

*Surveying the First Decade:
Video Art and Independent Media in the U.S., 1968-1980*

Curated by Chris Hill

Produced by Video Data Bank (1996)

This 17 hour survey, organized into 8 programs can be purchased through the Video Data Bank, School of the Art Institute of Chicago. *Producer Biographies*, short biographies of the over 50 artists, independent producers, and collectives represented in this collection, is one of the resources prepared for *Rewind*, an unpublished text designed to accompany the 17 hour tape collection.

PRODUCER BIOGRAPHIES

by Julia Dzwonkoski

Vito Acconci

Born in the Bronx in 1941, Vito Acconci received a BA from Holy Cross College and an MFA from the University of Iowa. A poet of the New York School in the early and mid 1960s, Acconci moved toward performance, sound, and video work at the end of the decade in order to "define my body in space, find a ground for myself, an alternate ground for the page ground I had as a poet." (Vito Acconci, interview with Liza Bear, *Avalanche*, Fall 1972, p. 71) Acconci's early performance/situations, including *Claim* (1971) and *Seedbed* (1972) were extremely controversial, transgressing assumed boundaries between public and private space and between audience and performer. Positioning his own body as the simultaneous subject and object of the work, Acconci's early video tapes took advantage of the medium's self-reflexive potential in mediating his own and the viewer's attention. Consistently exploring the dynamics of intimacy, trust, and power, the focus of Acconci's projects gradually moved from his physical body (*Conversions*, 1971), toward the psychology of interpersonal transactions (*Pryings*, 1971), and later, to the cultural and political implications of the performative space

he set up for the camera (*Red Tapes*, 1976). Since the late 1970s, Acconci has designed architectural and installation works for public spaces.

Nancy Angelo & Candace Compton

Working from 1976-80 in video and performance, Nancy Angelo was a member of Sisters of Survival, a performance group which "used the nun image symbolically" and a founding member, along with Candace Compton, Cheri Caulke and Laurel Klick, of Feminist Art Workers. Angelo and Compton were both actively involved with the Los Angeles Women's Building, an out-growth of the Feminist Studio Workshop (FSW). Established in 1972 as a college and graduate-level school for women in the arts, FSW had a core faculty of Sheila de Bretteville, Arlene Raven, Deena Metzger, Suzanne Lacy, Helen Roth, and Ruth Iskin. The Woman's Building was founded a year later by Judy Chicago, Sheila de Bretteville, and Arlene Raven and included *Chrysalis*, a magazine of women's culture. Both organizations were unique in their aim of reinventing the institution according to feminist principles. Angelo directed the educational programs at the Women's Building and, along with Annette Hunt and Jerri Allyn, she and Compton co-founded the Los Angeles Women's Video Center (LAWVC). Angelo and Compton's tape, *Nun and Deviant* (1976), reflects many of the theoretical concerns and activities generated within these pioneering institutions. The videotape and ephemeral print archives of the LAWVC are currently housed at the Long Beach Museum of Art, Long Beach, CA.

Ant Farm

A San Francisco collective of artists and architects working from 1968 to 1978, Ant Farm's activity was distinctly interdisciplinary, combining architecture, performance, media, happenings, sculpture, and graphic design. With works that functioned as art, social critique, and pop-anthropology, Ant Farm tore into the cultural fabric of post-WWII, Vietnam era America and became one of the first groups to address television's pervasive presence in

everyday life. As Chip Lord, one of the group's founders states, "Video became Ant Farm's equivalent to the architectural model, to record the group's live-in design process (*The Warehouse Tapes*, 1971); to explore the multi-barreled impact of electronics on auto-america (*Cadillac Ranch*, 1974 and *Media Burn*, 1975); and to exploit the structure of pure electronic culture (*Eternal Frame*, 1975 and *Off-Air Australia*, 1976)." (*The Range of Video Alternatives Retrospective* (AFI Catalog), p. 64) As graphic artists, Ant Farm contributed to numerous underground publications including *Radical Software* and designed Michael Shamburg's *Guerilla Television* (Holt, Reingart, Winston, 1971) Ant Farm included Chip Lord, Doug Michels, Hudson Marquez, and Curtis Schreier.

John Baldessari

"Everybody knows a different world, and only part of it. We communicate only by chance, as nobody knows the whole, only where overlapping takes place."

(John Baldessari, "Between Questions and Answers."(.....) p. 11)

(Chris will find full citation)

Born in 1931, John Baldessari studied Art, Literature, and Art History at San Diego State College and University of California, Berkeley. Influenced by Dada and Surrealist literary and visual ideas, he began incorporating found materials (billboard posters, photographs, film stills, snippets of conversation) into his canvases, playing off of chance relationships among otherwise discreet elements. Allowing pop-cultural artifacts to function as "information" as opposed to "form," Baldessari's works represented a radical departure from, and often a direct critique of, the modernist sensibility which had dominated painting for decades. In 1968, while working as an assistant professor in the University of California San Diego's art department, Baldessari met poet and critic David Antin who helped launch Baldessari's career, introducing him to like-minded group of emerging conceptual artists including Lawrence Weiner, Joseph Kosuth, Dan Graham, and On Kawara, all of whom would have a great influence on the

development of Baldessari's work. Baldessari's videotapes, like his phototext canvases, employ strategies of disjunction (*Some Words I Mispronounce*, 1971), recontextualization (*Baldessari Sings Lewitt*, 1972), and allegory (*The Way We Do Art Now and Other Sacred Tales*, 1973) pointing to the gap between perception and cognition.

Lynda Benglis

Born in 1941 in Lake Charles, Louisiana, Lynda Benglis studied sculpture and painting at Newcomb College and the Brooklyn Museum School. Well known for her process-oriented sculptures, Benglis was one of a handful of artists associated with the emergence of an anti-formalist, Post-Minimalist sensibility in the mid 1960s. Benglis first began using video in 1970 while teaching at the University of Rochester (NY). "I got involved with video. I saw it as a big macho game; a big, heroic, Abstract Expressionist, macho, sexist game. How big?" (*The New Sculpture: 1965-75*, p. 312) Benglis's video tapes call attention to the formal properties of the medium, layering multiple generations of images which resolve themselves in visual noise (*Mumble*, 1972) and exploring the frame as gendered device (*Female Sensibility*, 1973).

Dara Birnbaum

"One of my original inspirations for getting involved in video was having seen, in the 1960s, a demonstration in San Francisco against the expansion of the war in Cambodia, and they had a TV on the podium there and everyone was fighting – the New Left was already fighting fragmented-fighting each other and finally someone with a mallet said "are we listening to this?" because the news was on, showing the expansion of the war in Cambodia, and with the mallet, they broke the TV and it exploded. At that moment was the first time I thought I'd go out and buy a TV – I didn't have one for years because *I was not going to have one*. Then I thought, well, we're not listening to it, but that doesn't stop all those other millions of people

from hearing it. At that time the Nielson ratings said that the average family watched seven-and-a-half hours of television a day – so I thought that was the language I had to speak."

Dara Birnbaum, Interview with Judy Cantor, "Dara Birnbaum," Ivam Centre Del Carme, 1990 (p. 41)

An architect and urban planner by training, Dara Birnbaum studied at Carnegie Institute of Technology and the San Francisco Art Institute. She began using in video in 1978 while teaching at the Nova Scotia College of Art in Halifax and Design where she worked with Dan Graham. Recognized as one of the first video artists to explore the appropriation of television as a subversive strategy, Birnbaum describes her early video tapes as "attempts at slowing down 'technological speed' in order to arrest movements of TV-time for the viewer. For it is the speed at which issues are absorbed and consumed through the medium of video/television, without examination and self-questioning, that remains astonishing." Recontextualizing pop cultural icons (*Technology/Transformation: Wonder Woman*, 1978-79) and TV genres (*Kiss the Girls and Make them Cry*, 1979) to reveal their subtexts, Birnbaum describes her tapes as new "ready-mades" for the late twentieth century, works that "manipulate a medium which is itself highly manipulative."

Peer Bode

Educated and working in film until the early 1970s, Peer Bode was initially exposed to electronics technology through his father, Harald Bode's pioneering efforts in developing one of the first audio synthesizers. Bode's conceptual interest as a filmmaker in exploring the intrinsic properties of the medium informed his subsequent work in video. His early involvement with Binghamton, NY's Experimental Television Center, where he worked for a number of years as program coordinator and collaborated with other resident artist/engineers in constructing prototype imaging tools, reinforced his commitment to "tool expansion" and

"personal studio making." As Bode explains, "Clearly there was something about constructing the personal, independent side [of media] that, in fact, the industry models would never agree to construct. It's a challenge to that commercial system, and the people who challenge the system mostly won't be represented within that system. That's what it means to be outside." (Peer Bode, Interview with Chris Hill, 1995) Recognizing the limits imposed by designers of industrial and consumer technology, Bode sought to externalize the medium's "hidden coding and control structures" by experimenting with different combinations of tools and processes. His videotapes evidence his fascination with the semiotics and phenomenology of the medium, specifically through the synthesis of audio and video signals.

Broadside TV

Active from 1973 to 1978, Broadside Television was an experimental videotape production and cable television facility located in Johnson City, Tennessee which established a national reputation as an innovative, community-oriented communication center. Growing out of an Appalachian Regional Commission grant, Broadside TV produced videotapes which uniquely addressed Central Appalachian concerns and interests, among them, land use, energy needs, coal mining, regional history, and traditional arts and crafts. Founded by Ted Carpenter, who spent years working with residents of the backhills of Appalachia, Broadside was uniquely dedicated to education and community involvement in producing what was termed "the living newsletter." With the aim of encouraging mutual dialogue, Carpenter has written, "I almost never tape any situation unless the people involved first learn about the machinery, fool with it themselves, and then listen to a tape by someone else in the mountains who shares their experience. The techniques are not media oriented, but oriented to education and conversation." Bridging communities which were geographically isolated from one another, Broadside tapes were distributed via four cable TV systems serving the region. Broadside also ran a tape distribution system to circulate tapes between public schools, universities and

individuals. In 1979, after early years of financial self-sufficiency, Broadside went bankrupt and its tapes and written records were donated to the archive at Eastern Tennessee University.

(SOURCE OF DESCRIPTION?)

Barbara Buckner

Born in 1950, Barbara Buckner attended New York University and began working with video and computers in 1972 while studying with engineer and electronic tool designer Bill Etra. In 1976, Buckner moved to Rhinebeck, NY where she and fellow media artists Gary Hill, David Jones, and Stephen Kolpan lived collectively at a farmhouse under the auspices of Woodstock Community Video (Woodstock, NY) an early media access center under the direction of Ken Marsh. While there, and as an artist-in-residence at the Experimental Television Center (Owego, NY) Buckner gained access to and experimented with a complex array of electronic imaging tools and systems (Paik/Abe Synthesizer, Jones Colorizer, Siegel Colorizer, Rutt-Etra Scan Processor). Buckner's predominantly silent and non-narrative tapes and installations, sought to unleash the transformative properties of the electronic signal. "In my work I have been concerned with the spiritual consciousness of the individual and how one views one's position in Eternity. In this work, I – as soul – an immortal and eternal physical essence, view some aspects of the physical life as a finite yet everchanging phenomenon in space/time."

(Barbara Buckner, quoted in *8th Annual Ithaca Video Festival*, 1981)

Peter Bull & Alex Gibney

Peter Bull and Alex Gibney were both born in New York City in 1953. While studying at the University of California San Diego, they produced experimental films and worked as assistant producers in commercial television before collaborating on *The Ruling Classroom* in 1979. Using video for its capacity to record in real time and for its relatively low cost, they spent a semester documenting the experiment conducted in a Mill Valley seventh grade classroom in which

students invented and enacted the political, social, and economic reality of an imaginary country. The completed tape was aired nationally on PBS and stirred up a local controversy when the school's principal, who called off the experiment when it unearthed a story about teacher slapping a student, tried to prevent its further release.

Peter Campus

Born in 1937, Peter Campus studied Experimental Psychology and Film at Ohio State College and City College Film Institute respectively. His early tapes explore the anatomy of the video signal in relation to human psychology and perception. "The video camera makes possible an exterior point of view simultaneous with one's own. This advance over the film camera is due to the videcon tube, similar to the retina of the eye, continually transposing light (photon) energy into electrical energy ... it is easy to utilize video to clarify perceptual situations because it separates the eye surrogate from the eye brain experience we are all too familiar with." (Peter Campus, "Closed Circuit Video." Syracuse New York: Everson Museum, 1974) Campus was one of a group of artists in the mid 1970s to produce work through WGBH-TV (Boston) and WNET-13 (NYC)'s Television Labs. In addition to numerous single channel works, he has investigated the characteristics of "live" video through closed-circuit video installations and elaborate sculptural works whose structural components include video cameras, projectors, and monitors.

Candace Compton (See Nancy Angelo and Candace Compton)

Tony Conrad

With a background in mathematics and computer programming, Tony Conrad became active in performance and music composition during the 1960s and was associated with the founding of both minimal music and the underground film in New York City. Conrad was a co-founder, along with Marian Zeezela, LaMont Young, John Cale, and Angus MacLise, of the Theater of

Eternal Music which utilized non-western musical forms and sustained sound to produce what they called "dream music." Conrad's work in film ranged from experiments in physically transforming the film's surface, to theatrical productions featuring New York's underground scene. His film, *The Flicker*, is considered one of the key early works of the structural film movement. Conrad began working in video in the late 1970s while teaching at Antioch College (Ohio) and the Center for Media Study, State University of New York at Buffalo. As Conrad states, his early tapes "deal with the construction of the viewer, in the authorizing context of the art environment or within a broader sociopolitical context." Conrad's commitment to developing and sustaining a decentralized cultural infrastructure is evident in his active involvement with Hallwalls Contemporary Arts Center, Squeaky Wheel Media Coalition, and Buffalo Cable Access Media.

David Cort

With a background in theater and working as an antipoverty outreach worker at the Brooklyn Children's Museum, David Cort began using video in the late 1960s to document political events and "bring together divergent peoples." Attracted to the intimacy of the portable medium and its interactive potential, Cort's individual work ranged from documentary and video theater to interactive video games, installations and live video environments which literally activated their audiences, often by keying viewers directly into the frame. Cort was a founding member of both Commediation, an early activist media group, and the Videofreex, a pioneering collective of media activists and technicians formed in 1969 to explore alternative communications processes. Reflecting on the impetus behind these groups, Cort writes, "I think a lot of people are in video because they have no choice - it's so overwhelmingly around you. It's almost like a responsibility you have to take, that you have to work with because it's all pervasive."

Cara DeVito

Born in 1951, Cara DeVito received a BA from Beloit College in Wisconsin. She began producing video tapes in 1972 and went on to work as a producer/director of the independent documentary series "Changing Channels" sponsored by KTCA Television in Minneapolis. Her documentary work, focusing primarily on social and cultural issues, has earned a number of awards, including an Emmy Award for Outstanding Individual Craft in film making. Produced at a time when wide spread incidence of rape and woman battering was first being publicized, *Ama L'uomo Tuo (Always Love Your Man)* (1975), was a radical contribution to the independent documentary field.

Juan Downey

Born in Santiago, Chile, Juan Downey studied architecture at the Catholic University of Chile. He continued his studies at S.W. Hayter's Atelier 17 in Paris and at Pratt University in New York City. Downey was already experimenting with audio delays and instant playback when he heard about video in 1966 and began his early work with the medium creating electronic environments and multi-channel installations. Beginning in 1971, Downey embarked upon what he termed "cultural expeditions" through Mexico and Central and South America with a portable 1/2 inch camera: "After exposure to the New York art world, I decided to return South and recuperate my culture." The resulting "Video Trans America" series, which he developed in single and multi-channel formats, combines autobiography and anthropology cross-referencing western and non-western cultural practices and artifacts. Later works (*Las Meninas (Maids of Honor)*, 1975, *The Looking Glass*, 1981), are meditations on the architecture and psychology of pictorial space.

Downtown Community Television Center

Founded in 1972 by Jon Alpert and Keiko Tsuno in New York's Chinatown "to provide free media services to a struggling and often exploited community," Downtown Community Television Center (DCTV) has offered video training, equipment access and social-issue

programming. In 1974, DCTV made history as the first American television crew to be invited to Cuba since the 1959 revolution. The resulting *Cuba: The People* (1974) was one of the first half-inch color videotapes to be shown nationally on public television and one of the first independent documentaries ever to be broadcast. As part of the first team of American journalists allowed into Vietnam after the U.S. withdrawal, DCTV continued to break new ground with *Vietnam: Picking Up the Pieces* (1978), which examined the aftermath of American involvement in the war. Employing a direct interview approach and a signature up-close reporting strategy that focuses on the voices of ordinary people, DCTV has produced an extensive body of work that consistently addresses inequality and injustice in American society. DCTV's initial success in broadcasting its work was critical in opening television to other independent documentarians.

Ed Emshwiller

Born in 1925, Ed Emshwiller studied graphic design at the University of Michigan and L'Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris. By the late 1960s Emshwiller was working as a science fiction illustrator and had established his place in the American avant-garde cinema with such works as *Relativity* (1966) and *Image, Flesh and Voice* (1969). His early films featured collaborations with dancers and choreographers, a theme he carried over into his video works. As both an artist and a teacher, Emshwiller's pioneering efforts to develop an alternative technological language in video were enormously influential. His early experiments with synthesizers and computers included the electronic rendering of three-dimensional space, the interplay of illusion and reality, and manipulations of time, movement, and scale – exploring, as he describes, the relationship between "external reality and subjective feelings." Emshwiller was among the first artists to participate in the residency program offered by WNET-13 (NYC)'s Television Lab where he produced the groundbreaking *Scapemates* in 1972. *Sunstone* (1979) was made over a period of 8 months as the New York Institute of Technology (NYIT). Emshwiller passed away in 1990.

Experimental Television Center (ETC)

The Experimental Television Center (ETC) was an outgrowth of the Student Experiments in Television (SET) program established in 1969 by Ralph Hocking on the campus of Binghamton (NY) University. As the demand for community access increased, the Center formally organized as a not-for-profit organization and moved to a loft space in downtown Binghamton. ETC's programs addressed potential uses of new technology by three major communities: artists; social, cultural and educational organizations; and interested citizens. Workshops and equipment access were offered at no charge to facilitate a wide-ranging exploration of video. Tapes produced at the Center were screened throughout the region as well as on the Center's weekly community cable access show, "Access."

The investigation of video as a contemporary art-making medium was an integral part of the Center's activities. Under Hocking's direction, a Research Program was initiated to develop a more flexible set of imaging tools for artists. One of the early projects resulted in the construction of the Paik/Abe video synthesizer, under the direction of Nam June Paik and Shuya Abe, for the Television Lab at WNET-13 (NYC). In 1972, the Center began a Residency Program where Paik, Shikego Kubota, poet Jackson MacLow, and glass artist/video activist Rudi Stern were among the first artists invited to produce work with the Center's growing set of tools. The Center's image processing system was further expanded in 1974 with the addition of the first Jones Colorizer and in 1975, a set of keyers, a multi-input synchable sequencer and a bank of oscillators, all designed and constructed by David Jones. A computer-based digital imaging system, designed by Jones, Walter Wright, and Don MacArthur in collaboration with Steina and Woody Vasulka and Jeffrey Schier, was also introduced in 1975, laying the groundwork for subsequent innovations in artist-oriented software and tools, including a frame buffer and 2-D print software designed by Jones. Along with these pioneering technical achievements, the Center's Residency Program gained international recognition through the

works of visiting artists, among them Peter D'Agostino, Peer Bode, Shalom Gorewitz, Barbara Hammer, Ken Jacobs, and Gary Hill.

Richard Foreman

Born in 1937, Richard Forman studied at Brown University and Yale University before founding the Ontological-Hysteric Theater in 1968. Since that time he has written, directed, and designed over 20 major productions including *Rhoda in Potatoland* and *Vertical Mobility* in New York and Europe. Foreman's acclaimed theatrical and operatic productions are characterized by complex interplays between spoken language and visual tableaux. Foreman represents the cross-over between video and theatrical traditions, a genre of video that was enthusiastically explored by artists during the late 1960s and 70s. During this period, video dance and video theater emerged as more than mere recording, as artists like Foreman strove toward a conceptual translation of a given piece through the properties of the new medium. Employing disruptive devices that puncture theatrical illusions and audience assumptions, Foreman's works are distinctive in their rigorously controlled compositions, complex linguistic structures, and intricate collusions of language and image, and as such are considered mainstays of the American avant-garde. Foreman's plays and essays have been collected in the publications, *Richard Foreman Plays and Manifestos* (1976) and *Reverberation Machines, The Later Plays and Essays* (1985)

Terry Fox

Born in 1943, Terry Fox studied at the Cornish School of Allied Arts, Seattle and at the Academia Di Belli Arti before moving to the Bay Area in late 1960s. A central participant in the West Coast performance art, video, and Conceptual Art movements of the late 1960s and early 1970s, Fox became well-known for his political, site-specific performance actions that explored ritual and symbolic content in the objects, places, and natural phenomena of everyday life. Fox made his first video tapes in 1969-70 as documentations of performances that were taped

by George Bolling, then curator at the de Sasset Art Gallery and Museum at Santa Clara University, Santa Clara California. Describing his 1974 *Children's Tapes*, one of his first efforts to set up situations specifically for a video camera, Fox states: "The medium of video was chosen largely because the subjects were too intimate for performance and because of the special appearance and attention-holding power of TV for children. "

Hermine Freed

Born in 1940, Hermine Freed studied painting at Cornell University and New York University. During the late 1960s she taught and curated at NYU, working as program editor for an NYU-sponsored series on art books for WNYC-TV. Assisted by colleague Andy Mann, she began using video to produce a series of contemporary artist portraits, beginning with painter James Rosenquist. Although the program's broadcast quality did not meet WNYC's production standards, Freed continued to produce the series, showing the tapes to her students and in other venues. In 1972 she was invited to participate in a the groundbreaking exhibition, "Circuit: A Video Invitational" by Everson Museum curator David Ross whose encouragement lead her to explore other aspects of the medium and produce a new body of work. Freed continued to produce both documentaries and art works exploring female perception and self-image, producing *Art Herstory* (1974) while an artist-in-residence at the Television Lab at WNET-13 (NYC) in 1974. Since 1972, Freed has taught at School of Visual Arts, NYC.

Arthur Ginsburg (See Video Free America)

A graduate of Yale University's Drama School, Arthur Ginsberg began working in film and video in the late 1960s. His idea of introducing a West Coast branch of Global Village, an early NYC-based media collective/theater, was squashed when Global Village demanded 10 percent of the profits for use of the name. After forming an independent production company, called Mass Productions and Blessed Visions, Ginsberg met Skip Sweeney and the two joined forces,

producing video/theater hybrids and documenting counter-cultural events with the San Francisco-based collective Video Free America.

Global Village

With the motto, "TV in Your Own Image," and with the McLuhanesque ideal of a world liberated by advances in communications technology, Global Village was founded by John Reilly and Rudy Stern in 1969 as one of the first independent video groups in the U.S. Committed to experimenting with and producing new forms of television, the group considered itself a visual counterpoint to the underground press, chronicling and fueling the counter culture's clash with the establishment. Banking on the revolutionary potential of instant playback, footage from current events, including Woodstock, the RFK assassination, Nixon's Vietnamization Speech to Black Panther Party actions, (better construction) and anti-war demonstrations, were shown to audiences in regular screenings/performances at Global Village's downtown loft space. These events introduced a new form of journalism, characterized by the live, iconoclastic mix of contemporary imagery: "We orchestrate these images from performance to performance to give a sense of the ongoing violence, waste, pollution, and emotion of this society. We hoped to move to a point where Global Village is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to offer people a continuous video immediacy of news and kinetics. (Global Village, *Radical Software*, no. 1, 1970, p. 19). In addition to these spontaneously generated "reports", Global Village produced a number of single-channel tapes known for their radical content, including: *Transsexuals* (1970), *Lifestyles: A Study in Feedback* (1970), *The Politics of Intimacy* (1972), and *The Irish Tapes*. (1975).

As a media center, Global Village organized workshops, seminars, and an annual documentary video festival (no longer running.) Global Village went on to serve as a production center for national public television (PBS) through which the critically acclaimed: *Giving Birth: Four Portraits*, by Rudi Stern, John Reilly, and Julie Gustafson was produced, in

collaboration with The Television Lab at WNET-13 (NYC). Early members of Global Village included: Joe Kos, Jonathan Brandeis, Karen Mooney, Lars Reilley, Sean O'Neil, Tannya Quintiere, Susan Landry, Julie Gustafson, Lorraine Corfield and Barbara Mayfield.

Dan Graham

Dan Graham was born in 1942 in Urbana, Illinois. In 1964 he became the manager of the John Daniel's Gallery, New York City, where he featured the work of then emerging artists, including Sol Lewitt, Donald Judd, Robert Smithson, Dan Flavin, and Carl Andre. His own work at the time ranged from critical writing about art, architecture, and the television culture to performances exploring self awareness, architectural space, and group behavior, to conceptual works designed for popular and art magazines. Graham's investigation into the ideology behind, and relationship between, mass forms of architecture and media continued through the 1970s when he began working in film and video. Incorporating mirrors, windows, surveillance cameras, and video projection as devices for structuring the viewer's attention and perception, Graham's installations addressed the social function of architecture and television in mediating public and private life respectively. His single channel works include documentations of performances and later, documentaries/essays exploring, among other things, suburbia and punk music. Graham has published numerous critical and theoretical essays including *Video-Architecture-Television* (1980) and *Rock My Religion* (1993).

Ernest Gusella

Born in Calgary, Alberta, Canada in 1941, Ernest Gusella studied classical music as a child and received a BA and MFA in painting from the San Francisco Art Institute. Gusella was introduced to the video movement after moving to New York City in 1969 where he became friends with Woody and Steina Vasulka, founders of The Kitchen and Nam June Paik, the "grandfather of video art." Between 1971 and 1974 he produced a series of abstract video tapes which were generated by an audio synthesizer. In 1974 he began a series of dadaist rituals and

formal procedures in front of the camera, utilizing electronic manipulation of sound and image. In addition to producing his own tapes, Gusella worked throughout the decade as a camera man, audio and special effects technician for video artists and musicians including Sara Hornbacher, Doris Chase, Shegeko Kubota, Nam June Paik, Count Basie, and Benny Powell.

Julie Gustafson

Born in 1949, Julie Gustafson studied at Brandeis University before she began producing video documentaries concerned primarily with women's issues in the early 1970s. In 1978, she became a co-director, with John Reilly, of Global Village, one of the premiere media arts centers for video documentary in the country at the time. One of the founders of The Documentary Film Festival of New York (originally the Global Village Documentary Film Festival), Gustafson also worked as the director of the Documentary Center at the New School for Social Research (NYC). Utilizing a video-verité approach and literary narrative technique, the pioneering documentary team of Julie Gustafson and John Reilly produced a body of collaborative work from 1972 to 1986 which scrutinized American society and trenchant political and social issues.

Gary Hill

Born in 1951, Gary Hill studied sculpture at the Art Students League in Woodstock, New York. Hill was introduced to video in 1973 through Woodstock Community Video, an early media access center and public access, and its then director, Ken Marsh. Working as WCV's TV Lab coordinator, and later at the Experimental Television Center in Owego, NY, Hill's early videotapes "arose out of a dialogue with the properties of the medium" and made use of a variety of tools including the Rutt/Etra Scan Processor and David Jones colorizer (which Hill helped to build). Hill's work up until 1980 ranges from early investigations of synthesized imagery (*Windows*, 1978, *Summs and Differences*, 1978) to examinations of the relationship

between text and image (*Soundings*, 1979, *Around and About*, 1980). Since 1980, Hill has gained an international reputation for his work in video installation.

Nancy Holt

Nancy Holt studied at Jackson University and Tufts University in Massachusetts. In the mid-1960s, Holt was among a group of artists to introduce a Post-Minimalist sensibility in the field of sculpture. Holt used video for the first time in 1969 "when Peter Campus rented a video camera and came over. There was a tremendous sense of discovery because it was so accessible and so Bob (Smithson) and I immediately did a work of art. We invited a large group of people over to our loft that night, including Richard Serra, Michael Heizer, Nancy Graves, and Keith Sonnier to see it. It was very unusual [to] discover a medium, make a work of art and show it in the same day. That broke the ice and gave me a sense of what it was about - what were film ideas and what were video ideas." (Nancy Holt, quoted in "The First Generation: Women in Video, 1970-75" (1993) p. 24) Holt's early tapes, like her site-specific sculptures, explore the recorded experience of a particular time and place and the function of memory in decoding media spaces.

Joan Jonas

"Space was always a primary concern, and in considering the space of the monitor I then dealt with the boxlike structure, positioning it in relation to myself. I tried to climb into the box, attempting to turn the illusion of flatness into one of depth."

Joan Jonas, quoted in Lizzie Bordon "Directions in Video Art." *Video Art*, Philadelphia ICA, 1976 (p. 83)

Joan Jonas was trained in sculpture and art history at Columbia University, Mount Holyoke College, and the Boston Museum school where she studied dance with Tricia Brown. Widely

know for her work in performance in the mid 1960s, Jonas first incorporated a live video camera and monitor into a 1972 performance, *Organic Honey's Visual Telepathy*. In the same year, she began producing single channel tapes, among them *Vertical Roll* (1972), which are recognized as landmark investigations into the structural and performative nature of the medium. Exploring mythical female archetypes and the dislocation of physical space, Jonas' work occupies an important position in the development of both early formalist and early feminist video.

Paul and Marlene Kos

Working as a husband/wife collaborative team, Paul and Marlene Kos produced numerous videotapes throughout the 1970s exploring the hypnotic and illusory aspects of the televised image. Their installation works treated the video monitor as an essentially sculptural element with its own inherent structural language. In several cases, the monitor was often made to function as a window offering a view of events occurring simultaneously in another location. They likewise reassessed the role of the audience, actively structuring viewers into the performance of the work (*St. Elmos Fire*, 1977). Paul Kos began using video while teaching at the University of Santa Clara and through his association with the de Sasset Art Gallery and Museum whose curator George Bolling owned the only portapak in town.

Shigeko Kubota

"I want to create a fusion of art and life, Asia and America, Duchampiana and Levi-Straussian savagism, cool form and hot video, dealing with all of those complex problems, spanning the tribal memory of the nomadic Asians who crossed over the Bering Strait over 10,000 years ago. Then, I came, flying in a Boeing 707, on July 4th in 1964, drawn to the glittering Pop Art world of New York."

Shigeko Kubota, "Shigeko Kubota: A Portfolio 1972-1979" in *Video 80 #4*, Spring 1982 (p.35)

Shigeko Kubota was born in Niigata, Japan in 1937. After receiving a bachelor's degree in sculpture from Tokyo University, Kubota moved to the United States where she studied at New York University and The New School for Social Research in the mid 1960's. Kubota was introduced to video through her involvement with the the New York-based Fluxus Movement which included Nam June Paik, Allison Knowles, Allan Kaprow, and George Maciunas. In 1972 she produced the first of her on going video diaries (*Europe on 1/2 Inch a Day*), while at the same time exploring the image processing equipment at WNET-13 TV Lab (*Video Girls and Video Songs for Navajo Skies*, 1973). The fusion of spontaneous autobiography and electronic processing characterized her subsequent work which ranged in focus from everyday events to meditations on the work of Marcel Duchamp. Kubota curated the first annual Women's Video Festival at the Kitchen in 1972 which featured work by, among others, Susan Milano, Charlotte Moorman, Jackie Cassen and Steina Vasukla.

KQED-TV/National Center for Experiments in Television (NCET)

In 1967, broadcast TV station KQED San Francisco established the first experimental video workshop under the visionary direction of Brice Howard and Paul Kaufman. In addition to opening the workshop to artists working in a variety of disciplines, Howard targeted artists and technicians who concentrated specifically on television. A core group of producers began to form which included Willard Rosenquist, Bill Gwin, Stephen Beck, Don Hallock, Bill Roarty and at various times, two composers, Richard Feliciano, who had been among the first group of KQED resident artists, and Warner Jepson. Roarty describes an average day at the workshop during this period: "Warner and I would be working on a complex sound composition and immediately to our left would be Stephen, designing a circuit and then on the other side of that would be Bill Gwin, looking for a tape and over there would be Willard, working on light form. You couldn't help but be completely excited by the thoughts and

perceptions of all the people working around you approaching things each in their own way."
("Video: State of the Art," 1976)

In 1969 the workshop became the National Center for Experiments in Television (NCET), still under the direction of Howard who, by removing the pressures of the broadcast situation, created an atmosphere where experimentation could thrive. Network television personnel from around the nation participated in the Center's internship program where they were exposed to often shocking new approaches to the medium. By 1972, the Center had begun an outreach program where resident producers canvassed college and university art departments, screening work and encouraging these institutions to develop their own video production programs, which several went on to do. Following a highly productive period in 1973, when Jepson and Beck toured the country performing with their audio and video synthesizers, and Don Hallock presented his "Videola" at the San Francisco Art Museum, a change in NCET's leadership led to the loss of its experimental edge. Subsequent projects continued to incorporate many of the strategies developed in preceding years while the Center's overall focus turned toward the dissemination of social and political ideas through television.

Lanesville TV (See Videofreex/Media Bus Inc./Lanesville TV)

Media Bus Inc. (See Videofreex/Media Bus Inc./Lanesville TV)

Paul McCarthy

(Maria is compiling information which we will forward to you a.s.a.p.)

Linda Montano

Originally trained as a sculptor, Linda Montano began using video in the 1970s. Attempting to obliterate the distinction between art and life, Montano's art practice is starkly autobiographical and often concerned with personal and religious discipline; Montano spent two years in a convent and has studied Yoga and Zen for many years. Her avowed interest lies in "learning how to live better through lifelike art works," with personal growth evolving out of shared experience, role adoption and ritual. Exploring a wide range of phenomena, from personal transformation and altered consciousness to hypnosis and eating disorders, Montano's work from the 1970s and early 1980s is of critical importance in the development of video by, for, and about women.

Robert Morris

Born in 1931 in Kansas City, Missouri, Robert Morris studied at the University of Kansas, Kansas City Art Institute, California School of Fine Arts, San Francisco, and Reed College, Portland, Oregon. Well known for his minimalist sculptures in the early 1960s, Morris marked the transition to a Post-Minimalist sensibility by reintroducing everyday processes into his sculptural works and through his critical texts which provided the movement with a theoretical foundation. In 1969, Morris organized *Nine at Castelli*, one of the first exhibitions of Post-Minimalist, Anti-Formalist art which featured the work of Eva Hesse, Richard Serra, Keith Sonnier, and Bruce Nauman, among others. Involved in the E.A.T. (Experiments in Art and Technology) project, Morris worked briefly in film and video in the late '60's/early 1970s, employing structural devices (layering, framing, mirroring) in an examination of the medium's distinct features and its use as means of communication.

Phil Morton

Born in 1945, Phil Morton received degrees in Art Education and Fine Arts from Pennsylvania State University and Perdue University, Indiana, respectively. He began teaching at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 1969. Within a year he had established the first Video

Department in the country to offer both BA and MFA degrees in video production. In following years, Morton continued to expand the media resources and educational opportunities at the School of the Art Institute, establishing the Video Data Bank as a research and distribution center for independent and artist video tapes in 1972 and, in collaboration with Dan Sandin, distributing plans for the Image Processor (IP), a visual equivalent to the Moog audio synthesizer. In 1974, he established "P-Pi's" or Pied Pieper Interacting System, a cable TV station in South Haven, Michigan.

National Center for Experiments in Television (See KQED-TV)

Bruce Nauman

Born in 1941 in Fort Wayne, Indiana, Bruce Nauman initially studied mathematics and physics at the University of Wisconsin before receiving an MFA from the University of California Davis in 1966. By the late 1960's Nauman had established a reputation for himself as a conceptual pioneer in the field of sculpture. His works were included in the groundbreaking exhibitions, *Nine at Castelli* (1968) and *Anti-Illusion* (Whitney Museum, 1969). Nauman began working in film in collaboration with Robert Nelson and William Allen while teaching at the San Francisco Art Institute and produced his first videotapes in 1968 after receiving a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. In describing the transition from film to video, Nauman remarks, "With the films I would work over an idea until there was something that I wanted to do, then I would rent the equipment for a day or two. So I was more likely to have a specific idea of what I wanted to do. With the videotapes, I had the equipment in the studio for almost a year; I could make test tapes and look at them, watch myself on the monitor or have somebody else there to help. Lots of times I would do a whole performance or tape a whole hour and then change it. I don't think I would ever edit but I would redo the whole thing if I didn't like it." (Bruce Nauman, interview with Willoughby Sharp, May 1970). Using his body as a primary material to explore the limits of everyday situations, Nauman's works have

explored the medium as a theatrical stage and as a surveillance device within an installation context. He has somewhat simplistically described his early tapes as things he did "to keep himself busy." Nauman has often commented upon the impact the experimental work being done by Merce Cunningham, Meredith Monk, La Monte Young, Steve Reich, and Phillip Glass had on his thinking at this time.

Optic Nerve

Optic Nerve began in 1970 as a still photography and film strip production group. Two years later, with the advent of the Sony Portapak, the San Francisco collective embraced the medium of portable video and produced several important works of the period including *Psychological Bullrider*, (1973) a documentary on rodeo cowboys, and *Fifty Wonderful Years*, (1973) a behind-the-scenes look at the Miss California Pageant. These early works share an aesthetic found in varying degrees in all subsequent Optic Nerve productions: free-style narrative, little or no narration, and a strong commitment to personal contact. Optic Nerve's founding members included Lynn Adler, Jules Backus, Mya Shore, Sherry Rabinowitz, Bill Bradbury, John Rogers, and Jim Mayer. Finding collectivity a challenging and exciting creative process, the group explored a range of production forms and strategies: documentary production, working with community groups to produce organizing tapes, working with artists, and presenting video to the public. An Optic Nerve style emerged that stressed non-hierarchical production, skill diversity and collective editing. The resulting tapes vary in subject matter, from interviews with Anais Nin and Dennis Banks of the American Indian Movement (AIM) to documentations of local political struggles. In addition to producing their own tapes, Optic Nerve collaborated with members of Ant Farm and T.R. Uthco, two other Bay Area collectives, co-producing *Media Burn* and *Eternal Frame* in 1976. In this same year and like many other independent media producers, Optic Nerve began to focus on public television as a strategic outlet. *On the Boulevard* (1979) and *Pushed Out For Profit* (1978, in collaboration with local station, KQED-TV) were two projects designed specifically for broadcast. In the face of a

worsening economy, Optic Nerve ceased to function as a producing group in 1979. Former members continue to be active in documentary video under the name Ideas in Motion.

Nam June Paik

Born in 1932, Nam June Paik studied music and art history at the University of Tokyo, Japan, producing a thesis on Arnold Schoenberg and graduating with a degree in Aesthetics. Paik's studies continued in Germany at the Universities of Munich and Cologne, and at the Conservatory of Music in Freiburg. During this time (1958-63), Paik met avant-garde composer/thinker John Cage and worked with Karlheinz Stockhausen at the WDR Studio For Electronic Music in Cologne. After meeting Fluxus founder George Maciunas in 1961, he participated in numerous European Fluxus performances, actions, and events. Paik's first one-man exhibition was the 1963 Exposition of Electronic Music-Electronic Television at the Galerie Wuppertal, West Germany, which featured his series of "altered" TV sets. Paik came to New York in 1964 where he participated in the Fluxus scene and began developing performances in collaboration with cellist Charlotte Moorman. In 1969, Paik was included in the landmark *TV as a Creative Medium* show at the Howard Wise Gallery. In this same year, Paik and electronics engineer Shuya Abe designed and built the Paik/Abe Synthesizer at WGBH-TV in Boston. Many of Paik's tapes, including *Global Groove* (1973) and *A Tribute to John Cage* (1973) were produced through the artist-in-residence program at WNET-13 (NYC)'s Television Lab. In addition to his pioneering work as an artist, performer, and inventor, one of Paik's major contributions to the field was his early effort as a spokesman for the medium, lobbying (consultant) the Rockefeller Foundation and NYSCA to establish funding systems which would sustain the movement throughout the decade.

(Description taken in part from E.A.I. catalog)

Charlemagne Palestine

Born in 1945, Charlemagne Palestine studied at New York University, Columbia University, Mannes College of Music, and California Institute of the Arts. Throughout the 1970s, Palestine produced a seminal body of performance-based, psychodramatic videotapes and installations in which he used ritualistic physicality, motion and sound to achieve an outward articulation of internal states. Palestine was among a number of video artists to work at Art/Tapes/22 in Florence, Italy, where he produced *Body Music I and II* (1973-74). Palestine tapes have stressed the camera's function as a performer, rather than a neutral observer of events.

People's Video Theater

"The whole idea of community based theater is that the people who generate the information and the audience are one and the same" (Ken Marsh, taped interview with Gerd Stern, 1973)

Founded in 1970 by Elliot Glass, then a Spanish language doctoral student at Columbia University, and painter/printmaker Ken Marsh, People's Video Theater (PVT) sought to bring video to the streets and vice versa. PVT's unique brand of journalism involved gathering man-on-the-street interviews and then inviting participants to watch the tape at a local "hardware station," or loft space outfitted with playback equipment. Post-screening discussions were also taped and once again fed back to participants. This process introduced hundreds of people to the video medium and its potential use outside of broadcast television and within the sphere of everyday life. PVT's experiments with "video mediation" took the medium's feedback potential in yet another unprecedented direction: "The process is conceived to deal with issues in creating lines of communication between antagonistic groups whereby each can experience the information of the other without direct confrontation; therefore, working for and toward a resolution of conflict through dialogue." (Ken Marsh, *Radical Software* #2, 1970, p. 18). PVT's other activities included the production of "video newsreels" documenting countercultural events (Washington Peace Demonstration, Women's Liberation Day) and "video columns" on subjects ranging from music to lead poisoning. Ken Marsh went on to establish Woodstock

Community Video, an early media access center which organized an artist residency program through near by Reinbeck TV. Howie Gutstadt, who participated in many PVT activities, went on to found Survival Arts Media in Jamestown, NY.

Portable Channel

Portable Channel was founded in Rochester, NY in 1972 as a community media/documentary video center. The center's activities included providing equipment access and workshops in the techniques and aesthetics of the portapak, programming for broadcast and cable as well as publishing the quarterly newsletter, *Feedback/Feedforward*. Portable Channel was one of the first small format video centers to have an ongoing relationship with a PBS affiliate, WXXI-TV in Rochester. This collaboration resulted in the regular broadcast of "Homemade TV, a series featuring videotapes by staff, interns, workshop members, and guest artists. After 15 years of serving the Rochester community, Portable Channel closed its doors due to declining economic conditions. The archives of Portable Channel are housed at Visual Studies Workshop in Rochester, NY.

Raindance Corporation

Founded in 1969 by Frank Gillette, Paul Ryan, Michael Shamberg ,and Ira Schneider, Raindance was a self- described "counter cultural think tank" which embraced video as an alternative form of cultural communications. The name "Raindance" alluded to what members termed "cultural R & D" (research and development.) Influenced by the communications theories of Marshall McLuhan and Buckminster Fuller, the collective produced tapes and writings that explored the relation of cybernetics, media, and ecology. From 1970 to 1974, Raindance published the seminal video journal *Radical Software* (edited by Beryl Korot and Phyllis Gershuny for the first two years), which provided a network of communications for the emerging alternative video movement, reaching a circulation of 5,000. In 1971, Shamberg published *Guerrilla Television*, a summary of the group's principles and a

blue-print for a decentralization of television. The original Raindance collective dispersed in the mid-1970s; the nonprofit Raindance Foundation continues to exist today.

Anthony Ramos

Born in 1944, Anthony Ramos studied Fine Arts at Southern Illinois University and University of California San Diego. He began working in video in the early 1970s when, in addition to producing his own tapes, he served as a video consultant to the United Nations as well as for the National Council of Churches. Using video as a tool for breaking down mass mediated "truth" and as means of cultural documentation, Ramos remarks, "In my tapes I attempt to develop a different perception of events ... The information tells one story but it is not developed as a linear narrative." After serving an 18-month prison sentence for draft evasion, Ramos produced *About Media* (1977), juxtaposing network news stories with his own unedited footage. Ramos has traveled widely in Europe, Africa, China, and the Middle East, documenting the end of Portugal's African colonialism in Cape Verde and Guinea-Bissau, and the 1980 Iran hostage crisis.

Martha Rosler

"I find it important to call attention to form and to raise some questions about representation and the relationship of artist to audience. I use whatever means seem appropriate: video, photo-text, performance, postcards, books and even lectures and critical writing. Most of my work takes the form of a 'decoy.' It mimics some well-known cultural form — a cooking show, a garage sale, a banquet, a doctor's examination, a postcard message. I rearrange the content so that it yields a comment about the form itself and serves as a metaphor for something else: it is both literal and metaphoric."

Martha Rosler, from catalog -- Video: A Retrospective. Long Beach Museum of Art 1974-1984 (p.40)

Born in 1944, Martha Rosler studied at New York University and Fordham University, moving to San Diego in 1968. While working as a freelance editor and raising a son, Rosler became active in the women's movement and with anti-war organizing. Working as a teaching assistant at UCSD, Rosler produced assemblages and photomontages about the war as it progressed. She began making videotapes in the late 1970s. Describing her work in video, Rosler states, "The subject is the commonplace; I am trying to use video to question the mythical explanations of everyday life. We accept the clash of public and private as natural, yet their separation is historical. The antagonism of the two spheres, which have in fact developed in tandem, is an ideological fiction — a potent one. I want to explore the relationships between individual consciousness, family life, and culture under capitalism." In addition to her work as in photography, performance, and video, Rosler has published numerous critical essays.

Paul Ryan

Paul Ryan received a BA in English from New York University and worked on graduate studies at Fordham University (NYC) where he was the principal video research assistant under Marshall McLuhan in 1967-68 and a McLuhan Fellow in the Media Center from 1967-1970. A founding member of the New York City-based media collective, Raindance, Ryan was a practitioner and theoretician of the early video movement. Responding to the rapidly shifting technological and political climate of the late '60s, Ryan reflects, "I gave up my ambition to become a 'writer' and determined to use electronic technologies to work toward a society that could avoid Vietnam." Developing a vocabulary around video which suggested the transformation of individual and global consciousness through the medium's distinctive features, Ryan likened video, with its potential for feedback, to a mobius strip: "The mobius strip provides a model for dealing with the power videotape gives us to take in our own outside." Influenced by Marshall McLuhan and emerging discourses around cybernetics,

ecology, and information, Ryan's early work evolved from free-form collaborations with members of Raindance to exercises in human behavior and relationships, and studies of urban and natural ecological systems. Working as a consultant to the New York State Council for the Arts in the early '70s, Ryan was an early advocate for the independent video movement. The author of an anthology of essays, *Cybernetics of the Sacred* (1974) and *Video Mind, Earth Mind* (1992), and a regular contributor to *Radical Software*, Raindance's alternative media journal, Ryan has also published numerous theoretical articles.

Dan Sandin

Born in 1942, and with a background in physics, Dan Sandin became involved in video while teaching at the School of the Art and Design at the University of Illinois, Chicago in 1970, when, after the Kent State killings he recorded student protests, broadcasting them live on closed circuit TV. Sandin's early interest in computer graphics/video image processing and interactive computing environments motivated his pioneering work in developing video instruments for artists. "I was interested in light shows and kinetic events, producing slides for those shows. I was involved in using optical and chemical processes to create images that I found interesting and it occurred to me that I could do it electronically." (Dan Sandin, quoted in Furlong, "Notes Toward a History of Image Processed Video," p.37). In 1973, Sandin successfully designed and built the Image Processor (IP) as a modular, patch programmable, analog computer optimized for the manipulation of gray level information of input video signals. The IP provided many artists with their first opportunity to freely play with the color and composition of a video image. Designed to transform externally fed source material, the IP was also used as a performance instrument, generating images internally under the spontaneous improvisation of the controller. Sandin was of a generation that promoted a decidedly democratic approach to video technology, sharing plans for the IP free of charge to anyone who requested them and working to develop low-budget versions of advanced and

otherwise cost-prohibitive tools. Sandin's ideal of accessible video technology helped to foster a Chicago community of video technician/producers.

Ilene Segalove

Ilene Segalove was born in 1950 in Los Angeles, California. She studied Communication Arts at Loyola University (place) and received a subsequent degree in Fine Arts from the University of California Santa Barbara. Working in video since 1972, when she bought a portapack from Nam June Paik's girl friend, Ilene Segalove was initially "offended by [video's] invasive quality and seduced by its power." A self-described "child of Beverly Hills," she began pointing the camera at "familiar things," producing quasi documentaries about her family (*Mom Tapes*, 1973-75) and American TV culture (*TV is OK*, 1976). Segalove was member of the early group Telethon, with Billy Adler, John Margolis, and Van Schley, which designed installations featuring commercial TV collages and guest edited *Radical Software: The TV Environment* (Vol. 2 no. 2).

Richard Serra

Born in 1939, Richard Serra studied English Literature at University of California Berkeley while working at a steel mill to earn a living. He went on to receive an MFA at Yale University where he studied with painter/theorist Joseph Alpers. Living in New York, Paris, and Rome through the late 1960s Serra became acquainted with artists of the New York School: Philip Guston, Robert Rauschenberg, Ad Reinhardt, and Frank Stella, as well as avant-garde composer Philip Glass. Associated with the emergence of Post-Minimalism and Process Art, Serra's lead splashing sculptures were included in "The Warehouse Show" (Leo Castelli Gallery, 1968) and *Anti-Illusion: Procedures Materials* (Whitney Museum, 1968), both pivotal exhibitions which established a new discourse in the field. Serra produced several films before he began making videotapes in the early 1970s. His early works including *Television Delivers People* (1973),

Prisoner's Dilemma (1974), and *Boomerang* (1974) are structural examinations of the medium as a vehicle for communication.

Eric Siegel

Born in 1944, Eric Siegel attended Samuel Gompers Vocational and Technical High School in Brooklyn, building his own TV set by age fourteen. In 1968 he designed and built the Siegel Colorizer and in 1970, a video synthesizer. Among Siegel's early video projects, *Psychedelavision in Color*, was included in the groundbreaking "Television as a Creative Medium" exhibition at the Howard Wise Gallery in 1969. "Psychedeliavision is my attempt at video mind expansion," Siegel explained. "A new science must be created which can reach the inner core of human beings. One of the most important tools in this new science will be television ... The American Dream no longer is evolving. It's in a state of decay. Television must be liberated." (Eric Siegel quoted in *Expanded Cinema*, 1970, p. 316). In addition to producing his own work, Siegel regularly collaborated with other video artists and collectives, among them Steina and Woody Vasulka and Videofreex and contributed to the early issues of *Radical Software*. In 1972 Siegel traveled to India, after which he produced *The Hindustan Tapes*, a series on Indian culture.

George Stoney

Born in 1916, George Stony studied Journalism at the University of North Carolina and at New York University. After working as a freelance journalist, as an information officer for the Farm Security Administration, and as photo intelligence officer in war service, he joined the Southern Educational Film Service as a writer/director in 1946. In 1950, he formed his own company and by 1980 had made over 40 films, with subjects ranging from birth control, insurance, and the mentally ill to the nature of the Bahai faith and the situation of Canadian Indigenous. An early advocate of video as a tool for social change, Stony was the Executive Producer of the Canadian Film Board's "Challenge for Change/Societe Nouvelle" from 1966-

70, a founder and board member of the National Federation of Local Cable Programmers (1976), and was co-founder in 1972, with Red Burns, of the Alternate Media Center at New York University, which trained a generation of public access producers/activists. Since that time, he has produced and directed numerous social and educational works in video, among them his award-winning film *Robert Flaherty: How the Myth Was Made* (1978).

Skip Sweeney

Born in 1946, Skip Sweeney studied Theater Arts at Santa Clara University before becoming involved in the Bay Area video scene in the late 1960s. In 1968, Sweeney was one of the founders of Electric Eye, an early media collective concerned with video performances and experiments. In 1970, with Arthur Ginsberg, Sweeney founded Video Free America, the San Francisco media art center and communications nexus. Sweeney's work in video included abstract image-processing and synthesis, autobiographical documentaries and portraits, to video installations for theater productions including Allen Ginsberg's *Kaddish* (1977). Tuning and tinkering, often for hours to produce shimmering, interweaving mandalas, Sweeney has been described as one of a handful of people who came to master video feedback. . Sweeney has since worked in collaboration with Joanna Kelly, producing video dance tapes, video art, and documentary.

T.R. Uthco

T.R. Uthco was a San Francisco-based multi-media performance art collective that engaged in satirical critiques of the relation between mass media images and cultural myths, using irony, theatricality, and spectacle as its primary strategies. Founded by Doug Hall, Diane Andrews Hall, and Jody Procter in 1970, T.R. Uthco focused on the irreverent staging of fabricated events, also producing installations and video documents of its performances, collaborating with Ant Farm to produce *The Eternal Frame* (1975) and *Media Burn* (1975). T.R. Uthco disbanded in 1978.

TVTV (Top Value Television)

"Our intention, and it's still our intention, was to change television. The politics of information, the politics of television, are what we are trying to alter. When we first went to the conventions in 1972, we set out to prove a point. The point was [to] demonstrate that you could take this low-cost technology and people who had not been wrung through the broadcast television system and make not only technically decent television but also television in which the information was shockingly different; it was looser, more direct, more informal, more personal and it was more visceral. You felt like you were there after watching the shows, as opposed to feeling someone had laid a rap on you." Allen Rucker, quoted in "Video: State of the Art," Joanna Branson Gill, 1976.

TVTV (Top Value Television) formed in 1972 when members of existing media collectives (Raindance, Videofreex, Ant Farm) joined forces to provide alternative coverage of the Democratic National Convention in Miami. The edited tape, *The World's Largest TV Studio* (1972), and its companion *Four Mour Years, 1972* which chronicled the Republican Convention, were among the first independent documentaries to be broadcast on public television. Influenced by the New Journalism of the late 1960s and 1970s, TVTV used low tech equipment and a loose, subjective style of reporting, providing candid interviews with delegates and radicals alike, while at the same time devoting substantial attention to the network media presence in order to show viewers the "underbelly of broadcast TV." TVTV's subsequent projects ranged in focus from cult religion (*The Lord of the Universe*, 1974), sports (*Superbowl*, 1976) and TV commercials (*Adland*, 1974). As artists-in-residence at the Television Lab at WNET-13 (NYC), TVTV produced *Gerald Ford's America* (1975), a four part series on the "first one hundred days" of the presidency. TVTV disbanded in 1979.

University Community Video

In 1973, two student video groups at the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis/Saint Paul merged to form University Community Video (UCV). Supported by University funds, the name was chosen to reflect the constituencies served by the new organization. Founders include student activists Miles Mogulescu, Ellen O'Neill, Ron McCoy, Stephen Kulczycki, and others. UCV began by producing programming for the University's closed-circuit cable television system which led to the production of "Communitube", a regularly scheduled program utilizing 1/2" open-reel, black and white video equipment and broadcast on (KTCA) in the 1973-74 season. Only one other group—Portable Channel in Rochester, NY—was producing a regular series with small-format equipment for traditional broadcast at the time. "Communitube" was the forerunner of "Changing Channels", an alternative video magazine which premiered on KTCA in October 1974. "Changing Channels" was produced by UCV and incorporated the work of both UCV and community producers. In January 1975, UCV began producing "Everybody's T. V. Time", an open-access program broadcast in conjunction with "Changing Channels".

As the organization and the video-making community matured, "Changing Channels" became increasingly sophisticated in both its production values and content. The original commitment of UCV and area producers to alternative politics and the influence of grassroots and student groups in the area resulted in a documentary style that UCV and area videomakers are still known for. Energy issues, the women's movement, oppression of Native Americans and other ethnic minorities, treatment of the handicapped, and labor history were among the concerns of UCV and local independent producers. "Changing Channels" ceased production in June 1978. Throughout its history UCV also provided an extensive program of video workshops and a large inventory of video equipment for use by student and community producers. Other programs developed by UCV sought to help people integrate video as a tool in their work, including a Performing Arts Video Project and the Public Service Communications Project

(production of public service announcements for broadcast). UVC's archives are held by Intermedia Arts Minnesota and The Minnesota Historical Society.

Description taken from AFI National Video Festival catalog.

Steina Vasulka

Steina Vasulka was born in Reykjavik, Iceland in 1940. While studying violin and music theory at the music conservatory in Prague in 1959, she met and married Woody Vasulka. They moved to New York City in 1965 where Steina initially worked as a freelance musician. In their early collaborative work, the Vasulkas made extensive examination of the electronic nature of video and sound, developing their own set of specialized imaging tools and strategies, while at the same time using the medium to document the city's expanding underground culture. "We were interested in certain decadant aspects of America, the phenomena of time – underground rock and roll, homosexual theater, and the rest of the illegitimate culture. In the same way, we were curious about more puritanical concepts of art inspired by [Marshall] McLuhan and Buckminster Fuller. It seemed a strange and unified front--against the establishment." It was during this time that, with Andreas Mannik, the Vasulkas founded The Kitchen as a media arts theater. In the same year, Steina and Woody co-curated "A Special Videotape Show" at the Whitney Museum and established the first annual video festival at the Kitchen. Working with skillful and innovative engineers, the Vasulkas invented and modified video production instruments for use in performances and installations as well as single-channel tapes. They were among the first wave of artists to participate in the residency programs offered through the Television Labs (WGBH-TV, KQED-TV, WNET-13) then emerging across the U.S. Steina's work in video has explored the use of sound in creating and altering video signals (*Violin Power*, 1969-78) and the orchestration of video in an installation context. In 1975, while teaching at the Center for Media Study in Buffalo, NY, she

began *Machine Vision*, a "continuing investigation of space via machine systems and electronic images."

Woody Vasulka

"There are various motives for people who stumble into video. In some cases, it was pure accident; in some cases, it was hope. In my case, I had been in things I couldn't work with. I was in film, and I couldn't do anything with it. ... When I first saw video feedback, I knew I had seen the cave fire. It had nothing to do with anything, just a perpetuation of some kind of energy..." Woody Vasulka, quoted in "Video: State of the Art," Joanna Branson Gill, 1976.

Born in Brno, Czechoslovakia in 1937, Woody Vasulka studied metal technology and hydraulic mechanics at the School of Engineering, Brno and later at the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague, where he produced and directed short films. In 1965, he emigrated to New York City with his wife, Steina. Working as a multiscreen film editor and designer, he began experimenting with electronic sound, stroboscopic light, and, in 1969, with video. Moving to Buffalo, NY in 1974, where he taught at the Center for Media Study at the State University of New York at Buffalo, Vasulka continued his investigation of the machinery behind the electronic signal, working with the Rutt/Etra Scan Processor and successfully building in 1976 a computer controlled personal imaging facility called The Digital Image Articulator, in collaboration with Don MacArthur and Jeffrey Schier.

Videofreex/Media Bus Inc./Lanesville TV

Videofreex was an early media collective which emerged in 1969, shortly after Perry Teasdale and David Cort, both working in video and electronics, met at the Woodstock Festival. Later that year, based upon tapes they had produced from footage shot at Woodstock, the newly formed Videofreex were invited to produce for the "Now" project, a series on the American

counterculture for broadcast television (CBS). After collecting a vast assortment of material, including interviews with Abbie Hoffman and Fred Hampton, they screened the tapes to an audience of CBS executives who promptly pulled the plug on show (called *Subject to Change*) date and threatened to erase the tapes. With the money provided by CBS for the project, however, Videofreex had acquired one of the most sophisticated editing systems in New York City which they used in subsequent projects and made available to other independents. Operating out of a Prince Street Loft, Videofreex continued to produce tapes and multimedia events, while also functioning as an exhibition space. Establishing a reputation for their experimental approach to the medium, they were invited to participate in the Rose Art Gallery Show at Brandeis University in 1970, one of the first video art exhibitions in the country. In 1971 when NYSCA began offering large grants to upstate media projects, Videofreex incorporated as Media Bus, traveling around the state with their mobile media bus workshop program. In 1972, Videofreex relocated to Maple Tree Farm in Lanesville, NY where they lived and worked collectively. Arriving in the rural town, Teasdale recalls: "We didn't have any way of reaching out to the community. There wasn't any cable. There wasn't any broadcast in the area so we set up our own transmitter. We couldn't get it licensed, we actually made an inquiry but there wasn't any way to get a license so we jut started transmitting... It was pirate TV." (Perry Teasdale, Interview with Chris Hill, 1995). Lanesville TV (Channel 3) began broadcasting on March 19, 1972. The broadcasts continued on a weekly basis (one day a week) for five years providing the Lanesville community with programming which ranged from artist's tapes and discussions to live performances to play by play coverage of the 1976 Democratic National Convention (*Five Day Bicycle Race*) and other current events. Lanesville TV was particularly committed to exploring the interactive potential of the broadcast situation, using a live, phone-in component whenever possible (*Mock Turtle Soup*, 1976) and inviting viewers to come to the station and produce their own programs. Video Freex / Media Bus / Lanesville TV included Perry Teasdale, David Cort, Curtis Ratliff, Phyllis Gershuny, Nelson

Becker, Carol Votobel, Ann Woodward, Davidson Gigliotti, Nancy Cain, Bart Friedman, Skip Blumberg, and Tom Weinberg.

Video Free America/Electric Eye

Electric Eye was an early Bay Area production collective founded in 1968 by Skip Sweeney, Tim Barger, Lee Kominski, and Michelle Gallery. The group's early projects involved taping rock 'n roll bands and theater performances and programming weekly video screenings at Intersection Center for the Arts in San Francisco. In 1969, Arthur Ginsberg joined the group which had by then changed its name to Video Free America (VFA). In 1970, the group developed "The Philo T. Farnsworth Video Obelisk" at the Intersection Center, which featured a multi-channel, multi-monitor installation in the shape of a towering obelisk with Tim Barger as the video DJ, mixing pre-recorded material, live feedback, and a live camera. Around this time, VFA began documenting counter-cultural events including the Sky River Festival in Washington State and the Equinox Celebration in Golden Gate Park and, after obtaining a permanent base of operations in San Francisco, offered more regular screenings, including what became *The Continuing Story of Carel and Ferd* (1970-75), and a visiting artist series which brought, among others, the Vasulkas and Stephen Beck. In the mid 1970s, through Ginsberg's connections in New York City, VFA became associated with the Chelsea Theater Center where they worked on three plays (*AC/DC*, *Kaddish*, 1977, and *Kaspar*, 1974), all of which incorporated video within the set and the action of the drama.

Bill Viola

Born in 1951, Bill Viola received a BFA from the College of Visual and Performing Arts in Syracuse, NY. A drummer in a rock and roll band from 1968-72, he became increasingly interested in performance and in electronic music. Describing his transition to the video medium in the early 1970s, Viola states: "The crucial thing for me was the process of going

through an electronic system, working with these standard kinds of circuits became a perfect introduction to a general electronic theory. It gave me a sense that the electronic signal was a material that could be worked with. This was another really important realization. Physical manipulation is fundamental to our thought processes -- just watch the way a baby learns. It's why most people have so much trouble approaching electronic media. When electronic energies finally became concrete for me, like sounds are to a composer, I really began to learn. Soon I made what was for me an easy switch over to video. I never thought about [video] in terms of images so much as electronic processes, a signal." (Bill Viola, Interview with Raymond Bellour, *October*, 34 (Fall 1985), p. 101.) Viola describes his early single channel tapes both as "songs" and as "Visual poems, allegories in the language of subjective perception." These early investigations into the medium including *The Space Between the Teeth* (1974) and "*Truth through Mass Individuation*" (1976) employ formal strategies associated with structural film while at the same time operating as metaphors for transcendent vision, creativity, and symbolic transformation/illumination -- themes that preoccupy Viola's later tapes and installations (*Sweet Light*, 1977, *Chott ed Djerid (A Portrait of Light and Heat)*, 1979). Viola was among a group of artists to found Synapse Video/Cable TV Center in Syracuse, NY, as one of the first alternative media centers in New York state. In 1973, Viola and several musicians formed the Composers Inside Electronics Group which performed David Tudor's *Rainforest* (date?) and other works internationally. In 1975 he worked as the director of Art/Tapes/22, an artists' production facility in Florence, Italy. From 1976-80, Viola was the artist-in-residence at the WNET-13 (NYC)'s Television Lab and at Sony Corporation, Atsugi, Japan in 1980.

William Wegman

Born in 1943, William Wegman studied painting at Massachusetts College of Art and University of Illinois, Urbana. He began producing short, performance-oriented videotapes in the early 1970s, many of which featured his canine companion, Man Ray. Other tapes are dead pan parodies of "high art" and commercial TV genres. Describing the process behind his tapes,

Wegman states, "I present a situation and develop some kind of explanation around it. By the time the story is over you get to know why that particular prop or mannerism was displayed." ("Man Ray, Do You Want to...an Interview with Liza Bear", *Avalanche* no.7,1973,p.40) Wegman was among a group of artists to produce work through WGBH-TV Boston's Television Lab.

WGBH-TV

Established in 1968 with funding from the Rockefeller Foundation, public television station WGBH in Boston was a major force in the production and dissemination of artists' television. In 1969, Fred Barzyk, one of the station's producers, organized the first broadcast TV program magazine of video artists' work, *The Medium Is the Medium*, which included work by Allan Kaprow, Otto Piene, Aldo Tambellini, James Seawright, Nam June Paik, and Thomas Tadlock. A larger document of the video movement, *Video: The New Wave*, was also produced by Barzyk in 1973. The station's artist-in-residence program brought Nam June Paik who, with Shuya Abe, built the first video synthesizer and first displayed its imagery in a four-hour-long blockbuster program entitled *Videocommune*, broadcast in the summer of 1970. Another seminal program, *Violence Sonata*, was produced by Stan Vanderbeek in this same year. For the project, Vanderbeek made innovative use of the studio's capacity for real time switching, integrating the studio audience, made up of militant political groups and karate experts. In 1974 the New Television Workshop was created and quickly became a leader in the growing effort to bring artists into a more direct relationship with the technical facilities and audience potential offered by broadcast. Managed by Dorothy Chiesa, the Workshop provided its 1-inch editing facility to local Boston producers as well as visiting artists, among them, Peter Campus and William Wegman.

WNET-TV

Directed by David Loxton, the Television Laboratory at WNET-13 in New York City was established in 1972 with support from the Rockefeller Foundation and the New York State

Council for the Arts. The most elaborate installation of its kind, the TV Lab also served as the most consistent over-the-air outlet for experimental television, from special effects extravaganzas to nightly sign-off pieces about New York City by Nam June Paik, to new forms of documentary television. The TV Lab's artist-in-residence program initially invited both to experienced video producers and to artists in other disciplines who were exploring the television medium for the first time. During this initial phase, which lasted until the spring of 1974, works produced through the TV Lab's artist-in-residence program were to become classics of the video movement. Ed Emshwiller's *Scape-mates*, (1972), Nam June Paik's *Global Groove* (1973), and Bill Gwin's *Sweet Verticality* (1973-74), were all pivotal works in the evolving conceptual and technological investigation of the medium. By 1974, the TV Lab began to shift its focus toward non-fiction television projects including *The Lord of the Universe* (1974), a documentary about the guru Maharaj Ji, produced by TVTV which was the first independent documentary produced for national broadcast on public television. The advent of the time base corrector at this time enabled groups like TVTV to transfer half-inch portapak video recordings to the 1-inch broadcasting standard and stabilize the signal to broadcast standard, allowing independents increased access to broadcast audiences and influencing the future direction of the documentary genre. In 1975, WNET-13 began broadcasting "Video and Television Review" (VTR), a magazine series hosted by Russell Conner which featured key figures in the alternative television movement through interviews and excerpted examples of their work. "VTR" and other programs produced through WNET-13's TV Lab helped to establish an audience and a context for a wide spectrum of independent and experimental work.