Roger Welch

September 22–October 24, 1982

Drive-In: Second Feature, 1982. Film installation
On view continuously 12:00–6:00, Tuesdays until 8:00

Gallery Talk, Thursday, September 30, at 2:00
Roger Welch will be present

Since its invention in the late nineteenth century, film has been the preeminent medium for the creation of moving images. But today the electronic technologies of video and broadcast television are challenging its dominance. These new mass media are having an impact on all areas of film: production, distribution, and aesthetics.

Our central experience of film has been social. Whether a commercially popular entertainment feature or an avant-garde work, a film is generally viewed in a theater—a collective experience. This condition of the cinematic experience is in marked contrast to the more private home environment of television. Here the rapidly developing concept of the home entertainment center, designed to receive cable and satellite programs and play videotapes acquired by the viewer, is becoming an alternative to the theatrical experience of filmgoing.

Roger Welch's installation *Drive-In: Second Feature* reflects on the popular mythology that has grown up around the social act of "going to the movies." This project derives from Welch's earlier works, which comment on the iconography and the rituals that give popular culture its power.

The layers of irony that inform *Drive-In* include the archaic appearance of the Cadillac and the drive-in's screen. The drive-in epitomizes the effort of movie exhibitors in the 1950s to create new ways of showing films so as to retain audiences beginning to be lured away by television. The theater became a parking lot, with the rows of cars forming their own communities within and between themselves.

Drive-In, 1980. Film installation at P.S. 1, Institute for Art and Urban Resources, Long Island City, New York. Photograph by D. James Dee.
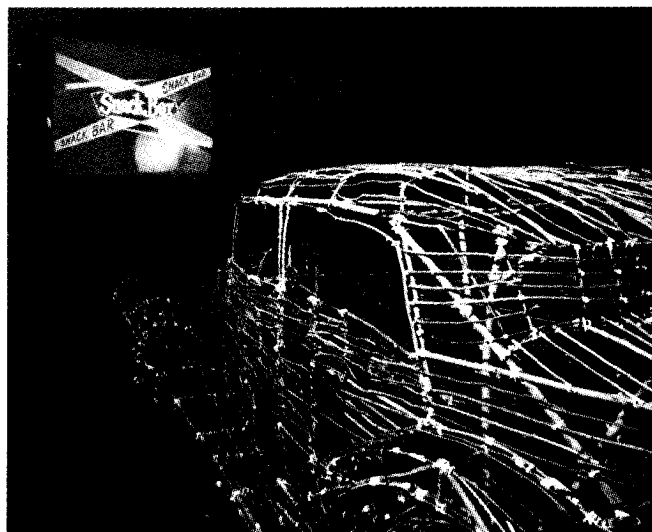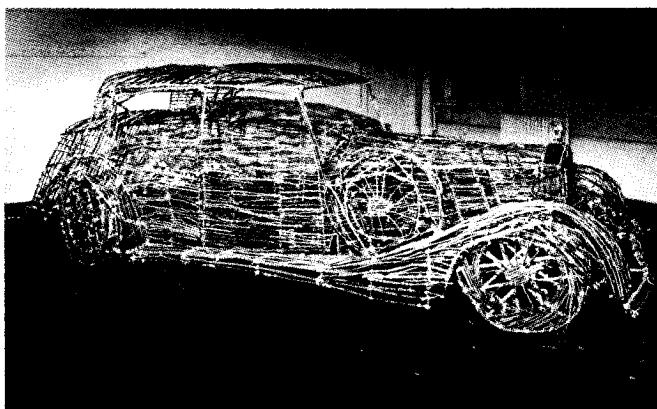
Drive-In, 1980. Film installation at P.S. 1, Institute for Art and Urban Resources, Long Island City, New York. Photograph by D. James Dee.

The 1958 Cadillac now appears to us, amid a changing world economy, as a relic of the distant past. Thus Welch's transformation of the car and screen into symbols of "American culture . . . created as if by a Micronesian cargo cult or a contemporary Robinson Crusoe," through the strategy of re-creating their forms out of twigs and branches, is particularly apt. *Drive-In: Second Feature* also represents an important aspect of the recent history of film as an art form: the development of installation works which treat film not as theater but as a sculptural and multimedia environment. Thus this latest project extends Welch's previous works as it reflects on the changing cultural, and social, experience of watching film.

Drive-In: Second Feature appears like a totemic sign of the industrial, mechanical age of the motion picture and the automobile, which is passing as new electronic technologies emerge, altering our way of life and our forms of entertainment and art-making. The future of film and television, as we know them, is open. Roger Welch's elegant work contemplates film from a double perspective, seeing it as both a theatrical and an installation medium.

John G. Hanhardt
Curator, Film and Video

Drive-In: Second Feature, 1982

The drive-in movie theater is a particularly American phenomenon that could be considered a symbol of the post-World War II United States. Drive-ins are now disappearing, along with the giant cars of the 1950s that brought the crowds to them.

One such car was the Cadillac. The Cadillac became a symbol of affluence, a Rolls-Royce for the American upper middle class. The owner of a Cadillac Eldorado identified not only with the comfort of a low-to-the-ground 325-horsepower ride, but also with the audacious design, a style that stood for the power of aerodynamics.

In Drive-In: Second Feature these two symbols of American culture are created as if by a Micronesian cargo cult or a contemporary Robinson Crusoe. Both the familiar drive-in screen and a 1958 Cadillac are done in the most primitive manner with some of the most common materials, twigs and branches tied together with twine. What seems to have been discovered in the jungle is now brought back, to be displayed in a museum. Along with the drive-in screen are projected fragments of what was once shown on· it, like pieces of a broken artifact an archeologist would put back together again.

Drive-In: Second Feature is the product of an archeological expedition into contemporary America.

Roger Welch

Drawings for Drive-In: Second Feature, 1982. Ink on paper, 14 × 17 inches each. Collection of the artist.
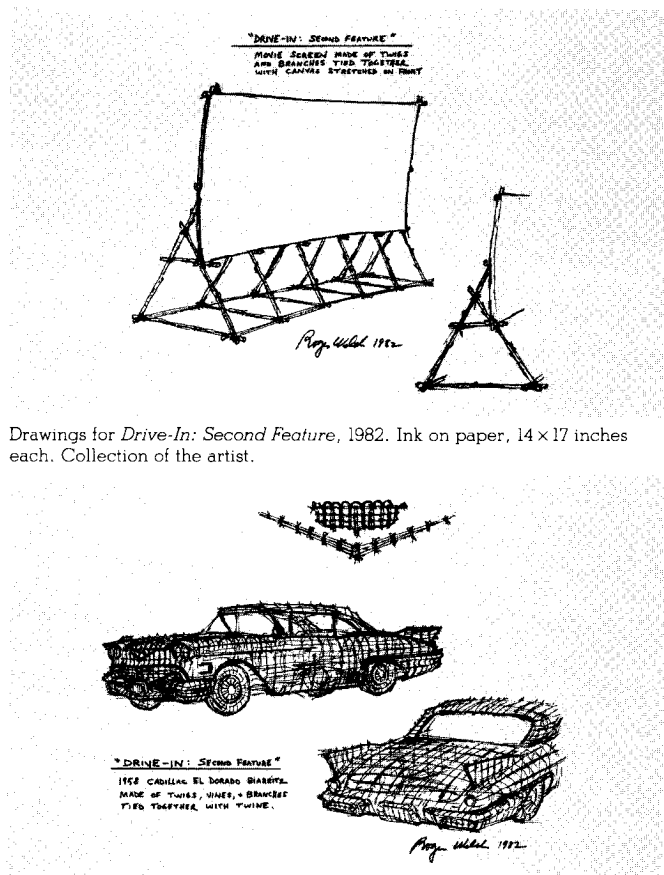

Biography

Roger Welch, who was born in Westfield, New Jersey, in 1946, studied painting and sculpture at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio; Kent State University; and the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, where he received an M.F.A. in 1971. His work in a wide range of media — sculpture, drawing, performance, film, video, and photography — explores the concerns of Conceptual and Process art. One of his major interests has been the process of memory and its ability to make "memory maps" and "photo memory works"; he has lately been involved in recycling and restructuring objects and forms which have become symbols within society. Welch's works are included in numerous private and museum collections, among them the Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Internacional Rufino Tamayo in Mexico City; the Georgia Museum of Art at the University of Georgia, Athens; and the Museum of Modern Art, New York. He lives in New York.

Selected One-Artist Exhibitions

Sonnabend Gallery, New York, 1972; John Gibson Gallery, New York, 1973; Milwaukee Art Center, 1974; Stefanotti Gallery, New York, 1975; Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, 1977; Museo de Arte Moderno, Mexico City, 1980; P.S. 1, Institute for Art and Urban Resources, Long Island City, New York, 1981; Museo de Bellas Arte, Caracas, 1981.

Selected Group Exhibitions

Kassel, West Germany, Documenta 5, 1972; John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, Washington, D.C., "Art Now '74," 1974; Wallraf-Richartz-Museum, Cologne, West Germany, "Projekt '74," 1974; Akademie der Künste, West Berlin, "SoHo Manhattan," 1976; Kassel, West Germany, Documenta 6, 1977; Contemporary Arts Museum, Houston, "American Narrative Art, 1967-77," 1978; The Clocktower, Institute for Art and Urban Resources, New York, "Film as Installation," 1980; The New Museum, New York, "Alternatives in Retrospect: An Historical Overview, 1969-1975," 1981; Helen Foresman Spencer Museum of Art, University of Kansas, Lawrence, "Four Artists and the Map—Jasper Johns, Nancy Graves, Roger Welch, and Richard Long," 1981.

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Collins, James. "Reviews: Roger Welch, John Gibson Gallery." Artforum, 12 (April 1974), pp. 78-79.

Davis, Douglas. Art Culture: Essays on the Post-Modern. New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, Inc., 1977, p. 36.

Naylon, Colin, and Genesis Porridge. Contemporary Artists. London: St. James Press Ltd., 1977, pp. 1034-35.

Popper, Frank. Art: Action and Participation. New York: New York University Press, 1975, pp. 259-61, 263.

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Roger Welch, 1970-1980 (exhibition catalogue). Mexico City: Museo de Arte Moderno, 1980.

Schjeldahl, Peter. "Let's Not Read Narrative Art Too Seriously." New York Times, December 8, 1974, Arts and Leisure section, p. 35.

Sky, Allison, and Michelle Stone. Unbuilt America. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1976, pp. 9, 250.

Smith, Phillip. "Roger Welch and the Sculpture of Memory." Arts Magazine, 50 (October 1975), pp. 57-59.

Smith, Roberta. "Reviews: Roger Welch, John Gibson Gallery." Artforum, 12 (December 1973), p. 83.

The New American Filmmakers Series

EXHIBITIONS OF INDEPENDENT FILM AND VIDEO

Leandro Katz

November 2–December 5, 1982

The Judas Window, 1982. Film installation
On view continuously 12:00–6:00, Tuesdays until 8:00

Gallery Talk, Thursday, November 18, at 2:00
Leandro Katz will be present

Works in the installation:

Achatinella Series, 1982. 26 shells and 40 Cibachrome photographs in wood display case with hinged lid: display case, 33 × 86 × 34 inches; display-case lid, 86 × 34 inches

Black Maria, 1982. Black and red canvas over wood frame, 120 × 90 × 90 inches (maximum)

Friday's Footprint, 1982. Slide projector, color 35mm slide, sandbox, sand, and synthetic polymer: sandbox, 4 × 55 × 25 inches

Judas Curtain, 1982. Velvet, metallic powder, and adhesive, 19 feet × 100 inches

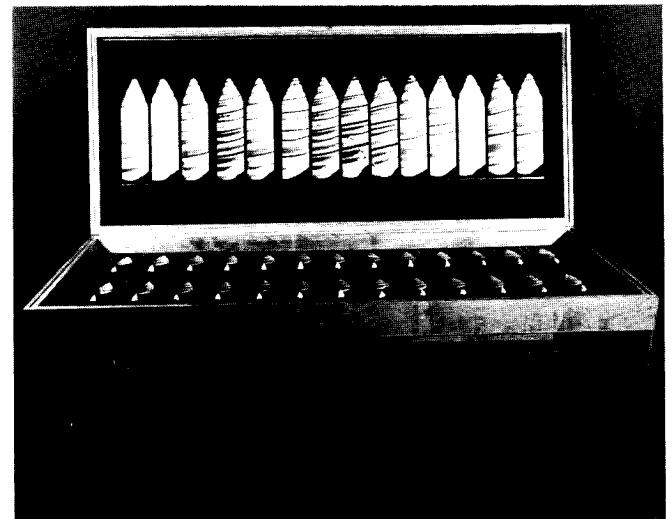*The Judas Window*, 1982. Color 16mm film loop, silent; 17-minute cycle

Parasol, 1982. Bamboo, string, brass, steel, and color Xeroxes, 100 inches (diameter) × 100 inches (stem)

The most widely held critical definition of film has been grounded in the idea that this photographic medium records reality on celluloid. This definition derives from the way still photography was first understood after its invention in the nineteenth century: it appeared to achieve the long-sought goal of reproducing the real world. As a result, photography — and, later, film — seemed to release the traditional arts of painting and sculpture from the burden of mimesis.

Leandro Katz, in his film installation *The Judas Window*, asks if the photographic process, whether still or motion picture, is truly mimetic. By placing film in unexpected relationships with other media and materials, he mixes different, often contradictory, modes of discourse. Thus his film — presenting, for example, a shot of the moon intercut with enigmatic phrases such as "A Cinematographic Rain" and "The Urge to Save" — is viewed within an environment of sculptural objects, including a large parasol covered with Xeroxed pages from classic adventure stories, among them Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*, and a house-like construction modeled on the famous Black Maria studio, in which Thomas Edison produced his first films, in the late nineteenth century. Other elements in Katz's installation include a slide of a Mayan carving projected onto the gallery wall; a display case holding a collection of twenty-six shells, each signifying one letter of the alphabet and together composing a linguistic code; and, on the floor, a sandbox with Friday's footprint. These diverse elements require different — perhaps mutually exclusive — modes of comprehension, and demonstrate how problematic mimesis can be. The installation thus becomes a complex text about epistemology, film, and the history of cultural forms — an archeological site at which to unearth the hidden premises of understanding and perception.

Two precedents, one a work of literature, the other the tradition of film installation as an art form, inform Katz's project. The literary text is *Impressions d'Afrique* (1910), by the French author and playwright Raymond Roussel. Roussel's influential text is an extraordinary catalogue of descriptions of objects and devices, people and events, held together by a loose plot. Its structure is based on an

elaborate system of word games and associations that establishes a compelling narrative. So too in Katz's installation the viewer joins and links the various elements into a network of associations that implies a possible narrative.

As for Katz's sources within the film medium, during the 1960s and 1970s artists began to remove film from the traditional theater setting and place it in a gallery or another environment. They have produced films designed to be projected into steam or onto different surfaces and within specially constructed environments, to be viewed with live dancing or other performances, or in conjunction with sculptural structures. All of these varied forms and processes, as in *The Judas Window*, cause us to reevaluate the nature of film: it does not present an unchanging segment of reality, viewed and interpreted exclusively within the confines of the screen; rather, film is a temporal, flexible, moving-image medium that can be read in different ways, depending on its physical placement and aesthetic context.

<div align="right">John G. Hanhardt
Curator, Film and Video</div>

The Judas Window, 1982

My work addresses the underlying structures that are present in every cultural gesture and form the way we think and make connections between notions. *The Judas Window*, an installation of individual works—contiguous and interchangeable episodes—treats the gallery space in the terms of an active movement of search inside a narrative chamber. In it, space is sudden, as in dreams, and all its functioning parts are engaged simultaneously. And space is also sequential, proposing a theatricality typical of cinema. Upon entering the gallery, as entering the screen, the spectator/viewer is asked to inquire and to elucidate a sequence of chained revelations, the anthological (dismembered) parts of a floating plot. One could say that in the end the work leaves a trail of connecting dots, and that this trail is what one would follow in attempting to find the way inside a darkened room which is completely familiar. Then, the elements of the installation—nature and history, the alphabet, the text, the body—all point to the instant when language is discovered, when the senses come in contact with language, that precise moment when the system clicks and everything brightens up. Therefore my work exists inside a very transitory position between the senses and the intellect, between nature and culture, attempting to make sense within the ruins of both.

<div align="right">Leandro Katz</div>

Biography

Leandro Katz, who was born in Buenos Aires in 1938, has lived and worked in New York City since 1965. He is well known as a visual artist, filmmaker, and writer; his books include the novel *Es Una Ola* (Buenos Aires, 1968) and *Self-Hipnosis* (New York, 1975), an artist's book. Katz is currently curator of film installations at P.S. 1, Institute for Art and Urban Resources, Long Island City, New York. He also teaches in the Humanities and Art History departments of the School of Visual Arts, New York, and is on the faculty of the Semiotics Program of Brown University, Providence, Rhode Island, where he teaches film. Katz is currently working on a feature-length film, *Mirror on the Moon*, for ZDF, a West German television station.

Selected One-Artist Exhibitions

Millennium Film Workshop, New York, 1977; Cineprobe, The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 1978; John Gibson Gallery, New York, 1978; The Clocktower, Institute for Art and Urban Resources, New York, 1980; The Collective for Living Cinema, New York, 1980; P.S. 1, Institute for Art and Urban Resources, Long Island City, New York, 1982

Selected Group Exhibitions

Whitney Museum of American Art, Downtown Branch, New York, "Words," 1977; John Gibson Gallery, New York, "Structure," 1978, "Structure II," 1979; The New American Filmmakers Series, Whitney Museum of American Art, "Allen Coulter/Leandro Katz," 1979; The Clocktower, Institute for Art and Urban Resources, New York, "Film as Installation," 1980; Elise Meyer Inc., New York, "Schemes," 1981

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Ashton, Dore. *American Art Since 1945.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1982, pp. 193–94.
Castle, Ted. "Verbal Art Speaks Up." *Flash Art*, November 1980, pp. 27–30.
Kosarinsky, Edgardo. *Jorge Luis Borges: Sur le cinéma.* Paris: Albatros, 1979, pp. 152–58.
Pipolo, Tony. "The Films of Leandro Katz." *Millennium Film Journal*, Fall–Winter 1980–81, pp. 265–72.
Reynaud, Bérénice. "Un Petit Dictionnaire du cinéma indépendant New Yorkais." *Cahiers du cinéma*, September 1982, pp. 48–50.

Selected Filmography

Los Angeles Station, 1976. Color, 16mm, silent; 10 minutes
Paris Has Changed A lot, 1977. Color, 16mm, sound; 30 minutes. Music by Richard Landry
Splits, 1978. Color, 16mm, sound; 30 minutes
Moon Notes, 1980. Color, 16mm, silent; 15 minutes
The Visit (Foreign Particles), 1980. Sequence of 1,200 35mm black-and-white slides, with synchronized sound; 75 minutes
Metropotamia, 1982. Color, 16mm, sound, for 2 projectors and zigzag screen; 20 minutes

Leandro Katz's films are distributed by the Film-makers' Cooperative, New York.

The New American Filmmakers Series

EXHIBITIONS OF INDEPENDENT FILM AND VIDEO

Ideology/Praxis

December 10–19, 1982

Daily at 12:00, 1:30, 3:00, 4:30; also Tuesday at 6:00

Gallery Talk, Thursday, December 16, at 2:40
Judith Barry will be present

Videotapes in the program:

Isaac Cronin and Terrel Seltzer
Call It Sleep, 1982. Color, ¾ inch, sound; 42 minutes
Written, produced, and directed by Isaac Cronin and
Terrel Seltzer. Narrated by Bruce Parry. Edited by
Don Ahrens.

Judith Barry
Casual Shopper, 1981. Color, ¾ inch, sound;
28 minutes
Written and directed by Judith Barry. Camera: Jeff
Handler. Sound design and mix by Andy Wiskes and
Dan Gleich. Starring Harriet Payne and Bill Shields.

There has emerged in recent years a renewed interest on
the part of video artists in forms of narrative. One aspect of
this new narrative video is represented by Isaac Cronin
and Terrel Seltzer's *Call It Sleep* and Judith Barry's *Casual
Shopper*. These artists and others employ narrative to ex-
amine the ideological controls operating within the cultural
institutions of our society. They have incorporated various
narrative strategies from films (such as those of Jean-Luc
Godard) and literature (the novels of Alain Robbe-Grillet)
and political theory from the writings of Louis Althusser,
Michel Foucault, and others. Their videotapes expose with-
in the narrative the links between capitalism and such in-
stitutions as commercial broadcast television. Thus these
artists attempt to show the social and class dynamics within
our culture and indicate how various styles of taste and
consumption are tied to the interests of the state and its
dominant forms of cultural discourse.

A prime concern of this new body of work is the exami-
nation of broadcast television: a confrontation with the role
that the all-pervasive mass medium of television plays in
packaging a world view—an ideology—for the consumer
by appropriating television's practices—its strategies of
discourse. These video artists undertake a radical critique
of network television by manipulating the codes that it has
evolved to differentiate advertisements, documentary,
news, and entertainment programming. This interplay be-
tween code and message creates a problematic text of great
subtlety and inventiveness.

Isaac Cronin and Terrel Seltzer's *Call It Sleep* takes as
its point of departure the Situationist view of Western cul-
ture and society as spectacle, and thus of the various social
and ideological systems that have shaped our modes of
thought and political action. The Situationist movement,
which arose in the late 1950s, was comprised of politically
committed avant-garde groups in Europe concerned with
developing a critique of contemporary society and of in-
stitutional forms of political opposition, including the major
political parties which have traditionally defined the left.
The confrontational tactics of the Situationists, including
street action, were to influence the events leading to the
May 1968 protests in France. The narration of Cronin and
Seltzer's videotape is based on interpretations of Situation-

ist manifestos and programs. This analysis is juxtaposed with sequences from motion pictures and scripted scenes manipulated to expose the contradictions between modernist forms of culture and the capitalist society that supports them.

Judith Barry's *Casual Shopper* takes a different approach by targeting consumer society, specifically the architecture of the shopping mall and the strategies of the television commercial. The shopping mall becomes the location for Barry's narrative as the performers negotiate their relationships and affect poses within the commercial spaces of the mall. The contradiction between television as a mass medium and the radical videotape which seeks to appropriate its working methods is the subtext of Barry's work. She examines the impact of consumerism and television on both our private spaces — the home, where TV is watched — and our public shopping spaces.

John G. Hanhardt
Curator, Film and Video

Call It Sleep, 1982

Call It Sleep is the first visual work produced in the United States which makes use of the Situationist technique of *détournement* — the devaluation and reuse of present and past cultural production to form a superior theoretical and practical unity.

Call It Sleep is based on material drawn from the most prevalent means of social conditioning — television — for two reasons. Familiar images easily acquire a strong negative charge when linked with a subversive content. And using images and techniques available to everyone has demonstrated, once and for all, that *détournement* is within the reach of anyone with a few basic appliances and the ability to communicate radical ideas.

Some people who see *Call It Sleep* are only interested to know if copyright permissions have been obtained from the producers of the various images in the tape. These "courageous souls" think that a disrespect for cultural and social conventions should begin after property rights have been observed.

Call It Sleep was completed in May of 1982. It was financed solely by its makers.

Isaac Cronin
Terrel Seltzer

Biography

Isaac Cronin and Terrel Seltzer collaborated as co-writers on *Chan Is Missing* (1982), a film by Wayne Wang. Terrel Seltzer's film *The Story of Anna O.* (1979) was shown in the New American Filmmakers Series in the program "The Freudian Text" in December 1980. Cronin and Seltzer presently live and work in San Francisco. *Call It Sleep* is their first videotape; it was screened in September 1982 at the Roxie Cinema in San Francisco and the Pacific Film Archive in Berkeley.

Casual Shopper, 1981

Shopping is an activity that consists of predictable yet indeterminate activities, where, like the cinema, what we go to experience over and over again is our own desire. This activity constructs a particular subject within a specific terrain, the mall or store, where a number of forces are mediated by the individual as he or she participates in the experience, including the complex drives at work in the individual psyche as well as the social imperatives of the television commercial.

Television commercials are viewed on TV sets in the home. Shopping takes place in a space specifically constructed for that purpose. Just as theaters are constructed to make possible specific spectator relations with the film through the use of frontal and fixed perspective, darkness, and the placement of the projector behind the audience, so stores are designed to produce specific effects within the consumer, through the use of endless corridors filled with objects for free libidinal access, set design, and grid lighting. Of course, there are fundamental differences between the movie spectator and the shopper. The shopper is not stationary, but is constantly moving and does not identify with the objects in the store in the same way as with the characters on the screen. But, they are linked in several crucial ways through the process of *looking* that must be brought to both occasions to activate desire — the spectator sits and the film does its work, the shopper moves and the store comes to life. *Casual Shopper* is about, but certainly does not exhaust, some of these relations. (For a more detailed discussion, see my article "Casual Imagination" in *Discourse*, no. 4, Winter 1981-82.)

Judith Barry

Biography

Judith Barry, who was born in Columbus, Ohio, in 1949, attended the University of Florida, where she received a B.S. in Finance and Architecture and a B.A. in Fine Arts in 1972. Barry moved to San Francisco in 1977, where, in addition to working in broadcast television and the film industry, she became known for her work in performance art, videotapes, artists' books, photography, and environmental installations. She has published a number of articles on art and theory, including "Casual Imagination," an analysis of the architecture of shopping spaces. Barry moved to New York City in September 1982, and is currently teaching in the Visual Arts Department at the State University of New York, College at Purchase. She is an editor of *Discourse* magazine, published in Berkeley. She will have a work included in the upcoming exhibition "Scenes and Conventions: Artists' Architecture," opening in March 1983 at the Institute of Contemporary Arts, London.

Videography

Kaleidoscope, 1977. Color, ¾ inch, sound; 50 minutes
They Agape, 1979. Double projection system, black and white, ¾ inch, sound; 30 minutes
Casual Shopper, 1981. Color, ¾ inch, sound; 28 minutes
Space Invaders, 1982. Color, ¾ inch, sound; 5 minutes

Whitney Museum of American Art
945 Madison Avenue, New York, New York 10021

Hours: Tuesday 11:00-8:00
Wednesday–Saturday 11:00-6:00, Sunday 12:00-6:00

Film and video information: (212) 570-0537

Ed Emshwiller

Dec. 23, 1982–Jan. 16, 1983

Passes, 1982. Video installation
On view continuously 12:00–6:00, Tuesdays until 8:00

Passes, a four-monitor installation, is comprised of four ¾-inch videotapes, each with a total running time of 25 minutes. The work contains the following short four-channel pieces, shown in sequence:

Space Passes, 1981. Color, sound; 6 minutes. Voice: Kathy McCord; percussion: M. B. Gordy

Vascular Passes, 1982. Color, sound; 5 minutes. Sound source: Marsha Carrington

Cut Passes, 1981. Color, sound; 5 minutes. Saxophone: James Rohrig; conch shell: Rand Steiger

Pan Passes, 1982. Color, sound; 6 minutes. Dancers: Kate Foley, Leslie Gaumer, Anne Sotelo, Janet Welsh; musicians: Rob Chavez, Merry Dermehy, Kevin Graves, Amy Knoles, Jim Snodgrass

Echo Passes, 1979–82. Color, sound; 3 minutes. Performer: Peter Emshwiller

Technical assistance:
John Rauh, Drew Naumann, Jim Gable, J. T. Moore (California Institute of the Arts, Valencia); Charles Langrall, James Cossa (Chicago Editing Center); Garland Stern (New York Institute of Technology); Gary Dunham (Henry Mayo Newhall Memorial Hospital, Valencia, California)

Ed Emshwiller has secured a place in the history of video art as both artist and teacher. He came to video from film, in which he had established himself as part of the American avant-garde with such works as *Relativity* (1966) and *Image, Flesh and Voice* (1969). His collaboration with choreographers and dancers in many of these early films was distinctive. He continued these collaborations in his video work with even more dramatic results in a series of productions which elaborated the dancers' actions through the unique capacities of the medium. Thus in *Scape-mates* (1972) and *Crossings and Meetings* (1974), the performers are not simply recorded on videotape, but become an integral part of an aesthetic that translates their movements and gestures into a synthesis of abstract and figurative images.

The video synthesizer and colorizer, developed in the late 1960s by teams of artists and engineers such as Nam June Paik and Shuya Abe, Bill Etra and Steve Rutt, represented new video technologies that made possible a remarkable body of electronically processed imagery. Emshwiller's art successfully demonstrates how these and more recent

Gallery Talk, Thursday, December 23, at 2:00
Ed Emshwiller will be present
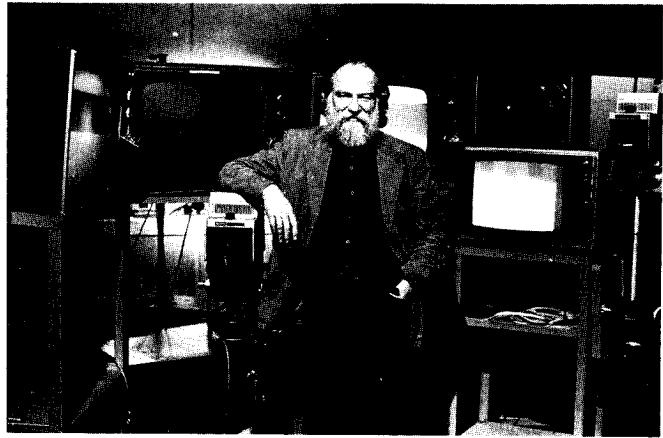

Space Passes, 1981

technologies, such as advanced computer systems, can be put to the service of the artist. In Emshwiller's case the visual artist works closely with the choreographer/dancer to create performance videotapes which change our conceptions of both video and dance. Yet he achieved this effect by controlling technology; it did not overwhelm his vision and understanding of dance as an expressive art form. Thus his videotapes are characterized by the interplay between the dancer's movements and the image-processing effects and techniques. Emshwiller has manipulated the two-dimensional video image by playing, through his performers, with its three-dimensional illusionistic properties.

Emshwiller pioneered strategies of editing that articulate movement within the frame of the single-channel videotape. In a number of later installation projects, he expanded and altered our perception of the screen itself. Thus in such multimonitor pieces as *Slivers* (1977) Emshwiller recomposes the imagery by masking the screen's surface so that we see only portions of the image. Here our attitude toward, and perception of, the screen is developed within the exhibition space by altering how we see the different parts, or slivers, of the videotape.

In Emshwiller's latest project, *Passes* (1982), the movement of his dancers and performers within the edited structure of the four channels of videotape is played out through

the four monitors' arrangement within the Film/Video Gallery. Here, as opposed to *Slivers*, we see the image on the monitor's screen as its entire surface, explored through the composition of movements and sounds within it. Each of the five short pieces explores time and space through a series of strategies which distributes the actions of the performers within the spaces in which they performed. This spatial interplay is then elaborated within the videotapes and the juxtaposition of the four monitors. *Passes* was produced at the California Institute of the Arts, where Emshwiller teaches and is developing a new center for video art.

John G. Hanhardt
Curator, Film and Video

Ed Emshwiller, 1979. Photograph by Robert Grosmere.

Passes, 1982

Passes is a musical/video surround. It is a series of short pieces which explores aspects of time and space in video performance. *Space Passes* is the unedited showing of four events which were recorded separately but were scored and choreographed to be presented simultaneously. *Vascular Passes* involves views of a body with synchronous stereo internal sounds. It is structured by video and sound editing. *Cut Passes* shows one view on all four monitors. The musical structure and choreography come from video editing. *Pan Passes* is from one location, at different times, with a moving camera and microphones, all shown simultaneously. *Echo Passes* is one location, with digital image transformations and stereo echo sound done in post-production.

Ed Emshwiller

Biography

Ed Emshwiller, who was born in East Lansing, Michigan, in 1925, received a Bachelor of Design degree from the University of Michigan in 1949. He studied graphics at the École des Beaux-Arts, Paris, 1949–50, and at the Art Students League of New York, 1951. He was a painter and illustrator before becoming a filmmaker. Emshwiller has taught at Yale University, the University of California at Berkeley, Cornell University, the State University of New York at Buffalo, and at Media Study, Buffalo. He was Artist in Residence at the WNET-TV/Channel 13 TV Lab, New York, 1972–79, a Ford Foundation research fellow at the Center for Music Research, University of California at San Diego, 1975, and visual consultant for the PBS production *The Lathe of Heaven*, 1980. Emshwiller has received grants for filmmaking from the Ford Foundation, the New York State Council on the Arts, and the Guggenheim Foundation, and for video from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Rockefeller Foundation, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, and the Guggenheim Foundation. He is currently Provost and Dean of the School of Film and Video at the California Institute of the Arts, Valencia. He lives in Valencia.

Selected One-Artist Exhibitions

Sunken Meadow State Park, Long Island, New York, 1962; Cineprobe, The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 1969; The New American Filmmakers Series, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, 1971; Cineprobe, The Museum of Modern Art, 1972; The New American Filmmakers Series, Whitney Museum of American Art, 1972; Anthology Film Archives, New York, 1974, 1976; The Kitchen Center for Video, Music and Dance, New York, 1977; The Museum of Modern Art, 1978 (retrospective); The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, 1980; Palais des Beaux-Arts, Brussels, 1981

Selected Group Exhibitions

Everson Museum of Art, Syracuse, New York, "Circuit," 1973; The Museum of Modern Art, New York, "Open Circuits," 1974; XIII Bienal de São Paulo, 1975; Documenta 6, Kassel, West Germany, 1977; Siggraph '82 Art Show, Boston, 1982

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Emshwiller, Ed. "Image Maker Meets Video, or, Psyche to Physics and Back." In *The New Television*, edited by Douglas Davis and Allison Simmons. Cambridge, Mass., and London: The MIT Press, 1977.

Kubelka, Peter. *Une Histoire du cinéma* (exhibition catalogue). Paris: Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre National d'Art et de Culture Georges Pompidou, 1976, pp. 76–77.

Mancia, Adrienne, and Willard Van Dyke. "Four Artists as Filmmakers." *Art in America*, 55 (January–February 1967), pp. 64–73.

Mekas, Jonas. *Movie Journal: The Rise of the New American Cinema, 1959–1971.* New York: Collier Books, 1972, pp. 215–16, 221, 386–88.

Whitehall, Richard. "The Films of Ed Emshwiller." *Film Quarterly*, 20 (Spring 1967), pp. 46–50.

Selected Filmography and Videography

Dance Chromatic, 1959. Color 16mm film, sound; 7 minutes
Thanatopsis, 1962. Black-and-white 16mm film, sound; 5 minutes
Relativity, 1966. Color 16mm film, sound; 38 minutes
Image, Flesh and Voice, 1969. Black-and-white 35mm film, sound; 77 minutes
Film with Three Dancers, 1970. Color 16mm film, sound; 20 minutes
Choice Chance Woman Dance, 1971. Color 16mm film, sound; 44 minutes
Scape-mates, 1972. Color videotape, sound; 29 minutes
Crossings and Meetings, 1974. Color videotape, sound; 23 minutes
Pilobolus and Joan, 1974. Color videotape, sound; 58 minutes
Slivers, 1977. Fourteen-monitor single-channel video installation, color videotape, sound; 60 minutes
Sur Faces, 1977. Color videotape, sound; 59 minutes
Dubs, 1978. Color videotape, sound; 24 minutes
Sunstone, 1979. Computer animation, color videotape, sound; 3 minutes

Ed Emshwiller's films are distributed by the Film-makers' Cooperative, New York; his videotapes are distributed by Electronic Arts Intermix, New York.

Citizen

January 18–30, 1983

Citizen, 1982. Film by William Farley. 80 minutes.
12:00, 1:30, 3:00, 4:30; also Tuesdays at 6:15
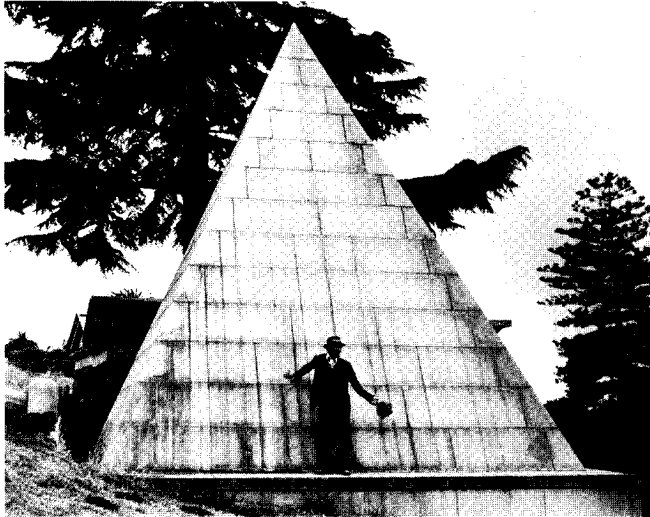
Bob Ernst in *Citizen*, 1982

Credits:
Produced and directed by William Farley. Starring: Michael Barrack, Stoney Burke, Bob Carroll, Victoria Emroy, Bob Ernst, Whoopi Goldberg, Peter Gordon, Judith Harding, Darryl Henriques, Mantra Jessop, Leon Johnson, Scott Keister, Murray Korngold, Kristopher Logan, Pons Maar, John O'Keefe, Michael Peppe, Cassandra Politzer, Lou Sargent, David Sterry. Featuring: David Abad, Mary Arcana, Gillian Bagwell, Joe Bagwell, Bobby Buechler, Priscilla Cohen, Marlitt Dellabough, Richard Guzzo, Liana Harris, Lynette Harrison, Martina Joffe, Charles Jones, Khadejha L'Aimont, Katherine Lyons, Rodney Martin. Narration: Leland Mellott. Casting: William Farley and George Coates. Associate producers: Howard Boyer, James Cloud, Holly Hayden, Mark Hayden, Douglas Hollis, Sally Lubell, Denise O'Neill, Ippy Paterson, Neil Paterson, Ruth Reichl, Ken Vetter. Production managers: Richard Foldenauer, Cathy Ramey. Production assistants: Mike Anderson, Ford Andrews, Jules Backus, Juliet Bashore, Maxi Cohen, Jack Davis, Mark Eastman, Charlotte Footham, Doug Hall, Nancy Kosenko, Truusje Kushner, Chip Lord, Jaime Oria, Arnie Passman, Dana Plays, Julie Schachter, Elisibeth Sher, Andrea Sohn, Eva Soltes. Screenplay: William Farley, George Coates, Susan Roether. Additional material: Stoney Burke, Bob Carroll, Whoopi Goldberg, Darryl Henriques, Murray Korngold, John O'Keefe, Michael Peppe, Mal Sharpe, David Sterry. Director of photography: Kathleen Beeler. Editor: William Farley. Assistant editor: Stan Russell. Editorial consultant: Richard R. Schmidt. Camera operators: Kathleen Beeler, William Farley, David Heintz, George Manupelli, Richard R. Schmidt, Ian Turner. Music composed by Peter Gordon, performed by The Love of Life Orchestra. Additional music: "The Donner Party" by Eva-Tone and Eva-Type; "Rendezvous" by John Bischoff, performed by "Blue" Gene Tyranny; David Behrman; Paul De Marinis; Anne Klingensmith. Titles: Ken Dollar. Negative conformed by Lela Smith. Film timed by Gary Coats. Special thanks to The Film Arts Foundation.

Gallery Talk, Thursday, January 27, following the 1:30 screening. William Farley will be present

Citizen is William Farley's first feature-length film. Shot in San Francisco and the surrounding Bay Area, the film follows a group of anonymous young people on an apparently random journey through a disjointed cityscape. As they travel, they encounter a succession of madmen and eccentrics, portrayed by various West Coast performance artists, whose impassioned monologues and improvisations satirize the institutions of contemporary American society. In the depersonalized environment of objects and images that Farley has created, these performers appear as manifestations of the wise man or the holy fool, bizarre individuals on the fringes of society who offer guidance to the group on their Pilgrim's Progress through the streets, subways, cemeteries, and highways of America.

Farley's intentions in this film are profoundly political. The basic premise of *Citizen* — the transformative journey — and its sense of anarchic freedom and improvisation are related to the Situationist notion of the *dérive*, a method of psycho-political interaction with the urban landscape designed to restructure the individual's relation to the environment. As defined by Guy Debord, the *dérive* is "a technique of transient passage through varied ambiances. The *dérive* entails playful-constructive behavior.... One or more persons during a certain period drop their usual motives for movement and action, their relations, their work and leisure activities, and let themselves be drawn by the attractions of the terrain and the encounters they find there."

Citizen might be viewed as a fictionalized documentary of an extended *dérive* conducted by Farley and his collaborators; selecting shooting locations spontaneously and following a scenario that offered only a minimal outline, the cast and crew approached the filmmaking process in a spirit of collective discovery and invention. The "stars" of the film are nine West Coast performance artists (in order of appearance: John O'Keefe, Stoney Burke, Michael Peppe, Pons Maar, Whoopi Goldberg, Darryl Henriques, Bob Carroll, Bob Ernst, and Murray Korngold). In direct contradiction to conventional notions of film acting, in which the actor subordinates him or herself to a fictional character and a dramatic script, these performers appear in the immediate act of creating their own improvisations. By filming these performances in straightforward documentary fashion and presenting them within an abstracted

landscape, Farley focuses on the performance artist as the heroic embodiment of the individual creative act. In *Citizen*, Farley proposes a new definition of "citizenship": an artistic, revolutionary state of being in which the individual is freed by his own creative, anarchic actions from the constraints imposed by social structures and ideologies.

The concerns of *Citizen* originate in Farley's earlier films, in which he explored issues of narrative form, cultural and spiritual survival, and contemporary society through the tension between images and story elements. It is important to situate Farley's work within the context of the various traditions that inform it: the irrational, anarchic writings of William Burroughs; the rich field of contemporary performance art; and current independent filmmaking. The rejection of the standards and conventions of the commercial Hollywood film has been one of the most significant movements in independent narrative filmmaking in recent decades. Farley, like many of his contemporaries, is seeking to radically expand the language of film as a narrative form and its potential as a medium for personal vision.

<div style="text-align:right">

Callie Angell
Assistant Curator,
Film and Video

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William Farley (seated) directing *Citizen*, 1982. Photograph by Richard Green.

Artist's Statement

My earliest memories include drawing and sketching, being lost in the meditation of reproducing images. This interest accelerated after my uncle brought me a roll of tracing cloth from the factory where he worked. I began tracing everything in sight: comic books, magazines, newspapers, patterns off the linoleum floor, our wallpaper, the shadows of furniture, even moving images off the TV screen.

Thus began my addiction to capturing images. Until my late teens, my drawing had been strictly private, but when I was seventeen my mother showed my drawings to a local artist who said I had talent and suggested I go to art school, a consideration I appreciated since I was doing murderous factory work and was desperate to escape. After studying commercial art and working as an illustrator I discovered

that my need for personal expression was the strongest impulse in my life. This impulse led me into filmmaking. The distance between a roll of tracing cloth and a roll of motion picture film is not so great. In time it represents about twenty years. In spirit it reveals that I have always been involved in the same activity: searching for images that help me understand the life around me.

<div style="text-align:right">

William Farley

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Biography

William Farley, born in Quincy, Massachusetts in 1942, studied at the Vesper George School of Art, Boston, 1961-64, and the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture in Skowhegan, Maine, 1968; he received a B.F.A. from the Maryland Institute, College of Art, Baltimore, in 1969 and an M.F.A. from the California College of Arts and Crafts, Oakland, in 1972. In addition to making his own films, Farley has served as scriptwriter, cameraman, or creative consultant on a number of other media projects, including Richard Schmidt's film *Showboat 1988* (1975), which was shown at the Whitney Museum in 1975, and videotapes by Ant Farm, Robert Ashley, and Joan Jonas. From 1974 through 1979, Farley lectured on film at the Center for Contemporary Music at Mills College, Oakland. He has received numerous awards for his films as well as grants from the National Endowment for the Arts and the American Film Institute. His film *The Bell Rang to an Empty Sky* (1976-77) was shown at the Whitney Museum in the New American Filmmakers Series in 1977. Farley is currently working on a feature film, *Revenge of the Modern Convenience.*

Selected One-Artist Exhibitions

Project Theatre, Dublin, 1977; Canyon Cinematheque, San Francisco, 1978; San Francisco State University, 1979; School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 1980; Encounter Cinema, University of California, Los Angeles, 1980; Neighborhood Film Project, International House, Philadelphia, 1980; Wesleyan University, Middletown, Connecticut, 1980; Media Study/Buffalo, 1981; Pasadena Film Forum, California, 1981.

Selected Group Exhibitions

Ann Arbor Film Festival, Michigan, 1974; 5th International 16mm Cinema Festival, Montreal, 1975; Rotterdam International Film Festival, 1975; 12th Annual New York Avant-Garde Festival, Brooklyn, 1975; Ann Arbor Film Festival, 1976; Conference on Visual Anthropology, Temple University, Philadelphia, 1978; 9th International Cinema Festival, Nyon, Switzerland, 1978; Ann Arbor Film Festival, 1979, 1980; 8th Deauville Festival of American Cinema, Deauville, France, 1982; Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C., "Nu Mooveez," 1982.

Filmography

Sea Space, 1972-73. Black and white, 16mm, sound; 8 minutes
Being, 1974-75. Color, 16mm, sound; 10 minutes
The Bell Rang to an Empty Sky, 1976-77. Color, 16mm, sound; 5 minutes
Marthain The Irish Film, 1977-79. Color, 16mm, sound; 40 minutes
Made for Television, 1981. Color, 16mm, sound; 5 minutes
Citizen, 1982. Color, 16mm, sound; 80 minutes

Caligari's Cure

February 1–11, 1983

Caligari's Cure, 1982. Film by Tom Palazzolo.
70 minutes. 12:00, 1:30, 3:00, 4:30; also Tuesday at 6:00

Credits:
Produced, written, directed, and edited by Tom Palazzolo. Cast: Carmela Rago (Mother), Andy Soma (Francis), Dave West (Allen), Paul Rosin (Cesar), Hether McAdams (Allen's Mother), Ron Kantor (Salesman), Ellen Fisher (Dream Girl), Ed Pino (Mr. Bat), P. Adams Sitney (Dr. Arthur Vision), Tom Jerumba (Chairman of the Board), Bob Loescher (Dr. Caligari), E. W. Ross (Man in the Boat). Camera: Kevin Smith. Sets: Bernard Beckman. Costumes: Lee Ann Larson. Music: Paul Gartski. Choreography: Ellen Fisher.

Caligari's Cure is Tom Palazzolo's first fictional narrative film and also his first feature. Loosely structured as an autobiographical remake of Robert Weine's *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* (1919), the film is a comic fantasy that presents the filmmaker's memories of childhood, Catholic school, and his arrival at the Art Institute of Chicago, as reenacted by a cast of performance artists and friends in wildly colored, distorted sets and costumes. Palazzolo's style is playful and irreverent, incorporating and openly acknowledging a wide range of influences from cinema, art history, and contemporary American art. The subjectively distorted, expressionist sets of the original German film, for instance, have been transformed into a junky, cartoon-like, and distinctly American version that reflects Palazzolo's involvement with contemporary painting as well as with film history.

Palazzolo has borrowed other elements from *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*: the characters of Francis the narrator (and filmmaker's alter ego), Cesar the somnambulist, and Dr.

Ellen Fisher and Andy Soma in *Caligari's Cure*, 1982.

Gallery Talk, Thursday, February 3, following the 1:30 screening. Tom Palazzolo will be present.

Carmela Rago in *Caligari's Cure*, 1982.

Caligari appear; and *Caligari's Cure* is, like the original, a tale told by a madman, although in Palazzolo's version the seminary/asylum where Francis and his friends end up is an obvious metaphor for the Art Institute of Chicago, where the filmmaker has been in residence, as student and teacher, for over twenty years. In Palazzolo's fantasy, the Art Institute and its school become the "institution" in whose rarefied atmosphere the narrator and his fellow artists, having survived middle-class childhood, Catholic education, adolescent sexuality, and even death, can live happily ever after as children and lunatics.

There is no small degree of self-parody in this image, but there is a great deal of appreciation and affection as well. Palazzolo resides comfortably within his own sphere of reference, a domain that includes the rich heritage of film and art history as well as his own personal memories. His familiar and gleeful attitude toward these weighty traditions allows him to draw from them freely while indulging in a virtuoso display of visual and verbal puns, improvised performances, sexual innuendo, appearances by friends, in-jokes and obscure references (many of which hold meaning

only for the filmmaker and his colleagues). The ease with which Palazzolo accomplishes all this suggests a new, more relaxed, and freer approach to the structuring of film narrative, not only in its affirmation of the validity of autobiographical concerns and personal expression, but also in its liberation of cultural tradition as a source of inspiration and humor for the contemporary artist.

Palazzolo's work as a filmmaker has evolved through several stages since his first film in 1965. His early works combined documentary with experimental/expressionist techniques to focus on the grotesque or humorous, particularly in circus performers, freaks, amusement parks, patriotic parades, and other bizarre cultural phenomena. Around 1970 Palazzolo began concentrating on a direct cinéma-vérité approach and, often in collaboration with Jeff Kreines or Mark Rance, produced a number of short documentaries that explored the political attitudes and social behavior of lower- and middle-class Chicago; perhaps his best-known film is *Marquette Park II*, an inside view of American Nazi Party headquarters on the day of the controversial 1978 Chicago rally. Palazzolo's work has always been distinguished by his off-hand approach and his fine eye for the ironic moment or image. His sense of humor, his fascination with the figure of the performer and with the unusual, and his cinéma-vérité techniques are all incorporated into *Caligari's Cure*, where they enrich Palazzolo's first venture into narrative.

Callie Angell
Assistant Curator,
Film and Video

Caligari's Cure, 1982

My work has always depended on outside sources, whether it's an artwork from another period or people, events, and places from my own past or present. I use this material as a springboard.

The combination of these interests and a growing concern with narrative forms led me to *Caligari's Cure*. This is my first film dealing with both performance artists and my own background. Recently I've become interested in performance art through my teaching at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (my paintings since the mid-1960s have been concerned with performers in posed, artificial settings). I chose performance artists from the Art Institute community because their physical appearance or personality in some way reminded me of my first and perhaps strongest associations.

Both as a student and a teacher I have spent most of my adult life in an art environment. This present work combines formative memories of Catholic school with the other half of my life—the museum and school of the Art Institute of Chicago. I have always wanted to do a remake of Robert Weine's *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*, both because the film is very interesting to me in a psychological sense and to reflect my interest in art and film history.

Tom Palazzolo

Biography
Tom Palazzolo was born in St. Louis, Missouri, in 1937. After studying at the John and Mable Ringling School of Art in Sarasota, Florida, from 1958 through 1960, he attended the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, where he studied photography and painting and exhibited with the group known as the Hairy Who. Palazzolo received his M.F.A. from the Art Institute in 1965, and began to make films that same year. During the late 1960s, Palazzolo became well known in what was then called "underground" film; in 1969 he traveled in the Middle East with a program of American experimental films under the auspices of the United States Information Agency, and in 1970 received a grant from the American Film Institute. His film *Love It/Leave It* (1970) was shown in the Whitney Museum's New American Filmmakers Series in 1973. In the early 1970s Palazzolo began to experiment with forms of cinéma-vérité documentary and for the next ten years his films focused on the people and events of working-class Chicago. One series of films concerned the rituals surrounding marriage: prom night, showers, bachelor parties, weddings, receptions, and anniversaries. Palazzolo has completed over thirty films to date; his films are included in the collections of the Museum of Modern Art and the American Federation of Arts in New York. In addition to filmmaking, Palazzolo has continued to work in photography and painting. He currently lives and works in Chicago; he teaches in the Film Department of the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, and is also Associate Professor in the Department of Human and Public Services at Richard J. Daley City College, where he teaches art history and photography.

Selected One-Artist Exhibitions
Cineprobe, The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 1968; Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, 1970; Millennium Film Workshop, New York, 1972; The Art Institute of Chicago, 1973; Madison Art Center, Inc., Wisconsin, 1974; Theater Van Guard, Los Angeles, 1975; Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, 1977; Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, 1977; Indianapolis Art Museum, 1978; International Museum of Photography at George Eastman House, Rochester, 1980, 1982; Karen Lennox Gallery, Chicago, 1982; Madison Art Center, Inc., 1982; Pittsburgh Filmmakers, 1982.

Selected Group Exhibitions
The Museum of Modern Art, New York, "Chicago Underground," 1969; The New American Filmmakers Series, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, "American Dreams and Nightmares," 1973; Film Forum, New York, "Chicago Film," 1974, "Working," 1978; Chicago Filmmakers, "New Films: Chicago," 1979; Pittsburgh Filmmakers, "Politics and Film," 1981.

Selected Filmography
All films are 16mm, color, and sound.
"O," 1965. 12 minutes.
America's in Real Trouble, 1966. 15 minutes.
The Story of How I Became the Tatooed Lady, 1967. 20 minutes.
Love It/Leave It, 1970. 15 minutes.
Ricky and Rocky, 1972. In collaboration with Jeff Kreines; 12 minutes.
It's Later Than You Think, 1973. In collaboration with Jeff Kreines;
    25 minutes.
Marquette Park I, 1976. In collaboration with Mark Rance; 25 minutes.
Gay for a Day, 1977. 12 minutes.
Marquette Park II, 1978. In collaboration with Mark Rance; 35 minutes.
Bean's Bachelor Party, 1979. In collaboration with Mark Rance;
    20 minutes.
Mr. and Mrs. Strocchia's 50th Wedding Anniversary, 1980. 25 minutes.
Milwaukee Talkie, 1981. 14 minutes.

Joan Jonas

February 22–March 13, 1983

He Saw Her Burning, 1982. Video installation
On view continuously, 12:00–6:00

Gallery Talk, Thursday, February 24, at 2:00
Joan Jonas will be present

Performances:
Tuesdays at 6:30 (February 22, March 1 and 8)
Fridays at 6:30 (February 25); 3:00 and 6:30 (March 11)
Saturdays at 3:00 (February 26, March 5 and 12)
Sundays at 3:00 (February 27, March 6 and 13)

Credits:
Assistant: Cynthia Beatt. Performance text by Joan Jonas; additional
material by Shawn Lawton. Installation: videotape by Joan Jonas; assist-
ant editor: Vincent Trasov; with Joan Jonas, Y Sa Lo, Shawn Lawton, and
Vera and Gabor Body. Performance: Super-8 film by Joan Jonas; camera
and editor: Cynthia Beatt. Performance developed in West Berlin and
supported by the Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst.

Joan Jonas' latest work, *He Saw Her Burning*, employs a
wide variety of components: video, dance, performance,
props, and Super-8 film. The installation functions both as
an environment in which to view the videotapes and as a
set for the performances. The resources for Jonas' narrative
art are rich and diverse: autobiography, current events,
science fiction, and folk tales. In *He Saw Her Burning*, she
uses preexisting story elements. In her earlier works these
elements had been taken from myths and science fiction.
He Saw Her Burning employs fragments of news reports to
create a powerful new visual narrative form. Thus, as with
the Grimm fairy tale reworked in her 1976 performance
The Juniper Tree, the narrative is transformed and opened
up—words, actions, sound effects, and the visual elements
work together to evoke new meanings and associations,
different from those of the original texts.

Performance is the central strategy in the art of Joan
Jonas. Through her use of sound, language, and physical
movements, she explores not only the construction of nar-
rative forms but various cognitive and spatial concerns as
well. For example, the spatial exploration of such early
works as her outdoor performance piece *Sound Delay*
(1970), which choreographed sound and dancers' move-
ments across distance, has subsequently been translated
into the illusionistic space of video. The technical possibili-
ties of video—such as left-right reversal, feedback, vertical
roll, and "real time" imagery—enabled her to extend the
perceptual investigations of her performance pieces. Such
videotapes as *Left Side Right Side* (1972), *Vertical Roll*
(1972), and *I Want to Live in the Country (and Other Ro-*

Joan Jonas performing in *He Saw Her Burning* in West Berlin, November 1982.

mances) (1977–78) demonstrated how the properties and
technologies of video could be made to address issues cur-
rent in her performance work.

In *He Saw Her Burning*, video was a catalyst in the crea-
tion and design of the performance and installation. Jonas
developed the project in West Berlin, where she was living
for eight months on a German government grant. As a for-
eigner in a large city she spent much of her time watching
television, listening to the radio, and reading newspapers.
The narratives in *He Saw Her Burning* are fashioned from
two news reports which Jonas recounts at the beginning of
the performance. Jonas then becomes, as the single per-
former, the medium for the stories, the narrative elements

of which are played off against the two prerecorded video-tapes (featuring an actor and an actress telling two news stories) which are shown simultaneously during the performance and in the installation. The other props, the painted backdrop, and the Super-8 film expand further on elements of the narrative.

The videotapes represent television as a mass-media source of news and information. Through the use of pre-recorded as well as closed-circuit video, the camera's point of view and the two-dimensional properties of the video image are integrated into the space of the performance. *He Saw Her Burning* becomes a meditation on the mythologies of popular culture and mass media, on the narrative form of news reports, and on the real and imagined spaces of live and video performance.

John G. Hanhardt
Curator, Film and Video

He Saw Her Burning, 1982

He Saw Her Burning is based on two news stories, one from the *International Herald Tribune*, July 1982, about an American soldier stationed in Mannheim, West Germany, who stole a tank and drove it down the main street of the city, causing panic and confusion. He finally drove onto the bridge over the Neckar River, turned it around, lost control, and tipped backward into the water. There was no explanation for his behavior. It took a 100-ton swimming crane to get the tank out of the water.

The second story is about a Chicago woman who burst into flames for no apparent reason (from the *Journal American*, Rome, August 1982). A witness sitting in his car told police that suddenly the woman was on fire. There was nothing left but a pile of ashes. Eight incidents of human spontaneous combustion are listed in reference books, one as late as 1957.

The two stories are intercut and linked throughout the performance. They are experienced and witnessed by the characters, a man and a woman, who also tell the stories. Passages and quotes from an Icelandic saga are also used in this allegory, pointing to the timelessness of current events.

The work developed from my relation to the landscape of Berlin (past and present), where I lived for eight months, and from my interest in listening to the American and English radio stations while living in a comparatively isolated situation. The two stories attracted me because they stand symbolically for specific conditions in our society. I was drawn by the elements of mystery and crisis.

Joan Jonas

Biography
Joan Jonas, born in New York in 1936, studied at Mount Holyoke College, South Hadley, Massachusetts, where she received a B.A. in Art History in 1958. She then attended the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, from 1958 to 1961, and received an M.F.A. from Columbia University in 1965. Jonas has been awarded fellowships and grants for choreography, video, and the visual arts from the New York State Council on the Arts, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Guggenheim Foundation, the

Television Workshop at WXXI-TV, Rochester, the Rockefeller Foundation, and the Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst. In 1981 she won the Hyogo Prefecture Museum of Modern Art Prize at the International Video Art Festival in Tokyo. Joan Jonas lives and works in New York.

Selected Outdoor Performances
Jones Beach Piece, Jones Beach State Park, Nassau County, New York, 1970; *Beach Piece II*, Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia, 1971; *Delay Delay*, Tiber River, Rome (sponsored by Galleria l'Attico, Rome), 1972.

Exhibitions and Selected Indoor Performances
Oad Lau, St. Peter's Church, New York, 1968; *Organic Honey's Visual Telepathy*, Lo Giudice Gallery, New York, 1972; *Organic Honey's Vertical Roll*, Leo Castelli Gallery, New York, 1973; *The Juniper Tree*, Institute of Contemporary Art, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, 1976; *Upsidedown and Backwards*, Sonnabend Gallery, New York, 1979; "Joan Jonas: Performance/Video/Installation," University Art Museum, University of California, Berkeley, 1980; *Double Lunar Dogs*, Performance Garage, New York, 1981; "Joan Jonas: A Retrospective of Video Works," Anthology Film Archives, New York, 1982; *He Saw Her Burning*, Arsenal, West Berlin, 1982.

Selected Bibliography
Crimp, Douglas. "Joan Jonas's Performance Works." *Studio International*, 142 (July–August 1976), pp. 10–12.
de Jong, Constance. "Joan Jonas: Organic Honey's Vertical Roll." *Arts Magazine*, 47 (March 1973), pp. 27–29.
Jonas, Joan. "Organic Honey's Visual Telepathy" (script). *The Drama Review*, 16 (June 1972), p. 66.
———. "Seven Years." *The Drama Review*, 19 (March 1975), pp. 13–16.
———. *Scripts and Descriptions*. Edited by Douglas Crimp. Eindhoven, Holland: Stedelijk van Abbemuseum; Berkeley: University Art Museum, University of California, 1982.
Junker, Howard. "Joan Jonas: The Mirror Staged." *Art in America*, 69 (February 1981), pp. 87–95.

Filmography
Wind, 1968. Black and white, 16mm, silent; 5½ minutes.
Paul Revere, 1971. In collaboration with Richard Serra. Black and white, 16mm, sound; 9 minutes.
Veil, 1971. Black and white, 16mm, silent; 6-minute loop.
Songdelay, 1973. Black and white, 16mm, sound; 19 minutes.

Selected Videography
Left Side Right Side, 1972. Black and white, sound; 7 minutes.
Vertical Roll, 1972. Black and white, sound; 20 minutes.
Organic Honey's Visual Telepathy, 1972. Black and white, sound; 23 minutes.
Barking, 1973. Black and white, sound; 3 minutes.
Three Returns, 1973. Black and white, sound; 12 minutes.
Glass Puzzle, 1974. Black and white, sound; 26 minutes.
Merlo, 1974. Black and white, sound; 16 minutes.
Good Night Good Morning, 1976. Black and white, sound; 11 minutes.
I Want to Live in the Country (and Other Romances), 1977–78. Color, sound; 28 minutes.
Upsidedown and Backwards, 1981. Color, sound; 28 minutes.

Joan Jonas' videotapes and films are distributed by Castelli-Sonnabend Tapes and Films, New York.

Frank Gillette

May 31–June 26, 1983

Oracle, 1983. Video installation
In collaboration with William Chamberlain, Stanley
   Darland, Stuart Greenstein, and Michael Riesman
On view continuously 12:00–6:00, Tuesdays until 8:00

Gallery Talk, Thursday, June 2, at 2:00
Frank Gillette will be present

Credits:
Chief programmer and program designer: Steven Buchwalter. Terrarium consultant: Dr. William Crotty, New York University. Video assistance: Davidson Gigliotti. Computer hardware courtesy Atari, Digital (D.E.C.), and Microperipheral. Sonar sensing device and 8 × 10 Hard Color Copier courtesy Polaroid Corporation. PALEO and TELIOS programs courtesy Time Video Information Services Division of Time, Inc. Oberheim synthesizer courtesy Oberheim Electronics, Inc. Panscan units courtesy Nigel Branwell and Audio & Design Recording, Inc. *Oracle* was made possible by a fellowship from the Rockefeller Foundation and by the generous support of Marilyn Oshman Lubetkin and Sara Ann Marks.

Oracle is the latest in a long series of projects by Frank Gillette that have contributed to shaping the history of the video installation. A distinctive feature of Gillette's work has been the formal investigation of the possibilities of video as an image-recording medium presented in an installation context. Such pieces as *The Maui Cycle* (1976) and *Aransas, Axis of Observation* (1978–79) employed videotape in multimonitor, multichannel configurations. In these works, Gillette interprets the specific sites and environments with his compositions and selection of images, extending the image-recording basis of video through the editing process. Thus the changes in the light and color of the environment and the cycles in plant and animal life are reflected in the choice of shots, the strategies of the editing, and the movement of the camera. In *The Maui Cycle* he employed the video camera and multichannel format to reveal the formal beauty and ecology of this Hawaiian island; in *Aransas*, he explored the specific ecology of an area, in this case the Texas Gulf Coast, by reconstructing the unique plant and animal life of the region in photographic and video imagery.

   Oracle takes these aesthetic interests in a new direction by using computers connected by means of sensors to the changing ecology of a terrarium. The computer systems translate the activity of the terrarium into video imagery, produced in real, not recorded, time. The different life forms thus become the actual source of the imagery, and not only on closed-circuit monitors; in addition, the linking of the computer programs to a printer produces a prose program. These statements are in grammatically perfect English, and range from 50 to 300 words each. Finally, the
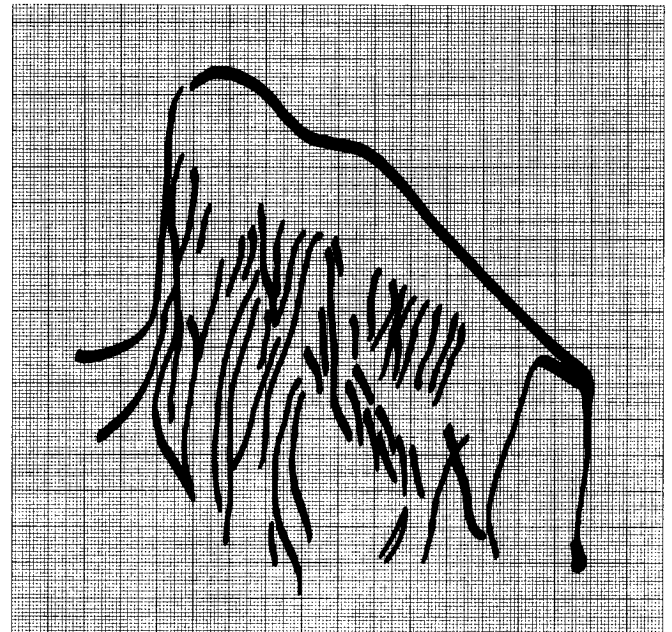
Template drawing for the PALEO program in *Oracle*, 1983. Ink on vellum with grid, 11 × 7⅛ inches. Collection of the artist.

programs also generate music. Thus a living ecology, the terrarium, is integrated into the installation's very structure and becomes the means for generating the visual, auditory, and linguistic texts which the spectator experiences in real time.

   Increasingly, new technologies are being incorporated into art projects, a process in which both these technologies and the concept of the artwork itself are transformed. Gillette's *Oracle* is a dramatic advance in installation and video art: it addresses the entire process of art-making through the use of new technologies as tools of observation.

John G. Hanhardt
Curator, Film and Video

Oracle, 1983

Oracle consists of two opposing parts, a terrarium and a display matrix. The terrarium, housing a primordial environment of ferns, mosses, and lepidoptera, contains sensors converting random movement into voltage flow which

determines changes in the display matrix. Six separate computer programs intercept the voltage flow and generate a fugue of textual, aural, diagrammatic, and imagistic data in the matrix of eight monitors, four speakers, and a high-speed printer. Two TV cameras convey the contents of the terrarium to the matrix as well. The programs:

RACTOR synthesizes prose. It draws upon a vocabulary of approximately 1,300 words (divided into eleven categories) and the rules for syntax and grammar in English. The length and character of the statements it produces are determined by random choice originating in the terrarium. RACTOR's read-out appears on one monitor and the printer.

CANTUS composes music in real time by following algorithms which delimit the allowable choices of notes, rhythms, and rests. It utilizes a random value derived from interpreting activity in the terrarium. The program chooses a first note, or chord, and then continually selects either a pitch or a rest, and a duration thereof, for four simultaneous voices, until commanded to stop.

PALEO is essentially an inventory of 72 images drawn from the Paleolithic, or prehistoric, epoch of art. Its images derive from the paintings, drawings, and reliefs found on the walls of caves (Altamira, Lascaux, Niaux) in the Pyrenees. The selection and duration of each image are determined by changes in the voltage flow monitoring the terrarium. TELIOS is grounded in the diagrammatic analysis of the ratios, proportions, and placements of four key structures in world history, that is, the pyramid at Cheops, the Greek Parthenon, the Roman Pantheon, and the cathedral at Cologne. Each edifice is represented in the program by five views and a floor plan which are selected in the same manner as the PALEO program.

INTER-1 intercepts the live E-to-E video from the terrarium to the matrix monitor. It reconstructs the analog image in digital terms and presents it on the monitor adjacent to the live image.

INTER-2 intercepts the other live E-to-E video feed from the terrarium in the same manner as INTER-1 but with a different set of variables digitalizing the image.

<div align="right">Frank Gillette</div>

Biography

Frank Gillette, born in Jersey City, New Jersey, in 1941, studied painting at Pratt Institute, Brooklyn, from 1959 to 1962. Gillette produced his first videotape, *St. Mark's Place*, in 1967 with Harvey Simmons. His videotape *Hark—Hork* (1972–73) was shown in the Whitney Museum's 1975 Biennial Exhibition. Two of his multichannel installations have also been shown at the Whitney Museum: *The Maui Cycle* (1976) in the New American Filmmakers Series in 1977 and *Aransas, Axis of Observation* (1978–79) in the 1981 Biennial Exhibition. Gillette's book, *Between Paradigms: The Mood and Its Purpose*, was published in 1973. He has been a National Endowment for the Arts Resident at the Everson Museum of Art, Syracuse, New York (1973); the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis (1974); and the Long Beach Museum of Art, California (1975); and received grants from the New York State Council on the Arts in 1970, 1972, 1974, 1975, and 1977. Gillette has been a fellow of the Dare Foundation (1975), the National Endowment for the Arts (1976, 1980), the Guggenheim Foundation (1978), and the Rockefeller Foundation (1981). Frank Gillette lives in New York.

Collaborators

William Chamberlain is a writer living in New York. He and Thomas Etter are the coauthors of RACTOR, a computer program which synthesizes prose.

Stanley Darland is a painter, sculptor, and photographer, and is Computer Graphics Consultant at Time Video Information Services Division of Time, Inc. He is coauthor with Gillette of the TELIOS and PALEO programs and is collaborator on all computer-graphic imagery in *Oracle*.

Stuart Greenstein, designer of the sensor system in *Oracle*, is an independent consultant in the field of personal-computer implementation.

Michael Riesman, a composer and performer, conceived and designed the CANTUS program. He is the musical director and keyboardist of the Philip Glass Ensemble.

Selected One-Artist Exhibitions

Everson Museum of Art, Syracuse, New York, 1973; Art/Tapes 22, Florence, 1974; Long Beach Museum of Art, California, 1975; The New American Filmmakers Series, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, 1977; Contemporary Arts Museum, Houston, 1978; University Art Museum, University of California, Berkeley, 1979; Anthology Film Archives, New York, 1980; The Kitchen Center for Video, Music and Dance, New York, 1980; Emanuel Walter Gallery, San Francisco Art Institute, 1981; Leo Castelli Gallery, New York, 1982; Lawrence Oliver Gallery, Philadelphia, 1983.

Selected Group Exhibitions

Howard Wise Gallery, New York, "TV as a Creative Medium," 1969; Everson Museum of Art, Syracuse, New York, "Circuit: A Video Invitational," 1973; Kunsthalle Köln, Cologne, "Projekt-74," 1974; Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, "New Learning Spaces and Places," 1974; Institute of Contemporary Art, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, "Video Art," 1975; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, 1975 Biennial Exhibition; Documenta 6, Kassel, West Germany, 1977; P.S. 1, Institute for Art and Urban Resources, Long Island City, New York, "Landscape Video," 1980; XIII Winter Olympic Games, Lake Placid, New York, 1980; University of Houston, "The Multiple Image," 1980; Whitney Museum of American Art, 1981 Biennial Exhibition; 40th Venice Biennale, 1982.

Selected Bibliography

Gillette, Frank. *Between Paradigms: The Mood and Its Purpose.* New York: Gordon & Breach, 1973.

———. *Aransas, Axis of Observation.* Houston: Points of View, 1978.

Gillette, Frank, and Brendan O'Regan. "A Teleconference on Computers and Art." *All Area*, 2 (Spring 1983).

London, Barbara. "Independent Video: The First Fifteen Years." *Artforum,* 19 (September 1980), pp. 38–41.

Rosebush, Judson, ed. *Frank Gillette: Video—Process and Meta-Process* (exhibition catalogue). Syracuse, N.Y.: Everson Museum of Art, 1973.

Selected Multichannel Installations

Wipe Cycle, 1969. Nine channels, three time delays, black and white, 30 minutes.

Tetragramaton, 1972–73. Six channels (30 monitors), black and white, 30 minutes.

Track/Trace, 1972–73. Ten channels, five time delays, three live-feed cameras, black and white.

Muse, 1974–75. Three channels, black and white, 15 minutes.

Quidditas, 1974–75. Three channels, color, 40 minutes.

The Maui Cycle, 1976. Three channels, color, 45 minutes.

Mecox, 1977. Three channels, color, 20 minutes.

Aransas, Axis of Observation, 1978–79. Six channels, color, 45 minutes.

Olaus Magnus, 1980. Four channels, color, 30 minutes.

Symptomatic Syntax, 1980–81. Six channels, color, 20 minutes.

Documentation of Frank Gillette's installations is available from the Leo Castelli Gallery, New York.

Whitney Museum of American Art
945 Madison Avenue, New York, New York 10021

Hours: Tuesday 11:00–8:00
Wednesday–Saturday 11:00–6:00
Sunday 12:00–6:00

Film and video information: (212) 570-0537

The New American Filmmakers Series
EXHIBITIONS OF INDEPENDENT FILM AND VIDEO

Ernie Gehr

September 27–October 9, 1983

Schedule
September 27–October 2
1:00; also Tuesday, September 27, at 6:30
Morning, 1968; *Wait*, 1968; *Reverberation*, 1969;
Behind the Scenes, 1975

3:00; also Tuesday, September 27, at 5:00
Transparency, 1969; *History*, 1970; *Field*, 1970;
Serene Velocity, 1970

October 4–9
1:00; also Tuesday, October 4, at 6:30
*Eureka*, 1974–79; *Still*, 1969–71

3:00; also Tuesday, October 4, at 5:00
Untitled, 1977; *Mirage*, 1981; *Shift*, 1972–74; *Table*, 1976;
Untitled, 1981

Sometime between 1903 and 1905 an anonymous film-maker in San Francisco produced a short sequence of silent film footage from a moving streetcar. Seventy years later Ernie Gehr, an artist living in New York, found the footage and transformed it into *Eureka* (1974–79), a landmark film in the history of the American independent cinema. The aesthetic power of *Eureka*, one of the films in this retrospective, is representative of Gehr's entire oeuvre and an analysis of it reveals the complex of issues present in all of his films.

Gehr refilmed each of the found-footage frames eight times. The original film, projected at its silent speed (16 frames per second [fps]) had a running time of approximately four minutes. After Gehr reworked it, the total running time extended to thirty minutes, projected at 24 fps, without a soundtrack. The San Francisco filmmaker, with a continuous tracking camera positioned on the streetcar, had recorded on celluloid the action on and about the streets and buildings. Gehr's manipulation of the frame transformed this action into gradually shifting movements of people and vehicles.

One of the most interesting aspects of the use of this found material is that only a single moving shot — one rhetorical device — serves as the basis for Gehr's exploration of how the photographic image is framed and interpreted. In *Eureka* the relentless gaze of the camera proceeds through a historical space, a street in San Francisco before the earthquake destroyed it. Gehr expands on this visual discourse: his rigorous strategy is to refashion our perception of the film by opening up its process of production and, consequently, the space and details of the action. His

Gallery Talk, Thursday, September 29, following the 1:00 screening. Ernie Gehr will be present.
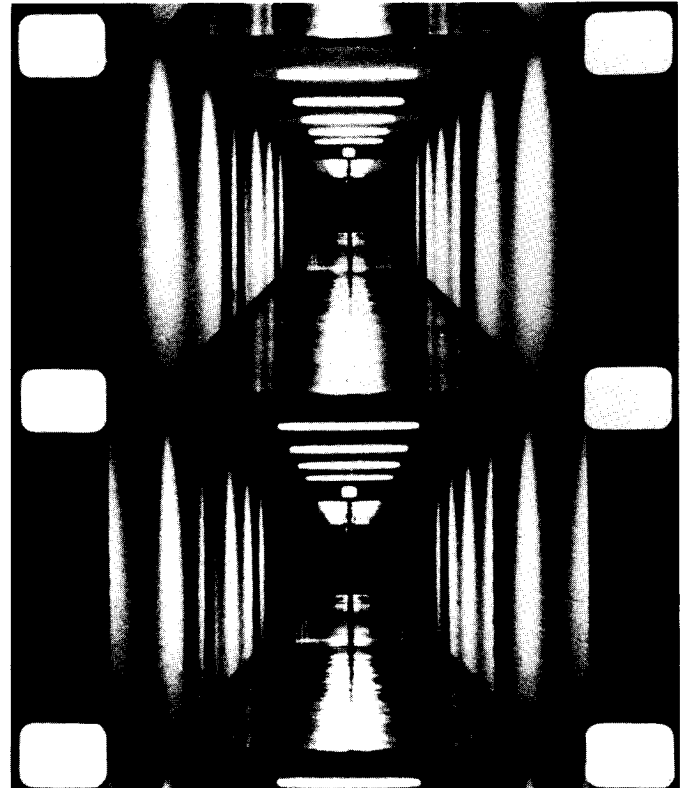
Frames from *Serene Velocity*, 1970.

decision to rephotograph each frame as he did removes any flicker in the image, thus making the technique employed invisible to the viewer.

The formal and aesthetic issues addressed in *Eureka* are also developed, with different strategies, in his other films. There is an attention in Gehr's cinema to the entire frame of celluloid and its surface as a compositional field and a strict concern with the cinematic principles that shape the film's form. Thus the properties of both the material and the camera are treated in the construction of the film and the framing of the composition. In such works as *Reverberation* (1969), *Still* (1969–71), *History* (1970), *Serene Velocity* (1970), and *Untitled* (1981), Gehr employs a variety of filmic devices and refines, through the subtlety of emphasis within each work, how we perceive such compositional elements as superimposition (*Reverberation*), zoom shots (*Serene Velocity*), and film grain (*History*). He investigates the phenomenology of the photographed image

and the dynamics of movement and time within the illusionistic, two-dimensional properties of film space.

Ernie Gehr's films share in the aesthetic concerns which have engaged painters, sculptors, photographers, and video artists, particularly within the context of Conceptual and Minimal art. The formal issues at play in his films define them as "structural." This independent film movement is characterized by work which emphasizes specific properties of the film production process. Yet Gehr's work, because it embraces both representational and abstract imagery, transcends identification with a single movement. Seen in their entirety, his films represent a unique achievement in the American avant-garde cinema.

John G. Hanhardt
Curator, Film and Video

Artist's Statement

A still has to do with a particular intensity of light, an image, a composition frozen in time and space.

A shot has to do with a variable intensity of light, an internal balance of time dependent upon an intermittent movement and a movement within a given space dependent upon persistence of vision.

A shot can be a film, or a film may be composed of a number of shots.

A still as related to film is concerned with using and losing an image of something through time and space. In representational films sometimes the image affirms its own presence as image, graphic entity, but most often it serves as vehicle to a photo-recorded event. Most films teach film to be an image, a representing. But film is a real thing and as a real thing it is not imitation. It does not reflect on life, it embodies the life of the mind. It is not a vehicle for ideas or portrayals of emotion outside of its own existence as emoted idea. Film is a variable intensity of light, an internal balance of time, a movement within a given space.

When I began to make films I believed pictures of things must go into films if anything was to mean anything. This is what almost everybody who has done anything worthwhile with film has done and is still doing but this again has to do with everything a still is — a representing. And when I actually began filming I found this small difficulty: neither film, filming nor projecting had anything to do with emotions, objects, beings, or ideas. I began to think about this and what film really is and how I see and feel and experience film.

Ernie Gehr

Excerpt from "Program Notes by Ernie Gehr for a Film Screening at the Museum of Modern Art, New York City, February 2, 1971 at 5:30 p.m.," *Film Culture*, Spring 1972, pp. 36–37.

Biography

Ernie Gehr lives and works in New York. His films are in the collections of several museums and universities, including Anthology Film Archives, New York; the Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; the Rocky Mountain Film Center, University of Colorado, Boulder; and New York University. He has been represented in film festivals such as "New Forms in Film," Montreux, Switzerland, 1974, and the Berlin International Film Festival, 1976. In 1979 he was invited to be an artist-in-residence by the Art Department of the University of Colorado, Boulder. He has taught film production and film history at various schools,

including Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, New York; the State University of New York campuses at Binghamton and Buffalo; the University of Colorado, Boulder; and the School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

Selected One-Artist Exhibitions

Museum of Art, Carnegie Institute, Pittsburgh, 1974; London Film Makers Co-op, 1977; Pacific Film Archives, Berkeley, 1978; Boston Film/Video Foundation, 1979; The Cinematheque, San Francisco, 1979; Cineprobe, The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 1979; Rocky Mountain Film Center, University of Colorado, Boulder, 1979; The Funnel Theater, Toronto, 1980; Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, 1980; Collective for Living Cinema, New York, 1981; The Arsenal, West Berlin, 1982; Millennium, New York, 1982; Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre National d'Art et de Culture Georges Pompidou, Paris, 1982; School of the Art Institute of Chicago, 1983.

Selected Group Exhibitions

The American Federation of Arts, New York, "A History of the American Avant-Garde Cinema," 1976; Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre National d'Art et de Culture Georges Pompidou, Paris, "Une Histoire du cinéma," 1976; New York State Gallery Association, "Film as Art" (traveling exhibition), 1977; Media Study, Buffalo, "The Moving Image," 1978; Moderna Museet, Stockholm, "The Pleasure Dome," 1981; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, 1981 Biennial Exhibition; The 20th New York Film Festival, Lincoln Center, New York, 1982; Whitney Museum of American Art, 1983 Biennial Exhibition.

Selected Bibliography

Cornwell, Regina. "Works of Ernie Gehr from 1968 to 1972." *Film Culture*, nos. 63–64 (1977), pp. 29–38.

Gehr, Ernie. "Program Notes by Ernie Gehr for a Film Screening at the Museum of Modern Art, New York City, February 2, 1971 at 5:30 p.m." *Film Culture*, Spring 1972, pp. 36–38. Reprinted in P. Adams Sitney, ed., *The Avant-Garde Film: A Reader of Theory and Criticism*. Anthology Film Archives Series. New York: New York University Press, 1978.

Hoberman, J. "Explorations: Back to Basics." *American Film*, 7 (June 1982), pp. 8, 21.

Mekas, Jonas. "Ernie Gehr Interviewed by Jonas Mekas, March 24, 1971." *Film Culture*, Spring 1972, pp. 25–36.

Sitney, P. Adams. *Visionary Film: The American Avant-Garde, 1943–1978*. 2nd ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 1979, pp. 369, 373, 381, 436–40, 443.

Filmography

All films are 16mm.

Morning, 1968. Color, silent; 4½ minutes.
Wait, 1968. Color, silent; 7 minutes.
Reverberation, 1969. Black and white, sound; 25 minutes.
Transparency, 1969. Color, silent; 11 minutes.
Still, 1969–71. Color, sound; 54½ minutes.
History, 1970. Black and white, silent; 25 minutes.
Field, 1970. Black and white, silent; 10 minutes.
Serene Velocity, 1970. Color, silent; 23 minutes.
Shift, 1972–74. Color, sound; 9 minutes.
Eureka, 1974–79. Black and white, silent; 30 minutes.
Behind the Scenes, 1975. Color, sound; 5 minutes.
Table, 1976. Color, silent; 16 minutes.
Untitled, 1977. Color, silent; 4 minutes.
Mirage, 1981. Color, silent; 12 minutes.
Untitled, 1981. Color, silent; 30 minutes.

Ernie Gehr's films are distributed by the Film-makers' Cooperative, New York.

Warren Sonbert

October 11-23, 1983

Schedule
October 11-23
12:30 daily; Tuesdays at 12:30 and 4:00
Carriage Trade, 1971

October 11-16
Tuesday at 2:00 and 6:30; Wednesday-Sunday at 2:00 and 3:30
Rude Awakening, 1975; *A Woman's Touch*, 1983

October 18-23
Tuesday at 2:00 and 6:30; Wednesday-Sunday at 2:00 and 3:30
Divided Loyalties, 1978; *Noblesse Oblige*, 1981

Our perception of the projected film image is shaped by a number of factors in the production process. One of them, editing, constitutes a central strategy in filmmaking. The joining together of two or more sequences of film footage, editing gives the film its overall framework; it links the shifting points of view and compositions of different shots, and, in the process, structures the viewer's temporal perception of the film's action. It is Warren Sonbert's virtuoso use of editing and his exploration of linkage that is of special interest in his films.

This exhibition includes five of Sonbert's films. *Carriage Trade* (1971), *Rude Awakening* (1975), *Divided Loyalties* (1978), *Noblesse Oblige* (1981), and *A Woman's Touch* (1983) comprise a unique contribution to the art of film and to the genre of the diary film. With his camera Sonbert records impressions from his travels and daily life, capturing details of the world around him. This material is then

Noblesse Oblige, 1981.

Gallery Talk, Thursday, October 13, following the 2:00 screening. Warren Sonbert will be present.

A Woman's Touch, 1983.

refashioned as he edits the pieces of film into a coherent whole. It is in the editing process that the film footage is synthesized as the relationships between shots are developed. Sonbert creates a visual language out of discrete images, joining them into sequences by formal associations of light, color, composition, movement within the frame, and the moving camera. Place and time shift kaleidoscopically.

The art of Warren Sonbert translates the diary form into visual terms through the properties of the film medium. The recorded fragments of time and place become memories formed by the editing process into the reflexive discourse of the diary. The films give impressionistic views of a personal and public realm, ranging from his travels around the world in the program's first film, *Carriage Trade* (1971), to the shots of San Francisco, Washington, D.C., gay-rights demonstrations, traffic in the streets, clouds rolling over the mountains, and people in their houses in *Noblesse Oblige* (1981). In addition to the formal relationships between shots that produce the cascading flow of images, Sonbert's interpretative vision — his perception of place and of the timeless moment — is acute. Like a novelist who plays with the structure of the sentence and makes us aware of the varying shades of meaning of each word, sentence, and paragraph, Sonbert looks

through the surface meaning of the image, the literal recorded shot, to the linearity of time and the logic of sequence. He transforms our expectations of time and sequence through the pace of the action and the camera's point of view.

Warren Sonbert's diaristic films, together with the films of Jonas Mekas and Andrew Noren, define a significant genre within the American independent cinema. The portability of the hand-held 16mm camera provided the filmmaker with new access to the events occurring around him. The lightweight camera allowed Sonbert, for example, to shoot out of the window of an airplane taking him home from one of his journeys. As viewers we are carried silently around Sonbert's country and world, yet the recorded film image transcends the specificity of a moment in time and becomes part of an aesthetic whole, an interpretation and rendering of our world.

John G. Hanhardt
Curator, Film and Video

Artist's Statement

These films are accumulations of evidence. The images must be read: not only what narrative connotations are given off by representational imagery as regards both language and figure-engaged activity, but also the constructive signposts of point of view, exposure, composition, color, directional pulls and the textural overlay. But in film the solo image is akin to an isolated chord; the kinetic thrust emerges with montage. That process expands, deflates, contradicts, reinforces or qualifies. It is this specific and directed placement that provides film with both its structure and its freedom.

Film can do flips, is acrobatic. A highly charged shot, though still potentially balanced by a multitude of suggestibles, may in turn, by replacement by a more neutral image, shift into objectivity the initial heightened response. This play with expectations, both frustrated and enhanced, constitutes a reason to look at the screen. The variables of an image, its visual qualities being punctuation, swell to a series of statements, whose provocative strains demand a measured vigilance of the viewer, when editing can either underline, comment upon or upset the fluctuating contiguities. This is not to say that the possible pleasure produced refuses rigor, but rather that cerebral sleight-of-hand implies control.

Warren Sonbert

Biography

Warren Sonbert was born in 1947 in New York. He studied filmmaking at New York University, where he received a B.A., *cum laude*, in 1969. He taught film at Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, New York, from 1973 to 1975, and at the San Francisco Art Institute from 1978 to 1979. Sonbert received a CAPS grant (Creative Artists Program Service, Inc.) in filmmaking from the New York State Council on the Arts in 1976. His films are in the collections of the Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre National d'Art et de Culture Georges Pompidou, Paris; the Österreichisches Filmmuseum, Vienna; and the Arsenal, West Berlin. Warren Sonbert lives in San Francisco.

Selected One-Artist Exhibitions

Cineprobe, The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 1971; The New American Filmmakers Series, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, 1973; Collective for Living Cinema, New York, 1975; Cineprobe, The Museum of Modern Art, 1976; The New American Filmmakers Series, Whitney Museum of American Art, 1976; Österreichisches Filmmuseum, Vienna, 1976; The Art Institute of Chicago, 1977; Collective for Living Cinema, 1978; The New American Filmmakers Series, Whitney Museum of American Art, 1978; Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1979; University of California, Los Angeles, 1979; Cineprobe, The Museum of Modern Art, 1980; The New American Filmmakers Series, Whitney Museum of American Art, 1980; Collective for Living Cinema, 1981; The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, 1981; The Arsenal, West Berlin, 1982; Collective for Living Cinema, 1982; Münchner Stadtmuseum, Munich, 1982; Cineprobe, The Museum of Modern Art, 1983.

Selected Group Exhibitions

National Film Archive, London, "First International Experimental Film Festival," 1970, and "Second International Experimental Film Festival," 1973; Filmex, Los Angeles, 1974; Vancouver Art Gallery, "Vancouver Film Festival," 1974; Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre National d'Art et de Culture Georges Pompidou, Paris, "First International Film Exhibition," 1976; Berlin Film Festival, 1977; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, 1979 Biennial Exhibition; Moderna Museet, Stockholm, "New American Cinema," 1980; Holland Film Festival, Amsterdam, 1982; Mill Valley Film Festival, Mill Valley, California, 1982; Whitney Museum of American Art, 1983 Biennial Exhibition.

Filmography

All films are 16mm and color, unless otherwise noted.

Amphetamine, 1966. Black and white, sound; 10 minutes.
Where Did Our Love Go?, 1966. Sound; 15 minutes.
Hall of Mirrors, 1966. Sound; 7 minutes.
The Tenth Legion, 1967. Sound; 30 minutes.
Truth Serum, 1967. Sound; 10 minutes.
The Bad and the Beautiful, 1967. Sound; 35 minutes.
Connection, 1967. Sound; 15 minutes.
Ted & Jessica, 1967. Sound; 7 minutes.
Holiday, 1968. Sound; 15 minutes.
Carriage Trade, 1971. Silent; 61 minutes. (Includes footage from *The Tenth Legion*, *Truth Serum*, *The Bad and the Beautiful*, *Connection*, *Ted & Jessica*, and *Holiday*.)
Rude Awakening, 1975. Silent; 36 minutes.
Divided Loyalties, 1978. Silent; 22 minutes.
Noblesse Oblige, 1981. Silent; 25 minutes.
A Woman's Touch, 1983. Silent; 22 minutes.

Warren Sonbert's films are distributed by the Film-makers' Cooperative, New York.

Selected Bibliography

Carroll, Noel. "Causation, the Ampliation of Movement and Avant-Garde Film." *Millennium Film Journal*, Fall–Winter 1981–82, pp. 61–82.
Curtis, David. *Experimental Cinema.* New York: Delta Books, 1971, pp. 70, 71, 172.
Davidson, David. "Warren Sonbert's *Noblesse Oblige.*" *Millennium Film Journal*, Fall–Winter 1982–83, pp. 109–11.
Mekas, Jonas. *Movie Journal.* New York: Collier Books, 1972, pp. 258, 326, 369, 404–5.
Sitney, P. Adams. *Visionary Film: The American Avant-Garde, 1943–1978.* 2nd ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 1979, p. 360.
Stoller, James. "Shooting Up." In *The New American Cinema*, edited by Gregory Battcock. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1967, pp. 180–85.

Whitney Museum of American Art
945 Madison Avenue, New York, New York 10021

Hours: Tuesday 11:00–8:00
Wednesday–Saturday 11:00–6:00
Sunday 12:00–6:00

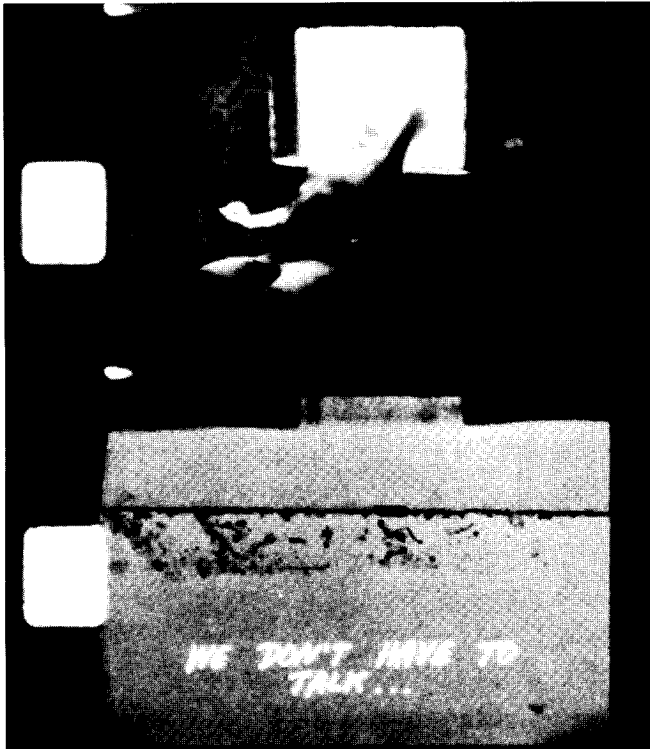**Film and video information:** (212) 570-0537

My Word

October 1983

My Word, 1973–74. Super-8 film by Vito Acconci. 120 minutes. 12:00, 3:00; also Tuesday at 5:30.

Gallery Talk, Thursday, October 27, following the 12:00 screening. Vito Acconci will be present.

Vito Acconci's *My Word* (1973–74) is an autobiographical film produced between the fall of 1973 and the summer of 1974. This feature-length work, with a running time of two hours, is a major project by one of the first artists to successfully develop a significant oeuvre in the Super-8 film format. To Acconci, who began to work with Super-8 in the late 1960s, the format had the advantage of being both flexible and inexpensive. Acconci adapts the medium of film to his aesthetic, which is distinguished by a probing into the self and an exploration of the psychology of perception. Thus, as in Acconci's other performance, video, and installation pieces, the camera in *My Word* is expressly focused on the artist's body and movements as he sets up situations and scenarios which create, within specific spaces, provocative narratives and actions related to his life and art-making.

In *My Word*, Acconci places his audience in an ambiguous position vis-à-vis the narrative and point of view. The film has no soundtrack and is composed of written statements alternating with shots of the artist in his studio and around his building. Acconci is the central protagonist whose gestures, actions, and written statements are all addressed to women — women are the other, unseen, presences in this work. The point of view of the camera can be interpreted as that of the women, silently confronting Acconci, or that of Acconci himself, mirroring his every move. "I have acknowledged what a screen could mean," Acconci writes at one point in the film, and *My Word* is a meditation on the screen as it captures what the camera records and becomes the ground on which the various personae of the artist, viewer, performer, and women interact and through which the artist explores language and silence.

The references to Acconci's art-making and to his female friends make the film, on one level, a commentary on his life from 1973 to 1974. However, on another level, he is seriously speculating on the idea of art offered up as the basis for a discourse on one's own life. Our perception of the film changes as the points of view shift between the artist staring at us, and the camera observing him. We perceive *My Word* as being on the border between a real and imaginary, a conscious and an unconscious, reflection of the artist's self and his world.

John G. Hanhardt
Curator, Film and Video

Frames from *My Word*, 1973–74. Photograph by Babette Mangolte.

1. By the end of 1973, Super-8 film was a part of my past. The 1970 pieces had almost all been on film: still camera, one take, three-minute film; my image as a target in front of the camera. If, now, I was going to return to film, three or four years later, the method would have to be different: moving camera ("every trick in the book"), change of scene, feature-length film; my person as viewpoint rather than target.
2. *My Word* started from the assumption that, at this particular time (1973), Super-8 is — by convention — a silent

medium: I would make a film, then, about being silent, about not talking.

3. Not talking would have its reasons, not talking could make a plot: I won't talk about it (whatever it is) because I don't want you (whoever you are) to know.

4. Super-8 film had "made my image": on the one hand, the 1970 pieces recorded my image as that image adapted to, or changed by, my activity; on the other hand, the 1970 pieces were the first pieces attended to by the media. If now, in 1973, I was going to use Super-8 film again, I had to parody the image, the trademark, that I had let film form for myself.

5. In the back of my mind: first-person films like the Robert Montgomery version of Raymond Chandler's *The Lady in the Lake*, or Claude Chabrol's *The Third Lover*.

6. "I" blowing itself up, becoming bigger than it should be, becoming "too big for its britches" (just as Super-8 film is being blown up here, becoming a feature-length movie, becoming bigger than it should be, becoming too big for its medium).

7. Super-8 film as home movies: the film takes place in one space (my own home, my own mind) — the film starts with corner and wall (banging my head against the wall, driving myself into a corner), then goes to windows (but I can only walk past them, I can't look out), then to deep interior space (I can walk around in circles), then out the window (but I can only look), then outside (but it's only the roof of my own house), then back inside (I can only go home again).

8. If the film has no sound, if I can't talk about "it" aloud, then I can always write it down: words would be written on the screen, as if on a blackboard. Not speaking, "person" loses breath, loses the "spirit" of person: the person becomes de-personalized, becomes a schematic of person, as if a person were looking down at his/her self from out of the body (as if a person were looking at his/her self on screen).

9. The words are written at the bottom of the screen, as if they're subtitles to a scene that isn't there, subtitles to a conversation in another language that isn't there (it's all in my mind anyway, it's only words).

10. In 1973, the last two years of work had been live: the making of a meeting-place between artist and viewer — the making of an intimate space. By 1973, this psychological space seemed to be an escapist space: pointing out the faults in "us" was an excuse to avoid seeing the flaws in an external system, a social/cultural/political system. (*My Word* turned out to be the last piece that "showed myself.")

11. The film keeps ending, keeps being about to end (I can't end the film because then I would be ending the relationships — I can't end the relationships because then I would be ending myself). So the film is either a last gasp of "I," a desperate attempt to retain what's seen as "identity"; or it's a view, from a detached non-I position, of "me" as a dead end, of the absurdity of personalness.

Vito Acconci

Biography

Vito Acconci, born in the Bronx, New York, in 1940, lives and works in Brooklyn. He was represented at the Whitney Museum of American Art in the 1977 Biennial Exhibition with his videotape *Undertone*; by his three-part videotape *The Red Tapes* in the New American Filmmakers Series in 1978; and in nine group exhibitions. His sculptural installation *False Center for L.A. (or: the New York Address)* (1978–79) is currently on view in the Whitney Museum's exhibition "Minimalism to Expressionism: Painting and Sculpture Since 1965 from the Permanent Collection," through December 4, 1983.

Selected One-Artist Exhibitions

And/Or, Seattle, 1975; The Kitchen Center for Video and Music, New York, 1976; Anthology Film Archives, New York, 1977; Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, 1978; Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, 1980; Institute of Contemporary Art, Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, 1982.

Selected Group Exhibitions

The Museum of Modern Art, New York, "Information," 1970; Kassel, West Germany, Documenta 5, 1972; Institute of Contemporary Art, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, "Video Art," 1975; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, 1977 and 1981 Biennial Exhibitions; Kassel, West Germany, Documenta 7, 1982.

Selected Bibliography

Kirshner, Judith Russi. *Vito Acconci. A Retrospective: 1969–1980. An Exhibition Organized by the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, March 21–May 18, 1980* (exhibition catalogue). Chicago: Museum of Contemporary Art, 1980 (with citation of earlier literature).

Filmography

All films are Super-8, silent, except where otherwise noted.

Three Attention Studies, 1969. Color; 9 minutes.
Three Frame Studies (Circle, Jump, Push), 1969. Color and black and white; 9 minutes.
Applications, 1970. Color; 8 minutes.
Fill, 1970. Color; 3 minutes.
Open-Close, 1970. Color; 6 minutes.
Openings, 1970. Color; 14 minutes.
Push, 1970. Color; 3 minutes.
Rubbings, 1970. Color; 8 minutes.
See-Through, 1970. Color; 5 minutes.
Three Adaptation Studies, 1970. Color and black and white, 16mm; 16 minutes.
Three Relationship Studies, 1970. Color; 15 minutes.
Two Cover Studies, 1970. Color; 9 minutes.
Two Takes, 1970. Color; 8 minutes.
Conversions, 1971. Black and white; 72 minutes.
Pick-Ups, 1971. Color; 15 minutes.
Watch, 1971. Black and white; 9 minutes.
Waterways (Burst: Storage), 1971. Color; 6 minutes.
Zone, 1971. Color; 15 minutes.
Face to Face, 1972. Color; 15 minutes.
Hand to Hand, 1972. Color; 12 minutes.
My Word, 1973–74. Color and black and white; 120 minutes.

Vito Acconci is represented by Castelli-Sonnabend Tapes and Films, Inc., New York.

Gary Hill

Primarily Speaking, 1981–83. Video installation
On view continuously 12:00–6:00, Tuesdays until 8:00

Credits:
Special thanks for props and objects to Donna Cisan, Brenda Cullom, Richard Gummere, Cindy Hollis, Bruce Lubman, Peggy Lubman, George Quasha, Susan Quasha. Production assistance: Richard Gummere, Greg Hill. Technical assistance: Dave Jones, Bob Pearl, Woody Vasulka.
Primarily Speaking was made possible with public funds from the New York State Council on the Arts, a Rockefeller Video Artist Fellowship, the Television Laboratory at WNET/Thirteen, and Installation Inc.

The television set is traditionally defined by the format of broadcast television as a static receiver of programs. We position ourselves as viewers before the television screen to observe sequences of sounds and images joined together to create a linear unit of meaning with a beginning, middle, and end. Thus the television set is expected to remain in a single position, vis-à-vis the viewer. Moreover, the standardized purposes of the broadcasting industry inhibit the exploration of television's unique expressive potential.

In the hands of the artist, video technology becomes a flexible image-making tool with the capacity to record, transform, and generate imagery, and to question how we perceive its images. The history of the single-channel artist's videotape, created for the single monitor, encompasses an extraordinary range of work that explores abstract and representational images within narrative and non-narrative forms and points of view. In addition, artists have made the placement of video monitors in the exhibition space another creative dimension of the medium. The relationship of multiple channels of video images to the siting of monitors becomes a central aesthetic strategy in the video installation. Here the spectator is no longer a passive viewer but is actively engaged in a mobile interaction with the medium.

Fundamental to Gary Hill's video installation *Primarily Speaking* (1981–83) is language—specifically, words and phrases presented aurally—which are integrated with solid fields of color and images of objects and scenes on videotape. The two channels of videotape and sound are displayed in two wooden structures, each housing four monitors placed in a row at eye level, facing each other in such a manner that they form a corridor. Thus the changes in sequences of the videotapes and soundtracks between both structures forms a choreography of images and sounds in time and space. The temporal dimension unfolds during the twenty-minute playing cycle of the videotapes and audiotapes, while the spatial dimension is shaped by the

Gallery Talk, Thursday, November 10, at 2:00
Gary Hill will be present
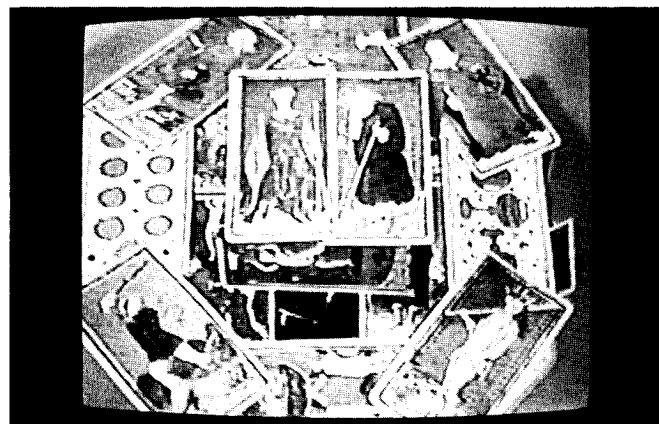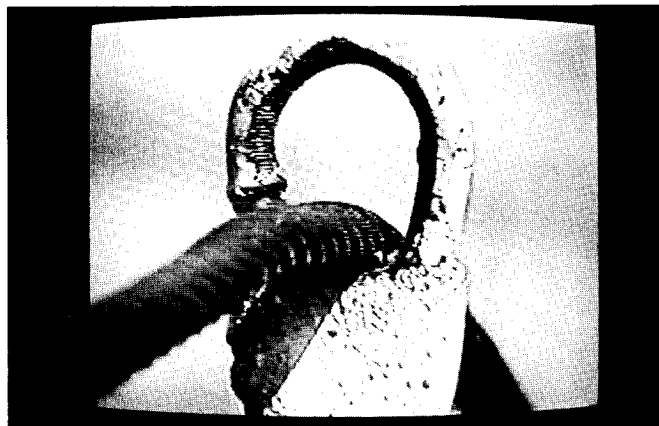
Primarily Speaking, 1981–83.

movement of sounds and images between the two banks of monitors as the spectators perceive different combinations of video and sound through their shifting points of view.

The complexity of *Primarily Speaking* resides in its aggressive use of multiple layers of image and sound text modulated not in a linear line of reasoning but as a three-dimensional experience. The work becomes a seen, heard, and spoken meditation on forms of meaning. This refashioning of sights and sounds results from the capacity of video to distribute and control discrete and highly defined moving images in such a way that they can be orchestrated into a complex audio/visual cycle. *Primarily Speaking* weaves different expressions and descriptions, language and images, into a seamless intertextual construct which is both aesthetically engaging and intellectually demanding.

John G. Hanhardt
Curator, Film and Video

The title *Primarily Speaking* should pretty much be taken at face value. This is to say that prying into things merely for orientation should be avoided at all costs. Nobody wants to be riding a bicycle, especially at top speed, only to discover that the wheels are spokeless and wonder how they got as far as they did in the first place. The work, consisting of eleven parts segmented by anthemic songs, is founded in a monologue construed from idiomatic phrase units — language at large residing in the public domain. The voice ping-pongs up and down a corridor stacking the idioms, placing linguistic objects in their appropriate places, sometimes answering and sometimes questioning. The given is always reciprocated. An image of a seesaw comes to mind. (I remember playing seesaw and in my neighborhood the object of the game was to leave your partner high and dry by jumping off at the instant your end touched ground, leaving said partner to come crashing down with his/her own weight — in effect sawing off the seeing.)

The text provides the attention span offered as a crossing. Images are signposts syllabicated by the tongue, pushed out and left by the wayside — discards, there is always room for more. The snake sheds its skin. This isn't something new, nor is it a recapitulation, it's a different take on talking pictures — talking pictures breaking the story. (Words and images move together like old roads and their placements sometimes do, and every once in a while they share a stretch of time where the scenario doesn't permit the necessary excavations.)

Really, it all boils down to this: I walked in on a tell a vision set and all the dialogue was provided and there were countless props, props upon props, more than I could ever use in a lifetime and it was all in living color colors colored — everything just as you or I might expect. Eye level and surprised, I found myself staring at arm's length cross-eyed into the palm of a hand. It was a glimpse of actual size which bespeaks my preoccupation with the notion of face value.

Gary Hill

Biography

Gary Hill, born in Santa Monica, California, in 1951, has been living and working in upstate New York since he moved east in 1969. A sculptor, Hill began working in video in the 1970s, and was artist-in-residence at such video centers in New York State as Synapse (Syracuse), Portable Channel (Rochester), and the Experimental TV Center (Owego). He has received several grants from the New York State Council on the Arts, Creative Artists Public Service, Inc., and the National Endowment for the Arts — among the latter, a United States/Japan Exchange Fellowship. Hill was artist-in-residence at WNET/Thirteen's TV Lab and was a Video Artist Fellow of the Rockefeller Foundation. He has taught at the Center for Media Study, Buffalo, and now teaches at Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, New York.

Selected One-Artist Exhibitions

South Houston Gallery, New York, 1974; Anthology Film Archives, New York, 1976; Everson Museum of Art, Syracuse, New York, 1979; The Kitchen Center for Video, Music and Dance, New York, 1979; The Museum of Modern Art, New York, "Video Viewpoints," 1980; And/Or, Seattle, 1981; The Kitchen Center for Video, Music and Dance, New York, 1981; Galerie H at ORF, Steirischer Herbst, Graz, Austria, 1982; Long Beach Museum of Art, Long Beach, California, 1982.

Selected Group Exhibitions

Everson Museum of Art, Syracuse, New York, "New Work in Abstract Video Imagery," 1977, "Video Revue," 1979; The Museum of Modern Art, New York, "Projects: Video XXVIII," 1979; Video 80/San Francisco Video Festival, 1980; The Museum of Modern Art, New York, "Projects: Video XXXV," 1981; Sydney, Australia, Biennale, 1982; Hudson River Museum, Yonkers, New York, "Electronic Visions," 1983; University Art Museum, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, "Video as Attitude," 1983; Palais des Beaux-Arts, Brussels, "Art Video Retrospectives et Perspectives," 1983; Walter Phillips Gallery, Banff, Alberta, Canada, "The Second Link: Viewpoints on Video in the Eighties" (traveling exhibition), 1983; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, 1983 Biennial Exhibition.

Selected Bibliography

Furlong, Lucinda. "A Manner of Speaking: An Interview with Gary Hill," *Afterimage*, 10 (March 1983), pp. 9-16.
Hill, Gary. *Around & About*. Buffalo, New York: Hallwalls Gallery, 1981.
Larson, Kay. "Art: Through a Screen Dimly," *New York*, September 12, 1983, pp. 86-87.
Quasha, George. "Notes on the Feedback Horizon," in *Glass Onion* (program notes). Barrytown, New York: Station Hill Press, 1980.

Selected Videography

The Fall, 1973. Black and white, sound; 11 minutes.
Rock City Road, 1974-75. Color, silent; 12 minutes.
Earth Pulse, 1975. Color, sound; 6 minutes.
Improvisation with Bluestone, 1976. Color, sound; 7 minutes.
Ring Modulation, 1978. Color, sound; 3 minutes.
Sums and Differences, 1978. Black and white, sound; 8 minutes.
Windows, 1978. Color, silent; 8 minutes.
Soundings, 1979. Color, sound; 17 minutes.
Around & About, 1980. Color, sound; 5 minutes.
Processual Video, 1980. Black and white, sound; 11½ minutes.
Videograms, 1980-81. Black and white, sound; 13 minutes.
Primarily Speaking, 1981-83. Color, stereo sound; 19 minutes.
Happenstance (part I of many parts), 1982-83. Black and white, stereo sound; 6 minutes.

Gary Hill's videotapes are distributed by Electronic Arts Intermix, New York.

Alvin Lucier

December 21–January 24, 1984

Seesaw, 1983. Sound installation
On view continuously 12:00–6:00, Tuesdays until 8:00

Gallery Talk, Thursday, December 22, at 2:00
Alvin Lucier will be present

Credits:
Room treatment by Douglas Simon and Studio Consultants, Inc.
Digital oscillators designed by Bob Bielecki.

Alvin Lucier, a leading contemporary composer, has also done innovative work in the creation of new forms of sound environments within gallery spaces. In his latest sound installation, *Seesaw* (1983), the exhibition space becomes an acoustic instrument in which audio oscillators, placed in specific locations, generate through speakers a constellation of reverberating sound patterns. The audience experiences the sound waves, moving invisibly about the gallery space, as a physical presence.

The sound-installation projects of Alvin Lucier and other contemporary artists—among them, Max Neuhaus, Liz Phillips, and Bill Fontana—employ new sound-generating technologies to explore the properties of sound in relationship to the spatial characteristics and wall surfaces with which sound interacts. The structures of sound—processed, prerecorded, and live—passing through space create subtle spatial environments. Spectators in the gallery interact with the sound, experiencing an alteration of spatial perception, as space is filled with the temporal articulation of sound.

Sound artists, in their use of advanced technologies and their involvement with the site, share many of the concerns of today's video- and film-installation artists. Sound-installation projects are allied to the theoretical and aesthetic issues that film- and video-installation works have brought to the traditional practice of sculpture. Both forms are rooted in a technology that introduces a new physical and phenomenological character to the three-dimensional properties of sculpture: in video and film installations it is the added dimension of the temporal, moving image as deployed within the gallery space; in sound installations it is the temporal and invisible presence of sound waves linking different physical points in space.

Alvin Lucier's *Seesaw* and other contemporary sound installations seek to break through the boundaries that separate art and technology. Sound becomes the medium for an active inquiry into our basic definition of, and experience with, the art object.

> John G. Hanhardt
> *Curator, Film and Video*

Artist's Statement

For several years I have been exploring ways of moving sounds in space. In performance works such as *Vespers* (1968) and *Reflections of Sounds from the Wall* (1982), sound waves bounce off reflective surfaces to various points in a room. In *Directions of Sounds from the Bridge* (1979) and *The Shapes of the Sounds from the Board* (1980), they flow out of musical instruments in different directions for different pitches. More recently, in *Crossings* (1982), orchestral players cause ripples of sound to whirl around the concert hall. In none of these works is the movement produced by electronic switching or panning; instead, the natural characteristics of sound waves are allowed to reveal themselves.

Still and Moving Lines of Silence in Families of Hyperbolas (1974-83), a large-scale work for singers, players, dancers, and audio oscillators, explores interference phenomena between two or more sound waves. When closely tuned musical tones are sounded, audible beats—bumps of loud sound produced as the sound waves coincide—occur at speeds determined by the difference between the pitches of the tones. The larger the difference, the faster the beating. At unison, no beating occurs. Furthermore, if

Music on a Long Thin Wire, 1977. Diplomat Hotel, New York. Photograph by Babette Mangolte.

Alvin Lucier. Photograph by Gene Bagnato.

Biography

Born in Nashua, New Hampshire, in 1931, Alvin Lucier studied music at Yale University (B.A., 1954) and Brandeis University (M.F.A., 1960) and spent two years in Rome on a Fulbright scholarship. He taught at Brandeis University from 1962 to 1969 and has been Chairman of the Music Department at Wesleyan University, Middletown, Connecticut, since 1979. Lucier co-founded the Sonic Arts Union with Robert Ashley, David Behrman, and Gordon Mumma in 1966 and was Music Director of the Viola Farber Dance Company from 1972 to 1977. He was awarded Composer's Fellowships by the National Endowment for the Arts in 1977 and 1981. A pioneer in composition and performance, Lucier has begun a series of solar-powered sound installations in collaboration with electronic designer John Fullemann. His recent orchestral work, *Crossings*, was performed at the opening concert of the 1982 New Music America festival in Chicago by members of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

Selected Premieres

Action Music for Piano, 1962, Galleria La Salita, Rome, Frederic Rzewski, piano; *Music for Solo Performer*, 1965, Rose Art Museum, Brandeis University, Waltham, Massachusetts, John Cage, electronic controls; *Vespers*, 1968, ONCE Festival, Ann Arbor, Michigan, members of the ONCE Group; *I Am Sitting in a Room*, 1970, The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, image by Mary Lucier; *The Queen of the South*, 1972, Spencer Memorial Church, Brooklyn; *Still and Moving Lines of Silence in Families of Hyperbolas*, 1973-74, Festival d'Automne à Paris, Musée Galleria, Paris; *Directions of Sounds from the Bridge*, 1979, Experimental Intermedia Foundation, New York; *Crossings*, 1982, New Music America, Chicago, members of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

Alvin Lucier is represented by Performing Artservices, New York.

Recordings

North American Time Capsule, 1967. CBS Odyssey Records
Vespers, 1968. Mainstream
I Am Sitting in a Room, 1970. SOURCE Record #3
The Duke of Yourk, 1971, 1976. Cramps Records (Italy)
Bird and Person Dyning, 1975, 1976. Cramps Records (Italy)
Music on a Long Thin Wire, 1980. Lovely Music
I Am Sitting in a Room, 1981. Lovely Music
Music for Solo Performer, 1983. Lovely Music
Still and Moving Lines of Silence in Families of Hyperbolas, to be released in 1984. Lovely Music

Selected Bibliography

Ballantine, Christopher. "Towards an Aesthetic of Experimental Music." *The Musical Quarterly*, 63 (April 1977), pp. 224-46.

DeLio, Thomas. "Avant-Garde Issues in Seventies Music." *Artforum*, 18 (September 1979), pp. 61-67.

———. "The Shape of Sound: *Music for Pure Waves, Bass Drums and Acoustic Pendulums* by Alvin Lucier." *Percussive Notes* (research edition), 21 (September 1983), pp. 15-22.

Ewen, David, ed. *American Composers: A Biographical Dictionary*. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1982.

Lucier, Alvin. "Interview with Douglas Simon." In *Individuals: Post-Movement Art in America*, edited with an introduction by Alan Sondheim. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1977, pp. 157-77.

Lucier, Alvin, and Douglas Simon. *Chambers: Scores and Interviews on Music and Environment*. Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1980.

Marshall, Stuart. "Alvin Lucier's Music of Signs in Space." *Studio International*, 192 (November–December 1976), pp. 284-90.

each tone originates from a separate source, the beats spin in elliptical patterns through space, from the higher source to the lower one.

The nature of pure sound waves is such that their physical presence is perceptible. In the same way that nodes and antinodes occur along a vibrating string, crests and troughs of loud and soft sound position themselves at regular intervals in any relatively echo-free room through which pure waves flow. The distance between troughs is determined by the size of the wavelength of the sound. Low sounds have long wavelengths, up to several feet; high sounds, as small as a few inches. When two closely positioned waves occupy the same space, their crests and troughs are in constant movement, in an attempt to stabilize themselves.

In *Seesaw*, two pure-wave oscillators are routed through amplifiers to loudspeakers positioned far apart in the room. One is precisely tuned; the other is programmed to sweep slowly and continuously to equidistant points slightly above and below that fixed pitch. As it dips below, walls of sound travel across the room toward the lower-sounding loudspeaker. As it approaches the fixed pitch from either side, the speed of the movement gradually slows down until, at unison, it stops.

Seesaw is the first in a projected series of installed works, tentatively entitled *The Motions of Certain Closely Tuned Waves*, in which various patterns of movement of sounds in space will be created.

<div align="right">Alvin Lucier</div>

Dara Birnbaum

February 4–March 4, 1984

PM Magazine, 1982. Video installation
On view continuously 12:00–6:00, Tuesdays until 8:00

Gallery Talk, Thursday, February 9, at 2:00
Dara Birnbaum will be present

Credits:
Video post-production: CMX editors—Mark Bement, Steven Robinson, California Institute of the Arts; Matt Danowski, Electronic Arts Intermix; Joseph Leonardi, the Annex, Long Beach Museum of Art. Music collaboration: Dara Birnbaum, Simeon Soffer. Post-production sound editor/mixer: Simeon Soffer. Musical assistance: vocals—Shauna D'Larson; drums/rhythm—James Dougherty, Jon Norton (*L.A. Woman*); guitar—David Dowse (*L.A. Woman*), Mark Norris; synthesizer—Simeon Soffer. Design consultation and execution: Dan Hill, John Salmen.

The artist wishes to thank Nancy Hoyt, who made the original installation of *PM Magazine* possible at The Hudson River Museum, Yonkers, New York, and Coosje Van Bruggen, who made the installation possible at "Documenta 7," Kassel, West Germany.

The art of Dara Birnbaum has established an aesthetic discourse predicated on both a formal and ideological investigation of commercial broadcast television. In her videotapes she refashions television's popular images through a variety of editing and image-processing strategies that expose the hidden meanings within narrative and commercial programs.

In a series of short videotapes Birnbaum began to examine the dichotomies within the broadcast medium. She deconstructed pop culture images and their content through the interplay of image and sound, a process that revealed latent agendas within the narrative. In *Technology/Transformation: Wonder Woman* (1978), selected actions of Wonder Woman, appropriated from the television show, are repeated on the screen so that they take on a rhetorical form, a ritualized gesture performed against a popular record, "Wonder Woman in Discoland." Here television's caricature of the heroic female is contradicted by the lines of the song, which describe her as a sexual object. This strategy lays bare what is in fact encoded in the television presentation.

PM Magazine (1982), Birnbaum's latest video installation, focuses on the self-promotional and commercial aspects of television. The videotapes, with music and spoken words, show computer and word-processing systems set up in an imaginary electronic office of the future in which the work space is a hyper-efficient field of exciting and slick images. This commercial message is combined on the monitors with the introduction to *P.M. Magazine*, the news and entertainment program that shows families and children as happy consumers. The commercial message in both programs is opened up as the artist probes hidden attitudes toward

PM Magazine, 1982. Video installation at The Hudson River Museum, Yonkers, New York. Photograph by Dara Birnbaum.

women and the sexual roles of the office worker and consumer by replaying them on monitors that are placed within three enlarged photographic panels.

The three panels, arranged on the wall of the Film and Video Gallery, offer a static image which, together with the moving video image, constitute a layered text of meanings. Each panel presents a photographic blow-up of a moment from the videotapes playing on the monitors. The pulsating action of the commercial and program introduction shifts the point of view as the illusory two-dimensional space of the photographs is contrasted with that of the videotape. The kaleidoscopic content and juxtaposition of sound and words to image, both frozen and moving, not only create a complex visual surface, but expose the dark side of broadcast television. *PM Magazine* thus engages the issues of power and sexuality through a critical joining of television's ideology of representation in narrative and advertising.

John G. Hanhardt
Curator, Film and Video

PM Magazine

PM Magazine represents the culmination of a series of works, dating from 1978 to 1982, which deal directly with television imagery and ideology. Made from TV fragments and the reconstructed conventions of television, the work can be seen as new "ready-mades" for the late twentieth century. Images are cut from their original narrative and

interwoven with layers of musical text in order to plunge the viewer into the experience of TV, rather than simply the watching of it. TV conventions are used, exploited, and turned on themselves to reveal the underside of a seemingly rational technology. Through formal devices such as repetition, "matte" effects—new framing for the original television material—and altered syntax, television is manipulated before it manipulates us: visual rap, scratch, and breaking tracks for the 1980s. Twentieth-century speed is suspended for the viewer's examination and interpretation.

Generally in the 1960s and early 1970s, artists' video was defined as the extended vocabulary of the traditional arts (painting, sculpture, and performance). This usually meant a necessary denial of the origin and nature of video itself, television. It is my intention to give the medium back its institutional and historical base so that new forms of artistic expression can be developed. The installation *PM Magazine* derives its material from the introduction to a nightly national broadcast of the same name as well as a televised commercial for the Wang Corporation. From within suspended renderings—enlarged freeze-frames from each of the sources—the newly indelible image of a girl at a home computer exchanges glances with an innocent girl eating ice cream. Through the use of highly edited and computerized visuals and sound, a split second in each of the stereotypical characters' existence is captured and played with. From the tableaux (both sign and stage-prop) emanates a continuous flow of *PM Magazine*'s postwar imagery signifying the American Dream—an ice skater, baton twirler, cheerleader, and the constant repetition of the youth licking ice cream. The viewer is caught in the experience of TV's stereotyped gestures of power and submission, of self-preservation and concealment, of male and female ego. Gesture is seen not as an opening to communication, rather as a form of constraint.

"Video is dead; that is, in its defined role as video art and its relation to the defined art gallery system. But video is alive in its indefinable relation to the industry and rate of conversion which exchanges the currency of TV for the currency of art." (Dara Birnbaum, *ZG*, 3 (London, 1981)

Dara Birnbaum

Biography
Born in New York, Dara Birnbaum came to video in 1978 with degrees in both architecture (Carnegie Institute of Technology, 1969) and painting (San Francisco Art Institute, 1973). Her video works have achieved international recognition and have been shown at The Museum of Modern Art, New York, the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, Kunsthaus, Zurich, the Moderna Museet, Stockholm, and elsewhere. Her work has taken her to such varied venues as the markets and streets of Bologna, Grand Central Station, film festivals, rock clubs, and broadcast and cable TV. Birnbaum received a Creative Artists Public Service grant in 1981. A grant from the New York State Council on the Arts in 1983 enabled her to create *Damnation of Faust: Evocation*, a single-channel videotape showing the life of a New York City playground and bringing the conventions of nineteenth-century Japanese painting to state-of-the-art video technology. Birnbaum has taught at numerous institutions, including the California Institute of the Arts, Valencia, and the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, Halifax. Currently she teaches at the School of Visual Arts, New York. A book on her work, *Dara Birnbaum: Rough Edits: Popular Image Video*, is due for publication in 1984 by The Press of the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design.

Selected One-Artist Exhibitions
The Kitchen Center for Video, Music and Dance, New York, 1978; The Museum of Modern Art, New York, "Video Viewpoints," 1981; Pacific Film Archives, Berkeley, California, 1981; The Hudson River Museum, Yonkers, New York, "Art and Technology: Approaches to Video," 1982; Institute of Contemporary Arts, London, 1982; Museum van Hedendaagse Kunsten, Ghent, Belgium, 1982; RTBF, Liège, Belgium, "Video? vous avez dit Video?" 1982; Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, "'60'80 Attitudes/ Concepts/Images," 1982; Musée d'Art Contemporain, Montreal, 1983; Pittsburgh Film-Makers, Pennsylvania, "Video in Person," 1983.

Selected Group Exhibitions
Kunsthaus, Zurich, "New York Video," 1980; San Francisco International Video Festival (and traveling exhibition), 1981; The Art Institute of Chicago, "74th American Exhibition," 1982; Kassel, West Germany, "Documenta 7," 1982; IIe Festival International du Nouveau Cinéma, Montreal, 1982; USA Cable Network, "Nightflight," 1982; American Film Institute, Los Angeles and Washington, D.C., "National Video Festival," 1983; Antenne 2 (French television), "Juste une Image," 1983; The Museum of Modern Art, New York, "Video: A History," 1983; San Sebastian Film Festival, San Sebastian, Spain, 1983.

Selected Videography
(A)Drift of Politics (Laverne & Shirley), 1978. Color, sound; 3-minute loop; installation.
Technology/Transformation: Wonder Woman, 1978. Color, stereo sound; 7 minutes.
Kiss the Girls: Make Them Cry, 1979. Color, stereo sound; 7 minutes.
Local TV News Analysis, 1980. With Dan Graham. Color, stereo sound; 60 minutes.
Pop-Pop Video: General Hospital/Olympic Women Speed Skating, 1980. Color, stereo sound; 6 minutes.
Pop-Pop Video: Kojak/Wang, 1980. Color, stereo sound; 4 minutes.
Remy/Grand Central: Trains and Boats and Planes, 1980. Commissioned by Remy Martin for Grand Central Station, New York. Color, stereo sound; 4 minutes.
New Music Shorts, 1981. Color, stereo sound; 5 minutes.
Fire!, 1982. Commissioned by VideoGram International Ltd. Color, stereo sound; 3 minutes.
PM Magazine/Acid Rock, 1982. Color, stereo sound; 4 minutes.
Damnation of Faust: Evocation, 1983. Color, stereo sound; 10 minutes.
Dara Birnbaum's videotapes are distributed by Electronic Arts Intermix and The Kitchen Center for Video, Music, Dance, Performance and Film, New York; Art Metropole, Toronto; and Video Data Bank, Chicago.

Selected Bibliography

Birnbaum, Dara. "Populism Report from the Field: Up Against the Wall," *Art Com*, no. 20 (1983), pp. 25-26.
———. "Video/Video-Television: Notions On and Offerings To." In *'60'80 Attitudes/Concepts/Images* (exhibition catalogue supplement). Amsterdam: Stedelijk Museum, 1982, pp. 13, 34-37.
Brooks, Rosetta. "TV Transformations: An Examination of the Videotapes of New York Artist Dara Birnbaum," *ZG*, 1 (London, 1981), unpaginated.
Buchloh, Benjamin H. D. "Allegorical Procedures: Appropriation and Montage in Contemporary Art," *Artforum*, 21 (September 1982), pp. 43-56.
Coopman, Johan. "Dara Birnbaum," *Andere Sinema*, December 1982, pp. 12-14.
Hoberman, J. "Three Women," *The Village Voice*, May 5, 1980, p. 42.
Owens, Craig. "Phantasmagoria of the Media," *Art in America*, 70 (May 1982), pp. 98-100.

Margia Kramer

March 13–April 8, 1984

Progress (Memory), 1983–84. Video installation
On view continuously 12:00–6:00, Tuesdays until 8:00

Gallery Talk, Thursday, March 15, at 2:00
Margia Kramer will be present

Credits:
The first installation of *Progress (Memory)* took place at the Visual Studies Workshop in November-December 1983. Very special thanks to the Workshop, Daniel Shapiro, Jeremy Shapiro, Naomi Hupert, Tom Bradley, Nicholas Frey Bennett, and Gary Goldberg. For the videotape *Progress and Access*, thanks to Vincent Mosco, Herbert Schiller, Stanley Aronowitz, Joan Greenbaum, Loren Shumway, Cheshire Catalyst, Dragon Lady, Mike McCullough and Jon Rynn, the Institute for Economic Analysis and the Alternate Media Center of New York University, the Bread and Puppet Theater, and John Berger. For production and postproduction assistance, thanks to Maria Marewski, Ellen Kuras, Bonnie Burt, Tish Rosen, Hans Kulleseid, Sylvia Scholar, Susanna Aiken, Robin Schanzenbach, Mary Frey, Bill Marpet, DeeDee Halleck, Temple University, and the University of Hartford.
    Progress (Memory) has been funded in part with grants from the Visual Studies Workshop and the Committee for the Visual Arts.

Margia Kramer's video installation *Progress (Memory)* (1983–84) takes as its subject the production and distribution of information through new technologies. This interactive project invites the viewer to engage in an inquiry into the complex social and ethical questions raised by the accelerating spread of technology into all areas of society. Thus the spectator pedaling the exercycle in *Progress (Memory)* sets into play a videotape which can be viewed on monitors. This videotape documents and critically in-

Progress (Memory), 1983–84. Video installation at the Visual Studies Workshop, Rochester, New York. Photograph by Ed Reed.

Progress (Memory), 1983–84. Video installation at the Visual Studies Workshop, Rochester, New York. Photograph by Mike Zirkle.

terprets the nature of computer uses and information-processing technologies and how they are being employed in the home and office. Here we learn how this revolution in technology will transform the ways we produce, gain access to, and ultimately control the distribution of information. By pedaling the exercycle, the spectator acts as a generator, an activist who produces and distributes the information to the other viewers in the gallery. This linking of the videotape's movement to physical action turns the perception of TV into a model of personal and direct participation.
    Progress (Memory), in its treatment of social issues as related to television, has as its historical context the developing history of video installation art, which has appropriated the TV set in order to transform its uses. In the first Fluxus exhibitions of the early 1960s, Nam June Paik and Volf Vostell took the TV out of its familiar surroundings and reworked its reception of broadcast images. This action served as a provocative revision of the conventional viewing and function of the TV receiver as a cultural icon and social commodity. With the introduction of the portable video camera in 1965, an increasing number of artists have been producing videotapes and installations that have changed the way we use and think about TV and video.

Today we are entering a period of enormous change, where the video artist faces new options—more flexible cameras, editing systems, distribution networks, and small-gauge production possibilities. Video culture is now expanding through home use of the TV and information processing—the introduction, for example, of interactive cable systems where the home user can respond to and select information from various cable networks. Margia Kramer, in *Progress (Memory)*, questions the uses of future technologies as she critically appropriates their systems and constructs experiences for us that initiate a critical examination of video, as well as an examination of our thinking about art and technology.

John G. Hanhardt
Curator, Film and Video

Progress (Memory)

The machine-like behaviour of people chained to electronics constitutes a degradation of their well-being and their dignity.... The political process breaks down, because people cease to be able to govern themselves; they demand to be managed.

—*Ivan Illich*

Computerization contributes to the isolating tendencies of capitalist culture. It orders the parts of society mechanically, but it has no sense of the whole. Computerization's inability to meet human needs is masked by its obvious efficiency and profitability.

People's lives will be controlled by computerized decisions to a greater extent as time goes on. For the sake of efficient management these decisions become centralized and bureaucratized. In this process of communication, information becomes inaccessible to the average person. In return, the system, which is no longer regulated by the government for the public good, resists change and increasingly monitors people.

Progress (Memory) (1983-84) is a three-ring, viewer-activated video installation. It raises some of the negative issues of computerization and offers positive experiences for viewers. With various physical and cultural materials it identifies some of the repressive trends and liberating potential of the information industry. In a direct, physical way, participants will experience their own feelings of control over their activities.

On the first rug there is a television set with a videotape of a young infant and a nearby lamp. An exercycle stands on the second rug. Viewers ride it to activate two video monitors which play a videotape, *Progress and Access*. A piano is on the third rug. When a viewer sits on the piano bench, the video monitor is activated to play a computerized Bach program. All around the space, the human images and sounds of music and children are contrasted with the binary language of computers on the VCRs.

Margia Kramer

Biography

Margia Kramer was born in Brooklyn and grew up near Coney Island. She earned a B.A. degree in studio art at Brooklyn College, where she studied with Ad Reinhardt, and an M.A. degree in art history at the Insti-

tute of Fine Arts, New York University, where she was a Woodrow Wilson Fellow. She has been an assistant professor at the University of Illinois, Chicago Circle, and Duke University, Durham, North Carolina. Kramer is a leader in new documentary and activist art; her writings have appeared in *Jumpcut*, *Wedge*, and *Women Artists News*, and she has self-published three books. She has received grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the New York State Council on the Arts, the Illinois Arts Council, and the MacDowell Colony, among others. She has traveled widely in Eastern and Western Europe and Asia. Kramer has two children and lives and works in New York and Hartford, Connecticut, where she teaches film and video at the University of Hartford.

Selected One-Artist Exhibitions

Sarah Lawrence College Art Gallery, Bronxville, New York, "New Work," 1977; Palace of Sport, Bucharest, Rumania, 1979; Artists Space, New York, "Secret I," 1980; Duke University Art Gallery, Durham, North Carolina, "Retrospective and Secret II," 1980; Franklin Furnace and Printed Matter, New York, "Secret III and Secret IV," 1980; A Space, Toronto, "Jean Seberg," 1981; Artemisia Gallery, Chicago, 1981; The Museum of Modern Art, New York, "Jean Seberg/The FBI/The Media," 1981; Visual Studies Workshop, Rochester, New York, "Video Installation 1983," 1983; Vassar College Art Gallery, Poughkeepsie, New York, "The Artist's Perception: 1948/1984," 1984.

Selected Group Exhibitions

Institute of Contemporary Arts, London, "Issues," 1980; John F. Kennedy Center, Washington, D.C., "First National Video Festival," 1981; Just Above Midtown/Downtown, New York, "Decision by Arms," 1982; "1982 CAPS Video/Multi-Media Festival" (traveling exhibition), 1982-83; Global Village, New York, "Ninth Global Village Documentary Festival," 1983.

Videography

Freedom of Information Work Tape I: Jean Seberg, 1980. Two channels, color, ¾ inch, sound; 18 minutes.
No More Witchhunts: A Street Festival, 1982. Two channels, color, ¾ inch, sound; 17 minutes.
Freedom of Information Tape 2: Progress and Access, 1983. Two channels, color, ¾ inch, sound; 36 minutes.
Margia Kramer's videotapes are distributed by the Video Data Bank, Chicago, and her books are distributed by Printed Matter, New York.

Selected Bibliography

Agosta, Diana, and Barbara Osborn. "If I Ever Stop Believing..." *Heresies: A Feminist Publication on Art & Politics: Film/Video/Media*, 4 (Issue 16), pp. 68-72.
Ashton, Dore. *American Art Since 1945*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1982, pp. 197-99.
Hills, Patricia. *Social Concern in the Eighties: A New England Perspective* (exhibition catalogue). Boston: Boston University Art Gallery, 1984, pp. 6, 21.
Kramer, Margia. "Making Art of Politics (Notes on Art as Intervention)," *Women Artists News*, 6 (May 1980), pp. 14-15.
_____. "Notes on Expression/Repression," *Wedge: An Aesthetic Inquiry*, Summer 1982, pp. 30-34.
_____, and Kimberley Safford. "Jean Seberg/The FBI/The Media," *Jumpcut*, Winter 1983, pp. 68-71.
Lippard, Lucy. *Issue: Social Strategies by Women Artists* (exhibition catalogue). London: Institute of Contemporary Arts, 1980, unpaginated.
Rice, Shelley. *Video Installation 1983* (exhibition catalogue). Rochester, New York: Visual Studies Workshop, 1983, unpaginated.

Whitney Museum of American Art
945 Madison Avenue, New York, New York 10021

Hours: Tuesday 11:00-8:00
Wednesday–Saturday 11:00-6:00
Sunday 12:00-6:00

Film and video information: (212) 570-0537

The New American Filmmakers Series

EXHIBITIONS OF INDEPENDENT FILM AND VIDEO

Paul Sharits

April 17–May 13, 1984

3rd Degree, 1982. Film installation
On view continuously 12:00–6:00, Tuesdays until 8:00

Gallery Talk, Thursday, April 19, at 2:00
Paul Sharits will be present

Credits:
Actress: Mary Ann Bruno; voice: Susan Mann; simulation of rattle-snake sound: Robert Franki; sound production assistance: Ken Rowe; visual production and general assistance: Steve Gallagher.

The medium of film is conventionally viewed within a theatrical context in which the projected film image appears on a screen, before rows of seated spectators. In this traditional arena of narrative cinema, the technology of film production and exhibition is invisible to the viewer. However, within the aesthetics of modernism, filmmakers have sought to establish a commentary on the film production process and make that process part of the film itself. Since the development of multimedia arts and Happenings of the 1960s, artists have transformed our perception of film by, for instance, placing projectors in gallery and performance spaces. They seek to treat film as a flexible medium in which the projected image is created for, and projected onto, different materials and surfaces. One of the leading figures in

this expanded form of film art is Paul Sharits, whose latest film installation, *3rd Degree* (1982), explores the material of film and the technique of multiple projection within the gallery space.

As in Paul Sharits' other film installations, *3rd Degree* employs specially modified 16mm loop projectors that permit the twenty-four-minute film to be shown continuously during gallery hours. In his earlier piece *Episodic Generation* (1979), four aligned projectors presented a continuous sequence of moving images. In *3rd Degree* Sharits positions the three projectors at different distances from the gallery wall so that each image differs in scale. He synchronizes the movement of the three films through the projectors to develop visual relationships between the projected images. Because the two larger images are successive refilmings of the first, layers of time are created, thus disrupting and expanding the temporal dimension of the original footage.

Study for *3rd Degree*, 1982. Ink, pastel on vellum with grid, 18 × 23 inches. Collection of the artist. Photograph by Geoffrey Clements.

In *3rd Degree* Paul Sharits confronts the material basis of film celluloid by "burning" the individual frames. The exploding image of overheated film is not unfamiliar to frequent film users; when a film becomes caught in the projector gate, a frame is burned by the heat of the projector's bulb and begins to bubble and melt. Sharits uses this "accident" as a means to alter the material of film: the film's image becomes a painter's canvas, with its representational surface image torn apart to expose a collage of new colors, textures, and image-making qualities. This concentration on the film image made abstract through the chemical properties of celluloid and the light of the projector removes film from its traditional setting and transforms it into a new kind of image-making.

John G. Hanhardt
Curator, Film and Video

3rd Degree

In Part I (or screen A, in the three-screen version) there is an image of a moving strip of film, showing sequences of a close-up of a match being waved somewhat aggressively in front of a young woman's apprehensive face. The sound track: occasional match striking and rattlesnake warnings and the words, "Look, I won't talk." The strip of images flows at varying speeds, sometimes blurring and occasionally slowing and coming to a stop, whereupon the image/celluloid begins bubbling and burning, then pulls away, flowing on and stopping, burning, flowing, etc. The second part (or center screen in the installation) is the first part rephotographed; again it's "stop and go"—but here we also see images of burns, which sometimes stop and burn (a sort of second-degree burning). In Part III we see the rephotographed image of Part II, which contains Part I, so it is a film of a film of a film (of a film of the original film of the victim being "interrogated" with the match); we see three sets of sprocket holes and images of burns being burned yet again.

The film is about the fragility of the film medium and human vulnerability; both the filmic and the human images resist threat/intimidation/mutilation: the victim is defiant and the filmstrip also struggles on, both "under fire." It is a somewhat violent drama but it is also an ironically comic work, and there is a formal beauty in the destructiveness of the burning film. While the film (from section to section or from screen to screen, in the installation format) develops, becomes more visually complex, successively regenerates (as the figurative images degenerate), it nevertheless implies no finality; rather, even in its three-screen "vicious circularity" form, *3rd Degree* suggests endurance, extension, and ongoingness.

Paul Sharits

Biography

Paul Sharits, a painter as well as a filmmaker, was born in Denver in 1943. He received a Bachelor of Fine Arts in painting from the University of Denver in 1964, and a Master of Fine Arts in visual design from Indiana University in 1966. One of his multiple-projection works, *Episodic Gen-*

eration (1979), was shown at the Whitney Museum in the "1981 Biennial Exhibition." He has been awarded grants from the American Film Institute (1968), the Ford Foundation (1970, 1971), the National Endowment for the Arts (1974, 1976, 1979), the Creative Artists Public Service of the New York State Council on the Arts (1975, 1978), and the New York State Council on the Arts (1976). Widely published, Sharits has also been the subject of numerous articles and essays. He has lectured around the world, and his work is included in international public and private collections. Sharits is Associate Professor of Film and Director of Undergraduate Studies at the Center for Media Study, State University of New York at Buffalo, and lives in Buffalo.

Selected One-Artist Exhibitions

Bykert Gallery, New York, 1972, 1974; Galerie Ricke, Cologne, 1974; Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, 1976; Droll/Kolbert Gallery, New York, 1977; Galerie 'A', Amsterdam, 1977; Galerie Ricke, Cologne, 1977; Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, 1977; Anthology Film Archives, New York, 1978; Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto, 1978; Wright State University Art Gallery, Dayton, Ohio, 1981.

Selected Group Exhibitions

Documenta 5, Kassel, West Germany, 1972; American Film Institute, John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, Washington, D.C., "Film As/On Art," in association with the exhibition "Art Now '74," 1974; Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, "Projected Images," 1974; Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou, "Une Histoire du Cinéma," 1976; Documenta 6, Kassel, West Germany, 1977; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, "1981 Biennial Exhibition"; Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, "'60'80: Attitudes/Concepts/Images," 1982.

Selected Filmography

All films are 16mm.
Piece Mandala/End War, 1966. Color, silent; 5 minutes.
Ray Gun Virus, 1966. Color, (sprocket) sound; 14 minutes.
N:O:T:H:I:N:G, 1968. Color, sound; 36 minutes.
T,O,U,C,H,I,N,G, 1968. Color, sound; 12 minutes.
Razor Blades (double projection), 1965-68. Color and black and white, stereo sound; 25 minutes.
S:TREAM:S:S:ECTION:S:ECTION:S:S:ECTIONED, 1968-71. Color, sound; 42 minutes.
SYNCHRONOUSOUNDTRACKS (double projection), 1973-74. Color, stereo sound; 35 minutes.
Color Sound Frames, 1974. Color, sound; 26½ minutes.
Tails, 1976. Color, silent; 4 minutes at 18 frames per second (fps), 3 minutes at 24 fps.
Episodic Generation (single-screen version), 1977-78. Color, sound; 30 minutes.
3rd Degree (single-screen version), 1982. Color, sound; 30 minutes.
Paul Sharits' films are distributed by the Film-makers' Cooperative and Castelli-Sonnabend Tapes and Films, New York, Canyon Cinema, San Francisco, and other international distributors.

Selected Bibliography

Film Culture: Paul Sharits. No. 65-66, 1978.
Sharits, Paul. "Notes on Films/1966-1968." *Film Culture*, No. 47, Summer 1969, pp. 13-16.
Sitney, P. Adams. *Visionary Film: The American Avant-Garde 1943-1978.* Second edition. New York: Oxford University Press, 1979, pp. 369, 374, 385-89.

Oscar Micheaux

May 22–June 10, 1984

Schedule
May 22-27
12:30
Body and Soul, 1924. Silent, 70 minutes
3:00; also Tuesday, May 22, at 6:00
The Exile, 1931. 60 minutes

May 29-June 3
12:30
Ten Minutes to Live, 1932. 63 minutes
3:00; also Tuesday, May 29, at 6:00
Swing: The Story of Mandy, 1936. 65 minutes

June 5-10
12:30
Lying Lips, 1939. 60 minutes; *The Underworld*, 1936. 65 minutes
3:00
God's Step Children, 1938. 65 minutes
Tuesday, June 5, at 6:00
The Underworld, 1936. 65 minutes

A trailer for the films *Birthright* (1939) and *God's Step Children* (1938) will be shown along with the feature at the Tuesday evening screenings.

Gallery Talk, Thursday, May 24, following the 12:30 screening. Pearl Bowser will be present.

OSCAR MICHEAUX'S *Production,* "GOD'S STEP CHILDREN" *With an All* COLORED CAST

Carman Newsome and Ethel Moses in *God's Step Children*, 1938.

Oscar Micheaux was one of the best known and most prolific black filmmakers of the 1920s. During the silent era, he produced more than twenty titles, which he also distributed through direct bookings in movie houses in black urban areas and in the segregated theaters of the South.

Micheaux was born on a farm in southern Illinois in 1884. He was one of thirteen children. At the age of seventeen he left home to find work and learn a trade. Five years later, after working as a shoeshine boy, laborer, and Pullman car porter, he used his savings to buy a homestead in South Dakota. In 1913 he published his first novel, *The Conquest: Story of a Negro Pioneer Homesteader.* He turned his second novel, *The Homesteader*, into a film in 1918. Micheaux financed the film in the same way he had financed the publication of the book — by selling shares in his Western Book Supply Co. to the white farmers he had written about. He raised $15,000 to produce *The Homesteader*, the first feature-length independent black production.

The Homesteader opened in 1918 in Chicago after some controversy over Micheaux's depiction of the hero's father-in-law, a minister described in the press copy as "narrow, spiteful, envious... the embodiment of vanity, deceit, and hypocrisy." Micheaux was to rework the same evil minister character in a later work, *Body and Soul* (1924). As a shrewd

businessman and promoter, he used the controversy his films generated to draw his audiences. If a local censorship board forced him to remove certain scenes, in the next town he would reinsert the material, advertising the film as "the uncut version."

Micheaux was an imposing figure and a persuasive talker, who could convince local businessmen to invest in his company and theater managers to book his films and advance monies for a new project. While on the road selling his latest novel or booking films, he scouted for new talent and interesting sites for his next project. Shingzie Howard, star of *The House Behind the Cedars* (1923), was discovered while Micheaux was selling books to her minister father in Stelton, Pennsylvania. She played bit parts in Micheaux's films and doubled as his secretary before getting the lead role in *The House Behind the Cedars*, a film developed from the novel by C. W. Chestnut.

Whether the themes of his films were based on his own writings, those of other novelists, or on newspaper stories, they focused on the black experience in America and often inspired heated debate. Micheaux sought, in his own words, "to present the truth, to lay before the race a cross section of its own life, to view the colored heart from close range...." He perceived his films as tools to expose injustice and to

counter the narrow stereotypical image of blacks in Hollywood movies. *The Brute* (1921) explored the mistreatment of black women. *The House Behind the Cedars* dealt with interracial marriage. *Within Our Gates* (1920) showed scenes of lynchings and burnings in a tale about sharecropping on a southern plantation. In *Symbol of the Unconquered* (1920), the hero takes on the Ku Klux Klan, and *The Gunsaulus Mystery* (1921), based on the Leo Frank murder case in Georgia, bore a striking resemblance to the controversial lynching scenes in *Within Our Gates.* Other films took a hard look at color bias within the race, the fate of illegitimate children, prostitution, the rackets in boxing, and the numbers games.

Micheaux's films were bold and naturalistic in style, their effort enhanced by "real" locations and dialect. But, with an eye to his audience, he wove entertainment into the plots, using nightclub sequences for comic relief (*Ten Minutes to Live*, 1932) or as transitions between scenes. Nightclubs were also "free sets" which he would sometimes invite the public to fill for his movie shoot. He would then advertise that they could come and see themselves on the screen. In *Ten Minutes to Live*, the climax of the film takes place on the dance floor of a nightclub, a diversion many moviegoers couldn't afford; for those who lived in rural communities, such scenes provided a glimpse into the nightlife of the big city.

Nightclub scenes, which required little dialogue, also satisfied the audience that craved the "all singing, all dancing" talking pictures. Micheaux here employed a practice prevalent in Hollywood films of a few years earlier: passing off a sound track with music and effects—and very little recorded speech—as a talking picture. In *Ten Minutes to Live* the villain is a deaf-mute who must write notes to talk with his girlfriend. Even the heroine has long sequences without dialogue. Recording voice and picture together was an expensive operation and low-budget productions like Micheaux's had to find ways to get away with less dialogue and more music and effects. *The Exile* (1931), Micheaux's first sound picture and the first black-produced sound feature, has long recorded sequences of dancing and music at a party in a mansion.

Micheaux cared little for cinematic conventions, his primary goal being to project the reality of the black experience. But with his low-budget operation, the films were often crude: the technical skills of the white journeymen he hired were limited, his old-fashioned equipment was immobile, and the casting of amateurs opposite professional actors sometimes destroyed a good story. He shot on a nearly one-to-one ratio, discarding little. As one of his actors said, "if you made a mistake or missed a line, he'd leave it in...saying maybe the audience would get a laugh...." Although Micheaux's audience was often angered by his subject matter and critical of the crudity of his work, he was nevertheless admired by blacks for his pioneering efforts. His films spoke directly to the black audience, whose common bond with the subjects heightened the credibility of his stories, while the visual sense of "place" or familiar terrain strengthened the myths he created.

Micheaux's career, which started with such flair, began to wane in the 1940s. He tried unsuccessfully to compete with the Hollywood genres, offering mysteries and gangster films shot in a studio. These films lack the naturalistic style of his earlier work. *The Notorious Elinor Lee* opened in Harlem in 1940; but the gold-engraved invitations and floodlights on the scene did not improve the box office receipts. And *The Betrayal* disappeared after a brief run on Broadway in 1948. Race films had lost their appeal and the last of the pioneers of early black films died in North Carolina in 1951, after a career that spanned more than thirty years.

Pearl Bowser
Guest Curator

Other Films by Oscar Micheaux

All films are black and white, sound, unless otherwise noted.
The Homesteader, 1918. Silent, 7 reels; lost.
Symbol of the Unconquered, 1920. Silent, 7 reels; lost.
Within Our Gates, 1920. Silent, 7 reels; lost.
The Brute, 1921. Silent, 7 reels; lost.
The Gunsaulus Mystery, 1921. Silent, 7 reels; lost.
The Wages of Sin, 1921. Silent, 7 reels; lost.
The Dungeon, 1922. Silent, 7 reels; lost.
The House Behind the Cedars, 1923. Silent, 7 reels; lost.
Birthright, 1924. Silent, 7 reels; lost. Sound version, 1939; lost.
Son of Satan, 1924. Silent, 7 reels; lost.
The Conjure Woman, 1925. Silent, 7 reels; lost.
The Spider's Web, 1926. Silent, 7 reels; lost.
The Girl from Chicago, 1927. Silent, 7 reels.
Thirty Years Later, 1928. Silent, 7 reels; lost.
A Daughter of the Congo, 1930. Silent, 7 reels; lost.
Harlem After Midnight, 1935. Lost.
Lem Hawkins Confession, 1935. Lost.
Temptation, 1936. Lost.
The Millionaire, 1938. Lost.
The Notorious Elinor Lee, 1940.
The Betrayal, 1948. Lost.
Marcus Garland, n.d. Lost.
The Veiled Aristocrats, n.d. Lost.

Selected Bibliography

Bogle, Donald. *Toms, Coons, Mulattoes, Mammies, & Bucks: An Interpretive History of Blacks in American Films.* New York: The Viking Press, 1973.
Cripps, Thomas. *Black Film as Genre.* Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1978.
————. *Slow Fade to Black: The Negro in American Films, 1900-1942.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1977.
Leab, Daniel J. *From Sambo to Superspade: The Black Experience in Motion Pictures.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1975.
Sampson, Henry T. *Blacks in Black and White: A Source Book on Black Films.* Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1977.

New American Video Art: A Historical Survey, 1967-1980

June 13–July 1, 1984

Gallery Talk by John G. Hanhardt
Thursday, June 21, at 1:00.

Program 1
Videotape Study No. 3, 1967–69. Jud Yalkut and Nam June Paik.
   5 minutes.
The Medium Is the Medium, 1969. WGBH, Boston. 30 minutes.
TV as a Creative Medium, 1969. Ira Schneider. 13 minutes.

Program 2
Lip Sync, 1969. Bruce Nauman. 60 minutes.

Program 3
Vertical Roll, 1972. Joan Jonas. 20 minutes.
Undertone, 1972. Vito Acconci. 30 minutes.

Program 4
Inventory, 1972. John Baldessari. 30 minutes.
Selected Works, Reel 4, 1972. William Wegman. 20 minutes.
Three Transitions, 1973. Peter Campus. 5 minutes.

Program 5
Television Delivers People, 1973. Richard Serra. 6 minutes.
Global Groove, 1973. Nam June Paik. 30 minutes.
Handling (The Austrian Tapes), 1974. Douglas Davis. 5 minutes.
Fourth of July in Saugerties, 1972. Ira Schneider and Beryl Korot.
   15 minutes.

Program 6
Scapemates, 1972. Ed Emshwiller. 29 minutes.
Vocabulary, 1973. Woody and Steina Vasulka. 5 minutes.
Underscan, 1974. Nancy Holt. 8 minutes.
Female Sensibility, 1974. Lynda Benglis. 14 minutes.

Program 7
Hark Hork, 1973. Frank Gillette. 18 minutes.
One-Eyed Bum, 1974. Andy Mann. 6 minutes.
Moving, 1974. Juan Downey. 30 minutes.

Program 8
Semiotics of the Kitchen, 1975. Martha Rosler. 7 minutes.
Children's Tapes: A Selection, 1974. Terry Fox. 30 minutes.
Boomerang, 1974. Richard Serra. 10 minutes.
Running Outburst, 1975. Charlemagne Palestine. 8 minutes.

Program 9
Video Ecotopia, 1975. Stephen Beck. 5 minutes.
Media Burn, 1975. Ant Farm. 25 minutes.
Birth of an Industry, 1977. TVTV. 18 minutes.

Program 10
I Want to Live in the Country (and Other Romances), 1976. Joan Jonas.
   30 minutes.
A Newsreel of Dreams, 1976. Stan VanDerBeek. 24 minutes.

Program 11
Four Sided Tape, 1976. Peter Campus. 3 minutes.
The Space between the Teeth, 1976. Bill Viola. 9 minutes.
The Morning after the Night of Power, 1977. Bill Viola. 10 minutes.
Vito's Reef, 1978. Howard Fried. 34 minutes.

Program 12
Laughing Alligator, 1979. Juan Downey. 29 minutes.
After Montgolfier, 1979. Davidson Gigliotti. 10 minutes.
El Corandero, 1979. Shalom Gorewitz. 6 minutes.

Program 13
Lake Placid '80, 1980. Nam June Paik. 4 minutes.
Olympic Fragments, 1980. Kit Fitzgerald and John Sanborn.
   10 minutes.
*Chott el-Djerid (A Portrait in Light and Heat)*, 1979. Bill Viola.
   28 minutes.

Program 14
Wonder Woman, 1979. Dara Birnbaum. 7 minutes.
Sunstone, 1979. Ed Emshwiller. 3 minutes.
Hearts, 1979. Barbara Buckner. 12 minutes.
Artifacts, 1980. Woody Vasulka. 22 minutes.

"New American Video Art" surveys video as an art form
from its beginnings in 1967 to 1980. These first years in the
history of video art saw a wide variety of approaches, de-
scribing and defining a new field of art-making. But behind
the diversity of these initial efforts lie three features com-
mon to video art in this period: its collaboration with the
other arts, its involvement with political and ideological
debates, and its intentional distinction from commercial
television.

By the late 1960s television had become a pervasive mass
medium viewed in virtually every home. On home televi-
sion sets, the public was offered a homogeneous selection
of programming that followed formulas for structure, run-
ning time, and content. The viewer's perception of the me-
dium was largely determined by the role television had
come to play as a commercial entertainment and informa-
tion industry whose success—and therefore profit—was
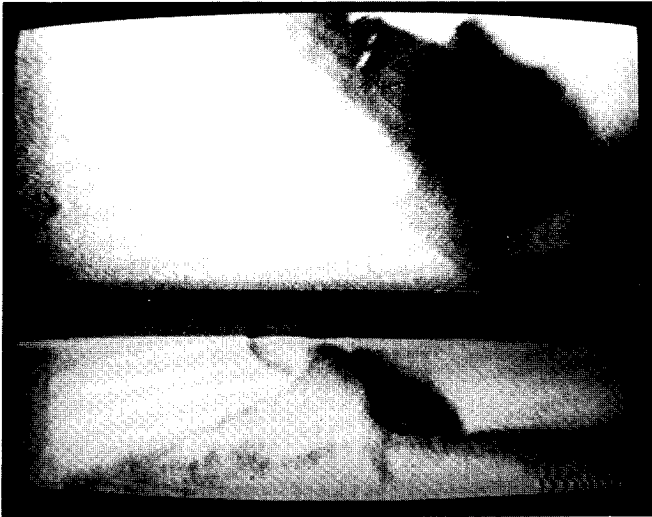
Still from *Vertical Roll*, 1972, by Joan Jonas.

gauged by the number of viewers it attracted. In an attempt to challenge the television industry's hegemony, many activists worked — often as collectives — to use video as a tool for social change. At the same time, video artists began producing tapes and installations designed to explore the medium's potential for a new aesthetic discourse. It is the work of this latter group that "New American Video Art" seeks to elucidate.

While a number of people began experimenting with television in the mid-1960s, the direct appropriation of television began with the manipulation or destruction of the television set itself in the early Fluxus art projects of the Korean-born composer and musician Nam June Paik and of the German artist Wolf Vostell. Vostell's and Paik's actions signaled a rethinking of the television set as a cultural icon and as a technology removed from the control of the individual. Their first exhibitions, held in West Germany and the United States, reflect the international dimension of video art's beginnings. They also show how television contributed to the changing dynamic of the arts in the early 1960s, a process that involved the re-examination of sacrosanct visual traditions. One manifestation of this change was the focus on popular culture at large, formalized in painting and sculpture as Pop Art.

Just as the emergence of independent filmmaking in the 1940s owed much to the development of the small-gauge 16mm camera, video became more accessible to artists and activists in 1965, when the Sony Corporation introduced its portable videotape recorder to the New York market. Nam June Paik and Les Levine were the first artists to use it. In 1965, at the Café à Go-Go, Paik showed his first videotape — of Pope Paul VI's visit to New York, shot with a portable video camera he had bought that day. In a sense Paik's action symbolizes the initial attraction of this system: it was portable, and unlike film, which had to be processed, one could immediately see what the video camera was recording.

It was commonly believed that the new video equipment would enable the visionary producer to remove the pro-

duction of video from the economic and ideological constraints of the television industry. Further, in keeping with Marshall McLuhan's theories, encapsulated in his aphorism the "medium is the message," many artists envisioned an electronic age where individual and collective producers would participate in a "global village" of information and images that superseded national and cultural boundaries.

The fourteen programs of "New American Video Art" examine, within a chronological framework, the kinds of technical, aesthetic, and philosophical issues that appear and reappear throughout the period. These include: *image processing*, whereby the artist develops new tools and a range of abstract and representational forms for transforming both prerecorded and electronically generated imagery through colorizing and other means; *personal documentaries*, which use the portable hand-held video camera to explore the dynamic of places and events; *performance-based* videotapes, which employ a range of narrative strategies to re-examine the artist's self, the psychology of manipulation, and the relationship between the viewer and the artist/performer; *perceptual studies*, which explore the epistemology of perception and the properties of the video image and image-making process; and *narratives*, *texts*, and *actions* produced to criticize or counter the pervasive presence of commercial television.

John G. Hanhardt
Curator, Film and Video

Doug Hall

October 30–December 2, 1984

Machinery for the Re-education of a Delinquent Dictator, 1983.
Video installation. On view continuously

Gallery Talk, Thursday, November 1, at 2:00
Doug Hall will be present

Credits:
Conceived and directed by Doug Hall
Photographed by Jules Backus

Machinery for the Re-education of a Delinquent Dictator was first exhibited in Rochester, New York, at the Visual Studies Workshop in November 1983. The version I am showing at the Whitney Museum has been changed sculpturally in order to take advantage of the new setting. Like most of my installation work, this piece is designed for a specific location, in this case, the Film and Video Gallery of the Whitney Museum.

Doug Hall, a San Francisco–based artist, has long been active in performance and video art. *Machinery for the Re-education of a Delinquent Dictator* (1983) is a vivid commentary on the signs of power as they are articulated through language and image. In this piece, the Film and Video Gallery, painted bright red, is transformed into an environment suggestive of authoritarian power. Four monitors are situated around a stepped glossy-black platform over which a large red flag hangs. Behind the platform is an enormous industrial fan that is activated as the spectator enters the gallery. The fact that nothing occurs until someone enters the space is central to the meaning of the work: just as power is bestowed upon a ruler by those ruled, there can be no spectacle without an observer.

The action of the fan on the flag alternates with the display of two videotapes. In one tape, the artist appears as a demagogue, with a reddened complexion and wearing dark glasses. Seen both in close-up and at a distance, this figure makes a series of pronouncements. But his speech is slowed down and processed through an electronic harmonizer so that the phrases are barely comprehensible. His words are merely a hypnotic vocal sound. Intercut with the images of the speaker are shots of the red flag moving in slow motion. In the other videotape, the flag is intercut with the following words: TYRANNY, CONDEMNED, THE FORBIDDEN, FEAR.

The movement of the air in the gallery, the artist's gestures, and the phrases amplified through the speakers convey a sense of political power—not through the explicit meaning of words or images, but through the connotations such conventions evoke in the spectator. It is style, not content, form rather than substance, that are employed as persuasive devices.
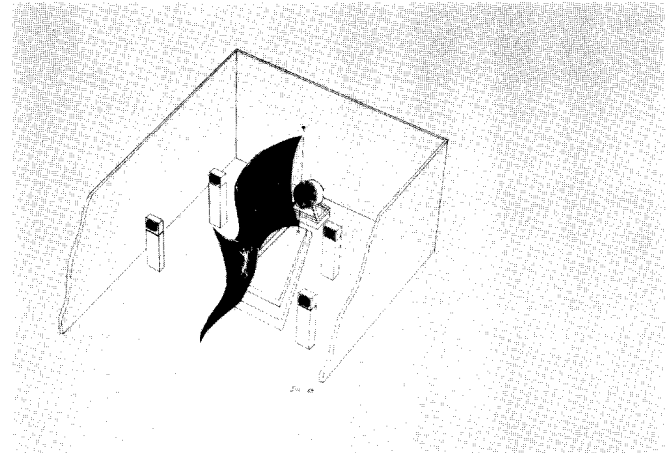
Drawing for *Machinery for the Re-education of a Delinquent Dictator*, 1983. Ink on paper, 20½ × 26 inches. Collection of the artist. Photograph by Geoffrey Clements.

In the videotapes, the speaker is seen from specific points of view: in close-up, from a low angle, and with a clenched fist smashing down on a table top. Each image projects an authoritarian presence. This theme is reiterated in the red color of the walls as well as in the monumentality of the pedestals on which the monitors rest. The installation is an intertextual investigation combining sound, videotapes with words and images, and the deployment of structures in space to reveal the seductive and frightening subtext of political demagoguery and persuasion.

Doug Hall's *Machinery for the Re-education of a Delinquent Dictator* parallels the concerns of many contemporary artists whose work critiques the mass media as it portrays domestic and international politics. The scope of this art ranges from the images of repressive violence vividly interpreted in Leon Golub's paintings, to Jenny Holzer's texts, which explore the hidden meanings within political slogans, to Barbara Kruger's photo-montages, which expose the ideological message within advertising and political rhetoric. Doug Hall's videotapes and installations share with these artists' work a treatment of mass media as a form of spectacle in society, as a discourse on the desire for power and social control.

John G. Hanhardt
Curator, Film and Video

Machinery for the Re-education of a Delinquent Dictator

In viewing this work, the spectator will see clearly that the piece plays with highly charged images which have obvious political overtones. The work is a machine, a lair, the soul of the tyrant. It is menacing and aggressive but not without a touch of the comical. The wind is theater, fabricated in the service of the spectacle and illusion. The tyrant himself, roaring from the safety of the television monitor, is an illusion, a fabricated image with no decipherable content to his harangue, his voice having been slowed and electronically distorted beyond recognition. He calls out like a distant voice in a dream, at once there and not there at all.

Of course, the huge red flag is central to this piece. It drapes itself over the black stepped platform like an immense red skirt. It is when one enters the gallery that a switch triggers the wind machine and activates the flag, which stretches out, billowing and snapping with the force of a bull whip. For a minute and a half the flag dominates everything in the room. The wind is overpowering; the roar of the machine unrelenting until the fan stops, the flag becomes still, and the voice of the tyrant once again dominates the room.

Like other work that I have done over the past several years, this piece deals with the symbols of power and how we orient ourselves to them. It is an investigation of what I call the "theory of the spectacle." This idea carries with it the following suggestions: first, it presupposes that culture has a pervasive power and that this power is the sum of the attitudes of the people manifested through their common will via the institutions that culture (the people) has created to express this will. Second, the idea of the spectacle suggests that a society must affirm and reaffirm its values through all the means available to it (through architecture, pomp and ceremony, athletics, the mass media, the visual arts, etc.). The flag is the chauvinist's talisman and is part of this theater of images. We are all forced, one way or another, to take a position in relation to these symbols since they form a significant part of the vocabulary which informs us about ourselves and the world we live in. It is, by the way, the spectator entering the domain of the tyrant which initiates the spectacle of the flag.

Doug Hall

Biography

Doug Hall was born in San Francisco in 1944 and studied anthropology at Harvard University, where he received his B.A. in 1966. He then attended the Rinehart School of Sculpture of the Maryland Institute, College of Art, Baltimore, and received his M.F.A. in 1969. Hall began working in video in 1973, creating single-channel tapes, installations, and performances. Throughout the mid-1970s he worked with T. R. Uthco, an artists' group he founded with Jody Procter and Diane Andrews Hall, as well as with Ant Farm (Chip Lord, Doug Michaels, and Curtis Schreier). Hall has received grants from the National Endowment for the Arts (1979), among others, and won the James D. Phelan Award in Video Art in 1983. He has taught at Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, and currently teaches at the San Francisco Art Institute. Hall lives and works in San Francisco.

Selected One-Artist Exhibitions

Contemporary Arts Museum, Houston, 1975; Anthology Film Archives, New York, 1975; Long Beach Museum of Art, California, 1976; University Art Museum, University of California, Berkeley, 1979; Long Beach Museum of Art, California, 1980; Anthology Film Archives, New York, 1981; Los Angeles Institute of Contemporary Art, 1981; Visual Studies Workshop, Rochester, New York, 1983; Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston, 1983; University Art Museum, University of California, Berkeley, 1984.

Selected Group Exhibitions

Kassel, West Germany, "Documenta 6," 1977; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, "Two-Channel Video," 1978; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, "Space/Time/Sound—1970's: A Decade in the Bay Area," 1979; The San Francisco Art Institute Annual, 1980; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, "1983 Biennial Exhibition"; Kunsthaus Zurich, "New American Video," 1983; Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, "Awards in the Visual Arts 2," 1983 (and traveling exhibition); Montbeliard, France, "2nd International Video Festival," 1984; The Museum of Modern Art, New York, "Video: Recent Acquisitions," 1984; San Sebastian, Spain, "San Sebastian Film and Video Festival," 1984.

Videotapes

All videotapes are ¾ inch, with sound, unless otherwise noted.

I Like My Television, 1972. ½ inch, black and white; 3 minutes.
The Real Lone Ranger, 1972. With Willie Walker. ½ inch, black and white; 4½ minutes.
I Like Supermarkets, 1974. ½ inch, black and white; 16 minutes.
The Eternal Frame, 1975. T. R. Uthco with Ant Farm. ½ inch, black and white and color; 23 minutes.
Really, I've Never Done Anything Like That Before, He Said, 1975. T. R. Uthco. Two channels, ½ inch, black and white; 15 minutes.
Game of the Week, 1977. Color; 17 minutes.
I Hardly Ever Leave This Room, 1979. With Diane Andrews Hall. Three channels, color; 15 minutes.
The Amarillo News Tapes, 1980. With Jody Procter and Chip Lord. Color; 25 minutes.
The Speech, 1982. Color; 4½ minutes.
This Is the Truth, 1982. Color; 5 minutes.
Songs of the 80s, 1983. Color; 17 minutes.
Almost Like a Dance, 1984. Color; 5 minutes.

Installations

The Eternal Frame, 1976. T. R. Uthco with Ant Farm. Single channel, black and white and color, sound; 21 minutes.
The Amarillo News Tapes, 1980, 1981. With Jody Procter and Chip Lord. Single channel, color, sound; 27 minutes.
The Tyrant's Last Dream, 1983. Single channel, color, sound; 4½ minutes.
The Victims' Regret, 1984. Four channels, color, sound; 7 minutes.

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McGee, Micki. "Artists Making the News, Artists Re-making the News." *Afterimage*, 10 (November 1982), pp. 6–9.
Video Installation 1983 (exhibition catalogue). Visual Studies Workshop, Rochester, New York. A special supplement to *Afterimage*, 11 (December 1983).
Video/TV: Humor/Comedy, A Touring Video Exhibition of Media Study/Buffalo (exhibition catalogue). Buffalo: Media Study/Buffalo, 1983.

Doug Hall's videotapes are distributed by Electronic Arts Intermix, New York, and Environmental Communications, Venice, California.

Re-Viewing Television

December 14–30, 1984

Re-Viewing Television: Interpretations of the Mass Media
Part I: Video Artists Look at TV

Schedule

TUESDAY
Program 1   1:15
Birth of an Industry, 1977. TVTV. 18 minutes.
Television Delivers People, 1973. Richard Serra. 6 minutes.
The Selling of New York, 1972. Nam June Paik. 8 minutes.
Media Burn, 1975. Ant Farm. 25 minutes.

Program 2   2:30 and 6:00
Independents Tonite, 1984. Jack Walworth with Whit Johnston. 47 minutes.
Face Fear and Fascination, 1984. Tony Cokes. 32 minutes.

Program 3   4:00
Race against Prime Time, 1984. David Shulman. 59 minutes.
About Media, 1977. Tony Ramos. 28 minutes.

WEDNESDAY-SATURDAY		SUNDAY	
Program 1	12:15	**Program 1**	1:15
Program 2	1:30	**Program 2**	2:30
Program 3	3:00	**Program 3**	4:00

This three-part exhibition features artists' videotapes that scrutinize the social and cultural institutions which comprise the mass media. Part 1 includes tapes that critically examine the establishment of the television industry and the practices that determine the form and content of its programming. Highlighting the show are recent tapes by David Shulman, Jack Walworth, and Tony Cokes. Earlier examples of how artists have dealt with the subject are also included to provide a historical background to these efforts.

Program 1 opens with *Birth of an Industry* (1977), by TVTV, an artists' collective. It is a satirical narrative which skillfully describes the early consolidation of power by the commercial networks through the control of patents. *Television Delivers People* (1973), by the noted sculptor Richard Serra, displays a rolling text of statements that explain the function of television in 'delivering' audience-consumers to advertisers. This commentary is juxtaposed with a Muzak sound track that ironically comments on television's promotion of popular entertainment and its unwillingness to engage in self-criticism. Nam June Paik's *The Selling of New York* (1972) is a witty comment on how the global dominance of the American media—based in New York City—produces an information monopoly. Ant Farm, the former architecture and performance collective from San Francisco, created in *Media Burn* (1975) an event featuring a car specially modified with video

Gallery Talk, Thursday, December 20, after the 1:30 screening. David Shulman and Jack Walworth will be present.

equipment which drove through a wall of televisions. In creating this extraordinary media spectacle, which was covered by local TV news programs, Ant Farm pointed out how the news media create events merely by covering them.

Program 2 features recent works by Jack Walworth and Tony Cokes. Walworth and Whit Johnston's *Independents Tonite* (1984) fashions a narrative out of the problematic position of independent producers who propose various strategies—both radical and traditional—to change television. In *Face Fear and Fascination* (1984), Cokes analyzes the representation of women in daytime soap operas and commercial advertising by combining off-air material with various texts dealing with the subject.

Program 3 offers two documentary interpretations of television news reporting. David Shulman's *Race against Prime Time* (1984) examines television coverage of the 1980 race riots in Miami. Shulman reviews both local and network reporting and the factors involved in shaping the media's response to the causes and the representation of social unrest. Tony Ramos' *About Media* (1977) treats local New York television coverage of Ramos' protests against the Vietnam War. The production critically contrasts Ramos' interview with TV reporters at his home with the subsequent report on television.

'Re-Viewing Television' is the first of a three-part series; it will be followed by 'Paper Tiger Television' (January 15–February 17, 1985), and a history of artists' alternative television, scheduled for 1985.

John G. Hanhardt
Curator, Film and Video

Face Fear and Fascination

I am studying mass culture in terms of methodology and ideology because I see concrete relations between the media and economic/political power. Television does not innocently disseminate information and entertainment. It is a conscious or unconscious means of molding beliefs and perceptions. It is not neutral. It is not passive. It is not natural. The meanings produced through the media have points of origin, points of view, and points of perception. A culture describes itself by repeating, by re-presenting its dominant values. I cannot avoid a relationship with the cultural spectacle, but I can ask questions: How and why does the spectacle limit what we 'see'? What social voices,

desires, and concrete alternatives does the dominant culture exclude and/or repress? What are our roles both as producers and consumers of the spectacle? And how are we implicated in the ongoing process by which the spectacle is maintained?

Face Fear and Fascination examines daytime television in terms of its portrayal and construction of women and its commodity advertising strategies. Women are depicted as objects to be looked at in repetitive and fragmented melodramas based on family conflicts, romantic love, and violence. The commercials sell the delimited powers of beauty, conformity, and the commodity. The spectacle constructs an audience in an economy of unfulfilled desires. The tape calls attention to the assumptions, ideas, and methods of 'harmless entertainment' offered by the patriarchy and corporate capitalism. In addition to material scavenged from broadcast television, I have used texts from such various sources as intertitles and voiceovers to question the conditions of reading and possibility generated by conventional television.

Tony Cokes

Face Fear and Fascination, 1984. Tony Cokes.

Race against Prime Time

In many ways, this documentary grew out of my experiences doing media support work for a Brooklyn-based community group, the Black United Front. The BUF was formed in 1978 in response to a wave of cutbacks in city services, hospital closings, and the choking death of a community resident, Arthur Miller, by New York City police. Over the two-year period in which I helped to provide access to video equipment, set up community film screenings, and videotape some of the marches and rallies, meetings, and protests which the BUF initiated, I usually watched and sometimes recorded the TV news coverage of these same events. What I saw on TV often left me startled and intrigued—were these TV news cameras really at the same event?

I became much more curious about the process behind news coverage. To what degree were the personal values of the individual reporter, or the political orientation of the station, or the organizational and economic structures of the news-gathering process responsible for the patterns of

Race against Prime Time, 1984. David Shulman.

distortion? To what extent was the medium itself to blame? The double standards, misrepresentation of grass-roots leadership, and the tendency to gloss over or ignore the real issues and grievances had an extremely negative and polarizing impact on race relations in New York City. To say that television news was racist and leave it at that wasn't very satisfying.

Throughout the process of making Race against Prime Time—getting access to TV stations, setting up interviews with media people as well as community residents—there was an accompanying thrill of discovering for oneself things that were otherwise hidden from view. This thrill of discovery has always helped to sustain the work I do.

David Shulman

Independents Tonite

The purpose of making Independents Tonite was to delineate and comment on the contradictions inherent in independent production. Specifically, I wanted to expose the limitations and constrictions independents are subjected to in the pursuit of an audience. Moreover, the tape explores the possible avenues independents can take to work around and in some cases actually change the broadcast television system. In the characters' attempts to effect such change, political as well as professional issues are traversed in a serio-comic tone. This serves to highlight the issues in both a theoretical and practical context.

With freelance work and my small 'independent' company as my experience, I conceived this project to confront my frustrations as a TV viewer. Collaborating with my fellow independents, we have used the narrative and comedic styles to obtain an audience, while breaking key codes and revealing inherent ideologies. The question does, however, remain: How can we change television?

Jack Walworth

Re-Viewing Television: Interpretations of the Mass Media
Part II: *Paper Tiger Television*
Video installation. On view continuously

Past and present members of Paper Tiger Television include: Diana Agosta, Fusun Ateser, Pennee Bender, Skip Blumberg, Bill Boddy, Daniel Brooks, Nancy Cain, Shu Lea Cheang, Dena Crane, Linda Cranor, Manuel De Landa, Michael D'Elia, Judite Dos Santos, Karen Einstein, Preacher Ewing, Mary Feaster, Bob Fiore, Bart Friedman, Vicki Gholson, Dee Dee Halleck, Ezra Halleck, Larry Hymowitz, Joan Jubela, Pat Keeton, Hilery Kipnis, Molly Kovel, Melissa Leo, Marty Lucas, Esti Marpet, Leanne Mella, Alison Morse, Diane Neumaier, Dan Ochiva, Mike Penland, Roger Politzer, Caryn Rogoff, Kurt Ruebenson, David Shulman, Janet Stein, Alan Steinheimer, Parry Teasdale, Valerie Van Isler, Martha Wallner, and Roy Wilson.

During the 1960s and early 1970s independent video- and filmmakers, working outside the mainstream of commercial film and television, participated in the critical reexamination of American domestic and foreign policy. Their activism took the form of a radically reinvigorated documentary and avant-garde cinema, and an alternative approach to video that challenged traditional modes of media production, distribution, and exhibition. Media collectives such as Newsreel formulated agitprop cinema for communities and meeting halls, and 'guerrilla television' groups created television programming and production networks through cable outlets.

But the potential of cable to become a genuine communications tool linking and addressing community concerns has now largely been eclipsed. Recent federal communications policies have resulted in further cutbacks in access for individuals and communities with alternative viewpoints. Despite this reduction, a few tenacious groups have managed to produce and broadcast regular programming for the public access airwaves.

One of these is *Paper Tiger Television*, a cable series produced by a collective of media artists concerned with exposing the economic and ideological factors that shape the industries controlling the content and distribution of mass media—of film, television, newspapers, books, and magazines. For this exhibition, Paper Tiger has re-created and expanded some of the studio sets in which their lively programs have been produced. In addition, they have designed a mock-up of a newsstand on which are displayed various publications. Some of these have been altered to interpret their editorial policies and content; others are alternative periodicals. Inside the newsstand is a TV monitor on which one can watch a chronological history of the series' programs.

This information environment also features an actual teletype that provides international news from different

Live Productions
Tuesday, January 29, at 6:30
  Flo Kennedy on press coverage of South Africa
Tuesday, February 5, at 6:30
  Herbert Schiller on *The New York Times* and the World Crisis*
Saturday, February 9, at 2:00
  "Youth and the Media"

wire services, a continuously running television in the 'studio' displaying public access programs, and corporate annual reports from the major media industries. This combination of installation pieces establishes an arena for critical interpretation of the largely invisible corporate world that controls the communications industry in the United States.

The Paper Tiger group is exploring new ways to comprehend and analyze a communications industry which is becoming increasingly removed from public review. Theirs is an activist and innovative art that attempts to identify the forces shaping public reception and response to global events.

John G. Hanhardt
Curator, Film and Video

Production still from *Joan Braderman Reads The National Enquirer,* 1983.

Most cable systems in the United States have a few channels that must be made available free to community members. They are called "public access" channels, and they are the bane of cable corporations. Company executives would rather program a more profitable twenty-four-hour, advertiser-based weather channel or yet another subscription movie channel. But it is the *law*, in the form of franchise agreements made with local municipalities, that requires public access channel space in exchange for the cable company's use of the city's streets and sewers.

Paper Tiger Television is a weekly program that appears on the public channels of Manhattan Cable. It is one of nearly two hundred weekly series that are transmitted regularly to cable subscribers in New York City. *Paper Tiger* began in 1981 as a special series on *Communications Update*, a weekly program initiated by Liza Bear in 1979. Since then, more than sixty-seven programs have been aired, not only in New York, but on cable channels in Minneapolis, Austin, San Diego, Somerville, Massachusetts, and in other cities nationwide.

Each week *Paper Tiger* features a guest commentator who provides a critical reading of a magazine or newspaper. The programs include basic information on the economic structure of the corporation that produced the publication. Many programs also look at demographics: who the audience for a particular publication is, and what products they consume—e.g., *U.S. News and World Report* readers buy wine by the case—and how much a full-page color ad costs. Sometimes we examine the board of directors or the background of the editors and reporters. While the specific focus each week is on one publication, it is the intention of the series to provide a cumulative view of the culture industry as a whole.

There are certain practical requirements for access programming. First, a show must be shown regularly. Since there is little hope of access programs being included in *TV Guide*'s schedule, or being listed in newspapers of record, the main way to build an audience is to schedule the show every week at the same time; people are home on certain nights and switch on the tube at certain times. If they turn the dial around during the breaks between the shows, they might linger on something that looks different from regular TV fare.

Another strategy is to have an immediately discernible "different" look, without being intimidating or alienating. *Paper Tiger* uses brightly painted sets. The guest sits on a yellow kitchen chair; no pompous "director" chairs, no stuffed couch, no glittery curtains. The set looks homey, but very colorful, like the funny papers on Sunday. The guests are projected into the foreground with pizzazz. The bright sets help to leaven the heaviness of the subject matter. Sometimes we use actors to provide simultaneous "non-verbal" translations of some of the text; often we use graphics and charts—not elaborate video effects, but hand-lettered, or cut and pasted. The graphics are not fed into a mechanical graphics holder, but are held in place so that fingers show. If there is a specific look to the series, it is *handmade*, a comfortable, non-technocratic look that says *friendly*—and low budget.

The seams show: we often intercut overview, wide-angle shots that give the viewer a sense of the people who are making the show and the types of equipment we use. At the end of the program, along with the credits, we usually display the budget, which includes everything from magic markers to studio rental. The total cost for one show can vary from nineteen dollars, using a black-and-white camera, to one hundred fifty dollars for a two-camera color setup that includes a switcher, an audio mixer, and two video recording decks. By showing the seams and price tags, we hope to demystify the process of live television, and to prove that making programs isn't all that prohibitively expensive.

Although most people are cynical about the media and consider themselves aware of being manipulated, most are unaware of just *how* this manipulation works issue by issue, ad by ad. Many people still think of "the media" as a form of "journalism," distinct from other areas of economic life. By analyzing a publication in detail, by examining its corporate interconnections, and by pointing out exactly how and why certain information appears, a good critical reading can *invert* the media so that they work against themselves. After seeing a publication discussed on *Paper Tiger Television*, a viewer sees each ad, each article, in a new critical way.

Dee Dee Halleck

Adapted from the forthcoming book *Cultures in Contention*, edited by Doug Kahn and Diane Neumaier, Seattle: Real Comet Press.

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