But is it art?

Video tunes in on our lives

by Susan Schutzer
Spectrum Staff Writer

The enthusiastic reception of video as an experimental medium during the 1960's was typical of the period's general outpouring of creativity. All forms of self-expression were tainted "art," from body movement to rock 'n' roll; thus video was aesthetically inbred. Tatooed "art," from body forms of self-expression were typical of the period's general freedo that unfloated itself in every sound and image.

Video was seized by individuals who saw it as a political tool capable of capturing "establishment" consciousness. Among them were Vasulka, former innovator and currently a resident video artist in Los Angeles. "The notion of these elements became the basis of what is now called 'video art.'"

With the advent of the video synthesizer by Nam June Paik, Shuya Abe, and Eric Seigel, video took a giant step forward. The synthesizer enabled signals to mix in non-ordinary ways, assigning an array of colors to an image on top of another.

A video happening

Artists from other mediums, including painting, dance, and film — flocked to the new, captivating consciousness elicitively integrating electronic device. Energy gleaned from those enlightened by the possibilities of a culturally undefined medium, was absorbed by the video equipment and released in a rare display of sounds, colors and images.

In 1970 an alternative media conference was held at Goddard College. Video and other media enthusiasts gathered together, spouted theories, altered their states of consciousness, held seminars, and screened hours of tape. This event provided the impetus for movement which in the past five years has crystallized into a "video happening."

Soon after the conference, video declared its independence from conventional television, as it spoke defiantly from monitors in public galleries. David Silver said eloquently in his article, "Transforming TV."

"It was a visceral thrill to see the TV (television set heretofore reserved for Carson, Cronkite, and Rice Krispies) issuing forth completely chaotic form — wild juxtapositions and distortions, radically contrasting with the strict predictability of broadcast TV."

Details, colors and outlines

Although video was reflexive screen from which a continuous stream of new images flowed, the art world, when suddenly faced with a new form called video, needed to define it, and thus categorized it in three ways.

The first was a category image processing and involved the artistic manipulation of the densities, colors and outlines of an image, manifesting the boundary of its transformation as originated through a light space code, regardless of external realities.

Secondly, video was classified as a conceptual tool where an image was staged for the camera, a style better known as documentation. This differed from image processing because it focused on the presentation of an idea rather than an image.

Lastly, video was defined as a documentary device, exploring events of social or individual significance by recording real occurrences.

Vasulka spoke of an early exhibition by Howard Weis, entitled "Video as a Creative Medium." "It was a whole new code of what was later to be proclaimed video art, contained in one exhibit."

Vasulka said, "I've seen a more precise definition, more socially hidden concept, but, I've not seen a significant contribution to these concepts since."

The exhibit had a number of monitors displaying different events. At first sight one was presented with an empty screen. Within a matter of seconds the viewer watched himself entering the room, a display of real time and an example of a documentary. As one rounded the corner suddenly upon Albert Einstein, or a version of Einstein distorted by the addition of colors and feedback, an example of electronically processed image feedback, an example of a slapstick comedy routine.

An episode in the continuing drama of The Videonauts, created by video maniac David Silver and poet Stuart Whiger, portrayed a man sitting in a bathtub who turned on the water and was awaiting its arrival. No such luck. Fraptured, he banged on the faucet. Suddenly water splashed on his person from thin air. Flabbergasted he stood up to be confronted by water flowing upward in his face. Here, video effects composed a slapstick comedy routine.

Commercial

Who said dancers must have their feet firmly planted on the ground? A video tape superimposed two dancers floating gracefully along the creat of Niagara Falls. Hermine Fried took classical oil paintings and animated them as if they were embodied by a mystical spirit. David Court created distorted body images, such as a body being swallowed by its mouth or tangled in the length of its nose.

Few public centers

Now that the reader has derived into the video world he may have emerged with a few questions. Where might one go to view video events and where might one find public access to video equipment? For presentation of video tapes in New York State, there exist such organizations as The Visual Arts Committee and Gallery 219 present: Poeme: Dance with Intermedia a performance involving live dancers, video, film and electronic music will take place this Thursday, March 31 in the Katherine Cornell Theatre at 8, 9 and 10 p.m. Admission is free and public is invited.

-continued on page 6-

Hear O Israel For gems from the JEWISH BIBLE Phone 875-4265

SUPER MISER SAFE

SALE BEGINS APRIL FIRST!!

ROCKS at its Best:

GRAND OPENING LATKO

Printing and Copy Center

(To serve the North Campus)

1676 Niagara Falls Blvd.
(formerly Buffalo Textbook)

834-7046

Our newest location is specializing in printing multiple page offset printing jobs such as thesis, dissertation, house publications, etc. at low, low prices. Please give us a call at:

834-7046

from 9 - 5 pm daily. We will be glad to help you with any question, Woody have.

When accompanied with COMFORT

There's nothing more delicious than Southern Comfort on the rocks.

Have your own Derby party, just pour Southern Comfort over ice and turn on your music. Merry Derby with all, T.V.,

WON $50

P. A. R. T. Y

Classical Sweepstakes

1) A Day-

Two Records

RCA

W 0061 April 23-

The Parson's

Secret

Two Records

RCA

0063 April 30-

The Byrds

Three Records

RCA

0063 April 30-

The Beach Boys

Five Records

RCA

0063 May 2-

Brewer & Shipley

Four Orchestral SW-

3610 MAIN STREET-

(Formerly Buffalo Textbook)

LACO BOOKSTORES INC.

$6.98 $9.98

CLASSICAL

Mourice Abravanel -

V varies .

Pablo Casals

Utah Symphony

LACO BOOKSTORES INC.

$6.98 $9.98

JEWISH BIBLE

Phone 875-4265

SPECTRUM TRADING POST

SAPIN TRADING POST

SAPIN TRADING POST

LEDBURY

Taj Mahal

JIMMY WILDCAT

B.B. King

COUNT BASIE

CHARLIE BYRD

DAVE BRUBECK

ROCK

THREE RECORDS

RCA

OTHERS

ROCK

TWO RECORDS

RCA

CLASSICAL CONCERTS

LACO BOOKSTORES INC.

3610 MAIN STREET

(Formerly Buffalo Textbook)

SPECTRUM TRADING POST

SAPIN TRADING POST

SAPIN TRADING POST

LEDBURY

Taj Mahal

JIMMY WILDCAT

B.B. King

COUNT BASIE

CHARLIE BYRD

DAVE BRUBECK

ROCK

THREE RECORDS

RCA

OTHERS

ROCK

TWO RECORDS

RCA

CLASSICAL CONCERTS

LACO BOOKSTORES INC.

3610 MAIN STREET

(Formerly Buffalo Textbook)
Video ... continued from page 5

Kitchen, Media Study Buffalo, Anthology Film Archives, Hallwalls, and some small galleries.

There are few public access centers for the production of video due to its growth as a highly individualistic artform and also a lack of financial backing. As Vasulka said, "Creative centers are always within the individual."

However a few such centers do exist, including National Educational Television (WNET) Synapse in Syracuse, Television Center in Binghamton, and Media Study Buffalo in Buffalo.

Media Study Buffalo was converted from an old hotel into a huge media-oriented complex, located on Delaware Avenue. Before its equipment was stolen, it was the second largest program for video exploration in New York State. Renowned video people involved with Media Study are willing to teach interested students here.

Burris, presently working with Media Study, said, "Buffalo is unique in its development of a framework for looking at electromagnetic phenomena. We gain an understanding of their principles by examining them in the present within the individual."

The Video Committee sponsors guest artists and video events. Their most recent show, Held Over at the Cafe Bizarre, was a multi-media presentation where Gallery 219, in Squire (Norton) Hall, was set up as a cafe equipped with stage, video monitors, percussion instruments and synthesizers. The Video Committee is an instrument of the imagination because of its future possibilities. Num June Paik, an innovator in video, said at a recent interview, "I would rather talk about its futility than its past because we've achieved something in video, but this is only a beginning."

Use by CIA

Replacing mad scientists will be mad videoists, pouring into their TV sets a mixture of TV ingredients - toll, toll, boil and bubble - (poof!) video discs and tele-communicating systems.

The video disc will create a situation where people can go into a store and buy the video acquired discs which require people's faces and facts as their lives. "With around 10 discs, they can print records for everyone in the world," he said.

The video disc industry will cast at the feet of humanity its jewels in the form of a wealth of new jobs. The young people today who are up on "what is going down," will have numerous job opportunities in the future.

Pictorial self-analysis

Videocommunicating, the construction of television video, the computer, will enable hom viewers to dial their exact video needs, be it the local weather report or business work transactions. Within ten years video technology will be prevalent at the automobile.

Paik said, "There are ten reasons to drive, for pleasure and as a means of communication. Pleasure driving is an escape from the self and seeks to analyze the self through a machine. Video provides an escape and so analysis through pictures. I communicate to someone else one won't have to drive. The will see and hear the other person through a two-way communication system."

Paik envisions video communication as a means of liberation from the energy crisis. The car's only source energy is gas; thus, to cut down on its use will benefit society. Video is the natural substitute for the automobile because it serves similar functions.

Whether or not the new generation will be video driven only time can tell, but can't be denied that video has tuned its way into our present life styles.

TOMORROW NIGHT!

UUAB MUSIC COMMITTEE, FESTIVAL EAST and WBUF FM93 present the Acoustic Brilliance of DAVE MASON featuring MIKE FINNEGAN and JIM KREUGER with special guest JENNIFER WARNES

Thursday March 31st. 8:30 pm at the Shea's Buffalo Theatre

Tickets available at U.B., Buff. State, Amherst Tickets & all Festival outlets in the U.S. & Canada

U.B. Student Tickets available ONLY till 3:00 pm Wed. March 30th!! FREE BUSES LEAVE FROM NORTON CIRCLE AT 7:30 pm