New York Digital Salon

First Annual

New York Digital Salon

December 6-17, 1993

Chair	Timothy Binkley
Curator	Bruce Wands
Assistant	Valerie Castleman
Jurors	Barbara Nessim
	Judson Rosebush
	Lillian Schwartz
	Kenneth Snelson
Special Thanks	Fury Nardone-Sabato
	Kirsten Solberg
	Michael O'Rourke
	Trilby Shreiber
	Claudia Coffman
	Bill Tinker

Jurors Corner

Kenneth Snelson   *Chain Bridge Bodies*

Lillian Schwartz   *A Hockney Illusion*

Barbara Nessim   *Spiral Down and Under Class*

Judson Rosebush   *New York, Ida*

Cover Art: Fury Nardone-Sabato, The Virtual Art Directors Club

New York Digital Salon

The New York Digital Salon has been organized in an effort to establish a regular venue for the exhibition of computer art in New York City. The computer has already had a profound impact on television, cinema, and graphic design. Photography is currently being transformed from an art form based on chemistry to one based on computation. The new arena of interactive multimedia is burgeoning as telephone and cable companies merge to create high bandwidth networks that will deliver interactive services to the home. All this activity signals a fundamental paradigm shift in human communication. The conduits of culture are migrating from passive analog media broadcast out of competitive centers of power to interactive digital media globally networked to a collaborative population.

Computers offer all artists radically new ways of creating and exhibiting their work, and the resources of digital technology have only begun to be tapped. In establishing the New York Digital Salon, we hope to foster experimentation and exploration on the digital frontier by providing a forum for the exhibition and discussion of the new work. It is our hope to contribute to humane and innovative applications of the technology.

This inaugural exhibition has the added distinction of being curated on the computer. A virtual counterpart to the real gallery was modeled using readily available software and hardware. Works selected by the "blind" jury were then scanned into the computer. This allowed much of the curatorial work to be accomplished quickly and easily. By placing and adjusting works in a virtual gallery, the curator is able to try out various hanging arrangements without hefting physical objects. Different alternatives are rendered on the computer screen to preview how they would look in the gallery. Our experiment may inspire museums and galleries to investigate prospects for computer-aided curation in their own venues. It also raises profound questions about how best to exhibit and view work created in a digital environment. This is one of the major challenges facing artists and audiences alike in a society whose fabric is interwoven with computer and telecommunication technologies.

Timothy Binkley, Chair

Yoshiyuki Abe	*Legend III*
Antonio Angulo	*Janus 4-8*
Elaine Breiger	*Stilled Center*
Jeff Burden	*The Swimmer*
Greg Carter	*Electric Brain Boy*
David Chalk	*Table Scene*
Cynthia Clabough	*The Last*
Adam Cohen	*Drive-in*
Richard Deon	*Bi-Level*
Stewart Dickson	*Fermat's Last Theorem N=5*
Diane Fenster	*Johnny Come Lately*
Roger Ferragallo	*The Reality of Infinite Nuance*
Dennis Finch	*Orthoprism*
Monika Fleischmann	*Liquid Views 1*
Nancy J. Freeman	*Whispers*
Rachel Gellman	*Running Horse*
Brissette Gendron	*Métiers Manuels*
Wendy Grossman	*Bicycle Race*
Bob Hall	*Point of View*
Pamela Hobbs	*Wunder Ba*
Won-Hwa Hong	*Space 3*
Keiko Iseki	*Elongated Passage #1*
Alex Jamison	*Equinoctial Sleep*

Eduardo Kac	*Adhuc*
John Kahrs	*Super Cluster (5000 Spheres)*
Ronaldo Kiel	*D'Invenzione 1*
Martha Leinroth	*Bacchanal*
Jonathan Morse	*Untitled #7*
Peter Oppenheimer	*Cyberian Bonsai (lenticular translation: Depthography*
Jan Pamula	*Group)*
Jee Hee Lee Park	*System #5*
Kent Rollins	*#3 Macro and micro-6.1*
Elizabeth Royden	*Untitled*
Lenore Seroka	*Erecticulous*
Robert Michael Smith	*Sherri*
Cheryl Stockton	*Millennium Projection*
Robert Stratton/Sandra	*Valley of the Kings*
McLean	*Woman*
Morgan Thomas	*Chaco Feather III*
Allen Toney	*Shadow of God*
Sigi Torinus	*Eyes Innocent II*
Claudia Tung	*Fish*
Roman Verostko	*Gaia Series 2*
Mark Wilson	*6B93*
Richard Wright	*The Night Café*

Creating the Virtual Art Directors Club Gallery

Given the task of curating the first New York Digital Salon art show to be held at the Art Directors Club in New York December 6-17, it only seemed natural that a computer should be used to assist in the process. The idea was that a replica of a gallery would be created using a 3D modeling system and the art would be scanned, texture mapped and placed in the gallery for the process of curating the show.

The first step was to gather all the data needed to build an accurate scale model. This involved several trips to the gallery. The first trip was a scouting mission to determine the appropriateness of the space and to record various details about the gallery. Several photographs were taken as well as a camcorder video. From these images a plan was made to take measurements of all the critical dimensions, i.e. the length and height of the walls of the gallery, the architectural details, lighting placement and any other physical objects that would be important in recreating the gallery. The process was begun from the entrance and then moved around the space.

From this data, a series of architectural sketches were drawn of the gallery. These included a top, side, and front view of the gallery. Incorporated into these sketches were the actual dimensions of the space. At this point, the data was ready to be put into the computer.

The hardware and software for this project are an IBM PC compatible computer and Autodesk 3D Studio. The computer is a 66mHZ machine with 16 MB of RAM, a 340 MB hard disk and SGVA graphics. It also has a Targa 32 + graphics card and a RGB monitor. This combination was chosen due to the software features of using dimensioning, ease of texture mapping and speed of the computer for rendering of images.

The first step in building the computer model was to set up a grid and to set the dimensions in architectural units. Once this was done, the model was entered using the top view first. By building the model from the top, it could be extruded to the correct height of the walls. In addition, there were other details that were planned to be added later. The top view of the model was then extruded to give the gallery dimension.

At this point a camera was created so that one could see and move around the gallery. Lights were added to match the actual lighting conditions of the gallery. Omni lights were added to mimic the overhead lighting and spot lights were used to light the walls where the artwork would be placed. The ambient light level was also adjusted to match the time of day and the light coming in from the windows. Additional architectural details were also added at this point. Several test renders were made from different points in the gallery for the purpose of refining the model. Once this process was completed, the virtual gallery had been created. It should be mentioned that render time was also an issue. The model was made as accurate as possible to match the actual space, but intricate details such as scrollwork around columns, interior moldings and grills were not included. These details were not considered essential for the curation of the show and enabled the render time to be kept at about 2-3 minutes per image.

The next step in the process was to scan in the art for the show. Once the show had been judged, the 35 mm slides were scanned in using a Leaf slide scanner. They were brought in at 72 dpi in 16 bit color which gave a file size of about 350-600K per image. Given that there would be many works of art, memory management of the database was an issue. The works could have been brought in at a higher resolution, but the hard disk memory would have become very large and the render time would have increased significantly. The file size chosen allowed a relatively accurate representation of each piece.

Once the virtual gallery had been built and the work scanned in, the process of curating the show was begun. Another trip was made to the gallery to confirm what the actual space looked like. A list of the pieces and their descriptions and dimensions was brought along to help come to some early decisions as to where each piece would be placed. From this point, the computer was used to view the work and place it in the gallery.

Bruce Wands, Curator