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*Gossip* (1990)

*Wikipedia* refers to "gossip" as the act of spreading news from person to person, especially rumors or private information, and connotes that the news usually has a personal or trivial nature. Gossip has earned a reputation for introducing (perhaps intentional) errors and other (negative) variations. "Gossip" is more easily associated with "chat" than with "conversation," and far removed from "discourse." What is Csuri's view of gossip?

Gossip is there, it's a given. It's colorful and glossy. One bit generates more bits. It's magnetic: one piece attracts another piece; gossip doesn't repel gossip, it draws more matter to itself. It swirls, gathering momentum. Some bits fall away, some build in density. It's light, airy, and it travels. Gossip is made up of individual circular utterances. They are self-contained, allowing some shaping from the outside but no penetration to their insides: A bit of gossip is self-contained, assured, self-sustaining. The utterances will attract other utterances but none of the originating utterances are transformed by new gossip.

Csuri's floating orbs of gossip are empty in the middle. They originate from personae that are made up of similar orbs, empty in the middle, which when stacked form towers without centers. The beings which put forth gossip are made up of a stack of gossipy orbs, devoid of cores, made of what they emanate and emanating what they are made of.

Csuri's *Gossip* is playfully observant. It is accepting with an implied knowledge of the shallowness of its attraction. It is close to how Saul Steinberg might whimsically treat the subject, and removed from how Jules Feiffer might sardonically castigate it. Csuri's view is a kind acceptance of our foibles in which he shares. (p. 110)



*Origami Flowers Frame 89 (2005)*

There is not much that is simple about *Simple Flowers*. *Simple Flowers* is a three-dimensional mathematical "object" set within a space with a chosen point-of-view and a light source placed by the artist. I see it as a clump of irises, believable in their grace and elegance, but abstracted as if they are origami. The flowers have a Japanese delicacy about them. They seem made of thin paper with sharp cuts and intricate folds that have rendered them three-dimensional. An origami influence may be there or may only be imagined, but Csuri has knowledge of and admiration for Japanese art and culture.

*Simple Flowers* brings to mind Van Gogh's *Irises* (1889) by subject, color, and composition. Van Gogh's flowers, however, look thicker in their structure and feel heavier in their physicality of oil paint on canvas. They are drenched in sunlight. Csuri's flowers are more delicate, swayed by a gentle breeze, dappled with bright light that leaves shadows. The flowers of *Simple Flowers* and *Irises* are ephemeral but in different ways. Van Gogh's flowers are in full early-summer bloom, will fade, their petals will wilt, whiter, and fall to the ground, and their unsightliness will be cleaned up by a careful gardener. Csuri's are free from the effects of time and independent of a natural environment. Yet what stability they have in their life in a computer is dependent on a tap on a keyboard that could subtly or drastically alter them, or by another tap that would delete them forever.

*Simple Flowers* seems ultimately a meditative homage to calmness in complexity, and to peace amidst a fragile environment. In looking at Csuri's image, we see complexity of many shapes and lines, intensities of light and dark colors, thin solidity and some transparency, and spatial depth and density due to multiple overlaps of material. We also know somewhat the mathematical complexity of the polygons that actually constitute the image, metaphorically parallel to the atoms that constitute natural flowers. That polygons or atoms can construct such beauty is sublime.

*Iris*es, because of what we see or perhaps because of the biographical information about the Van Gogh that we know, seems to have a nervousness about it. *Simple Flowers*, because of what we see and perhaps because of what I know of the stability of Csuri's personality, seems to have calmness about it. Van Gogh is agitated by the delicacy of life; Csuri embraces it. (p. 166)



*Emily's Scribbles Frame 300* (2005)

As you might infer from the title and the gestures, Emily is Mr. Csuri's granddaughter. He watched as the two-year-old scribbled her crayons on paper with intense and carefree abandonment. He wondered what she thought as she marked, if the drawing had cognitive content for her, if she was expressing something and concluded that she was likely working freely, intently, and with abandon--like a child. He delighted in her involvement; it inspired him. He longed nostalgically for kinetic mark making, for direct involvement with the physicality of materials, the process of putting crayon to paper. He was once, before all, an artist who pushed and pulled and dragged paint on canvas, with nothing between him and the surface except a brush, if he chose to use one, or his fingers. Csuri remembered when he was joyously lost in the process of making with abandon like Emily.

He took Emily's abandon as an inspiration for *Emily's Scribbles*. What we see here, however, are not the uninhibited hand gestures of an adult artist: *Emily's Scribbles* is a mathematical model of polygons aligned by vectors manipulated by an arithmetic "ribbon function" designed by Csuri and Steve May that allows for infinite manipulations of the same objects. In his method of working, Csuri imagines but does not actually see the effects of the logarithmic constraints he is imposing or the configurations he is building until the computer calculates them and eventually renders them visible on a monitor. Through strokes on the keyboard, Csuri can create one, two, or hundreds of

versions of the model, wait for them to materialize as thumbnails, and select the ones he wants as-is or for further manipulation. In further manipulation, however, it is the whole "model" in three-dimensional space that will be altered, not one single line, or shade or tint of one particular color. (This is not Photoshop.)

*Emily's Scribbles* is a three-dimensional image printed on a two-dimensional piece of paper. It is not flat marks on paper like Emily's crayon drawing. Note that the lines of Csuri's artwork are lit by a light source, highlighting some lines and shadowing others. Lines in the foreground appear larger and closer to us than those in the background because Csuri's programs accept a Renaissance perspective point-of-view. He has chosen the place from which we see this scene: many others were available to him.

Csuri let go of the joy of hands-on processes, direct markings on tactile physical materials such as paper or canvas that gives an artist instant visual information upon which to make further visual decisions such as to stop, make more marks, erase some, and tidy some or smudge others. This is not a Cy Twombly; it is a Chuck Csuri. *Emily's Scribbles* is a beautiful, dynamic, sophisticated image that could only be achieved as it is in the way that Csuri constructed it. In the end it is gorgeous to look at, triggering an immediate visceral reaction and rewarding close inspection. (p. 168)