

RESEARCH REPORT  
ON  
PUBLIC-MEDIA

CROSSEYE

PUBLIC-ACTIONS

312/666-5628

ELECTRONIC VISUALIZATION CENTER

VIDEO AREA  
ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO  
COLUMBUS DRIVE AND JACKSON BOULEVARD  
CHICAGO  
60603

## PREFACE

This paper has been realized after a few weeks of research done by students from the Video Area, The School of the Art Institute of Chicago, under the course -

### TWO-WAY COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS for LIVE and RECORD PROGRAMMING (2658/5658)

Using light-weight audio/video technologies we will design, install, program, and try-out communication systems optimized toward high human performance, interest, and intelligibility. We will study existing works and thoughts available in two-way production and performance systems, with keen focus on the transformation problems entailed when two-way data transmission must be resolved into one-way formats. All production experiences will be group execution using systems we design.

#### 3 STUDIO CREDIT HOURS

Class meets Mondays 1:00-4:00 w/three hours outside research expected weekly.

INSTRUCTOR: Phil Morton, Associate Professor of Art.

The active student researchers were -

**CROSSEYE**

GREG DAWE

MARK FAUSNER

DAVIDD FROULA

KEVIN HOUTARI

DAN KWONG

BARBARA LATHAM

MARY O'KIERSEY

ELIZABETH PAULE

ED POULIN

ANDY ROSEN

ANDY ZAID

Feel free; thank you. -pm

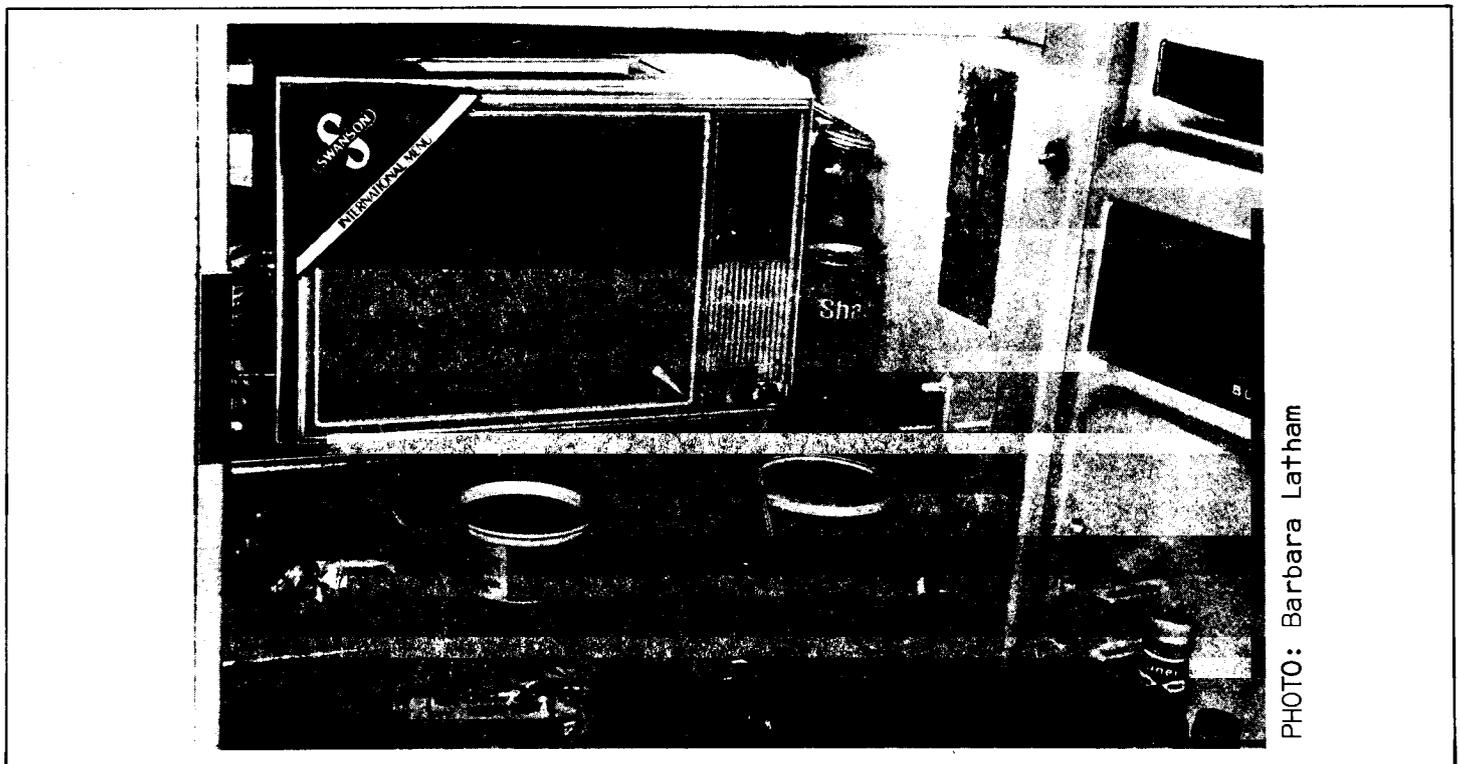


PHOTO: Barbara Latham

A PUBLIC-MEDIA MODEL FOR INTERACTIVE, TWO-WAY COMMUNICATION AND PERFORMANCE ART.

INTRODUCTION

Installed in the SAIC Gallery, Chicago 1977, this model uses electronic visualization instruments with Student performers offering exceptional television 'sightings' and 'soundings' to the public when using two-way interactive terminals, or the one-way observer terminals. Perhaps the aesthetics of the whole system and your terminal experience could best be entertained from the 'feeling' one has while traveling out into a new private domain, into the time of tele-communications as you see it. There is something about adventuring into tele-communications that so clearly just 'feels'. Intellectual compensation from writing/reading a short paper feels hardly, in kind, of the same clarity. Eye think the difference, in kind, is sensed between - abstractive, single-level communications and interpretive, multi-level communications. This differentiation of kind is the subject of another paper, another time; or, most likely a videotape. Some existing videotapes which exemplify what eye mean by - interpretive, multi-level communications, are -

A VIDEO SAMPLER - Christine Tamblyn (collaborating with John Manning),  
B/W & COLOR, 3/4" U-matic, 13 mins. 1976

GENERAL MOTORS - 1976 - **CROSSEYE**, B/W & COLOR, 3/4" U-matic, 60 mins. 1976

S-TAPE, 1976 - Jane Veeder, B/W, 1/2" EIAJ, 23 mins. 1976

The whole exhibit, ELECTRONIC ACTIVITY UNDER ART SURVEILLANCE, of which this model is a part exemplifies as an event - interpretive, multi-level communications dominantly. For those who recessively conceptualize and realize through abstractive, phonemic languages only, this paper says little we don't know already. Yet for those who intertwingle these didactic 'paper' concepts with actual real USE of a terminal, comprehensive clarity should increase many fold. It has for us, students of electronic visualization. If increased comprehensive clarity does not happen

through USE of a two-way terminal, then we have probably failed as comprehensive designers. To us the goal is clear: CONSCIOUSLY FLY EVER HIGHER, WITH CONSTANTLY LOWER ENERGY CONSUMPTION. As a human organism we can't afford to be conscious of that which we can accommodate unconsciously.

It does cost you time as a User in a two-way terminal to realize (see) for yourself the messages encoded therein. And after, it does cost you time as a contemplative observer to grok holistically what has transpired. Emerged use and removed observation, both, appear to be requisite for clarity; one or the other seemingly contribute to half-vision (the visual intelligence of a dumb half-wit).

- STAGING -

Explicit physical environment features of this model as adapted into an art gallery, public (show-off) medium, are -

First, an observation area with television monitors displaying aspects of this normal, human system operating LIVE, in real-time.

Second, the two public User terminals for observers in the area who choose, to consciously elevate (fly) into a two-way participant role.

Third, the processing area where three programming performers (students) are processing the signals flowing back and forth between the two User terminals.

Two of the performers are playing analog computers; one for video signal processing on the Sandin IMAGE PROCESSOR, and one for audio signal processing on the ARP 2600 AUDIO PROCESSOR.

*Plato thought the word, or the conceptual, expresses the deepest thing.  
St. Augustine thought the sound, or the audible, expresses the deepest thing.  
Spinoza thought the vision, or the visible, expresses the deepest thing.*

*This argument is settled for good.  
TV commercials have all three.*

- NAM JUNE PAIK; Videa 'n' Videology, 1959-1973  
Everson Museum of Art, Syracuse, New York.

The third performer is 'ON' the audio line (like a telephone operator) to assist and

guide terminal Users if needed; this same (third) performer is also 'ON' the video line (like a tele-picturephone operator) with joystick control synthesizing two, independent but parallel, bi-directional video transmissions into one dynamic, uni-directional normal television picture for an on-line videotape record of this two-way transmission experience. Our terminology for this performer is the CO-OPERATOR; for the ARP 2600 performer - the ARPIST; for the IMAGE PROCESSOR performer - the IPIST.

### - ASPECTS OF TRANSPORTATION -

Primary in our student conceptioning of this public-media model was the designing of two teleportation terminals with equal LIVE tele-communication capability. Each terminal offers the User ability to send-and-receive signals (messages) through both acoustic and visual (A/V) channels of environmental perception.

In each terminal a television camera and microphone accomplish the sending function, and a television monitor and earphones accomplish the receiving function. Other more specialized human interface devices such as helmet-headsets, glove-handsets, etc. have been part of this public-media dreaming stream; but we work with generalized tools when public-media model-building is the call. We are poor. Commercially. Speaking up.

*"A COMPUTER-ANIMATION DREAM MACHINE" (VIDEOGRAPHY, Dec. 1976, pp. 22...); a feature article, presents the reader a moderately understandable description (with COLOR pictures) of Dr. Tom-Tom's digital computer graphics language - GRASS - working with Dan-Dan's IMAGE PROCESSOR at the Circle Graphics Habitat, University of Illinois, Chicago Circle - Chemistry Department. Entities collaboratively created between Tom DeFanti, Dan Sandin (UICC) and Phil Morton, Bob Snyder (SAIC) and others are represented from a couple of Electronic Visualization Events (1974-76) performed in Chicago.*

Multiplied into this 20th Century, normal teleportation terminal is an interesting tactile device. A remote-control console for Users to feel-around with. These 'feelers' enable geometric modification of the television picture. By hand-playing and finger-touching the User can change angle, focus, intensity, and scale (4 control dimensions) of the picture coming-in from the other terminal. Effectively, one can

look around, within the other terminal to see whatever.

This same kind of tactile device is commonly found, ready-made, in more security minded heavy handed niches of our commerce environment, such as: SUPER MARKETS. DEPARTMENT STORES. MUSEUM GALLERIES. MONEY BANKS. GOVERNMENT STRUCTURES. Of course the transmitted on-going dialogue frequently deals with correction/re-correction of this type of light hands-on geometric control. To wit -

"...will you ZOOM my face eye can't see." - *TV Student*

You may find as a User that it doesn't take long to learn (exhaust) the tele- portation aspects of these terminals. As experienced telecommunication terminal Users, some of us ran out of interest right now. Others found teleportation aspects reason for longer pause.

#### - ASPECTS OF TRANSFORMATION -

*Re - quotable cliches and processed yak-yaks:*

"...my kind of study in communication is really a study of transformation whereas Information Theory and all existing theories of communication I know of are theories of transportation. All the official communication theories studied in the Schools of North America are theories of how you move data from point A. to point B. to point C., with minimal distortion. That is not what eye study at all. Information Theory I understand and use; but, Information Theory is a theory of transportation. It has nothing to do with the effects these forms have on you... ..the problem in the transportation theory of communication is to get the noise, the interference, off the track and let it go through; get it past the barriers, the opposition of the young, just to move it, keep it going! I have no interest, much, in that theory. My theory or concern is with - WHAT DO THESE MEDIA DO TO THE PEOPLE WHO USE THEM? So, mine is a transformation theory. HOW PEOPLE ARE CHANGED BY THE INSTRUMENTS THEY EMPLOY. "

- MARSHALL McLuhan, 1974; *from a Cindy Neal, Tampa, Fla./Phil Morton, Chicago, Ill. videotape (see, SAIC Video Data Bank).*

"...I designed the IMAGE PROCESSOR from the point of view of, what does the student have to do to use it? ...not from, what can the machine do? ...with electronic visualization done properly, the feedback is no longer the limit; the limit then becomes how fast your mind can process information; and that, is a much higher limit in some cases, especially when processing visual information."

- DAN SANDIN, 1972; *from a conversational audio-tape w/Phil Morton.*

"In relation to the computer-tool hookups of automation, it is to be noted that all tools are externalizations of originally integral functions of human organisms. ...universities must compete or die!"

- R. Buckminster Fuller, Chicago, 1965.

"...jamming on equipment like this (computers) demands more from the human engineering side of design than ordinary real-time computer graphics. The system called, GRAphics SYmbiosis System (GRASS) was first designed to help artists interactively explore art. ...we now have an annual event, like a recital in music, it's PERFORMANCE but, of animated 3-D Images with color image processing and sound synthesis (meyer kind of TV)..."

- Tom DeFanti, Chicago, 1973

"...about tha current POP-cultural explosion and use of tha ra-did-deo (C.B. Radio). The first thang a User must due is to re-name, 10-4. Yur new name is culled yur 'handle'. Ya must cum up wif a handle or nobuddy will talk wif you. Re-name ur ya don't play tha game dumbly! 10-4..."

- CROSSEYE, Chicago, 1974.

With electronic speed one learns the game of broadcasting and point-to-point telecommunications through USE of C.B. Radio. The old 'professional' University slow-training into Television, Radio and Communication departments is comparatively, ineffective. In effect, for \$69.00 (intuition) personal tooling, you matriculate into a 'comprehensive broadcaster' right now, you're ON-THE-AIR!!! However, in a two-way telecommunication format. Perform. One-way professional telecommunications become very dumb; in one-way you can't talk back 'n' forth, effectively.

"...tha ra-did-deo wuz jist the first 'pop', 10-4. Many more cumin' yur way for shore. ...ya' cast yur good eye on tha va-did-deo (Video) thar if ya'll; and them come-putters too; tha's Anny-log and Dig-it-All, okaaaay? Thay cumin' down this ole' two-way (Interstate Highway) for-ten shore! ...**BREAKER-BROKE**... yur turn, User-go..."

... YA' GOT ANNY ON THA FRONT-DOOR  
N' DIG-IT IN THA BACK;  
GOT-SHA IN THA KITCHEN  
N' CROSSEYE IN THA RACK ... ...go ahead, I can't keep up wif ya'..

- from a videotape recorded live (@78mph) while crossing over into the state of New (20th Century) Mexico. Transcription between: 'SKUNKY', a Black American driving a black-and-white, Moving Truck, and 'CROSSEYE', an Educational Dropout driving a mobile Videospace Van. North America, 1975.

Much of our public-media environment is contoured through one-way munication formats. The professional TV and RADIO system, the EDUCATIONAL system, the RELIGION system, the ART system; all are retarded in one-way munication formats. The 'system'

In its current (1977) state of the art condition, is being taken lightly (via light-weight A/V technologies) in communication drives such as this week of work in the gallery, handled:

# electronic activity under art surveillance

## MAJOR USERS OF THE VIDEO AREA

Annette Barbier	Lou Levinson
J.Z. Corbett	John Mabey
Nick Despota	Mary O'Kiersey
Chip Dodsworth	James Passin
Mark Fausner	Andy Rosen
Tom Finerty	Edward Rankus
Estelle Kenney	Christine Tamblyn
Dan Kwong	Jane Veeder
Barbara Latham	Peter Weiner

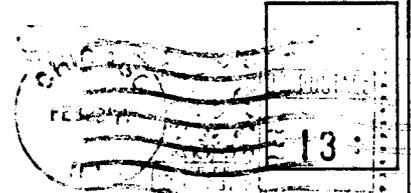
saic

GALLERY

SCHOOL OF THE ART INSTITUTE  
OF CHICAGO

Jackson Blvd. at Columbus Dr.

March 4-12  
Opening: March 4, 4-6 p.m.



CROSSEYE

~~████████████████████~~ St.  
Chicago, Ill. 60608

## SPECIAL THANKS TO:

Jane Veeder; Graduate Student - VIDEO AREA, who coordinated this exhibit and detailed out the vital intersections of this 'week-of-work'. Jane's unwavering marathon stamina in making this all publicly visible is indeed, a real-time, time consuming aspect of our ELECTRONIC VISUALIZATION CENTER. Thanks Jane.

C.B.S. Television; Channel #2, WBBM - Chicago, who broadcast on the 6:00 and 10:00 News various live and recorded works in this exhibit. Using the same light-weight tools of communication, in practice, more than likely facilitates co-communication. Thank you, Bruce Miller.