

# SWITCH

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Volume 1  
Number 1 *Information on the Internet*

Article 5

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1-1-1997

## Web Tribes

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### Recommended Citation

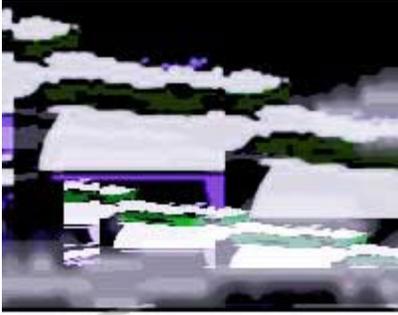
Squire, Joseph (1997) "Web Tribes," *SWITCH*: Vol. 1: No. 1, Article 5.  
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all #1 #2 #3 #4 #5 #6 #7 #8 #9 #10 #11 #12 #13 #14 #15 #16 #17 #18



information on the internet

## Web Tribes

Joseph Squire on Jan 1 1997

issue 01

### thoughts about the web

I'm **fascinated** by the Web, but also profoundly **ambivalent**. Don't let anybody fool you into believing that the Internet is everything it's hyped as. And don't be fooled into thinking that its a place brimming with incredible **art**.

It isn't.

The Web, which is the Internet at its best, is an awkward and clunky environment for an artist to work in. The design possibilities are excruciatingly limited. Images load slowly under even the best of circumstances. And it can get frustrating if you don't particularly like watching video the size of a postage stamp, or listening to sound in 20 second increments.

But still, I'm drawn to the Web and have even committed myself to working in it as my chosen **medium**. I'm not so much interested in what the Web is, but rather in what it can become. I'm particularly curious about how artists will work here.

Independent of medium or tool or technique, there are timeless aspects of art that endure.

Artists communicate.

They accomplish this by speaking a symbolic language that is shared by the tribe. The Web is a very unusual kind of **tribe**, but the word fits. And like all tribes before it, there will be those who give expression to the beliefs and values of the group.

They'll call themselves artists.

The language they will use won't look or feel like anything that we've experienced before. I don't know what the exact shape of that language will be. It's beyond my ability to imagine. But I know that I'm witnessing its beginning.



## ::CrossReference

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**:: Web Tribes** - Jan 1 1997

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