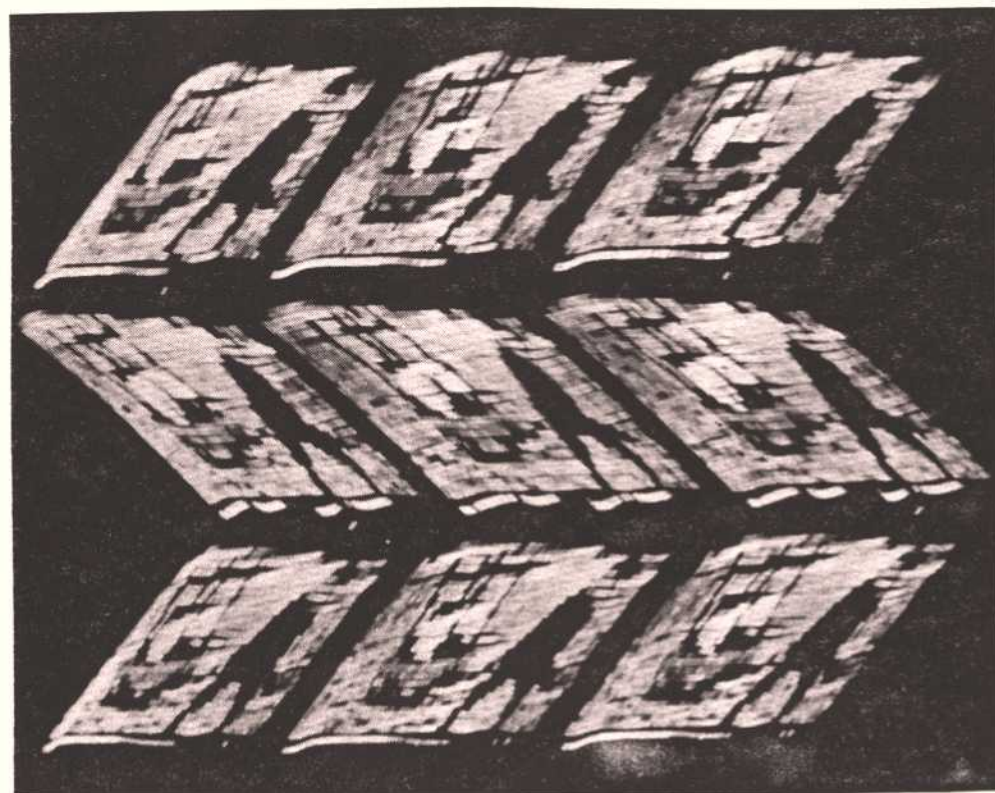


TOKYO FOUR

STEINA VASULKA



FLORIDA
Arts

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Steina, born in Iceland in 1940, attended the Music Conservatory in Prague from 1959 to 1963, and joined the Icelandic Symphony Orchestra in 1964. She came to the United States the following year and has participated in the development of the electronic arts since 1970, both as co-founder of The Kitchen, a major exhibition center in New York City, and as a continuing explorer of the possibilities for the generation and manipulation of the electronic image through a broad range of technological tools and aesthetic concerns. Her tapes have been exhibited and broadcast extensively in the United States and Europe. In 1978 her exhibition, *Machine Vision*, opened at the Albright-Knox Gallery in Buffalo, New York. She was a Guggenheim Fellow in 1976, and has received numerous other distinctions, recently including the Maya Deren Award from the American Film Institute

Since moving to Santa Fe, New Mexico in 1980, Steina has produced tapes relating to the land, and several multiple-channel synchronous video matrix installations displayed on 4 to 48 monitors titled: *The West*, *Geomania*, *Vocalizations*, *Ptolemy*. The newest, *Tokyo Four*, is based on images she collected during her six-month stay in Japan in 1988.

"In making *Tokyo Four*, I have been very preoccupied with the composition itself at the expense of considerations for the placement of it as an installation in space. For this time, I had requested nine monitors as a display, but the T.V. place in Daytona Beach thought I should have eight. To me this was a signal to change the configuration, making a hole in the middle. It fits very well into this asymmetrical gallery space. It is fun to show this installation here, I cannot imagine another place as different from Japan as Florida."

--Steina Vasulka

"No form of moving-image art comes as close to musical composition as multiscreen video, where the different channels of image and sound are equivalent to musical polyphony, each functioning like a voice in a musical ensemble. And no multiscreen work is as spectacularly musical as Steina's. She works as a composer would, playing on the visual equivalents of timbre, texture and tone. *Tokyo Four* is the audiovisual equivalent of a string quartet. Sometimes one screen is the melody and the others are accompaniment, then another screen takes the lead. A musical syntax emerges from this visual point/counterpoint organized around duration, interval, rhythm, repetition and series.

Her compositional devices include flipping or reversing an image (right becomes left) and playing it at imperceptibly different speeds on different screens, which gradually all synchronize at the same speed. These strategies are especially effective in the final movement when the female dancer is bowing."

--Gene Youngblood, art critic

College of Santa Fe, New Mexico