

"Mouse.Dance" by Neil Zusman and Arthur Aviles

"[Mouse.Dance](#)" (1998-1999)
<http://www.turbulence.org/Works/mouse.dance>

Technical Note:
You will need to download the [Shockwave plug-in](#) to view this site
properly.

[Description](#) [Artist Bio](#) [See Art](#) [Q & A](#)

"Mouse.Dance" by Neil Zusman and Arthur Aviles

By Carl Goodman

A series of captured gestures of dancer/actor Arthur Aviles and two narrative text fragments form the basis of the "[Mouse.Dance](#)," an interactive "tour de mouse" that is surprisingly rich given that it takes place on an area of the screen roughly the size of a Kleenex. It is also an example of an emerging trend towards short, though high-impact, online experiences that are well suited to the surfing habits of time-stressed, easily distracted Internet audiences.

The first and fourth "movements" of "[Mouse.Dance](#)" gain expressive power from creative deployment of the cursor AND alphanumeric keyboard, as well as from the scaling of 2D images and their movement to present the illusion of activity in three-dimensions. These techniques, common in CD-ROM-based art, play, and game experiences, are now being rediscovered online.

The maker and presenter's attempts to characterize the work as "Internet cinema," or in terms of music or dance or poetry, or Genet's theater for the dead, for that matter, only serve to illustrate the function of the Internet as an arts discipline super-collider. What do you call something that involves using a dancer as a paintbrush?

No matter. However it is described, "[Mouse.Dance](#)" delivers an evocative, media-rich experience from someone clearly in command of the variables of this emerging (multi)medium.

[Description](#) [Artist Bio](#) [See Art](#) [Q & A](#)

Who is Neil Zusman?



Neil Zusman is a video/Web artist. A poet of many mediums, he is an animator/orchestrator of images. His current work -- "[Mouse.Dance](#)" -- is all interactive, a wild and unique stop on the World Wide Web. His work has been shown at Art on the Edge and Turbulence and has been presented at THAW 98.

"[Mouse.Dance](#)" (1999) was commissioned for [Turbulence](#) by the National Endowment for the Arts. LOUNGE VIDEO (1998, video, live mix) has recently been seen in The Found/Stolen Show at Moebius in Boston, the F3 Film Festival in Austin, Banff Arts Center, Canada, and the Anchorage in New York.

[Description](#) [Artist Bio](#) [See Art](#) [Q & A](#)

Q and A with Neil Zusman

The following questions were sent to each of our Web artists.

1. How would you say your art is situated within the Web as a whole?

piece on the web
for the link to the dead
dance invoking
shiva
paint and action
play
different
each time
shaking sticks
or letting the
wind
carry

2. Do you think having a background in traditional art is a prerequisite or a hindrance to working in Web-based art? Why?

new
practice makes perfect
they say
a background
or belief
in touch
therapy or
provoking with
words
is
useful.

3. Whom did you work with to create this piece(s)?

Reading listservs, Eyebeam, Frameworks, X/change, and Dance Tech.

Arthur Aviles [the dancer featured in the piece], based in New York City, choreographed his movement on videotape for

this piece.

Clifford Duffy's piece is from Eyebeam. I had my software checked by a mad scientist.

4. What other works interest or inspire you?

Right now, it's alchemical visual states and touch, as in Phil Solomon's films, and others in cinema trouve. On the computer, I want to bury pixels in the dirt and pour bleach on them as well as defy gravity, behave like a proper shaman, both fearless and thoughtful, and open up channels to other worlds in this world. That process is the poem I'm writing.

5. The Web gives artists a global venue. Why do you choose to work in New York?

For the moment, New York on land will have to do because it's as close to being the ark as any place. My mother is also holding Brooklyn together. I can't think here but it really gives me the motivation to get away in spurts and code my work together. The motive energy here is what I crave the most, and the changes of focus.

[Description](#) [Artist Bio](#) [See Art](#) [Q & A](#)