

NAM JUNE PAIK CALIFORNIA/NEW YORK/BOSTON VIDEO SYNTHESIZER PLUS

Shuya Abe and I am stranded in Los Angeles without car. . . We miss New York's dirty subway. . . John Lindsay is a great man, who charges on 30¢ for a refrigerated ride. . . Abe-san said "We are Darma-monk" . . . Darma was so diligent for 9 years in sitting and meditating that he did not even go to men's room. . . The accumulated shit eventually melted away his limbs and Darma became to be loved as a Buddha without legs. . . this leg-less man's wireless transmission is all what TV is about today. . . and in coming carless society.

Video synthesizer is the accumulation of my nine year's TV-shit (if this holy allusion is allowed), turned into a real-time video piano by the Golden Finger of Shuya Abe, my great mentor. Big TV studio always scares me. Many layers of "Machine Time" parallelly running, engulfs my identity. It always brings me the anxiety of Norbert Wiener, seeing the delicate yet formidable Dichotomy of Human Time and Machine Time, a particular contingency of so-called Cybernated Age. (I use technology in order to hate it more properly.) . . . In the heated atmosphere of TV-control room, I yearn for the solitude of a Franz Schubert, humming a new song in the unheated attics in Vienna. . . Ironically a huge Machine (WGBH, Boston) helped me to create my anti-machine machine. . . this is a place to thank beautiful people there. . . Michael Rice, Fred Barzyk, John Folsom, David Atwood, Olivia Tappan, etc. . . you just never know.

Let us look back to the mid 19th century. . . most people were deprived of the way for self expression in the visual art. Only the selected few had the access to tools, such as oil paints or canvas and know-how. But the invention of camera changed the scene and made everybody into an active visual artist. The size of camera industry and art business illustrates the massive desire to create an artwork, instead of watching a masterpiece on the wall. Will this process repeat itself in the TV world? Will the network program become a wall painting in the museum and we active video creators and creating machine, such as video-synthesizer etc., become as big as Kodak, Nikon, Zeiss Ikon combined? If yet, will we be able to subsidize the ailing NBC or CBS from our tax-deductible portion of income. . . Dear Phyllis: don't smoke cigarette, and live longer to see our D-Day.

Paik-Abe video-synthesizer is a humble effort for this day, putting 1001 ways of instant TV making. We gave up High Fidelity but we won the Super Infidelity. . . adultery is always more interesting than marriage.

The "attraction" of drug experience to young people lies in the peculiar "ontology" of this unfortunate medium.

Generally speaking art consists of three different parties. (1) Creator (active transmitter); (2) Audience (passive receiver); (3) Critics (judge or carrier-band).

Through this discrepancy, all the complicated contingencies in the art world, or art-pollution, such as vanity, school, style, intrigue, manipulation etc. come up to the scene. The dubious distinction of so-said First Class artist or second rate musician or minor poet etc., is also a result of this discrepancy.

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 a short cut effort 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 experience to "safer" and more "authentic" art medium, without 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. . .

by Nam June Paik

R Cybernated art is very important, but art for cybernated life is more important, and the latter need not be cybernated.

(Maybe George Brecht's simplissimo is the most adequate.)

X But if Pasteur and Robespierre are right that we can resist poison only through certain built-in poison, then some specific frustrations, caused by cybernated life, require accordingly cybernated shock and catharsis. My everyday work with video tape and the cathode-ray tube convinces me of this.

***** Cybernetics, the science of pure relations, or relationship itself, has its origin in karma. Marshall McLuhan's famous phrase "Media is message" was formulated by Norbert Wiener in 1948 as "The signal, where the message is sent, plays equally important role as the signal, where message is not sent."

***** As the Happening is the fusion of various arts, so cybernetics is the exploitation of boundary regions between and across various existing sciences.

+ Newton's physics is the mechanics of power and the unconciliatory two-party system, in which the strong win over the weak. But in the 1920's a German genius put a tiny third-party (grid) between these two mighty poles (cathode and anode) in a vacuum tube, thus enabling the weak to win over the strong for the first time in human history. It might be a Buddhistic "third way," but anyway this German invention led to cybernetics, which came to the world in the last war to shoot down German planes from the English sky.

☆ The Buddhists also say

Karma is samsara

Relationship is metempsychosis

We are in open circuits

published by Something Else Press, 1966.

WOODY VASULKA RICHARD LOWENBERG

ENVIRONMENTAL SYNTHESIS

Our concerns and objectives in working with video tape to date have involved electronic experimentation with the media and its relationship to other environmental technologies, striving constantly to present new sensorial interrelationships within human life-functions.

Current and proposed projects:

Video-Moog—dancer feedbacks (live movement creating visual, creating sound, creating movement, etc.) Self-regenerative feedback interplay.

Video Synthesizer (computerized visual analysis, breakdown, and storage for creation and recreation of images) To work on visual output as does the sound synthesizer in the creation of audio output.

"Cyborg" Cybernetic organic investigations and presentations. (Audio-video systems triggered by brain wave-alpha rhythm-readings through proper nonrandom conversions). To study human control of purely contemplative creative processes.

ALDO TAMBELLINI NEW YORK CITY



photo: Jasmina Boo

JOE WEINTRAUB

NEW YORK CITY

INFORMATION EQUALS REVOLUTION

There exists right now the most powerful information network ever created by man on the planet. I am talking about television. It is controlled by establishment creeps, who are using it to keep the masses in a state of moronic amnesia.

But their grotesque Disneyland of the mind is being threatened by underground video, and the creeps are getting nervous. Information about a new way to live is being withheld from the masses. Information already on video tape, ready to be shown in millions of homes. Information that is useless unless it gets into peoples heads.

The pressure is building. Information pressure. The quantity of vital relevant video tape waiting to blast open the atrophied frontal lobes of the sleepwalkers is turning network programming into a cosmic joke. This is a warning ABC, CBS, NBC: THERE IS A CRITICAL LIMIT TO HOW MUCH BULLSHIT THE UNIVERSE CAN ABSORB. YOU HAVE PASSED IT. THE UNIVERSE WILL RETALIATE.

Where is our underground video network? The tapes are ready to be shown. The viewers are waiting, dying of boredom. The technology to do it at a feasible price, with cable TV or even UHF, already exists. EVEN the money is there, in the form of \$250,000 in the vault at the New York State Council on the arts, and more floating around Warner Brothers. WE don't need more hardware. We don't need more video-packs and cameras. God knows we don't need more TVs. We're ready and waiting. We demand viewer sponsored underground video. We demand the right to speak, to be seen and be heard. We've got the information that can save this planet from destruction. WE DEMAND A NETWORK OF OUR OWN.

ALBIE THOMS LONDON

I left Australia about a year ago and have been on the road with my experimental feature film MARINETTI. In my travels I have met many video freaks and realise that the time is right to get back into the video scene.

I am working for OZ magazine, which has done much to liberalise printing techniques, etc. and am helping the editors start up INK which will be a weekly underground paper. It is hoped that the news that is gathered for INK will be distributed via sound & video tape as well as newsprint & we are planning co-operation with TVX in realising this objective. Our eventual aim is a weekly videonews tape as well as the paper. Anyway, you shall be hearing further from us about that. . . . Meanwhile, we are getting it together for a free news service for the community that is assembling for the Isle of Wight festival, and we will be putting out a daily paper there, as well as radio & video news bulletins. It is hoped we will be able to project our news tapes onto the 24' eidophors that are being used to televise the performances for the crowds far from the stage.

Experiments with video tape loops

Juliette Mondot

Exercise 1:

Starting from Steve Reich's COME OUT TO SHOW DEM

Two tape loops with the same image and sound—one slightly longer than the other are started and mixed simultaneously into a single image. They begin synchronically and as they go out of sync, the image and phrase separate and there is an increasing reverberation of sound and image. Two or more of the same tape loops can be mixed in and orchestrated into the on-going rhythm.

I want to find out what happens to the progression of image as it goes out of sync. What happens in black and white—in color?

What happens with different kinds of imagery?

Primary forms—such as circles, squares and triangles expanding and contracting from the middle of the screen

Feedback forms—with the abstract forms and strobing progressions

Realistic forms—such as a sequence from newscasts

What would happen with the repetition and mixing of an initially realistic image—would it become a more abstract form—more like pure shape or pure color?

TVX LONDON

This fall TVX will be introducing Electric Newspaper, a monthly Magazine published in videotape form. We aim to sell sufficient copies to distributors to enable us to cover production costs, and distribute a large number of copies at cost of tape stock, to colleges, arts labs, video heads etc.

We will shoot and compile the first edition, and subsequent editions will contain a large % of contributions from other people and groups working with video, both in this country and abroad. (Expected date of first edition around October, '70.) Electric Newspaper will also operate as a live information/distribution/news/message service at pop festivals and other large gatherings, using projection screens and monitor chains. This section of activity is to be run in conjunction with BIT information service and Friends Magazine.

Contact us at: 1 Robert St., London, N.W. 1, England

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NATIONAL CENTER FOR EXPERIMENTS IN TELEVISION AT KQED

SAN FRANCISCO

The National Center is a unique institution conducting theoretical and applied research into television as an instrument of personal and community growth, a learning and therapeutic tool, and a fine art. The Center's main products and services are experimental videotapes made by gifted visual artists; research projects investigating psychological and cultural implications of television; an intern program which brings to the Center talented staff members from public television stations throughout the country.

The Center encourages visitors as a part of its effort to share its concepts and imagery with as wide an audience as possible. "Monday Nights at the Center" provide an opportunity for young experimentors and artists in videotape from nearby campuses to present and discuss their work with the Center staff.

The Center came into being on April 1, 1969, when the Corporation for Public Broadcasting made a grant of \$100,000 to KQED for its establishment. In 1970, the Corporation renewed and increased its funding with a \$150,000 grant. In addition, the National Endowment for the Arts awarded a matching grant of \$60,000 to the Center to begin its fellowship program.

LEICESTER²⁵ COMMUNE KENMORE, NY

The Leicester Commune is a two-culture consulting, problem-solving, and media communications group. Our focus is on communications, particularly on problems that require the interfacing of disparate cultural groups, eg. community leaders and revolutionary students, police and young blacks, etc. Our most recent work has been for a major government research laboratory and has involved planning for the effective communication of environmental research needs and problem-solving information among the various societal groups which must be involved for action to take place.

The underlying value system of the Leicester Commune affirms the dual-cultural life-styles of its members and our continued positive involvement in the basic processes of cultural change going on in America today. The next twenty years will be the most crucial ones in mankind's history, for the West a period of revolutionary cultural transition from a highly structured puritanistic and materialistic society based on production of goods and property values to a more flowing hedonistic and humanistic society in ecological equilibrium and based on exchange of information, services and software. At best the transition will be rough and involve isolated new violent skirmishes and a gradual ending of the massive violence now underway. At worst, mankind will end. We fear the extremes of violence and dehumanizing polarization must, and indeed, can be averted.

Our present societal institutions are at the same time necessary for the economic support of our society and the major impediments to required change. We feel that being responsible in the present environmental entails neither embracing these institutions as they are nor rejecting them out of hand. Where and when opportunities exist to do so, we wish to work with aware people within these institutions, helping them accommodate to, or at least develop a tolerance for, the new culture life styles and value systems. We thus wish to function within the present economic system as long as it is the prevalent mechanism of societal information feedback. At the same time, we are interested in the creation of new cross-cultural organizations and functioning idioms appropriate to the changing environment. The Leicester Commune is in itself an attempt at the latter.

Our qualifications are of two kinds, our individual skills and our synergistic capability of functioning as a group. As individuals our establishment credentials include an aggregate of over thirty years of relevant consulting and work experience; two of us have Ph.D. Degrees, five Master's Degrees; we have long lists of publications, accomplishments and past clients. . . . Our areas of professional expertise include a variety of communications skills: group dynamics, interpersonal encounter and affective education; videotape, film and mixed media small-group communications; humanistic and clinical psychology; computer and library-based information systems; community dynamics; science information exchange; Gestalt awareness methods; environmental design for communications. Areas of work we have been involved in include design of curricula and programs on the elementary through the graduate school levels, management training, consulting for top management on conflict problems, use of videotape for small-group, scientific and cross-cultural communications. We also have access to an extended network of highly qualified individuals who are available to work with us in specialized problem areas.

As a group, we have had experience over a protracted period in the processes of living together, working together, playing together and being "into one another." This process, for a long time one of mutual mind-blowing, has been the source of our synergy, of our personal honesty and of our economical internal communications. It is what makes us more than the normal consulting group of throw-together experts. It was also key to the development of our life-work style, which is 24-hour involvement of the subgroup concerned while we are on the problem. . . .

Our clients, past, present and potential, include colleges, universities, research laboratories, youth groups, hotel and motel chains, banks, civic organizations, environmental groups, urban planning groups, libraries and—in general—organizations which must somehow function on the interface of straight society and the new alternative culture.

Our style of involvement ranges from the existential to the highly disciplined depending on the client's needs and how we react to them. They might include: 1. diagnosis of communications problems—what is the real problem, where is its locus (personal, interpersonal, intergroup, role or subculture-related, etc.) and what should be done, 2. design of communications environments, including use of space, time, physical setting, media technology and social setting, 3. planning and running cross-cultural communications workshops, particularly ones designed to confront generational and value system differences, 4. utilization of media communications aids for short-term feedback and small-group connection, particularly videotape, slide shows and super-8 films, 5. preparation of written, videotaped and filmed documentary reports of study projects—for broader circulation, 6. training in communications, on all levels. Our normal operating mode is to secure the maximum possible involvement of members of the client system in whatever project we are engaged in. We teach on several levels, explicitly and through exposure of the client to our life style. The latter is sometimes very painful but, more often than not, existentially free, joyful, easy but yet somehow very efficient.

As for most consulting organizations, our fees are based on the time devoted to a client's project plus out-of-pocket expenses. Our overhead rate is quite low and we provide our own videotape and media equipment. Although our original base has been Buffalo, New York, two of our members are currently in New England, one in Southern California. Our area of travel is global and we draw up a team out of our membership and associates to meet the needs of the particular problem at hand.

Further information on the Leicester Commune or a ½" Sony video documentary on it can be obtained through writing Vince Giuliano, 104 Leicester Rd., Kenmore, New York, 14217.