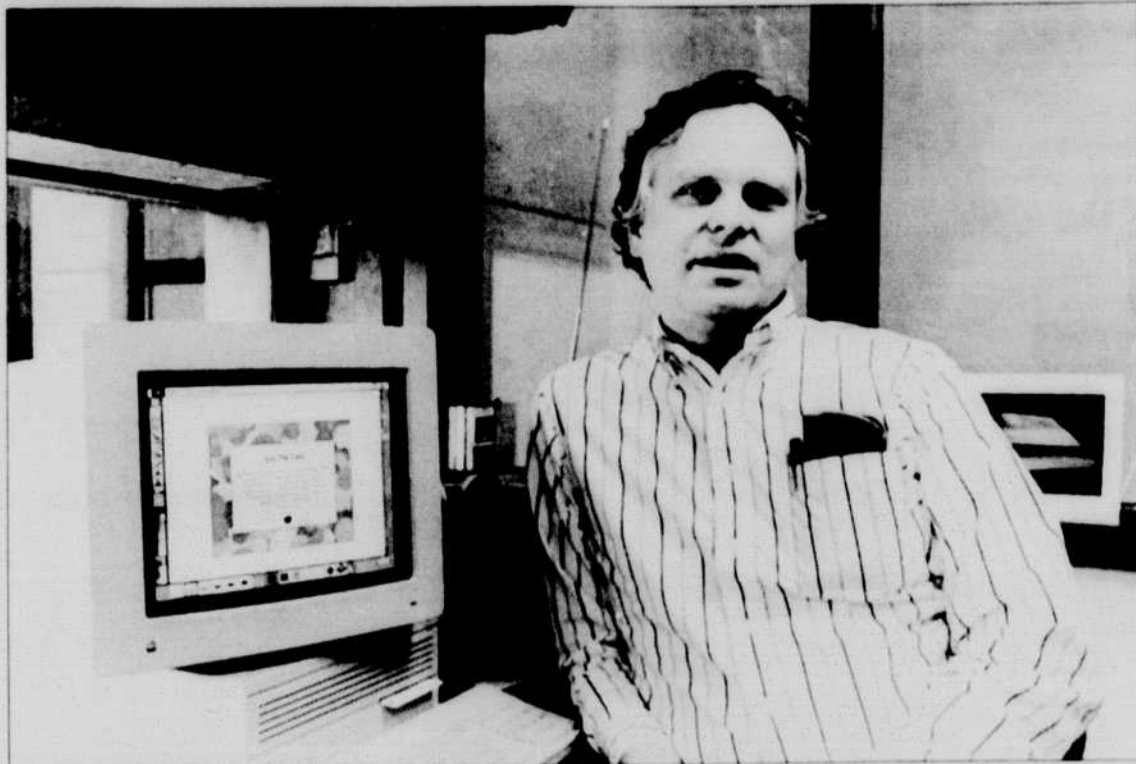


UNIVERSITY



Fine arts professor Craig Hickman shows his award-winning program Kid Pix in action.

Photo by Sean Poston

Professor's Kid Pix wins award

□ A computer magazine ranks Craig Hickman's creation as the top kids' program

By Carrie Dennett
Emerald Associate Editor

Craig Hickman, an assistant professor of fine arts, noticed in 1989 that his then 3-year-old son Ben became frustrated when trying to use the MacPaint program on the family's home computer.

"I noticed that for him, the process of making the picture was more important than the product," Hickman said. "Even when he would print out to make a hard copy, he had more fun just watching the printer work."

Hickman began work on what is now known as Kid Pix, a computer paint program for younger artists. It was recently judged Best Children's Program by the editors of *MacUser* magazine.

Hickman's son had difficulties clicking onto the correct MacPaint menu, or accidentally clicking into another window or program. Kid Pix prevents these problems.

Kid Pix is also more fun. The program features a variety of

sound effects, including a scratching sound when the Kid Pix's pencil tool is used and a dripping sound when the paintbrush is in action.

If kids want to destroy their creation, they can do so by detonating a firecracker on it or banishing it to the "Black Hole."

Kid Pix is user-friendly, a must for young children and helpful for adults, too, Hickman said.

"When you get a new program, it's fun to play around with it," Hickman said. "You don't want to have to look everything up in an instruction manual."

Hickman said his creation was meant for his son, but he expected other people would want to use it. However, he did not expect the program to be a commercial hit.

The first Kid Pix program was a black-and-white public domain version, available for free. The second version, the one sent to Broderbund Software, Inc. was in color but had limited sound effects.

In a rare move, the software company Broderbund — which receives thousands of programs from creators wanting them to market their software — accepted the program immediately. The current version was re-

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— Craig Hickman,
Kid Pix designer

leased in March 1991, with expanded special effects created by Broderbund's sound department.

The program received a 1991 *MacUser* Editor's Choice Award, known as an Eddy, in San Francisco on Jan. 12. The Eddy judges said Kid Pix "is not just 1991's best children's program — it's as imaginatively conceived and well executed a piece of software as we could find in any category, period."

The program has received five other awards, including a British Educational Technology Award and a Parents' Choice Foundation award.

Broderbund will not release sales figures, but a spokeswoman said industry lists of the best selling software show Kid Pix near the top in the home and recreational use category.

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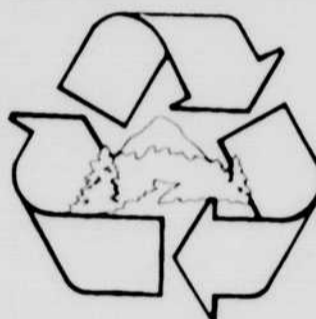
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