

SWITCH

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Editors Notes: Issue 6

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<art>

of the

world wide web

PART I

Editors Notes

Issue 6

Loretta L. Lange on Mar 15 1997

issue 06

Editors Notes Issue 6, art on the WWW

by Loretta L. Lange, Managing Editor

No doubt about it. The Web is expanding at a phenomenal rate. Daily, thousands of new sites are being submitted to **search engines**. Amid this explosive number of web sites, artists are exploring a new territory. In our collaborative efforts, the *Switch* staff determined a distinction between "art of the Web" and "art on the Web." Numerous discussions and sometimes heated debates over the past few months have led us to the conclusion that this is an immense and developing subject, -- a unique area with which artists are attempting to form a relationship. It was decided that in order to examine its many facets, the best strategy would be for us to cover the subject in two issues.

This issue is explorative, research-oriented, and raises a number of questions for which we do not yet have answers. In the issue to follow, we will focus our research in the attempt to draw some conclusions and form a basis by which to analyze and critique web-specific art. There is much to be considered beyond a simplistic approach -- "the good," "the bad," and "the ugly" -- and the structure of that analysis is still to be determined.

Some web art promotes the "intensification of the aesthetic process in a void"⁽¹⁾ yet some web art seeks to conjoin the viewer not as a separate surveyor/spectator, but as a participant in the work. Web-specific art brings up questions regarding art for art's sake, the commodification of art, the gallery system, the contextualization of art within the Web, and the influence the Web might have on the art world as we know it.

We welcome input and feedback from other artists and critical writers who have an interest in this nascent development on the World Wide Web. We would like to incorporate or link to your comments, views, and articles in the second half of this double issue. We are involved with a new art medium in its infancy that is worthy of more than a transitory exploration by artists.

(1) Gablik, Susan; *The Reenchantment of Art*

