

Claude Closky

Television

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ART IN REVIEW

Claude Closky

'Television'

*Location One
26 Greene Street, SoHo
Through Dec. 30*

"Television," an interactive computer installation by Claude Closky, a French conceptualist, is either really dumb entertainment or a brilliant satire of electronic consumerism. Unlike cyber-artists who strive for impressive high-tech effects, Mr. Closky favors a deadpan primitivism similar in spirit if not medium to that of Ed Ruscha.

A Web project accessible at the Dia Center's site (www.diacenter.org/closky) called "Do You Want Love or Lust?" presents viewers with an endless series of questions drawn from women's magazine questionnaires. Each time you click on a question — "What tires you, competitions or inquisitions?" — you get another, not necessarily related question. It's captivating and irritatingly futile.

"Television" is similarly compulsive and pointless. Mr. Closky has created 10,000 short, silent, animated loops, some made by himself, some appropriated from the Web and none lasting longer than about five seconds. In the gallery, a bank of 19 monitors displays these programs and viewers may use a mouse to click from one loop to another. (You can try it at home, too, at www.location1.org/closky.)

The jerky, pixilated programs show gogo dancers, morphing geometric patterns, erupting volcanoes, cavorting cartoon characters, performing rock stars, defaced politicians, cruising sharks, the explosion of the Hindenburg, and much, much more.

Each is at least momentarily diverting, and it is difficult to resist the desire to watch just one more. So with mordant understatement "Television" reflects the consumer's soul-eroding addiction to distraction.

KEN JOHNSON

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