
The chronology works as a complement to the frontpage of the New York Times, March 10, 1936, hung in the gallery; tidied, Not Yet, it shows us time-bound matters that barely miss the target of relevance: just before.

Before I read the catalogue (while in flight to see the show), I read Hollis Frampton's "Impermanence of Edward Weston." I found the concluding lines of the essay difficult to comprehend. This was surprising since, though the theoretical issues raised may subject both writer and reader to some torments of confusion, I generally find his prose elegantly crafted. I take as deliberate one dubious sentence construction: "It is, I believe, the case that the artist's work is not the artist's will.fu; rather than implying a vicious alter-it-ty, I see Frampton working it as a kind of conjunction that adds something to something else. Everywhere, conjunctions (either real or implied, verbal or visual) link ideas, postures, attitudes, forms, categories, modes, and terrains to one another.

In obvious cases, Frampton conjoins his multifarious elements by abutting them to one another. Abutment occurs in The conquest of culture and nature from "False Impressions." He abducts illustrated covers from the Filmaker's Newsletter and Sports Afield, where each uses the same fisherman-hooking-fish image to connote their respective conquests. The lateral abutment, fixed by an axerographicscan, relates to a vertical, natural abutment of land and submarine life below the waterline. The twice-illustrated fisherman struggles to pull a creature of one realm into his own, while the original, anonymous photographer (like Frampton on another level) straddles the boundary line between both.

Sometimes, Frampton straddles terms of difference along lines not neatly straight and neutral but markedly jagged. In Two Exemplary Applications of Applied Color, the line terms are the telltale signs of the advertisement's abduction. Frampton's eager hands definitely do not rip the ads from the same page, but since the tear's ridges and valleys are complementary and match up, it seems as if they were. Consequently, the shade of the "red" tree seems coordinate to the open prairie of the "blue" swimming pool. As the ad boasts of its miraculous tree, the binary collage is and is about "a two-in-one" sign. In the case of the tree, it is about both "beauty and speed"; in Frampton's xerograph, it is about two icons of yard mythology strangely matched.

The usual randomness of tearing paper obscures the artificial registration of the graphic overlay. Frampton's work interests me here, as elsewhere, by con-

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FRAMPTON'S OTHER WORK
purposeful hands behind seemingly random, natural con-
junctions and give "false impressions." Over mistakes, un-
predictable mishaps, noise, unauthorized alterations by art-
ists multiply any number of readings or false impressions.
Hiltelho, a viewer may carry a false impression innately or
unawares of its construction. Made over to expose random-
ness and purpose, Frampton's shifting conjunctions link us to
"another." 

Linkages occur throughout most of the exhibition by con-
junction-like elements but also by various organizing sys-
tems. Frampton appears to be a man carried away by a most
persuasive system—listing. Lists abound everywhere.
The ads of "Nostalgia" impression parade selling points flagged by a
red blue. The series, "Reasonable Facsimiles," carries lines
and columns of word-pictures, which Frampton lists as it per-
forming subtractive sculpture by extracting the items by razor
tines. The canned-food labels, which are flat-
tened and framed like skinned animals (trimmed by Xerograph),
were probably from items on his shopping list. As if making an
inventory, he laid out his coded T-shirts in "Protective Colora-
tion," as a list of integrments for today's social chameleons.
"Nostalgia," especially in the film form, can be experienced as
a list of photographs/memories fading.

Frampton seems driven to list-making by a central preoc-
cupation with time and its representation. Listing is just one
representation of time, which may be thought of as a succes-
sion of events or movements on a list. Frampton spews of time
like an "and then" and "then" with each tick. 

Nowhere is "and then" more implicit between framesthanin
"Reasonable Facsimiles," we find, out of several repeated lists of schemes, "Group, Array, Clus-
ter," circled in red. Whatever scheme he used to derive the
two universals across an eye-ball-dialed diagonal is not given.
Whatever one would call it in metahistory, replication would
be part of the scheme's program. At the forms Frampton
uses replicate or repeat an image and seem to say "in other
words." Replications, even as close as hi-fi color photo-
graphs, have significant alterations that let you know that the
same thing is being said in a different way. Xerox copies replic-
ate lists, as in the case of the schemes mentioned above,
but they never quite match. The writing appears similarly
circle, and, of course, color and texture are removed or al-
ter. The replication of the fisherman-hooks-fish image is as
important as its abstraction. The magazine cover-produced
by thousands within an edition. But, Frampton has given a
trans-publication replication, as if somebody else's list
were to repeat a word. In addition to any subtle differ-
ences of cropping, tone, or color that survive Xerograph,
Filmmaker's Newsletter "utters" the image differently than
Sports Afield, drastically so for Frampton who humorously

He understood that "to use an image is to make another." 

Any use of a pre-existing image is a kind of replication,
because one involves the sameness of identity, and any replica-
tion is another statement, because it involves the differ-
ence of framing. Where sameness and difference are
paradoxically involved, replication is impossible just as it is
unavoidable. Even contradiction in a two-sided world of repli-
cation is to say in "other words."

Frampton seems especially fascinated by the replicated
two sides that any supermarket abundantly displays. The
cars laid out repetitively in rows repeat themselves front to
back. The series of Xerox can labels in "If Any Other Name"
undoes the structure and lays front to back from side to
side. Bamboo Shoot Brand Globes is my favorite example.
It privileges the front side with cleaner, bolder, more alluring
domestic and dumps the untidy gibberish of ingredients' list to
the rear. The globe rises above, showing China on its
privileged face. I thought perhaps North America would be on
the label's verso, but alas, this label has not broken through
the two-dimensionality of signs—China repeats.

In front-to-back or recto-verso repetitions, memory com-
monly intervenes and overlays its own systemic mediations.
Memory's disregard of some details and its superimposition
of others comes into play with the can labels, but it plays more
strongly in nostalgia. The portfolio of stills calls to mind the
film, itself based on earlier versions of these stills. Within the
film, narrative captions were temporally disjointive, causing
the viewer to experience a picture in anticipation of its nar-
dation and the narration in reference to a memory of the preced-
ing photograph (which was burned on a halftone). Memory
repeats, Frampton seems to be saying, just as mechanical
systems can repeat, but it does so on its own terms of differ-
ence, in "other words."

More basically and from an overview, Frampton's explora-
tions of forms of replication bet the Aristotelian law of iden-
tity and contradiction. The law states that an entity is itself be-
cause it looks like itself and that the entity cannot be itself and
something else at the same time. Frampton cut up the axiom
when he linked replications within and without time. He con-
cluded that verbal and visual something does indeed look like
something else, and that something is itself something else.
He adapted the terms to something else at the same time. I doubt modernisms for a sake of the北海的 hideous inutility but did so to indicate another way to restave or reestablish identity and contradic-
ing kinds of linkages in Reflections/Reactions. But the
term has another dimension where one can explore the posi-
tion of the work in relation to Frampton's total, creative activ-
ity. He called it his "other work" where something does in-
deed look like something else, and that something is itself
something else at the same time. I doubt modernisms for

From the "Reasonable Facsimiles" series. Left: Zucchini squash encountering sawhorse (1975), "from "Sixteen Studies from Vegetable Locomotion" series. 
ion amount to mile after mile of unedited footage and only partially
decided information. He marvelled at Ray L. Birdwhistel's analysis and conclusions drawn from 36 frames of moving
footage. The scientific examination of 11/2
seconds of a mother diapering her baby showed him a double
bind in kinetic communication. Frampton wondered at how
so many uncountable moments in real time composed the
total film.1

His own practical attempt at least to approach the total film
seems to lie in the Magellan Cycle. He wanted its 36 hours
(viewed over the span of 371 days) to match metaphorically
this image. The run of film (his master metaphor) you're
to turn his "polymorphous" camera onto all possible appear-
ances within its Magnum Opus horizons. I believe this major
ark moved in the mainstream of Frampton's attention.

Yet, throughout his theory and practice, he was always
ready to point out the other half of the dominant figure of at-
tention: in the running offilm (his master metaphor) you're
actually watching an illusion of only half of what took place.
The camera's shutter was closed the other half of the time. So
that there is another cinema of equal length that could have
been made precisely at the same time.2 I see the work in
"Recollections/Recreations" as the other side of the flicker,
the dark side that the show lights.

The contents are that which is not filmed—by implication,
that which is excluded from the film experience. As vastly in-
clusive as his film projects are, he recognized that conditions
of choice determine to some extent their execution. To
choose is to include; to include is also to exclude. I wonder if
that which is excluded from the film experience can be
used to show how binomial hierarchies inform discourse and
shape the determinant laws of the whole. Although the staff of the AI-
College of Art and Design, and New York: New York University
Press, 1983), pp. 137-160. (First published in October, no. 5
(Summer, 1978): pp. 48-68.)

"Incisions in History/Segments of Emptiness." In Circles of Con-
fusion, p. 56. (First published in Artforum, Vol. 13, no. 2 (Oct.

Susan Krane, in Hollis Frampton: Recollections/Recreations, p. 11.

(First published in October, no. 1 (Spring 1976): pp. 104-110.)

5. As quoted in "Incisions in History/Segments of Emptiness," in Circles of Confusion, p. 11. (First published in Artforum, Vol. 10,

6. "Incisions in History," in Circles of Confusion, p. 84.

Susan Krane, in Hollis Frampton: Recollections/Recreations, p. 11.


(First published in October, no. 1 (Spring 1976): pp. 104-110.)

1971): pp. 61-66.)

1971): pp. 61-66.)

12. Simon Field and Peter Sansbury, "Zorns Lemma and Hapass Legen-
emes," Interview with Hollis Frampton," Afterimage (Lon-
Susan Krane, in Hollis Frampton: Recollections/Recreations, p. 11.

13. "On Horse Camel Rivermouth, a Preface," in Circles of Confu-
son, p. 7.

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