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DANCIN' IN OUTER SPACE?



BY MARK VON PFEIFFER

**(To be read in voice of action movie trailer narrator set against the straining melodies of delicate violins, which slowly escalate into a flowering crescendo representing the persistence of the mankind's manifest destiny): "IN A WORLD FULL OF DANGER... two men... had the courage... to set themselves free...and reawaken a dying race... to live and LOVE another day."*

Ok. You've bungee-jumped, parachuted, snowboarded, you've even rollerbladed! Well little girl, do you have cojones big enough to lash yourself in, ten feet from four million pounds of high-grade rocket fuel, in a spaceship with over 270,00 moving parts built by the lowest bidder? Sound a bit like a movie? It should, I stole it from *Armageddon*. Gene Meyers, President of Space Island Group claims that very, very soon, mankind will be sipping Martinis and enjoying heretofore unimagined genres of music, sports and fashion whilst hurtling through the void 400 miles above the big blue marble.

Space Island Group is the technical yin to the yang of Dave Skinner's entertainment powerhouse All-4-One-Management. Joining forces, the two companies hope to have the first recreational space platform in place by the year 2004. By 2007 they aspire to have fully functional hotels, dance clubs, sports arenas and orgy-pits pleasuring consumers from here to infinity (that last bit is mine...hope they take it to heart). Personally, as far as new sports go, all I can think about is bounty hunters, rocket sleds and booze. Screw Michael Jordan.

Of the two dynamic personalities, it's Skinner who can be called the musical visionary.

"Drum and bass, house, tech house, dark house—all these labels. It's getting too refined and it's segregating society. That's

why we need music that will bring it back together. That will make history alone; it'll be another Lennon/Beatles thing, an evolution revolution that will change the world!"

So, at the moment Skinner is preparing himself somewhere deep in the heart of Texas for a kind of cosmic Easter egg hunt. In a relentless, yearlong quest Skinner means to find the world's greatest DJ who will, for one brief moment in time (at least by default), be the greatest DJ in the universe—unless the aliens have other, more sinister plans. But let's not talk anymore about that right now.

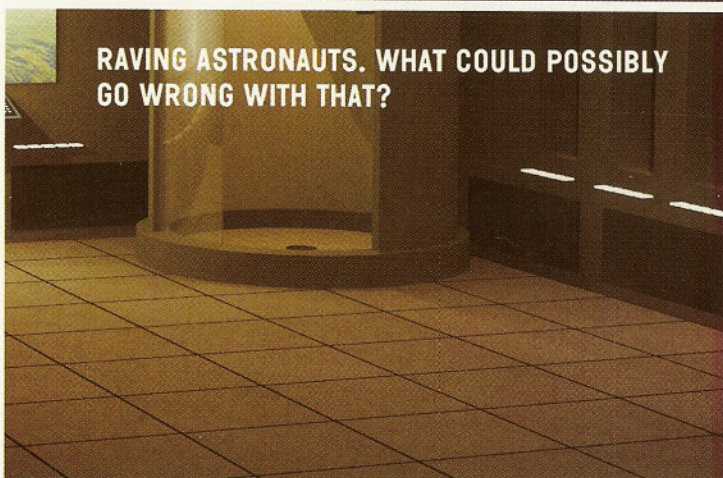
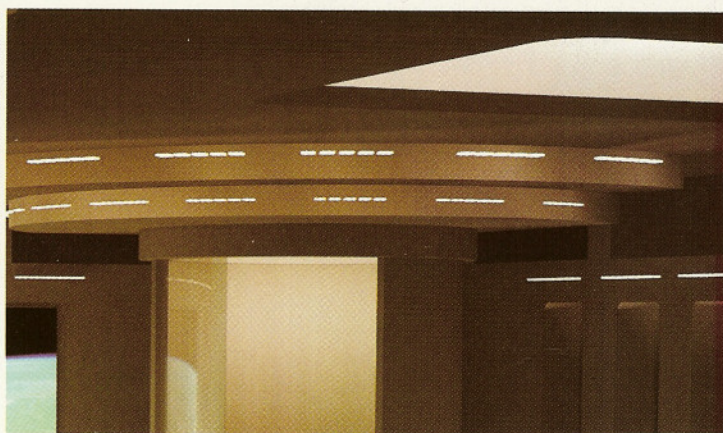
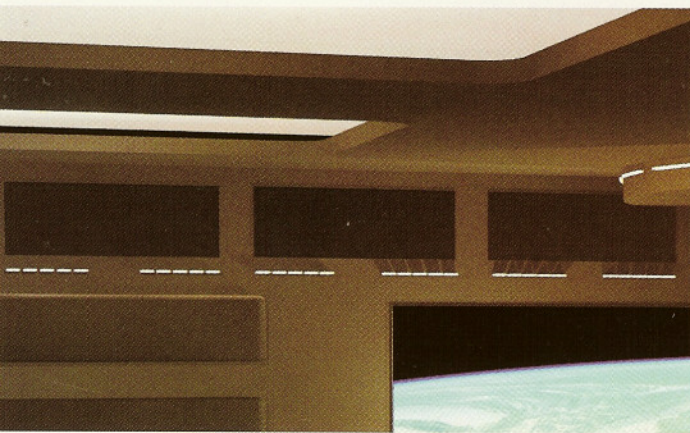
Dancing in zero gravity? Hmmmm. Meyers and his team have apparently spent a bountiful amount of time in studying youth culture.

"We look at a lot of the rock videos which have been around for the four, five, or six years, and they kind of have this space "theme" where a lot of the performers try to look like they're floating around in space anyhow. These facilities of ours, which will be in place by 2004 or 2005 will allow them to 'perform' in those environments. Additionally, Gene has his own, albeit radical, notions about what might prove to be an 'out of this world concert.' There might be a way to do a performance up there in the partial gravity section which would be broadcast down to a number of similar concerts that were going on at the same time around the world with the images of space behind the performers down here. You might be able to match some of the motions so that the one on the screen would be able to jump three times as high or even float around and coordinate it with what people on stage in front of the screen are doing."

With advanced ideas like this it's easy to see why Meyers is so far ahead of the pack.

"No one has even thought of this yet," Skinner agrees.





RAVING ASTRONAUTS. WHAT COULD POSSIBLY GO WRONG WITH THAT?

How much will it cost to spend a week in one of the many External Fuel Tanks (E.T.s for short), which will be recycled into play spaces for the wild at heart? At first the main concern will focus on paying for the project, so for a time, costs will keep many moon-worshippers of the five-figure salary variety from getting closer to their life-giving mother.

"When everything settles out, prices for a two week stay will fall somewhere between \$60,000 – \$100,000, similar to a world cruise or an African safari. We want to make it accessible to everyone. They aren't stopping there," Skinner hints, "By 2006 we will take one of these recycled fuel tanks or E.T.s and orbit the moon. Quite like a blimp, it will have a little cockpit on the bottom and strap-on legs."

If you're like me, you might just be wondering what steps Space Island Group is taking to defend against inevitable confrontations, which will arise with the aliens. Are they going to arm the shuttle with clusters of super-charged plasma cannons? The words "laser howitzer" or "mega-nutron particle decimator" make me feel even more secure. Strangely Meyers is casual, even dismissive on this point.

"It depends on what kind of music they like. We aren't spending a lot of time thinking about alien problems up there; if they want to buy tickets, we'll see to them. Come on in."

Yes, it certainly sounds like some lofty goals have been set, but it seems like a lot of emphasis is being put on fun. Has Space Island Group taken the necessary precautions to guard against the potential dangers, which might arise from such brazen space travel? I myself, had to buy stock in the adult diaper company Depends just to ride the Concord after last year's mishap, and complications resulting in casualties on a space station would make the Titanic look like a clam bake. What if for some reason, whether it be collision, instrument malfunction or human error, the orbit of the platform decayed. Kind of like Apollo1, but instead of three astronauts burning alive on a launch

platform, it would plummet, chock full of brave travelers into the earth's atmosphere, turning quickly from a dreamy thrill-filled wonderland into a white-hot mass grave, hurtling at ultra super-sonic speed towards a large metropolitan city. Perhaps Paris?

"With our advanced radar we can detect masses the size of a baseball coming towards the station, in case of a disease or fire break out we can isolate sections in order to contain it. There will be hospital facilities onboard, just like a cruise ship. These things will probably look more like a cruise ship than anything else," says Meyers. Thank God.

IF YOU FEEL YOU'VE GOT THE RIGHT STUFF CHECK OUT THESE WEBSITES:

<http://all4onemanagement.20m.com>

<http://www.spaceislandgroup.com>

