

TOKION

# HI-SPEED VIDEO MACHINE

## The Frenetic Pace of Artist Ryan Trecartin

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The art world may love its RISD-hewn prodigies, but rarely is that title as well-earned than for artist Ryan Trecartin. Trecartin made his debut at the 2006 Whitney Biennial with a 42-minute coming-out narrative on video called *A Family Finds Entertainment* (2004). Exploring themes of masculinity, agenda, fame and community, *A Family Finds Entertainment* popped into existence with colorbomb visuals, frantic editing and characters whose lovable eccentricities give Warhol's superstars a run for their money.

Along with his videos, rapt attention has been paid to the performance group Experimental People Band, whose members include Trecartin and some of his cast. "At RISD, I got along really well with a group of people, and we kind of kept to ourselves," Trecartin says. "Something about Providence promotes an all-out experimental attitude, and people isolate themselves and form communities with their own logic and rules." Since leaving Providence, Trecartin and co. have deposited trails of glitter all across the United States: "We all moved to New Orleans, which was awesome. Then our house got destroyed in the hurricane, so we went to Ohio, and then out to L.A. A lot of us now share studios in North Philly."

As meandering as Trecartin's lifestyle may seem, his work represents an elated return to traditional storytelling. Defined narrative—rarely treated with kindness in avant-garde film and video art—anchors Trecartin's video hysteria and makes his work infinitely watchable. His most recent piece, *I-BE AREA* (2007) is an hour-and-48 minute exploration of avatars in virtual communities, delivered with the artist's signature wit:

*Cheetah: "I-Be, I can't translate your rants, what the hell do you mean?"*

*I-Be2: "Buy my Rosetta Stone."*

While translation software might seem an initial requirement to parse Trecartin's disjointed language, his strangely winsome world is locked and loaded with blockbuster-esque plot intrigue.

*Ryan Trecartin will be featured at the Moore Space gallery in Miami (for Art Basel), and in a special performance with Experimental People at Performa 09 in New York City.*

