Takeshi Murata
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Left: **Takeshi Murata**, *Monster Movie*, **2005**, still from a color video, 3 minutes 55 seconds. Right: **Takeshi Murata**, *Untitled (Pink Dot)*, **2007**, still from a color video, 5 minutes. Stills courtesy Electronic Arts Intermix (EAI), New York.

THE OPENING FRAMES OF TAKESHI MURATA'S *Untitled (Pink Dot)*, 2007, alternate between a magenta circle on a black field and a cyan rectangle with a black hole, creating the effect of a single, flickering sign. A cool pulse by sound artist Robert Beatty punctuates the steadiness of the blinking colors throughout the subsequent quickening of action sequences ripped from *Rambo: First Blood* (1982), which take turns erupting from fields of pure color. When Sylvester Stallone grabs a bad guy in a half-nelson, or a warehouse explodes in flame, Murata lets these bursts of violence leave digital footprints as the action moves messily across the screen. *Rambo*'s washy jungle colors melt into synthetic pink and blue until the screen reverts to its original flicker—the starting point for the next episode.

The artificial palette, flashing lights, abstract patterns, and coarsely pixelated texture of *Pink Dot* and other works by Murata locate him in the tradition of electronic animation pioneered by John Whitney and Lillian Schwartz. But while his predecessors were testing the computer's ability to replicate the cinematic illusion of movement, Murata uses the tools of consumer-level film-editing software to undo that illusion, with trails of pixel dust tracking the changing positions of the image from frame to frame. *Timewarp Experiments*, 2007, takes a different approach to accomplish similar ends. A radical deceleration of the opening credits of the sitcom *Three's Company* (1977–84) lets the viewer deliberate on the temporal construction of each gesture. It's a clinical exercise, but Murata smartly leavens it by making John Ritter's pratfall and the bimbo grin of Suzanne Somers his guinea pigs.

Takeshi Murata will present his works at Electronic Arts Intermix in New York on February 17. For more details, click here.

— *Brian Droitcour*

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