

glitch

Artists:

Jon Cates

Paul B. Davis

Kyle Kondas

LoVid

Shane Mecklenburger

Tom Moody

Vjanomolee

Jenny Vogel



Vjanomolee, *untitled*, still from video, 2010



Jenny Vogel, *untitled*, still from video, 2010

Glitch  
Jan. 15 – Feb. 5, 2011

centraltrak

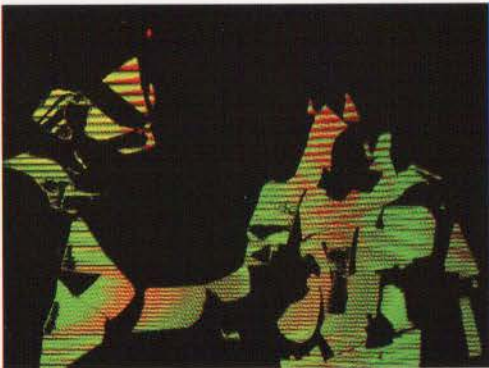
800 EXPOSITION AVE., DALLAS, TX 75226

Gallery Hours: Wed. - Sat., 12 - 5 p.m.; Sunday - closed

The University of Texas at Dallas Artists Residency – [centraltrak.org](http://centraltrak.org)

For assistance, call 214-824-9302 or Texas Relay Operator 1-800-RELAYTX. UT Dallas is an equal opportunity/affirmative action university.





LoVid, *Paper performance2*, still from video, 2010

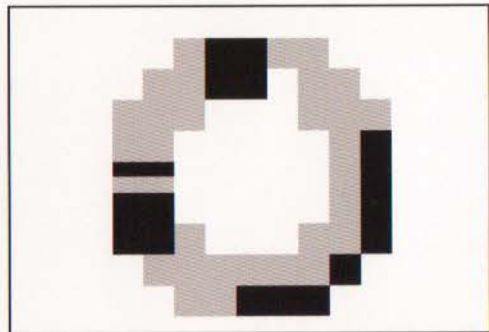
*Honour thy error as a hidden intention.*

— Brian Eno & Peter Schmidt's 1st Oblique Strategy

Technology is supposed to work. As long as it does, we don't need to understand how or why, or what it may be doing behind the scenes. We're told the perfect technology is invisible. This, Asimov declared, makes it indistinguishable from magic. Such mythologies imply that we're only to be critical of devices when they fail. When the ring of invisibility slips off and devices call attention to themselves, most of us try to ignore it. If we can't, we work to eliminate it. Artists in this exhibition have chosen instead to "domesticate" the wild glitch, as Rosa Menkman has put it.<sup>1</sup> Here the glitch is both subject and material.

The glitch has well-worn use as a narrative device. In popular media, glitches are a cue for the paranormal. Serious glitches: harbingers of doom. Lights go out, cell signals fade: prepare for the worst. The growing lexicon of glitches is continually re-aestheticized, most often as nostalgia. Emulations of vertical scratch patterns in cinema film have long since become a standard feature of video editing software. The 70s and 80s are known by the wobble of aging analog tape edits, the 90s by horizontal, rectilinear digital tape artifacts. The passage of time is increasingly marked by the idiosyncrasies of how media degrades.

Technologies can't be neutral. The promise of functionality is itself a bias. Tools and processes are further embedded with the prejudice of tasks they are designed to perform. The first task of video was to make television. The purpose of television, Schoolman and Serra noted, is to deliver people to advertisers.<sup>2</sup> Artists working with video are obliged either to embrace or resist television. Metaphors of everyday computing declare its bias: a "desktop" of "folders" and "files" is designed for doing business. To experiment creatively with such a device is to work against the material. In both instances, artists are placed in a peculiar position by the medium itself.



Tom Moody, *untitled*, still image from gif, 2010



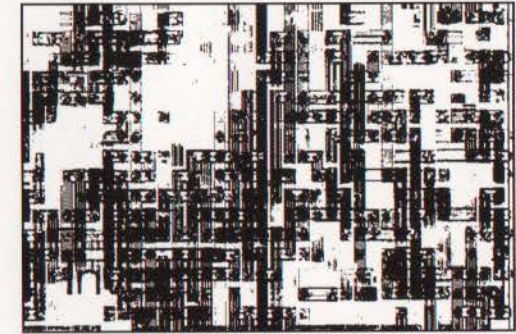
Paul Davis, *Compression study #4*, still from video, 2007

The famous signal-to-noise ratio defines signal as "useful" information. By contrast, noise is characterized as a "corruption" of comprehensible data. What constitutes noise versus signal is always a political determination. Noise renders signal "incomprehensible," causes it to be "irrelevant" or, at worst, "false data." Signals can be put to work. Noise threatens that work. Noise that exceeds signal invokes corruption, falsehood, chaos, interruption, struggle, failure, refusal, freedom and play.<sup>3</sup> The same attributes are often assigned to hacking, a term with multiple connotations.<sup>4</sup> The cultures, purposes and processes of glitch art can be similar, analogous or in anarchic solidarity with those of hacking.

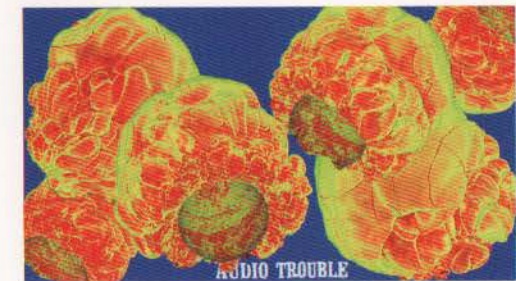
Offering a glimpse of the otherwise opaque processes, these practices extend the legacy of surrealism and process art. By working with the grain of the medium, glitch aesthetics are also indebted to abstract formalist painting and structural film, which deconstructed painting and film as signs. These projects succeeded largely by discovering where a breakdown in the medium occurs and then exploiting those limits. Celebrating uncertainty, mishap and creative misuse, and transgressively exposing what we are not meant to see, glitch artists also participate in an aesthetics of abjection and resistance. Considered on their own terms, they hunt the mysterious ghost in the machine to unveil it and dispel the cloud of superstition created by techno-mythologies.<sup>5</sup>

— Shane Mecklenburger

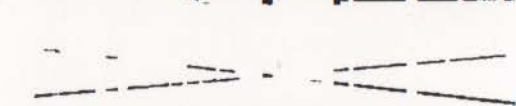
- 1 Menkman, Rosa. *Glitch Studies Manifesto*, 2009/2010. <http://rosa-menkman.blogspot.com/2010/02/glitch-studies-manifesto.html>
- 2 Schoolman, Carlota Fay and Serra, Richard. *TELEVISION DELIVERS PEOPLE*, 1973
- 3 Satrom, Jon. *GLI.TC/H RECAP* video, 2010. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sZXhhEPuzp8>
- 4 Cates, jon ++ Elliot, Jake. *Hacking Open Together: New Media Art, Activism and Computer Counter Cultures*, 2006. <http://gli.tc/h/wiki/index.php/4RTCR4X0RZ>
- 5 O'Brien, Nicholas. *Defective: Debugging Media Myths*. Exhibition essay, Nightingale Theater, Chicago. 2009



Kyle Kondas, *Generic Data*, still from video, 2010



Shane Mecklenburger, *untitled*, still from video, 2010



here is nothing to see, where things see

fetishization of the game itself as mach



Jon Cates, *GLITCHMACHINIMA*, still from video, 2010