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TECH PIONEER'S DREAM MUSEUM

Inventor who took on Microsoft envisions virtual, 3-D health exhibits

BY LISA BERTAGNOLI

When he was 13, Michael Doyle sat underwater for 20 minutes in the pool at West Pullman Park, wearing a synthetic gill of his own design. The feat won him first place in the state science fair.

In 1999, when he was 40, his company, Eolas Technologies Inc., sued Microsoft Corp., claiming illegal use of Web Rouser, a patented Eolas technology that enables embedded interactive programs to run in web pages. After nearly a decade of appeals, Eolas won a \$520-million settlement in 2007.

Now 52, Mr. Doyle, an inventor who holds 14 patents, is working on his next goal: the April 15, 2015, opening of the National Museum of Health and Medicine Chicago, a satellite of the eponymous Washington, D.C., museum.

The project brings together Mr. Doyle's background as a medical illustrator, his doctorate in cell and structural biology, his career as an inventor and tech pioneer and his business acumen, not to mention his new wealth.

He promises it will be a museum like no other.

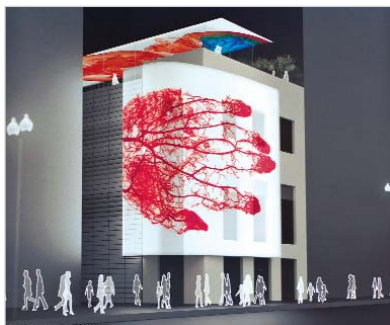
"This is an on-demand museum, a 'Fantastic Voyage,' " says Mr. Doyle, chairman of Eolas and CEO of Wheaton-based Iomas Research LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Eolas. "This is not stethoscopes under glass."

Except for a handful of exhibits (the bullet that killed Lincoln and fragments of his skull), the museum will be virtual. Computer-generated, 3-D exhibits will leap to life on visitors' orders. Stored digitally, the exhibits allow visitors to request them in advance and curators to update them constantly.

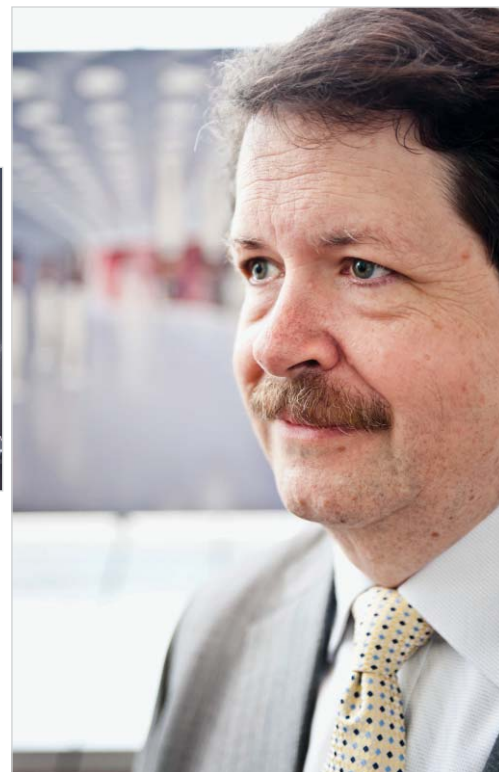
For the museum's virtual research center, Mr. Doyle is digitizing research collections, including the Carnegie Collection of Human Embryology, a body of 680,000 microscope slides that has guided medical research since 1862. A private cloud will hold the collection for researchers worldwide to access.

Mr. Doyle also promises an architecturally avant-garde space. Giant video projections will wrap the building's façade, a look Mr. Doyle calls "a computer monitor overdubbed with origami." Visitors' heel strikes on piezoelectric plates will produce energy to run the museum, planned for the former Chicago Federation of Musicians' headquarters at 175 W. Washington St.

"It's ambitious," says Gordon Gill, a partner at Adrian Smith & Gordon



Michael Doyle's company won a \$520-million settlement from Microsoft. Now in his sights: opening a health and medicine museum in downtown Chicago.



JOHN R. BOEHM

Gill Architecture LLP, the Chicago-based firm Mr. Doyle has retained to design the museum. "His ultimate goal is to transform the experience of museum-going. That's a large statement."

NO EASY FEAT

Why the four-year lead time? Some of the technology required is still in its infancy or cost-prohibitive. The project will require \$45 million, and the dialing for dollars has just commenced: Mr. Doyle hosted an introductory event May 21 at the Art Institute of Chicago and is mining the 300 attendees for financial support.

Mr. Doyle's plan looks "compelling, relevant and urgent," Chicago-based fundraising consultant Margie DeVine says. "And Chicago is a robust philanthropic community."

That said, "a lot of work needs to be done to raise \$45 million in two-and-a-half years," she says. The high-tech component poses a fundraising challenge, too. "Innovation and big ideas do generate larger investments, but lack of understanding or the unknown doesn't lend itself as well."

Mr. Doyle has already sunk in nearly \$3 million, including a cash payment for the 1920s building. After the Microsoft settlement (Microsoft declines to comment; Mr. Doyle refuses to discuss that case or pending

legislation involving the same patent against a dozen or so tech companies), he could, conceivably, bankroll the museum himself.

He won't.

"I'm not doing this to put my name on a museum," Mr. Doyle says, though he urges philanthropic Chicagoans to consider the possibility for themselves. He envisions the Chicago museum as the first of many medical museums around the country. "We have to come up with a business model that is able to be replicated," he says.

Mr. Doyle comes by his talents, and tenacity, naturally.

He grew up in Roseland and then Beverly, the seventh of eight siblings. His father, John Stuart Doyle, was a code breaker in World War II. His mother, Marie, dropped out of law school to follow her husband to Hawaii during the war. Mr. Doyle died in 2003; Ms. Doyle is 91 and lives in Lake Forest.

Her father was a German immigrant, inventor of paper-mill machinery and holder of more than 30 patents.

"I grew up thinking it was possible to be an inventor," Mr. Doyle says.

Older brothers Geoff and John recall Mr. Doyle as a quiet, observant child.

"More than we realized, he was just soaking up everything he came in contact with," says John Doyle, 65, an attorney in Washington, D.C. He recalls parents who were strict but loving and emphasized achievement.

Geoff, a former FBI agent who now runs an investigative consulting firm in Virginia, recalls a father who was smart and let the family know it. "If I heard it once, I heard it 150 times that he scored the highest on the Quigley North entrance exam," he says.

Darrell Williams, managing director at Loop Capital Markets LLC in Chicago, has known Mr. Doyle since their days at St. Ignatius College Prep in Chicago.

"He's always been one of those still-waters-run-deep guys," says Mr. Williams, 51. "He's clearly smart, but the depth of how smart and talented he is . . . he doesn't wear it on his sleeve."

A tech investor (though not in Mr. Doyle's company), Mr. Williams admires his former schoolmate's tenacity. "Eolas is the mouse that roared," he says. "You don't take on significant behemoths just on a whim."

Mr. Doyle started at St. Ignatius wanting to be a marine biologist. When he discovered a talent for drawing, he switched and earned a degree in medical illustration from the University of Illinois at Chicago. He earned his doctorate from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and ran the biomedical visualization lab there from 1989 to 1993; during that time he met Adrienne Noe, director of the National Museum of Health and Medicine in Washington, D.C. The two hatched plans to someday digitize the Carnegie Collection. That idea led to the Chicago museum plans.

INTRICATE MIND

In 1993, Mr. Doyle took a position as director of the Center for Knowledge Management at the University of California at San Francisco. There, working with a team at the university, he invented Web Rouser.

Despite the big ideas, acquaintances describe Mr. Doyle as self-effacing and modest.

"Someone said, 'He seems like such an average guy,'" says Jim Paglia,

59, principal at In's & Out's, a Chesterton, Ind.-based marketing firm and one of the museum's seven board members. 'I said, 'Yeah, we both get our wardrobes at J. C. Penney's.'

"You'd never guess this guy has a ton of money," except for one trait: "It's hard to wrestle the dinner check away from him."

A year-and-a-half ago, Mr. Paglia attended a meeting in Washington with Mr. Doyle. "Mike listened almost the entire day . . . we didn't exchange more than 10 words," he recalls. When Mr. Doyle finally spoke, "It was clear he had reflected on everything everyone said that day, but distilled his views into two minutes."

"His mind works so well," he adds. "Half the people in the room couldn't follow the intricacies of what he's presenting."

Jordan Mozer felt the same way after he and his wife attended the Art Institute event. "We were having a hard time following the ideas," says Mr. Mozer, 52, designer and founder of Jordan Mozer Associates Ltd. in Chicago. "I'm fascinated by things like specimens and the history of medicine—I love that kind of stuff," he says. Still, "the presentation and building seemed to be kind of complicated."

Mr. Doyle says that reaction is rare. "I think we're pretty clear about what we're attempting to do," he says.

ARTS PATRON

His support of the arts extends to his wardrobe: At the May 21 event, Mr. Doyle wore a custom suit, shirt and tie, purchased at an auction to benefit the Benjamin Marshall Society. His wife, Peg, wore a modest print dress, one she might wear while attending Mass with Mr. Doyle and their three children at St. Michael Catholic Church in Wheaton. (Ms. Doyle declines to be interviewed.)

While famous for his focus, Mr. Doyle is also known as a Renaissance man. He supports the arts through the Buonacorsi Foundation, a nonprofit he established to pursue his philanthropic goals. He also is a patron of the Stradivari Society of Chicago, which buys fine instruments and lends them to promising musicians.

A financial contribution from Mr. Doyle allowed Wheaton-based Camerata Chicago, a classical music ensemble, to expand to 35 from 16 members.

As much as he loves music, Mr. Doyle doesn't consume much of it. "I don't have time. My next invention will be time dilation," he jokes.

In addition to having to find \$45 million, he has a cutting-edge museum to design. Guiding a guest through the 28,000-square-foot space, Mr. Doyle points out oddities: John Petrillo's dark-paneled office with a safe room and bulletproof windows, a basement filled with souvenirs of its past—copies of the autobiography Mr. Petrillo commissioned and self-published; boxes of CDs left by former tenant Rock Records. Throughout the building, workers polish brass railings and scrub marble steps.

Geoff Doyle has no doubt that the museum will open on schedule, fully financed and boasting every technological bell and whistle his brother promises.

"When he sets his mind to something, as evidenced by his litigious history with Microsoft," Geoff Doyle says, "he'll see it through."

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