

9/00

Whitney Museum of American Art The New American Filmmakers Series 8/5-8/75

The medium of video offers to the artist an array of modes of presentation which range from videotapes shown on a single monitor to sculptural and environmental arrangements of monitors which employ videotape and/or closed-circuit video cameras.

The videotapes selected for the Projected Video program were not created expressly for projection but as works to be perceived on the video monitor. Many of the artists represented in this exhibition have worked with projection systems for showing their tapes and with live video installations. Since the viewer is accustomed to seeing artists' tapes on an exhibition monitor which is also one of the most familiar objects in our culture--the television set--he brings to the video monitor, often to video art, the manifold associations of the television set as furniture and conduit of commercial broadcasting. Through the projection of videotapes the work is offered within an altered context giving the video medium new avenues of appreciation and accessibility.

Film can be projected in a variety of situations and on a variety of surfaces but is fixed by the rectangular parameters of the convention of the strip of celluloid. Video and film are tied to specific technologies of production and exhibition which inform the differences between them. Film's resolution of space and organization of temporality through camera movement and editing, the process by which film is manipulated directly by hand and eye, results in rhythms and surface and spatial articulations not available to video. The video image recorded electronically and stored on tape is visualized on a monitor. The electronic surface of the video image conveys a psychological immediacy not felt in film with its more self-contained materiality. The video artist has at his or her disposal a wide range of image modifications and processes ranging from colorization to computer generation. In addition the use of live video on a large screen and on monitors in sculptural pieces and environments can distend time and space in a way not available to film. Thus the ontological separateness of video from film, from the simple fact that video is generated from the surface of the picture tube and that film is projected onto a surface, is crucial in its appreciation.

The Projected Video exhibit does not deny or ignore this basic difference but recognizes that large-screen projection of videotapes will serve to further clarify the achievement of the artist's work and the uniqueness of the medium. Video projection, in this case utilizing the Advent IOOOA VideoBeam system, was commercially developed to make large-screen television available for home use. The system enlarges by more than ten times the largest 25-inch television screen. From a projection tube the electronic videotape is projected onto a specially prepared screen. The straightforward blowing up of the video image results in a magnification and expansion of the artist's image. Because of this, purely technical fluctuations are magnified and take on greater interference than when perceived on a smaller screen. In addition, camera and surface movement take on a different significance when increased from a small to large surface. Image definition is also somewhat reduced, especially in black and white. Thus technical considerations along with aesthetic ones have played a role in selecting the tapes shown in this exhibition: tapes were chosen which would both be appropriate to this large screen projection format and also display the range of originality and achievement in video art. The Projected Video exhibit is organized into four programs. Each of the programs is not mutually exclusive in terms of the types of work presented but is meant to offer access to a variety of forms and styles.

The first program presents tapes by Bill Etra, the Vasulkas, and Nam June Paik. Etra's *Abstractions On A Bed Sheet* is a computer-generated three dimensional figure which animates the cubic depth of the screen and explores the potential of the computer as a compositional tool. The Vasulka's works *Vocabulary*, *C-Trend*, *Noisefield*, display a range of specific concerns with the electronic image. *Vocabulary* treats the "interactive modes of a camera image and internally generated electronic textures" with a texturalization of a manipulation of the medium; *C-Trend*, a camera view from a window, is displayed on a scan processor which manipulates its surface and perspective; in *Noisefield* the colored snow (or noise) of the television screen is "keyed through a circle with the energy content of the video modulating the sound," in this way exploring the perceptual field of video snow and

color and offering a video correlation to the flicker film. Paik's *Global Groove* is an impressive performance of technique and playfulness with the iconography of television and the potentials of video technology. The articulation of the video image through music, color and movement sustains in GLOBAL GROOVE a complex of rhythms.

Video artists can describe and extend our perceptions through temporal and spatial factors in manipulating video. In the second program, Wegman's *Semi-Buffer* treats the formulas of social etiquette in serving a buffet as an abstract of the implications and absurdities of spatial and temporal arrangements of place and event. It becomes a complex performance playing with expectation and assumption as the viewer becomes involved in the process of the "buffet." Campus's R-G-B stands for the three primary colors of video, red, green, and blue. He deals with the phenomenology of color through various strategies of manipulating surface and perspective. Campus's *Set Of Coincidence* treats the person of the artist interacting with the medium, and shows images produced in different times made simultaneous through video loop recording. Each of the three parts of this work expresses the artist's physical relationship to video space, time, movement, and displacement. The work creates a tension between narrative and the resolution of specific formal organizations. Davis's *Studies Of Myself 11* shows the artist seated at a character generator as a camera records him typing out and reworking his thoughts. This activity is seen in real as opposed to edited time. This uniquely video device has been incorporated by Davis into a tape dealing with the perception and articulation of the printed word; the work is involving and personal, rather than didactic.

Commercial television in particular, and the commercial media in general, inform our lives to an unprecedented degree. In the third program, Serra's *Television Delivers People* is a succinct critique of the corporate nature and purpose of television. He confronts the seductive manipulation of television by juxtaposing his radical printed text with a muzak sound track. Paik's *Selling Of New York* is a study of television and the City of New York as the medium-as-message. In this short work he displays his involvement with the medium through the ease and assurance with which he works with such a variety of material and information. In Benglis's *Female Sensibility* she and another woman confront the viewer with their interacting gestures while the edited radio soundtrack offers a commentary often intersecting with the images. The immediacy of the soundtrack lends tension and expectation to the images of gestures of the women. Adler and Margolies's *Richard Nixon* outlines Nixon's presidential career by showing off-air material later edited into sequences. The tape was put together to "show the reality of television material concerning the myths surrounding the American presidency." It does not focus on the obvious news material but subtly depicts both Nixon and the presidency and the nature of the broadcast medium itself as it "records" and describes the Nixon persona.

The direct manipulation of video takes many forms and contexts, as the fourth program illustrates. Sonnier's *Animation 11* explores computer generation and video's temporal qualities. The voices of the artist and technicians take place in ordinary video time while the various pieces of visual information are stored by Sonnier and exist as temporal units other than the actual tape we perceive. What results is a complex and multi-layered imagery. Baldessari's *Sings LeWitt* is a rendering in song of Sol LeWitt's statements on conceptual art. Baldessari's performance is an amusing yet serious play with the way we perceive and receive messages as written and auditory information. Freed's *Art Herstory* is a personal look at art history and woman's role in that history. Through video technique Freed physically places herself within the iconography of classic works of art and comments on what that place means. Kubota's *Marcel Duchamp And John Cage* is based on her photographs of Duchamp and Cage's chess game concert which took place in Toronto in 1968. The chess board was wired so that the different configurations of the chess pieces modulated the sounds. Kubota later videotaped these black and white photos and then colored them in such a way that layers of color interact with the sound and placement of the photographs.

John G. Hanhardt

This exhibition of Projected Video is made possible with support from the New York State Council on the Arts.

SCHEDULE**PROGRAM 1**

THURSDAY, JUNE 5 THROUGH SUNDAY, JUNE 8
DAILY 12, 29 & 4 P.M.

ABSTRACTIONS ON A BED SHEET - P.D.P.11-10 (1973)

William Etra. 10 minutes

VOCABULARY (1973-74)

Woody & Steina Vasulka. 6 minutes

C-TREND (1974)

Woody & Steina Vasulka. 10 minutes

NOISEFIELDS (1974)

Woody & Steina Vasulka. 81 minutes

GLOBAL GROOVE (1973)

Nam June Paik. 30 minutes

Total Running Time: 64 1/2 minutes

PROGRAM 11

MONDAY, JUNE 9 THROUGH WEDNESDAY, JUNE 11
DAILY 12, 2 & 4 p.m.
TUESDAY EVENING AT 6:15 & 8 P.M.

SEMI-BUFFET (1975)

William Wegman. 20 minutes

R-G-B (1973)

Peter Campus. 15 minutes

SET OF COINCIDENCE (1974)

Peter Campus. 13 minutes

STUDIES IN MYSELF II (1973)

Douglas Davis. 29 minutes

Total Running Time: 77 minutes

PROGRAM III

THURSDAY, JUNE 12 THROUGH SUNDAY, JUNE 15
DAILY AT 12, 2, & 4 P.M.

TELEVISION DELIVERS PEOPLE (1973)

Richard Serra. 6 minutes

SUITE 212: THE SELLING OF NEW YORK (1973)

Nam June Paik. 8 minutes

FEMALE SENSIBILITY (1974) Lynda Benglis. 14 minutesRICHARD NIXON: 1968-1974 (1974)

Billy Adler & John Margolies. 60 minutes

Total Running Time: 88 minutes

PROGRAM IV

MONDAY, JUNE 16 THROUGH WEDNESDAY, JUNE 18

DAILY 12, 2, & 4 P.m.

TUESDAY EVENING AT 6:15 & 8 P.M.

ANIMATION 11 (1974)

Keith Sonnier. 25 minutes

Distributed by Castelli-Sonnabend Tapes and Films

Videotapes

Kubota, Shigeko

MARCEL DUCHAMP AND JOHN CAGE (1974)

20 minutes. Color

Distributed by Electronic Arts Intermix

Adler, Billy & John Margolies

RICHARD NIXON: 1968-1974

1974. Color. 60 minutes 4

Distributed by Telethon.

Baldessari, John

BALDESSARI SINGS LEWITT

1972. B/W. 15 minutes

Distributed by Castelli-Sonnabend Tapes & Films.

Benglis, Lynda

FEMALE SENSIBILITY

1974. Color. 1 minutes

With the participation of Marilyn Lenkowsky.

Distributed by Castelli-Sonnabend Tapes & Films.

Campus, Peter

R-G-B

1973. Color. 15 minutes

Produced at the WNET-TV Lab, under a grant from the New-York State Council on the Arts.

Distributed by Castelli-Sonnabend Tapes & Films.

Campus, Peter

SET OF COINCIDENCE

1973. Color. 13 minutes

Produced at WGBH-TV Workshop under grants from the National Endowment for the Arts and the Rockefeller Foundation.

Distributed by Castelli-Sonnabend Tapes & Films.

Davis, Douglas

STUDIES IN MYSELF II

1973. Color. 29 minutes

Produced by the Everson Museum Department of Video Arts at Synapse Studio, Syracuse University.

Engineering by William Viola and Andy Buck.

Distributed by The Video Distribution at
Stefanotty Gallery and Electronic Arts Intermix.

Etra, William

ABSTRACTIONS ON A BEDSHEET - P.D.P.11-10

1973. WB /W. 10 minutes

A videotape in cooperation with the Sycom Electronic Music Center at the University of South Florida at Tampa.
Distributed by Electronic Arts Intermix.

Freed, Hermine

ART HERSTORY

1974. Color. 28 minutes

Produced at the WNET-TV Lab under a grant from the New York State Council on the Arts.
Distributed by Castelli-Sonnabend Tapes & Films.

Kubota, Shigeko

MARCEL DUCHAMP AND JOHN CAGE

1974. Color. 20 minutes

Distributed by Electronic Arts Intermix.

Paik, Nam June

GLOBAL GROOVE

1973. Color. 30 minutes

Distributed by Electronic Arts Intermix.

Paik, Nam June

SUITE 212: THE SELLING OF NEW YORK

1972. Color. 8 minutes

In collaboration with Ed Emshwiller.

Produced by David Loxton at the WNET-TV Lab. Distributed by Electronic Arts Intermix.

Serra, Richard

TELEVISION DELIVERS PEOPLE

1973. Color. 6 minutes

Produced with Carlotta Schoolman.

Distributed by Castelli-Sonnabend Tapes & Films.

Sonnier, Keith

ANIMATION II

1974. Color. 25 minutes

Distributed by Castelli-Sonnabend Tapes & Films.

Vasulka, Woody & Steina

VOCABULARY

1973-7 Color. 6 minutes

Multikeyer: George Brown.

Scan Processor: Rutt/Etra.

Dual Colorizer: Eric Siegel.

Distributed by the Vasulkas.

Vasulka, Woody & Steina

C-TREND

1974. Color. 10 minutes

Multikeyer and H.D. Variable Clock: George Brown. Scan Processor: Rutt/Etra.
Dual Colorizer: Eric Siegel.
Distributed by Electronic Arts Intermix.

Vasulka, Woody & Steina

NOISEFIELDS

1974. Color. 8 1/2 minutes

Sequencer and Multikeyer: George Brown. Dual Colorizer: Eric Siegel.

Distributed by Electronic Arts Intermix.

Wegman, William

SEMI-BUFFET

1975. Color. 20 minutes

Produced at the WGBH-TV Workshop under grants from the National Endowment for the Arts and the Rockefeller Foundation.

Distributed by Castelli-Sonnabend Tapes & Films.

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