

**OBAMA** A fresh plan for smarter tech and science

**APPLE** Steve Jobs and the cult of the Mac

**SAVED** How coastal cities can survive climate change

W J E D

beat the odds | Jan 2008

**THE Truth ABOUT**  
**CANCER**

Don't try to cure it. Just find it. Inside the science of early detection.

BY THOMAS GOETZ

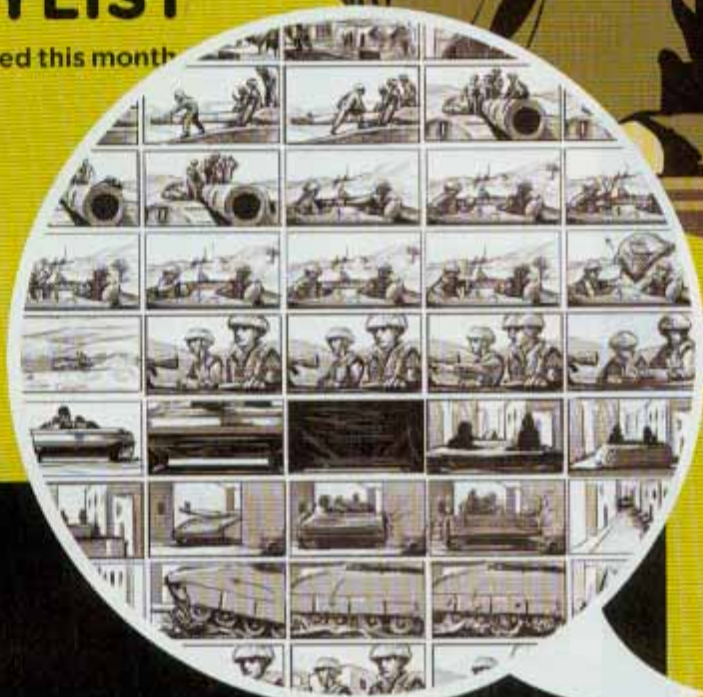
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LAST DAYS OF A HACKER TAKING DOWN A CREDIT CARD CON MAN



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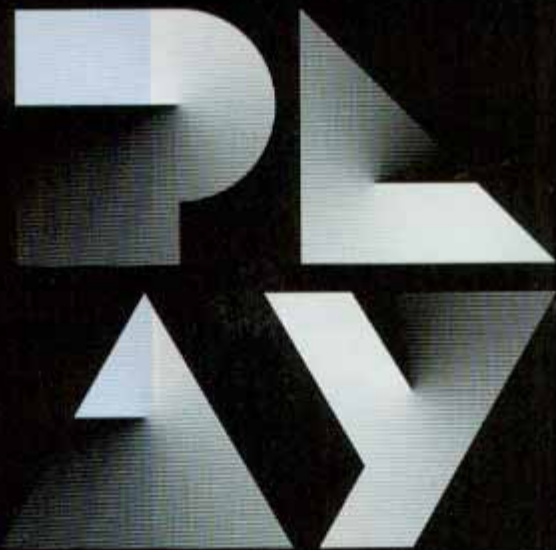
## PLAYLIST

What's wired this month



### Waltz With Bashir

To explore his grim experiences as an Israeli soldier during the 1982 invasion of Lebanon, director Ari Folman eschews the standard tropes of war documentaries (talking heads, vintage newsreel footage) and instead deploys an innovative and far more engaging genre: animation *vérité*. With a budget of less than \$2 million, Folman and a team of animators churned out 3,200 hand-drawn illustrations and used Flash—a staple technique for YouTube videos—to translate the harrowing accounts and haunting memories into a powerful, disturbing alloy of the real and unreal.





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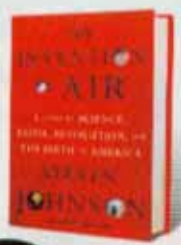
**Animal Collective: Merriweather Post Pavilion** The laws of rock 'n' roll typically allow artists just one sprawling, arty, hash-hazy album. Animal Collective, headed up by Baltimore-bred experimental musician Panda Bear, has churned out two ear-bending efforts in less than two years: late 2007's *Strawberry Jam* and *Merriweather* now. With soaring harmonies, twinkling keyboards, and funky hand-claps, it's avant-garde you can almost cuddle with.



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### Three Wired books

It's a busy time for WIRED writers. Contributor Brian Raftery's *Don't Stop Believin': How Karaoke Conquered the World and Saved My Life* reminds us that belting out tunes with all your heart can be fun, wrenching, and ultimately very satisfying. In *Arcade Mania*, Brian Ashcraft and Jean Snow tour the innovative, sometimes bizarre, and never dull world of Japanese game centers. And Steven Johnson recounts how scientist Joseph Priestley put a mint plant in a jar and discovered oxygen in *The Invention of Air*.



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### WattzOn

How much energy do you really use? Your electric bill isn't especially uh, illuminating. WattzOn lets you create a personal energy-consumption report (right down to what it took to make the books on your nightstand) and see how you stack up against the site's other users. You can then take steps to cut back, tracking the results along the way.

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### YouTube "The Final Countdown" Covers

The '80s track "The Final Countdown" by Europe was a paragon of dopey arena-rock bombast, which makes YouTube's current glut of bedroom-shot covers all the more delightfully absurd. Stuart Croft's "kazookeyele" (kazoo, piano, ukulele) version is by far the most badass. The two-hand-band fart-alongs and SpongeBob mashups turn the awesome up to 11.

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### Frustration-Free Packaging

Spending the holiday season cursing at hard-to-open packages didn't exactly make our yuletide bright. That's why we're stoked about Amazon's "frustration-free packaging" effort. The retailer is urging manufacturers to wrap products in fewer materials and make them easier to open. (What will comedians complain about now?) For videos of particularly egregious packages, see the Gallery of Wrap Rage at [amazon.com/frustration](http://amazon.com/frustration).

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### Battlestar Galactica: The Final Season (this time, it's for real)

We held tight during the writers' strike and after that what the *Frak!*? midseason cliff-hanger last summer. On January 16, the final batch of *Battlestar* episodes finally hit the Sci-Fi Channel for what's sure to be a bittersweet 10-week swan song. Things we will learn: The identity of the final Cylon, why Earth resembles an apocalyptic wasteland, and the fate of everyone's favorite ragtag fleet.

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### Ergobaby Carrier

Carrying your little one Swedish-style is so last century. Instead of a BabyBjorn, today's savvy parents tote their tots in the American-designed Ergobaby. It balances the munchkin's weight across your hips rather than your back and lets you lug kids (up to 40 pounds!) in front, on the side, or behind. Of course, no carrier can eliminate a child-induced pain in the neck...

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### RIM BlackBerry Storm

It's tough to steal the iPhone's thunder, but RIM has managed to rain on Apple's parade with the Storm. Sure this device has multifinger touch like the Jesus Phone, but it trumps Cupertino's wunderkind with cut-and-paste functionality, a 3.2-megapixel cam, and zero input ambiguity—you physically click the screen like a mouse button whenever you type or select an app.

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### Wines of Substance

As science geeks, we first loved the novelty of these wines from Washington state vintner Substance, with labels inspired by the periodic table of elements (just like WIRED's Play section IDs). But the actual wine appeals to our more bacchanalian side: The syrah (Sy) is rich, spicy, and not too fruity, tasting as smart as it looks.

