First This

In more than one way this may be a confusing book. It is not about photographs and it is not about computers, at least not in the traditional way. The book shows what happens when a programmer with the ambition of a photographer and the facilities of a large research lab gets his hands on a photo digitizer and starts writing programs to transform images in every conceivable and inconceivable way. Leafing through the collection of pictures reproduced here you will probably wonder who on earth would care to go to so much trouble to create these nonsensical images. Yet these computer manipulated photographs can be fascinating. If they were not so easy to create, they might almost pass for intricate works of art. Most of the images reproduced here, however, were made in just a few seconds of computer time and startled their maker as much as the occasional viewer.

This material is just too wonderful to pass up. This book was made to share the images and the picture editing technique with more people. There's no deep message behind them, no claim on originality, and no artistic pretense. I do want to show that computer-manipulated photos do not have to be fuzzy and ugly. With some effort, and with the right tools, photos can be digitized, processed, and reproduced close to the resolution of commonly used films and photographic papers and certainly with enough detail to fool the human observer. The pictures collected here are for you to enjoy, to stare at, to feed your imagination, and to tempt you to build your own digital darkroom and duplicate the effects.

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