

JOSEPH NECHVATAL (The Kitchen): Artistic productions in the form of books, videotapes and drawings have always been this artist's means of demonstrating his political feelings, most especially his "no-nuke" sentiments. Identified as a plea for disarmament, Nechvatal's newest installation, *When Things Get Tough on Easy Street*, is a desolate environment that successfully suggests the aftermath of a nuclear war.

The room is bathed in a pink light, and spotlighted in two corners are plastic face masks, one of an old man, another of the devil. In the center of the room sits a video projector, wrapped in black cloth, that shines a pink and green image on a large production screen. Against two opposite walls are four video screens, each showing a different single drawing by the artist that he has photographically blown up. These photographs show simply drawn male figures on which scratch marks have been superimposed; the effect is as though they are pressed behind a sheet of cracked safety glass. Save for the erratic flinching of the video, the images don't change or move, thereby enhancing the sterility of the setting. Boxed into the video screens and this web of scratches, the figures seem hopelessly removed. While the masks in the corners are rather obvious and unoriginal, the bizarre lighting, the images, the black box and the actual video screens all make for a static and eerie environment. The finishing touch is the faintly heard background noise: a mixture of static whoosh sounds and the funereal gong of a church bell.

—Sarah Cecil