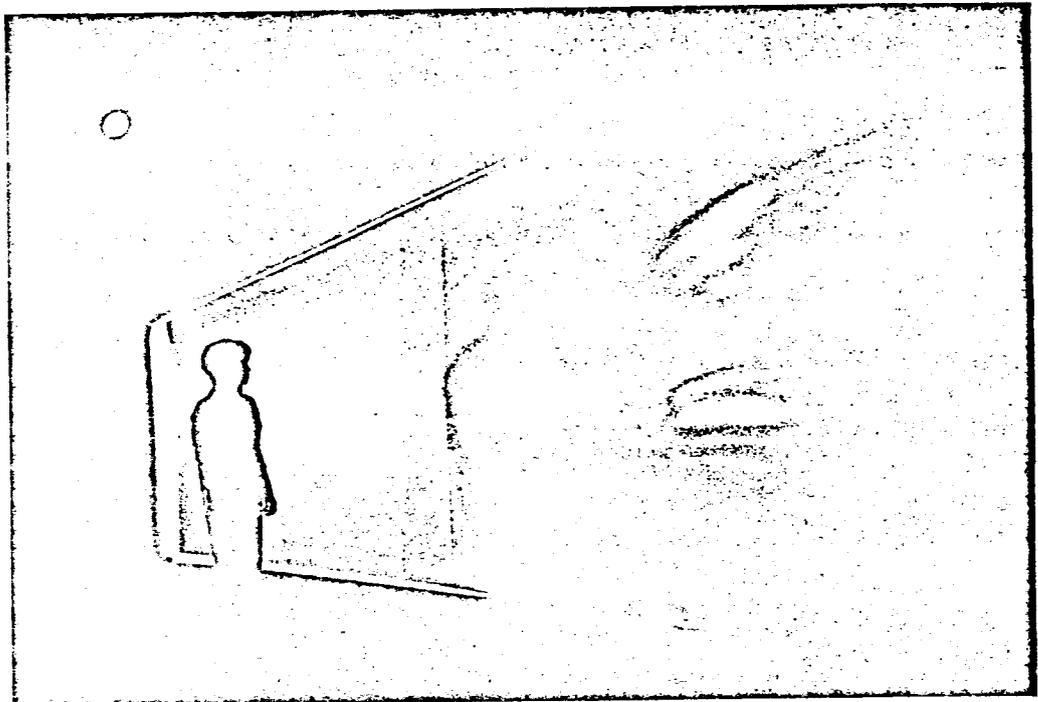


REVIEWS

PETER CAMPUS, Bykert Gallery uptown; CARL ANDRE, John Weber Gallery; MATTA, Andrew Crispo Gallery; ARSHILE GORKY, Knoedler Gallery; IVAN BIRO, 55 Mercer; BARBARA COLEMAN, SoHo 20; DAVID PRENTICE, Livingstone-Learnmouth Gallery; MARTIN BRESSLER, 55 Mercer Street; KATE RESEK, SoHo 20:

PETER CAMPUS's was one of the best exhibitions this year and revealed a significant development of his work. Campus creates live video situations which, activated by the viewer's presence, project his image on a wall or screen. Previous work has involved a double image, one the reverse of the other. Previous work has also involved two kinds of mirroring: first, it tolerated being dealt with hedonistically as a "live mirror"; second (and also because), it simply mirrored and so implied continuity with the space directly in front of the wall or screen. This year Campus has tightened up his work. The amount and the location of the space within which the pieces can be activated and experienced (not always the same now) has been severely limited and specified. And in addition, the relationship of this space to the depicted space, the space of the image, is altered in each piece. But while certain kinds of space may have become more exclusive, these limitations also restrict the movement of the viewer, forcing him into close contact with both his image and the architecture it is projected on, and thus establishing a new spatial closeness, if not a continuity, between viewer and image. This proximity is also not entirely comfortable; there is only a single image in these pieces, an image which we must deal with for the most part from an oblique angle, unable to look ourselves in the eye, and yet at close quarters. And so ultimately what seems most important is that the limitations of movement, the differentiations of space bring an increased psychological and emotional depth to the experience of Campus's work.

In *dor*, a camera in a hall is trained on the doorway to a room, and on the back of anyone entering the room. A projector places the image on the wall adjacent to this doorway, so as you enter the room, the image of your back is directly to your right. To move in front of the image, or too far into the darkened room is to move out of camera range and the image disap-



Peter Campus, *mem*, 1975.

pears. So you are stuck there slightly in front of the doorway, lined up with your image, both of you looking sideways. The space you must remain in to see the piece and the space of the image parallel each other and both have approximately the same frontal boundary, the continuous plane formed by the open door and the closed wall. The juxtaposition is strange; your image is large, blurred and peripheral to your vision. If you turn sideways, your image does likewise, also facing the edge of the door. This edge seems like an arbitrary division (the image, for example, would continue if the wall did), an architectural element in limbo; you don't know whose side it is on.

Oblique angles are even more complexly employed in Campus's second piece, *mem*, and the results are even more difficult to describe. Here the camera is placed close and parallel to the wall that the image is projected on, thus you must move almost up to the wall in order to be within camera range, so close that your shadow becomes a third intermediary element between your body and your image. Further complication results from the fact that the projector is placed at an acute angle to this wall and rather than projecting the conventionally rectangular field of light, it projects a

trapezoid, a shape which is smaller at the end near the camera and expands upward and outward across the wall. This in turn distorts your image, making it different at almost every point across the field. It is clear and average-sized at the small end, becoming larger and blurred toward the big end. The field of the image thus becomes active, affecting the image rather than simply containing it. As in *dor* you are confined to a narrow corridor of space within which the piece can be activated, but although this space is directly in front of the image, they are not continuous. The space you move through and that which your image moves through intersect at an angle; as you move along the wall toward the camera, you will seem to cross paths with your image.

When you stand toward the center of the field, close to your large blurred image, this piece seems particularly sad, emphasizing a quality present in both pieces. Campus limits access to the image; it is vague and unresponsive, psychologically distant. Discussing Campus's piece last year, I wrote about the way in which your mind adjusted to watching the results of movement on the wall rather than in terms of actual internal perception and the disembodied feeling which developed. That sensation seems

significantly different now. Campus places you physically within the newly defined perimeters of the work; movement is less possible and less important and also the strangeness of this proximity keeps your mind on edge. He actually reduces the continuity — the spaces are irreconcilable and the image, so tangible, is profoundly isolated. The experience of Campus's work has always been somewhat private, on your own time and terms; it is one quality which makes his use of technology interesting and different from many other artists. Now, more than before, he pulls you into the silence of his work, into the silence of watching yourself completely alone, without even the comfort of meeting your own gaze.

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