

GAME REVIEW

by Costantino Oliva

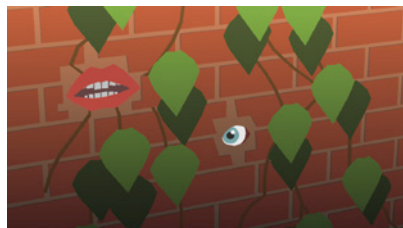
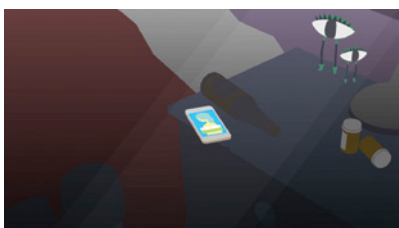
Pale Machine

Production: Ben Esposito
Platform: Web browser

OUR IDEA OF digital games certainly doesn't fit *Pale Machine*. The latest work of Ben Esposito—a multimedia artist based in Los Angeles—comprises a physical CD with eight songs and eight wacky game experiments that accompany every track on the album. The title track (or game) is a sequence of absurd vignettes: first you are somehow controlling a bottle rolling on a desk. A few seconds after, you are awkwardly maneuvering a hyper extendable tongue, which soon enough will occupy the whole screen. The game then proceeds to completely change the controls, and now you become a giant hand floating in the sky of a suburb.

It is hard to grasp, but *Pale Machine* is a tribute to many other works: games like *WarioWare* and Keita Takahashi's *Katamari Damacy* and *Noby Noby Boy*. One can also hear echos of Japanese electronic musician Nobukazu Takemura, as well of the chiptune band YMCK. But the uniqueness of *Pale Machine* is in its ability to join together interaction design and music composition. It provides an intense and inspiring experience, perfectly appropriate for an artistic setting. ●

<http://bo-en.info/URLpalemachine.html>



THINK FUN

FACT or FICTION?



Do we live our wishes when dreaming?

«» Made infamous by Sigmund Freud, the idea is that we spend one third of our lives dreaming about what we would like to do. Our rational brain suppresses these feelings.

On the other extreme, our brain is just as active in certain sleep stages. These neural firings express themselves in dreams. There are no deep hidden emotions behind them.

Somewhere in between lie recent studies that show that dreams are important in memory, learning and emotions. If you sleep without dreaming these qualities will suffer. For example, rat studies in 2001 showed how while dreaming they replayed solutions to mazes to commit them to their long-term memory.

Send your questions to think@um.edu.mt and we'll find out if it's the truth or just a fib!