RUNWAY FOUNDER STORY - SCOTT SNIBBE, EYEGROOVE

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by Runway Admin

Scott Snibbe is an artist, entrepreneur, and the co-founder and CEO of a brand new app called Eyegroove. He was previously the founder of Snibbe Studio, producer of interactive music apps, including the world's first app album Björk: Biophilia; and Snibbe Interactive, a developer of immersive gesture and touch interactive experiences for clients including James Cameron's Avatar and The Beijing Olympics. This is his story.

Where are you from?

I was born in New York City. My parents were big into the tech/art scene in the 60s. We moved to Massachusetts then later to California when I was 10. A neighbor was Gary Kildall, father of both the CP/M operating system and of my best friend. Gary was a major influence.

How did you get started in tech?

I remember when I first saw the Apple II at 10–it made me want to do graphics and music for the rest of life. In school (Brown University and RISD) I studied computer science and film. I started my career working for a company that created After Effects which was sold to Adobe. Working there post-acquisition wasn't as innovative as I'd hoped and I eventually left to join Interval Research Corporation. This was Paul Allen's version of Xerox PARC. I worked at IRC for 4 years, learned computer vision, interactive music, got to work with Laurie Anderson and Brian Eno, but almost nothing made it out of the lab. It's hard to distribute that stuff.

I realized the only way to start something super innovative was to create your own company. That's when I started Snibbe

Interactive. We created interactive experiences like James Cameron's Avatar Experience Traveling Exhibition. When the iPad came out, it was a new outlet for these kinds of innovative interactive music projects. That's when I started another company called Snibbe Studio where we made the first app album with Björk, called Biophilia.

With Snibbe Studio, we made several other interactive music apps, but it was a difficult business model because it wasn't scalable. We thought about apps that people use the most, and how you only ever use about 20 apps. We wanted to create a top 20 app.

That's how we came up with the idea for Eyegroove, we combine music video and interactivity—an "instant music video" app that lets people bring their videos to life with amazing music and effects in a social network. We want to do for music video what Instagram did for pictures.

What does the future of interactive media look like?

I've noticed we're moving into a creator culture vs. consumer culture, or using the nerdier term, "user generated content." YouTube is probably the last giant of video consuming culture. Twitter and Instagram used to be "art projects". Now everyone loves taking and sharing square photos. The next step is music

videos. Believe it or not, fan music videos already make more money than "official music videos". How much bigger do you think that will grow now that Eyegroove lets you make them instantly?

I just read an article about a friend of mine working on a technology to replace actors. Actors can scan themselves at various ages, entitling themselves to the rights of their appearance at different ages. Maybe someday we'll communicate through Hollywood quality movie clips automatically created from our short descriptions.

What's your advice for entrepreneurs starting their own companies?

I learned from making every mistake you could. If you're not business oriented, get a really strong business partner as early as possible. Make sure you're covered strategically and operationally. Don't use your own money if possible because it causes too much anxiety. And if you can't convince others your ideas should be funded then you should revisit the idea—if your idea is any good someone should be willing to fund it from the get-go.

Any tips to be more creative?

It might sound like a far out answer, but creativity is like nature, it has a natural flow. You have to spend time to get to know yourself, and especially to accept yourself, to honestly understand your own positive and negative qualities without judgment. It's a psychological process in which you remove the blocks towards accomplishing great things with your life. A great way to get there is to spend time outdoors, away from computers, or to do yoga,

meditate, cook, etc.

What hurts creativity?

Stay away from addictive activities. Finding a balance between creating and consuming is also important.

Check out these awesome videos made with Eyegroove

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