

# ArtPace massages media

BY JOHN EWING

Marshall McLuhan coined the phrase "the medium is the message" over 30 years ago, but the Canadian scholar's axiom has never been more up to date, or more debatable. ArtPace continues the discussion when presenting its next group of resident artists: Austin-based Bill Lundberg, Diana Thater from Los Angeles, and South African Kendell Geers.

The "art terrorism" of 29-year-old Geers (a self-described "con-artist") plays off the backdrop of South African social history. His "Title Withheld (Brick)," for example, consisted of a brick thrown through a gallery window and left on the floor amidst broken glass. And Geers' submission to the 1994 Havana Biennial was a towering pile of empty crates the other artists used to ship their work to Cuba.

These ironic statements, or "reality principles," as Geers calls them, are not inconsistent with the predicament of his birthright. As an Afrikaner — a white South African — Geers acknowledges through his media-styled events the colonial tyranny of the exclusive "white cube" art gallery. His work at ArtPace will address gun use in both South Africa and Texas.

By contrast, Bill Lundberg's film installations embrace the contemplative detachment of the gallery setting. At 56, Lundberg is the oldest of the three ArtPace residents; it's a distinction that puts him in the historical company of those revolutionaries who first brought film and video into museums.

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## PRE:VIEW

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Video art lectures and  
artists-in-residence exhibit

WHERE: 445 N. Main

INFO: 212-4900

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Lundberg has often projected real-time events like poker games and dinner parties back onto the surfaces where they occurred. These ghostly simulacra of lived experience satisfy a yen to review one's life from a safe distance. Lundberg's work at ArtPace will also include film projections.

With video projectors and hardware directly on the floor in plain sight, Diana Thater's art is a demystification of media technology, if not an emasculation of it. Her priority is light itself: the way the man-made video band and the sun's spectrum paint architecture and people inside and outside of the spaces she has chosen. Layering nature and the not-so-natural, Thater often employs "animal actors" working in the L.A. film industry. Her video subjects have included wolves, chimpanzees, and a herd of horses trained to act wild. Thater's ArtPace residency will also include a late-night, interactive zone with video and music which should thrill club kids, young and old.

To set the stage for these artists, ArtPace and Railyard Media Productions are bringing in an expert to provide an introduction to historical and contemporary media arts. On August 31, John Hanhardt, Senior Curator of Film and Media Arts at the Guggenheim Museum, will begin a three-evening lecture with video excerpts ranging from early Ernie Kovacs to the up-to-the minute Pipilotti Rist. Taken together, the lectures and exhibit should extend concepts first formulated by McLuhan and ground them in ArtPace's continued commitment to contemporary art. ■