New Media Fellowships
2004 Project Cover Form

Jennifer and Kevin McCoy

Title   *Traffic*

Genre   interactive installation

**Applicant's Role in Production**   artists and producers

Production Format interactive installation with robotics, miniature sets, and screens

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Brief Project Description (do not exceed space given below)

Traffic is a robotic video installation that miniaturizes and automates the entire film production process to produce a story that examines the culture of the car, comparing it to the culture of cinema and computer networks. As our cinematic starting point, we will examine and recreate iconic elements of the chase scene, the road movie, the drag race, and the traffic jam. We will use custom computer software to control small moving cameras, moving set elements, and recorded dialog so that a short narrative can be projected in front of the viewer as they watch. The small, dollhouse scale set allows the viewer to spatially explore what they experience temporally through the video projection. We are interested in using computer technology to investigate what is called "film magic"- the propensity of even the most sophisticated viewer to understand and, at the same time, be drawn in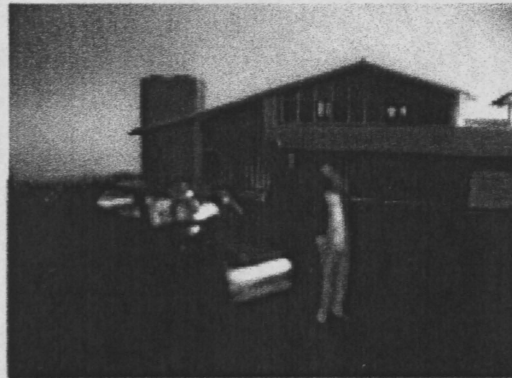 by illusionistic cinematic effects. *Traffic* will create and reveal these effects simultaneously with their product. Newer media is often used to understand the cultural conventions of older forms. The history of industrialization and mechanization has often succeeded in miniaturizing, streamlining, and automating complex processes. We are interested in both the mythology of progress this presents and in the inherent pathos of its inhumanity. *Traffic*, by placing these metaphors of data flow and mechanical automation within a narrative framework, will underline the double nature of this mythology of progress.
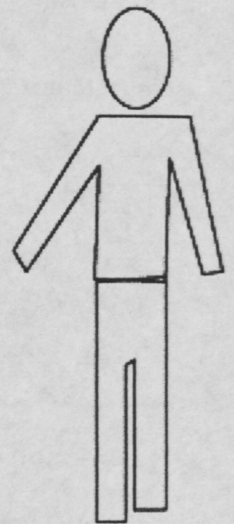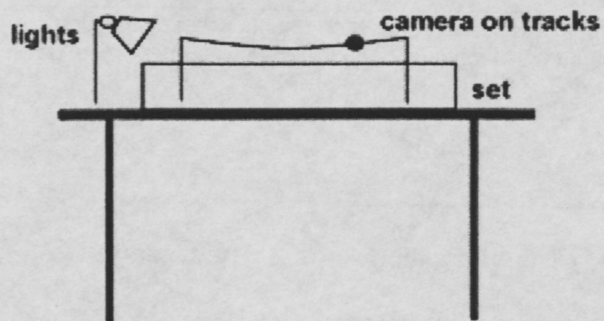
Installation Diagram

projection area

miniature cameras that move on tracks

table with film set elements
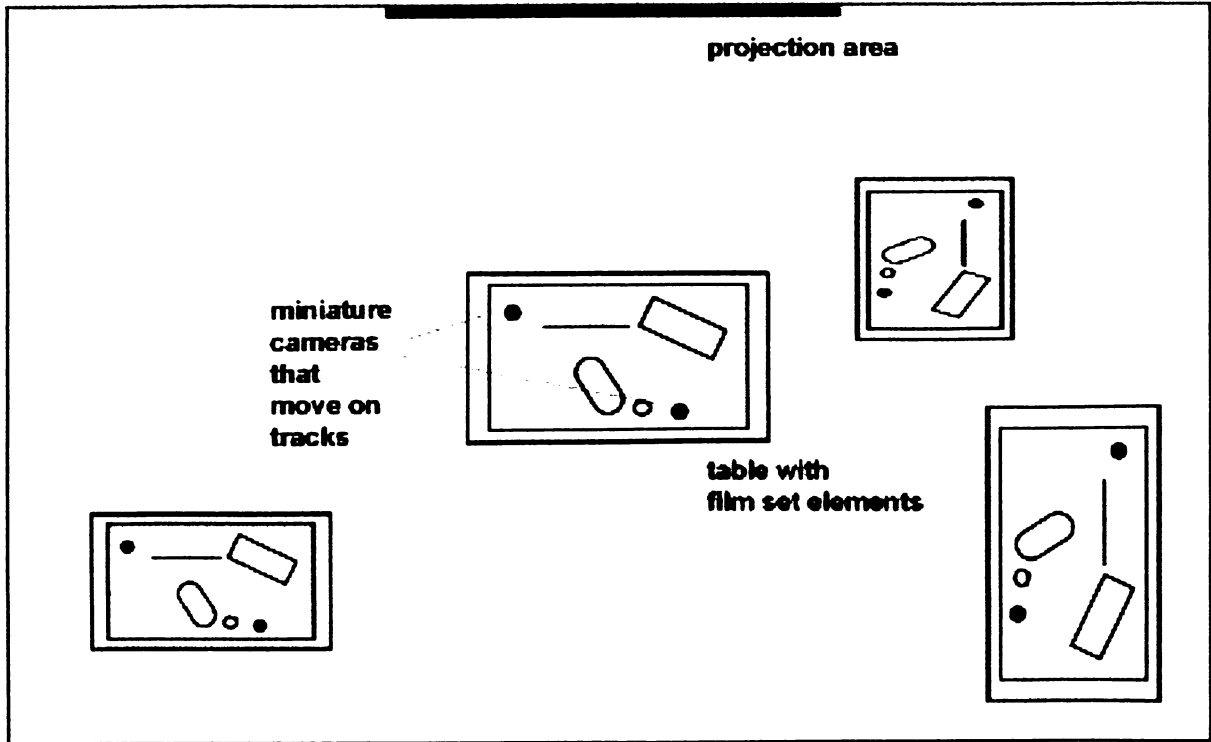
PLAN

Installation Diagram

video projection

lights

camera on tracks

set

ELEVATION

Check One: ___X___ Sample
_____ Supplemental

Jennifer and Kevin McCoy

If you are sending more than one sample, please copy this page. Sample(s) must be cued: indicate how long each sample should be viewed for a COMBINED viewing time of no more than 15 minutes. If slides are included in this application, please list the title and year of the work on this form.

Title   Recent Projects: Jennifer and Kevin McCoy

Year   2000-2003

Technical Information

Original Format	Format Submitted for Viewing	Preferred OS
_____ Software	_____ Software	_____ Windows
_____ Web	_____ Web	_____ Mac
X Installation	_____ VHS	_____ Unix
_____ Other _____	**X** Other __**DVD**__	_____ Other _____

Web Information (answer only if sample work is in Web format)

_____ URL _____(if more than one please list them below)
_____ Browser requirement(s) _____
_____ Plug-in requirement(s) _____
_____ This sample requires broadband connection (fast Internet connection)
_____ A local copy of the sample work has been included with the application

Special Information for Screening:

Description of Work (use an additional sheet if necessary)

This DVD contains documentation from four installations:

1.*Soft Rains* (2003) computer controlled installation with robotics, light, and sound dimensions variable.

This project represents the first attempt at an idea we would like to extend for our current work. *Soft Rains* consisted of 7 sculptural platforms, each of which was inspired by films of distinct narrative genres: action, horror, musicals, mysteries, love stories, and "classic European" cinema. The documentation shows an exhibition at FACT Center in Liverpool England. Following the installation view, we have included the images that the sculptures are sending, live, to the video projector. Each platform had a set of miniature video cameras that switched under computer control.

Over 60 different shots were sequenced by computer software to create a story of a female protagonist who dreams of escaping from her normal life. The *Soft Rains* title is taken from a Ray Bradbury story about an automated house that serves its family, unaware that a war has destroyed its inhabitants. Like Bradbury's house, our set creates its story absent of filmmakers and actors, creating narrative without human presence.

2. *Pink Light,* 2000, computer controlled installation with robotics, light, and sound, dimensions 2' x 2' x 2.5'

Pink Light is a computer controlled robotic installation that delivers an audio/visual message to viewers in the gallery. Our proposed project for the Rockefeller will extend the things we learned from this work about the interconnection of motors, relays, electronic circuits and software. This is the first project in which we work with the idea of a "special effect" that occurs in real space. The simple interactivity of the project (the act of pushing an elevator button) is a counterpoint to the oddness of the miniature elevator's arrival. The sound element consists of twenty "aphorisms" about religion as information from Philip K. Dick's *Valis* and original music. The computer (which is on the basement level of the gallery) chooses from among these phrases each time the elevator is called. A network of hardware sensors, switches, and motors synchronizes the arrival and departure of the object with the sound and flashing pink light.

3. *Every Shot Every Episode*, 2001, interactive installation, dimensions variable.

Every Shot... breaks film narrative down to a list of standardized techniques, drawing the viewer's attention to the tropes and methods of narrative film production. This idea of finding the basic gestures of story telling relates to the reduced film language that will be available to us when we work with miniatures in our proposed project. This is our first database driven artwork. To produce it, we engaged in a process of un-editing, compiling, and letting a computer find an alternative to narrative structure; in this case, the list. In the gallery, the viewer can select from about 300 discs. The interactivity is kind of like shopping, or playing records in that the viewer can curate his/her own selection. Although databases are most often experienced through a screen-based interface, we produced this project as an object

because we wanted to visualize the database by making the range of choices and scope of material occupy physical space.

4. *Horror Chase*, 2002, computer-based installation with projection, dimensions variable

   Horror Chase is a one-shot horror film consisting of an endless chase sequence. Custom software plays the video sequence forwards and backwards at variable speeds. To film the sequence, we re-constructed a 1000 square ft set inspired by the film *Evil Dead 2*, by Sam Rami. Although on very different physical scales, both this project and our proposed work involve constructing a set and shooting a film with it. Both projects take a well-known film genre as a starting point – horror and film-noir mystery respectively, and present themselves in real time through software control and algorithm. *Horror Chase* is a variable system, changing through an internal, code-driven dynamic. Our goal is to show a human-actor who is controlled by machine vision in which the choreography of the movement gains a digital, fragmentary gait that is different than motion under human control.

   As is typical with our work, all three of these projects develop custom technological systems of hardware and software for producing and presenting the work. Developing such frameworks through practical experimentation is integral to our collaborative creative process.

Artist Statement : Jennifer and Kevin McCoy

We are interested in creating projects about how human thinking is structured through genre and repetition, and the role that technology plays in those processes. In order to focus attention on these structures, our work takes a formal analysis of narrative as a point of departure, reexamining television series, films and classic science fiction literature, creating installations, net art, or live events from what we find. Our method is to interpret mainstream visual culture from the pre-digital era by cross-referencing and reconstituting the original material into a non-linear repository of content available, much like all computer data, for selective viewing and manipulation. We are interested in adding to the history of machines used to create moving images, from magic lantern theaters and zoetropes through net art.

In New York City, our work has been exhibited at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, P.S.1, Postmasters Gallery, The New Museum, and Smack Mellon. International exhibitions include projects at ZKM, The Cornerhouse Gallery (Manchester, UK), Van Laere Gallery (Antwerp, Belgium) and F.A.C.T. (Liverpool, UK). In 2002 we received a Creative Capital Grant for Emerging Fields. Articles about our work have appeared in Flash Art, Art News, Art in America, Artforum, The Wire, Spin, and The Independent.

We feel our contribution to the field has been the development of a distinctive artistic practice that brings the languages and techniques of digital production and Internet culture to the worlds of film and television viewing. In our work, the database is a collection of not only facts and files but also of more slippery ideas of genre, stereotypes, relationships, and representational techniques.

Project Narrative – Jennifer and Kevin McCoy

Traffic is a computer-controlled, robotic video installation that miniaturizes and automates the film production process to produce a story that examines the interconnections between the car, cinema, and computer networks. We will use custom computer software to control small moving cameras, moving set elements, and recorded dialog so that a narrative can be produced and presented live, in real-time. Four tabletop, model scale sets will be constructed which will allow the viewer to spatially explore what they experience temporally through the video projection. We are interested in using computers to investigate what is called "film magic"- the propensity of even the most sophisticated viewer to understand and still be drawn in by cinematic effects. *Traffic* will create and reveal these effects simultaneously. The history of industrialization has often resulted in miniaturizing, streamlining, and automating complex processes. We are interested in the mythology of progress this presents and in the pathos of its inhumanity. An examination of computers, cinema, and cars is our current focus, the filmic metaphors of car culture working as a stand-in for cultural drift and anomie. Each sculptural platform will examine a facet of the cinematic treatment of the culture surrounding the automobile: traffic jams, car chases, the road movie, drag racing, etc. For this project our primary cinematic reference points are: *Weekend* (Goddard), *The French Connection* (Friedkin), *American Grafitti*, (Lucas), and *Bonnie and Clyde* (Penn). We will create, in miniature, scenes that are inspired and informed by our collective recollections of these films – scenes that, in turn, will be framed, edited and projected by the technical apparatus of the sculpture. To produce this edit, the platforms will create a self-forming, reactive data network. This network, as it operates

over time, will allow the platforms to exchange images and editing control information. This exchange facilitates live experimentation with the film narrative as well as formally and technically creates a traffic flow of protocols and data. We have recently finished a project in which we developed this format without dynamic editing: *Soft Rains*. That project consisted of 7 sculptural platforms, inspired by films of distinct narrative genres: action, horror, musicals, mysteries, love stories, and "classic European" cinema. As in *Traffic*, each platform had a set of miniature video cameras that switch under computer control. Over 60 different shots were sequenced by computer software to create a fixed story of a woman who dreams of escaping from her normal life. Within the context of our work, this kind of project became interesting to us in 2000 with our miniature elevator *Pink Light*. There is an abject quality to the miniature that marries nicely with our interest in an un-heroic or comic look at technology. In 2002, we made a life-sized film set for our *Horror Chase* installation. Our proposed project combines elements of both these two works. Additionally, we are interested in using the computer because they can create a transformative space within an installation. In this case, the computer is a control device that adds motion to a still image. The real time aspect of this transformation is important to our work. We think of *Traffic* as a performative object. The narrative will have an algorithmic aspect to its structure. An embedded microprocessor will be programmed to trigger events (in this case scenes) in a variable sequence. From the viewer's perspective, the narrative may never be quite the same twice. Although the set itself is the same, narrative fragments may join together differently on each encounter. The story's tone and event structure can shift. We feel that the work's interactivity with its own system of creation is essential.

Feasibility Statement- We have begun research and hardware development towards the completion of this project. We plan to finish the modules during winter 2004 and begin to link of the components into an integrated whole the following spring. We hope to finish the larger project by the summer of 2005. Our last project, *Soft Rains,* which is physically larger but technically simpler, took a similar time to complete. Extending from what we did in *Soft Rains*, *Traffic* will make much more use of robotic elements and the capacity to reformulate the narrative structure of the piece in real time.

Use of Work- Our work uses both of our backgrounds in film and media theory to create projects that examine and critique popular forms of media. We want our work to trigger an interest in these critical skills in our audiences and encourage them to learn about and question technology. Our ideal audience is a mixture of people who are fans of fine art and popular media and who are interested in thinking about experimental means of production. We hope to reach this audience not only by creating works of art that are publicly displayed, but also by participating in artists talks, panels, conferences, and collaborations with other practitioners. The appropriate venues for our work are museums, galleries, and public art spaces. Specifically we are interested in venues that provide a history and context for emerging fields.

Fellowship Use- We will apply the fellowship funding to expenses for equipment, materials, manufacturing and production, and consultants. These consultants would play a role as we develop the interface between computer control and the mechanical and electrical systems necessary to move the cameras. We also plan to use the funding to cover our time, ideally with one or both of us taking some leave from our full-time jobs. Including partial leave, the total cost of the project will be approximately $50,000.

Jennifer and Kevin McCoy • *Traffic*
Budget

Project Phase	Item	Expense
PreProduction Planning & Initial Set and Circuit Materials for Research	Motors	$ 50.00
	Cameras	$ 200.00
	Controller Hardware	$ 200.00
	Set Materials	$ 400.00
	Electrical Supplies	$ 100.00
SUB TOTAL		**$ 950.00**
Production: Robotics, Special Effects, and Set Design	Construction Consultant Fee	$ 2000.00
	Electrical Supplies	$ 1700.00
	Additional Motors	$ 250.00
	Additional Cameras	$ 1000.00
	Computer Controllable Video Switchers	$ 2000.00
	Computer Hardware Controllers	$ 1500.00
	Production Design Consultant Fee	$ 1500.00
	Model- Making Supplies	$ 1600.00
	Lights and lighting hardware	$ 1500.00
	Lumber	$ 500.00
SUB TOTAL		**$ 13,550**
Testing / Post-Production	Miscellaneous Supplies	$ 200.00
	Documentation	$ 600.00
	Software Archiving	$ 100.00
SUB TOTAL		**$ 900.00**
Artists Fee		$ 6000.00
Living Expenses	(6 mo.1 person or 3 mo. 2)	$12,200.00
Administrative Costs		$ 1400.00
SUB TOTAL		**$ 7400.00**
Totals		**Total Expense**
		$35,000.00

Jennifer and Kevin McCoy   **www.mccoyspace.com**

Education : Kevin McCoy
1994   Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Troy, NY; Master of Fine Arts in Electronic Arts.
1990   University of Paris III, Paris, France; Dept. of Cinema and Audio-Visual Studies.
1989   Whitman College, Walla Walla, WA; Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy.

Education : Jennifer McCoy
1994   Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Troy NY; Master of Fine Arts in Electronic Arts.
1990   Cornell University: Ithaca, NY; Bachelor of Arts in Theater Arts, concentration in Film Studies.
1990   University of Paris III: Paris, France; Critical Studies Film Program with CIEE.

Awards
2003   Eyebeam Artists in Residence, New York NY
2002   Emerging Fields Award, Creative Capital Foundation, New York, NY
2001   New Media Art Fellowship, Colbert Foundation, New York, NY
2001   Finishing Funds Grant, Experimental Television Center, Owego, NY
2000   Net Art Commission/Residency, The Alternative Museum, New York, NY
1999   New York Foundation for the Arts Computer Arts Grant recipient, New York, NY
1999   "World Views" Thundergulch Artist in Residence, New York, NY
1999   "Emerging Artist/Emergent Media" Grant recipient presented by the Jerome
         Foundation through the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, MN.
1999   HarvestWorks Artist in Residence, New York, NY.

Solo Exhibitions

2004   "Robot Films" Sala Rekalde, Bilbao, Spain. *January 2003*

2003   "eternal return" Gallerie Guy Bartschi, Geneva, Switzerland. *November 2003*
         "Robot Films" FACT, Liverpool, England *September 2003*
         "Stardust", SJSU Art Gallery, San Jose, California. *March2003*

2002   "We Like to Watch" VanLaere Contemporary Art, Antwerp, Belgium, *October 2002*
         "Love and Terror," Butler Institute of American Art, Youngstown, OH, *October 2002*
         "We Like to Watch," Postmasters, New York, NY. *April 2002*

Selected Exhibitions

2004   "Open House: Working in Brooklyn," Brooklyn Museum of Art, Brooklyn, NY.

2003   "Hot Summer Cool," Postmasters Gallery, New York, NY.
         "Recon / Decon", Pacific Film Archives, Berkely, CA.
         "Art of the Encyclopedic", Carnegie Art Center, Buffalo, NY.
         "The 2003 Armory Show", Postmasters Gallery, New York, NY.
         "Americ@n Dream, " Ronald Feldman Gallery, New York, NY.
         "Critics Choice," Rotterdam International Film Festival, Rotterdam, NL.
         "Late to Work Everyday, Dupreau Gallery, Chicago, IL.

2002   "watery domestic," The Renaissance Society, Chicago, IL.
         "Future Cinema," Zentrum für Medien Kunst, Karlsruhe, Germany
         "The Omega Manual," Smack Mellon, Brooklyn, NY.
         "Where Do We Go From Here?" Cornerhouse Gallery, Manchester, England.
         "Flay, Splat, Play", Espace Paul Ricard, Paris, France. (part of the Paris/Brooklyn
         exchange program).
         "New Acquisitions in Photography" The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, NY.
         "The Armory Show," New York, NY.

2001   "Video Viewpoints," The Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY.
       "Animations," PS1 Center for Contemporary Art, New York, NY
       "Video Jam", Palm Beach Institute of Contemporary Art, Lake Worth, FL,
       "The Brewster Project", Brewster, NY.
       "Mapping the Web Informe", New Langton Arts, San Francisco, CA.
       "Trompe l'Oeil", Media Z Lounge, The New Museum, New York, NY.
       "WRO Media Art Biennial", Wroclaw, Poland.
       "Outsource", Flipside, Brooklyn, NY. *interactive*
       "The Armory Show", New York, NY. *interactive*
       "The BabySitter Tapes", Walden Gallery, New York, NY.
       "Technically Engaged", A.I.R. Gallery, New York, NY.

2000   "Pink Light", Postmasters Gallery, New York, NY.
       "Verbal 3", The Kitchen, New York, NY.
       "Dissection - New Electronic Interaction", Macau Museum of Art, Macau.
       "B-2000", Centre Bruxelles, Brussels, Belgium,
       "Through the Looking Glass", Beachwood Center for the Arts, Cleveland, OH,
       "The Skin Game", Smack Mellon, Brooklyn, NY.
       "Subject to Sound", The Rotunda Gallery, Brooklyn, NY.
       "South by Southwest Interactive Festival", Austin, TX.
       "Tenacity", The Swiss Institute, New York, NY
       "Greater New York," P.S.1., New York, NY.
       "Airworld Tonight," Postmasters Gallery, New York,NY.
       "Arts Entertainment Network", The Walker Arts Center, Minneapolis, MN,

1999   "Viper International Media Festival", Lucerne, Switzerland.
       "Virginia International Film Festival", Charlottesville, VA.
       "Kino Vision", Gallery Fleur, Kyoto, Japan.
       "Airworld", Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, MN.
       "The 1999 Robert Flaherty Film Seminar", Durham, NC.
       "WRO 99 7th Internation Media Art Biennale", Wroclaw, Poland.
       "Toys and Noise", OK Center for Contemporary Art, Linz, Austria.
       "Contact Zones", Centro de la Imagen,Mexico City, Mexico.
       "Contact Zones", Johnson Museum of Art, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY.
       "Fin de Siécle", Mire, Nantes, France.

1998   "ISEA98", F.A.C.T., Manchester, England.
       "Trance Dance", Pacific Film Archives, Berekeley, CA.
       "Tomorrow's Homes Today", Museum of Science and Industry, Manchester, England.
       "Touchware", SIGGRAPH '98, Orlando, FL.
       "Video Room Video Festival", Brooklyn, New York.
       "European Media Art Festival", Osnabrück, Germany.
       "Impakt Festival for Audiovisual Arts", Utrecht, Holland.
       "Arts Edge", Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth, Australia.
       "Viper International Media Festival", Lucerne, Switzerland.
       "A Common Thread: Digital Media and the Creative Process", Fine Arts Gallery,
       Wake Forest University, Winston-Salem, NC.

1997   "Maintenance /Web", The Thing, NY, NY.
       "Small Appliances", The Light Factory, Charlotte, NC.
       "Digital Studies", Alt-X web magazine.
       "Excavations", Bay Area Video Center, San Francisco, CA.
       "Blast 5 Drama", Sandra Gering Gallery, New York, NY.

1996   "Cluster Images," Werkleitz Geselschaft, Tornitz, Germany.
       "11th Fringe Film and Video Festival," Edinburgh, Scotland.
       "The Next 5 Minutes, Tactical Media" V-2, Rotterdam, The Netherlands.

Jennifer and Kevin McCoy- Selected Collaborative Works

Soft Rains- 2003; interactive installation

The Kiss- 2002; computer installation

448 is Enough- 2002; interactive installation

How I Learned- 2002; interactive installation

Onscreen- 2002; DVD edition of 10, color, sound, 20:00

Horror Chase- 2002; computer installation

Every Anvil -2002; interactive installation

201: a space algorithm – 2001; interactive video/web project

Every Shot, Every Episode-2001; interactive installation

The Babysitter Tapes - 2001; media performance

Pink Light- 2000; interactive electronic sculpture, light, and sound

Radio Wonderland- 2000; electronic sculpture, microwatt radio installation

Radio Frankenstein - 2000; electronic sculpture, microwatt radio/internet project
http://www.radiofrankenstein.net

Airworld Probe- 1999; videotape, color,sound, 3:50

Airworld Transit Lounge (sense of space)- 1999; interactive installation

Airworld - 1999; web project/mixed media project
http://www.airworld.net/

Sense of Space- 1999, interactive digital video installation

Replay - 1998; interactive digital video installation

Small Appliances - 1997; interactive video installation and CD-ROM

Transmission - 1997; videotape, color, sound, 7:00

Maintenance/Web - 1997; web project.
http://www.thing.net/~m

Donor- 1995; videotape, color, sound, 5:00

Snow Burns My Heart - 1993; videotape, color, sound, 5:25

Recent Critical Reviews, Press and Media Coverage

2002
Jim Supanick, "Pounding Pulling Slapping Whacking: Jennifer and Kevin McCoy's "Every Anvil" *New York Arts Magazine* (June 2002).

Roberta Smith, "Art in Review" *The New York Times* (April 19, 2002).

2001
David Frankel, "Openings: Jennifer and Kevin McCoy," *Artforum* (November, 2001): pp. 136-137.

Anthony Huberman, "Ether Talk, " *The Wire,* (October, 2001): p82.

Stefan Caldana, "201 - a space algorithm," *el ciberPais,* (July 5, 2001):
http://www.ciberpais.elpais.es/d/20010705/ocio/portada.htm

Carl Skelton, "aen.walkerart.org," *dART International,* (Winter 2001): pp.28-31.

Holland Cotter, "Events Listings," *The New York Times.* (January 25, 2001).

2000
Jeff Howe, "net.aesthetics," *The Village Voice,* (September 6 - 12, 2000): p. 85

James Oliver Cury, "Motion Pixels," *Spin,* vol. 16, no. 7 (July 2000): p.127

Claire Barliant, "The Challenge of Exhibiting a Supernatural Instrument," *Feed,* (May 31, 2000): http://www.feedmag.com/essay/es343lofi.html

Martin Spinelli, "Viva Frankenstein," (New York: PS1, 2000):
http://www.ps1.org/cut/java/essays/spinelli.html

Nicholas Noyes, "Frankenstein," (New York: PS1, 2000):
http://www.ps1.org/cut/java/essays/noyes.html

Laura Marks, "Making a Scene With Live Video," *The Independent Film & Video Monthly,* vol. 23, no. 6 (July 2000): p.34-37

Lisa Curtis, "Subject to Scrutiny," *Brooklyn Papers,* (May 22, 2000): p. 9

Catherine Hong, "United Artists," *Harper's Bazar,* (May 2000): p.132 *photo*

Glen Helfand, "WebArtopia, The Art Entertainment Network has it all," *San Francisco Gate Online,* (April 26, 2000): http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?file=/technology/archive/2000/04/26/webartopia.dtl

Rachael Stark, "Music in Wonderland," *Brooklyn Daily Eagle,* (April 20, 2000): J13

Howard Halle, "State of the Art," *Time Out New York,*" no. 234, (March 16, 2000): p.80

Robert Cozzolino, "Airworld," *Isthmus,* (January 14, 2000): p. 22

1999
Laura Marks, "Low Tech is How Electrons Remember," *Nach dem Film,* no. 1 (December 1999): http://www.nachdemfilm.de/no1/mar01eng.html

G.H. Hovagimyan, "Jennifer and Kevin McCoy"
Collider (New York: The Thing, August 19, 1999)
The publication is a video interview published online at http://bbs.thing.net

Josephine Bosma, "Airworld: An Interview with Jennifer and Kevin McCoy"
(Minneapolis: The Walker Art Center, 1999)
Published online at http://www.walkerart.org/gallery9/mccoy/bosma.html
Republished (forthcoming) in Hacktivism: network_art_activism, The Electronic
Disturbance Theatre, ed. (New York: Autonomedia, 2000)

Felix Stalder "Internet Retrograde: The Rise of the Net Infomercial", (Minneapolis: The
Walker Art Center, 1999) *Published online at*
http://www.walkerart.org/gallery9/mccoy/stalder.html

Steve Deitz, "Art.commerce," (Minneapolis: The Walker Art Center, 1999)
Published online at *http://www.walkerart.org/gallery9/webwalker/ww_june.html#3*