

**DISTRIBUTED
GALLERY**
TELIC ARTS EXCHANGE

#1

TOM MOODY

EDITIONS 5

Telic Arts Exchange
Distributed Gallery 1
Tom Moody

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Introduction

Every exhibition at the Distributed Gallery is accompanied by a conversation. There are no press releases, curatorial texts, or anything of that sort - just a fairly in-depth conversation, which is what follows this introduction.

The Distributed Gallery, of course, has no place. There is no at, or there are several ats: at the time of this writing they are on top of a cabinet at Fong's, on a book display table at Ooga Booga, at the entrance to The Public School, and in the back hallway next to the bathrooms at Via Cafe. It is situated in little bits of the real world, or otherwise non-art gallery places (although the operators

of these establishments may take issue with the classification).

Televisions can fit in anywhere, but always seem out of place. In the last day, I've seen television screens at the gas station next to the pumps, in an aisle at the supermarket, in my bedroom, on the bus, and across from the counter at the corner store. The stuff on these televisions is similarly diverse from trivia to the news to racy Asian cinema to *Lost*.

The people that have agreed to make a show for the Distributed Gallery (not always artists or curators) have agreed to dive into this messy (but

extremely familiar) territory and simultaneously participate in the conversation mentioned above.

Although the transcript has been edited and rearranged, the text that follows remains faithful to the original exchange.

ISSUE I.
Relationship of art to blogging

Sean Dockray: Can you describe how your artwork and your blog are related to one another?

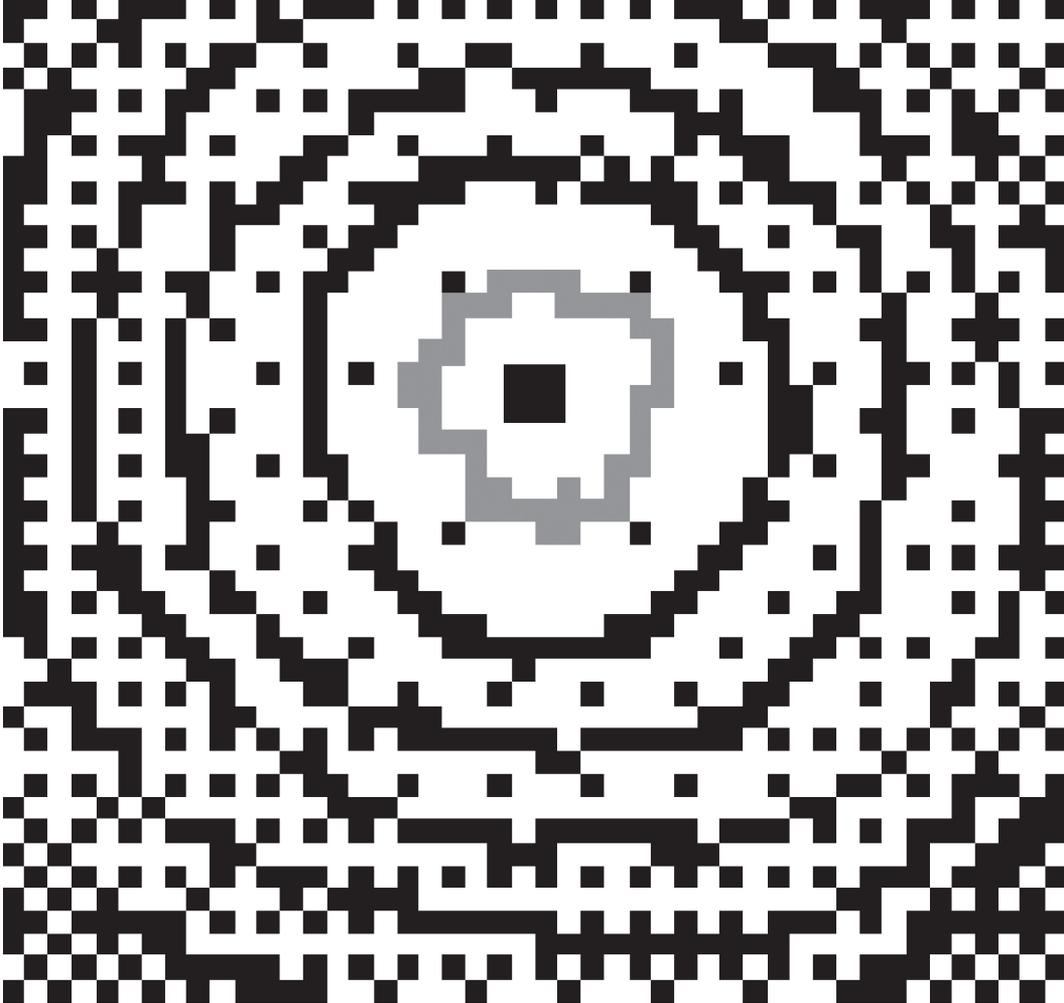
Tom Moody: The best analogy is a DJ who is also a producer. You make tracks that are meant to stand alone (on a CD or internet player) as your creative work but can also be "slipped into a set." With added "meta" layers that blogging gives you--being able to comment on your own work and others' and how you see them interrelating.

And you literally are making music that you've been distributing through your blog too - it's not just an analogy. But also you will also

write political commentary, film reviews, critical art history, etc. It's more diverse and strained [multi-stranded? --tm] than your analogy lets on, I think. What do you leave out?

Things that are adequately covered in the mainstream media: sports, tips on relationships and dieting, celebrity news, fashion. Am not being entirely flip, here, I am conscious of topics being over-covered and have a taste for the obscure, nerdy stuff.

What kinds of subject matter, or attitudes, or people do you tend to leave alone?



As you noted, the blog is inclusive. Besidestheforementionedsubjects the media beats us over the head with, I guess what I omit reflects my unconsciousbiasesandblindspots. Consciouslylavoidpersonal,touchy-

feely stuff, posting photos of myself, and I struggle not to write in the first person. It's not for shyness. The media always wants to put a face and a brandable personality with creative products and that gets very old.

How finished does one of your images, songs, gifs, etc. need to be for you to post it?

Pretty finished. If it is work in process it will usually be identified as such.

Are they ever too finished to post?

No, I'm not holding anything back. Certainly some art things I've done can't be experienced online--a DJ set

with a good sound system or a room with the limits of the blog/internet I'm going

Have you read this book?

<http://aaaarg.org/nicolas-bourriaud-p-friends-and-students>.

I haven't, only excerpts. I'm familiar with acting to him and commenting on him

What I liked at the time was that he was or responding to cultural changes brought computers, but he didn't include any projects uses the DJ and the programmer as a production, but there is little work he most tech-art programs. But, do you think not including computer art?

There is a tendency in the decelerated art

wall-sized video or paintings. But within
g full throttle.

ostproduction. I used to push it on

n Bourriard from artists and bloggers re-
n. Also his Relational Aesthetics.

s talking about art that was interactive
ought about by the Internet and com-
perly "new media" work (XYZ art?). He
analogies to elaborate his idea of post-
discusses that would be acceptable in
think he's being a little conservative by

world to use the computer as a metaphor

without actually touching the damn thing. It may not be conservatism so much as ignorance or the fear of making a judgment in unfamiliar territory. We are constantly having our radical-ness tested: we get the critical gist of sampling but not, say, hyperlinking. As for Bourriaud's ideas, I think I tend to practice relational aesthetics (a re-fried concept from the '70s) more than I believe in it. As an artist I'm interested in finished, stand-alone works but the blog is sloppily gregarious and incorporates and reacts to what other people are doing.

To me, one of the most interesting things about the recent popular net art (as opposed to net.art)

is the way it emphasizes use over creation (I'm cribbing from that Bourriaud book now, I guess, but he would say post-production instead of production). It's refreshing not to have art discourse revolving around how someone did something technically, and with GIFs it's usually not a mystery. But at the same time, there is still a significant element of competition or attention-seeking, and definitely a place for the "how did you do that?" conversations. Basically, I'm really interested in going more into what you['ve] said about the social nature of GIF-making, of blog-writing, etc.





Maybe an easy way to dive more into i
your blogging on your own weblog, ve

Agreed there is a place for the "how did y
surprisingly little tech talk about GIFs an
participated in (such as Nasty Nets) or t
blog (more on that below) I had a fair am
on in my comments but with Nasty a tacti
weren't going there. Just post things and
to suss out who made something and
though, I'm constantly talking about p

It is to explain the difference between
versus on Nasty Nets?

"you do that?" conversations but there is
another "internet folk art" on the sites I've
follow (such as cpb.tumblr). On my old
account of interesting how-to dialog going
it agreement quickly developed that we
drift back and forth, and leave the viewer
how it was made. On my current blog,
process.

ISSUE II.
Relationship of art to blogging
(showing whole blog in gallery)

S: I remember reading that you actually showed your weblog within a gallery context. Was that interesting for you?

T: It was hard work! I did my normal blogging routine as a performance piece. A computer was installed in the project space at artMovingProjects gallery in Brooklyn, and visitors could talk with me via comments, which were an active part of my blog at the time. It was kind of a goof on interactive installations but I took it seriously in terms of being conscious of gallery hours and wanting to be as entertaining as possible during those time frames. I upped my quotient of animated GIFs so at any given mo-

ment there was some new, hopefully confectionary thing beckoning from the gallery pedestal.

Am I remembering correctly that you were throwing out questions about whether you could sell it? The performance itself, the blog posts you made, the whole blog, the computer with its browser history, any of it. I'm not trying to say it can't be commodified because rich people will find a way to buy anything. But did anything "out of the ordinary" happen during the process? For example, if someone bought your blog out from under you, that would have been highly unusual. Were there any non-stan-

dard interactions that you had with people? I'm wondering what you got out of it.

The question "how are you going to sell it?" surfaced on my blog comments and I gave my answer. By way of recapitulating that: A buyer was considering the piece (it was ultimately too much for him, I think, or too little... I don't really know his thought process). He wouldn't have bought it out from under me, in any case: what was for sale was the month-long performance, documented on DVD with the HTML pages and associated files (GIFs, mp3s, etc) for each day of BLOG, the piece. An edition of three, as I recall. What I get out of it remains

to be seen. The art work is still on the market and a certain precedent has been set for thinking of blogging as an art-bounded performance work. Other people had put blogs in galleries before, but not where the blog was a disembodied surrogate for an actual breathing artist who was thinking about that particular space (among other things) and interacting with it in real time.

Yeah, by "get out of it" I was thinking about two things at once: (1) You called it "hard work," and I really do believe that when blogging becomes a performance it is a lot of work. I'm curious how this economy of generating content for free

(which is often capitalized on by MySpace) relates to art production. (2) By setting up, I wondered if you got a new type of interesting ideas about what your blog was doing.

As I said a few years ago (and I think it still holds) of things--studiodiary, ongoing documents in-process, as well as collaborations, original curated exhibitions of things I like (of both kinds) interested in the crossover of visual art, text, and politics and not just replicating the aesthetics and restrictions." With BLOG I extended gallery space--kind of a road show that

It also got more semantically convoluted with BLOG on BLOG. That was pretty interesting. At least one writer picked up on how absurd

Is [the idea of BLOG] still interesting [to

ace, or whoever) will go, and how it re-
p this unusual situation in the gallery, I
raction, strange experiences, different
, etc.

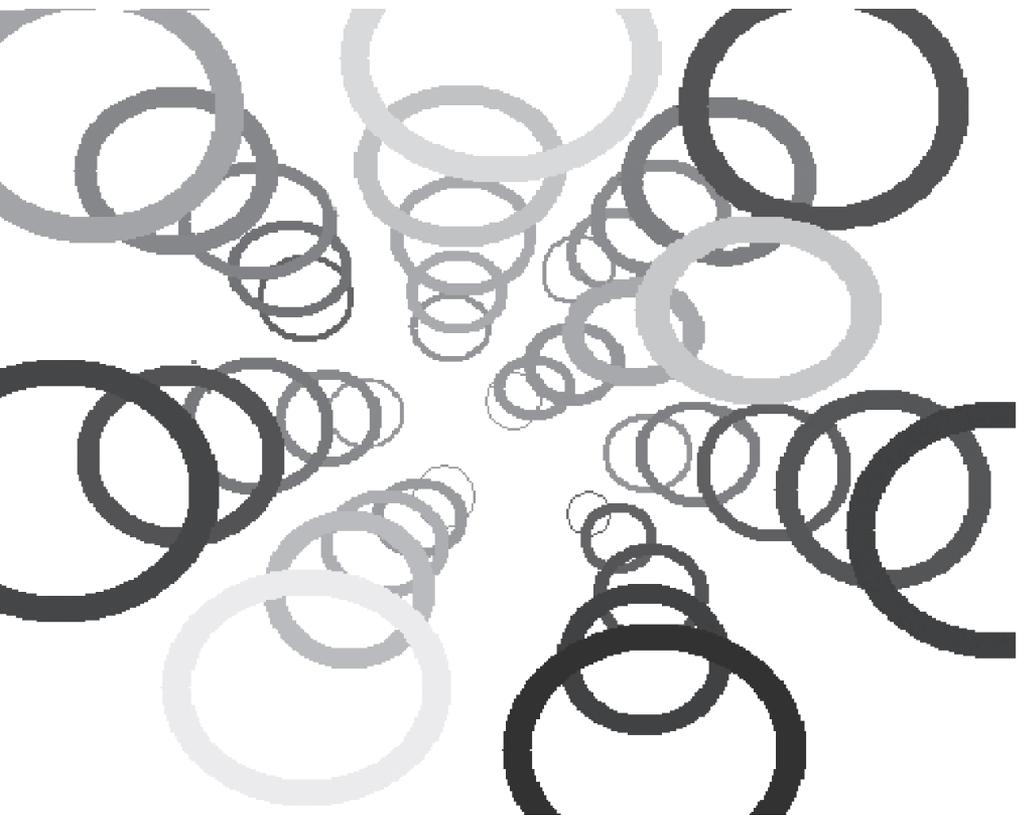
ill holds up): "My blog is a combination
ntation of past work, and a place for work-
ginal pieces made for the web, and mini-
both an art and a web-oddity nature). I'm
ch, electronic music, film, science fiction,
art world online, with all its ancient struc-
nded this laboratory environment into a
t didn't actually involve travelling.

ed. At some points I was blogging about
sting to me, and I was gratified that at
urdly recursive it was.

o you]?

I would do it again, in the right venue. To some extent the piece could not be done again the same way, though. Shortly after the end of it I stopped posting at <http://www.digitalmedia-tree.com/tommooody>, which was my blog from 2001 to 2007, and which had comments, and moved to a commentless Word Press blog at <http://tommooody.us>, where I've been working since. I really can't say how much of that was a reaction to the intensity of doing BLOG. It was draining, both creatively, and in terms of the load of moderating comment threads, which were active during the show.

I remember the transition. There was a time when I was being re-



actionary and I hated weblogs. But then I became a fan of yours because it had active comments and the discussions were often pretty thoughtful. I even participated in a few of the discussions under a generic screenname. When you

moved to no comments I was a little of
observation that has grown on me: it'
discussion operates on the Internet a
ing a "comments" section. Could you
wrong)?

Comments impose a power relationship
commenters generally can't. People assur
doesn't like (I only did it with abusive/obv
feel I had an obligation to host--but was
cussion storead that people think moder
done that I would have no commenters

My current mindset is, since blogs are e
conversation is with hyperlinks between
with a "home court advantage." This isn't
of writing/thinking I'm most interested
e.g., mixing and remixing others' GIFs. C
tirely a wish.

disappointed, but I think you made an
s a lot of work to deal with spam; and
cross sites, without necessarily need-
elaborate on that (or correct me if I'm

:bloggers can edit and take their time but
me the blogger is deleting comments/he
viously psychopathic statements I didn't
amazed from some recent Rhizome dis-
rators delete comments willy-nilly. If I had
rs.)

easy to get and run, a good way to have a
blog posts where everyone can produce
very spontaneous but better for the kind
in. The conversations can also be visual:
Or musical. This is happening, it's not en-

ISSUE III.
Translating art from blog to
public space (specific GIFs)

T: A question for you, Sean. For the Distributed Gallery show, will you be using DVD players to display art in the host locations, or will it be possible to display a GIF (as a GIF or rendered as a Quicktime) from a computer hard drive? I'm curious how my GIF imagery will be displayed for reasons of sizing, resolution, etc.

S: It will be halfway in between actually. We are using these little Compact Flash video players that were recently donated to us from the Getty's California Video show. I believe they are usually meant for playing looping advertisements on buses or in supermarkets or at gas stations. For our purposes, they

will behave more or less like a DVD player, but we can drag and drop video files from a computer onto the CF card and play right away. I need to look at one to see the make and model to let you know about resolution, frame rate, preferred encoding, etc. But my impression is that it is similar to a DVD. I will follow up about this in the next couple of days.

Almost every show I've done lately involves a different way of translating or adapting the animated GIFs on my blog for display in public space, with a unique set of technical issues that changes the art in some way, requires workarounds, and potentially

leads to new content (or disaster).

Here is a quick FAQ for the players: http://www.medeawiz.com/faq_details/faq_dv68.htm. [player accepts .mpg files used in the DVD process to make MPEG 2 files, the DVD standard]

Thanks. Do you know what kind of monitors you will be using? Here's the problem. Animated GIFs look crisp and simple on a computer screen but the process of converting them to MPEG so they can be played on DVD players makes them mushier. I've been able to make the mush less noticeable by showing the converted GIFs on cathode ray (CRT)

screens. It hides the anti-aliasing and artifacts and adds some additional visual "oomph." If you are using LCDs for the Distributed Gallery the compression of the GIFs will be more noticeable. Not a big deal, I just wanted to make you aware of it.

This is fine with me. I am actually a little less interested in purity of the images (or faithfulness to the original medium) than I am in what happens through the translation into something else. We['ve] talked a bit about how so much material from the "world" is translated into gifs, blogs, discussions, etc. Not so much yet about the reverse (although I think this comes through

strongly in the work, as well as the 2D
-- world back onto net). As it turns out
fairly small LCD flatscreen. The flatscreen
changing room or a tiny store, Ooga B
in there to accommodate a TV!

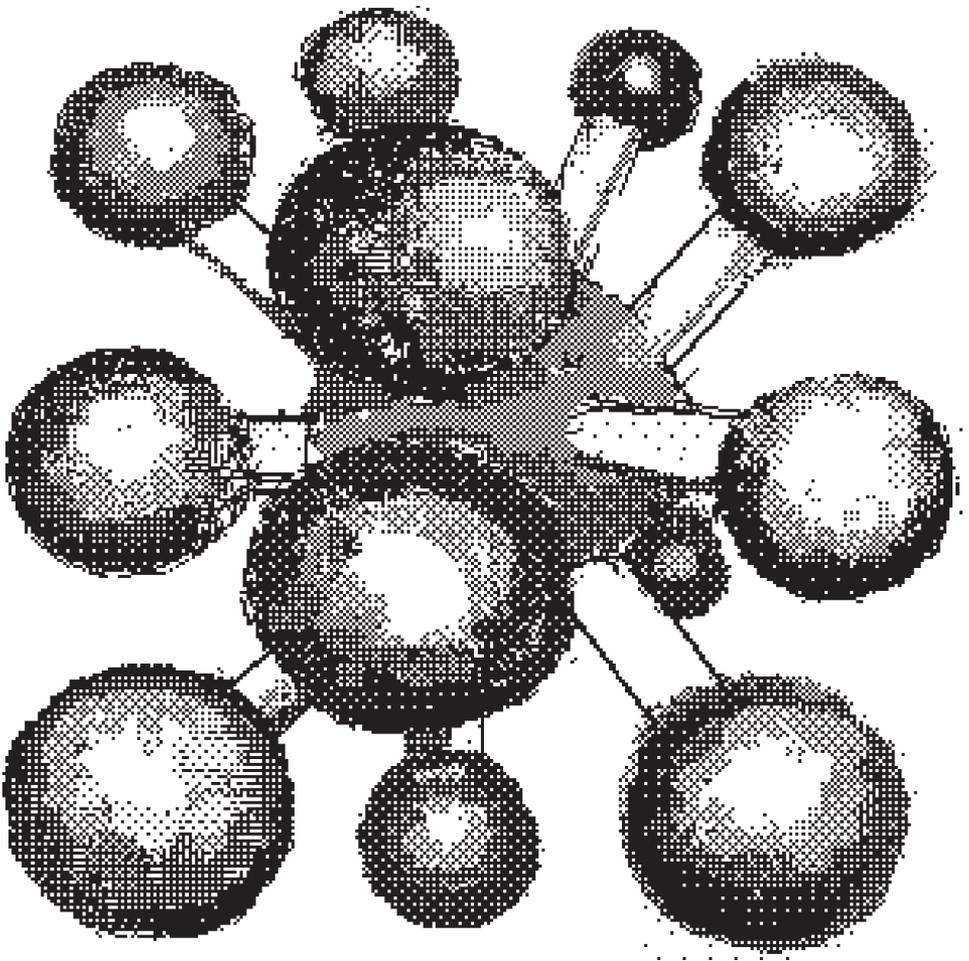
That's great to hear about the TVs. My co
so much about faithfulness to the GIF. It
as opposed to a half-baked one in the de
that the unfamiliarity of a looping comp
setting will be enough to make up for a
through multiple translations.

[Well,] I feel like this translation between
ever, is an important part of your work
ing that you would show moving ima
Internet. I imagined your animated gifs
the back hallway at a cafe. I'm actually
coming a stranger in their own land - th

D images that you post of your studio
t, there will be 3 CRT screens and one
een is necessary for fitting within the
Booga. There really isn't much volume

ncern with the presentation details isn't
's about wanting a good art experience
eased medium of "MPEG 2." My hope is
outer animation on a TV set in a non-art
loss of impact the images might suffer

n mediums, contexts, situations, what-
k. I asked you to do this show assum-
ges that refer to, if not belong on the
s on a television in an antiques shop, in
y curious how you feel about GIFs be-
ey were super common on the Internet



just a few years ago, but now with YouTube and other ways of watching video, they're verging on obsolescence. Obviously there's a long history in art of aestheticizing the recently outmoded - how has

it been working with something that is passing from ubiquitous to something of an oddity?

Verging on obsolescence? Au contraire, GIFs are flashing in the backgrounds of YouTube user pages and next to millions of chatboard screen names on the net. Animated GIFs are an integral part of many commercial web pages and they also have a large and devoted culture of makers and appreciators on the artist side. Sites such as <http://gifanime.tumblr.com/>, <http://lalblog.tumblr.com/>, Mike's Digital Pog Page, the aforementioned <http://cpb.tumblr.com/> and Nasty Nets, are all recent sites that mix artist and non-artist made

animations in GIF form. These are not necessarily the next generation.

Again, quoting earlier writing: "Animate tous 'mini-cinema,' entirely native to the Web. Almost anyone can make one and other words, no YouTube compression, proprietary formats to view, and they can be made in imaging programs. They are the purest along with JPEGs and PNGs comprise it <http://www.artfagcity.com/2008/08/0>

Judging from my stats I have hundreds every year; many of these are not from me did an art installation where I captured 6 by people on the open Web: <http://ww>

That installation looks fantastic!

et.artists pining for the old Web but es-

d GIFs have evolved into a kind of ubiquitous personal computer and the World Wide almost every browser will read them. In no wait time, no subscriptions or propri- made in the most elementary and cheap expression of the democratic web and s most authentic visual language." (see 5/img-mgmt-psychotronic-gifs/)

s of thousands of GIF loads from my site y blog but hotlinked from my directory. I 60 different uses of one GIF from my site ww.tommoody.us/panel-notes/

"Mini-cinema" is interesting. It obvious technologies from zoetropes to phen. million other scopes and tropes. And ture, as well as silence (which means so And if you bought a zoetrope back in th own. But what do you mean by "native use of that word for protocol, for some

I agree with you about the gifs being k spent a lot of time thinking about them the web vernacular to Flash and CSS you think GIFs have more staying pov (or ornamental, or peripheral, I'm not s of a web page?

(An aside, because I'm not sure: Isn't banging my head against the monitor t grams. I blamed it on Compuserve!)

ly evokes all the pre-cinematic display
akistoscopes and praxiniscopes and a
they share a looping animation struc-
ound, if added, comes from elsewhere).
ne day, it wouldn't be hard to draw your
ve"? (Alexander Galloway often makes
e reason.)

kind of ubiquitous - and I know you've
n - but what do you make of the shift in
and PDF's from GIF's and HTML? Do
ver because they are kind of marginal
ure which is the best word here) parts

GIF a proprietary format? I remember
trying to create animated gifs from pro-

Thanks for the kind words about the insta
ago so they are now open source. There v
raged web pages, etc, but that's all over. I
opposed to the movie industry, books, n
graphic format for web pages and they r
ing power, I believe, because every brow
If you are viewing pages with GIFs on an c
will not tell you that "additional software
are disabled for this file" or "do you want
happens with video or streaming media
that's it. I realize this may not always be t
make us all more dependent on paid c

Regarding 'mini-cinema' and silent mov
will be screened (along with Olia Lialina
a piano accompaniment for an event in C
futurist piano." I'd love to be there to s

allation. The GIF patent lapsed a few years ago. It was once a controversy about them, but it's not by native I mean belonging to the web as music, TV, etc. The GIF evolved as a low-res format that really have no other use. They have stayed because the user reads them with a minimum of fuss. On an outdated workplace operating system it often requires "is required to view" or "ActiveX controls need to check for software updates?" as often as possible. Browsers just load them, promptly, and they are true, as the CSS and Adobe conspiracies of the web designers and bloated retail software.

...ies, I just learned that several of my GIFs (including those of Paul Slocum's, and some others') with a Chicago. The music is described as "Italian" and you can see/hear it.

Appendix

(selected blog posts and
comments by Tom Moody)

55 Psychotronic GIFs

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(excerpt)

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Events and Essential Web
Documents Edition”

Psychotronic GIFs

Animated GIFs have evolved over the last several years into a kind of ubiquitous “mini-cinema,” entirely native to the personal computer and the World Wide Web. Almost anyone can make one and almost every browser will read them. (From Wikipedia: “the Graphics Interchange Format is an 8-bit-per-pixel bitmap image format that was introduced by CompuServe in 1987 and has since come into widespread usage on the World Wide Web due to its wide support and portability.”)

In other words, no YouTube compression, no wait time, no subscrip-

tions or proprietary formats to view, and they can be made in the most elementary and cheap imaging programs (free if you search for open source). GIFs are the purest expression of the democratic web and along with JPEGs and PNGs comprise its most authentic visual language.

As an artist I am attracted to this medium and have been making and posting GIFs for several years. This mini-cinema can be “scaled up” for galleries and film festivals but it’s equally fun to surrender it to the big pool of home-made creations that circulates on the Web. It’s gratifying to find GIFs you made yourself circulating on the pages of strang-

ers months or years later. I don't consider this "mail art"—it is too chaotic and lacks that practice's genre rules. At the same time I do consider it a legit and underexamined form of post-studio art. My main point of comparison is Jim Shaw's "Thrift Store Paintings" show at Metro Pictures gallery (also the book), for the questions that show raised regarding authorship and taste in the art world.

"Psychotronic" is a term coined by writer and low-budget film buff Michael Weldon to describe a certain type of movie:

Psychotronic films range from

sincere social commentary to degrading trash. They concern teenagers, rock and roll, juvenile delinquents, monsters, aliens, killers, spies, detectives, bikers, communists, drugs, natural catastrophes, atomic bombs, the prehistoric past, and the projected future. They star ex-models, would be Marilyn's, future Presidents (and First Ladies), dead rock stars, and has-beens of all types.

...according to the intro to the Psychotronic Encyclopedia of Film, 1983. The great thing about "psychotronic" is it is in the eye of the beholder—it could be a quality of weirdness in an otherwise "normal"

film. (Although there is some dispute about this among Weldon and subsequent users of the term—it doesn't appear to have been trademarked by Weldon and is also used by a film society of that name. The term originally came from a film called *The Psychotronic Man*.)

For this IMG MGMT essay I present a smaller pool of mostly psychotronic GIFs. About half are ones I made (or remixed) and half are ones I found on the Internet and saved. My site tells which is which but here I have numbered them a1, a2, etc as a gesture to the "authorless" quality of their web milieu. All of them are subject to whatever copyright claims

adhere to their original publication source, so I will remove them or attribute them if you so request in the comments, and I ask that you not use any of them for commercial purposes (as if!).

GIF fans know that there is a lot sicker material out there. Gruesome actual deaths, bestiality, coprophagy (yum), etc. Psychotronic films, while not exactly family fare, generally avoid the hardcore and the abyss. Exploitation, fine, but there is nothing easier than a “money shot.”

From Art Fag City, August 5, 2008:

IMG MGMT is an artist essay series highlighting the diversity of curatorial processes within the art making practice. Today's invited artist Tom Moody shows at artMovingProjects in New York, maintains the blog tommoody.us, and recently exhibited videos in the Dallas Video Festival.

www.artfagcity.com/2008/08/05/img-mgmt-psychotronic-gifs/

BITMAP Catalog: A Response

The catalog essay "Bitmap and Vector," by "BITMAP" curator Marcin Ramocki, explores the two main ways of making images digitally. Ramocki posits them as central metaphors, or markers, in hyper-stimulated, hyper-simulated (i.e., post-Baudrillardian) visual culture. The essay is eloquent and informative but seems to be leading up to a conclusion rather at odds with the artists chosen for the exhibit:

"The vector is the more revolutionary visual unit so the artists in this show follow the path of retrenchment."

Kidding, sort of, he doesn't really say that, but Ramocki's gallery is called vertexList, which is a term from vector graphics, and there is a notable uptick in his prose excitement when describing those graphics that is perhaps lacking in his description of stodgy old horizontal-and-vertical, reality-based bitmaps. (In brief, bitmaps are grids of dots called pixels, similar to photographic "grain," while vector imaging is based on drawing curves to define shapes. Photoshop is bitmap based and Illustrator and Flash are vector based. The latter use "handles" to draw Bezier curves defined by points called "vertices.")

Here's where Ramocki really gets cooking:

Vector image essentially does away with the necessity of the "real" and the photo-optical referent. It is a child of a purely virtual formation process and a "perfect simulation," to continue the Baudrillard reference. Unlike the Photoshop filtering process that "tricks" the photo to look a certain way via a chain of intricate algorithms, a vector is infinitely pliable and non-photographic--any vertex can be repositioned along with the handles at any point. There is no claim of optical proximity to some existing universe; there is only design for its own sake.

This blog admits a certain bias for bitmaps (because they are dumb) and basic ignorance regarding vector graphics. I admired the vector-inspired “graphics revolution” of the ‘90s, as wrought by such collectives as Designers Republic and Buro Destruct, but still prefer the look of GIFs to the ultra-smoothness of Flash and the output of crappy pixel-based imaging programs such as MSPaint and Paintbrush to the sleek gradient fodder of Adobe Illustrator.

“BITMAP” has about 30 artists working with pixel-based reduction, craft, and image-dismantling. One hopes that Ramocki can one day round up

all the artists bending time, space,
and human understanding with vector
(Paper Rad?) for a companion
show: "Bitmap vs Vector: Who Will
Win?"

[http://www.tommooody.us/
archives/2008/08/02/bitmap-
catalog-a-response/](http://www.tommooody.us/archives/2008/08/02/bitmap-catalog-a-response/)

Thoughts on a Nasty Nets Post

The following was originally posted as a comment to the somewhat fruitless Net Art 1.0 vs Net Art 2.0 discussion at Rhizome.org (<http://rhizome.org/discuss/view/37549#52671>). The "oldguard" Internet art crowd has been characterizing the art on the newer group blogs such as Nasty Nets as "ironically posting links to existing media on a group blog" and asking for more explanation of why this was art, or Internet art, while at the same time saying that NN was just a later version of stuff they'd been doing for years. You can't really take both positions. The following stabs

at the issue by examining a specific post from Nasty Nets on April 1. It's been rewritten slightly.

Petra Cortright had this post by Javier Morales (<http://nastynets.com/?p=1498>) onscreen for a while during the recent Net Aesthetics 2.0 panel, and I think it's brilliant. Using very simple means (screenshots of Google search results and some html scrolling), it tackles sexual content in a very distanced, fetishistic way--the words "penis" and "vagina," in boldface, slowly move towards and away from each other in a configuration that is both a mirror and conflict. It is a snapshot of current culture: some earnest

websites such as democraticunderground.com, cybersleuths, and cv-corner are captured only because they use the word penis or vagina and google finds them. There are accompanying thumbnail images that seem to have no connection to the words underneath them--did google do this or the artist? Plus snippets of text, moving just slowly enough to be read: "or is the penis a very large clit?" "the craze for designer vaginas" that somehow have to be accounted for in the overall clash of contexts. And it's nice to look at, with its suprematist squares collapsing into each other.

This was not submitted to Rhizome

for institutional sanction as far as I know. It existed "out there" with 4Chan and all the other mashup sites. It's true that Rhizome gave approving coverage to Nasty Nets but there is no link on NN to Rhizome or any other signifier that it exists in an approved stream of processing "art" content.

Perhaps you hate this piece but I don't think you can reduce it to "ironically posting links to existing media with your friends on a group blog." Perhaps you like it but I don't think you can claim it is what Net Artists have always done if you think it is "ironically posting links to existing media with your friends on a group blog."

I personally believe this is a new taxonomic class to be evaluated. The fact of it being on a blog, a blog that blends into the Internet "street," existing "outside" the world of grants for technological innovation, where the surrounding posts may very well be found material (but you have to figure it out), the fact of it using Google to generate a snapshot of the present moment, using search features (images, etc) that were not commonly available in 1999, while maintaining old school simplicity, means it is different, and I think better. More complicated, more real than XYZ tech art where algorithm Y converts raw material X into social solution Z. Morales can't be blamed

if some Rhizome staffers think what he is doing is important enough to rate a new version.

But regardless of whether I'm right about it being different, you can't both claim it and repudiate it.

<http://www.tommooody.us/archives/2008/06/26/thoughts-on-a-nasty-nets-post/>

Quiz

1. Do you know who Marcel Duchamp is?
2. Do you know who Roland Barthes is?
3. Do either of them have any bearing on digital art?
4. Does an artist who uses a computer have any bearing on digital art?
5. Is a blog a multiple choice format?
6. Does a blog limit artistic expression?
7. Is "finding" enough or must one create?
8. Which is more interesting, the new or the old?
9. Is a scan of a photo of a painting digital art?
10. Which is better, blog pages that scroll down or pages that you click on to go to other pages?
11. Which is better, pages where new content is added at the bottom or pages where you have to hunt for the content?

mp is?

es is?

ing on art practice?

ter have to be able to "program" it?

t?

ion?

also "make?"

network or the content on the network?

on a blog "net art"?

change every day or static, fixed

w content is at the top or pages where

nt?

12. Is speed a virtue on the Internet?
13. Broken links: cool or uncool?
14. Which is the best way to communicate with your
comments?
15. Is the design of a page more important than the
content?
16. Are default templates unartistic?
17. Are computers good and are they making art?
18. Should every artwork question its own existence?
19. Is an artwork an individual statement or is it
cumulative?
20. When a group of artists agree on a style, is it
or insignificant?

or is slowness a valid experience?

nicate--email ListSrvs or blog

ortant or the content on the page?

y helping us to be a better species?

s own means of implementation?

ment in space and time or could it be

a set of conventions is that significant

Net Aesthetics Trial Balloons

Afterthought to afterthought re: Marcin Ramocki's surf club analysis (<http://www.ramocki.net/surfing-clubs.pdf>):

Some 20th Century writers complained that reality (in a hyper-charged mediated environment) was outstripping their ability to spin fiction.

Artists, too, have to compete with real world content far more captivating than anything they could come up with, which the Internet effectively gathers all in one place (sneezing Pandas, etc). Two possible respons-

es are (1) to continually rise above it through aesthetic and conceptual framing and posturing or (2) to disappear into it and trust the viewer to ultimately sort out what's going on. The Web is a consumer's medium, not a producer's, so the artist is inexorably led to consumption as a "practice." The degree of criticality can only be inferred, not implied.

<http://www.tommoody.us/archives/2008/06/04/net-aesthetics-trial-balloons/>

Comment on "Massive Links! Events and Essential Web Documents Edition"

A few quick reactions to Ramocki's excellent outline (<http://www.ramocki.net/surfing-clubs.pdf>):

1. I would date group art blogs around 2003 with 544x378(WebTV). Ramocki says it was '05/'06. 544x378(WebTV) wasn't just Abe Lincoln and jimpunk: they had a roster of "speakers" with posting privileges. The emphasis was more on making than finding but the product/process is very similar to Nasty Nets, et al. (see <http://544x378.free>.

fr/(WebTV)/FFFFFFF.htm)

2. Ramocki values posts that start a dialog, and "challenge and response" or gameplaying is a good way to describe such interchanges. It was occasionally remarked on Nasty Nets, though, that posts with no comments had value, too—because people were stymied by them and/or needed time to process them. For some it was a game to inspire silence.

3. Some of the earliest internal discussion on NN is "why post this to NN and not our own blogs?" An aesthetic based on "what's good for a group page" is something that might

be added to Ramocki's analysis.

4. I frankly don't understand the difference between the boon and the wake on spiritsurfers, but I've noticed that the SS'ers are already making jokes and visual puns about it (e.g., a directional arrow cycling between the boon and the wake). This is very much like jokes about Bob's pipe in the Church of the Subgenius webpages from 10 years ago. In-jokes about church dogma. This raises the issue discussed on Rhizome but not in Ramocki's notes: what makes surf clubs different from 4Chan or the Subgenii?

Years ago during an artist's talk

I asked Jim Shaw what made him different from the Subgenii and he said "I'm more anal." The spiritsurfers manifesto describes an elevated or lofty art purpose. More thought could be given to what differentiates group activity in the surf clubs vs 4Chan than "I'm a conceptualist elitist and you're an anonymous bathroom wall scroller." Or not—the internet's ability to thoroughly confuse these categories has a certain fascination.

5. Ramocki's notes are blogcentric. Supercentral is not included in his analysis. They recently switched from a blog to a Wiki. It was fun group-editing the Wiki for the Internet

Sleepover last August and that format should be given some consideration as a surf club "syntagmic signifier." The downside of Wikis is for all the pleasant Orwellianism of their tweakability how does an outsider follow the changes via RSS or otherwise? (Maybe it's possible, I don't know.)

<http://www.artfagcity.com/2008/06/03/massive-links-events-and-essential-web-documents-edition/>

