

Six Rules Towards A New Internet Art



POSTED BY [RHIZOMER](#) | TUE, FEB 12TH 2002 1 A.M.



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Boundaries are what inspired the "heroic period" of early net.art-- boundaries such as bandwidth, browser design limits, etc. Ironically; as bandwidth has expanded and browsers more flexible, we have also seen a homogenization of net.art. A design aesthetic prevails; as we see slicker and slicker "art" sites with no message or point or content. Several of the following limitations are designed to deflect the trappings of tradition set up by the original net.art form which we seem mired in. The new net.art will not appeal to net.art purists nor the designers with a bent towards untraditional displays; instead it is a reflection of what I see as "the new cliches."

The following was drawn up in my frustration at viewing work on the internet as of late, in an attempt to find for myself what it is that has started to bore me so much about art on the web. The "manifesto" was written as a means of provocation to thought in other artists on the web who are not looking at the traps they are falling into; as well as tendencies in my own work that I was unsatisfied with. You will notice that the work I list below is not "boring" but merely rampant; I am not saying that work created against the rules I'm setting forth can't be interesting; but merely that these modes are already prevalent, and that steps should be taken by any artist who is interested in expanding the medium by posit rather than reproduction. Work created under the New Net Art Banner will work within the following selected boundaries--at least 7 of these criteria must be met for a work to be considered "New Net Art."

If no one responds to it, I am quitting the list.

+ + +

1. No Flash.

This has nothing to do with corporate/anti-corporate; and should not be mistaken as the most radical rule. The no-flash rule is in effect by simple virtue of its rampant use in net.art work at the expense of diversity. Because flash is so common, we see common systems of animation; common color schemes, common layouts. This rule should be taken with the understanding that under the rules for "new net.art" there is an allowance for up to 30% of a site to consist of flash and shockwave.

2. No introduction pages.

There will be no thesis; critical reviews or explanations of intent or content before displaying the work. The use of such pages is alienating and self-important and detracts from the responsibility of the viewer to interact with the work in order to discover its meaning; this results in a decreased sense of intimacy within net.art.

3. No more art for the sake of error.

No more art will be produced using broken code; flashing gifs or anything relating to computer viruses or corrupted data. This work is already a predominant aesthetic.

4. Images must be unique to the sitemaker.

Any images used on the site must be scanned or photographed by the artist embedding it into html. Images found on the internet may not be recycled or re-appropriated. This is intended to develop a unique, localized feel to all new net.art; as well as contribute to a new exploration of the documentary in net.art.

5. Technology is not a subject. The internet is not a subject.

New net.art cannot be "reflective of the internet or technology or its impact." These subjects are irrelevant; as the internet is not "new" and its impact has been largely explored.

6. The work stands alone.

No CV may be included in the promotion or distribution of communications art. The CV is irrelevant to the experience of any art and should not be included in any materials used to promote the site.

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M. RIVER | WED, NOV 26TH 2008 12:30 P.M.

I can not believe, after all these years, that no one commented on this posts. It's still one of my favorite Rhizome moments of all time. Just saying.

(to be clear - I love, made and still hope to make all that is railed against in this post but hell, I'm still with you Eryk.)

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CHRISTINA MCPHEE | WED, NOV 26TH 2008 12:45 P.M.

This text itself exactly qualifies as net art according to its own terms. It's da bomb.

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M. RIVER | WED, NOV 26TH 2008 2:23 P.M.

Yeah, Totally...although, I think if you set the 6 Rules (2002) to this email, #5 is a fail. Also, if I understand the rules right...

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you need to hit 7 of the rules to count. He listed only 6.

If I could pick a rule #7 for the set it might be something from the Dogme 95 Manifesto Vows of Chastity like "Optical work and filters are forbidden." or one from the LARP version "All secrecy is forbidden." or something new like "no commercial platforms (youtube, facebook, etc.)"

Anyways, it's always good to make and then break rules in art.

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CHRISTINA MCPHEE | WED, NOV 26TH 2008 2:37 P.M.

the great thing is that, as there is no rule seven, then the work automatically "fails" , ergo violates one of the rules (ie no glitches).

like your Vows of Chastity concept too. Could be a technical virgin.

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