

### A Three-Dimensional Life

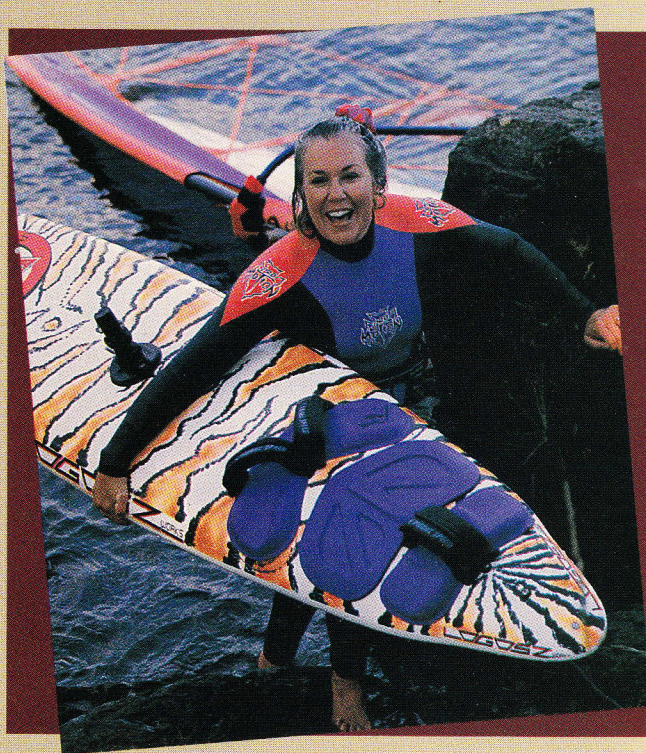
**W**arning: If you dream of some elusive future where you'll windsurf frequently, work when it's not blowing and contemplate majestic sunsets on a daily basis, do not read this article; it'll probably make you sick.

But if you're strong enough to keep reading, meet Sharon McCormack. Avid windsurfer. Gorge resident. One of the nation's top holographers. She doesn't need to call the wind-line in the morning ... she can see what is happening at the Hatchery without lifting her head off the pillow.

A love of windsurfing, talent in a unique art and desire for independence and fun have brought McCormack to the Gorge—to a light-filled home on a bluff above the Columbia River in White Salmon, Washington.

It is an artist's home, decorated in muted colors of the Southwest, while large windows frame one of the most majestic views of the Northwest. Sculptures, plants and quirky keepsakes compete for the eye with outdoor views of rock, river and sky.

McCormack says she was an "art-oholic" long before she got



PHOTOS BY JAY CARROLL

**Sail when it's windy, work when it's not— another rough day for Sharon McCormack.**

into holography, but no other medium gave her the satisfaction of this high-tech art form.

"When I first heard about holography, I didn't believe it," she remembers. "But then I saw some early holograms. I was hooked."

She studied holography in San Francisco, but at the time holograms were only being made of inanimate objects. They were largely curiosities.

Fortunately the art and technology of holography eventually evolved, and McCormack returned to it after a stint in cinematography and an extended visit to Europe.

"There was a new process ... making holograms from movie film [rather than photographic film]. I felt that a career had been created for me."

There was not, however, much work—yet. For several years McCormack apprenticed, taught and made holographic optical printers and lensing systems for optical printers. A

commission to make a very large, very futuristic hologram, "Time Man," for a Silicon Valley bar helped McCormack make the transition from struggling artist to professional holographer.

"Time Man," a hologram shot in video, which blended 14 master tapes with digital effects, was not only a riveting piece of holographic art, it was the first hologram to tell a complete story.

An exhibit for the '84 Summer Olympics in Los Angeles and other projects followed, and McCormack at last was making a living doing what she liked best.

But something was missing. "I needed a sport," she says. One day while on a sailboat in San Francisco Bay, thinking she was the fastest person on the water, McCormack saw "these things" ripping by.

"I thought, 'If I'm having this much fun on this big boat, how much more fun could I

have on those?'"

Before long she was addicted. "Windsurfing became my total priority. My whole perspective changed on time and work. ... I needed to be free when it was windy."

In part toward this end, she started thinking about leaving San Francisco. The last day of a summer spent in the Gorge clinched the deal.

"I was headed back to San Francisco and had loaded all my stuff in my van, with my windsurfing gear on the bottom. About Cascade Locks I realized that with the weather conditions, it must be raging out east. I turned around and drove back to the Wall, unloaded all my stuff to get to my equipment and rigged up.

"Then I drove back to California and put my house up for sale."

The move three years ago hasn't hurt her career. While many who move to resort areas find themselves working part-time in restaurants, hotels or retail shops, McCormack's reputation and connections keep her in the forefront of her craft.

Photographing 1992 Sportsman of the Year Michael Jordan for a holographic *Sports Illustrated* cover. Photographing Prince for a new CD cover. Capturing baseball greats for holographic baseball cards. Those are the kind of assignments McCormack has.

She keeps busy with an invigorating mix of projects, including curating a holography display at the Oregon Museum of Science in Portland, and an exhibit of her work at the Gorge's Maryhill Museum of Art. A collection of holograms featuring Native Americans is in the works, as is a series of small holograms for the general public.

"Really time-consuming work—like computer-generated images—can only be done during the non-windy season," she says firmly.—*Davinne McKeown-Ellis*



**Holograms originally were made from photographic film. The shift to using movie film gave McCormack a career that seemed made just for her.**