

NATIONAL VIDEO FESTIVAL



Presented By
The American Film Institute

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SEPTEMBER 20-23 1|9|8|4| | | | | | | | |

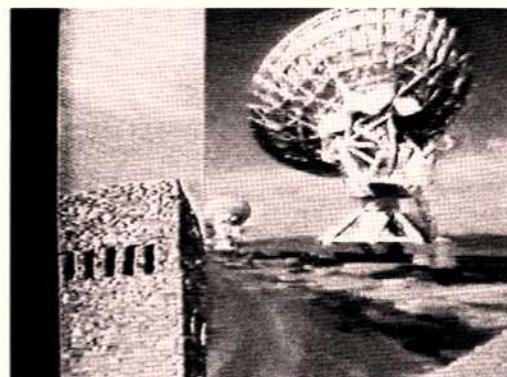
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Installation

The West





From the video installation
The West



The Vasulkas

The West. Created by Steina; instrumentation, production assistance, and 4 Channel audio environment by Woody Vasulka. Copyright: The Vasulkas, 1984.

The West is a video environment which generates a phenomenological experience of the vast Southwestern landscape, a landscape so arid and clear that any human notation on the land is preserved for a very long time.

The Vasulkas' installation employs a matrix of six monitors in a darkened room. The viewer sees imaginary panning in constant, stately motion, enveloped in the eerie tones of the audio track. This 2-channel video/4-channel audio piece depicts not just the landscape, but also manifestations of human expression on that landscape: ceremonial Indian dwellings, earthworks and installations of scientific equipment. The

primary structural element of the circle is invoked by the Vasulkas' mirrored, rotating globe, the circular structure of the Anasazi ruin Chaco Canyon and the giant silver discs of the VLA (Very Large Array) — a radio telescope system which turns slowly to scan the sky. The natural red and blue tones of the earth and sky are manipulated to produce highly saturated colors which hardly seem out of place in the dramatic landscape.

The West is an elegant demonstration of how image and sound can constitute a complex mapping of the presence of the individual in a vast landscape of space and time.

The West was produced through State University of New York's Program in the Arts, with funds from the Rockefeller Foundation and National Endowment for the Arts.

Woody and Steina Vasulka were pioneers in the development of the electronic arts. In 1970 they founded "The Kitchen," a New York City media theater and exhibition center. Steina has continued explorations in the possibilities for the generation and manipulation of the electronic image. In 1978 her exhibit, "Machine Vision," was held at the Albright-Knox Art Gallery in Buffalo, New York. She was a Guggenheim Fellow in 1976. In 1974 Woody became a faculty member of the Center for the Media Study at State University of New York, Buffalo, and began his investigations into computer controlled video, building "The Vasulka Imaging System," a personal imaging facility. He is a 1979 Guggenheim Fellow. Since their move to Santa Fe in 1980, Woody has produced *Artifacts* and *The Commission*. Steina has produced a series of videotapes relating to the land of the Southwest.