FIVE INSTALLATIONS IN MEDIA EXHIBITION *AUTOMATIC UPDATE* AT MoMA USE TECHNOLOGY TO COMMENT ON THE MODERN-DAY INFORMATION AGE

Automatic Update
The Yoshiko and Akio Morita Gallery, second floor
June 27–September 3, 2007

NEW YORK, June 20, 2007—*Automatic Update*, an exhibition of five media installations made since 2000, features works of art drawn from the technology of the last decade. Employing computers, LCD screens, DVD players, digital video, and user-activated components, works in the exhibition show contemporary artists trying their hands at a range of newly invented art forms. The artists in the exhibition, Cory Arcangel, Xu Bing, Rafael Lozano-Hemmer, Jennifer and Kevin McCoy, and Paul Pfeiffer, make comical and sometimes absurd use of recent technologies while offering lighthearted critiques of today's society.

The exhibition is on view from June 27 through September 3, 2007, in The Yoshiko and Akio Morita Gallery on the second floor, and is accompanied by a series of related films and videos that will be screened in The Roy and Niuta Titus Theaters from July 7 through September 2, 2007. *Automatic Update* and the accompanying film-and-video series are organized by Barbara London, Associate Curator, Department of Media, The Museum of Modern Art.

In the 1990s, artists worked in a range of newly invented art forms, often switching from analogue to digital equipment as the technology evolved. They built interactive installations and electronic publishing networks, and made art for the Internet. Technology advanced so quickly that in some cases the platform upon which an art form depended would disappear while a work was being made. By the year 2000, this quasi-revolutionary aura had dissipated, and media art had settled into the mainstream.

Ms. London says, "The wildness of the dot-com era infused media art with a heady energy. *Automatic Update* is about the vision of art drawn from technology of the last decade. The show features the work of hackers, programmers, and tinkerer-revisionists from North America, Europe, and Asia."

Cory Arcangel (American, b. 1978) is known internationally for his subversive reworkings of obsolete computer systems. He participates in the artist group BEIGE and the Radical Software Group. This exhibition includes his newest work, on view for the first time, titled *Two Keystoned Projectors (one upside down)* (2007). It comprises a VCR (video cassette recorder) and two projectors that cast two fields of color and a channel number onto the wall. The work takes into consideration now-dated VCR technology and shows what media art might look like if the engine of consumer innovation had stalled at the development of the VCR.

Xu Bing (Chinese, b. 1955) works in a wide range of media, creating installations that question language and demonstrate how meaning and the written word can easily be manipulated. Here he presents a classroom-like installation, *Book from the Ground* (2007, work in progress), in which he arranges two desks and a computer against a text panel. Viewers may interact with the icons on the computer screen, using Xu's sequences of simple images to construct "sentences" from a universal, visual language akin to hieroglyphs. Icons are ubiquitous symbols providing information without words, antidotes to misunderstanding in the enveloping sphere of world languages in the global electronic network. The work plays with the notion of the word "icon," which in the past referred to objects of worship. Now the word refers more commonly to company logos and the thumbnail images on computer screens that are clicked to activate an application. With *Book from the Ground,* an ongoing project, the artist intends to foster communication through a common language of icons.

Rafael Lozano-Hemmer (Mexican/Canadian, b. 1967) develops large-scale interactive installations in public spaces, usually deploying new technologies and custom-made physical interfaces that use robotics, projections, sensors, and other electronic devices. Here he offers an interactive installation that is mounted on one wall of the gallery. Titled *33 Questions per Minute* (2001–02), it consists of 21 small LCD screens linked together by cables. The cables are connected to a laptop computer that contains a grammatical software program. Viewers are invited to enter questions or words into the computer, which processes them and generates related questions on the screens at the rate of 33 per minute. Words or questions entered by viewers become part of the program's database, expanding its vocabulary ad infinitum.

The husband-and-wife team of **Jennifer McCoy** (American, b. 1968) and **Kevin McCoy** (American, b. 1967) have worked together since 1990 in video, installation, media, and performance. *Our Second Date* (2004), draws upon Jean-Luc Godard's film *Week End* (1967), which the McCoys saw together on their second date. A tabletop installation recreates the car accident scene in Godard's film in miniature, while six video cameras film the scene from above. The footage is processed by a computer and played back live in both small and large scale in a projection on the adjacent wall.

Paul Pfeiffer (American, b. 1966) uses video, sculpture, and photography in works that dissect the role that mass media plays in shaping public consciousness. In a series of videos focused on professional sports events—including basketball and boxing—Pfeiffer digitally removes the bodies of the players from the games, shifting the viewer's focus to the spectators, sports equipment, or trophies won. These intimate and idealized video works are meditations on faith, desire, and a contemporary culture obsessed with celebrity. For this exhibition, Pfeiffer deals with the subject of athletic stardom in *John 3:16* (2000), an LCD monitor showing a digital video loop of basketballs hovering above the hoop, gleaned from countless NBA games. The title of this work refers to a passage from the Gospel of John in the Bible: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have

everlasting life." The conjunction of this religious sentiment with professional sports, and therefore with celebrity, suggests that markers of success often substitute for traditional objects of worship.

EXHIBITION WEB SITE:
The accompanying Web site, www.moma.org/automaticupdate, is designed in a retro, 1990s, pixelated style and includes descriptions of works in the exhibition, interviews with some of the artists, and information about the film program. The site was designed by Matt Owens of Volumeone, New York. It also features a link to the *Automatic Update* page at http://del.icio.us/Automatic_Update where visitors may view and share bookmarks pertaining to the show.

PROGRAMS:
A film-and-video series features works by video artists and film directors concerned with issues of media and technology. The films and videos will be screened in The Roy and Niuta Titus Theaters on dates between July 7 and September 2, 2007. Organized by Barbara London with Hanne Mugaas, Intern.

The Artist and the Computer:
Videos produced by young contemporary artists working with computers, digital technology, and the machine as part of their artistic practice. Artists include Pierre Huyghe, Cory Arcangel and Frankie Martin, Seth Price, Daria Martin, Mark Leckey, Oliver Payne and Nick Relph, Paper Rad, Michael Bell-Smith, Lars Laumann, and Takeshi Murata. 90 min. Saturday, July 7, 2007, 2:00 p.m., T1; Thursday, August 30, 2007, 8:30 p.m., T2

Welcome to My Homepage. 2003. USA. Video. Directed by Paper Rad. 3 min.

Digital Video Effect: "Editions." 2006. USA. Video. Directed by Seth Price. 12 min.

Morrissey Foretelling the Death of Diana. 2006. Norway. Video. Directed by Lars Laumann. 16 min.

Two Minutes out of Time. 2000. France. Video. Directed by Pierre Huyghe. 4 min.

Made in 'Eaven. 2004. England. Film. Directed by Mark Leckey. 8 min.

414-3-RAVE-95. 2004. USA. Video. Directed by Cory Arcangel and Frankie Martin. 4:57 min.

Soft Materials. 2004. England. Film. Directed by Daria Martin. 10:30 min.

Sonic the Warhol. 2005. England. Video. Directed by Oliver Payne and Nick Relph. 15 min.

Chapters 1-12 of R. Kelly's Trapped in the Closet Synced and Played Simultaneously. 2006. USA. Video. Directed by Michael Bell-Smith. 3 min.

Melter 2. 2003. Video. USA. Directed by Takeshi Murata. 3 min.

Feature Films:
Pi. 1998. USA. Directed by Darren Aronofsky. Max is a genius mathematician who has built a supercomputer at home. The apparatus provides something that is a key for understanding all

existence. Representatives both from a Hasidic cabalistic sect and high-powered Wall Street firm hear of that secret and attempt get it from him. 84 min. August 25, 2:00; August 29, 8:00

Crash. 1996. Canada/Great Britain. Directed by David Cronenberg. After a road accident leaves him with serious facial and bodily scarring, a former "TV scientist" becomes obsessed by the marriage of motorcar technology with what he sees as the raw sexuality of car-crash victims. The scientist, along with a crash victim he has recently befriended, sets about performing a series of sexual acts in a variety of motor vehicles, either with other crash victims or with prostitutes who they contort into the shape of trapped corpses. Ultimately, the scientist craves a suicidal union of blood, semen, and engine coolant, a union with which he becomes dangerously obsessed. 100 min. Monday, July 23, 8:30; Saturday, July 28, 7:00

8 BIT. 2006. USA. Directed by Marcin Ramocki. Co-directed by Justin Strawhand. A combination of "rockumentary," art exposé, and culture-critical investigation, *8 BIT* ties together the 1980s demo scene, chip-tune music, and artists using "machinima" and modified computer games. Produced in New York City, Los Angeles, Paris, and Tokyo, the documentary brings a global perspective to the new artistic approaches of the DIY generation that grew up playing Atari, Commodore 64, and other video game consoles. 77 min. Saturday, July 21, 6:00; Saturday, August 18, 2:00

Synthetic Pleasures. 1996. USA. Directed by Iara Lee. *Synthetic Pleasures*, conceived as an electronic road movie, is a sci-fi documentary that investigates cutting-edge technologies and the way they influenced our culture as we approached the 21st century. The film is concerned with both the look and the language of high-tech culture. Interviews with some of today's most noted figures in cyber-culture emphasize the influence of technology on human experience and question the implications of having access to so much transformative power. These powers involve the ability to transform three things in our culture: our surroundings; synthetic environments; and our synthetic bodies and synthetic identities. 85 min. July 18, 8:30; August 17, 4:30

Short Films and Videos:
Short films and videos by Laurie Anderson, Ericka Beckman, Miranda July, Kristin Lucas, John Pilson, and Pipilotti Rist. 112 min. July 18, 6:00; August 30, 6:00

Hiatus. 1999. USA. Directed by Ericka Beckman. Madi plays an interactive online computer game in the privacy of her apartment. Wearing a computer corset that stores her programs in a "Garden Interface," she propels her go-go cowgirl construct WANDA through the game world, encountering an assortment of logged-on players and game identities who trick and confuse her. An aggressive male character, WANG, logs on and inserts his cold architecture into her coordinates, draining the power in her corset. His expanding architecture threatens to overtake her Garden Reservoir. To confront this powerful take-over artist, she must rely on her organic memory and is forced to establish some psychological boundaries to protect her identity and preserve her freedom. 30 min.

Nest of Tens. 1999. USA. Directed by Miranda July. *Nest of Tens* comprises four alternating stories, which reveal mundane yet personal methods of control. These systems are derived from intuitive sources. Children and a retarded adult operate control panels made out of paper, lists, monsters, and their own bodies. The New York Video Festival, 2000, described the film as: "A young boy, home alone, performing a bizarre ritual with a baby; an uneasy, aborted sexual flirtation between a teenage babysitter and an older man; an airport lounge encounter between a businesswoman (played by July) and a young girl." Linked by a lecturer enumerating phobias in a quasi-academic seminar, these three perverse, unnerving scenarios involving children and adults provide authentic glimpses into the queasy strangeness that lies behind the everyday. 27 min.

Interregna. 1999–2000. USA. Directed by John Pilson. Pilson explores how life rushes into the corporate environment. The title refers to Manhattan's gridded street plan as well as to modernist architecture and its legacy in Minimalism. In this "controlled" environment, men in business suits sing doo-wop songs in the corridors, elevators, and bathrooms of a corporate office tower.

Pickelporno. 1992. Switzerland. Directed by Pipilotti Rist. Rist blurs the boundaries between art and entertainment, creating an exuberant hybrid. A surveillance camera makes low-flying journeys across the bodies of a young man and woman, in an ode to sensuality and pleasure. *Pickelporno* is an anti-pornography that shows how to address the topic of eroticism with grace and style, and to present it in a way that is aesthetically challenging while ensuring that neither image nor imagination descend into the vulgar realm of virile obscenity. 12 min.

What You Mean We? 1986. USA. Directed by Laurie Anderson. Strapped for time due to her busy schedule of personal appearances, Anderson creates a rather clumsy looking clone to take over and keep up her artistic production. Anderson plays both parts, pitting the chain-smoking, productive male half against the laid-back female half. In the end, one highly successful clone begets another clone, a situation spoofing the rise and fall of the 1980s art star. 20 min.

Host. 1997. USA. Directed by Kristin Lucas. Lucas states: "In this video, I participate in an online therapy session directed by the system operator of a street-side multimedia kiosk. As I indulge in a virtual conversation about a troublesome relationship, the session instantly becomes an amalgamation of daytime television and tabloid, wherein the surveillance camera becomes the eye of the media."

PopRally

PopRally Performance: Paper Rad
July 24, 2007, 8:00–11:00 p.m., The Museum of Modern Art

In conjunction with the exhibition *Automatic Update*, PopRally—a program of events at MoMA and P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center for young New Yorkers—presents an evening of live performances, art, and music with Paper Rad, featuring Cory Arcangel. Influenced by 1980s mass media and pop iconography—from Garfield to Gumby to Trolls—Paper Rad (Jessica Ciocci, Jacob Ciocci, and Ben Jones) playfully combines found footage from TV and the Internet with original animations to create utopian, rainbow-filled environments that elicit nostalgia for the throwaway technology and images that have permeated the last two decades.

Tickets for this event will be available two weeks in advance. Guests will be invited into a special after-hours viewing of the exhibition. For more information, visit http://moma.org/calendar/poprally/.

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For high resolution images, please visit our press office Web site: www.moma.org/press.

Public Information:
The Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53rd Street, New York, NY 10019

Hours:	Wednesday through Monday: 10:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Friday: 10:30 a.m.-8:00 p.m. Closed Tuesday
Museum Admission:	$20 adults; $16 seniors, 65 years and over with I.D.; $12 full-time students with current I.D. Free for children 16 and under. Free for members. Target Free Friday Nights 4:00-8:00 p.m.
Film Admission:	$10 adults; $8 seniors, 65 years and over with I.D. $6 full-time students with current I.D. (For admittance to film programs only)

The public may call 212/708-9400 for detailed Museum information. Or visit www.moma.org.