INSTALLATION: VIDEO 
AN EXHIBITION OF DIAGRAMS 
DOCUMENTATION 
AND VIDEO INSTALLATION

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PATRICK CLANCY
WENDY CLARKE
BRIAN ENO
KEN FEINGOLD
DAN GRAHAM
GARY HILL
SARA HORNBACKER
SHIGEKO KUBOTA
Patrick Clancy
video still illustrating
the hybrid digital/analog audio synthesizer
from the installation "Paseo Video.
1974, Picker Gallery, Colgate University
Video art, which has grown out of non-commercial genres such as performance and conceptual art, is currently being confronted with a system which promotes more commercially viable artforms. The reemergence of decorative styles in painting and sculpture, in addition to the increasing predilection for art which has commodity potential, seems to be superseding more conceptual forms in the arena of critical approbation. To add to this dilemma, it appears that the existence of video art may well be threatened by the state and federal cutbacks in the arts proposed by the current Reagan administration. Major funding cuts in the budgets of artists' resources such as the National Endowment for the Arts will prove to be lethal particularly to the video installation genre. In the event of such cuts, and along with the current interest in collectible works of art, we are likely to see a serious decline in the momentum built up by experimental video over the last twenty years. One begins to wonder if video really is the same medium which, in 1974, Hollis Frampton predicted would enjoy "the hope of a privileged future."

Some video artists, responding to the instability of public funding, and gallery sponsorship have sought out larger audiences and a more lucrative income. The recent marketing of the video disk has given artists the opportunity to mass distribute their work via the commercial recording industry. Others prefer to explore the possibilities of video art in the traditional broadcasting networks. Most video artists, however, will find their greatest opportunity by tapping into the budding cable networks, though only a few of these networks have granted access to artists and, then, in limited formats.

If access is greatly expanded, however, a basic conflict which resides within the psyches of many video artists may finally near resolution. David Antin summed up the general conflict in 1975:

[Commercial television] shares the essential conditions of production and viewing of everything seen on the video monitor screen [and] has also provided almost all the background viewing experience of the video audience and even of the video artists. So no matter how different from television the works of individual artists may be, the television experience dominates the phenomenology of viewing and haunts video exhibitions the way the experience of movies haunt all film.

This dominance can easily be traced back to 1963, when Nam June Paik first began his kamikaze TV modifications. Far from discouraging the average video artist, this dominating influence has serviced the artist with a host of material to index for his own work. This source is by itself inadequate, in that TV fails to stimulate the consciousness of its viewers. The alternative? Les Levine proposes:
that the way to deal with the media and big business's negative control of our images and ever-increasing appetites is for the artist to take charge of image-making once again, using all of the techniques and experiences developed by the forces of propaganda, such as TV commercials, documentary film, set-up photographs and so on to develop an art that addresses itself to individual human concerns. We, the image makers of our society, have a responsibility to present a model that will bring about deeper, personal understanding of the human condition that will put people and their lives over the forces of power.\(^3\)

We assume that this responsibility also includes the expansion of broadcasting access. But if this power is afforded, and access is acquired, in what position does the video installation artist find himself? The video installation, in contrast with the video broadcast, is a form of access which is more selective of its audience. We do not wish to examine the political or aesthetic pros and cons of such selectivity in this catalogue. Nor did we, the curators of this exhibition, have this in mind when we selected the artists represented here. It must be pointed out, however, that the video artist does indeed modify the formal treatment as well as the technological properties of video work in a way which makes the format more intimate. In this way the video artist turns away from the industry . . . a run from the money, so to speak.

It is hard to imagine a medium more suitable for the establishment and the conveyance of intimate relations than that of video. Yet it is also the medium used most assaultingly in regard to that very principle of intimacy between video maker and viewer. Those video artists who are currently entering into the mass market or broadcasting arena are actually aiding in the facilitation of the assault on intimacy. The artist who chooses to fabricate an installation in the gallery, or the public site, however, also chooses to perpetuate a more conventional artist-audience relationship, one which is intimate. This type of video art need not end up an anchronism of our time, a danger which seems increasingly impending as funding is held back.

The artists in this exhibition and catalogue have all been selected based on the merit of their installational work, rather than from their videotapes alone. Some of them, such as Dara Birnbaum and Brian Eno (with the assistance of Tom Bowes) have enjoyed the access of public transmission via cable TV. Most of these artists do make videotapes which lend themselves to the potential of broadcasting. In this catalogue we have concentrated on assimilating works in which the installation encounter and the open-circuited relay become as important as the prerecorded tape. It is our opinion that this two-fold virtuosity is what makes video one of the most facile artforms in existence today. What other medium can be so readily adapted to function directly for both the lone viewer and the culturally expansive domain of hundreds of millions?
Some of these installations have already been realized as works of art; others have only been proposed in sketches and diagrams. Many of the diagrams were actually maps of the placement of the video cameras or monitors or both. Like maps, these diagrams show the environmental overview of an overlapping arrangement of video space. When encountering these two-dimensional works, the audience is asked to discriminate between the finished product and this layering of written information.

It was our interest as curators to represent all facets of the video installations: photographic documents of past events, descriptions of installations which were current at the time of preparation of this catalogue; and projections of the imagination into the future. The statements included in this catalogue were written by the artists themselves unless otherwise indicated. Hopefully, video installations will be with us for a very long time, supported by an adequate and accessible funding resource. If not, we may well have to content ourselves for some time with only diagrams and sketches of unrealized works.

G. Roger Denson
Kathy High

FOOTNOTES:


INSTALLATIONS:
HALLWALLS, MAY 1980
Brian Eno

2 Fifth Avenue: Video Installation
edited by Tom Bowes

For the past ten years, Brian Eno has displayed an ability to work in a variety of media. He is currently composing and producing a series of albums he calls “Ambient Music” which relates to his video work in their intent “to brighten the environment by adding stimulus to it – to introduce calm and a space to think.” He also says of his video 2 Fifth Avenue, “this was made from the window of an apartment I’ve lived in. The intention is to create a pictorial space rather than a narrative progression: In the same sense, the music that accompanies it is intended to construct a space rather than to occupy one.”

This installation is scored to Eno’s group of compositions entitled Music For Airports. The video was designed for transit spaces and has in fact been exhibited at LaGuardia Airport, New York and at Grand Central Station, New York as well as galleries and museums throughout the world.

The monitors used are placed in a vertical position and Eno varies the channels by manipulating color distortion, light variations, sequence in timing and framing and editing so that it presents variations that are fugue-like in its slowly-evolving, hypnotic compositions. Brian Eno creates textures by combining and editing versions of the same phrase in his consistently economical use of his resources.

published by permission from E.G. Records.
Video installation of 2 Fifth Avenue at Hallwalls Gallery, 1980, by Brian Eno with technical assistance from Tom Bowes
There is a kind of feeling of the monitor(s) addressing each other or one self with the viewer being caught in between. An image arises of the monitors being headphones and are viewed peripherally. The text takes on a certain insistent power as it seemingly generates the images...
One channel one (audio) is a continuous spoken text which determined the editing points of the original tape; for every syllable there is a new image. On channel two (audio) is a more sporadic spoken text which comments on channel one text.
I'm sure it could have gone another way, a completely different way, a way that hasn't ever come to mind but that's a given. One can never observe all the possibilities and still go on to the next. Sometimes one just exists and enters again. I think I can agree with myself that it's not a matter of choice. You might think that agreeing is a kind of choice even a blatant choice, but that's not all you're interested in either. There's another determining factor and that's what we have to concentrate on, at least I do. I agree it's easy to get sidetracked. It's not even that there's a lot going on. We're just busy. I mean it's not complicated. You can go on. I can go on. We can assume there's something happening or not something happening. I don't know perhaps it's unfair to go on. Maybe we should take our minds off it; think about something else. Maybe it's not worth thinking about at all, but that leads to other things just as problematic. Maybe it should be more complicated, we're looking at it too simply. Look we don't have to consider all the possibilities but instead really complicate one, if that's what you want to do. I don't know, maybe it's my fault. I came prepared. I'm not ready to be complex. I don't think that's the answer though. I don't think it's an answer we're looking for. In certain ways that's probably obvious by now, even knowing that you're a little uneasy with it and I am too, but I think it's a way I can work with now and maybe you can and maybe you can't. I mean I'm thinking about that. That's time involved here and it's yours as much as mine. I certainly don't want to threaten your time or make you have to feel decisive yet I want you to be here. I mean I assume you are here but I don't want to back you into a corner, and by the same token I don't want to start from that corner. That's a particular relationship I would like to put aside for now. I know this isn't free of bullshit. I mean I'm coming from somewhat of a self conscious place. It's kind of stacking. I mean the ideas just pile up but aren't interwoven. They're not connected or disconnected. I can see it, disembodied ideas being thrown against the wall, but that isn't fair. That isn't fair for me or you. That really kind of loads things down and that's not my intention. I can assure you of that. I want you to be with me. I mean you don't have to listen just hear me out. I don't want you to be involved in deciphering anything but then it's your prerogative and I don't want to get in your way. There's something that can be said for that and I hear you, but I don't want to listen to it. I realize it's easy for one to say that I'm being ambiguous but I don't think so. I mean if you want to leave you can do that or you can just turn off. I'm not trying to say I'm indifferent. I just think there's a way here. Maybe you really do hear me and I'm going on and on, but we have to continue for sometime. I mean I think that's part of it. It would be easy to stop at this point. It would just be interesting and over and possibly boring, but that isn't even the issue. It's important that we go on. This is the way I think it has to be right now. If it wasn't this it would be this and there's still this area we have to get through so that this and that won't become significant to this. I mean what I'm talking about isn't important in that way that importance draws attention. You might think this is a game of some sort, but really you've tried ways that were adjacent to this one when you weren't thinking about the consequences. You may even have heard this before in so many words but I want to go on. I'm not interested in this kind of talking. It has its purpose but it can get very sticky. I would rather settle with you, somehow that's nonreversible, a way of being with you when it's the only way. When I arrived here I had no way of knowing it would be this way. I thought about it a lot in the beginning. I tried different ways of thinking of you, what your response would be and that has to be considered now too. I've never lost sight of that. I don't think there's been a loss of anything. It's just that I haven't been accumulating things for me or you. There's always time for a sense of urgency. I want to avoid that for now. I don't know though maybe you're waiting for that, waiting, and listening.
DIAGRAMS, DOCUMENTS & SKETCHES
Dara Birnbaum

KISS THE GIRLS:
MAKE THEM CRY

DARA BIRNBAUM
Installed Realities
(Originally printed in Real Life Magazine)

A 'professional cameraperson' will keep one eye on the viewfinder of his/her camera as the other eye is kept open to/focused on the 'general field of action'/set. Thus, he/she can simultaneously observe two concurrent realities – that of the black and white world within the viewfinder and that of the 'colored world' which surrounds this (intent) image.

Use of the Corner Insert

The *corner insert* allows for two continuous realities to co-exist on screen (within the frame) at the same time. Whereas, with a *horizontally or vertically split-screen*, the proportion of one defined area to another tends to be equal, the *corner insert* produces unequal relation of parts of the screen. This inequality allows one to stress dissimilar sets of visual information at any one time during broadcasting/viewing. In addition, the *corner insert* permits one to control the relative size of insert versus main image as well as the sizing of both images in relation to one another. Extended possibilities become apparent: the particular corner that the insert will occupy and the contrasting of different sets of images to one another. The psychological effect of the smaller size of the *corner insert* as against the larger, full-screen image is of prime importance. It is, in fact, the smaller, contained image which remains a concise whole (a 'gestalt') able to key ('trigger') information in relation to the full-screen image. The smaller *corner insert* as it is 'whole' is seen by the viewer as representative of a 'totality' – relative to the presented situation being depicted on the screen.

Within the broadcast industry, this inserted portion of the *occupied screen* is frequently referred to as 'window' while the major portion of occupied screen is referred to as 'wallpaper.' The reference of 'window' seems to relate to the function of 'looking out'/'through' the existing framework(depicted situation. In viewing, the 'window' (*corner insert*) would then describe the 'event' rather than the 'individual action' occurring on the screen.
Dara Birnbaum

Installation of *Kiss the Girls: Make Them Cry* at the Salon de Coiffure, Inc./H. Hair, 1980
Paseo Vidéo (Energy Generator)

A non-hierarchical field where past, present, and future are one. Paseo Vidéo is a standing wave, sonic, and video environment which is generated by a hybrid digital/analogue audio synthesizer, recorded sound, a microprocessor, and video. Depending on their height and rate of movement through the field, each person experiences different aspects of the sonic plasma while maintaining a ritual connection with the whole. Five large video monitors face up towards the participants, around the center of the Paseo. These monitors are fed tape-delayed images from a low-light camera mounted above this innermost pathway. The recorded image either precedes or follows the participants, depending on their rate of movement around this pathway.

In Mexico and Central America I would go to the Paseos which occurred in small towns and villages. On Saturday nights men and women would come into the central squares of the villages. The men would walk in a clockwise direction, while the women walked in a counterclockwise pathway around the square. A kind of sexual battery or energy generator which would go on for hours... (Colgate University, 1974)
Lingam/Yoni (Image Generator)

Two video cameras, one operated by women the other by men, develop particular points of view in relation to the evolving perceptual field. The female camera uses a wide-angle and zoom lens, occasionally a prism, and is run through a special effects generator to create a dense, multi-layered general image of the event space. This camera pans the space in a rotating counterclockwise direction. Around this central area the male camera, mounted on wheels, travels in a clockwise trajectory through space. Its lens covers both an event occurring in the central area, and two scrolls (one above the other) which surround the entire circumference of the outer gallery walls. The video lingam and yoni includes points of view as well as representations of male and female space, and other opposed dualities such as day/night, security/danger, order/disorder, above/below, solid/liquid.

The male camera moves through the female yoni channel. The female camera observes from the male lingam. The female camera structures the event space (metaphor), and the male camera continuously traces the event space (metanomy). The two are compared and superimposed on each other. Each point of view includes elements of the other, and which point of view is dominant at any time depends on the context. The electron tube and magnetic yoke combine to generate video images. A pulsing, erotic, electromagnetic field of wave energies, within which model entities (electrons, people) swim, come into being, and disappear.

(Williams College, 1979)
Diagram of Lingam/Yoni, Williams College, 1979 L.

Drawings by Clancy used in the installation R.

A and B. The swimmer approaches the wall with his normal stroke.
Patrick Clancy

Superimposed image for the Central Myth
Tableaux from the installation

Diagram of proposed installation entitled
American Mystery

American Mystery (Marginal Theorem)

A videotaped document of an event that may have occurred in the same space that the tape is presented in, fictionalized space.

Two naked attendant figures (male and female) pass objects, sounds, and words to a central figure. Hemispheres of the brain. Lies/truths, representations/the represented, paradigms/syntax. Clues and misplaced objects are meaningless to the detective. Video, sound, and other artifacts remain in the central area, isomorphic with the point of view of the observer. Around the central area are notations: photoscrolls, written texts, and diagrams. One of the major images – the relief-carved panel from the Palace at Palenque.

(Proposal, 1980)

Male and female attendant figures around central figures. Rubbing from Tablero del Palacio
Wendy Clarke

Interactive Video Sculpture (shown at the Whitney Museum of American Art, NYC, 1976)

I am exploring video much like an artist-inventor. I have become fascinated by a special kind of space created only by video, and these pieces have been conceived so that each person can experience this new space. New perceptions come from shuffling sensations already familiar to us; our brains, our eyes, our muscles, our movements change to fit our new knowledge of a new space. In order to complete or 'play' with each piece, the viewer must discover new perceptions and move in specific patterns; this discovery process becomes the emotional content of the pieces. Each piece describes a different kind of videospace. Reversal of images, kinetic two-dimensional representation, lens distortion and space foreshortening are some of the elements explored. I purposely avoided using video-tape in this situation because I wanted to work in live space and real time. The entire gallery has been designed as an environment conducive to play. I am an enthusiastic believer in play as a way to discovery – and also, it is fun. Because the pieces are participatory, people can bring their own characters to the show. Video is a new medium; its uses are just now being discovered; this is one such exploration.¹

¹) Text originally printed by the Whitney Museum.
Detail from Olympic installation
Blackhole Ski Jump
(commissioned for the Winter Olympics 1980)
Blackhole Ski Jump, in collaboration with Hilary Harris

Inspired by the sport of ski jumping, Blackhole Ski Jump is designed so that participants can experience kinetic and ecstatic sensations. Standing on the skis mounted in the blackhole, participants look at the monitor in front of them, and see themselves flying through the air, off into the universe. Their images are combined with images of the background. Both the moving camera of the blackhole and the moving background of the whitehole are set into motion by the participant. This video sculpture is to be improvised by anyone who wishes to play. Enjoy!

For me, video is a medium that makes things possible, not just for the artist or those who have been initiated into the mysteries of complicated technology, but for anyone. Essential to all of my work is the participation of an audience, which is introduced to experiences impossible in any other context – experiences which tend to humanize and demystify the videographic process, and whose aesthetic value is measured by the growth and awareness they generate. I envision my role as an artist in terms of the planning, facilitating, directing, and synthesizing of interactive situations.  

2.) Text originally printed for the Winter Olympics.
Portrait of Descartes with Live Rats and Birds,
diagram of proposed installation, 1960
“From this time I begin to know what I am with a little more clearness and distinctness than before; but nevertheless it still seems to me, and I cannot prevent myself from thinking, that corporeal things, whose images are framed by thought, which are tested by the senses, are much more distinctly known than the obscure part of me which does not come under the imagination. Although really it is very strange to say that I know and understand more distinctly these things whose existence seems to me dubious, which are unknown to me, and which do not belong to me, than others of the truth of which I am convinced, which are known to me and which pertain to my real nature, in a word, than myself. But I see clearly how the case stands: my mind loves to wander, and cannot yet suffer itself to be retained within the limits of truth.”

– Rene Descartes, Meditations on First Philosophy 1641
Dan Graham

A large ADVENT video projection screen is placed on the front lawn, facing pedestrians on the sidewalk. It shows an image of whatever TV program is being watched by the family on their TV set within the house. When the set is off, the video projector is off; when channels are being changed, this is seen on the enlarged public screen outside the house.
The video piece is located in a modern shopping arcade. It utilizes two of the shop window showcases which display their standard goods and which are opposite each other. Each showcase has a mirror fixed to the back wall, parallel to the window. Shoppers, looking through the window can see all of the following: the images of the showcase's merchandise reflected in the mirror, and at the same time they see the image of the other side of the arcade with the merchandise in the opposite showcase; they see the reflections of the outside of the window surface, and the mirror's reflection of those on the opposite window; and they see the other shoppers who look into these windows or who pass through the arcade between them.

Both shop windows have television monitors located front and center at eye level. One monitor (on the right diagram) faces the window, and the other faces the mirror. Each monitor has a video camera resting upon its top surface. The camera lens on the right faces the mirror; and the camera lens on the left faces the window.

The view from the camera on the right is transmitted live to the monitor on the left; but the view from the left camera is transmitted 5 seconds delayed to the right monitor.
This could be red

Textural Strategy for a Video Installation of Mere Utterances

A Performance for a Closed Circuit Cast.

This transparent text visually simulates the conceptual inclusions and structuring of a performance installation for prepared magnetic tapes (video and audio), projected filmic images (16mm. and slides) and 4 performer voices with sequencer. These prepared materials integrate blends of film, video, sound and voice to create the acoustic and visual images finally represented by their discrete technologies in live performance.
**sign:** "mutable element which is dependent on the intention of its creator who is assigning to a phenomenon the function of a sign in the event that one wishes to point to another phenomenon in reality; also dependent on the receiver, on one's ability to read or decipher this double context."

*Film as Language, Barbara Mruklik*

"Analysis attempts to substitute this text "the primitive speech of desire" for the literal text, the formal account; it does this by moving from one meaning to another, so that it is not desires that are placed at the center so much as the form they take, their content (abstractions) and their implications. The symbol becomes the image embodied in the object, and the vicissitudes of meaning can be attained only through the vicissitudes of instinct."

— Sigmund Freud
Installation of photo transparencies, lit from the rear, with prerecorded sound track entitled
*Mere Utterances*
River

Two channel pieces, videotapes of my face which was colorized, close up and swimming. TV sets (two 5" Sony trinitron sets and 12" set) will be hung from the ceiling down on the water, inside of the water container which was made of Stainless steel, mixed with mirror. Water pump which makes three different waves slowly and spontaneously like River. Audience at the space will see the Reflection on the water of River. River piece which I would like to dedicate for the Hudson river in New York City which river I always love, and the Mississippi river which I haven’t seen yet . . .
Shigeko Kubota
Diagram and photograph of video installation
River, 1980
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