

the Link

Concordia's Independent Newspaper

TECHNOLOGY ISSUE

Fringe
arts

November 10, 1998

Hand maid internet art

Story and photo by Jen Raso

When you hear the word "art", what usually comes to mind? Solemn galleries or some abstract painting called something like "Intuition" that looks like it was done by your two year old sibling. The word could also conjure images of people wearing black and chain smoking while discussing the deeper meaning of the gum that got stuck on their shoe, or maybe even Garfunkel (he sang with Simon). Probably not computers or the internet though. Well then, it's time to introduce you to the women of *Studio XX*, the Xs referring to chromosomes, not sex shops.

Founded in 1995, this group of bilingual gals promote the exploration of digital media as an outlet for creative expression and examine the place of women in cyberspace through workshops, monthly salons, etc. And, all through November, *Studio XX* is presenting its second annual festival of web art by women, entitled *Maid in Cyberspace - Encore!*

If you get a chance to check out the show you will be greeted by a volunteer or two (they might be outfitted in maid regalia). You'll then be directed towards the art,

which isn't on the walls remember, but on one of the seven computer terminals (your choice of Mac or PC). And don't expect a collection of personal web pages with pictures of movie stars or bootlegged recordings. This is quality artwork on an international scale. Selected from forty projects, a final group of works by eleven women – from Montreal, Toronto, Calgary, New York, Australia, England, Scotland and Estonia – are represented at the show. These works also span a wide variety of themes and topics.

Aside from an open gallery, *Maid in Cyberspace* offers a lecture and workshop series to spice up the gray days of November. The selection includes:

Nov. 14, 1 - 3 p.m. *Curly, Larry, and PoMo*; an examination of cyberfeminism in contemporary culture. Also, from 4 - 6 p.m., *The \$9.95 Project*; how to create interactive media art for only \$9.95 with Nancy Paterson (participants are encouraged to bring a 9V battery, a pair of AA's, or a battery operated kid's toy).

Nov. 21, 2 p.m. *Web Toys and Tricks* with Ingrid Hein, as well as a presentation by local artists J.R. Carpenter and Pascale Trudel.

Nov. 28, 12:30 p.m. *North/North: East - West*, a live on-line forum between Montreal and Russia. Hosted by Katherine Liberovskaya, this symposium deals with East and West perspectives on the internet as a medium for creative expression.

If you're too much of a wimp to brave the cold but have access to the net, you can check out the exhibit at www.studioxx.org/maid-encore. Or if you just want more information about the group itself, listen to the Studio XX radio show on CKUT 90.3 FM every other Wednesday at 11:30 am. The show is definitely worth attending. It only happens once a year and it's a fifteen minute walk from Concordia's downtown campus. Besides, how often do you get to see quality visual art on the world wide web?

Maid in Cyberspace - Encore!, held November 6th to 28th at Belgo 410, 372 Sainte Catherine West, #410. For more information, call (514) 845-7934 or you can e-mail organizer Catherine McGovern at catherine@studioxx.org. Their website, at www.studioxx.org is also helpful.

