

Video Viewpoints

Five independent videomakers talk about and show their work
Monday Evenings, 7:30 p.m. Founders Room, sixth floor
The Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, New York, N.Y. 10019
Tickets are free and are available at the Lobby Information Desk

March 13

Steina Vasulka

The Craft of Electronic Imagery

March 27

Vito Acconci

FACE/FIGHT/FLASH (Video as a Ground for Non-Video)

April 24

Bill Viola

Subjective Elements in Videotape Recordings

May 8

Beryl Korot

Video and the Loom: An Explanation of Ancient and Modern
Technologies (Illustrated by Two Multi-Channel Works)

May 22

Jon Alpert

The Work of the Downtown Community Television Center

The series is partially supported with public funds from the
New York State Council on the Arts

Please post

AFTER MONTGOLFIER (1979, 8 minutes). By Davidson Sigiotti.

Color. Sound. Rental \$40 (¾"), \$35 (VHS). Sale \$150 (¾"), \$140 (VHS).

Inspired by the pioneer French balloonists the Montgolfier brothers, *After Montgolfier* follows the flight of a modern-day balloon over Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minnesota. The beauty of the balloon drifting across the landscape is enhanced through camera pans done in tandem with each turn of the balloon and through dollying effects created by the wind. The dramatic effect is heightened by the ambient sound of the slow release of helium that regulates the flight.

BETWEEN THE FRAMES. CHAPTER 5, THE DOCENTS 9 (1983, 13 minutes). By Antonio Muntadas.

Color. Sound. Rental \$50 (¾"), \$35 (VHS). Sale \$200 (¾"), \$140 (VHS).

This is one of eight videotapes or "chapters" that examine aspects of the art world in the United States and Europe. Each chapter functions separately, but all focus on the institutionalized structures that separate artists and their work from their audiences. In *The Docents* we observe the individuals who conduct groups of visitors through art museums, here the Long Beach Museum of Art and the Newport Harbor Art Museum. The guides describe their work, revealing their dedication and motivation. This footage is intercut with scenes from crossovers of traffic moving rapidly along the Los Angeles freeway. The highway, a dominant feature of the American landscape, is used to question the docents' seemingly straightforward flow of information.

THE COMMISSION (1983, 45 minutes). By Woody Vasulka.

Color. Sound. Rental \$150 (¾"), \$140 (VHS). Sale \$500 (¾") \$475 (VHS).

In *The Commission* Woody Vasulka utilizes image and audio processing to develop and enhance a narrative structure. The title refers to the commission to write a piece of music that nineteenth-century composer Hector Berlioz received from the great Italian violinist Niccolò Paganini. The electronically distorted narration describes the lives and the relationship of the two men, interpreted and played by two well-known video-makers, Ernest Gusella as Paganini and Robert Ashley as Berlioz. Gusella's gaunt face is rendered apparitional by the image processor, eliciting a mystical quality. With a sequence of Berlioz playing the harmonica among the rocks of New Mexico, this work reveals an unpredictability, humor, and inventiveness that are characteristic of Vasulka's work.

DOUG HALL PROGRAM (1982–84, 28 minutes). By Doug Hall.

Color. Sound. Rental \$75 (¾"), \$70 (VHS). Sale is by each individual title @ \$220 (¾"), \$210 (VHS).

Selected works by this artist who came out of the West Coast media collectives the Ant Farm and T. R. Uthco in the 1970s. His work contains much of those groups' acute media awareness and spirit of social satire.

1. *The Speech* (1982). Satirizes the postures and attitudes of a political speechmaker.
2. *Songs of the '80s* (1983). A series of five enigmatic pieces that project a sense of precariousness and disaster. Continuity is established through the repeated use of images such as a hammering fist and objects bursting into flames. The segments are titled "Fear of Falling," "Sounds of Glass," "Through the Room," "Leaning Forward Gracefully," and "These Are the Rules."
3. *Almost Like a Dance* (1984). Directed by Doug Hall and Jules Backus. An intense look at the Olympics champion weight lifter, Mario Martinez, at the Sports Palace in San Francisco. Parts are shot in slow motion and extreme close-up.
4. *This is the Truth* (1982). A parody of a public speaker, a preacher, or politician, in which the performer exhorts his audience with a series of platitudes such as "Only the strong succeed."

GOTTA MAKE THIS JOURNEY: SWEET HONEY IN THE ROCK

(1983, 58 minutes). Produced by Michelle Parkerson and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. Directed by Joseph Camp.

Color. Sound. Rental \$150 (¾"), \$140 (VHS). Sale \$500 (¾"), \$460 (VHS).

Gotta Make This Journey is a portrait of six radical women who are the present members of Sweet Honey in the Rock. The group's music is as varied as its members, ranging from spirituals to calypso, African chants to American blues; but in their commitment to social change and racial equality, the group stands united. The focal point of the videotape is their ninth-anniversary concert. Interwoven are interviews with members of the group and commentary by Alice Walker, Holly Near, Angela Davis, and others.

HOW TO FLY (1980, 30 minutes). By Ed Bowes.

Color. Sound. Rental \$150 (¾"), \$140 (VHS). Sale \$500 (¾"), \$460 (VHS).

How to Fly presents the richness of a random series of daily lives through fragmented scenes from life that offer minimal context but ample humor. Ed Bowes describes his tape: "Its principal characters are sweet, eccentric in the ways we ordinarily are, softly sexy, and slightly disturbing. *How to Fly* suggests that while

life is more unruly and less directed than we often imagine, it's also interesting and rewarding and loaded with possibilities. It's the six-hundredth episode of the nicest soap opera you ever saw."

IN THE NUCLEAR SHADOW: WHAT CAN THE CHILDREN

TELL US? (1982, 26 minutes). By Eric Thiermann.

Produced by Eric Thiermann, Vivienne Verdon-Roe, and Ian Thierman. Edited by Vivienne Verdon-Roe and Ian Thiermann.

Color. Sound. Rental \$40 (¾"), \$30 (VHS). Sale \$125 (¾"), \$70 (VHS).

Twenty-seven young people between the ages of six and eighteen, from different backgrounds, express their feelings about the threat of nuclear war. Sharing their insights into the pressures on them is a moving experience. Contrasting with the youthful statements are scenes of actual nuclear testing and paintings by children of their impressions of Hiroshima. In a personal testimony a Japanese dentist, at fifteen a survivor of the Hiroshima bomb, recounts how the August 1945 routine was broken by a blast that in a few seconds turned a modern city into a desert of the dead. His memories are illustrated by footage of the aftermath of the bomb showing the injured victims, many of them children.

JAZZ DANCE (1980, 4 minutes). By Doris Chase.

Color. Sound. Rental \$40 (¾"), \$35 (VHS). Sale \$150 (¾"), \$140 (VHS).

Modern dancer Gay Delanghe, transformed through synthesized video images, interprets the joyful mood and bouncing rhythm of the Dixieland jazz music of Jelly Roll Morton. Delineated in white silhouette, her moving figure is double- then triple-exposed, and as the music progresses, the three forms become abstract, break up, and reform again. Earthbound movement is transformed into a flowing, gravity-free experience. Richard Lorber, writing in *Arts Magazine*, describes Chase's video work as "in the intensely visual tradition of Oskar Schlemmer and Loie Fuller. Chase continues to break ground in her media explorations."

KIKIRIKI (1983, 27 minutes). By Tony Labat.

Color. Sound. Rental \$40 (¾"), \$35 (VHS). Sale \$250 (¾"), \$225 (VHS).

In *Kikiriki* Tony Labat weaves together a series of tales of immigration through broken narrative, flashback, and use of a divided screen. Labat reconstructs his personal experience of coming to the United States as a teenager from Cuba, and using symbolic characters he depicts the problems of entering a foreign culture.

LOST IN THE TRANSLATION (1984, 10 minutes). By Tony Labat.

Sound. Color. Rental \$50 (¾"), \$40 (VHS). Sale \$300 (¾"), \$275 (VHS).

In *Lost in the Translation* Tony Labat continues to explore contemporary story-telling conventions. Adapting the fast-editing style of broadcast television, he interweaves a series of fragmentary vignettes, featuring an elderly woman and a carnival man who divulge their secrets, as well as a group in the woods, an artist's model, and two young boys. The situations bear a resemblance to "human interest" stories found in the news media.

PIANO PLAYERS RARELY EVER PLAY TOGETHER (1982; long version 76 minutes, short version 60 minutes). Written, produced, directed, and edited by Stevenson J. Palfi in cooperation with Mississippi Educational Television.

Color. Sound. Rental (76 min.) \$150 (¾"), apply - VHS. Sale (76 min.) \$725 (¾"), apply - VHS.

Rental (60 min.) \$125 (¾"), apply - VHS. Sale (60 min.) \$600 (¾"), apply - VHS.

Piano Players Rarely Ever Play Together documents an attempt to bring together three generations of jazz pianists—Isidore "Tuts" Washington, Henry "Professor Longhair" Byrd, and Allen Toussaint—on one stage, in one club, on one night. Although the concert at Tipitana (named for Professor Longhair's song) never happened—Professor Longhair died two days before the performance—*Piano Players* succeeds in exploring the musical and personal relationship among these men. As the camera follows them through the sometimes frustrating and often humorous process of rehearsing an old boogie-woogie composition, each musician tells his own story. *Piano Players* ends with a rare look at a very personal and sacred tradition, a New Orleans wake.

THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS (1984, 60 minutes). By Julie Gustafson with John Reilly.

Color. Sound. Rental \$90 (¾"), \$75 (VHS). Sale \$350 (¾"), \$300 (VHS).

In *The Pursuit of Happiness* Julie Gustafson and John Reilly question the "inalienable right" mentioned in the Declaration of Independence to pursue happiness. Shot with hand-held cameras, the documentary focuses on Molly Rush of the Plowshares 8. A member of this group of Catholic activists, she was sentenced to two to five years in prison for smashing the nose cone of a nuclear weapon. Interwoven are interviews with Molly Rush's husband, Bill, and with the warden and two inmates of the prison where she was held. Each

responds to the question of how one can live according to one's own values and, at the same time, pursue the American Dream.

THE REFLECTING POOL (Collected work, 1977-80, 62 minutes). By Bill Viola.
Color. Sound. Rental \$100 (3/4"), \$80 (VHS). Sale \$500 (3/4"), \$400 (VHS).

This is a collection of five independent works that together describe the stages of personal journey, utilizing images of transition—for example day to night, motion to stillness. Each work explores specific video techniques and technologies, in combination with the spatial potentials of stereo sound. In *Reflecting Pool* (1977-79) movement and change in an otherwise still scene are limited to the reflections and ripples on the surface of a pond in the woods. *Moonblood* (1977-79) is a set of images relating to a personal concept of a woman; *Silent Life* (1979) presents a series of portraits of newborn babies, from five minutes to one day old. In *Ancient of Days* (1979-81), diverse rhythms of natural and subjective time are interwoven into a complex whole using the mathematical notation of SMPTE time code editing. Finally, in *Vegetable Memory* (1978-80), a repeating cycle of images recorded at the Tsukiji fish market in Tokyo becomes continually extended in time.

Also in the video collection is Viola's *Chott el-Djerid*.

DER RIESE (1983, 82 minutes). By Michael Klier.
Black and white. Sound. Rental \$100 (3/4" & VHS). Sale \$400 (3/4" & VHS).

Der Riese (The Giant) is an ominous work recorded from surveillance cameras permanently installed in different urban locations such as an airport runway, a shopping mall, and an outdoor cafe. From their omniscient vantage situations, the fixed black-and-white cameras mechanically pan the mundane situations. Klier heightens the suspense of watching and waiting for the unusual occurrence with a soundtrack that includes Mahler and Wagner.

SOME CALL IT BAD LUCK (1982, 47 minutes). By Lisa Steele. Cast: Karl Beveridge, Ian Gzinck, Gerald Hannon, Donna Reuss, Lisa Steele, and Pat Wilson. Camera: Clive Robertson and Norman Cohn.
Color. Sound. Rental \$75 (3/4"), \$65 (VHS). Sale \$300 (3/4"), \$275 (VHS).

In *Some Call it Bad Luck* Lisa Steele portrays a single parent, an American immigrant to Canada who is down on her luck. She is questioned by the police as a witness to a crime and as a result is accused of

manslaughter. Although at first she is certain of her innocence, the relentless bullying by the interrogating officers gradually breaks down her ability to differentiate between truth and fabricated reality. Steele, who has given this work the look and grittiness of a documentary, emigrated from the United States to Canada in 1968.

TAPES (1979, 16 minutes). By Pier Marton.
UNITY THROUGH STRENGTH (1981-82, 7 minutes). By Pier Marton.
Color. Sound. Each title is in its own cassette. The rental and sale is the same for each title. Rental \$50 (3/4"), \$45 (VHS). Sale \$200 (3/4"), \$175 (VHS).

In both tapes the artist presents himself in a series of performances that explore aspects of the self and at the same time expand the creative potentialities of video. An intensity of feeling is achieved through a variety of devices, including fragmenting and repeating dialogue, creating simultaneous views of the artists within the frame, and the use of abstractions and image break-up.

VOYAGE OF DREAMS (1983, 30 minutes). Produced and directed by Collis Davis and Raymond Cajuste.
Color. Sound. Rental \$75 (3/4"), \$65 (VHS). Sale \$450 (3/4"), \$400 (VHS).

Voyage of Dreams documents the efforts of the Haitian boat people to escape from the political and economic strife of their homeland and build a new life in America, where they face incarceration and deportation. Narrated by Ossie Davis and Raymond Cajuste, this video documentary features exclusive footage from Haiti and interviews with those who survived the perilous journey across the ocean, recreated by the Haitian artist Nemo through the use of computer graphics.

YOUR MONEY OR YOUR LIFE (1982, 45 minutes). By Laura Kipnis. The mugger is played by Ernest Parry.
Color. Sound. Rental \$50 (3/4"), no VHS. Sale \$250 (3/4"), no VHS.

The videomaker takes a satirical approach to produce a statement on poverty, racism, and injustice. The principal character, a cynical, unemployed young man, describes how he took up mugging people to make a living. Shot on location in the streets of a deteriorating inner city, the tape draws its strength from the skillful blending of narrative and documentary techniques.

LIST OF TITLES IN THE MAIN VIDEO CATALOG

Title	Running time in mins.	Rental	Sale
BLUE STUDIO: FIVE SEGMENTS (Charles Atlas & Merce Cunningham)	16	\$50	\$250
PETER CAMPUS PROGRAM	24	100	NA
CHOTT EL-DJERID (Bill Viola)	28	75	300
DANGLING BY THEIR MOUTHS (Colin Campbell)	60	75	300
GLOBAL GROOVE (Nam June Paik)	30	50	200
HEALTH CARE: YOUR MONEY OR YOUR LIFE (John Alpert and Keiko Tsuno)	60	75	275
GARY HILL PROGRAM	56	75	200
THE IRISH TAPES (John Reilly & Stefan Moore)	46	75	275
MEDIA BURN (Ant Farm)	25	50	200
META MAYAN II (Edin Velez)	20	50	200
MONTANA (Jane Veeder)	3	35	150
MUSIC AND FIRE AND I WOULD DO IT AGAIN (Robert Ashley)	30	100	350
NOW (Lynda Benglis)	13	40	NA
ONE WAY (James Byrne)	8	35	150
OUT OF THE BODY TRAVEL (Richard Foreman)	43	75	275
PICK UP YOUR FEET: THE DOUBLE DUTCH SHOW (Skip Blumberg)	30	50	200

LIST FOR TITLES IN THE MAIN VIDEO CATALOG

Title	Running time in mins.	Rental	Sale
PICTURES OF THE LOST (23 min.) & HEARTS (12 min.) (Barbara Buckner)	35	50	250
PRESUMED INNOCENT (Claude Beller & Stefan Moore)	60	75	350
SMOTHERING DREAMS (Dan Reeves)	23	50	200
SPIRAL PTL (SPIRAL 5) (Dan Sandin, Tom Defanti & Mimi Shevitz)	7	50	150
SUNSTONE (Ed Emshwiller)	3	50	150
TELETAPES (Peter D'Agostino)	28	50	200
TELEVISION DELIVERS PEOPLE (Richard Serra)	6	45	NA
TRAVELS (Shalom Gorewitz)	27	50	200
TRIM SUBDIVISIONS (Bob Snyder)	6	50	300
UNDERTONE (Vito Acconci)	30	50	NA
STEINA AND WOODY VASULKA PROGRAM	62	75	275
VERTICAL ROLL (Joan Jonas)	20	50	NA
THE WEAK BULLET (Tony Oursler)	15	50	200
WILLIAM WEGMAN PROGRAM, SELECTED WORKS, REEL 4	20	50	NA