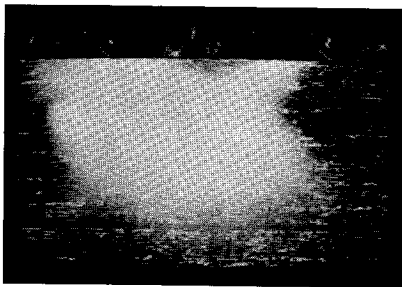


Much of Janice Tanaka's recent work concerns the fluidity between religion and life; in **GRASS...**, man and God collapse creation and catastrophe in a technically splendid "greatest show on earth." The subject of **Ontogenesis** is the effect on people's consciousness of mass media, which perpetuate a meaningless cycle of illusory cause and effect. No radical change ever takes place. Although this is a collaged tape, the images occur in fluid succession, merging together with a lack of chronological punctuation that professional television upholds. Because subliminal inculturation is not always consciously recognized, Tanaka strives for her work to incorporate a primary visceral effect with an analytical statement reflecting the multiplicity of a particular experience and observation. Accordingly, in **Beaver Valley** more personal black and white footage contrasts sharply with slick media images of Marilyn Monroe and designer jeans; the myth of woman is returned for a refund.



*GRASS, or When the Rain Falls on the Water Does the Fish Get Any Wetter?*

## JANICE TANAKA

### Program 1

**GRASS, or When the Rain Falls on the Water Does the Fish Get Any Wetter?**

6 MIN COLOR 1985

**Superhuman Flights of Submoronic Fancies**

10 MIN COLOR 1982

**Ontogenesis**

6 MIN COLOR/BW 1982

**Mute**

3 MIN COLOR SILENT 1981

### Program 2

**Beaver Valley**

7 MIN COLOR/BW 1980

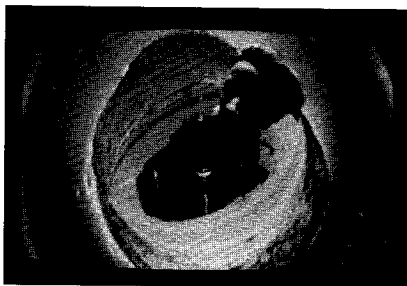
**Manpower**

6 MIN COLOR/BW 1980

**Duality Duplicity**

7 MIN COLOR/BW 1979

When I first heard that Steina Vasulka packed up and split New York City for New Mexico, a big smile welled up inside of me. I liked to think of her working out there alongside the other great artists Georgia O'Keeffe and Agnes Martin, who were equally drawn to the landscape and the ruins of Chaco Canyon. What is it about the West that seems to offer up a perfect setting in which our renegade and seminal artists can continue producing work that questions and challenges the nature of Nature and of our human interior natures without ever getting sappy or sentimental? Am I getting sappy and sentimental here? Maybe so. But the work (**Cantaloup**, **Let It Be**, **Bad**, **Summer Salt**) moves me, and I gladly shed my critical armor. In Vasulka's own words, "You are not in charge of the space; it is not your choice — it is somebody else's. Habitually, by looking, we keep selecting, subjectively 'zooming' and 'framing' the space around us."



*Summer Salt*

## STEINA VASULKA

### Program 1

**Summer Salt**

18 MIN COLOR 1982

**Let It Be**

4 MIN BW 1972

### Program 2

**Cantaloup**

28 MIN COLOR 1980

### Program 3

**Urban Episodes**

9 MIN COLOR 1980

**Selected Treecuts**

9 MIN COLOR 1980

**Bad**

2 MIN COLOR 1979

### Program 4

**In Search of the Castle**

Steina Vasulka

Woody Vasulka

9 MIN COLOR 1981

**Progeny**

Steina Vasulka

Woody Vasulka

Barbara Smith

18 MIN COLOR 1981

## WOODY VASULKA

### Program 1\*

#### **The Commission**

45 MIN COLOR STEREO 1983

### Program 2

#### **Artifacts**

23 MIN COLOR 1980

### Program 3

#### **In Search of the Castle**

Woody Vasulka

Steina Vasulka

9 MIN COLOR 1981

#### **Progeny**

Woody Vasulka

Steina Vasulka

Barbara Smith

18 MIN COLOR 1981



*Artifacts*

**The Commission** is an eleven section magnum video opus. Employing an operatic form to tell the story of a 19th century commission offered to the violinist Niccolò Paganini (played by master of eccentricity Ernest Gusella) from Hector Berlioz (cannily played by Robert Ashley, all decked out in white suit and Panama hat), who we understand to be standing-in for a wealthy music publisher. The work represents a major accomplishment as well as a major departure for video pioneer Woody Vasulka. According to Charles Hagen (*Artforum*, March 1985), "Vasulka has long argued for the possibility of producing an 'electronic reality' that would be 'more convincing than camera reality,'" reflecting, in Hagen's own words, "a Modernist faith in science and the transformative powers of technology. At first he [Vasulka] regarded **The Commission** as simply a formal experiment in applying various effects to narrative material . . ." but, in the end, Vasulka was willing to leave the familiarity of his well-traveled electronic terrain and take to the high ground of narrative and theatricality. The risk was well worth it, allowing **The Commission** to enter the domain of the symbolic, and that is significant.

## WILLIAM WEGMAN

### Program 1

#### **Selected Works, Reel 1**

30 MIN BW 1970-72

REMASTERED ON 1 INCH TAPE 1985

### Program 2

#### **Selected Works, Reel 2**

30 MIN BW 1972

REMASTERED ON 1 INCH TAPE 1985

### Program 3

#### **Selected Works, Reel 3**

20 MIN BW 1972

REMASTERED ON 1 INCH TAPE 1985

### Program 4

#### **Selected Works, Reel 4**

20 MIN BW 1972

REMASTERED ON 1 INCH TAPE 1985

### Program 5

#### **Selected Works, Reel 5**

30 MIN BW 1972

REMASTERED ON 1 INCH TAPE 1985

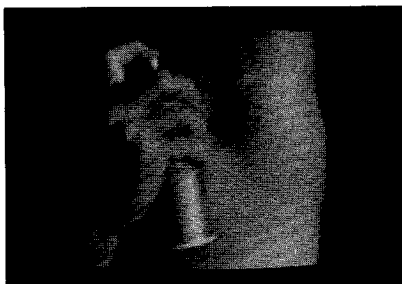
### Program 6

#### **Selected Body Works**

20 MIN BW 1970-72

REMASTERED ON 1 INCH TAPE 1985

SEE AVALANCE VIDEO ENTRY  
FOR WEGMAN PROFILE.

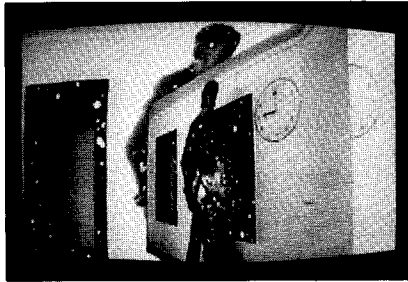


*Deodorant*

"I was born with no mouth at all, just a kind of plane across my face. I did have a well-developed nose when I was born. Actually I did have a mouth; it was more like just a little slit about an eighth of an inch high and my parents just figured that gradually it would develop, that it would grow into a real mouth. But by the time I was six they could see it wasn't going to happen. They were afraid to send me to school with a mouth like that, so when my grandfather died when I was six they transplanted his mouth onto mine, took out my mouth, and I think they gave it to the University of Massachusetts. So I've been shaving ever since I was six."

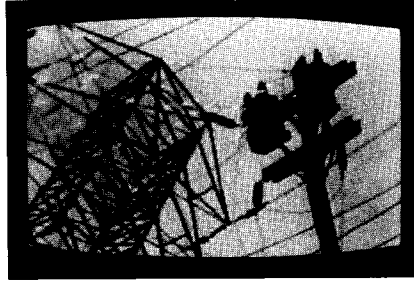
"Of all the deodorants, this is the one that I enjoy using the most. It feels real nice going on, and smells good, and keeps me dry all day. I don't worry about it cutting out at clutch moments. All the other ones are just, oh, they just never seem to hold up under pressure for me. I can put this on once during the day, and for the rest of the day I'm fine. I'm all set up; I don't have to worry about, you know, social nervousness or anything. It keeps me feeling good and fresh. I love the smell. I don't think there's any deodorant that comes close to this one."

# Video Noir



Double Lunar Dogs

Photo: Gwenn Thomas



Lines of Force



The Commission

## Beneath the Skin

Cecelia Condit  
12 MIN COLOR 1981

## Human Skeleton

Wayne Fielding  
17 MIN COLOR 1983

## Double Lunar Dogs

Joan Jonas

Producer: The C.A.T. Fund  
25 MIN COLOR 1984

## Naked Doom

Edward Rankus  
17 MIN BW 1983

## Lines of Force

Bob Snyder  
10 MIN COLOR STEREO 1979

## The Commission

Woody Vasulka  
45 MIN COLOR STEREO 1983

In the great enormity of the situation, what is this *video noir*? An anachronism? A dialogue with the past? An update on those forces beyond our understanding that threaten to overcome us? This series of tapes investigates the darker side of life and articulates the primary question — What do we fear, the past or the present? (There is no real future.)

*Film noir*, a post-World War II visual expression of pessimism, based on a literary genre most credited to Dashiell Hammett, featured the offbeat “American” man compelled to make sense of an afflicted society though darkness should engulf him. Saved only by his cynicism, he existed as others dared not — with the knowledge that a bad man is bad to the core.

Today, of course, we don't credit man with a core. Instead, he is formed by exterior events that precede him. He has no essence to blame or appeal to; existence is some free-floating outside-ness. So, rather than controlling himself or the environmental factors that fight him, he can control nothing. Today's opposites are not night and day, but the belief in opposites versus the belief in immaterial diffusion — that rare moment when one realizes thought is absent, when Joan Jonas's face explodes into multiplicity and when a co-traveler is annihilated by rotating his electronic plane of existence. Is cynicism still able to save us?

*Naked Doom* is the most traditionally *noir* work in this series. Its claustrophobic hallways, forbidden rooms and autocratic camera movements

contain an ever-threatening psychology. Classic *noir* shadows construct jail bars and cages in a steady battle against the criminal — man out of society's control — who slithers through this geometry, acting out his derangement, also in shadow contortions. And what does this hold for us “normal” viewers? Are we also vulnerable to neurological experiments? Is the half-closed hand, grasping in thin air, a site for identification? Is it for masochistic pleasure that we grab at our past with stunning video black and white?

And what if we're still romantics? When Woody Vasulka puts his astonishing state-of-the-art visuals to the purpose of an opera about Paganini and Berlioz, is the artist-as-tragic-hero electrocuted or resurrected? In either case we're left with the body, examining the cold facts via autopsy. Furthermore, the measurements definitely match — can this ritual ever lay to rest the buried and reburied Paganini?

Certainly the entrapments in *Naked Doom* and *The Commission* are no more frightening than that in *Lines of Force* — a modern containment achieved by technology: spontaneity and diversity held in check by graphic matches, a conglomeration of modern life so overburdened with media and amusement that one competition seems equal to the next and any future takeover necessarily redundant. Here we are, strapped in by Bob Snyder's computer-generated visual ropes and willing to accept a false sense of security based on an order of otherwise inconsequential resemblances — do the corresponding projec-

tiles of luscious ferns and exploding bridges make them equally natural sights?

In the last decade, video art has appropriately redefined spatial and temporal dimensions to express our contemporary terrain. Keys, image processing, superimpositions and DVE's have structured a now-common language to challenge that once-held assumption that "no two objects can occupy the same space at the same time." Multi-occupancy, anti-boundary, time-travel achronology — this is our current mentality which video alone expresses. In **Double Lunar Dogs**, the past is just out the window, as are hallucinations in **Human Skeleton**.

Through a sequence reminiscent of Maya Deren's *Meshes of the Afternoon*, Fielding connects material and psychological spaces: a medium shot of a woman standing at a window looking through venetian blinds cuts to a fast-traveling driver's point-of-view shot down a country road — a route which leads, later, to a second woman's suicide — cuts to a medium shot of the second woman lying in a bed with the venetian blinds' striped shadows crossing her face — shadows cast from tangible onto phantom by an hallucinatory gaze.

In **The Commission**, single frame editing overrides empiricist failings, reconstructing the sky as positive space, co-spatial with the land. With dazzling animism the hills radiate, and the past is accessed by tapping one's staff on a boulder — a method certainly as reliable and efficient as the language of history. See Edward Rankus's camera-attempt to pull back from an ever-increasing pile of scattered, crumpled testimony; or Cecelia Condit's Pavlovian response to media "reportage."

Just as Condit's voice-over character is unable to get facts from sensationalistic newscasts, so does she exaggerate, misrepresent and over-postulate in her retelling of a murder. No matter if, in the end, the victim was decapitated; horror does not rest on any one incident alone. Suggestive images of terror and vulnerability (strangulation in the woods, drowning in the blood-tinted lake, convulsion overload) foreshadow the murder so that we can feel it with generic accumulation. Nothing can be overstated in Cecelia Condit's world, where nasal congestion can impede the search for a decomposing body. Is television news *video noir*?

Has humankind been formed in an outdated language? Is this why we fear our own entropy? Heaven forbid (i.e.  $E=mc^2$ ) that our neo-psychology be reduced to nostalgia, and our decentered subject made to uncover the "double" of German Expressionism. Has Dr. Jekyll of the day and Mr. Hyde of the night now become Earthman wronged and Spaceman by rite?

Many descendents of the archetypal "double" figure look back at us from these tapes: in **Double Lunar Dogs** two spacemen watch themselves fighting each other, and opposing male powers are angered by and interested in memory investigations by "post-subjects"; in **The Commission**, Paganini must speak to/through the ear of his son/echo who mouths the genius's words without understanding; in **Naked Doom**, the echo is visual as man confronts his shadow; in **Human Skeleton**, a blonde woman finds her dark haired friend/self in death — at the beach she digs a small hole the size of a mirror, a puddle momentarily reflecting her friend's face which then sinks in the sand to join waters with the lake; in **Beneath the**

**Skin**, the narrator seems unable to pin down the/her story of a murder victim, until she enters the experience through personalization, at which point the "story" ends; in **Lines of Force**, the double is displaced onto personal/impersonal duplication *ad infinitum*.

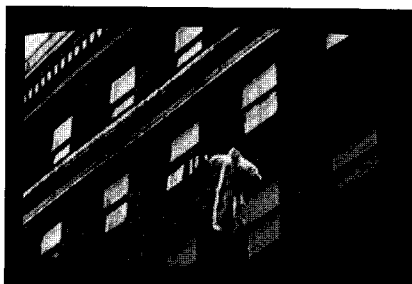
Classic *film noir* men were reliably steady and tough, deliberate with a gun and straightforward in their own split knowledge. The *film noir* woman, however, was more deceptive. Man after man was unable to see her evil or resist the dangerous force of her darker pull; thus film after film required her destruction — a generic punishment for female sexuality.

Forty years later, sexuality is less feared than is its "lack." In Joan Jonas's post-World War III **Double Lunar Dogs**, a woman begins to caress her body as pre-war landscape images appear — so was there a connection between sexuality and nature after all? In a contrasting scene, a bird's eye view of earthly destruction whizzes past a couple as the woman opens a book and the man gleefully and provocatively strokes a phallic-shaped flask. Now the survivors have been relegated to the video key position. Later a woman and man fight for ownership of a rope, parroting an earlier tug-of-war between mirror-imaged dogs. "When I was young I was followed by double lunar dogs tagging at my heels." Now, in this endlessly traveling spaceship, where the impossibility of aging makes memory inadequate, the battle between the sexes seems a continuity more lasting than traditional notions of sexuality.

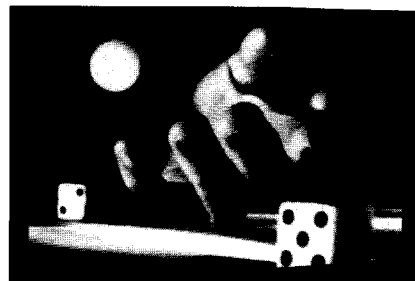
In the great enormity of the situation, what is this *video noir*? An RGB expression of egocentric (old-fashioned) post-dissolution fear?



*Beneath the Skin*

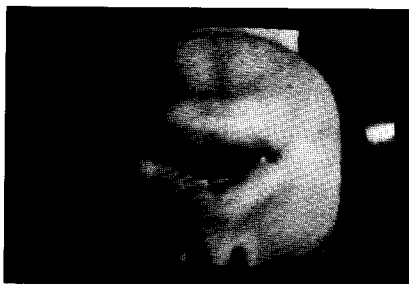


*Human Skeleton*



*Naked Doom*

# Formal Investigations



*Lip Sync*



*Left Side Right Side*



*Pryings*

## **Pryings**

Vito Acconci

10 MIN EXCERPT BW SILENT 1971  
REMASTERED ON 1 INCH TAPE 1985

## **Left Side Right Side**

Joan Jonas

7 MIN BW 1972  
REMASTERED ON 1 INCH TAPE 1985

## **Vertical Roll**

Joan Jonas

6 MIN EXCERPT BW 1972  
REMASTERED ON 1 INCH TAPE 1985

## **30 Second Spots:**

**Philip Glass; Steve Reich**

Joan Logue

1 MIN COLOR 1980-82

## **Lip Sync**

Bruce Nauman

10 MIN EXCERPT BW 1969  
REMASTERED ON 1 INCH TAPE 1985

## **Stamping in the Studio**

Bruce Nauman

10 MIN EXCERPT BW 1968  
REMASTERED ON 1 INCH TAPE 1985

## **Spiral PTL**

Dan Sandin

Tom DeFanti

Mimi Shevets

7 MIN COLOR STEREO 1980

## **On Edge**

Norie Sato

4 MIN COLOR 1979

## **Boomerang**

Richard Serra

10 MIN COLOR 1974  
REMASTERED ON 1 INCH TAPE 1985

## **Trim Subdivisions**

Bob Snyder

6 MIN COLOR SILENT 1981

## **Summer Salt: Photographic Memory**

Steina Vasulka

5 MIN COLOR 1982

## **Selected Body Works:**

**Stomach; Deodorant**

William Wegman

3 MIN BW 1970-72

When low-cost, portable video equipment became available in the late 1960s, artists viewed the equipment as a radical tool and were pleased to keep a distance from the technical virtuosity of commercial television. This distance secured video's identity as the "other," the marginal edge in electronic experimentation. The first videotapes made by artists were on ½ inch black and white, and were usually unedited for real-time. Throughout the next two decades, the formal resolution of the sound/image structures have become more complicated, reflecting the increasing availability of special effects generators and switchers, image synthesizing and colorizing devices, color cameras, time code computer editing systems and, finally, full access to the advanced technology of commercial post-production houses. Each technical advance provided artists with new means of experimentation, and led closer to high television tech. This series of tapes was selected to show a variety of technical and formal experiments which frame the course of video as a developing art form.

Many of the earliest videotapes were performance-oriented with the artist as solo performer using his/her body to investigate conceptual ideas or formal aspects of camera and monitor. In *Stomach Piece*, William Wegman uses his body to personify male and female genders with very simple gestures and alterations in the pitch of his voice. In *Stamping in the Studio*, Bruce Nauman demonstrates the primal ritualization of the artist preparing himself to enter the creative state of the studio. In *Pryings*,

Vito Acconci struggles to force open the eyes of a woman, while the cameraman tries to keep the image in focus.

Experimentation with time-delay and feedback can be seen in Bruce Nauman's *Lip Sync* and Richard Serra's *Boomerang*. In *Lip Sync*, the camera is tightly focused on Nauman's upside-down face. He is repeating the words "lip sync," and the sound goes in and out of phase with his moving lips. In *Boomerang*, Nancy Holt speaks words which then feed back through earphones, creating a struggle for comprehension and verbalization of those very words.

Joan Jonas's *Left Side Right Side* directly confronts the difference in seeing/determining the left side of the face from the right side through a reverse of the video monitor. One side of the face is real; the other side is an exactly-placed mirror reflection of this first side. In *Vertical Roll*, Jonas uses the quality of video de-synchronization which can occur between camera and monitor to create a vertically rolling picture. She then reinforces the repetition of the falling image with the banging of a spoon on a transparent surface.

Image processing and colorizing have been central to the development of video imagery. Dan Sandin's *Image Processor*, an analog computer which synthesizes images, has provided many artists with an extensive range of visual potentials. One outcome of this is *Spiral PTL*. This tape is the product of a real-time collaboration in which Tom DeFanti, Dan Sandin and Mimi Shevets performed like musicians on video and

audio synthesizers in front of a live audience. A spiral image is continuously transformed, hypnotically drawing the viewer into the abstract space of video technology.

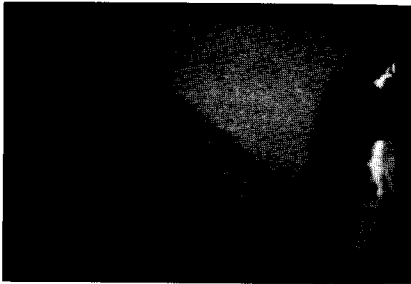
Steina and Woody Vasulka have also been at the forefront of generating video-synthesized imagery and formal electronic constructions. In **Photographic Memory**, Steina collapses the time between winter and summer by intercutting images of the same trees in both seasons.

Bob Snyder uses wipes and keys to comment on the sameness and interchangeability of the typical suburban tract house in **Trim Subdivisions**. Houses become formal objects in which windows, doorways and aluminum siding are geometric patterns that go in and out of alignment.

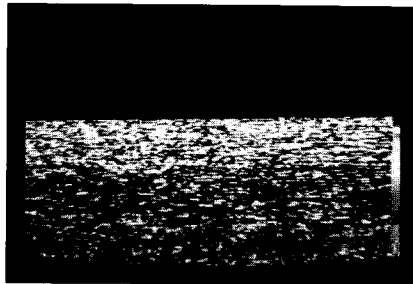
Norie Sato experiments with the basic characteristics of the video image on the monitor. In **On Edge** she creates a minimalistic blank image with an edge of electronic activity. This edge, which is

the edge of the frame as well as the edge of the image, is usually not seen on a television or video monitor.

Joan Logue's **30 Second Spots** are slick, concise pieces which duplicate the commercial television format of thirty-second advertisements. This series includes performances by composers Steve Reich and Philip Glass: Reich uses clapping hands to produce the repetitions of his minimalist music; Glass is seen in tight focus, only one eye and his nose moving in rhythm to his music.



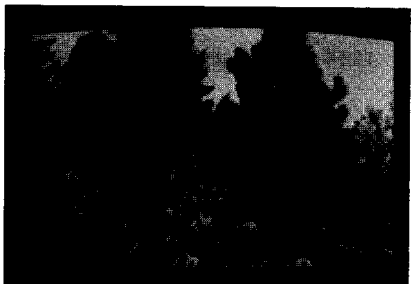
*Stamping in the Studio*



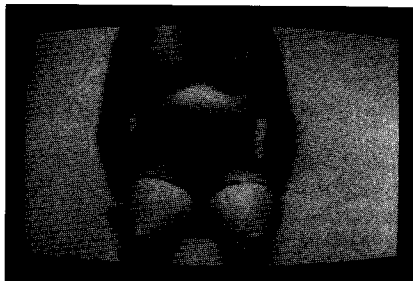
*On Edge*



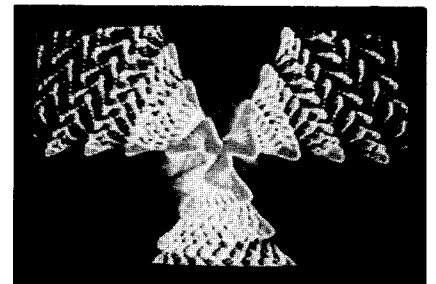
*Boomerang*



*Summer Salt: Photographic Memory*



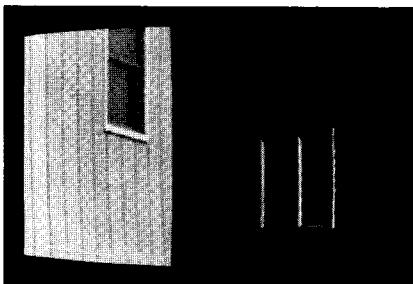
*Selected Body Works: Stomach*



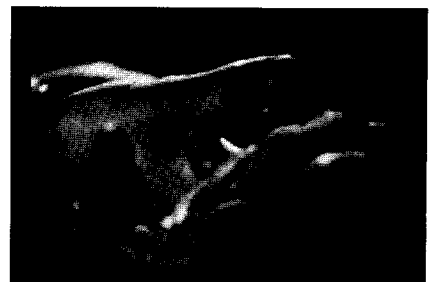
*Spiral PTL*



*Vertical Roll*



*Trim Subdivisions*



*30 Second Spots: Steve Reich*

# The Science of Fiction

# The Fiction of Science

## The Science of Fiction

90 Minutes

### Lip Sync

Bruce Nauman

1 MIN EXCERPT BW 1969  
REMASTERED ON 1 INCH TAPE 1985

### Leaving the 20th Century

Max Almy

11 MIN COLOR STEREO 1982

### Kleenex Commercial

Diamant Library,  
Brooklyn Television Center  
1 MIN BW

### Impala Commercial

Diamant Library,  
Brooklyn Television Center  
2 MIN BW

### Go For It, Mike

Michael Smith

Mark Fischer

Mike & Mark Productions

5 MIN COLOR 1984

### R.M. Fischer — An Industrial

Carole Ann Klonarides

Michael Owen

4 MIN COLOR 1983

### L.A. Nickel

Branda Miller

10 MIN COLOR 1983

### Speech

Miroslaw Rogala

3 MIN COLOR 1982

### Lectra Nancy Side A, Side B

Beth Berolzheimer

Wayne Fielding

Karl Hauser

7 MIN COLOR 1981

### P.I. Piece

Mark McKernin

2 MIN COLOR 1983

### AlienNATION

Edward Rankus

John Manning

Barbara Latham

5 MIN EXCERPT COLOR 1980

### 30 Second Spots: Carles Santos;

Spalding Gray; Arnie Zane and Bill T.

Jones; Philip Glass; Nam June Paik

Joan Logue

3 MIN COLOR 1980-82

### Remington Commercial

Diamant Library,

Brooklyn Television Center

1 MIN BW

### Ahluvyalike

Arturo Cubacub

6 MIN COLOR 1983

### Your Show of Shows: Dating in America

Sid Caesar

8 MIN BW 1954

### Manhattan Poetry Video Project:

Bob Holman's Rapp It Up

Executive Producer: Rose Lesniak

Out There Productions, Inc.

4 MIN COLOR 1984

### Arcade

Lyn Blumenthal

Carole Ann Klonarides

11 MIN COLOR 1984

### Anthem

Bill Viola

11 MIN COLOR 1983

### The National Anthem

Conducted by Arturo Toscanini

Museum of Broadcasting

2 MIN BW

## The Fiction of Science

90 Minutes

### Manhattan Poetry Video Project:

Anne Waldman's Uh-Oh Plutonium!

Executive Producer: Rose Lesniak

Out There Productions, Inc.

4 MIN COLOR 1984

### Hell

Ardele Lister

17 MIN COLOR 1984

### Political Advertisement: 1956-84

Co-editor: Antonio Muntadas

Co-editor: Marshall Reese

4 MIN EXCERPT COLOR/BW 1984

### Perfect Leader

Max Almy

4 MIN COLOR STEREO 1983

### Band-Aid Commercial

Diamant Library,

Brooklyn Television Center

1 MIN BW

### Trim Subdivisions

Bob Snyder

6 MIN COLOR SILENT 1981

### Westinghouse Commercial, Part I

Diamant Library,

Brooklyn Television Center

3 MIN BW

### Damnation of Faust: Evocation

Dara Birnbaum

10 MIN COLOR 1983

### Let It Be

Steina Vasulka

2 MIN BW 1972

### Selected Body Works: Stomach

William Wegman

2 MIN BW 1970-72

### Marlboro Commercial

Diamant Library,

Brooklyn Television Center

1 MIN BW

### Sons and Fathers

Daniel Klepper

11 MIN COLOR 1984

### 30 Second Spots: John Cage; Steve

Reich; Tony Ramos; Laurie Anderson

Joan Logue

2 MIN COLOR 1982

### Westinghouse Commercial, Part II

Diamant Library,

Brooklyn Television Center

4 MIN BW

### Amida

Dan Reeves

9 MIN COLOR STEREO 1983

### Songs of the 80's: Sounds of Glass;

Through the Room

Doug Hall

8 MIN COLOR 1983

### Manhattan Poetry Video Project:

Allen Ginsberg's Father Death Blues

Executive Producer: Rose Lesniak

Out There Productions, Inc.

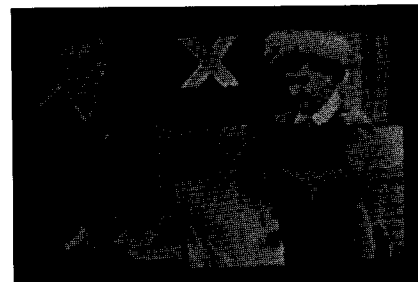
4 MIN COLOR 1984

### The National Anthem

Conducted by Arturo Toscanini

Museum of Broadcasting

2 MIN BW



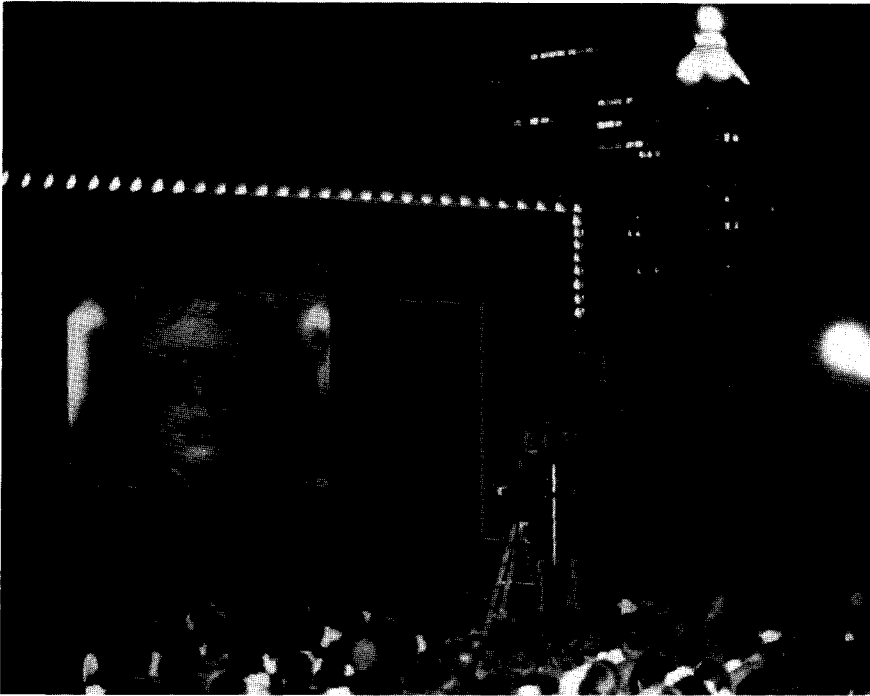
Westinghouse Commercial



Lectra Nancy Side A, Side B

(Series description on following page)

## Historical Context: Video Drive-In



Video Drive-In, Grant Park, Chicago, September 1984

Photo: Ernest Scott

On September 7 and 8, 1984, the **Video Data Bank** produced the unprecedented **Video Drive-In**, two evenings of large-scale projection of video art at the Petrillo Music Shell in Chicago's Grant Park. Ten thousand viewers gathered in the summer night air around this spectacle to experience a post-modern take-off on the science fiction genre.

When we think of science fiction, we think of *The Twilight Zone*, pulp novels, Marvel comic books and *The Invasion of the Body Snatchers*. But do we think of paid political advertisements and vintage television commercials? **The Science of Fiction/The Fiction of Science** was curated for the Drive-In to combine video art with fictitiously scientific material found in the popular culture. This programming was arranged to introduce video art to a general audience as being no more esoteric and no less interesting than popular entertainment. The success of **The Science of Fiction/The Fiction of Science** demonstrates the potential for developing an audience for video art which far exceeds the limitations of "art world" ground rules and constitutes a definite breakthrough in the expectations and assumptions surrounding "art events."

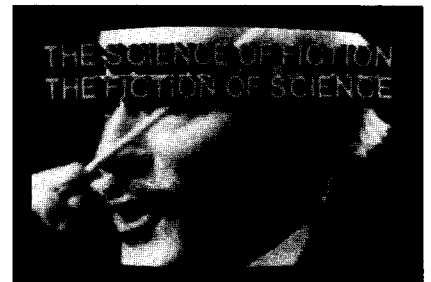
*Just how spectacular spectacle can be was demonstrated in two nights of extremely sensitive programming of videotapes and television clips shown to audiences that numbered in the thousands and sat under the stars in the Petrillo Music Shell in Grant Park. Just how ironic this venue was (Grant Park was the site of riots during the 1968 Democratic convention) became abundantly clear when the predominantly youthful crowd booed at political advertisements for Ronald Reagan and cheered for John F. Kennedy: mass media replaces mass protest...*

*Orchestrated to alternate art with television, the rhythm was one of oppositions: slow/fast, simple/complex, upbeat/downbeat. Drive-in movies were the model for the physical installation, so that the 18-by-24-foot screen was superimposed against the expanse of Chicago's skyline. I recalled a similar unreal thrill in the bright, colossal image on a drive-in-theater screen glimpsed from the highway at night; here it was even more unexpected, since imagery was not just decontextualized but radically recontextualized by the backdrop. Steina Vasulka's lips [Let It Be] shared equal scale with the Borg*

*Warner Building, and Bill Wegman's stomach [Selected Body Works] jammed itself up against the glowing blue spire of the Santa Fe Building. There were hundreds of these juxtapositions – the adjacency with actual buildings of the details of vernacular architecture in Bob Snyder's elegant Trim Subdivisions, for example. The program had other merits: to see Betty Furness, larger than life and thin as a stiletto, chastising the less fortunate frumps whose Brand X machines could not remove the horrid oil and sand she'd thrown in on their wash provided a poignant reminder of more innocent, pre-feminist commercials in which the ideology of cleanliness was focused on laundry rather than feminine hygiene; and Bernie Schwartz's ad for Lyndon Johnson, with its daisy-petal count-down and black and white nuclear explosion, transformed a familiar but frightening cliché into an augury of what it might actually look like enacted in Chicago...*

*Arcade is an absolutely eponymous title for a tape whose syntactic structure and lateral movement aptly match its fair-ground equivalent. [Arcade is by Lyn Blumenthal and Carole Ann Klonarides, in collaboration with painter Ed Paschke, and was produced by the Video Data Bank specifically for The Science of Fiction/The Fiction of Science.] The work includes a series of images recycled from television and film interspersed with location footage of Chicago's El stations, and punctuated with gorgeous paintings by Paschke (created specially by the artist on a sophisticated computerized paint box). Flashing insights and lights, the ready-made imagery presents a sideshow of current concerns playing on the slippage between televised and real...*

— Judith Russi Kirshner, *Artforum*, December 1984



Arturo Toscanini Conducting The National Anthem