



**NOT YOUR AVERAGE WALLPAPER** Latitude 53 presents colorful wall designs at its exhibit, *Honky Arts Association*.

# Honky tonk walls, paintings

**Honky Arts Association**  
15 September to 14 October  
Latitude 53 Contemporary Visual  
Culture Gallery

**EDMON ROTEA**  
Arts & Entertainment Staff

While many artists prefer to paint on the traditional canvas, one Edmonton-based artist dares to defy the limits of conventional artistic techniques. Up-and-coming artist Robert Harpin would rather paint walls—at least for his latest art exhibit titled the *Honky Arts Association*, which is currently on display at the Latitude 53 Contemporary Visual Culture Gallery.

“The most unusual [technique] I employed is painting directly onto the walls,” Harpin says. “For me, painting on the walls is far more aggressive and in-your-face than painting on a canvas. It incorporates the space and anything else in it. A painting only moves as far as the frame,” Harpin explains.

The installation-based based work will concern themes of culture and gender, and Harpin’s work will explore ideas including masculinity, feminism, queer culture, cultural roles and

subcultures. The installation will also run concurrently with another project—James Prior’s *Family Fable: Masculine Interpretations In A Post-Feminist Era*.

Some viewers may take offence to the subjective meaning of Harpin’s work, yet the young artist forges ahead with artistic freedom and expression through the formation of his socially-conscious work.

“I started it as a collective so that I could operate as an artist with relative anonymity,” he continues. “The collective also allows me to explore certain topics that could be seen as sensitive without having my name directly attached. I feel that’s what *Honky Arts Association* is.”

Like other art exhibits, Harpin’s work is entirely subject to interpretation and meaning. His work, which isn’t attempting to deliver any overt social or moral statements to the casual viewer, incorporates the use of signs and symbols in an attempt to deconstruct the aesthetic.

“I’m not trying to make any particular statement to the viewer,” Harpin says. “I want to leave the viewer guessing at what exactly I’m trying to convey. By

creating a show full of signs that have no particular meaning or conflicting meanings, I want the viewer to think that he or she is privy to something private without any overt messages.”

While Harpin remains confident about his exhibit, the preparation for his work was not without challenges. For Harpin, who graduated with a Bachelor of Fine Arts from the Alberta College of Art and Design, it’s not just about what kind work he should create—it’s also about which works he should showcase.

“I always have trouble deciding what to include and what to exclude,” he says. “I try to make too much work for a show so that I can decide how everything will look and what I want to say when I get to the space. With installation, you might have an idea in your head, but it’s ultimately the space and the amount of time you have to install that decides the final product.”

Despite this concern, though, Harpin has a jovial warning for other artists and artist collectives.

“The *Honky Arts Association* is preparing for a hostile takeover of the Edmonton art community. Prepare yourselves,” Harpin concludes.

# Wii are the Nintendo champions

With cheaper games and shopping channels, Wii’s got a well-defined package



**CONTROLLER  
FREAKS**

As of last week, the industry has been buzzing over the new information that Nintendo has revealed about its upcoming console, the Wii. Over three separate conferences in Japan, the UK and America, Nintendo gave specific details about its coming launch, including release dates, launch titles and much more.

Let’s get the most important stuff out of the way first. The Nintendo Wii will be released on Sunday, 19 November for the suggested retail price \$249.99US. Inside the package will be the console and a single Wii-Mote controller with Nunchaku peripheral (an analog-stick controller attachment) along with the game and tech-demo *Wii Sports*, marking the first time Nintendo has had a pack-in game since the SNES.

Nintendo also announced pricing for their highly touted virtual console, which allows for Wii owners to download every first-party game Nintendo has made. NES games will cost \$5;

SNES games \$8; N64 games \$10. Borrowing heavily from Microsoft’s point system, Nintendo will use Wii points to distribute its virtual console games, with \$1 representing approximately 100 Wii points.

Nintendo has organized every aspect of their console into different Wii “channels.” So far, eight have been announced, allowing things like gaming (for both Wii and Gamecube games), shopping, and profile management. The latter, dubbed “Mii” works similar to Microsoft’s Gamer Card feature, and functions uniquely with different games.

As for launch titles, Nintendo has promised about 20 for the 19 November date, including the highly anticipated *The Legend of Zelda: Twilight Princess*, as well as at least 17 other third-party titles, like the new *Trauma Center*, *Call of Duty 3* and *Red Steel*.

The actual launch date is very interesting; with it being so soon after Sony’s heavily under-shipped PS3, it’s possible that many gamers with that extra \$600 will take a chance on Nintendo instead of waiting an untold amount of time for the next shipment.

It is a bit curious, though, that the Wii packaging only comes with one controller. Since the console was

announced, Nintendo has been hailing it as a “market-expanding” system, bringing in people who don’t usually play video games. It’s understandable that Nintendo wouldn’t necessarily want to shell out an extra controller for every console they sell, but charging an extra \$70 for the Wii-mote/Nunchaku tandem may turn away some potential customers who are hoping to play with friends.

That said, the rest of Nintendo’s pricing is pretty much dead-on. Compared to its competitors, the Wii seems like a bargain. The virtual console games are also priced very well; paying only \$10 for *Ocarina of Time* is a delightful prospect. The virtual console’s level of success may depend on whether or not it supports online multiplayer, something Microsoft has already done with the classic games on Xbox-Live.

In the end, buying the Wii at launch may be like buying its potential. While many of the launch titles use the Wii-mote’s motion sensing in interesting ways, some of them just seem like an obligatory afterthought. The real question is whether or not third-party developers are actually going to make proper use of this potential. Only time will tell, but it’s a safe bet that the Wii will have to depend on Nintendo-developed games for the first little while.



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