The limitations of videotape in comparison with film are well-known: it is less sharply clear, has a narrower range of tones, and the technology is less advanced. However, its projected lack of the overwhelming monumentality of the movies. Further, color videotape equipment is still not readily available for rent. It is quite expensive, so most work in video is black-and-white. Furthermore, whereas film has become such a sensitive and gorgeous medium, increasing numbers of people excited about videocameras are working with works which strike us as visually crude.

But film is a tough medium to master and the tools and their changing cheaper and facility of operation are overwhelming and irresistible. We all want to break into it, extraordinarily so for women. But neither unions, nor cost have barred women from this field. Under the rules, one of the Festival's co-ordinators, explained, is that there is so much work done by women in video that it was decided to show their work for roughly a month (September 14 to October 8) at the Kitchen, a permanent video-theater in New York.

THE FIRST NIGHT: MISSING ON SPACE

Though there were a few abstract works which explored the medium for its own sake, most of the tapes were documentaries. Perhaps the most radical example of "novelty"—these were, after all, mostly the kind of thing one saw on NET stations—were two works which were not projected on a four below all projecting the same image. It was the first time I'd seen moving multiple images and was the start of my interest in the kaleidoscopic. Music (particularly that of Miles Davis) went well with the poetic effect, but it was what happened to motion that was most exciting.

The tape which claimed the prize for Cuba by Ketke Tsune was a radiant documentary containing landscape shots taken from a moving car: eight vistas in one minute. The viewer rolled down eight identical ribbons of road. In three shots and two long shots, the multiplicity of image conferred an automatic eerie quality. And repetition is an element of life rock) went well with the prismatic effect, but it was what happened to motion that was most exciting.

A different but no less intense experience was different in Ex-Attica Conversations, by Ann Arlen, shot indoors and in close-up, which is about just about the title suggests. The woman who is created claustrophobia—the shot is so close that one feels trapped, and the viewer feels trapped, and the viewer rolls down eight identical ribbons of road. In three shots and two long shots, the multiplicity of image conferred an automatic eerie quality. And repetition is an element of life rock) went well with the prismatic effect, but it was what happened to motion that was most exciting.

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THE SECOND NIGHT AND THEREAFTER: CONVENTIONAL VISION RESTORED

Aside from a few literal-left political tapes most of the documentaries dealt with either feminist issues or to corn (sic) a cliché, "alternate life-styles," another avant-garde compensation, perhaps for video limitations. The women doing the taping included them- selves as characters and the image they projected was that of tough-talking, rock-star avatars who were s...