works does not lend itself to an easy and immediate decoding, but rather to a cryptanalysis, as happens with the events and objects the initial objective of which has not been communication. The artist given account, on many opportunities, of this process. It is common to hear that the creator is not interested in what happens to the receptions of his works, since he searches for expressive forms and not communicational contacts. In a word, since he tries to put together significant objects, rather than messages conveying information.

If we remit ourselves to natural tongues, we observe that the communicational and the significative qualities are joined together in them, as happens with numerous semiotics systems. However, by constituting a synthesis of image and sound, video is a paradigmatic example: through it, art signifies. A traditional sculpture or painting is charged with meaning. Can it be inferred from this that they communicate with us? Doubtlessly, not. But the case of video is singular in it we meet with objects, conjunctions of unforeseen events, scenes which are filled with meaning or alternatively open to all meanings. When a semiotic structure is open to all meanings, the result can be apparent nonsense. These real figures of "accumulation" manage to constitute, sometimes, cryptograms for whoever is unfamiliar with the code of this or that creator. In the frequent case of an artist who toys with the technical possibilities of his electronic equipment, the resulting multiplicity of effects and nuances is fused with the iconic objects presented on the screen, adding to the entire representation an ambiguity belonging to the accumulation of effects, which is added to that which is already contained naturally in every image. We may, therefore, operationally distinguish two large areas of research for video art: the communicational and the significative. To the former would correspond the works whose privileged function is the transmission of one or various messages as from the structure which the medium normally operates with testimonial or documentary video, based on iconic models, which is produced by Latin American and some European artists. To the significative order would belong the works of formalist video, where the technical processing is privileged, where what acquires relevance is the esthetic development of the presented images, be it on their own or in conjunction with sound, works in which a symbolic thematic florishes and which distingue the production of a large number of United States artists. Of course, just as the iconic and the significative are not mutually exclusive, the same happens with the communicational and the significative.

Jorge Glusberg

BRIEF HISTORY OF VIDEO ART IN JAPAN

1968
April
Toshio Matsumoto makes a film Funeral of Roses in which he uses a TV event of "magnetic scramble". Katsuhiko Yamaguchi and Yoshiaki Tono produce a video event at a symposium "SAY SOMETHING NOW, I'M LOOKING FOR SOMETHING TO SAY" held at Sogetsu Kaikan.

1969
November
Kohei Ando and Rikuro Miyai make films using video. Takahiko Iimura and Keigo Yamamoto start making video.

1970
April
At EXPO'70 in Osaka, many experimental works in audio-visual displays including video were presented.

1971
February
Takahiko Iimura's live event Inside/Outside using CCTV and telebeam at Asahi Lecture Hall. Katsuhiko Yamaguchi makes his first videotape Asia at Luce at Gallery Videoballisco in Rome. At 10TH CONTEMPORARY JAPANESE ART EXHIBITION, Iimura's Man and Woman and Yukihiro Isobe's Video Documents on Phoenix House were exhibited.

1972
February
The first video show in Japan "do-it-yourself-kit" VIDEO COMMUNICATION organized by Michael Goldberg and several Japanese artists was held at Sony Building. The participants of the show formed a group called VIDEO HIROBA. The initial members were: Katsuhiko Yamaguchi, Toshio Matsumoto, Fujiko Nakaya, Makoto Kobayashi, Nobuhiro Kawakita, Yoshiaki Tono, Tetsu Matushita, Michitaka Nakahara, Rikuro Miyai, Masahiro Konuma, Sakumi Hagiwara, Keigo Yamamoto, and Shoko Matsukita.

1973
January
Fujiko Nakaya attends the MATRIX INTERNATIONAL VIDEO CONFERENCE in Vancouver. Tapes by VIDEO HIROBA members were shown.

February
Symposium with Effzyenberger and 4 Japanese artists was held at Asahi Lecture Hall. Kawana directs CCTV with multiple monitors and Telebeam.
Kosai Hori's video show at Tamura Gallery. 2 separate spaces were connected by VTR circuits and the articulation of information was demonstrated by decomposition and composition.

Video research project methods of Using Video as a Means of Community Participation in Urban Renewal, commissioned by Economic Planning Agency, was conducted by Yamaguchi (collaboration: Nakaya, Kawanaka, Kobayashi, Shoko Matsuaka, Kazuko Hikami). Noe area in Yokohama was chosen and video interviews of local people and multi-level feedback conference were tried.

Fumio Takamizawa's video work showing the process of multiplying the act and recording (2 tapes shot in a studio were reset in the gallery and so on) exhibited at IMPLEMENTATION AND EXECUTION.

Hakudo Kobayashi's video event HELLO VIDE0 at workshop MAG. His Loose Communication Series deals with the accumulation of gestures by participants. In which he explores the arbitrariness of memory with humor.

VIDEO EARTH makes a video document of the campaign of Senate candidate Akiyuki Kominato's, drawings executed by 6 performers were accumulated one after another.

Tatsuya Watanabe's video performance Climax No. 2 at Tokiwa Gallery. The Tenjosajikikan Video Theatre.

Sakumi Hagiwara introduces the tapes by Joan Jonas and John Stergeon at Smokers.

Hakudo Kobayashi's Hello Tobacco show, recordings of more than 200 heavy smokers. Their tape collection exceeds 100 at present.

VIDEO INFORMATION CENTER equipped with portable system starts its operation with Kobayashi, Kawanaka and Morioka was exhibited.

Fumio Takamizawa's video exhibition Image On at Takamura Gallery. Through his video performance of multiple recording, he objectifies the structure of the recording process.

Nobuhiro Kawanaka's Playback 5 performed at Esme Giraux, using 8 monitor delay system. Performance of an actress was overlapped with audience by switcher.

Sakumi Hagiwara used the same system and showed his media transformation piece First in Question.

Research Team of VIDEO HIROBA produced a series of videotapes for a Community Center of an electric company in Niigata.

Etsuro Kawayama's video show Image On at Tamura Gallery. Using a pantomime, he experimented with the discrepancy of language and gesture and the images were displayed on 3 monitors.

All of his

August

September

At COMPUTER EXHIBITION '73 In Kyoto, the works by Keigo Yamamoto (video communication game of viewer seeing the image on a monitor and interacting), Etsuro Kawayama (the discrepancy of the identification of different viewers of the same image), and Fujiko Nakaya (Blind the Wind and Draw a Line - an ecological video sculpture of spiders in natural and artificial environments) were exhibited.

Videotapes by VIDEO HIROBA members were shown at International Film Festival Pessaro, Italy.

Fumio Takamizawa's video show at Tokiwa Gallery. Through his video performance of multiple recording, he objectifies the structure of the recording process.

November

VIDEO INFORMATION CENTER equipped with portable system starts its operation by tape readings, theatre events, concerts, art events, lectures and others. Their tape collection exceeds 100 at present.

Hakudo Kobayashi's Hello Tabacoo show, recordings of more than 200 heavy smokers.

Sakumi Hagiwara introduces the tapes by Joan Jonas and John Sturges at Tenjospaulikian Video Theatre.

December

Tatsuya Watanabe's video performance Climax No. 2 at Tokiwa Gallery. The drawings executed by 6 performers were accumulated one after another.

1974

January

Video show TOKYO-NEW YORK VIDEO EXPRESS produced by Shigeko Kubota with VIDEO HIROBA and UNDERGROUND CENTER at Tenjospaulikian. 3 American tapes as well as the tapes and performances of 15 VIDEO HIROBA members including Makio Idemitsu, Kyoiko Mihosha, and Shuntaro Tanigawa were presented.

Tokyo photo exhibit the International Video Conference OPEN CIRCUIT held at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, and gives a talk on Video Art in Japan.

At THE CONTEMPORARY ART '73-'74 held at Art Core Gallery in Kyoto, Shoji Matsumoto's video image feedback piece using a stopwatch was exhibited.

VIDEO EXPRESS No. 1, VIDEO HIROBA magazine, was published.

February

Masayuki Takahashi's video show at Sirenoki Gallery. His concern is the special confrontation of the difference of media through parallel placement of real objects, photos, graphic reproductions, video, etc. Video group CITY & LUDENS is formed and they hold 7 video shows named VIDEO RALLY.
Kenji Togami shows his tape of himself contending with a coil spring to which he is contracted. **ITALIAN AND JAPANESE ART EXHIBITION** sponsored by Italian Cultural Center on the theme of "Time". Videotape of Pagoda of Brahma by Tatsuo Ikeda was shown.

1977

January
Katsuhiro Yamaguchi's exhibition **VIDEORAMA** at Minami Gallery. He created several environmental works by incorporating mirrors with the images created by video synthesizer and further combining them with multi-monitor display.

**VIDEO INFORMATION CENTER** installs a cable system in their apartment building, and starts a cablecast of 1 hour program each evening from their studio in the building.

February
Katsuhiro Yamaguchi attends VII INTERNATIONAL OPEN ENCOUNTER ON VIDEO in Barcelona and gives a talk on video encounter by means of "Renku" to open new circuit of communication.

April
Video Section for public events is introduced to the 11TH JAPANESE CONTEMPORARY ART EXHIBITION. Keigo Yamamoto receives a prize.

Takuji Azechi shows his drawings on metal sheets as well as a videotape of the act of drawing.

Mako Idemitsu video show using multi-channeled video system. The structure of communication with the frankness particular to video is explored.

**WOMAN AND VIDEO** group is formed and women's tapes are shown at their monthly showings.

Steve Moore's video show at American Center.
Katsuhiro Yamaguchi's drawing show at Ao Gallery - an experiment of live media circulation through combined color photocopy, video, and polaroid camera.

July
Don Druck and Canadian Video Show at Image Forum. Minoru Yoshida's Video Live-Edit "Gourmet of the Space" was also shown.

AET TODAY '77: "The Structure of Seeing" (Commissioner: Yoshiaki Tono) was held at Seibu Art Museum. The entire process from the planning to the realization of works by 5 participating artists was videotaped by Shotaro Uchiyama and Yama Art University AV House and Feedback public during the exhibition.

TOKYO-SAPPORO VIDEO EXPRESS organized by Minoru Takeyama and Katsuhiro Yamaguchi. Video symposium with Yamaguchi and Kyoichi Michinaga as panelists.

August
At MAKI SPACE VIDEO IN TOKYO, 8 artists and a group show their work. At 12-hour event "77 SEPTEMBER ALL NIGHT" organized by a young artists group called HOT PRESS, VIDEO WORKS were SHOWN along with film and synthesizer.

Asuka Kunimatsu's allscreen show VTR MONTAGE - a montage of images from a monitor.

October
At JAPAN-U.S. CONTEMPORARY ART EXHIBITION organized by Nobu Yamaguchi and Steve Moore, a videotape by Tsuneo Haseki was shown.

November
VIDEO CONCEPTUS 78 held at Fukui Prefectural Art Museum. Symposium with Yusuke Nakahara, Katsuhiro Yamaguchi, Nobuo Hovanaka as panelists.

1978

January
**SIMPLEX-COMPLEX** show organized by HOT PRESS.

Pan Conceptuals '78 video show at Tamura Gallery. Participation from Australia, New Zealand, U.S., Canada and Japan.

March
VIDEO EARTH experiments with the joining of video, film and children's picture books. Also the first trial of frame by frame video at their seminar for video animation.

Makoto Kobayashi starts his one year community video project commissioned by the City of Kunitachi.

May
Keigo Yamamoto's Video Show at Muranatsu Gallery. His theme is the visualization of "ma", such as the time lapse between the perception of an act and the act of imitating what is perceived.
The formation of VIDEO HIROBA

September 1971: No alternative video activity in Japan apart from the relatively isolated projects of Takahiko Iimura and Keiko Yamamoto, until Michael Shamberg visits Tokyo and leaves several copies of Radical Software in the hands of interested artists.

November 1971: Michael Goldberg of Intermedia, Vancouver, comes to Tokyo and stays four months, showing tapes from Canada and promoting his idea for video communication and free exchange of video through a decentralized global network.

February 1972: Video Communication do-it-yourself-kit, the first video exhibition in Japan, organized by Michael Goldberg, Katsuhiro Yamaguchi and Fujiko Nakaya, at the Sony showroom in Ginza. Eighteen people made their first tapes with portapaks; Goldberg accompanied each person on his first day of taping to give technical assistance. Five live events using feedback and time-delay were presented.

March 1972: Participants from Video Communication officially form VIDEO HIROBA with the aim of expanding the possibilities of videotape and video communication. The structure of the organization was discussed but no consensus reached. We decided to let it evolve. The basic idea was to keep it open.

April 1972: Video research on Niigata City and on Mito City by Yamaguchi in collaboration with Kawanaka, Kawanaka, Kobayashi.

May 1972: VIDEO HIROBA and the Asagaya School of Arts document Woodstock in a rock concert staged in order to raise funds to send Minamata Victims to the Stockholm Environmental Conference. Edited tape was sent to the People's Forum in Stockholm.

June 1972: Many HIROBA members participate in Vancouver, B.C., artist, Terry Reid's Recycle at the Tokyo International Film Festival.

September 1972: Hakudo Kobayashi's video event at Mecaco '72, Sony Building, Morihiro Wada's one man show Hollowing of concept by conception: the use of video as a medium for discovering plasma-language, at the Tamura Gallery, Tokyo. VIDEO HIROBA's tape participation in Communication and Information at the American Center in Seoul, South Korea. Video research on the Shinagawa district by Yamauchi, and Tokyo Zokei University students. Keiko Yamamoto's tape exhibition at Image 72, Kyoto Municipal Museum.

October 1972: HIROBA's second collective show Video Week, at the American Center, Tokyo. On setting up viewing stations to facilitate exchange and distribution of artists' work. Only very localized closed circuit cable TV facilities are available at present, and we have no outlet except for ad hoc showings and events held by individual artists.

Projects of VIDEO HIROBA

Tomoko Fuji, a dancer-choreographer, relates physically demanding objects and environments to the body in her dance events. In Stones, she picks up large stones one by one, eight tons altogether, placing them alternately on two conveyor belts. Because the belts differ in length the stones drop at different intervals at the foot of a wall. Finally the wall cracks and a light shines through. Her interest is darkness and light, and the use of the body to its physical limits.

Sakumi Hagiwara, an underground filmmaker and essayist, uses video to record time. He recorded 20 minutes of a mountain with clouds moving in to obscure it until it disappeared completely, and then gradually reappeared as the wind lifted the clouds away: time becomes meta-time. In five events, Hagiwara explores "how reality changes through the action of physical media." He shoots an original in both 16 mm and video: re-shoots the film original, with video: re-shoots that from a monitor with the 16 mm camera: makes a videotape of that and so on. They are shown simultaneously on eight monitors, in conjunction with further re-shooting: media becomes manipulable. Hagiwara is "experimenting to find a video grammar."

Eizaburo Hamada, a photographer, tapes himself dancing (in real life he is always taking other people's pictures) dressed in female costume (he is always dressed in male clothes, though not quite conventionally) with a globe on his head.
Kawanaka does not record what he finds—he "lets video discover his everyday life."

Hakudo Kobayashi, an event artist, has several on-going projects: one is called *Lapse-Communication,* and the other is his *Heavy Smoker* series (recording 200 heavy smokers). His street events probe the deviation of reality from intention. *Intersection* is a simultaneous recording by two portapaks going in opposite directions around an intersection, crossing at one point and meeting again at the starting point.

Masaomi Komura, a computer artist, has used video to document computer art, but now wants to channel computer output directly into video. While Scanimate offers interesting possibilities, it is too al-purpose for this artist's very personal aims. He says of his work that "It's like making a new musical instrument."

Toshio Matsumoto, a filmmaker, has made three films using an electro-color-video process. This system (Data Color System) allows for delicate color control. Matsumoto is now working on computer-controlled video using black and white videotape as the input source. He is also working with Shuya Abe who is designing a new computer-video system.

Shoko Matsushita, an underground filmmaker, employs the delay effect of the EE system (especially prominent in Akai machines and considered a defective property) in a creative way. The particular intensity of Matsushita's work is due to its material economy, a zooming-in and out technique and this exposure-adjustment-delay effect.

Fujiko Nakaya, a fog sculptor and staff member of E.A.T. TOKYO, is interested in using video to encourage social interaction. Her first project (with Kobayashi) was an experiment in communication among the supporters of Minamata victims as they protested by means of sit-ins in front of the Chisso Building. Another concern is the integration of old people with society, technology and children, through a video data-bank of (1) their ideas on recycling, (2) their wisdom and experience, (3) their hopes for the future. Nakaya is also making a series of tapes on primitive technology, such as trimming a tree or standing an egg.

Katsuhiko Yamaguchi, an environmental sculptor, has organized a number of community projects and is now developing methods of video research applicable to various social planning processes. His basic concern is to find "a meeting ground for social needs with video as a medium." His next project, still in the conceptual stage, is a video caravan to visit the countries of each ping-pong player participating in the Yokohama Assembly. There will be no national or ideological boundaries—China, Formosa, North and South Korea are all participating. The social backgrounds, training sessions, and families of the players will be shown simultaneously on a multi-screen at the Assembly.

Fujiko Nakaya, *How to Stand an Egg,* 1973

Katsuhiko Yamaguchi, *Eat,* 1972

Katsuhiko Yamaguchi, *Water and Light,* 1972

Keigo Yamamoto, *Confirmation by Doing No 4,* 1971

Other members of VIDEO HIROBA include Shuya Abe, Kohei Ando, Dabudabo, Deigo-sei-shingeka, Saiichi Fuji, Ichiro Hagiwara, Makio Hasegawa, Kinji Hayashi, Miyabi Ichikawa, Hiroyuki Ito, Tetsuo Matsushita, Issu Miura, Rikuro Miyai, Shigeki Nagai, Michitaka Nakahara, Takashi Nakajima, Sachie Nishikawa, Mokoto Okamoto, Satomi Suehiro, Keiichi Tanami, and Morihiro Wada.