Western States Regional Media Arts Fellowship Proposal: Image as an Object

In my work with video and other forms of electronic imaging, I have always paid attention to dialectic notion of the media: the m e t a p h y s i c a l structure of the signal (time and energy) and the p h y s i c a l i t y of the tools through which the signal must propagate, and conversely to the r e a l i t y of the basic code, waveforms or digital code structures and the i l l u s i o n - i s t i c summary of all processes and codes in the service of narrativity.

In every new encounter with a machine capable of restructuring existing images or with a machine presenting a different way of organizing the image, I engage in the process of explaining. In this process as the unknown and the mysterious reveal itself, the tool architecture becomes visible, the strategies and the rules lead to the eventual concept of craft and possibly art.

In my previous work so far, there have been three of these encounters: the Scan Processor (Rutt/ Etra 1974) did initiate a visual essay "Didactic Video" (Afterimage 1975), my first digital imaging tool (MacArthur/Schier 1976-79), produced "Syntax of Binary Images" (Afterimage 1978) and the Image Articulator (Schier 1979) was responsible for the videotape "Artifacts".

"Didactic Video" and "Syntax of Binary Images" were recorded photographically from the Cathode Ray Tube, which became the phenomenological tables of the analog and digital pictorial concepts. Later I added a sequence "Hybrid Hand" which became a synthesis between the two basic methodes, digital and analog. I call these works "didactic" because the impulse to assemble them was primarily the need to understand, explain and educate myself and possibly others.

In case of "Artifacts" the production of a videotape was essential. In the same spirit, the proposed work titled "Image as an Object" (Work title) will be a video tape between 15 and 20 minutes long. The impulse for this new work I am about to begin, has risen from my encounter with a new class of machines, able to perform three dimensional image modelling and through the software of an excellent facility, produced by "Digital Arts" software group. And now I want to identify the spacial particularity of image objects in the contrast to film/video "reading" of images, the inevitable movement of iconic artifacts towards an object/ image, with a different, explicit object-like interpretation.

Santa Fe, June 14th 1988,   Woody Vasulka