

## **Bill Westheimer**

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### **Ascent** – The Evolution of Analog Man to Digital Man

The relentless process of evolution from simple amoebas to complex human beings continues onward. We know that man's forbears were apes, and before that other less likely creatures. Man continues to evolve, transforming into unknown future creatures more able to thrive in today's digital world.

Ascent explores this evolution from today's analog man to tomorrow's digital man. As our modern environment of digital interrelationships evolves from history's analog world man continues to change and adapt.

In my Ascent project, I utilize historic analog photographic processes and cutting edge digital modeling technologies to create 3 dimensional digital sculptures from 2 dimensional analog photograms. The technologies used evolve similarly to the evolution of man. Through multiple iterations of a specific analog to digital process the shadows of the objects evolve into 3D sculptures.

The human hand is captured as a series of thirty six 2D photograms created at 10 degree intervals as the hand is rotated. Those analog photogram shadows of the hand are digitized and then converted into a 3D digital model. That digital model is output using rapid prototyping 3D printing technology. The resulting resin sculpture of a hand is one evolutionary step away from the original hand to a digital hand.

This rapid prototype sculpture of the evolved hand is then used to create 36 more analog 2D photograms, which are scanned, then synthesized into a new digital 3D model, and again output as a 3D rapid prototype. The new sculpture has progressed one more step on the evolutionary path to digital man.

One complete set of all 20 3D printed hands complete with lighting have been fabricated. The original analog man hand sculpture is a bronze casting with a white patina. At this time only 15 of the 180 silver gelatin photograms have been framed. The complete installation comprises 21 sculptures each roughly 15" high representing the evolutionary steps from the original analog man to create the hand of Digital Man. Each of the 20 3D printed sculptures is mounted on a 3D printed base which contain a LED light that shows the inner and outer sculpture.

The 21 sculptures are to be arranged on a platform about 1 foot above the floor of the gallery in an area of about 6 feet in diameter with the analog hand in the center and a spiral of the evolution extending around it. The 180 silver gelatin photogram prints are 14"x11" will be framed and hung in a strip or matrix nearby. The 21 sculptures and 180 prints are available for exhibition.

More information is at [www.billwest.com/ascent](http://www.billwest.com/ascent)