



Computer Graphics World, December 1999

Author: Jenny Donelan

[www.cgw.com](http://www.cgw.com)

### Pixologic Merges 2D with 3D

A new product from a new company, ZBrush from Pixologic has been designed to close the gap between 2D and 3D sculpting and painting, with an emphasis on ease of use. Artists employ tools and palettes in a manner analogous to 2D painting applications, but ZBrush's proprietary technology embeds depth and material information in each pixel of an image, giving users the ability to create 3D content without calculations, wireframes, or NURBs. Using a brush or other tool, users create and distort objects with intuitive pushing and pulling motions, then paint textures and other attributes directly onto the objects.

Among the product's strongest attributes are its graphically appealing and accessible menu bars, which run along both sides of the screen. The menus are highly configurable, so users can keep the tools and palettes they use most often at close range.

Graphics artist Peter Kim, who develops videogames for Electronic Arts, is an early user of ZBrush. "The materials editor, which lets you paint textures on objects with a brush, is really intuitive, and a timesaver." He says that before using ZBrush, he used Photoshop to apply textures to objects, "which works well but is labor-intensive." Other 3D paint programs he has used require fewer steps, but are not as precise as Photoshop. The alternative, ZBrush, "could be the texture-painting product for the videogame industry."