Flash Art

CORY ARCANGEL

TEAM GALLERY

As a member of Beige, Paper Rad and RSG (Radical Software Group), Cory Arcangel staked out new frontiers for befuddling definitions of intellectual property, most notably by monkeying around with Atari and Nintendo game systems. For his latest show, Arcangel continues to test the extra-proprietary possibilities in all readily available commercial media, cleverly demonstrating his computer wizardry as well as his formalist and process-oriented tendencies.

Arcangel's keen interest in electronic music and his formal music training are evident in his selection and treatment of "found" artifacts. The piece titled *Sweet 16*, for example, is a tribute not only to the classic '80s hair band Guns N' Roses, but also to minimalist experimental music composer, Steve Reich, applying his principle of 'phasing' to the opening seconds of the music video for *Sweet Child O' Mine*. And, in *Untitled (After Lucier)*, Arcangel pays homage to both Alvin Lucier's feedback experiments and to The Beatles with a computer program that continually compresses and, as a result, progressively degrades the 1964 TV broadcast of the band's historic first appearance on *The Ed Sullivan Show*.

Arcangel has also applied his sophisticated computer-generated manipulation to the 1988 gangs-vs-cops-themed movie *Colors*, turning the image into an abstracted pulsing play of vertical stripes and foregrounding the film's intact hip-hop and rap soundtrack. And, in an extreme act of out-sourcing, Arcangel hired a call center from Bangalore to read for each of the speaking parts in the 1993 movie *Dazed and Confused*. Dubbed over and delivered without inflection, the teenage stoner slang dialogue set off by classic '70s music is rendered even more ridiculously anachronistic than the original.

While all the works appear, at first glance, to be simple yet elegant studies in appropriation, the formal systems underlying each of Arcangel's pieces makes them all the more compositionally complex and conceptually challenging.
Melissa Friedling
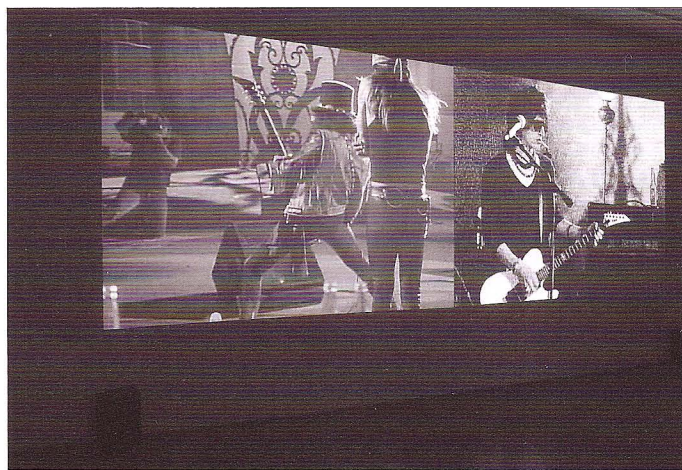
CORY ARCANGEL, Sweet 16, 2006. Projection from a digital source, dimensions variable. Courtesy Team Gallery, New York.