ELECTRONIC ZEN:

The Alternate Video
Generation

By Jud Yalkut

"The light-flower of heaven and earth fills all the thousand spaces. But also the light-flower of the individual body passes through heaven and covers the earth. Therefore, as soon as the light is circulating, heaven and earth, mountains and rivers, are all circulating with it at the same time. To concentrate the seed-flower of the human body above in the eyes, that is the great key of the human body."
- THE SECRET OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER.

"Zen Meditation is purely a subjective experience completed by a concentration which holds the inner mind calm, pure and serene. And yet Zen meditation produces a special psychological state based on the changes in the electroencephalogram. Therefore, Zen meditation influences not only the psychic life but also the physiology of the brain."
- AKIRA KASAMATSU AND TOMIO HIRAI ("An Electroencephalographic Study on the Zen Meditation (Zazen)") in ALTERED STATES OF CONSCIOUSNESS (Charles Tart, editor).

"We are not yet aware that telepathy is conveyed through the resonance factors of the mind... The electromagnetic vibration of the head might lead the way to Electronic Zen."
- NAM JUNE PAIK.

ELECTRONIC ZEN: THE ALTERNATE VIDEO GENERATION

PREFACE

Although the medium of television has existed in the American home since the post-war period, it has only been since the advent of portable video recorders in the late sixties that a meaningful dissemination of electronics communication technology has permitted the two-way interf low of information and vision exchange.

This predominantly half-inch video technology engendered the emergence of alternate video innovators who have gradually mastered the parameters and circuitry of equipment woefully unstable as com pared to the hardware used daily by the vast television broadcasting networks. An alternate network of electronic experimenters, artists seeking an analog output for their creative flow, and radical communicators pointing their lenses and microphones at previously tabooed data, now freely exchange and exhibit videotapes of recorded and instructional data, sociological documents, inner visionings, and the conceptual processes of a new breed of logic merged with metaphysics.

As P.D. Ouspensky has elucidated, the human being requires three external materials for survival: "the food he eats, the air he inhales and the impressions he receives." This latter vibratory food, as has become evident to any conscious being existing within society today, has become as polluted, in this paradoxically ecologically-minded half-century, as the air replete with noxious fumes and once fresh water now unfit for living sustenance.

ELECTRONIC ZEN is an attempt to enumerate the probings of the first Cybernauts using the tools of new video technology. Leaving the trails of their progress across the face of countless miles of magnetic tape, these young pioneers have formulated the life styles and state of the art needs so powerfully that the communications superstructures that predominate can no longer disregard their inherent role in the survival of humanity.

New York City became from the beginning a magnetic center for many of the explorers in the new video realm. As an early practitioner of the electronic visual arts himself, the author seemed also to
be one of the few concerned with periodically recording and publishing aspects of the history of this new medium and its adherents. Starting as early as 1967 and running *continuously* through 1973, these documents, either previously published, broadcast or heretofor unpublished in any form, are collected for the first time in ELECTRONIC ZEN.

Through the devices of projective essay and direct discourse with a number of outstanding members of the first generation of cybernetic *landing* parties, ELECTRONIC ZEN',pLttempts"to.trace;the his torical, aesthetic, technical and conceptual interweavings which form the fabric of the new vibratory exoskeleton of a global commun- ity now pulsating with ever more *resonant* frequencies.

By exploring the grassroots of video art and technology, the emergence of teledynamic environments, video as a meditation and encounter tool, the evolution of a new breed of visionary abstraction ist, and the development of a new cybernetic syntax concerned with hardware interfacing and software reticulation, ELECTRONIC ZEN is a record on the moving temporal tape of these attempts to "concentrate the seed-flower of the human body above in the eyes" (- THE SECRET OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER).

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PART ONE:

ELECTRONIC ZEN

The Grassroots of Video
Art

ELECTRONIC ZEN

"The TV image offers some four million dots per second to the
receiver-the viewer of the TV mosaic, with technical control of
the image, unconsciously reconfigures the dots into an abstract
work of art on the pattern of a Seurat or Roualt.. The mosaic
form of the TV image demands participation and involvement of
depth of the whole being..The TV image requires each instant
that we 'close' the spaces in the mesh by a convulsive sensuous
participation that is profoundly kinetic and tactile, because
tactility is the interplay of the sense.. The beatnik reaching
out for Zen is only carrying the mandate of the TV mosaic out
into the world of words and perceptions.. TV can illustrate the
interplays of process and the growth of forms of all kinds as
nothing else can." - MARSHALL MCLUHAN
The first approaches towards a cathode ray art have naturally

originated with avant garde artists and their increasing

concern with the interaction of art and technology. David Tudor

in "Bandoneon", the most unfairly neglected piece in the

Experiments in Art and Technology "Nine Evening" Armory show,

generated with his "electronic accordion" all the impulses

feeding both the music synthesizing equipment and the complex

television projections, oscilloscopically abstract, producing

one of the most organic fusions of multiple media yet seen.

Ken Dewey's Action Theater juxtaposed, in the New York Film Festival's lobby, videotapes of the Selma, Alabama civil rights protests with delayed closed-circuit playback of the viewers reactions to both channels. Closed circuit TV projection integrated the audience's entry into the visual mesh of Robert Whitman's film-oriented "Theater Piece", and fused into total participation the images of live dancers and musicians with multiple projection USCO films and slides at the "World" discotheque. Marta Minujin's "Minuphone", the intermedia telephone booth at Howard Wise, obliged the caller inside to stand on the television floor image of his own face, from an in-booth closed circuit camera, later offering him a Polaroid snapshot of this monitor image.

Emory Menefee of Canyon Cinema in San Francisco describes filmmaker Earl Bodien's television film "Nocturnal Emission", made "by colorfilming a multiple series of images with such devices as a concave mirror in the center of the TV image, reflecting an irregularly flashing hypnotic red spot." Bodien is quoted: "People who watch, creatively alter, and totally involve themselves in TV images, form a kind of communications system which exists outside of the regular channels. That is, there is some sort of unexplored force field which is capable of transmitting a personal bonding kind of message back through the TV medium... A McLuhanistic alteration of consciousness through tampering with the medium itself, can be achieved partially by a series of films which induce people to turn off (their sets) and turn on (themselves)."

An Off-Off-Broadway "videotape theater" Channel One, purports to be "providing Heads with their own CBS". "We concentrate on humor, psychedelic satire", they explain. Three video monitor screens face three sections of seats above a Japanese-pebbled floor. Erotic breathing is heard, the TV snow fades into extreme closeups of an undressing couple, repeated unsuccessful attempts to unclasp a brassierre are punctuated by male sighs and groans, and the final unclasping reveals a second undergarment beneath.
Wagnerian theme music heralds several hours of skits in a revue format, ranging from forays against current TV fare like the "Consolidated Monopoly" Weather Report and the pure sadism of "Meet Mr. Science", to the fantasies of a pornography-reading children's clown and a "psychedelic" variety show called "Manifestations" with ads for morning-glory seeds (remember them?) and Zig-Zag papers. "Channel One" remains a theatrical experience translated to a small-screen living room experience, with the CONTENT (exclusively) of TV programming stressed through satirization, in the guise of Underground Television.
        "Very, very very high-frequency oscillation of lasers will enable us to afford thousands of large and small TV stations. This will free us from the monopoly of a few commerical TV channels", wrote Nam June Paik, Korean electronic artist and composer, in 1965, who then proceeded to program a 24-hour broadcasting day for his "Utopian Laser TV station ... to be telecast March 1, 1996 A.D."

"My experimental TV is not always interesting but not always uninteresting, like Nature, which is beautiful, not because it changes beautifully, but simply because it changes", wrote Paik of his circuit-modified and magnetically distorted TV "light machines", first shown in Germany in 1963.

"You cannot exclude anyone from TV", declares Paik, "so really delicate important subjects like politics, philosophy, sex, and avant garde activity are not shown. But videotape can supplant commercial broadcasting with highly selective programming to be played back anytime at all. When you have avideotape recorder, you can make a videotape magazine. When you have a big screen 3-D color videotape recorder, it will kill LIFE magazine just as LIFE killed COLLIER'S."

"Like radio ham operators, we will have amateur TV. Combinations of Xerox with videotape will print everyone's newspaper at home. The video-record will become cheaper and easier than videotape for mass production, with no threading and instant playback. As the collage technique replaced oil paint, the cathode ray tube will replace the canvas."

"Medical electronics and art are still widely apart, but these two fields can also change each other's fruits, e.g. various signals can be fed to many parts of the head, brain and body, aiming to establish a completely new genre of DIRECT-CONTACT-ACT. The electromagnetic vibration of the head might lead the way to

TV AS A CREATIVE MEDIUM

"It was the funeral of President Kennedy that most strongly proved the power of television to invest an occasion with the character of corporate participation. It involved an entire population in a ritual process ... In television, images are projected at you. You are the screen. The images wrap around you. You are the vanishing point. This creates a sort of inwardness, a sort of reverse perspective which has much in common with Oriental Art." -Marshall McLuhan

Since the introduction of the home television receiver in the U.S. in 1946, several generations of millions of viewers have been bombarded daily by streams of electrons, at the rate of 3 million information bits per second. Television viewing became a daily ritual, a family's life centering around their 16 to 21 inch monocular picture tube within its monolithic (shades of "2001") console. As receiving sets became smaller and more portable, the assimilation of the TV mosaic into the corporate bloodstream of vibratory inputs became established fact, as commonplace as transistor radios and corner telephone booths.

Early television broadcasting formats mimicked ancient radio iconography, giving meat to the disembodied familiar voices, and visualization to the fantasy patterns of the sound airwaves.

TV created its own figureheads, gargoyles, and abominations, spewing forth neverending inundations of encapsulated information, exploding frenetically like time seeds within the tribal psyche. The rate of bombardment was accelerated by the vanguard of television marketing demands, the repetitive imprinting process synchronized with the electromagnetic beat of cerbral brainwaves. It was only natural that the counterreaction to this data spoonfeeding ad nauseam would eventually take the form of individual dietary control, with the emergence of television artists engaged in the articulation and reprogramming of the vital electronic emanations "Why has not art been affected by this all-pervading influence? Perhaps quite simply, because, up until now the time was not right. Perhaps it had to await the maturing of the generation who were in their sub-teens in the 1950`s, those who were brought up on TV ... As   in every generation, some were artists ... working with TV because they were fascinated with the results they were able to achieve, and because they sensed the potential of TV as the medium for their expression."

-Howard Wise

Spectroscopically probing the television art spectrum, the
Howard Wise Gallery issued invitations to several artists,
those already known for their video explorations and those
ready to
leap into TV from a neighboring art and technology
promontory. The conglomerate of these individual electronic
visionings, a kaleidoscopic mosaicing of an already mosaiced
medium, was exhibited at the gallery from May 17 through
June 14 of 1969.

"This route to novelty depends not so
much upon the novelty of the object as
much as upon the novelty of
perceptions available when people are
allowed and encouraged to invent such
perceptions. Since there is no reason
to think that human perceptions are
not infinitely various, there is no
reason to believe that the novelty
available from the object-library of
the museum is not infinitely
extendable."

-Serge Boutourline, "The Concept
of Environmental Management".

Serge Boutourline's "Telediscretion" presented "four mini-
TV's with a device for fingertip selection of sound channels.
Presentation will include three broadcast channels and one
channel playing 'A Commercial for Life', a videotape conceived

 The interaction and selection of the TV soectator with the transmitted

and preprogrammed channels generated levels of feedback, the

simultaneous realization of one's ability to program modulate one's

own perceptual inputs, the self-perception of the self as perceiver,

in the process of perceiving.

> "PARTICIPATION TV comprises 3 or 4 color
>
> TV sets which show multi-color echoes, or
> fog, or clouds which are electronically produced.
> Sometimes you can see yourself floating in air,
> dissolving in deep water." -Nam June Paik

     Paik, a pioneer of the TV movement, modulates incoming broadcast

transmissions with electromagnetic distortions and circuitry

modifications, abstracting iconographic popular cliches beyond all

limits of symbological recognition, creating neon colored moires of

electronic interference patterns, fields of cognitive

and nonfigurative imagery interweaving an unfolding Persian carpet
of delight.

> _'_'Although the piano has only 88 keys, now we
>
> have in color TV, 12 million dots per second,
>
> which I have somehow to control for my work. It
>
> is like composing a piano concerto using a piano
>
> equipped with 12 million keys. How can you deal
>
> with that vast quantity of possibilities without
>
> the painstaking study of your materials

and instruments?"

-Nam June Paik

Sound modulations, hand clapping, singing, screeching, yelling, whispering, the ringing of a bell, all activate the neon tangles of fluorescent tracers, expanding and contracting the frequency modulations within involuted vortexes of electric color. Three TV cameras, red, green, and blue electronic eyes, survey the infinity of movements possible to the spectator-performer. Color-separated ghost shadows mirror and re-echo one's gestures, one's dance with light, with visual toys, with silence. In total feedback loop, a color monitor facets and fragments the closed circuit images of Charlotte Moorman's cello improvisations.

"In this case, the sound of the cello she plays will change, modulate, regenerate the picture of her TV-BRA ... one   sharp example to humanize electronics ... and technology.   By using TV as bra...the most intimate belonging of the human being, we will demonstrate the human use of technology, and also stimulate viewers NOT for something mean but stimulate their phantasy to look for the new, imaginative and humanistic ways of using our technology."

-Nam June Paik

Earl Reiback, a former Nuclear engineer from MIT since
engaged in the generation of luminal art works, contributed "Three
Experiments Within the TV Tube", his first TV work, "with the
cooperation of RCA tube laboratories, working within the depth of
the TV tube, painting the walls of the tube with color phosphors".
One called "Electron Beam" omitted the phosphors "off the front
fare of the tube, and added neon gas to the partial vacuum.
With an external magnet, the viewer can bend the beams of
electrons"
in the slow moving waves of concentric black-lighted galaxies.
"Thrust' mounted a phosphor-coated screen perpendicularly to the face
of
the tube to produce "shooting images in color ... as the electron
beam scan sweeps across the inner screen". In the third peice, a
phosphor screen circumscribed and suspended within the perimeters
of the picture tube receives the image streams of football games
and horror movies, while the phosphor painted inner tube
background reflects iridescent reflected energy.

TV art imagery engenders multitudinous means of presenting
itself upon whatever closen monitor system; the presentation of
a complete closed circuit system loop as a gallery piece, the
modulation and distortion of received transmissions, the
inclusion of the spectator as a visual link in the cybernated
chain, and the eventual broadcast, through the air or via cable,
of articulated and composed video imagery.

> "A Moebius strip is a one-sided surface made
> by taking a long rectangle of paper, giving
> it a half-twist,   and joining its

> is the inside. The inside is the outside.
>
> Here the power of Video Tape Recorder (VTR)
>
> is used to take in your own outside. When
>
> you see yourself on tape, you see the image
>
> you are presenting to the world. When you
>
> see yourself watching yourself on tape, you
>
> are seeing your real self, your 'inside'."
>
>   -Paul Ryan

You are sitting in a curtained booth, on a stool, a TV aperture hangs before you like a surrealistic picture frame, beyond which the portable video camera sits and observes, as you are prodded ever so gently by calculatedly stimulating questions: "React to the following people: Nixon, your mother, Eldridge Cleaver, Teddy Kennedy, you...for the next ten seconds, do what you want ... Now, let your face be sad ... let your face grow sad... turn away from the camera ... now turn back ... press the stop button... thank you." You then watch yourself in full audio-picture
recap of your "interview", erasing all but the fewest frames of the previous tape, just as your tape will be almost totally obliterated by the next. Naturally, the final tape is a total montage of every participant-spectator.

Said Paul of "Everyman's Moebius Strip": "Ifeel it's only

a very crude kind of beginning. I've been talking about the Moebius strip model and the videotape machine lately as an extension of man as a cybernator; communicating with himself about his behaviour, he enlarges his control over his behavious. The machine is almost the reverse of what he is doing; what he puts

takes in, processes, and then feeds back. Then a person can take that in, process it, and feed that back. It's a matter of self-cybernating and self-processing, co-cybernating and co-processing studying one another's videotape playbacks in slow motion and imitating, or trading, body languages. That has a whole set of implications towards what I conceive of as bordering body languages. My hope is that we can avoid the professional, the professional who understands everything, and barter on a lateral basis with friends. The electrical circuitry in the home and the video tape are really a beginning of a kind of elastic information environment in the home. The electric possibilities of communes are just beginning."

Former painter Frank Gillette and former filmmaker Ira Schneider joined forces to produce "Wipe Cycle", a nine screen TV mural that served as the entrance and opening piece to the "TV As A Creative Medium" show. Facing the elevator doors opening into the gallery, the closed circuit cameras of "Wipe Cycle: instantly integrated the spectators' images in the immediate present and in delayed playback, switching with cyclic patterns of broadcast transmission and pre-programmed videotape, delay change cycles and alternations activating the nine screen matrix.

"Every 4 seconds the live feedback image exchanged places with the broadcast image for 4 seconds--in an 8 second cycle, 4 seconds

is taken up by a live feedback of You
in the Now, alternating with broadcast in the central monitor. The 4
external monitors (corners) exchange images every 8 seconds, and
these are the tape programs. The 4 inner monitors exchange places
every 4 seconds between the 8 and 16 second delays of the live
image. So what you see phenomenally, is your image at 3 points in
time fluctuating in the center of the mural, while at the
extremities extraneous collage information is switching locations in
its own pattern flux. Overlaid on all this is a 'light' pulse
pattern every 2 seconds, going around counter-clockwise, and taking
16 seconds for a complete cycle. So the piece is based on a 2-4-8-16
second basis." -Frank Gillette

Added Ira Schneider: "The most important thing was the notion of
information presentation, and the notion of the integration of the
audience into the information. One sees oneself exiting from the
elevator. If one stands there for 8 seconds, one sees oneself
entering the gallery from the elevator again. Now at the same time
one is apt to be seeing oneself standing There watching 'Wipe
Cycle'. You can watch yourself live watching yourself 8 seconds ago,
watching yourself 16 seconds ago, eventually feeling free enough to
interact with this matrix, realizing one's own potential as

an actor."

"The embedment of a TV in clear plastic so

that it is totally viewable, seals it from

all

human contact except for plugging and unplugging it.
It is a relic of this civilization. When the TV
stops functioning the work is complete." -John Seery

John Serry's "TV Time Capsule" was the shorest-lived piece in the show, the color TV receiver completely sealed in a plastic cube, fusing-and burning itself out by the end of the first week. It was replaced to run for the last week of the show. "It was conceived in a factory, modified by the artist, until its programmed death; its death is its great creative act-the change of state."

"Art is sometimes called the 'transmission

ecstasy'. Because TV is transmission with

ecstatic potentials ... why can't the

viewer, after a trying day, sit down at his

TV set and listen to music while watching

the screen burst with beautiful color

displays? These visual fantasies would

relax you better than any tranquilizer and

at the same time give your spirit a

wonderful lift."

-Eric Siegel

Eric Siegel, an ex-prodigy from New York, who home-contructed a closed circuit TV camera at the age of 15, contributed

four-dimensional whirlpools and sweeping electronic auroras,

the two-dimensional phosphor screen transformed into a trip

beyond vanishing points.

> "In these years I developed devices with
>
> patterns, sequences, motion, color, programmed
>
> to make the viewer get involved in the
>
> unfolding composition, to relax and want more,
>
> a new way. of seeing. As the requirements of this
> new art revealed themselves, a need for an
> instantaneous, flowing, comprehensive device for
> expressing these images arose. This vacuum was
> filled by the use of the color television tube as
> the readout device for the program apparatus." -
> Thomas Tadlock

Tadlock's ARCHETRON, a monumental electronic console with one

black and white monitor displaying the source material such as a

baseball game, two smaller black and white monitors recording the

stepped segmentation of the permutated image, all crowned by a

large color tube radiating an infinite complexity of vibrant

radial reflections, pulsing, unfolding, merging towards and

surging from the meditational mandalic center.

"A pie-shaped triangular section of the broadcast image

is removed", explained Tadlock, "and repeated 8 times in a

reverse repeat around a symmetrical axis. The colors

originate in the peice itself, reading out as the sums and

differences of black and white areas of different parts of

the same signal. The TV

call stations are the only patterns that repeat themselves, if
the machine is left at the same setting--So you get a complete
 set of things that are never the same and things that are always
the same." During the brief moments when the TV image is blank
 except for small interference dots, the kaleidoscopic translation
ripples gently in concentric waves upon the phosphored pool.

"Black Spiral" by Aldo Tambellini, of the Black Gate
Electromedia Theater, resulted from a collaboration with Tracy
Kinsel and Hank Reinbold of Bell Laboratories. A high contrast
spiralling white light shimmers, radiates, contracts, twists in
 orgasmic ecstasy, dwindles to nothing, and blazes forth again on
 the black video field. "Black Spiral" was the only piece remaining
on after the others retired for the day, a beacon of hidden forces.

"I wanted to convert the TV lines into spiral forms", commented
 Tambellini, "using live TV transmission through the circuitry
 of the set itself. I had been working in slides and film before
 TV, painting on film as a direct medium, and eventually
 scratching and drawing lines on the film similar to TV lines.
 This related to the rapid pacing and abstract black and whites
 of my films, drew me to television as the most powerful
 hypnotic medium."

The primeval permutations of TV as an artist's medium stagger
the senses with the potentials of programming on a global scale and
within the inner sanctities of the private home. Joe Weintraub
sees his AC/TV ("Audio-Controlled Television") as a machine
"translating music into a complex kinetic image on the screen of any

The colors are controlled by the pitch. The patterns are dependent are both. Installation is simple, as the AC/TV clips onto the antenna terminals of any color TV. Patents pending... The AC/TV is radical art because it allows the viewer to turn off the endless stream of garbage and use his color TV in a personal aesthetically satisfying way". Radical, and marketable, Art!

Paik early predicted that "the cathode ray tube will replace the canvass."

Tadlock hopes for a relaxing of the holds upon TV as a medium by government regulatory agencies: "TV has been out for ee years and only now are artists able to use it. And even a show as comprehensive as TV AS A CREATIVE MEDIUM may never be presented on TV itself except within the confines of a building."

"Eventually, speculates Ira Schneider, "I'd like one monitor at the North Pole, one at the South, and two at the equator, big monitors switching and trading images back and forth."

We are witnessing the intermeshing of our global

THOMAS TADLOCK: THE ARCHETRON

"By means of a console with innumerable knobs, switches,
dials and other mysterious looking controls, three small TV
monitors and a system of mirrors and color filters, Tadlock
is able to compose on a TV screen constantly moving and
changing colorful kaleidoscopic images. In accomplishing
this, Tadlock uses all or parts of three separate live
broadcasts. It is now possible for this artist (or any
other using the Archetron) in effect to create simul-
taneously works of art on TV screens in countless homes,
thus making Nam June Paik's 'Silent TV Station' possible.
All that is needed is for a broadcasting organization, a
closed circuit TV company or a cable TV company to avail
itself of this remarkable development."
- from the notes for TELEVISION AS A CREATIVE MEDIUM.

JUD: How did the conception of the Archetron first come about? THOMAS
TADLOCK: Several years ago, before I ever came to New York, maybe
five years ago, I was working as a light sculptor with light bulbs in
Providence, Rhode Island, where I studied at the Rhode Island School
of Design. I started watching television, kaleidoscoping it, and
screwing up TV- just something fascinating, like games. I'd never
even heard of Nam June Paik at that point. The first kinetic art show
that I think was ever held in this country was ART TURNED ON in
Boston where I saw one of his pieces, so I first saw Paik's work
which then showed even greater possibilities of television. I still
continued to work with the electric pieces and finally got into TV
with the actual commission- by Dorothea Weitzner, a collectorfor this
machine.
JUD: Is this the only machine built
thusfar? TADLOCK: Using television, yes.
JUD: Is it a patented machine- similar to the one for Richard Ald-
croft's Infinity Projector? Would you build any others?
TADLOCK: Miss Weitzner wants to do it to protect herself. From the
building of this, many ideas have come- of how to expand this,

several others. In fact, this is really a basic experiment
anyway in what I could do with TV. It's not everything I can
do with TVbecause of the expense. Nobody can really afford it-
it's hard to find people somehow, to get the money to
experiment with this.
JUD: Have you considered the idea of projecting the images?
TADLOCK: This machine can drive a TV projector as well as a direct
monitor. A color projector costs $186,000 (Note.- in 1969). I
could make this machine more complex and show much more. There's
many more things that I'm ready to do with TV- I only need the
means to implement the ideas.
.JUD: How is the image transformed through the Archetron?

TADLOCK: The broadcast signal is received in black and white, and a
section of the entire picture is removed- a triangular section- and
repeated in a reverse repeat around a symmetrical axis, to make the
pattern that you see. That's a basic process- there are three units
in the machine- there could be any number of these devoces to
convert the picture over and over.

JUD: Similar to the triangle repeated kaleidoscopically eight-
fold in computer random dot patterns.
TADLOCK: From one given picture, you can make two or three of
these symmetries, because I could take the upper left, or the
lower right, and another in the middle. That's what's going on
here- there are three now- maybe there would be ten, 17, or 22-
all feeding in. JUD: That would make the image more complex.
TADLOCK: Yes. Those three black and white images are then fed as
sum and differences of the gray scale- different areas are
superimposed, each one given a color which is designated by the
nine color controls and the three percentage controls on the
electronic palette board
or color mixer. For each of the signals coming in, there are knobs
for the three primary colors of light- red, blue, and green. By

You can take each converted image and make it any color you want and combine those three colors by the percentage knob to make it, say, 50% the yellow image, 30% the orange, and 20% the blue image,
or whatever. And you can also change those while you're watching them, but I prefer to set them and then leave them. And you can set them up to show in a primary system, a tertiary system, or you can set for pastels, or Tibetan colors. I don't know; everybody likes different colors to play with. I'd like to make that programmable, instead of by knobs being adjusted, by filling out cards of differ-ent positions and what they mean. I can see it start to fall into patterns that have to be explored- and instead of positions on knobs, it can be run on sequences like they use in electronic music synthesizers- to synthesize color patterns going right down.
JUD: What do you envison working on after this piece?

TADLOCK: There are many avenues of approach that have been opened

up in the making of this piece, and I'm waiting to see just what I'm going to do. I mean, I work mediumistically. I don't set out to do anything- I just do whatever comes up. I want to further extend my idea of processing the existing information that they're throwing into the air.
JUD: How did your earlier light machines compare with the present work?

TADLOCK: I still want to work in light but it's frustrating because the image producing apparatus isn't as complex as I want it. In other words, the most advanced light source we have is the television tube. JUD: The two to four million Information bits with which to play around with.
TADLOCK: Before I got into processing imagery this way, I was pro-cessing random information through a triangular rotary repeat. There might be six lights in each triangle that were wired all around so that a random pattern fed in would be a changing kaleidoscopic turning star effect. Before I really knew what I was doing, it was similar to reprocessing TV- which is like random garbage. I was reprocessing random information coming out of

JUD: Did you know Richard Aldcroft?

TADLOCK: Yes, I met him at my studio. The people next door were trying to make pirate copies of his *Infinity* Machine- and somehow he
came to see me. I was working on this machine at the time and he flipped. Yousee, the people next door had wanted me to run one of their pirate machine copies to see if it would work. And there's some secret to the process that Aldcroft knows how to do that would keep it from blowing up from the heat- the plexiglass cylinders in all the pirate copies would blow up in three hours and the mineral oil would all come out. They lost about $6000 trying to make those phony copies. JUD: That secret was not included in the patent.
TADLOCK: Right. So he thought that was pretty *funny*. And he was talling about the same thing that I wanted to do.
JUD: The beautiful thing about his machine, and the Archetron, is that the same pattern is never repeated. That's been a dream for a long time.
TADLOCK: Plus the information that keeps coming in here. Like my patron was watching this machine when it was broadcast on TV (on the PBS "THE MEDIUM IS THE MEDIUM"). She watched it on TV on itself. And during the *opening* there were psychedelic TV shows on
TV we were watching on it- reprocessed, and so it goes on and on.
JUD: Did you ever talk to Aldcroft about his design concepts?
TADLOCK: We talked a lot. He wasn't interested in his machines at all when he was in Providence- he was interested in making floating environmental structures...
JUD: Yes, floating spherical cities on the ocean...

TADLOCK: Which had to do with what I wanted to do- and we were both more interested in that than art at that point, so that's what we talked about. I listened mostly to his theories which were all very radical, but he was able to convince me of the sensibility of every one of them. Since then I've thought more and more about it and I'm working on something on a smaller scale, a more personal sized environ. ment. (NOTE: Since this interview, Tadlock had been in California completing a huge ferrocement boat, lighter than water yet virtually indestructable, upon which he planned to live and to transport the Archetron.)

JUD: I've believed for some time that one of the few possible salvations for this country would be if more of the technology here were made immediately accessible to artists, rather than into the hands of...

TADLOCK: Business. As soon as an advance comes along that's powerful enough to be of use to the artist, it is usually snapped up and kept in tow by advertising- and government. For example the controls that are put on TV. It's been out now for some 33 years and only now are artists being able to- allowed to use it. I think I'm being too pessimistic about all this- but maybe being like that will get them to loosen up.

JUD: What do you think of TV as a medium for spiritual enlightment or education? I can see something like the Archetron doing something to loosen up people's sensibilities.

TADLOCK: I've noticed that to be true- because making this kind of meditation pattern and then feeding it with the programming that exists- (the time base patterns that they feed into commercials that they've discovered make you want to watch, make you want to buy, make you just want to want)- just those subliminal countdowns they put in and things like that are reprocessed through the machine, and sometime you can simplify it, and that makes the possibility come to the front. JUD: Paik has been taking popular images, and completely transforming them beyond all proportions into the abstract. Our society, inversely, takes good things and turns them into cliches, and Paik's work and your work retransforms these cliches into pure energy concept- pure visualization.

TADLOCK: Right. That's exactly the purpose of the work.

ADDENDUM TO: THOMAS TADLOCK: The Archetron

                                    July 21, 1969

Dear Mr. Yalkut:
Concerning ARCHETRON:
I enjoyed your article in EVO of July 2 last, but since Mr. Howard
Wise mentioned to me that you might be writing about ARCHETRON again,
---please note that I am Miss Weitzner (rather than Mrs. as printed

incorrectly), also that I am an inventor holding over 30 U.S. & for-
eign patents, that I introduced Thomas Tadlock to the possibilities
of the kaleidoscope (I had been working on a MSS. since 1959 with
color illustrations, tixt, and applications to all sorts of
different types of machines, sonic as well), that it was I who
decided that ARCHETRON should be in COLOR rather than move into our
own closedcircuit programming after we had completed its black-and-
white model.

Very Best Regards Anyway,

Dorothea Weitzner.

RAP WITH IRA SCHNEIDER AND FRANK GILLETTE:

An Attempt to Reshuffle One's Temporal Experience.

Ira Schneider is, or was, a filmmaker who previously had studied art history and research psychology, and had begun making films in 1963. In the winter of 1968-9, he joined forces with Frank Gillette, a former painter who since 1965 and had experimented with communications videotape programming As a case study of why a number of filmmakers and other artists have migrated into realm of following tap with televeision and videotape, the understanding this the and Frank may prove extremely useful in Ira

shift in perspective towards the broadening spectrum of media and intermedia.

FRANK: Film people come to videotape as an extension of film; it's a relief for them. They see videotape in a large part as a means of making film easy, whereas tape is an entirely different realm, having many more bogus similarities to film than genuine ones.

IRA: Of course you're saying that as a painter. (Laughter)

JUD: How do painters and filmmakers get into videotape--how did you both get into it?

FRANK: I got into it when Fordham University--Marshall McLuhan's Media Center, or whatever it was called--laid some equipment on me a year ago last June. Basically the unit was two studio cameras, two portable cameras, two playback decks, and two monitors, and about $300 worth of tape--that, plus some minimal editing equipment, various microphones, cords and addendum things was the unit--the package. I had this equipment for three months

with which to do whatever I wanted. It was like using the artist-
in-residence concept in reverse--in other words, you take the
residence out to the artist and give it to him to work with. So I
had four TV units for three months and I produced a few programs
with it--That was my introduction to tape.

IRA: I got into videotape when I found that the type of filming I
wanted to do required particular ease and little stress on
production--whereas in filming it was always difficult to get sync
sound whithout the use of a crew. What I wanted to do was
environmental and very loose, and I found it much easier to work
with videotape equipment than with film equipment because basically
you got everything down, and with sync sound, and you could do
whatever you wanted to it afterwards. I've always had difficulty in
working with low budets, using film equipment and having to depend
on people to help me. Videotape cuts down the size of the crew and
provides sync sound from the word "go". Another advantage to
videotape is that it fosters a life quality which I didn't always
get on Film. Somehow the media are different.
JUD: The immediacy of the television medium.

FRANK: The immediacy is conveyed through a sense of tactility
that film lacks. There'a a sense of touch--volume--the way volume
is defined on videotape is more enhancing to the volume quality--
it emphasizes volume.

JUD: What about the image resolution differences between film and
tape?
FRANK: Well, half-inch tape was a technological compromise in
a way. It comprised image definition for portability. You can
make a portable videotape reasonable if you put the
information on half-inch tape. It's the other side of the
equation being

equalled out. In terms of the television definition of
resolution, 230 lines is a high-resolution picture. It's only
a low resolution picture when it's compared with, say, 525
lines.

IRA: When we talk of 525 lines, which is American standard
broadcast television, we're taling about 525 at the point of
transmission. By the time it's received by a set it's down to 320
lines. So there's not too much actual difference between that and
the, say, 220 line capability of a portable system. FRANK: The
potential of cable television (CATV) is that with .adaption you
can send any signal over the line--the cable line-without having
to go to two inch quadraplex. You can essentially produce a cable
TV station with facilities built around portable equipment. You
eliminate the interface problem by transmitting through cable as
opposed to throwing it out into the air. The FCC requires 525
lines when throwing signals into the air because of the chances
of break-up, interference, and all kinds of electronic pollution.

IRA: It's a difference in rationale because with cable you're
getting no loss. When you're passing a signal from a video
amplifier through cable you're getting basically what your
output is at the reception site.

FRANK: The only existing problem with cables is that they have to
be insulated because signals can transfer and pollute each other.
JUD: Like crosstalk on magnetic tape.
FRANK: Exactly. So with some minor adaptions, the essential

attribute of videotape when it connects with CATV is that it

uses

already existing systems. Now, television is usually understood

in terms of a receiver. Our idea is to render that void.

Television is something you feedback with as much as you

receive with--which is a symbiosis--which works both ways.

That's the vast potential of cable TV hooking up with portable

equipment. You can have everybody running around with portable

TVs like people run around now with Bolex cameras, and by

eliminating the interface with that and transmitting, using

cable.

IRA: Perhaps we should quickly run through these different

television notions, CATV, CCTV (Closed Circuit TV), and UHF. The

notion of closed circuit TV being akin to cable is that closed

circuit, if we're talking about videotape or storage of

information and playback, plays back from the recorder into a wire

that
runs into the monitor. CATV is an extension of this in that the

wire--cable--between the playback and the monitor is much

longer. The longer the cable, the more you have to generate the

signal so that it can travel that far--it needs amplification.

FRANK: Closed circuit TV is best understood in terms of a
stereo system. A few years ago there were no stereo systems,
and no software to play on stereo systems. Likewise, in 5 or 10
years, closed circuit systems will probably be as popular as
stereo systems are now, and as you have stereo albums for
stereo systems, you'll have videotape albums for video systems.
IRA: Although EVR (Electronic Video Recording) that CBS is
coming out with may interfere with that. I think EVR is another
hype.
FRANK: It's a reactionary technological move.

IRA: EVR is not videotape but a combination of magnetic sound

strips and film to be played back through a special apparatus

on your receiver or monitor. I think their main interest in investing in this system is that it is basically like Super-8 film, and they expect to be putting out entertainment albums on EVR, and unlike videotape it will be difficult to copy, so that they can control the market.

FRANK: It's going against the current of the nature of television. Television has ubiquitous access. If you let the system run wild, everyone can get in on it, and it's not held by selected hands.

JUD: You were going to mention UHF (Ultra-High-Frequency)? IRA:

UHF is simply a means of putting more channels out for broadcast--thrown through the air. However it suffers the same limitations as standard broadcast in the sense that it's regulated immediately by the FCC--through not as rigorously and commercially compelling as standard broadcast--but still forzen to a certain number of channels.

FRANK: On the other hand, UHF will probably serve as the first show for the Pacifica radio kind of experiment when it reaches television--it'll probably not be CATV. UHF is now serving some function in the sense of sub-cultural TV serving the minority communities.

IRA: But UHF now has severe limitations because it is mostly set-up by people who are committed to the standard format of broadcast TV--limited like standard broadcast in the sense of what they can deliver or what they can see is necessary in terms of information transmission to people. For the most part now I see TV as a dehumanized media.

FRANK: At the present time. But that's not intrinsic to the system that television is. We're interested in exhausting the potentials of what television is as a total system.

JUD: Frank, what was your first work in television?

FRANK: Well. I had been doing monochromist minimalist painting, dealing with concrete concepts, and I had reached a hiatus in painting. Along came the contact with Fordham, and I first produced a 5~ hour documentary on Saint Marks Place. I spent three weeks standing on Gem's Spa corner interviewing the locals. The documentary's conception was that it focused from the inside out--these people defining themselves, and not my going in and extracting information of which they're only an element. They basically gave their raps on videotape.

IRA: And during this period Frank existed on egg creams and marshmallow candies.

FRANK: That lasted 3 weeks. Then I experimented through the Village Project with the effects of videotape on kids with bad trips--15 to 19 years old-burnt-out acid cases--let them use the camera on me, themselves, as a means of expression as opposed to a means of recording their expression. They were alienated
from their shrinks who came in periodically to extract information from them on the St. Marks scene. Videotape was a new,
favorable means of feedback for them; they dug it. I also used videotape like a canvass, specifically about four hours of

what I call a self-portrait on videotape, that used four cameras with two feedback systems. There are points in the self-portrait where you see on tape me looking at myself on tape,

an entirely redefined image of myself. At a point in December, I met Ira, we discussed working together, and we went out to Antioch College in January and February.

IRA: We were invited out by David Brooks, who was teaching in the film department and who managed to get us access to their TV studio equipment. We brought our own Sony portable equipment, and completed about 20 hours of taping there, combining many approaches, in the studio and in the streets. The basic notion was that we were going out to meet an American sub-culture, without any preconceptions, and to work through interaction.

JUD: You had been filming and not working in television prior to this?

IRA: No. I stopped that summer when a film project fell through because of lack of funds. I was filming this British painter painting the SALVATION building in Sheridan Square and his interaction with the indigenous people, from him alone painting to over fifty people dancing in the streets and decorating the phonebooths. I won't mention the cameraman's name, but he was an inveterate zoomer, which made cutting the shots very difficult. Again with film you have to spread otu production among many people, and if you don't have an organized group, it becomes impossible.

(Ira Schneider's previous films include THE FRANTIC PEDANTIC SEMANTIC ANTIC, THE GHOST OF WITTGENSTEIN, and LOST IN CUDIHY a prizewinner of the 1966 National Student Association Film Contest.)

JUD: What happened after that?

IRA: Well, let's see--four months of depression (Laughter), thinking about what I was going to do next, and then I woke up one morning saying, "Television, television, that's how to communicate quickly". And then I met Frank. I decided videotape would be the next move, grabbed a knapsack full of money, some videotape equipment, a car, forty pounds of salt pork, cans of baked beans, and we split for Antioch-- where

we did some lecturing and involved the students as actors in our studio and non-studio work. One technique was to introduce four to six people into a studio with only chairs facing cameras, leaving them there and working the cameras from outside.

FRANK: We gave them minimal instructions--like you can't communicate with each other unless you communicate through the camera. Under each camera was a mirror--they sat in the chairs, could do anything they wanted, but only through the media--the camera, and they could use the mirror to facilitate their actions.

IRA: Sometimes the rules were more and sometimes less restrictive--like the restriction being not to destroy the cameras. We also taped at David Brook's countryhouse with actors--loose plots--an actor peeling potatoes, and suddenly he was a farmer who had lived there forty years.

FRANK: We also picked up the town, a strike at a book-bindery, interviews with farmers, children, and the locals at the doughnut bakery there in Xenia, Ohio.

IRA: And then we had the Cincinnati jugband in the basement.

FRANK: And a vain attempt at a skin-flick on tape.

IRA: We canned that but we got a lot of beautiful bathtub footage.

JUD: Some of the bathtub scenes were included in your WIPE CYCLE television mural at the Howard Wise Gallery TELEVISION AS A CREATIVE MEDIUM SHOW?

IRA: Yes, we seem to have a facility to abstract small sections of material

FRANK: Which is an important point. Videotape lends itself to collage more easily than film because of the accessibility of the image.

IRA: One thing we succeeded in doing at Antioch was turning the kids on to using videotape in their own work, and then we split back to New York, and shortly thereafter fell into WIPE CYCLE.

"WIPE CYCLE is a television mural designed to engage and integrate the viewer's television 'image' at three separate points in time and five exchanging points in space. Synchronized cycle patterns consisting of live delayed feedback, broadcast television, and taped programming are developed through four programmed pulse-signals every two, four, eight, and sixteen seconds. Separately, each of the cycles acts as a layer of video information while the four levels of information in concert determine the overall

> composition of the work at a given moment. The
> intent of this overloading (something like a
> play within a play within a play) is to escape
> the automatic 'information' experience of
> commercial television without totally divesting
> it of its usual content. Thus, the information
> on the programmed tapes juggles and recombines
> elements within the Gallery and its immediate
> environment with portraits, landscapes,
> montages, and video distortions." --FRANK
> GILLETTE

FRANK: The original proposal was to distribute the tape delay
systems throughout the gallery, but because that would have
interfered with other exhibits it was shelved, and the mural
conception with the delay mechanisms on one wall was introduced.

IRA: I guess we just designed for the space provided for us
an entrance piece, or opening piece, facing the Gallery elevator
and picking up people as they came in.

FRANK: To emphasize this point we taped our co-exhibitors while
the show was being set-up and programmed these bits into WIPE
CYCLE to give it an interesting internal feedback quality.
You saw the show being put together as you entered the gallery,
and the rest of the show was how it had been put together. IRA:
The most important facet of WIPE CYCLE was the notion of
information presentation, and the integration of the audience into
the information.

FRANK: It was an attempt to demonstrate that you're as much a
piece of information as tomorrow morning's headlines--as a
viewer

you take a satellite relationship to the information. And

the satellite which is you is incorporated into the thing which is being sent back to the satellite--in other words, rearranging one's experience of information reception.
IRA: WIPE CYCLE'S physical makeup is a television mural consisting of nine monitors.
FRANK: It's a prototype model-

IRA: A live feedback system that enables a viewer standing in his environment to see himself not only NOW in time and space, but also 8 seconds ago and sixteen seconds ago, and these are in juxtaposition and flux. In addition he sees standard broadcast images which come on at periods alternating with his live image, and also two programmed shows which are collage-like, ranging from a shot of the earth from outer space, to cows grazing, to 57th street. Somehow there's a juxtaposition between the now of the person, and the individual, with other elements of information about the Universe and America, and so the general reaction
seems to have been a somewhat objectifying experience, and also a somewhat integrating experience in terms of one's place in the Universe.
FRANK: It's an attempt to reshuffle one's temporal experience-one's sense of time and space.
JUD: What possibilities do you see for the integration of abstract television effects and electronic distorting devices, such as Paik uses, in your TV work?
FRANK: I'm not as much interested in my work in pure abstraction as with the potential of TV for collage abstraction, that is to say, the taking of real elements which read as real--or live on

videotape--and juxtaposing them in abstract formulas to create a "living" abstraction. People see videotape and what they read in their skulls is "real"--it seems live and has an unstored quality-- like the live immediacy of even Walter Cronkite on the 7 o'clock News. I see television as a potential for using that "live" effect via abstraction, as a vehicle for an abstract statement from another angle, but I see it as no less than that.

IRA: I would add that the notion of abstraction also includes

the notion of the abstraction of information, and the

juxtaposition of information, which can be further spaced out by

the integration. of distortion circuitry effects. But basically, I

think we

look for a point from which to take off for abstraction on a level

of content, or of information, and then into something like notions

of successive auras, which by the way come up on videotape once

in a while. I won't say it's an aura but there's electromagnetic

interference of different kinds that enter into videotaping.

Somehow it's picking up vibes.

FRANK: A videotape freak argued that the image on his

viewfinder in a portable camera had been bettered by his feeding

the camera good vibes.

IRA: In fact, we looked through it and it seemed that he was

right. It was better.

FRANK: It was certainly the best viewfinder image I've ever seen

in a videotape camera, and his claim was that he broke the

camera in by sending it good vibes, by loving it, by psyching

out the media and changing the image. An ideology can be built

for

better electronics through metaphysics.

To demonstrate the poignancy of tape, people have seen
themselves fedback on film and fedback on tape, and invariably
they say that tape is a much more eerie experience,
particularly the initial witnessing; the first time you see
yourself back
on tape, it's the first genuine view from the outside of what the
inside is like. A mirror is like an extension of the inside because
you have to keep your eyes focused on it, and you're always looking
at your eyes focused into a mirror. But with tape, you see yourself
in every gesture, your kinetics are revealed. It's all suddenly
outside, and it's the first time you've ever met that outside.
Videotape sends a quality of the whole, and it's that poignant
sense of the real whole that gives it strength. It sends a volume
and tactility--a sense of touch, the texture of the volume.
IRA: In film I always get the feeling that my image is in a
two-dimensional space; somehow I don't relate it to myself
immediately. Whereas, in videotape, I tend to see my movements
and my behaviors, the way I carry myself, much more vividly.
I haven't felt any satisfactory definition of the
differences in systems; I think it will continue to evolve.
FRANK: Film imitated theater, videotape imitates film.

It's just beginning to develop. It's like the first
automobiles with the engines in the front, because that's where
the horse was.
IRA: Or like the television media's news presentation coming
off of a concept of "sound" news--as per radio.

FRANK: Or attempting to distribute TV's as they once distributed radios. Well, that's ignoring the potential of the system. The mentality that went into the distribution of the TV system is remarkably low--it was surrendered over to marketing. Television, from its inception, with the slightest adaptions, had the potential of doing what it's doing now in terms of its flexibility and avaiability of access. Some CATV stations are delivering nothing but commercials--they're total marketing experiments. How to market your product more efficiently: show them pictures of it with singsong, and send a program along with that to which they get narcotically addicted, and sell soap; it's a potpourri of ailments being solved. That's what TV is about now.

JUD: Korzybski talked about plants being chemically binding, animals adding spatial binding, and man time-binding; the fact that we can look at and interpret artifacts by an Egyptian.
FRANK: Yes, we are complex modes of all sorts of messages and signals, and one of these defines endurance. What videotape does is to dip into that; you can demonstrate an individual's sense of his own past with tape much clearer than anything I can think of, unless you add the even further dimensionality of holography where you can further articulate the three-dimensionality of the image. You can qualify it by getting a better space understanding of it but you can't qualify it anymore in terms of your temporal understanding of the tape. The delay system that we had in WIPE CYCLE is only an embryonic form of this. You can establish an entire

environment where you're constantly tracking yourself every
two seconds--at two seconds intervals every point going
back add infinitum is somewhere being fed back to you.
IRA: A delayed strobe.

FRANK: Only it's an informational strobe, not merely a light
strobe. Which is one of the ideas that freaks me out and which
I'd like to do. In other words, how many generations of self-
feedback can you keep track of without totally losing the
sense of yourself; literally, through electronic techniques,
setting yourself up outside of your body. You don't have to
sell the Hindu trip anymore, you sell the television set.
I forsee in the future that it'll be largely a matter of how
much information you hold--information replaces capital in the
economy. That cultural switchoff is not that far away. The
revolution in America is not going to result from the clash of
political ideologies; it's going to result from the saturation
of information and the modes of informtion dissemination being
entirely different, and at that point you'll have the American
Revolution; and the only violence will-be done to its own
history, or its own sense of history.
IRA: Media violence, that's all.

FRANK: Paik is the George Washington of the movement, which
has yet to encounter its Warren G. Harding.
The name of the game in this number--the entire videotape
media number--is being in the position of outthinking
yourself, constantly expanding parameters, dropping previous
boundaries, instituting new boundariesl it's constant

the volume of the information is so incredibly high, and the
exhaustion and obsolescence with which the media information
is used is very high rate. So you're constantly faced with the
situation that if you're holding an idea for longer than "x"
period amount of time, two weeks perhaps, the idea is
incorporated into the space and is obsolete. So the ideas have
to be constantly generated in terms of always out-thinking the
ideas that were previously generated--it's a spiralling
process, lead"ing to who knows where, and it's a direct result
of the electronic process. It's like electronic foreplay,. you
can record and know what the cat on the other side of the
world is thinking about as fast as you can know what you're
thinking about; practically speaking it's about the same
speed. And that changes the nature of the way information
interacts and the way people take advantage
of information.

IRA: Frank, I think, is in charge of generating vocabulary.

JUD: What's your feeling about the televising of the moon
landing?

FRANK: The idea that everyone who has a television receiver
will be capable of seeing the first step on the moon is a
gigantic, universal confirmation of experience. Columbus
didn't have that luxury. The entire world is with him
literally, he's having his experience confirmed like nobody
else has had their experience confirmed before--he's going to
be stoned, just be mere vibration feedback his experience
will be confirmed. Like the first motherfucker who hit the
North

Pole, or Mount Everest, he says oh shit, this is his

thing, that he's doing, he's all alone by himself, he's

got to come back and rap about it.

IRA: These guys don't have to hold it in. They can rap

while it's happening. But I wish it didn't sound like

a football game.
FRANK: One of the environmental TV projects we're in the process
of designing for "X" is a complete system in which the room would
be the experienced core of the television environment, with one
wall that would entail color. A third of the system would be
direct color tape, and two thirds of the system would be black
and white adapted to color through the use of filters, and so on,
and the elements would be around 18 monitors and a videotape
projection system, using retrieval, delay units, projection
mechanisms for matting one image over another image (where you
get three or four overlays).

IRA: Let's say, integration of the live audience onto

pretaped material.

FRANK: It would probably use six cameras, some rotating, some

stationary, and all serving the different functions of throwing

the witness to the experience into the feedback of the

experience. It's more than merely putting together TV

environments (teledynamic environments)--we'll be dealing with

software concepts also.
IRA: We'll be dealing with media-ecology.

FRANK: One of the ideas for which we haven't found backing

yet, would be a video chamber with a plexiglass core, so

one would actually enter the chamber physically--and 360
degrees around, the chamber structure would be a system
of monitors feeding back your own image integrated with
programmed material.
IRA: From many different angles.

FRANK: For example, if you were standing in this chamber, the
camera may be shooting from underneath and feeding back the
image of shooting you from underneath overhead, and this would
be switching with other positions. And the manifestation of this
would be that you would enter the chamber and experience the
total TV environment, where you would have contract with

a contiguous environment, and that would be the maximum TV
experience given the current state of the technology. Besides
using separate monitors, we're looking into the possibility
of having a circular or chamber shaped video-receptive screen
for projection-
IRA: Which is not yet available commercially, but will be
in the next few years. I think content is by and large the
most important thing, and particularly its applications
in helping people to better realize the objectifying experience.
In other words, seeing themselves from outside themselves, which
potentially can lead to the realization that we are all actors--or
that we are not realizing our potential, that much of our energy
is relegated to our habit patterns and the behavior that's carried
us through to this point. When you can see yourself on TV, and the
back of yourself simultaneously-something that we seldom if ever
get a chance to do--if we
extend further into the notion of an environment, one can

see oneself in a social, or spatial environment. This offers a potential of, say, liberation.

FRANK: Another dimension possible to varieties of abstract programming is literally using videotapes or the TV screen as a temporal canvas. It's like a canvas, only the other dimension of time is introduced; and all the implications which this realm opens up, as far as total environment constructions, or constructing environments which are in their totality THAT feedback which we want to explore.

IRA: In addition, there's a further idea of entertainment, and the individual becoming his own entertainment. More and more, I see people laying out, and boredom creeping in on the scene, or simply lack of initiative. Now, seeing

this over a period of time being mediaized or seeing yourself in front of a TV camera--seeing the feedback--breeds the notion that we're all potential actors--effectors

When John Cage saw the electronic TV experiments of Nam June Paik in 1965, he said: "I always thought that someone would do this. The next step will be pocket-sized videotape recorders."

> "Art and TV are no longer two different things. They're equally redious. The geometry of the one's devitalized the other ('find out what kind of bad habits you have'); TV's vibrating field's shaken our arts to pieces. No use to pick them up. Get with it: 'Someday artists will work with capacitors, resistors & semi-conductors as they work today with brushes, violins, and junk."'
> - JOHN CAGE in "Nam June Paik: A Diary" in A YEAR FROM MONDAY

. Born in Seoul, Korea in 1932, educated in Tokyo, Munich and Cologne, and having worked in the studio for Electronic Music of Radio Cologne, Paik first exhibited his electronically altered television "light machines" at the Galerie Parnass in Wuppertal, Germany in 1963. In 1965, his television work was shown in New York at the Galeria Bonino, as well as his 20 channel radio-controlled Robot K-456, now resident in Cologne.

JUD: John Gruen has called "the embodiment of the Combine Generation compulsion to be a latter-day Renaissance man of the arts" by being at once a kinetic sculptor, a composer, an actor and a theoretician. What new roles have you assimilated?

PAIK: I am the greatest Haiku poet of all periods since 1967, and it is scientifically provable. 17^{111} is a magic number. Haiku poems consist of 17 syllables and there are no more than 111 syllables in the Japanese language; therefore 17^{111} is the total possibility of all Haiku poems including the best and the worst. When I let the computer write out all these possibilities, which is pretty easy, thereafter no one can write any more Haiku poems. Whatever they might write, however they might sweat, the result will be one of my Haiku poems. The best Haiku poet from now on will be at best the editor of my poems.

JUD: And what are your views on the possibilities of the laser?

PAIK: In 1965, Billy Kluver asked the question, "If you could have unlimited money to use technical means for artistic uses, how would you do it?" One of my answers was to make many, many laser TV

and radio stations, so we could have, for example, a Cage only station, a Brakhage only station, etc.

Color has been the biggest problem in 20th century life, but color will be the biggest problem to death in the 22nd century. Because of the laser gun, we will ahve not only the luxury of life or death, but the choice of the color of death, violet death, pink suicide, transparent nirvana, tricolor Harakiri, etc. I think it will be the biggest invention after the electric knife.

JUD: As a communication specialist, what role do you envision for the artist?

PAIK: 80% of the family planning job in India is the publicity job for which artists are best talented. The only way to reach an Indian villager is through the mixed-media language, which is the avant garde artist's own language. Meanwhile, a first class Ad-man would never go to Indian to live, and probably third-class talents are getting paid in Indian at first class rates and are doing third-class ,jobs. Bizarre vision, unorthodox approach, rich imagination and, most importantly, a genuine love for India and a will to study and admire Indian culture- all these make the artist a qualified publicity worker for family planning, and probably more talent for this work will be gathered among artists than any other group.

JUD: What is your contribution to the C.I.A.?

PAIK: A great deal: A) Most of my electronic TV work is a scanning variation. I think I have more scientific data on the scanning pattern than any lab on earth, pLnd this is something for the C.I.A. For example, if the Republic of Tanganyika sent their moon ship to the Moon and wanted to send their picture back to Earth in a way that the Republic of Uganda or Katanga could not see its content, then they could scramble the picture according to one of my 1000 scanning patterns and send it back to Earth. In this way the balance of power in Africa would be stable forever.

B) The use of the "Synthetic Face" for police identification and beauty surgery will enable us to construct any kind of face on a TV screen: e.g. a suspect who has the long contour of John Wayne, the melancholy eyes of James Mason plus Chou En-Lai, half bald as Yul Brynner, oriental flat nose, but with the sensual mouth of, say, Oscar Wilde, but wearing glasses like James Joyce's,

and the sex appeal of Henri Vidal.

> "I suggest to build a 7 channel video signal mixer, in
> which each camera shoots the separate parts of various
> faces, enabling us to compose one face out of 7 men's
> characteristics.
> a) eyes weep, while mouth smiles.
>
> b) only eyes come out of face and fly away (negative
> feedback of eyes will eraeeout original eyes electron-
> ically.)
> c) a face with slowly shrinking mouth.
>
> d) a face with two mouths and three eyes.
>
> e) whole face shakes, but only nose stays unmoved.

JUD: What is your main concern as of now?

PAIK: As a responsible citizen, I am very worried about the moral
consequences of the picture telephone. First of all, the picture-
phone will undoubtedly soar the sales and spur the designs of
gorgeous negligees. When you get a telephone call at night, you
will want to be seen in your best pajamas.
    This has its positive aspect for society. Say, a businessman
goes to a *convention* in the Midwest and wants to make a goodnight
picturephone call to his beloved wife in New York, in the eastside
brownstone house. They talk to each other, a bit of escalation, and
kiss through the picture, a bit more escalation, they try to hug
through the picture, in vain, frustration, and a bit more escalat-
ion. Then, maybe a daring wife might talk to her husband topless,
but that's still okay.
    But what happens if there is a professional good night answer-
ing service, which has a staff of buxomy blondes, doing picturephone
answering service, how will this affect the whole Park Avenue call
girl business? And what if micro-boppers get that telephone number?
I urge, as a responsible citizen, to set up a special committee in
Congress for this attack on morality. John Cage expressed similar
concern already a few years ago.

JUD: What do you think of the urging of J.J. Akston in ARTS maga-
zine for an art and business collaboration?
PAIK: I urge that the top 500 businesses create an "Artist-In-
Residence" position to advise in marketing advertisement and the
research of new products on the top level. so that their unorthodox
fresh sense can vitalize a big corporation hierarchy. For example,
John Cage as Artist-In-Residence of I.B.M., Allan Kaprow in the
Chase Manhattan Bank. Mary Baumeister in Helena Rubinstein, Christo
in the United Packing Company, Otto Piene in Polaroid,
USCO in General Motors, Nam June Paik in the Something Else Concern.
JUD: Whom do you recommend to Dow Chemical?
PAIK: Franz Schubert.

.JUD: Now even Ray Johnson is going out with a petite
computeress. What have been your results with the computer
itches?
PAIK: Max Mathews of Bell Labs has quoted John Cage. who said that if
piece. If you are not surprised, then you have composed it. however,
I found out, might that no matter how genial a computer
be, "he" has   no   common   For example, instead of just down
saying "Walk", you   sense. have to   to logical steps, that is, your
give the weight to   break   it   the   body, give the strength
to the muscles below the   put the energy to the vector point
ing to the sky, making 90 degrees to the earth, move the vector to
160 degrees to the earth, using also universal gravitation, stop the
movement as soon as the distance between your leg and the earth comes
to zero, repeat the above process for your right leg, the right leg
meaning your leg on the right side of your body, then repeat the
entire process 100 times.

> "Weiner's main theme was 'control and communication in
> animal and machine' (note: animal comes first), which he
> put as the subtitle of his main work, 'Cybernetics'. He
> reached to the automatic control of the anti-aircraft gun,
> an earliest model of today's huge computer, through the
> study of feed-backs in the animal's nerve system. Also the
> binary code of today's computer has its origin in the 'all
> or nothing' character of our Neuron synapses, which are
> either simply 'ON', or simply 'OFF'."
> - NAM JUNE PAIK.

PAIK: I decided to title all my computer pieces in French, to
protest the lack of common sense in the computer. Verlain wrote:
"It rains in my heart, as it rains in the city." I say: "It rains
in
my computer, as it rains in my heart"- "Il pluit dance mon
computeur" will be my first piece. It is the mix of real rain and
simulated
rain in the computer. My second piece will be called "La Computeur
Sentimentale", and the third piece "Aimez-vous FORTRAN
progamming?" The more it deals with the character of randomness
and repitition, the more efficient is the computer. These are the
two poles of human artistic materials. Total repitition means
total indeterminism. Both are mathematically simply explicable.

> "Indeterminism, a core in the thought of the twentieth century
> from Heisenberg via Satre to Cage, reflected also in Wiener
> and McLuhan. For Wiener indeterminism was entropy, a classical
> terminology of statistics, and for McLuhan indeterminism was
> the 'cool media with low definition'...'it is possible to
> interpret the information carried by a message as essentially
> the negative of its entropy and the negative logarithm of its
> probability. That is, the more probable the message, the less
> information it gives. Cliches, for examples, are less
> illuminating than the great poems.' (Norbert Wiener: The Human
> Use Of Human Beings. p. 21) White noise has the maximum
> quantity of information." - NAM JUNE PAIK.

JUD: You have worked with electronic music since 1958 and with elec-
tronic painting since 1960. What is your opinion on the current stage
of the art and technology boom?

PAIK: If revolution meant electrification for the Russians of 1920;
and for the Americans of 1940, wall-to-wall carpeting; then revol-
ution in 1960 means electronification, from mind to mind and from
planet to planet.

"McLuhan's famous phrase 'the medium is the message'
also existed implicitly in the science of communicat-
ion since the 1940's. Norbert Wiener wrote that the
information, in which a message was sent, plays the
same role as the information, in which a message is
not sent. It sounds almost Cagean.... Cage might say,
'a notation, with which music is playable, plays the
same role as the notation, with which music is not
playable'. I titled several of my pieces as 'playable
music', since most of my musical compositions are
not playable." - NAM JUNE PAIK.

PAIK: But even McLuhan misuses and mixes up the words "electric"
and "electronic", which have as much difference as "tonal" and
"atonal". In the electronic trade jargon, we distinguish roughly
two sort of processes: 1) peripheral units, that is, various
inputoutput units and gate circuits, and 2) central processing
units, that is, various data-storage and data-processing units,
which have some similarity with organic unity, the animal and
human machines. Many art works using electronics up to now have
been in the first stage. Whether you use a capacitor switch, a
photo-cell switch, or wireless control, it is still the peripheral
unit and does not reach the central processing units. Data
PROCESSING is
the superior meaning. Some of my color TV works have this kind
of data processing unit, because they have some discontrol
elements among the three constituents, the creator-artwork-and-
viewer. They are moving independently, this is, affecting each
other, but not determining each other.

"The systematic study of SCANNING in symmetric and
assymmetirc, geometric and ageometric,
deterministicprababalistic-indeterministic, periodic
and aperiodic ways.

The main reason for the quick success of my
electronic art was that I gave up very early the
production of video-signals (information quantity: 4
million bits per second) in order to concentrate my
efforts on the creation of unusual scanning patterns
(very manageable information quantity: 15,000 and 50

> bits per second). Especially the addition of a third
> deflection yoke and triple modulation was a break-
> through. The quick switching of various deflection
> patterns (e.g. spiral, oval, triangle, etc.) with
> adequate gate circuit as in chromatron color TV will
> enrich the variability by far. I am confident that the
> introduction of the computer to this already well
> proven area will bring immediate success."
> - NAM JUNE PAIK.

PAIK: I also envisage the day when the collaboration of artist and
engineer will progress into the **integratioh:of** artist and engineer
into ONE person. According to my past experience, the best results
were achieved through accidents and error. As you see, the transis
tor was dicovered by accident. This means that the present computer
age was the product of chance to a high degree. Therefore, if I give
and order to an engineer, and if I don't go through all the exper-
iments myself, (that is the complicated process of trial and error)
I will lose all those precious errors, I will only get what I want,
and miss all the disappointments and surprises. I have found that
the by-product is often more valuable than the first envisioned aim.

> "But if all arts merge into one, as the recent movement
> of Multimedia shows, then the study of various arts
> should merge too into one by the qualified in-
> vestigator, who, if I may simulate Wiener, is 'a spec-
> ialist in his own field but possesses a thoroughly
> sound and trained acquaintance with the fields of his
> neighbors. " - NAM JUNE PAIK.

PAIK: And, to look back to the classics, Leonardo's scientific

study of perspectives was inseparable from his artistic achievement,
Chopin's and DEbussy's piano virtuousity was inseparable from their
compositional imagination. Although the piano has only 88 keys, now
we have in color TV 12 million dots per second, which I have somehow
to control for my work. It is like composing a piano concerto using
a piano equipped with 12 million keys. How can you deal with that
vast quantity of possibility without the painstaking study of your

> "Anyway, if you see my TV, set it more than 30 minutes.
>
> 'the perpetual evolution is the perpetual UN-satisfaction. It is the only merit of Hegelian dialectic.' (R. AKUTAGAWA)
>
> 'the perpetual UNsatisfaction is the perpetual evolution. It is the main merit of my experimental TV.' (N.J.P.)
>
> The frustration remains as frustration There is no the catharsis." - NAM JUNE

JUD: Can you comment on some of your "composite" pieces at the second Bonino gallery exhibition (1968)?

PAIK: One element was electronic antique art. I used some first class Japanese art works and combined with the new electric media, without harming the original antique work. Thus the buyer is sure to own at least one authentic and secure investment, even if Nam June Paik is completely forgotten by the year 2000; and if my reputation does survive until then, then they two authentic works. It is will own a game in which the buyer never loses.

One more new idea was the collaboration of two artists, like Cage and Tudor in the performance of music, but never done quite this way in the visual arts. Mary Baumeister, Ayo, Robert Breer, Christo, Ray Johnson, made the exterior housings of my TV as their own composition. In serious art, becoming a celebrity is only a passage to anonymity and these collaborations are a modest but beautiful stepping-stone to the utopian republic of anonymity.

> "McKuhan sees only the good side of TV culture. David
> Reisman was more pessimistic about mass communication
> sociologically because of monopoly manipulation by continual
> headlining and simplification of news. Norbert Wiener,
> who contributed to the electronic age, was pessimistic,
> 'scared of this creation.' Cage expressed an opinion to
> the effect that in a way McLuhan was only describing
> today's phenomenon. It was important for a diagnosis of
> the age, but he made no value ,judgment."
> - NAM JUNE PAIK.

NAM JUNE PAIK, PART TWO: We Are In Open Circuits.

> "Many mystics are interested to <u>spring </u>out from
> ONE-ROW-TIME, ONE-WAY-TIME, in order to
> GRASP the eternity.
>
> aa) To stop at the consummated or steril Zero-point
> is a classical methid to grasp the eternity.
> bb) To perceive SIMULTANEOUSLY the parallel
> flows of many independent movements is another
> classical way for it.

But po+cr Joyce was compelled to write the parallely
advancing stories in one book with one-way direction,
because of the othology of the book. The simultaneous
perception of the parallel flows of 13 independent TV
movements <u>can </u>perhaps realize this old dream of mys-
tics, although the problem is left unresolved, whether
this is possible with our normal physiognomy (we
have only <u>one </u>heart, <u>one </u>breath, <u>one </u>focus of eye,)
without some mystical training, and IF WELL TRAINED
.... he needs neither 13 TVs, nor TV,
nor electronics, nor music, nor art....... the happiest
suicide of art........ the most difficult anti-art, that
ever existed........" - NAM JUNE PAIK in "afterlude to the
EXPOSITION OF EXPERIMENTAL TELEVISION, 1963, March, Galerie
Parnass.

Eating grapes and talking to Paik in his New York studio (Canal
Street), I asked him about his work with computers and computer-gen-
erated images at Bell Laboratories. "Oh, my work with computers;
grapes are better than computers. The computer has never had an ir-
resistable attraction for me, but grapes do."

> "<u>Cybernated art </u>is very important, but <u>art for cybernated
> life </u>is more important, and the latter need not be cyber-
> nated." - Nam June Paik.

PAIK: For the MACHINE show at the Museum of Modern Art in 1968-9, I
first made all my color TV playable by the viewer; now I can do much
better using the computer.

> "I have treated cathode ray tube (TV screen) as a canvas,
> and proved that it can be a superior canvas. From now on,
> I will treat the cathode ray as a paper and pen....
> If Joyce lived today, surely he would have written 'Fin-
> negan's Wake' on videotape, because of the vast possibil-
> ity.of manipulation in magnetic storage information."
> - NAM JUNE PAIK FROM "RONDO ELECTRONIQUE", 1965, printed
> finally in the MACHINE show catalog.

PAIK: There are three ways:

1) using the Calcomp plotter which makes all the information bits
into one graphic sheet, but this is very slow;
2. using the Stromberg-Carlson 4020 microfilm plotter which is now
standard equipment for computer-based movies and graphics. This
machine is very versatile but it has for me one very grave mistake:
the end result will be recorded on film rather than communicated
directly on the cathode ray tube. (NOTE: Since this time in 1969,
Bell Labs has since developed direct read-out on CRTs. Others were to
follow.) If you work with it for a short time, it costs hundreds of
dollars because of computer time-sharing, and the results are always
fixed and determinable, not indeterminate or changeable. The result
must be projected and you lose the burning effect of looking directly
at the cathode ray tube. Watching a direct source and indeterminancy
are my mai interests. The 4020 has a scanning of 1000 X 1000 (X and
Y) which is pretty good, but one month rental of the machine is $8000
which is godamn expernsive. I don't think it will be the machine of
the future;
3) The third means seems most promising: feeding computer-generated
signals directly into the various inputs of the cathode ray.

"Professor K.O. Goetz of the Kunstakadenie in Duesseldorf, Germany
has published since 1960 on the idea of feeding the Kathode of the TV
picture tube with a computer. This idea has not been realized,
because he could not get a computer and our largest computer is still
too slow to send 4 million points in each one 50th second. Although
this idea and my method is completely different, I want to pay due
respect." - NAM JUNE PAIK, Winter, 1964, in NEW SCHOOL concert
program.

PAIK: This is a good symbolization of the human body which has seven inputs from ears to mouth to genitals. The cathode ray has eight inputs and is comparable to the human body. Computer generation is best for abstract patterns and the input signals can be directly computer generated or generated by the philosophical pro grams obtained through the use of a computer. When pictures are this sent by wire from place to place, process is reproductive but picture never changeable, giving the same at the other end. If we computers can translate the picture through into mathematical equa tions, the results can then by changeable. Once you make an equation it is very easy to manipulate.

"The painfil gap existing between TV video signal (4 meg c/s) and the output speed of computer (eg. IBM 7090: 400,000 bits per second) requires an unusual solution. One way would be to record the program in slow speed and speed it up in play-back. But still astronomical quantity of information bit in single frame and its sequence re- quires enormously time consuming program work, and just this shortcoming demands an original programming system, with many short cut ways and artistic phantasies, for which I may say myself, I have often been credited. As the first step I will establish many machine independent subroutines, which may be used by other programmers like twelve tone rows or raga in *Indian* music. Eg:

a) Subroutines of various basic forms, *ranging* from geometric to irregular form like bacteria. b) Subroutine of **place** inside a frame.

c) Subroutine of size.

d) Division of raster to many fields and its interchangability.

e) Stretch and shrink each field in various directions.

f) Subroutine of combination of all 5 subroutine and the superimposition with realistic images. As human laughter and dog's bark is superimposed in Vocoder, so Picasso's face is scanned into the face of *gnawing* cat.

Among vast application of this method in art, science

>   and technology, one interesing example would be the
>   imitation of the statistical movements of virus,
>   bacteria, fishes, and mass people."
>   - NAM JUNE PAIK, 1966.

I asked Paik about his experiences in Japan:

PAIK: I was in Tokyo from July 1950 to October 1956, and then in 1964 again. I met two great Japanese engineers there. Stockhausen has worked in Japan and said the best engineering staff he has ever had was with the NHK radio. The two engineers I met were Shuya Abe and Hideo Uchida. They changed my weltenschang. They understood that science contains more beauty than logic.
"....From 1969 to 1970, I have collaborated with Shuya Abe (a great engineer-artist) to make a video-synthesizer, which would accumulate all my past experiments into one playable console. It was generously supported by WGBH Boston, a leading public television station in U.S.

>   This can grow to a video-piano ay every household in the
>   post-video cassette age. People can create their own art
>   and send it to their friends through video-telephone lines
>   and elevate their mood by watching or attaching certain
>   medical electronic gadgets and control their own brainwaves
>   in order to achieve an instant Nirvana."
>   - NAM JUNE PAIK, 1971, Sonsbeek, Holland catalog.

PAIK: Hideo Uchida discovered the transistor much earlier than the Americans, but no one believed him when he said that certain crystals can amplify signals. He is now researching the electronic basis of telepathy. For example, when an elevated train passes under highvoltage wires, the people in the train change their subjects of conversation or the pitch of their voices unconsciously, and it is possible for people to pick up or tune in on the resonance of each others' brain waves. He believes that every radio has electronic resonance factors (The coil has a factor which responds to some frequencies more violently than others). We are not yet aware that telepathy is conveyed through the resonance factors of the mind or the environment of the surrounding house. (NOTE: Excerpts from articles by Hideo Uchida, provided in English version by Paik. appear as appendices to ELECTRONIC ZEN.)

"Resonance.... If one has a circuit that oscillates, an
oscillator, one can feed energy from that circuit into
spatially distributed curcuits, such as wires running in
parallel, as in cables, and then to tuned structures, such
as a large antenna at the other end of the parallel wires
or cable.... The antenna itself must be tuned, that is, it
must be adjusted in the length and its distance from the
ground in such a way that one achieves a standing wave
pattern on the antenna.... When standing waves exist on the
antenna, the oscillating field distributed over the antenna
excites traveling waves in the surrounding space, which we
call radio waves. The antenna then radiates.... We can also
tune our brains and bodies to transmit those
energies.... It may very well be that our atmosphere over
the whole planet is part of an intelligence network whose to
code we have failed break and whose transmissions are
outside our present knowledge."
- JOHN C. LILLY, in Chapter 9 of THE CENTER OF THE CYCLONE.

PAIK: Medical relectronic research using computer analysis of human
brain waves is rapidly advancing. Professor Kasamatsu of Tokyo
University and others have been charting the alpha waves of Zen
monks to observe the physiological-electrical changes when Satori
is reached or not, and also experimented with LSD and other
psychedelics likewise. The effect of the alpha wave on a graph is
unmistakable.

I found myself, I receive certain frequencies very low which I
can reveice normally when I perform my ONE FOR VIOLIN solo. I do
not crash the violin until I can perceive certain frequencies of

"But how can one arrive at variability without losing in-
tensity. Unifying variability and intensity has been one of
the most important problems. Is intensity (tension, high
voltage) essential to life? Perhaps one has to substitute
this physical dimension rather by a spiritual or ideolog-
ical dimension, e.g. ambiguity, depth, etc., if there is
such a dimension.

Everyone can experience this consciousness through love for
a while. The Zen priest also aims at a kind of calmness

or calm ecstasy, but an external extended one, without
crescendo, climax, catharsis,- the causes for delusion,
illusion, error and deception and self-deception. There-
fore they say that love is as bad as hatred.
They train themselves to diminish, level and balance
the amplitudes and frequencies of their love, hatred and
life.- Zen requires hard training.... Who is trained, can
better endure the tediousness. I admire the MUSIC OF
CHANGES most of all because it is Cage's most tedious
composition." - NAM JUNE PAIK.

Paik has performed his ONE FOR VIOLIN and many other compos-
itions in Europe and America with cellist Charlotte Moorman, known
for a while to many in America as the Topless Cellist since she was
stopped by police during her performance of Paik's OPERA SEXTRONIQUE
at the Filmmakers' Cinematheque in New York in 1967.
Commented Paik: I have wanted to combine sex and music for a long
time. It's a simple fact that two such beautiful things should go
together. Popular music is aware of this, but Brahms leider, for
example, is usually sung by ugly women. I have been looking in Japan
and Germany for a woman who was a serious musician who would take her
clothes off. I couldn't find anyone. Charlotte was the firsy and I am
eternally grateful to her and her energy and graciousness. With
Charlotte, the amplitude of the siganl is more important than the
frequency of the signal. In the next century, cello performers will
be examined not for their finger skill but for their breast size.
Historians of 60s culture cannot be historian who has no insight into
psychedelic experience. Art critics who are bisexual can understand
something of both cultures.

"TV is as mass media as Sex.

Before Kinsey beautiful lady used to whisper to her neighbor,   'My
husband plays only one finger on piano ... and always with one
finger...' Kinsey wiped out this frustration and made the heresy to
the authodoxy. TV-culture is in the pre-Kinsey satge at this moment.
As wife was just a sex-machin for her husband (before). public is
just the Pavlovian dog **for the network (presently).** The infinite
potentials of TV, such as: two-way communication, audience

'electronic democracy through instant referendum' (John

Cage) .... is by far ignored or delicately suppressed."
- NAM JUNE PAIK, 1968-1970.

Paik and I discussed the recent activity in Art and Technology. PAIK:
One of the grave dangers of Art and Technology is the high cost of
production which have a minus effect on the artist's freedom.

Allen Ginsberg needs only rice and 'pot' and can say anything.

Norman Mailer speaks to a vast middle class, but the Art Market has

been diminated by the very rich.
Visual art is getting more and more like performing art. All art
using sophisticated engineering techniques tends not to be per-
manent, breaks down, etc. the notion of the permanency of art. In
economics, the inflation hedge of buying real estate and art works
to keep property values in the face of currency devaluation each
year is common. Technological art breaks down the notion of perman-
ency, and is the last great blow to gallery art which was already
shaken up by happenings and intermedia.
The production of art work using engineering is so expensive that it
is over financing the capability of private galleries. The minus side
is that the high cost of production will have minus effect on
artist's freedom. If the artist needs industrial help for artistic
production, he loses his most supreme function as the last social
critic of the social defense industrial complex. Some compromise will
be necessary if he is receiving money from industrial complexes.

The **more art** depends on industry, the more the artist loses his

function as social critic. This has to be true. Hollywood has

already long ago lost complete freedom with its movie industrial

ization. Going with the tide and romantic resistance neither work.

We have to find a third way. Perhaps smoking 'pot' is art and engin-

eering: art and chemistry.

"Generally speaking 'art' consists of three different parties. (1)

Creator (active transmitter); (2) Audience (passive receiver); (3)

Critics (judge or carrier-band)....

But in the drug experience, all three parties are united into one. A

kid who smokes a joint or so is at the same time creator, audience

and critic. There is no room for comparison and grading, such as

'first class drug taker' or 'second rated

pot smoker' etc... This ontological analysis demonstrates to
us once again that drug is short cut to recover the sense of
participation ... and basic cause lies in our passive
state of mind, such as TV watching, etc.

Can we transplant this strange 'ontology' of drug ex-
perience to 'safer' and more 'authentic' art medium, with-
out transplanting the inherent danger of drug overdose???
Participation TV (the one-ness of creator,
audience, and critic) is surely one probable way for
this goal... and it is not a small virtue ... not at
all."

THE MEDIUM IS THE MEDIUM: The First Video Art Broadcast

The present standards of television programming have driven those
home television owners not already desensitized totally by the Big
Brother, violence-not-sex soporifics, into the exploration of
educational and ultra-high frequency broadcast cables. Artist
engaged in the probing of the electronic medis have generally worked
with closed circuit TV systems, or by modifying and totally
distorting the overflow of network cliche iconography, and have
moved into portable video equipment and the creation of alternate or
environmental videotape theaters. Eventually laser communications
and the possibility of transmitting thousands of individual
frequencies within a single beam may permit a separate channel for
each living human being.

In the interim, creative workers in video are seeking openings for
collaboration with educational networks, and encouraging and
initiating the possibility of cable television systems and listener
subscriber support. The National Educational Television Network has
instituted several television stations in this country as
experimental center, KQED in San Frnacisco, WGBH in Allston,
Massachusetts near Boston, and recently WNET in New York City has
instituted an Experimental Television Laboratory. (NOTE: This
original piece was written in 1969.)

"As far as the equipment goes, you have to define it in terms of
what the other two centers have in Boston and San Francisco. The
WGBH experiments were primarily oriented to see what happens when
you take existing boradcast equipment, existing cameras, an existing
studio, and see how far you can push standard equipment into rather
extraordinary effects. In San Francisco at the NCET, the center went
very much in the opposite direction; they never really had access to
a studio but toally developed a non-studio environment, working
almost only with the synthesizers. What our TV Lab has is a
combination of both of these. (NOTE: A Paik/Abe synthesizer was
built for WGBH in 1969-1970; the TV Lab installed a Paik/Abe in
1973, as well as a Butt/Etra synthesizer, developed by Bill Etra and
Steve Rutt, a modular full-scan system synthesizer; and the NCET in
San Francisco

> facilitated the completion of Stephen Beck's Direct Video
> Synthesizer in 1971.)

> - DAVID LOXTON, Director of the NET TV-Lab, in the VISION
> NEWS, August 1973.

The following conversation was recorded with Fred Barzyck, a
producer-director in the experimental program at WGBH, and Olivia
Tappan, his production assistant and assistant producer.

(Our primary vehicle for experimenting with new forms and new ways of
handling subject matter was the weekly series, WHAT'S HAPPENING MR.
SILVER, (with David Silver who later also worked at the TV Lab),
which in 1969 came to the end of a full year's run. Incorporating a
youthful style and a sense of concern, it developed a framework that
might be called television collage and, among other things,
illustrated how much life and imagination can be put into television
through manipulation of electronic equipment."
> - from the EGBH Annual Report, 1968.

FRED BARZYCK: Silver, young guy, 22, Tufts University, tried to
create if at all possible a collage program, each of the 30 weeks
having something different involved with it- in other words, the
format changed- one week we'd have the Vietnam War, and another
week would be on drugs. It was a young show, and one program won
the NET award for the best cultural program.

We used John Cage's theory of random selection. We had about 32
different inputs including audio and video, and we had about 20 peo-
ple in the control room, and when they got bored, they yelled out and
so there was a kind of a plot back there, but it was executed on the
spur of the moment, and we'll see how it looks when we get there.
That was 30 weeks of that kind of thing, and it was in that
                                                        process

that we started dealing with McLuhan's term THE MEDIUM IS THE MEDIUM,
because lots of times we really didn't have much content but what we
could do were a lot of electronic things. We were turned on to that
stuff- the weird stuff- and it got into the process of getting into
the crew, and into the engineers, so that certain engineers were tur-
ning on to doing certain effects and things in the process where nor-
mally in a television station you're dealing with people who are try-
ing to give you the most accurate lifelike picture possible. It

into giving you things that were abstractions and patterns, and this was '67-'68, and out of that came a request by PBS (Public Broadcasting System) yo do a show called THE MEDIUM IS THE MEDIUM, and that's how we got in touch with artists like Nam June Paik and Thomas Tadlock.

PBL contracted WGBH to provide facilities and Olivia and myself, and six artists that they would choose. Now they were chosen by two producers out of New York- Pat Marx, who has a radio show, and Ann Dresser, a sculptress and part-time worker for the Kaplan Foundation. They had a lot of friends who were artists, and whose desires ran towards television, so they became like mothers to the artists and we became the source of getting it on to tape.

Because of money considerations, we had to limit each artist to a half-day in the studio, though some went over, and some almost a full day. So we took two artists and gave them a Saturday and a Sunday- six hours in the studio for each one, and we took three weekends at WGBH. We brought them up and showed them all the equipment, the videotapes, the switching, and the panels, and their minds generated. We showed them some of our old tape (The Silver tapes, and MIXED BAG, a jazz show with Charles Lloyd). The switcher who was working on the Silver show was the director of the Lloyd thing, and of course we had gone through so many processes that, doing this jazz show live, we started manipulating some of the effects, and we had a light show going on with cameras on that, and it was beamed one on top of the other, matting it. His name was David Atwood, who came on as the co-director of THE MEDIUM IS THE MEDIUM. Really the three of us worked as a team on the Silver thing and we try to carry on that continuity. That way you don't have to say so many things- it Just happens. So each weekend we brought two artists up.

(DEEP VOICE FROM TV: What happens when artists take control of television?
ABSTRACT SOUNDS.

UP VOICE FROM TV: PBL invited six artists to collaborate with television technicians in search for new ways to use the tools of television as an electronic art form. Each artist has **experimented with** sophisticated technology in

machines, kinetics, and multimedia. They all see
television as an immediate way of reaching a vast
audience, and creating a museum for millions. Here they
use the medium as THEIR medium.

Aldo Tambellini, born Syracuse, New York, 1930,
mixed media pioneer and co-founder of New York's Black
Gate Theater. His work explored the philosophy and
social concept of blackness. He uses 1000 slides, 16
films, TV monitors, and 30 children in his piece titled
BLACK.

TV SOUND: Tiny children's voices, playing. Diesel
sound comes in and crescendoes...)

BARZYCK: Aldo Tambellini. He brought his slides, his films. He
asked us to go out and grab 30 kids, and set up an environment
inside the studio where they could see themselves, and hear
themselves, and just play around and have fun.

We took three cameras- Aldo wanted to do everything black and
white- so there was no color in there at all. We put up the cameras,
one camera shooting slides, another camera shooting his films, and
the third camera on the kids running around. And we started the tape,
said: "Kids, go to it- play around here, dance around here for a
while, you other kids sit on a rug for a while, and we just went for
a half an hour, with the three cameras going.

Sometimes Aldo would run out into the studio, and so "No, No-
do it this way" and run back in, and sometimes he was switching
it, and most of the time he just watched the process go. The sound
was being created at the same time this was going on. Aldo brought
some sound sources, and we had others, and he talked to the audio
man and everything kind of happened at once.

JUD: What kind of sound did he use?

BARZYCK: These were basically feedbacks and loops, and plugging into
the audio console board itself, and tape rewinds, and that kind of
material. Everything was just happening and really going by Aldowith
everyone sitting there, and Aldo was like the piston in the machine,
and he was going: "Oh, that's beautiful, that's terrible, that's
good, why don't you give me some more of that, that's awful". So
this sort of went on, and we were all like up and down. So we had a

The second was Thomas Tadlock, who brought in his Archetron
kaleidoscopic video machine, and there was very little we had to do.
We got him a source of I SPY, brought it to his machine. We tried to
take it directly out of the machine so we wouldn't have to shoot the
monitor- but couldn't do it- he was working with what is called in-
dustrial sync and we had broadcast sync and the pictures would never
generate properly. He blew a part while trying to insert into our
system, and we all had to wait a day. He left the machine here and
eventually we came to the conclusion that the only thing was to
shoot the monitor. So we ran Tadlock for an hour and a half, and he
left the studio sometimes, and sometimes had on headsets coming out
to him with the Beatles, and other records and tapes, which were
also being recorded on the video tape as well as the sounds of the
television shows we were using. And we just recorded a lot and that
was the raw material for him.

       (TV VOICE: Allan Kaprow. What's happening here. He uses four
       locations in Massachusetts, 5 cameras, 2 television
       monitors, and people trying to get in touch. Title: HELLO.
       FIRST LADY: I see you, Harriet.

       SECOND LADY: I see you, too. Hi. There you are. Who are you?
       MAN: Hello, hello That's my daughter. If I could only talk
       to her through all this machinery, it'd be great. Helen,
       Helen.
       LITTLE GIRL: Hi.

       MAN: Hello, this is Daddy. Do you see
       me? LITTLE GIRL: I saw you already.
       MAN: Do you see me now?

       SMALL BOY: Hi.   MAN: Hi, Peter.

       HELEN'S FATHER: Hello, Helen. I can see
       you. HELEN: I see you.
       MAN: Take the microphone out of your mouth.

       HELEN's FATHER: Hi there. Do you hear me, Helen? Say hello

BARZYCK: For Allan Kaprow, we set up four locations in Boston, which

we have feeding into WGBH from other areas for other purposes- a line
to MIT which feeds us programs which we record for them, and other
lines from EDC (Education Development Corps) which also does special
educational shows. We also have a Mobile Unit which was set ou` in the
parking lot, and we also used a studio. Sothose were the four
sources. Allan said, these are the rules of the game- at each place
about eight people, and the only thing they're supposed to say to
each other is "Hello, I see you." The switcher is to work out a
plan of how he's going to edit it. The people at each location will
have a monitor, and what they see will determined by somebody else
who works it out independently of what might be taking place on the
video tape, and the audio man has worked out a situation so each
location would hear a certain other location, independent of
anything else that was going on. The people who were experiencing
the happening had other things going on besides what was on the
show. Al had to make the compromise of cutting down a half-hour
happening into five or six minutes. We had to come up with a final
product, so we recorded a half-hour with black and white lines
coming in

         (TV VOICE: James Seawright, born Jackson, Missippi, 1936.
         Technical Supervisor of the Columbia-Princeton Electronic
         Music Center. Here, Seawright uses two dancers, videotape
         delay, positive and negative color, and the electronic com
         position CAPRICCIO by Bulent Arel.)

BARZYCK: Seawright brought **with him his wife** and another dancer. We
constructed a totally black environment for them with very hard cross
lights, and put the dancers in white against the black, and then put
three cameras next to each. Each camera was working only on one of
its color tubes, camera one shooting red, two green, and three blue.
There were three sections. The first part used just a black
background, and the three cameras next to each other shooting the two
dancers, each shooting its separate color, and the video man adding
the blue and then the red background electronically into the picture.

      The second had the same three cameras exactly the same except in
negative, so that the black became white and the white took on the
almost plastic aspect of Warhol's pinks and purples. The three cam
eras started to move when more gyration came to each camera on a dif-
ferent plane- they reversed scans on one of the cameras so it gave

some cross reference of balance. When it was negative, the video man switched the colors a number of times in the most vibrant parts, and simply colored in some of the effects.

The third element of the Seawright piece was a kind of Norman McLaren body-catching thing, sort of a duchamp's NUDE DESCENDING A STAIRCASE, with one camera and the two dancers. Each of the three color tubes inside the camera were run to an individual tape machine, so when a dancer moved, three machines were running, one picking up the red image, one green, and one blue. After they had finished the dance, we stopped, set up each of the tapes with a quarter second delay after the other, and we ran the three tapes into a final mastertape, so when the three color images stop and catch up with each other they trun into a black and white image, and when they move they return to color.

(TV VOICE: Otto Piene, born Westphalen, Germany, 1928. Exhibited first smoke paintings, programmed light sculptures and hot air balloon demonstrations. Piene here uses 800 feet of polyethylene tubing, 22 tanks of helium, searchlights, and one 95 pound girl, in his ELECTRONIC LIGHT BALLET.
TV SOUND: Internal, shimmering, echoing sounds.)

BARZYCK: Otto Piene came in twice and constructed one aspect which was a happening out in the parking lot at night, when we used all these balloons to float a girl 40 feet into the air, with searchlights on her. We recorded this 20 minute happening, and the other effects were with stencilled cardboard circles with holes and patterns punched into them. We put very strong light behind them and manipulated the circles around, while the video man was manipulating the colors. So the light patterns were burned in, smearing with a "debeaming" effect.

(TV VOICE: Nam June Paik, born Seoul, Korea, 1932, composer of electronic music and experiments in mixed medis. His tools- magnets and junk television sets; his images- three hippies, a nude dancing model, and national political figures. Title: ELECTRONIC OPERA NO. 1.
sound; A fugue being played on the xylophone.

VOICE: This is Participation TV. Please follow instructions.

SOUND: The Moonlight Sonata.
PAIK'S VOICE COMES IN: Close your eyes... open your eyes...
three quarters close your eyes... two thirds open your eyes.
RICHARD NIXON'S VOICE: ... Being one of the top experts in
defense appropriations...
VOICE: I'm getting awfully bored.
PAIK: Thank god, it's the last one.
VOICE: Well, what do we do now?
PAIK: Well, let's start it over again from the beginning.
VOICE: This is Participation TV. Please follow instructions.
VOICE: Turn off your television sets.)

BARZYCK: Paik. A dancer, three cameras, again res, green, blue, and
.then he fed those images into a monitor and it was shot from the mon
itor- the monitor shot itself with another camera so that in fact what
you get is the whole feedback of the hand and the girl twisting and
turning, and we adjusted the amount of contrast, brightness, and the
amount of the image that was going into the monitor to give it some
flexibility. All the effects when he said "Close your eyes"
were his old TV sets with the magnets in front, and we added the col-
or. He brought four sets in, and he had also recorded on helical scan
the President and those other people, and we shot the helical scan
monitor, and put the magnets in front of that and turned it
around. We added the red, and blue dots. The hippies were standir
green they were shot in negative, three
cameras, red, green and blue.
All these artists came here and recorded more than was seen on
the air. We thought we'd better keep them short and keep them moving.
Everyone agreed to four to six minute sections.

We brought each artist back for an eight hour day in electronic
editing, viewed the material, decided what we wanted, put it together.
Aldo's was very simple- it was just hard edits all the way through.
We took perhaps 6 or 7 big areas, added a little volume to the kids'
"Black, I'm proud" which we recorded in the studio. Tadlock looked at
his whole thing and said he just wanted this one section with the
Beatles' sound.
Allan Kaprow amd we hard edited the half hour happening, except for
the last bit which I felt should make more clear man's relationship to
the machine, and Allan and I came up with the suggestion that

   we have the moon and the earth, and the Hello, a surrealistic
   ending . with the machine last. Allan wasn't partciularly happy
   about all this but it was the strongest ending we could find for
   something which in its original form had a flow which was hard to
   describe. James Seawright's was the simplest in many ways because,
   in effect, he had brought us a piece of music, so everything was
   timed to that. We
knew his piece was going to be six minutes long, and we just
recorded the same piece over and over again, so we were able to
take the best section from each.

     With Otto Piene's, we had to superimpose one thing on top of
the other after he had picked out the best sections, six minutes in
length of the moving colors and dots, and of the happening, and we
simp
ly dissolved back and forth between the two. Audio was added by the
audio man right out of the board-. whatever noise was in the system
Etc."

     Nam June Paik's was the hardest because we had nearly two hours
of his, and he realized he was to be the last one to edit, and the
last ore on the show. So he tried to work against what everybody
else had done, put a little humor into it, and we sort of created
it on the spot. He had tons of stuff we never even got to- we
composed an almost piece-meal thing, music was added, a touch of
corn, a touch of sentimentality. He's a very disparate human being-
he was very flexible and probably got shortchanged more than anyone
in this whole thing because his time was cut very short.
     We did the opening with the PBL device, and the flag- The flag
was a regular flag, and we matted into the white of it a slide of
moire patterns. And the PBL twirling, swirling device **was a steal_**
from the Silver show- we cut a piece of aluminum foil to fit the
front of the lens, and cut out the shape of the PBL letters- it
could have been anything, tree, human, PBL- physically put it right
over the lens, and placed a very bright object, like aluminum foil
or a Christmas ornament with a lot of light on it, put it out of
focus
so we were just picking up the dots of light- So you have a

It's very interesting because what we're seeing here was, for many years, considered to be mistakes by engineers, and now we're dealing with extremes, looking for mistakes that we can have fun with now. For years engineers have had as their highest aim to reproduce exactly what the skin tone was, etc.- but there are always a variety of extremes in colonization and in beam roll-off- which is what they call the saturation of color into it. We were now looking for mistakes, and mistakes were something with which we are now having fun. JUD: Yes. Paik has always maintained that there are certain imperfections and limitations built into the medium, and these exist, and should be taken advantage of by the artist. What do you feel about the limitations of the TV medium?

BARZYCK: I see them from an interesting aspect because I'm really talking about a system that I'm working with constantly all the time- I'm faced with these kinds of restrictions and limitations and attitudes. Let me say that I think this show, and the Silver show, and the Mixed Bag show, and things like that have been training for the people who manipulate the idea. When you walk into the studio with an idea, when you're an artist like Paik, you have a machine and you mess with it. It's a one-to-one relationship, and you get what you want. When you walk into a television facility and get it on tape, there are fifteen people who touch your product before it even gets to the tape.

There are two or three ways you could do it: either you set up schools and standards to say this is what everybody's got to do to get it into the system properly, or you say, each one of you guys is an artist, or at least handling the thing as an art. I don't knoe, I can't tell you what to do with it, I'll just tell you simply these are the kinds of effects that I want, you do it- which just destroys the whole relationship that most engineers and production types have towards doing a TV show. You know, if there's going to be a shot here, there's going to be a shot there, period- there's no such thing as what would you like to do with it, kind of attitude. So this is where we turn the tables on them, and we started saying how far can you go, and what can you do- You tell me what you can do. All of a sudden they were starting to look at their mistakes as a possible way of getting effects. Lots of times we practically destroyed machinery- but there was this great aspect of it, I remember, and I'll

 tell you a little story.

     An engineer in his fifties, out of New York, during the
Silver episodes, actually shut down one of the machines, and said
I will not record what you're senging me because I don't think it
meets specifications- "specs". After he shut it down we had to go
and talk to him for a few minutes, to try to convince him that it
was alright and he finally recorded it, because we were only
going to use a
small section on the air. Two years later, this engineer, when he
had finished work, put on his coat and was leaving to go home and
go fishing, took the time to come into the control room where I'd
just finished a show, and said: "Hey, I've got these three ideas
that you might be able to use" and he took the tape machine and
started to show me three technical ways to screw up the picture.
     So, all of a sudden, you release the pressure of the

ERIC SIEGEL: Television Is The Last Communication Link We Have
To Change This Country

       One of the youngest proponents of the video revolution, Eric
Siegel, born in *1944,* won Second Prize in the New York City Science
Fair at the age of fifteen for his home-made closed circuit TV. The
next year he won an Honorable Award in the same competition for
"Color through Black and White TV." After high school, he was
employed by several concerns in closed circuit television, and in
1966, worked in the Educational TV Department of the University of
London.
       In *1968,* Siegel produced the PSYCHEDELEVISION videotape
program for the closed circuit TV theatre, Channel One, and
designed and
built the special effects TV *components* for Serge Boutourlin and Susan
Buirge's TELEVANILLA at the Martinique Theatre, all in New York City.
He exhibited his PSYCHEDELEVISION IN COLOR in the Howard Wise
Gallery's TELEVISION AS A CREATIVE MEDIUM, and his BODY, MIND AND
 JUD: You entered television at fifteen?

 ERIC: At 1; I did the first outward thing with television,
 building my first TV camera, and it continued from then on,
 building more and more equipment.
 JUD: What had you been doing before that
 time? ERIC: Electronics. Pure electronics.
 JUD: So you entered into television through an interest in
 electronics quite directly- no other art form?
 ERIC: Yes, it was electronics, and then I got turned on to TV through
 electronics by getting hold of TV equipment, and playing with it. And
 since I built the first camera I've continuously been interested in
 it, and still am.
 JUD: When did you actually first get to work with videotape?

 ERIC: About two years ago (NOTE: The date of this interview is
 1970.) somebody gave me an old videotape recorder in pieces
 JUD: A Sony tape deck?

After which, I took the camera I had built and I started to
make some tapes which you've seen at Howard Wise.
JUD: That was a color machine?

ERIC: No, it was black and white. The Howard Wise tapes were black
and white and I made them into color with another electronic
circuit.
JUD: Which you built yourself?

ERIC: Yes, the first circuit was built inside of the color set, but
now it's been expanded so that it's a separate thing which *connects*
to the back of a color monitor, and it should be out on the market
soon. I don't know who's going to market it, yet.
JUD: When did you first show your videotapes?

ERIC: The first showing was just one day at the Channel One
Theatera preview, and the second showing was *continuously* at
Howard Wises. JUD: How did you get involved in the Wise show?
ERIC: Tom Tadlock told me about the show, and Howard Wise called up
and said that he'd heard about me through Tadlock, came up and saw
the tapes, and said please be in the show.
JUD: Did you know the work of other people in the field, like Nam
June Paik, at that time?

ERIC: I saw some of Paik's work at MOMA's MACHINE show, and it turned
me on- I liked it. I'd already had some of my tapes completed then,
but I didn't meet Paik until the Wise show, didn't even know what he
looked like, until someone said "that's Paik."

JUD: Would you say *anything* influenced your approach to TV-
anything from people working in the field to McLuhan?
ERIC: No, I was doing the work before I read or even knew of McLuhan.

I found out afterwards. No, I wouldn't say there were really any
external influences. It was just watching TV itself, what the stations
were doing, saying "Oh, forget it," and just trying to do completely
different things. Basically, I was making videotapes that I enjoyed
watching myself, and my friends enjoyed watching, and at the same time
trying to make the tapes so I was expressing myself through them, on a

ERIC: No, the Wise tapes were different material. The Channel One tapes were meant to be paid to see, and portions of the tape were straight video- you know, a camera pointed at a person talking and performing, and you have to have this straight kind of video if you're expecting regular people to pay, because they're not going to pay to watch abstract patterns for an hour- you have to give them something else. But things are changing, and there are ways of making TV programs now where reality and abstraction can be intermixed in the right proportions so that you can hold the attention span, and keep a rhythm going so that just when you feel like you're getting bored, it changes, and the change comes just at the right time, if you feel

.it out as you go. But the Wise tapes were all abstraction= music and abstraction.

JUD: What was the music on that again? There was a section reminiscent-of "2001."

ERIC: THE SYMPHONY OF THE PLANETS, the last piece, had music vaguely similar to "2001," but I must stress that I made the tape before seeing "2001." It must have been in the air, or something. The Wise tapes were edited so that the EINSTEIN section came first; then the Beatles section, TOMORROW NEVER KNOWS, and the SYMPHONY OF THE PLANETS.

> (ERIC: Naturally, I had started *experimenting* in making a number of tapes, but it has all been filtered down now. Of all those tapes that I was making, it has filtered down to EINSTEIN, T0= MORROW NEVER KNOWS, and SYMPHONY OF THE PLANETS as one tape- all those three things have been put onto one tape. Then there's another tape called WAR TRIP which not too many people have seenand so, an hour has been distilled out of all those two hours of two-inch experiments I was doing at that time. And actually:, that was the first time that I was actually doing video- making tapes and so forth. So a very low ratio of things were kept, to much taping was being done. Now, in 1/2" work, the ratio is a little bit more even.
> JUD: All the early tapes originally constituted part of the PSYCHEDELEVISION show at Channel One.
> ERIC: Yes. That was one showing. In other words, it was the
> JUD: You showed the major tapes again at the Kitchen, together

with a live piece. (NOTE: A showing in 1973.)

ERIC: Right. At the Kitchen, what I did was- I got hold of one of the better copies of EINSTEIN that was still on two inch helical scan and made a redub of it. So that the people who have just seen it recently at the Kitchen, not only have they seen it in better quality than the last time, whenever they saw it the last time, but they saw it through this new colorizer that I'm now marleting in New York.)

JUD: How would you characterize your basic orientation to videotape? ERIC: It's a way I express myself as an individual. JUD: What of its relationship to other people?

ERIC: Well, that's not with the videotapes- only vaguely, but not really- that's with the other experiments that I do, like the Brandeis piece. Rather than a direct expression of myself, that's more an expression of how people should perceive themselves, so in that pie(they see themselves in color, delayed, and there's music playing. The music is supposed to trigger them off to move, to dance- and they're supposed to watch themselves moving and *dancing.* Usually, this is a mind-blowing experience, if they've never seen it happen before- watching themselves delayed a few seconds. But this is another kind of statement. I'm not saying anything about myself- not giving anything of myself in this kind of thing. It's really like letting people get high on themselves, you know, get all involved with themselves, because that's what they want to do anyway.
JUD: It's a feedback situation.

ERIC: Right. The videotape is myself into tape. Right now, I'm getting ready to design a video synthesizer, which will enable me to do live video- like in the old days there would be a concert with a piano, not there'll be a concert with a video synthesizer. And this is something that Paik is into also. And it's the next step of video. They're making new video devices, or getting ready

ERIC: Yes, that you hang up on the wall. So that, everyone knows
that TV is going to change into something new- into an expanded
medium, and a few people are getting ready for it, by making the
hardware that will enable the new kind of programming, the new
kind of video communications that's going to happen.
JUD: Do you think flat tube will make TV Projection
obsolete? ERIC: Oh yes, if they perfect it.
JUD: What about holographic television?

ERIC: That's so far away, so I'm not tied up in that right now. As
far as I know, you won't be able to get three-dimensions out of
the flat screen thing, so if people get more turned on to three-
dimensions than a large flat picture, then holograms will become
popular in TV. But I'm more tied up in what will be a possibility
in the next year.
JUD: In Truffaut's film FAHRENHEIT 451, people have wallsize
color television in their homes, during an era of bookburning.
ERIC: Well, video will become like books with the advent of
cassettes, so if they'd be burning books, they'd be burning
videocassettes.
JUD: You don't think there would be Instamatic video cameras?

ERIC: Yes, it's getting close to it already. Video will become like
8mm film is now. They'll habe minature plumbicon tubes inside min-
ature video cameras, with videocassettes you just throw in.
However, I don't think the film industry should worry yet, because
video quality is still lacking. But that's the fault of the
equipment manufacturers- they're only interested in making money,
not in making something right. So perhaps one company will make
some equipment right, and when that happens, people will find out,
and the other companies will have to follow or go down. Right now,
they're all making crap. JUD: Do you think the better equipment
will be made by the Japanese? ERIC: Possibly. But they'll have to
get feedback from us. We have to write the Japanese companies,
telling them what kind of equipment we want them to manufacture

We have to tell them what is needed on the American market, what
kind of new technology is needed, because the Anerican technology
is just not going to keep up with it. The Japanese are giving us
all our media, supplying us with the media tools, so we have to
let them know what we want in the future.
JUD: How did you find the video situation in Sweden when you
were there?

ERIC: Video is state controlled there- state controlled television.
They have some experimental programming, however it was quite
boringwhat I would call low-key. I don't know if they plan it or
not, but it's meant to keep the people tranqulized. They don't want
to excite 'the people for some reason. So all TV is lowkeyed- it's
boring.
JUD: More boring than American television?

ERIC: In general, Swedish TV is boring, but it's more informative
than American television. American television is just insane. The
first priority with American television is that the commercials
must go. Commercial television must end.
JUD: Do you think pay TV or cable is the answer?

ERIC: Some kind of alternate system where you don't have to be
bombarded, buy this, buy that, every fifteen minutes. This whole
consumer crap must go.
JUD: That first step is pretty far-reaching.

ERIC: At least let's get people talking about it. First let's just
say, advertising must be stopped- let's get it around. Then, once
it gets around, the momentum will carry through to the end. But a
lot of people aren't even thinking about it.
JUD: Do you think a show like Brandeis or Howard Wise's can help
change people's consciousness about the concept of television? ERIC:
It does have an effect, but not much of an effect, because not that
many people come. A very small minority of people are getting exposed
to what's going on. Nobody knows what's happening with TV. Nobody even
knows that there's television art already- they don't know the
alternatives of what they're watching at home. The only effective way
is getting on the networks. There has to be a network *consisting* of
television artists, which is beradcast across the country, so it

  link we have to change this country. The whole country is tied to-
gether with television. The only way to effect a real change in this
country, to get it together, is through television. One of the major
network chiefs admitted to the fact that he's broadcasting shit, and
said that's what the public wants. What television artists are doing
right now, is fanning the fire, trying desperately to let it be known
that TV art exists, that it's a real thing, that there are people who
are turned on to TV and know what it is and what to do with it. And
when the word gets out, people will start clamoring to see it on their
home TV screen. However, if they don't, there are alternatives, be-
cause the videocassette recorders will be out in about two years or
less, so you won't need the networks after a while- you could rip out
the tuner from your TV.

JUD: It would have to be quite a different kind of network to implem

ent what you're talking about.

ERIC: Right- control rooms with
pillows onto a network, not work FOR
a network, mosphere in network TV
stations. If you you'll find it gets

on the floor. We have to get
because there's a certain at-
come in and your mind is
okay, along the line. Right

have to take the technology that exists, and exploit it, use it,

our own benefit, not for the benefit of the advertisers. I don't think

there's enough time to start making a new technology. After we've got-

ten rid of the evils, and can sit back, relax, and have a smoke. THEN

we can start making the new fantastic Aquarian age technology- the

pleasure technology. But we can't do that yet.

JUD: One of the lessons I think we've learned from the Art and Tech-
nology collaborations is that the artist has to learn some of the tech-
nology himself. As Paik says, you have to make your own mistakes so you
can make your own discoveries.

ERIC: It's true. I admit that I've had it easy. But, probably, indiv-
iduals artists will find technical people to work eith them. That's an
immediate solution.

JUD: That's happening right now. Perhaps eventually the engineers will
become artists themselves.

ERIC: The future trends will be art and science and technology all com-
ing to a point at some- point. It's all going to become one- all headed

in that direction. And if the scientists would realize that now, and the engineers, and the people controlling the whole formation of what happening on this planet- if they would all wake up and say, it's going to come together anyway so we might as well come together right now, then we could really start correcting a lot of the shit that's fucking us all up.

JUD: What are your immediate plans?

ERIC: To build the video synthesizer, which will be the preparation, the new instrument for television. In the future there will be people who will learn to play it very well, like any instrument, and talk through it.

JUD: Do you see the video synthesizer **making television a performing** art?

ERIC: I see it doing several things. It'll enable live performances because no sets are needed, you don't have to control actors- you can present abstract visions, images, with music. It'll work especially well with music, with live groups. And then, for making videotapes, there are two kinds of tapes you can make: the documentary which gets dated, and the other kind which doesn't get dated. For making nondocumentary tapes, it'll be very useful- for things which don't have to do with time. Actually they do, but they don't become dated because they're not anchored to one year.

JUD: Are you more interested in color than in black and white?

ERIC: I want to go to color, and then to three dimensions, and then, whatever comes after that. But color for now. Black and white is over.

JUD: Do you feel any affiliation with the movement right now?

ERIC: No, I feel as an individual. I feel totally alienated from all movements.

JUD: Apolitical.

ERIC: Completely. I'm just concerned about the planet that I live on. The major concern that I have is mind pollution. Aside from the noise we hear on the streets, when you go home and turn on your TV set, you're getting mind pollution, and your brain is being screwed up and fucked around with- the commercials are the biggest culprits..:'They have scientists, psychologists, psychiatrists, all working on the staffs of the major advertsiing companies, knowing all the tricks, how to influence people's minds, so that they can make their millions. If I can get into TV, I'd like to try and clean up some of that pollution.

Some TV programs could consist of a beautiful abstract trip for an hour, with the right kind of music. And that too can trigger off thoughts, but you're not triggering off any specific thoughts. You're triggering off a flow, a pattern of thoughts.

JUD: In which each individual's thought patterns can take their own form.

ERIC: Right. And one of the things that will get the country back together is when people get their minds back.

PART TWO:

PARTICIPATION TV:

Teledynamic Interplay
And Social
Interaction

TELEVANILLA: SUSAN BUIRGE AND SERGE BOUTOURLINE: The Human Use of
Television

One of the first video/dance perfromances ever held, in a one
night performance at the Martinique Theatre on Broadway in New
York City, on April 22, 1968, was TELEVANILLA. It was presented as
an 'improvisational theatre dance piece choreographed and
performed by Susan Buirge" in which various television devies were
"used to extend and change the scale and scope of an event."
Susan Buirge is a dancer who has performed extensively with the
Alwin Nikolais and Murray Louis dance companies, also presenting
her own choreography at the Henry Street Playhouse. Her
Collaborators on TELEVANILLA included: Serge Boutourline, a the-
oretician and inventor in the field of human communications, who
is best known for his behavioral studies *involving* man's uses of
the spaces he moves in, and for his television device VIDEOSKETCH
which was shown at the Howard Wise Gallery; *Wynn* Chamberlain, a
painter whose works involving the human figure are widely *known,*
and who was producer of the Playhouse of the Ridiculous Repertory
Club's extravaganza THE CONQUEST OF THE UNIVERSE; Eric Siegel, the
creator of PSYCHEDELEVISION as an outlet for his experiments in
television, assisted by Peter Sorensen, lumokineticist, presently
working with colored television and polarized light; and Phil
Glass, a well-known composer who has been recipient of two Ford
Foundation grants.

As described vy the VILLAGE VOICE: "The evening consisted of three

very short experimental works- in effect a demonstration of the

effects of television devices on an event. Miss Buirge roun-

ded out the evening by turning it into a sort of children's party for dancegoers. The ushers were pretty dancers, and they gave out daisies with the programs. The programs were stuck in white envelopes sealed with a butterfly. Also in the envelope: colored gel papers strung on white yarn, to look through. Color ed felt squares stapled neatly to the cartons that served as stands for the TV sets. Free coke and ice cream in intermission I; magic markers, paper, and a bulletin board in intermission II; and in-vitation to play with Videosketch afterwards.?

Technically, the pieces involved several (seven) video mon-itors by Shibaden, a three-sided theatre-in-the-round, one motion picture projector, a closed circuit ITV video camera, and one cus tom video special effects generator.

The first piece FLAVORS had Susan in white playing with her hands before the video camera, with finger motions, in and out of focus, with the video operator then following her feet, meandering up to her face, in and out, in more increasingly rapid circles, to a jazz organ soundtrack. Video solarization, feet whirling, to high contrast, flashing out to an oscilloscope-like trace, the path: of mutually interacting moving camera and moving feet, into a swirling are trace, like a fluttering black and white butterfly. Then, an *intermission,* where the audience was invited "to make an ice cream soda."

The second piece EXTENSION NO. 1 used the dancer, in a nearly *transparent* leotard, against a film of herself by Wynn Chamberlain on a suspended screen, of her legs and feet performing the same danc in almost eurhythmic movements, knee against knee, sounds of

uses, one foot leaping, "flying," a sudden surge of distant birds, neck muscles closeup into a slow spinning vortex, and fade.

The third piece utilized the VIDEOSKETCH with Ms. Buirge dancing, lights on each hand and ankle, and one on her head, with the VIDEO-SKETCH's receiving eye transferring her lights to the screen "in the form of green blobs, squiggles, fat and thin lines," to the music of Phil Glass. Video images like alpha particles traces in a cloud chamber, the dancer playing against her traces on the screen, like sumi painting strokes, amorphic streaks overlaid, opposing, merging into time passages, with sound arcs surging and bursting about each other, play against play, vision against television.

These preceding notes from the original performance and here followed by an interview with Susan Buirge about TELEVANILLA and its implications, done in 1968, and previously unpublished.

SUSAN BUIRGE: Man must necessarily move to stay alive. This involves the element of choice within a theatre situation, rather than sitting in a proscenium situation (even there everyone has a somewhat different point of view). We are magnifying the premise of the multiplicity of points of view: a stable TV monitor point of view, live action from three sides, and a large screen. It's where you wish to look.

We tried to design the show in black and white, but we gave people colored gels to allow them to make their own overlays. This puts the audience members in the position of making their own designs. Even the variety of intermissions being situations of interest for the audience, playing the danceable music of today. You can dance, but you don't have to dance.

There's a choice of roles if wanted, more contact with the performer, and no gods and goddesses. It's a space we can share, and the involvement we can share. If you cab walk around in the event's spacee, you have the ability to have an attachment with what the performer is doing, a common bond of understanding between communicator and **with** those being communicated. One of my personal feelings, and I feel this particularly, is: media, no; theatre, no; there must be a word somewhere for this particular area of "intermedia", that is to be personal.

One thing I feel "technology" has done to the "arts" is to kind of take *"personalization"* away from the audience-performer bonds, except in certain "intermedia" or stream toward the alizations that take like looking closely zeroed in on a small squares. In a larger size screens. I'm trying to extend a personal strain audience, not something idiosyncratic, but person- place in small squares, or small areas of focus; at one part of a person, and all of a sudden you've square, like a movie zoon. TV monitors are small space. I would use more monitors, but the same

We've stopped going horizontally; things now come vertically. We can look at the history of music that way. Now you have a chunk, a verticality, not necessarily following some path, but making its own sense. We had "not merely horizontal" *intermissions;* why should only the "art event" have the right to that verticality? Every person has the right to that verticality. Why go flat?

JUD: Everyone has been leaping into that problem, in intermedia perfor-mance, from many individual vantage points.

SUSAN: Being a dancer for the sum total of eight years, five being

with Nikolais, I discovered dance as a sophomore in college; instead

of badminton, I thought modern dance. I went to it like a fish to

water, instead of law school, and went to Juilliard. Working in a form

of "intermedia" with Nikolais, the kind of craftsman that he is,

taught me to be "all" to the situation. But what I did creatively

seemed to be creatively opposite to what most people at Henry Street

were doing. What evolved was simplicity. I, of course, was immediately

criticized for being uninterested. I knew the formula; it's far easier

to join; everyone wants to be accepted, especially when existing in a

parental organization.

I had the good fortune to rupture a disc in my back, which made me stop
and reevaluate where and who I was. The realization that I had been
stuck resulted, and shortly after that time I met Serge Boutourline.
Group 212 in Woodstock, New York, had an event *happening* on something
lik Monday, April 7th. But April 7th was a Wednesday, and everyone went
on the date instead of the day, but we went on the day; that's how we
met.

Serge was doing this thing with a TV camera and lights that moved. Next
thing I knew, I was figuring out new possibilities with it. Besides
teaching at the Playhouse and NYU, I started doing small parlor-like
performances, almost in pre-20th century style, for people like Paul
Sills who started Second City, potential investors, and interested peo-
ple. It was nice having intimate contact with people in intimate situa-
tions; the immediate elements, questions and concerns. The element of
production becomes something that you play out of and off of. I decided
that much of this concert would have to be improvised. And you have to
have artist technicians who are also performers.

I would never have reached this kind of conception if I person-
ally did not know how the mechanical, technical elements operated. That
started about a year ago, when I was introduced to the possibilities of
TV in such a situation. I can see the day when TV reaches out to touch
me and I the screen. I feel in many ways that TV went from black and
white into color before it was ready. The possibilities of black
and white are mostly unexplored.

This is one baby, mini-aspect of *interaction* events.
Eventually, I*want no camera, <u>no intermediary in intermedia</u>;
directly between performer and audience, totally humanizing the
technology, with the per former capable of being in total control of
what is seen and how it is seen as each moment is happening.

(Sections of a later conversation follow, with Susan Buirge, and
with her collaborator, Serge Boutourline, at the 42nd Street offices
of Serge's company, INTERACTION SIGNAL, INC. INTERACTION **SIGNAL** is
described as a company which develops environments and devices that
increase man's capacity to control his own surroundings by direct

> "Environment is a specific set of measurable physical phenomena
> existing during a specified period of time at a specified
> location point. These physical events may be light rays, sound
> vibrations, chemical particles in the air, measured temperature,
> measured pressure or any of a number of physical events *which*
> are measurable. A room can be thought to be a three dimensional
> grid consisting of a **finite set** of points each with its own
> unique inventory of physical events which change over time. . .

. . . . If one wanted to decide where to place a spotlight, one might think only in terms of the structure of light rays existing at a set of points in a room. If one wanted to decide where to place a computer, one might think only of the stength and direction of magnetic fields at that same set of points. . . If an exhibit manager moves a spotlight in an open room then every point in that room will experience an altered structure of light rays. This, in itself, would not be significant if people did not respond to sets of events rather than to isolated events. Thus, the ability to introduce what may seem to be relatively minor changes in existing environmental systems can change the meaning of the entire enivronment for people. One of the central activities of environmental management is to introduce such changes so that people will have experiences which are more valuable for them."

- Serge Boutourline, THE CONCEPT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT.

Originally we wanted a TV projector, and Wynn Chamberlain has

SUSAN:

this old one, except that you need such a high level to light the figure to get it to project, so you wash out all'the projected images, and you end up with nothing. Rear-projected, it would have worked, but we had no space to rear project, only about five feet.

SERGE: It would be nice to
Basically, this format has
and live, and the intimacy
personalization.

do several evenings, of various things. to
be developed, with the whole image, TV that
comes out of that, rather than the de-

JUD: Ideally, each person perhaps should have his own receiving set.

Actually we all do, but that's a different communication system. SUSAN: It's a series of perceptions. You can get one and not another. Or you get your own, and then you have another one magnifying your own. No only each member of the audiecne with his own receiver, but each performer should have total control of the work. Originally, when I started on this, I had developed some things to a point but not to a proficiency, whereby the perfromer was in ultimate control of everything- the camera, lights, sound, what was seen and not seen. In other words, literally lowering myself in a little box, with no cables, and a battery sticking in it.

JUD: That's about as big as all hardware ideally should be.

SUSAN: Yes. It sits right in your hand, and you control the lights, and the sound, etc. And it's all in your hand.

SERGE: You should have done one thing that you were totally in control of; VIDEOSKETCH was the closest you came.

SUSAN: But it seemed just as valuable just to do it.

SERGE: It's like being behind the camera while you control the set, which is really a highly personal scene. And all this is really putting someone in charge of what happens. It's changing the vantage point. JUD: In the Gurdjieffian dances, each dancer had his part which seemed to have no relation to anything, but all the parts together related in a highly charged manner.

SUSAN: That's like a piece of choreography that Laban did, when he was in Germany developing his system of dance notation. They had this huge festival, and every opera house and every little village sent out their chorus of dancers, and there was all Germany dancing on this field. And Laban sent out these scores of translating notes to the little groups:

   where they were supposed to be and what they were supposed to do, and
   of course, nobody knew what the other guy was doing, except that
   Laban knew. And they all met on this field for the big day of the
   concert, took their places and did this thing, and the whole thing
   was beautiful. But it was like that giving out of parts.

   SERGE: Which your idea is not into. That's where this TV thing, or
   even film, becomes really personal, because it's one person, one
   dancer handheld.

 JUD: The camera is and can be a performer. There's no-question of

that. SERGE: Ultimately we have to move both the camera and the

performer. VIDEOSKETCH was the one situation where the camera was

stable, and an analogy to that is when you want to give a performance

opportunity to someone who is a guest, one way of doing it is by

freezing your camera, rendering yourself impassive, so then all the

movements the other person is making are showcased. So Susan's been

working with the frozen camera, so essentially all the motion on the

screen would be in fact created

by her. It is then like painting or drawing. In fact, VIDEOSKETCH

came from a drawing idea, where you have a stable field, like a

stage which is a stable field, and any motion created is that of the

performer. SUSAN: But also to take and put things at different

points in space,

in relationship to the viewer. Even in a proscenium, you have that to

a small degree. You bring people closer to the situation when you

bring them and monitors closer to each other; you get that kind of

three dimensional multi-level visual fields.
JUD: Or one big field. With many levels.

SERGE: The Martinique has very special characteristics. One of them is

that you're so close that even moving your head from side to side can

change the field. One characteristic of signal fields is that the

you are to the source, the more control the receiver can excercise

over content and structure. From real close, by moving very little,

there's a considerable difference in background created perspective.

With the same motion, from twenty feet away, it's a barely impercep

tible difference that I can create in my own location, and as you get

farther and farther away, there's the point where that is an

absolutely unmalleable visual array.

SUSAN: If I can gain more control of the situation, I would know

how it's happening, rather than relying on another person.

SERGE: Susan's been working with still cameras, and one thing about

that is that it has a reflexive character. In effect, the only thing

that's happening on the screen is the result of one person's actions.

What that creates, as a technical question relating to signal theory

really, is that there are characteristics to joint motion where the

field is moving and the receiver is moving. It's weird, but two things

moving independently of each other create an *interaction* signal. If we

could have had moreperformances, the whole relationship to the audience

could have been done more. On the marquee outside, we had real flowers

and christmas lights all around, and that care and *handling* of the

audience, putting things on their seats, having local lighting instead

of house lighting, created an intimate situation.

JUD: A beautiful thing that happened, when I arrived around 9

o'clock, there was a small gUequd of people waiting for tickets

outside, and one woman said, "They're all standing out there, this

must be part of it." "This is part of the happening" was her exact

terminology.

SUSAN: The New York Times review of the piece:headlined

"TELEVANILLA DANCE OFFERS FREE DAISIES. THey gave away daisies at

the Martinique Theatre last evening. The occasion was a

TELEVANILLA

 a thetre-dance piece in which Susan Buirge, a dancer/designer, was as-
sisted on stage by seven small television sets and a camera with oper-
ator. Considering the battery of equipment and the host of backstage
collaborators including Serge Boutourline, a communications theoretic-
ian, and Wynn Chamberlain, painter, Miss Buirge's effort to 'explore new
dimensions in the dance experience' were definitely disappointing. With
the camera aimed sometimes at her torso, sometimes at her feet, there
was Miss Buirge in person, Miss Buirge in part, Miss Buirge entire, as
flashed on the television screens. EXTENSION NO. 1, the secand section
of TELEVANILLA also saw here dimly particularized on a vertical screen
to the rear of the dance space, and for her finale tricks out a flashing
light bulb, she pranced delicately before a machine, the program
identified as VIDEOSKETCH, making little blobs of light play leapfrog on
its screen." There's something so beautiful about that comment.
"Whatever cohesion of image Miss Buirge wished to impart, being in three
places at once, was never realized."
JUD: That's classic.   SUSAN: They came to see dance.

SERGE: But the whole idea of giving something to the audience, of having

a giving relationship; I just like that so much.
SUSAN: It's assumed on the part of a performer that the performer gives
when he's performing, but when you can extend that into immediate per-
sonal things, it just becomes more beautiful.

JUD: The concept of working with an audience and the notion of receptiv-

ity, then the idea is to increase that receptivity to its fullest ex-

tent. Then receptivity becomes giving.

SERGE: In a signal oriented frame, as opposed to object language

geneology, you get into the myriad sets of signals which exist. This

has to with the theoretical framework of what I've been working with

sofar,

which has to do basically with the question of defining the physical

world, or defining human environment. Ultimately you get to the ques-

tion of how do you define even the physical world. One tends to get in-

terested in that question because one is interested in perception, and

this has been true throughout the history of psychology, where the fun-

damdntal issue is how do you explain or account for the fact that

people perceive something so differently. The traditional explanation

has been essentially that there is a world out there and you perceive

it differently than I do, because there's something different in my

head than your head- which I'm sure is the case.
JUD: At least a different filtering system.

SERGE: Yes, the notion of a filter. And then you get that thing of bre-

aking down the filter so that more comes through. While I can't say

that I'm against that position, I've been evolving another position-

the fact that whatever I point to out there is in point of fact

different for me than it is for you, physically, in all the

perspectives. Like, you can see into the next room, I can't, etc., etc.

Add on to that the tactile sensations that you're creating for

yourself, the fact you're wearing different clothes, that your feet are

in a different configuration than mine, that you're moving your head up

and down and I'm shaking my headyou are creating at your retina a fast

splice cut.
JUD: It has to do with the multiplicity of a moment, the infinite

multiplicity which moves vertically through time as well as

horizontally. SERGE: The point of fact is that the physical, raw

world you're exposed to is so different from the physical, raw world
 events which happens at one's sensors. If you take that definition of

 what the world is, what's happening here cannot be explained by this,
because now we're dealing with a set of signals or events, and this is
tricky, which exist both because of what I do and because of the "char-
acter" of what is out there, again created by what I do because I am
selecting "what part" of out there, this rather than this. Like the
character of this chair is really the character of a small group of
spot: that I choose to touch at that moment, which is hardly the chair.
That subset of spots is itself defined by what I do. It then becomes
hard to postulate that external, extensive object Newtonian reality
which is essentially the common conception of us all. It is at that
point where the depest agreements in our society take place, that after
all, sir, there's the real world out there. This has been prostituted
by the perceptualists who say, yes, it's out there but we all have a
different filter. I'm essentially taking it another step. I'm saying
that nobody ever knew the real world, and nobody can help but create a
world for themselves, therefore the idea of a world is a fiction in
that sense, :. that's unrealizable in human experience. It's even
unmeasurable by any scientific theory. It has to do with the
INTERACTION SIGNAL company in that this company purports to relate to
the process which is the process of living, in a funny way. That is
what an interaction signal is, that set of signals which one develops
over a perios of time in interaction with one's milieu. But it is not
the milieu, because to describe envi*ronment,* you see, is back into
object language.
    Fundametally, my position carried to its utmost says Susan is
des*igning* her environment now, I'm designing my environment, you are
desig*ning* yours- but that I did not design this environment because
in fact,
my position taken to its ultimate, there is no such thing as this
environment. You can think then now of this three dimensional space as
a

sea of points, or a matrix of points. At each point there is a unique
subset of signals including light, electrical signals, magnetic,
electrostatic, sound, chemical particles in the air- in other words,
physical events which are occurring at that point. Using that model,
then in a naive sense, say a naked man or woman moving through this
room is in fact bathed in a sea, in a subset of such points. And by
true movement, movement that is interpreted not by having
significance with me as an object having a relationship with other
objects, but as creating at my own, and each new location, a new
subset of points. At each point of which is another new subset of
events.
JUD: The complexity, of course, is infinite.

 SERGE: It's staggering, but what it's similar to is in fact
swimming, or as if we are all walking in water. And the only other
thing is to speed up that people to people contact. That's what we're
really trying to do. I, personally, am thinking in terms of what will
be the next step. And, beyond the multi-sensory multi-media
experience, I feel that it's going to do more with direct involvement
with the making and doing of things than with consumption; but maybe
not. Anyway, it's clear that a sensorium like the Electric Circus,
which literally sells half hour experiences for five dollars, is
playing upon crowds of zillions of people who literally have never
had that experience, even once.
SUSAN: And it's something we live with, and work

STAN VANDERBEEK: THE VIOLENCE SONATA

Stan Vanderbeek has become perhaps one of the best known independent
filmmakers in this country, winning festival prizes for such anim-
ation films as MANKINDA, SCIENCE FRICTION and SUD7".IT, and has been
re cipient of both the Ford Foundation grant for experimental films
and the Rockerfeller grant for films and studies in non-verbal
communication. His particular collage approach to *animation*
techniques has brought him into experiments with the latest image-
creating technologies, uncluding computer generated graphics with Ken
Knowlton at Bell Laboratories, and the creation of video collages for
CBS Television. During 1969, he was Film Artist-In-Residence at WGBH-
TV in Boston, concurrent with a fellowship at the Advanced Visual
Studies Center of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.
On January 12, 1970, the VIOLENCE SONATA, a PRE-THEATRE-NON-VERBAL-
ELECTRIC-COLLAGE, an evening of experimental television realized by S.
VanDerBeek, was broadcast by the two channels, Channel 2 (VHF carrying
the primary material- a mono-video form understandable to viewers with
one set), and the UHF Channel 44 (carrying a collection of thematic
comments on the primary material of the other channel) of WGBH-
Television. The home viewer could best participate in VIOLENCE SONATA
by watching two sets at once. It was composed of three double-screen
collage videotapes, each lasting about fifteen minuts.

> "The titles of the three videotapes are MAN, MAN TO WOMAN, and
> MAN TO MAN. They are mixtures of parts of VanDerBeek's past
> films, films from the archives and newsreel footage from around
> the globe, films and live-action videotapes shot in Boston
> especially for
> the show, and slides and photographs superimposed on the final
> tapes by matting... Between each of the three screenacts of this
> collision-collage, questions will be put to home viewers and
> they will be able to telephone comments to the three studio
> panelists. Meanwhile, in Studio A at WGBH, the same images going
> into local homes will be tele-projected for viewing by a special
> audience of 100 invited participants. In front of the screens,
> as well as behin

   them in a kind of shadow drama, masked live actors will perform

a play which VanDerBeek has written... with the *intent* of gradually
involving the in-station audience in TV-play. After the show, the
studio audience will conduct a 'thrash-out' of the issues which it has

iences on both channels. The home viewers can again join the discussion by phoning in at any point."

("Our violence is the digestive act of our inability to communicate. Man's frustration at not being able to communicate with words leads him to violence. Centuries of words have meant centuries of violence. We Must explore all other ways to communicate if we hope to live non-violent lives... By moving from the screen and stage presentation out to the studio audience and then to all viewers in the community, I'm hoping to find new ways to confront the issues but to cool the violence." - STAN VANDERBEEK)

The following discussion was taped at WGBH one week after the VIOLENCE SONATA broadcast, when VanDerBeek, staff members of WGBH, some studio participants and other guests watched a dual-monitor play back of the boradcast tapes, and then rapped. This was the first time that Stan had seen the show as a TV-spectator, having been active in the studio during the broadcast.

STAN: What we basically did was take all these variables at the same time and stick them together. And I frankly don't know what you think. It really went into something and, very curiously, came out someplace, and I really, at this moment, don't exactly know myself.

QUESTION: Do you have any feedback from people about whether they did adjust their sets at home?

STAN: The little bit I have is that most everybody just let it slide out untailored, just come out and fall over them, and the ones that I did speak to, that I had any insight to, all felt they were perfectly capable of privately editing in their head. They said, well, I'm so used to TV commercials anyway, turning the kids off or on in their room, that it didn't matter; they swung right with it. And I was really trying to evoke certain particular parts that had more substance, more literate substance, if you will. I wanted to hear that, and so I was playing for that, and I found it interesting that the responses I've gotten were basically to edit in real time.

Q: I want to get some feeling reaction to this thing. I'm all fucked up in my feelings right now about the piece, and I want to get some community feeling.

Q: I wonder if that wasn't the way a lot of people in the audience feltparticularly since it was such a crowded mass, a really tense situationI would not have wanted to be sitting in there.

STAN: What we were riding with is an invisible third element of theatre that evening, and that was a live-action performance piece going on whic had a dimensionality to it, and in fact I had taken the studio here as literal space and had set up a lot of evocative, or evocational, sim- iles- references- to the whole idea of violence, so that the audience here had a very high emotional pressure when they came in just to see what was going to happen. So that had been done quite deliberately. You're right, I'm also rensed and puzzled, because I think that actually I evoked the basic body-mind-sense that I was looking for, which is really a state of *confusion,* or questionning, out of which I wanted to evoke something that you would get emotionally to some level- where if there was any insight or outsight that you might have, was to get you to that point. In other words, is there something that happens to you at some level of new emotional awareness or wherever, kind of crudely put- a sensitizing process, by overstimulation or overloading, you then see something new or some new reference point?

The basic theory behind it is that rather than **work out your** phy- sical acts of agression in one way or another, either on a home level or a street level, or on a nation-wide level, you do it in some form of play. One of the audience came up with something about the rational play- there was no such form of rational play that was not harmful to us- and I was looking for a form of theater act that did lead us to that so that we acted it out in that situation physically there, rather than go out and do it in the street. That was the basic motive for the thing. One of the problems about the form I put it in, and one of the whole points about metaphor, is that I don't think we really have an innate talent to confront issues directly- we mus always make them off to one side- and I would even make a bet at this point that it'will be hard for *anyone* to volunteer their literal feeling about it. Is that possible to ask?

FRED BARZYK (Producer): Overall, I think I would have to say that the whole show had a rather *inhuman* aspect, except for what existed inside the studio, and the shift between those two elements was a difficult one,

but an enjoyable one when I finally got with the audience because I

somehow felt that I was back in some state that I understood.

When the three pieces were working well, it communicated best when it had your absurd sense of humor involved with it because it touched again on a humanity note. It worked effectively when there was asimple image, for me, like the knife moving back¯.and forth; that had all the essence of what you were saying very clearly, yet still with the same vision that you have. And there were many times in the whole show when I really felt no particular thing at those moments because I'd been saturated with so much that I'd been turned off. And maybe when I joined the group again, I got turned on again.
STAN: You--came in and out of it.

Q: I never really got into it- there were points where I could view the thing sarcastically, but I think I'm very much like one of the guys in the audience pointed out- the sort of person who'll just sit back and watch it and then go home and go to bed. I don't know, maybe it's a subliminal sort of thing, and six months from now, I'll wake up and be acting totally different.
Q: Stan, would you like to elaborate on what you what trying to do, because we talked a lot about that, and obviously you weren't trying to incite violence. You were talking about sensitizing people to violencf
STAN: The problem about an artist making something is that I really shouldn't have to legitimatize it with theory and surround it with a verbal package with a list of instructions. It really should, in some way, come through. I was really trying to do something that was closer to non-verbal forces. A lot of the material was essentially meant to be visual, so my first premise was that I wanted to explore non-verbal ideas, if I could, and then explore the media. And there are so many ingredients in the media, we had to sort of take inventory of it, and then I was looking in the large mainly for a myth-orientated form of evoking something without having the actual thing itself to be done. Q: On that last point, Stan, should we have looked for the gratification of violence without committing it?
STAN: Yes- and no, aha!

STAN: It may well be- that's an interesting and curious point. It strikes me you may very well have something there which I wasn't even aware of- that wasn't my plan. I didn't know frankly how it would end up. What I was looking for, which is a kind of reverse of non-verbal communication, and one of the things by the way which I got interested in as a result of this, is that the audience, whom I had no idea how they would respond afterwards, seemed to me to be really ready to verbalize, to plunge in. It was a problem selecting one out of maybe seven or eight people, volunteering, all wanting to talk. I found that a very interesting by-product, that possibly such a heavy audio-visual load leads you to talking it out, which may or may not be a point, but I suspect that it is.

I don't know- it's like a fun-house, where it does and doesn't work, but in the large sense it does work. Now in our society, we have an incredible amount of pressures and forces that are not really legitimatized, like pornography which isn't and is in everybody's mind, and violence. Two large thoughts came out on the violence basis, it seems to me, that, one: violence in many is a fairly natural phenomenon. I guess we don't escape it, or else we invent some sort of play that relieves us of it- if you let that energy go on out of control, it becomes violent.

Q: Was this to be a model of a new kind of play, then, that would take the place of violence?

STAN: Yes, in effect it could be, and I hope to look at it in that light. Q: Well, then, isn't one of the tests of whether or not it worked for us, is if it did the job, vicariously, or if you were in the studio talking, whether we felt expressed... You see, there wasn't really that much violence in the pieces to experience; that many of the pieces were metaphorical or expressive of other kinds of human behavior or traits. When every so often, you'd get a glimpse of something that looked like genuine violence, like the World War II footage, that can out stunningly different from the rest. Gee, I didn't find that much violence in
it to really get that out of it ...

STAN: I know that that was quite deliberately done. I really only wanted to make oblique references to it. For one of many reasons, it's not easy to get that strong footage without a lot of trouble, and I also didn't want to do it- I wanted to stylize it so that it

I think that would be more involving and you had to read into it what you would. In fact, one of the things that was said in the postmortem period in the studio itself is that they'd seen it all beforeit was all TV stuff, which is true. And all I'm saying is that it's
all part of the mythic structure that we have- that it is the fabric of our contemporary myths. Seven million people watch these football games each week, and that's really woven into us, so we don't tend to think of it in its *counterpoint* way.
Q: Tell us about VIOLENCE TWO. (Laughter). Q: More to come.

STAN: Yes, phase two. What I had in mind originally was to explore a form of portable theatre that was also, in the large sense, a scale and a media interpretation. We have many medias in our society; most of them don't give us a responsive situation, and we have a scale problem in our society where basically the individual is isolated from his overall community, and there are only a few ways he can identify with it.

The real problem is that our society has a physicality that we must explore in some way, and I'm particularly interested in penetrating and rebuilding what is our physical scale, in some way, so that we as individuals both function better as individuals as we as groups function better as groups. So what I'm really addressing myself to fs the role of television as a new form of theatre, or whatever you want to call it, which works in real time, and works in all these dangerously balanced medias which we have at our disposal now, but which none of us quite knows how to orchestrate or use.

> (TV VOICES: 1) AM I ON THE AIR OR NOT. (LAUGHTER) 2) GO AHEAD. 1) WE'RE GOING TO HAVE PEOPLE THERE, NOT ON FILM, BUT BLACK PANTHERS AND WELFARE MOTHERS AND MOTORCYCLE KIDS AND KIDS WHO JOHN HOLT SAYS ARE BEING MURDERED BY A SCHOOL SYSTEM. JOHN HOLT IS A CONSERVATIVE. HE TELLS US OUR KIDS ARE BEING MURDERED IN OUR SCHOOLS. (APPLAUSE) 3) THE VIOLENCE THAT WE SEE PERPETRATED ON OUR SOCIETY,DOMESTICALLY AT LEAST, IS MAN TO MAN, AND MOSTLY WITHIN FAMILIES AND NOT OUTSIDE. NOW HOW DO YOU ANSWER THAT IT TERMS OF INSTITUTIONAL VIOLENCE. YOUNG LADY) THE FAMILY IS ONE OF THE MAJOR INSTITUTIONS IN OUR SOCIETY THAT PERPETRATES THE BASIC

AND DEGRADATION OF WOMEN. (LAUGHTER) ALSO IT TREATS A WOMAN AS IF SHE WAS THE PROPERTY OF THE MAN, AND CHILDREN AS THOUGH THEY WERE THE PROPERTY OF THEIR PARENTS. THAT'S THE BASIS OF CANNIBALISM WHICH IS THE BASIS OF VIOLENCE IN THE WORLD TODAY. MAN) HOW DO YOU REDESIGN? I FAIL TO SEE ANY RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE FAMILY STRUCTURE AND CAPITALIST STRUCTURE. BUT THAT MAY BE YOUR BAG. YOUNG LADY) THE FAMILY STRUCTURE TODAY TRAINS PEOPLE TO ACCEPT THEIR ROLES, BUT NOT THEIR HUMANITY, WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF AMERICAN CAPITALISM. WHEN WE FREE OURSELVES, WHICH MEANS TO FIGHT AGAINST AMERICAN SOCIETY, WE FREE OURSELVES FROM THESE OPPRESSIVE INSTITUTIONS, WHICH MEANS THAT WE ESTABLISH REAL COMMUNITY WHERE PEOPLE RELATE TO ONE ANOTHER IN A SOCIALIST WAY, BECAUSE THAT'S HOW YOU COMMUNICATE. YOU BREAK DOWN THE FAMILY AND CREATE COMMUNAL LIVING. MAN) AND YOU REALLY BELIEVE THAT WE HAVE TO REDO THE WHOLE SOCIETY IN ORDER TO RID OURSELVES OF VIOLENCE. YOUNG LADY) OF COURSE.)

TOP VALUE TELEVISION (TVTV): PRIME TIME: Post-Broadcast TV

> "The purpose of TVTV was to demonstrate that portable
> video equipment can be used professionally to create a
> different style from conventional TV; and that there is a
> market for such work. Moreover, we wanted to demonstrate
> that we could work efficiently without a rigid hierarchy."
> - TVTV, PRIME TIME, 1973.

MEGAN WILLIAMS: I guess there are about ten of us that work
together, in San Francsico. Michael Shamberg and I came from
Raindance in New York, Allen Rucker who co-founded Media Access
Center in Menlo Park, California, Tom Weinberg from the 1/2" video
INSTANT REPLAY group in Chicago, Chip Lord, Doug Michels, Hudson
Marquez and Curtis Schreier from Ant Farm (into inflatables,
alterante structures and graphics), and Betsy *Guignon* and Michael
Couzens.

Right now, we're basically working on this ADLAND tape, a docum-
entary, and this equipment thing, testing out equipment. We're trying
to push the state of the equipment, and push the state of the art and
see what the best production facilities would be, and the best place
place to be. Because we couldn't call for the equipment ourselves,
these prototype pieces of video equipment, because we didn't have the
clout to deal with the manufacturers that way, we're doing it through
KQED here in San Francisco. There's no money being exchanged. It's of
benefit to both of us because KQED is really interested in exploring
alternate television type programs, 1/2" programs, and they'll be
really hot into it when we're in color- *then* they'll be really
interested.

And it's of benefit to them to know what they need, and it's a real
benefit to us to know what you can get for the money, what would be
the best, the most stable, the cleanest, and have the best color- so
we're doing it. We're just testing it out- they're not buying it. And
it's also important because we're doing a survey on hardware and
we're going to publish it in the fall. (THE PRIME TIME SURVEY BY
TVTV, 1974.) It'll be a good model, a separate little thing, like a
magazine saying, here's hardware, what kind is it and how can you
modify it. It'll be more along the lines of the equipment stuff
that's been in RADICAL SOFTWARE. It'll have model numbera and prices,

see a price for that kind of equipment. The cable systmes have already
bought expensive stuff, and a lot of people are bringing in 1/2" tape,
so that's a big thing.

Then, we've got this project called PRIME TIME which is a ninety
minute pilot program. It's more a sassy type thing as opposed to a
documentary- it's not the coverage of an event. It's sort of a look
into what the future of TV is and it'll utilize all of this equipment
to show what the flexibility of the equipment is, and the light equip-
ment and the recording equipment. We want to trace out the history of
the tech development in television- people might be putting in people
watching the TV of the'60s, and as the program progresses, it will in-
volve getting into color and using all of the equipment.

> "PRIME TIME will be publicized as an alternate future for
> television. Future models themselves are part of the Amer-
> ican tradition. The 'car of the future' often draws consum-
> ers to auto shows. Science fiction imagery paved the way
> for acceptance of the space program... The PRIM TIME pro-
> ject will be a non-institutional way to develop new video
> formats and hardware. The project will serve both as a con-
> text for showcasing the work of alternate video producers,
> and as a prototype operating structure through which alter-
> nate programs could be financed and distributed."

We're also working on a book, sort of a profile on electronic com-
munications now and in the near future- not a futuristic thing, not a
real forecast for the year 2000, but something like the next five years
what the interfaces are between computers and video, and what kinds of
regulations would be in control. The way we work is that we all sort of
work on everything. The people who are working on the book are
basically Michael Shamberg, myself and Blair, who'll probably help us,
and people doing some of the graphics. There are a few people who
aren't part of TVTV working out of Chicago, and a woman in Japan. She
translated t#UERILLA TELEVISION (By Michael Shamberg and Raindance
Corporation, 1971) into Japanese, and it's really important, and it's
really weird, I mean, that's so old.
JUD: How did TVTV come about in the first place?

TVTV

MEGAN: TVTV started being formed around the conventions of 1972. We
decided we wanted to do the conventions so we came up with the name
TVTV, and it was sort of a fantasy to cover this media event, and then
it became a reality and we got commitments from Sterling and Teleprom-
pter Cable and Cypress Communications and Continental Cable. A few
cable companies gave us money commitments and we also got press
credentials, so that we were on the status of any other independent
press people down there in Miami, independent meaning other than the
networks. So
we started hustling grants for it and figuring out how we were going
to it, and how many people, and that's really how the people got to-
gether. We sent out flyers to a lot of people, and some really
responded "Yeah, I'd really like to work on this gig," so in the
beginning there were about twenty of us who went down, and we got
help with the money from small foundations. Andy Mann, the
Videofreex, Tom Weinberg from Chicago, the Ant Farm, Ira Schneider,
and the video people from Antioch College in Ohio: Steve
Christiansen and Martha Miller- everyone was coming from a different
group, so we had this ad-hoc structure to do this production.

     We had about ten portapaks..In the beginning, we had absoluely no
focus- we were running around and shooting what we thought was impor-
tnat, and then we starting following stories and themes, and deciding
what was really important. Like, we got a sense of it after a while
but it was just such a kick to be there. The place (The Democratic
Convention) was like the biggest television studio you've been in, THE
WORLD'S LARGEST TV STUDIO (the title of the production)- and the media
was a big part of it too- it was real interesting to hang out with
those guys and see how they operated, and to see what they think is
important in relation to what we think is important. So what happened
is that we did this programming, two hours on each convention (FOUR
MORE YEARS was the Republican Convention.) which were edited at the
Egg Store in New York City, on the Sony 320F
JUD: Dubbed up to one inch video and then back down to 1/2".

MEGAN: And Parry Teasdale and Chuck Kennedy of the Videofreex did all
the tech work, and they're really fine- they really checked it out.
Then we had no idea if it was even broadcastable- we hadn't even

really a test- I know it's been done- but we transfered it to quad
using the AMPEX AD01 and it was exquisite. The first time we
transfered we did it optically at KQED, and you know what that looks
like, just shooting it off the monitor, and then Westinghouse put up
their time and their AD01- it took a lot of time but the technicians
got into it, and it transfered really well.

So then, we were out in San Francisco, Michael and myself and
Allen Rucker and Tom Weinberg, and we decided that we really wanted
to do more productions, really wanted to start making tape, but we
had to figure
out some distributiom, some sort of outlet, because otherwise it's
this thing here and this thing there. So the next thing we did was a
piece on ROLLING STONE MAGAZINE called BEHIND THE LINES which was on
WHET in New York, and that was a sort of little number- it was about
sixteen minutes which they chopped up before broadcast. We spent time
hanging out with Jan Wenner, time in the offices and talked to all the
people. Wenner has a very successful enterprise going, providing some
kind of service, some sort of communication, or he picked up on the
music which is the communication for that culture, and capitalized on
it. He started when he was about 23, and he's 26 now, and it's very
interesting to see that it's a very traditional straight sort of
business- and also to see where it's going from there, because you
can't really make it just on music anymore, so he's become a pretty
good journalist.
JUD: You say there isn't a structure being put together for the sake
of this operation. How is this being arranged now- who does what?
MEGAN: That's pretty abitrary though- we all have offices and things,
but that doesn't really mean anything. It doesn't mean that anyone has
any more pull than anyone else, and we haven't worked out any sort of
equity right now- it's all being held by one person- it hasn;t been
divided up but it's a tool. Like we need a structure to do what we want
to do with this new **pamphlet,and make it** as efficient as possible, and
it's a tool to help us raise money, but it doesn't necessarily
determine the kind
of work we do.

JUD: Are you all sharing one space in San Francisco?

MEGAN: No, infact, our space is not determined. We have an office

TVTV

JUD: A question of what used to be called media ecology. What's your terminology now?
   MEGAN: Post broadcast- that's the terminology we've been using. It's

a function of the future- small and cheap, light and functional. That's our term. It's working in post-broadcast format, with post-broadcast equipment, and post-broadcast distribution systems. It doesn't mean anything; it's just another funky video operation. (Laughter)
Just trying to get it toegether, seeing themselves, and traveling around a little bit, and doing what they want to do.
JUD: The basic materials you've been doing, the Convention tapes, Adland, et al, seem to take a look at certain cultural mainfestations in a kind of both observational and satirical point of view.
MEGAN: Well, in a sense, I guess that's satirical, and cycnical, but-
MICHAEL COUZENS: It takes a staged event and displays the process behind the stage upfront. And some things, when you do that, look ludicrous. The Republicans go through all that trouble to stage an event, and when you show the staging, and you show the kids being rehearsed before they go out to the hotel to greet the celebrities, and so on, the whole thing looks like a contrivance, and it creates a different perspective. I gues that's common to all the tapes thusfar, isn't it?
MEGAN: I'm not sure that satirical is the right word. It's documenting the culture, and this is part of the culture; these people are very real these are the lives they lead and the things that are important to them, and that's part of America. And they're part of the whole civic scene they live and work in, and sometimes it's just important to get a scan on who those people are because they have a lot of power in this country We're not on a heavy political number, but that kind of information doesn't get transmitted, and a lot of us are not even aware of it because we're pretty inbred, and pretty closed and pretty isolated. MICHAEL COUZENS: If you did a tape on Disneyworld- they go to a lot of trouble to hide their technology, to make it unobtrusive so that the ᶠᵃⁿtasy atmosphere is maintained. But the place would probably give you the impression of being impressed with their

and what that process was- and these are the guys who are giving you
the news every night, and telling America what they're doing, what's
going on. But they're not accessible. It's like turning the tables on
some of these people and exploring. I mean, if a bunch of South Caro-
lina Republicans walked in here with a film crew to check out our
scene, who are these videotape people, what do they do, what kind of
places
do they live in, down here on St. Marks Place and Vallejo Street in
San FRancisco, and Thompson Street in New York, and up in Woodstock?
that'd be pretty weird. It's not just picking up our lifestyle, but
it's putting our lifestyle into perspective so people know what what're
doing JUD: It's a kind of uncovering, in a sense.
MEGAN: But it's sort of an exchange, too, because at the same time
we're uncovering, we're really exposing ourselves to them too- like
they're having some sort of experience themselves as well.
JUD: What do you think they're getting out of it?

MICHAEL COUZENS: Well, it makes them stop and think about what's
relevent and what's important, and they find out what other people
have a different view about.
MEGAN: Or it makes them think about their own lives when they find
out that other people are curious about their lives, and most
people don't think about their lives a whole lot.
JUD: They're not self-reflective.

MEGAN: So, maybe it makes them think it makes them think that if
these guys with their Sony packs thinks we're important, or
something we're doing is valid- I mean, Walter Cronkite doesn't give
a shit about us, what we are doing, but maybe it does that. I don't
know; it would be pretentious to say that we had an effect on their
lives. I'm sure we probably don't.
JUD: Do they get a chance to see the stuff? Do you get direct
feedback from them?
MEGAN: Yes. Moreso, with ADLAND. With the Conventions, it was pretty
hard, and it was a momentary thing- two weeks in Miami Beach. But
with ADLAND, we can go back to the people and show them the tape. We
haven't done any of that two-way sort of feedback- unless they pick
it up and see themselves on TV.

megan; They're unsually more impressed by the technology than considering the tape, and then it's all pretty usual, as would expect, "that's my image- that's me on TV"- they get into that head. There was the Wallace delegate, who was on the tape, and saw the tape which we taped, but Walter Cronkite didn't see the tape we shot of him because he didn'y have the time.

JUD: There would have been a chance for him to see it?

MEGAN: Yes, CBS has a copy of it, and he could just get it out of the Archives, although I'm sure he has no idea.

JUD: There was a tape of yours that was shown on David Silver's WNET television show in New York

MEGAN: That was a tape of our loftJUD: It was
autobiographical

MEGAN: I haven't seen the playback, so I don't know exactly what they used. The original was about five minutes. David Loxton just asked us to do an introduction to who we were, and at that time we were living and working out of a much smaller space; and we just took people around through our space, introduced ourselves and showed them what we were doing- who we were basically. I was really to serve as an introduction, I would say.

JUD: David played it at the Kitchen, as well as the broadcast.

MEGAN: They cut the gallery at the end of it- we had a gallery of art, with glossies we got from the PR department. So we had a gallery of all the movement, and some guys who are well-known like Crbnkite and Fred Friendly, and some were a bit more obscure, and some were local, so the game was that you had to go around and name them, and see how fast you could name them off, if you remembered their name from television- how memorable they are. But that wasn't a particularly heavy piece of tape.

Another thing that we're sort of interested in doing, and are pursuing right now, which may happen, is a similar tape on the Guru Maharaj Ji, the 16-year old-guru and his following. He's doing a tour of

the country now, and the upshot of the tour is called MILLENIUM 73 in the Houston Astrodome in November. It's supposed to be a really big number, hundreds of thousands of kids, followers of the guru; and we'd like to travel with him, and they're having a thing called the Soul Rush, and they're coming from Boston and New York. Those guys are very weird.

JUD: They're all around in the East Village.

MEGAN: And he's around. He's plastered all over the place, and he's really into the technology, this little kid. He's got all his Divine Missions hooked up with Telex; he's into computers; he has a *747* on which he's got cassette recorders, and he really understands *linking* people together through media.
JUD: How have the arrangements for ou the tour gone?

MEGAN: We're not going to do the whole tour. We're mainly going to do the:Astrodome thing, and then pick him up in Denver, and Detroit.
JUD: A few lead-ins.

MEGAN: We contacted them, and it's still in negotiations, but they said they'd be interested. They sent us all their material. Right now we're trying to get some money from PBS to do it, through KURT in Houston, and they're interested in it. So right now it's in Washington with the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) to give a little grant to PBS Houston. The guru is probably into it because it would just be a little more media, right? We talked to two of his people. What do you think of his scene?
JUD: I've been avoiding any impressions of him.

MEGAN: Maybe you should work on this program. (Laughter) We decided that the upshot of the gig would really be if one of us is converted, that would be the final point. I don't know how long his following is going to last, or if it's as big as he claims it is, but if it, then it really is an **important event,** and it's really important to figure out who these kids are, believing in him, and turning everything they have over to him. There are a lot of them..

"MILLENIUM *73* was described by the Guru himslef as 'the most holy and significant event in human history.' In retrospect (and on tape) it was one of the silliest, but being in Houston was something of a mindfuck as at times we felt like aliens who had stumbled into 'The Invasion of the Body Snatchers' with our porta-paks... The event itself was visually outrageous, with the GBru sitting atop a 50-foot plastic throne wearing a gold crown while Biblical sayings and G-O-D flashed on-and-off on the Astrolite scoreboard behind him. Capping the madness was a 56-piece rock band led by the Guru's brother in a silver sequined suit." - TVTV.

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JUD: You believe in going into each of these projects being as open as possible.

MEGAN: Yeah, we try to. The thing we learned at the Convention the most was that you just let them talk; I mean, the Republicans just said what they believed, and what they wanted to say, and I think that's really the way to do it. It seems to be a lot more interesting for people watching the tapes if you let them make their own decisions about it, but it's not in a way that you can't say it's objective.

JUD: You try to go without any preconceptions except for saying that somehting is worthwhile to cover.   .

MEGAN, Well, I say we have preconceptions and it probably gets across, the way we frame the camera, or the way we cut the tape, but in the actual shooting process, we're thinking about how we're framing, and about how we might cut it, but we try to just let them communicate what they think is important. Because that's what we want to know; that's what we're curious about.

JUD: You've been working mainly with Sony 1/2" technology?

MEGAN: Yes. But we're not dedicated to Sony. We'd certainly work with anything that came along that was good enough.

JUD: Where do you see the idea of 1/2" broadcast from this point?

MEGAN: For the near future, the next year, it's really hard because it's partially a technical problem, those technical hangups with helical scanbut the time base corrector might have a lot to do with it. No one has yet worked with it long enough to see the limitations- but the problem seems to be in the engineering studios, because they're still *unwilling* to deal with it. To them, it's trash, it's a toy, and we sort of feel it's crappy ourselves, but we push it and cajole. The thing that's happening KQED is nice because it's the first time that KQED engineers are concerned, and Zeff Futterman, the program manager, understands what we're doing and careas about it. That seems to be the way it's going
to find people within the industry who are sympathetic to what our goals are. It's the same with cable; the problem with cable is that their wholc economics is so fucked up that they haven;t made any commitment to programming- they've got no software commitment at all
like, every time you have a program, you have to go back and do the

whole number all over again. But Couzens heard a rap on satellites and microwave today, which really doesn't apply to the next year, maybe the next five. It would be so easy and relatively cheap, so perhaps with people subscribing to satellite services, and many little networks formed around those services, then TVTV or Jud Yalkut could lease an hour on the satellite for $1000 and just hit all the people who subscribe to that service.

MICHAEL COUZENS: That means that the cable station could become instantly a network, but for a specific purpose- like for a particular sports porgram that has regional interest, or for TVTV- if TVTV puts up a tape and a network is formed instantly for the purpose of pulling that in in perhaps a dozen places. And, with predictions for more cable stations with more subscribers, there might be money for programming, which could be accessed by satellite.

MEGAN: There would be new forms of distribution coupled with better equipment, which would bring about new formats of programming, and that'; what we're really into. We're into producing television in a new way, anc I guess we're not doing community video; we're not doing art video; we're producing. We want to make TV, and we want to make it different, but I don't know if it will be better.

JUD: It's actually alternative programming that you're interested in.

MEGAN: Yes. In clifornia things are a lot different than in New York because there's not that concentration of video people; they never had a New York Council On The Arts, or the same cable thing; the public access thing, the unique rapport between cable and video. So, in San Francisco we're not affiliated with any cable system, or any broadcast out, or any community thing- we're pretty indepenent. We wanted to leave New York, a lot of people on the scene were leaving, going upstate, and Raindance was in flux, and people we wanted to work with were out in California.

JUD: There are other people working with 1/2" video in California.

MEGAN: Actually, there are lots- women's groups, community groups; there' Mission Media Arts, a black group, Fillmore Media, and then there's Video Free America, Art Ginsberg, and Optic Nerge. Optic Nerve is a group that works out of Project One, a sort of urban community of freaks who are interested in different media, and they've taken over a warehouse and broken it down, into many groups. There's a video group, a print

group, an architectural, ecology group, and the funds of Project One

work out of that space, which is into the alternate use of computers,
of which they have a couple down there. In a sense, they're doing
similar video to what we are, their tape on a rodea (PSYCHOLOGICAL
BULLRIDER~ and they covered the Miss California Pageant. Again,
though, it's very small and there's not much communication between
all those groups. JUD: Is there any interest among TVTV in image-
processed video?

MEGAN: For myself, I think its' real important; some of it is
really fine, and really exquisite. One of our people, Curtis
Schreier, this crazy technoid from Ant Farm- it's really hard for
me to describe Curtis- started out working with Larry Halprin, the
architect for awhile, did a lot of design work then, and then
joined up with the Ant Farm.

He worked with them on the whole inflatables thing and the
INFLATOCOOKBOOK, and he's been teaching himself electronics. His little
apartmentall of a sudden the fans and plastic bags are gone- and it's
filled with ICs, resistors and capacitors all over the place, and
little blinking lights. He put together something which generated
geometric patterns; not a synthesizer, not very sophisticated; very
crude, in a little box. But if anyone is actually pursuing it actively,
it would be him. I think the techniques are very important, and things
that come out of it, like the whole colorizing thing, would really
apply to our PRIME TIME production. It would be applicable in our own
context, because there are a lot of other things that we want to do-
we're really into entertaining too.
JUD: And information.

MEGAN: Right, information. And we're into producing things that people
would be into sitting down and watching- maybe they'll learn something,
but it seems that information should be sort of entertaining in itself.
Television, broadcast television, Jsut tries to create entertainment,
and put all the shit in to make it fun, and they just add all this
ginger bread to it. I think that if you make it a little bit more pure,
and get into the pure information of it, you can get away from the jive
entertain ment interest. That's probably the difference between what
we're doing an(what broadcast people are doing. We're not really
competing with CBS,
ABC or NBC.

JUD: Who want to?

JUD: You've also been doing raps with shows, and raps on equipment.

Have you tried incorporating material on the equipment itself into tapes? MEGAN: We tried that, to show the difference between the equipment that we're using and the equipment that CBS used at the Conventions. We try to give people a sense of our space and our editing process, and sometimes we bring ourselves into the tape. That seems to be important to us. A lot of people don't think so and call it self-indulgent, but it seems important to us to communicate that- the soul of TVTV.

MICHAEL COUZENS: I've been noticing the amount of time the networks waste on Washington procedures and Caucus room transitions. It has struck me that while they're down there, they could explain to people what Senators are doing, what kind of sordid deals are being hammered out in committees, what they're voting on when they go to the floor. The closest T've seen is when ABC followed some senator through the subwat over to the Senate, over to the Capitol building, and then followed him back- but the process of which this is a part continues to be veiled because they define the news as just what goes on in the Caucus room.

I don't know why they make the assumption that that's relevant and nothing else is. It's a struggle to proceed with other assumptions, until those situations arise and start to do it.
JUD: You're encouraging those situations?

MICHAEL COUZENS: Well, perhaps create situations and discover situations. Maybe it's the same thing.
JUD: What would be the fulfillment of your greatest working fantasy?
MEGAN: To work in the context of broadcast television- and it seems really important that we be able to do things on a regular basis. Not necessarily a series, or an old format or time slots, but even a five minute series as a signoff is unique, and they don't do that.

So, instead of having a piece sixteen minutes long appear on NET once every three months, or once every six months, we'd either like to do a whole night's worth of television, and PRIME TIME is the prototype form which is total fantasy- a whole evening of PRIME TIME in the prime time hours from 7 to 11, and just have it broadcast.

So that we'd be in control of the content, and either do that or some new kind of series thing. It's really frustrating to see your

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TVTV

 make a tape. A lot of it has to do with the environment of a place
 they would pick to eat at, and the food, and the waitresses, and that
 whole scene, and it's also them and their friends, whoever comes
 along; and it's much looser, more casual, much more comfortable, and
 everyone's eating, sitting around and talking, and it's not a studio.
 Not bringing someone into a studio and making him sweat and feel all
 uptight. So that's one idea we have in mind.

 And, for PRIME TIME, we think it would be real nice just to
be able to do our own commercials, if there are going to be
commercials in the broadcast time- then we'd like to do
thecommercials too.
JUD: For specific sponsors? Or for yourselves?

MEGAN: For the sponsors, if there were sponsors. This could be
educational television, but even if it were broadcast television, or
on independent VF1F, wouldn't it be nice to do the whole night-
everything? That's sort of a fantasy. That would be a major product.
That'd be so fun. This is Megan Williams, signing off for TVTV.

> "The original PRIME TIME project was planned as an entire
> evening of alternate TV programming. Prior to that,
> however, we plan a 90-minute pilot on TV-of-the-future as
> an education/ entertainment/consciousness raisin; vehicle.
> The working title for the program is TV2000.

> TV2000 will be hosted by a personality whose television
> career spans from 1939 to 2000. TV personalities of the
> future will be electronically generated by super-
> sophisticated video synthesizers. These characters--called
> Animatons--will have no real life counterparts but will have
> physical characteristics selected through audience surveys
> and pieced together like police composite sketches...
> Production technology in the year 2000 will be the miniest
> of mini-cams: retina receptors which chemically translate
> what the eyes of the cameraman sees into electronic
> impulses... The airwaves, of course, will no longer be

with virtually unlimited channels to choose from, most of them boring.
The existing networks will have merged into one national conglomerate
and will compete with other nation stations (ArabTel, Japanco,
Brasiltel, Sovstation, and MAOVISION) for rights to global events...
Another new form will be corres

> pondence television where viewers are invited to send tapes."

THE VIDEOFREEX: Maple Tree Farm And Beyond

"The FREEX are the most production oriented of the video groups.
They've developed a high expertise with telvision hardware which is
their strength because they demand respect (even from people put off by
their life-style and viewpoint) simply because they know their tools...
They have also the most collective life-style, sharing expenses and
space for living. This is in no small part due to the nature of the
videotape process and the FREEX clAim to get it off most when they're
all plugged in together through an elaborate camera mixing system and
taping collectively. They also, of course, make tapes individually
using the collective support system." - MICHAEL SHAMBERG, in "A
Personal History" in
          GUERILLA TELEVISION (Holy, Rinehart and Winston, 1971).

        The Videofreex has long consisted of a working core group, who
have also collaborated with other video groups, as well as producing
individual tapes by its members. David Cort initiated and moved off
into his own interactive video situations; Davidson Gigliotti developed
an expressive multi-monitor configuration head for videotape install-
ations; and other members were more concerned with documentary and
community interactive television systems. Other members of the Freex
include: Nancy Cain, Nelson Becker, Chuck Kennedy (the ace harware
technician), Curtis Ratcliff, Allan Scholom, Carol Vontobel, Ann
Woodward, and the other three who are involved in the following
extended interview, Skip Blumberg, Parry Teasdale, and Bart Friedman.

JUD: How did the Videofreex come about?

PARRY TEASDALE: There are two things to say about that, and one is that
we try to stay way from defining that period of internal history where
we came together, and the second thing is the reason for that is that
everyone has a different opinion, because it's a historical thing that
we don't understand, which tends to create an image that we don't nec-
essarily want to create- a mythology or a legend.
        Chronologically, it can be run down as far as what we've been in-
volved with, which was essentially the Woodstock Festival concert, and
doing video there. Some people got together at that point.
OUT OF WOODSTOCK
JUD: Was it basically gathering information video at Woodstock?

PARRY: That's a good point. At Woodstock, there was no Videofreex; there was just people with video. Actually, there were two of us who got together- (NOTE: David Cort and Parry Teasdale) and later editing the tapes, three people became involved. But more and more people came; but it started as an information system. There were Actually several video people at Woodstock.

JUD: I know that, including Ira Schneider and Carl Goldberg. And I

was shooting 16mm film myself.

PARRY: So the whole thing started as to play the tapes back to the people there wasn't any concept of at a central location in mation, but it just so It turned out that gether, and actually, these tapes there were not too many people at the state of the Porta-johns was. relevance which is valid, but the were these tapes

an information system, in trying who were there at Woodstock, and anything. It was simply replay, Movement City at that point. The attempt was documentary of the thing, but to relay infor happens that we used the tapes in the city later. felt there was a basis of information to put to may be of historical interest, but the time who were interested in what The hard information had very little some people to feel the ambiance, commercial potential is very limited. So there

SKIP BLUMBERG: You'd already been working in video for a while. JUD: So, at the Festival, it was essentially David Cort and you. PARRY: As far as we got together at Woodstock, we both had equipment. David had a portapak.
SKIP: David was traveling with some teenagers.
PARRY: Yes, he was with some Movement people, and I was with some friends. SKIP: High school radicals, and they did a lot of the shooting.
PARRY: And then Curtis Ratcliff, which whom David shared a loft in the city, was involved in the editing of the tapes.
JUD: You'd been shooting tape for a while before that?
PARRY: I'd been involved in it for less than a year. I didn't have a portapak; I just had a studio deck; I got some equipment from a guy in *Washington, D.C.,* Grayson Mattingly.
JUD: I know his book, with Welby Smith, "Introducing The Single Camera VTR System." (NOTE: 1971, Smith-Mattingly Productions, Ltd.)
PARRY: He's a fascinating guy, because he's been in video from the beginning, and the most startlingly beautiful thing about Grayson is that,

in many ways, he takes himself less seriously, and has more impact on,
more video people than a lot of people recognize. He's had an effect
because of the clarity of his original book and pamphlet. He turned me
on to video, and some other people that I know, and he's been in
Washington, and not in New York, so its' made a difference- because he
started in video in 1966 or 1967. There wasn't anything happening in
video, and you had to sell equipment to the government. But, anyway,
Videofreex got
its name sometime after that. It was a friend of ours who put the
name up on the door, and we thought it was funny, and used it.
JUD:: That was the original spelling?

PARRY: Yeah, - EEX. So, we were doing other things. We were trying to
relate to radical groups, and women's groups. We were just using the
equipment, you know. There was a musician, Buzzy Linhart, who live up-
stairs and we made a lot of tapes with him, and just tried to do
different things.

THE CBS EXPERIENCE: _"SUBJECT TO CHANGE"

PARRY: In the midst of trying to figure out what we were going to do
with the equipment we had, and the energy we had, which was pretty
high, along came Nancy Cain, who was working with an executive at CBS,
and they were trying to put together a show. They saw video
SHIP: They saw half inch

PARRY: Yes, half inch, and like a people, whether involved in
television or not, when they see half inch, they get immediately turned
on, at how easy it is to make a television show. They had visions of
using it as the new medium for pilots, I guess. And the portapak had
been around for a very short time.

SKIP: You couldn't play back with the portapak (NOTE: Sony CV, the
first produced.) and the resolution was awful.
JUD: It was an unstable picture.

PARRY: And it was impossible to edit essentially.

SKIP: Anyway, they got real turned on, and we met Nancy, and
somehow managed to get a lot of money from CBS.

PARRY: This executive had access to the highest echelons at CBS as
far as funding was concerned.

SKIP: He was an experimenter. They considered him, at least after he
left, to be a freak, really, and crazy, because he had dealt with

PARRY: Traditionally, CBS had been very conservative,
professionally as far as style, and we just totally broke the
rule, for which he was duely penalized at the end, by being fired.
JUD: Nothing ever got to broadcast?

PARRY: Well, they finally transferred some things to two inch. The
process was that not only did he have money, but he spent it very
liberally; some of it on us. Practically everyone who's here now,
came in either during the CBS thing, when there was lots of money
and a tremendous amount of energy- *nothing* to stop it because there
were no financial barriers- or they came in the immediate aftermath
of that when there was still this highness about what had gone on.
We did a lot of traveling, and a lot of shooting.
SKIP: There were probably a hundred hours of tape, during that
project. Or close to it, because it was not just the Videofreex, but
other people shooting too.
JUD: What kind of material was that?

 PARRY: I don't know what everybody shot, but we went to Chicago and
dealt with the Yippies, and the Weathermen, but not so much the
Weathermen as the SDS people, during the conspiracy trial. Tom
Hayden, probably the most foresighting person there as far as
straight political radicalism was concerned, made us erase all the
tapes we made of him when he found out that we had dealings with
people affiliated with CBS. You see, this executive had his own
company, and he was getting money from CBS; it was one of those
quasi-strange deals.
        We went to Chicago, taped Fred Hampton before his assasinat-
ion, and dealt with the Yippies, who were very much media-conscious and
didn't care, in many senses, what we did with the tape as long as it
got exposed. We traveled to California, tried to relate to LA which was
impossible, and tried to bring New York to Big Sur, which was
impossible, and ended up in San Francisco relating to some people at a
school in Palo Alto, the Pacific School, who were really beautiful, and
we've maintained a relationship with those people.
SKIP: We sort of did short documentaries.

PARRY: We dealt with celebrities, too, like Dr. Hippocrates, who
was writing a column for the Berekeley Barb.
SKIP: So, in many wyas, it was a bad experience, because it led us

on the other [hand. it](#) really taught us a lot about *CBS* and the broadcast industry, and now we're really beginning to understand what we went through. With CBS, we were really loners there. At CBS, in the offices at that time, maybe it's still the same, you couldn't change furniture around unless you had the maintenance men come in, and they had specific spots where you could move the furniture. We wanted to show some films, and they have veiwing rooms, and we wanted to turn some light off, and there are no light switches to turn the lights off. It took us a week or two to get them to come in and turn off the lights. PARRY: You couldn't even have things on your desk, unless it's approved. SKIP: And there we were, in the midst of this, playing harmonica down the hall, and stuff PARRY: And just getting crazy.

SKIP: Right next door, between Andre Kostelanetz and the room where you sit and watch TV shows, and have a red button in one hand and a green button in the other.
PARRY: It's weird; like people would disappear in that building. It was a whole thing where we were the radicals, or whatever they classified us as, and then there'd be offices where one day there'd be one name on the door, and the next day there'd be another name, and nobody would know what happened to the guy who'd been there the day before. It was a frightening thing; and it created in us a take-what-you-can-get-and

run attitude, which in retrospect was bad because it hurt our chances for getting something on the air. But, it was probably good, because it kept us arrogant enough not to be co-opted totally, so that when we fin- ally got ripped off, we could say, "Oh, those schmucks, those pigs." SKIP: We probably cared more about the tapes than about getting them on the air. We figured *CBS* would be worrying about getting it on the air.

PARRY: Now, if we had gotten involved with that later, it's impossible to speculate how things would have changed, but our attitudes were dif- ferent. But the end result was that we presented a program to an exec- utive, Michael Dann, then director of programming
SKIP: And several guys from his department.
PARRY: He had an entourage; they surrounded him. We presented it in our loft, and he didn't sit, wasn't allowed to sit, or didn't want to sit with the people involved in the show.
JUD: This happened at the Prince Street loft?
PARRY: Yes. It truned out that he had to sit in another room, and couldn

relate to the show at all, and got very drunk and conducted
himself terribly, and then came out a gave a little lecture
SKIP: He was responsible for things on the air like the Beverly
Hillbillies.

PARRY: But he said, if you have to produce a show once a week for 20
or 30 weeks out of the year, you'll learn that it's a little bit
different; and he was right, if you're dealing with their structure
of presenting television. There's no other way to do it other then
to be a media fascist. That was an interesting experience for us,
and the last thing was that they took the tapes and kept them for
themselves. We managed to get some of them back, just by going in
and taking themJUD: There were no dub?

PARRY: No, they took all the original footage. We got a copy of the
edit of the show, which we used as our main tape for a long time;
(Laughter) which we never look at now. We had edited this whole show,
and we had inherited a tremendous amount of equipment, which had
created in us, not only arrogance, but this air of "we certainly hit
the top; now we're the big guys in video." And we'd been supported by a
network for four months, and then, all of a sudden, they totally
withdrew their support, asked for a lot of the equipment back, only a
little bit of which they got, because they had given us a lot of it.
You know, they called us up and said "Wouldn't you like to give this
back, even though we gave it
to you."

SKIP: And the guy who produced the show left CBS. PARRY: His desk
was locked one day, just like that. SKIP: And he went back to be
managing editor of BROADCASTING MAGAZINE, which is what he'd been
doing before.
PARRY: AND, in a way, for CBS he really was a crazy man, you know;
he was really far out.

JUD: I find that's been a pattern, that people who get projects
initiated which are more far out in boradcast TV, even at one time in
NET, often are the ones who leave, or have to leave, quite soon after.
PARRY: I don't think he wanted to leave, definitely. He liked his
position there, but he was pushed out. But then, not happened; they
had transferred the thing to quad, and they tried to sell it for
awhile. So, we decided to keep on going, to keep doing whatever we
could.

FREEX

JUD: How did you get in involved in video before CBS?

SKIP: Basically, I wasn't doing anything that I was interested in any-
more, and Carol Vontobel and Nancy Cain had been working for CBS, and
needed some help; so I started working with them. It's just that I was
open to do it.
JUD: You hadn't been working with vdieo before. PARRY: But you'd been
working with super-8mm film. SKIP: Yes, fooling around with stuff like
that, and light shows, in psychedelic dance halls. At that moment, I
was on my way to Europe with money I had saved up, which dissapated
itself right after the CBS gig because we left that and had no
thoughts of the futures, really, and only had these vague projections.
Originally, we were going to make $90,000 within six months. We were a
hot item. So, somehow, we managed to keep getting along; no one really
knew how- there were seven to nine of us- and we just kept going on,
getting involved with some nice people and making tapes.
"VISION AND TELEVISION" AND PRINCE STREET

SKIP: We did the television show at Brandeis, VISION AND
TELEVISION (1970), setting up an Eidophor video projector.
"FREEX OUT- in addition to videotape documentaries, the Videofreex
will bring a full production unit to campus (3 cameras, special
effects generator, TV projector, etc.) and electronically relate the
exhibition to student activities on campus." VIDEOFREEX in catalogue
to VISION AND TELEVISION. JUD: Can you talk about the project for the
VISION AND TELEVISION show? PARRY: It was a kind of participatory
thing. Because there were a lot of different events happening around
us, what we brought was production equipment and we tried to tie it
together to give a feed out. We had the projector on one floor, and
then below was the little studio setup with plexiglass around it. You
could see into it.
SKIP: And three or four camera cables coming out. You could go up
to the second floor or come down to watch.
PARRY: So we sent a feed out to Ira Schneider's matrix (NOTE: "RANDOM
INTERLACE (Content Electronics): an integration of video and audio in-
formation both within the Rose Art Museum and from other spatio-
temporal points in the universal matrix."- Ira Schneider). We recorded
things including Charlotte Moorman's performance.

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JUD: I remember David falling into the pool during the panel discussion. PARRY: Right, while he was shooting. He was on the panel discussion and shooting at the same time. So, we were making tapes, otherwise, and showing them around; with teo or three groups working.
SKIP: We built our loft, a lot of that- the studio on Prince Street in Soho, with money from our savings, and little gigs, like music things.
JUD: But everything went right back into getting the loft together.
SKIP: Right, but it was all very unconsciously done. We didn't say we're going to get our loft together.
PARRY: We just thought we needed this big production studio; we thought we'd be following people through right and left, and we had the production equipment.
SKIP: Television of the alternate culture.

PARRY: And we somehow managed to pay the rent, through varying gigs, and then sometime in the spring of that years, we got involved with two things
JUD: That was 1970.

PARRY: We got involved with Earth Day, and through Earth Day met someone involved with the New York State Council On The Arts. But Earth Day never really happened much as far as video was concerned.
JUD: The event in Union Square.

PARRY: There were supposed to be twelve big video projectors around the Square, and they were going to drop people by parachutes, but also bought a piece of heavy hardware, our first major purchase aside from keeping the loft going, a one inch editing machine which we thought would really reap in the business.

JUD: What kind of editing deck?

PARRY: An IVC. (NOTE: Similar to the equipment at NET's Television Lab.) We had really been turned on by editing when working at CBS- we had used Sony then, and we really wanted to continue it. There was no way to edit CV tapes except by going to one inch- there was no 1/2" editing equip ment then- so we got that, and put ourselves deeply in debt- just incredibly. It's crazy when we think about it now.
JUD: Up until that time, what was the complement of your equipment?
PARRY: We had a four camera system, an SEG, and we had about three portapaks, the old CVs, and a bunch of CV table decks, and an old

PARRY: And so we built in a shop and a studioSKIP: Shooting space.

PARRY: And a control room, a little office, and a kitchen space, and some people lived in the middle of that chaos, and some people lived uptown in a little less chaos.

SKIP: So we started living together, slowly get rid of the apartments that spread out over Manhattan, moving into what was eventually two spaces in the city.

PARRY: And at that time, Carol and Nancy were supporting the space uptown, the apartment, and they were getting ready to go back to work because there was no way the Videofreex could support anybody. So they went back to work, put a lot of bread into Videofreex, and the apartment Skip put his money in, and we all put in what we had.

SKIP: Money we had from straight jobs, savings from previous lifetimes. PARRY: Or we paid rent on places that were used communally, like Rivington Street. There wasn't much in the way of jobs, but we started to get involved with the Council On The Arts

SKIP: And developed a grant proposal to be able to do this thing called MEDIA BUS, one of the programs we've evolved into, which was basically to go to Rochester and work with community video, to go into a community where there was no video, and no cable TV, or very little participation in television of any sort, and set up an equipment pool, and find people from the community who could maintain that equipment pool. To learn to teach other people how to use the equipment.
PARRY: That's what we did the next year.

SKIP: And we tried to develop systems among ourselves that would allow us to deal more effectively and efficiently between ourselves, and that was a problem because the group fluctuated, some leaving for short periods of time, and others just left, not wanting to be involved. There was a nucleus; there are about ninne of us who have been together- it's the fall of 1973 now, so it's been 3½ years, or almost 4 for the group. But the thing is, even though there are nine important people, lots of people have worked with us, either lived with us, or just come for a week and stayed, or people that we've known for the whole time, like Ira Schneider and Beryl Korot, people who worked with us and who we worked with like Eric Siegel, and people today like Joseph Paul Ferraro. And we've in turn worked with lots of other groups, too. It's definitely not a closed thing.

 JUD: There's a kind of magnetic center to the group.

 PARRY: For us, for the the nucleus of people, it seems to be a
magnetic center. Certainly a lot of people would say that if it's
magnetic, it's the same pole and it repels them. (Laughter) And I'm
sure we turn off as many people as those who come to work with us.
JUD: That's part of the process too.

 PARRY: And it's not the way that everyone wants to live. But
we've found it most effective for us.
SKIP: I'm not talking about so much about living together, as about
working together
PARRY: Sometimes, I not so much confuse them, as use the words inter-
changeably. For us, because if for no other reason, our living space
and our working space are so totally interchangeable, intermingled.
SKIP: And also, in my life, I feel strongly that they're intermingled
too, and I feel that living and working are the same thing because I
don't know when I stop working, really.
JUD: Even the thought and conceptual processes, and all things
that happen during the relaxation periods
SKIP: Right. They all contribute to my tape making and to my
PARRY: Like Carol and Nancy, who are both working to a point
because in some senses they were asked to be part of and to help
support the group, and yet they have this very strong distinction
between their 9 to 5 type job and this other thing. It was a
tremendous strain on them, and finally Videofreex was able to
support us all.
SKIP: Or they got sick and tired of working, in a way too. That's
partly why we moved up here to the country, because of the strains or
the inequities, and also the expense of living in the city which
turned us off. Like, we really got turned to the competitive attitudes
in the city like trying to make it in the art world, or in the music
business, or trying to make it in video- and so, we moved up to the
country.
PARRY: Although, again, what we're saying is what we got turned off
to, two people right here, who are simply in a sense sharing a space
MAPLE TREE FARM AND BEYOND

 SKIP: Some people didn't want to leave the city; they thrived on that

FREEX

  kind of energy.

  JUD: New York addicts.

  SKIP: Right. I think everybody really enjoys the space here. Some
  people never leave, and some people are occasionally going to the
  city. And some people have just been in the city for long periods of
  time since we've been up here. We're not representing a group view
  because there is no group view.

  JUD: It's a similar situations to a great many other group
  collectives, particularly in the field of media.

  PARRY: We've been pretty much here, for a little over two years, and
  we're finally starting to do things outside of just video, as far as
  having facilities here, like the darkroom hopefully soon, and to put
  together some print things, and work out of here. We do travel a lot.
  And we've been making a lot of tape.

  JUD: You're leasing the farm? Do you see it as your permanent
  location? PARRY: I think nobody would agree to that. Maybe it's
  because nobody wants to commit to a place, or more likely because this
  is not what any of us would consider the ideal spot. It's simply a
  better location than separate places in the city.
  JUD: Sometimes the city seems to fragment things and make it more
  difficult to pull things together.

 SKIP: The proximity to the city has been an advantage here, because we
do need services from the city, and some of the facilities, and much of
our money is derived in various ways by contact with the city. And then
there's keeping in touch with city activities, musuem scenes- just keep-
ing contact and knowing what's going on.
PARRY: But, also, on the other hand, we'd like to get farther away
from the city, because it's crpwded in this area
SKIP: Not only with people, but with video people. Harvey Cahill has a
house just over here for the summer, and he runs Media Resource
Equipment Center in the city, and there's a guy down the road who
started the first traveling video repair service
PARRY: And the people in Bearsville, Woodstock and Downsville.

SKIP: Not everybody would like to move; it's a big group, this many
people with this much equipment would be a big task, and it would take
away from actually doing our work.
PARRY: And it also takes time to relate to a new

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PARRY: The thing is finding a new community, a community that might have cable with a station that would open to us working with them, and the kind of cultural institutions nearby that we could get work from.
SKIP: If we could find something like that, I think we'd move.
PARRY: We found that moving up here, for most of us anyway, gave us a certain perspective we hadn't had before. The city tends to narrow your perceptions, because they're all directed toward New York. I don't know if it was just our naturing as a group, or as individuals more likely, but we have greater contact in the fact that more video is happening over the country
SKIP: And all over the world too.

PARRY: And we started to travel more. In the city, you travel uptown and you're in a different world. But out here, you really have to travel to see new things, in some senses, and it got us involved: David was in Israel, Skip and Carol and I were in Europe for a while, and David came up there too, and Skip and Bart and Nancy went to California SKIP: We went to the Caribbean and to Florida, and the funny thing is that you have to go to the city to get to the airport.
PARRY: And as a result of our traveling, and I guess also of our notor iety, a lot of people travel through too. Many people in the state here come here, use our facilities, work us, and also with from all over the world come up lot of people
SKIP: You don't see as many people, visitors, in the city because it's harder to deal with visitors in the city. don't encourage people to come. It gets crazy sometimes, in the summer; the month of August and the last two weeks of are usually just insane. You get forty a July people here on a nuthouse. But, it's also fascinating, weekend. It's because things
PARRY: Things evolve. We have facilities and people who are in doing things, and they have the energy to stimulate us and we them, and so we get tapes, and not even interactions. And we, in turn, need it because of being out of the It's a long winter.

LANEVILLE TV

JUD: How have the relationships been working out with the community in Lanesville Television?
PARRY: Well, it's been slow. A little bit about we're nestled up in the mountains, and much community is that cut off from what a

lot of people really consider the Catskills, because of the topography. There's no farmland around here and no recreation in this particular valley. There are about 200 people who live in the village of Lanesvilly, and some have been living her, I've heard, as long as 250 years. JUD: Whole families.

PARRY: Very large families. And when we first came up here, we were really new, and still only have been here two years as compared to 250. Slowly, we started makinf friends and making our resources available to the community.
JUD: In what ways was that done?

PARRY: Initially, we would meet and tape people, and they would come up to visit us.
JUD: And watch tape.

PARRY: Yes. And slowly, it's not an organized program, or anything-
SKIP: We were the first initiators of that, and they were curious. They came and they couldn't believe that we didn't wear underwear, and they were curious. And after that, they saw that were not ogres.
PARRY: And not only that, they have a good time coming over here. There': a lot of weird stuff with which to play around, and we'll let anybody who's interested, use it. That's one of the things we really like to do-not to hold the equipment ourselves, but to teach people, or let people learn that they can make TV programs themselves. And then, when the kids have a good time, they bring their parents, or their parents came to pict them up
SKIP: Because they want to see, too; the parents really want to see the most.
PARRY: Understanerably so; there are a lot of people who are just week-enders, and there's no community that way: The families who have been living here a while, who are the indigenous population, and the retired people who have moved up from the city and bought large pieces of land, and they're different, and then there are the weekenders. And there are young people, like ourselves, who've moved up out of the city, some of

whom are weekenders, and some of whom are people who plan on staying a certain amount of time, and relating to the community. But there are so many divergent groups that it creates a certain amount of tension, and certainly causes a problem in creating any kind of community outside the problems that arise simply within a very isolated group of

people, of internal feuds.

SKIP: We can't isolate Lanesville from the community because we relate t the community, and video is part of the way we relate; we relate primarily through ourselves, and video is a resource that we make available to the community. If they want to use it, they can use it; if they just want to come up fro a cup of coffee, they can do that.
PARRY: As long as we've been up here, the thing that happened last night was the first sense of community the people got, and even then the old tensions and problems flared up- so it was actually a very interesting experience. And maybe Lanesville TV can play a part in perhpas continuing to create that sense of community, because it doesn't exist naturally.
JUD: What exactly is Lanesville TV? At the present time?

SKIP: From that very informal way of just being in the community and having video equipment, it evolved into playing back once a week, or a few times a week.
PARRY: Now it's Saurday evenings, at seven
o'clock. SKIP: It used to be Sundays and
Wednesdays.
PARRY: And Saturday afternoons was the Buckeroo Bart Show, and people came up to watch it in our house, and now we have a few houses attached to ours by cable. We're a cable station for three families.
SKIP: Four families, actually.

PARRY: Right now, there's very little participation for many reasons. It's summer, so less people are liable to be inside watching TV. And also, in the beginning, it was just very novel.
SKIP: We reach more people than the cable station, which is supposed to reach houses up and down the valley and has a sloppy signal, and we've taken advantage of that by informing people that we're doing programming, so they get programming a mile or two down the road.
PARRY: This is an electronically isolated area. They hardly get any AM radio; FM is just about unheard of here, and the television signal they get is like Alaska in December. It's just a blizzard over the picture, and yet people watch TV.

SKIP: It's not as if they didn't have TV, and didn't watch it, but just the quality of the signal technically is abyssmal.
PARRY: And so we come through a little bit stronger, and even if

JUD: You transmit through the cables via RF (radio frequency)?

PARRY: Yes, because they get the regular channels. We just unplus the regular channels and put our programming on Channel 3
SKIP: And people have the opportunity, we have a phone line, so they can call in at any point to tell us if they don't like what's going on, or have suggestions or comments- and it goes out over the air too. PARRY: We get a representative response from as many as thirty people during a show, not 30 calls during a show, but five people here in one place, some there, and we figure, even when that's infrequent, that it represents a sizable audience
SKIP: Even if we get 10 people watching, that's a tremendous percentage of the available audience.

PARRY: The potential audience is probably 200 at most. We used to have shows at the loft in Soho every week, and it was a discipline and very experimental, much more experimental thah what we do now, because we'd do just anything. It was a very closed audience and we could put in
sex and drugs

SKIP: All the accoutrements of hippiedom. (Laughter) And up here, that's not frowned upon, but they don't understand and wouldn't be able to relate to it. It would be frightening to them.
PARRY: Anyway, it's still a kind of discipline putting on a show every week that keeps us productive, and we've gone through periods where we've been very productive. Like, for three and four months in the city, we would get up a 10 o'clock and do calisthenics with the cameras, and discuss things, what we want to do with it, and it was kind of mandatory; and now, Lanesville TV and the Saturday night thing is the only thing really that forces us to be together. We don't have meetings, or anything like that, and our projects are very variable. Many projects are just totally individual; one person has a concept and actualizes it; some things are about two or three people, and some things involve us all, and more people as well. But Lanesville TV is a regular thing
that people can participate in.

JUD: How do you correlate all these projects, if someone comes up with one?

SKIP: It's all through individual interaction. No scheduled

SKIP: Yeah, remember? Chuck didn't come; he was too chicken because it was about technology

PARRY: It's more effective not having meetings on any regular schedule. Some people don't care. If people are interested in a project, they find out about it, because if they're interested, the person who's initiating the project will contact those people, and pretty much know who's interested in what and who's not- it's hard to explain

SKIP: We know each other well enough, and we also know other people, either video people, or those who might be interested in a projectone person dealing with a concept, and sharing it, or just keeping it to himself, and it gets together.

PARRY: And, of course, the system is not efficient in all senses, or effective in every way. People do get left out of things, and some projects don't get completed as well as possible. But. it's hard to explain those situations, and the only way to understand it is to live with a group of people and have that experience. To explain how things get done in a group, you tend to categorize it, and it becomes codified.
SKIP: And then, if you try to repeat it, it just won't work, because so many things change.

PARRY: There are nine individuals going through nine individual trips, and the conglomerate is a tenth entity, which is the group, which nobody really tends to under stand; so you can't repeat things.
JUD: What about any kind of role playing, like tech
people? PARRY: Some of the things like that, change as
well.
SKIP: That come down to most superficial way of looking at things, because other people are always the ones who come up with the joke; some people are the ones who get down on others for leaving a mess. It changes as well, but we have evolved into various roles, I guess, in terms of job functions.
PARRY: The most important thing is that any group of people makes the most important thing being aware that you're falling into a certain role; if you can deal with that, and the other people can deal with that,
then it's fine; if not, then you'd better get out of the role, or you're going to get forced out of it, or into it. (Laughter) The idea of using the word "group" is such a nebulous idea; really, it's just

 the front of being some sort of group because we do projects together.
 We appear as a group. But I don't think that any of necessarily feels
 that we're so much a group as simply we've found, again using the
 words effective and efficient, ways of getting our ideas done.
 SKIP: Learning how to work well-individually and with other people.
 PARRY:That seems to be the nature of video. I don't know of any other
 idea, thing, or movement that's caused so many people to come
 together around a particular thing- video. You really have to go back
 to the idea of Utopian community.
 SKIP: Film never caused that to happen. It was mostly
 individuals. JUD: Individuals, or industry.
 PARRY: And what else is there that's caused this, other than peace
 and love

 SKIP: Theater groups are one of the few other things. JUD:
 Like the Living Theatre and the Performance Group. PARRY:It
 causes people to immediately gravitate towards groups. SKIP:
 Well, it certainly caused us to do it. (laughter)

SPAGHETTI CITY VIDEO MANUAL

JUD: The hardware end; who's most involved in it?

SKIP: Well, Chuck of course comes from the experience of working with
that fro awhile. He worked with Sony, with a company that sold harware
called GBC (NOTE: A large closed-circuit specialist.) for a while, and
he was inside the guts of the equipment in the 60s, and pretty much
continued along that road. He makes tapes occasionally, works the
switcher, and the audio- and everybody has the opportunity to move
around , but he's pretty much stayed in that, building us things like
black and white keyers, and switching systems that make it more
convenient to work with complicated systems. Because Chuck was around,
Parry had the opportunity to get involved in the equipment, without
going to Sony school, or working for Sony for ten years- it gave him
the opportunity to do what he's doing now, and he's become very
technically competent. As a result of our experience, and his experience
of how to deal with the equipment,
we wrote a book and he did diagrams that's coming this fall, THE
SPAGHETTI CITY VIDEO MANUAL.
          "Way back when, on the old Tonite show, Jack Paar showed a

the Spaghetti Tree.' Many of the viewers found the film in-
formative but they couldn't figure out what made so many peo-
ple in the audience crach up with laughter. Even though those
viewers are spaghetti, the technology of spaghetti was unfam-
iliar to them. Most people now working with portable low-cost
equipment are also faced with the unfamiliar technology of
spaghetti. Video spaghetti- the wires, cables, connectors
and hardware- is only unfamiliar because the 'how' and 'why'
of it hasn't been available in any comprehensive form. Hope-
fully, this manual will help change that situation."
- from the Introduction to THE SPAGHETTI CITY VIDEO MANUAL.

Chuck and Parry pretty much handle the technical end, although to
varying degrees, the rest of us have learned how to maintain the
equipment when we go out on the road, so we don't have to run to some
dealer 200 miles away to get things fixed. Of course, we've gotten
into the production techniques, into form and structure. In the
beginning, many of us didn'y ever really have the opportunity to work
with this kind of visual medium. That's a problem, in a way, that you
have to deal with; there are
a lot of boring videotapes, and a lot of them are boring because
people don't know when to turn the camera on and off, and we didn't,
or how
to hold the camera steady when you're in a crowd, or in a boat, or
wherever. The way we're set up, we have a lot of time to shoot, and
make tapes. We have our own facilities, equipment, editing facilities,
and it's given us a freedom to never have any limitation on the amount
of tape that we can use. We've taken away salaries, lights have been
turned off, but we always have tape.
PARRY: Did you tell him about the book?

SKIP: Yes, I told him about the book. I told him that you were
very smart, and that you wrote a great book. (Laughter)
PARRY: THE SPAGHETTI CITY VIDEO MANUAL, to be published by Praegers
in October (NOTE: October 1973.) is divided into 3 or 4 parts.
There's an introduction to how thw hardware works, not specifically
for the portapak, but essentially Y" tape machines, type 1 standard
helical scan, how mics work, and how monitors work, and how the
camera tube works, in terms of allowing people to understand the
basics of the tools in order to maintain them and to work with them
most effectively

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with general concepts, of cables and things together; what is involved in the editing system, with some specifics of how to rig up certain cable that you need, like 8-pins; just again trying to give a practical overview on the equipment and how to use it. Then, there's a section on specific maintenance procedures, and some of them involve specific tools and things that you need to do any maintenance procedure; some of them are involved with specific procedures for the Sony portapak, or other Sony pieces, because that was the most prevalent equipment when the book was written. And the last section is an introduction to not so basic *maintenance,* which again is an introduction to what you would need to

go on in terms of getting more self-sufficient when involved with this technology. Not again geared to how to read schematics, but how to ap-proach it, what information you can get from highly technical data without being a highly technical person. I suppose, in general, it's an attempt to try to make the information more human and less intimidating. JUD: A very basic problem with any new technology. PARRY: Right. And to see what humans get away with without engineers or technicians, and to put it down on a level that makes it a little more egalitarian for everyone, a technology that everybody should be able to deal with. And then there's the last part which simply runs down some of the available equipment, some of the ways to interface with cable and broadcast; and then some conclusions dealing with the idea in general, and where the

"TV will soon be a tubeless technology. But defining the future of TV as tubless is like talking about the car as 'horseless'- what it won't be instead of what it will... Solid state camera the size of a transistor radio are already in production... Flat screen, solid state monitors can also be made... Eventually, most VTRs will use some sort of cassette. Video discs will probably be the most popular form of home playback equipment- if such a market exists... This technology has provided us with tools that are at the same time exciting and frightening. If we are to use these tools it is essential that we understand their very nature."
- THE FUTURE from the THE SPAGHETTI CITY VIDEO MANUAL.

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VIDEO FORMS AND VIDEO FARMS

SKIP: There are a few things that we all, I think, feel commonly about-
,jus the fact that learning to work together, when we do work together
with love, and when we haven't worked together well, it's been quite an
experience and taught us a great deal about working with other people.
Learning to work with each other is also, I think, learning to work
with other people.
       There are alot of interesting formal tapes, technically competent as
far as camera work, but there are a lot of art tapes which are so bor-
ing because there's nothing to say. With many of us, both things have
evolved, content and form. With me, I guess it's been very strong because
I always really wanted to be a cameraman, and to be able to work by.
myself, to go into a situation and figure out what's going on, and to be
able to shoot it so that an audience knows also. Some of our people are
also more into the conceptual art uses of video.
JUD: Like Davidson (Gigliotti) and David.

SKIP: Other things we've had to get together, as a business thing, and
to be able to deal with grant people, and not only be able to perform
what we do well, but to be able to keep records of it, on paper as well
as videotape, and to keep track of our spending. It's a small business,
in a way, it's a small town. The major thing I've gotten out of it all
has been personal growth, and that's really what keeps me going, that I
have the opportunity to learn the most, expand and to go more towards
the way I want to be and what I want to do.
For the past two weeks, I've been working on very wide ranging I'll
projects, that I think will yield some tapes, but go through per
iods where I'm doing nothing as far as tape production. Anything I'm
working on: grant proposals, reading, or working in the garden; people as
are pretty much as effective they can be. They do what they want and
have to do.
JUD: What's
         your feeling about tape production as opposed to the kind
of process video thing that David is talking about these days?
SKIP; Well, Laneville TV is a very process oriented thing, because it's
live television. To me, that's like mainlining video. It's the highest
video experience in my mind- live television. I like to make tapes that
are seen; I like to do things where people enjoy themselves. I think the
most effective use of video is when it's played back to the people
who were actually there. When you're there, and you see playback, you

go through changes. I've seen myself on TV hundreds of hours and I still go through changes when I see myself on it.

JUD: Have you shown any pre-recorded tapes on Lanesville TV? SKIP: Yes, it's a mix of live TV and talking and tapes.
JUD: And live switching and mixing

SKIP: Right. I don't know what it would be like to deal with the country as far as live television, like they do the news every night.
JUD: That would of course remove most of the process feedback.

SKIP: I don't know how I would deal with it on a national level, or a reglonal level, but I'd love to do it. I think many of us would like to be able to continue dealing with live TV, and in a way that might be what's sustaining us in the future. And showing it to larger audiences, rather than getting bigger grants. Of course, we're constantly struggling to survive.
JUD: There's a gigantic tape libary in there.

SKIP: Yes, we probably have three or four hundred tapes in there, and we've shown in lots of museums,on several TV stations around the country, cable stations, but we never eeally had something that's been able to sustain us, like the TVTV people, who are staring to work on productions that will be able to sustain them, and that's their approach.
       Our approach is as a production company, but we also deal with the community, and do workshops and try to teach people how to do their own television; and we also do a lot of technical research. So we have three thing that we're heavily into, that somehow we manage to do, and somehow manage to support, and hopefully we'll get each of
COOPERSTOWN_TV IS A MUSEUM

SKIT: There are a lot of concepts you can talk about video as an art-form, but as far as I'm concerned, I'd rather not talk about them. These concepts can be best communicated to people by seeing our tapes and, bang, they've got them. It's a sort of ten understanding.

       But, as far as other thing we do, about doing community workshops and teaching people how to do television, we do and have done lots of workshops, less now but more arranged and calculated. What we do often is to go into a town and have a community contact, like a musuem or his-

torical society or a community center, any community organization
that has a way of dealing with their community. We go in and set up
our equipment, publicize that we're resourcing and available, and
people come in and learn how to use the equipment, and we try to
show it on cable. One of the best workshops that we've ever had
really was the Cooperstown TV Workshop. The official title was A
VIDEO METHODOLOGY FOR HISTORIANS.

What we did was in a way a more specific kind of discipline. We deal
dealt with this New York State Historical Association, on the premise
that video would be helpful for local historians around the state. We
invited historians from around New York State, and from around the
country as well as museum personnel, the Smithsonian, and through our
workshop, the idea was to teach people what could be the application of
video to a historical society, and to the processes dealt with by a
historian. People were talking, made displays, saw a few tapes, and a
number of people had experience hands-on with video and showed each
other tapes, and we taped that and audio recorded it, and played that
back; and people talked about film versus video, slides versus video,
and local problems, and we outlined what was going to happen for the
next two days.

This all took place in Cooperstown, New York, in the Farmers' Museum,
this whole complex of museums there, which made it a perfect loc-
ation, in a very old beautifully preserved town.

So the next day we set up a few production systems, three or four,
and one or two of us were the staff for that, and the only difference
between use and the others was that we had a little more expertise in

video and they had a little more expertise in history. And we went
around to different places, to the high school, and to an old
blacksmith,

and they made tapes- they'd never made video before- and they learned
in a short period of time, made a couple of hours of tape. Then we came
back that night, looked at their tapes, talked about them and their ex-
perience, had dinner and a cocktail party that night; and the next day,
the tapes were edited and we had already set up with the cable station.
We helped and the production crews pretty much edited their own tapes.
The cable station was very cooperative, had never originated any pro-
gramming before, and we had a well-publicized- with signs all over
townshowing. We pulled into the Fish And Game Club that morning, set up
all the hardware and played back tapes, with probably 50 or 75 people,

least 30 participants with their families, and the people who had worked with us at the Museum- and we couldn't stop the phone calls. People watched the tapes and they'd seen tapes of Main Street and they'd seen themselves on tape, and somebody who had watched the show came down and showed some aerial photographs he had taken of Cooperstown. He saw it on Tv and he just rushed down with them. And, as a result of all this, they are sustaining a portapak at the Historical Society, everyone left with some kind of expertise. I haven't kept track of it; it was pretty much David's gig, but we all worked on it. Also the Cooperstown people have, sustained the idea and continued doing some programming.

JUD: You also got some community video activity happening in Rochester. SKIP: We had quite a sizable grant to deal with that community, and they got equipment, and we had workshops and found people- sort of following them along for a year- to sustain an equipment pool and a video resource center for the city; and they started working with many groups, women's groups, the black community, old people, people interested in ecology, people interested in the performing arts. And they really got themselves together. Now they're an independent group dealing with the communityas a model- and that's kind of a model too, a video resource center dealing with the community, not only making lots of tapes with them
and showing them closed circuit at their own facilities, but now dealing with the Educational TV station to produce a twice monthly show called HOMEMADE TELEVISION, which is an outlet for the tapes that they've made with different community groups. And they go on live and explain a bit about who they worked with, what the process was like, show the tape, and they're dealing with broadcast TV.

It's a good examply of how community people, how the man on the street, can have an input into his TV station. And it also proves that ' videotape can be broadcast, which the broadcast people have always resisted.

JUD: Particularly in metropolitan areas.

SKIP: These people at Portable Channel in Rochester are a good example. After having gotten along with those people and gotten through those interpersonal problems, in order to cope with the technical problems, they are regularly shows their tapes on the air.

JUD: I wonder if this is still an isolated example of alternate video production coexisting in the same facilities as regular broadcasting

FREEX

SKIP: I just finished a study, that we intiated here, and did with
Ira Schneider and Beryl Korot, with the cooperation of many video
people around the state; a study of how &1" was being used, as far as
playing tapes back and, incidentally, where equipment was available.
We found very few places in the state that were regularly dealing
with video, but it's just the beinning. We found that NET has
occasionally broadcast thing on Free Time
JUD: Jackie Cassen pioneered that attempt.

SKIP: When we go into the broadcast situation now, or with cable,
we've evolved from where we were when dealing with CBS.
JUD: That was basic training.

   SKIP: We've evolved from that point of view of trying to get as much

as we can from these people. Now we've found people are more
cooperative if we can understand them a little bit better, if we can
deal with them on a human level. You'll find people pretty open, cable
TV stations, and broadcast TV, and I think there will be more of an
outlet for these tapes,mainly because broadcast people are looking for
cheap programming. And cable stations have so much time, and also
cassettes. Those three things could be outlets; the main problem in
video in freeing up the time.   I think there are more interesting
tapes. I used to think that video was brand new, just totally
uncharted territory. Now, I'm staring to understand more that we're
dealing with the same old problems that filmmakers have been dealing
with for so long, that broadcast TV has been dealing with for so long
JUD: Production, distribution, and maintaining yourself in the
process. SKIP: Right. But making good tapes. Our advantage is that we
have portable equipment that's a bit more inconspicuous, and because
of that our attitudes might be different from other people in that we
haven't involved ourselves in heavy role games like they do in film,
the director and stufflike that. But we're dealing with the same old
problems of trying to produce good television. Or a good cable show,
or a good museum show.

     There are several ways. One is that Bart and the rest of us are
interested in producing specifically for children, things that they
find interesting and also might be able to participate in. Bart
produces a series of shows for Lanesville TV with many of the community
members as part of the show. The star of the show is an eight year old
child, one of the Benjamins who live down the road, and with some of us

both roles, and interchanging them and trying to merge them. And also
the people who are kind of inside the camera screwing around with the
technical thing, but just trying to get involved in the whole process
physically and spiritually. A couple of tapes have evolved out of
that process: one called FACES which is just rapid switching between
people's faces so that they merge into one face, and another tape
called an ORIENTAL MAGIC SHOW starring a man in a box and a barbarian
which is a kind of electronic magic, very simple to do; it just sort
of happened. And we do a lot of experimentation and rarely,
occasionally, it results in a tape, which may our best tapes by far
because they're timeless
and have a meaning beyond what we intended them to be. So there's
that kind of tape, and again that's getting into the art part of
it.

        And the other tapes; we do documentaries and David's working on
a tape now; he does biblical epics and some theatrical thing too.
Nancy's been working on a tape with the women in the valley called
PORTRAIT OF
A MOUNTAIN WOMAN or a MOUNTAIN FAMILY which she's done completely on
her own. She worked very closely with one of neighbors who's become
part of the Benjamin valley who've been here for 200 years, and she's
really become close to here, and in the course of living here for 211
years and working on this tape for the last six or eight months, it's
developed into a tape portrait of this woman, which is being edited
now.

        Things come along. We don't make plans for them. We just have the
equipment available and in shape, so if something interesting comes
along we can do something. The way the circus happened was that we were
making tapes of carnivals and found that the circus was coming to
Phoenicia, the next large town over from us, and we just decided to
pick up the circus for about 3 or 4 days, and we didn't make any
arrangements; we didn't plan on it; it happened, and next month
something else will happen. I enjoy that; I like to live like that;

It's called the Buckaroo Bart Show. I guess Bart was the star, but he was pretty low-key; he was like Mr. Good Guy, and there was a character named Horrible Howard, and then there was the Sheriff who was always trying to put Horrible Howard in jail, and the Sheriff was the little eight year old Benjamin boy; Bart was always the voice of reason, trying to make the compromise between the two, but the Sheriff always made the final decision because he was the one in charge. And there were other people in the community, and Howard was a neighbor of ours, and it's great as far as dramas and other theatrical things go

PARRY: March 31st, Chapter Two, in the afternoon. Another tape project: we followed the circus around for about four days and got pretty friendly with those people; they were real nice and open with us, and we taped about five or six hours of TV which we're going to edit down to about

a 15-20 minute tape. And the thing about TV is that you can act really fast with it; you don't have to wait for the labs, for things to get synced up, so we're very prolific.

There are nine people, and when we're producing- and this is the summer which is a high point for us- there are nine producers programming. Carol's now editing a tape of her own; Nancy just finished a tape on a lady wrestler; Bart was shooting tapes of midget wrestlers at the same time; Davidson's been doing multi-channel pieces with waterfalls, three monitors sitting on top if each other, to extend the image. And we're doing lots of things besides video also: Bart and a friend of ours, Pedro Lujan made a rope bridge down there just as an architectural excercise, and we have a whole graphics studio in the house so we're getting into multimedia and other areas, and also working with other people. There's a book of the Cooperstown Workshop called COOPERSTOWN TV

IS A MUSEUM, as well as other kinds of smaller print projects. I think we're going to be doing books and pamphlets here as well as videotapes. There were about three progress reports (NOTE:MAPLE TREE FARM REPORT) which was just an effort by us to keep in touch with friends, and that was effective while it was going on, and we just

SKIP: We did some kinds of experimental work here, delving into the relationship between the people who are behind the cameras and the people who are in front of the cameras, with our friends and us performing

PEOPLE'S VIDEO THEATER AND WOODSTOCK COMMUNITY VIDEO: Video Villages

> "The media person of 1/2" video can now discern between
> ideology and the 'real'- the day-to-day process of taped
> programming to an audience within a provincial environment
> with a homespun consciousness. Settling into a community,
> accepting day-to-day realities of it and ourselves, bridging
> gaps of miscomprehension around and within us will serve
> eventual user rehabilitation and that 'revolution' of
> electronic media technology. This will depend on the wil-
> lingness, patience and perserverance of media activists." -
> Woodstock Community Video, in "Radical Software."

KEN MARSH: My head starts moving in realms of the theoretical,
which happened a lot in terms of being in New York City. The
possibilities in Woodstock are more real, I think. The initial
ideas that were involved in People's Video Theater were community
video oriented. We
had six objectives, which one way or another said: service of
community, with a studio program providing the means for
advertising all that stuff. But it never got off the ground in New
York becauseJUD: Because there are only limited communities there.
KEN: At least, they're not geographical- but in Woodstock it's
become very possible.
JUD: There's much more of a sense of community here.

KEN: Yes, but it seems to be primarily a geographical definition
that defines the community- maybe it's just a way of dealing with
communication, limiting it to the hardware
JUD: All those words that share the same root: commune,
community, *communications*. How do your getting involved in
video start?
KEN: That was with David Cort. He was the director of something called
Operation Discovery, a kind of community cultural enrichment program,
tha came out of the Brooklyn Museum, and then he broke away and got
community support. I came along to work with him the summer before we
got into video, with a small artists' grant to work with kids. They had
a small budget, which was silly in a way because I got one of the
largest grants for working with five kids for six weeks- I got
something like $600, which was on of the larger grants, and was
supposed to include supplies and everything. I had been into light

The program was only summertime, and we started working with a
group of black artists to develop a stronger base in the community
to get more money. We had some from the City Parks Department and we
hit on the Mayor, and we went to Washington with a large proposal
for a black cultural plant, with all sorts of crafts and arts and
kids' training. Towards the end of that, we met Eric Siegel.
JUD: When was that about?

KEN: Probably the spring of 1968. I forget the actual pretext of
meeting, but we were trying to reach out to artists all over the
city and we ran ad ad in the VILLAGE VOICE about "possible grants to
artist working with kids", and we had a lot of applicants. Sp we met
a lot of people that way. I think that's how we met Eric. Anyway, he
turned us on to video, and we decided to make an effort to get it
working with this black group. We got a show guaranteed at the
Brooklyn Museum in the
new Community Gallery. Because of what we were doing, and other
groups were doing, the pressure was put on them to accomodate the
action, and the group of black artist we were working with got
the first show.
    With those credentialz, some of the people in the Parks
Department talked to the Rockerfeller Fund with a small proposal for a
mobile video unit using community kids, and they came through with
$7500. Eric, at
the time, and he's always concerned with technical things, advised
us to get one inch rather than 1/2 inch equipment; so we did that
and we ended up with this big cumbersome Ampex 1700 and those big
Concord cameras- not very mobile at all, except that you could put
them in a truck and carry them around. So we thought of producing
tapes with some of the black artists, with the kids working with us.
JUD: What kinds of artists were they?

KEN: Some interesting things- there were three groups of artists and
different affiliations had brought them together. One group had a
musseum with an Afro-American name, near Pratt Institute, and they
had a nice backyard there. For a couple of weeks, we invited
artists, both graphic painters and a lot of musicians, including, in
fact, Sun Ra. He came down and rapped with this black woman for an
their work and showing it, and some musical stuff.

Actually, Sun Ra didn't play anything, but some other cats did. Most
of the stuff was shown in that Brooklyn Museum show, in September
1968.

COMMEDIATION

KEN: Someone else who was working with us on the perimeter was Howie
Gutstadt, who's now with People's Video Theater in the city. He was
peripherally working with us, and ran into Frank on the streetJUD:
Frank Gillette, on St. Marks Place?

KEN: Yeah, and we all got together. There was something happening at
the time called the East Village Project which was one of the first
street therapy things- everyone could come in and rap- and this free
clinic type thing was set up by Jewish Family Services. There was
some video there and *Frank* was sort of hanging around doing things.
That was around the time of the St. Marks tapes by Frank and Harvey
Simons.

So, we all got together, and I was leaving the Brooklyn scene, and
David was ready to leave the Brooklyn scene, and we had reached the
point where we felt the blacks should do it, since we had become, as
I got to feel, an advocate for someone else's way of life.

Anyway, we got together, and through Nanine Bilski, who used__to work
for an industrial program developer, and is now with the New York State
Council (Beryl Korot used to be her assistant) working in special
projects. She was interested in the whole cultural thing, and of course
in video, so she really put together what became the reason for working
together, which was a job. That was for the Center of Urban Education
during the fall school strike of 1968. (These tapes were of the school
decentralization crisis around the Oceanhill-Brownsville school dis-
trict. NOTE.) This program was put together, to send artists into some
ghetto schools in Brooklyn, to teach whatever they do, at a good time
because the strike was on and yet classes were still being held. So
that was COMMEDIATION. The people who made up COM:+7EDIATION were
Harvey Simons, Howie Gutstadt, Frank Gillette, David Cort, and myself,
with Paul Ryan on the periphery. Vic Goscia related to it also; he saw
the potential of using a group like us with the Village Project and
other things he was getting into; he's still at Roosevelt Hospital. But
that never came off.

JUD: That led to the video magazine idea?

KEN: What really r-ot to it first was when People's Video Theater opened. In terms of what we wanted to do as the group COMMEDIATION, we talked about started to put out products- tape packages- that idea of a video magazine, taking the idea of translating the format of a print magazine, with columns and features and advertising. It was an idea that emerged in a lot of people's heads, because it is the nature of videotape that it can't be that topical- so a magazine rather than a newspaper idea.

So we did try this travelogue on New York, with a piece that David did on Orchard Street, about a ten minute segment, of some old fish man, talking about now Orchard Street was; and Howie and I did a sort of vis

ual abstraction of the Brooklyn Bridge, playing around with mirrors in front of the lens; and another piece was done on the Clositers, I think that was finished, that Frank and David worked on. We showed this all to Manhattan Cable at the time, and they politely sloughed us off. They thought they did enough of that stuff on their own. They didn't totally dismiss us but made it obvious that we were in the wrong market place. But, after that, COMI~IEDIATION split up. It lasted about two months, and everyone went their own way. Frank met up with Ira Schneider about then. JUD: And began the Antioch thing that ended in WIPE CYCLE.

KEN: Howie and I were working on other things together, like silkscreens, and David got a job with some outfit doing super market trainign stuff

and put together enough money to get his own 112" equipment, and that took him to Woodstock with the Videofreex. And that's where they've been.

I myself didn't really do *anything* until about the following spring. I met Thea Sklover, then at Fordham University, also with Paul Ryan. She was in Two Bridges, trying to turn them on to the video possibility, since

it was an experimental school board. It had an interesting hub and she was trying to sell them on a cable package. She had this idea, which may have been in "Radical Software", that if the community could get together, go to the cable company and ask for an installation, and guarantee so many subscriptions, they could in turn demand certain things, like a studio, and that the school be wired up. So I worked with her on a sample tape, to show around the community.

Then, an interesting trip that summer- a couple who had spent five

rent equipment using my loft. We had people up, getting into social
raps with the tape running, and he was always playing provacateur,
stirring things up in a very kind of sexual way, towards an orgy by
the end of the night. So that was a funny trip. Like all video
tripsmy video trips.

The next thing was back in the Two Bridges area, but with Nanine
Bilski, who wanted to give a workshop to kids on video. So we did
this short run thing, three weeks, with kids in the classroom. We
played
some video games, trying to use the camera as a sort of hot seat,
where kids moved around chairs and when they got in-front of the
camera, they had to act something out. It worked well with the kids,
aged 8 to 12. And then we got them to do their own news thing, which
Raindance got into also, but here they sort of made up the stuff.
There was a racecar drive, a report on a blimp going over- silly
little things. A nice experience with kids.

PEOPLEfS VIDEO THEATER

KEN: The next thing was again a long lapse, as far as immediately being
with video, and then I got together with Elliott Glass, who had been to
one of the summer sessions and gotten truned on to video. He was-a Span-
ish instructor out in Queensboro College. He got money together by the
Christmas 1969, bought equipment and started using it in school. He was

going out to El Barrio, taping it and bringing these tapes back to the

class; and then the Department got a little uptight and asked him not to
do it, so his equipment was laying around doing nothing. Summer was
coming on, and he would be free, so that's when People's Video Theater
was formed, and that was June of 1970. And we got dragged into the big
New York State grant battle. (Laughter) In the summer there, and we got
supported- we all got rewarded.
JUD: How did People's Video Theater basically function?
KEN: There were two people:
We went out shooting magazine type of thing, and we really chose the
name to the our minds, our intent- the idea of theater.
We felt show what was showplace- we needed a place, and right off the
bat, it should be showplace. There was just the idea of producing and
the market place was one and the same.

      First, we tried to go four days a weel, Thursday through Sunday.
We opened up from 6 to 11 P.M. just any day, free-flowing, for the
first couple of weekends anyway. Then we decided it was silly- we
shoulc be asking people to give something, so we did, starting at a
dollar. By September it went up to $1,50. There were occasions where
we asked more for a special thing. After the first magazine, when we
got into it, we started covering things happening. I guess, for our
aesthetic and political sense of the time, this was what was
happening in the streets. And we got involved with the Young Lords,
partly because of Elliott's spanish *thing* and that interest in the
political and activist thing- with good demonstrations and marches on
the street. So we did a lot of that, and got involved with Gay Lib,
Women's Lib, the Puerto Ricans- all that liber stuff.

      One of our most heartfelt first statements was that people
are part of the *information*. We felt that going out on the
street, asking people and getting them to be THE people on
television, rather than always relating to the television and the
people on it as something special, as some unique group. Break
that down by saying "you're the information."
JUD: Breaking down the TV structure.

 KEN: If we were going to be something different, it had to be that-
the other way around. We also had these video polls- did two or three
of them. The first one was: "Do you think the US should get out of
Southeast Asia?" We parked ourselves in front of Bloomingdale's, and
we got pushed around, yelled at a few times. But most people stopped
and said what they thought. What I was saying before about Woodstock,
that kind of geographical limitation really expedites all this-
because the same people you got to shoot are really going to see
themselves. In New York, in front of Bloomingdale's, we're going to
show this stuff in a loft on Sixth Avenue with very little
advertising. And I don't think any of those people ever saw
themselves.
      We also did a business survey on 14th Street, preparing
questionnaires, one for shoppers and one for merchants. We went out
and questionned them both and asked them to come around the corner
to our loft. We took one block on 14th between Fifth and Sixth
Avenues- to come around the corner and look at these things, and one
merchant showed upno one else. Some Israeli merchant wanted to see
himself- he brought a couple of his friends. So we took it out on

She had that grant to document what people using tape were doing. She came along with us and we went out to play that business survey back- and that worked nicely. But, then again, very few businessmen stepped away from their business and looked- I can't remember any of them who saw themselves. So the whole thing was good in principle, but wasn't working in that city context.

Up here, in Woodstock, we got together and did this thing with Bob Dacey around the elections. We asked the candidates to give us a minute or so, then showed in on street and got reactions. In fact, one of the candidates who didn't participate, about a month or so later, said he was really sorry he didn't go along with us- he really thinks it made a.difference.
JUD: Did he get elected?

KEN: No, he didn't. Actually, two of the other guys who didn't go along with us got elected. Well, we didn't reach that many people, on the streets.
JUD: With video monitors on the garbage cans, turned-over garbage cans. BOB DACEY: Our alternative to cablevision. Closed circuit TV on the stree JUD: Where did you place those?
KEN: In the supermarker, the Grand Union; that was a good one. On the street in front of the hardware store, infront of the leather shop
and once at the Expresso Shop- we just used there patio there, not inside JUD: Patiovision.
KEN: That was the day of the elction that we showed
there. JUD: That's not too far from the polls.
KEN: No, right. About 115 feet. We were
electioneering. JUD: For everybody.
KEN: Right. Except the three who wouldn't, two of whom won.

So, one lasttrip with People's Video Theater was with the Indians. We got a hot tip- somebody said the American Indians were going to be demonstrating up at Plymouth Rock on Thanksgiving, so we went up there, as a lark, and a way to get out of the city. And they pulled off a real nice action. At Plymouth Rock where there is a good energy. They weren't violent or disruptive. They were trying to

make a point. They talk about the Indian way, and I really learned what
an Indian way is in terms of those things. A person who would go to
bury a rock, say a prayer, yell that "another Hitler is coming" and
then go take over the ship. And when the cops come, they just walk off.
They're done- they've made their point.
JUD: Any particular tribe?

KEN: This was mixed tribes. In fact, at that time, this one of the
first cross country actions, because the guys from Alcatraz were there,
and the group based in Milwaukee, the American Insian Movement, AIM.
Even the more conservative Northeastern group- there are some very
highly placed Indians in the Northeast- who were insulted by the Gov-
ernor in Bosotn were participating too.
Another thing that happened, the Plymouth Plantation, a sort of
Disneyland Plymouthtown in the area, had invited some 250 Indians be-
cause it was the 250th anniversary, and were asked "what if 500 In
dians come." They siad, well, this is only the 250th anniversary. So
the Indians went there with 500, came in and sat down. And when these
people dressed as pilgrims put out all these turkies and beautiful
food, the Indians walked out, saying "We're having our dinner, let's
go." A couple of the more radical ones turned over a table and stuck
a knife through one of the turkies. What was nice in the whole exper

ience was that we could connect with them. They saw us and what we were
doing and said "Hey, stay with us. Our next move is to the Plymouth
Plantation." So we went with them and got that scene. The lighting was
bad, so it's weak, but we got it. It was really heartrending to see
this woman empty this one overturned table, and people just shaking
their heads. And then the Indians had this conference at their own
dinner. So we talked to some of them, and got a little rap from the guy
from A1catraz- beautiful, articulate people with a sense of what
they're into.

        So we ran a couple of specials on that at our theater back in
New York a couple of weeks later. We threw together about an hour
edit. The first night we got a hold of some of the Indians in New
York through someone, and about 15 Indians were there- that was nice.
We tried something like that with the Young Lords on the jails.

        We had these, as we called them, video forums. Part of our thing
was that a live forum was part of our show, in the idea of having a
theater, a place to show. We came up with always wanting to have aud

talk with people.

JUD: Put it on tape. Did you monitor it at the same time?

KEN: Most of the time we played it back after. People who came
really dug the whole experience, but some were in a sense rightfully
critical of our handling of the information, not so much in content,
but with editing. We were handcutting tape, and that was murder, and
we couldn't do too much of it either.
JUD: That was all on the old Sony CV equipment?

KEN: Yeah, we didn't get an AV unit until the following January of
1971. That fortunately happened because we got a job. It was one of
those elementary supplementary education programs, with money
administered
by the Board of Education. It was supplementary educational programs,
ar they had something like ten programs, and this was an umbrella
administration that kept the groups together and helped each one. It
was called Umbrella Four- there wer apparently six umbrellas in New
York City. They would only relate to geographical areas and they
would overlap. They were coming up for new monies and though of
putting together a videotape, rather than any other presentation.
They called us, Raindance and Global Village, and we all did our
thing. I think Raindance didn't want to do it- they didn't go down;
and Global Village tried. Anyway, we got the job which brought in
enough money to go AV. **That was an** interesting job too. The whole
videotape trip, at least for me, is gettinE intimate with people and
going on their trip- the whole documenting process, the witnessing
process.
JUD: The empathy bit.

KEN: Yes, but sometimes that's hard though, because it's demanding.
Like we were dealing with eleven different programs, with eleven
had some heavy tests, and after about three months, they found he
had diabetes, and told him to get out of the East, get his health
back and to go Southwest and cool it. This took him out of it, out
of People's Video Theater.
    Money was beginning to come down from the State Council. Elaine
Milosh had just come into the scene about that January, so she was

a lot with me. It was she and I with Elliott going further and
further away. Howie Gutstadt had been working with Elliott and I,
and after
a little conflict split off, but with this new money coming in, we
had the potential of really expanding. Howie and a couple of people
recently got together- a lot of them tend to start more or less a
commune- there was that kind of thinking there. It would have turned
out that way if it had gone all the way. It was tighter than just a
working group. Which just didn't work out, not at all- but it was
people using the same resources.
JUD: Not necessarily living together.

KEN: Yes, in a sense. We had a country house not too far from here.
That was for weekends. In my mind there was that sort of intention
eventually- the work was going to be the basic nucleus motive.
Maybe that's why it broke down, because other demands were being
expressed too. Or not expressed, but felt. But in that process,
anyway, we did get this house up in Westkill and started to work in
this area. We weren't necessarily thinking of Woodstock
specifically, until we got up here and spent some time. Then,
Elaine and I really latched on to that idea, and Howie and Ben
Levine are the other two who are left. They're still really into
the city thing. Howie's on very much of a health trip, and Ben had
just gotten to the city, hadn't spent much time there, so he's
still excited about it. He'd been on a boat in the Caribbean,
originally from Boston, and he came to New York; he's a
psychologist. The history of the movement compiled in Michael Sham-
berg's book GUERILLA TELEVISION, these little note things, spell it
WOODSTOCK COMMUNITY VIDEO

"WCV is a public enterprise capable of providing the town with
community message-making facilities via closed-circuit equipment on
the streets and in meeting places and with cable the expertise and
programming for a Woodstock Community Channel. WCV can provide low-
cost advertising for local businesses. WCV can be a way for sponsors
to support low-cost production of programs for schools, churches,
social groups, etc ... WCV can market valuable Woodstock information
to other

> community cable channels throughout the country and abroad.
> WCV can be an economically self-sustaining enterprise brin-
> ging 21st Century media potentials to Woodstock."
> - WOODSTOCK COPf.MUNITY VIDEO, in RADICAL

SORTWARE. JUD: Woodstock.

ELAINE: An epic poem.

KEN: Where we all are now. Woodstock was a little bit of a problem at

first; it was getting out of New York so the beginning was half being
reborn, half dying. There's a point between, where you're half and
half. It was a strain to get out of New York, I mean,our funds weren't
that great that this whole separate thing could go on.

The first thing Elaine and I did was trying to *connect* with
this group thing, Family in Woodstock. They asked us to run a video
workshop, so we did- it ran once a week for four or five sessions.
That's
how we met Bob Dacey. We were doing some music things with them,
and they said, "Oh, we have this audio engineer." So, for the
workshops, we made a training tape on how to use the equipment,
and showed it. I think we showed it that first day.

BOB DACEY: In fact, I walked into Family one day, into Ken's
workshop where that tape was showing, and I was so impressed with
that, thinking "someone's one the ball here." And he offered anyone
who wanted to use the equipment to use it, if they had anything in
mind to do. So I kept that in the back of my mind. The next day I
was talking to Billy Fair, about three weeks before the elections in
Woodstock, and Billy said, "What are you doing politically?" I said:
"I don't know. I don't even know who the politicians are. In fact, I
don't care. What do I do?"
And he said, "Talk to people." I thought in the back of my mind, that's
all I've been doing, talking to people, and anybody who has any legal
right to do anything never seems to do what you wanted them to do any-
way. But, after seeing Ken's workshop, I said: "I know, I'll videotape
the whole gand of them, all the politicians, the Republicans, the Demo-
crats and the Independents. Billy said, "Let's Just do the
Independents." Personally, I figured the Democrats haven't had a chance
here in forty years, so maybe I can at least get the Democrats down. So.
I went to
Ken and he said, "Let's do the Republicans too." A couple of days
later, we got permission from the Democrats and Independents to tape

on anything. To talk things over took us a week or two.

KEN: It took a public meeting. We went to one, and during the questionning period, the last question was "Why won't the Republicans participate?"

BOB: We told them we had the Democrats and the Independents, and they hemmed and haed around and conceded eventually. Now after we had videotaped them, I said "where do you we show it?"- the next question.Then the idea came to throw it on a grabage can and have it centrally located in town, which drew a lot people to look at it.

JUD: First, out of

curiosity. BOB: Then it

snowballed.

KEN: We started talking to them to and taping it.

BOB: We got people's reactions, and we came up with a very comprehensive study of the political system and row people really felt about it.

 Of course, we realized we couldn't do it an a garbage can all year, because it gets too cold to stand outside and watch. After the outdoor locations, we had to get indoors, so Ron Merians who owned the Joyous Lake Restaurant in town gave us a little spot. Since then, the town has been dictating to us that they'd really like their own TV station, along with us planting the idea that it would be a better community, and a better communication device to tighten up, a small.community. We're now trying to fugyre out ways to fund this thing, through the state, or the town, or perhaps the merchants.

KEN: The cable system here now has about 1000 subscribers and is part of Kingston Cabelevision, owned by NBC. NBC is not supposed to own it, under present FCC rulings, though they could be changed. The service we get in Woodstock is not the same as in Kingston, even though it's the same system. They can't get over the hill, so they built a separate antenna in town on Mean 1"lountain. You get all the New York stations and Channel 3 out of Hartford, connecticut. We don't get any of their local programming from Kingston. Bob and I want to get this whole town turned on to the potential of cable. We've written a pamphlet we get around as much as we can, and we've started shows at the Woodstock Artists Association which, in my mind, demonstrates the use of the medium for the public in terms of local issues. **There are** twelve done so far- one night a week.

    The first night we're dealing with community video cable, with

 that's a rap with the program director of the cable company, and
 there will be about an hour of tape. I also asked Tom 0' Keefe, the
 station manger, and this Mike fisher, to come that night, and we'll
 make a special effort to get the town council people there. After we
 show the tape, we'll turn the camera around- again this live forum
 idea- and get a public meeting with all the principals involved.
 We've been editing and re-editing the political piece, to about
 twenty minutes.

     We're also doing a storefront theater that was donated by Ron and
Valma Merians. Once we got donw with the election, we wanted to keep
the energy going, so we got the storefront and went and taped with
the Family and reports from the Town Clerk

BOB: The store dealt with, how can we encompass the community and one
way to do that was to have three monitors there. One is called SCOOP-
SCOPE which deals with any scoop you have, you lost the cat, you're
selling your car, you lost your husband, or whatever- you could come
and rap on tape for SCOOPSCOPE; another monitor is NEGA-POSI-TUBE
which deals with the social, ecological talk show show issue thing;
and the third monitor is CHANNEL ARTS which takes care of the artistic
community.
JUD: That was the Third Programme.

monitors going but, in reality, it ended up that we were producing
about
a half hour of tape a week, so we had one monitor with various program
types together. We got into the Free Store which another Family thing.
 But the problem is getting people to decide which tape to watch. BOB:
 It's either cablevision or garbage can video. Our original idea was to
 have a walkin situation like a Newshop, which would be a video
 newspaper, with different programs, and we still envision that if we
 get cablevision. This is a town with many people in transit and it
 could tighten up communication with people who come here, where they
 can go swimming, where they can sleep, where are the motels, and other
 general information that we could service. In spring, we'd like a
 store right in the middle of town where people can walk off the
 street, and we may still keep the three monitor idea. Also, any
 visitors who come here with portapaks would be happy to show, because

KEN: w'e're making the software. One idea with the cable is perhaps we can get a kickback from the cableowners on the subscriptions, perhaps $1.50 per subscriber per month, and that could be sizable; and the other thing would be to get advertising, even in the Newshop idea, with all the people coming in, for vital information and merchant's ***information,*** which when you're new to a town are the same thing, so those are ads. JUD: Could they possibly transmit form the antenna here? KEN: They don't have a headend in town; it's master cable, that's all it is now. You need just a few amplifiers for a headend, and it depends where you locate your headend studio. We'd like to have it in the Town Hall; that means two amplifiers up to that headend point, and then distribution amplifiers come down.

BOB: We're about a mile and a half from the ***antenna*** if we decide to out a headend studio in town. We'd need a mile and a half of cable.

KEN: We're trying to make a real proposal to the town, because the Town Council should get involved. Apparently, we heard that the present cable franchise is going to up next year. We'd like to get something sooner, by making a pitch to NBC and Kingston Cablevision. We would probably
need extra money. The pitch has to made that they should set up the headend and pay at least 50 cents back to WCV as the program directors of the community channel that they could add to the system. From there, we'd pick it up. If they don't want to pay for the headend- we got some figures on that and it's about $15,000- maybe that's where private money could come in. What we're really talking about is a funny kind of social transition, the question here, from free TV to Pay TV. It has to be Pay TV, if people are going to get what they want, and be able to participate. JUD: A viewer sponsorship concept.

BOB: A town like this is a classic example of small communities across the United States. The governemtn can't handle it anymore, and small communities are getting bigger. The population is doubling every ten years. It also happens to be an artistic community, and if anyone should get their communications together, it should be them, and perhaps we can show other communities how to do it, through our own experiment.
KEN; The transition from free to pay TV is poised on some realistic precipice. It could happen, but the problem of running something like that is a whole new area- the maintenance, the regularity, the delivery. If you think of programminS three to five hours a day, it ends up being 20

to 25 hours a week. That's a lot of progra:ning, so perhaps that's why

you repeat things.

BOB: What's nice about an area like this is that a rock group can come
in and play. We can always bail: out along the line. If we're missing
a program, a group can come in and wail. A lot of people have
certainly offered their services once it's a reality, and they'll come
walking in, someone with a puppet show, a doctor talking on the VD
problem intown, and I'm sure a lot of people would use up on it when

> "For us, the video programmer, once pursuing the allusions
> of our rhetoric about alternate media ideals, the task has
> now become tedious, sometimes monotonous, but always and
> consistently satisfying. Day-to-day programming is not the
> sort of thing conceived by rhetoricians. Weekly taped
> programming is no celebrated task for media revolutionaries.
> The only models to look to for direction are the
> rhetorically defined enemythe networks- who also are the
> models for the audience. The changes seem more in the
> revolutionary than in the establishr.:ent. " - WOODSTOCK
> CObUY1UNITY VIDEO, in RADICAL SOFTWARE.

KEN: Hopefully, one could book up the time a lot. A great many
artists would be interested. There's almost an ego sense about
Woodstock

JUD: It's a community of individuals. KEN: That's a good way to
express it. JUD: Even the straight people are very individualists,
in the classic American entrepreneur style.

KEN: A number of the straight people are IBMers. There are old
Huguenot Dutch who have been here for generations.

JUD: Some are landed aristocracy, in a sense. And then you have the
arts and crafts and the fine arts syndromes, with the original
splintering between original Byrdcliffe group and the Maverick
artists colony.

BOB: I heard that Herbie White had a falling out with Peter
Whitehead's wife after they'd been here about a year, and built all
those fantastic million dollar buildings on Byrdcliffe to house
artist and craft centers So when Herbie got pissed off, he went down
the mountain to Maverick Road and brought all the artists with him
and they built their own houses, little shacks and cabins on dirt
roads, and that's where the Woodstock artists community actually got

We're not so far away in this town from having its own TV and
radio stations.

JUD: Have you put any of the alternate health and spiritual
trips up here on video?

KEN: In my mind, one has to use categories in a very general way,
saying, for examply, Health issues rather than getting into any par-
ticular youth culture trips. Let it embrace more. I'd like to get it
in a way where more people could view it less threateningly that some
of the social attachments some of these things have, for both old and
young. We we're talking about health, we'll go to the health food
stores and we'll also talk to the most conservative Republican
doctor- I mean, it's the sam sphere. We'd see the fabric of the
community, programming th issue of the way the community is built- a
self-defining process.
BOB: People move up here for many reasons. For artists, they
isolate themselves to work; others come up for their health. As a
result, the thing is like a vortex, which can obviously show up on
video, perhaps better than a newspaper. We can express the feeling
of the community. KEN: Like the thing we did with Ken'd Esso, a
local mechanic, who's thought of very highly because he's
reasonable and honest. He's a local resource for how to live with a
car.
BOB: "How to Winterize Your Car" is a program we did with him.

KEB: All the things everyone is, the roles they've elected to play,
and the things they are just as people; these are all resources for
somebody else. This is talking about the non-material exchange that
people dothe data thing. Family is a real work group in that whole
concept.
BOB: One thing we did with Family was when this lady from New Faltz
can up to explain how to get the food stamp program and how to
apply. KEN: The person-to-oerson contact, which Family is doing, is
limited, so again video comes into that, probably extending people
further than they can go. it puts a little pressure on the
confrontation, which is good.

BOB: There's also a Town Board meeting and we videotape so people
who couldn't make see it the same day.

KEN: It would be nice to have a community talk show. what really
turned me on was the variety of people running for office, like this
old Republican judge, who had been school principal, and people tell

policeman, all while he's a ,judge.

KEN: There are all *kinds* of stories like that. There was Alfie, our
town idiot savant

 BOB: He's not the town idiot, he's a town problem, but he's a poet
 who tends to get out of hand occasionally.
 KEN: But he ran for office too as a write-in candidate.

 BOB: We're always bailing him once a week from ,jail, for drunkeness.
 He's very talent; he can take on another character; he's an actor.
 KEN: And another polarity is the IBM people, 40ish, 50ish executives
 who are active in the community- like the Town Supervisor. And
 Underhill the local cleaner owner, the one small business in town
 that's polluting the creek. He lost the election. And John Gardner,
 who's Albert Grossman's head audio engineer. He won. He's on the Town
 Council.
 BOB: In fact, two Democrats *won in* the election for the first time
 in fifteen years.

 KEN: Another who won *in* Ken Sweeney, the Justice of the Peace, who
 owns a business called Simulates which makes plastic models for
 nurses to study, gruesome woulnds and stuff.
BOB: The intention with WCV is to, for example, videotape a day in the
life of a fireman, a day in the life of a policeman, to get a
comprehensive look at a community.

KEN: They're not really police; it's a second class town. They're a
constabulary. But they're really nice, really open. They have a
(NOTE: Vay 18, 1972, Kingston Cablevision confirmed "the noncommercial
use on a non-exclusive basis of an unused *channel* of *Kingston*
Cablevision's Woodstock CATV system for the presentation of programming
produced by Woodstock Community Video. "The above agreement with
Kingston Cablevision marked a first in this town. On May 29, 1972 the
first 2 hour program went out to some 1800 cabled homes. Every week
about 2 hours of locally produced documentaries about the town can be
seen on Wednesday nights from 7:30 to 9•30." WCV- in **RADICAL SOFTWARE.**

DOUG DAVIS: Open A channel For Every Mind

> "Open a channel for every mind.
> Let every mind communicate with
> every other mind. Let
> the communication be visual and
> sensory as well as aural and
> written. Expand sight and site.
> Create the world/universal mind."
> - DOUG DAVIS for the ELECTRONIC HOKKADIM I.

DOUG DAVIS: I remember my experiences with early television when there was Captain Video, and on another channel you could get Kukla, Fran and Ollie, and that was big competition. I remember when I was in college, to make some money, I worked for a surveying team that was surveying viewers on the audience ratings, and I was a great fan of Kukla, Fran and Ollie, and I hated Tom Corbett, Space Cadet and Captain Video, so I put down extra marks for Kukla, Fran and Ollie, and I falsifies; I lied, sir. In hindsight, I can see that I did the wrong thing, but at that time (Laughter) the pressure was such that I wanted Kukla, Fran and Ollie to win. I was a bit overzealous, so I added votes and Kukla, Fran and Ollie stayed on the air.
JUD: And Tom Corbett folded?

DOUG: I can't remember. Tom Corbett was actually a better show than Captain Video; everybody remembered Captain Video because of the name. They would do Captain Video live on the set, and Captain Video would say: "We must go to Mars; into the rocket, men," and there would be a long pause while you were waiting for them to get the film looping, the same film of the rocket out in space which you would see wherever they would go.
THE ELECTRONIC HOKKADIM

DOUG: Anyway, when I did the Electronic Hokkadim (NOTE: at the Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C. on June 12, 1971.) I had a very simple idea of what participation involved, and there were also many reasons for it being simple; one of the main ones was practical. It's very difficult to find a television station that would do it; also, I had a lot of social and political idealism at the time, and I had the feeling that if I didn't do it in prime time, in a very big way, that I couldn't really change the structure.

I had a notion that I could change the television structure, very
naive, you know. And that wasn't easy. It took years to find a tele-
vision station; I just didn't want to do it on public television which
didn't have a very big audience at that time. Now it does but it's

been only three years since, but in that three years it's changed a

lot. And I didn't want to do it on cable, or in any small way because I

thought I thought that the idea of viewer participation in a TV

program, if it could be done in a large way and the *notion* of it

disseminated all over the world, that that would really change people's

ideas about what television could be. Having that wish in mind meant

that the participation had to be very simple because I wouldn't have

that much time on the air; you can't be on prime time on a major TV

station for very long, and it wasn't so much the problem of

communicating with the viewers and getting them to join in any complex

or difficult way, but it was the problem of *convincing* the people who

had control over the TV station; that people could be relied upon to

understand and join in a complex participation scheme. Because the

broadcasters don't believe that and, in one way or another, like all

television people, they're absolutely convinced of the stupidity of the

audience.
      So right away, I was limited. They wouldn't let me get to the
viewers in anything other than a simple way, and the simple way proved
to be phoning in sounds, to make the song of the city. Another reason
why it was simple was that, I guess, I had very simple notions about it
too, that somehow or another it didn't matter what people did as long
as they did it together. So it was a combination of where my head was
and also the restrictions placed upon me by the TV station, and by my
naive desire to really change things, to make big structural changes.

      And so, we did this thing. The really beautiful part of it was

the way the viewers responded; it was just amazing. I still have the

tapes, of all the different sounds and all the different things that

people chanted, the noises they made, and putting their pets on, and

their children; it's unbelievable, how imaginative it was and how they

understood exactly what it was about, with not very much told to them.

We began about two or three days before the program with these 15 to

30 minute spots which simply said "Electronic Hokkadim, Saturday

Night, 8:30 PM, add your sound to the song of the city" for a long

time that was all you saw, and there was press the day before, and the

day before we began flashing the telephone number because it was only

then that

DAVID

we had the number. And the phones started *ringing* and these beautiful,
beautiful sounds came in. Right away they all understood it; you could
tell from listening to the sounds; old people, middle-aged people,
kidsand it really gave the lie to all that the television people were
saying. that only a few people would understand, the university people,
the
art world people, all that shit they always say to you. The General
Manager of the station had a saying, which he kept saying to me: "I
want to improve your program so lots of people will like it" and I
said: "Like, you're killing the idea" and he said "You don't
understand the difference between masturbation and copulation- I
don't like sitting alone by myself and *masturbating,* and that's what
you're really into, and you want a few of your friends to come in
and masturbate with you; but I want to have other people around and
I want to fuck." That's what he said, in fact, he kept saying that;
it was one of his favorite metaphors, because we went through lots
of meetings with him, and he kept charging me with that.

So they changed the script about five minutes before we went on
the air, and did just unbelievable things. It was the end of my naiv-
iety about television, about being able to change political and soc
ial strictures. I realized that you can't do it that way. But, I felt
from the *beginning* that you could count on the people, I could count
on the viewers, not absolutely sure, but *listening* to those sounds I
realized that people are really much further out then even they
realized And that led to the TALK-OUT **because the** Hokkadim made me
feel that if you gave people more of a chance to talk, more time, and
get to them in a deeper way, you'd get a new kind of participation, a
deper and more meaningful dialogue. Hokkadim really changed
everything; it was the most traumatic thing I've ever been through,
and I can't tell you how awful it was for me. It was six months before
I even physically got over it, and the worst thing is that no one
understood how awful it was; even today. some of the people who went
through it with me, said it was such a great thing, "you managed to
get on the air, you actually had a two-way thing, you got prime time;
what are you *complaining* about?" Very few people understand how much I
hated what happened, and how it has changed everything I've done since
the Hokkadim, which is all very different from anything I did before,

DOUG: I can't remember when I started to think that television would be the medium for something I could work in, but it somewhere around to late 60s to very early 70s, but one of the first thought I had was about making television a participative medium, and that came out of the *happening* events, all those things I did in Washington in the mid-late 60s. It was the first thing I thought of; I didn't think of the television set as a place to make pretty pictures, but how could I use it as a link between viewers and myself. It was how to make the television set active; how could one, make a live experience in which people would join. And, once having thought of that, it was trying to find a television station that would help, or *finding* a museum that would help because I knew a museum would be one of the few who could persuade a.television station. So it was really that simple, and to do it a big was, to actually confront the structure and change it. Very naive.

> "MANIFESTO FOR A NEW TELEVISION: The world's first participative telecast live while it is *happening* the viewers create what they watch and hear at home.
> People phone in any sounds they wish to make: shout sing **grunt growl** whistle play an *instrument* talk at the TV studio children drench live camera picture of operators taking all the calls with colors of their own choosing at the museum. Artists and public make live electronic images on Paik-Abe and Eric Siegel video synthesizers. At first each sound and image takes over the screen by itself. Slowly they are mixed together. At the end the city makes what it sees. Electronics revives the participative music of ancient Africa."
> - DOUG DAVIS on the ELECTRONIC HOKKADIM I.

THE EARLY HAPPENING EVENTS

JUD: Describe the early *happening* events.

DOUG: God) there were so many of them. It dates back to Rutgers when Allan Kaprow was there. I was living in *Washington,* and it was a very dead scene, like being out in the provinces. I wanted to change the scene, and I didn't have any notions of being an artist, of making any events or happenings myself at all, but I knew Allan, and I thought of bringing him to *Washington* and getting him involved in some kind of

event, and got everybody there, that it might change things. So, in order make something happen, I created an event that I decided to dedicate to Allan, that he would come down and be in it, and hopefully that would change people. And that's what happened; there were a lot of people involved in it, as many as possible; it took place all over the city, with friends in it, and other artists, but it turned out that the person who was changed the most was me. I didn't change anybody else; I changed myself. It was very complicated and took place over several days all over the city, and ended very late at night with a flare event in 5 or 6 different parts of the city, and there was a lot of silence involved in it. A swimming pool event was structured into it, with people falling into the pool. (NOTE: SWIMQUIP: A Week-long happening, Washington, D.C., July 15, 1967.)

And I kept doing pieces after that, and there was a group of about five or six artists in Washington who all sort worked together and did things together, Juan Downey was part of that, and Ed McGowin, the Berkowitz' from time to time, and Jim HarithasJUD: When he was at the Corcoran.

DOUG: Yes. We did so many things. Gene Davis was involved. The last event before I left Washington was kind of related to television. It was call GIVEAWAY (NOTE: Washington D.C., May 22, 1969). It was an event whereby Ed McGowin, Gene Davis and I made fifty paintings; we took one of Gene's paintings and made fifty copies, whatever they were, I don't know if they were copies or not, and held a big lottery in the Grand Ballroom of the Mayflower Hotel. And all the paintings were up there, and they were given away, 5o Gene Davis Paintings, absolutely beautiful paintings; they were better than the original, 6 by 6 feet, on stretchers. Incredible, a thousand people there, black-tie, a mindblowing event, and nobody could figure out whether they were Gene Davis paintings or what they were. We were very happy about that, because that was the intent of it all, to confuse the whole idea of art, and what
a signature is, and what is the relationship between the work of art and the name.

"What is obvious about this Event is that it celebrates the end of one era in Washington art and the beginning of another. Beyond that the meanings fragment, like color in a prism, depending on the perceptions brought to it. There are at

> least three possibilities: a free Gene Davis is priceless;
> the acts of conception, selection, and reproduction are
> equal to the first act of making; a painting, since it is
> now being given away, like a free balloon, really is an
> object, and ought to take an appropriate form; conversely,
> we are free now not only to return to expressionism but to
> landscape and portraiture; art is common, rather than
> individual property; the **entire Event, from its origin** in a
> chance kitchen conversation to now approaches both art and
> ritual, by formalizing life. This last is more than a
> possibility to me: it is real; it is why I join in giving
> Gene Davis away." - DOUGLAS M. DAVIS.

DOUG: We all made statements in connection with it. The sentence which
I like a lot: "It's common, not individual property" relates to video
obviously too, because video is about dissemination, no one owning it.
Videotape is almost an organic thing. Dealers have great trouble with
videotapes. It's very easy to copy. There's no way you can tie it down
to personal property. The moment I heard about videotape and had a
camer in my hands, it was almost as much thinking about that
dissemination possibility, and the immediacy thing about it, rather
than any actual physical thing. It was much more philosophical or
conceptual. That's what turned me on about video.

    GIVEAWAY was 1969 and I moved to New York in 1969, but my chil-
dren were still in Washington so I spent a lot of time of there, and
as a result of that did an event there in 1970 called LOOK-OUT:, and
the idea was to get people to look out at the world, and it was a 24
hour look-out. We asked the city to look out, and every person to stop
thinking about himself and just look outside of himself, or outside of
his house, or outside into the world; the whole thing was turning
people outside

> "LOOK-OUT lasted for 24 hours and the camera goes ... poking
> into streets and neighborhoods everywhere, outside the mus-
> eum (where the Event only finished, late at night), asking
> people strange questions and receiving stranger answers." -
> DOUGLAS DAVIS.

That was also Earth Year, and it got misinterpreted as an Earth event,
not that that bothered me. I sort of liked that, but it wasn't what I
had in mind. It was OK because it was involved with that notion too

that we're destroying the environment because we're not looking at it. We're not looking at what's happening. When a lot of politicians heard about the event, they sent telegrams in support of it because they thought it was connected with the Earth, McGovern, Muskie, the Mayor of Washington, and once this got out to the city, everybody thought: "Oh, yes, this is an Earth Event." There was just huge participation. At the end of the 24-hour meditation, people were to come to the Museum and bring some symbol or statement of what they'd seen or thought about as a result of that meditation. It just so happened that a friend who has helping me with the event, who I think is very important in

the history of alternate video, although I think unfair things have been said about him, but that's another story, the famous Don West, who had been fired from CBS, he had a CV portable deck and he heard about the event and wanted to be a part of it. So he came to Washington with me and we decided to videotape the event, the first time I really had a camera extensively in my hands for a long time, and we videotaped everything that happened all around the city, leading up to a meditation that night, and the tapes were there in the atrium of the Corcoran while people were coming in. They were on monitors, so people could see what had happened, the course of the meditation during the day, and there was also a monitor showing what was in the atrium at that moment.

I still have an installation photograph with this big canvas and the videotapes hanging in front of it. And after the canvas was made, the next morning when we installed it in the atrium, I felt very strong ly that the videotapes were as much a part of the record as the canvas itself. And another thing I liked about it was that it depicted the making of the canvas so it was a work of art that showed its own creation. Those were the things about video that attracted me; it was never the hardware, though it was there, of course, the portapaks, and beginning to get some access to television stations, but the central thing was the dissemmination and the immediacy. They're still the things that count the most for me about it.

JUD: Describe the making of the canvas.

DOUG: The canvas was treated with a solution, not unlike the solution that Man Ray used to make his canvases photosensitive.

JUD: How was it developed?

DOUG: The canvas was stretched out on the floor of the atrium, and

some brought branches, some flowers, one man brought a silkscreen that said "Peace" *on* it, other people lay *on* the canvas themselves- that was their statement- and these hundreds of objects were spread on top of this photo-sensitive canvas. There were giant are lights from the top of the atrium and around the side, ineffect *standing* for the sun, exposing the area around the objects, but not too precisely, as in a Rayogram. There are all kinds of ways that light gets through and around objects, so it's not a perfect silhouette in any sense, but a very complicated, mysterious silhouette. And they lay there for about two hours to make that exposure. Actually, it probably should have gone on for another hour. We weren't sure; nobody had ever made a photosensitive anything that large before, so we guessed how long it would take. When we washed off the solution, leaving the images imprinted in white against the exposed area, which was dark blue, it was in many cases vague and murky- you couldn't make out exactly what it was- and in other cases, the image printed through very clearly, but it was a beautiful canvas.

I still think it's a beautiful canvas. I have no idea where it is now. The Museum has it up for a couple of weeks longer than I

HELIOGRAPHY

Doug: The slowness of the development made it possible for us to make of a three foot direct print the Sun, because in Arizona, there's a tele scope, near Tucson, which costs millions of dollars, and its **huge design** and machinery is designed to bring a direct image of the sun which is 3 feet in diameter, going underground through a complex of mirrors, to a table deep down in the earth- here's the sun. You can see the sun exactly, sunspots and everything. Sun scientists from all over the world come there to study the sun. And we managed to persuade them to let us come with this process, because they wanted to see if it could be done also, because nobody had ever made a direct print of the sun'd image, you see, because there's no other method of exposure that moves as slowl as this one does.

So we went there with three treated canvases, and the first one we made was a perfect image. None of the others worked out. We guessed that it would take one minute for the exposure time. That's how strong the sun's rays are. It was on display for about a year at the Museum of Science and Techology. I felt at the time very strongly that that the

sun was participating with us in making that canvas. That was about 1971.

JUD: This was a collaboration with whom?

DOUG: Fred Pitts. We did a lot of things. We called that Heliography, and it was mostly Heliography that we collaborated on. But, when I moved to New York, it was much more difficult to collaborate. Slowly, slowly, I got more involved in video, and Fred was in Washington, more interested in Heliography and we just going our own ways.

JUD: What was your next development, post-Heliography? In terms of the electronic media.

DOUG: The work in Heliography ran alongside the beginning of actually working in video. It was one thing I was doing at that time, which was, as the world sees it, I was doing many different things. Inother words, I'was working in Heliography, I was creating events, and I was beginning to work in videotape, and they seem like different things, but they weren't, they were all just ways to work out a certain interest I had at that time which was probably best and most clearly seen as the idea of participation, or the creation of a work that has many sources, or imputs. That was really behind Heliography too, as far as I was concerned. And it was behind the early work in video too. My feelings about media as materials or forms was that they weren't and aren't important, but that they're just ways in which to express a central concern

JUD: Vehicles or channels.

DOUG: Yes. Opening all the channels. Heliography had its basis, or so I felt, in participating with many elements, some of them random, but the final image was always impossible to predict. It would depend on the intensity of the sunlight; it would involve air currents, weather, the shadows of people passing by depending upon where the canvas, the photosensitive object, was. We could never be sure when to stop the exposure. I remember when we made the great sun image that's absolutely crystal clear, perfect, it was our first try, and we made three canvases that day and the other two were absolutely awful. What we found was that we made the first canvas at around 10:15 in the morning. By the time
we washed it off and put it away, saturated another canvas and stretched it down on the table again, it was about 1 o'clock in the afternoon.

JUD: It's one of the largest camera obscuras.

DOUG: Right, though it's hardly obscure. Except in foggy days. But there was that kind of idea in it, which was really interesting to me at that time, which was to make something that involved a great many inputs, not all of which you could control, .and I was much more interested in that whole process than in the final form of anything. So I was delighted that we got the sun image, and that evryone liked it, but that was the least interesting thing for me about going there.

And the same thing of the events, at least in the beginning, was that I was much more interested in the process, in how many people particiapted, whether they really responded to what the event was about, than about the final form of the event. And when I first started working in video, the first idea was to make it work in two ways, which involved bringing in other people's inputs, and when I finally moved into
a television station for the first
time. JUD: At WGBH.

DOUG: Right, the thing I was most interested in was getting together many different kinds of visual inputs, and I really didn't care or think at all about what it would like at the end at all, until we finally got into the control room. So, it was a kind of period, obviously based upon my early meeting--with-Allan Kaprow, and thinking about happenings, and the idea gestating, that came out in all this stuff. I was attracted to the media for certain reasons: conceptual, philosophical, but it had nothing to do with the mechanics or physicality of any of those media, or the final form that would come out of your interaction, and I guess that's a statement that's true of almost everything I did between 1967 and maybe into my first year in New York, after which it ended, which would bring it to about 1971.
ALWAYS IN YOUR MIND

JUD: How would you relate the influence of Kaprow?

the heliography, and various techniques of graphics, had it very strong,

and Allan was really the first person I met or heard of who got me in-terested in a bag of ideas, now pinned pretty accurately and correctly on the Fluxus movement and John Cage. It was through Allan that I thought about all this.

JUD: Any writings or concepts of his in particular?

DOUG: The obvious thing is, a lot of it comes from literature, as
you know. I was a graduate student in English at Rutgers, and was
very interested in Burroughs, hearing about his snipping off bits of
audiotape and building cutups. And certain things in literature I
think of being very much affected by, readings in Existentialism, at
that time. I
don't know how that relates to Allan, but it was there. I always
thought there was something about existentialism which tended to
increase or heighten your value of the present tense, or the immediate
experience. I was reading in Satre, a lot of him, and Camus, nothing
systematic about it, during that time, and it was Allan and what I
learned through the investigations about him that really launched me
with the other think ing and doing about other reading. I was more a
part of the written arts than the visual arts at that time. My thinking
and reading about existentialism, my coming into contact with a body of
ideas we normally associate with fluxus, and what interested me most was
the importance of the present tense which related to Kaprow because of
what he was saying, and what Cage was saying, was that we don't live in
any other time but the present tense, which relates to Eastern thought
and philosophy.
JUD: There are quite of number of Orientals in the Fluxus movement.
DOUG: Yes. And, that every moment is really magic or divine, because
that's the only moment you ever really live in. And so with Kaprow's
happenings; I remember one that took place at Stony Brook on Long Island
which I was in, and it concluded one night with a huge bonfire, an
incredible bonfire with hundreds of students around and everybody
singing, in this wild garbage dump, and people began to make sculptures
out of garbage cans and trash cans and stuff like that- it was just an
amazing moment. And I remember one student said to Allan: "This is
incred ible, but no one will ever know about it; there's no way it can
be reported, we can't put it in a museum, a photograph won't do it, and
it's going to go away, and disappear." And Allan said: "Yes, but it will
always be in your mind."

    There's some kind of link in all that body of ideas, and it has
an effect in the way you think about art, because art has
traditionally,
in the last several hundred years, been identified with permanenece;

not to the present. and the art produced in it tended to re-enforce
that notion. And when I actually began making art, and I think I've
described the origins, it was all together there; how it ended didn't
make any difference. All that counted was a heightned kind of
experience. JUD: How about the process of videotape, and the fact that
we have here one of the most process-oriented arts that we know, and
at the same time we have videotapes? How do you feel about that? It's
a process whic nevertheless sometimes ends up with a product.

DOUG: That is no longer a problem for me. That was a problem when my
head was set back in the way that I described before. I was
frustrated at the time with the the kind of work, but I believed so
much in the underlying ethic though that it didn't bother me. I kept
working at those things, always unhappy with it. After all, it
turned.out that the really clear heliograph was the heliograph I
loved the most and, that after all, when I thought about my various
frustrations, when I thought back on the events, I realized that the
ones I liked the most were the ones that I had made come out right in
the end.

NUMBERS

DOUG: Making NUMBERS was an important part of that process because
when I got into the control room at WGBH, I almost didn't care how it
would work out, the process of making the tape, *gathering* all the
imputs,
but then I found myself really loving going over and over those images
and making them come out right. So that problem I had, and there had
been a problem about video at the time, began to erode and the
conflict wasn't there anymore, that no process is going to work unless
the goal is right. I mean, the means do not justify the ends. It was
necessary that the end be the right kind of end, that the final form
be right, and if that wasn't right, it didn't make any difference how
you got there. So that stopped being a problem.

The only thing I would like to say about that issue, the issue of
th conflict between process and videotape is, that videotape is much
closer to process than most other medis; it's so *instantaneous.* That
made it
easier for me to get into it. But that has actually *nothing* to do
with what I'm working with in video now, I mean, it's important, I
wouldn't still be into it if I didn't feel right about the values
involved, the moral and political values.
JUD: But the real reasons and values are now what?

DOUG: That has to do with another change of mind, because everything that I'm really talking about comes from the inside rather than the outside. The major turning point was doing the ELECTRONIC HOKKADIM, and how I talked about it being so awful.
JUD: We talked about the negative and the positive.

DOUG: There were some positive things. The HOKKADIM came after WGBH; I made NUMBERS in 1970, and the HOKKADIM was 1971, and WGBH was the first time in a television studio. It was just wild, just far out; I loved it, felt like a kid in a candy store, and I loved having all these people around who would do anything that I wanted to do. I said I wanted 300 kids painting numbers out in the parking lot, and we had 300 kids. I said I wanted a computer printout, and they got me a computer. I mean, it was just like a kid with a toy. I'd say to them, look, I want to try to layer images on top of each other, and they'd do it.
I wanted to turn that purple and they'd do it for me. I don't know how to describe it' it was being Merlin or something, the Magician. And there's a lot of exuberance in that piece which comes because it was just wild, and I wanted to do everything that I could think of, get every image I could think of, and put them all together, and I didn't care how they came out- but I thought I didn't care about how they came out, but I really did care. And the whole process of finding out what really made me happy, what really made me fulfilled in making a work, started to gestate at that time and was really heightned by the HOKKADIM trauma, which was a real trauma: what they did with that whole idea of participation, and the layering, and the synergy, they just cheapened it all is what they did. It was a long time before I could even think about trying to do anything like that again

Let me tell you a story which illustrates the frustration of it all. About three months ago, I gave a lecture in Washington and Walter Hopps came, and we were talking about the HOKKADIM, and I said that I knew it was a step in history, or something like that, that it was important to get it done and that 1000's of people had participated in and enjoyed it, but that I still thought that it failed, because it didn't fit together aesthetically. And Walter said to me: "I'm sur-

and shapeless and a mess_,. and corrupted, etc., was that it does
have a relationship, and it does matter how the event ends and how it
is put together; and the simple act of participation, the fact that
5000 people, or that a million come, or that 85% of the people there
seem to be smiling and fulfilled is not enough. That the form's got
to be right, and if the form isn't right, it doesn't make any
difference what the level of participation is. I know this sounds
terribly vague and metaphysical, but the practical effect is that now
I really work my balls off to make things come out right, because it
pleases me to do that,
and you don't want to make anything sloppy, anything that's less than
you best, or do anything that you think is wrong for any reason
aesthetically, because if it's wrong at the core, then it's no good.
JUD: It's the move to perfectionism.

DOUG: Yes. Kids, incidentally, are perfectionists. But it's something
deep in human nature, not anything that's layered on you. It's not
something you get because you're sophistciated; it's like a carpenter in
the woods, or a bricklayer, or anybody who feels good about making it
come out right, and when it comes out right, then everyone is going to
participate in it on the right level. In other words, the kind of
participation that I'm really interested in right now is getting people
to participate in the work that I make, and that can be intellectual,
SEQUENCES and STUDIES IN BLACK AND WHITE VIDEOTAPE

> "SEQUENCES was made with a video camera, equipped with a
> Tivicon tube, extraordinarily sensitive to heat and light,
> which can 'see in the night'- a quality unique to video.
> The performance was a silent ritual- the participants moving
> through the darkness with sources of light of their own cho-
> osing. All the images- sight and sound- were made by those who
> came in the order of their coming. The sound track was im-
> plemented by an Electrocomp Synthesizer." - DOUGLAS DAVIS.

JUD: What was the next stage after the HOKKADIM?

DOUG: There were several months when I did nothing, lay fallow, and
tried to figure out what went wrong, and started to reach the
conclusions we've been discussing. I was part of the Finch College
Museum's show of TEN VIDEOTAPE PERFORMANCES in the fall of 1971, and the
work I got together for that was called SEQUENCES/NIGHT VIDEO, with lots

which I think was the first time a tivicon camera was used, but again
what interested me was the way the tape looked after it was all over,
and also in that tape, I made a statement about immediacy. It was the
conclusion of the program; I wanted the viewers to realize that they
were watching a non-edited tape, and it had been made in real time, your
time, so the ideas about the importance of immediacy began to complicate
and develop.

>"This is a real-time
videotape. The performance
you are watching has
occured
>>   is occuring in real time your time
no editing."

>- SEQUENCE STATEMENT, 1971, DOUGLAS DAVIS.

DOUG: The next group of tapes were made at C.T. Lui's Egg Store in
New York early in 1972 and those were the black and white studies.
But, a significant thing happened in the fall of 1971. After the HOK

KADIM, I'd had this image in my head of a backward television set, I
don't know why- the only source that I can specifically remember is a

party that I went to where a guy had a television in the middle of
the pary, and we were all sitting around watching the back of it and
we all thought it was quite beautiful. But, it's been in my head for
a long time, so I put a television set in the Reese Paley Gallery;
they had
a backroom which they said they'd give me, and I put it there, turned
off the lights, turned on the TV set with its face to the wall, turned
it on to white noise, no station, and it just hissed softly like that
all day. And I guess that the first non-participative work, the first
construction. It was created by a lot of participative forces, like the
magnetism, outer space, the causes of the snow which you see on the
television set, but it was specifically set up as an image for people
to come and see, and it really worked.
JUD: Don't you think more than an image, perhaps an icon?

DOUG: Yes, yes. It certainly has become that. That wasn't the reason
I Put there but it certainly became that.

DOUG: If I started talking about the icon, there's so much that could be said about it. That IMAGES FROM THE PRESENT TENSE I, the backward television set occurre about the same time as the last participation piece, the Finch College SEQUENCES, which was just a sequence of light images. I'd seen the tivicon camera at Lui's store, and wile watching it in the monitor I saw somebody light a cigarette and it really flared up, and it was a wild thing, and thought it's got to be interewting if you trun off all the lights and have people direct light sources into it. Until the event happened, I had no idea what it was actually going to look like, but I really like the images that came from it. It was a further step in freeing myself from that notion that only process counted. The images at Reese Paley occurred at about the same time, but I didn't do any more work until February 1972, when I did the four black and white studies at the Egg Store, and that was really a total break into something new.
JUD: Since you've experienced gatting everything to come out the way

you visualized it, that's something artists try to manifest of themselve DOUG: Yes, it's more than being a perfectionist; it's more that there's some concept, or some feeling, or some images iside you. It's got to come out right, and that's what it's all about, and that's the most democratic thing you can do, the most effective thing you can do in terms of affecting the world game. There's actually a terrible snobbery or elitism that's hidden in this whole notion of letting the people do it or pretending that you don't care about certain thins that you do care about. It's like some upper class white person going into the ghetto, handing people a camera but not telling them anything about it or how to organize a television show, because somehow or other he thinks what they might want to do is not serious or sophisticated.
JUD: It's like the positive or negative use of anything.'Channels can flow one way or another, and one way you can get pollution, poisoning.
DOUG: Before I did the black and white studies, I also did VIDEO CAR-NIVAL(NOTE: with help from a New York State CAPS grant, Open Channel and assistance from the Museum of Modern Art). This was another step in these realizations because the notion of VIDEO CARNIVAL was that children should be permitted to make their own television show, and I wanted this to be a working metaphor. So we took this barrage of equipment, an audio synthesizer, colorizers, and cameras to a school in Harlem, and if you

watch what the children did, they were very interested in abstraction. They got over very quickly the whole notion that video is about seeing yourself on television. They would take pictures of their friends and themselves, but lasted about five minutes. Then they were into doing very radical abstract things. It was another realization of the idea I was trying express earlier, and another important experience too. As I said, it finally got expressed in STUDIES IN BLACK AND WHITE VIDEOTAPE which is all about making the image or concept become clear, and I really felt good about those tapes, the same way I felt good about the image of the backward TV set.

JUD: And the image of the sun. The backward TV image is, I think, kind of corona-like.

DOUG: That's true, that's true. In addition to seeing that image, just to look it, it was really in my mind as an elegaic piece, because I was thinking about the Judson Three at the time and what had happened to them, and I wanted to do some kind of work for them, as I felt what was happening to them was indicative of what seemed to be happening to the country. So it grew out of that, a political work mixed with this animal, or iconic feeling about the image, but once it got in there, I saw it didn't have a thing to do with the Judson Three; it was not an elegaic work. It had it's own integrity which was that it was about itself.

JUD: The elegaic concept came about as a way for it to reveal its true nature. In literature, the form of the elegy has often rather revealed more of the nature of the maker than the subject.

DOUG: Yes. That's true. I don't think Hendriks and Toche would have felt it had anything to with them, and they'd be right. It was about itself. The first poster announcing it was filled with stuff about the Judson

3, but it's taken over now. And it's taken over my life. It keeps coming up in all sorts of things. People keep telling me what they think about it, and what it reminds them of, and that's gotten mixed up why it has been hanging around in my mind for so long Someone told me place him on the floor, and he would crawl around the television set, and when he sees that image, he thinks of food. So it just blows your mind.

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JUD: Getting back to STUDIES IN B&W, and the elements in part of it used two people, two chairs, and what equipment?

DOUG: It's a four tape series. The first tape was a straight documentation of the images. It begins out on the street. I put the camera on a dolly because I wanted to have the viewer feel that he was kind of rolling into it, and you move across the street into the gallery all the way to the back. You sit, and you watch it, and you come back out, withdraw the same way you came, and that's a very mysterious tape, and very slow. It takes a long time to develop, and a long time to get into the image, and then you pull back out again. That tape was made with a portapak camera.

The other three tapes were made in the Egg Store, which had just gotten set up and hadn't been announced publicly yet. I struck a deal with Lui, if he'd let me go in there for a day, for 24 hours, and make anything I could. I didn't have much money at the time, and they were interested in finding out what their equipment could do, so I got this cut-rate chance, in a 31" video studio, and we made three tapes in 24 hours. We were up almost 24 hours really, night and day, and it was very intense, and the tapes are very complicated, and none of us was an engineer. Frank Cavestani assisted, and John Brumage, C.T.'s engineer at the time came in to help, but to this day I don't know how we did it, because you know, even to work at NET, to get one tape made in one day is really something.

One of the ways we were able to get it done, quantitatively, was that I had a notion that I wanted to start making all tapes in real time with no editing. So, once we got everything set up, we just let the tapes go, and in that sense were able to do them quickly. But getting set up, as you know, is such a- well, they're very complicated tapes technically speaking.

JUD: Why don't you talk about the technical configuration and then segue into the concept?

DOUG: Right. The second tape is about two people sitting side by side, a blonde girl who happens to be my wife, Jane, with the blackest guy I could find- it happened to work around that, and it's about split-screening; it's about black against white; it's about keying, and it's about reversing colors.

JUD: Color here meaning black and white

DOUG: And it proceeds in a very strict and logical sequence, all done in

DAVIS

real time, no editing, and I knew exactly what I was going to do every
minute. The editing was live- switching. cameras were all b&w
The studic the tape about the
cameras, with friends working them. two peol've blocked out
tape in my mind, because it's related the backward television set.
to first tape you look at it from
In the second tape, what you see- in tape, five television sets are
the the back in the dark room- in the their tops, and the camera
sees them from above, and the light dims. The room is very bright in
the beginning, and then the light diminishes slowly, so that in the end
all you see is five little globs of light in a black sea. And
everything is seen from a camera above; again, that was very rigorously
planned.
I knew exactly where I wanted the cameraman to move the camera,
every step of the way.
The fourth tape was by all means the most complex. I don't think any one
of knows how we set it up. The idea was, with the console, with all the
cameras from above and around me, and monitors, to allow me to sit in
the middles of all this image-making equipment, and learn how to use it
in front of you. We wanted to provide me with so many options, of seeing
the same thing, which was always me just sitting there doing this thing,
right in front of you, that it had something to do with infinity. And it
also has to do with you looking at what I'm doig while I'm doing it,
like living through the whole learning process, and while you're
watching it. The most interesting image for me is that from time to time
I manipulate the keyer so that the image becomes whitened against a dark
sea, and you see the tape itself that you're now watching turning
around- _A complex of all those immediacies. When-you_star_t _thinking
about that, it becomes infinite . That's what that tape was about.
They were made to be played together, but they can be seen separately.
For example, if you see No.
it's a very high-tech tape, 4 by itself, as some people have, they think
equipment; but when you see that it's involved with working out the
understand that it's really it in connection with all the others,
JUD: It's also a tape about you about something else.
DOUG: Yes. Someone the process of making a tape.
said that last tape shows you how the other three
were made, as
though it's going to explain them. (Laughter)
JUD: A summation

DOUG: Right. You see all the techniques; you see how to make a split-screen. Well, I couldn't care less about that, in the sense that it's not what the tape was made for, though I care about learning how to do those things right and work them out.

STUDIES IN COLOR VIDEOTAPE

DOUG: Then in 1972 I started working at WNET Television
Laboratory. Then their open access plan began and I had a chance
to go there. JUD: That was the series in color.
DOUG: The STUDIES IN COLOR VIDEOTAPE I and II, and they're very differ-
ent. You helped me with No. 1. That piece was about time too, but it
was also about infinite possibilities of seeing the same thing. It's
very complicated, with lots of layering, not very pretty, but I wasn't
trying to make it pretty. I was trying to get out certain layerings in
physical fact, and also in a time sense, because you see the same tape
over and over and over, in many different permutations. It's being
playe< on three decks; you're seeing it from above the camera, and
you're watching from cameras moving in on it. At one point, you break
into the tape itself, into the electronics of the tape itself. It's a
hard feed of the basic tape onto the tape.
        The second color study was made three times, and wasn't right
until the last time. The first two times I tried it near the Egg
Store on a street downtown. From the beginning, my notion was, if
you took
a color camera out on the street, and began the tape thirty minites
before sunset, at the time supplied for that day by the New York
Times, that if I stood in front of that camera with a TVmonitor and a
light, that the tape would begin in a realistic setting, but the
image you would be looking at would very strange.
JUD: It's also a static camera.

DOUG: Yes. A man standing alone on a street with a television set.
But it would still have the sense of being part of the real world.
Then, as darness began to fall, this image would become less and less
real, in the conventional sense, and really be somewhere out in
space.
JUD: Even though paradoxically being a real image. Though it does play

DAVIS

DOUG: I knew that I had seen light smears that move across video cameras and very strange things happen on that monitor. And it stood to reason that if I got a color camera out on the street in darkness, that whatever the light would be doing would be very far out. But the concept of what the tape is about is not that simple. So we made it twice the first time and that's important, and we'd start the camera rolling 30 minutes befor(sunset, and twice something happened that ruined the tape. The first timc maybe something didn't record correctly, and the 2nd time, as we got towards the end of the tape, night was falling, it was beautiful, absolutely perfect, and a man came and mugged in front of the camera, jumped up and down and totally ruined it. I could have edited that out, but during that whole period of work, and to some extent it's still true, the idea of turning the camera on and letting it go in real time, without going back to edit it, was very important, and still is.

I still want people to have the sense of occupying the same time, being present tense, being right there, in the middle of it. And so, the third time I made the tape, it was very hasty. I'd been telling David Loxton at NET about the tape, and he called me one day and said: "I think we can do it" because they'd gotten permission to get the camera on the street, and I got there, and it was about 50 minutes before sunset. David and John Godfrey were sitting around, and Jane had come with me, and I said "Well, can you get it on the street in 20 minutes?" (Laughter) and he said "Well, we'll try", and we got very close to it, set up the tape, and it was on 46th Street now, mid-town Manhattan, not way downtown.

JUD: Facing the UN. The Un was actually between the camera and the sun.
DOUG: Right. And I thought, if it failed downtown, it would fail for sure here, because people would mime, but as you know, there isn't any. People went back and forth, looking, seeing something strange, but they don't get in the way. There's a point just at the end of the tape where you notiae a dog coming up the street.
JUD: Maybe that area has a more restrained, almost architectural presence DOUG: I don't know. But, anyway, we made it, we got through. We didn't get the total abstraction at the end that I wanted. It's not an abstract image which happened the first two times- it was like you

it was total black with just two little circles of light
moving. JUD: What kind of a light were you using?
DOUG: A work light, like in a gas station.

JUD: Why did you choose that particular kind of light?

DOUG: Danger. Red means danger- and what happens is that the
television, while you're watching the tape there is regular television
fare on- I must say there are several moments which are incredible,
for *instance,* the replay of Booby Thompson's homerun, all those things
that just came across when I was **turning** the TV set on. You..watch all
this stuff, and then, suddenly, it's off; I reach down and turn the TV
set into a monitor, and the next thing you know is that you see the
red light on it, and it's suddenly very quiet. The light level starts
dropping down,
and what was a link to the real world suddenly drifts out, and it's
part of another world. And the red light means danger; there's danger

     After that tape, there was more work at the TV LAB, all leading
to the November-December 1972 exhibition at the Everson Museum in
Syracuse. *Including* the piece TALK-OUT:A TELETHON. All work for the
exhibition,

         "We went on at 11 P.M. and didn't stop until 2:30 A.M. It

was the first art telethon. Calls from everywhere ... all over the
country ...Some of the New York City callers seeing the same tapes we
were playing on Sterling Manhattan Cable, public access channel...
phones backed up all the time ... getting some calls and statements
printed out on character generator, the words floating across the
botton of the screen ... radio stations plugging in, passing out the
number to their listeners ... very complex and dense layering of
communication, live from start to finish." - TALK-OUT, from RADICAL

SHIRLEY CLARKE: THE VIDEO TEEPEE

> "Via the medium of Video, time and space are again taling on
> new dimension. I am very happy and excited to discover that I
> have become the Dancer again. The ability to see what my
> camera is taping on a monitor across the room has changed for
> me my fear of the camera. I can see what I am doing as I do
> it and therefore I enjoy it. I have relaxed. I have almost
> lost the bad habit of having to play director and editor
> because of my need to produce a finished work. The act of
> doing it is now enough. The process for the time being is the
> message and so I never made a 'documentary film (honored
> critics withstanding). I think tonight I may be starting on
> my first."
> - Notes for a Video Experience with Shirley Clarke, 1971,
> at the Museum of Modern Art.

Shirley Clarke: Video and me and baby makes three. It's the same trip
as the dance trip, and any other one, only it's closer to dance. I
should never **have** quit dancing. I was a nice person once- I smiled, I
didn't scream, I had physical release. Ever since then, the machine has
come between me and physical release. When I get angry, it's over the
dumbness of everybody, including myself. It's because the machine is in
the way.:.Now, video has almost helped, but now you have to know
electronics, and I spent two and a half years learning to ask the right
questions to ask.
JUD: The "why doesn't it work?" syndrome.

SHIRLEY: I tried that in the beginning, and I would nod when people
said something, like I knew. Like, I'm talking long distance on the
phone to Paik in California, and Jackie Cassen is here, and I say,
"Pack, I've got a video thing here," and he says "We are honored to
have you; What are you going to do?" I answer: "How about color? I hear
you have a terrific color synthesizer", and he says "You need a color
camera; goodbye, see you soon." What I needed was a way to make color
without a color camera. Fortunately, he's going to invent the Paik non-
color synthesizer soon to take the color out, and all will be well;
back to normal. I tried to new Akai color camera (NOTE: out in 1973.)
and it's really a synthesizer, and not as good as Eric Siegel's which

I can do more with; you don't get enough light with it, and it's green, not even a nice green. Can you do something with the halations? Maybe you use the flaws in it as something artistic. I tried it out two months ago, to finish that ANGELS OF LIGHT tape that I started at the NEW Television Laboratory, determined to the end that I would do it. So I got the camera; hustled Camera Mart into thinking that I might buy it. I'd try it with my equipment, and something would go wrong and I'd keep it another day. So I had it for a week and shot, titles and stuff; some were nice and some were terrible; the camera was a pain in the neck. Particularly since I wanted to shoot off monitors in color and that was impossible. Some of the stuff that I've like the best is when I mixed synthesizer color with real color, in some of the best things I did at Channel 13 with that.

> "THE ANGELS OF LIGHT- (by Shirley Clarke, Hibiscus, and Angel Jack)- Some mad, merry, musical moments from tapes made at the Experimental TV Lab designed to reveal how that favorite form of American entertainment- the musical comedy- can be given a new and unique form when it is interfaced in a 'live' video mix with the possibilities of electronic color, chroma key, etc., to create some extraordinary, beautiful visual images."

Maybe we'll get better color when the 3/4" cassette is perfected. Until then, what's the matter with black and white Daumier, even Goya, Durer, Kathe Kollwitz, what's the matter with black and white? It's like a song. Black explotiation films. "THE COOL WORLD." How to be ten years ahead of your time because you don't know it. If we made the COOL
WORLD now, it would make money, because it didn;t have enough evil chases; it didn't have glamor is what it didn't have. It was so damn nitty-gritty, ich, realistic. I'm very affected by Rossellini; he's the only filmmaker who had any influence on what I saw. When I saw OPEN CITY, never having seen anything but Hollywood before, I just flipped, "My god, is that what it could be?" and by then there had been this whole 16mm movement going on for about ten years. Yes, we met doing one of these things, at Gideon Bachman's house, for German TV, our sponsor German TV. I used to get my print costs everytime by selling it to German TV; they bought everything.

JUD: How did they translate some of the vernacular?

SHIRLEY: I don't know; I didn't see it. I translated the
CONNECTION into French, with Noel Burch, and tried to get some of
the drug words into French, and though let's go for content; but
how do you say:
"This is my pad"? "C'est chez moi" doesn't have the flavor; it
                                                              rea
lly doesn't feel right. So we got a combination, and the French told
me later they were the worst subtitles they ever saw in their lives,
not good or bad.
        The time we showed THE CONNECTION at the White House was not to

be believed. In the Kennedy days, there was something called the
Arthur Schlesinger Film Society; Schlesinger had a film critic job
for a magazine, so while in Washington, he would send for films for
Friday night screenings. Jackie and Jack, and all the big brass,
would show, sitting in these little gilded chairs and look at movies.
And who would believe that one day Schlesinger asked to review THE
CONNECTION, and I invited and Jack Gelber and I go down. We don't
believe it; first of all, I'm so ashamed of the film, with Leach
picking his nose and saying "This is America; we're free here" in the
White House. And who's sitting in all those chairs, right, and
Schlesinger says "Miss Clarke will be happy to answer questions
afterwards."

    Nobody laughed at any point in the film, a lot of heavy rustling of
the squeaky seats, and now it's over, light applause. I stand up-
question, first row, Mrs. Harriman: "How many pads are there in New
York?" It's unreal- I'm not sure how many, "Forty" I said. Now the rest
of the questions are equally stupid. And sitting in that room are the
guy: who are the big drug experts of the government, and there's about
to be
a big change in the drug laws, and I'm up there, saying "I think we
should legalize heroin," in front of the braintrust; really out of
place. And I think they should take us for a coke afterwards, at least,
but, no, they all split, and I'm leaving by myself with Kack, like,
we're lostyou know, whwre's the party?

    We're in the elevator with Harriman and he taps me on the
shoulder, "Beautiful picture, dear, beautiful." And then I watch the
richest man

> "...it does use many documentary techniques in the shooting,
> a technique known as ciname verite. These new techniques al-
> low the director to probe the inner being of people, because
> you can not only see them but hear them speak. This new 'doc
> umentary' technique can be used in THE COOL WORLD to make it
> possible to tell a story on social, psychological and emot-
> ional levels. I like to call this kind of film 'new realism,'
> not documentary. But we do have in common the use of new mob-
> ile equipment that allows us freedom of camera movement and
> location sound of real people, not only actors."
>   - SHIRLEY CLARKE, 1966, interviewed in the SAN JUAN REVIEW.

At the White House, I tried to look for a John for a half hour during
the screening, because I couldn't look at the film with that
audience, as you can well imagine, I had to pee quick. I wander
around and get into the private quarters, because the guards can't
figure out who I am wandering around in the wrong part of the White
House, and then this guard found me, a nice fellow, and led me back
to the right section. And Arthur Schlesinger gave it a good review,
which I also though was rather funny. You see, there's a happy ending
to every story.
JUD: And now you're with video.

SHIRLEY: Video; it's a new art form. It's not like any previous one.
It's not mini-movies or theater; I don't know what it is yet, except
game playing. We screened Melies tonight, which are some of the
earliest films made. Have any films ever been made better than those?
The tapes you're looking at now are the best that you're ever going to
see. The art form has reached its height at the beginning apparently.
It's finished; what am I doing? Getting myself stomache aches, for
what? It's true; all of the early films, Griffith, Lumiere, Melies; can
GENTLEMEN PREFER BLONDES compare to a Griffith movie, really? The
greatest Egyptiar art was the early, not the later; the early Greek
stuff, not the corruption. Let's not do any more; we're corrupt
already. Look at Giotto compared to Michelangelo, you know, Giotto's
great; Michelangelo is corruption.
    But what's interesting here, if you give it a moment's thought,

I see, maybe, video has just about to begin. There's a *funny* transition
that's happened with electronics that Paik and you represent, very
clearly, because of the film/video connection, that you do both

film in his tape; you have that crossover. Which must be some form of
making yourself comfortable for the transition to the next thing. Since
video is not only going to be on tape, and will only exist in its own
lifetime, real time. I think we're just about to begin. To do it, we're
really going to need that two-way connection from Peking to New York,
to do video, and until we have that, we're marking time. We're doing
lecture demonstrations. That's what my Videospace Troupe is doing;
we're pretending the future is here already, just acting like it is.

> "INTERFACE-INTERPLAY: A VIDEOTAPE GAME- (By Shirley Clarke,
> David Cort and the Tepee video troupe)- First of a series of
> videotape games designed to interface with a live audience.
> Basic set-up: 2 1/2 hour tapes each into separate decks into
> separate monitors placed side by side, played back together.
> Then as tape A plays back on tape B the same amount of space
> has been left blank to record a 'live' camera interface with
> the playback. Cues to go into playback to record mode have
> been laid along with prerecorded material and blank space on
> both tape A and tape B so that you can play the inter-faceplay
> game and the tapes are in a sense left unfinished in a manner
> unique and reflective of the imagination and ability of the
> people present."

JUD: How is the Videospace Troupe doing that?

SHIRLEY: With different space: inside this room here, in the garden,
upstairs, in the bathroom, and I pretend that one's Peking, one's New
York, one's Paris, one's Ohio, right. Now I can do two other things
now: I can send you video letters because you have the same deck that I
have, so we can do that now; that's video, that ain't nothing else. And
we can do these autiobiographical, what I call Proustian novel, video;
you can track your life. Like the junk I've got, the 200,000 tapes
which, if you look at it, say, a hundred years from now, is as good an
historical image of the time as anything; and it's done by doing
nothing every once in a while turning on something, but not looking at
forbid, because then you might do somethign about it. Now, if we could
get these real short; a half hour is too long; get them down to fifteen
minutes, we could cut out a lot of junk, like editing which has nothing
to do with video- switching, yes, editing, no- that should be our

Because the switching in video is fabulous; it's a performance art.
We're all getting to be actors; we're all directors. I was never the
film I ever made, I never would be, but I get it out of those tapes.
One of my dogs is a movie dog, and the other is a video dog, but the
funniest thing is the other night. when this girl came here- I do
these tapes where everybody who comes through here does a half hour by
themselves staring into a monitor, alone, and they take them home, and
I call them Totem Tapes, and it's quite interesting how we all do the
same thing; so they're in sync. So this girl is sitting there doing
her's and we're watching, and she has two cats, and she's called
"MalcolmBobo" and Max and Morris rush up to her and kiss her. They
don't know their names; they know the sounds. They don't see dogs;
they hear- like they'll answer any dog they hear on any videotape that
plays- when they bark on a videotape, they bark back. So, I'm
disappointed because I *thought* for four years that Max knew his name,
but he knew the sound. Here, Malcolm, here, Malcolm- Oh, he just went
away. Gee- we just disproved it. We won't worry about that- it doesn't
mean anything. These scientific experiemtns are never to be trusted.
Just make a brash statement and stick by it. Say it often enough and
people will **believe** it. Do you think differently then you did two
years ago about video? Because you're one of the very earliest people
to ever deal with it, so I'm very curious.
JUD: It's rather like the stage where images or ideas occur to one
and they materialize at one time as drawing, or a painting, or a
poemand now they are realized as, this is film, this is video
SHIRLEY: But what about this thought- that all the other arts at this
moment are all trying to do *something* that is really only suitable to
video. In theater, for instance, Peter Brooks is involving the audience
at the end of THE TEMPEST; they get up from their seats and join in the
marriage celebration. We've seen dance try to do this, and paintingand
yet the only art right for it is video. It's built into the medium,
into its reality. What's known as audience participation is always a
fake I put it into every film of mine, and it was wrong, because I
tried to cross a proscenium that existed. There is none, any longer;
there is no theater space. We don't all have to sit in one space
together to see itit can be a big group, or one person, and all at the
same time have the experience. Now that opening of the world that way
is a very beautiful
concept- and all the arts are going for it- as in Bucky Fuller's thing-

and yet video is the one that has
it. JUD: Multimedia tried it.
SHIRLEY: Multimedia was an input you had to have to get to the head
of it; you couldn't have gotten here without multimedia. Now,
multimedia will come back shortly as we get different size video
images, such as a video projector that really works, when we have
the flat screens, the round, the triangle, the mosaic screen- and
then multimedia, and every imput that we have, that we learned from
the multimedia days, will make sense. Because, remember how hard it
was to get a multimedia show together. I mean, you never got each of
those things to work. JUD: Schlepamedia. It's somewhat true in video
still. Especially with cabling.
SHIRLEY: Yes, but it's getting less, and less. When I had that show at
the Kitchen and we started at the beginning and ended at the end-
that's pretty close to getting it together. Compared to what it had
been at the Museum of Modern Art- that was pure chaos, beautiful, but
chaos.
I meant it to make a statement; I didn't realize the significance of
the statement- I was intuitively right- that was organized, bad
chaos. But it was good for the Museum- they needed it. But now we
are more together, and I have done shows- with just Bruce, Andy, and
myself, just three of us- and just blew it apart- it was beautiful
to watch
it happen. We took that film festival, and that night when it was
over,' it was like they had gone to the greatest party they'd ever
been tothey talked to each other; they hadn't been talking to each
other for
a whole week- they were all friends from that night on. The thing
really ended well. And it had been raining the whole time until then,
and usually we do a rain dance, but I said "Let's do a sun dance
tonight" and the sun came out the next day- "Look, you need more proof
than that, for God's sake" I said. We went around in a circle, and I
said it's a sun dance. I gave them a rope and they pulled- a tug-of-
war- and one pulled the other over; they played dragon games, until
4:30 in the morning, and then, when it was over, they said "What was
it about?" "whatever happened to Shirley Clarke; she used to make such
good serious films. What was she doing. So, it's fun, but what does it

    Like the first winter I had video here, people came by and instead
of having parties, we did video with each other, and they used to go
home high. We had a really good time, looking at ourselves. We turned
the camera upside down, and "My God, it's ups ide down." And I remember
the day when I was wearing black, and you could through me to you on the
screen, and we went througha whole freak thing of how you can see
through in video.

 "SHIRLEY: We're going to have to change many habits and we've got to
understand that most audiences see their role as observers. They are
used to sitting back and waiting to be entertained. There's going to be
a learning period and I see nothing wrong with helping them... If we see
video as a 'process' art, we can use the process of learning in life as
a good guide. We need very much as adults to play. To understand that
playing is art and art is playing- what's the difference? We've
separated these things too long. We've lost the tribal culture and we've
lost shamans and the campfire and the group energy that's needed if the
rain dance is to produce rain. We have separated the artist from the
group. We've gotten to the point now where there are these freaky people
called artists and then there's everybody else- we are changing that,
and Video is the tool that will let the artists connect back, by
interacting with the group- that is, if we can learn to use video
properly."
                - SHIRLEY CLARKE, interviewed by Antioch's Videoball. in
                RADICAL SOFTWARE.

JUD: What's happening now with the Video Tepee?

SHIRLEY: I'm going to move out; I'm leaving it, but I'm going to let

it stay here. I can't stand living with people on top of me all the
time, you know, I've been squashed into this corner on the floor on a
mattress, and everything else is video, and I can't squeeze myself any
further over. So, instead of going insane, I'm leaving. I've got this
terrific room across the roof in the Hotel (Chelsea) to which I'm
moving, which can be latched into here, if I want, but I can close the
door and just go away. And the Troupe people are going to have to help
to keep this together; I can't do it myself anymore. They're going to
give workshops, Synergetic Workshops, and we'll charge for eight

It's cheap, right? The ad in the VILLAGE VOICE is going to cost $60, but the Troupe will have to meet the rent each month, plus any salaries they get for themselves. I'll teach one of two of the workshops, and my daughter Wendy will do some, and the group are very interesting people, one's a painter, one's a photographer, one's an actress, and one's sort of a psychiatrist. They were in the last workshop thing that I did. The people I'm getting to know are improving. My sister was in the workshop, fabulous, she's a fantastic actress- and it was a mental health trip for her from a deep depression into a whole video thing of her own, out into some kind of socialist education thing that she's into. We didn't talk to each other for years, and I invited her when she was really down, and she was marvelous. It was such a delight to meet her again, and that was a nice experience. So video does good. It's a good art; it's not a mean one. It actually has the potential for doing more good things than any other art form-since primitive man sat around the campfire and danced from rain. In exactly the same way, video can act- not separating the artist from the community. They're all together now- one and the same. And the ones with more talent, dance, and the ones who can sing, sing, and thems that video, videobut everybody's needed for their energy imput. So it's called the Tepee. That's about where it's at.

And then, I'll go away. Shigeko Kubota and I have one thing to dothe Shirley Clarke Accupuncture Festival in Japan, to get our trip paid by the USIA, with accupuncture free. I heard from Shigeko's friends
that the Japanese kids really don't have access to video because it's so expensive for them, and that was disappointing because I though it would be like half price in Japan. But they're made for American and Canadian consumption. You have to be really rich to get it in Japan. The country that's making it, doesn't have it. That's really capitalism at work. The olive oil thing in Spain, no cognac in France, no Scotch in Scotland.
My grandfather, who was Russian really looked like a Tartar- physically, cheekbones and everything. He was an inventor, and always had an interesting East-West connection.
JUD: What did he invent?

SHIRLEY: He invented the self-threading screw- the Phillips head. They're made in Japan now instead of America. That was a big discussion- should he sell the rights to Japan, and he said: "It's cheap labor, not the

same standards." But grandpa sold out. And we live to get the screws
back from Japan in our video machines. I wish he had cleaned up so I
could be independently wealthy, but the Stock Market broke- it's too
late. I sold the family jewels already- I have nothing left. I should
buy land with what little I have left and try to see if I can survive
off the land. That's what he'd do. And whatever happens, you can eat.
JUD: Do you think there's any hope for the video funding scene?
SHIRLEY: Not if they don't listen to me, (Laughter) and take my advice
and stop spreading it thin and giving a a few people instead enough to
get it together once. It's not really a good plan in funding to take a
small amount, a few hundred thousand dollars, and spread over 400
people, for the sake of geography, because you can't make up :your mind
as to what might be good or bad- instead of giving it to three or four
people so they could get it together and get it to work. Meaning that
we all suffer from being violently underfunded. You know what it takes
to get something together, for Paik to do that penis piece. It's very
expensive- you have to get this guy, get him undressed, put the camera
on his penis on the monitor, and then playback- that's not cheap. But
that's video- that's real video. The audience was free, and the guy was
fabulous; he stood there absolutely for hours. You couldn't tell if
he had an erection or not because the monitor was the wrong was the
wrong way- a very smart piece. One of my favorite Paik pieces- Paik's
penis piece. It was alliterative besides. And I consider that to be a
video experience. Howard Wise ogt a 'poppa' grant for four or five ar-
tists; they're going to share $15,000, including Paik, Woody and Steina
Vasulka, and for Charlotte Moorman to do her Avant Garde Festival thing
once more. I think it's too much for her, but a work of genius- how she
gets that fantastically complicated thing together. Like the video
people- more and more, the images are cancelling each other out elec-
tronically. Poor Bill Etra couldn't get any of his equipment to work
there. We were alright because we were way up on the top, doing the
video oracle piece, but only a few people came- they couldn't find us.
It was fabulous. Now I hear this year she's going to take over an air-
plane hangar. The last one is going to be the world- the Charlotte
Moorman World Avant Garde Festival, location: The World. I should have
put up my Video Ferriswheel on the top of the Chelsea instead of for
twelve hours at the Avant Garde Festival at the Armory. I never got to

CLARKE

see it; I was so busy putting it up. It took 84 hours to put it to-
gether, and it ran for two hours, or something. That's not quite the
right rate of returns. I keep telling Charlotte, it's too hard- if only
I could think of something simple.

"THE VID-E-ORACL- (By Shirley Clarke and Don Snyder) a kit
comes with each order for the Vid-e-oracl. The kit contains: 2 20
minute fortunetelling tapes, a set of instructions with helpful
hints for would-be oracles; also 100 magic collage cards,
. chimes and bells, plus a headdress and robe for the oracle."

I've got a terrific one for this year, you know- the Video Portraits,

where you draw yourself in videospace- you draw by seeing yourself.
You have one person on one camera- they could be anywhere, in Europeor
right next to you- and on the vertical monitor you put a piece of
paper and you give them the ink and brush and they do a portait only
looking at video, and it's marvelous. You can send people through in a
row and you'd get all these marvelous *funny* drawings. You use shelf
paper and you get these video portraits that go on and on, and what's
fascinating is that when you put the camera on them, the reality is
different from the distortion. The things look right on video, but in-
correct in reality, because of what the camera and the lens have
done. I have rolls of these things, and you could get them to go
around the world. What I thought was that it could be put up in the
Museum with monitors and cameras on, so you could see the difference
and people could do it themselves, and we could cross the coutry with
long, long shelf paper, one long roll with video portraits.
       I must say, frankly, that my interests have changed. What it took,
the input of making a film, and so many false things in.it: the editing
period, the showing period, are all separated from each other in a way
that's maybe valid in theater for a playwright but, even then, I'm not
sure.
JUD: Once again, it's the process, not the product.

SHIRLEY: How right you are. The Living Theatre should have taught us
that; how soon we forget. I sometimes remember the image of someone
better than they themselves.

DAVID CORT: THE VIDEO BODY EASEL

 David Cort is a video artist working with interactive participation
 and game forms, and a pioneer member of the VIDEOFREEX group.
 In 1975, he was invited to be artist-in-residence by then faculty
 member Jud Yalkut at Wright State University in Dayton, Ohio, and
 produced an interactive video installation called VIDEO BODY EASEL
 MACH I as phase one of a two-part video and projection art show,
 LUMINOUS REALITIES, CURATED BY Yalkut. Following are excerpts for
 Cort's biographical sketch and his description of the VIDEO BODY
 EASEL as told to Yalkut.
        DAVID CORT: I was born in Boston, Massachusetts on July 3, 1935
and graduated from Brandeis University in 1957.

        After traveling in Europe, I was involved in the theater for a
while and directed a short Pirandello play called CHEF CHEE at a small
off-off Broadway house in New York City in 1964. From Pirandello, my
interests started to focus onto interactive environments and I began
some processes at the Brooklyn Children's Museum and the Brooklyn Mus-
eum, which culminated in two exhibitions : A CHILD'S VIEW OF THE
WORLD'S FAIR at the Chilfren's Museum in 1966 and the first community
exhibition at the Brooklyn Museum in 1967 which was organized through a
community cultural project called OPERATION DISCOVERY.
During this period, I began to involve video in these processes. In
1969, after doing AN INFORMATION PIECE at the Woodstock Festival,
 I and a few of my fellow artists came together to form the Videofreex,

a group devoted to exploring communication processes. We created a non-
profit corporation called MEDIA BUS, INC., a media center called MAPLE
TREE FARM, and an experimental TV station in the Catskill Mountains
also called LANESVILLE TV, devoted to a very samll rural audience in
Lanesville, New York...
After this, my work became more personal and I did an exhibition called
VIDEOGAMES at the Kirkland Art Center in Clinton, New York at the end
of 1973. I then did a one-man show at the Kitchen in New York in 1974
called DAVID CORT WITH HIS FRIENDS... In 1975, at the Everson Museum in
Syracuse I did TIME PROCESSING SYSTEMS. I have also taught through
these years at the Rochester Visual Studies Workshop and Goddard
College, Vermont.
        My tapes have been commissioned and/or played by the Jewish Mus

eum and the Metropolitan Museum in New York. I have been artist-in-

residence at the Film Section at MIT in Cambridge, Massachusetts in 1976.

VIDEO BODY EASEL MACH I

DAVID CORT: This is it. This is the Video Body Easel Mach I. The piece is essentially a process in which the basic premise is that, in the system, there is no difference between up and down and right and left. Normally we watch television in a specific way- it's set up with a bottom pointed toward the ground and the top is up, and the right is right and left and left. That's what most people think. But in actual fact, there is a mirror which has a completely different right and left. Then a TV is right and left, because in order to read print, you have to **have** an image which is turned as if you were looking at it from the back, rather than looking into a mirror which reverses the image. But, in order to perceive that, we have to turn a TV monitor on its side (and there are two sides to it) which will show us there is no right and left. And we could also turn a monitor upside down, and then within this system there would be no real difference in directions. We could watch it any way.

Because the videospace is now right above the trampoline, and the trampoline has above it a raised projection screen, so as you're lying flat looking up at the screen, you can obviously see that there is no up and down, or right and left. You could turn around in complete circle and the up and down would be changed. If you changed from North to South to South to North, you would have effectively changed the direction of the system because you've changed your sense of gravity. We're working in a different gravity system than is normal in TV.

There are two cameras, and then the trampoline which will rise up about three feet, and those two cameras will intersect; a line between the two cameras will intersect a center point in the trampoline, and
one camera will be facing from the back, and that's a normal camera, and the camera up top is reversed (it's a mirror image)- and both of these matted against each other will give an exact duplication of each other. That is, one is a front camera and the other is a shadow camera. And, as you move away from the surface of the trampoline, the

CORT

The lights are at a very deep angle; they run 3 by 4, all the way
through the space. So, as you move away, because of the angles of the
lights, there is a shift in the image coming from the bottom (shadow)
camera; in other words, it goes far beyond the space. When you're
flat on, then the shadow is perfectly matched to your body; but as
you move away from it, as you get angles and light, the shadow takes
on different proportions, so that by moving your body in that space
you change the relationship of the top camera to the bottom camera;
that is, the shadow changes in relationship to your body, so that you
can then theoretically control the imagery, and both cameras are of
course mixed through certain circuitries.
You can change the imagery you're watching up there, and on the
sides (through several monitor displays) which will explore the
upness and downess, and rightness and leftness of the system
(they'll be

tipped over and turned upside down in different configurations). So

there will be a burst of imagery essentially as you move your body,

an *illumination* of imagery because the shadows will have changed

sufficiently as you move to create another image which will be

recorded as a "cut-through," like a matte, from a third piece of

information which the students and myself will bring in, textural

information which will be fed into the system by a videotape

recorder, and then the sync from that VTR will support the system,

that stuff coming in from the outside, being plugged into the system;

so that by moving your body

in these textures, you create distortions because of the shadow in
these textures, and your body in relationship to those textures, and
then hopefully we'll be able to get some sense of space, and the order
ar. form that this particular space is defining.

It's a different sense of space. It's not normal space. It's video-
space- it has different rules. Up and down aren't up and down; right
isn't right and left isn't left. It's a space in which the figure and
the shadow are interconnected, and it's an access space; it's a space
into which people can feed *information* and physically participate in
the image-making and the image control.

This is a basic aesthetic in which I'm involved. I believe that
people should participate in image-making in TV, and not be
manipulated by the images, but actually manipulate the images
themselves, that is,

  the non-technoid person, the person who doesn't have any knowledge
  of equipment should be able to walk into the system and participate
  in image-making, and the porta-pak knowledgable person can
  participate on that level, but essentially all my systems should be
  able to be participated in by non-technoids, and they should be
  able to have an experience of image control.

    It's a destruction of that broadcast format in both the physical
sense and the psychological sense, that is, we're destroying the
format of a single channel piece (why can't the monitor be upside
down?), and why do we have to watch TV and be hypnotized by it rather
than doing something to it? Those are two questions that we're
confronting here. And why can't I have a sensual kinesthetic
experience with television? Hopefully, the piece will come to the
point where people who walk into the gallery can have that experience
and come away with it.

    It's all using available equipment. We had to mount the video
projector so we built a very simple structure to hold it. The room is
very important. This space is being used- the piece is conforming to
the
space. As a matter of fact, this gallery is making the piece as well
as the people who are involved. And the process of building the piece
is, as far as I'm concerned, just the same part as when the public
comes in. It's no different; there will be no change. It will be
continuous movement. This piece is not a piece; it's not a work.

    It started to work when I started to think about it when Jud and I
talked about it several months ago. And it's continuing. At one point,
we' we'll destroy it, pull it apart, and there'll *probably* be just
papers
and videotapes left of it, and it will go on that way whenever anyone
plays it. But it's a continuous experience- a continuous process.
And, right now, it's also in process. You can experience it in a
special pass into the space. The best way to get physically involved
in it, if you're interested, we have lots of physical tasks.

    It's an orthicon projector- Schmidt optic projector. It's got a
very bright tube which shines on a lens which then goes out- it's

There is no way out. There is a logic which this space puts on the piece which is unavoidable- that is, the equipment and the space. They make it so that there is no other way out. The projector must

be put up into the ceiling because there's a darkness in the ceiling because of the balcony, and there'll be no light up there- the lights will be down here. We're going to get maximum darkness for the lights that shine down here. We need light because it's a live piece- you

have to have light for the cameras, so what we've done essentially is to create a light lock on this level and a dark lock on that level, so that there's no other way but to put the screen up there and the stuff down here; unless we reverse the whole thing and put the projector down on the floor. But then we'd have the trampoline hanging from the ceiling. And there's the gravity problem- that's one standard that you can't change. We're trying to change that; we're trying to do away with it, if we possibly can. Another type of decision might be the flying machine. So, from a point, this whole process is inevitable.

When I make a concept, I don't know sometimes what's going to happen because I set into motion a process which then takes over. And I'm out of control, in a sense. The control factors are in the space and the equipment that's available. That's where the control function comes in. And I'm very interested in the way the piece is built because that's where it's at. It's a process.

This is a denial of the product, a denial of the marketplace, a denial of the gallery people, not these gallery people, but the gallery people on Madison Avenue who try to put prices on it, and rip artists off, and make commodities of art rather than it being an experience, in which people, if it's successful, will get insight into somethingabout space and time.

Also, if anyone wants to input into this system in terms of video-tape, and get involved in the system, there's no reason in the world you can't do that also, and make tapes for it. Make a tape to put into the system, and if you stick with it, you begin to see what the rules of the system are, to understand what kind of tape would fit in. It's a
  and shifting and moving, through these spaces- a different videotape.

PART THREE:

OPEN *CIRCUITS:*

The New Video

ERIC SIEGEL: The Electronic Video Synthesizer

Eric Siegel, one of the early adventurers into the realm of video entering via electronics, invented the PCS (Process Chrominance Synthesizer) in 1968 which permits controlled colorizing of black and white videotapes and the EVS (Electronic Video Synthesizer) in 1970, by means of which abstract forms, mostly geometrical, can be created at will in color on a TV screen without the use of a camera. His EINSTEIN tape (1968) uses feedback to produce its psychedelics effects and:was one of the first video art tapes to use this technique. Following are extracts from the description of the EVS by Eric Siegel, and from an interview with Siegel by Jud Yalkut, taped by Jackie Cassen in 1970 in conjunction with the FREE TIME WNET-TV, channel 13 braodcast series, the first screenings of experimental and portable video work on New York Broadcast television, supplemented by extracts from a radio interview for WBAI-F"" in 1973.

"The Electronic Video Synthesizer (EVS) is an instrument for the creation of visual color information in the medium of video. This information is seen on the screen of a color TV monitor similar in appearance to a home TV screen. The instrument itself consists of a keyboard and a panel on which are mounted a number of knobs and switches. By manipulating the knobs and switches a wide variety of patterns in controlled color and motion may be created.

The colors may be produced in an almost unbelievable intensity and richness. This is possible because the instrument activates the phosphors on the TV tube directly without the in tervention of a video camera, and in this manner is able to utilize the full potential of the tube, which the camera does not.

The patterns are Seometric formations, either =symetrical or asymetrical, as the player chooses. These may be held steady on the screen and the colors of the various elements changed at will; or the patterns set in motion and the colors held steady; or both patterns and colors may be changed in rapid succession as the player desires and is capable of producing. **The latter procedure** may be used to produce a visual accompaniment to mus-

EVS

Pase Two

>ic, though considerable prqctice and manual dexterity is re-
quired to,produce satisfying results, particularly if the
music has a fast beat such as rock.

Though the instrument does not require camera signals to produce the
patterns and colors, nevertheless camera signals may be combined with
the electronically-generated abstractions if the player so desires.
Technically the EVS is quite sophisticated. For example, most video
signals are AC plus DC. On the other hand, most homc TV receivers are
AC coupled, and, therefore, produce signals

> that are highly inaccurate and result in incorrect
brightness level on the TV screen. This video inaccuracy is
termed B.L.D. (Brightness Level Distortion). All video
signals in the EVS are DC coupled, thereby insuring a
complete range from dense black to intense white, as well
as accurate color range, provided the monitor is capable of
handling such, ‾ːa perfect signal

The EVS is the instrument of the New Television. Where conventional
television is used to inform and entertain, the New Television will
be used as a means of self-expression and a way for constructive
meditation, of a person communicating with his own inner self.
Because the colors are so intense and the motion so hypnotizing, the
EVS helps to expand the viewer's consciousness and brings up
feelings and emotions which he did not know he was capable of
experiencing. The viewer may be launched on a 'trip' which is
controlled by the person playing the EVS, whether he be yourself or
another." - ERIC SIEGEL.

JUD: A few words about the colorizer, and also the video synthesizer.
ERIC: For the last two years, out of necessity, I've been into a
hardware trip, and in this time I've developed two pieces of video
equipment, both of which were developed in San Francisco. I thought I
would that I would work better out there. The main project was the
Electronic Video Synthesizer, that's like the video equivalent of a
music synthesizer, where you have a program board and you can start to
set up a whole series of visula geometric happenings in color on the
video signals- the screen- and this is designed for video
compositions. At the Kitchen last week (NOTE: In 1973), I did a piece
called YANTRA MANTRA with it, which

was quite favorably received.

 JUD: Yes, I would say so.

 ERIC: And the other piece of equipment is the colorizer. There
 have been, by the way, business and technical snags to getting out
 the EVS, but it is something that people should be able to go out
 and get. JUD: The EVS operates predominantly with electronic
 imput?
 ERIC: On the EVS, you just have to put in sync, and everything is
 composed right inside of the synthesizer. But you can put in live
 cameras too, and do things that involve pictures and synthesizer
 images.
 JUD: It could be used with a music synthesizer as well so you could
 synthesize both image and sound.
 ERIC: Yes, I suppose that's the ultimate next step. But I'm not going

 to take it. (Laughter)- would be a total synthesizer- a synthesizer
 that is a video and a music synthesizer all in one box, and is built
 to compose totally.
 JUD: That could be a one-to-one relationship between sound and visual?
ERIC: What's exciting visually, if you listen to it through an
amplifier is not alwairs very exciting to listen to at all. And so, to
make a total· synthesizer would involve a whole interfacing system that
interpreted the video signals into an audio signal that would have the
same equivalent feel to it, but it would have to be changed.
JUD: And use that as source material for composing.

ERIC: Right. So that's the EVS, and the other piece of equipment I've
been developing parallel to this is the Color Synthesizer, or Video
Colorizer, as people tend to want to call it. That takes black and
white video signals, from 1/2" tape, like people who have been
shooting with their portapaks, and it allows them to synthetically
color the picture. This doen't work out well for interviews or
striahgt types of photography, but it does work out extremely well
when you move into the more visual and abstract things.
JUD: More video process imagery.
So that's the second piece of equipment.

JUD: What do you think can be done to improve video as a healing tech-
nique? To improve the vibrational feed that people get from it?

EVS.

ERIC: I think that depends wholly on the particular video artist
who produced the video, that they have to expand themselves- they
have to go to the top of the mountain first, and then through their
tapes show everyone else the top of the mountain. And I haven't met
too many who have gotten to the top at all yet.
JUD: And also, as they say in Zen, when one goes to the top of the
mountain, after achieving nothing, one must return to the marketplace.
(Laughter) Wasn't there, by the way, an earlier version of the
colorizer: ERIC: There were a few earlier versions, as a matter of
fact. i would put it another way- it has been under constant
development and has gotter to a stage now where I am totally satisfied
with the way it works. You see, all the previous ones that I made and
that other people have made have many problem areas; you couldn't get
the colors clean, within the areas and the borders; they would always
bleed into the next thing and smear and oscillate.
JUD: Some people did like that effect, and still do.

ERIC: Yes, there are some people who want this wild type of smeary
effect, but I don't. I don't dig it at all, and electronically, it's
totally inaccurate, and I don't even agree with the aesthetics of it.
So, the way mine is right now, the colors are very clean and totally
within their borders and areas. At times it looks like chromakey,
where you see two pictures cut in so neatly and cleanly that you're
convinced that it is one picture.
JUD: We can consider the synthesizer as a tool for the transmission
of energy.
ERIC: Karma energy.

JUD: Karma enemy, in what sense?

ERIC: In the logic sense. I think the synthesizer will enable Western
man to take advantage of the technology that he has created and only
put it to the use of pro-life, pro-spiritual powers. I think that the
synthesizer, used by people who have advanced to higher levels of
consciousness, whatever you wish to call them, can be used in that
way so that this can rub off to an extent onto the people at home
JUD: We mentioned earlier the possibility of having an interface
between "electronic gurus," as we'll call them, who can speak through
this transmission to each other, creating perhaps an energy field which
is capable of enveloping a larger number of people.

i age Five

ERIC: Hopefully, yes. If this should continue, perhaps with the energy that is transmitted bean` **received** by other video gurus, so to speak, they would pick up on that and send a new flow of more concentrated en-
' ergy back out into the airwaves once again, and start not an atomic chair reaction, but a psychic chain reaction.

JUD: A psychic chain reaction which in this case is being intiated tot-ally by electronic means, by the direct electronic interpolation of the performer-guru in reaction to his external and internal environments.

ERIC: Right. In other words, video, because there is this portable equipment, because it is being used to make this segment which will go out

on the air now. Because there is this equipment, it means that you
don't have to make videotapes in the environment that we're making them
in now, and we're only isolated from the horror city by hundreds of
feet (NOTE: This interview was taped in Central Park.) and so the karma
City is still upon us, and we can't escape that, and it will come through
on this tape. But this recorder that we're using can be taken out where
there is good karma to make recordings, and then the tapes can be sent
places like New York where there's bad karms, and good karms can be
trans mitted through the airwaves.

JUD: The synthesizer, too, is also basically a portable piece of
equipmen and can be used to broadcast quality transmission, or for
1/2", or for any type of equipment.

ERIC: Yes, and as a matter of fact, it can be worked on batteries.
You can have a battery-powered tape recorder, a sync generator, and a
video synthesizer, go up to the top of a mountain and do it.
JUD: Right. That seems to be the type of environment that it might
well find a home in.

ERIC: I think that technology is finally going to go into its
second phase of existence. To help mankind,:not for war.
JUD: This is a very vital aspect of what we're talki;n about, because
basically the use of technology up till now has been only one small
percentage towards the beneficial use of mankind, as per atomic
energy. The comparison of budgets of the amounts spent on defense as
against the amounts spent for the equivalent types of technology in
beneficial aspects has always been one of the problems. More of the
technology in

the nahd of the military and business should reach the hands of the creative aspects of society like the artists and the spiritual teachers. ERIC: Right. As a matter of fact, there doesn't seem to be any let-up in this state of affairs. It seems that there's a great apathy that is over all of us now, kind of a feeling that it's not going to work, that we're getting nowhere, and it's not true. This television broadcast is proof of the fact that we're going ahead.
JUD: Now to talk about the nature of the syntehsizer itself. It works through the generation of the three basic colors of the video systemred, green, and blue.
ERIC: With the addition of magenta if you want it.

JUD: Is that magesnt, cyan, and yellow, in terms of pure color light mixing?
ERIC: Right. In other words, you have four colors that you can work with, and the harmonics thereof, or you can choose to work with the three television primary colors. It's a positive color mixing in that when you have two colors mixed over, you get a lighter brighter color where the crossing occurs.
JUD: In terms of the generation of forms, there are some circular forms, but a great many tend towards the diamond. They seem very much related, in a sense as we've seen them today, to the form of the video mask as we see it. Can you make some comment on the range of form. We've seen differences in tempo and oscillation also, but what range of form is possible? For example, could the machine generate a completely circular mandala? We've seen other types of mandalic images today ERIC: Not in its present state, but the machine is in its infancy now. It was born just a few months ago and conceived a year ago. When it grows up it will be the machine that everyone has been waiting for.
And the most important thing about it is that it will be that machine, and it will go directly onto the airwaves„ and it will transmit out of those 50,000 watt transmitters, and it will go out and reach everyone.
JUD: The machine has several oscillators in it. Is that correct?

ERIC: It has alimited number of oscillators right now and I havr ideas in my head about what the new circuitry should consist of, plus a new way of interfacing that I have been thinking about for a long time is the direct electrode system of picking off the EEG,

 machine shows it up. But I'm not working on that now.

 JUD: They've taken EEG, for example, of Zen monks in meditation, or
 of yogis in samadhi, and they've found a direct correlation with par-
 ticularly alpha waves, and also in terms of the visualization
 process, the theta rhythms have figured in. Of course the alpha range
 is between eight and thirteen cycles per second, and four to seven
 for theta. ERIC: They have found that when they're in a state of
 meditation that they go right into alpha and stay there constantly.
 But alpha is nothing-more than a sine wave going up and down, and it
 has to be interfaced in a certain way so that picture-wise it comes
 through with some *intensity* as to what alpha is, that state of
 consciousness. So there has to be another interface made. That's part
 of the reason I'm not working on it yet.
 JUD: The oscillators in the synthesizer are basically capable of
 generating which waves- sine, square or sawtooth, or the whole
 range of electronic waves?
 ERIC: A limited number of electronic waves right now, but it has
 the capability of accommodating far more circuits and waveforms
 and so forth. It has been designed to be expandable to no end.
 JUD: It can be expandable in the sense that Moog, Arp, and Putney
 synthesizers in music are, modular, and you can add so many more
 components, and generate so many more harmonics, perhaps.
 ERIC: Yes. Like I'm studying biochemistry now and there are
 parallels to things that the synthesizer does.

 "The Electronic Video Synthesizer was created to enhance the
 interface between the Video artist and the people. Each human being is
 enshelled in his own perception of reality. Rational logical
 communications have their severe limitations. The communications which
 take place on the Aesthetic Abstract level- deal with the *inner* tune
 of a being. It's like the DNA code of the artist speaking to the
 world- Since we all perceive different worlds, in the same world- it
 becomes our necessity to find witnesses- when we find the ultimate
 witness ...we find love. The current trend towards Religion and god is
 in a way a frustrated attempt to find the ultimate witness. One can
 not do without a witness. What you see on the screen is my attempt to
 get a witness deeper into your being."

DREW BROWNING: THE DAN SANDIN IMAGE PROCESSOR

     Dan sandin, a physicist and designer who teaches and practices art
at the University of Illinois's Chicago Circle Campus (UICC), is the
designer of the Image Processor, an analog video processing system. The
modules of the Image processor, analgous to a modular electronic music
synthesizer, separate, contour, extract edges, do separation effects,
fade, superimpose and colorize electronic video signals, and in effect
simulate the combined functions of a video switcher, keyer, colorizer
and special effects generator, complete with its own syncgenerator.
Used by Sandin, and other Chicago video artists like Phil Morton and
Jane Veeder, in conjunction with the digital computer image
transformation abilities of the GRASS (Graphics Symbiosis System) com-
puter language developed by Tom DeFanti, a Phd. in computer program
designer also teaching at UICC, a humanly useable digital/analog image
generation system has been effected, for video image modualtion and use
in live interactive performance situations.

"The Image Processor may be copied by individuals and notfor profit
institutions without charge. For-profit institutions will have to
negotiate for permission to copy. I think culture has to learn to use
high-tek machines for personal aesthetic, religious, intuitive,
comprehensive, exploratory growth. The development of machines like the
Image Processor is part of this evolution. . . . in brief, the Image
Processor accepts signals = + .5 volts 75 ohm including video signals.
These signals (images) are distributed into (usually) a number of
processing modules and then (usually) mixed out into a standard color
encoder (output module). Since most of the processing modules are
voltage controllable and control voltages and images are interchange-
able, fantastic combinatorial power is possible."
          - DAN SANDIN.

     Working at the so-called Circle Graphics Habitat and Newspace at
UICC, a close knit group of young Chicago video artists, who have both
studied with and worked with Sandin and DeFanti has evolved, including
Drew Browning, who has toured with interactive shows utilizing the
Image Processor. The following interview with Drew was recorded during

these events in 1977, and is concerned with the Image Processor itself.

JUD: How long have you been working with Image Processors (IPs)? DREW: Since late 1971, or early 1972.
JUD: Soon after the design of them?

DREW: Right. I actually was around when Dan Sandin was designing them. I helped him build modules as he was designing them.
JUD: It might be interesting to talk about the early history and genesis:of the design of the IF.
DREW: Well, I can give you my point of view of it. Dan would be the real person to tell it. But I can tell you the story that Dan tells of how he conceived of it. It goes something like- He was waiting for a friend to come in on a train, and sitting in the station, and he came up with the idea of a video machine that would have the same kind of properties that a Moog synthesizer had, meaning a video synthesizer, and he set about to teach himself the electronics to do that.

I'm totally amazed by the design intelligence, the decisions he's made, now that I'm in the position to do design stuff for this new system in the works. Thinking about doing my own IF, I've thought about control structure a lot, and how I would do it **if I were to start from** scratch, and it allows me to go through the same process that Dan did, and I realize that Dan really thought it out very well. It's a wonderful machine. As soon as he started building it, he incorporated it into student use because he felt the need that students could use it. So he constantly got feedback from students on what they thought and how they could use it. So that had a big influence on how it was designed, and then it was incorporated into a class.
JUD: How do you think incorporating the designing and learning process affected the total design, rather than if he had designed it as an instrument for himself, and then disseminated the information?
DREW: He had the advantage of coming in it from watching artists use it, and seeing what kinds of biases they have built in, such as how they're used to controlling color, in a mixing way. One way to work

or brightness, which is something foreign to artists who are used to
mixing pigments to get those variables. So I'm sure that had some part
in his decision. Also he had a lot of things in mind about using it as
a performance instrument.
JUD: Right from the top.

DREW: Right. So that things would be readily identifiable without lab-
els. That had a lot to do with the patterns that the knobs and connec-
tors created. Those configurations were very important for going to the
right knob without the delay of having to read it, because generally in
performance you're operating in low light levels and you couldn't read
it anyway. So the color coding and the size of the knob are important.

JUD: It's rather similar
to DREW: Right. He had   a musical instrument.
that in thesizer you
                                mind. Once you get to know a music syn-
of people who haven't
used use it?" And yet   the machine: "There's no labels, how can I
that same doesn't need   person, after they've used it, says: "It
JUD: What about the design design to use patch cords instead of a

matrix switching system?
DREW: I've thought that
                                 too. Patch programming has the advantage
of maximizing the number of possibilities. As soon as you go into a
matrix system, you have to limit, you have to figure out how many pos
sible interconnections you're going to allow for, and you can't get all
of them. But with patch programming, you can go from any point to any
other point. You can take outputs to imputs, inputs to outputs; even if
they might not do anything, there is that potential to do it. It's
things like that that create effects that I've never seen before. Stud-
ents are constantly playing around, plugging in cables and coming up
with effects that blow me away, because I wouldn't have thought about
it, because it doesn't make sense conceptually. The disadvantage of
patch programming is that you have to reach through all of these cables
to get at any of the knobs.
JUD: That relates to the earlier video concept of Spaghetti City.

DREW: So my personal approach to it is that when I put up a patch, and I isually put up a rather complex patch and that means a lot of cables, I usually don't use the face of my machine for the control. I usually externalize control, so that I can become more intimate with my controls rather than worrying about where the knob is, and what the position is; I put the controls on joysticks and put them in my loft, and **just sit there** in front of the monitor so that I can become very personal or intimate with the monitor image. It's a kind of human interfacing which I think is very important in this kind of work. So things like joysticks and voltage control capabilities allow for that, and other *interfacing* devices.
JUD: More remote control.

DREW: Exactly. All you need is the remote control device and the monitor. Though the machine is here, I could be down at the other end controlling ti. Things like that interest me very much- some kind of external control that will control the image. In the case now (NOTE: A Video Sketchpad Interactive piece.) the line of a pen is *changing* the image, or perhaps a person's voice, and all that kind of control stuff, *including* biofeedback.
JUD:° What about concepts of videospace? Many artists are working at defining it in many different ways: game patterns, formalistic patterns, videospaces that expand the environment, or videospaces confined to the monitor frame. How do you approach it?
DREW: It's very hard to describe. I usually tell my students that you have to feel it before you really understand it. No matter what you say, it doesn't come across until you really feel it. So many people don't understand it.
JUD: But how do you approach the sense of videospace particularly in real time performance?
DREW: OK. It's very close to:~the idea of real time, that it's a space that affects you in real time. What your actions are, are due to the monitor. Without that image, without that feedback, you wouldn't be able to do what you're doing. Real time is very important and a lot of people don't emphasize that enough. The IF allows you to do that. JUD: Of course, video is the original real time medium. The electron gun of the tube shooting out through the screen being a direct neurological link between the electron-photon conversion and the eye-brain.

DREW: And -::at can't help but influence what you do right now. I think it's very close to music. It's very similar to other kinds of space with which you get intimate. But I think that the fact that you can make a mistake and feed off of that is very much accentuated.
JUD: That's the sense of discovery.

DREW: Definitely. And you can get very complex with the mistakes, you know. There are so many mistakes, that it becomes the whole piece- a number of mistakes that work very well.
JUD:. What do you think of the new sense of the artist becoming his or her own technician?
DREW: That's very important. It's somethinh that I try to emphasize when I teach. The phrase, independent video producer, requires one to be both an artist and a technician. Meaning that you don't rely on somebody else to maintain your tech, and I see that happening all over the place. The more you know about the tech, the more intimate you become with it, and it influences your art. Now, it's also very easy to get too involved with the tech.
JUD: You realize that there are a lot of people who are very counter to the idea of the artist working with technology.
DREW:' Oh yes, I realize that. I knew nothing about electronics before I started working with video, and it's something I taught myself. JUD: With video you can also someone like Eric Siegel who came into video from electronics.
DREW: And it's a different attitude.

JUD: Well, it's different in certain senses. Eric is like the chief engineer, I feel, of the video underground, in many respects. He's always tellign people how to get up to specifications and how to improve the quality of their signal. I think that's very important. But he's also aware of the artistic end. He just entered video that way. So many people enter from so many ways. Video art is just ten

PART FOUR:

SEEING AND
SOFTWARE

I. THE FILMMAKER
AS VIDEO ARTIST

> "Television sort of found me. I had been superficially
> exposed to it, as my friend Tom DeWitt was in the TV
> Department at school. That summer, another friend, Michael
> MacNamee of Washington State University, said he could could
> set up a TV studio situation for me at a station in
> Sacramento. I didn't know what would come of it, but OFFON
> came of it. And now MOON has come of that. Going into tele-
> vision doesn't mean that I've abandoned cinema. It's a
> matter of expanding my technical vocabulary. I'm still doing
> METANOMEN things, and I'm still doing OFFON things. But it's
> all adding up; I'm creating a new vocabulary."
> - SCOTT BARTLETT in Gene Youngblood's EXPANDED CINEMA.

JUD: How did you first start working with video in relation to your filmwork?

SCOTT: The first experience that I has was making OFFON in 1967, and that was one of those magical occuences where I met Michael MacNamee of Washington State University, who had been working at a television station in Sacramento, and he was on his way there to do some experiments at midnight, and he saw my light show material and wanted me to come along and plug in.

JUD: You'd

SCOTT: For been working in light shows and multilpe projectionsabout a

JUD: Using year before that I'd been setting up light shows. self-

films. How matting images with black backgrounds and high-contrast about

SCOTT: I would usually commission someone-to do the liquids for shows.

JUD: Yes, liquids take quite a bit of devotion.

SCOTT: And also one must be attached to that process all the way through, including the presentation. Whereas I can make the film material for a show and not be involved in the show itself, except to see it set up. So, I was thinking that I would bring a collection of some of the film loops I had made, as a promotion piece for some of my loops. It wasn't quite clear that light shows were going to drop dead a month later.

JUD: Nobody could forsee that.

SCOTT: Nobody knew. It seemed like it was going all the way, whatever

that was. So we went to this television station with the idea that we

would fill out and electro-vdieograph this material, and then make a film. That was at Channel 3 in Sacramento; it was the only time we went there. Typically, we weren't invited back, not because of any particular reason. It was just that our material wasn't the sort of station was able to use.

JUD: Or didn't know what to do with at that time.

SCOTT: Curiosly, what they did in the end was to super our materials that they had on tape over people toasting with chanpagne glasses for a New Year's Eve midnight show. So they were able to use it, but in a very curious way.

JUD: What kinds of things did you actually get done there, in the process of working in a studio? What discoveries were made at that point?
SCOTT: One discovery was that it was a great advantage in having the material in loops, a loop being a film strip that's connected from its head to its tail. That's how we would present the films in light shows. We would have a section for each song, and load the projectors with a particular set of loops to match a particular set of slides, and matte some overheads and liquids and everything. So, in a way, we were making mini-movies to each song. It turned out that it was great to have the films on loops because we could set up the film chain, which is a projector and a video camera watching the image, those two instruments bounc together.

JUD: Usually with a multiplexer which can also switch between slides.
SCOTT: Exactly. And live cameras in the studio. We could then make all of our adjustments on the control board while the loop was playing until we got a thing set up in a very precise way, thanks to the fact that it was a loop going on and on and on, until we had it balanced the way we wanted it. We weren't really trying to catch up with the images as they were changing.
JUD: Were you adding color electronically at the time?

SCOTT: Exactly. Our only real color source was the liquids projected on a rear screen. I don't think I mentioned that that was Glenn MacKay doing that. He had HEADLIGHTS with Jerry Abrams at the time.
JUD: And then later he toured with the Jefferson Ariplane.

SCOTT: Right. Then he came to New York and worked at the Fillmore East. JUD: And was also at the Woodstock Festival for that matter.
SCOTT: That's right. So our sources were these: we had filmloops, which

were balck and white, on the film chains; most of them pulsed also
which meant that when two or more images were being fed through the
special effects generator, one image would want to take precedence over
the others, because we were using the key as opposed to the super of
the images.
JUD: Was that a black and white keyer?

SCOTT: It was color keying in the sense that we had boosted the color
source all the the way to the point that it was interpreting white
over black in terms of color.
JUD: And levels in between, the gray scale.

SCOTT: So that was making it color, but we also had liquids as another
color source which gave a range to the colors. Maybe the liquids
wouldn' be in focus, but it would bring some other variations in
color, because one loop, for example, would be alternating frames with
balck and white, with an image on it, and say for two frames where it
was black, the other image was going to come in stronger, and when it
was white it would take precedence. But that would happen 12 times per
second (at 24 FPS). So that was a major electronic battle with all
those sources, fighting for space on the screen. So an awful lot of
the effects than were those little electronic dead bodies along the
edges and fringes of the image, where the really heavy action was
going on. We did feedback which is filming the monitor with a TV
camera, and then by putting the information back on the same monitor
which was being filmed, and since the image that's put back is likely
to be smaller or larger, so that the camera's now seeing two such
images, but of course now the information is fed back, and that goes
on infinitely
JUD: Like a tunnel of mirrors.

SCOTT: And I happened to have some loops that were already set up per-
fectly for that. I had a loop which was made of two halves of a face,
that were supered out of sync, and I was zooming on the face as the
face was rocking, and I was also panning with the orcking. So this
face, if it can be described verbally, was the left side of a face
rocking and zooming towards the camera and then back again, with the
right side of the face catching up to the left side of the face, just

JUD: Which also uses the decay rate of the video phosphors, the beam lag
SCOTT: That whole experience was a total of about four hours, running until four or five in the morning.
JUD: That's par for the course in terms of studio time, in a professiona quad studio

SCOTT: And also par for the course in terms of the time of day, when that kind of stuff can happen. (Laughter) I didn't have any exposure to video again for a long time.
JUD: The end result was on tape, and became OFFON.

SCOTT: It was on tape, but we also kinescoped it on the spotJUD: While it was happening
SCOTT: We rented a camera, a modified Auricon

JUD: With a TVT shutter to correct for.the 30 frames per second of video
SCOTT: Right. And filmed it right off the monitor.
JUD: So they kept the tape and you were able to have the filmSCOTT: And they taped everything, but we only filmed when we got the thing set up the way we wanted it. And we had a zoom lens on the kine ca era, so we were able to compund the zooms that were happening with the studio cameras
JUD: Did you have the union cameramen?

SCOTT: No, we didn't have the union but that's a secret. cameramen, (l;aughter) There was only one person there who ion, who was taking care of was employed by the stat- what was going out and somehow, there was on the air, the engineer, never any communication the night went on, he grew to resent us, and our freakiness and our en-thusiam, that perhaps we would spawn a kind of enthusiasm that would mean the end of his job.
JUD: Which is still prevalent in some studios.

SCOTT: Now and then, he would write his commercials in over the film, so I saved a bit of that. In OFFON, there's a place where a motorcycle oc-curs, and people ask me: "What's that about?" And the reason it's there

is that the film, even as abstract as it is, is like all my other films; it's finally personal and it's like a little scrap of a diary, and I to take a bit of the good lik, and the bad, all the flukes, and keep
JUD: The motorcycle comes them.

SCOTT: It's actually a nice image. It does not though really fit; it's not quite as outer-spacey.
JUD: But that was from a commercial-
SCOTT: Yes. A real time insert.

JUD: You didn't formulate the entire form of OFFON there, but reworked the material afterwards?

SCOTT: Yes, but not so muc. Actually, when you analyze the film, it does pretty much like a catalog of film loops.

JUD: Yes, I think it is one of the more episodic of your films. You star ted to unify the structure more in the later films.

SCOTT: Actually, I had the idea that I was going to make that film be th vision sequence of another film about a woman who goes to the beach and meets herself, based on an acid vision that I had at this particular beach. And two *things* happened. One's an interesting story: one of the things that happened was the film itself took off, under the label OFFON It won some awards and it was recognized, and I really didn't want to tamper with it after that.
JUD: That was your second completed film.

SCOTT: *Right.* But the second thing that happened was that I took this woman to the beach, thinking we would discuss the film and plan out the sequences for the woman who meets herself at the beach movie, and she ant I really didn't vibrationally mesh so well. It was coming to me that I wasn't going to enjoy working with her so much, and I gave up the idea in the process of going to the beach. Once we got there, it was all fogged over; we really couldn't see it, and we *thought* of *scouting* some *othe* beaches. So we drove down the road and came to a Ranger station in a gate and there was a guy sitting on the Ranger station steps and he was dresse, exactly as I was, all Jean clothes and boots, and he had blonde curly hair, and we both noticed that we looked an awful lot alike. (Laughter) And I asked him what his name was, and his name was Scott; same as mine. So I felt the real life story sufficed.

I have another story with a similar feel. There was a movie I was making called THE END, and it was about technology run rampant. I had col. lected footage from old British newsreela, mostly long Industrial Revolution shots of corridors of people working on machines as far as you can see, that very heavy Second World War black and white, ugly, sooty Industrial Revolution stuff. That in a way was the bulk of it, but it started out abstractly, and went through that phase and came back to an abstraction. I had never made a workprint of that film; I had been working on the original and carrying the footage around, especially footage of pul leys, cogas and wheels, doing a video feedback re-interpretation of footage. Then I finally had it all together, the final THE END movie, and

I sent it to the lab to have them put it through their scratch
removal machine
JUD: The liquid gage process

SCOTT: Yes. Because the bulk of the materials was from old prints, and
they put it through the scratch removal machine and immediately washed
it, and washed off all the emulsion. When I heard about that, it was a
shock, but it was mitigated by.the irony of the fact that the theme of
the film was precisely what had happened to the film. And, in that same
way, both of those movies were lost. But, at the same time, on a more
in. visible level, they're always there.
JUD: Right. What was your next encounter with the video medium?

SCOTT: The next thing that happened was that I got teamed up with
some people to make a show called TOGETHER. We were making the pilot
first for a series, and the pilot was an hour and a half long
JUD: Was this in San Francisco?

SCOTT: This is now a station in San Jose. This is another destruction
story, (Laughter) We worked four months; there were six of us, and the
show included OFFON and a rap discussion- a talking panel- with some of
the known folks around during the Psychedelic time. They were talking
about the I-Ching and astrology, and the idea was to express our
culture to the larger culture, and we filmed that in a particular way,
so that their faces would be talking, one within the other, or lip to
lip, or eye to eye
JUD: Through the video switcher

SCOTT: And then there were little vignettes that I made as well, with
the musical background that would ride in and out of that. The talking
thing took about a half hour of the whole show. The Grateful Dead were
there with their whole family. We had a kind of party that we filmed
and little poems using them, and we had a nice show. The sponsors had
approve it, and it was going on the air, and one night, the master for
that show and the originals for that master, and the originals for
subsequent shows, which were all stacked neatly in the manager's
office, and someone took them one by one and erased them
JUD: Totally deguassed them

SCOTT: And not by accident. I mean, it couldn't have been by
accident. They were put back carefully in place the way they were,
but they were all erased. We think we know who it was, one of those

JUD: Most often between union and non-union people

SCOTT: That's what it often boils down to, just that. So that was the end of that show, except for the fact that I had kinescoped that rap part, so that I could edit it more tightly than was possible on the equipment at the station.

JUD: Did that become A TRIP TO THE MOON?

SCOTT: Yes, that became A TRIP TO THE MOON.

"A TRIP TO THE MOON (1969), 16mm, 29 min., B&W, sound. A discussion of possibilities for man's release. - Stan Brakhage. 'Seven young men, each of them involved in one of the arts, talk for the greater part of this film. They are involved in a discussion of mystical processes important to them. Their conversation is edited so that ultimately the discussion becomes a mantra, evolving around the nature of these young men & the mysteries of their universe.

There are three distinct episodes in the film that are apart from the discussion and which belong to the private world of the filmmakers, Scott Bartlett, and Tom DeWitt. There is no dialogue, just rock music ...Filmic collages (composed

of almost totally abstract imagery) translate the mystical implications of the discussion into contemporary iconic language: the external world used as metaphor for the internal world... One of the more spiritual aspects of electronic manipulation of this film are the 'accidents' which occur in the process and which reveal an electronic meaning in harmony with a universal one..." - MISS PEACHUM.

JUD: What did you do further to it?

SCOTT: First, I released it as my next movie

JUD: As it was?

SCOTT: Yes. It was ponderous. And it was a lot of movie, being a half hour, and it really didn't have the intensity that I wanted it to have. So then I spent about a year, at that point I got a grant, so I traveled up and down the coast. I went to several stations on the West Coast, using that material in different ways, making loops out of it, which I had done with OFFON, and finally coming up with MOON 1969, which was by then in color, and half the length, and full of a lot more

porated into MOON 1969?

SCOTT: Probably about five minutes worth

JUD: That's around the middle section, the control room and talking
sequence. And there was an I'Ching section also in MOON 1969.
SCOTT: That's the stuff. And it was different from A TRIP TO THE MOON
mainly in the balance of the space versus the words. In A TRIP TO THE
MOON, there were lots and lots of words. Little vignettes would attempt
to illustrate that which was being spoken about. But MOON was the other
way around; it used passages to complement the images and the voyage
that you were in, so that when these people were talking about their
various personalities, as if they were in layers, their face would be,
while they were talking, in feedback across a seascape, or timelessness,
or time and space. All those things were played with, visually.
JUD: There's an image in MOON 1969 with a little figure that goes
plummeting down through the void of the clouds which resembles
computer animation.

SCOTT: It is the Computer man, Mr. Computer Man, the one that was devel-
oped by Boeing, I think
JUD: You got hold of a print of it.

SCOTT: I got it from Boeing when I was in Seattle. That was part of
the trip up the coast. And he represents himself in the film, our
projected illustration of a man, based on the Leonardo DaVinci drawing
JUD: Right. The man in the divine geometry.

"The magic of the film is its totally undefined meaning, the purely
visceral message. The message could be called a code that we're trying
to learn about, a code for connections to new space and new
consciousness, a code for making it to the moon metaphysically, paths
for your mind to get out where you can reach anything: the stop-frame
action means mechanically defined space and time and the feedback layers
are **like accord**ion time- all the times stacking up on top of one
another... Your mind goes from one understood state to another
understood state and you realize that you've voyaged in that process."
         - SCOTT BARTLETT in Gene Youngblood's EXPANDED CINEMA.

JUD: What happened next in the video oddessey? SCOTT: That might be
coming close to the end of it.

JUD: You never worked at KQED's Center for Experimental Television?
SCOTT: Well, I hung around there a little bit, but I never did use
their facilities there. Most of the rest of that work, I did some
work with
a Slo-Mo in New York at
Videotronics. JUD: That's a disc
recordet
SCOTT: It takes 30 seconds at a time, and you can slow it down, or
speed it up to whatever speed you want. It's quite complicated for
that effect JUD: And also a very expensive piece of equipment
SCOTT: Yes, very expensive. They're not many of them in the
country. JUD:: These use them for instant replays of sporting
events.
SCOTT: And that 30 seconds is probably the limitation of the replay.
Some of that stuff shows up in SERPENT, but I had already done
slowed down things on the material in film, and it came out crisper,
using an optical printer and step-framing it.
        Also, I did another tricky thing, which was to hold a single
frame such as of a flame, which appears in SERPENT; hold that frame,
reprintin it enough so that I could dissolve from one frame to the
rest, so that
you don't get the jump but you get a slow metamorphic change from
one flame frame to another.
JUD: How many frames was each frame held?

SCOTT: Well, 50 which gave me a 16 frame dissolve at each end, and
enoug. space in between for the printer to switch.
JUD: Which images in SERPENT were done on the Slo-Mo? The video
images? SCOTT: Yes, the stuff on the little box, though to tell you
the truth
I can't think of any shot in that film that I'm sure I did on the
SLO-MO. I think maybe just a little burst of the color horses that
are right over the flames. That's about all.
JUD: Are the video images in the little box drawn from
newsreels? SCOTT: They're from boradcast television

JUD: There are Nazi soldiers marching

SCOTT: Right. And every Western and Italian Steeve Reeves movie
spectacular that came through my tube during a three month period.
(Laughter) JUD: You filmed directly off the tube?
SCOTT: Yes, and I also recorded it in black and white on one small

"SERPENT (1971), 16mm, 15 ,im., color/sound, Sponsored by the Guggenheim Foundation. The serpent embodies the primal chaotic life force in mythic symbology. SERPENT uses natural and electronic imagery to particularize this creative force. The visceral impact of this marriage of metaphors brings about a union of irreconcilables, fire and water, nature and civilization, extremes of hot and cold." - SCOTT BARTLETT.

SCOTT: But there's something insidious and unhealthy, I think, about broadcast television on the whole, and when you get intensely connected to it, as I was then, then it seems there's bad chemistry, whatever the poison is

JUD: That might seem to be inherent in the system.

SCOTT: I don't know. I just have the idea; my own personal use of video has been as a fine art; I just used it aesthestically, and I've used the grain as an element itself, and I've used the technical possibilities for themselves, for their own sake and what they mean, what they can be used for. There's still a long way to go there. There's an electronic truth, I think, if I can find the right harmonic connection to that system, I think we can probably develop mpre elements of a visual language. JUD: There are a good many video workers who feel that the video scanning pattern is very much a teleological extension of the whole neurological system of human beings.

SCOTT: Well, I would agree, especially if it were the spiral-

JUD: And helical scan

SCOTT: Yes, I think that's closer, both to electronics and our *internal* systems, than the left to right which is the Western book fixation. I think the helical scan could be applied to any scale or any grain, and any number of dots.

7UD: What differences do you see in your experience in the tactility between film and video also the interfaces that come from the brushing of the two, and them?

SCOTT: The main thing that happens, it seems, is that the grain and the shape of the screen carries a connotation of technology, so I've used it that way, in juxtaposition to more natural images, and it heightens the clarity of the background, or the next scene, or however I'm putting one against the other.

JUD: Like the moving landscape image in SERPENT.

SCOTT: Right.

 JUD: With the sunspots coming almost through the image

 SCOTT: So when that grainy image appears, the crispness around of
 that space is accentuated. It becomes more real and anatural. And
 it's that contrast that I was working towards for a long time, ever
 since OFFON, ever since I had wanted that to be the vision movie.
 And for myself, I think that I'm going away from, at least
 temporarily, from using video, since it has come down to such a fine
 thing. I've made by statements about technology, it seems, and there
 are a lot of other thingd for me to explore, and I would finally
 rather be tripping over vines in a forest than coaxial cables in a
 studio. (Laughter)
 JUD: Have you worked with 31" technology much yourself. You said you
 recorded some things off the air.
 SCOTT: Sitting down in one place was the bulk of that. I did have a
 portapak for a while, but that's the other branch of television, it
 seems, that's immediate media
 JUD: Video as opposed to telvision

 SCOTT: I think so, and that's totally valid. I just never got into
 that myself. It's not refinable enough, and not clear enough for the
 kinds of things that I do
 JUD: Like your most recently finished films, the 1970 film, and also
 the film that was shot in North Africa
 SCOTT: MEDINA

JUD: These depart very strongly from the whole technological aspect
of the earlier films, into a much more personal thing. Is that the
area you're most interested right now?
SCOTT: When you say personal, that two has gone in two directions:
"1970" is an autobiographical film, and multiply personal in that sense.
Within the film there are comments on the idea of making a film. It's
about yourself, and not consciously about yourself, and the
complications you have while trying to do that. You can't tell all. You
can't show your whole being. You can't really give an accurate picture.
You can only hope to focus on an aspect of yourself, especially perhaps
one that involves a problem, or a blind spot that you're trying to see
around. And film, for me, has been a tool for that kind of self-
exploration. In fact, when I first made films I didn't realize that
that was what I was doing until later when I saw the film and saw that
          "1970 (1972), 16mm, 30 min., color/sound. Sponsored by the

> American Film Institute. 1970- the year of the moon shot; the
> year of the Bartlett's only son, Adam; the year Scott's life
> peaked in high harmony and discord with the American culture.
> This autobiographical film presented so thorough a summation
> of Bartlett's personal work that it rendered him harmless for
> years to come." - SCOTT BARTLETT.

JUD: At which point did that self-exploratory revelation occur?

SCOTT: Maybe after a couple of years. Maybe during the time of MOON, making MOON, but it still hadn't sunk in- still I use my intuition rathE than my intellect in making my films, until that very last film. When the two things were together, the *intuition* and the intellect were both

there battling, the *intuition* saying: "I want to use this particular

shot" and the intellect of what you're saying." at this point. You have

saying: "Well, it has to be justified in terms "You have to know now because you're conscious to know why you're using it, what you're saying." always fall back on the fact that it would have

a cohesion and a dramatic structure of *internal* integrity, abstract as it was, that would hold it together, and I could find that later on, after lots of reflection, just what it was that I was saying, what I meant. And most of my films have grown organically that way, and taken a long time to make. None of them have been pre-scripted. The closest I've come to prescripting anything was really in the situation of shooting film in Morocco- MEDINA. Again, that wasn't a script, but I had strong limitation. I couldn't go back and anything else again. I had to work with what I'd collected.

JUD: You had to know what you needed on the spot.

SCOTT: Yes. And the subject matter had to be tightened down on the spot, to something. It was finally the Medina, rather than using the footage I had shot on the roads there with the camels, I stuck to the two cities, Fez and Marrakesh, and events that went on there, and the spiritual look of the place involved, the mosques and the praying in there. And also their process, closely connected to the earth and survival, so that those cities, especially Fez, looked, really looked like organs from a body, with a river that ran through it which was clearly the digestive tract, the *intestinal* tract, and you could smell it; that it was.

> "A documentary about the old cities of Morocco. Bartlett
> sleptwalked into an awakening culture."

JUD: What are you working on now?

SCOTT: I haven't really made a movie for over a year. I guess I'm re-
searching or something. I've been playing kalimba, which is my first
experience with music. I've been learning about sound, and just picking
up small things and trying to do them well, but no grand plans for
movies at this point. I know the direction I'm moving but I don't see
the means at this point. I'd like to make a film that's a poem about
nature. I can't describe it very well, but it would be somehow
transcending just the documentation of nature and the things that
occur, and using certain screens to establish patterns, so that it's
really the patterns that youRre seeing rather than the nature, but
using nature as the elements of the patterns. It would take a long time
to collect the material, probably a couple of years, and I have to
figure out some scheme to support that financially, and I haven't dont
that.

What I've been into, where I seem to be drifting at this point is
closer and closer to academic institutions. I've been doing more
teaching, and planning all sorts of workshops, and hanging in tightly
with folks who would sponsor things through government money or
something, so that maybe at some point I can channel it directly into
what I do personally, but for the time being I'm just getting it
channeled into certain educational programs.

"MAKING OFFON (1981), 16mm, 18 min., color/sound. In the summer of 1967,
Mike MacNamee, Glen McKay and Scott Bartlett met for America's first
electrovidographic jamb. Bartlett's film loops and McKay's light show
liquids were mixed through a video effects bank and the results were
filmed by MacManee directly off the syudio monitor with a rented
kinescope camera.

Bartlett edited a portion of this material and then built
sound track with the help of Tom DeWitt, who had also supplied
many of the original film loops, and Manny Meyer, electronic
sound composer. The finished film was called OFFON.

In 1980, Bartlett recreated theevent in a video production class
at UCLA. With his students' help he composed a video primer: MAKING
OFFON. Wipes, keying, feedback- all of the standard functions of a
studio switcher- are first illustrated and nam ed, then woven into a
sound and puzzle picture of the 60's." - SCOTT BARTLETT.

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SCOTT: The idea of serendipity, the idea of letting an idea grow; that becomes the unique part of what I have to teach, and I'm trying to set up courses around letting a film find itself, and of course there are a lot of problems when you have the limitation time, just a short six or eight weeks, and students have to tune in to several people. In other word, several people have to tune in the same vibration, but so far there's been some signs of success, and ultimately I think we'll have a film, and a book, and a rap, and a film theory, you know, that could be used at schools as a new cirriculum, because so far most production is patterned after the industry, and I'd like to see that changec a bit. So that's where I'm going now.

THE FILMMAKER AS VIDEO ARTIST: 2. STAN VANDERBEEK

"I propose the following:

That immediate research begin on the possibility of an international picture-language using fundamentally motion pictures. That we research immediately existing audio-visual devices, to combine these devices into an educational tool, that I shall call an 'experience machine' or a 'culture-intercom'...

The establishment of audio-visual centers ... preferably on an international scale...

These centers to explore the existing audio-visual hardware... The development of new image-making devices...

(the storage and transfer of image materials, motion pictures, television, computers, video-tape, etc...)

In short, a complete examination of all audio-visual devices and procedures, with the idea in mind to find the best combination of such machines for non-verbal interchange."

JUD: Stan, you've been involved as a filmmaker, computer artist, video artist, and numerous other technological excursions in the visual media. STAN: Excursions, indeed. Illusions. Visions and exclusions.

JUD: I want to really concentrate on how you first got into video art. STAN: It's tough to remember exactly how that began
JUD: It didn't have something to do with CBS

STAN: Basically, it did. It came about because I had built the Movie-Drome in upstate New York, and CBS was doing some kind of documentaryI'm not sure if this was the right title- HOLLYWOOD ON THE HUDSON- a kind of review of the film scene around New York. I know they did one and then another; I'm not syre which one it was then. And knowing that they intended to reproduce the multimedia effects of projecting on the dome screen, which was impossible- that was no way you could filmically recreate it- I thought it would be more successful if I came into the studio and manipulated the images through electronic combinations.

Prior to working with video, I had had a projected dream of what was going on with video. I said here's a fantastically obvious

cryptic little message; I said, this was about 1965 : "Dear Mr. Paley,
it was time you made me artist-in-residence at CBS, yours truly" and
so on, and that went into a whole series of various strange maneuvers
between different people, producers, and he answered me back, saying
yes, and he referred me to a whole bunch of people; but that's
background material. I'm flashing back.

Let me flash up to the moment we just got into: They were doing
thi show, and I said: "You can't reproduce the multiscreen effects
that I was trying to do with the planetarium situation." So, I said:
"Let me

come in and play with your system" and they said, fine, and they
agreed to it. I did this work called PANELS FOR THE WALLS OF THE
WORLD. I worked in a studio for about two hours, mixing images. It was
the first such work I could do; that was about 1966.
JUD: Was that a hands-on equipment scene?

STAN: Yes, but I had to tell people what to do. It was a marvelously
ludicrous situation, because they were standard engineers in the
middle of their *afternoon,* from 2 to 4 p.m. with no idea what they
were being thrown together with, or into. So I walked in with six
film chain lengths of edited films that I had in mind, plus a bunch
of slides that I had prepared, and a soundtrack. The soundtrack was
the only measured element that I had brought in. I knew exactly its
length and I had edited the picture more or less so that they ran in
an A,B,C,D,E,F roll sequence. I stuck them all on film chains, six
film chains, and we ran everything all at once, and watched the
monitors, and I was calling the shots.
JUD: It was rather like using the studio as a rather gigantic
optical bench.
STAN: Precisely. I had already anticipated that that's what it essen-
tially was, in real time; fascinating because you saw exactly what you
were getting as you got it. And then I added colors- not in this
particular experiment- but you can add colors to the black and white,
and stuc this whole thing together, in a two hour recording session in

to swing with it finally because they had to get out of their chairs
because I was calling the takes so fast. I said: "Matte A into B with a
circle wipe, and put that into this." And so they were really going
hysterical because it was trying to catch up to the sound/image

ship I was interested in. So, it was fun and I got something that
came out approximating the idea of what could be done with sticking
images together. It was the most literate of the video experiments I
probably got over a couple of years period, and I love the idea
because I essentially then saw what was possible with the thing; it
just knocked me out. I mean, you take six strands of film, and one
particular strand of sound, which is consistent except that the
combination of picture would be different depending upon how fast
you switched, or what choice of editing; so it was like a coda; you
came up with a form of images stuck together in innumerable
combinations. It just drove me nuts; I could have made probably
fifty variations of the concept PANELS FOR THE WALLS OF THE WORLD
just dealing with these six rolls, or six minutes of film each. It's
a lovely concept, and it seemed like it could go on forever, which
is the attitude, the real premise that I have for the work. I'd like
it literally to go on forever, making variations on it.
JUD: I know that you use certain material quite often over and
over. reworked in different contexts.
STAN: Basically, I'm fascinated with certain images, and I just refer
to them again and again, and they become, like musical chords, you
get to know them, you like them, and the other half is practical; I
don't have enough money fro striking off new inputs all the time. So,
I walked into CBS and said: "You have to let me into your stick
footage." Their vaults were just groaning with all this old junk
newsreel stuff that they had going way back, and it's beautiful,
fantastic stuff, outrageous parades through New York and everything.
So all the stuff I pulled out was CBS footage that was in their junk
film collection. Now that was my first hands-on situation, and it was
mock hands-on because I had to talk it into place through all the
engineers, but they were very nice.
JUD: It was a real time experience, a real television experience,
becaus(that's what it's usually about, with a director coming in, and
a technical director who will then do what the director tells and give
instructions to the other personnel. It's a very real kind of
broadcast situation.

STAN: It was, and it was very cheap too because they didn't want me
to use the studio. They said: "If you just use the control room."
That cuts your whole cost down; there were no cameras, no lights.
JUD: Well, it was quite incredible that you had as many as six

STAN: Well, that facility exists, literally just lies there. They have that, no problem at all.

"PANELS FOR THE WALLS OF THE WORLD, 16mm, 8 min. An

iment in video tape control, an electric collage that mixes the images by way of electronic mattes, superimpositions, and other electronic means of integrating as many as eight separat images onto one screen. A film commissioned by CBS for TV, it is the first such attempt to examine the almost unlimited graphic and visual possibilities of videotape intermix."
- STAN VANDERBEEK.

JUD: I find it interesting that the first PANELS FOR THE WALLS OF THE WORLD first video relaization came about as a direct result of trying to emulate your multimedia work in the Movie-Drome.
STAN: Right.   also struck a theoretical position for myself, knowing that ideally if you want to have many images simultaneously, it's ideal to put it all on one carrier, like one piece of film, in some simpler container. It's tedious to have twelve projectors, which is the problem I disocvered in the Movie-Drome. It was very difficult.
JUD: With possibly inter-lock systems, rethreading and rewindingSTAN: And personal operators that you need to have because these machines are meat-grinders essentially; the projector runs a little bit off and-pop- one perforation is off and it's across the room, and you want to keep a subtle level of activity in the room so that people get into the films and don't have operators walking all around. It's very tedious to handle.
JUD: Of course, you need things like headsets and
intercoms. STAN: Sure. It's a very difficult situation.
JUD: Which are daily routines in the broadcast TV situation.

STAN:.Yes. Ideally, I would like to have that kind of technical backup, with operators, and keep all of that in a way where nobody has to see it, to encapsulate it. It's true, I was emulating the whole idea of the planetarium dome screen, sticking it all into one little, tiny image which is at the end of your room, and it's a nice idea. It's a way to go actually. I would like to figure out other ways of solving the squeezing of images together

  to Paley: "Please let me into your workshop." And he was interested,

 and sent me back anote: "Let's talk about it." and I was surprised
 about that because it wasn't a complete turndown. And then I met him-
 may favorite stpry about the whole thing- at the CBS building, on I
 can't remember what floor, like the 70th or 80th, and I had this first
 meeting. I came into the room and he was watching four screens across
 from his desk and I had a fifteen minute conversation with him never
 taking his
  eyes away from the TV sets, which is incredibly interesting; I had
 this extended conversation with this man who was watching multimedia
 in his own way at the end of his room, simulataneously carrying on a
 relatively coherent conversation with me, without ever once looking in
 my direction. He stopped me for one second once to turn up the volume-
 there had been no sound, just picture, and he stopped with one of
 those silent change commands- a space commander- and turned up the
 sound on one of them that he had to catch something that he was in
 charge of, I guess, and he stopped me with his hand silently, and
 turned up this thing instantaneously. He listened to it for about 30
 seconds and clicked it back so it was silent again, and he resumed the
 conversation without a ripple.
JUD: That was a DR. STRANGELOVE interview, in Strategic Air Command.
STAN: Sure, it was a joke. So then I went down to subsequent meetings,
 went down about ten floors at a time, each to the next meeting. After
 about seven meetings, at about the 20th floor, I got the message that
 it was hopeless. We had a lot of meetings but no one was interested in
 doing anything about it. But they wanted something to be done with the
 dance scene on video; they were very bothered about how the dancers
 just zoom into the lenses, running right into the lenses and just
 darting around them. That was about St, the concept of video
 choreography for about ten years.
JUD: In film, it was even worse for a longer time. Simply
recreations of stage performances, until people like Shirley
Clarke.
STAN: Yes, it. was a very static concept of choreography, and they
were concerned about it and hoping that someone would come up with an
interesting concept about how to do something with it. They referred
to dance on television as literally "dead wood," the exact expression
this producer gave me. And would I be interested in doing something
about this "dead wood" and working with it, and I said of course. Like
I would love to do some experiments with Merce Cunningham in video
thoughts like that. That's what we were talking about.

JUD: But that never came about.

STAN: Never. And that was another whole concept, that Merce Cunningham conducts these classes and nobody has bothered to put a camera on him for all these years. It's an outstanding waste of potential, an excess of talent wasted away.
JUD: What was the next step of your experiments with video?

STAN: Well, I carved out any opportunities wherever I could and even had to construct them. I would get Artist-in-Residencies for different schools which I knew had a public TV station connected with the school. JUD: Many of which are only used for recording lectures.
STAN: Yes. And I would say that part of the deal was that I would come and do a work with the station, and I did about three or four of these, in various places, the University of Illinois, the University of Southern California, and often working in fairly small studios in these incredibly minimized spaces, and again just getting used to the media because it just takes a while to adjust
JUD: Were any of those studios professional quad-?

STAN: Well, not really broadcast quality, but some two,inch. 2 inch low band equipment, and in some cases one inch things. There were actually four schools, and I went and took a crack at it each time I could get to it, and it was a wearing process, because you'd come in and find new crews, people who'd you'd have to get interested in the visual effort which you had in mind. It was a fun way to learn, but not an ideal way.
JUD: Were there any pieces that emerged from work at those schools?
STAN: I did a series of pieces, which have never been shown, or much seen. One, I made a kinescope of, and then added color to the B&W

> "FILM FORM NO. 1 (1970), 16mm, 10 min., color. A hypnotic dance film of colors, dancers, forms and music all sweeping through the T.V. tube eye, mixed together into a flow of female bodies and colors, a brilliant study of color printing from black and white. Collaboration of the project by Brown/ Olvey." - STAN VANDERBEEK.

STAN: I did a whole series of dance pieces, quite a number of them, maybe two or three hours worth of little works, each about 7 or 8 minutes long. JUD: Using a couple of cameras and a switcher?

STAN: Yes. With supers and dissolves and wipes, combinations and feed-
back studies. I didn't have chromakey. There were low-level light
system: in black and white, with some matting, not always so good, and
a lot of tearing of the image, but it was the basic kind of hardware.
What I was particularly drawn to was exploring kinescopes. I liked
making films of the tapes, so then I could project the images quite
large, and I was working with a lot of the dancers again. You'd
videotape them, and then do a live performance with the dancers,
projecting the videotape kine over the dancers, so you had two scales.
I got very involved in that idea of size and scale and movement and
penetrating images. That went
on for about three years, I guess. I did a whole thing, image after
image, called DANCE WORKS which I designed as a three-screen piece.
did a lot of three-screen works then. Basically the idea of the kine-
scopes and editing them so that they would lock together on a three-
screen basis. Again with references to environments, again thinking of
the dome. A lot of the work I did for the last ten years, in many ways,
refers to domes, or to simultaneous projection.
JUD: Or things which could be used as raw materials for the dome.

        "The 'movie-drome' would operate as follows...

In a sperical dome, simultaneous images of all sorts would be projected
on the entire dome-screen... the audience lies down at the outer edge
of the dome with their feet towards the center, thus almost the
complete field of view is the dome-screen. ..this image-flow could be
compared to the 'collage' form of the newspaper, or the three ring
circus ... the audience takes what it can or wants from the
presentation... and makes its own conclusions." - STAN VANDERBEEK.

STAN: Oh, yes, everything was raw material for the dome. That's sort of
stunning, you know. I could go crazy; there isn't anything that isn't
raw material for it, because it really got outrageously encyclopedic-
JUD: You talked about the information bank thing
STAN: Yes, that's very much the point. The concept for the Movie-Drome
was to build this very dense audio-visual environment with multi-sound
systems, in the circular format of the dome, where you could rotate
sounds, spin the room around basically by sound. And the basic
acoustics in a dome are insane to begin with; there are real focal
points in sound and sound carries all the way across a curve. It does
very interesting things acoustically, very distracting until you get

again, the image thing is very distracting because you don't have any
reference points- with the little 31 foot planetarium that I built in
Stony Point, New York, you can lie down about 25 people, so you're
lying in a circle and you turn stuff on. Several very strange
experiences grew out of that, *when* I became aware after a while that
what I considered as an information concert- about which I had many
ideas, the flow of images, the content of an enrgy flow- and how many
images would do certain things to you, and where you placed them in
the sapce, and how you would distract people by different sounds and
images in certain areas, and so on,,so the whole *thing* was like a
spinning, unfolding river of images. Curiously enough, one of the big
problems was that a number of people we] to sleep very soon, after
lying down about 20 minutes to a half hour of this heavy overload
stuff, and being comfortable lying down, and of cour, the dome itself
immediately sent you into another state, a *psycho-phys*ical state that
it transcendent. Immediately, you don't know quite where you are. It
feels very comfortable, very warm
JUD: Spaceless

STAN: Yes. Comfortable, womb-like

JUD: Womb- tomb- dome- home- all analogous.

STAN: Sure. Tomb-home-womb- a universal replica of the universe. That
kind of breast- interior brain skull- molecule situation; a very
important image for me, and an important physical image. So, you come
and you fall asleep, but that led me into the new work that I've been
doing now for the last two years *which* is the fascination with the
idea of sleep and dreams, and theater that puts people to sleep is
anti-theater, in
a sense.

      The major works are called CINEDREAMS which is the eight-hour ver-
sion cycle, where you go to sleep, coming at 11 P.M. and you're invited
to go to sleep or stay awake, whatever you choose, and the work runs
all night. And the shorter version is called CINENAPS (Laughter) and
runs fo hours. That was the funny thing; out of all this work that I
put in to build the dome and to make the works to show in it, which was
            "NEWSREEL OF DREAMS NOS. 1 and 2, 16mm, 8 and 10 min. Color.

A video/graphic collage of old newsreel footage synthesized with color and superimpositions to produce vision of history as dream-events that look like history but disappear inside each other. Each film is part of an endless series of newsreels od dreams to include any found film and present newsreel footage." - STAN VANDERBEEK.

STAN: I lost my whole attitude about it; I lost the total sense of what I..had done. Eventually, of course, I realized that what I had done was to stumble by accident onto a whole genetic form of theater that's essentially designed to put people to sleep. I've laughed *and* called the dome a decompression chamber, because I thought there would be very important ways to suggest non-verbal confrontations. I really conveive in terms of complex social thinking, but I don't quite know how to solve the problems yet, but there are ways to make an audio-visual performance that gets through to people in a certain way. So I had that in mind right from the beginning. I was prodding in the direction of finding the solution of how to make new social visual rituals. And this was clearly one way to go, and when I discovered that people could come and go to sleep, as a communal experience, and then wake up and talk about it in the morning, then you found out what images perhaps they recalled from their dreams, and what possible combinations of things you could do for people's dream states. That's now opened what is pretty clearly to me a life's work
now, and I don't know quite how to handle it.

JUD: What type of imagery is involved? Is it related to the older work? STAN: The interesting thing to me is the experience of what I've been doing with my life. Fifteen years of making little films, 6, and 7 and 12 minutes, so that a 15 minute film was feature length to me. I don't understand why I'm driven towards these short episodic works, but it's
a life compulsion. I just can't stop them, and I work on multiples at the same time, at least 5 or 6 films and some of them are 6 years old, and being pulled forward at the same time that I'm moving forward. A funny process. I'm sort of dragging all these pieces together.
     Then I suddenly discovered that what I've been doing is making episodic dream sections, and when I take all these little films I've made and put them all together, they become 4 to 8 hours long, whatever

metaphor for the whole idea of continuity and dream flow, for the
whole sense of a dream cycle. It's a bit more than that actually
because no one haredly ever dreams that much in a night's cycle. So
all the films that I made before are now part of that constant
package, constantly changing and constantly shifting package of
material. Of course, new things keep coming along, and developing.
I show abstract things and of course the computer work all fits in.
I'm into an encyclopedic kind of interest. I love computer stuff, I
love live action stuff, I like junk footage, I like home movies.
I'm intrigued with stylized works and videographic stuff; so it all
fits very neatly together.

JUD: Now, in terms of mentioning theater before, have you been
thinking about apy actual correlation with brain wave activity?

STAN: Sure. The theater is not an accident, because the whole idea of
the dream theater is that part of the dream state is everybody's
portable theater. I haven't worked with direct biofeedback, only a few
preliminary studies, but nothing serious yet. That's another study that
has to be done. What I really need, of course, is a total support
system, like psychologists and some sort of research center, a really
very carefully equipped research center to find my way methodically
through it. I'm Just doing this now very intuitively. Sure, we could
work out whole kind: of concepts for whole groups of people, and
knowing when they were in their dream state, of doing something through
the acoustics of the room at that exact moment which would slowly get
into their dream state, without waking them, and to do it as a group
experience.

JUD: You've been turning a lot of video work directly into
kinescopes for film projection. What about work which survives
only in the state of videotapes themselves?

STAN: Oh, I've tons of that. The work I've done so far (NOTE: This was
1973.) is on mainly two inch low band black and white helical scan,
which is sometimes hard to find now

JUD: Right. The machines are now obsolete.

STAN: And they're out-dated. I'm stuck with hours and hours of stuff

that I've done like that. I've got to find ways to convert that back
down to 11".

JUD: Of course, one way is kinescope all of that and feed it back
through a regular video system through the filmchain, rather than go
through time base correctors. Anything you put on 16mm film is workable

home-made; I've shot all my own.

JUD: Using an Auirocn 16mm with a TVT shutter.

STAN: Yes. Renting a camera with a special shutter. You can actually
do it with an Arriflex if you're careful, but it's a bit of a bore.
JUD: Yes, you can do it with any mirror reflex camera where as you
change the speed, you can see the change in drift lines in the
video image that you're trying to avoid.
STAN: You can just shade it down a little but underneath that 24th
of a second speed; you can cheat it. But it's obviously not an ideal
way. JUD: Have you ever had a chance to work with 31" equipment
itself, like with portapaks?
STAN: I've done a fair amount of portapak stuff. I'm not too fond of
it as a straight system. That kind of image stuff I would just as soon
shoot with film as the portapak if I'm shooting just everyday scenes.
JUD: Are you interested at all in sync sound?

STAN: Not much. I have almost no speech in my films, so I'm not
interested in people's lip sync; voice over occasionally interests me,
but almost nothing that has to have effective use of sync speech. Amd
portapaks are nasty; they break down a lot. I find them cranky as
technical pieces of equipment. The Bolex which I've had for ten years,
which I repaired once, and give it a couple of drops of oil regularly,
and the damn thing has run thousands of feet of film. It's lovely.
JUD: A good many filmmakers feel that way about their Bolexes.

STAN: Yes. And those other things; the batteries are already half
dead, they're very wispy and sentimental to temperature changes, like,
they just flicker off.

JUD: Well, even digital multimeters, they've been discovering, the latest
thing in test equipment, are responsive to changes in humidity and temp-
erature, and **not always accurate because of that.**
STAN: Too much of the equipment now is not resolved, as compared to a
$10 regular 8mm movie camera made back in 1937, which is practically
indestructible and incredibly reliable.
JUD: As they say, they don't make them like they used to.

STAN: That's it exactly. The project that I'm interested in now has to
do with working with satellites. I have one project that I'm trying get
through Canada which has two lovely satellites floating around, 225

STAN: Yes, and they uplink to them if you get the cooperation of the CBC, and that dish is so designed that it can spread out the entirety of Canada and 2/3rds of the United States, so now I'm exploring one little test pilot to runup from Toronto; the little computer-made film that I ran there, running up to that satellite and down to around 200 people in Atlanta, Georgia.

JUD: Is that the MAN AND HIS WORLD FILM made for Expo '67?

STAN: No, it's a new film I've got up there. For about a year, I've been involved with a concpet of making an entirely computer-made film by re-mote control, Just dealing with phone calls and letters and programming cards, back and forth between a bunch of programmers at the University of Toronto and myself. It's about 50% effective. It's really hard to work without seeing each other and talking directly. But I was trying it out.

JUD: It reminds me of Moholy-Nagy's phone experiment of doing an painting.

STAN: Yes. Over the telephone, back in 1920. I was intrigued with that idea and tried to do it that way. But it was very difficult to get the people up there to follow their momentum. I wrote a lot of ideas and it to them, and by the time it got talked sent over, they would lose or get distracted, and it was hard. But I interest finally went there to the project. Then, it worked beautifully. finish We spent four hours and made a whole film, a ten minute film. together It's called it's just a little drawing on one of those systems where you can draw into the computerJUD: With a lightpen.

STAN: Yes. The stylus system, and it has nice distortion qualities and makes for an artificial 3-D effect

"TRANSFORMS, 16mm, 3 min. Silent (24 FPS). Computer animation tricks the eye to believe spaceand 3D. This film was made at the University of Toronto as anexperiment in remote-control filmmaking. Made in cooperationwith a Canadian-Council grant and the programming help of Les Mezi and Tom Britton." - S.V.

STAN: But I'm intrigued with this situation of beaming up from Toronto with a satellite and then beaming down to a planetarium on the outskirts of Atlanta. And the system there in Canada is essentially designed for the eskimos, who don't get good TV coverage in the removed areas. So they're sitting in their little igloos, and I'm beaming down to this

little planetarium in the US. I think it's gorgeous as a concept and it's been unbelievably difficult to organize. I have to deal with the FCC and the CBC and Telstat and the University of Toronto and another outfit in Atlanta called Scientific Atlanta that's going to pick up a mobile dish they can aim at this thing, pick up the signal and amplify it and pipe it over a mountain to this little planeratium for 20 minutes. It's a fantastic effort. But it intrigues me because it fulfills lots of thoughts I've had; it's clearly the transmission process. I don't think we should mail around films anymore. I think we'll be able to do it this way. It's very close to telpathic communications.

JUD: Which will eventually be the next step image-making will move into. STAN: 1965 was an interesting year for me. I really prophesized all these things for myself and sat down to figure out how I could help get it going that way. I wanted to get into video, into computers, and that's when I really jumped into computer programming.

JUD: That happened at Bell Laboratories in New Jersey.

STAN: Yes, and Ken Knowlton was terrific to work with; he really gave me lots of insight into programming and how to deal with this

> "The series of films called POEM FIELD is also known as the Computer Art Series, and is comprised of animated computer/ graphic films. All of these films explore variations of poems, computer graphics and, in some cases, combine live-action images with animation collage- all are geometric and fast-moving. As samples of the art of the future, all the films explore variations of abstract geometric forms and words. In effect, these works could be compared to the illuminated man-uscripts of an earlier age. Now typography and design are cre-ated at speeds of 100,000 decisions per second, set in motion a step away from 'mental movies.'" - STAN VANDERBEEK.

STAN: So, at that time, I said we're clearly going to be telecommunicating in the not-too-distant future down to what I call memory banks or image banks where we can store this stuff and then individual artists could perform with it. Like, what's lying in the vaults a couple of -. blocks away at CBS is an immense amount of fantastic visual material, which would just lie there until somebody throws it away. So, I would be intrigued if people in different parts

each other material that was not necessarily finished material, but additive material, which you could then manipulate and put together, or it could be finished too, obviously. The possibilities for handling it and working with it and then sending back to them, and then they could do something with it and send it back to you. It's a visual dialogue, a totally non-verbal system of just feeling out how images can really be used for each other.

JUD: The computer work with Ken Knowlton was mostly frame-by-frame animation using digital means for generating the images, and I was wondering now.if you were interested in analog real time techniques, because you have to wait longer for the results right now in digital.

STAN: They're both nice. I love the lightpen system but that involves a terrific amount of hardware that you have to sit at, so you have to be there where it is, and I like the technique of the digital stuff because I can sit at home, even in the bathtub, and write it out on a piece of paper that could eventually be punched up into cards, as so there are a couple of ways of doing it, and I'm interested in both. One is a kind of removed and interior process where you're thinking about it- the digital- and the other is a spontaneous real time dialogue that you have wi some piece of equipment, and you're thinking about things and sketching it out. They're both very beautiful ideas.

"SYMMETRICKS, 16mm, 6′1 min. A computer-created *animation* film of high-speed stroboscopic mandalas with molecular-like energy. The surprise of this film is the color produced from the strobing black and white symmetrical images. Done with an electronic stylus on a special computer at MIT. This film demonstrates the possible use of the computer interacting with the graphic artist." - STAN VANDERBEEK.

STAN: Of course, I like the analog thing because I have a natural interest in drawing, and the other digital thing is harder to do; you have to really concentrate and extract yourself more from where you are and meditate on the ideas of what the forms could be like. At this point, I'm favoring the drawing thing because it really is more immediately rewarding. You can see it right there and you've got it. It's like the theory that you can write the music and one day, sooner or later, you'll write this great computer electronically-animated work that sits on paper, and some day or another, an orchestra will

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 The Toronto project is drawing on a stylus, distorting the images and
 manipulating them. It's a nice program, at the Computer Research
 Department at the University of Toronto.
 JUD: You're no longer working at WGBH-Tv in Boston?

 STAN: No, that's ended. I had a Video Artist in Television
 Rockerfeller grant for a couple of years while I was up in the Boston
 area at MIT, an it actually only lasted for one year at WGBH. That was
 a nice concept. I think that it's unfortunate that that project ended,
 or folded. It was a really unique way to get people to play with the
 stuff.
 JUD: They didn't get any more funding?

 STAN: No. And there's a real problem that a big functionning studio
 like that hasn't really got the empty time to let people come in and
 play. So the other little workshops like KQED and the WNET TV Lab are
 temporarily the answer, but there should be a lot more of those. I'm
 trying to do that now in Florida while I'm going down there next year
 at the University of Southern Florida. I'm going to try to encourage a
 local setting up of a video workshop to get the regional centers
 functionning, rather than just the 2 or 3 we have now in this country.
 I'm fascinated with this idea of non-verbal communication and I think
 the video synthesizer systems are one of the best ways to get non-
 verbal systems going around the world. If you check out the kinds of
 images being turned out, everyone invariably produces semi-abstract
 works, and the audio sunthesizers almost always produced simple
 qualified sound profiled which are similar.
 JUD: There's a new universal vocabulary and a new visual syntax.

 STAN: Like the Japanese work sounds very much like the French work,
 and the same is true of the Italian stuff, and the video synthesizer
 stuff I glanced at from the ORTF in Paris looked a lot like the stuff
 I've seen coming out Ron Hays' workshop at WGBH. I'm quite convined
 that there's going to be an accidental community of image that's the
"Mankind faces the immediate future with doubt on one hand and
molecular energy on the other...
He must move quickly and surely to preserve his future... he must
realize the present...
the here and now... right now.

         An international picture-language is a tool to build that

THE FILMMAKER AS VIDEO ARTIST: 3. ED EMSHWILLER

 JUD: I'd like to talk to you about video, your relationship to it,
 and how it has interfaced with your film work.
 ED: What I've been trying to do, I guess all along, ever since I was
 a little kid, is to make images. I really think of myself as an
 imagemaker. When I started out, I tried as a kid doing 3-D color
 drawings with red and green glasses
 JUD: Anaglyphic stereo

 ED: And making little animated movies for a 16mm projector back then,
 but I basically started out drawing, and eventually I got a movie
 camera. JUD: How old were you then?
 ED: My first effort to get a movie camera was when I was 14 years old,
 and I was a paper boy and saved up. In those days, Revere had just
 come out with the 8mm movie camera and it was advertised all over, and
 I was very excited to get an 8mm camera. I could afford that, and I
 saved up to get one, because I had this paper route. But my parents
 talked me out of it. They said, well, you don't have a projector and
 that will be more money, and you'll have to buy film, and you like
 music, so why don't you buy a radio, a farily small radio, a little
 battery powered job, and that that was a good thing to do. So I bought
 a radio, but I still wanted to make movies.
       The first time I got a chance to use a movie camera was when I was
going with Carol, and I was a student at the University of Michigan.
Her father had a 16mm movie camera, from back in the early 30s when
they
first came out. It was an old Bell and Howell Filmo. And he had left
that in Europe just before the Second World War with a friend, and he
bought another one a little later on, a 16mm magazine job and I
borrowed that when I was going to school in Michigan, studying painting
there. I made a kind of little record, playing around with things at
school, shooting pictures of us down at the park, sort of home movie
type things. Then
we went to study painting and graphics over in Paris, and we rescued
his old movie camera that he had left there, so that was the first one
I had, that old Filmo. I still have it.
JUD: They were great cameras, very well built.

BLES with a chest pack for a ride on a motorcycle. I figured it would hold up better *than* I would if I took a spill. (NOTE: SCRAMBLES, made in 1964 is "a picture of motorcyclists in action ... an impressionistic film.") I had that movie camera during the 50s *when* I was doing a lot of painting. It was hard to do single framing with it; it's not desig
ned for that, and I was always excited by what were called experimental movies. That kind was of more interest to me than any other kind and I went to Cinema 16 in New York for screenings. I don't remember when I bought my first Bolex, but it must have been around the mid-50s, because I wanted to do some things I couldn't do with this old camera. I started doing single framing. I made a lot of records of my paintings and I did animated things.
J.UD: You did paintings in progress.

ED: Right. Like *the* flower blooms in stop motion. I've got quite a few of those old *things*. Eventually, since I was always talking about what was then called experimental movies, why didn't I do one. So, in 1958, I started thinking about that, and making arrangements for it, and in early 1959, I finished it. JUD: That was DANCE CHROMATIC.

> "DANCE CHROMATIC (1959), 16mm, *7* min., color. A fusion of dance, abstract painting, and a percussive score (NOTE: by Lou Harrison) *achieving* a hypnotic and strongly rhythmic synthesis." - ED EMSHWILLER.

ED: Then, for the next five years, I was doing painting and filmmaking, and also a lot of illustration and that financed the filmmaking. Then when I got a grant from the Ford Foundation to do RELATIVITY, and I got a commission for a documentary, I quit illustration for a year, figuraing I'd take year off from that, but it became permanent and I never did go back to illistration. That was 1964, and from then on it was straight movies, until I got involved with videotape.

> "RELATIVITY (1966), 16mm, 38 min., color. A man wonders, measures, views relationships, people, places, things, time, himself. A sensual journey through a series of subjective relat*ionships." - ED EMSHWILLER.*

JUD: Why do you think the *transition* took place around 1964-1965? There was that period in 1965, when the Expanded Cinema Festival took place at

the Filmmakers' Cinematheque in New York, and we were all there,
and the fruits of that *transitional* period are still with us.
ED: That's true. And then I did IMAGES, the videotape from Brooklyn
College, which was the first tape that I designed. I had done
something for CBS CAMERA THREE some years before. I was a kind of
visual consultant and suggested a number of things, but I didn't
structure the thing or direct it in any sense
JUD: There were sequences that ran through it

ED: Right. Those were concepts of mine. It was largely graphics in
various kinds of visual treatments, *painting* and so forth, that I
wanted to try to do, combining the film chain material with the live
camera. It was a program on the composer, Harold Farberman, who had
done scores for certain movies.

For the Brooklyn thing, Charles Levine asked me if I would
discuss some of my movies for a cable TV series in Manhattan, and I
asked if it would be possible to do a color videotape to show along
with my stuff.
He said he had a friend at Brooklyn College, a graduate student, who
then made all the arrangements. His name is Dave Davis, and we worked
together. I described the kind of thing I wanted to do, and he, in a
production sense, arranged for it and directed it in the control room,
while I sat outside as the interviewee, and Charles was the
interviewer, which was the original concept that the whole thing
started off with. And we took off and did a parody on that idea. There
were all sorts of things that we could play with, and I had a little
portapak that was live and plugged into a delay system that was
included in the studio.
I threw in everything we could play with, including one of the
studio cameras and a monitor, with a 15 second delay image with the
studio camera.
JUD: Using the delay of videotape stretched between a couple of
decks. ED: Right. And then we had two film chains with a lot of my
movies on them, and we had the soundtracks from those plus Carol
reading a semiautobiographical story based on an interview that she
had with me, made some time before related to filmmaking. So here was
a videotape which was a kind of summary of various things and
activities. The film material I had included pictures of my studio,

date. It's very textural. JUD: A kind of summation mix. ED: Yes. I think the weakest part of the tape, as it turned out, was the fact that we didn't have the means at the time to do several track recordings, and man who had to the mix had to do it live, and had never done anything like that before. Had there been the chance to rebalance some of the many different inputs, it could have been a stronger work.

And that tape sort of led to the Whitney show that they had on video, led to my entree into the WNET Television Laboratory, because on the basis of that, as with a lot of people, I was invited to suggest doing something there, and I did something called COMPUTER GRAPHICS NO. ONE, which was partly relaized one day at the Dolphin Scanimate studio. JUD: Was that done in the off-hours at Dolphin?
ED: No, we got a date there through the Television Lab, one full day, and I edited it in one inch, and had a dub made which was sent out to Minneapolis and was well received in the National American Videotape Festival, the first one they held there, and it won some award there. Then, I got a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts through the Television Lab to do another tape on videographics, and I did SCAPE-MATES with that, which came out well. I had had real doubts about all that initially; I had handled portapaks; I had one myself for a little over a year, but not for long.

"THERMOGENESIS (assembly #2 of COMPUTER GRAPHICS #1)(1972), 16mm, 12 min., color. A film version of a videotape. In it my drawings are animated and colorized by using computers. Walter Wright and Richard Froman were on the computers. John Godfrey helped with the video editing. Robert Moog and Jeff Slotnick worked with me in making the electronic sound score on Moog synthesizers." - ED EMSHWILLER.

JUD: When did you first start working with portapaks occasionally?

ED: I think I held them, not really working with them, a couple of years before that. I wasn't a person who in 1968 really got into them
JUD: The real video freaks

ED: No, I was still very much involved with filmmaking, and I still have some of the prejudices that a lot of filmmakers have about the image quality. I was also interested in color, the idea of being able ductions of that which you see outside, in the so-called real world.

I am really more interested basically in depicting the subjective
world. A view of the real world is so subjective anyway, but to filter
it more than that
JUD: A kind of internal keying

ED: Exactly. That's always fascinated me because my own sense is, in
 terms of arbitrary definitions, that I think people really live in
 fantasy worlds, if that's what you want to call the subjective world,
 with either thinking about what they're going to do, or what they did
 do, at least as much of the time as they're being occupied with what
 is right now. You're living both in the past and the future an
of the time, which is, to get right down to it, a form of fantasy in
that direction, of projection, however it's defined.
JUD: It's an analogy to the dream state.

ED: Absolutely. And I think that's the big world, the dominant thing to
deal with, that's the area to try to express. I felt that if I could get
access to and do works with high-tech video, the kind of things you can
do with keyers and synthesizers which transorm images in ways that
appeal to me. And the little rundown that I gave you of my little times
of experiences is really a history of how I became to be involved, and
that's pretty much the way it is now.
I have a whole bunch of feelings about fine film and video; I can't de-
it that well. I have a little portapak and a couple of Bolexes,
and I use one for one kind of thing, and I use the other for another
kind of thing. I haven't been able to rationalize it that much, except
that obviously the portapak will run for a half hour with sync sound and
will give me a black and white picture which is capable of video modif-
ication, and so forth, in a very direct way. Whereas the Bolex gives me
28 seconds of windup playback time, and it's noisy if I try to do some-
thing sync, but it gives me a nice color picture. It's more portable
than the portapak. I equate somewhat to when you go to the restaurant,
what do you want to eat? There are lots of menus, and lots of tastes,
and you don't expect the same thing from each meal. They both are nour-
ishing, in terms of your own inner needs, but they satisfy those needs
in different ways. And I like those differences, even though I haven't
come to theoretical reaons why this one works in one side better. In the
course of discussions, sometimes my real feelings about these difference
come out. In our exchange, I'm sure the response is very similar.

JUD: In terms of the tactilities of the two media, there's a very dif-
ferent sense in lines making up an image and variations of voltages
witl in those lines, and the grains of an emulsion bouncing around. Do
you find any kind of analogy between visions that want to
express, themselve: becoming associated with one of these tactilities
so that it is directec towards one medium or another?
ED: I'm sure that happens, but it tends to be something that I don't
rationalize at the time. It's a series of intuitive things. You just
say "Ah, this kind of concept I want to do in film" or even if it
works the other way, we have this chunk of equipment which says
"Handle me this way; I feel good when I'm handled this way" and you
say" "I want to handle that this way because it seems to be calling
for it, because it is what it is, because it makes a mark; it makes
it's own record."
JUD: How do you feel about symmetry in design in relation to organic
form? It seems to come up strongly in the graphic aspects of your
work. ED: Yes. I was noticing just very recently that my doodles, my
graphic doodles, and I use a whole battery of pencils, and
frequently, sitting in conferences and dsicussions, I like to doodle
and I've noticed that I have two modes, and one is absolutely
symmetrical, and the other one is absolutely asymmetrical. If I were
to put it down to almost a ratio, I would say that I have a fairly
higher ratio today, in my doodles, of symmetry than I had in the
past, a higher degree of it. The assymmetry is perhaps bolder than it
used to be, which means I'm able to extend myself further than I
could in the past; that the polarities within me are being emphasized
and extended in definition. That's my own sense of it.
JUD: Analgously, the entry of film from painting, through the
tradition of Eggeling and Hans Richter, came from the desire to
animate the paintings in serial time senses. In Richter's case, there
was the concern between automatic painting and writing, and the
almost constructive concern fro symmetry and tight structure- the
concern with chance and control- and the need to constantly try to
resolve that in his work. ED: It's been a concern of mine, and what's
really fascinating is that years ago, around 1960, I was doing a
series of what I called VARIABLE STUDIES, and then around four or
five years ago, I saw a little B&W film by Eggeling (NOTE: SYMPHONIE
DIAGONALE, 1924.) and I was really amazed at this film done in the
twenties and in B&W. I felt like anybody who had seen VARIABLE

old movie, and did a color version of it."- An updated version of it. But so many of the concerns that I was interested in had come to me out of a mix of all the things that I had experiences, and they seem to be interesting things to probe, in terms of my own inner response to certain fluctuations and spatial, compositional and temporal transformations. And I saw this old movie, and he was doing the same thing, only he was doing it 40 years before. (Laughter)

JUD: Of course, Eggeling was working heavily on developing a whole syntax and language in terms of forms, textures, values and shades, which was, his major project when Richter and he encouhtered each other. They developed a whole dialectical approach to image making, which oftens leads to abstraction from reality. In SCAPEMEATES, for example, there seems to be a concern between the symmetrical and the organic, and that is almost what the tape is about.

ED: Absolutely, it is, and space and the visual depiction of space, and the various forms of it; that surface kind of space and the concept of deep space, and the concept of the illusion of it, and the contradiction of the evolution and the negation of it.

JUD: Michal Snow, talking about WAVELENGTH, calls that fictional space, which many films are about much of the time, and which has been dealt with in the past few years in concerns with illusion and anti-illusion. In SCAPEMATES, how did you approach confluences in the geneation of the tape, the back and forth feedback between the different levels of computer graphics, working with the live studio situation, and with human beings within that space? It must have been a continual process, with one thing generated by another; I think that's an interesting process. ED: Whew- I guess it started with the fact that I wanted to do an extended piece which would use the equipment over at Dolphin, and that was the first thing: "I'll do something there." The next thing was, having made COMPUTER GRAPHICS NO. ONE, where I had all kinds of organic shapes, flowing shapes, my sense was that most of the signals generated were portrayed on the raster through a synthesizer tended to be sine waves, of one sort or another, or transformations of that. I wanted to do something where the pace was more leisurely than the way most computer graphics seem to go- very fast paced like in television commercial computer graphis a lot- and I wanted something that would be leisurely in musical terms. And I wanted something that would have straight edges, and I knew I had five gray levels, and I wanted to utilize those five gray levels

for color purposes, and I wanted to deal with illusions of space.
These are the types of things I knew I wanted to deal with in this
work, those being the ingredients in the kind of cake I was going to
bake. I'm going to use this stuff, and I'm going to make a mix, and
these are the elements I want to consider.

Another thing, the first tape that I had done in those terms did
not involve a studio with dancers and so forth, and from very early on,
I've always been interested in integrating different elements; I wanted
rectalinear and straight-edge lines, and I wanted to combine and explore
the paradoxes of space, which you can do very well, it seems to me, on a
flat screen thing. I wanted to deal with time; I wanted to do an exten
ded piece, and I started dooing these drawings. The drawings actually
defined what sort of narrative it would be, and the narrative going from
a- kind of box defining a space to a landscapey thing to an attention to
symbolic forms and the ways in which the people related to the environ-
metns, whether they were the monolith statue, symbols of the city, or
that birth-like sequence, the coming out and the manifestations of ener-
gy, the alienation of the confinements within the maz-like city, and so
forth. They were never conscious at all. In the process of making, they
were all obviously working, but each thing developed out of another
thing. And a consideration, because I knew that this was terribly expen-
sive to do and I had an enormous amount of work to do in a short time,
I prepared the artwork carefully, made sure that it would function,
and I worked out a sequence or series of these things roughly. After I
had made them, I found out what the series was going to be, and then
made transformations on each stage, so that when I went to the
computers and transformed and colorized and animated these still
drawings in B&W- of which I had made 22 of them- I would have maximum
flexibility in how I could relate to them. In very simple terms,
because I didn't want it to be, at least as an overall work, as highly
textures and complex as the Brooklyn IMAGES tape, I wanted to have a
certain clarity to it, because what I like to do from one work to
another is to oscillate. I like to
do a long piece and a short piece, not that it's so regular, but if I've

done something that's very dense, I want to do something that's very
pure very simple. And if I've done something that's very controlled, I
want to do something that's very loose. And sometimes that will be a
work in its own self. And then there are other times when I really feel
that I want to make it as complicated as I can, and other times it's
just plain, super simple.

JUD: The antipodes of complexity and simplicity.

"All of the computer stuff I've seen was so flat in appearance that I wanted to try electronically to convey depth. I was also challenged to use the computer for rectolinear forms as opposed to the curved forms which have predominated in previous computer video... The dancers couldn't really see what was happening on the tape as they were doing it, **so they** pretty much had to take my direction, but they were familiar with the tape before they tried dancing for it."
                    - ED EMSHWILLER in the TV LAB AT WNET/13 NEWS, August, 1973.

ED: In the case of SCAPEMATES, this is the form, the mix that came out,

but the next one was very different when you think about it: PILOBOLUS AND JOAN. There is a different set of concerns in that one. Now, I'm sure if you look at all the stuff that I've truned out, all the images that I've drawn, you would find certain core *concerns* that are an expression of a really deep statement of who I am in terms of my interests, concerns, and the manifestation of those interests and concerns, what actions I take, and that you can find all kinds of forms. But I reall like to do something different, and the idea of doing something narrative like PILOBOLUS AND JOAN was really a story type thing, still not done with a script, even though Carol had written a story
JUD: There was a literary model for the piece

ED: That's right. And the images I took very often were simply images that I has preplanned even before she wrote her story; I mean, they are the images of relationships bewteen Joan and Pilobolus, Pilobolus and its needs and expression, which were dance, and Joan's means of expression which were song-writing and *singing.* These things were the givens with which I had to deal and find some way to put them together

> "Carol turned out METAMORPHOSED, a story of a common cockroach which waked up to find it self transformed into a man (NOTE: the inverse of Franz Kafka's famous METAMORPHOSIS)- struggling for survival in a man's contemporary world. The man-insect is portrayed by the four members of the Pilobolus Dance Theatre (Robby Barnett, Jonathan Wolken, Moses Pendleton, and Lee Harris) who move in carefully choreographed unison throughout the program, doing everything together from reading,.a newspaper,

to visiting art galleries, to playing a furious game of frisbee with Joan. Joan is Joan McDermott, a singer-composer-actress whom Ed has worked with before."

- from the TV LAB AT WNET/13 NEWS, May, 1974.

JUD: There were completely visual things which generated relationships in SCAPEMATES, and here there was a literary model.
ED: Right. And then the following one, CROSSINGS AND MEETINGS is more of a structural work than the other two, when you get right down to it, even though it's a development through the various stages of the way one relates to an image as being quite abstract and not so abstract depictions of, say, a person. But it goes through it's own musical structure which becomes more complex and technically more colorful. That's the only way I'd use the term. Some of the things that were done in it are as difficult to do technically as some of the later developments; but in terms of the visual presentation, they look simpler. It's like a dancer doing some incredibly difficult thing and nobody realizes how damn difficult it is, and then they do some sort of spin and they go on with it for ; or 10 seconds, and everybody gives them a whopping big hand. It's silly.
JUD: In CROSSINGS AND MEETINGS, the confrontations with this technological piece of equipment, the video disc recorder, dictated the explorations which become structural.
ED: Absolutely.

JUD: Or did you also find the need for something structural and then the equipment available to realize it?
ED: It worked basically out of my interest in the tool itself, like, here's an interesting piece of chalk, and what can I do with this piece of chalk? And the chalk has a certain kind of hardeness, marked capabilities, and I have a certain surface to work on, and I want to see what kinds of marks this surfaces lends itself to. Obviously, you're only going to barely touch the possibilities, because most of the possibilities are locked in; they're only accessible through imagination, and how much imagination you're able to release during the process of a given work. That's determined by who you are and your characteristics.

I simply said, I have access to a video disc, and I would like to explore some of the ways that I see this as an expressive tool. So, in abstract terms, there were a number of things I wanted to deal with, and I wanted to emphasize how you could take a very simple image, which

people have been doing in structural terms all along, and through var-
ious modifications and technical manipulations of the material, play
with it. Basically you first take one image, this guy going across the
frame, that's about 531 seconds, and that's used over and over and over.
again hundreds of times. It's just the same stuff going over and over,
but treated differently, and it's all treated with this marking contrap-
tion, the video disc; and I'm saying that you can use it for skip frame:
and for freeze framing, and the beauty of it is that it's computer con-
trolled, and you can set it up so that it will run full speed, at half
speed, or 200 frames, or freeze frame, for X frames or seconds, and ther
itˑwould go on to other things, and this is progammable. And the person
who runs it has to know how to program a computer; that's really what it
amounts to. So what I would do is to define a number of linds of prot
lems, and would try to establish that with John Godfrey, the chief en-
gineer and Phil Falcon, who was the one who ran the computer, and John
ran one of the editing machines, and we used the three editing machines
a lot, for many hours and hours. You know, the amount of stuff on tape
that was originally shot is relatively little, but the amounts of hours
that were spent in editing was enormous, and then an enormous amount of
tape was spent to do that simple-looking piece. That's another place
where the appearance is very deceptive; it just looks so simple, but
that piece probably took as much time or more than PILOBOLUS AND JOAN,
which runs a lot longer and is itself very complicated. There are shots
in CROSSINGS AND MEETINGS that took a full day to edit, with 3 or 4 VTRs
going, and a bunch of people running around; just because you have to go
through so many generations to build up that stuff. But the thing is
that it's really a mix of seeing something happening and saying: "I'v
cahnged my mind about what we're going to do next; let's take this thing
and go on with that, and see where that leads, and then plug it back

into the structure we've already got."
JUD: It's the performance aspect of pastic creation.
ED: Absolutely. Absolutely. And that's the
you know what's going to happen, like I've exciting part about it. If
to direct feature films and be sent scripts but they don't that much on
anymore now because I guess they've given up me (Laughter)- but they
would ask me if I'd like to make that into a movie, and the thing is tha
they're defining the making of the movie, so that it would be like build
ing a house from someone else's blueprints, and having it all pre-

And, simply, if you're good at it, you can build a beautiful house, with your own feeling about it, but the whole process and the excitement of finding out how forms relate to one another in the conceptual sense, is lost. And that, to me, is the process of discovery and learning which is proably the central thing in my involvement; the most important thing. So, to sepnd a lot of time making something that already exists, that's complete and ready, is just visualizing something that's virtually all contained in those words that are written. That's the way most of those movies are built. And that, to me, has no real appeal

What's really appealling is to be doing something that stretches YOU, both in terms of trying to perceive ahead, so that you can plan and do some intricate difficult things, but also be loose enough to say, right in the midst of it,"Hey, I never thought of that; let's go over and look at that for a while, and go down that alley for a while, up that buench." I made that movies BRANCHES with the whole idea that go along and you have all these possibilities, in the alternate universe kind of concept, and it's very appealling: the appeal of not knowing where you're going. That's excitement, where the real

"BRANCHES, 1970, 16mm, 44 min., color. Featuring Bill Weidner and Connie Brady, BRANCHES was made in a filmmaking workshop at Cornell University during the summer of 1970. The film was improvised around the theme of Branches of Possibilities real or imagined in Bill's pursuit of Connie. It is an attempt to structure a film out of the *concerns* of the time, using the college environment and student sexual drives as the principal focus." - ED EMSHWILLER.

JUD: That exploration idea is also related to the performance aspect of the sense of choreography in your work- the choreography with the camera- and a mutual choreography with the subject, which seems to be a longstanding thing with you.
ED: Yes. When you put it in those terms, that's right. Right from the very beginning, when I started making movies with other people, the fact that there was another set, or another person with whom we are *dancing* is really what it amounts to, with whom you're dancing in a physical sense with your camera, and the person, or persons, with their bodies. There is also the feeling of getting informed of things related to dance. like guidance and response, and another's needs in those terms- what are;

their capabilties and needs and desires_y and what moves them- so that
you work in harmony, and have a maximum amount of interplay that
makes it exciting and interesting for both of you. And that's always
been the way in all the dance type films that I've been involved
with. I like to keep the relationship between how the dance comes
into being in front of the camera very varied; I don't define it,
except occasionnaly I'll say: "Move your arm from here to here at
this rate," and they'll do it, and that's one extreme. And another
extreme, like in FILM WITH THREE DANCERS, I'd tell **you to do a dance**
and I want you to tell me how you would like it shot, and what it is
that you want done with it. And say I've got a feeling for doing
something in the snow- it's a nice snov day and it got too cold for
us- and we did slow motiom, and some of it was used and 90% wasn't;
and anything that occurred to them, or to me; so it's really
important to have people that you're working with who are not only
skillful in expressing themselves, by training their bodies like
maybe I've trained my hand, or through practice. A baby doesn't dance
an elaborate dance; a baby does baby things, and it usually takes
time to develop skills, whether it's talking or writing or dancing.
And I really like to work with people who are exciting, in that they
have some skills they've been able to develop, that they project out

of their natural characteristics. And they bring things that add so
muct to what I'm doing, beyond what I would be able to bring to it,
beyond what my imagination and my scope might be, and they add to
that, and it sometimes becomes more than the sum of its parts.
JUD: A collaboration between navigators in space and
time. ED: Yes, absolutely.
JUD: In the video work, you're working with the interfaces between
yourself as an image-maker and technical equipment, the analog
computer, the instant replay machine, and working with relational
things that are like intelligent spirits, and relating that within
the space which is the videospace and space within the studio.
ED: And the psychic space between people, and their own needs in
terms of interpersonal relationships and their social roles; the
patterns of behavior and its logistics. That's right.
JUS: Seeking out that continuity each time in each work and each
experience.
ED: Yes, I am. Somehow that's become very important to me and I've

come conscious of it. I think that it's true in some degree even reas-
onably early in my work, that I wasn't necessarily with any conscious
awareness of it. Which brings up an interesting thing, whether or not
being conscious of something is a positive or not a positive feature.
Because being self-conscious sometimes means self-consciousness, and
that can backfire.

JUD: It's a series of plateaus of consciousness, where one reaches a
certain awareness of a characteristic, or how one works with certain
mechanisms, and that becomes part of one's autonomous learning vocab-
ulary, and then you jump off into new things.

ED: That's another thing. I have a strong feeling that not only the un-
certainty and the pleasure of going off into the unknown, and not simply
staying where you what's going on all the time- or where you think you
know what's going on all the time- (Laughter) but along with Einstein,
in terms of relativity, in terms of physics, and with Heisenberg, in
terms of probability and chance, not only do we see things from differ-
ent perspectives, but as far as our perceptions of things are, things
are gambles. There is an enormous amount of uncertainty; the uncertainty

principle is very large. And whether or not, on an ultimate fundamental
basis that's true or not, to a great degree part of the joy of art or
of working is just the fact that you don't know what's going to happen
next.

JUD: Sure. Otherwise, you'd be bored as hell. (Laughter)

ED: That's definitely a consideration.

JUD: How was it when you first sat down and started feeling out the
controls of, say, the Dolphin machine?

ED: I felt as I think I've felt at other times, when I first held my my
first movie camera in hands, and I checked out the F-stops turning
and the viewfinder, and there's a feeling about dealing with ways of wha
was out there with what was in my head through this particular manifes-
tation. That happened to be a mechanical, optical structure, but on a
fundametal level, it's an energy complex, and this was just another
manifestation of that in terms of boxes, with pots and sliders; it was
the same fundametal response of the person with the charcoal. That's
really my feeling about it: the stick that enables me to do that which
I can't do with my finger, which is to make a kind of mark, which is a
way of pysically extending myself, with the nature of tools as
extensions of our muscles and of our mind. And it's a sensual pleasure,

intellectual pleasure. It works on the right half and the left half of the brain simultaneously, and that's beautiful. I think that's how I `

get my highest satisfaction, when I can be analyzing and trying to define my range of possible actions, the parameters of my next few steps, with a bodily, intuitve feeling of going through transformations. That is the dance. And they're equally important; you do them together, and it's a good feeling.

There's always fear involved, incidentally; fear involved in many

subtle ways, that you might be able to learn important things that are right there, or that somehow you don't have, for one reason or another, the ability to grasp at that potential, at that point that would open things to you enormously, right then and there, because of a kind of myopia, or blindness, like the blind spot in your eye. If you have one eye closed, it's not apparent that it's there, but it's always there.

JUD: The immediate analog translation of controls on video equipment is a direct analogy to the process of inner visioning and trying to close the gap, the relational time between the possible and the practica: ED: It's a return to painting in those terms, and the dance. It's the immediacy and the sensuality of it, which filming can be also. It's an interesting thing, when I spoke before about the intellectual aspect of it, and the physical and sensual aspects of ti, and the intuitive, there' a funny thing when you think about filmmaking, you're *dancing* with the Bolex, you're dancing with the forest, or with another person; anyhow your body is moving and you're shifting your camera which is an extension of your body and your eye at that point, relative to the space which is out beyond you, that you're capturing through the lens, or involving through your lens, and that can be very sensual.

The peculiar thing that happens there too is the delayed sense that you know that it is not only a pleasure to do it but there is also a form of fear and anxiety that occurs because you have no final assurance that all the certain things you feel at that moment is really what you are getting down. It isn't, with film, until you see it projected, that you have the feeling that it really did get down, or not. Whereas, when you do it with video, you can literally watch it happening at the time, monitoring it, and if you're too preoccupies with the process, the moment you're done, while the blood is still boiling. You can say: "Let's do it now this way, and let's go from there to this." Whereas if it's a

day later, or whatever

JUD: You build up that response pattern. It's another kind of time
delay pattern. In video, many filmmakers who jump in see the film
cahin as the main point of entry in relating to the complex of
equipment. It's finding a little opening for them into this new
continuum. Videospace becomes the cybernetic model of the
neurological changes we're **going** through. Originally, I found film to
be the synthesis of the multiple aspects of things I was interested
in, bringing it all together. Video does it on another level, but
with immediacy.

ED: I have the same feeling about it. I always like to bring together
that kind of synthesis and at least, if nothing else, simply the,con-
frontationfrontation of different kinds of images and different
meaning: within my own mind, and to express those coming together,
those collisions, those confrontations in a medium, and you've got a
tremendous ability to do that in film, and I think even moreso in
video.

JUD: It demands the immediacy of your reponses because you're working
it a multi-dimensional activity, with the human, visual auditory
elements, and the technical parameters,::with manipulations going on
all the time a the creative responses which have to be triggered off
each time. In orde to do that, one has to integrate the ability to
function on all of those levels simultaneously.

ED: Right. And, in those terms, like an analog responding to whole
serie of different levels, pressures, and intensities, you find some
sort of waveform with which you respond to all of these inputs, and
that is the nature of not only the life you go through, but the trace
of it, like in this case, a live whirlpool, perhaps a record, like a
tape, of that exper fence.

JUD: The brain/nerve complex with which we function, the direct
digital/ analog convergence system, the model for all the relatively
primitive analogs we've generated, and the constant assimilation of
the environment and the responses to it, the backlog of all one's
experiences, all this results in actions taking place in microseconds.

ED: In fact, in many ways, the slowest part of it is between the eye
and the mid-brain, in terms od the actual process, and then the
response to that from the musculature, that definitely, but the
psychological end of it is the slowest sequential segment of the
whole part.

JUD: And the physiological analog in the studio, at the cybernetic
console, is the space between you in your seat and the machine
controls, no

matter how close you are, no matter how infinitesmal it may be in
relation to the larger cosmos, it is still infinite.
ED: Right. (Laughter)

"Computers are a terrific way to choreograph visual material. It
gives an artist access to dimensions that previously could not be
visually expressed... There's something about the shar ness and the
potential for electronic control of the picture which you just can't
do with film, that makes me feel that I want to work with video for
the time being."
       - ED EMSHWILLER, in the TV LAB AT WNET/13 NEWS, August, 1973.

PART FOUR

SEEING AND SOFTWARE

II. CYBERNETIC
VISIONS

CYBERNETIC SERENDIPITY: The Hippie And The Computer

> "...society can only be understood through a study of the
> messages and the communication facilities which belong to
> it; and that in the future development of these messages and
> communication facilities, messages between man and machines,
> between machines and men, and between machine and machine,
> are destined to play an ever increasing part."
> - NORBERT WIENER, in "THE HUMAN USE OF HUMAN BEINGS".

The moon landing was pershpa, and we know the hardcore US admin-
istration hopes, the boosting hit into the technological education
mainline. Outside of the plethora of ENGINEERS AND TECHNICIANS WANTED
ads and posters, the attractions of a hidebound technical or
engineering education has proven less and less enticing to **a
revivified younger** generation. Perhaps no greater dichotomy can be
drawn than an attempt to relate an IBM complex with a hippie commune.
Certainly artists, increasingly more active as sociologically
motivating beacons, have transmuted their endeavors into the zealous
mating of Art and Technology, awkward bedfellows uncertain of their
intial approaches. Undoubtedly, the true American Revolution will be
forged with the tools of communication, the free exchange of ideas,
and the trading of information, of spiritual and pragmatic
information not dualistically divorced.
    Wiener defined "cybernetics" in his first book by that title
as "control and communication in the animal and machine."
Certainly, the questions of control of information communication
are not *unapparent*
to any devotee of the free media channels. As electronic technology
proves more and more to be the gross externalization of our
collective nervous system, the sources of stricture and obstruction
become as painfully obvious as any bundle of frayed nerve endings.
As hopeless and self-destructive as it would be to amputate any
infected appendage, the greater hope lies in the generalization of
newer and more numerous channels through which the *information*
"bits" can flow.
    Cybernetic art is one aspect of the *humanizing* of electromechan-
ical processes, the reminder that all energy flow systems depend upon

smoothly into cybernetic sculpture, "the cathode ray tube has sup-
planted the canvas" (PAIK), films and graphic images are computer
generated, and more art "pieces" and "events" (the definitions grow
cloudy as the common urges reveal themselves simultaneous and
synchronous) concern themselves increasingly with concept exchanges
and the revealing of invisible energies as prime movers through their
omnipresence.

In the autumn of 1965, the seeds of a comprehensive cybernetic
art exhibition were nutured by Jasia Reichardt of the Institute of
Contemporary Art in London, England, and was finally held there from
August through October of 1968, eliciting great interest with science
fiction-like abstractions and turn-on-yourself mind blowers. Called
CYBERNETIC SERENDIPITY (Serendipidity being "the faculty of making
happy chance discoveries"), this show became resident at the Dupont
Center of the Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C. from July
15th to the end of August 1969.

"SERENDIPITY AND INDETERMINANCY. Art's a way we have for
throwing out ideas- ones we've picked up in or out of our
heads. What's marvelous is that as we throw them out- they
generate others, ones that weren't even in our heads to be-
gin with." - JOHN CAGE from A YEAR FROM MONDAY, excerpted in
the catalog for CYBERNETIC SERENDIPITY.

Only several blocks from Dupont Circle, the Tompkins Square
equivalent in Washington, the Dupont Center (formerly the Washington
Gallery of Modern Art before its acquisition by the mammouth Corcoran)
now housed three floors of alternatingly involving and alienating cy-
bernetic games and probings; the brilliant pebbles of Isaac Newton's
child on the shore of an immense unknown sea. Upon entering, it was
very likely to see school children improvising sounds on David
Tucker's ELECTRIC MUSIC BOX, twirling potentiometer dials to create
"sound patterns which are totally random dependent upon the position
of the knobs." Ultimate feedback was generated by the view of a
computer generated portrait of Norbert Wiener, whose gray scale was
composed of the density of two-digit number "bits," a digital Norbert
Wiener by
H. Philip Peterson of the Control Data Corporation Digigraphics
Laboratories, Burlington, Massachusetts.

The early relation of metaphysics to pre-cybernetic systems was
presaged by the Spanish visionary theologian Raymond Lull in the

and his LOGIC MACHINE equated 136 conbinations of the "attributes of
God, states of the soul, and the seven virtues and the seven deadly
sins," a primal binary, digital "either/or" machine. The French phy-
sicist Lissajous really started something with his discovery of "the
series of plane curves traced by an object executing two mutually
perpendicular harmonic montions," familiar to any modern oscilloscope
practitioner, and further inspired innumerable automatic "drawing
machines" like the toy spirograph, and several included in Cybernetic
Serendipity, the Pendulum-Harmonigraph of Ivan Moscovitch, the Meccano
(English Erector Set equivalent) constructed MECHANICAL PATTERNMAKER
of Roy E. Allen, and the gigantic PENDULUM DRAWING MACHINE designed by
John Ravilious, originally conceived to generate all-over repeat pat-
tern wallpapers, consisting of a paper-holding swinging board and a
pencil-holding swinging bar.

> "The machine consisted of a swinging board (heavily weight-
> ed) on which the paper is placed, and a separate swing bar
> (solenoid operated) with the pencil. The board swings with
> two motions: 1. a basic circular motion, and 2. another rot-
> ary swing at double the frequency. The pen swings over the
> small distance at four times this frequency ... to do large
> designs of variable complexity which might be suitable for
> framing as decorative works of art." - JOHN RAVILIOUS.

A full spectrum of audio-visual and tactile experiences awaited
the visitor to CYBERNETIC SERENDIPITY, free to interpolate the mani-
fold manifestations of "switched-on" wizardry on any of the innumer
able levels of physical and metaphysical understanding, from sophis-
ticated playtoys to completely operating closed information systems.
"Don't forget that a poem, even though it is composed in the language
of information, is not used in the language-game of giving
information." - LUDWIG WITTGENSTEIN in ZETTEL.

Experiences accessible at CYBERNETIC SERENDIPITY ranged from cop-
ious graphics and texts (many of which were available in the printed
catalogue, CYBERNETIC SERENDIPITY: The Computer And The Arts, Praeger,
an invaluable reference work on the present state of cybernated art)
to mind shattering programmed experiences such as English cybernetic-
ist Christopher Evan's CYBERNETIC INTROSPECTIVE PATTERN-CLASSIFIER,

or CIPC, inwhich people looking in were "given a brief, bright flash
of a pattern which plants an image on the retina in such a wat that
it can be seen after with eyes closed, for one or two minutes... The
patern can be seen to fragment and change its form, and these forms
are probably the basic perceptual units used by the brain in
recognizing the pattern... watch one's own cerebral processes
actually in action." Imprint a floating peace sign in your sign.
The CIPC typifies the basic conceptual unity of the show, which was
primarily predominant over the purely visual and sensual at the
highest level of cognition. Dupont Center's Arian curator, Renato
Danese, thought the show existed on many levels, as compared with
the New York Museum of Arts and Crafts cybernetic show which was
more cerebral and less fun perhaps, with a lot of reading matter.
"What we've done here," added Renato, "is to allow you, if you're
compulsive that way, to read all the material. If not, there's
enough visually reinforcing graphics whose images you can go away
with, plus the fun that the machines might give you."
Embodying the intangible apperception of hidden meanings and forces,
Juan Downer, a 29 year old Chilean technological artist, resident at
that time in Washington and one of the local supplements to the
international show, presented a purely phenomenological experience in
his ENERGY FROM BEYOND THESE WALLS. "Sculpture No. 1 is sensitive
to 4 kinds of outer energy: atomic disintegration or cosmic rays,
radio waves in the neighborhood, aircraft radio waves, and radar
waves. It is also sensitive to one inner form of energy, it's own
heat. Any one of these forms of energy when present will activate a
distant tone in an electronic organ."
"All this," added Downey, "is a input that the sculpture possesses to
produce an output that we never hear- it's a little system in itself-
it doesn't allow the public to participate in it at all. The sculpture
transmits the input of each signal to another Sculpture No.

2 upstairs, which complains when it doesn't recieve a signal, and
trans. mits a radio signal to No. 1 which plays the electronic organ.
It's actually a game between two little electronic brains- very
primary ones- bit it's a game between the two of them activiated by
outer energies. An earlier piece of mine had formica shapes that would
rock back and forth (at Downey's extensive One-Man show at the
Corcoran last January) because of the repulsion in electromagnets when
certain fre-

quency radio waves were received by it: citizen's band channels 23 and 10, which are used by the police and fire departments. So these types of people were activating the sculpture without knowing it, and that was part of the fun- making people work for you. I guess at some point people will become sensitive enough so we'll be able to start playing with them, but at a new level- They will start producing waves or something that activate machines and make other people play. These are simple games- perhaps we can get into a higher game with energy in the future. I guess eventually the main direction will be imitating mental processes with systems of machines- like the way people think or feel." (NOTE: Juan Downey began to integrate closed circuit video into environmental installion pieces frequently after this, with LIFE CYCLE at the electric Gallery in Toronto, INVISIBLE ENERGY DICTATES A DANCE CONCERT at the New York Filmmakers' Cinematheque in 1970, PLATO NOW (utilizing alpha-wave detectors, 9 performers, 9 video-channels and 9 audio-recordings of quotations from Plato's Dialogues) at the Everson Museum in Syracuse in 1973. His VIDEO TRANS AMERICA and trips with video equipment to the Amazon and other regions in South America **propelled** him into prolific videotape production to this day.)

Making people aware of the invisible and the intangible is a new aspect of contemporary art, casting a lingering ear and eye-on subtle surational phenomena. Buckmister Fuller has long been fond of pointing out that the majority of Human experiences occur "within the invisiable realms of the electromagnetic spectrum."

"One can observe the duration of a phenomenon by *uninterrupt*ed observation or by trials. The observation of duration may be continuous or intermittent." - LUDWIG WITTGENSTEIN.

        "The name I put on my piece for the show is KINETIC PRESSURE PAIN-TING," stated Mexican-born artist Arturo Cuetara, whose work was seen in the seminal Experiments In Art and Technology show at the Brooklyn Museum. "Pressure creates the actual color in the plexiglass piece by affecting the molecular structure of the material with 6000 lbs. of pressure on four points from an automatic hydraulic Jack, the stress patterns made visible by polarization and modulated by the spectator's

own foot. I realized that this piece is a self-portrait of when I

was an expressionist pain⁻ter, *painting* my head off to the point
where it was about to crack. One paints to survive and most of the
time one doesn't succeed. Who says Van Gogh is dead? I think
plexiglass **works can be seen** as a building for light in a scale for
the eye to enter and the mind to move within. You cannot exhaust it,
and you can spend a lifetime trying to look and look, and you can
always find new experiences. It's like my encyclopedia."

"An elaboration of the Lissajous oscillographic technique" was
utilized in Hugh Riddle's and Anthony Pritchett's SIDEBANDS 1968, where
"surfaces have been substituted for the lines of the classic Lissajous
figure," using a complex of high frequency sideband signals (above and
below the unmodulated carrier put out by a transmitter). The system was
originally designed to generate a Moebius strip for a BBC-TV science
fiction title sequence. One could once again program one's head
electronically, lotus-positioned before a 10 by 12 inch CRT.

On the third floor, tripping past Wen Ying Tsai's organically
undulating CYBERNETIC SCULPTURE whose vibrating rods are "in constant
harmonic motion in an electronically activated environment" altered
by modulating high frequency strobe flashes, one then encountered Nam
June Paik's multifarious PARTICIPATION TVs with kaleidoscopic ghost
images of oneself, sound-modulated neon color triangles and meditation-
ally monotonous (in the most intense mantras *manifestation* sense) man-
dalas. Downstairs, on Thursdays, Charloote Moorman played Paik's TV BRA
NO. 2, activated by the live cello performances and incidental magnetic
articulations. Twice daily, the gallery showed computer generated films
by Stan Vanderbeek, John Whitney, Bell Labs computer sci

entists, and English experiments in a workshop back of Paik's room. high energy discharge of CYBER- Simultaneously freneticizing the the resignation of the Corcoran
Gallery's Director, James Harithas two weeks before the show's opening,
uncurred by his indignation at the stultifying conservatism of bur-
eaucratic administration. "With 50 or 60 people, including a Board of
Trustees, dictating over the Director, how can a museum program be free
and open-minded," Harithas pointed out. Washington area artists united in
sympathy, and Barnett Newman removed his OBELISK sculpture, by that time
an established landmark before the Corcoran main building, refusing an
offer by the institution to bt,7 the painted sculpture for

an estimated sum of $150,000. "An era ends," moaned the Washington
Post: "The resignation... of the man who put Washington on the
national map artistically... left the art community stunned and
discouraged.

"It's the same everywhere," remarked Harithas: "There's a whole
conservative ethic that makes it very difficult to move freely,
people interferring with the program and what I consider my own
creative ac ademic freedom to show things that I like. In the large
Corcoran building, we had Black Power militants sponsoring events,
concerts by Sun Ra and Pharoh Sanders; we showed anti-war films
three years ago to shocked audiences, and we now have 30 ghetto
projects going on, and we broughtthe first set of rock-and-roll
groups into a museum context, also stressing the interaction between
museums and artists, known and unknown. With Black theater, commune
events and inexpensive community interchanges, the best compliment
that was ever paid me was from one of the most militant guys I've
ever met, who told me: 'You changed things for me; I'm still
militant, but I don't feel that nad anymore, baby.' We've had big
scale exhibitions where when the artist ran out of studio space or
had ambitious ideas, I would turn a gallery in the building complex
over to him for a studio. One worked for-four months, produced a
whole show, and then put it up directly on the walls surrounding
him, and there it was- very simple. The museum becomes a
kind of open forum, so you don't have this incredible one year gap
between the actual germination of the idea and its presentation.
But I found checks and balances at every point here."

(NOTE: Shortly after his resignation from the Corcoran, James
Harithas became Director of the Everson Museum of Art, which then
pioneered the first Video Art department, bringing in David Ross as
cur ator in that area, and instituting the first extensive video art
touring show CIRCUITS in 1973 and a number of important video
installations exhibitions including Frank Gillette and Douglas
Davis.)

"Harithas was instrumental in getting CYBERNETIC SERENDIPITY
into the Dupont Center," reflected Renato Danese: "The Smithsonian
had been interested in importing the show from London, and it
arrived in lousy shape, with crates broken and transistors

it, working day and night for a month at the Smithsonian, a week
assembling it here, artists working with technicians to get it
together, for about $5,000. Now it's in shape for any museum to take
it over inexpensively, to have an operable show with minimum budget,
instead of a hassle."
"We're trying to get backing for a Media Center proposal, hoping for
grants from the Justice Department and Health, Education and Welfare.
We're thinking more and more about the museum's responsiblity beyond
it's walls, it's extension into the community, and the responsibility
that's implicit, being responsive to various community groups ranging
from black to white," continued Danese. "We believe that a brcik
through a window is somehow akin to a paintbrush in somebody's hand.
We want to initiate a Media Center where people can work it out
through media, from the traditional ways to more sophisticated dev-
ices, and provide a constructive alternative to socially unacceptable
behavior. Film, TV and videotape would all be involved in the Center,
to direct that kind of self-awareness and learning about your
environment by seeing it in front of you graphically. The 12th &
Oxford gang in Philadelphia, which has a high juvenille delinquency
rate, were given filming equipment by YOU (Youth Organizations
United) and produced a film called JUNGLE. During and after the
production, the crime rate in Philadelphia went down considerably.
That's a constructive alternative to what those kids were doing
before; they've learned a hell of a lot. That's akin to one aspect of
what we want to do here. Hanging paintings on the wall is fine, but
maybe we can accomplish something else."

FRANK GILLETTE: Proces And Meta-Process

> "As you investigate videotape you enter into another re-
> ality. You investigate taped reality in a way which is pec-
> uliar to itself. No other medium quite gives you the ad-
> vantages. What I'm trying to do it to develop a grammar,
> a syntax. A way of relating evolves from this probing,
> this experimentation with the media in terms of
> holistic phenomena. In terms of the language of
> television, one assembles some kind of asthetic that is
> intrinsic to television." - FRANK GILLETTE from A
> VIDEOVIEW OF FRANK GILLETTE BY WILLOUGHBY SHARP.

FRANK GILLETTE: My Joycean tapes were done in 1971, under the group
title EYESORE THE END AS SHE DANCED UPON MY FLAW: 1. IF YOU WIN YOU
LOSE THE BALL, 2. FIXED LICKS, 3. YOU FOIL THE MOIL, 4. A PRETENDER
TO THE GROAN- done as a four channel composition of 120 minutes
(four 30 minute segments) in AV B&W standard. These four tapes were
designed to be seen simultaneously on a matrix of four monitors; an
advanced version of that was shown on eight screens, two **screens** per
track,
at the Avant Garde Festival in New York in
1971JUD: At the Park Avenue Armory.

FRANK: At that point, I was mixing it live. The Joycean tapes were
done basically between 1970 and 1971, started in the fall of 1970.
I was living on Charles Street, and they were done over that
winter, and finished in the spring of 1971. The first two were
finished relatively quickly. What I was working with was something
I given a considerable amount of thought to since, but very little
work with. I've chosen to work among another set of problems.
Videotape has a peculiar sense, in that it seems somehow more
accountable for reality than other media. Every new medium has
always claimed this, so it's nothing new that videotape has
claimed this. That being true, it in no way diminishes that fact
that somehow or another you can't distinguish betwen live and
taped TV, if the tape is functioning properly. There's no
distinction in the image of a live tape, of a live performance and

So what happens when you begin operating on that aspect of its sense of reality, in terms of a highly discontinuous mosaic of ideas? Because reality as seen through television is highly sequential, and almost linear; it has all the linear attributes, you know; one idea follows from another, and the continuity of image establishes a certain flow in time, and 99% of television you see is like that. So what I was involved in was fragmenting that sense of time; in the way that Joyce fragmented the literary genre, by introducing personal mythology with more objective circumstances, and the immediate environment that I was living in

JUD: The telescopic metaphor.

FRANK: But metaphors which are also very classic in the thing that video does, and very much involved with still-life, the idea that still-life is something that you point at and frame, as opposed to paint.

JUD: This derives from the original compositional sense that you've had in the past.

FRANK: Completely. In a way, they were a levelling off of it. There's another tape for single screen entitled HARK HORK in a similar vein, similar but not identical. HARK HORK is from FINNEGAN'S WAKE; it's a line in it, and it's also Joycean in the sense that it deals with a mosaic, not in the original sense of a mosiac, but in the diffuseness.

JUD: McLuhanistic?

FRANK: McLuhanistic in the sense that all television is a mosaic. I'm saying that in television there is an attitude that tend to produce short bits of discrete time as compositional elements. I take these short bits of discrete elements and rearrange them such that they form discontinuous shifts in your experience of the thing being experienced. They're reinforced in a very diffuse way, not reinforced through the redundancy of the image or the continuity of the image. They're reinforced in another way which is much more diffuse. And that's what I mean by mosaic, not what McLuhan means. You can call all television a mosaic, and also iconographic, which he does, although it's probably more iconographic than it is mosaic. It's a mosaic, but you don't see the parts on TV. Mosaic implies that you see parts as well as the total effect. The total effect of television is never the parts; it's always a whole, a sensuous, continuous whole, like life

 JUD: Print matter as it's used today is often in a mosaic form.
FRANK: Right. The front page of THE NEW YORK TIMES is a mosaic of
information. The four-part Joycean tape was all shot with a portapak
and edited, and all shot in New York, mostly on Charles Street. I
was living uptown on 57th Street for a short while where I shot most
of the still-life work. The tape was actually 25 minutes, 4 parts
times 25. There are three specific portriats in the tape: Marco
Vassi, one is of Harvey Simmons, and the third is Constance
Abernathy, but the portriats again are Just taking snatches, and the
qualifying aspect of any snatch that's chosen to enter into the
total composition is somehow or another representative of their sen-
sibility, and their force. I mean, it may not make discrete sense
with what was said prior to it, but in a sense I'm trying to estab-
lish an energy flow and the fragmentary or mosaic aspect of it,
which was the discontinuity of what they were talking about, and
what they were referring to. What made them consistent in your head,
or what reinforced their image on you, was not the content of what
they were saying, but it was in their manner, or their gait, and at
times also what they said, in their rap, which is another Joycean
parallel.
JUD: There were other tapes in that cycle.

FRANK; Yes, I consider them a cycle. They, and one single other
tape: TORTOISE TEMPLATES (1971-2) represent the work being done, a
four part and a single part.
JUD: Which all relate to the I'Ching.

 FRANK: Right, the I'Ching, and it's also all still-life. TORTOISE
TEMPLATES is the tape that's reproduced in the book BETWEEN PARADIGMS.
Those stills are from it, and it was like the culmination of those
four tapes. It was work done as a result of having spent six months
doing that four part tape, and once I had done it, it all came to me
in one tape for a single screen. It's the same, only more purified,
more distilled, in a way.
JUD: What determined the choice of stills as it's laid out in
BETWEEN PARADIGMS?

FRANK: The idea behind putting them in the book is that they were done
simultaneous with most of that work. I wanted to put something that I

stratified simultaneity. I was doing these drawings, I was writing
these ideas, and these are examples of what I was doing from the
tape, all about the same time, same period, same cycle. I didn't want
to take bits from each tape. I didn't want to give anything that
would give any sense of collecting a history, so it's all from one
tape, which
 is basically a collection of very, very dense still-lifes shot with

a tivicon in the dark with a strobe, complete darkness and a
completely bright image alternating. And still-lifes with mirrors
and flowers and shell life. And all that work ended in the spring
of 1971.
 JUD: I felt that they were some of the finest examples of
editing in the production of videotape up to that point.
 FRANK: It was the first time I ever say edits which were less *than*
a second; I was working with third of a second edits, and that was
due to the facilities of Andy *Mann.* Andy can play the virtuous at
the wheel.

JUD: Can you say something about the cooperation with Andy Mann?
How that came about?

FRANK: I met [Andy. at]() *Antioch* College in 1969 when Ira Schneider
and I were doing the residency at Antioch
 JUD: Which we discussed at *length* in an earlier piece

 FRANK: (Laughter) Right. To excessive *lengths.* And then Andy
disappeared for a few years and he emerged in New York to work for
Global Village, and Andy became quite adept at *psyching* out video
hardware. Somewhere Rauschenberg says: "I never learned to weave
canvas either" and I have the same attitude; I see it as an
equivalent. If you want to get into the engineering aspects of the
medium, if that's your
bag, alright, but there's no requirement, I don?t think. I think
you can do video, in the same relationship that a painter has to
canvas which he doesn't weave. He works on it, he works with it; it
comes weaved, and that's how I see the engineer function in video.
And Andy happened to be the most capable weaver, and also willing
and able to work with the erratic nature of what I was thinking
about it. JUD: Erratic, but progressive nature.

FRANK: Right. We learned a whole new language, a language which
was as much a mutual phenomenon as it was mine.

JUD: In terms of language, I know that Paul Ryan has been **getting**

how you relate to the way, for example that he sees the dyadic nature
of language in the suject and predicate, because you're very strongly
into language.
FRANK: I think life is breath and words are shaped breath. Language
is the sahpe of life. There's an instinct to put language down. Where
it emerges from, I really don't know. It strikes me as an idiotic
one. I'm not saying that any critique of language is idiotic; I'm
saying that this notion that somehow the facility with words or a
degree of articulation is somehow thought of as being glib, or
verbose
JUD: Certain conceptualists see words as conveyances which are
necessary for full expression, for communication.
FRANK: I don't think you solve anything moving away from
language, unless you enter into total silence. If you agree to
talk at all, then you go all the way, and you speak with as much
subtletyJUD: Right. Go the whole hog.
FRANK: Precisely. Which is not to say that shutting up for two
yearsI wouldn't go as far as Meher Baba- but I would try it, and at
some point hang up, which would a good thing if I could commit
myself to living in circumstances in which that would not be an
encumbrance. Then I would do it.
JUD: Well, you have called yourself an
excessivist. FRANK: An excessiveist. That's true.
(Laughter)
JUD: Feeling the need for communication of a certain caliber.

FRANK: That's true. I wouldn't say as much communication of a
certain caliber as a certain kind of interaction of a certain
caliber.
JUD: How would you distinguish between communication and interaction?
FRANK: I wouldn't. I agree with you there. They're identical. Commun-
ication is a bit more explicit, in terms of nuance. But words have
short spans. It's strange. They have to be ressurected and reinsisted.
Some mystic said that about the biggest barrier to truth is the over
familiar word; that was Gareth Knight.
JUD: Words in language have to mutate.

FRANK: Sure. They not only mutate, but they're cycled and recycled,
and you've got two periods of issuing disorienting references into

Carson wrote her book; you say "ecology" and it had to be grafted onto your sense of that word and its attendant complexes; you realize that it's become a buzzword, and that it's over. It slips in too easily and is dismissed as well, because conceptions of it have been so diluted and forced to conform with the lowest standards of its us

age. All words are somehow subject to this. Some never get past the intial stage, but those that do suffer this cycle, this evolution of buzzing, this evolution of the value and the introduction of the word in terms of what it does to your total sensibility when it's used. If it simply reinforces everything there already, there are no new differences, and it's useless, in my *opinion.* The language should always be used as a heuristic device, as well as not only a device for the organic monitor between us as a species, the infrastructure of our species' special content. It should be used also as a heuristic device, a device with which you discover new connections through the *introduction* of concepts and new ideas. Even in a random way, this has held true, in a sense.
JUD: You see the videotape process as an analgous way.

FRANK: Yes, I do. You can think about them in terms which are the same. JUD: Some ideas might manifest one way and some another. FRANK: Completely.

JUD: And also in the graphic senseFRANK: For my own work, it does
JUD: Would you say those were the three predominant outputs, aside from the projection of ideas through extensions of personality and actuality, like rapping or teaching?
FRANK: Teaching. I do a lot of seminar work. Those are very different because the people I have contact with there are usually fresh; I've never had contact with them before. The whole thing just starts over again in a new way, and I like that feeling.
JUD: It's an *introduction* to morphology.

FRANK: Yes, and it's more basic than what we're rapping about. You and

I more or less understand each other, some sense of connection. Oh, I've also been working with shells a lot, as you can see around here
JUD: And horseshoe crabs

JUD: One piece here has the progression of size diminishing
upwards, in a totemic form- of different sized horseshoe crabs.
FRANK: There are 14 of them, which was how many I discovered in
Wainscot over the summer. It was an effort to find them; I went to
the beach every day. It's like a record, if you live on the beach for
a summer, collecting those and using that as material for a piece.
The one behind you I collected last summer
JUD: That's a large horseshoe crab surrounded by a necklace of
the eel skulls

FRANK: Which is surrounded by pheasant feathers found in the potato
fields, which come up to the sea in that part of Long Island. Not even
by looking, but just by keeping your eye open for a serendipitous
connect, and that's how it came to 14. Until the last day at the beach,
I had 13; I would have had 13 to work with, and the significance of
that, but 14 in the I-Ching is probably the most favorable of the

Chings, POSSESSION IN GREAT MEASURE; it's the simplest and the most
straight forward. It just says "Sublime success, supreme success" and
gives no qualification whatsoever. I like that correspondence.
JUD: How do you relate your continuing interest in the usage of the
I=Ching as an adjunct or part of process of the progression of your
work?

FRANK: It's part of the ground out of which the work can be seen as
a figure, or as different figures.

JUD: You've been doing it for how long now?

FRANK: Every day for about four years.

JUD: And sometimes more frequently.

FRANK: Right. Under certain circumstances, but there are days I've
skipped, but they're exceptions. When I have a lot of traveling, I just
don't get around to it; it's not fortuitous at all then, but basically
daily. And it's an excuse for reading it, which is basically where it's
at.

JUD: Of course, it's the process way of reading the book. The
earliest process book known to mankind.

FRANK: Returning to the term interactive, all books, in a sense, are
communicative. The Ching is interactive. I like its relationship be-
tween the general and the specific. It always refers to the general
in

the most specific way, which is exactly what it's about. It estab-
lishes your specificity every day with the general, in the bigger
context. And it does that in an unfailing way for me.
JUD: One of the aimes of your work is to achieve that kind of spec-
ificity

FRANK: And generality at the same time. I've never thought of myself
as having a name, I must say.

JUD: I know that at one point you called yourself an experimental
epistemologist, a term from Warren McCullough.
FRANK: That was half tongue-in-cheek, not quite all the way. And I
would say still that my work is episttemological. The show at the
Everson is evidence of that. It's about knowing processes as much as
it is about anything else. I mean, the medium I'm involved in, the
feedback pieces, the biological pieces, are in a sens epistemological.
And I did take the term from McCullough, with whom I was infatuated at
the time I said it probably, and with whom I'm still infatuated, as a
matter of fact, who has continued to blow my mind.
JUD: What particular aspects of his work?

 FRANK: His sense of neurological models. I'm told, for example, now
that all of the McCullough-Pitts models are no longer operable in neuro-
physiological labs, but that doesn't make any difference. It was the
elegance with which these models were corrected and assembled by
McCullough, and the kind of thinking he through is exemplary. It's not
that the specificity he wound up with is still applicable; that's not
the issue; the issue is the model which he dealt with, data and
structure and reformed structure by new data and reinforced data by
applying old structure to it, and linking ideas in a very, very beau-
tiful way. He'd work everything from metaphysical concepts and the re-
lationships of those to actualities, yes-no sparks that travel through

a synapse, zero/one, on/off
JUD: He was very conscious of the forms of the process
FRANK: He was a poet basically, as well
slight tongue-in-cheek deference to McCullough, I called myself an
perimental epistemologist, which doesn't mean that I didn't mean it;
I still am, I think. But I don't know what I'd call myself no. I have
no name. I have a sense of what I'm doing-
JUD: The experimental period has ended?

 FRANK: Sent out of use. discontinued.
 (Laughter) JUD: What about Gregory Bateson?
 FRANK: Bateson's influence on my thinking is enormous. All my model-
 ling concepts come from Bateson and McCullough and Wittgenstein, in
 my opinion. I accepted those ideas in such a way that I built from
 that. JUD: That's your foundation.

FRANK: Right. They share in my thinking the groundwork, the basework,
and since I still maintain a relationship with Bateson, both in read-
ing and writing, and seeing him on occasion, it's strong. The concept
in THE ECOLOGY OF MIND is enormous; it has an enormous effect on you
if you really link all its parts. I think his concept of learning, as
of evolution as a huge learning devie basically- which is what the
universe does- the universe evolves and what evolution is is just a
learning process. So the thing is always not what it was. It's always
in the state of becoming, and now we've got to get the hang of what
that is and to understand how the stratifications work within that
process, again going from degrees of specificity to generality.
There's really
a great beauty and extraordinary clarity to his thought; he's
just very, very lucid. Make it as lucid as possible.
JUD: Do you value the additive process?

FRANK: I think both approaches work. I think you accumulate and
then edit. You accumulate and then reorganize.
JUD: And in some Zen moments you work from the source

FRANK: Between those two. Sometimes youedit as you collect or
accumulate. Shells are an example of that.
JUD: And the tapes are put together with that sensibility.

FRANK: It depends upon which tape. Let's talk about that later
work at the Everson show (of 1973).

>   "Floor plan: thirty monitors positioned equidistant
>   around a circle in three sets of ten. Each set of ten
>   arranged in an equilateral triangle, programming over two
>   a & b channels simultaneously (a total of six channels
>   over thirty monitors, each channel a video track, 25
>   min.)" - FRANK GILLETTE.

on four screens, arranged in three equilateral triangles. I had a
specific sense of what I wanted to do and that was determined by
the hardware that was available.
JUD: I believe it was a perfectly square room.

FRANK: Yes. And it was largest room in the musuem. And the piece was a
c1crcle with about a 25 foot diameter around which it was built. I
began working on those tapes, those six tapes; each tapes of a differ-
ent ecological or geographical phenomenon: the first is the ocean, and
the second is a pasture, and the third is the ocean as well, only
played in the other direction, its dunes, and there's one of a lake
and a pond, there's one of a stream, and one of a glen. And each of
these serves as a base of interaction, and on top of **each** of the six
tapes the thing is enfolded upon itself, the material is made denser
and denseer through editing. When the six tracks are played together,
they are interlocking and their references are as much to their
differences and selections on rhythms of changes, as they are for the
ecological processes concerned; like the ocean is one, the ocean
beach, dune, and then a glen and the stream, and then all four
seasons, a waterfall in the pit of winter, a pond in the spring, the
beach in
the summer. I was trying to establish an informational process which
emulated the actual ecological processes of inter-relation, and then
at the same time, the content being those very processes in the
sense of seascapes, landscapes, using a very traditional form.
JUD: How do you feel that formation piece related to its
title? FRANK: TETRAGRAMMATON, from the Talmud
JUD: Or the Kabala.

FRANK: I got it out of the Kabala, but it's a Talmudic concept.
(NOTE: The tetragrammaton YHVH, "the explicit name' or "the
complete name" which gives the possibility of the direct
actualization of the divine presence.)
        "Re-networking the associations thru vectors of temporal
        reference. Translating the data into inforseen mytho-
        poetic contexts. Renewing shapes. Thus:
a b b b a b a b b a DESCRIPTION: An equilateral matrix of ten monitors
compos-

ing two channels of simultaneous
material. - FRANK GILLETTE in BETWEEN
PARADIGMS.

JUD: There is a real sense of sculpture as a basic tool in the crystallization of the concept of lucidity as manifested in that piece. The sense of lucidity and crystallization seem generally important to your work.

FRANK: Yes. Someone called it lean and stark, stark but sensual. That was the synthesized response I got from people who were willing to talk about their reactions to the show, and also prior to the show. JUD: Perhaps a kind of sensual austerity.

FRANK: Yes. Stark indulgence. And I don't know if it's a conscious effort, but it's always been in my work even before I got into videotape. The painting are painted very stark, but sensual

JUD: They do have a asnese of tactility

FRANK: And monotone color. A tactility that can be recognized and read. JUD: In other words, you limit the aperture of the tactility, at which point it becomes infinite.

FRANK: Through the eye of the needle. (Laughter) It's very nice to talk about your own work that way. I mean, I have no idea what the ultimate response of the value of the work will be, no way of determining that except for the satisfactions of one's own vanity, of which I have a considerable wealth. I wish my divinity was equal to my vanity. I'm holding my own. Vanity has not been vanquished yet. JUD: What about the preparation of some of the other Everson pieces? FRANK: We can talk about the entrance piece TRACK/TRACE, which had 15 monitors, again a triangle

JUD: In stacks on steps.

FRANK: Precisely. It had three cameras, and a four level time base. That is to say, the audience walked into a room and they were picked up by a camera and fed back in real time, in the present tense, into the apex monitor, and 3 seconds later their image appeared twice on the next level, simultaneously with appearing on two monitors, and then on three monitors on the next level six seconds later, on four monitors on the next level nine seconds later, and twelve second later of the five monitors of the bottom level; and then the image on the screen is fed in from three different camera. every 8

porate one's physical sense of space and time into the phenomenon contemplated, so it becomes a dimensionalized contemplation of self. What you're seeing going on is your image being relocated every 8 seconds spatially, while it's being relocated temporally every 3 seconds, and it's multiplying in direct relationship to the advancement in the past. You see the present 3 seconds, 6, 9 and 12, and you have an electronic trail, so to speak, of your image in time and space, a constantly changing composition, and this is the phenomenon comtemplated. JUD: Information decay.

FRANK: It's entropy, in a way, and the redundancy which **emphasizes entropy, acquired** in time, maintaining fidelity to do something, and it's diminishing. It's either more redundancy or less noise. In face, it can be the same thing, generating less noise and repitition.

"TRACK/TRACE incorporates the audience as content. The viewer becomes the information, which he receives both in real time and in four layers of delayed time, so that he experiences 'self' at five different periods in time, simultaneously; and from three different points in space, sequentially." - FRANK GILLETTE

FRANK: There's nothing much else to say about that piece except that it's a distillation of other work; I've worked with this image concept before
JUD: First with WIPE CYCLE

FRANK: WIPE CYCLE and AMPS WATTS AND VOLTS are the two pieces that it's most closely related to, first at the Howard Wise show and then at the 1970 Brandeis VISION AND TELEVISION show.
JUD: Would you call it a further
sophisticationFRANK: Yes, and it's also a
distillation.
JUD: In what way exactly would you say?

FRANK: In the earlier pieces, the time delay function, the time scrambling, was mixed with extraneous material, tape material and off-air material. It's a question of selecting out one cycle and working with that single cycle, as opposed to mixing 3 cycles, or 4 ever, with an accent on the distillation, I wanted to work on that alone and this was the idea that I came up with. And I wanted to disturb also the concept of it being a physical thing, dealing with its physicality in a way I hadn't dealt with beofre. Probably AMPS WATTS

the first time I dealt with that physicality, trying to do something about its physical extension in space which was different.

> "AMPS, VOLTS AND WATTS is an exploration of the interface-space existing between two rows of five monitors, face to face, parallel to the floor and serparated by a distance of 14 inches. The viewers 'live image' interacts with a spectrum of video data on tape through feedback from the monitors. An accompanying audio collage and score completes the loop... Two sequences (cycles) operate continuously and simultaneously:
>
> Cycle A- Monitors 1,2,3,4,5: Camera A alternates with the tape deck #1 every ten seconds.
>
> Cycle B- Monitors 6,7,8,9,10: Camera B alternates with tape deck #2 every ten seconds. - FRANK GILLETTE.
> (NOTE: Camera A and B face each other on either end of the horizontal matrix, and the monitors are alternated with odd numbers on on level and even on the other: 1,7,3,9,5 and 6,2,8,4,10.)"

FRANK: AMPS, VOLTS AND WATTS was built for the VISION AND TELEVISION show, done in January 1970; the hardware waa from the Carpenter Center at Harvard, and it was a ten monitor piece with 5 monitor facing downward, and 5 monitors facing upward, perpendicular to you and parallel

to the ground, creating a corridor of imagery. The two cameras at either end picked up the audience and interacted with 2 pretaped materials, and switched back and forth over the ten monitors going up and down. You looked down the corridor and you saw your image of you looking down the corridor, switching from location back and forth over the ten monitors, and mixed with pre-taped material. I think TRACK/TRACE is a distillation of that.

JUD: Also, TRACK/TRACE was integrated into the other works at the Everson show.

FRANK: Right. It had a feed out from the live time which fed into a ten part matrix in the third gallery, which mixed it with material from gallery 4 and gallery 3, and it was of all different life processes at different stages of development with different commentaries on their growths. Gallery 3 was a large ecological piece, the first one I've

ever built, the large TERRAQUAE, and in it I built two 10 by 6
by 9 foot cases, terrariums basically.
JUD: Going back to TRACK/TRACE, can you relate your experiences
in relation to the viewers?
FRANK: Well, I never have had quite such an experience before or
since. I had a glimpse of it at the Howard Wise Gallery. But because
the Everson was a museum, they had tours every day before museum
hours, preplanned tours of grade school children; practically every
day
there was a mass of children who came through the museum before
hours were officially open, and that's when I was usually there,
getting my shit together or giving a seminar or hanging out or
fixing something. So, I saw a lot of interaction between these kids
and that piece, and what struck me was that it released a kind of
activity in them that I had never anticipated;. and it certainly
didn't do an equivalent mode with adults. Adults tried to play it
cool in front of it, like they tried to psych it out, but the kids,
as soon as they got into it, they began dancing and actively
interacting with it and with each other, mostly by dancing, moving
their arms about, with incredible screeching laughter all the time.
Enormous self-enjoyment. Some kids stayed with the piece a very long
time. I found this oddly reassuring, for someone who's been accused
of being such a goddamned snob. (Laughter) I had almost begun to
believe that, by the way. But it was good to dig these children. I
found I was satisfied by the fact that the kids were turned on by
it. They were fascinated with the rest of the show, especially the
ecological pieces, but they were really turned on by that experience
of themselves.
JUD: The 3rd and 4th galleries were the ecological pieces.

FRANK: Yes. They were essentially the same piece. The chicken
gestattion piece was like an addendum piece. But it's more of a
system than a piece. It's a system of discrete parts and discrete
processes, all integrated- a systemic piece.
JUD: The entire show was designed as a system.

FRANK: Yes. It was designed as one piece, hence the point of
linking gallery 1 and 3. When you get to gallery 1 you see the

ation and one from the growth of the chickensJUD: On the ten monitor piece in gallery 3 FRANK: Precisely. It's two images from gallery 4, the gestation was from over the incubator, and the growth of the chickens was inside the geodesic dome
JUD: On either end of the ten monitor matrix

FRANK: Exactly. They function as parathens6s. The ten cases going down the side of gallery 3, and one large flat case on the other side were all different biological processes going on. In some cases, it's symbiotic, and other cases represent a parasitic relationship, and

they also represent the relationship between decay and growth, between growth and stress, and another case, between decay and death. All those were played out, and I chose them not to make a didactic point about biology at all, but purely on aesthetic grounds, and hence they have this arbitrarily determined sense about them. You don't include red in a painting because you're making a didactic point about about the function and all the aspects of red; you choose it because it's an intuitive process that tells you to choose it, that provides you with why you choose it. That's why I chose it. I chose examples from each of the processes, as I understood them. The flat case had two colonies of termites living in, what for them, is a sea of wood, a cherry wood veneer
JUD: A plane of veneer

FRANK: At a 35 degree angle off the wall, 6 feet by 8 feet and a inch wide, filled with cherry veneer and 10,000 subterranean Eastern termites, and this is picked up by a scanning camera which takes a meta-view of it. You can't expect the camera to pick up the activity of a single termite because it's always scanning, so the attitude of the camera is one of a meta-level, and then these meta-levels are brought together to form a continuous pattern, integrating all the various choices of biological interaction as becoming one continuous flow of information, patterned together, with all these scanning cameras, except for the one in the middle and the end, the camera over the incubator and the camera is gallery one are not scanning. All the other cameras move; they scan automatically.
JUD: The geodesic dome used a scanning camera.

FRANK: The dome camera moved 360 degrees, and there's a camera over each of the cases, of course, and there's a camera facing the aud-

ience which is looking at the matrix, and including it.

JUD: What determined the sequence of events within the ten matrix monitors? In terms of their structural placement?

FRANK: It was determined independent of anything inherent in the structure of the thing being conveyed. There are two views of the audience: one is from gallery one and the second is in the third gallery.
JUD: Why were those chosen to be the central images?

FRANK: Because there's a certain symmetry to the gestation and gtowth pieces, and that's where that symmetry best fit.
JUD: What determined the placement of the other six monitors? FRANK: Each monitor conveyed what each camera picked up and sent to the matrix, a scanning image of what was going on. You saw live, from an eye view level, and you saw many levels of the informational process which is gleaned from what you've seen at eye level, from the top level, bird's eye view, which is scanning. There's no intention to improve on the screen what you saw in the flesh at all. It was like a means of commentary as much as a visual representation. It was a commentary on the process. It was taking technology and giving it the function of making a commentary on biological and ecological processes. JUD: Was there any attempt to control the scanning rates of the cameras?

FRANK: It was controlled. I didn't try to make it slower or faster than they could go; there were all variable setting possible, but they moved at the same speed.
JUD: What determined that particular speed?

FRANK: The degree to which the image on the screen, just before it would blur, to move as fast as possible without distorting the image. JUD: Which turned out to be what speed?

FRANK: Pretty fast. Full scan was 15 seconds. JUD: And a return
wasn't distorted by speed, but still nothing was restive.

JUD: An illusion of the video sense of momentum.

FRANK: Precisely. That's what determined it.

JUD: It might be interesting if you could interpolate any relations between these particular configurations and any combinations engen-dered or chosen.

FRANK: The things I chose I have an inherent fascination with, for some reason or another. I instinctually chose them over others. I knew I wanted to work with tarantulas and turtles and iguanas and horseshoe crabs. I wanted to work with old biological forms. The horseshoe crab is about 350 million years old without any substantial change. Arthropods represent a very rare offshoot wing; their phylum is an exceptionally different phylum from the insects, and the tarantula is the largest example available. And the idea of working with that kind of strange form has an intrinsic fascination for me.

I have a personal mythology with turtles which I picked up from the I' Ching, the tortoise shell pattern being the source for the I-Ching, and the iguana is another mystical beast that struck me. I've always had a fascination for iguanas, and some things came about just because of sheer practicality. I wanted to do one life process of gestation and birth and the best thing, interms of convenience and availability of expertise, was with chickens. It was a question of chickens or ducks. I could have done it with doves- that was my original ideabut doves were out of the question; they're too delciate, which would have provided a problem, that delicacy, and chickens are the most reliable. So I got into learning how to gestate a chicken, and I had to do it from scratch. I'm not exactly a framboy. I learned gestation from the beginning. So the piece hatched six or eight chicks every day, and then they entered the dome, and at the end of the piece, you had 30 different levels of chicken, each separated by a day, which introduced strange hierarchy problems.
JUD: In the pecking order.

FRANK: It was very close, and always unstable, since new materials are always changing the stability. However, they had a sense of **community**. I was fascinated by it.
JUD: It was involved in the sociological pattern of chickens.

FRANK: Yes. It was the socio-biology of chickens. I think chickens have been bred to be a certain way because they produce eggs and they are good food, and all the selection and genetic manipulation has been in that direction, and the socio-biology is a byproduct of that. So small units, all acts will be commanded from the large male chicken and

sent down to the lowliest chick and it moves in unison. That's when they're moving. When they're just randomly eating, a certain kind of anarchy takes over. Control is less evident. But once you clap your hands, or get into the piece, you can see it. Which really struck me; I had no expectations- rats or chickens, any kind of Skinnerian simplicity will do.

In describing the parts of the TERRAQUAE "system" or complex, I hesitate to call it a piece. The five cases, nine feet high, six feet long, and 231 feet wide had, in the first case, dead and decaying horseshoe crabs laying in a field of brine with agar and spores, very beautiful really- it was fresh water in a field of chipped rock and the chipped rock **dissolved in the fresh water** producing a chemical reaction, which interacted with the decay of the horseshoe crabs to produce a milieu in which growth was encouraged in the spores through agar pasted on the glass walls of the case. It was a nutritive con-text with a gowth. The decay interaction between the stone and the water and the crab which was the nutritive for the growth of the mold on the surface of the glass.

JUD: Which affected the visibility of the interior.

FRANK: Yes. It was opaque at a certain point in the growth. And this was of course scanned from the top with a camera.

JUD: In a sense, in that piece, you relied more on the view of the scanning camera.

FRANK: In that piece, opacity took over. The next piece was hermit crabs, which represent a kind of parasistic relationship because they crawl into other shells; hermit crabs living in fresh water and sand, and fresh water snails in the water.

JUD: In the original shells in which they were found?

FRANK: At one point in the show, we put in a shell, and one of the hermit crabs exchanged shells. There, the ecology was the relationship between the hermit crab and its shell and actual shells; they're called mystery snails, medium, black, and they look like the kind the French eat. They settled around the water, and around them was the form of life that uses the shell. So there was that kind of commentary, with a scanning camera above.

The next case was supposed to be grasshoppers, and wound up with crickets, and the piece opened with 10,000 crickets, and they were lay-

ing eggs and burying the eggs in the soil of the piece, and
eating the rest of the piece which was leaves and green vegetable
matter. JUD: What kind of leaves?
FRANK: Maple. A whole branch of tree was placed in. It was consumed in
the course of the exhibition. I also put in chicken feed to suplement
their diet, which they can live on as well and was recommended to feed
them, and there were tens of thousands of eggs laid in the piece. The
piece never reached maturity- that's when a noticable degree began
hatching. The eggs were buried in the soil, and at some point there
were so many buried there they began to emerge to the surface.

Just the image of a glass containing 10,000 crickets.

JUD: How long would it have taken for that piece to
mature? FRAN: Maybe another week, or week and a half.
JUD: There were also crickets dying.

FRANK: Yes. After they lay the eggs, they die. So you had live
crickets, crickets dying, and crickets laying eggs; crickets in
three stages. The next piece was toroises and tarantulas. What I
wanted to demonstrate there was two completely impervious systems.
Tortoises and turtles will not eat tarantulas, and tarantulas have
no interest at all in tortoises. They're impervious to each other's
ecologies, immune to each other's necessities, although they can
coexist. And I was involved in the aesthetics of that mix, in
putting tarantulas in with turtles in a very comfortable space, and
watching these two phenomena coexist in terms of space. The habits
of tarantulas are intensely-territorial and the female will hunt
out all males within its range and attempt to kill them after
having sex with them. It's a characteristic of all tarantulas.
JUD: And other spiders also.

FRANK: But tarantulas are the most fierce, I think. And to see
two tarantulas in a death grip is a remarkable sight
JUD: Which occurred at the exhibition?

FRANK: It occurred at the opening. That was quite a cue, the timing
they had. There was this major battle between two of the most domin-
ating females on the back of a large wood turtle. They basically
staked out territory on the back of this turtle who was completely

in fierce conflict on it. In the last case there were two
varieties of iguanas, a larger and a smaller variety
JUD: The smaller ones appeared to be the larger one's childrenFRANK:
Indeed. In fact, they lived on its back, and the iguanas lived on
the top of a bed of geraniums which they ate, which they consumed.
JUD: That's one of their natural foods?
FRANK: Right, a delicacy which they like.

JUD: Probably something they don't get very often, but appreciate.
FRANK: Quite well. The blossoms basically. They also like bananas,
and we supplement. their diet with bananas and insects- meal worms so
I would sprinkle in meal worms at the end of every day I was there,
or someone else would.
JUD: All of the cases were maintained this way?

FRANK: They had to be. The piece was not conceived in terms of a
David Smith sculpture in which you have all this steel and the only
maintenance required is that you throw an oily **towel over it for** a
millenia or two, if you're going to stash it away. When you're
dealing with a process, you're dealing with all the contingencies
that maintain that process; dealing with living phenomena like animal
life increases these necessary contingencies. You have feed them and
maintain the atmosphere in which they thrive. So each of the pieces
had to be dealt with in some way.
JUD: Do you feel that some of the ecological pieces were more
sucessfil coatings or demonstrations than others?
FRANK: I think it sinks or swims as a piece, as a system. You can
talk in terms of parts of the system, but that was simply the
vicissitudes of what was available and the avilable expertise and my
own wit. I would never build the piece again; I wasn't asked to build
an ecological piece, so it was, strictly speaking, a piece confined
to the time and to the state of the art, with which it became
synonymous.

> "The processes occurring in the systems evolve and
> exchange at different rates. The telvision
> cameras/monitors depict these systems as information. The
> audience's participation of both levels produces a third,
> or meta-level." - F.G.

JUD: Are you anticipating the execution of any ecological or

ering games which would utilize ecological processes on a vast scale,
for example, getting into the hypothesis that you can take select data
from satellite surveillance and other ecological modeling systems, and
take those reults and somehow or another interact with them, producing
a new synthesis of interaction, in a game format. Now, this would be
working indirectly with real ecological phenomena. So I've been
thinking abou that. I've not been thinking about building a physical
plan as I built at the Everson. I'm beginning to design a matrix, an
environmental matrix, for the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis,
which will proably not include biological material, taped biological
material, but not live biological material, I don't thin. If there's
a sufficient budget, I migth consider it, but I'm thinking about that
now.
JUD: But there would be human imput? In real time?
FRANK: There would be human imput, a real time imput, in a way that I
have not yet used. I'm just beginning to think about it.
JUD: Are you in a position to discuss the line that you're pursuing?
FRANK: I'm talking about a feedback space which would be determined by
the variability of the positions of camera in the environment. Most
camera angles are expected, hence all the feedback imagery has an an-
ticipated look, a kind of half-life of anticipation, and that half

lifing can be reworked. I'm trying work out camera arrangements,
to sustain a degree of mystery about
and feedback arrangements which the feedback is the audience it
self, in a way I've never used before. I've always used cameras in
a feedback environment in order to clarify and simplify one's orient-
ation. I want to get into making that a much more complex area of in-
teraction. Low,light level cameras, high cameras, different sets of
angles, working with territories being picked up by a whole
new definition of the ways cameras are arranged and information is
fedback.
JUD: Where the cameras are arranged spatially
FRANK: Spatially, and also in the feedback relationships, in
terms   of
the multiplicity of images, the closeness of image, the arrangments of
images and ,juxtapositions. So I'm thinking in much more different dir-
ection again than the pieces which were built at the Everson. At the
Everson, everything was concentrated; it was the culmination of that

wing of thought, at least as I've been entertaining it for the last few years. It was the culmination of one direction. Now I'm working in the other direction.

"PROPOSAL: <u>MAZE</u>, a circular network of intercommunicating paths, 120 <u>ft. in</u> diameter, placed in a field of high grass or dense brush. A congruent, corresponding network of twenty two scanning cameras and **twenty three** monitors positioned at varying intervals along the paths. Feed from the cameras is relayed to a twelve level time-delay loop, such that a participant in the maze always encounters an earlier image of himself as he moves to the center of the network." - FRANK GILLETTE (1972-73) in RADICAL SOFTWARE.

JUD: How do you feel that the structure of your pieces relates to divine geometry?
FRANK: I think they do relate, but I'm not playing out the axioms. I'm interacting with them, and referring to the Kabalah and the use of the triangle.
JUD: What about magic squares?

FRANK: I've never worked with magic squares as a form, but I've worked with the concepts that derive from and around it. For example, a triangle of triangles within a circle, as in TETRAGRAMMATON, and the implied space around a circle, producing in effect, parabolic shapes.
I play with those senses of geometry. I've never tried to institute an ideology that reflects these in any way whatsoever. I take them for the same elemental reasons, compositional reasons, that a painter would choose a color or a specific shape, or a specific setup of juxtapositions in textures and form on a canvas. I just simply choose technological or biological arrangements and produce compositions with them, as opposed to colors and shapes.
    What I'm trying to do is infrom the arrangements with a greater range of reference, as much as I possibly can, without overdoing it. Obviously, there's a point of didacticism which is reached, where a thing sinks in its own sense of reference. It should be free of them, as well as connected to them, at the same time, to somehow embody that complex. So, I'm not trying to introduce any ideology of numbers, or anything. I'm saying that everything is fair game

ical, whatever material, whatever is within my wit or reach, I'm wil-
ling to use. Nothing is sacred, including my own experience of
myself. JUD: How do you relate to work shown in galleries and museums
predominantly as opposed to the way video is considered in different
types of structural systems for displaying the information?
FRANK: Why have I done it the way I've done it? I don't think I
have any choice. In the kinds of things I wanted to do, and did,
there's no sympathy for financing, or even thinking about
financing, in any other context but the art world. Most of the
money went for videotape, and most of the impetus for ;~ inch
videotape went into an immediate quasi-socilogical bag, and also
small entrepreneurship. Some of the things in that bag, I'm also
interested in; I'm not saying that I discount them. I had an
original interest in it, in the beginning. Raindance is an example;
however, the shape of Raindance has changed considerably since the
idea of the turn-on in videotape, so that *none* of what I really
wanted to do fit into that milieu, that pardigm. And the only place
that would entertain what I wanted to do were people like Howard
Wise, Russell Connor, and James Harithas, people whose *connections*
and whose power base are in what we refer to as the art world. And
that's basically where the audiecne is as well. I don't have much
of an audience outside that.
JUD: They are people in the alternate sociological end of video
who look askance at the so-called art video piece.
FRANK: I know. I'm aware of that. My name has been used in vain
in some circles. (Laughter г:п what?
  JUD: But, in terms of the modifications of perceptions and levels of

consciousness, which I think video is capable of, how do you
relate to the progression in that direction?
FRANK: Talking about the direction of my own work, my initial exper-
ience with videotape sent me into the street and it was intensely
socio and intensely psychological. I turned the tape on myself and I
began doing what might be called videotape therapy
JUD: In the street, and then into yourself

FRANK: Precisely. And both at the same time, done simultaneously. Re-
cording your own behavior and then watching it, videotape therapy,
watching my response and recording my response, and so on, ad *infin-*
itum, up to six or seven levels. And doing this under the influence
of psychedelic drugs, and this was the 60s, six years ago. And then

interest left that aspect of videotape. I was more impressed by
the limitations of that world than I was by its opportunities. I
felt that it was harder, too sensitive, and highly suject to
political manipulation, and various kinds of skullduggery.
JUD: Which is inherent in the economics of the current
communications seen.
FRANK: With the granting systems, and the way people had to scramble
for money, the whole thing just turned me off, and I retreated, as
you may know. I split the scene entirely and wrote a book. And
emerged from that with no interest at all in rejoining that
attitude, that evangelistic attitude to tape: "I want to turn the
world onto videotape" attitude. It's a good social tool and a great
therapeutic device, but the parallels can be strained to the point
where they don't mean anything. And the relationship between this
attitude to videotape and mine is about as far apart as you can get,
and still have work in the same medium.
    I'm more interested in seeing how far we can soar with it as
OPPOSE to what ways we turn ourselves on to manipulating information
with
it. Even if the way you want to manipulate information is for the
good of everyone, as far as social good- I'm not against social good,
as a way for people who wish to improve things. I'm saying that an
intensive and restrictive isolated focus on that aspect of the medium
is simply a gross distortion of the range, potential, sophistication
and solvency of the medium, and I'm more interested in that. Becuase
that's where you soar. I want to soar with it; I want to take off
with it.
Do it in a way that emphasizes the differences and not the
similarities. Deal with it as a highly mutable medium, which it is,
and not become lock-synced or glued to one attitude about it. I'm
afraid that a lot of people have that missionary zeal, the social
fallout of the 31 inch video systems- missionary zeal is the word.
They go and establish colonies, which is fine with me. Good luck to
them. But I have no interest in it.
    I think the strength of fantasy is the degree with which it
can be translated into a medium which strengthens the concept of
the fantasy, which strengthens the imagery, which brings it into a

JUD: Like the American pragmatists.

FRANK: ... of the state of the art. Your sense of imagery, or sense of system as and process changes the availability changes in relationship to the state of the art in milieu in which you work. If you choose elec tronics as a medium, you've got a constant change of the art within 2 or 3 years; I think every years a new element enters which changes the the configuration of medium, the structure of the medium you're have to working with. So you be aware of these changes and the implic ations which carry forth from them, the kinds of inferences which are generated by the fact that these things are changing, and the way they're changing. The availability of screens, of multi-monitor sys- tems, the availability of cable, all of these are constantly evolving, changing, switching back and forth, affecting each other. You've got to evolve an attitude towards those changes. In terms of the spiritual question, our spiritual evolution is a project which is our own, and the way we can affect or facilitate someone else's is by the byproducts of our art, by indirection, not direction. If videotpae beomes a medium in which people directly influence and manipulate other people's spiritual development, I think that's going to be to its detriment. It's like Soviet realist painting, in a way a direct parallel between that and the stricture that you can only paint tractor and healthy workers smiling and singing the Internationale in the wheat fields. I'm boviously making it very one dimensional to em- phasize the manipulative rigidity which is involved in seeing it as the medium in which you can spread ideas to make people better, and to conform the use of the medium to that attitude. So they would probably accuse me of doing something which doesn't mean anything to everybody. And I would dissent. (Laughter)

There are other people involved in the same frewuency that I am. They're just tracking a different trip. The work of Ira Schneider, Andy Mann and Peter Campus, to name a few to whom I consider my head close to, many of them are involved in using videotape systems as environmental phenomena as a premise, and working off the variables from there. I'm interested in getting into computers, as I mentioned. I've been playing games with IBM computer game players. I'm interested in designing my own, and that's where in the satet of the art I'd like to place my interest. But again it's a question of access, how

much access do you have to making those ideas real. I wouldn't enter-
tain them if I didn't have a chance of making them real. I'm not de-
signing pieces which-need a Titan rocket because I have no access to
Titan rockets. You have to anticipate the availability. In fact, in

basic pragmatism, because the work requires it, you have to have a
realistic view of the world if you want to see things done. Whereas a
painter doesn't have that; there's always stretched canvas to work your
art, which is another attitude entirely about aesthetic form. JUD:
Would you relate to Taoism as a pragmatic form?

FRANK: Definitely. In a sense, since I read the I'Ching everyday,
I'm a Taoist. I guess, if I really think about it, I'm a practicing
Toaist. I read the major holy book of Taoism every day.

JUD: In a ritual way.

FRANK: Right. And I consider it a very practical experience.

JUD: Which it is.

FRANK: Hard to take sometimes, but goddamn if it isn't somthing to get
involved in. Some Zen theorists, not all of course, in my opinion,
over-emphasize the getting into of ordinary day-to-day existence. I
think that's too weighty a pragmatism. I'm saying that one should be as
pragmatic as is required to fulfill the fantasies to which your
imagination has brought you. The level at which those fantasies operate
in the equivalent level of reality, and the bringing together of the
two requires a pragmatic state of mind. It requires being able to
figure out how you can do it, and then doing what it's necessary to do.

JUD: You've spoken of the relevance of ecstasy to your experience in
work.

FRANK: I mentioned the Irish god, Angus. I'm working on a sequel book,
actually the second of three, the first already published being BEYOND
PARADIGMS, and this book has the working title of ANGUS, who is the
old Irish god of ecstasy and beauty and eloquence, the Irish god of
poetry. And the nature of the book has elegance in the mathematical
sense, which is poetry in the mathematical sense- they fuse together
somewhere- and the nature of the work is to provide a record of pro-
posals or suggestions, diagrams, ideas, attitudes, etc. which attempt
to utilize communication technoloSies and computer systems to TV to
purely ideational matters, like diagrams, scales and heuristic devices
which are purely ideational, and to assemble them in a way which ev-
olves an overall, infrastructural attitude toward technology as a

contemporary medium, and my readout on the kinds of ideas possible to an artist who has chosen it as a medium. What's really possible and how do you begin thinking about it.

It's a cliche to mention that if the 19th century imposed any-thing on contemporary technology, it was its grim vision of the process itself, the mechanical, mechanistic, Protestant thic, laborist view of the function of and potential *interaction* one can have with a technological system. And ecstasy is certainly not going to come out of that, except in the most pathetic form.

I'm also involved in actively, not as a religious or theological experience, but as an aesthetic one, developing a ritualistic context, or doxologies, using different tenchologies, and the interacting play ers would engage in a kind of theater. That's what a computer game would be; it would be a heuristic theatrical context. People relate to data that comes in from the computer, and then relate to the reaction that the computer has to what they did to it, and all the variabilities on that, and then having criteria or figures of merit to judge the variable values of what is doen in such a way that you have a kind of heuristic competition, a heuristic interaction where ideas are generated out of new contacts which were impossible before the game structure was imposed on the data. And that can, in a sense, become ritualistic, not in the sense of repetition and redundancy, but ritualistic in the sense of plugging in your sense of awe with the limits of your communicational technology. Which is all that ecstasy is, really. It's to take the entire system and utilize it in such a way that it turns you on to a whole new structure on what's possible.

> " 'Trouble arise' writes Gregory Bateson, 'precisely because the "logic" of adaptation is a different 'logic' from that of the survival and evolution of the ecological system.' The purpose (goal, object, context) of the game is one of simulating ecologic and behavioral complexity ... of distin-guishing the sets of relationships between, and the channels of influence exchanged by conceptions of the world and their subsequent control over behavior in the world.

2. The game is played by *3,6,9,12,15* or 18 people with a computer system which provides the constantly evolving context within which conceptual models are created and embodied

"age Tw,-   Eight

in a range of media, from diagramatic print-out to holographic simulation. The system also provides the criteria by which modela are tested.

3. A primary function of the game is the development of a variety of world-process orientations articulated or embodied in more and more encompassing contexts."

- FRANK GILLETTE, excerpted from NOTES FOR A PROPOSAL ON CONCEPTUAL GAMING in RADICAL SOFTWARE, Volume II Number 5.

   JUD: Do you conceive of all f p%alistic structures as games in a sense?

  FRANK: No. Games are explicit forms, specific cases of that. The game metaphor is useless for a lot of life; it leaves off at a certain point and it's not useful at all after that point is left off. But, within a certain range, it's a very useful metaphor. It leaves off *when* it comes to the inexpressible. There's no way of applying a game metaphor to the inexpressible.

  JUD: It's a threshold, the inexpressible.

  FRANK: That's in a certain rane; it leads up to that, and beyond there': no game structure that explains anything. Game structure explains basically human interaction. It's **anthropocentric-though it's-usually** imposed upon the rest of life. You can see the games of evolution,

in a sense. The thing that makes a game a game is a degree of explic- itness and rules, and the problem is that those ruled in effect become the game. There are certain contingencies in life which have no explicitness of rules. The day the game metaphor goes away, the inexpressible takes over, in a sense, and you play strictly by fine tuned ear, you hope, at least what you to believe is a finely tuned ear, and you may develop explicity from that experience, but you don't go into it with it. It doesn't function as a game. I think too many find themselves suffering from all the problems of reductionism in a singular cluae, if its the only thing you see social existence as. There should be several models with *which* you understand social interaction as existence, and game theory shouldn't be seen as the only one. The model is the epitemological tool.

JUD: So, in what relationship would you place your work to the immediate future state of the art of video as it's progressing. What do you see happening in the overall scene and your relationship to it?

GILLETTE

FRANK: I think there's a basic healthiness to some of the people in-
volved. At the risk of sounding Prussian, I would say there's a
certain wheat/chaff separation that is always taking place, but
things become clear when perspective is gained, and certain ideas
will suffer in application the way television suffers in the
overwhelming exposure it has. And there's an inverse ratio at work in
the degree of intrinsic interest over the amount of hours exposed to
a given audience. The audience, however limited, for the products of
television laboratories on NET and cable systems may not be
necessarily the audience that my work attracted, but I don't isolate
myself from those people. It's Just not my focus because it's a
room where people see all other kinds of television.

      I'm much more interested in creating environments which are com-
pletely distinct from that experience of television. It requires a
different attitude entirely towards the medium, and subsequently a
dif ferent audience is attracted and a different criteria establishes
its value as to what is or is not successful. So that's how I see my
work in relationship to those people who work in TV Labs with
synthesizers and the like.
JUD: What about the new interest in satellites?

FRANK: I would have to have a more pragmatic understanding of how
time, for example, is purchased and maintained on a satellite and
utilized. Ira Scheider has developed a piece which would put video
imput from locations all around the globe simultaneously in one place
and then they would be pointed in metaphorically parallel
imputs from satellites from the different **Time zones.**

            "REAL TIME (a Video Environment for the USA Bicentennial
            Exhibition)- It is now technologically feasible to monitor
            aspects of the whole earth. In fact it is being done. How-
            ever, the real time information thus generated is not gen-
            erally made available to the public. The following is a
            proposal for an exhibition which permits the public to
            the simultaneity of micro-cultural events on planet earth.
            Eighteen 25" monitors suspended seven feet above the floor
            and 6.28 feet apart circumscribe a space eighteen feet in
            diameter. Eighteen images are presented. Each is a real

GILLETTE Page Thirty time telecommunication (via satellite) from
eighteen major cultural centers around the planet. At each of these
centers three camera positions are selected revealing macro- to micro-
perspectives of the cultural environment by day or night... Flexible
pre-programmed automated switching allows for the selection of the
eighteen single camera views to be transmitted to the exhibition
hall."
                    - IRA SCHNEIDER, 1973 in RADICAL SOFTWARE.

            ("ONE LOOK, MANY POINTS OFVIEW, ONE WORLD")- I.S.

FRANK: That's one attitude that I found extremely interesting, that's
just the beginning of everything, because you can also do variables
on that theme. I'm interested in the potential of two-way cable
systems. I think at some point the following hardware will be
available:
you will have a console in your room, and anywhere from 9 to 20 screens
and with this console you would receive and program for yourself via
telephone or xerox machine or whatever, a catalog of what's available
in each computer bank, a constantly updated catalog. And you would dial
into the computer bank to get any one of your screens, and any number
in conjunction. And that's hoe you would experience television.
You would have your nornal broadcast schedule at the same time, but
basically you would have this facility in which you could access many
resources as you could reach banks of computers through a dialing
system, and you would be charged for the amount of time, or whatever,
or for whatever materail you used. I'm extremely interested in exper-
imenting with the potential of a system like I just described, which I
think is capable of becoming reality at the end of the decade or so.
And then we can begin to think out larger and larger complexes of
informational process, and more and more permutations will develop,
where you could enter into any one of those banks your material as well
as take from it, and what you enter into the bank is put into the
catalog and becomes available to everyone else. So you could have the
whole world plugged into a practical infinity of banks. You wouldn't
need
any one master bank. That's the old way and it's a stupidity we're
going to wind up with if we don't watch out. We could have an
infinite variety of banks and you could plug into any one at will.
And when television reaches that kind of technological state,

will change exponentially. And I'm keenly interested in that
development and the possibility of working with it.
JUD: Your book, BETWEEN PARADIGMS, can be read in sequence, or out
of sequence, except perhpas for the continuity of the videotape
stills, and I find that a valuable format for a book, with
individual pages and pieces
FRANK: More discrete entities.

JUD: And yet somehow bound together very closely, like nodules
in a network.
FRANK: I would say explicitly, it's the language I use, it's the lan-
guage in which I think, and it's the language in which I formulate
ideas. That is to say, I need a language which postulates networks
and modes and paradigms, nodules, feedback operations, and so on.
Reality in the language of cybernetics. I seem to formulate all
my•ideas in the same terms. And this somehow or another emerges in my
book as well as in my show. I'm not surprised.

>   "As the evolution of stellar mass and energy yields life, an
>   initial apperceptive **enigma evolves** radially into com-
>   plexifying equilibrium. From its consequences teleologies
>   are inferred and description holds forth. Described within
>   its own context, life traces its intuitive dynamic into
>
>   art. As art is the successful communion of a variety, life's
>   paradox is identical with art's: Affinities for opposites
>   changing into one. In seeking the more perfect illusion, art
>   seeks life."

<u>PAUL RYAN: Self-Correction Through_Cybernetics</u>

"Regarding black and white videotape we make the fol-
lowing assumptions:
-Videotape records a person's genetically determined un-
iqueness, that is, their firstness.
-Videotape records the way of a person's firstness, that
is, the mode in which they have learned to segment the
continuum of their experience.
-Through videotape feedback a person can learn to en-
hance their way and learn new ways.
-Through imitation of another on videotape, one can
learn another's way.
-Videotape can record the given pattern of differentiation
of many natural and man made forms in such a manner as they
can be understood structurally by man. -Videotape feedback
opens up channels of communication in a triad of people
sufficient to enable them to stabilize a threefold
relationship in a self corrective manner." - PAUL RYAN from
EARTHSCORE (For an intentional community using videotape).

JUD: Jargon?

PAUL: Jargon. (Laughter) Vocabulary. Yes, I've had to develop a pec-
uliar jargon, because when you talk about tape you develop a new
vocabulary on top of tape that has to be different. So, what words
come to your mind? I have a friend who used to say: "Think of your
five favorite words, and you'll know pretty much where you're at."
JUD: Well, let's start out with Kleinform, and the
differentiation between Kleinform and Klein bottle.
PAUL: The Klein bottle is a mathematical curiosity developed by a
mathematician named Klein in Germany (NOTE: Felix Klein- 1849-
1925), and what I did with it was to transform it into a form.
I'll talk about it and then come to a tighter definition.
JUD: Right.

PAUL: A bottle gets its stability from gravity. So just by naming
it a bottle the cat precluded thinking about it, but when you take

then link up again, you've got a different systemic, a different relationship, and the stability comes from the inter-relationship of the parts and not from it being named a bottle. The Klein bottle itself, if you try to use it as a model of thought, allows a kind of inspin. You can go from the part that's contained to the part containing, and back and forth, with a kind of an oscillation. With the Kleinform you can't do that.

> "The Klein bottle outline passes continuously from part contained to part containing that part, and vice versa, <u>without formation of a part uncontained</u>. In kleinformation such a passage is not possible. This is the essential difference... This two part pattern of thinking we call inspin. It is like a dog chasing his tail unto exhaustion. Inspining is not thinking kleinform. Kleinform maintains a threefold differentiation of part containing, part uncontained and part contained. If you have less than three self differentiating parts, you are not *kleinforming.*" - PAUL RYAN in EARTHSCORE.

JUD: You would equate oscillations with the inspinning process. A pendulum.

RYAN: Yes, a pendulum form. Any back and forth, dyadic type of motion, that simply by that motion can become so symmetrically related as to lose context. If you work into a triadic system, you're insisting upon context. That was McCullough's idea; towards the end of his life what he got into was triadic logic, because if you have a triadic system, you necessitate thinking aboyt context. I mean, if you stay within that mapping context you're insisting on context. And it's a form. I thought it was a language at first; I made that mistake in the last chapter of the book I wrote (NOTE: BIRTH AND DEATH AND CYBERNATION, an Interface Book, Gordon And Breach, 1973.). I took the mathematician Rene Thom uncritically, but it seems that language structure is subject-predicate, and that's the dominant mode of the way we think

JUD: With modifiers

PAUL: And qualifiers, and so forth. A Kleinform is a different structure for intelligence, and a lot of the struggle that I've been in is trying to get this non-verbal form accessible to people in

that will do that. It's much more important. People who work with tape
understand it quite easily, and dancers have come to understand it by
working in the form.
JUD: You can't think of any semantic equivalents?

PAUL: Not structural equivalents, not semantic structural equivalents.
It's not a language. I thouhgt it was a language, I called it a
language, but it's not a language. It's a form. Spencer Brown's LAWS
OF FORM was helpful in thinking about it, though I disagree entirely
with his basic distinction of dyadics which he works from. I think
that's acontextural and I think it's bullshit of a kind, even though
it's elegant.
JUD: It's extremely elegant.

PAUL: Yes, and the elegance has an enormous strength, but he and John
Lily are both on a kind of attenuated trip from what I can see. I
mean they've thinned out their thinking for the sake of elegance, but
it loses context. The structure involved loses context. That's my
sense of it; I'm sure there are other readings.
    So, that's Kleinform. Firstness is another word that I've been
was very fond of it. And I liked it because it precluded a hierarchy.
If everybody's got firstness, then there's nobody that's first.
JUD: As we used to say in the USCO group: "You don't have to be first
to be on top."

PAUL: Right. That kind of thing. And it also speaks of uniqueness,
like if you record it on tape, you can't imitate it; it's like a
fingerprint. When somebody's
                              on tape, the firstness is apparent, and
you can't argue with it,
                         nor can they really. (Laughter) You've got to
to come to **some relation** it. And I think it's a genetically det first
ermined reality, and the
                          reality to accept. It's the first limyour
it system you deal with,
                          genetic coding, and if you move outside
your firstness, oy develop ways of behaving that are contrary to your
firstness, you wind up schizophrenic. And the culture's pushed us that
way.
JUD: Into developed secondness, in a sense.
PAUL: Right. I've come to use the phrase "departures from firstness,"
related to the conceptualization of the community that works by elec-
tric tape, or electric metaphors, basically tape, and there will
others, like holograms. Basically non-print media. Departure from

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   firstness seems to be the mistake, the error which can be made if
   you push somebody so that they're forced into a contradictory
   relationship with their firstness, or if they push themselves, and
   then a contradiction is created, and so on. Foistness. (Laughter)
        Other vocabulary? Chreod is another one. Chreod is a term
developed by Waddington. That is another thing in the book that I
didn't get entirely clear. What Waddington was after was a
necessary path
of development, and Thom picked it up and generalized it. It comes
from two greek words: Od, meaning path or way, and cre, meaning when
it is necessary. There are certain structures, or certain models,
that support and describe a process, like the tape I made with the
Kleinform on the floor which described and supported the process that
was going on. Waddington was working in genetics and embryology and
developed this notion that are certain patterns, necessary pathways,
that if a process is developing there is a necessary pathway that you
can describe, and that if it's disturbed, it will return to this
pathway. What I tried to do with the notion of sacred chreod was to
say that in our evolutionary schemae, there are necessary pathways
that evolution has taken which, if we disrupt them, or destroy them,
we destroy ourselves. Bateson's rap is that the species that destroys
its environment, destroys itself. So that's what the **EARTHSCORE text
is about in terms** of chreod cells, the attempt to discover those giv-
en patterns of differentiation in the evolutionary ecological scheme,
which if we destroy we destroy ourselves. And by fixing the word
sacred to it, the intent is to release and bring to bear man's reli-
igious traditions and religious sensitivities in relation to the life
support system that he has. It's a very rich notio. Thom and Wadding-
ton also go in for the notion of homeorhesis, rather than
homeostasis, "rhesis" being "over time," because they say that
homeostasis is death. It's a spatial metaphor, whereas homeorhesis is
a developmental process.
JUD: What about the terms, cell and chreche?

PAUL: Creche-cell. I like the sense of the word. It's like a
crib, in French, and it has the sense of child, and care and
tenderness. It's like the family cell in a sense. You see, the
structure of EARTHSCORE is entirely mathematical; it's a
rigorous mathematical metaphor. The words could be changed. The
notion is basically a self-corrective cell of three, and then

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 cells, which were names creches. The business of the chreche cell
is taking care of firstness; that's its basic function. Chreod cells
being cells that decode the given pattern, the differentiation, the
ecology, and organize behavior in relation to respecting those
patterns. And the work cell would be the cell that interlaced with
the societyat-large and maintained whatever was necessary. With the
notion of three being self-corrective, you can work exponentially,
just increasing, so you go from three to twelve, and then three sets
of twelve, three different orders. Once you get to Kleinform, as
opposed to Bateson's work, which is based on the theory of logical
types, no class can be a member of itself which assumes a
discontinuity between a class and its members. If you accept the
conceptualization of logical types, which I think is basically a
print metaphor, you're inevitably caught in a class society, which
is what Marx was decoding and was riled against. We've got to get to
a classless society, and if you work in Kleinform you can have a
society with no class, because you assume that people are discrete,
such as bits of alphabet on a page. You don't class people according
to discretion; you accept that they're
part of a continuum, which has very large philosophical
ramifications. When I read Pierce and saw what hw was trying to do
with a triadic system, it's enormously rich, enormously strong,
and also his sense of the continuum. But the understanding of a
continuum has always been linked up with a unity, a unifying kind
of principle. In other words, if it's continuous it's unified. You
cannot differentiate.
    Once you pass the continuum back into itself, you have the
capacity of the mind to differentiate without severance, without
discretion, without cutting off. So you never lose that you're part
of the whole.
I don't know how far it can go as a form. My sense of it is that as
a form it will take habit in an evolutionary sense; that we've had a
period, by my calculations, of the 60s and so forth as a period of
trial and error, which was random, and the cybernetic metaphor was
used randomly. I sort of came to that through McLuhan, through the
use of video, and became dissatisfied with the randomness, in terms
of using something like video, and out of the video work, that form
came to my mind. It seems now that that form can take habit, that
it's possible for that form to take habit. I used to use the metaphor
of guerilla warfare in a random way. For me, anyway, that phase is
over. The random is not a coherent metaphor. It was useful at the end

possibility that I can see now, using the conceptualization that
I've come to, or the composition of EARTHSCORE, but the Kleinform
is basically that which can take habit. What I'm up against now is
trying to find the proper context for that to take habit, and I'm
still not sure yet, at this point, what that is.

> "In English, the verbal formulation that best insures
> the mind of staying within the rigorous mapping of
> relationships possible in kleinform is the injunction,
> 'never less than three." This we call the Canon of Self
> Correction... That which cannot be decoded or commanded
> according to the Canon of Self Correction must be
> accepted in its given pattern of differentiation. Any
> non-self corrective process gives rise to a fixed
> morphology definable once and for all by a model of that
> process, a chreod that reveals its self stabilized
> structure. For example, the breaking of a wave cannot be
> commanded to happen in Kleinform. Similarly, the Canon
> of Self Correction cannot command triplets, a trisexual
> species, or undo our bilateral symmetry. Births as
> given, speies sexual differentiation, and bilateral sym-
> metry must be decoded and accepted as given restraints
> on kleinformation. Similarly, non **kleinformed self**
> **corrective** processes must be related to with respect to
> their form."
> - PAUL RYAN from EARTHSCORE.

JUD: How do you feel that this form relates to the content that
might fulfill part of it?

PAUL: Well, it has a bias. Any form will have a bias for a
certain content.

JUD: Yes, that's the light in which I'm asking that.

PAUL: Yes, and I'm not really sure at this point. On the basis of
the last weekend's work and other work I've done, that behavior is
the proper content for this form, as opposed to the Skinnerian
stimulusresponse kind of thing. I think that this form provides a
shape that's kind of minimal, very minimal, within which behavior
can be invneted, so that it's in a self corrective way.

  Individualized behavior, like the metaphor of the circle, and
everybody finding center, like the Sufi tape you showed me, which

Christianity, any of them that use that centering metaphor- because it can be used acontexturally is a kind of proto-fascistic structuring of consciousness of which I'm fearful. For example, in the name of ecology, a lot of ugly shit is going to came down. And people now have a sense of the ecology and so forth, but if you define a circle where you're inside and somebody else is outside, you're back into a kind of tribal warfare syndrome, even at a religious level. Perhaps that's an over-reaction on my part, and an attempt to differentiate a new for from the old, but I sort of keep that flag in my head when I, see a circle. (Laughter) So behavior is a proper content, but ver balization, I don't think so.

I don't think that the structure of language, unless you get into a Joycean usage where language is nore on the auditory channel and is a flow of mechanism, then perhaps verbal form can be found, or the verbal content of this form. the mathematician I've been using Thom, structure of language using his a lot, is now trying to decode chreods and attractors. I talked the topology, along with the (NOT: This rap was in 1973.) but notion of to him about a year and be able to find some way to under stand the relation of language to kleinform, whether it can be a the proper content or it needs to non-verbal realm. Language has been so dominated by print, and print structure, that language is in such bad shape in this country. I found that in the VIDEO WAKE FOR MY FATHER (NOTE: Twelve hours of tape presented by invitation only in an apartment in New York City) that what I was doing was pure command. I was using raw sentences, complex sentences, which don't work somehow. It was John Lennon's Primal Scream album, with very simple language relationships. It reminds me of the context that George Steiner set up for trying to understand what happened to the German language in the 30s.

The language itself has somehow become depleted of meaning, and I think that the habit of public line that we've gotten from advertising and politics has sucked, whoosh, language of meaning. Nobody's publishing anything that makes any sense. Mailer is straining at movies, Marilyn Monroe, and you meet people all the time who are closet writers, doing very fine things that never see the light of day. So language is in bad shape. So I don't really work to get language into a kleinform. I'd be content in a community for a while where nobody did anything but quote FINNEGAN'S WAKE. (Laughter) Then maybe we'd

get some Sense of the richness of language back.

JUD: How do you feel that your earlier involvement with the concept of infolding through the medium of tape has eveolved into the kleinforming through tape?

PAUL: Infolding was avague tag on the sense of what could happen, coming of de Chardin and the business of matter being lined with consciousness, and the noospheric concept of earth infolding on itself. William Blake used the word as well. My mind, and I guess a lot of other's minds work this way: you have an intuition and then you tag it with a word like infolding which is unusual, that stores it in your mind until you can develop it another way. So, the infolding
was a vaguery, and the kleinform is a very rigorous matehematical, diagrammatical structure, and you really don't need to use the word "infolding" once you've approached Kleinform, because the kleinform goes through; it's not just an infolding. I remember explaining in-folding to a college kid about two years ago, and then explaining kleinform, and said: "But it's not infolding anymore, because in and out are not valid, not viable." That's pretty much the relationship. Of course, videotape was the metaphor through which I got this form. Simply by doing a lot of tape with yourself and not accepting a dis-continuity in replay. I suppose film and the time delay precluded this kind of thinking, because of the laboratory, but when you're using tape you're in the same time-space situation, and you begin to weave it. You can do that with a kleinform.

"The process of getting to tape was really a transition from aural culture to electric culture.
,BUD: Through your work with McLuhan at Frodham.

PAUL: So it was easy to dig what he was saying. It wasn't a question for me of writing criticism of MCLuhan pro and con, but let's do it. So it was obvious to get your hands on the media, so I started looking around for something that nobody had touched; too many people are into film and that medium just didn't turn me on that much; it was like a different space, so I went to videotape. So I want to the library and found that nobody knew anything. The only

I had a chance to get onto the portably Sony stuff and I started working in the Montessori school. I worked with

the kids one day a week and I took the equipment home. It was the old Sony 2000 studio deck. I just approached it from a kind of NicLuhan head: what is the grounding of this, how is it different from print and different from film, and what distinguishes it. The most obvious thing was the control of time and feedback, but it was a closed loop, especially with the kids, so I started making it available to them in an, other room.

Two things are important: one was the business of so much feedback with yourself, and what that does to you, and getting yourself beyond the behavioral constraints of the society so that you're not dependent so much on a mirror, or somebody else, to get yourself back, because you can get yourself back. Like I know how I look when I ,jump, and I'm not going to be afraid to jump because somebody else is watching, because I've seen myself jumping already. So, doing a lot of tape with yourself creates that kind of behavioral head. That's Why it's important that more people learn how to do that, so if enough people do that you can do something else, whatever that something else is that you want to do.

It's taking in your own soul from outside, and it's powerful shit. Picture two medieval cats sitting across from each other at a tablg, or two Japanese cats, or two Americans, or two chimpanzees, and when you examine the picture

it becomes apparent that this behavior is at least 3000 years old. So one of the questions we're up against is not so much the good intentions or the good feelings. I think we've learned that a lot through rock music. We can do that now. We know those circuits, right?

The problem is that once you awaken these feelings, how do you not behave like chimpanzees, when it comes to something like interpersonal relationships and the whole range of ways we've been programmed to behave. So that it really offers you an opportunity to do a behavioral ,jump. And it's important that a lot of people are doing it, so you're not doing it alone.

JUD: We're talking about the necessity for sheer ecstasy.

PAUL: Exactly. Because if you do it by yourself, you're crazy, but
that's cool.
JUD: Like Zorba the Greek was crazy

> PAUL: Exactly. Or like Neitzche was crazy with
> Zarathustra. Like I let out my tape to anybody I thought
> was anything; I didn't care if I'd only seen them once;
> let them have it, shake it and do it, get it out. If it
> doesn't work, where can we go for the code of behavior and
> have ecstasy together, because without a little shared
> ecstasy, this planet just isn't going to make it. A lot of
> people are really dying, because we've programmed them to
> dollars as a tribal rite. We need some objective
> correlative for our ecstasy, and I think that's the
> function of ritual. The ritual is right when you know the
> ecstasy is there; then you've got it. OK, we'll do the
> dishes. Because with the planet in such a delicate
> balance, the ritual really has to be right because the
> homeostasis is so delicate. It's never been so delicate.
> That's
> a heavy thing, because we've always had one big
> macrostructure. They came screaming across Europe
> killing the Canaanites and reading the Bible. Insane,
> like destroying people like the Hopi Indians. Look what
> they're doing!
> There are some guys who are really just making trash
> out of consciousness. They're conspiring with entropy,
> can you imagine? Glory, the technical meaning is clear
> knowled ge, and praise, but people want that cheap.
> Cybernetics is a transform with a difference, and that's
> what McLuhan said: every media is different. Doesn't it
> seem that there has to be some essential referencing
> system, if we're going to have a homeostasis to balance
> this one out, if we're going to have the ecstasy."
> - PAUL RYAN, from an unpublished rap with Jud Yalkut, 1971.

PAUL: I've been working with dancers lately. A lot of people seem to
be, in film and tape, going to dancers and beginning to work with
them. And it makes sense, as probably the richest resource we have
out of which to invent behavior, given the traditions of dance. I

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a lot of ideas and notions that were worked out in the weekends to get the sense of dance as opposed to linguistic structures.
JUD: And very paradoxially, of course, dance is one of the things for which there's been tremendous difficulty in developing a notation. PAUL: Exactly, and it hasn't worked on television. There are very few dance pieces on television. Nobody has quite figured out the proper way to move in an electronic context. The Sufi seems quite close, the Tai Chi seems quite close, those forms of movement.
JUD: Perhaps, in recent **electronic work,** some of things that Ed Emshwiller has tried begin to get at it.
PAUL: Dance is a behavioral resource. As opposed to Albert Scheflen's work (NOTE: A psycholinguist, author of HOW BEHAVIOR MEANS and BODY LANGUAGE AND SOCIAL ORDER)- you know Scheflen tries to describe behavior in terms of the theory of logical types. HOW BEHAVIOR MEANS is based on using the theory of logical types to describe behavior, and to me, it's an excercise is labelling and it's useless for life. I don't mean to put Scheflen down; he's done an enormous amount of work on perspective space in behavior, but you don't behave in perspective space. You examine it and write about it from perspective space, but if you're going to behave, you've got to behavior, you know.

JUD: You've talked a deal about necessary redundancy and how
great that determines the in modes of behavior.
givens   PAUL: Yes. great word. It comes from unda, meaning
Redundancy is a wave. that abundant came from. So redundancy-

the image I have of it is of a wave breaking back on itself. These are generalizations that Bateson has pushed to a very useful level, like a redundancy pattern. The word, in our culture, is equated with repitition. I'd try to differentiate and save the word "redundancy." It has such richness. But, in terms of behavior, there are certain recurrent patterns, some of which you can't avoid; they're part of it. McCullough talked about it on the level of the reticular core. They said there's about an inventory of a dozen things that require the commitment of the whole organism: birth, death, making love, not making love, fleeing or fighting, crapping, and all sorts of bodily functions- and his hypothesis was that all that was governed by the reticular core, which he intuited worked triadically. And for that work, there had to be what he called the redundancy of potential

 meaning that anytime a particular situation came up, the organism
 could decide that this was the time to go to sleep, but it would
 know that from having built up a habit of sleep. That would be the
 redundancy pattern, and in the behavioral invention that we-ve
 tried what gives us the flexibility to differentiate roles is that
 the stronger the redundancy pattern that's created, the more
 flexibility there can be for role differentiation. Seeing the Sufi
 tape next to the behavioral tape made that point very strongly.

     during that weekend of work, we started from nothing and created
m$nimal redundancy patterns. Also, the notion of chreods accepts the
notion of redundancy in the ecology system, and the using of that
from the culture as the coding system rather than any we invent, to
take the state of grace,.the state which is given and to decode that
and abide by that. What I understand of astrology, that's very much
the stength of it, is¯¯that it works on a given pattern that no man
can control; it's out of the control of man, and indecoding and
abiding it, you free the species of interspecies dominance.
Waddinton has this notion where he said the human organism, or the
human species, has developed an authority bearing species; the
father bears authority and he controls other people. Well, we've
reached a point where fathers and sons are no longer viable as a
control mechanism. We can't presume to control each other.
      We have to allow the species to behave within it's own context.

So, if you're going to take away the authority from within the
species, if you're going to take way master-slave relations, if
you're going to take away dominance relations, how then is the
culture going to stabilize? How is it find control unless it accepts
a pattern larger than the species and integrates that into its way of
life. So you're beyond the notion of a nation state; you're beyond
the notion of family even as we've known it, the patriarchal or the
matriarchal family. You're into the notion of a species in context.

     Peter Berge, with whom I spent a weekend on the West coast
inmarathon discussion, has an extraordinarily strong vision of what
he calls geomorphic identity. It's got a vocabulary where he talks
about the Pacific Lake, and people of the mountains, people of the
plains, people of the coast, no longer Canadians or Americans, or the
nation state rap which has deivided up the earth for exploitation,
and not for life. And the nation state, as McLuhan describes it, is
structured by print

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and structured by the metaphor. And that metaphor of print goes
back to the Egyptians who were the first ones in the West to really
code things in an arbitrary kind of script, arbitrary in the sense
that you could understand it without context. They were the first
ones to have a-hierarchy, as I understand it, with a priestly
caste. So you started a class structure. In terms of [print. as]() long
as you work with print, you're going to have a class society.
   JUD: This is characterized by the idea of literates and illiterates

in reference to people who are not cognizant of the sophistications
an(elegances of a particular system as illiterates, and it's used in
a derogatory sense.
PAUL: Right. And the literati think other people are stupid.
(Laughter And it's only 2/5s of the world that's literate, you know,
and they're trying to pump out the SESAME STREET stuff to keep people
literate. It's ridiculous. I understand there are blacks now who are
saying: "Don't learn to read, just don't learn to read" and that
creates a vacuum, and once that vacuum is there, you either revert to
an oral culture, which seems impossible to me now, and probably not
desirable, or you try to develop electric forms, and I think that
Kleinform is one such circuitry, or one circuit design that's
generalizable. I'm sure there are others that people are working on,
other forms that will work electronically. Well, you've got to ground
that.
     What I've been doing for the past two years in this valley is
trying to decode the system with a Sony portable camera, the
ecology. So I go out and spend a year and a half by a stream where
water goes over rock, up by Smitty's, trying to learn how to decode
how water goes over rock. I finally did a half hour tape that I
feel is a respectable attempt (Laughter) at decoding water over
rock. There's a tree out here, where I've been fro three months,
and last week I had the courage to go out there with a camera, and
I haven't even looked at that tape. I don't know how well the
portapak decodes a tree. It requires a sense of meditation. It
requires a whole different kind of Zen head, You do it right the
first time. You don't presume to edit.
     You don't presume to scramble up someone's time sense. You offer
them your perceptions, that's all. So I've got *36* tapes, after I
sketched out about a hundred tapes, three *non-living*, three living

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Well, if you're going to understand what lichen are, non-verbally,
you go out with a video camera and a micro-lens and you look at
lichen for a half an hour, OK. It doesn't tell you a hell of a lot.
Maybe we need different instrumentation. Maybe we need Kirlian
photography to understand plant life. Maybe we need holographic
shapes to understand animal behavior, rather than me running around
with the monkeys and
a camera, although you can do fairly well with a camera and
monkies and fish.
JUD: And also direct electronic feedback with plant life.

PAUL: That's right. But we don't know; we don't know the Earth.
We've been reacting to it. We cut down the trees and then made paper
and made marks on it. (Laughter) And we presume to know. And it goes
on and on. You know, I've got a half hour tape of the library, and
when ·you speed it up to fast speed, it's extraordinary; you can
begin to decode structure, the way McLuhan's mind worked at decoding
the structures of print, and trees are a really rich resource for
doing tape because you're after it non-verbally. And you show three
of these continuous tapes at one time, and you begin to work at
understanding the differences between them. That's as far as I can
go by myself.
     After this, to really develop a way of decoding the ecology, you
need a functionning community that's self corrective. EARTHSCORE is
in some ways analgous to the Monastic rules of St. Benedict that were
written in the 16th century. It's tricky territory. I don't know how
dominant my monastic experience is in the kind of thing I've been do-
ing; it may be too dominant. I want to get away for a while and think
differently. But, just as Benedict was into: "To labor is to pray,"
well, to move information in this culture is the most sacred of
tasks, because we need to understand the way things are working.
     The computer industry now, the people working within it,
discover that they're basically a working class. They hopped them up
and told them that they were professionals, flooded the market, and
now they're working their asses off with the digital system. The
digital system is the one-to-one correspondence; what's
characteristic of the digital system is a quantized model, and it's
part of the difficulty of the cycle we're in. We're into

gical sense. They're extraordinarily stupid; they're acontextural.

On and off. Yes or no. You amass wealth and you exploit, and you make money, and you're in big trouble.

The Kleinform itself cannot be digitized. There are ways to translate it from kleinform back to quantity, but you cannot digitize a kleinform. I think that's where McCullough couldn't make the triadic logic that he wanted, because of his preoccupation with number. "What is a number that a man may know it, and a man, that he may know a number." A number is a one-to-one correspondence, again a discrete. It goes back to Russell and Whitehead. And Thom begins a new direction in mathematics that's qualitative. He says: "I don't care how much the bridge weighs; I want to know if it's going to stay up or not when I go over it." And that's the situation we're in ecologically. You can't quantize it and expect to make any sense of it. That's why the extraordinary resistance to capitalism that the alternate culture has developed has been a very healthy thing. And those that have gone the way of capitalism have gone that way; they're divorced from whatever vitality there was. Because once you start evaluating things in terms of one scale, money, money, money, you're in trouble. You can't keep a balanced system- how to finance these things. (Laughter) That's another problem. But they've got to wake up that you don't that much money to do it. It's a way of thinking that's necessary, that can interface with a capital economy. We don't even have the time for revolution. There's no sense in doing that.

JUD: We need some self-regenerative process whereby as software is produced, raw stock is made available. Just as when you cut down a tree, you should put one in its place.

PAUL: Yes. There has to be some sort of regenerative process. Cybernetics has been tooted and the way it's presented is not right. It's the whiz kids with the computers who figured out what to do in Vietnam and were on government payrolls.

JUD: How do you feel the analog model holds up as opposed to the digital?

PAUL: I'm not sure. Bateson makes extensive use of that, the analog and the digital, and it seems to work for him.

JUD: It's also been used in video thought, especially in the age of video synthesizers.

PAUL: It's not very useful for me. A kleinform is a logic; it's

JUD: But it's also a real time thing.

PAUL: Oh, yes, there has to be a time factor in a kleinform. It's not a space model; there is a different time if you pass through the form. You're in each part at a different time, and time has to be considered in a Kleinform.

You see, I think Cage and Paik picked up on the cybernetic model and they did extraordinary things with the random phase of it, and they, or the traidition of which I think think of them as being most characteristic, have put us in a position to do more, but I think we have to get beyond the random/analog which seems to me a groping beyond, a random kind of groping. Bit I could be wrong.

JUD: Of course, the analog has importance in the effectiveness with which it bring the intuitive realms into play, and that is possibly the key where it may *transcend* the purely random.

PAUL: I resist the *notion* of transcendence right at this time. Bateson's rap is that we can answer the question whether the mind is im*minent* or ranscendent; that the mind is, in fact, imminent, and those traditions that seek to transcend the ecology of mind we're in work against that ecology ultimately.

There's one monk that I keep in touch with who runs down the extraordinary scam of the history of human spirituality, in basically _three phases, before our own, and he does it on the basis of alienation, tracing the notion of alienation. The first business is that when man woke to consciousness, he realized that it was meaningless, utterly meaningless and, in his terror, he threw up a vast network of symbolic structures in order to create meaning.

JUD: As Adam supposedly named all the creatures.

PAUL: Exactly. And we had birth, death and mythology. We had the paradise mythology. The Hero. All these things to create some *meaning,* because it was out of our mind, probably men out of their minds who created these symbol structures that worked. Well, in Indian and the East, and in China, there arose a dissatisfaction with this logical structure, and they sought by very deep interiority to transcend the human condition, to jump out of it- the yoga discipline is the most characteristic- and they sought to

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PAUL: The insistence on timelessness. The West was seized with this biblical linear sense of time: this social system is unjust, what are we oing to do about it; well, we're going to utopia; how lonm doe-ʋit take; 200 years; it doesn't matter.
JUD: It's based on a very strond cause and effect head.

PAUL: Right, and that created an idea of time in the West, so the Western man's identity has to do with locating himself in history and the gragmentation that comes from that, that kind of conflict. So, now we're in a phase where there's a lot of attraction for the East from the West, which is very healthy, but it's not all. We still have to deal with the birth/death reality. We have to deal with the fact that we're now an endangered species. So the whole business of birth/death shifts enormously. Your life has no meaning. I mean the gift of your life has no meaning unless there's somebody around to accept it. And if the whole species is gone. And to create a meaning system can't
be done unless some other species is found to accept the gift of life. And spiritual transcendence doesn't, for me, ground in the birth/death mythology.

JUD: Of course, grounding is one form of harnessing therapeutic energy, an area of exploration in healing.

PAUL: I'm in a place now where I feel that I'm growing new connec-
tions in my brain, according to kleinformation patterns. I feel I'm playing that out now. But we've got to do some very fine work now. What I've done sofar is a sketch, the last rough piece of work that I want to do; it's a conceptual thing. It's what I fill out as one person in the time that's left. And I wonder about the definition of artist. Money from the state seems to go to artists and mental institutions and criminality. That seems to be the definition of deviants that the state is arriving at, so I think we'll see in the future an extraordinary debate: how do you differentiate a madman from an artist? You know, it's all one mind. Art seems to be the one place where there's flexibility left.

    I was thinking of trying to get together a conference on art and ecology, if an intelligent ecological base could be found that related to art process. It's a very difficult problem, because you know when
you get a grant- I know you and you know him- it becomes a political football.

JUD: Why don't we return to the structure of EARTHSCORE?

PAUL: It's a conceptualization of an intentional community. In other words, where people would intentionally meet non-compulsively, and it's a method whereby people would agree to behave in a certain way, or agree to agree in a certain way. It's designed to be a leaderless culture, a non-hierarchical culture.

The minimum amount of people needed are 36. It's based on self ective cells of three. Each person ent cells: a cf'eche cell which was involved, analgous to a would be a member of three differ- concerned with the care the persons actual family; a chreod cell which would be concerned with decoding the ecological situation, and every month would be producing a record, or an explication, a document of the ecological situation, taking testimony from the earth; and a work cell which would be concerned with things like transportation, whatever interface there was with the money economy, keeping the place working, whatever had to be done

JUD: The dirty work.

PAUL: Well, there's a way to make any part of the whole meaningful. JUD: Like who washes the dishes and who takes out the garbage.

PAUL: Right. So there are three orders of cells. A person is part of a self-corrective cell in each of those three orders, and because there are four cells to an order, or a group of twelve people as one self corrective cell, if it's in its self corrective process and goes off, that cell. there are always three in your creche family, and your So chreod that can correct the activity of that one cell. The family designed in kleinform, and the basic redundancy or the coding is form is "never less than three." That is the Canon of Self Correction. It's not being tied by a rope to two other people, but it's a of a redundancy pattern. And there's a certain description redundancy pattern was maintained above that threshold, I'm quite sure the community would work, whether it was in an urban or a rural environment, or any environment. If a certain threshold of redundancy were maintained, the community could survive, maintain itslef, and a lot of variation would be possible. I'ts a society premised on the notion of using tape, although the tape is designed to get behavior.

"The formula for such stabilization is as follows. Three people do continuous tape without talking and without leav- ing the scanning field of the camera or cameras. This can

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be done with one camera on a tripod, or ideally, with three camera in
the hands of skilled camermen who care about the people involved.
Tapes are played back simultaneously. This process is repeated with
appropriate time intervals, unto stabilization...
The invention of a stabilized repertoire of triadic behavioral
patterns must precede the formation of this intended community. This
repertoire can be assumed to be secure when these patterns can be
carried on without the presence of video equipment." - PAUL RYAN from
EARTHSCORE.

 JUD: At a point in EARTHSCORE, you reach the point of not using
 tape. PAUL: Right. Because to create a determinate dependency, I
 think, woulc be a mistake. However, the community itself would need
 some recordkeeping to- keep its time base stability. If you're
 loctaed in a geomorphic region, and you're keeping testimony,
 records of the development of the ecology, there's no legitimate
 authority other than to take testimony in this land. So how are you
 going to ground testimony? Will you ground in patterns that are
 larger than yourself? If I do
 a tape of a tree, there's nothing to stop a man from doing another
 tape of the tree with a $1500 portapak, and saying, no, he's got
 it wrong. It's not working that way. All this is public
 information, and any one of those twelve ecological continuums can
 be monitored by the other ones: the effect of automobiles on
 liches, for example; those 3 people rapping with those 3 people,
 monitored by people who are concerned with television, and any one
 of those 12 continuums can
 shift and change according to the **different technologies that are**
 there and they'll shift and change over time, like I started here
 with technologies like the automobile, television and airplanes.
 Well, it's possible to combine planes and autos, since it's internal
 combustion engines, and shift over and watch nuclear power, since
 they seem to
 be building a nuclear power plant in the next town. So it's a
 flexible kind of system, and it.s a way of life. I think there's a
 difficulty with it in terms of sexual behavior, since human sex is
 dyadic, but if the sexual dyad could be broken down, it would be
 possible in a chreche family, but not necessary. But the sexual

children, so being responsible for the care of children is
accompanied with some right to regulate the birth of children, and
in that context, sexual behavior that had childbirth as an issue.
The community, by using those cells, would find some way to self
correct. Peoplw who have tried sexual triads find they break down,
if you've got two of one sex and one of the other, it's not going
to work for very long. Whereas, if you've got six people, one cell
can be self correcting the other, or if you've got nine, or twelve,
those things might self-correct. Sometimes I think that's all a
crock of bullshit (Laughter) and just a decadent impulse to attempt
that, and at other times, I think it's a critical problem, and if
it could be broken down in people, it would release such freedom
that a lot of things could happen. It's a mapping; triadic logic is
a mapping of the kinship system. We've always had to stumble along
with the kinship system, and we've never seen really how it's
worked and known how it's worked.

I think the kleinform is a mapping of the way the kinship system
in fact works, so you could return to family in an electric culture
with this kind of kleinformation. The family is a natural
ecological unit. Split the mean and send them off to war, and you
wind up with prostitutes. Split the mean off and send them to work,
and you wind up with frustrated housewives, and librium and valium.
The extraordinarily sharp definitions of male and female in this
culture are ridiculous, much too important. The natural family unit
has been doublebinded by literacy, and by industrialization.
Perhaps, that doublebind can be broken and we can get back to a
natural, organic family situation.

> "Let this endangered species have part in the coding of
> its experience of trial and error for other life forms
> that may survive its own, both terrestial and extra
> terrestial.
> Let us code this experience, in so far as it is possible,
> in a logic of triadic relationships, so as to provide the
> possible recipients of this gift of human life with
> optimal fail safe as learners.
>
> Let this coding process be part of a way of life that is a
> ritual of readiness forming a budget of flexibility that
> will optimize all chances for our survival.
> Let us engage in the porcess as part of our bond with our

        own kind, our dead and our unborn.
If survival is not possible, let us die gracefully." - PAUL
RYAN from EARTHSCORE.

TALKIN;i HEADS IN VIDEOSPACE: A Video N:eta-Panel With Shirley
Clarke, Bill Etra, Nam June Paik, Walter Wright and Jud Yallcut.

     The following Meta-Panel, so-called because it represents an
attempt at an overview of the alternate video scene as of the time
of the discussion with a glance into the video future, was one of
two hour-long radio discussion panel shows, hosted by Jud Yalkut,
for the Pacifica radio station in New York City, WBAI-FPM The shows
were part of a weekly series called ARTISTS AND CRITICS, each week
dealing with a different art form. During the life of the series,
one a month was on the media arts of film or video. The other video
panel show, included in this book, was the discussion on the Kit-
·chen, An Electronic Image And Sound Laboratory. This video panel,
called now TALKING HEADS IN VIDEOSPACE, was originally recorded for
broadcast on February 4, 1973, and its guests were four of the
foremost practitioners of video art explorations: Shirley Clarke,
proponent of ultimate participation video; Nam June Paik, video pio-
neer, avant garde performance artist and co-creator of the Paik-Abe
Video Synthesizer; Bill Etra, video artist and co-designer of the
Rutt-Etra Video Synthesizer; and Walter Wright, working with com-
puter generated images since 1965, former computer animator for
Dolphin, Computer Image Corporation, and designer of his own video
synthesizer system.

JUD: Since we have four practitioners of what is called alternate
video here, or video art, terms to be defined, we can start out by
discussing what do we mean by alternate video at the present time?
WALTER WRIGHT: I'll start by telling you what I do. I've been
exploring the use of something that might be called a video
synthesizer, and it has the possibilities of transforming or
building an abstract image, or changing a real image into something
more abstract. The process means that I can take a real video image
in, or generate
one with oscillators, and then add to it electronic color. Nam
June Paik has in fact built one of these machines, being the
grand-daddy of this.
NAM JUNE PAIK: Thank you for mentioning, sir. (Laughter)

SHIRLEY CLARKE: Which he sells for a pittance.

WALTER: And Bill and I are going to rebuild Nam June's.

PAIK: Thank you very much. I think this should be in good **solid**
hands, who know every institution, and how to do things. Distrib-
ution is much more important than production. A guy who can start
from the distribution end on, that guy will be really good for it.
I like what you, Bill, and you, Walter, are doing because we are a
small, small stone in a vast sea, and the problem is how to face
that vast sea, you know. And it will benefit everyone, and then
the video synthesizer can be a solid media, alright. If they made
video into a medium, then we can sell video synthesizers as a
medium, because this is much more interesting this way. It can be
sold eventually for a few hundred dollars. So it will be much
cheaper then a portapak, because it has no mechnaical moving
parts. So, theoretically, the video synthesizer, from all
professional technical points of view, should be, if we make as
many as portapaks, which is not too many, we should be able to go
1/3rd price of portapak.
SHIRLEY: I have to interrupt you now to ask, does this make an
image? What is it, live process?
BILL: It will do either.

SHIRLEY: But, I mean as against the portapak which records, as
sort of a pseudo mini-movie camera?
BILL: Carried to its ultimate extreme (Laughter) which is- oh, I
don't know what it would cost to build one now. We're in the process
now of getting together and building one which would go to the
ultimate extreme. Television is recorded in a matrix of 526 by 600
and something lines, vertically and horizontally, and we would be
able to put a different color and intensity dot into any one of
these points and move it around at will, so it wouldn't necessarily
have to have a camera to generate an image. We would be able to
actually paint it.
SHIRLEY: Like painting.

BILL: That's one of the possibilities. Now you can also take a
live image and process it. You could take a person's face and roll
it up into a little ball.
SHIRLEY: But does it replace a camera and a recording

SHIRLEY: My first suggestion would be, since you're going to work in that area, that you give us, into our hands, an object that would be like a little ball that would actually be a lens similar in a way to a microphone in an audio system, that you can squeeze closedJUD: An image collector.

SHIRLEY: Right. An image collector, and you would squeeze it closed to zoom in, and open your hand to zoom out, and through a wire or whatever, send a signal to a recording apparatus so we could free ourselves finally from the nonsense of looking at video as if it were film, and thus messing up our heads further, (Laughter) since we already see a great many electronic movies, and we don't see a great many electronic videospaces.

PAIK: Yeah, yeah. I agree completely. I completely agree.

SHIRLEY: And you really have to change some of our physical devices. There's no reason any longer to have a camera, right? That was something necessary for movie-making; you had to look through the lens in order to see what you were going to shoot. In film, this was fine, but in video, where the finished product is seen in videospace, i.e. a TV monitor or a video projector

PAIK: That's it. There is no finished product, because, like your room at the Hotel Chelsea, Shirley, I think that is the most ideal, supreme creation of video so far, because there you feel the space, and there is no product and it's more interesting.

SHIRLEY: To me, there is no product.

PAIK: Because that's the process of a living room. You have integrated videospace with living space.

SHIRLEY: I think I'm ready now for when we have the two-way cable access, or even first cable, and then two-way access. No, my image is: I'm up in my Tepee, you know, the roof, and all of you are with me, and various other artists in New York, in China, in Paris, and Tennessee, altogether into a live mix. That, to me, is the essence of video

PAIK: I think that is really a very good use of video, in constant video living.

SHIRLEY: Every event that I have seen that fits into the live action process use of video does the thing that no art in front of it ever did before, that makes you understand video, and not fall into the traps of video is like film. It is, but video is also like theater; it's also like dance; it's also like music.

PAIK: Video is video.

BILL: Conceptually, it's beautiful, Shirley, but structurally
nearly impossible. My phone doesn't work half the time.
SHIRLEY: I don't think that's important.

BILL: No, it's not important to the concept. It's omportant to
the reality.

SHIRLEY: Our minds go faster than the technological
manufacturing keeps up.

JUD: That's been one of the problems with film for ages, that
you can't splice as fast as you can think.
SHIRLEY: Yes. I got into film in the mid-50s, and we all went in and
spent the next 15 years trying to develop a hand-held sound camera.
Now, when I left film a few years ago, we had the great accomplishment
of an Auricon **which was there before any of us came and separated** the
sound system so you could record sound separately, meaning that the
manufacturing people have never kept up with the artist, and never
kept up with the fantasy and mind of man. But, I think it's going to
get progressively less so. Time feeds everything. And our job is just
what we're doing right now, which is to talk to people, get them to
understand some of the possibilities so they want them. Then they'll
make sure we get them. Because manufacturers in a free enterprise sys-
tem produce to the demand.

JUD: Eric Siegel's been pushing very much for the manufacturers to
come up with new developments which would meet the needs of the prac-
titioners.
SHIRLEY: We never succeeded

BILL: Everyone in this room has done it. I've seen Shirley's
remodeling of the Sony camera.
WALTER: Manufacture our own.

SHIRLEY: That was one of the better moments

BILL: The glove camera. (Laughter(Nam June can't buy a
synthesizerSHIRLEY: So he made one

PAIK: And went into making synthesizers. Walter is redesigning syn-
thesizers. Walter's worked with computers and he's redesigning
them. I, as an artist, found an electronics engineer who's building

JUD: It's an exact analogy to the old days of light shows. You could never go out and but a machine to produce the effect you wanted to produce. You would end up having to get the components and building from scratch for every single image you wanted to produce.

PAIK: Video is very fast, but it's supposed to be a cool media.

SHIRLEY: What I find fabulous is that I'm basically a very impatient person. I'm amazed that I have managed to survive two years of constant mechanical hangups. I have yet myslef to participate in or attend any event where the equipment worked. I remeber spedning 72 hours to get that ferris wheel set up to enjoy it for ten minutes, and the show was over. It's endless, endless

PAIK: That's what I gave as an answer when somebody, the LONG ISLAND _NEWSDAY, interviewed me about what I thought of Art and Technology's Nine Evenings. I said: It¯is marvelous, because it showed how technology is fragile. (Laughter) And this is a great accomplishment so that art does blind words for technology. So I think that's a great achievement and I'm airing some part of that for my Cage show, because it's

a tribute. And number two is that when the last issue of the 1960s came out of Newsweek, which I read in Tokyo while building that syn-thesizer, and was fighting with those machines, I read what the editor in-chief of NEWSWEEK said the 1960s did, that two things happened: you had ended on the moon, in which all technology worked perfectly; and number two, you had a great blackout where all technology failed, and he had much more fun in the blackout when everything failed than on the moon landing where everything worked. I think that's a brilliant observation.

SHIRLEY: It is. I think one of the talents that all of us have developed, I know I certainly have, as performers, is that we fill in when the machine fails.

BILL: A basic survival tactic.

SHIRLEY: Communicating person to person with an audience, which is in a way a marvelous thing, because we can assure ourselves, whereas for awhile elctronic music had the problem of bringing the human being back into it, the performance. We've got the human being in there always. PAIK: When you had that very difficult session at NET, I think they should have filmed you, then they could have made a

JUD: There are several who work the night shifts quite a
bit. SHIRLEY: Oh,, good. Because there were none at NET.
BILL: It never works, the equipment doesn't
work. SHIRLEY: That's true, but sometimes it
does.
BILL: I went to see a friend of mine, Steve Rutt, who's the
inventor who's working on the machine we're building, and for a
week I got him interested in video. He was into other fields of
electronics, and Steve walked around for a week, looking at his
scopes around the plant shaking his head: "It doesn't work." None
of it works, and he would play it back on the ;~" machine and the
playback would change from time to time, and "it doesn't work,"
and he would look at the broadcast signal, and say: "That's not
what it's supposed to look like; that's lousy." And the fact is
that television is one of these non-perfected media, which get
very soft
JUD: Low definition.

WALTER: Yes, low definition.

 SHIRLEY: I don't mind that, because I personally think the
aesthetic of the 8mm camera is way beyond the aesthetic of the 35mm
camera, you know that heavy monster that sits and watches is not
really as beautiful as something that can be held by a human being
in your hands. And that's certainly important here. It's just that
sometimes when it doesn't work at all- (Laughter) I went recently to
see an experience by a young artist from Baltimore who came to New
York, and it was interesting because he did it over a period of
seven performances, one each night for 15 minutes. He gradually got
all his equipment together by the end of the week. (Laughter) But,
meanwhile he learned a lot. I went to all of thme. Unfortunately,
not everybody had the time to do that.
PAIK: Actually, the VISION AND TELEVISION show at Brandeis, the
opening was 7:30, and nothing was working in my part, and I had half
a floor. (Laughter) Oh, nothing, and one of Charlotte's TV bras
broke, 0; SHIRLEY: TV bras?
WALTER: In Boston?

PAIK: In Boston, and at 6 o'clock everything closes, all the TV
stores SHIRLEY: Did you have to buy brasseires or TV sets though?
PAIK: And then, suddenly, miraculously, 15 minutes after the
opening, two sets worked, and then I had a great performance as if
two sets were all, you see. Always, man is more interesting than

SHIRLEY: Of course, since you've been to my place, more things
work. I'm learnin6 more about wires every day. I spent my first
year crawlinL; on the floor, looking for which wire to attach.
Now I've got a little patch thing, and I hit it, and sometimes it
works.

BILL: it's the artist developing into a technician. Sometimes you
haVE to.

SHIRLEY: Ugh. (Laughter)

BILL: You get entrapped by this wonderful stuff that you see you
can do if you have a laser, or a video camera, and I took all
this stuff to the Avant Garde Festival this year, and it broke,
including the tape. The tape came apart. (Laughter)

SHIRLEY: But mine worked this year. The thing I did with Don
Snyder, the Oracle, really worked. It's true we spent 5 to 6 times
as long putting it up as we enjoyed it, but there was an atmosphere
that was created that was very, very exciting. What I found, by the
way, is the most successful thing to do, is what I call game
playing, using video to play games, because the human element is
built into came playing, and there is that built-in exchan-e, and
if you can find setups that that becomes part of. The thing of
Paik's that I've enjoyed are always where there is the live human
element being faced with the audience. Sometimes it's a reaction to
a man standing there nude, and
on his intimate parts is a little TV monitor. It's much better
for me than watching tapes, that's for sure.

PAIK: There is a clear distinction between video art and
videotaped art, that we cannot enough emphasize this
difference.

SHIRLEY: For me, what I do, maybe I'm wrong, I refer to something
called videofilm, which uses electronic computers, and all sorts
of things, to enhance the ability to put onto a single strand, or
many strands, images that are recorded; but then I see next to it
a live process, which is an interaction with things which are
prerecorded, and basically they imply some kind of a mix of
different elements, of people, of prerecorded tar-es and cameras,
and to me I guess that's more video.

JUD: And the videofilm can be released as a film or a
videotape. There's an interchange between the two.

SHIRLEY: Right. Is that, by the way, the same as reversing the

Is that an issue about it? Ply suspicion is that, in the long run, it's not.

JUD: The interchangeability between the two is rapidly being discovered in terms of syntax

PAIK: Of course. That is important.

SHIRLEY: When our screen sizes change, that will also make a differenc(PAIK: I think the difference between broadcasting and non-broadcasting is in the main technical.

SHIRLEY: It makes a great difference

PAIK: How we think of it. If communication should be complete, alright then, communication is practically a feedback loop. You go and come back.

BILL: Absolutely. It's a, feedback loop whether it's a delay line or a .few microseconds.

SHIRLEY: Are there lots of friends of ours outside who are waiting? If everybody comes to the Kitchen this Sunday- Paik, who won't even be physically there, he'll be in Boston, right?- What's going on right now, you're at the Kitchen, seeing us right now, and what Paik suggested was, why don't we play back the audio through a radio when it's boradcast, and each of us bring some kind of image feed, so that while this is going over the air, the images could be watched, whatever they might be

PAIK: Actually, you have time to come over to 240 Mercer Street- the Kitchen, alright- then watch and see this program with us

SHIRLEY: They can do just what we're talking about; they can leave their houses, dash over to Mercer Street, and watch what's happening now. This is video.

BILL: If we're doing a commercial for the Kitchen, I have to say that we're supported by the New York State Council On The Arts.

SHIRLEY: No, you're not doing a commercial.

JUD: In other words, you're listening to the conception of a piece which will be realized when you're hearing it and watching it at the Kitchen

WALTER: And Nam June will be phoning in from Boston

SHIRLEY: And if we're really very good at miming, we could mouth our own words.

SHIRLEY: Ok, everybody has arrived. The audience is here, and we say hello. Now we start.

JUD: What's the picture of the video movement at the present time?

SHIRLEY: Right now.

BILL: No, I have a different outlook than Shirley on what video art is. or what videotape is. The difference between tape and live performance, now this will probably make it so that we're all going to be screaming at each other, and nobody will be able to understand what's going on

SHIRLEY: They're having a hard enough time already. (Laughter) PAIK: It's a good talk show. Better than most talk shows you see. BILL: You see, I work with electronic image, and I'd rather work, for the most part, without people

SHIRLEY: You're lazy

BILL: No. I've done several things with people, and you've seen them.

SHIRLEY: I never saw you do anything with people, except help me.

BILL: The Billy Graham tape. I didn't direct him. I did the thing with the San Francisco Cockettes. You saw that. You liked that.

SHIRLEY: If you ask me whether I like tapes I've seen, if you ask if I've liked film tapes I've seen, sure, I have.

BILL: I did a live show with a strobe at the Kitchen, but that's be

sides the point. I would prefer to use a medium without people bel cause as soon as involve people in the medium, I lose some-.of the control, and for a lot of pieces I would prefer to have total I would like the control. interaction with the audience to come, not bral level where on a cereyou sit there, watch the tape and think of meant, but where what I they sit back, relax and think of other

then have the tape affect them in such a way that they're carried a- long, and they can think their own thoughts and add their own imput into it on a highly personal level, on an individual level.

SHIRLEY: You're misundestanding, though, the role of the video direct- or. You're confusing him with the videomaker, let's call him. The videomaker can control, is the one in charge of, the situation, and he sends out broadcasts out over the air, or across the room, to himslef, whatever he wants, and when you want to control a situation, fine. But I don't see the process as being of that short a duration. First of all, I see it aS constantly continuing. Already in the United State, the American people go to sleep, go to work, and watch video. If you ask them what they do, most Americans watch TV, and that's

their occupation.

BILL: I guess so. I don't watch TV.

SHIRLEY: So what I'm suggesting, in the six hour day that the
average person puts in, there's a great deal more time to explore
many things in relationship to any imput, any process, any kind of
back and forth thing. So, I'll give you my great fantasy, what I
call the Pleasure Palace Theater of the Future. And it's something
like Mercer Street, but instead of being a bunch of separate people
who have come in and rented space, this is one big overall space, a
kind of labyrinth maze, and that as you go from room to room, you
can go through many experiences, from dance, to music, you can eat,
you can take a sauna bath, you can play chess to Mozart, you can see
live theater. Jud and Paik know this well because several years back
(Laughter) we des.cribed the same event. I haven't yet found that
200,000 dollars to even get the first thing, but it's an
architectural space, something that would certainly get anybody out
of the house. Otherwise, I, for one, plan to stay right smack in my
house and watch TV, until you send me something else over the cable
so I can turn on the cable, or else I may stay in my house and play
bingo- via the cable. But, other than that, I don't think we're in
any disagreement. I think you either don't understand, or just don't
accept the implications of what I'm describing, something very big
that will include watching tapes made electronically or however. I
personally would like to feed film imputs to my tapes because they
give me certain images I cannot get otherwise. BILL: It's just the
average artist's inability to communicate with anybody else.
(Laughter) I agree with what you're saying perfectly. And I didn't
understand it, right? So there's a communications gap, which I find
happens a lot between people who are always striving to communicate.
SHIRLEY: No, I think it's very important for us to exagerate what
we say. In other words, I will not stand publicly for electronic
films versus video as a live process art form, because unless I
scream loud and clear for process
BILL: You would never get it. SHIRLEY: We won't get it at all. BILL:
I feel the same way about electronic image. Unless you sit there

and shout: "You need this machine which will do this," people
look at you like: "What do you do?" "Well, I do videotapes."
"What sort of people do you tape." "I don't tape people at all;
I deal with electronic images." They say: "What does it look
like?" and unless I have my portable video playback unit there,
or my studio, I can't even begin to show them. It's become
totally strange. Walter must have the same experience
JUD: For years, it's been: "What kind of films do you make?"
SHIRLEY: Thank you. Jud. I was just going to say, I make films
about people and I never make films about abstract objects. That
was not my thing, that's all.

WALTER: The FCC says there something wrong with the television;
they'r going crazy when they see things like that.
. SHIRLEY: I like them fine. But then, I usually admire what I don't
do. As do we all. But I think Jud is a very good example. Jud's
been in and around the video scene since its very coneption, way
before I
even knew it existed, and yet he has remained very faithful, no
matter what he uses as input, to the kind of filmmaking that he
believes in, that he's been doing for many, many years. And Paik's
work resembles Paik's work, whether it's music, or whether it's his
tapes
WALTER: Or whether it's an interview. (Laughter)

 SHIRLEY: Why would it be anything else? And I remeber seeing
Walter's things the first time, and flipping out because he was
playing around with TV with images we would get all the time with a
TV screen, even though we all admit that the problem with things
keeping themselves together technically is tough, and it isn't
going to be much longer before we see large groups of people,
across the city, across the world, all different kinds of art
imagery produced, using this medium for distribution.
JUD: That's for sure.

SHIRLEY: And that's why you compared it earlier WBAI, because the
whole thing with why Gene Youngblood feels so strongly about it,
and when I met him at Paik's house last fall, I suddenly got the
impact of the meaning of it, what access to this medium is going
to mean, because he described himself sitting in California, a
film critic, not being able to see films, which is, of course,
insane.
JUD: When we're talking in terms of opening up channels, it's

SHIRLEY: That's indeed true.

JUD: And what perhaps has to happen culturally at this point,
and what we are talking about now, is just like the first
injection of stimulant into this mass nervous system.
SHIRLEY: One of the things, of course, that's fantastic is this
idea: we're having a conversation now that's really marvelous.
We're really imputting a great many ideas. Now, unless people sit
at home with a cassette and record it for themselves, they won't be
able to play it back and at their own leisure re-examine it. And
this is, of coursem definitely true with images. You go to the
movies, and you've got to look back each time. Let's just think for
a moment of the videocassette and what that's going to do. We can
have these things just like we have books and records, and that's
going to make a big difference too. I'm busy right now trying to
write, which is not my thing at all, and I realize that in the few
moments we're spoken here, the next year's worth of articles have
been written.
WALTER: Ah, maybe I ought to start writing.

SHIRLEY: No, I think we should do more ways of talking actually,
because it's a good way of communication.
JUD: As you get more in non-verbal communication, you discover
that words have an entirely other importance.
PAIK: And hire a professional editor to edit it, so it will be
as good as anything.
BILL: You'd have to get someone who's literate. Like Shamberg came

to guest lecture at one of my classes at NYU, and he asked me to
write down something, and I asked him how to spell every word
because I never learned spelling.
SHIRLEY: You talk alright, like I do.

BILL: Alright, but not well. And I said to Michael, I'm sorry,
you'll have to write it down yourself. I'm illiterate. And he said,
post-literate. (Laughter)
SHIRLEY: Well, that's a nice compliment.

BILL: There's an interesting thing that hinges on what we're
talking about. It was a sort of scary talk I had with Paul Kaufman,
who's the Executive Director at the National Center For Experiments

few years. And it was, of course, the summer before the election, and he said: "I think Nixon will be re-elected; everybody will feel sort of suppressed and stop a lot of their protesting, and we're going to be the Soma producers. We're going to produce pretty patterns and nice television so people can sit at home and not go out and protest, and sit back and get high and watch tape." Now, I see it differently too, otherwise, I'd be totally scared; but it is a scary thought.
SHIRLEY: But I see something much more exciting going on now.

BILL: Opening sensory, new tactile, new sensory, orgasmic feelings, through image and sound, electronic image and electronic sound, added in with old art forms which you can now put in a cassette and review paintings or old pictures frame by frame, and do intense study. It does imply something of going more into yourself, and getting out of politics, and that's sort of a frightening though, in some ways.
SHIRLEY: Up until that very last sentence, I was absolutely with you. And then, I will just take this deviation here. If you look at a very interesting phenomenon, which is all the people, many of them violently anti-Chinese, anti-Mao, who returned from their first visits to China and their first reaction to it, you get a very interesting phenomenon beacuse all they report is that there is a group of people now in the world who are happy at the moment doing what they're doing because they see a positive future based on the best parts of of their past. Ande, here, we all feel kind floaty lost. This is a that very political statement I'm making now, if we saw our roles as having to learn these new skills we're talking about, so that the technology makes possible the communication web, to really start to cross, we too can become part of what the Chinese are going through, without or with the kind of revolutions they had to go through to attain what they did. It might be possible in the future, just through communication, through information passed to people, and it doesn't matter if it's Nixon in the White House or who it is, because the power of the people stopped that bombing in North Vietnam, no matter what anyone says. There's no question about that. It didn't stop the fighting.
WALTER: Maybe we'll get the communications web then.
SHIRLEY: But when we get it, we better jolly well have used this per-iod perfecting some of the techniques. I, for one, find it difficult

to do something that was never asked of me before, though it's been
asked of Jazz musicians for years: the fact that a jazz musician can
play and improvise within a group. He hears what he plays, and at the
same time he hears what other people are playing. What do we do with
our eyes and our bodies? Dancers know something about it with their
bodies. We don't know anything about that with our eyes. Now this is
a skill we're going to have to learn, a totally new skill for the
human being. There was no other way he ever needed it before.
PAIK: That's very true.

SHIRLEY: And it's a very important thing to look at this period as
prectice time, or getting together time. It's true; our heads are in
 PAIK: For instance, from that moment of time that man-monkey stood

 up and we had man, until the time we could draw, first, say the
 painting of 5000 B.CT good painting in a way- it was a million years
 we took Just to learn how to use it. OK, we even use cave painting
 still a lot of times, and from 5000 B.C. to now is a very short time
 still. SHIRLEY: Because you have to look at it not just as passive
 input, Bill.
 PAIK: I think it is very important that we got a new hand,
 telecommunications

 SHIRLEY: Right, a new tool is going to make man

 PAIK: This new tool takes a very long time, and now the smart way
 of many, many **experiments** should be done because we cannot say
 that this is video, and this is video art, now, you know. We
 cannot say that. SHIRLEY: No one's ever defined for us what
 painting is either.
 PAIK: Art is a very elusive concept.

 SHIRLEY: I think that's something we all have to do, busying
 ourselves perfecting our talents to create electronic images, a
 skill that we're all going to need.
 PAIK: That's very important.

 SHIRLEY: I am busy learning things having to do with movement,
 fine. That's what we need. We need all our different inputs.
 JUD: It's rather like studying the zen of
electronics. WALTER: Yes, zen electronics.

BILL: Jud knows me and I think he may be poking fun at me. Jud and
I teach a course together and jud knows that the only book I

THE ART OF ARCHERY (NOTE: by Eugen Herrigel.). People then look at the equipment in a different way. Instead of saying, in the standard Western approach: "This is a machine that I'm going to battle it out with," they should look at it and say" "This is something that I'm going to have to incorporate into myself in order to be able to use it."

SHIRLEY: I agree with you, but I'm very curious about what Paik wants to say now, because I wondr about how he felt about being able to be part of something like the Experimental Television Lab. PAIK: My position from the beginning was, though I'll do all that I can do, that I thought the best thing I can do is not to excercise any of my personal influence, so that it can be as open as possible, and then, I thought of doing as Lao Tzu said, the doing of not-doing. SHIRLEY: By giving people access to what you have developed.

PAIK: Yeah, yeah. Of course, it was a very hard decision first, like in 1970, the various things I had already developed for ten years, and then to make a machine, and to liberate it or not to liberate it. I thought many, many nights. And one day, I knew it, that I should go off, and that day I said I will practically not use it. I made one whole year of movies with Jud Yalkut, so that I don't play video synthesizer. It should be an open thing. Therefore, video art should be as open as possible, and also therefore all environment and all non-videotapable art.

For instance, in a panel discussion with George Stoney, Gene Younblood and Russell Connor in Minneapolis during the first video art competition, I said: "You are supposed to be video art competition, but what you are doing is single channel videotape art competiion." (To WALTER) I'm sorry,-you won, and it was a very good tape. It was

a good thing they discovered Walter. It was all agood thing, but the name was at fault, and I didn't submit anything. And the thing is that video art and videotaped art are different, and we are also thinking of environment, and that is also different. I always think about the profound meaning of Paul Ryan's thing which very few people know. Paul Ryan has this time-delay line and self-analysis. I think that's very important.

"YES AND NO is an experience in one's own balancing of positive and negative feedback.

machine records you and the second plays the recording back on a five-second delay. According to how you feel, start with saying YES or NO into the camera.

If you start with YES, when that comes back on the monitor

five seconds later, you can either switch to saying NO to your YES- and so on and so on. All manner of ambivalence can be explored in this way.... (Piece at Brandeis show)...

"VT is not TV. Videotape is TV flipped into itself. Television, as the root of the word implies, has to do with transmitting information over a distance. Videotape has to do with infolding information. Instant replay offers a living feedback that creates a topology of awareness other than the tic-tac-toe grid." - PAUL RYAN.

SHIRLEY: My daughter, Wendy, is involved in something that's fascin

PAIK: Psychological
SHIRLEY: Yes, of self-analysis with video which could end being something like a Proustian novel, and that's a whole other possible thing.
PAIK: What I'm quite interested in what we are doing now with Jud is freezing time. Why are we, why suddenly, take a portrait of a great man? It used to be a job for a painter, and the painter's job

was how to make it better. Then they invented and that became the job of a professional cheap, it became everybody's job, you and when it became very know, the same thing, all beginning with So Paul Ryan's portapak is

SHIRLEY: How about a film I once made called PORTRAIT OF JASON, which, by the way, I thought was a videotape. I thought when I finished it I thought, when I finished it, I could hire myself out as the modernday portrait painter. You know, for $1000, I'll come to your home and do your film on you.
BILL: One of my first revelations in video, when I started working with electronic image, I would keep the camera on myself as I was play- ing with the thing, because I wanted a live image to imput into this mess. Afterawile I realized that I had the bad habit of picking my nose
SHIRLEY: Self-improvement.
BILL: You discover it. But after awhile, you're watching all this tape- I decided it didn't matter anymore.

PAIK: Actually, George Stoney said the same thing. That's really interesting.

SHIRLEY: What I've done is, I set up my first equipment so that the monitors and the camera were right there together. From then on, no one ever looked through a lens or a viewfinder in my house. We looked in the monitor. But then Viva said: "Aren't you going to make people self-conscious?" The answer was: "Of course. They go through a period of self-consciousness, of enjoyment, of vanity, and then they go beyond it." And it's fabulous. I have finally gotten where!I will let people take still pictures of me, which I never could do before, because I was really insecure about my image.

JUD: It's like the Gurdjieffian idea of self-remembering, and video feedback is making us more able to do that instantaneously, to train ourselves to do it

SHIRLEY: Simultaneously

JUD: Yes, simultaneously, because we can train ourselves to do as things are happening, to be aware of what we're doing at the moment that we're doing it, and be right on top of it

PAIK: Yes, like Paul Ryan.

SHIRLEY: It will change how people who go out with videoatpe deal with themselves, let's say, everybody wants to show everyone else in the world something of themselves. We've given them the means to do it themselves. No longer do we have the interpreter; we're that for ourselves now. There's this dating game at Antioch College they're into- the kids- it!s perfect; it's a very good video symbol. You come and for x number of dollars, you make a ten minute tape of yourself, and then you want a date with somebody, you can come in and look throur all those tapes and see what the different people look like, and you choose somebody to go out with. It's a very good idea.

PAIK: It's much better than a computer. BILL: We must have that at the Kitchen. WALTER: That's the kind of thing the TV LAB should be doing, and broadcasting it, too.

SHIRLEY: We could do it at the Kitchen, and pay for the tape because a person would pay, say, ten dollares to be put into

WALTER: The video data bank.

SHIRLEY: Video Date Data. (Laughter) Dada. D-A-D-A.

SHIRLEY: Oh, you mean I could gradually take $2 off of everybody as they came in, out of the $10
BILL: And it goes to a good cause, the Pleasure Dome.

SHIRLEY: Bingo in my house is cheaper. I run a bing game on the cable. Why not? They do it in Chicago.
WALTER: Which cable?

SHIRLEY: They have apartment buildings which have been wired up for cable in Chicago, and there are young kids sitting there making quite a mint of money running bingo games for the apartment houses. Fine, wry not?
WALTER: That's right. The cablestations in Canada play bingo too
SHIRLEY: I want the money to come to us so we can continue doing our thing.

PAIK: Actually, the latent, sleeping demand or use for video is so much
SHIRLEY: It blows your mind.

PAIK: For instance, the reason I am not I is because when I started working at Binghampton Community TV Center- Binghampton is a sleepy small town
BILL: Was- (Laughter)

PAIK: In upstate New York. Actually, there were university and then town people. There were three Binghamptons: one was university, which is quite far; another is IBM people; and another part is old Binghampton which is centered on Johnson's Shoe factory. There are three completely different types of people on income. And when you see a house, you know where they belong. Anyway there was hardly an *introduction,* just sleepy town. Then Ralph Hocking set up the TV Center, with seven portapaks, and nobody cam to rent it out. His job was to rent it out free, and nobody comes. First week, one guy; second week, two guys, and then, in two months, people just kept coming, all kinds of people, firemen, policemen, and of course, young people, and the poets, and clergymen. For *instance,* they still had hula- hoop competiitions going on. An now, they really have a waiting list for ten portapaks a month. JUD: That happened with public access in New York City, too.
PAIK: And then we made a video synthesizer and, of course, nobody used it. For months, nobody, and I had a very bad conscience to make that, to specnd so much money, with nobody using. Then, slowly, slowly, two week waiting period, even the video synthesizer.
SHIRLEY: Well, you know, that was the history of the portapak

Remember, three a month, now 33,000 a
month. JUD: And how many people per
portapak
SHIRELY: Yes, one portapak goes to many people. It's not a
little home toy quite yet. The implications are extraordinary.
PAIK: That Binghampton case

SHIRLEY: Jus think, that community that's sitting there, all sleepy
and separate, where one person didn;t get to know another, and I
don't know if they have cable or not, but if they did those tapes
would go out over cable, and what a different change.
PAIK: Because it happened in Binghampton. I lived in Freiburg, a
small German town, a university town. The only sexy thing in town
was the undergarment advertisement
SHIRLEY: That was the big turn-on.

PAIK: That was the most sexy thing, you know. Martin Heidigger
lived there, and Edmund Husserl. It's like the birthplace of
existentialism, Frieburg, near Switzerland. And Binghampton was on
that level, you see BILL: They will never talk to you again, Nam
June.
SHIRLEY: Why? Well, it's changed the sex habits of the world. Put
your own portapak up and make your own porno.
BILL: That's right. They have them in Tokyo. SHIRLEY: I see it as
a live action thing, frankly. BILL: I have trouble lighting the
set. (Laughter) I know it's a skill you have to perfect; that's
waht I say.

PAIK: Very interesting. You just talked about how we have to learn
to use our senses. So, there are three classical visions: Plato
said that the word "conception" is the most important thing; St.
Augustine said that sound is the most profound; and Sinoza said
that vision is the most profound. Now, TV commercial has
everything. (Laughter)
But still, another interesting thing: when Doug Davis videotaped
his honeymoon with Jane, in some motel in Vermont, and then on the
bed. They showed it silently, and I told them: "Turn on the sound"
and they didn't turn on the sound.

SHIRLEY: That's interesting. It made it personal when the sound went
or PAIK: So sound is profound, no?

SHIRLEY: There's no doubt that all the inputs make it. Anytime
you have a medium with something missing, like on radio now,

PAIK: That audience is so important.

SHIRLEY: By the way, one of the things that's struck me so much about video; in therter, you have to go to the place, and in film, in order to see it. But with video, the place is something we have to start to question. Where do you see it? It can be both ways.
PAIK: It can be anywhere.

SHIRLEY: It's quite a different thing when something comes into your home.

PAIK: The most interesting thing about NET'S two-channel production, which I saw, the most interesting part was when Bob and Ray intercepted and met in the middle. That was fantastic.

SHIRLEY: That was the whole trip. And when they took the rope to pull, and they got it wrong in the tug-of-war, so that instead of being out of one monitor into the other, they got it a little mixed up so they were both in the same monitor on the edge, and suddenyl you understood that's what integration is.

PAIK: And also, both disappeared- in the middle. That is a genius idea That's what the video medium is- silence.

SHIRLEY: I once discovered something very funny. I was doing what I call Sculpture Tapes, where you take three cameras and you put the monitors one on top of the other, say, like a body is, head, torso, feet. And the reople watched while they were being taped, and what was interesting was that, in the playback, the bottom monitor, which was the feet, had nothing much happening, and that's where your eyes went all the time. Not up to the busy tops, and all the moving around, but to these dumb feet which jsut stood there, or just sat. That's what I've learned actually very much from oriental art.

Once, when Paik came to my house and we were playing with my stuff, he took a live camera and set it up so that it had one of those absolutely perfect kind of Japanese etching qualities, just the edge of something, the edge of a monitor showed, a little frame, and suddenly your eye can't go into all my fancy images. It kept going back to this quiet

JUD: The quiet center.

SHIRLEY: The power of observing quietly while action goes on around is another thing that only video input can do, because

PAIK: My thing is that the future, because I am now studying
radio quite much, the degree of freedom we will have in the
futureSHIRLEY: Yes, we have to do something about that.
PAIK: Freedom need not be first amendment. Medium free. When you
go to movie, you are prisoner of time.
SHIRLEY: Absolutely.

PAIK: Alright. Ther's no other thing
there. WALTER: A physical prisoner.
PAIK: On television, you have half freedom, because you turn on
the lights a certain amount, and you can do a certain amount of
your things, read some books
SHIRLEY: And also, the commercials were a good tought

PAIK: Right, so you can leave the room. Or you don't watch it. You
come only for the commercials. And number three, radio gives you
more freedom, because you can all information while you type a
letter, and doing things, and even watching TV. Therefore, if in the
future we can have one silent TV station, where you can get all the
information through visuals, while we can choose our own audio
source, from records, radio
JUD: THat could be aided, of course, by having a larger visual
screen. SHIRLEY: The day of the mosaic screen, where you have many
inputs on a wall.

PAIK: When you stop broadcast, there's more inportant
informationSHIRLEY: But the reverse of what you're talking about,
too, where the sound is played for you on the video, and you can
make your own image.
PAIK: Of course

SHIRLEY: And all the variations that come from understanding that.
PAIK: I have the feeling that all talk shows, including TONIGHT
show and Dick Cavett, will eventually go back to radio, because
there is no reason to see Johnny Carson every night.
SHIRLEY: What I find though is this; I like to get a look at
how somebody behaves
PAIK: Sometimes

SHIRLEY: There' something interesting about personal behavior. Let's
take an aging movie star; that's very interesting to watch. There are
all sorts of strange possibilities. But there are ways of doing it
that don't demand so much, for instance, when there's a talk show on,

PAIK: And you do other things.

SHIRLEY: I now live alone, and find something very interesting. In the old days, I used to turn on my record player when I came into the house. Now, I turn on my TV set, because in many ways I can deal with it merely as sound input, and busy myself. Not too often do I turn to look, and the soap operas are fine with just sound. They really don't need much image, and game shows too. But, where I see the major difference in what we're talking about, is having access. At the same as we have access to all of this to the fact that if you are living in Korea, and you are living in San Francisco, and you
are living in Brooklyn; and I'm in New York, and you're in MinnesotaWALTER: Why me in Minnesota?
SHIRLEY: I don't know; you won the prize there. Then we can, also at will, use what used to be called the videophone. We can also plug into each other.
WALTER: That's the thing to be able to get back
toSHIRLEY: That we get back and forth.
WALTER: Sometimes we've got to talk back to the television set.
SHIRLEY: You can send video images. You can say: "Shirley, shut up for a while; I'm sending you for the next half hour beautiful images; enjoy them."
BILL: Why are we restricting ourselves to one screen? I used to sit at home and have two air programs on simultaneously, or I would flip dials. I'm a very big one for sitting there and zooming around. The information needed really to digest two or three prime time shows isn't very much. You can flip the dial and have them all laid out. SHIRLEY: That's true of television. It isn't, I don't think, quite so true of the kind of concentration that some of us expect with other things. In other words, I think then that the skill we were talling about developing, is that we have to learn to integrate images so that multi-images can be played, and that they can connect in a way that makes it possible to watch.
BILL: Like Nam June's last show at the
KitchenWALTER: Or Shigeko Kubota's RIVERS
SHIRLEY: Shigeko's RIVERS was a very good example.

BILL: This is all, I think, important. As Nam June said in his

BILL: To some extent. You can have a four-wall screen, or a six-wall
screen. You can have the floor and ceiling. You can be inside a cube
where there's something different everywhere

PAIK: Like quadrasonics, we'll have

quadravideo. BILL: I think this is the next

step.

SHIRLEY: The average living room, twenty years from now, has screens
of many sizes on the wall, the way they have paintings. And they can
still hang paintings on the opposite wall.

SHIRLEY: Do we still have more time.

JUD: I'm going to over-record, so we can edit.

WALTER: This is edited. This is what should be left

on. BILL: This is process radio.

(NOTE: The program was broadcast exactly as it

was.) SHIRLEY: Still a real filmmaker.

PAIK: One thing- let me say one

thingSHIRLEY: Last word.

PAIK: No, not last word, but one word. Everybody says one last
word. Like in court. (Laughter) Finally, Harvard University, with
many hundreds of years of history, and many thousands of scholars,

SHIRLEY:

Grant. PAIK: They always get better than we do. (Laughter) He
Of course. did about what was written about the telephone and, for
all research   years, or 110 years, that the telephone was exist-
ing, only two essays had been written about the telephone. SHIRLEY:
Oh, that's not nice.

PAIK: One is McLuhan; another is another guy. In a hundred years!
When-television
SHIRLEY: Unbelievable.
PAIK: Yes, telephone changed our lives, and only two guys wrote about
it.
SHIRLEY: You know what's very interesting. There's this old Don
Ameche movie about how he discovered the telphone; Don Ameche was
the actor who played Bell, right, so there he is discovering the tele-
phone, and finally when he and his partner have gotten it together, and
they're going to have a big show to get money so that they- produce
telephones- what they do is- it's an absolutely perfect example of what

our lives have been like- One of them is in Springfield on one end

of the phone, and in Boston, all these rich people are watching,
right and guess what he sends out, the first telephone message:
"Hello, hello, you there? and you get there, and then a group of
barbershop singers.do a little number, there's a cornet solo
(Laughter) and
then it's all interrupted because the lanlady, who they own rent
to, interrupts than, saying: "You have to get out. Sorry, you
can't do this." She kicks them out, and everybody looks and says:
"Well, it's a nice toy, but really what is it? Who in the world
would ever want to use it." And that's exactly the state we're in
now. It's a good analogy.

JUD: There must be a tape of that somewhere. WALTER: We'll hire a
Harvard man to research it. SHIRLEY: I find my survival now, which
is in a way very nice, by thinking of all this, as in the
beginning of any new art form, as something one plays with. You
must look at it more as a toy. Don't take it too seriously. Enjoy
it. Because it's in that enjoyment that the significance of the
thing is finally revealed. We don't really know yet all the
possibilities.
BILL: And we won't, for several million

ELECTRONIC ZEN: The Alternate Video Generation

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