

Warhol meets Nintendo in 'NOWN'

BY LESLIE HOFFMAN

In July 1968, Valerie Solanis shot Andy Warhol. Now, with Cory Arcangel's hacked 8-bit video game, "i shot andy warhol," gallery visitors can take aim at the pop artist, too.

Arcangel's game — like many of the video, prints, computer games and sculpture in the Wood Street Galleries' show "NOWN," which opens tonight — discusses animation in terms of not only "person, place or thing," but also in the context of the "now."

Curated by Michele Thursz, known for her work with the Moving Image Gallery, one of the first spaces in New York City with a unique focus on new media, "NOWN" will present many pieces from mediums that examine not only methods of reinterpreting themes those with an art background will be familiar with, but also what the reinterpretation of those themes by technology means.

"People think that technology is only 'Net art,'" Thursz said. "But it's not just something sterile; it's part of our everyday."

For example, Arcangel has hacked into a cartridge of the Nintendo game "Hogan's Alley" to present Warhol as well as other "celebrities," such as

the pope, Colonel Sanders and Flavor Flav, in an arena where players can use a light gun to try to shoot the wily artist. It seems simple. But consider the use of an appropriated game in context with the use of the Warhol icon, as well as the use of the other "celebrity" icons — Warhol worked extensively with borrowed images and famous people — and the act becomes more significant.

With his enlarged framed stills of landscapes from the video game "Doom," Milos Manetas discusses not only the ideal of the landscape in the context of art history, but also suggests that unreal video game landscapes have also become part of our perception of landscapes.

Kinya "Mumbleboy" Hanada and Karl Ackermann have produced a work similar to Arcangel's with their interactive "Mumblehop." The piece is essentially a video game in which participants themselves are the controllers: to move the character back to his home on the screen in front of them, players direct him with their feet on a sensor-loaded footpad.

"It plays pretty much like a board game," Thursz said.

Michael Rees' "Pib 1 animation" takes the production of art with the aid of animation a step further. In-

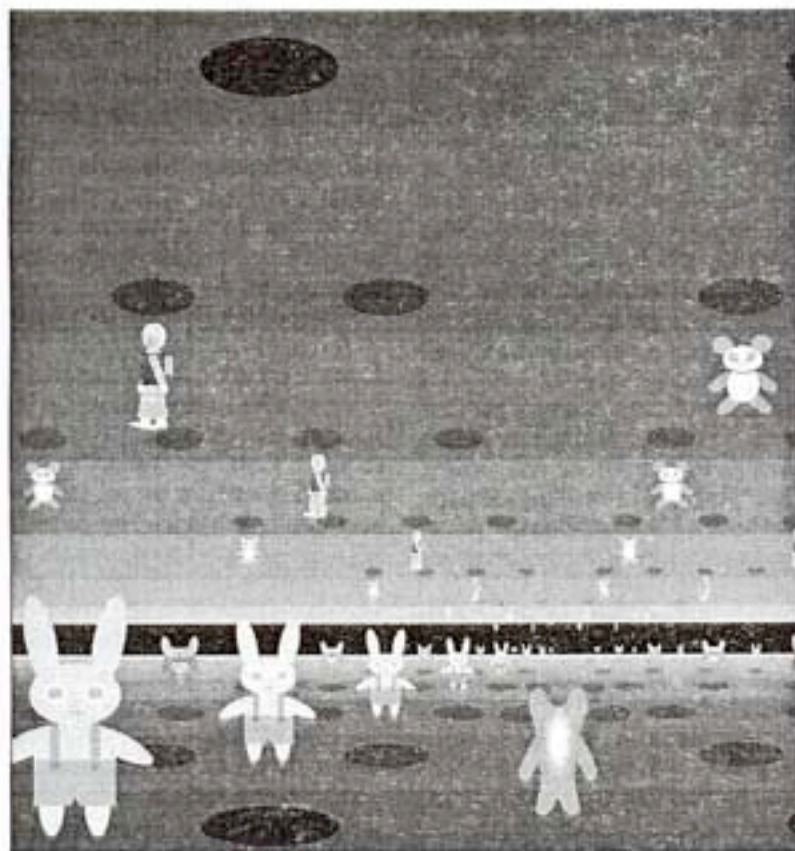
stead of sculpting an image for animation, he has animated a bizarre figure composed solely of an extended torso with many pairs of limbs sticking out from the sides. He then printed out the images and used them as models for sculptures of the strange figure.

In addition to works by artists Yael Kanarek, Craig Kalpakjian, Tobias Bernstrup, Willy Le Maitre, Eric Rosenzweig and Michelle Handelman, the opening tonight also will feature

the world debut of Robert Lazzarini's "Untitled," created especially for this exhibition.

"Hopefully it will be progressive for people to look at these works and include their [own perspectives]," Thursz said. "Now that technology has fully infiltrated our lives, it should be less prohibitive."

Leslie Hoffman is a freelance writer.



Detail from "Mumblehop" by Kinya "Mumbleboy" Hanada and Karl Ackermann.