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RHIZOME ARTBASE 101

Forty Selections From Rhizome ArtBase Demonstrate Scope of a Decade of New Media

June 23 – September 10, 2005

New York, New York (June 1, 2005) – ***Rhizome ArtBase 101*** surveys salient themes in Internet-based art making, a practice that has flourished in the past ten years. The **New Museum of Contemporary Art** will exhibit 40 works selected from the Rhizome ArtBase from **June 23 – September 10, 2005**, in order to present new media art as a diverse medium rivaling other, more traditional art forms in its ability to buttress diverse formal and critical explorations. ***Rhizome ArtBase 101*** is organized by Lauren Cornell and Rachel Greene, with assistance from Kevin McGarry for Rhizome.org.

The Rhizome ArtBase is a respected online archive of new media art containing some 1,500 works. Founded in 1999, the ArtBase is unique because of the wide variety of new media art forms that it includes, such as software art, games and moving image, and also for its international scope. The 40 works selected for the New Museum exhibition are outstanding examples culled from the ArtBase and grouped by ten unifying themes: Dirt Style, Net Cinema, Games, E-Commerce, Data Visualization and Databases, Online Celebrity, Public Space, Software Art, Cyberfeminism and Early Net.Art. ***Rhizome ArtBase 101*** includes seminal pieces by early practitioners such as **Alexei Shulgin's** *Desktop Is* (1997) and **Heath Bunting's** *_readme* (1998), as well as projects by some of the most pioneering emerging talents working in the field today, such as **Marisa Olson, Cory Arcangel** and **Paper Rad**.

Projects described as **Dirt Style** appropriate graphic detritus from the Web in gestures that both celebrate and satirize digital pop culture. In *extreme animalz: the movie: part 1* (2005), by the collective **Paper Rad** and artist **Matt Barton**, gif files of animals, sourced through Google's Image Search, are woven into a digital tapestry that is mirrored by a surrounding cluster of mechanized stuffed animals. Dirt Style works can also express nostalgia by repurposing analog technology. In *Dot Matrix Synth* (2003), of which documentation is stored in the ArtBase, **Paul Slocum** reprogrammed a dot matrix printer to play electronic notes in accordance with different printing frequencies.

Net Cinema puts film and video in dialogue with digital aesthetics such as hypertext, databases and algorithms. *Super Smile* (2005), by Korean-based duo **YOUNG-HAE CHANG HEAVY INDUSTRIES**, evokes multiple film genres such as romance, action and noir through the rhythm and pace of its experimental, text-based narrative. The flourishing

of commercial media programs such as Flash in recent years has seeded new possibilities for moving images online. Still, some artists are more interested in a program's vulnerabilities than in its options. For his series *Data Diaries* (2003), New York artist **Cory Arcangel** exposes the vulnerability of hi-tech programs by "tricking" QuickTime into reading his daily desktop debris (old emails, jpegs and Word documents) as media files to produce dozens of vibrant and abstract streaming videos.

With their cutting-edge graphic environments and dependence on a player, **Games** provide a rich terrain for artistic intervention. **Eddo Stern's** well known re-contextualization *Sheik Attack* (1999) culls footage from a host of games, including Settlers III, SumCity, Nuclear Strike, into a narrative video to expose the underlying social and political agendas embedded in their structures. Works in this genre also include game art such as modification, a graffiti-like action whereby artists hack into virtual gaming worlds and alter their landscapes or actions.

Artists have responded to **E-Commerce** through a wide range of projects that disturb processes of online consumption. **damali ayo** riffs on the commodification of identity in *rent-a-negro.com* (2003), a service that offers the companionship of an African-American person for a price but free of the commitment of "challenging your own white privilege." The works of **Rtmark**, a brokerage firm comprised of international artists, facilitate the sabotage of corporate products and protocol through their official headquarters, rtmark.com.

Data Visualization and Databases create unexpected relationships between informational entities. **Mark Daggett's** *Carnivore Is Sorry* (2001), for example, uses **RSG's** network surveillance program *Carnivore* (2001-2003) to track individual users as they navigate the web. The resulting web data is compressed into a jpeg resembling an abstract artwork, and then e-mailed to the user to offer them an alternative look at the information that recently passed along their browser. *One Year Performance Video (akasamhsiehupdate)* (2004) sources prerecorded clips of Brooklyn-based collaborative **MTAA** into a streaming video diptych that simulates a fictional narrative of the artists living in adjacent, identical white cells for the duration of a year.

Online Celebrity demonstrates how quickly and frequently personal behavior becomes public spectacle due to the increasingly number of computer users linked to blogs or homepages. On **Marisa Olson's** *American Idol Audition Training Blog* (2004), the San Francisco-based artist exhaustively documents the pitfalls and nervous anticipation involved in her attempt to become the next American Idol. In *Diary of a Star* (2004), **Eduardo Navas** re-contextualizes selections from *The Andy Warhol Diaries* (edited by Pat Hackett) to connect this earlier artist's legendary self-awareness to the attitudes of

today's online personas.

With more overlap between virtual and real spaces made possible by the proliferation of wireless technologies, artists have produced a host of projects that engage the notion of **Public Space**. In *[murmur]* (2003), by **Shawn Micallef, James Roussel** and **Gabe Sawhney**, pedestrians can dial into a central database from anywhere in the U.S. and enter their location to hear or share site specific stories about that exact spot. For *Nike Ground* (2003), the international team of artists known as **0100101110101101.org** employed Internet-based marketing strategies (Web sites, e-releases) to fool the city of Vienna into believing that their beloved Karlsplatz had been acquired by Nike and was to be supplanted by a monumental Swoosh.

Software Art attempts to demystify software programs to reveal how social factors, politics and economics factor into the most basic design of computer interface systems. Through its open source, cross-platform design, the early program *The Web Stalker* (1997) by British collective **I/O/D** prompted a consideration of how commercial software limits options and experimentation that reverberated throughout international communities of artists when it was released in 1997. Conversely, *theBot* (2000), by **Amy Alexander**, downplays functionality in order to strikingly visualize certain operations that software enables, such as searching and rendering images.

Cyberfeminism has appropriated the Internet as a platform for feminist exploration, action and protest. **Prema Murthy's** *Bindigirl* (1999), which parodies South Asian cyberporn sites, features a character called Bindi who laments the failure of new technologies to liberate her from constricting religious and gender identities, confronting some of the identity issues facing South Asian females. In *Brandon* (1998), **Shu Lea Cheang** uses the true story of Tina Brandon as a source for her commentary on the paranoia and distrust relating to transgendered bodies, manifested in graphic imagery from international locations on multiple screens.

While historicizing an emerging art practice is never simple, there are some new media artists and works that have undoubtedly created a critical and formal context for Internet art practices as we see them today. **Early Net.Art**, comprised chiefly of works by European artists active in the mid-late 1990s, is represented in *ArtBase 101* by classic projects such as *Desktop Is* (1997) by **Alexei Shulgin**. This group project reframed the computer desktop as a platform for artistic production, inviting artists to experiment with the most basic computer interface. At the same time, it also represents an important beginning point for Internet Art in that it encouraged the creation of new projects in the context of a community by launching new projects over the web and e-mail, changing the landscape of web-based media artwork.

Funding

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The New Museum of Contemporary Art receives general operating support from the Carnegie Corporation, the New York State Council on the Arts, the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, JPMorgan Chase, and members of the New Museum.

About the New Museum of Contemporary Art

The New Museum of Contemporary Art, founded in 1977, is the only museum in New York City dedicated exclusively to contemporary art and shows the best art from around the world. Over the last five years, the Museum has exhibited artists from Argentina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cameroon, China, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Germany, Poland, Spain, South Africa, Turkey, and the United Kingdom among others. The Museum has also mounted ambitious surveys of important but under-recognized artists such as Ana Mendieta, William Kentridge, David Wojnоровicz, and Paul McCarthy. The Museum's Media Lounge, launched in November 2000, is the only museum space in New York City devoted to presenting new media art.

In 2005, the New Museum will begin construction on a new home at 235 Bowery at Prince Street. This 60,000 square foot facility, designed by the Tokyo-based firm Sejima + Nishizawa/SANAA, will greatly expand the Museum's exhibitions and programs, and will be the first art museum constructed in Downtown New York's modern history. During the transition period, exhibitions and programs are held at the New Museum of Contemporary Art / Chelsea, at 556 West 22nd Street. For the most up to date information, visit www.newmuseum.org

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New Museum of Contemporary Art / Chelsea

General Information

Interim Exhibition Location	556 West 22 nd Street, New York, NY 10011 (at 11 th Avenue in Chelsea)
Telephone:	212-219-1222
Fax:	212-431-5328
Web Site	<u>HYPERLINK</u> http://www.newmuseum.org www.newmuseum.org
Email	newmu@newmuseum.org
Museum Hours	Tuesday – Saturday: noon – 6:00PM Thursday: noon – 8:00PM* Closed Sunday and Monday
Store Hours	Tuesday – Saturday: noon – 6:00PM Thursday: noon – 8:00PM
Admission	\$6.00 general; \$3.00 students/seniors Free for members; visitors 18 and under free *Thursday 6:00-8:00PM, \$3.00
Directions	Subway: C/E to West 23 rd Street, 1/9 to 23 rd Street Bus: M23 to 11 th Avenue
Administrative Offices	210 Eleventh Avenue, 2 nd floor (at West 25 th Street) New York, NY 10003

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For more information please contact the Public Relations Office at 212-219-1222 ext. 217 or email HYPERLINK <mailto:press@newmuseum.org> press@newmuseum.org or visit the press office online at HYPERLINK http://www.newmuseum.org/Press_Office/index.html http://www.newmuseum.org/Press_Office/index.html. Information about the New Museum's exhibitions and public programs is also available online at HYPERLINK <http://www.newmuseum.org> www.newmuseum.org

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