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- event: "The End of Analog."

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Review

Time Out Chicago / Issue 211 : Mar 12-19, 2009

Art review

"The End of Analog"

Critic's Rating

Roots & Culture, through Mar 21.

In June, when the United States abandons analog television broadcasting for digital, customers who lack the requisite digital sets or converter boxes will confront blank screens. This milestone in media history inspired Eric Fleischauer to organize "The End of Analog" and a catalog of related essays by local artists and curators.

The show evokes oddly little nostalgia for its threatened subject and hints that every new form of technology will be supplanted. Rebecca Gordon's totemic *Pillars* (2009), a pair of glowing cruciform sculptures made from black tile mosaic, internal lighting and CDs in clear plastic jewel boxes, seems to embody the moment when worshipped objects begin sliding toward the landfill.

Yet "The End of Analog" reveals that we retain memories of these vanished bits of plastic and data. Alexander Stewart and George Monteleone's video installation *Coax* (2009) literally links a human body—clad in the artists' TV-tuner suit (pictured)—to the television it controls. Carson Salter and Robert Snowden's *Floor Plan* (2009) hilariously illustrates the half-life of television in our minds: Salter and Snowden asked dozens of people to draw floor plans of the homes featured in old-school sitcoms such as *Seinfeld* and *The Cosby Show*. Even the crudest drawings grasp what's essential about the characters' relationship to the space. (One depiction of Jerry Seinfeld's apartment consists solely of a rectangle and an arrow pointing to Jerry's mountain bike.) It's hard to stay worked up about seismic changes to TV's mode of transmission once you realize you still remember the Huxtables' kitchen.

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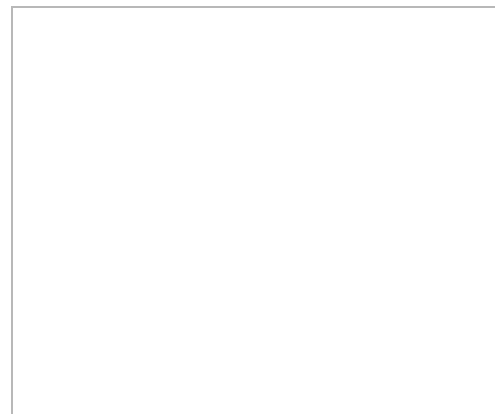
— Lauren Weinberg

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Stewart and Monteleone, *Coax*, 2009.



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