 SOME NOTES ON MY USE OF VIDEO
Vito Acconci

1. Face-to-face contact: person on-screen faces person in front of screen. (The video-viewer is met by a screen approximately face-size, whereas, in film, the viewer encounters a screen twenty feet high.)

2. Film + landscape, silence (the sound comes from something too large to be a person — talk functions as back ground music, myth-making 'titles'). Video + close-up, sound.

3. Video-viewer sits close to the screen — the distance Edward Hall calls 'personal distance,' where three-dimensionality is emphasized. But the image on video is flat, grainy — video, then, serves to decrease distance, to approach Hall's 'intimate distance,' where vision is blurred and distorted (appropriately, the video image presents itself in dots).

4. Since sharp focus is lost, there's a dependence on sound. But it might be difficult to talk about something (Martin Joos: 'An utterance in intimate distance avoids giving the addressess information from outside the speaker's skin'). The point is simply to remind, hardly 'inform' — the addressess of some feeling inside the speaker's skin.

5. If both the image and the sound in video are only 'basic,' only 'outlines,' there might be two approaches: either humanly pushy ('I can push up against the image on video is flat, grainy, video, then, serves to decrease distance, to approach Hall's 'intimate distance,' where vision is blurred and distorted (appropriately, the video image presents itself in dots).')

6. Video, then, as a place to keep, to move, to keep talking — improve, to avoid habitual senses altogether, and concentrate on pure-energy transmission — or, on the other hand, be humanly pushy: I can push up against the screen, as if to throw myself at the viewer, as if to fight the neutrality of the situation, push myself through.

7. Video-viewer sits close to the screen — the distance Edward Hall calls 'personal distance,' where three-dimensionality is emphasized. But the image on video is flat, grainy — video, then, serves to decrease distance, to approach Hall's 'intimate distance,' where vision is blurred and distorted (appropriately, the video image presents itself in dots)....

8. Charlie Chaplin (talking about the necessity for long shots in film comedy: 'There's nothing comic about a face twenty feet tall.') In contrast, the face on video can be handled — with a little effort, you can bounce it around like a ball. (Possibly video makes it hard to work in a single key — no tragedy, no horror, no spectacle, nothing sacred, it thickens, or muddies, the plot.)

9. The more recent pieces might be said to play on the notion of video's 'dual key' (a circle that includes the viewer, a circle that's completed by the viewer — my point is to take it back to the viewer, jobs at the viewer (cf. TV newscasts, commercials).)

10. The problem is that it's too easy to take a videotape as seriously as an installation (the installation can, of course, include video — but, in that case, the tape is part of the whole situation, the tape itself becomes the plot: 'There's nothing comic about a face twenty feet tall.') In contrast, the face on video can be handled — with a little effort, you can bounce it around like a ball. (Possibly video makes it hard to work in a single key — no tragedy, no horror, no spectacle, nothing sacred, it thickens, or muddies, the plot.)

11. My first question is: where am I in relation to the viewer — above, below, to the side, back... (If this is established, then I can figure out the reason for my physical position, I can decide: what I have to do, what I should say.)

12. Problem: it's hard for me to take a videotape as seriously as an installation (the installation can, of course, include video — but, in that case, the tape is part of the whole situation, the tape itself becomes the plot: 'There's nothing comic about a face twenty feet tall.') In contrast, the face on video can be handled — with a little effort, you can bounce it around like a ball. (Possibly video makes it hard to work in a single key — no tragedy, no horror, no spectacle, nothing sacred, it thickens, or muddies, the plot.)

13. The problem is that it's too easy to take a videotape as seriously as an installation (the installation can, of course, include video — but, in that case, the tape is part of the whole situation, the tape itself becomes the plot: 'There's nothing comic about a face twenty feet tall.') In contrast, the face on video can be handled — with a little effort, you can bounce it around like a ball. (Possibly video makes it hard to work in a single key — no tragedy, no horror, no spectacle, nothing sacred, it thickens, or muddies, the plot.)

14. The problem is that a videotape is 'thrown into' a gallery. The room is usually darkened, probably with fixed seating — the tape, then, becomes a spectacle and loses its quality of 'home companion'; there's a crowd of people in front of a monitor — too many faces to come face to face with; there might be more than one monitor showing the same tape — so that I can't have a definite point to stand in.

15. Possibilities for a viewing situation: two walls, each about eight feet square, facing each other, about three feet between them — the video monitor is placed in the middle of one wall, at eye-level, the sound is adjusted to normal speaking volume (the viewer, then, has to actively meet the image; he can stand outside and catch only glimpses, or only mumbles; or he can squeeze in between the walls and edge up to it: or he can step right up and put his face against the screen.}

**The Black Taratula**

**Kubota, Shigo**

**Akiro Kokubo**

**Nsncy**

**Richard Landry**

**Douglas Huebler**

**William Gwin**

**Ernie Gusella**

**Lynda Benglis**

**Jared Bark**

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Joan Jonas

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Shoat

Vito Accconci

Roger Welch.

**THEME SONG (1973) — LIKE A QUIET, PRIVATE NIGHT — PILLOWS ON A LIVING-ROOM FLOOR — THERE'S A TAPE RECORDER, JUST OFF-SCREEN I'M LIVING ON THE FLOOR, FACING YOU; I'M PLAYING SONGS — THEY SET THE MOOD THAT STARTS MY FISH — THESE ARE THE FIRST NOTES OF OUR RELATIONSHIP. I CAN BRING MY LEGS AROUND, AS IF I'M WRAPPING YOU UP, WANT TO BRING YOU DOWN TO MY LEVEL — I'M PLAYING OUR RELATIONSHIP, PLAYING IT OUT, TO THE FINISH — IT'S AS IF I'VE BUILT YOU UP, IN REAL SPACE, SO THAT, FINALLY, I CAN LET YOU GO, I CAN TALK TO YOU IN MY MIND (I'M BACK WHERE I STARTED IN THE FIRST PLACE).
August 1974

Fawn Grove, Pa.

Joan Jonas

So we entered the hidden meadow. It was green and yellow bright with high goldenrod and Queen Anne’s Lace (have to know my flowers). Silent. Bugs. Crickets very loud here. After some time I started walking toward where I thought I had entered. The trees are thick around the field. I noticed that the meadow and as I walked by I thought I didn’t want walking toward where I thought I had entered. The below the hidden meadow. I was not planning to go to my brother’s 4 year old son understands meadow and as I walked by I thought I didn’t want walking toward where I thought I had entered. The below the hidden meadow. I was not planning to go to my brother’s 4 year old son understands

Today I thought of the nun back there somewhere as again I find myself on a retreat - isolated, thinking.

Richard Serra

The product of television, commercial television, is the audience.

2. Television delivers people to an advertiser.

3. There is no such thing as mass media in the United States except for television.

4. Mass media means that a medium can deliver masses of people.

5. Commercial television delivers 20 million people a minute.

6. In commercial broadcasting the viewer pays for the privilege of having himself sold.

7. It is the consumer who is consumed.

8. You are the product of TV.

9. You are delivered to the advertiser who is the customer.

10. He consumes you.

11. The view is not responsible for programming.

12. You are the end product.

13. You are the end product delivered en masse to the advertiser.

14. You are the product of TV.

15. Everything on television is educational in the sense that it teaches something.

16. What television teaches through commercialism is materialistic consumption.

17. The New Media State is predicated on media control.

18. Media asserts an influence over an entire cultural spectrum without effort or qualification.

19. We are persuaded daily by a corporate oligarchy.

20. Corporate control advocates materialistic propagandization.

21. Television establishments are committed to economic survival.

22. Propaganda for profit.

23. Television is the prime instrument for management of consumer demands.

24. Commercial television defines the world in specific terms.

25. Commercial television defines the world so as not to threaten the status quo.

26. Television defines the world so as not to threaten the status quo.

27. Soft propaganda is considered entertainment.

28. Popular entertainment is basically propaganda for the status quo.

29. Control over broadcasting is an exercise in controlling society.

30. Seventy-five percent of news is received by you from television.

31. What goes on over the news is what you know.

32. It is the basis by which you make judgments. By which you think.

33. You are the controlled product of news programming.

34. You are the product of television.

35. “Television Delivers People”

36. The New Media State is dependent on television for its existence.

37. The New Media State is dependent on propaganda for its existence.

38. Corporations that own networks control them.

39. Corporations are not responsible.

40. Corporations are not responsible to government.

41. Corporations are not responsible to their employees.

42. Corporations are not responsible to their shareholders.

43. Shareholders do not organize and enforce their will. Shareholders buy stock in companies and don’t even know what the companies do.

44. Corporations mitigate information.

45. Every dollar spent by the television industry in physical equipment needed to send a message to you is matched by forty dollars spent by you to receive it.

46. You pay the money to allow someone else to make the choice.

47. You are consumed.

48. You are the product of television.

49. “Television Delivers People”

50. Television delivers people.

51. The New Media State is dependent on television for its existence.

52. There is a mass media compulsion to reinforce the status quo. To reinforce the distribution of power.

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110. The New Media State is dependent on television for its existence.
Reflections are irresistible. Its impossible to resist the temptation to look in a mirror, or any reflective surface: store windows, shiny surfaces, dimer facades, mobile homes, still water, etc. Why bother to resist? Narcissus knew what he was doing. Vanity is a virtue. The image is a corroboration. She does her beauty preparations assiduously each day. Now she's in mourning so a subtle scent is proper, nothing too strong or sweet. Good taste must prevail. A simple suit is always right: You can dress it up or down. That is one area where excess does not hurt your self-image. That is one area where extra-esthetic issues intervene. But one must always be beautiful, especially for images. The beauty of the tape is that the performance is evidence of self-assurance about beauty and about sexual identity. It is pan-sexual chic. It is more than male or female. It is a new gender. A new genre.

Now the jet-set will give their sets of dozens of matched Waterford crystal glasses to the Salvation Army and in a few years all the hippies will be drinking out of crystal. Maybe next year jelly glasses will be in. One must have an instinct for these things, like how to set in front of a camera. Near death from a bee sting allergy I kept failing in my efforts to give myself a shot. I said to my two friends present, "Help me!" One of them started taking photographs. Then I knew it had to be perfect and I accomplished the injection immediately.

...Art works produced with video are not about the future of television or the future of anything else. One might try to approach video in the context of the future of the television industry itself, though it would be a grievous mistake in logical typing. Video still exists clearly apart from the television industry, despite the television industry's repeated efforts to use video as a kind of programming in their linear, tightly packed structure. Further, art work in video and television seem to have mutually exclusive descriptions in the first place, in much the same way that the print scene relates to the magazine publishing industry. The only way that I can actually relate video to the future of television is by taking a speculative look at the application of video in the reformation of one of our culture's more anachronistic institutions, the art museum. When cable TV is considered, the field for the museum educator broadens considerably... In a strange way, video marks the return of a primary visual art experience to the individual, at the same time that it creates a real public art... The museum has, in each case, managed to forge a new forum for artistic interchange. For the artist wanted merely to repeat a short sentence, to the artist in addition to or instead to the artist in addition to or instead to the artist in addition to or instead to the artist in addition to or instead to the artist in addition to or instead to the artist in addition to or instead to the artist in addition to or instead to the artist in addition to or instead to the artist in addition to or instead to the artist in addition to or instead to the artist in addition to or instead to the artist in addition to or instead to the artist in addition to or instead to the artist in addition to or instead to the artist in addition to or instead to the artist in addition to or instead to the artist in addition to or instead to the artist in addition to or instead to the artist in addition to or instead to the artist in addition to or instead to the artist in addition to or instead to the artist in addition to or instead to the artist in addition to or instead to the artist in addition to or instead to the artist in addition to or instead to the artist in addition to or instead to the artist in addition to or instead to the artist in addition to or instead to the artist in addition to or instead to the artist in addition to or instead to the artist in addition to or instead to the artist in addition to or instead to the artist in addition to or instead to the artist in addition to or instead to the artist in addition to or instead to the artist in addition to or instead
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his worry that it is the latest, newest thing. Since he was urging its use almost ten years ago, he now feels a little like Dr. Frankenstein. The possibility exists that video will become a pet of museums and will be exposed in an over-kill situation, through a rapid series of grant anthology exhibitions, lacking in point or focus. "It will always be an area for artists to work in," Davis says, "but one shot museum recognition tends to be smothering, leaving the medium or artist 'leftover.' I much prefer a continuing and serious series of small one-man events to the pretentious extravaganzas. Their annuals always signal the ends of eras."

**BULLETIN**

The Bulletin for Film and Video Information is a bi-monthly newsletter edited by Callie Angell and Hollis Melton and published through Anthology Film Archives. It is designed to provide information for independent film- and video-makers and their users, and is organized around the general areas of film- and video-makings, distribution, exhibition and programming, study, and preservation. Issue #2 included a list of Video Distributors, Video Showcases, and a bibliography. Issue #3 had sections on Video-Making in Europe; Television Stations Assisting Artists in Video; Video Distribution; Video Programming; Galleries That Show Video in New York City; and more bibliography. Each issue contains Film- and Video-Makers' Travel Information, listings of schedules and travel plans for those artists who are available for lectures and showings. Issue #4 will list upcoming exhibitions at home and abroad and other fall news; it will be published September 15th. The deadline for news for Issue #5 is October 15th.

Subscriptions are $2.00 a year domestic; $6.50 foreign air mail and $4.50 foreign surface mail. Back issues are available for $.50 each. Video artists and others interested, involved persons are encouraged to send their news, ideas, and other matters to the attention of Callie Angell, Video Editor, Bulletin for Film and Video Information, 80 Wooster Street, New York, N.Y. 10012 (212) 226-0010.

**THE QUESTION**

Art-Rite asked video artists to respond to the following question: What is it that distinguishes your video from that of other artists working in the medium?

**RON CLARK**

The present self-involved and solipsistic phase notwithstanding, television as a form of art-making may be ultimately understood as simply an extension of the great traditions of film and theatre of the 20th century. In which case people like Brecht, Artaud, Eisenstein, Jarry, Beckett, and Hitchcock would constitute the competition. A sobering thought.

**ALAN SUICIDE**

a) because I am bored.
b) because I have nothing better to do.
c) that's plenty good for video.

**THE BLACK TARANTULA**

My video art differs from the video art of others in that I don't make video art. I'm a writer. More seriously: originality as a value is a New York commodity value. Re my art, I do what I have to do; i.e. I do what most interests me. But then I send out my work free, I live in San Francisco, am poor; I can do what most interests me. Not that I object to any way anyone can hustle food shelter love in this horror-ridden society.

**ERNEST GUELLA**

My video is not:
- Accompanied by a "pink sludge" cock and roll soundtrack.
- Documentation of a conceptual performance in which I jump out a 13th story window to test the laws of chance.
- Synthetic images created with rebuilt surplus World War I airplane parts.
- Shot with two cameras attached under each armpit and one between my legs.
- A group therapy encounter between the Neo-Nazi Anarchists and the Bowery Satanists.
- An underground sex-opera starring all my beautiful friends.
- A presentation about the 3rd coming of the Punjub of Mysore to bless his freedies in America.
- Product with future marketing potential.

**TAKA IMURA**

I have been using video lately as a tool of self-communication and two-way communication for myself and for people.

For myself I have a series of video tapes Self Identity in which I talk to myself in video.

For people, a series of video installations Project Yourself. Register Yourself. Face/ing, etc., in which people are asked to participate for their own identity.

The pieces were performed at Project '74 in Cologne and I am amazed that people are so inventive.

What I must emphasize is to de-mystify video and to show simple enough to be with and in video.

**HANNAH WILKE**

Me! Or the way I wear my hat, the way I sip my tea, the memory of all that, Oh no you can't take that away from me — The way my smile just gleams, the way I sing off key, the way I'll haunt your dreams, Oh no you can't take that away from me.

**JEN DUPUY**

In English, the vowel "i" is a diphthong (that is, to pronounce the letter, the mouth must make two movements and two sounds: "ah-e"), and consequently cannot be shown directly in a still photograph.

So I decided to show it in an indirect way.

Here is an example showing how a videotape, used as a mirror, becomes necessary too. It would have been impractical to film such a situation with a movie camera, since the presence of a cameraman would have been embarrassing.

**PRODUCT WITH FUTURE MARKETING POTENTIAL.**
Question 1.
Kite is a kite
Sparrow is a sparrow
Heron is a heron
Swallow is a swallow
Any question?

It is the space in which you can include everything, but it is a container in which nothing can be put in. Video is the parody of the world.

* The above answers are followed Zen’s questions and answers.

ULRIKE ROSENBAUER

I must say that it is really difficult for me to answer this question. The word "separation" to me has a rather ideological meaning. So I would answer: nothing separates me or my videowork from the videos of other artists, because I am not a separatist. But in the sense of being an individual in community with other individuals there is of course a difference between my work and the work of other video artists. Being both a person and a woman, I try to develop my female personality. I think about the lives, the social and the historical conditions women had to live with in the past and I try to find out how to improve their positions and their self-consciousness. I try to show in my activities the historical and psychological sources and contexts of the standard a woman has.

I don’t know whether other women work on adequate themes and how many video artists there are doing this sort of work in their ways — but I hope there are a lot.

DONALD MUNROE & JOAN SCHWARTZ

There is nothing to say; its all been said.

PAUL TSCHINKEL

My work in video makes aesthetic gestures. It is based on controlled experiments, which the casual and immediate aspects of video permit me to do. I use simple notions of visual as well as oral progressions, dealing with a sequential organization of planned ideas. I examine actions that are either staged or discovered, with the intent of creating an unusual and revelatory experience. In one tape, a sequence I did described, in visual and sonic terms, the act of opening and closing a spring activated door. The door was opened and shut with degrees of force that varied as the tape progressed. I made the appearance, the sound, and the duration of this action an aesthetic event. Because I was able to get into those moments that elapse in the midst of a seemingly ordinary and mundane event, I captured the extraordinary and elusive kinetic aspects of that action.
DOUGLAS HUEBLER
I have used various media ... video, film, photography ... in a manner that I would describe as "natural." The medium becomes an extension of the eye(s) scanning undifferentiated phenomena. What gets fixed as an image for a work is that which falls across one of the parameters of the construct that forms the design of the work.

So far I have suspended the "time" factor in video by using only single instants (still photographs made from a monitor); so far I have not been interested in the technologically expressive character of the medium.

Inasmuch as there is nothing more interesting about the appearance of one incidentally obtained image from that of another I am not including a photograph with this comment.

PETE KAMPUS
I use video as a tool, as my material. I think video art is a misnomer. Video becomes a qualifier, video art is a genre. What makes my work unique—certainly not its separate components, but perhaps their arrangement: my interest in durational space and the accumulation of perspective, the transformation and displacement of light and electricity, the retroreflection of one's projected image and its accompanying sensations, and the balance and fusion of disparities whose unified origins cannot be perceived directly.

WILLoughby SHARP
The content of my video art is the analysis of certain specific ego states. I take graduated doses of LSD and other derivatives of lysergic acid with hallucinogenic properties to examine the quality of my thoughts and feeling. Some of the basic concerns of my video performances are various forms of insanity, sexuality, brutality, greed, hate, fear, sentimentality, love, birth trauma, childishness, escapism, death and transcendence.

I use the actual experience of each video performance to isolate aspects of my ego; I use the accumulation of resultant video works to reconstitute my developing personality. (Change is the only constant in this growing videography.)

While particulars of place, public and presentation are crucial to the character of each individual performance, the primary aim of my work is to attain the most intense expression of psychological truth.

MAM JUNE PAUK
I wrote in 1965, that someday cathode ray tube would replace the canvas. Now I love canvas ... I made about 200 drawings in the past year. Most of them are titled Paper TV, whose relationship to the real TV is that of TV dinner to the real dinner. My paper TV finances my Real TV. Look at Miss Moorman's TV eyes look at you. TV used to be "watched," too, not a long time ago.

WILLOUGHBY SHARP
& alto), bamboo flute, indian gourd flute, soprano and tenor saxophone, and guitar. In Divided Alto@1974, a multi-track recording was used so that there are two sound tracks and two corresponding sets of images. The first quadrant is a close up of the mouth playing the first track, the second is the fingers, the third and fourth quadrants are the mouth and fingers playing the sound track...

NANCY NOLT
In video, "distancing" is one of my involvements. In Locating #2, Zeroing In, Going Around in Circles, and Points of View a prop was placed between camera and view, which cut off certain sections of the camera view, and physically set up new patterns in the flat video space. In my latest tape, Underscan, time and visual image are compressed. A series of photographs of my Aunt's home in New Bedford, Mass. have been videotaped, and re-videotaped from the underscanning monitor screen, which is framed within the final tape making a visual distancing at 3 removes. Underscanning changes each static photo image, as it appears, from regular to elongated to compressed or visa versa. Excerpts from letters from my Aunt spanning 10 years are condensed into 9 minutes of my voice-over audio. Certain yearly occurrences repeat, making an auditory rhythm, which coincides with the cycle of visual changes.

HAM JUNE PAUK
This is a newspaper photo of a photograph of a videotape of a painting of an underscanned videotape of a garden...
I. F. W. I. W. I. W. M. W. E. W. M. A.

That fantasize whose works involve talk about their past. They show us the world we live in. There are those short, others long and light. They

artist from another as does length of

strong role in identifying one video

Subject matter plays a

artist have a heavy touch, others a

different from others?

the artist is hidden behind a parti-

absent. In many live performances

the excitement of seeing the artist is

come of the work unpredictable,

upsetting to the artist and the out-

one is trained to cope with it, can be

artistry makes it a desirable form for

resolution quality. This is a drawback

video. Generally however, the maleability

video makes it a desirable form for

the artist’s ideas. The danger, I think, is

is for an artist to assume that any idea

put on video will be interesting because

the nature of the material. Usually, I

will investigate many possible forms

that a project could take and I will only

use video if it seems the best way to

present the idea. William Wegman

Peter Campus are two artists whose

ideas function particularly well in video.

A global network of simultaneously

transmitting and receiving "TV Arc-

dades." Open to the public twenty-four

hours a day, like any washbasine. An

arcade in every big city of the world.

Each equipped with a hundred or more

monitors of different sizes from a few

inches to wall-scale, in planar and

irregular surfaces. A dozen

automatically moving cameras (like

those secreted in banks and airports,

but now prominently displayed) will

pan and fix anyone or anything that

happens to come along or be in view. Including cameras and monitors if no

one is present. A person will be free to

do whatever he wants, and will see

himself on the monitors in different

ways. A crowd of people may multiply

their images into a throng.

But the cameras will send the same

images to all other arcades, at the

same time or after a programmed

delay. Thus what happens in one

arcade may be happening in a thousand,

generated a thousand times. But the

built-in program for distributing the

signals, audible and audible, random

and fixed, could also be manually

altered at any arcade. A woman might

want to make electronic love to a

particular man she saw on a monitor.

Controls would permit her to localize

(freeze) the communication within a

few TV tubes. Other visitors to the

same arcade may feel free to enjoy

and even enhance the mad and surprising

scramble by turning their dials accor-

dingly. The world could make up its

own social relations as it went along!

Everybody in and out of touch all at

once!

'Hello in original form has never

been done for obvious technical, finan-

cial and social reasons. If it ever is

approximated in our lifetime, it

probably will be locked into the exhibi-

tion atmosphere of a world fair and

thus will be denied the casual

accessibility it really needs. I rarely

indulge in futuristic dreams, preferring

the practicable, but this exception

arose out of a fanciful conversation

with Nam June Paik who likes predic-

ting the future and did very well at it.

At the same time (the fall of 1968) I

knew from Paik that I would have a

chance to do a small model experiment

of Hello at WGBH-TV in Boston, for a

video program of works by artists,

under a grant from the Public Broad-

cast Laboratory. This station, directed

by Fred Barzyk was, and is, the most

open and adventurous in the country.

Thus I wasn't entirely dreaming.

Barzyk made it possible to set up

four separate sites of video, including

two at WGBH, one (I believe) at MIT,

and one at a children's school in

Cambridge. Five cameras and twenty-

seven monitors were involved. This

modified program for Hello went as

follows:

Each of the four sites were linked
together sending and receiving

simultaneously, like an open con-

ference call on the telephone.

There was about an hour of time available. A
group of participants at each place

watched their monitors and when

anyone saw someone they knew they

called out Hello (speaking the name

of the person) I see you!

The engineers in the control room at

WGBH, which was also one of the

sites, had the additional job of ran-

domly switching the sound and picture

signals to all four sites. Thus one of the

monitors at site A might get audio but

no video image, two monitors at site B

might have video but no audio, while C

and D got normal transmission for a

few minutes on all monitors. Audio

and video might be divided between

sites so that friends might hear but

can see each other and vice-versa.

Because of this switching system

which was arranged in advance, people

in all four places were only in partial

and brief contact with one another.

It was a strange, straining yet often
One of the supreme joys of videotapes is that they self-destruct. They wear down gracefully; and, the very nature of the media is such that they cannot be limited. I say "cannot" realizing full well that some merchants have tried to structure videotapes so that they are metamorphosed into "rare objects." The impossibility and sheer perversity of this notion is self-evident.

Now I should go slowly here because I do not want to offend anyone whose life is videotape. First of all let me explain that I am a passionate, circle-under-the-eyes virtual freak, the sort of person who can listen to Taka Iimura telling me for forty minutes (full face, profile, and back of head) that he is squawks. I currently have no intention of using videotapes in any way that might be perceived as reductive or degrading. Yet, it is often given undue value to the most unlikely artistic droppings and constantly reduces me to fits of laughter at the most inconvenient times (at the scull auction I kept on waiting for garland's "red slippers" to come upon the block). Of course there still are many of these objects around — that is not the problem — but in terms of videotapes in a highly object oriented market, the mentalité of what art is needs one hell of a lot of rethinking and re-educating.

By Rob Stefanoff

It is truly amazing how retarded the art market has been in its approach to videotapes. When one considers the mercantile fervor which has given "real" monetary value to such unlikely candidates as posthumous Duchamp readymades and Handertwater silkscreens in editions signed-and-limited-to-10,000, it is confounding to question what is that some of the most creative work of the last eight or nine years has been relegated to unsaleable status.

Perhaps the main deterrent to serious progress has been the notion of the unique, rare and consequently even more valuable object — a notion which possibly has been so fruitful that permanent and back of head) that he is squawks. I currently have no intention of using videotapes in any way that might be perceived as reductive or degrading. Yet, it is often given undue value to the most unlikely artistic droppings and constantly reduces me to fits of laughter at the most inconvenient times (at the scull auction I kept on waiting for garland's "red slippers" to come upon the block). Of course there still are many of these objects around — that is not the problem — but in terms of videotapes in a highly object oriented market, the mentalité of what art is needs one hell of a lot of rethinking and re-educating.

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REHEARSAL FOR 5 HOUR SLUMP

Dennis Oppenheim

Rehearsal for Five Hour Slump, Chan dra Oppenheim
Components: electric organ
Installation: video equipment, electric organ, reflective black mylar plastic.
John Gibson Gallery — New York
Rivkin Gallery — Washington, D.C.
This piece acts as a configuration for a performance lasting 5 hours in which a static body produces a steady electric sound. Ideally, it asks that the figure dies on top of the organ.
(Continuous sound produced by a dead organism.)

CASTELLI-SONNABEND TAPES AND FILMS, INC.

Leo Castelli Gallery started with videotapes in '68, mostly because Bruce Nauman was one of their artists and making tapes. About 2½ years ago, the gallery got seriously into production and distribution of video when Joyce Nereaux began working for the gallery. Joyce was in film before she started at Castelli, and pioneered whatever "video network" there is in the fine art world. There were no precedents for video distribution and production, so she had to feel her way. Now it is actually possible to go into the gallery and view any of hundreds of tapes by Castelli and Sonnabend artists, if you make an appointment first. They used to have a monitor room, but now the monitor is just in the back room, surrounded by the art in storage. Joyce does have a few complaints about the mass video shows they have had in the past, and hopes that future shows will be simpler, more congenial, and dealing with only one or a few artists in a show.

Just recently, Castelli Gallery and Sonnabend Gallery, while remaining separate galleries, pooled their videotapes and films into a new company, Castelli-Sonnabend Tapes and Films, Inc. Most of their tapes sell according to length and whether they are b & w or color (rather than by the status of the artist). Prices tend to be under $250.

A distribution system is just beginning to be set up. Castelli-Sonnabend will control the showing and rental of tapes (and film) while other galleries will be able to buy for resale at a gallery discount. The market at this point is almost exclusively universities and museums, but the number of collectors who are interested is slowly growing.

In the works is an extensive catalogue, to be in loose-leaf binder form with a page per tape, each with a photo and a description. Regina Cornwall is doing the film, Lizzie Borden the video, and Liza Bear is overseeing the whole production. If you have been buying videotapes from Castelli-Sonnabend, the catalogue is yours for free.
TV LIKE 1. A PENCIL 2. WON'T BITE YOUR LEG

I had this old pencil in the dashboard of my car for a long time. Every time I saw it, I felt uncomfortable. Since it was dull and dirty, I always intended to sharpen it and finally couldn't bear it any longer and did sharpen it. I'm not sure, but I think that this has something to do with art.

Eleanor Antin during one of her performances.
both my balance and form in the more difficult poses such as Attitude Croise. He never appeared in the still pictures. But this is an oversimplification; I shot the still pictures and made the tape as precisely as that point in my ballet career when “Help” would be necessary. It’s much later in my “ballet history” now, my technique has improved and I could no longer structure the piece in this way without deliberate falsification, or “acting.”

My use of video as an interrogation medium is clearer in “The King,” a videotape made with the intention of transforming myself into a man by adding hair to my face. But what man? The monitor gave back to me a succe-
sion of alternative images, other and not quite the same as my original expectations — medieval alchemist, 19th century American patriarch (Smith Bros. patent medicine man), dwarf, Jesus — interactive gambits with a monitor, each of which I tenta-
vatively accepted, refined, held in abeyance, rejected, to finally accept the one I found most appropria-
tive to me. My use of video as, if I do the other mediums I work with, as a participant in a dialogue. It is essentially a dialo-

gical operation between me and the camera. A decision made by the monitor is given back to the monitor which acts as mediator between us. The monitor offers me the image of a point in dialogue, its suggestion for further dialogue, but the message isn’t always so clear. One of my tapes “Black is Beautiful!” was especially ambiguous. I had thought I was a black movie star but I didn’t yet know what that meant. The nature of blackness was unclear so position interacted with mine. I carried how could I hope to attain it? What things is a kind of adolescent attempt at sophistication. To think that art and the political are opposites or that the personal and the political are opposed is to refuse to, or to be unable to, think beyond obvious and coarse categories. The modulations and interpenetration of system imposed for convenient and practical reasons, that is where sen-

sitive and new perceptions lie. The artist claims insight; otherwise she or he would not give answers. She or he should spit on easy answers and the cheapest of roles: the artist as frill-seeker and cornball entertainer. Yours truly, My Stevems

Re Mitz! May Stevens letter to Editor Art-Rite, An Atom-Bomb Maggot and Parassite Community (atom-bomb and parasite being con-

tracted statements) with that much -5). Shorthand for familiar forms. .reconstructing a film image in my mind (The Live Show).

6. Augmentation of familiar forms... talk shows, the news, soap opera, talk radio, video from an audiotope tradition.

7. Expansive: It’s in a box... con-

taining is different from framing, im-
plies that there is real space inside (disorienting if different from space implied by the picture)... film as a hole in the wall, through which we can see outside.

8. Size (about as big as my head).

9. Flattening: Video so flattens out identifying facial characteristics that I could make myself look like someone else by shifting points at which tension is centered in my face... much more effectively than I could with photography (Exorcism, 10 min. 1973).

10. It appears to be all there. I do not expect to fill-in, imagine the rest, infer... I think if I leave something out in a videotape, no one will even notice. I am accustomed to creating gaps, expecting viewer fill-in, anticipating it, using it to go beyond the material.
So the artist in that situation has got to do something with his anxiety itself. It's not a genuine thing. It can't be questioned. I mean it can't be interesting or boring, or randomly new or fresh, or anything. It can be all of those things, but it's got to be spontaneously. It has to be not just a matter of making a choice, choosing those things because you think they're what it's got to be. That's what you have when you have decided you will absorb the energy of the audience, and permit the audience to come towards you in such a way that you absorb the audience's anxiety and present the audience back with that anxiety. This is something it is not a totally genuine thing, if you're attempting to conjure it in any way.

I think it would be a mess. In that kind of a situation, you're just trying to create a newspaper open screen or open vessel for their anxieties at that given moment. I think that's what you've got to be fed back. It can't be anything you've essentially created.

So it's sort of, the idea that creativity itself is the most negative aspect of art. That's really beautiful. In that, the artist is involved in trying to control a process of destruction of creation. By attempting to control the process, you're also totally destroying the creative process because the creative process is not to create the whole but to allow what you don't want to be absorbed by you in such a way that you can express it and clarify it and make it real, not just when you're making it clear. People might say that's what you've done is to control but to control.
HENRY PEARSON

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SEPT. 24, 27
3 INSTALLATIONS
SEPT. 21-28
SONNABEND GALLERY
420 W. BROADWAY
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