**REVIEW: VIDEO**

Six TV monitors capture a kaleidoscopic desert.

By RICHARD HUNTINGTON
News Critic

VIDEO, with its small electronic stage, tends to cramp the aesthetic field. As in ordinary television, our vision is, in effect, trapped within a 21-inch box.

One way around this for video artists is an installation using a number of monitors. This effectively can break the limited physical boundaries of the single monitor and decentralize the video image.

Steina and Woody Vasulka, who are showing a six-screen installation called "The West" at the Michael C. Rockefeller Art Center at Fredonia State College, demonstrate the impressive effects possible with such multi-monitor pieces.

Here, the six monitors are set in a single row, horizontally, at the end of a narrow gallery. But the artists allow any number of configurations — vertical stacks, pairings, and so on. Why this is so is hard to imagine. The spectacular scenes of the New Mexico desert which are captured here by Steina Vasulka’s camera are ideally suited for this lateral arrangement.

In such a precisely worked-out piece there is reason to enjoy the artist’s sensitivity for basic presentation values. The video images are clear, smooth, and naturally with the kind of music to push our psyches into some zone beyond the realm of human influence.

Whether this lyrical and pleasant tape can stand repeated viewings and close analysis is open to question. I have my doubts. I saw the piece three times and the third time I felt that I had more or less exhausted the work.

"The West" was originally produced for the State University of New York’s Art on Television series. Since its premiere in AOsberg, the installation had been shown worldwide. It will continue at the center through Feb. 26.