

# GRAPHIC EXCHANGE



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## THE TIME <sup>HAS</sup> COME

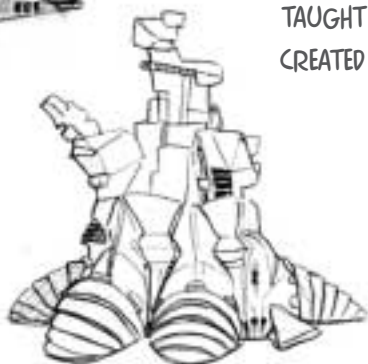
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# STORM ON T

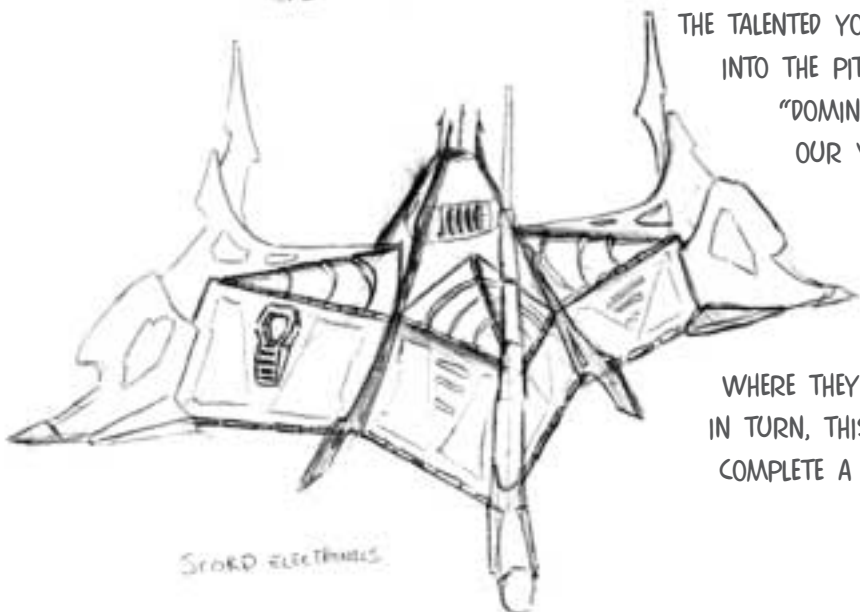
ONCE UPON A TIME, IN A VAST AND WEALTHY COUNTRY, THERE LIVED A BOY WITH A VERY ADVENTUROUS SPIRIT, WHO LOVED TO DRAW — AND HE ESPECIALLY LOVED TO DRAW CHARACTERS FOR COMPUTER GAMES.



ARMAND ELECTRONICS



MERC ELECTRONICS



SCORD ELECTRONICS

WHEN HE WAS VERY YOUNG — BACK IN THE TIME OF THE ASTEROIDS — HE TAUGHT HIMSELF TO DRAW ON THE COMPUTER, AND HE AND HIS BROTHER CREATED A COMPUTER GAME CALLED “AUNTARCTIC ADVENTURE” WHICH THEY SUCCEEDED IN GETTING PUBLISHED IN ANOTHER VAST AND WEALTHY COUNTRY TO THE NORTH. HE WAS JUST 16.

AND THEY MADE THEIR FORTUNES IN THE TIME OF THE ASTEROIDS, WHEN THERE WERE MANY GAMERS BETWEEN TEN AND THIRTY WHO WANTED TO PLAY COMPUTER GAMES.

THE BOY LIKED TO WORK VERY HARD. AS HE GREW TO MANHOOD, HE SPENT A LONG TIME STUDYING DRAWING AND ANIMATION AND FILM. OVER THE NEXT TEN YEARS, HE WORKED WITH SIX SOFTWARE DEVELOPERS ON NINE DIFFERENT COMPUTER GAMES, PREPARING HIMSELF FOR HIS BIG ADVENTURE.

THE BOY, NOW A YOUNG MAN, FREELANCED ON PROJECTS SUCH AS “MAELSTROM” AND “ULTIMA UNDERWORLD II”. THEN, ONE DAY, HE MET ANOTHER YOUNG MAN, WHO HAD HIS OWN GAME COMPANY CALLED DISTANT THUNDER ENTERTAINMENT.

THE TALENTED YOUNG MAN AND HIS NEW FRIEND THREW THEMSELVES INTO THE PIT OF DESIGN, BUILDING GAMES CALLED “G-NOME” AND “DOMINION”. WHEN THE COMPANY WAS SOLD TO 7TH LEVEL, OUR YOUNG MAN WAS NAMED CREATIVE DIRECTOR FOR 3D GAMES. AND HE WAS PLAYING, AND VERY HAPPY.

BUT BOTH YOUNG MEN SHARED A SIMILAR VISION AND THEIR QUEST FOR SUPERIOR GAME DESIGN ULTIMATELY LED THEM TO THE KINGDOM OF ION, WHERE THEY MET THREE OTHER YOUNG MEN OF A LIKE MINDSET. IN TURN, THIS LED TO THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE OF THEIR LIVES, TO COMPLETE A GAME THEY CALLED “DOMINION: STORM OVER GIFTS”.

AND THEY CALLED THE COMPANY **ION STORM**.

# THE HORIZON

BY DINAH TOLTON

THE YOUNG MAN IN OUR TALE IS JERRY O'FLAHERTY.

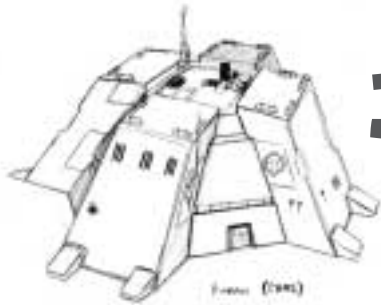
O'Flaherty and Todd Porter, together with John Romero, Tom Hall and Bob Wright, formed Ion Storm in 1997.

For 29 year old O'Flaherty, accepting the position of art director at Ion Storm meant the beginning of a routine of long days and longer nights.

With game players now clammering for faster, more intelligent, real-time strategy and role playing games, Jerry and Todd's real life battle has been to manufacture a challenge for current hits such as Blizzard's hugely popular *Warcraft II* and *Starcraft*. Bungie Software, too, has captured a significant portion of the market with *Myth: The Fallen Lords*, with its editable war tactics.

O'Flaherty's designers at Ion Storm have spent many hours playing all kinds of computer games, studying and analyzing them. They also look for creative inspiration in the work of film directors like Ridley Scott, Steven Spielberg and James Cameron, as well as fantasy artists like Whelan and Frazetta and Parkinson.

Despite the pressure of impatient gamers who can't understand why release dates are late, Ion Storm has resisted the temptation to rush products to market. In fact, in the search for funding for their titles, they approached Eidos, a large game publisher, specifically because Eidos understood the importance of not rushing out a premature release. Eidos has exhibited patience and support for Ion's fanatical attention to detail and quality.



Vehicle (1998)

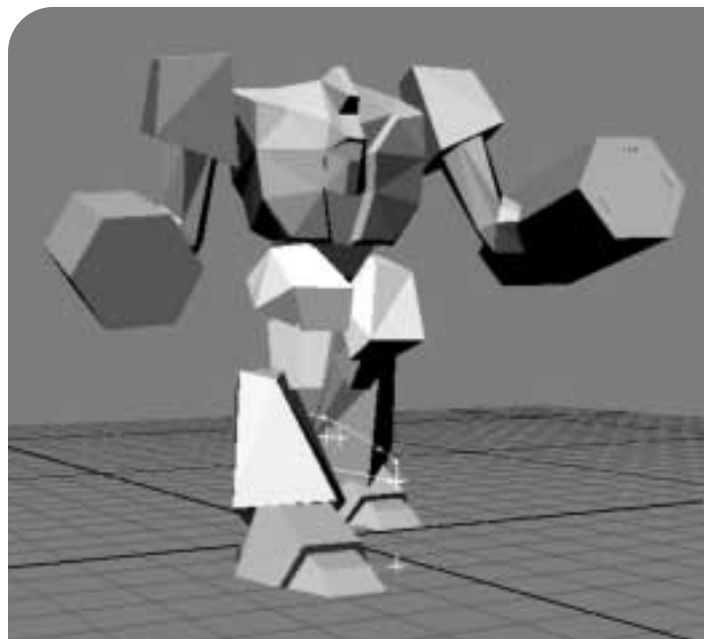
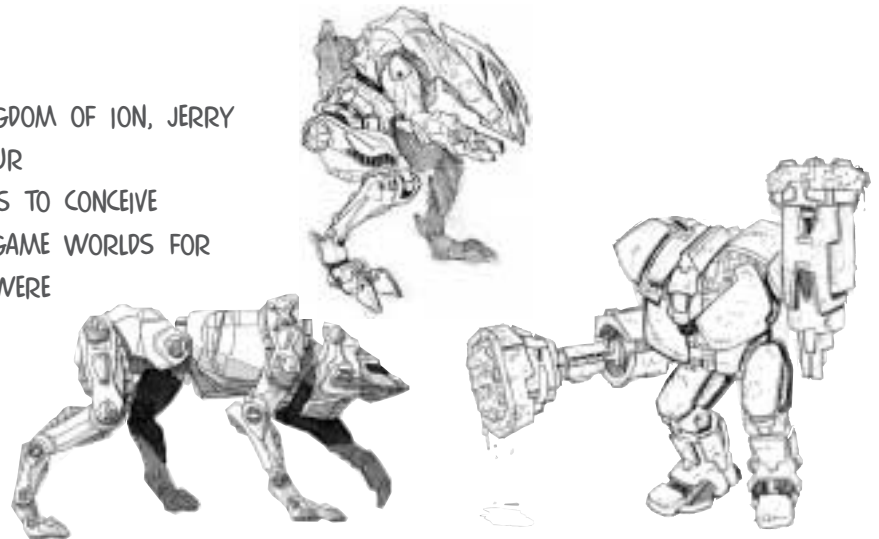
**I**N THE MAGIC KINGDOM OF ION, JERRY WORKED WITH HIS FOUR DESIGNER/PRODUCERS TO CONCEIVE ELABORATE FANTASY GAME WORLDS FOR THE FIVE GAMES THAT WERE TO MAKE UP ION'S SUITE OF TITLES.

THE DESIGNERS DREW ON THE TALENTS OF A TEAM OF THREE COMIC BOOK STYLE ILLUSTRATORS, AND TWENTY ANIMATORS, AND TWENTY TEXTURING AND MODELING ARTISTS, ALL OF WHOM TOOK UP THEIR PENS AND

PENCILS TO MEET THE CHALLENGE OF CREATING WORLDS UNLIKE ANY SEEN BEFORE.



WITH CARE AND PRECISION, CHARACTERS AND SCENES WERE DRAWN ON PAPER, THEN MARRIED TO TEXT, AND PRESENTED FOR APPROVAL, TO PRINCE JERRY. FINALLY, WITH THIS 'BIBLE' FOR THE GAME COMPLETE — STUFFED WITH 300 PAGES OR MORE — IT WAS TIME FOR THE REAL GAME TO BEGIN.



ION STORM'S CREW OF COMPUTER ARTISTS RELIES ON JUST a few software applications to execute their work: NewTek's *Lightwave* and *3D Studio Max* by Kinetix for modeling and animation, and Adobe *Photoshop* for creative imaging.

Each of O'Flaherty's four designer/producers has responsibility for a specific title, each overseeing a team of creative wizards; John Romero is the creator and designer of 3D action/adventure game *Daikatana*; Tom Hall oversees *Anachronox*, a 3D sci-fi role-playing game; Todd Porter directs the teams for both *Dominion: Storm Over GIFT3* and *Doppelganger*, a pair of real-time sci-fi strategy games; and Warren Spector is the designer and chief architect of *ION Storm Austin*.

The rapid influx of Windows NT tools has accelerated O'Flaherty's game plan considerably. To generate basic game code, Ion Storm invested in three different gaming engines: Quake II, Unreal, and Robo Rumble. But although these engines provide a base for development, it is still up to O'Flaherty's team to create user interfaces, set final screen resolutions for artwork, and fine tune game tactics and tools, such as weapons and characters' "health".

With his passion for film, O'Flaherty directs his designers and artists with a film director's cinematic point of view, using a frame-by-frame method that makes the animation more precise, and employing Hollywood-style framing and editing that lends a more realistic feel to animation and game play.



(from top) The RageMaster from "Daikatana", and a Scorpion Bot, a Human LionBot, and a Darkened Robotic, all from "Dominion: Storm Over GIFT3".



**A**S ROUGH SKETCHES AND SCRIBBLINGS EVOLVED INTO FINISHED ART AND WORKING INTERACTIVE SCENES, THE KINGDOM QUICKLY GREW.

ALMOST BEFORE PRINCE JERRY COULD BLINK, THERE WERE 85 OR MORE DENIZENS INHABITING ION'S NEW CASTLE, PERCHED ATOP A MAGNIFICENT TOWER: ARTISTS AND ILLUSTRATORS, DESIGNERS AND PROGRAMMERS, BUSINESS MANAGERS AND ACCOUNTANTS, EVEN MUSICIANS.

AND WORD SPREAD THROUGHOUT THE KINGDOM THAT, AT LAST, THE FIRST OF ION'S GAMES WOULD BE RELEASED TO COMPUTER GAME PLAYERS ALL ACROSS THE LAND.

GAMERS EVERYWHERE WOULD SOON FIND OUT WHETHER IT HAD BEEN WORTH THE WAIT...

*"DOMINION: STORM OVER GIFT3" (FOR WINDOWS 95) IS DUE FOR RELEASE IN MAY. DEMOS OF THIS AND OTHER ION STORM GAMES IN PROGRESS CAN BE FOUND AT [www.ionstorm.com](http://www.ionstorm.com).*

**A**ND PRINCE JERRY, TODD, AND ALL THE REST OF THE ION STORM TEAM LIVED HAPPILY EVER...

...BUT WAIT! THIS ADVENTURE HAS BARELY STARTED. AND, AS IN ANY GAME, OUR HEROES WILL PROBABLY ENCOUNTER MANY MORE OBSTACLES BEFORE THEIR FINAL SHOWDOWN.

WHICH, BEING GAME MASTERS THEMSELVES, IS PRECISELY WHAT THEY WOULD HOPE FOR. AFTER ALL, IT'S NOT WHETHER YOU WIN OR LOSE...

