"The West" (1983)

University Art Museum, Albuquerque

Any action of man on land, stays recorded for long in the South-West. In no other region of this country does the presence of the sun play such significant role in the ecology of land, arid and eroded, with an exceptional clarity of the night skies, forming notions of extra terrestrial importance in the minds of its inhabitants. The landscape, by its dimension and by its geometric and textural variety, inspires man to create harmonious structures, dwellings and other earth works. Significantly, the exercise of one of the most advanced scientific disciplines, the Very Large Array (VLA) radio telescope system, utilizes these conditions and has also inspired creations of profoundly meditative pieces of land art based upon geo-observations and other events related to the position of stars.

"The West" is a video environment, involving situations where human expression results in the marking of earth by building dwellings and ceremonial structures, creating works of art and developing scientific instruments of landscape proportions.

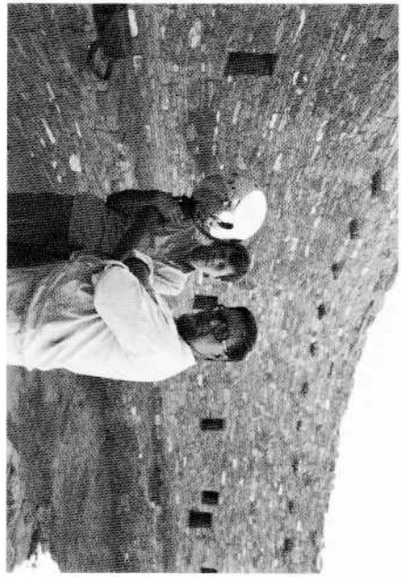
The Vasulkas

Steina (born in Iceland, 1940) attended the Music Conservatory in Prague from 1959 to 1963, and joined the Icelandic Symphony Orchestra in 1964. Woody Vasulka was born in Brno, Czechoslovakia, and studied metal technologies and hydraulic mechanics at the School of Industrial Engineering there. He then entered the Academy of Performing Arts, Faculty of Film and Television, in Prague, where he began to direct and produce short films.

Woody and Steina came to the United States in 1964, and lived in New York City. They have been pioneers in the development of the electronic arts since 1970, when 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 through a broad range of technological tools and aesthetic concerns. 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 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 two video tapes, "Artifacts" and "The Commission," an operatic work based on the legend of Paganini and Hector Berlioz. Steina has produced a series of video tapes relating to the land of the Southwest.

STEINA & WOODY VASULKA



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