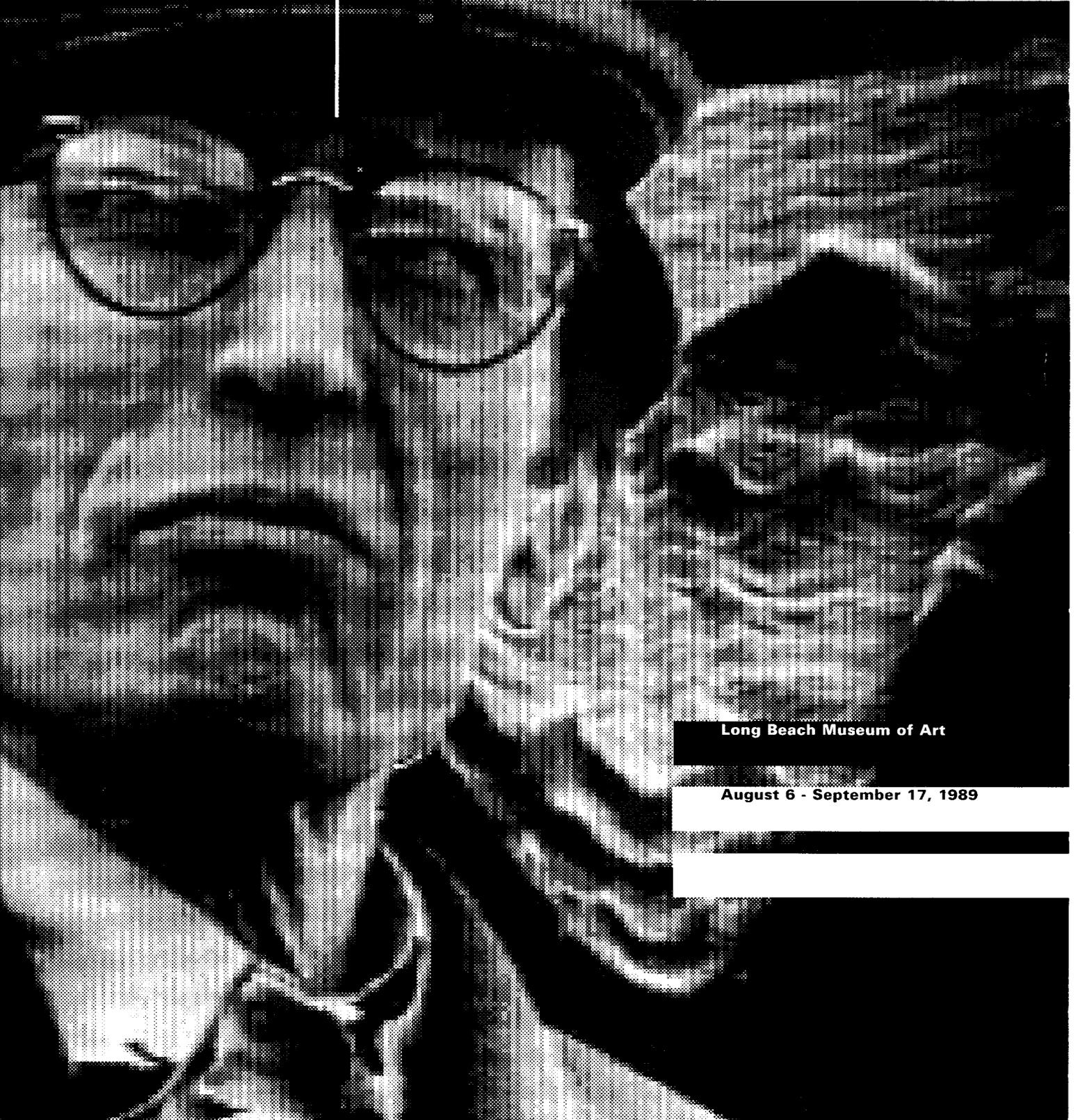


Reconstructed Realms:

*Recent Acquisitions of
Long Beach Museum of Art's Video Collection*



Long Beach Museum of Art

August 6 - September 17, 1989

Reconstructed Realms

The death of context, the death of the author, the death of art. The postmortems of postmodernism are rhetorical exaggerations, but they accurately paraphrase the sentiment of the theoretical chic that holds sway in the '80s. The art work that elaborates this anti-modern discourse practices its own impossibility, practice made nearly perfect by self-fulfilling prophecy—it aspires to being an art of not being art, and often succeeds. The postmodern perspective, it would seem, is painting art into a corner.

One of the most influential advocates of an "anti-aesthetic" is critic Hal Foster, who describes this position as, "a critique which deconstructs the order of representations in order to reinscribe them." But *reinscription* is the crux of the matter. It is this articulation of the new that is not generally addressed by the adherents of deconstruction, the practice of disassembly and de-centering that has become virtually synonymous with postmodernism.

Aligned with German philosopher Jurgen Habermas's contention that modernism is an incomplete rather than a failed project, media theorist Gene Youngblood advocates a postmodernism of reconstruction rather than the predominant approach of resistance by deconstruction. These perspectives both acknowledge the crisis of meaning, the "commodification" of art and the dispersion of the avant-garde into popular culture. But to simplify greatly, what essentially makes the idea of reconstruction different is an important shift in emphasis, toward the notion of advancing change through transformation rather than protest through negation. Rather than merely "problematizing" referrals, the difference between the intention and the act is "poeticized"—theory is treated as an imaginative premise rather than the basis for an illustrated conclusion.

While the artists in this exhibition don't adhere to any single set of terms, much less Youngblood's typology, their work can be seen as proposing re-figurations of form that push beyond the dead-end of resistance

by deconstruction toward the possibilities of new landscapes and narratives. They all struggle to go beyond modernism, but they also struggle to move beyond the "uninterrupted present" of orthodox postmodernism.

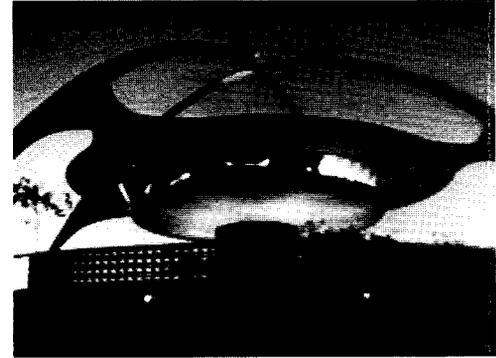
In Leslie Thornton's work, there is an attempt to locate the present by mapping its future—however apocalyptic. In Woody Vasulka's and Ken Kobland's tapes, the relationship between the past and present is reworked, not to suspend history, but to make a new landscape of the past's presence. When the constructs of pop culture are incorporated by artists like MICA-TV or Rea Tajiri, they aren't just exposing its dynamics, they are isolating elements for their power of association and evocation. Paik/Garrin treat media as a present and exaggerate its dynamics, pushing television so far that it becomes a mirror for reflection rather than a screen for reception. In similar fashion, Bob Snyder subverts formalism by taking it to its logical conclusion, a realm where all formal configurations can be interrelated through pure aesthetics, music becoming a meta-structure that empowers the reconstruction of landscape as poetry. Together, these tapes can be seen as purposefully transposing "mediascape" for landscape, illuminating the psychic geography of experience in an age when the average American accumulates nearly nine years of television exposure in a lifetime.

Reconstructed Realms highlights the Long Beach Museum of Art's Video Collection—the largest public collection of video art on the West Coast and one of the most important in the country. The collection and preservation of video art is one of LBMA's recognized areas of leadership in the field. In keeping with an annual tradition of Collection shows, the newly acquired video tapes in this exhibition provide a survey of outstanding recent work in the context of a significant theoretical inquiry.

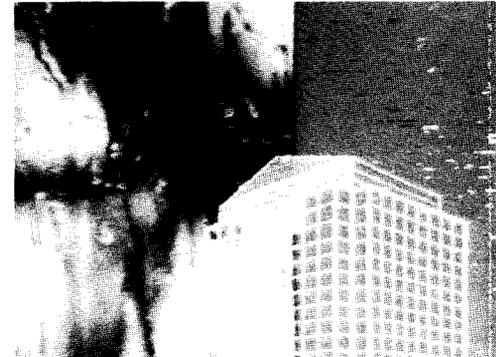
Michael Nash
Media Arts Curator



Two Channel Music Tape: Spring/Fall



Cascade: Vertical Landscapes



Hard and Flexible Music



*Hitchcock Trilogy:
Vertigo, Psycho and Torn Curtain*

Two Channel Music Tape: Spring/Fall

by Paul Garrin and Nam June Paik, 1987, 32:20

Spring/Fall is a mesmerizing blizzard of image processing on two simultaneous channels that invites the viewer to explore different associations with audio compositions. The viewer reconciles the two streaming transoms—offering images of contemporary life, media, fashion and art—with each other and with the audio, discovering universal pulses. This collective heartbeat is signified by the ambient audio's metronomic, surging surf. Like all of Paik's work, *Spring/Fall* is hypnotic, sexy, enigmatic, hyper, hallucinatory and exhilarating, modernism gone maximalism. By overwhelming the viewer it imposes the cosmic dislocation of the "media-as-message" postmodern age, and then pushes television even further until it swallows itself in a kaleidoscopic whirlpool. The structural trace is that of the snake swallowing its tale, Urobros, the mandala of self-knowledge.

Cascade: Vertical Landscapes

by MICA-TV (Carole Ann Klonarides and Michael Owen), 1988, 6:28

In the view of Carole Anne Klonarides and Michael Owen, the postmodern architecture of "universal civilization" is a Tower of Babel, and their homage to its verticality literally takes this premise 360 degrees. Collaborating with composer Christian Marclay and visual artists Dike Blair and Dan Graham, MICA-TV brings together elements of vertical composition, images from contemporary architecture and quotations of popular culture. The vertical read of the camera frames the chaos of the city with this manifestation of its break with the landscape, producing an odd sense of equilibrium and balance.

Hard and Flexible Music

by Bob Snyder, 1988, 5:30

Trying to work through the idea of formalism that developed in new music to see what's on the other side, Bob Snyder has produced one of the smartest and most faithful revivals of the visual music tradition. The German filmmakers in the '20s who first theorized visual music proposed a total synthesis of visual and aural elements, but this has remained an illusive ideal. Dividing his screen in half to mirror the image/audio duality, Snyder sets up a dialog between nature and architecture, intrinsic and extrinsic forms. Through conceptually precise "polymodal" compositions, Snyder treats music as a theory of unified fields, a meeting ground for a concrete poetry of absolute form.

Hitchcock Trilogy: Vertigo, Psycho and Torn Curtain

by Rea Tajiri, 1987, 13:30

On the surface Rea Tajiri's work reads like the standard deconstruction of appropriated popular media via text to which we have grown accustomed to in the '80s. But this is a work of remarkable evocation and resonance that counterpoints and complements the scores of Hitchcock films with "meta-narrative" possibilities. These occur by doubling the inherent distance from the appropriated subject, standing

twice removed in the realm of parallels rather than parodies. *Vertigo* offers obliquely drawn character studies, *Psycho* dwells ominously on the portraiture of two women and *Torn Curtain* offers a procession of endless beginnings. In each, Tajiri "mirrors the mirror"—she departs from her own subjective perception rather than the original and creates a new scenario. In the space between these scores cues to conventional dramas and the reconceived expositions, arises a story within the story that envisions an "inscape" of the text.

Berlin: Tourist Journal

by Ken Kobland, 1988, 18:50

Ken Kobland reconstructs Berlin as a zone for the merging of memories and experience that models the psychic geography of the contemporary landscape. The prologue sets up the journey somewhat ambiguously—is this a departure or an arrival?—and the idea of Berlin is always more present than its actuality. This imaginary city of media representations and moody interiors is continuously superimposed upon Berlin locations, culminating in the revelation of a miniature Berlin Wall that serves as a paradigm for the tapes fusion of actual and imagined space.

Peggy and Fred in Kansas

by Leslie Thornton, 1988, 11:00

In Leslie Thornton's *Peggy and Fred in Hell* series, we don't know exactly what, but *something* has happened and *something* is over; we see a post-apocalyptic aftermath played out by two children and work backwards to deduce from whence they came, perhaps where we are now. The *Peggy and Fred in Kansas* installment is an inverted *Wizard of Oz* of sorts that finds our protagonists taking refuge from a Kansas twister in a cellar, play-acting enigmatic disaster scenarios. They re-create the world in their own self-image, an image inherited from our collective media memory, a world where time has been suspended by the infinitely empty horizon.

Art of Memory

by Woody Vasulka, 1987, 36:00

Working with Gene Youngblood, Woody Vasulka is developing a new theory that delineates four areas of emphasis shift between film and video, reviving the "inherent properties of the medium" notion without the rigidity insisted upon by formalism. One of these areas of emphasis shift is deemed "image as object"—the ability to shape an image into a 3-D illusion—and it is the central structural component of *Art of Memory*. Vasulka "hammers" imagery from World War II and the Spanish Civil War into the landscape of the New Mexico desert. This location of these phantom image-objects suggests a lingering metaphysical fallout to the first nuclear blast in this desert; here we find exiled the Shiva, as though the mythological destroying angel was obsoleted by the nuclear age. Vasulka's reconstructed memories have an "aura of phantoms," something that postmodern thinkers would say is impossible of a representation (Walter Benjamin's idea that the image reproduced loses its aura is practically doctrine), a reconciliation of remembrance and re-creation that gives a palpable form to forgetting.



Berlin: Tourist Journal



Peggy and Fred in Kansas



Art of Memory

design: Rebekah Behrendt

L O N G B E A C H M U S E U M O F A R T

May 15, 1990

Dear Video Poetics Artist,

Enclosed please find exhibition announcements and catalogs for LBMA's current exhibition, Video Poetics, in which your work is included.

I have also enclosed a copy of today's LOS ANGELES TIMES article regarding the broadcast of Jenny Holzer's television spots in conjunction with Video Poetics. The exhibition has also been reviewed by ARTWEEK and the L.A. WEEKLY, and soon will be by the Long Beach PRESS TELEGRAM. I will send you those reviews as soon as they are published, along with any additional press that materializes.

Curator Michael Nash sends his best, and hopes to run into you if you plan to attend the upcoming NAMAC conference in Boston.

Please let me know if you would like additional catalogs.

Sincerely,

Kim Harlan
Asst. Curator, Media Arts



Encls.

THE ARTIST & THE COMPUTER

January 16 - March 13, 1983

E V E N T S

- Sunday
January 16
2 - 4 pm
- Opening: THE ARTIST & THE COMPUTER co-hosted by the Friends Council and the Video Council: artists present to discuss their works.
- Wednesday
January 26
8:00 pm
- "THE WORLD OF COMPUTER GRAPHICS" by Maxine Brown of Digital Productions and L.A. Chapter SIGGRAPH. An overview of the use of computer graphics in industry, entertainment, business and the scientific community. Slides and discussion. Long Beach Museum of Art, 2300 East Ocean Blvd, Long Beach, admission is free.
- Wednesday
February 2
8:00 pm
- "ARTIST/SCIENTIST: COLLABORATION IN THE LAB" with artist David Em and Dr. James Blinn, member of the Technical Staff, Jet Propulsion Laboratory. This event is co-hosted by the Department of Art, California State University, Long Beach. Sponsored by The Polaroid Corporation. At the University Theatre, CSULB, 1250 Bellflower Blvd., admission is free (use the 7th Street Parking Lot: \$1.50).
- Wednesday
February 23
8:00 pm
- "THE PHILOSOPHY AND ORIGINS OF COMPUTER ART," a panel discussion featuring Gene Youngblood, Professor, California Institute for the Arts; Steina and Woody Vasulka, artists and co-founders of The Kitchen, New York; and John Whitney, Sr., filmmaker and Professor, Department of Television and Motion Pictures, UCLA. Co-hosted by LACE as part of the "LACE Lecture Series on Contemporary Art" at the new Sealy G. Mudd Auditorium, University of Southern California, Los Angeles. A \$2.50 donation is requested at the door.
- Saturday
February 26
12 - 5 pm
- HANDS-ON computer graphics systems will be demonstrated in the Museum Conference Room, featuring personal and microcomputer systems and industrial real time animation systems. Coordinated with Los Angeles Chapter ACM/SIGGRAPH. Admission is free.

LONG BEACH MUSEUM OF ART

City of Long Beach Department of Recreation and Human Services
2300 East Ocean Boulevard, Long Beach, California 90803

L O N G B E A C H M U S E U M O F A R T

1 September, 1990

Steina Vasulka
Route 6, Box 100
Santa Fe, NM 87501

Dear Steina,

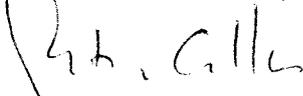
I am writing to thank you for your participation in the Traversals:
Instructions to the Double exhibition at the Long Beach Museum of
Art.

As you will see from the enclosed, LBMA did an excellent job with
the catalogue. Such attention to detail and quality of
presentation carried over into the presentation of the work in the
screening room.

There is a possibility that the exhibition will travel in the
future to other museums in the United States. We will keep you
informed if negotiations to that effect are successful.

Thank you again.

Yours sincerely,


Peter Callas
Guest-Curator

L O N G B E A C H M U S E U M O F A R T

March 3, 1993

Steina Vasulka
Route 6 Box 100
Santa Fe, NM 87501:

Dear Steina:

Our exhibition "Choice Encounters" closed on February 14, 1993.

"Choice Encounters" was very successful in presenting new points of view on our permanent collection and was well received by the community. As a result, we will be presenting permanent collection exhibitions annually.

"Choice Encounters" also drew favorable reviews from the press. Please find enclosed review copies for your information.

The Long Beach Museum of Art would like to thank you for your contribution and continued support.

Yours truly,

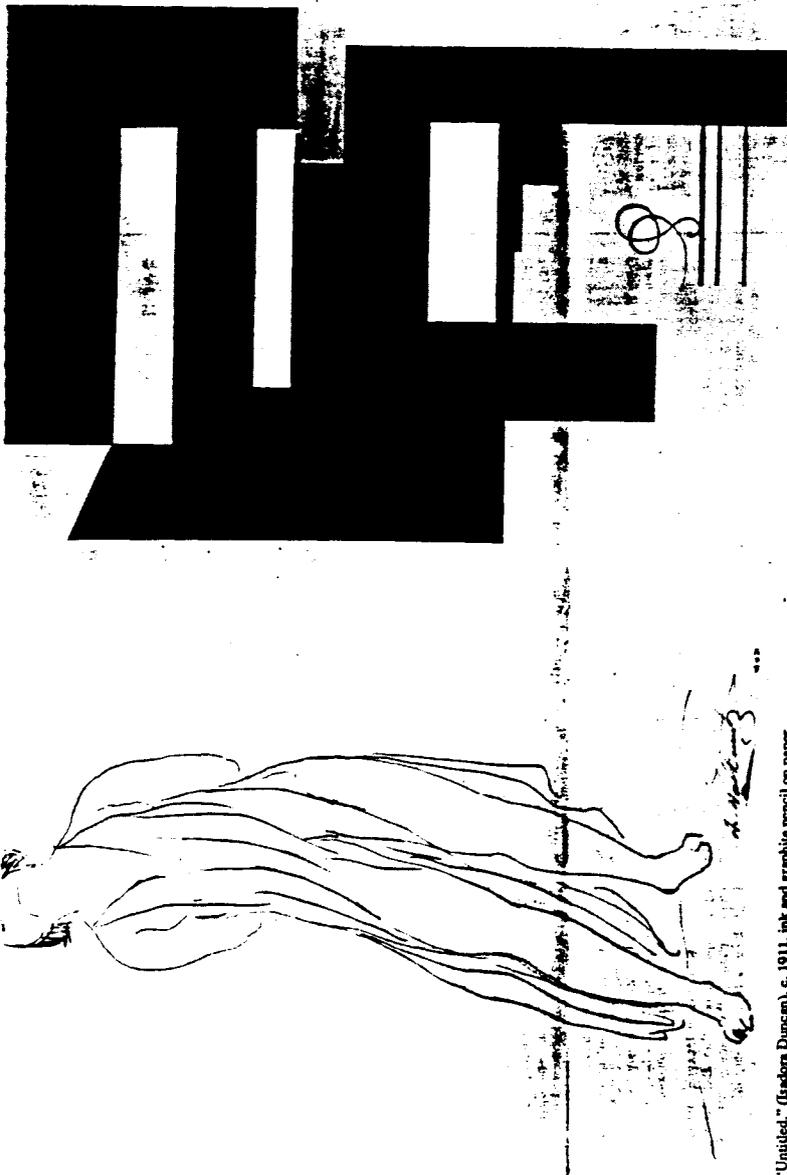


Leni Velasquez
Registrar

Our 31st Year

WEST ART

Vol. 31, No. 8
January 8, 1993



"United," (Isadora Duncan), c. 1911, ink and graphite pencil on paper
ABRAHAM WALKOWITZ

"An Arabesque," 1938, oil on canvas
VASILY KANDINSKY

LBMA Collection's Choice Encounters

Long Beach

A diverse range of styles and concerns in painting, sculpture, photography, works on paper, and video are represented in the Long Beach Museum of Art's exhibition "Choice Encounters." The exhibition, drawn from the LBMA's permanent collection of 20th-century art, can be seen to February 14 at the museum located at 2300 East Ocean Boulevard.

The exhibition explores unique relationships between works of different media and time periods by investigating the ideas which have informed those works through juxtapositions in the museum's galleries.

One such group deals with the concept of modern life and popular culture, focusing on artists who create work from commonplace or "found" materials and those who represent various aspects of a consumer society. Robert Coalingham's large-scale painting "House on Victoria" (1969) and James Strombone's painting "Birthday" (1968) are seen in relation to Michael Smith's videotape "Secret Horror" (1980) and Irene Segalove's "The Mom Tapes" (1978), which address innermost domestic and societal fears.

Pop art is represented by Robert Rauschenberg, but most of the work simply shares an interest in the subjects of everyday life. Some of the works—such as those of Diego Rivera, Joan Brown, Tony Bertani, Ann Chamberlin, and William T. Wiley—are off-beat, humorous, or stylistically naive. Work by Billy AI Bengston, Luis Jimenez, and Robert Frank is also included.

Another grouping examines the more formal relationships with which artists of the 20th century have been concerned. Informed parallels between modern and contemporary works in different media are made.

In the 1920's, for example, German artists and filmmakers explored synthesis, a process through which experience is transmitted from one sense to another, resulting in correspondences between things felt, seen, or heard. This section brings together works by Vasily Kandinsky, Ron Cooper, Max Finkelstein, Craig Kauffman, John McLaughlin, Kenji Nakahashi, Jack Chipman, Karen Hansen Curson, Chris Burden, Karl Benjamin, Norman Abbey, and Barnett Newman.

A large gallery is devoted to figural works, presenting a range of approaches to the representation of the human body within a confined space. The works, which span several decades, present varying degrees of the human figure.

A 1931 work by Pablo Picasso is seen in relation to Alexander Archipenko's more abstract sculpture of a dancer. Other works are by Abraham Walkowitz, Bruce Nauman, Bill Viola, Jennifer Bartlett, Diane Buckler, Charles Eames, Raymond Saunders, and Larry Schumaker.

Various modes of abstraction are seen in works by Tony Delap, Philip Gaston, Paul Kelpie, Gabriel Kohn, Ed Moses, Minoru Ohira, Clinton Adams, John Alexander, Emil Bistram, Hans Bruchhardt, Carolotta Corpron, John McLaughlin, and Helen Lundberg.

Attention is also focused on the LBMA's outdoor sculpture garden, which includes important works by Peter Voukos, Claire Falkenstein, Luis A. Bormudez, George Rickey, Harry Bertola, and Larry Shep.

—DERRA KING

Monitors in the Museum

Choice Encounters at the Long Beach Museum of Art

BY HOLLY WILLIS

Choice Encounters, currently at the Long Beach Museum of Art, is a selection of work from the museum's permanent collection, a collection which is atypical in that it includes a great deal of video. In 1974, the museum staff began to define the possibilities for the development of an audience for the medium and a facility which would provide artist support. The result was an ambitious video exhibition program and the establishment of the Artists' Post-Production facility. The museum is coming up on its twenty-year anniversary and its goals remain intact—the Video Annex continues to offer production facilities and the exhibition program continues to program videos. Unfortunately, popular resistance to the medium continues, as well.

Choice Encounters also marks the first instances at the museum in which video work is exhibited alongside the standard fare of paintings and sculpture. Monitors have been placed in each gallery, with videos that supplement and parallel the other works in the room.

The work in the first room investigates the relationship between television and video, a relationship that troubled or intrigued many early video artists. It includes an excerpt from Ilene Segalove's *The Mean Tapes* (1974-78), Martha Rosler's *Semiotics of the Kitchen* (1975), and *Easy Street* (Episode #1, *Unusual Weather*) (1983) by Chip Lord and Mickey McGowan, as well as one of the most recent pieces in the show, Jeanne Finley's *Common Mistakes* (1986). *Common Mistakes* is divided into four segments, each titled with synonyms for "mistake." They are illustrated by polemic extremes which cleverly depict the manner in

which a word like "accident" can be stretched to refer to a child's error or the Tarea Mile Island "accident." The acts are clearly different, but language can be used to confer a relativity on any act.

Another room displays work which examines the relationship between sound and image. It begins with transfers of Oskar Fischinger's abstract choreographs of animated lines and shapes, which dance to musical selections, and concludes with Bob Snyder's *Hard and Flexible Music* (1988), and it covers both the temporal aspect of film and video and the changes in imagery brought about by developing technology. Nancy Buchanan's *The Work of Art in the Age of Electronic Reproduction* (1985) boasts a convergence of Walter Benjamin's essay upon art's loss of aura

and the culinary skills of Julia Child, but pushes both further. It contains several other elements relevant to video artists in general, including an interest in theory and its imbrication in personal work, the incorporation of text, and the technical potential of the medium.

The third room, upstairs, presents an eclectic selection of work. Joan Jonas's *Vertical Roll* (1972) is an amazing examination of video as medium. Images roll upward, divided by a band of black, to suggest the frames of film and deny a clear view of the image. The image itself shakes in response to something banging within the frame, thereby dividing the plane between the profane event and its subsequent manipulation. This monitor also presents Patti Podesta's *Stepping*

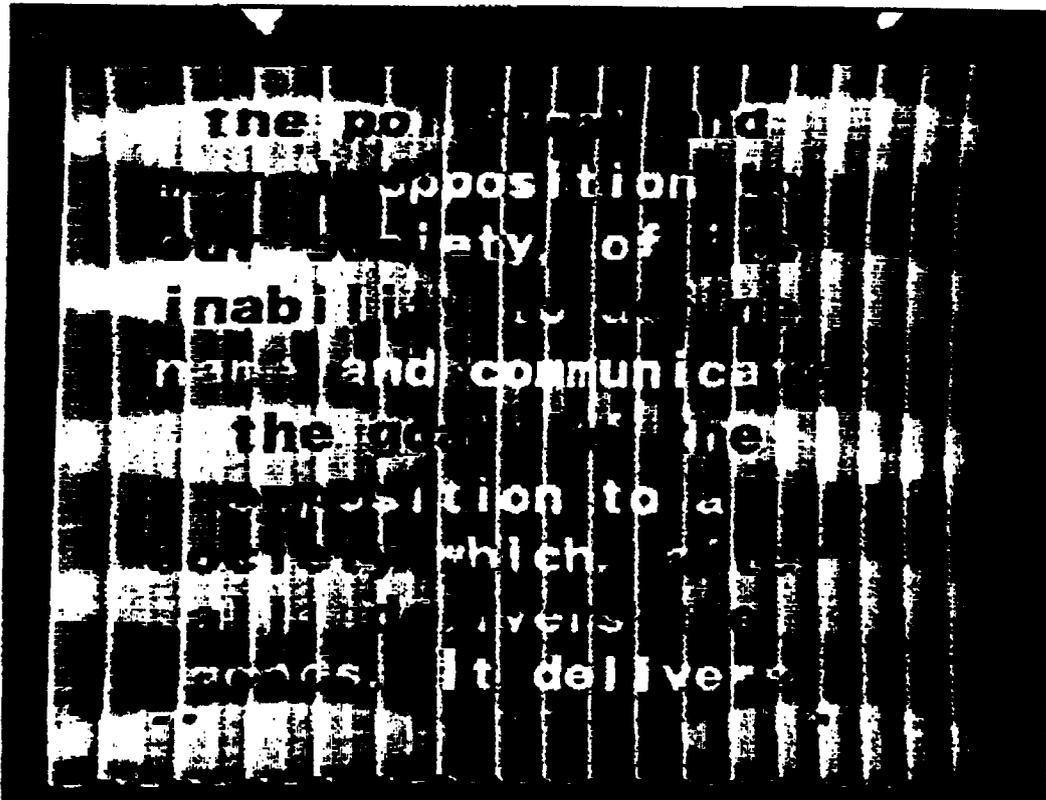
(1980), another rumination on video. The tape is one long back-and-forth shot that follows the movement of two feet in high heels, sidestepping. The tape illustrates the choices made in framing as the camera attempts to follow the movement of the feet, which do not keep within the frame. The differing compositions that result from this simple exercise also call attention to aspects usually sought in the scenic art, namely color, balance and elements of organic unity. The room also includes the Kipper Kids in an excerpt from *Up Yer Butt with a Bangal Lancer* (1976), a tape which is ridiculous on the point of sublimity. Work by Bruce and Norman Youennoto, Chris Burden, Art Form and Bill Viola, among others, the rest of the program adds to the early video history of the show as a whole.

Even though it provides an excellent introduction to early West Coast video, *Choice Encounters* only hints at the wealth and diversity of the institution's video collection and, with the absence of a written program, barely does justice to the significance of the Long Beach Museum of Art's role in the development of video art here. This project

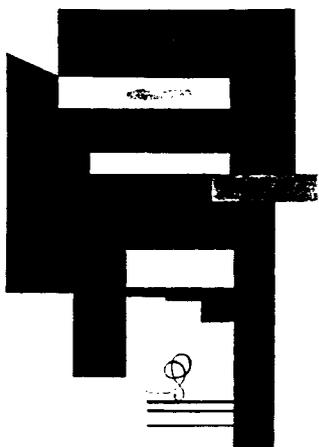
may be better addressed next year with a twenty-year retrospective; for now, curator Carole Ann Kionarides has been content to merge video with the other exhibits with the continued goal of expanding the definition of the medium. With the continuation of the Open Channels program and Vid-KidCo, as well as several important exhibitions planned for later this year, LRMA promises to carry on its tradition. ■

Choice Encounters through February 14 at the Long Beach Museum of Art, 2300 E. Ocean Blvd., Long Beach.

Holly Willis is a Southern California-based freelance writer.



Nancy Buchanan, *The Work of Art in the Age of Electronic Reproduction*, 1985, video, in *Choice Encounters*, at the Long Beach Museum of Art.



Vasily Kandinsky, "An Arabesque", o/c, 36 1/4 x 25 5/8", 1938, courtesy of The Milton Wichner Collection.

CHOICE ENCOUNTERS

(Long Beach Beach Museum of Art, Long Beach) Built in 1912 as the vacation home for a wealthy Eastern family, the Long Beach Museum is a Craftsman-style house that sits high on a bluff overlooking the ocean. On a clear day you can see Catalina from the non-stop view of its impressive sculpture garden.

Its permanent collection is a diverse assortment of 20th-century art that spans from early European Modernism, through post-War American art, to contemporary California abstraction. Generally less well known is its acclaimed video program. In fact, the collection of artist's videos is one of the largest in the country.

Since the hey-days of the sixties the LBMA Video Program has been growing steadily in quantity, quality, and reputation--thanks to past Media Arts Curators David Ross (now director of the Whitney Museum) and Kathy Huffman.

Though some die-hards remain reluctant to recognize video as a viable art form--continuing to associate it with the commercial product that they view on their home television sets--others are coming around to appreciate its enormous range and (still) untapped potential. But problems remain even among those who acknowledge its legitimacy. People simply fail to allow themselves the time necessary to enter the darkened viewing rooms, sit down, and experience the work from beginning to end.

On the horns of this dilemma, Curator Noriko Gamblin and current Media Arts Curator Carole Ann Klo-

narides came up with a dynamic solution when they organized "Choice Encounters." Taking the videos "out of the dark" (both literally and figuratively), they co-mingled them with the Museum's permanent collection of paintings, sculpture, photography and drawings. The results are a series of innovative mini-exhibits that challenge viewers to make new connections and associations. By comparing the relationships of art created in many media and different time periods, familiar works may be experienced from a completely fresh perspective.

One room, for example, is dedicated to artistic statements and comments on everyday American life. Hanging on the walls are such Pop culture icons as the car in Robert Frank's photo/essays (1956); the stacked chevrons in Billy Al Bengston's lacquer on aluminum, *Hidden Gold* (1966); and the cutout cardboard collages of Robert Rauschenberg's *Cardbird* (1971). Meanwhile the TV monitor blares out biting social commentaries that include Ilene Segalove's *Mom Tapes* (1974-78), Jay McCafferty's *Apartment Art* (1974), and Jeanne Finley's *Common Mistakes* (1986). The overall impression is bold, energetic, and sassy.

Around the corner a large abstract grouping compares the formal and spiritual relationships of Vasily Kandinsky's oil painting, *Arabesque*

(1938), with works such as Barnett Newman's silkscreen, *The Moment* (1966), Kenji Nakahashi's black and white gelatin silver print *Creation* (1981), and Max Finkelstein's kinetic aluminum wall construction, *Black Plus Angles #9* (1968).

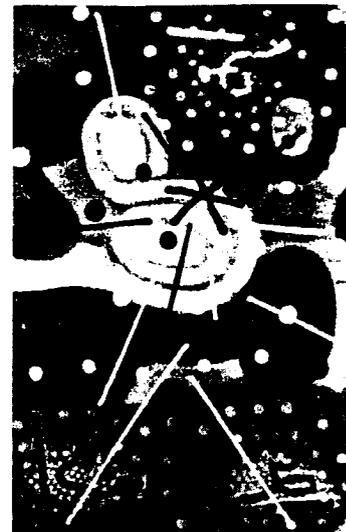
Here, too, the video monitor expands our emotional/intellectual perception as abstract videotapes add dimension to the gallery experience. Oscar Fischinger's wonderful, experimental, 1930's films (transposed to videotape) and *Voice Windows* (a 1986 collaborative work by Steina Vasulka and Joan LaBarbara) are but two of many electronic offerings found in this provocative grouping.

Upstairs one finds figurative works that compare the vision of Alexander Archipenko (*The Dancer* [1957]) with Pablo Picasso (*Table of Etchings* [1931]), Joyce Trieman (*Swimmers, Antibes, Topanga* [1971]), Abraham Walkowitz (*Isadora Duncan* [1911]), and Larry Shumaker (*Cali-Prime* [1970]). And the video antics of Dara Birnbaum (*Wonder Woman* [1978-79]), Harry Kipper (*Up Yer Bum with a Bengal Lancer* [1976]), John Sturgeon (*Shapes from the Bone* [1976]), and the black and white madness of Wolfgang Stoerchle keep us entertained, amused, and decidedly off-balance.

For those who will devote the time, two special viewing rooms are included as part of the "Choice Encounters" experience: one for Bill Viola's hypnotic metaphysical meditation, *The Reflecting Pool* (1977-79), the other for a two-hour series of exceptionally fine TV tapes that run the gamut from a 30-second clip by Chris Burden through a powerful re-enactment of the Kennedy assassination, *The Eternal Frame*, produced by Ant Farm in 1976. If you stay to see Elon Soltes' hilarious photo-documentary, *Nixon in Exile*, you can come out in time to watch the sunset over the Pacific.

Shirle Gottlieb

One of the most visually productive movements in California's aesthetic history, Dynaton, basically consisted of three artists, and lasted for a few years in the early fifties, in rela-



Gordon Onslow Ford, "Essential Being Beings", a/c, 78x48, 1972.

tive obscurity, 3,000 miles removed from New York's Abstract Expressionist explosion. Two exhibitions, *Dynaton Before and Beyond* and *Paintings of the Inner World*, cast fresh light on the collective and considerable achievements of Wolfgang Paalen, Gordon Onslow Ford, and Lee Mullican.

Paalen, an Austrian immigrant who fled the Nazi onslaught for Mexico, brought the active influence of his Surrealist experience to bear once here, as is apparent in the *Dynaton* show. Ernst, Matta, and Tanguy are particularly visible in his works from the forties. Paalen was the chief force in influencing and shaping Onslow Ford's and Mullican's more youthful work around his own theorizing. Derivative Surrealist forms and techniques give way to a visually beautiful pure color abstract style, at once mystically ethereal and rhythmically powerful, prior to his suicide in 1959.

Fortunately, the other two artists are still with us, and both exhibitions survey a fine range of their work over a fifty year period. Onslow Ford's focus on inner worlds, built on line-circle-dot building blocks, most often takes the appearance of space opera, always a grand, playful theater of the imagination. This can be alternately exhilarating and overbearing, but the persistence of his aesthetic devotion, borne out by sketchbooks included in

Fostering unlikely relationships

Museum juxtaposes TV and old and new art

By Janet Wiscombe
Staff writer

OK. sure. Hang a Picasso next to a sculpture of a sausage in a box. Next, trap a Kandinsky in a room with abstract images on a TV monitor. Don't forget the "Blond, Blue-Eyed House." Put it in another gallery and plug in a soundtrack about dysfunctional families.

Long Beach Museum of Art curator Noriko Gamblin calls it "Choice Encounters," an exhibition from the museum's permanent collection that opens Friday. She says it won't be one more romp through the institution's past but an approach she and media arts curator Carole Ann Klonarides devised as a way of integrating video art and more traditional work.

"Most people wouldn't put a Kandinsky next to a video," Gamblin says. "What we'd like is for our audience to make connections that we — and perhaps they — hadn't thought of before."

"Video is often presented in a little room at the end of a hall. When it is seen as something in a separate category, it doesn't seem like art. Our aim is to treat it like other media, to present it in galleries the way other work is presented to help people feel more comfortable about it."

Video art can use all the help it can get. Even though the small museum's artist videos have won acclaim, the public hasn't always responded enthusiastically. By combining video with more familiar work, the museum hopes the public will begin to view TV images and sounds as interesting and challenging.

Ask about the museum's source of greatest pride, and director Hal Nelson begins the list with video. After that comes the museum's 1,500-item collection of 20th century European modernism and work done by California painters since World War II.

With the combination of the three areas in "Choice Encounters," the

audience will have an opportunity to rediscover the permanent collection, Klonarides says.

As an artist herself, she says her own particular interest is to develop an exhibition that explores relationships and connections among different media across centuries and geographic boundaries.

One gallery, for example, will deal with modern life — ordinary things like houses and cars. Robert Cottingham's large-scale painting "House on Victoria" (1969) and James Strombotne's painting "Birthday" (1968) will be seen in relation to Michael Smith's videotape "Secret Horror" (1980) and Ilene Segalove's "The Mom Tapes" (1978).

Pop art and California culture, the off-beat and the humorous will be represented by work such as Tony Berlant's "The Blue-Eyed Blond House," Ann Chamberlin's "The Little Coffin," Diego Rivera's "Peasant Boy," William T. Wiley's "Eye Dream" and Robert Frank's "Long Beach, California, 1956."

Another gallery will look at parallels between modern and contemporary works in different media. Viewers will be able to contemplate the moods of Vasily Kandinsky's "Red Square" (1928) while drinking in video artist Bob Snyder's contemporary "Hard and Flexible Music" (1988).

And, sure enough, a large gallery will be devoted to representational works ranging from a human form by Pablo Picasso to, yes, a strange sculpture of a sausage in a box, the work of Larry Shumaker.

Klonarides predicts the audience will appreciate the encounters. Says she, "It is my ultimate hope that people will make their own connections."



Mary Julia #5 by Joan Brown is included in the "Choice Encounters" exhibit.

The exhibit

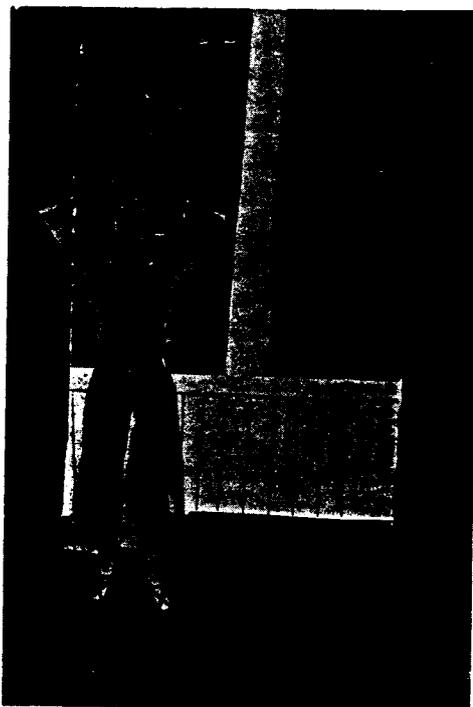
■ "Choice Encounters" will be exhibited at the Long Beach Museum of Art from Friday through Feb. 14. The museum, at 2300 E. Ocean Blvd., is open Wednesday through Sunday, noon to 5 p.m.

ART NOW Gallery Guide™

December 1992

West Coast

Outside L.A.



Joan Brown, *Mary Julia #5*, 1976, acrylic on paper, 36 x 24 inches at the Long Beach Museum of Art. The exhibition "Choice Encounters" will be on view December 4 through February 14.

Long Beach

LONG BEACH MUSEUM OF ART 2300 E Ocean Blvd, 90803 • 310-439-2119, fax 310-439-3587 • wed-sun 12-5 • "Choice Encounters" multi-media exhibition of 20th century art including works by Pablo Picasso, Vasily Kandinsky, Alexej Jawlensky, Joyce Treiman, Helen Lundberg & Lorser Feitelson; curator Noriko Gamblin & media arts curator Carole Ann Klonarides Dec 6-Feb 14

UNIVERSITY ART MUSEUM, CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY 1250 Bellflower Blvd, 90840 • 310-985-5761, fax 310-985-7602 • tues-thurs 11-5, fri 11-3, sat 11-4, sun 2-5 • Centric 47: "Kathy Grove: The Presence of Absence" provocative photographs of classic masterworks, appropriated & altered to suggest the stereotypical ways in which women have been portrayed throughout the history of art thru Dec 13 • "Fresh Paper: New Acquisitions" selected new works acquired from the permanent collection between 1990-1992 thru Dec 13 •

Malibu

J. PAUL GETTY MUSEUM 17985 Pacific Coast Hwy, 90265 • 213-459-7611, fax 213-454-6633 • tues-sun 10-5 • "Art & Science: Joris Hoefnagel & the Representation of Nature in the Renaissance" thru Jan 17 • "In the Tomb of Nefertari: Conservation of the Wall Paintings" thru Feb 21 • "16th & 17th Century Italian Drawings" Dec 15-Feb 28 • "Silvy's "River Scene, France:" The Story of a Photograph" Dec 15-Feb 28

Newport Beach

NEWPORT HARBOR ART MUSEUM 850 San Clemente Dr, 92660 • 714-759-1122, fax 714-759-5623 • tues-sun 10-5 • "El Corazon Sagrante/The Bleeding Heart" Dec 18-Feb 14 • Ralph Eugene Meatyard: An American Visionary" Dec 18-Feb 14

CHOICE ENCOUNTERS

Museum Of Art Finds Expression In Vaults

By Dorothy Stern
Gazette Staff Writer

Reaching into its vaults, the Long Beach Museum of Art uses its own resources to showcase the wide variety of sound, light, motion and form which encompasses the modern artistic expression in its latest exhibition, "Choice Encounters."

The show takes 66 selections from the museum's permanent 20th Century collection. Mixing video, painting, sculpture, photography and works on paper, it reflects various styles ranging from European modernism and post World War II California abstraction to more contemporary works of art.

Curator Noriko Gamblin and Media Arts Curator Carole Ann Klonarides said they chose not to stress the historical reference for the various art pieces. Rather it is an exploration between different art mediums and time periods to investigate the ideas that have shaped the nature of art.

"This exhibition creates a new excitement, a discovery," Gamblin said. "The works encounter each other in a new way — to reflect the viewer's experience of art."

As an example, the electronic medium of video is combined with more traditional forms of art in various galleries of the museum. The mixture emphasizes the interaction between visual and audio expressions.

Artist Jay McCafferty has designed a video entitled "Apartment Art" to "reflect absurdities" in the relationship between objects and their environment. In the segment "Shoe

Boat," for example, a shoe floats in a sink of water.

"My influence was based on observation — fiddling around and putting things together," McCafferty said.

Light, motion and fluidity are all aspects of the piece entitled "Black Plus Angles." It reflects the viewer in its representation of art, according to artist Max Finkelstein. Concave "mirrors" capture four tiny upside-down images of the viewer. Etched grooves in the aluminum appear to be moving in various directions depending on the lighting and orientation of the observer.

"It evolved from a rotary kinetic piece," Finkelstein said, "I

wanted to create a feeling of kineticism where the viewer becomes the kinetic force."

Form is represented in Jack Chipman's sculpture entitled "Soul Totem Pole I." A structure of canvas and paint uses traditional materials "in an unconventional way," according to Gamblin.

"This piece is a marriage between painting and sculpture," Chipman said. "It is an investigation on the basic elements of primitive Eastern philosophy."

"Choice Encounters" is hosted by the LBMA Friends Council at the museum, 2300 E. Ocean Blvd. It will continue through Feb. 14.



POINT OF VIEW. Artist Max Finkelstein explains his work, "Black Plus Angles."
—Gazette photo by Dorothy Stern



Chris Burden's 1973 lithograph "Dos Equis." Viewers can check out his "TV Tapes" upstairs.

TASTY TAPE

At 'Choice Encounters,' the Videos Steal the Show

By CATHY CURTIS

Elegant geometric paintings by Wassily Kandinsky in the same gallery as films of dancing geometric shapes, shot by Oscar Fischinger (who collaborated on "Fantasia")? Not every small museum has the resources to show such works side by side.

But that's the kind of eclectic collection that the Long Beach Museum of Art owns, and the current exhibit, "Choice Encounters," (through Feb. 14) wisely takes full advantage of it. Artfully dodging the spotty nature of the museum's holdings, curators Noriko Gamblin and Carol Ann Klonarides group works by famous and little-known artists in ways that allow their strengths—or at least their subject matter—to reinforce one another. Even lesser works at least offer a broader context for a particular style or approach to materials.

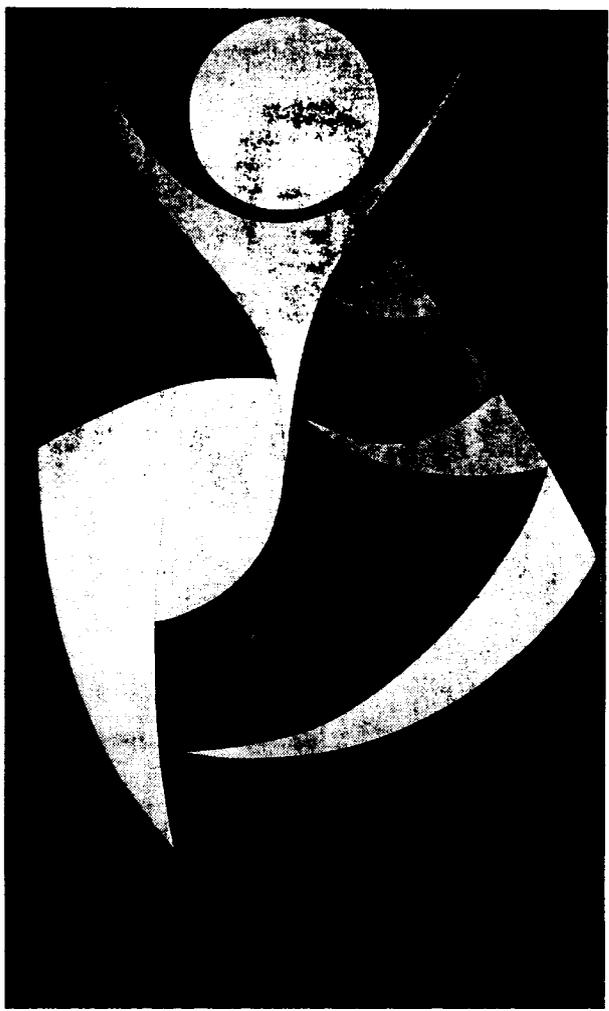
One gallery offers a taste of the development of early California modern art, with canvases by pioneering abstract painter Lorser Feitelson and his wife, Helen Lundeberg; a minor, not yet completely abstract work by Karl Benjamin, and a jaunty early painting by

Fischinger.

The two small Lundeberg paintings, from the late '50s, show the shadow-striped interiors of her dreamy Post-Surrealist period evolving into the flat color fields that would mark her later work. In the Feitelson paintings, both from 1963—more than a decade after he began working in a strictly abstract style—hard-edged serpentine shapes evoking bodies in motion slice rapidly through bright flat fields of color.

Too bad John McLaughlin's yellow-and-white untitled painting from 1956—a sublimely meditative work representative of the high point of Southern California geometric abstraction—is not included in this grouping.

It hangs in another, larger gallery, near the monitor that screens the delightfully retro Feininger films, which include a primitive commercial enlivened by dancing cigarettes. After these brief animated abstractions, the tape segues to pulsing, computer-created abstract videos by several contemporary artists. Most compelling is "Voice Windows," in which the dimensions of the computer imagery (by Steina Vasulka) are altered by the startlingly inhuman sounds of vocal artist Joan LaBarbara.



"White Figures on a Red Sky": a minor work by Karl Benjamin.

The artists' videos are the best aspect of the exhibit, and it's great to see them integrated into the gallery groupings as well as in the video screening room—making it more likely that a video-shy visitor might fall under their spell. (One thing the curators seem to have forgotten, however, is a standing person's relatively short attention span in a gallery. Please, bring on the chairs!)

In a second-floor gallery devoted mainly to paintings, drawings, prints and sculpture that literally or metaphorically evoke the human body, the videos represent another facet of body-conscious exploration in art.

The stationary works in this gallery range from Abraham Walkowitz's romantically disheveled, untitled drawing from about 1911

of early modern dance doyenne Isadora Duncan to Tony DeLap's pair of sinuous floor-hugging sculptures. "Tango Tangles III" from 1966. Other artists represented in this uneven grab bag include Pablo Picasso, Bruce Nauman and Joyce Treiman.

But the real treat (for open-minded and patient viewers, anyhow) is on the small screen. The videos include excerpts from Harry Kipper's amusingly witless exercise in infantile vulgarity "Up Yer Bum With a Bengal Lancer"; brief untitled works by Wolfgang Stoerchle in which he rolls his body in a big roll of paper and wiggles off his clothes without using his hands, and Joan Jonas's hypnotic "Vertical Roll," in which

Please see 'ENCOUNTERS,' Page 7

What

"Choice Encounters."

When

Noon to 5 p.m.
Wednesdays through
Sundays through Feb. 14.
(Closed New Year's Day.)

Where

The Long Beach Museum of Art, 2300 E. Ocean Blvd., Long Beach.

Whereabouts

Take the San Diego (405) Freeway to Seventh Street and head west; left onto Cherry Avenue, left onto Ocean Boulevard.

Wherewithal

\$2, children under 12 free

Where to call

(310) 439-2991.

MORE ART

IN LAGUNA BEACH: "PROOF"

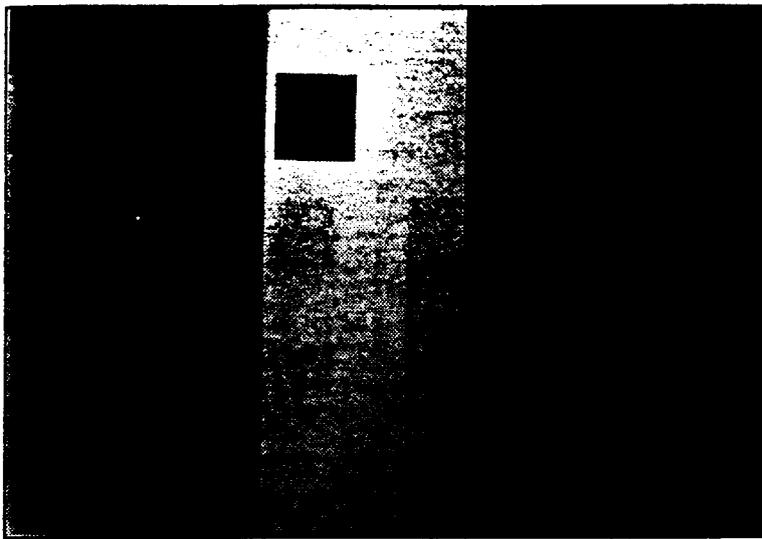
Closing Jan. 17 at the Laguna Art Museum, "Proof: Los Angeles Art and the Photograph, 1960-1980" offers witty works by 45 artists who printed photographic images on unusual surfaces and stuck them in odd places to show the malleability of photographic truth. (714) 494-6531

IN NEWPORT BEACH: A "VISIONARY"

"Ralph Eugene Meatyard: American Visionary," at the Newport Harbor Art Museum, is a retrospective of one of America's most original photographers, whose experimental, Zen influenced sensibility informed his images of humans and inanimate subjects alike. (714) 759-1122.

IN SAN DIEGO: MARY ELLEN MARK

At the Museum of Photographic Arts in Balboa Park, "Mary Ellen Mark: 25 Years" surveys 125 black and white images by one of today's leading documentary photographers whose compassionate view of people in need has drawn from homeless people to the state of California.



"Red Square," elegant geometry painted by Wassily Kandinsky.

'ENCOUNTERS': Video Is Source of Exhibit Strength

Continued from Page 4

the repetitive imagery (portions of Jonas' body, mostly) moves slowly in vertical formation, frame by frame, to the accompaniment of a banging spoon.

Thanks to the personal interests of former video arts curator David Ross—now director of the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York—the museum's greatest strength lies in its collection of wildly adventurous tapes made during the video explosion of the '60s.

As a result, viewers intrigued by the sly menace of Chris Burden's 1973 lithograph "Dos Equis" hanging downstairs (the words "If you Drive" are written above a photograph of two burning Xs, evoking the beer symbol as well as Ku Klux Klan cross-burnings) can check out his "TV Tapes" in the screening room upstairs.

One of Burden's 10- and 30-second TV spots—which actually ran on stations in Los Angeles and New York in the '70s—shows Burden crawling on his stomach on asphalt littered with broken glass, a performance piece he called "Through the Night Softly."

The rest of the TV-related videos showing in the screening room—by numerous other artists—also are pretty wild.

Especially worth a check-out: "The Eternal Frame," a re-creation of John F. Kennedy's assassina-

tion. It was done by T.R. Uthco and the Ant Farm, a group from the Bay Area, with a male actor playing Jackie and much behind-the-scenes irreverence.

Produced to raise questions about the role of TV in shaping our comprehension of current events, the video is by turns "disturbing and entertaining," as a viewer remarks at the San Francisco screening. (In pseudo-documentary style, the video also incorporates interviews with viewers, during the taping of the action in Dallas as well as after the screening.)

Other video nuggets include Bill Viola's "The Reflecting Pool" (screened in its own room on the second floor)—which offers a magical vision of time at once flowing and suspended in nature—and Ilene Segalove's "The Mom Tapes."

These amusingly deadpan slices of suburban life are screened a few feet away from Robert Frank's 1956 photograph "Long Beach, California," an utterly banal view of a car shrouded in a protective cover and parked next to an ugly, flat-topped dwelling landscaped with a couple of palm trees. That kind of juxtaposition is exactly what makes this show tick.

Cathy Curtis covers art for The Times Orange County Edition.

■ ART LISTINGS, Page 26 (for another story about art, see Page 8)



November 23, 1994

Steina and Woody Vasulka
Route 6 Box 100
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501

Dear Steina and Woody:

By now you should have received catalogues and payment for the inclusion of your tape in **Intelligent Ambience**, the single channel video program curated by myself and Kathy Rae Huffman, presented at Ars Electronica in Linz, Austria this past summer. Kathy and I were very happy about the public response to the program as a whole and feel that our (and your) contribution to the festival was a great success. Thank you again for all your effort and support. As mentioned in previous correspondence, I am writing to let you know that LBMA will be presenting **Intelligent Ambience**, opening here on Friday December 2nd and continuing through Sunday, February 19th as a scheduled exhibition program. I have enclosed five announcement cards and a copy of the museum's Quarterly for your interest. I do hope you will have the opportunity to see the program in its entirety -- if you are in Southern California during the exhibition, please let me know.

At this time I have all of the master tapes -- it was with some difficulty to receive all the materials from Austria and then find the money to convert all Pal tapes to NTSC in order to make compilation tapes. We have succeeded in designing a strong presentation reel with striking graphic intros for each titled section. The museum's budget is meager and I can only offer a one hundred dollar honorarium but do feel that all efforts will be made for a positive return on the inclusion of your tape. We will sell the Ars Electronica catalogue plus I have made a free hand-out for the public. I am confident that there will be a lot of interest in this program. Enclosed are two copies of the invoice for you to sign and please return one copy to us so that we may send you a honorarium check (if we received your tape through a distributor then the check will go to them). Please inform me where to return the master tape, which I will do immediately.

Thanks very much,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Carole Ann Klonarides".

Carole Ann Klonarides
Media Arts Curator

*P.S.
Tape and invoice
went to Ed I.
Hope all is well.
ACK*

Encls.

LONG BEACH
MUSEUM of Art

Steina
Rout 6, Box 100
Santa Fe, NM 87501

Fax 505 473-0614

Fax'd

July 15, 1994

Dear Steina:

We are looking forward to your talk at the Long Beach Museum of Art on Thursday, July 28 at 10 a.m. Your talk is scheduled in conjunction with the current exhibition, *The First Generation; Women and Video, 1970-75*.

Please confirm that you will be able to be in Long Beach then. Please sign and return (by FAX or mail) the enclosed invoice for an honorarium. If you need transportation to and from the Museum, please let me know, and I shall arrange it.

I hope all is going well for you. I look forward to meeting you.

Sincerely,



Sue Ann Robinson
Education Coordinator

Long Beach Museum of Art

July 30, 1986

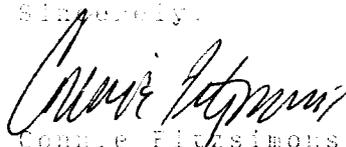
Woody Vasaike
Route 6, Box 100
Santa Fe, NM 87501

Dear Woody:

I want to thank you for the opportunity to exhibit your work in Long Beach Museum of Art's exhibit *Poetic License, July 22-August 17*. The show has been well received.

Enclosed is an announcement and a copy of the program notes for your files. We will forward to you any press clippings and reviews as they become available.

Sincerely,



Connie Fitzsimons
Curator

ccp
Inclosures

March 20, 1985

Steina and Woody Vasulka
Route 6, Box 100
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501

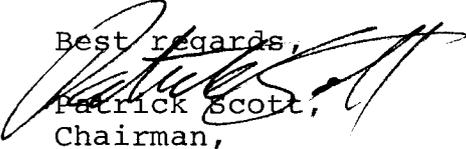
Dear Steina and Woody:

I am writing to confirm our telephone conversation of Monday, February 11, 1985. Please excuse the delay in getting this letter to you. I am organizing a festival called MEDIA ARTS EXPO, jointly sponsored by the Video Council of the Long Beach Museum of Art Foundation, and the 11th Annual Los Angeles Professional Videoshow, to be held May 21, 22, and 23, in the exhibit hall of the Long Beach Convention Center. MEDIA ARTS EXPO will occupy a large space walled off from the adjoining trade exhibit and will have its own entrance.

I was so taken by your extraordinary installation, "The West," at AFI that I would like to present it in a thirty-six monitor format of two stacked rings. On my recommendation, Mr. Charles Tepfer, Director of the L.A. Pro. Videoshow, has obtained a verbal agreement from JVC to provide the monitors, decks, and audio.

"The West," and a new installation by Bill Viola, will be the centerpieces of the festival. Every effort will be made to promote appreciation of your work. We are prepared to offer you a fee of \$1,000, one round-trip plane fare, and expenses, while you are in Long Beach for the festival.

Best regards,


Patrick Scott,
Chairman,
Video Council

PS:es

Enclosure



DATE: 7/26/94

TO: STEINA

FROM: SUE ANN ROBINSON, EDUCATION COORDINATOR, LBMA

TOTAL NUMBER OF PAGES 1
(including cover sheet)

COMMENTS:

We're looking forward to your visit. We have limited space in which to view tapes (the Video Gallery), but we are expecting about 40 people on Thursday at 10 a.m. What type of deck, if any will you need for Thursday morning? If you can get back to me, or Martin Betz with that information before Thursday, it would be most helpful. Thank you

P.S. Art Reviewer Chris Knight gave the exhibition a great review in this past Sunday's Calendar section of the LA Times, including a mention of your talk. Artweek included a photograph from your tape.

PLEASE NOTIFY US IMMEDIATELY IF ALL PAGES ARE NOT RECEIVED. THANK YOU!

August 8, 1985

Kira Perov
324 Granada Ave
Long Beach, CA 90814
(213) 439 7616

Steina and Woody Vasulka
Route 6 Box 100
Santa Fe, NM 87501

Dear Steina and Woody,

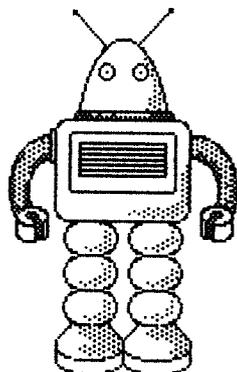
Here are finally some slides and b/w contact sheets from the installation **The West**, as it was presented in Long Beach in May. Sorry they are so long in coming but I guess I just never got around to doing the contact sheets until just now.

The slides look really great if you see them through a loupe, or project them. You can see many of the monitors in good detail. The black and white photos can be burned in to get an image also. The Video Council covered the film and processing, but if you wish to order any of the black and white photos, you need to do that through me.

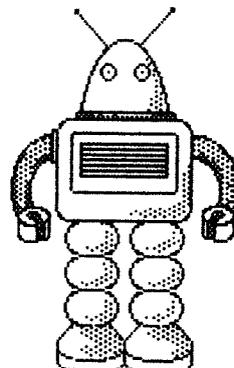
I am sending you the slides with the stipulation that if they are published anywhere, I require a full photo credit, especially since my services were donated. If any publication photo fees are involved it would be nice to receive a percentage, but I know how rare that is in the art world.

I hear that Scott Rankin will be visiting with you soon. We are sorry to see him leave Los Angeles, but it sounds like he is embarking on a new adventure, and that is always lots of fun.

Enjoy the slides, and very warm wishes from both of us.



4731 (BILL)



4589 (KIRA)

Kira + Bill

(THIS COMPUTER IS GREAT!!!)

LONG BEACH MUSEUM OF ART
2300 EAST OCEAN BOULEVARD • LONG BEACH, CALIFORNIA 90803 • (213) 439-2119

December 3, 1982

Woody & Steina Vasulka
1600 Old Pecos Trail
Santa Fe, NM 87501

Dear Woody & Steina:

I would like to officially confirm the inclusion of your videotape in the forthcoming exhibition: THE ARTIST & THE COMPUTER, January 16 - March 13, 1983. I plan to exhibit: "Progeny" by Vasulkas and Bradford Smith

Date: 1981 Length: 17:00 Credits:

Additionally, I would like to confirm the following:

We have received your tape.

We have NOT received your tape. Please mail via First Class Priority or UPS - Insured - by December 20.

We have received your biographical materials.

We have NOT received your biographical materials. Please forward ASAP.

Please sign and return the attached exhibition agreement. Make sure date and information pertinent to the artwork is complete and accurate.

The video portion of the exhibition is being funded in part by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, Media Art Center. A modest rental fee (minimum \$50) will be paid to each participant. I will notify you in the near future with the exact amount.

Thank you again for allowing us to include your work in this exciting and challenging exhibition and educational project.

Sincerely,


KATHY HUFFMAN
Curator

P.S. I will return your composite tape soon as I get a chance. Thanks.