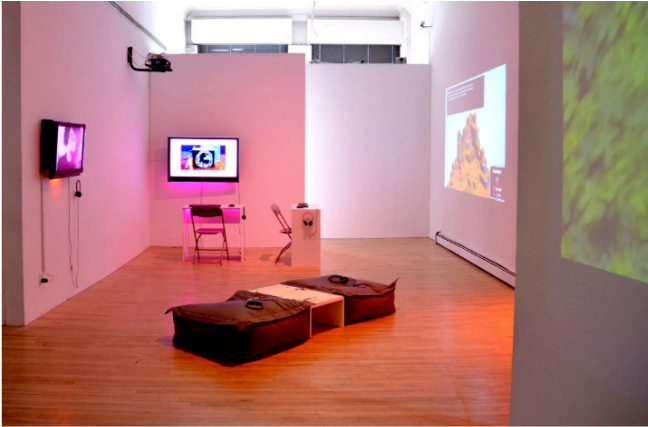


The New York Times

Spring Gallery Guide: Below and Above Canal Street



An installation view of "Dire Jank," a show curated by the gamer Porpentine Charity Heartscape.
courtesy apexart

2. apexart, 'Dire Jank'

For 25 years, the nonprofit apexart has been inviting curators from across the globe to produce thematic group shows in its small space. Many of the curators have been artists, as is the case with Porpentine Charity Heartscape, the digital game designer who assembled the current show, "Dire Jank." Keeping her checklist short, she has surrounded her own work with that of just three fellow gamers, all but one transgender. The exception, an artist who calls himself Thecatamites (Stephen Murphy), takes a sardonic look at old-school games in a click-heavy conquest narrative that goes nowhere, very slowly. Tabitha Nikolai, self-described as a "trashgender gutter elf" from Salt Lake City, offers a tour through a luxury mansion that houses a Borgesian library, a sexology institute, and opens up onto vistas of cosmic space. Devi McCallion, the rock star of the bunch, delivers a despairing, pulsating plea for environmental awareness in a music video. As for Ms. Heartscape's work, centered on the risks of queerness, it's startlingly soul-baring. Where most conventional games are about predation and its thrills, hers are about the evils of predation. I should mention that in the gallery I found the interactive pieces glitch-prone. (Maybe they're meant to be? After all, jank is gaming talk for, among things, low quality.) But when I reran the show on my laptop everything worked like a charm. **Through May 18 at 291 Church Street; 212-431-5270, apexart.org.**

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/04/26/arts/design/gallery-guide-canal-street.html>