By GRACE GLUECK

Frank Gillette's new work for television is not the sort of thing that is meant to produce solid 14-minute videotape shots on Cape Cod, but it is not the sort of television that is meant to produce solid 14-minute videotape shots on Cape Cod. The 14-minute video-tape shot on Cape Cod has as its sole subject the flow of water into and around a cave.

In the series of these, "Trask Gillette, a 34-year-old artist who used to work with the more conventional paints and canvases, it is almost as though he is taking all those conventional forms of art and turning them back on themselves, to convey the most primordial of sources, our basic life-support system.

Mr. Gillette, whose new work is part of a 12-piece cycle with an ecological theme, is one of a growing breed of video artists, for whom the TV screen has become an esthetic medium. Uninterested in commercial television, they produce videotapes that take imaginative advantage of its technology, from delicate signs and designs to elaborate productions that call on the full technical resources of a TV studio.

Their visually transient work, dismissed by the object-oriented art world only a few years ago, is now highly evident on the museum and gallery circuit. In New York, the Museum of Modern Art schedules videotape shows, and they were a feature of the Whitney Museum's recent annual exhibition. Tapes may also be regularly viewed at such galleries as Leo Castelli and Blanca Sonnabend, 420 West Broadway, and at video stores such as The Kitchen, 58 Wooster Street, and Global Village, 450 Bourroe Street.

A Minga a Tela

A proliferation of video festivals has also occurred during the last year. One is now at the Museo de Arte Contemporaneo in Caracas, Venezuela, and in New York a women's video festival is in progress at the Women's Art Center, 549 Wooster Street.

"Today, a lot of videomakers are being broadcast, on the networks of public television stations. There's a significant body of works being produced by independent videomakers that warrants very exposure on the public-television system," says David Loew, director of the Filmmaker Lab, at Channel 13.

For the Studio Thirteen Laboratory, for the first time, a concert of the artists' tapes is appearing on tele-

A video image of the poet Allen Ginsberg from Nam June Paik's "Suite (212): Allen Ginsberg."
Videotape Is Replacing Paint and Canvas for Artists

Continued From Page 33

involved with his subjects. In "One-Eyed Bum," for instance, he persuades a Bowery derelict to talk revealingly about his life and his street philosophy.

Not all tape makers work in broadcast video. Some, for whom the medium is still best suited is gallery viewing, create installations in which multiple images are seen simultaneously on a number of monitors placed around the gallery. One of these is Raul Coro's "Dachau," a reconstruction of the German concentration camp in which the camera takes a dead- end "trial" point of view. At Koros, who with an artist congregation runs a television studio, he edits and edits the video.

More

Advertising

Appears on

Preceding

Pages

magazine Radical Software, experimenters were fooling around with the commercial TV imagery, notably Mr. Paul, a Korean-born musician known as "the father of video." With such devices as electromagnetic and signal interceptors, he broke up images on the screen, melding performers into indistinct huddles and exploding domestic ads into geometric flowers.

Mr. Paul showed some of his "alternative" TV sets at the Howard and Wine Gallery in 1969, along with such other video makers as Mr. Gillette and Mr. Schreiber, co-creators of a multi-image, multi-video program called "'Video City."

The short history of video—was shaped by Bunsen burners and "gorilla" recorders—differs from the commercial TV — even those as late as 1968 and the development of Technicolor photography by the "TV" films which allowed forchten, or "double" images. The videomaker has"dual" equipment which allows for images which are taped twice and then displayed. The videotape is studio use. An exhibition of TV by the "videoportals" device is one of the most promising. A crop of young hand-held cameras and a battery of videomakers is already emerging, giving artists instant access from art schools, funding agencies, such as the Rockefeller Foundation.

At about the same time, some of the artists who are working on videotape and video traffic.
By JOHN J. O'CONNOR

Since the first Sony Portapaks were introduced to this country in 1968, half-inch videotape, offering increased portability and lower costs, has been hailed as the salvation of the electronic artist or journalist attempting to remain independent and "personal." While the road to mass-audience access and recognition has been--and still is--rocky, the medium has produced work of outstanding quality.

A collection of good examples can be found in two new series that begin tomorrow. The first is an experimental public television: "Video and Television Review," a 26-week series produced by VJNET/13's experimental Television Laboratory. The second is in a lower-Manhattan loft: "The First Annual Video Documentary Festival," featuring a different schedule of presentations on Fridays and Saturdays, at 8:30 P.M., for the next three weeks.

The Channel 13 series, with Russell Connor, artist and critic, as host, will attempt a broad survey of videotape art--artistic and journalistic--it will include both information about the latest developments in hardware and conversations with artists and producers.

The first program will examine the aims and style of "Transcending," a group that gained a respectable measure of national success with "The Lord of the Universe" and, more recently, a four-part series on "Gerald Ford's America." Next week will feature "Turning," the first videotape of Ian Hugo, veteran film maker. And, in following weeks, it will include a new work by Ed Emshwiller and "The Irish Tapes," a 48-minute documentary on Northern Ireland by John Reilly and Seán Moore.

The series will obviously provide a valuable forum for a medium in desperate search for any forum. That desperation is the reason for the documentary festival at the Broome Street loft housing the Video Study Center of Global Village. It's at 454 Broome Street (phone 966-7526). Mr. Reilly is director of the center and his "The Irish Tapes" will be included on one of the programs. Much of the material, however, has not found an outlet on either TV or cable, which initially promised "alternative access" but has proved a failure so far.

The "video documentary"--generally, makes a mockery of objectivity. Tightly controlled by a few people or even one person, the documentary tends to be extremely subjective. For example, several trips to Ulster were made. Scenes of hate and suffering, on both sides of the conflict, were set in a form that opens and ends with glimpses of a St. Patrick's Day parade in New York. Grim reality is powerfully counterpointed with uniformed fantasy. The "troubles" are portrayed by the participants--defiant, hysterical, puzzled.

The scope and styles of the video documentary are broad. Other works in the festival include:

"The Politics of Intimacy," by Julie Gustafson. Ten Women, recorded in close-up and medium shots, candidly discuss orgasm and sexuality. The "clinical" statements accumulate into sensitive portraits of women of different ages, sexual preferences and socioeconomic backgrounds.

"Hindustan-Part I," by Eric Siegel. A trip through India is recorded without narration, without statistics and with super 8 camera work.

"Water" by Bob and Ingrid Wiegand. A gym teacher is interviewed in immediate detail, his work, his boat-sailing and his story about survival in a German slave-labor camp seamlessly intertwined with the white.

"Giving Birth," by Dale J. Carey. A desperately modern couple go to Mexico for the delivery of their child. The result is graphic, as plashd, and hilarious, as not planned.

In addition, the festival is showing some works that have received some measure, TV11's "Four More Years," an irreverent and, particularly in light of Watergate, perceptive view of the 1972 Republican convention in Miami, was shown widely on cable television. And Downtown Community Television's: "Cut the People" was carried on P.B.S.

For anyone interested in a safely mediated present containing significant possibilities for the future of electronic artistry, the Video and Television Review is a must; the Video Documentary Festival is a want.