

"TUNNELING"

FAMOUS ACCOUNTANTS

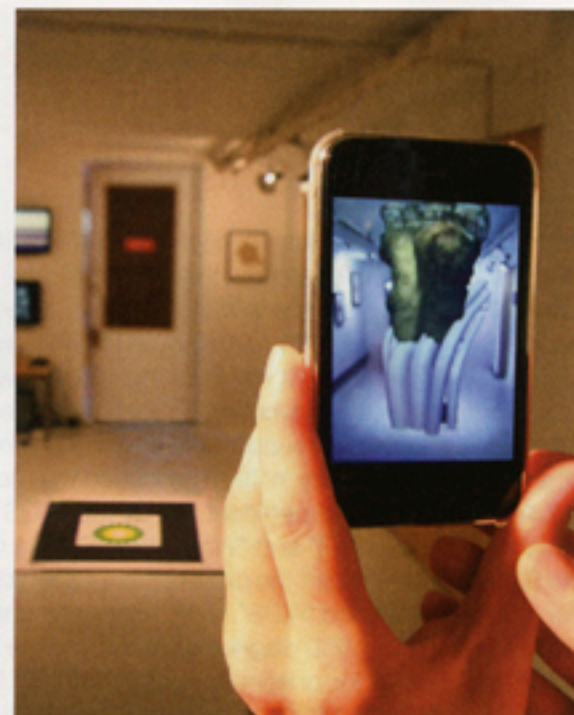
The group show "Tunneling," on view at this Bushwick venue, offered more groundbreaking media, mind-expanding imagery and diverse sensory experiences (performance included) than its claustrophobic-sounding title might imply. More than half the works by 13 participating artists were technology-based, with elements ranging in sophistication from a Geiger counter (measuring minute levels of radiation released by an innocent-looking piece of 1930s-era "uranium glass") to Second Life avatars. The curator, Will Pappenheimer, a new-media professor at Pace University in New York, advised in the show's literature that we should interpret "tunneling" in a trippy sense, as in "hallucinatory, near death, out of body." Offering up insights into how new media can be used to create art that is compelling formally as well as conceptually, Pappenheimer nonetheless eschewed what he could easily have relied upon: novelty, and the sexiness of the cutting edge.

Not all of the works in the show were tech-based, though even the more traditional (drawing, sculpture) yielded optically powerful results. To make her small-scale collages on paper, Meg Hitchcock slices up diverse source texts ranging from the Old Testament to Darwin and glues the individual letters into mandala-like compositions, to near phantasmagorical effect. Cooper Holoweski's videos magically orchestrate imagery from biology (CAT scans of the brain), mechanics (piston engines) and architecture into seamless—and infinitely watchable—wholes, while Susanna Starr's color-saturated sheets of Mylar have latticework surfaces so intricately patterned that they appear to have

been cut with a laser—though they were, in fact, done by hand.

At the heart of the show, however, was *The Leak in Your Home Town* (2010), by artist-programmers Mark Skwarek and Joseph Hocking, who, to create their work, used augmented-reality software, a method for superimposing 3-D images over live video feed. When visitors pointed an iPhone at a British Petroleum logo installed on the floor, the viewscreen ignited with the image of a swirling toxic oil plume in Flash animation, which leapt out of the corporation's once benign-looking green-and-yellow sunburst. *Leak*, it should be noted, will work on any BP logo, anywhere, and at press time Skwarek and Hocking were deciding whether to make the smartphone application that runs it available to the general public for "next-to-free." Let's hope they do just that. *Leak* is a one-liner, but it's a good one—a work of interventionist art so deliciously acerbic it deserves the broadest audience possible.

—Sarah Schmerler



View of Mark Skwarek and Joseph Hocking's *The Leak in Your Home Town*, 2010, BP logo and smartphone; in "Tunneling" at Famous Accountants.