

THE VASULKAS:

TAPELIST UPDATE

FROM 1979 TO PRESENT

Violin Power, 1970-78

Time: 10 min.

"Violin Power" is a demo tape on how to play video on the violin.

Stasto, May 1977

Time: 7 Min.

The image material in "Stasto" is earth and water. After a brief introduction, there is a fast switching in real time between two sequences. In the second half of this tape we look alternately at the direct camera image, and the same image as it is held briefly in a computer memory.

6-6-77, Steina.

Nature begins to reveal itself in the opening water imagery, but we are jerked away from the revelation by a sophomoric montage which is clearly pretentious and unmotivated, calling attention to the director's lack of clear purpose. The result can best be described as a hodge-podge. The director is daring the audience to turn away. Later in the tape, nature "reveals" itself through the director's manipulation of montage in audio. A cute formalist idea, but one which acts as a long one-liner.

10-14-79, Hal Himmelstein.

Enjoyed the tape. Especially like the abrupt freeze/fram/jerking, and the concept of water filling up the frame.

10-21-79, Diane Spodarek.

B/w water splash. Sharp cuts, nice structure. Computer images too long & unchanging. First part much more exciting than computer images.

10-17-79, Karen Nulf.

I liked the earlier portion of the film, but found it rather over-extended. The sound was not satisfying despite the visuals. I thought it would bring in colour and felt disappointed that it did not get there. There was a sensation here, of a tool which in anyone's hands, could produce "art".

10-14-79, G. Semsel

Flux, November 1977

Time: 7.25 min.

A two character material, water flow and video noise are the basic sources of multi-directional movement within switched frames or slow scanned noise fields.

Artifacts, October 1980

Time: 22 min.

"Artifacts" is a second in a series of tapes: "Syntax of binary images", "Artifacts" and "Transformations". Artifacts, as the title indicates, is a collection of images initiated by basic algorithmical procedures, to verify the functional operation of a newly created tool.

The "Digital Image Articulator" or simply "Imager" was designed and constructed by Schier/Vasulka specifically for the purpose of studying real time video image performance. (For more information, see "Cantaloup" a video tape report on the design, construction and use of this tool).

By "real time" it is meant here that all operations are performed on field by field basis, (60 fields per second of television standard) and further indicates a severe time competition for processing of each Picture Element. Mainly for the same reason, images are reduced to 4 bit densities (16 steps of gray scale) and appear on T.V. screen as a matrix of 128 by 128 elements.

"Artifacts" portray rather simple functions, mostly in the range of Boolean primitives and simple arithmetic operations, or where more complex calculation is necessary, a modest amount of numbers is calculated for each new field, for example 256 of X and Y numbers, controlling functions of zooming.

The work succeeding artifacts is called "Transformations".

"Artifacts" were made possible with support from New York State Council on the Arts.

In search for the Castle, February 1981

Time: 9:29 Min.

Originally a study of wide angle lens performance, the videotape became later suitable for variations of algorithmical processing through the "Vasulka Image Articulator".

Progeny, February 1981

Time: 18:30 Min

After seeing an installation of Steina's "Machine Vision," sculptor Bradford Smith suggested that his work should be explored in video. With Woody Vasulka and Steina, a videotape "Progeny" was created.

As in "Machine Vision", all camera movements are pre-programmed mechanically and optically and executed without further intervention. This same principle of pre-programming was applied to the electronic processing later.

"Progeny" was realized through funds from National Endowment for the Arts.

Summer Salt, February 1982

Time: 18.00 Min.

"Summer Salt" is a Video Tape in five parts subtitled: "Low Ride", "Sky High", "Somersault", "Rest" and "Photographic Memory". Within each segment a specific "way of seeing" is used by mechanical/optical means.

Produced with funds from New Mexico Arts Division and National Endowment for the Arts.

Bad, December 1979

Time: 2 min.

BAD is the mnemonic command for the B-Address register of our Buffer Oriented Digital Device. There are several functions in this register, namely: Up/Down, Left/Right, X and Y maps, and 9 variations on resolution, here manifested as stretching or squeezing of the image.

The tape starts with the register at Zero and adds One at a pre-programmed speed. For sound, the most active bits are selected, translated through digital/analog converter to voltage controlled oscillators. Then blue is added on the darkest gray (black) and red on a middle gray, leaving the remaining image Black/White.

Selected Treecuts, March 1980

Time: 9.50 min.

The movement in this tape is produced by an automatic in/out zoom lens and rotating prism.

It is composed of a rythmical collage of images of trees, conceived either directly from a camera or from camera images held briefly in a computer memory.

"Selected Treecuts" were made with funds from National Endowment for the Arts.

Cantaloup, May 1980

Time: 27.50 min.

This tape is about the struggle to define the basis for computer control of a digital image device, for a descriptive language and necessary programming languages.

The device was designed to be low resolution/high speed field by field operating tool. Its microprocessor based architecture is a concept which can achieve transformations between two images at video field rate, pixel by pixel (pixel = picture element).

The tape contains sequences ranging from the first artifacts of the machine to more program demanding image transformations. For example, working with digitizing and storing the image in memory, gives the option of manipulating image in variable time. Another sequence (the zoom), shows the microprocessor at work as it must recalculate the position of horizontal and vertical addresses for each point within the video field, in order to achieve multiplication of images on the screen.

Cantaloup was made possible with public funds from New York State Council on the Arts, and is a production of The Television Laboratory at WNET/THIRTEEN.

Urban Episodes, June 1980

Time: 8 min. 35 sec.

In the spring of 1975 I started to work on a serie of installations and tapes, all involving mechanized modes of camera control. The effort resulted in a collection of works which I call "Machine Vision."

Ordinarily the camera view is associated with human view point, paying attention to the human condition around. In this serie the camera conforms to a mechanized decision making of instruments, with the movements and attention directed towards their own machine viewpoints.

Urban Episodes, shot in downtown Minneapolis, is the latest in this serie. It was produced for KTCA, St. Paul, Minnesota, with funds from NEA.

Steina