

JON HADDOCK creates an eagle-eye view of famous images in his 'Screenshots' series, such as this depiction of Elian Gonzalez's seizure. Haddock's computer-assisted drawings give a video-game-like quality to the scene.

Driven by technology

Visual art • A new exhibition delves into the nature of identity in a technological society.

Stories by **RICHARD CHANG**
The Orange County Register

The first thing you see when you walk into the Laguna Art Museum's newest exhibit is a body, split into nine pieces.

It's not an actual body; it's a virtual one, broadcast on nine television screens. Each screen contains a different body part. There's the head at the top, the arms, breasts, legs and feet.

"I'm trying to understand things, and this is one way of breaking things down, isolating elements," says S.E. Barnett, creator of the video installation piece, "Mary Shelley's Daughter."

"I was really influenced by the turn of the previous century," says Barnett, who lives and works in Los Angeles. "Not only the idea of a creation story, but also in an outmoded technology, like tele-

vision."

The exploration of technology, its effects on our daily lives and its combinations with nature and culture are the inspiration behind "Cyborg Manifesto, or the Joy of Artifice," which opens today at the Laguna Art Museum.

The exhibition features 26 artists, most of them from California and five from Orange County. The works are in various media, including video, photography, installation, sculpture, computer imagery and drawings. An online catalog accompanies the show, accessible at www.cyborg-manifesto.com.

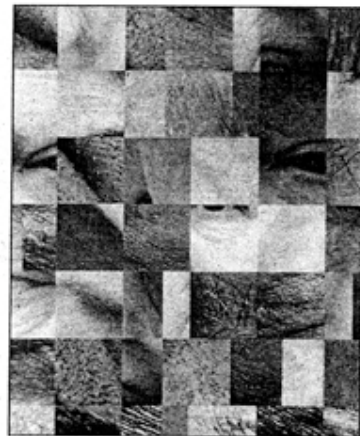
Tyler Stallings, Laguna's curator of exhibitions, views this exhibit as part of a continuing series of shows examining the nature of identity. He has previously dealt with border issues, skateboard art, Deadheads and other subcul-

tures.

"This show is about how one defines one's self within a technology-driven society," Stallings said. "We're using the cyborg as more of a metaphor. If you really thought of the idea of the human and the machine merging, if you really thought of that working, it redefines the relationship. A cyborg isn't completely human or machine. It makes you wonder how would you, as a pure human, deal with that situation."

Contemplating technology and its impact on society seems to be a popular theme these days at museums across the county. Both the San Francisco Museum of Contemporary Art and the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York are now featuring exhibits exploring technology.

The Laguna exhibit offers a kaleidoscope of approaches to the man-machine conun-



KEN GONZALES-DAY amasses body parts and skin surfaces into a kind of digital jigsaw puzzle in his untitled series of color photographs.

comprising a wooden workbench and two cathode ray tubes captured in vise grips.

THREE THEMES

The show is broken into three conceptual themes: body, nature, culture/pub-