
CORY ARCANGEL

DON'T TOUCH MY COMPUTER

PARIS DEBELLEYME

28 Tuesday - 25 Saturday



"Retro video games are what computers think about when we're not around." (Clive Thompson)

We are delighted to announce the second one-man show by the young American artist Cory Arcangel. Born in Buffalo NY in 1978, he now lives in Brooklyn. During the past two years in particular, he has appeared in public with innovative performances, videos and computer-generated projections.

Seldom has an artist of the youngest generation attracted so much attention from famous cultural institutions. In 2004, works by Arcangel were shown at the New York Museum of Modern Art, the London Royal Academy of Art, the Liverpool Biennial, the Whitney Museum of Art, New York, and the Guggenheim Museum, New York. Last year, the Migros Museum in Zurich devoted an entire exhibition to his work.

The aesthetics of Arcangel's works are based on the computer technology of the 1970s and '80s. For instance, he uses historical Nintendo entertainment systems and manipulates their software. In Paris, we are showing his projection Mig 29 Fighter and Clouds (based on a Cold War computer game) and a complete film (Colors) based entirely on a manipulated Hollywood movie.

In an interview last year, he replied to a question about why he works with historical computer technology: "Using a limited amount of computing resources provides a few positives. One is that older computers can be found for a few dollars at thrift stores. Two, is that since they are much simpler than today's computing machines, they can be programmed on the machine code level, which means that as an artist your code is directly affecting the hardware on the machine. This is important because it means when a pixel appears on the screen, the artist has to put it there, and not some operation systems written by 1000 programmers in Silicon Valley. It means you can really understand the aesthetic of the machine. It is a bit more hands on. Third, is that old machines are never updated, so they never change! A Commodore 64 today will be exactly the same 30 years from now. You won't have to download any plugins to run it"

Rarely have software and hardware been regarded so open-mindedly as raw artistic material, as in the work of Cory Arcangel. His attitude to antiquated computer technologies entails the rejection of unquestioning participation in consumer society; it plays with the collective imagery of the first generation to grow up with home computers, and reflects in humorous vein the tradition of minimalist art and the legacy of the ready-made.

Further details on Cory Arcangel and the BEIGE Group – an association of like-minded computer enthusiasts and hackers – are available under the following addresses: <http://beigerecords.com/cory> or <http://post-data.org/beige>