

PTOLEMY  
a video installation  
by Steina Vasulka

In PTOLEMY, Steina Vasulka circles inside a space, delineating its boundaries with a mechanized choreography of camera movement. This is a world of circular movement, a vertiginous dance of machines and ordinary objects. The installation of PTOLEMY, a four channel piece in a multi-monitor matrix, further compounds the action; a disjunctive world circles to sudden, but inevitable, conjunctions. Light and shadow, reflections in mirror balls, and the camera lens itself trace an optical trajectory to a soundtrack of machine music. This installation will premiere at Ars Electronica, 1990.

THE THEATRE OF HYBRID AUTOMATA

A Lecture/Performance by Woody Vasulka and David Dunn

This presentation will be concerned with two basic modalities of space: the actual and the virtual. Believing that the notion of construction and syntax for a new dramatic space can develop as a dialectical confrontation between the traditional stage (or media space) and the data based virtual world, we have set out to build some basic tools for space exploration. The most advanced to date is the Pan/Tilt/Rotate camera head, a robotic physical device which, when linked to graphic virtual computer space, attempts to redefine the traditional stage and established media space. This device can also be activated through two aural modes: simple verbal commands or musical vocalization. A second tool, the binaural microphone system, creates a confrontation between an actual acoustic space and its synthetic model. In order to demonstrate this concept we will present a binaural sound environment which models the audio component of virtual reality research currently in progress. This environment explores the potential for interpenetration between diverse sensory worlds, subjective and objective experience, and the real versus the impossible through aural illusions of orbital motion in physical and virtual space. A variety of soundscapes will be explored using the robotic camera device to literally rotate the listener's aural perception through a cube of sonic stimulus. Some of these soundscapes will include texts by writer Lizbeth Rymland which articulate the seeding of the virtual technological domain with evolutionary imperatives. These imaginary scenarios show how ephemeralized technologies, physically incorporated into the human organism, will extend perceptual, locomotive and expressive capabilities beyond the familiar human spectrum.

7/10/90

Dear Gottfried!

Here are descriptions of our lectures/ performances/ installation plus bio material. If more is needed, please fax up the demand.

About the photos: we are sending you, via air mail, pictures showing our personas. In this fax transmission are some xerox copies of color thermal prints which are directly related to Dunn/Vasulka project lecture. I will include the originals in the photo package with pictures of Steina's installation. In case you want higher quality prints (transparencies) we could have 35mm slides of direct data scan-out made, but estimated price here is about \$20 a piece.

All best regards,

Woody Vasulka

June 23, 1990

Att.: Gottfried Hattinger, Fax: 43-732- 28-37-45

Dear Gottfried,

Steina's equipment requirements include:

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- 16 color monitors, 19" or larger
- 8 floor platforms 18" in height, width of a single monitor, depth according to the monitor base
- 4 channels of audio, with amplification and equalization, situated in each of four corners of exhibition space
- 4 playback U-Matic VTR's by Sony with 33 pin interface (Sony 5000 series for example. We suggest that the installation be NTSC compatible but we would be satisfied with PAL if you provide the transfer. This would include approximately 8 thirty-minute 3/4" video tapes).
- 1 4 channel synchronizer for Sony 33 pin VTR interface.

We expect, you provide all hardware except the synchronizer

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Our presentation can be organized into four parts with combined requirements for space and equipment. Since Steina installation is continuous, we could interrupt the show in proper times and use the hardware for our demonstrations. We would leave up to you the timing of events. We would like to occupy a room approximately 12x12 meters, (the exhibition space used by Marianne Amacher last year would suit us perfectly). Vasulka/Dunn lecture/performance can be treated as separate or joined shows, our hardware will be wired in both, acoustic and video modes (here again the question of standard comes up, our "live" show is in NTSC video. The problems of standards is nothing new to you, so we trust your solutions). The lecture by Terence McKenna could of course follow this concept as well.

The logistics of Dunn/Vasulka operation will require to assemble the hardware here, compose the necessary scores and ship it over as a special

purpose package. We hope you will pick up the bill. To complete the package on your end we will need additionally:

6 channels of audio amplification (no speakers)

Audio mixing board (8 channels minimum)

6 or more stereophonic headphones (this must be of good quality headphones such as Sony MDR-6, capable of a dynamic range for digital sound)

Distribution amplifier for the stereophonic for the stereophonic headphones (all headphones will be monitoring the same stereo signal from the mixing board).

We will let you know in a good time if other details arise.

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For McKenna's lecture we will need an IBM PC Computer.

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Please, send us letter of confirmation as soon as possible. Our Fax 505-982-6790, our telephone 505-471-7181

Sincerely,

Woody Vasulka

PS: Do you need any photos for the catalog?

THE "CUBE"

