

PERCEPTION

Interim Report

Perception is a recipient of a New York State Council of the Arts grant totaling \$15,000. Based on these anticipated funds, Perception began functioning by integrating itself with The Kitchen For Electronic Media, 240 Mercer Street, which had been inaugurated somewhat earlier in the year (July, 1971) by the Vasulkas.

The activities which have taken place at The Kitchen, partially supported by the above mentioned grant, fall into three areas: Public Performances, including video, electronic music, and dance; workshops in video, biofeedback, and three dimensional studies; and research and development of new audio and video electronic systems.

I. PUBLIC PERFORMANCES (See Appendix for more complete listing of performers and their works)

A. Electronic Music Concerts; performances to date = 12

This series of Monday evening concerts has run during October, December, and January, and is scheduled to continue throughout the remainder of this year. Attendance has varied between 25 and 100 persons each performance.

A large variety of material has been presented; including, live performances via electronic synthesizers, music concrete, experiments in four channel audio, and music generated by video systems.

B. Wednesday Evening Open Screenings; performances = 23

Video artists are encouraged via word of mouth, advertising in the Village Voice, and other media to bring their works to The Kitchen for public viewing. The size of the audience varies, but seems to average at least 25 persons per evening. The atmosphere is informal and helps to foster a free exchange between artists and audience. Such discussions include the questions of conception, efficacy of a given work, and technical aspects of production.

C. Weekend Video; performances to date = 17

Whereas Wednesday evenings allow for unstructured viewing of works in progress, the weekend performances are devoted to more complete artistic endeavors. Various groups, some of which are also recipients of New York State Council grants, have presented their works at The Kitchen during these evenings: Raindance Corporation, Acme Video Rangers, The Video Freaks, Peoples Video Theatre, and Space Video Arts.

D. Vasulka Video; performances to date = 38

Much of the Vasulka's work makes use of electronically generated video images, accompanied by audio analog. It is normal procedure for video pieces to be pre-recorded for future playback during performance--especially in the area of image generation. While most video work is performed in this latter manner, it is important to note that the Vasulkas have developed the conceptual basis and means to create live video performances of electronically generated images. Roughly one-third of their performances have been executed in this manner.

E. Cinema; performances to date = 3

Two of these evenings consisted of viewing and subsequent discussion of the Swerdloff's films on the ballet. The third evening was devoted to the combined video and cinematic efforts of Nam June Paik and Jud Yalkut.

F. Three Dimensional Studies; performances to date = 1

On January 4, 1972, Alphonse Schilling presented a series of 3-dimensional slides encompassing Iceland and the New York Subway System. These images were accompanied by live music generated by W. Vasulka on the Putney Synthesizer.

G. Dance; performances to date = 5

Early in October, Kei Takei, the Japanese choreographer and dancer, gave an evening performance of a work in progress: Light, pts. 1, 2, and 3. Somewhat later, on four successive November evenings, Kei Takei and her troupe performed a more extensive version of this piece which received favorable notices in the Village Voice and various other media.

II. WORKSHOPS

A. Bio-feedback

The Vasulkas in conjunction with Philip Perlman and Dmitri Devyatkin have been exploring the use of body sensing devices including EKG, EEG, measurements of galvanic skin response, and body capacitance as means of generating electronic images for use in feedback networks involving audience and performers.

B. Education Workshops

1. Ten Towns Project

This group, numbering some 20 persons, availed themselves of The Kitchen's facilities during mid-September

2. Elizabeth Cleaners Downtown School

This group is composed of over-achieving high school dropouts who have formed their own school and are developing an alternative educational program. This school meets once a week at The Kitchen to learn about video systems and electronic music.

3. Other

Students from many other institutions including The School of Visual Arts and New York University have attended workshops and performances at The Kitchen.

Due to the many workshops and performances, The Kitchen has become a central meeting place and communications center for those interested in electronic media

C. Editing And Viewing Facilities

Although The Kitchen's facilities are relatively modest in terms of editing and transfer capabilities, it is one of the few locations in New York which is available to persons in need of viewing, editing, or transfer work. The entire Whitney Museum Video Show was viewed and edited in The Kitchen.

III. RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

A. Electronic Modules

Erich Siegel has been working in conjunction with the Vasulkas to develop a modular video synthesizing system based on the inherent parameters of the audio-video matrix and having open-ended capabilities.

This system is being designed and constructed on Vector Boards so that it can be expanded at will and features complete interchangeability and facility of replacement. Perception has begun distributing Vector Boards to various persons already engaged in image generation systems.

It is anticipated that ultimately everyone working in this area will submit the necessary information so that all video and audio generating systems can be integrated into a modular whole. These systems include keying devices, colorizing units, and image synthesizers.

B. Bio-feedback

Perception is working toward the development of body sensing devices which can be worn by performers and transmit biological data for audio and video image generation.