Dear Artist:

March 5, 1990

Many of you will recall that the Video Data Bank presented the first Video Drive-In at the Petrillo Band Shell in Grant Park, Chicago, in September, 1984. Two programs were screened for this event: The Science of Fiction and The Fiction of Science. With a sense of scale and elegance, this outdoor event drew an audience of over 10,000 people to your work and the work of other independent video producers.

One person in the Grant Park audience was a student who had just arrived in the United States from Portugal to go to graduate school at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. This event captured his imagination so intensely that when he went back to Portugal he was determined to bring the Drive-In to Lisbon.

Through his commitment and the generous support of the Gulbenkian Foundation, the Video Drive-In was presented at the amphitheater of the Foundation in Lisbon in July of 1989. Three nights of screenings were presented: The Science of Fiction, The Fiction of Science, and a third program, It's Evening In America, curated by Carole Ann Klonarides.

Corinne Deserin, a curator from IVAM Julio Gonzalez of Valencia, was present at the screening in Lisbon. She immediately scheduled the Drive-In to be presented the following September in Spain. This time the Drive-In was presented in a picturesque dried up river bed in Valencia. It then travelled to Barcelona where it was co-sponsored by the Center for North American Studies and the city of Barcelona. The Barcelona screening was held in conjunction with a city wide festival of events and the Drive-In was placed in the middle of a closed off street at the center of the festival.

Each screening site presented complex challenges for the technical crew that was responsible for the projection. This crew came from Samuelson, LTD. in London with a General Electric MLV projector and a Sony Betacam SP deck plus a van load of test equipment, back up equipment, cables and all the
other accessories necessary for outdoor projection. All of these European screenings drew packed audiences that were unfamiliar with American video works but were nevertheless captured by the powerful intensity of the 18 x 24 foot scale, the visual imagery and content of the work. Both the Gulbenkian Foundation and IVAM Julio Gonzalez published catalogs for the screenings. The event drew great attention from the local media in each city. Although we don’t have copies of the reviews to send out, we have enclosed the catalogs with your royalty payment.

What’s next for the Video Drive-In? Central Park in 1990.
We have been funded to present the Drive-In in conjunction with the Public Art Fund and Central Park’s Summer Stage Program during the upcoming summer. The two programs curated in 1984, The Science of Fiction and The Fiction of Science will be retired after having been seen by many thousands of people; three new programs will be curated and collectively called The Alternative Voice.

Although we don’t have exact dates yet, we will keep you informed and we hope many of you will be able to attend this important video event. We are confident that it will focus much-needed public attention and draw new audiences to independent video and the producers who make it.

On behalf of the entire staff of the Video Data Bank please accept our thanks and appreciation for helping to make the Video Drive-In such a big success.

Best regards,

Kate Horsfield, Director
7/10/92
Video Data Bank/22 Warren/NY, NY 10007

Dear Woody and Steina,

I trust your show in Linz was well-received. I'm curious to know who was able to see it and how people responded to a discussion of this period of time. I'll be anxious to speak with you when you return.

I want to thank you for your hospitality during what was certainly a very pressured time for you both (and of course the fantastic race to the airport!). It did my heart good in many ways. The conversation was invigorating, of course, and some important low frequency fundamental modulated the visit as well. I've enclosed a 3/4" copy (dub from Hi-8 master) of the interview (for you), which definitely covers some important territory for my project, and offers important perspectives from which to approach the work, and a Hi-8 tape to replace the one Steina gave me. Thanks so much.

There's other tape and writing I want to send you but have not yet had time to round it up. I will be in touch with you, I expect, before the end of July to make arrangements about masters for the VDB history project.

I'm in NYC until the end of July c/o Video Data Bank/22 Warren St./NY,NY 10007/(212)233-3441/fax (212)608-5496. Then in Buffalo through August at 70 N. Pearl (rear)/Buffalo, NY 14202/(716)884-4571 fax c/oHailwalls (716)855-3959.
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Producer: Kate Horsfield • Curator: Christine Hill
Project Coordinator: Maria Troy

“The release of this fabulous new, comprehensive history of independent video art couldn’t be more timely. It is especially critical for this vital and diverse history to appear now, when there is a whole new generation of videomakers and viewers.”
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Video Data Bank
The School • The Art Institute of Chicago
112 South Michigan Avenue, 3rd floor
Chicago, Illinois, 60603 U S A
PH 312.345.3550 FAX 312.341.8073
Program 1—Explorations of Presence, Performance, and Audience

Performer/Audience/Mirror, Dan Graham, 1975
Selected Works* [Two Dogs and Ball, Used Car Salesman, Dog Biscuit in Glass Jar], William Wegman, 1972
Baldessari Sings Lewitt*, John Baldessari, 1972
Undertone*, Vito Acconci, 1972
Vertical Roll, Joan Jonas, 1972
My Father, Shigeko Kubota, 1975
Exchange, Robert Morris, 1973

Program 2—Investigations of the Phenomenal World—Space, Sound, and Light

Black and White Tapes*, Paul McCarthy, 1970-75
Stamping in the Studio*, Bruce Nauman, 1968
Double Vision*, Peter Campus, 1971
Boomerang, Richard Serra and Nancy Holt, 1974
Island Song, Charlemagne Palestine, 1976
Cycles of 3s and 7s*, Tony Conrad, 1976
The Children's Tapes, Terry Fox, 1974
Sounding, Gary Hill, 1979
Lightning, Paul and Marlene Kos, 1976
Sweet Light, Bill Viola, 1977

Program 3—Approaching Narrative—"There are Problems to Be Solved"

The Red Tapes Part II, Vito Acconci, 1976
Out of Body Travel*, Richard Foreman, 1976
The Continuing Story of Carel and Ferd*, Arthur Ginsberg and Video Free America (& WNET), 1972-75

Program 4—Gendered Confrontations

Art Herstory*, Hermine Freed, 1974
Female Sensibility, Lynda Benglis, 1973
Always Love Your Man, Cara DeVito, 1975
The Mom Tapes*, Ilene Segalove, 1974-78
Primal Scenes, Linda Montano, 1980
Non and Deviant*, Nancy Angelo and Candace Compton, 1976
Vital Statistics of a Citizen, Simply Obtained, Martha Rosler, 1977

Program 5—Performance of Video Imaging Tools

Calligrams*, Woody and Steina Vasulka, 1970
Illuminatin' Sweeney*, Skip Sweeney, 1975
Video Weaving*, Stephen Beck, 1976
Five-Minute Ramp Through the II: Dan Sandin, 1973
Triangle in Front of Square in Front of Circle..., Dan Sandin, 1973
Video-Taping, Ernie Gusella, 1974
Exquisite Corpse, Ernie Gusella, 1978
Einstein, Eric Siegel, 1968
General Motors*, Phil Morton, 1976
Mercy by Mercy by Paik, Nam June Paik, 1978
Crollings and Meetings*, Ed Emshwiller, 1974

Program 6—Decentralized Communications Projects

Mayday Realtime*, David Cort and Curtis Ratcliffe, 1971
People's Video Theater (Women's Liberation, Gay Pride, Young Lords, Native American Action)*, Ken Marsh and Elliot Glass, 1971-72
Participation*, Steina and Woody Vasulka, 1972
First Transmission of ACTV, Austin Community TV and George Stoney, 1972
Jonesboro Storytelling Festival: Kathryn Windham Telling Ghost Stories (The Jumbo Light), Broadside TV, 1974
The Politics of Intimacy*, Julie Gustafson, 1974
Artica Interview*, Portable Channel, 1971
Queen Mother Moore Speech at Greenhaven Prion, Peoples' Communications Network, 1973
Laughing Alligator, Juan Downey, 1979

Program 7—Critiques of Art and Media as Commodity and Spectacle

Eternal Frame, Ant Farm and T.R. Uthco, 1976
Television Delivers People, Richard Serra, 1973
The Business of Local News*, University Community Video-Minneapolis, 1974
Proto Media Primer, Paul Ryan and Raindance, 1970
About Media*, Tony Ramos, 1977
Fifty Wonderful Years, Optic Nerve, 1973
Technology Transformation: Wonder Woman, Dara Birnbaum, 1978-79

Program 8—Independents Address Television Audiences

Healthcare: Your Money or Your Life, Downtown Community TV, 1978
The Ruling Classroom, Peter Bull and Alex Gibney, 1979-80
Four More Years, Top Value Television (TVTV), 1972

* these titles are excerpts from longer works

PRICE AND ORDERING INFORMATION

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This project was funded by generous grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, Media Arts Program, and the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts.
video would be complete without William Wegman and his long-suffering canine collaborators. "It's a Man Ray?" Wegman can also be seen singing with his navel.

Recent experimental video will also be shown, including tapes by Dana Birnbaum, Bob Snyder, Max Amin, Michael Smith, and many others. Amin's current project, a collection of "Leader" is anything but subtle, to the accompaniment of a numbingly repetitive electronic score, a computer engine that "functions perfectly as a candidate." Michael Smith's "Is the Moon Made of Tinfoil," with its deadpan humor, is more successful, but still fails to transcend the limitations of the music video it parodies.

A few of the items on the two outdoor programs are more than ten minutes long. The two longest tapes, roughly 17 minutes each, are by Chicagians: Wayne Fielding's Human Skeleton and Edward Rankin's Naked Doom. Human Skeleton is an intriguingly disquieting narrative centered on "a woman's delusion of her friend's suicide." Naked Doom is a visually striking, if somewhat overwrought, expressionist nightmare.

The proceedings will be punctuated by Joan Logue's brief "commercial" for various artists, including composers Steve Reich and Philip Glass, choreographer/director Yvonne Rainer, and performance artist Laurie Anderson and Carlotta Monterey. These are mostly single-take close-ups, condensing concisely and wittily the artists' work.

There is a great deal of excitement at the Video Data Bank over this opportunity to bring Chicago's blossoming video community to the attention of a wider audience. The chance to present video as a large-scale spectacle fills these videophiles with glee.

They are also excited about Dos Rios, a video performance artwork that will be presented in conjunction with "The Science of Fiction," Friday, September 7, at 9 PM, and "The Fiction of Science," Saturday, September 8, at 9 PM, both at the Video Data Bank over this weekend at the Art Institute's Columbus Drive Auditorium. Admission is $8, $5 for students. "The Science of Fiction," Friday, September 7, at 9 PM, and "The Fiction of Science," Saturday, September 8, at 9 PM, are free to all. In the event of rain, they will be moved from the band shell to the Art Institute's Columbus Drive auditorium. For more information, and for reservations for Dos Rios, call 443-3710.

The Video Data Bank's collection of tapes, including interviews with artists as well as video art tapes, is available for individual viewing in the Video Data Bank screening room. For information call 443-3793.

- Harvey Nosowitz