on the VGXs. This comes complete with mist, programmable time-of-day, and so on. Be sure to try to find a VGX–they're faster, too.