

ART REVIEW



BUSTER DEAN: CHRONICLE

'SPIN FORM': Yael Kanarek's work features sheer organza ribbons.

Artistic limits tested in exhibit

By PATRICIA C. JOHNSON
HOUSTON CHRONICLE

The inroads made by digital technology in the world of art are multiple, and like their counterparts in the landscape, some are more interesting — or more daring or tried-and-true — than others.

Deborah Colton Gallery, which is inching toward specializing in the genre, presents some of each in *Touch and Temperature*. The exhibit features both electronic and traditional work; a handful of its approximately 20 pieces stand out.

The flickering candles in Michael Grey's installation and Peter Dudek's anthropomorphized architecture appeal in different ways. Grey's *Miss American Time* (2004) is a lovely bit of nostalgia that fills eyes and ears and tugs at the memory. It consists of two DVD projections side by side on a

TOUCH AND TEMPERATURE

■ **Where:** Deborah Colton Gallery, 2500 Summer, third floor; 713-864-2364. Through Nov. 30.

■ **When:** 10:30 a.m.-5 p.m. Tuesdays-Saturdays.

wall. Each shows one long white taper that burns slowly and in unison with the other, until both disappear at the lower edge, the flames waving and flickering in time to Don McLean's 1972 *American Pie*.

Dudek's sculpture, exhibition curator Michael Rees says, "grows from a tradition that includes (architect) Le Corbusier (artist) Barry le Va and Robert Morris (among others)." The installation consists of various modular pieces in shapes and

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ART: Digital and traditional worlds collide

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flat colors that recall a child's giant jigsaw puzzle. There are floor pieces and pieces stacked on each other and on tables, scattered in both orderly or seemingly random fashion.

On the walls is a series of small black-and-white drawings. They are "portraits" of a modern house dreaming, cartoon-balloon fashion, of being an old-fashioned cottage, and vice-versa.

Yael Kanarek essentially is a "Web artist" but occasionally produces a physical object. *Spin Form*, dated this year, is one of them. It consists of a draping, romantic shape, a ghost fashioned from sheer organza ribbons hanging from a hook.

Though delicate in form and appearance, Marcus Baenziger's tree dominates one section of the gallery. The sculpture titled *Spring* (2004) re-

sembles a sycamore sapling with its slender trunk, airy branching and winglike leaves. It's painted entirely white and seems to be balanced, however impossibly, on the tips of tiny roots that barely touch the dirt base.

"To include *Spring* in the show," Rees says, "is to suggest something about the system of representation that is the computer." But the illusion is what counts, and this one, like a magic trick of levitation, is what snags the mind's eye.

Illusion is the power of electronic media — and its fault line. Consider Joseph Nachvatal's DVD *Black Attack: The Eternal Return* (2002), described as "a movie of a computer virus." The artist, Rees says, is an author and theorist, a pioneer in the use of computers and computer-assisted painting devices. For this movie, Nachvatal

designed an electronic "painting" and infected it with a virus of his own making to destroy it. The "painting" is an abstract pattern in brilliant colors like those of oil sheen; the virus appears as white-hot dots that "eat" away at it, pixel by pixel. It's mesmerizing, like a lava lamp; unfortunately, it's just as meaningless.

Of much greater interest is *Query 4*, an elegant photogenic print on acrylic plate by Michael Somoroff. The electronically created drawing is a robed figure on stairs — a takeoff on Marcel Duchamp's 1912 painting *Nude Descending a Staircase*. Its shape is defined by interlacing lines, like the nets of axiometric drawing. He overlaid several slightly different positions of the figure, creating the illusion of movement.

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artgalleries and museums listings exhibits

Through Nov 2, *We the Video: Public Service Announcements*, Lawndale Art Center
 Through Dec 31, *Anne Frank: A Private Photo Album*, Holocaust Museum Houston
 Through Nov 7, *Perspectives 143: Katherina Grosse*, Contemporary Arts Museum Houston
 Through Nov 14, *Bill Dennard: Retrospective*, Center of Contemporary Craft
 Through Jan 2, *The Dead Sea Scrolls*, Houston Museum of Natural Science
 Through Nov 2, *Eastern Impressions*, Tansu
 Through Nov 30, *Touch and Temperature: Art in the Age of Cybernetic Totalism: Curated by Michael Rees*, Deborah Colton Gallery
 Through Jan 2, *Joseph Beuys: Actions, Vitrines, Environments*, Menil Collection
 Through Jan 9, *Treasures from the roof of the world Tibet*, Houston Museum of Natural Science
 Through Dec 30, *Richard Stout – 2004 Art League Houston Texas Artist of the Year*, Heritage Hall at JPMorgan Chase Building
 Nov 1 – Nov 24, *Character Reference* Raphaele & Linda Hofheinz, main gallery, *Mandela: Bridge to the Sacred* Juli Rodgers, side gallery, The Jung Center
 Nov 5 – Nov 23, *Loco Locals*, Sippora

MUSEUMS

- Art Car Museum, 140 Heights Blvd. 713.861.5226
- Art League of Houston, 1953 Montrose 713.523.9530
- Blaffer Gallery, UH Campus, Ent. 16, 713.743.9530
- C.G. Jung Educational Center, 5200 Montrose 713.524.8253
- Contemporary Arts Museum, 5216 Montrose 713.284.8250
- Glassell School of Art, 5101 Montrose 713.639.7500
- Heritage Society, 1100 Bagby 713.655.1912
- Holocaust Museum, 5401 Caroline 713.942.8000
- Houston Center for Contemporary Craft, 4848 Main St. 713.529.4848
- Houston Center for Photography, 1441 W. Alabama 713.529.4755
- Houston Fire Museum, 2304 Milam 713.522.4652
- The Menil Collection, 1515 Sul Ross 713.525.9400
- Museum of Fine Arts, 1001 Bissonnet 713.639.7300
- Museum of Printing History, 1324 W. Clay 713.522.4652
- Orange Show, 2402 Munger 713.926.6368
- Project Row Houses, 2501 Holman 713.526.7662
- Rice University Art Gallery, 1600 Main 713.348.6069
- Rothko Chapel, 3900 Yupon 713.524.9839

- Goldesberry Gallery, 2625 Colquitt 713.528.0405
- HCC-Central Gallery & The Heinen Theatre, 3517 Austin at Holman 713.718.6570
- Houston Landmark Gallery, 1200 McKinney St. #415, 713.650.3551
- Houston Studios, 707 Walnut #100, 713.223.0951
- Joan Wich & Co., 402 Main St. Second Floor 713.227.2480
- Koelsch Gallery, 3202 Mercer 713.626.0175
- Lawndale Art Center, 4912 Main St. 713.528.5858
- Mackey Gallery, 5111 Center Street 713.850.8527
- McClain Gallery, 2242 Richmond 713.520.9988
- McMurtrey Gallery, 3508 Lake St. 713.523.8238
- Midtown Art Center, 3414 La Branch at Holman 713.521.8803
- Moody Gallery, 2815 Colquitt 713.526.9911
- Mother Dog Studios, 720 Walnut 713.229.9760
- Nolan-Rankin Galleries, 4621 Montrose #B110, 713.528.0664
- O'Kane Gallery, One Main St. @UHD 713.221.8042
- Post Gallery, 5103 San Felipe 713.622.4241
- Redbud Gallery, 303 E. 11th St. 713.862.2532
- Retro Gallery, 1839 W. Alabama 713.522.7074
- Rice University Art Gallery, 6100 Main St. 713.527.6069
- Sippora Gallery, 234 West Gray 713.520.1085
- Somoza-Sims Gallery, 2431 Sunset Blvd. 713.526.9995
- Studio, 1107 East Freeway 713.224.5555
- The Gallery at 401, 401 Louisiana #411, 713.237.0090
- Tansu at 321-B West 19th, 713.880.5100
- Thornwood Gallery, 1201 Birdsell 713.861.2787
- Watercolor Art Society, 1601 West Alabama 713.942.9966
- Watermark Fine Art Photographs and Books 3503 Lake St. 713.528.8686
- Women's Caucus for Art, 1413 Westheimer 713.520.7840
- Zarnosh India Gallery, 2339 University Blvd

ART HOUSES

- Archway Gallery, 2013 West Gray 713.522.2409
- Barbara Davis Gallery, 5701 Main St. 713.520.9200
- Betz Gallery, 1208 West Gray 713.523.3765
- Blank Canvas Gallery, 917 Franklin 713.236.0189
- Blossom Street Gallery & Sculpture Garden, 4809 Blossom 713.869.1921
- Community Artists' Collective, 1501 Elgin at La Branch 713.523.1616
- DiverseWorks, 1117 N. Main at Naylor 713.223.8346
- Everage Gallery, 2055 Westheimer Suite 175 713.907.9970

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