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Nam June Paik's Video Art: Participation-TV
as an Extension of Happening

-A Postmodern Practice-

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A Thesis

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ABSTRACT

Nam June Paik's Video Art: Participation-TV as an Extension of Happening -A Postmodern Practice-

Hong Hee Kim-Cheon

This study argues that Paik's video art is essentially a participation-TV process with special emphasis on the presence of an audience. This practice derives from the artist's happening activities, the live art tradition based on the notion of audience-participation. Thus, Paik's video art (participation-TV) is an extension of his happening activities (participation-performance).

Happening practices assimilated the elements of live art traditions, using new concepts such as intermedia and indeterminacy to define the happening environment in which collective participation is an active mechanism. Video art inherited from happening these idioms of live art, but in a different manner and according to its own properties. Video art in itself is not only the acme of intermedia, but because of its electronic nature, video per se also offers an indeterminate image based on the 'double scene', the non-adherence of the iconic and the electronic. This doubling of the video image permits us to postulate a specific type of perceptual response from the spectator.

In fact, the indeterminate video image, following recent

theories of perceptual behavior, seems to double the human perceptual organism, wherein the electronic environment of video evokes audience-participation in the sense of a biological feedback principle. From a psychological point of view, video raises the question of audience-participation as extending the human psyche: the mirror-reflection of the observer produced by the monitor creates the narcissistic situation of the split-self. But the issue of audience-participation is mostly manifested when we relate video art to the mass medium, television, a medium concerned with mass audience and popular culture.

Hence both happening and video art belong to poststructuralist postmodernism, the strategy of which is to deconstruct, via indeterminacy, logocentric representation based on mimesis, or to blur, via intermedia, the distinction between disciplines. Paik's video art and happening activities demonstrate most clearly this theoretical argument. In this sense, Paik's work can be regarded as one of the "emblematic" features of postmodernism.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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INTRODUCTION

> [The] difference of the 50's liberal and the 60's
> radical is that the former was serious and pessimistic,
> the latter was optimistic, and loved fun. Who changed
> the society more ? I think, the latter. John Cage's
> refusal to accept "serious" continental aesthetics and
> the rise of Happening, Popart [sic], Fluxusmovement
> [sic] signaled the beginning of the sixties. . . . What
> will signal the seventies ? Needless to say . . .
> "video."1

It was in 1982 that the Korean born American

artist Nam June Paik (1932-   ) had the opportunity of

holding a retrospective exhibition in the Whitney Museum of

American Art in New York in 1982; it took place from 30 April

to 27 June. This exhibition not only sanctioned Paik's

success as an individual artist, but in a larger sense, also

recognized video art as a new artistic genre. Paik gained a

few nicknames after this exhibition, such as "Video Art's

Guru" (D. C. Denison, The New York Times Magazine, April 25,

1982), or "The Zen Master of Video" (Bruce Kurtz, May-June,

Portfolio, 1982), together with such titles as "Cathode

Karma," attributed to him by Gene Youngblood as early as 1970

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1 N. J. Paik, "Video-Videa-Vidiot-Videology," Nam June
Paik: Videa 'n' Videology 1959-1973, issued as catalogue of
the exhibition of the same name held in the Everson Museum of
Art, Syracuse, New York, in 1974 (Syracuse: Everson Museum of
Art), n. p.

in his book <u>Expanded Cinema</u>, or "John Cage of the Ordinary Domestic TV Set" used by John Canaday when favorably referring to him in <u>The New York Times</u> of 1965 after seeing his exhibition at the Bonino Gallery; these attributed names suggest both the new recognition of video art and Paik's position in it.2 This large-scale retrospective not only showed most of the video works that he had produced for the past twenty years, but also it included his early musical objects, the remnants of his happening activities. In addition, the retrospective happening performances that accompanied this show provided the audience an opportunity to glance over his entire career from happenings to video works.3 The inclusion of happening performances in the exhibition was an excellent idea, because in Paik's art, happening and video art were an inseparable entity linked by the notion of audience-participation.

The notion of audience-participation is the key term both for happening and video art in general, but for Paik,

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2 Paul Gardner enumerates the "noble titles" that Paik earned from avant-garde circle; "Michelangelo of electronic Art, a cultural terrorist, George Washington of alternative TV, a visionary missionary, a magician with a magnet, a wiring wizard, the father of video, a Renaissance man of the arts, a pioneer TV artist . . . the daddy of electronic Dada." Cf. P. Gardner, "Tuning to Nam June Paik," <u>Artnews,</u> vol. 81, no. 5, May 1982, p. 64.

3 He presented sixteen pieces during two days, the second and the third of June, including "TV Bra for Living Sculpture" (1964), "Cello Sonata No. 1 for Adults Only" (1964), "Variation on a Theme by Saint-Saens" (1965), "One for Violin Solo" (1961).

who made this his artistic goal and demonstrated it through his happening activities (Action Music or Fluxus Happening) and video works, it bears special importance. This study argues that Paik's video art is essentially a participation-TV process, as the titles of certain of his works imply, with a special emphasis on the presence of an audience, a problematic handed down from his happening activities, the live art practice based on the notion of audience-participation. Thus, his video art as participation-TV is an extension of his happening, the participation-performance.

As I will demonstrate in the following chapters, it can be maintain. . that happening considers itself a form of live art in the sense of participation-performance. I will argue this point three-way. Firstly, happening belongs to the anti-art tradition of avant-garde art, which attempts to integrate art into the praxis of life or society and was initiated in the early twentieth century by such radical and experimental artists as the Futurists, the Dadaists or the Surrealists. Secondly, happening also belongs to the tradition of modern performance art that advocates live art and action art against the established values of formalistic or conceptual fine art, which, having its origin in the experimental theatres of Jarry or Artaud, was practiced by such avant-gardistes Futurists or Dadaists in their anti-art live performances. Thirdly, rooted both in avant-garde art and experimental theatre, happening marks the early phase

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of postmodern art: occupying an indeterminate situation between art and theatre, it characterizes the postmodernist concept of 'intermedia'; moreover, by creating such intermedia environments and performing actions instead of producing art objects that separate the audience from the artwork, it establishes a new direct relationship with the audience. In the dematerialized environment of (post)modern performance art, of which happening was the precursor, the audience becomes an important, essential element in its 'indeterminate' situation of the 'here and now' condition. Therefore, we aim to demonstrate that, because happening presupposes the presence of the audience, in such a process this audience advances from passive observer to active participant. Thus happening, as Pierre Restany claims, may be seen as a "mechanism of communication," or as a "technique of collective participation."4

As such, happening practices the ideal of live art in relation to new concepts such as intermedia and indeterminacy that define the happening environment and automatically includes the audience within it. Video art inherited from happening such idioms of live art, but in a different manner and according to its own properties. Video art in itself is the acme of intermedia, not only is it occupying the

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4 P. Restany, "Happening," L'Avant-Garde au XXe siècle (Paris: A. Balland, 1969), quoted in Frank Popper, Art-action and participation (New York: New York University Press, 1975), p. 23.

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intermedia position between artistic genres such as pictorial image and sculptural object, or space art and time art, but it also brings into interaction art and technology, art and entertainment, art and life. As well, video per se, because of its electronic nature, offers an indeterminate image based on what will be identified as the 'double scene', the non-adherence of the iconic and the electronic. This doubling of the video image also characterizes intermedia, and permits us to postulate a specific type of perceptual response by the spectator. In fact, the indeterminate video image, following recent theories of perceptual behavior that refuse traditional concepts of conditioned reflex, seems to imitate the human perceptual organism. This means that the electronic environment of video or television evokes audience-participation in the sense of the biological feedback principle.

But the issue of audience-participation is mostly

Not only in the biological sense, but psychologically, video raises the question of audience-participation replicating or extending the human psyche. For example, in certain cases, it can be said that the mirror-reflection of the observer (artist or audience) produced by the monitor creates the narcissistic situation of self-reflection, in which the subject experiences the tension of the split-self between self-ego and alter-ego in the process of self-identification.

But the issue of audience-participation is mostly

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manifested when we consider video art in the context of mass communication by relating it to the mass medium, television, a medium addressing a mass audience through popular culture. In terms of the relation with television, video art shows a circular movement starting from television and returning to television: video art emerged from the manipulation of the television set and the television image; it then evolved into a genuine phase of video art in which independent artists experimented with the medium of video; finally it went into a new phase of TV art, focusing on the 'live time' aspect of broadcast, thus advocating prime-time live video art or TV broadcasting art. Here, in the third phase of video art, a phase characteristic of the eighties, the goal of participation-TV may be accomplished not only by the fact that it addresses a mass audience deriving from the television public, but also because it operates the reconciliation of high art with popular art.

As such, happening and video art are interconnected by the notion of audience-participation, sharing the new concepts of intermedia, indeterminacy, and live art: this is one of the main hypotheses of the present thesis. Hence, both happening and video art belong to postmodernism, more precisely to poststructuralist postmodernism, the strategy of which is to deconstruct, via indeterminacy, logocentric representation (based on mimesis), or to blur, via intermedia, the distinction between different disciplines.

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Paik's video art and happening activities demonstrate most clearly the theoretical argument above. In this sense, Paik's work could be regarded as one of the "emblematic" features of postmodernism , as noted by Fredric Jameson.5

This study is divided in four chapters. In chapter I, I offer an historical reading of happening and a definition of the term. Chapter II will focus on Paik's own happening practice. Following a similar method, chapter III proposes a theoretical reading of video art, while chapter IV will deal with Paik's video work. In chapter I, I will present three themes that describe the participatory aspects of happening: indeterminacy, intermedia, and the resolution of art and life dichotomy. The aspect of indeterminacy derives from John Cage's musical approach, thus this part of the discussion will be mainly based on literature concerning Cage. In the case of intermedia, I will discuss happening in its relation to, and re-evaluation of, traditional theatre. For this, I will rely on the basic theories of happening brought forward by Michael Kirby and Richard Kostelanetz. Finally, in my examination of the resolution of art and life dichotomy, I will then situate happening in its historical context of modern performance art, based on RoseLee Goldberg's research in the field of live art.

In chapter II, I propose to demonstrate that Paik's

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5 A. Stephanson, "Interview with Fredric Jameson," Flash Art, no. 131, December 1986-January 1987, p. 72.

happenings should be considered as participation-
performances. The two periods that form his action music
activities, the Cologne period and the Fluxus Happening
period, will be examined. For my argumentation, I will rely
on critical literature dealing with his performances, on
primary sources derived from my own experiences of the Fluxus
Festival6 and Paik's performances7, and finally on interviews
with the Fluxus artists as well as with Paik.

In order to address the question of participation in
video art in chapter III, I chose to divide the video medium
into three parts: the mass-mediatic, the psychological and
the electronic; this will permit me to deal with the relation
of video with television, the narcissistic structure of
video, and the questioning of representation occurring in the
medium. In order to grasp video as a mass medium, I will
review the general history of video art and demonstrate the
televisual circular movement described above. As we will
see, this move from television to video to television

6 A Fluxus festival, "Festival of Fantastics," was held
in Roskilde, in Denmark, in 1985, from May 27th to June 2nd.
The participating artists were Eric Andersen, Philip Corner,
Geoffrey Hendricks, Alison Knowles, Jackson Mac Law, Ann
Noel, Anne Tardos, Ben Vautier, Bob Watts, and Emmett
Williams; they presented 17 programs of various sorts from
staged performances to street happenings. Though Paik did not
attend this event, his pieces, such as "Zen for Head" (1961),
were performed by Ben Vautier and others.

7 For example, "Life's Ambition Realized" performed by
Paik with Denise Gorden, Oct. 12, 1981, at The Kitchen, New
York, and other pieces performed at the Whitney Museum of Art
as part of his retrospective exhibition, June 2-3, 1982. For
details of the Whitney Performances, see pp. 92, 93, 95.

identifies with Paik's own recent satellite activities of "global TV," a term used by the artist to describe the new TV broadcasting art. The psychological aspect of the medium will be viewed in the light of Rosalind Krauss's theory of the narcissistic aesthetics of video art, in which she examines video reflection in terms of Freudian narcissism and Lacan's "Mirror Phase." Finally In dealing with video as an electronic medium, I will focus on the formal and the technical characteristics of the electronic image in order to establish an analogical relationship between the video image and the human sight. To examine this analogy, I will then explore perception theories developed in neuroscience, organization theory and cognitive psychology.

In chapter IV, Paik's video career will be divided into three phases corresponding to the three forms of his video activities: sculptural works (Prepared-TV), video tape works (Interactive Video), and satellite projects (Global-TV). For this discussion of Paik's video works, I will use both primary and secondary sources, the former obtained during personal visits to exhibitions and to Paik's studio in Soho, New York City.

This thesis aims to demonstrate that Paik's video art is primarily a participation-TV activity. In order to pursue this demonstration, I need to examine Paik's happening activities when he first elaborated his participation-performances. His video art is not only an extension of

happening, but also part of the same impulse to link art and life. The premise of this argument is that happening and video art are from the same pedigree of avant-garde art which aims to unite art and life praxis, a concern that is also a characteristic of postmodernism. I do not aim to question here whether the avant-gardiste intention or the postmodernist claim can be achieved successfully or not, or whether the result has succeeded or failed. In other words, this is not an evaluative study, although I will eventually address this problem in my conclusion by mentioning some of the contradictory aspects of avant-garde art in resolving the art and life dichotomy.

But before developing this subject any further, I deem it necessary to define two basic key terms composing my hypothesis: 'avant-garde' and 'postmodernism', two separate but historically successive and interrelated movements, both of which entail certain confusion in meaning and usage because they not only designate certain specific artistic trends but also refer to the same cultural phenomenon. Though the definitions or meanings of the terms may vary according to their use in different fields, theorists agree upon general terms: avant-garde art is generally defined as experimental, advanced, radical, original, and intellectual, as opposed to conventional, conservative, classic, or academic. For some authors, it refers to the "dehumanized, abstract, new art of the new generation" (Ortega Y Gasset),

or it is related to concepts such as "exception" (Vittorio
Pica), "novelty and strangeness" (Renato Poggioli),
"decadence" (Georg Lukacs), "negation or resistance" (Theodor
W. Adorno).8

While these concepts provide no distinction between the
avant-garde and other modernist movements since Romanticism,
Peter Bürger's theory distinguishes between an historical
avant-garde occurring at the beginning of this century (such
as Dadaism) and other pre and post-avant-garde modernist
movements based on "aestheticism." Bürger's theory links the
notion of the "autonomy of art" to modernist aestheticism, a
notion that grew during the romantic period and that became
institutionalized in bourgeois society. It was against this
form of modernism that the Dadaist staged their avant-garde
movement of self-criticism. The aim of the avant-garde was
not merely to criticize previous styles or schools as
modernist artists did, but to negate simultaneously art as an
autonomous institution and the society that promoted such a
phenomenon: the avant-garde impulse was anti-art and anti-
bourgeois. The anti-art provocation was to integrate art
into the praxis of life and society. Thus, for Bürger, the
crucial difference between modernism and avant-garde rested

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8 Refer to R. Poggioli, The Theory of the Avant-garde,
trans., G. Fitzgerald (Cambridge, London: The Belknap Press
of Harvard University Press, 1968); P. Bürger, Theory of the
Avant-Garde, trans., M. Shaw, vol. 4 of Theory and History of
literature, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press,
1984).

in the opposition between 'autonomy' and 'engagement'. He writes:

> The European avant-garde movements can be defined as an attack on the status of art in bourgeois society. What is negated is not an earlier form of art (a style) but art as an institution that is unassociated with the life praxis of men. When the avant-gardistes demand that art become practical once again, they do not mean that the contents of works of art should be socially significant. The demand is not raised at the level of the contents of individual works. Rather, it directs itself to the way art functions in society, a process that does as much to determine the effect that works have as does the particular content.9

Leaving aside the question of whether the avant-gardiste theory is defendable or not, Bürger postulates the inevitable and inherent failure of the avant-garde due to the nature of art and the mechanism of bourgeois society.

The claim of the historical avant-garde to link art and life has been maintained up to now by postmodernism in what Bürger calls the neo-avant-garde. Postmodernism generally designates the specific cultural phenomenon of the late bourgeois, capitalist society, commonly defined as the postindustrial consumer society appearing after World War II. Rooted both in modernism and the avant-garde, postmodernism, while sharing the 'engagement' of avant-garde, assumes a dual position vis-à-vis modernism, at once positive and negative. As Hal Foster suggests, postmodernism must thus be considered from two positions, one of reaction and one of opposition to the modernist tradition. The

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9 Bürger, op. cit., p. 49.

reactionary position is aligned with neo-conservative politics, and the oppositional position derives its logic from poststructuralist theories.10 Both aim at transcending high modernism regarding it as an autonomous, formalistic, abstract and 'hermetic' practice. The "postmodernism of reaction" returns to representation in terms of style and form, favoring the figurative, the narrative, and the ornamental that high modernism had abandoned. Though it reacts to modernism, it still depends on this movement because it shares on the one hand, the modernist definitions of history in which art is the negation of previous art, and on the other hand, like modernism, it recognizes traditional authorchip. By opposition, 'poststructualist postmodernism' "seeks to deconstruct modernism and resists the status quo." Foster speaks here of a "postmodernism of resistance."11 This latter position extends the artistic field: it is not merely anti-art or anti-culture, but anti-humanistic; it questions the very basis of humanist thinking, the subject as the center from which all knowledge emerges, hence negating the logocentrism from which is derived the metaphysical structure of western civilization. It thus "assumes 'the death of man', not only as original creator of unique

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10 H. Foster, "(Post)Modern Polemics," in _Recodings:_
Art, Spectacle, Cultural Politics (Seattle, Washington: Bay
Press, 1985), P. 121.

11 Foster, "Postmodernism: A Preface," in H.Foster, ed.,
Postmodern Culture (London, Sydney: Pluto Press, 1985), p. xii.

artifact but also as the centered subject of representation and history."12

As such, if neo-conservative postmodern art seeks to transform art history by integrating itself to the modernist tradition and by clinging to the traditional artistic media or genres (such as the canvas or the object), poststructuralist postmodernist art concentrates on the issue of deconstruction mainly by redefining mimesis and representation through the use of such activities as indeterminacy, intermedia or live art (activities introduced by the historical avantgarde). Thus, though Foster maintains that the two different, oppositional attitudes of postmodernism in the end "disclose a historical identity," the two are readily distinguishable both by intent and practice.13 By returning to the canvas tradition, by emphasizing the painting medium, and by attempting to recover representation, neo-conservative postmodernism, in spite of its stylistic eclecticism (one of the characteristics of postmodernism),14 shows a strong connection with Greenbergean

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12 Foster, Recodings, op. cit., p. 121.

13 Idem.

14 Jean-François Lyotard considers eclecticism as "mixing neo- or hyper motif with lyrically abstract or conceptual ones on a single surface"; he also seems to allude to the Neo-Expressionism or the Transavantgarde, as "eclecticism of consumerism" appealing only to the "magazine readers" or to the sensibility of the "supermarket shopper." "This 'taste' is not Taste," he continues, because it does not question the problem of the "nondemonstrable," that is, it neglects the tension "presenting the unpresentable," which

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modernism that claims the "self-definition" and "purity" of
each medium.15 By contrast, poststructuralist postmodernism,
because of its deconstruction of representation, belongs to
the traditic` of avant-garde, encompassing the issue of anti-
art by the larger concept of deconstruction. The imperative
of the historical avant-garde--the sublation of autonomous
art into live art--has become a strategy of postmodernist
deconstruction. Consequently the avant-gardiste practices
(such as 'collage' and 'allegory' which obey to a "fragment"
principle as opposed to the 'organic unity' of the
classicist-symbolist-modernist tradition, as well as 'chance'
and 'accident' operations which are opposed to rationalist
compositions; these devices are explored in order to shock
the audience) were appropriated by postmodernist artists
within a transformed morphology.16 The passage from collage
to 'combine', from chance to 'indeterminacy', or from

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he calls "sublime," or the sublime "tension between act of
painting and the essence of painting." Cf. Lyotard,
"Presenting the Unpresentable: The Sublime," Artforum, v. 20,
n. 8, April 1982, pp. 68-69. If one recalls that
'heterogeneity' or 'multiplicity', similar to but different
from eclecticism, is a true characteristic of postmodernism
in the decentered postmodern world, the stylistic eclecticism
of the neo-conservative postmodernism may be called 'pseudo-
heterogeneity'.

15 Refer to C. Geenberg, "Modernist Painting," The New
Art: A Critical Anthology, new, revised ed., edited by G.
Battcock (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1973), pp. 66-77.

16 Peter Bürger explained the avant-gardiste wo: /s by
dividin, the basic concepts into five categories; the problem
of the category 'work', the new, the chance, the allegory,
the montage. Cf. Bürger, op. cit., pp. 55-82.

'inorganic work' to 'intermedia' exemplifies this practice.
In postmodernist activity, there occurs a re-evaluation of
two-dimensional collage via three-dimensional collage
(combine) to environmental collage, realizing a new type of
collage which is enacted by the indeterminate, intermedia
happening environment, or the electronic video environment.
In brief, while the postmodernism of reaction belongs to the
tradition of modernism, the postmodernism of resistance
belongs to the avant-garde tradition, in which both happening
and video art are located.

Postmodernism and avant-garde being more clearly
defined, I will now proceed to analyze of happening and video
art. In studying Paik's art, I came to realize the lack of
critical literature and monographs dealing with his works.
My aim is to suggest a new vision of his art: Paik's
happenings and video art can and should be considered as a
participation art practicing the postmodernist's attempt to
resolve the dichotomy between art and life, a quest that
develops from the anti-art intention of the historical avant-
garde. Seeing Paik's performances and works, and meeting
with the artist, helped me a great deal to understand the
place of his art vis-à-vis the history of video art. I must
also mention that the catalogue, Nam June Paik: Videa 'n'
Videology 1959-1973, accompanying a retrospective exhibition
of Paik's works at the Everson Museum of Art (Syracuse, 1974)
also helped me to arrive at a global understanding of his

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art. I will not hesitate to quote frequently from this
catalogue: as Paik'. reflections speak best for his art.

CHAPTER I

THE PARTICIPATORY ASPECTS OF HAPPENING

Nam June Paik's artistic career was largely influenced by
happening which, as Harry Ruhé put it in the subtitle of his
book on Fluxus Happening, can be "the most radical and
experimental art movement of the 60's."[17] As the term
"radical" and "experimental" may imply, happening belonged to
the avant-garde tradition of anti-art experimentalism whose
ultimate aim was to be 'live art', to resolve the conventional
art and life dichotomy. Absorbing the lessons of live art
tradition on the one hand, and employing the new artistic
concepts like 'indeterminacy' and 'intermedia' on the other,
happening made its appearance as a new type of performance
art, quite different from traditional theatrical
performances.

The most novel aspect of happening is that it presupposes
the participation of an audience: happening accomplishes its
aim of live art in terms of involving the members of an

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17 H. Ruhé, Fluxus: the Most Radical and Experimental
Art Movement of the 60's (Amsterdam, 1979), n. p.

audience to take part in its event, transforming these members from passive spectators to active participants. Thus, as Pierre Restany noted:

> The happening may be seen primarily as a mechanism of communication, a language (or series of methods) particulary adapted to this purpose, a technique of collective participation whose practical justification is an end itself: that arousing among the participants an active sympathy, making them pass from the receptivity to action, creating in them and around them the conditions of a possible participation.18

These "conditions" mentioned by Restany would refer to, or be provided by, the multidisciplinary aspect of 'intermedia' and the 'indeterminate' situation of environment and action.

Taking this point of view in consideration, I deem it appropriate to divide this chapter in three parts: indeterminacy, intermedia , the resolution of the art/life dichotomy, which comprise the participatory aspects of happening in terms of concept, form and aim, respectively. The range of this study will not be limited to Paik's own happenings, but rather it will cover the general theories of happening while focusing on the aspect of audience-participation; this will provide a good understanding of the happening movement and thus lead to the study of Paik's activities in the following chapter.

However, before proceeding to the main discussion, it is important to distinguish between Fluxus Happening (Fluxus) to which Paik belonged and the American type of happening

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18 P. Restany, loc. cit., quoted in F. Popper, loc. cit.

(Happening) centering on Allan Kaprow in order to have a clear idea of Paik's activities. (In what follows, Fluxus stands for Fluxus P ppening, Happening for American Happening, while the small-lettered happening designates the general happening activities of both movements.)

Originally, both Fluxus and Happening were the products of John Cage's musical teaching. Courses he gave at Black Mountain College in North Carolina in the early 1950's and at the New School of Social Research in New York during the years 1956-58 represent Cage's educational endeavors. His early happening-oriented performances at the Black Mountain College with Merce Cunningham and Robert Rauschenberg evolved through the experimental music class of the New School. In fact, this class became the seedbed of happening that gave birth to Fluxus and Happening; among the students of this class, Kaprow and Al Hansen became protagonists of Happening on the New York scene, while Dick Higgins, George Brecht, Jackson Mac Law went on to take part with other avant-garde artists in Europe (including Paik) in the formation of Fluxus, the internationalized happening movement.19 Although participants of Fluxus and Happening, as followers of Cage's musical philosophy and as the heirs of Duchampean avantgardism, share a common artistic aim, form and concept, they differ as to the location of their activities and the constituent element of

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19 For the detailed description of this class, see D. Higgins, Postface (New York: Something Else Press, 1964), e. g., p. 51.

each group.

Firstly, they are different in their organizational aspects. Fluxus can be regarded as a movement forming a "united front"20 under the banner of George Maciunas's straightforward leadership, whereas Happening is a more loosely organized group arising out of friendship and a common interest in certain specific artistic aims. Secondly and more importantly, the quality and the number of their audience-participation varies greatly; the issue of audience-participation is more essential in American Happening than in Fluxus. Since Kaprow's concept of happening evolved from the idea of including the audience in the artistic activities (regarding them as an element of environmental collage in the happening situation21), the Kaprow-centered American Happening demands and presupposes the active participation of an audience, thus resulting in its "chaotic appearance."22 On the other hand, Fluxus, based on minimalist-oriented aesthetics23, stresses "more of the character of

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20 This expression is quoted from the manifesto of George Maciunas. Cf. H. Sohm, ed., Happening & Fluxus (Cologne: Kolnnischer Kunstverein, 1970), n. p.

21 For a detailed discussion, see pp. 43-44 below.

22 G. Adriani, W. Konnertz, and K. Thomas, Joseph Beuys: Life and Works, trans., Patricia Lech (Woodbury: Barron's, 1979), p. 82.

23 'Minimalism' is one of nine criteria of Fluxus set up by Dick Higgins. Cf. D. Higgins, Fluxus: Theory and Reception (1981), p. 16, quoted in, M. Bech, "Fluxus," North, Copenhagen, No. 15, 1985, p. 18, p. 65 (note 28). Also, see George Brecht's notion of "Event"--the "minimalistic analog of

demonstration," and favors a more conceptual and "disciplined character" in audience-participation.24

Each group of artists shows dissimilar artistic origin. Whereas many of the Happening members (Allan Kaprow, Red Groom, Jim Dine, Clas Oldenburg, etc.) are from the visual art milieu, others such as musicians or performance artists (Nam June Paik, Dick Higgins, Joe Jones, Philip Corner, etc.) contributed to the formation of Fluxus. The former moved from painting or sculpture towards environmental art, whereas the latter were adepts of staged performances. However, this distinction can not be strictly maintained, due to the strong characters of individual artists: Wolf Vostell's "Décollage"25 happening, for example, appears rather close to American Happening with its clamorous atmosphere; Beuys' unique expressionism seems to belong neither to Happening nor to Fluxus, though he was associated with Fluxus.26 Thus, we can

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the happening," followed by Higgins' interpretation. Cf. Higgins, "Postmodern Performance: some Criteria and common Points," Performance by Artists, ed., AA Bronson and P. Gale (Toronto: Art Metropole, 1979), p. 176.--also attests to this point. For Brecht's "Event," see H. Sohm ed., Fluxus & Happening, loc. cit.

24 Adriani et al, loc. cit.

25 For the meaning of Vostell's Décollage, see p. 175 and footnote no. 365 below.

26 Due to these tendencies, Maciunas considered Vostell and Beuys as having had "nothing to do with Fluxus-ever," and distinguished them from the group of real 'Fluxus-People' (Paik, Ben Vautier, Brecht, Higgins, Alison Knowles, Maciunas Robert Watts, etc.). For further distinctions of Fluxus artists by Maciunas, see the Preface of H. Ruhé, Fluxus loc. cit.

conclude that Happening and Fluxus, however different they are in the aspect of audience-participation, together represent happening, the new artistic movement of the 1960's that made audience-participation its goal.

A. INDETERMINACY

> Without Cage, M. Duchamp, and Dada, Fluxus would not exist. Especially without Cage, who . . . has done two brainwashings. The first, at the level of contemporary music by the notion of indeterminateness, the other, by his teaching through the spirit of Zen and his will to depersonalize art.27

From Ben Vautier's remark which seems to epitomize Cage's contribution to contemporary art, we become aware that the latter's main input was the introduction of the notion of indeterminacy in the domain of art (which is related to the spirit of Zen) and his will to depersonalize art in the frame of his thinking.28   As Cage's artistic concepts mainly derived from musical thinking based on oriental philosophy, so too

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27 H. Ruhé, loc. cit.

28 Cage mentioned the relation of Zen to his art in the foreward of his book, Silence. Cf. Cage, Silence: Lectures and Writings by John Cage (Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1973), pp. ix-xi. Calvin Tomkins reports that Zen Buddhism's "anti-rational and at times harsh logic took for him, as he said, the place of psychoanalysis." Cf. C.Tomkins, Off the Wall: Robert Rauschenberg and the Art World of Our Time (New York: Penguin Books, (1980),1985), p. 68. As well Richard Kostelanetz relates Cagean repetition and boredom to Zen. Cf. Kostelanetz, "Contemporary American Esthetics," Esthetics Contemporary, ed., Kostelanetz (New York: Prometheus Books, 1978), p. 27.

does the notion of indeterminacy—possibly the opposite or the alternative to the determinacy of Western logocentrism. Though Cage seems not to have given a philosophical definition of indeterminacy,29 except as having "flexibility, changibility, fluency,"30 he nevertheless relates it to the theory and the practice of musical pieces which have compositions and performances that are indeterminate in character.

According to his theory, indeterminate music is concerned with process rather than with completion, because it is made essentially without any intention except only to make it non-intentional, that is, with "purposeful purposelessness."31 Cage describes:

> [The] composition [which is indeterminate with respect to its performance] is necessarily experimental. An experimental action is the one the outcome of which is not forseen [sic]. Being unforseen [sic], this action is not concerned with its excuse. Like the land, like the air, it needs none. A performance of a composition which is indeterminate of its performance is necessarily unique. It cannot be repeated. When performed for a second time, the outcome is other than it was.32

Then, there are certain practical matters, Cage maintains,

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29 It is my inference derived from available information.

30 Kostelanetz, "Conversation with John Cage," John Cage, ed., Kostelanetz (New York: Praeger Publishers Inc., 1970), p. 10.

31 Kostelanetz, "Contemporary American Esthetics," op. cit., p. 28.

32 Cage, Silence, op. cit., p. 39.

concerning the composition and the performance of indeterminate pieces: the physical space and the physical time.

By physical space, he refers to a new spatial disposition of musical elements, an environment in which the traditional use of stage becomes obsolete. In order to create this environment, Cage advises the players to separate from each other or to scatter throughout the architectural space, so that the sounds can be "issued from their own center," to "interpenetrate" in a manner not to be obstructed by any conventional musical organization.33 Thus, the music is more the product of processes than of the harmonious fusion of sounds. More than that, this environmental situation is, according to him, quite pertinent for the independent actions of the players, because the scattered positions make it easier for them "to turn their mind in the direction of no matter what eventuality."34 In the end, the sounds that arise from the actions of the players would bear on the actuality of the music rather than creating "psychological" or illusory effect.

By refering to physical time, Cage means the elimination of the artistic or fabricated time as opposed to real time. This can be realized in terms of replacing the traditional function of the conductor--the beating time by which a performance is unified--by using a real watch or having the

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33 <u>Idem</u>.

34 <u>Idem</u>.

conductor taking on a new function by substituting for the watch. By doing that, as he maintains, the sound would be issued in a time independent of a beat, which would evoke a new perception of time that has already been realized and practiced in the area of broadcast communication.35 And here, though Cage does not mention video art per.se, he might suggest the importance and the inevitability of real time in video art.

The introduction of the physical space and the physical time in the domain of musical performance is very significant. It is not only because the spatial dimension in the time-based musical art implies the environmental aspect of its performance (which contributes to the happening environment), but also because the concept of real time and real space would come to define the 'here and now' aesthetics of happening, conforming to the postmodern sensibility. In this context, the functional relation between the concept of indeterminacy and the issue of audience-participation develops: real time and real space become a necessary and sufficient condition for causing, by chance or accident, the indeterminate state of the happening environment which includes the presence of audience either as as a chance element or a given condition. In this situation, the .audience is no longer alienated from the artistic event, but comes to participate in or share the experience of the artists both at

35 Ibid., p. 40.

the conceptual and actual levels: conceptual by their existence, and actual by their physical presence.36 This explains why the audience has the impression, as Cage states, that the music or the event makes its own action rather than the composer's or the performer's.37

An "Untitled Event" performed by Cage and others in 1952 in Black Mountain College exemplifies the indeterminate happening based on physical time and space. According to the detailed descriptions of this event by Roselee Goldberg, the scene was performed as follows: Cage, standing on a step ladder, read a text related to Zen Buddhism, while Rauschenberg and David Tudor from the sides played old records and 'prepared piano'. Planted in the audience, Charles Olsen and Mary Caroline Richards read poems, during which Cunningham and others danced in the aisles chased by an excited dog while, in a corner, Jay Watt played exotic musical instruments.38 All the players were scattered throughout the space and around the audience, located in the middle of the activities and forming, according to Goldberg, four triangles created by the diagonal aisles. The players were supposed to

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36 The actual participation by their physical presence refers as well to all the possible sounds and movements that audience produce, which contribute to the work as elements of art.

37 Kostelanetz, "Conversation with John Cage," op. cit., p. 11.

38 R. Goldberg, Performance: Live Art 1909 to the Present (London: Thames and Hudson, 1979), p. 82.

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act each action independently and concurrently by the given

scores that indicated only the "time bracket" between

actions.39 There were apparently neither a conductor who was

beating time, nor any dominant figure who governed the

performance. Instead, "they were never sure what was going

to happen next" as Cunningham recalls,40 or if "anything that

happened after that happened in the observer himself" as Cage

remembers;41 both comments suggest the shared experience of

the event between performers or even between performer and

audience.

While the artistic legitimacy of the notion of

indeterminacy is as described above, the methodology for

creating the state of indeterminacy brings forth the principle

of "chance operation." Chance operations, it can be said, are

an artificial or artistic method to create an indeterminate

state in the domain of art. Cage chose to use, for this

operation, I Ching, the Chinese Book of Change, which provided

him with a methodical system using pure chance: throwing coins

or marked sticks for chance numbers, the complicated system of

which becomes the governing rule for composition.42 The piece

composed by this rule would thus become "free of individual

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39 Idem.

40 Tomkins, op. cit., p. 75.

41 Goldberg, op. cit., p. 82.

42 H. Cowell, "Current Chronicle," John Cage, op. cit.,
p. 99.

taste and memory in their order of events," as Henry Cowell
points out.43 Cage's "Imaginary Landscape" (No.4, 1951) is
typical of the indeterminate piece operated by the chance
operation. This piece consists of performances by twenty-four
players controlling the volume and the channels of each twelve
radios, the score instruction of which was made by tossing
coins.44 The music will experience various changes during its
diffusion, according to the diverse broadcasting programs of
the different channel of each radio, the "live time machine,"
and in spite of the pre-planned programming.45

The idea of chance operation is not new. It has
historical precedents: "Accidental Poems" by Tristan Tzara,
"Collage with Squares Arranged to the Chance" (1916) by Hans
Arp, or "Trois Stoppages-Etalon" (1913) by Marcel Duchamp;
such Dada inventions were derived from the experimental
spirit, free from artistic intentions and conforming to the
goal of an anti-art principle. Indeed, the use of chance, as
"symbol of freedom," or as total opposition to art became one
of the principal practices of the historical avant-garde.46
However, it must be noted that while the Dadaists' chance
operations were inspired by Freud's theory of unconscious as

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43 Idem.

44 Idem.

45 Kostelanetz, "Contemporary American Esthetics," loc.
cit.

46 Bürger, op. cit., p. 66.

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was also the case with the Surrealists' automatism, Cage achieved this position "through external techniques . . . which release him from his own psychology."47 Thus, the resulting outcome for Cage was not "a juxtaposition of dissimilars" as Cubist-Dada collage, but "a multiple melange that is without symbolic reference, without a formal center, without distinct beginning or ends, thus suggesting unfinishedness."48 However, both Dadaist chance and Cagean chance involve "painstaking calculation," the result of which entails "unpredictable" indeterminacy. Peter Burger suggests that this type of "mediated" chance must be distinguished from the "direct" chance used by Action Painting or Tachism, which refers to total "spontaneity," "empty subjectivity," and the result of which remains "accidental" and "arbitrary."49

Such Dadaist-Cagean chance operations inducing indeterminacy, not spontaneity, become the essential aesthetic of happening. This is self-evident when we consider the title of Fluxus organ, V TRE. The spelling V TRE was taken from the remaining letters of a certain burned down neon-sign, which George Brecht discovered by chance and adopted as the name of the publication. The idea behind the accidental adoption was that the title would change indeterminately but would always

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47 J.Johnston, "There is no more Silence," John Cage op. cit., P. 147.

48 Kostelanetz, "Contemporary American Esthetics," loc. cit.

49 Bürger, op. cit., p. 67.

include the letters V TRE; for example, Valise eTRanglE, fiVe

ThReE, or Vacuum TRapEzoid, which were merely li·guistic puns

without any meanings.50   But most importantly, Cage's two key

concepts, chance and indeterminacy, provided him with the

logical basis for his music theory, which could be called

'noise music', the musical prototype of happening.51   Cage

regarded every sound, whether music or nrise, as a musical

element.   Accordingly, all the aleatory elements surrounding

him, even silence or the presence of someone, could become

musical events for him.   His "Première 4'33"" (1952)

demonstrated how his noise music could use silence or noise or

the presence of an audience as a musical event so as to make

all the elements an essential part of the musical event.   This

event appeared too simple and totally absurd: David Tudor sat

in front of a piano for 4 minutes and 33 seconds doing nothing

except raising his arms three times to suggest the three

movements of the piece.   Out of this silence, the noise or

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50 Ruhé, loc. cit.

51 The Cagean noise music can be traced back to the "Art
of Noise" of Luigi Russolo, the Italian Futurist. Russolo
extended the notion of music by regarding as the source of
musical sound all the noises, ranging from the natural noise
like thunder or wind to the city noise by factory machines,
etc.In addition to his manifesto of "Art of Noise" in 1913, he
fabricated 'Noise Intoner'(Intonarumori) to practice his
theory with which he created "networks of noise." Cf.   C.
Tisdall and A. Bozzolla, Futurism (New York and Toronto:
Oxford Univ. Press, 1978), pp. 115-7; Goldberg, op. cit., p.
15. However, the Cagean concept of noise based on
indeterminacy must be distinguished from the Futurists' noise
music which may be seen as an eulogy to the modern technical
development.

sound coming from the audience was the only music to be heard.

Kostelanetz suggested that "Première 4' 33''" represented Cage's aesthetic notions of noise music: since every musical piece carried silent passages and since pure silence was physically impossible, every music eventually contained both intentional [music] and non-intentional sound [noise]; and because any noise was accidental, no piece could be the same twice in aural experience [indeterminacy], thus noise and sound became equal in musical ontology [noise music]. From this inference, he derived the conclusion that "4'33''" demonstrated a "redefinition of musical art and the enhancement of our everyday aural lives."[52] However, Kostelanetz neglected to point out the aspect of audience-participation inherent in this piece, even though his remark may have implied that meaning. Indeed, "4'33''" was a musical prototype of happening that presupposed the participation of an audience whose presence itself composed the musical event.

We can see that the participation of the audience was made possible in a specific environment, created or prepared for the purpose of participation. As previously mentioned, indeterminate situations based on real time and real space evolved into happening environment that included the audience as a given condition, and that the 'creation of environment' and the 'audience-participation' are the key terms that

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52 Kostelanetz, "Inferential Art," John Cage, op. cit., p. 108.

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characterize happening. The two are conditions for the creation of happening: the new concept of environment replaces the traditional objecthood of the artwork that bars direct communication between art and audience, and the audience in such an environment comes to take part in the artistic event, thus establishing a new relationship between art and audience, a more direct and activated one than had hitherto existed. In this context, the kinship of happening with kinetic art, and also with video art (which, in its inception, was regarded as a kind of kinetic art[53]), might be set up. Thus, as Frank Popper noted, "with Cage, as in the most recent expressions of kinetic art, the notion of the environment is closely linked with that of the presence of the public."[54]

Because of this linking of environment and audience, environmental art in general gives the impression of "unfinished character"[55] as opposed to the finished character of 'object art', waiting for the participation of audience for completion. Also because of the indeterminate character of the environment and of the actions of the players and

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53 The first group exhibition of video art held at the Howard Wise Gallery in 1969, "TV as Creative Medium," was conceived as an extended presentation of kinetic sculpture; see p. 178 below. And for a detailed discussion of the kinship of video art and kinetic art, see pp. 151-2 below.

54 Popper, op. cit., p. 151. Paik also noted this point by saying, "This (audience-participation) [held by Mcluhan with his notion of "cool media"] might have been the first bait, taken up by Cage." Cf. Paik, Videa 'n' Videology , loc. cit. For the discussion of "cool media," see pp. 205-6 below.

55 Popper, loc. cit.

sometimes of the audience as well) happening gives the impression of more freedom than that of object art which emphasizes form and style. However, the unfinished character or the freedom is far from improvisation. The improvisation, though it appears open to unlimited freedom, still works within a tradition, depending on "acquired habit and, thus conventions."56 On the other hand, the freedom of indeterminacy is referred to as "unexpected and unpredictable results," neverthless produced by systemized rules or methods.57 Thus, we can say that the freedom of indeterminacy is at once 'prepared' and pure in terms of cause and effect. Cage's chance operation, a tool for creating the indeterminacy, is a systematic method using pure chance. Indeed, the uniqueness of the outcome of Cage's music comes from this deliberate synthesis of the systematic and the indeterminate, prepared and pure, order and chaos, logical and alogical, etc. The repetitive a.d successive variations in rhythm and melody that form the typical style of his music not only reflect such a contradictory use of the "self-denying principle,"58 but also represent the dual character of

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56 Kostelanetz, "Contemporary American Esthetics," loc. cit.

57 Idem.

58 Kostelanetz, "Contemporary American Esthetics," loc. cit.

indeterminacy, the bridled freedom.59

Kaprow emphasizes this controlled character of
indeterminacy in happening by pointing out the misconception
of happening derived from the "unfortunate" use of this word
as its name.60   As he claims, the word, "happening," suggests
something rather spontaneous that "just happens to happen," or
something "unforeseen, casual, unintended, undirected," as of
an event or occurrence.61 However, as his first happening
piece "18 happenings in 6 parts" (1959) shows, the structure
of happening is a well organized construction of events which
includes concurrently elements such as "environment,
constructed sections, time, space and people."62   This
organized structure, according to Kaprow, only permits a
"different degree of flexibility" in actual performances, "the
contributions of each person, accidents of weather, the slips
in timing, etc.   . . within parameters of an otherwise

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59 Cage's typical stlye is "based on one or another set
division of absolute time, such as a unit of sixty seconds,
etc."   For detailed explanations, see Cowell, op. cit., pp.
95-96.

60 A. Kaprow, "A Statement," Happenings, written and
edited by Michael Kirby (New York: E.P.Dutton & Co.,Inc.,
1965), p. 47.   For the motivation of coining the name, see
Kostelanetz, The Theatre of Mixed-Means (New York: RK Edition,
1980), p. 111.

61 Kaprow, loc. cit.

62 Ibid., p. 46.   The scrip and the description of the
production of this piece are presented in the same book, pp.
53-83.

strictly controlled imagery."63 Thus, "planned variation" or "controlled flexibility" would be Kaprow's version of indeterminacy.64

Michael Kirby's theoretical study on happening (exclusively on American Happening) clarifies this point when he distinguishes the indeterminate character of happening from the improvised one of traditional theatre. His argument proceeds from the analysis of the structure of happening which goes like this: happening is "not exclusively visual or pictorial" compared to the traditional scenic theatre. It contains aural (sound) or even olfactory (odor) elements of the same importance. Frequently, pure sound value, whether it is music or noise, mostly resulting from unique actions, presides over verbal value of traditional theatre. The words used in happening have no primary effect or importance. This "non-verbal" character of happening corresponds to the "compartmented structure" that blocks the matrixed information passing through the whole plot structure in the story-based traditional theatre. This means that happening is "non-matrixed performance" transcending the traditional time-space-character matrix, and thus becomes "alogical" in respect to

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63 Ibid., p. 51.

64 Kostelanetz made a distinction between Cage and Kaprow in that "whereas Cage offered an esthetics for unpredictability (and the acceptance of happenstance), Kaprow forged instead a philosophy advocating impermanence on one hand, and art independent of any objective forms on the other." Cf. Kostelanetz, "Contemporary American Esthetics," op. cit., p. 31.

the informational function.65

Happening, based on such a compartmented-nonmatrixed·· alogical structure, appears to have high-degree of freedom in actions compared to traditional theatre. However, this freedom, following Kirby, is not necessarily an improvised one as in the case of the matrixed-logical-plot structure of traditional theatre. Kirby supports this view by defining the role of improvisation. Firstly, improvisation refers to the detailed variations within the given matrix. Accordingly, while it has a special function in the traditional theatre, it does not contribute anything to happening structure where the words have no specific references. In brief, there is no need of improvisation in the nonmatrixed alogical structure of happening. Secondly, improvisation is related to the actions of players. The traditional actors act aesthetically, so that they often face the momentary challenges to adjust their acting to others, which requires certain improvisations. On the other hand, because in happening the performers perform their tasks functionally, there is no need to attempt to adjust to, or fuse with the others. Thus, their freedom in action is not an improvised one, but an indeterminate one.66

Because of this character of indeterminacy, that is, the fundamental flexibility distinct from the matrixed freedom of

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65 M. Kirby, "Introduction," Happenings, op. cit., pp. 11-20.

66 Ibid., p. 18.

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improvisation, the performances of the same happening piece

vary greatly from one to another. While the difference itself

between the performances is not important as Kirby has pointed

out, this variation characterizes the quality and the property

of happening, bearing the significant meaning of real time and

real space on which Cage's new concept of indeterminacy of was

based.67

B. INTERMEDIA

> Part of the reason that Duchamp's objects are fascinating
> while Picasso's voice is fading is that the Duchamp
> pieces are truly between media, between sculpture and
> something else, while a Picasso is readily classifiable
> as a painted ornament.68

This is what Dick Higgins mentioned in his article on

"Intermedia" (1966). He established the concept "intermedia"

to distinguish the new artistic form of concept that lies

between the areas of traditional genres or conventional

principles from the unique style of painting or sculpture. He

found the prototype of intermedia in the works of Duchamp and

the typical expression of it in the art of happening. In

fact, various experiments to transcend the uniqueness of any

artistic medium had already been attempted by the avant-

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67 Ibid., p. 19.

68 Higgins, "Intermedia," Esthetics Contemporary, op.
cit., p. 187; the same article, in H. Ruhé, loc. cit.

gardes, which were to be finally accomplished by the neo-avant-gardes.

Kostelanetz finds an early example of intermedia in the art of Moholy-Nagy, whose concept was based on "kinesis" and "arts-between-old-arts." The factor of kinesis was, as Kostelanetz points out, "a decisive evolution from fixed perspective to vision in motion," hinted at already in the multiple perspectives of the Cubist surface and developed later into mobil sculpture or kinetic art.69 Kinetic art, as we mentioned earlier, shares the 'here and now' aesthetics of happening that leads to the creation of an environment that evokes the participation of an audience: happening uses physical space and physical time for the creation of the environment, kinetic art uses "the parameters of real time and motion" for the same purpose.70 The actual or physical elements both in happening and kinetic art confer on them the quality of the non-representational or non-illusionistic. Jack Burnham distinguished the non-representational character of kinetic art from traditional automata that is rooted in craftsmanship and mechanical competence: kinetic art emphasizes the pure "motion" (resulted from forces directly connected to physical system), and its "effect" (usually

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69 Kostelanetz, "Contemporary American Esthetics," op. cit., p. 25.

70 J. Burnham, Beyond Modern Sculpture: the Effect of Science and Technology on the Sculpture of this Century (New York: George Brasiller, 1968), p. 218.

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produced without visible cause), while automata depends upon "intelligence, anthropomorphism, temporal sequence, and coordination."[71]   This comparison recalls Kirby's comparative study between happening and traditional theatre, which forms a parallelism wherein an equation of nonmatrixed-alogical happening and kinetic art versus matrixed-logical theatre and automata might be set up.

The analogy between happening and kinetic art goes further.   The kinetic element in art, in terms of pure motion and its effect, calls forth the problem of classification as in happening, which relates to the second point of Moholy-Nagy's concept, "arts-between-old-arts," intermedia, in Higgins's term.   Kinetic art, because of its non-illusionistic and non-two-dimensional quality, seems easily classified as sculpture.   However, it was, as Jack Burnham pointed out, a rather accidental classification caused by the possible choice between the two dominant fields of sculpture and painting.[72] In fact, kinetic art, as Moholy-Nagy's "arts-between-old-arts" implies, is beyond such simple categorization as mere sculpture.   It reflects the modern sensibility that admits the "diversity" or freedom of artistic types, or the "particular integrity" of traditional media.   This "new inter-medium" would be echoed, as Kostelanetz maintains, in the themes of Cage, such as indeterminacy or art as process, which would

71 Ibid., p. 219.

72 Ibid., p. 220.

influence the art of intermedia after the 60's, beginning with happening.73

Gottlieb commented on this particular tendency towards intermedia under the title of "Storming the Barrier; the Aesthetics of Merger" in her book, Beyond Modern Art (1976). According to her arguments, the storming of the barrier is not limited to the fields of artistic genres such as painting and sculpture or art and music, but is also applicable to other disciplines of human activity such as art and science.74   She analyzed the phenomenon of the merger in terms of six sections of synthesis: 1) the synthesis of painting and sculpture; the wounded canvas, combines, the nongeometric field; 2) the synthesis of art and architecture; environment, light situation, space sculpture, sculpture as causeway, land art; 3) the synthesis of fine art and verbal art (literature, theatre); lettrism, happening; 4) the synthesis of fine art and motion art (film, dance); design in movement; 5) the synthesis of art and music; the use of sound; 6) the synthesis

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73 Kostelanetz, "Contemporary American Esthetics," op. cit., pp. 26, 28.

74 Fredric Jameson considers this "effacement of key boundaries or separations" as one of the features of postmodernism: " Today . . . we have a kind of writing simply called 'theory' which is all or none of those things [different discourses such as philosophy, political science, or sociology]. . . . Is the work of Michel Foucault, for example, to be called philosophy, history, social theory or political science ?" Cf. F. Jameson, "Postmodernism and Consumer Society," Postmodern Culture , ed., Hal Foster (London: Pluto Press, 1985), p. 112.

of art and science; physics as tool.75

Gottlieb related happening to the synthesis of art and architecture, and of fine art and verbal art. The former refers to the happening environment, especially that of Kaprow's, which can be conceived of as the combination of sculpture and architecture: the environment is neither architecture, since it is "useless and uninhabitable in every practical sense," nor sculpture, since it "must be walked into."76 In case of the latter, she refers to the relation of happening with lettrism and with the theatre. The marriage of art with lettrism or literature is not new: Cubists' collage works, Schwitters' 'Merz', or Magritte's surreal juxtapositions of images and words provide the examples (the Calligrammes of Appolinaire show the reverse).77 However, Kaprow's happenings, following Gottlieb, involve the whole gamut of lettrism, as his "Words" demonstrates, combining words as signs and as shapes and juxtaposing the lowbrow use of words in advertisements to the high brow use of words in poem.78 The connection of happening and theatre is evident. Kirby's definition of happening shows it: "a purposefully composed form of theatre in which diverse alogical elements,

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75 C. Gottlieb, Beyond Modern Art (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1976), p. 198, p. vi.

76 Ibid., p. 212.

77 Ibid., p. 256.

78 Ibid., p. 257.

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including nonmatrixed performing, are organized in a compartmented structure."79 Or, as the title of Kostelanetz's book on happening attests: "The Theatre of Mixed-Means." Gottlieb's own words to define happening go as follows: "an abstract theatre performed by amateurs who are artists."80 Here, the term abstract may be used, first of all, as the opposite of realistic effect, derived from the plot structure of traditional theatre. But, at the same time, as she maintains, it suggests the connection with visual art or art history, which makes happening belong to the history of art, as well as to the history of the theatre.81

Kaprow's statements on the origin of happening testify the art-originated aspect of happening. The origin of happening was, for Kaprow, a "multileveled attitude towards painting," which was developed into a "kind of action collage technique" (inspired by Pollock), "grasping up great hunks of varied matter: tinfoil, straw, canvas, photos, newspaper, etc., [and] the autobiographical fragments."82 The action collage became bigger in so far as it included audible elements and later all sorts of sensory elements. This created an entire environment, which made him discontented with the gallery space, thus led him to the outdoors so as to

79 Kirby, Happenings, op. cit., p. 21.

80 Gottlieb, op. cit., p. 257.

81 Ibid., p. 258.

82 Kaprow, "A Statement," Happenings, op. cit., pp. 44-45.

"float an environment into the rest of life."83 In this

environment every visitor became a participant by being part

of it, and they were given by Kaprow the responsibility to do

something to develop or to complete the happening situation.

Thus, Kaprow's happening is not only the synthesis of art and

theatre, as Gottlieb argues. It is also, as Dick Higgins

claims, intermedia, "an uncharted land that lies between

collage, music and theatre."84 Strictly speaking, it is an

intermedia between painting/sculpture (collage) /architecture

(environment) /music (sound) /dance (motion). In brief,

happening epitomizes the aesthetic of merger, of intermedia.

Following Higgins's arguments, each artist working in the

domain of happening contributes to the intermedia differently

according to his artistic concept or background. For example,

Kaprow, being a former painter, conceived happening situation

from the perspective of collage technique; Higgins, who

started his career as a composer, set up a happening situation

from a new theatrical concept, removing the separation of

performance and audience with a systematic method that

replaces the traditional time and space sequence by the

structural element of change. By the same token, Nam June

Paik entered into happening by replacing musical elements with

nonmusical actions. As well, the work of Philip Corner would

be the intermedia between music and philosophy; Joe Johns,

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83 Ibid., pp. 44-46.

84 Higgins, "Intermedia," op. cit., p. 189.

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between music and sculpture; and finally the 'concrete poems',
the literary chance operation of Emmett Williams[85] and Robert
Filliou, the intermedia between poetry (text) and sculpture
(visual art).[86]

If the "intermedia" of Higgins or the "aesthetics of
merger" of Gottlieb refer to the integration or synthesis of
various genres, we could possibly say that the traditional
theatre or opera is also an intermedia, since it also includes
the various art forms, such as song, drama, and dance.
Kostelanetz's theory of mixed-means medium solves this
problem: he distinguishes the new form of theatre such as
happening, which he called "new theatre of mixed means," from
the primitive ceremonies or musical stages of traditional
mixed means theatre in two respects. The first is related to
the components of the mixed means, and the second to the
different relationship between these components. That is,
firstly, while traditional theatre was composed of poetic
language, song ,setting, and dance, among which the poetic
language was the main factor supported by the rest, the new

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85 E. Williams's explanation for his concrete poem,
"Alphabet Symphony," clarifies the meaning of concrete poem:
it is "as depersonalized as the letters of the alphabet the
twenty-six objects and activities are substituted for, and
using an alphabet of object and activities to spell "love" or
anything else is bound to produce combinations that go far
beyond the barriers of logic and common sense. Chance
encounters make strange bedfellows." Cf. Ruhé, loc. cit.

86 Higgins, "Intermedia," op. cit., pp. 189-90;
Higgins, "Postmodern Performance: Some Criteria and Common
Points," Performance by Artists, op. cit., p. 176.

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theatre not only banishes the predomination of languages but also includes new elements ranging from painting, sculpture, light, odor, even extending to film, tape, audio systems, or video installation. Secondly, in the traditional theatre, the components complemented each other in such a way that music accompanied songs or dance, while, in the new theatre, each component functions independently so that each element is used for its own possibility.[87]

After distinguishing the new theatre from the traditional one, Kostelanetz further divided the new theatre into four categories, which, as he maintains, would have the advantage of "isolating the major characteristic and yet encompassing the entire movement" of the new theatre. The criterion of the division is dependent upon whether the three elements of space, time, and action are open to indeterminate situations or not, among which only the case of triple openness would be regarded as pure happening as the table below shows:[88]

genre	space	time	action
pure happening	open	variable	variable
staged happening	closed	variable	variable
staged performance	closed	fixed	fixed
kinetic environment	closed	fixed	fixed

In spite of the individual or occasional differences, as Kostelanetz enumerates in some examples, most American Happening manifests itself as pure happening, while Fluxus

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87 Kostelanetz, The Theatre of Mixed-Means, op. cit., pp. 3-4.

88 Ibid., p. 7.

belongs to the staged happening or kinetic environment rather
than pure happening.89 However that may be, the difference in
the two movements seems ti lie in the degree and quality of
the audience-participation, as mentioned above, and that the
issue is more important in Happening than in Fluxus. However
the distinction between Happening and Fluxus in terms of the
above table is not of primary concern to us. What we can
infer from this tabulation is that the more indeterminate the
situation of time/space/action, the purer the happening in the
context of audience-participation. In other words, in
happening, as an art of "collective participation" (Restany),
the degree of purity is determined by the degree of audience-
participation, which is determined in turn by the degree of
indeterminacy of a happening situation in terms of
time/space/action.

Whether it is the "intermedia" of Higgins or "mixed means
medium" of Kostelanetz (the former being a larger concept
including the latter that deals only with performance art in
the name of "new theatre"), both of them designate the unique
style of happening, as if coined for happening. That is, both
terms represent the formal aspect of happening, which defines
or is defined by the substantial or conceptual aspect of
happening, indeterminacy. That is to say that the form of

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89 Kostelanetz considers Fluxus as pure happening or
kinetic environment. Cf. Ibid., p. 5-6. However, in my point
of view based on direct experiences, staged happening is most
frequent in Fluxus Happening.

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intermedia and the concept of indeterminacy are two sides of one entity, which become artistic devices to activate audience-participation. We can easily conceive the close connection between the two: when a performance or an artwork is based on the concept of indeterminacy, it usually consists of intermedia, or vice versa. The aforementioned "Untitled Event" (1952) by Cage and others provides a perfect example for this. It was not only a prototype of happening, the performance and the composition of which was indeterminate, but at the same time it was also a precursor of happening as being "the first multi-media spectacle," as Calvin Tomkins claimed, employing poetry, music, dance, etc.[90] Just as indeterminacy automatically includes the presence of the audience as an element of the happening environment, the intermedia naturally allows room for the audience. It transcends the hierarchic system of traditional theatre in terms of its democratic organization, where artist and audience share the same experience in a horizontal situation, in addition to the maintenance of the equal value of each medium. In this respect, we could say that the intermedia or the new theatre is the most pertinent form for the public-democratic spirit of live art handed down from the variety theatre[91] or vaudeville.[92] Or, to paraphrase the reading of

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[90] Tomkins, op. cit., p. 75.

[91] Originally meaning 'variety entertainment' or 'variety show', it had prevailed from the end of the 19th century untill before World War II, and declined with the development

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Kostelanetz's table, the more intermedia, the purer the

happening, in the context of audience-participation.

C. THE RESOLUTION OF THE ART AND LIFE DICHOTOMY

Performance has been considered as a way of bringing to
life the many formal and conceptual ideas on which the
making of art is based. Live gesture have constantly
been used as a weapon against the conventions of
established art. . . . Performance manifestoes, from the
Futurists to the present, have been the expression of
dissidents who have attempted to find other means to
evaluate art experience in everyday life. Performance
has been a way of appealing directly to a large public,
as well as shocking audience into reassessing their own
notions of art and its relation to culture.93

This is what RoseLee Goldberg came to realize during her

study on performance art of the twentieth century.

Performance art in modern times has been considered as live

art, through which the artists tried to resolve the long

standing dichotomy of art and life, as the subtitle of her

book, Performance: Live Art 1909 to the Present, implies.

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of film. Cf. Encyclopedia of Literature (Seoul, 1975), s.v.
"variety theatre." Italian Futurism made Variety Theatre one
of its aims and based the Futurist Synthetic Theatre on it;
Refer to p. 54 below.

92 An entertainment consisting of successive performances
of unrelated songs, dances, dramatic sketches, acoustic
feats, etc. The word is derived from Vau-de-Vire, a village in
Normandy, where a famous composer of lively, satirical songs
lived in the eighteenth century. From these songs, modified
later by pantomime, developed the "variety" shows known as
Vaudeville. Cf. A hand Book, Literature, 4th edition, 1980,
s.v. "vaudeville," by C. Hugh Holman.

93 R. Goldberg, Performance, op. cit., p. 6.

Happening belongs to the history of performance art and shares the aim of live art. It performs the task of the reintegration of art and life in terms of establishing a new aesthetics that evokes audience-participation, which is based on concepts such as indeterminacy and intermedia. In other words, the proposition of the reintegration of art and life embraces the two concepts, indeterminacy and intermedia: indeterminacy as "willful disorder"94 is as natural as nature or life process itself, and thus becomes a common denominator between art and life, so that the works of art based on indeterminacy become an intermedium between art and life. The proposition of "shocking the audience" is inseparably related to the tradition of live performance art. Through the various shocking devices, the performance artists could not only reveal their antagonistic spirit against the art establishment, but also arouse the responses of the audience, evoking their mental or physical participation, and thus establish a new direct relationship with them. In a sense, we can say that the history of performance as live art is the history of shocking devices that vary according to the individual artist and to the spirit of time.

The first and the foremost example of this stream would

94 Kostelanetz, "Contemporary American Esthetics," op. cit., p. 28.

be "Ubu Roi" (1896) by Alfred Jarry.95 Its stance was

thoroughly against convention, as if to be revolting was its

aim. The idea was clearly revealed in the preface to the

play96: it would consist of only one set, therefore, instead

of raising and lowering the curtain, the sign plate would

indicate the scenes or acts as in a puppet show; it would

employ certain devices to eliminate any intelligible or

contextual effects, such as the abstract quality of speeches

("the adoption of an accent," "a special tone of voice"), the

neutrality of the costumes ("as little local color and

historical accuracy as possible"), or the elimination of

crowds on the stage ("a single soldier 'representing' a horde

of people"); and to create the effect of an old English

theatre ("Guignol"), the figures for the equestrian scenes

would wear a horse's head made of cardboard around their

necks.

As Jarry himself had declared to the audience before the

play began, "looking dead white . . . nervously sipping from a

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95 Jarry's "Ubu Roi" was first played in 1896 at the
'Theâtre de l'Oeuvre', the symbolist theatre founded in 1893
and run by the symbolist actor-manager, Lugne-Poe, who asked
Jarry to become a stage-director of the company. For
detailed descriptions see R. Goldwater, Symbolism (New York:
Harper & Row, Publishers, 1979), pp. 107-8; R. Shattuck, The
Banquet Years: the Origins of the Avant-garde in France 1885
to World War I, revised edition (New York: Vintage Books,
1955, 1968), pp. 203-4.

96 This preface was written originally in a project-
letter to Lugne-Poe, the idea of which had not been changed so
much in actual performance. Cf. Shattuck, op. cit., pp. 204-5
: R. Goldberg, op. cit., p. 9.

glass," at the table brought out on the stage: "As to orchestra, there is none. Only its volume and timber will be missed, for various pianos and percussion will execute. Ubuesque themes from backstage. The action . . . takes place in Poland, that is to say: Nowhere."97 Roger Shattuck characterized Jarry's idea emphasizing 'nonsense' and 'eternity' as the "Eternity of Nowhere,"98 the "stylized comic earthiness" which was not derived from the authentic tradition: it was neither, as Shattuck maintains, the "prevailing realism of the time nor the essentially antidramatic theories of symbolism," but was modelled on live art tradition of the medieval theatre such as Rabelais,99 or farces of Jarry's school day experiments at Rennes.100

It was not only with these anti-art devices that the "Ubu Roi" shocked the audience, but also by spitting an obscene word with intentional affront: "merde" (shit) which was the opening and single word of Firmin Gemier (who play the role of Ubu) and caused "pandemonium" in the audience.101 Such a radical shocking method was the trademark of the Expressionist

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97 Shattuck, op. cit., p. 206.

98 Idem.

99 The theatrical form derived from the French satirist, François Rabelais (1484-1553), who satirized and criticized human nature and society. Cf. Encyclopedia of Literature op. cit., s. v. "Rabelais."

100 Shattuck, op, cit., p. 205.

101 Ibid., pp. 207-8.

café-théâtre, known as "intimate theatre," which prevailed in Munich before World War I, the melting pot of antagonism and provocation.102 Among them, the notorious play of Benjamin Franklin Wedekind seemed a true heir of the shocking theatre of Jarry. Influenced by Nietzsche and Strindberg, and wishing to "extol the power of sex and to attack a hypocritical, stultifying society,"103 his lines were similarly obscene and cynical: "his standard first line to young women was inevitably 'are you still a virgin ?'"104. Along with urinating, masturbating or inducing physical convulsions in himself on the stage, his play meant the total negation of civilization, including himself.105

While the Expressionist theatre was made of activities of individual artists or playwrights, such as Wedekind, Kokoschka, Carl Sternheim, Ernst Balarch, and rooted in the literary-theatre tradition, the Futurist and Dada performances were composed of group activities of various artists, such as poets, painters, or sculptors; these Futurist Evenings or Dada Cabaret, therefore, seem closer to modern happenings, the art-oriented performances.

The Futurist, as an ideal performance, adopted the model

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102 Goldberg, op. cit., p. 34.

103 R. S. Furness, Expressionism (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1973), p. 22. [This book is from the series of The Critical Idiom, ed., John D. Jump.]

104 Goldberg, op. cit., p. 34.

105 Ibid., p. 35.

of variety theatre, the intermedia theatre, employing various means like film, acrobat, song, dance, clowning etc., claiming as its doctrine "no tradition, no masters, no dogma,"[106] in which "intelligence was pushed to the brink of madness and the audience involved in an iconoclastic destruction of logic."[107] The Futurist added to this model "a dynamic concoction of manifesto, reading, poetry declamation, theatrical interludes and outright provocation of the audience."[108] Thus, the Futurist theatre was the most dynamic in its relationship with the audience, and the most advanced in the technical matter of intermedia as well, exploiting, as Kostelanetz pointed out, all the simultaneous representations both of the visible and invisible, such as, speed, simultaneity, agility, technology, electricity, words in freedom, scenery, and a greater degree of audience-participation.[109]

Compared to the Futurist Evenings which were provocative and shocking enough to be called 'manifestation activity',[110] the Cabaret Voltaire of Zürich Dada was an artistic activity

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106 Ibid., pp. 12-13.

107 C. Tisdall and A. Bozzolla, op. cit., p. 102.

108 Ibid., p. 91.

109 Kostelanetz, The Theatre of Mixed-Means, op. cit., p. 11.

110 1911, Manifesto of Futurist Dramatists; 1912, Technical Manifesto of Futurist Literature; 1913, Manifesto of Variety Theatre; 1914, Dynamic and Synoptic Declamation; 1915, Manifesto of Futurist Synthetic Theatre. Cf. Tisdall and Bozzolla, op. cit., pp. 89-109.

in spite of its anti-art claim. However, it was based on the

notion of "living art", as Hugo Ball declared, that was

"irrational, primitive, and complex."111 In fact, the

provocation of Dada was mostly carried out through live

performances that were designed to unite art and life,

employing irrationality, primitivism, and complexity. The

simultaneous poem was one of its artistic irrationality

productions: Ball defines it as follows:

> a contrapuntal recitative in which three or more voices
> speak, sing, whistle, etc. at the same time, in such a
> way that the elegiac, humorous, or bizarre content
> of the piece is brought out by these combinations. In
> such a simultaneous poem, the willful quality of an
> organic work is given powerful expression, and so is its
> limitation by the accompaniment. Noises . . . are
> superior to the human voice in energy.112

This assertion of Ball not only predicted the concept of

Cage's noise music, but also announced the advent of

intermedia.

Dada invented chance operation that supported the concept

of simultaneity. Tristan Tzara affirmed this point by saying

that "spontaneity that issues freely from ourselves without

the intervention of speculative idea represents us" and

"chance is the only saving force that could liberate the

artist from centuries of restrictive rationality."113 Indeed,

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111 Goldberg, op. cit., p. 37.

112 Ibid., p. 39.

113 A. H. Melzer, "The Dada Actor and Performance
Theory," The Art of Performance: A Critical Anthology, ed.
Gregory Battcock and Robert Nickas (New York: E. P. Dutton,
INC., 198-), P. 47.

all the productions of Zürich Dada, it is possible to say, were the result of chance and spontaneity, on which the composition and the performance of the simultaneous poem, bruitist poem, or accidental poem of Tzara, or the accidental collage of Hans Arp were based.

The consequent activities in Berlin by Raoul Hauseman, George Grosz, and others had more of an anarchic character transforming Dada into an aggressive and political group with a spirit of anarchism that "enabled Berlin Dada movement to live life to the full in its own way."114 As Hans Richter pointed out, "the idea of putting people in a position to exploit their mental and physical energies in a spirit of unbounded optimism and faith in themselves--this was the idea behind the wild and exuberant antics of Dada."115 The demonstrative character of Berlin Dada, as if following the example of the Futurist Evenings, had come to utilize other spaces than the theatre or gallery; the entire city of Berlin could be their stage. If the Zürich Dada had been a 'staged happening' according to Kostelanetz's criteria, the Berlin Dada was a 'pure happening', in which space, time, and action were open to indeterminacy.

As such, with the use of "found space"116 and

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114 H. Richter, Dada: Art and Anti-Art (New York and Toronto: Oxford Univ. Press, 1965, 1978), p. 113.

115 Idem.

116 Kirby, "On Acting and Not Acting," The Art of Performance, op. cit., p. 111.

consequently with the creation of the indeterminate

environment in their intermedia performances, Dada anticipated

the aesthetics of happening. The "Merzbau" of Kurt Schwitters

attested to this point clearly: it was not only the first

example of the environmental collage that might have developed

into the indeterminate happening situation, conforming to the

Kaprowean sense of autobiographical accumulation of things,

but also the product of the principle "to blur the

distinctions between arts and finally integrate them all with

each other," rather than becoming a total work of art

(Gesamtkunstwerk).117   This view is confirmed by the remarks

of Schwitters himself on the concept of "Merzbuhne" (Merz

composite work of art, or Merz theatre):

> In contrast to the drama or the opera, all parts of the
> Merz stage-work are inseparably bound up together ; it
> cannot be written, read, or listened to, it can only be
> produced in the theatre. Up until now, a distinction was
> made between stage-set, text, and score in theatrical
> performances. Each factor was separately prepared and
> could be separately enjoyed The Merz stage knows
> only the fusing of all factors into a composite work.
> Materials for the stage-set are all solid, liquid, and
> gaseous bodies, such as white all, man barbed wire
> entanglement, blue distance, light cone. . . . Materials
> for the sore are all tones and noises. . . . Materials
> for the text are all experiences that provoke the
> intelligence and emotions. The materials are not to be
> used logically in their objective relationship, but only
> within the logic of the work of art. The more intensively
> the work of art destroys rational objective logic, the
> greater become the possibilities of artistic
> building . . . 118

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117 Richter, op. cit., p. 152.

118 As quoted in Kostelanetz, The Theatre of Mixed-
Means, op. cit., pp. 12-13; A. Henri, Total Art: Environment,
Happen.ng, and Performance (New York: Praeger Publishers,

As Kostelanetz himself pointed out, we can see here-how Schwitters's thinking on the Merz stage was close to the theory of Kostelanetz' new theatre.

The "First Dada Event" organized by Max Ernst in Cologne in 1924 provided another example. It was held in a found space to which one could only enter through the "pissoir" of a beer-hall. There, he and other artists exhibited all sorts of things, actions, and sounds: aquarium, alarm clock, wig, axe, reciting poems, etc., the spectacle of which was to shock the innocent and unexpected audience, the beer-drinkers.[119]

The later phase of Dada activity in New York and Paris by Duchamp and Picabia developed into another direction tinged with the Surrealist unconscious added to the Dadaist voluntary irrationality. However, the Surrealist performances were firmly rooted to the Dadaist principles of live art which needed a "constantly virginal audience,"[120] simultaneity and chance (indeterminacy), the blurring of distinctions between arts (intermedia), and the inserting of life into the stage or work (reintegration of art/life). The ballet piece, "Relâche" of 1924 by Picabia and Erik Satie represented the Surrealist Dada performance anticipating the happening idioms: the simultaneous actions occurring on, under, and around the stage in a kind of compartmented-nonmatrixed presentation; the

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1974), p. 20.

119 Goldberg, op. cit., p. 46.

120 Melzer, op. cit., p. 30.

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mixture of various medium, such as film ("Entr'acte" by
Picabia), dance, music, mural setting, etc. "to achieve a
total effect"; the collaboration between various artists of
different fields in terms of "competition and feuding," like
Picabia, Satie, Duchamp, Man Ray, René Clair (film maker),
Rolf de Mare (the director of the Ballet Suedois); the strong
allusion to life itself with the filmed scenes of chess
players (Duchamp, Man Ray), a funeral procession through Luna
Park and the Eiffel Tower, or with the "tableau vivant," the
naked couple representing Cranach's Adam and Eve (Duchamp
portraying Adam).[12]

From this brief survey of modern performances starting
from the "Ubu Roi" of Jarry through the Expressionist,
Futurist, and Dadaist performances to the "Relâche" by
Picabia, we can notice that the consistent theme throughout
was to provoke, or to shock the audience, with which they
intended to accomplish the task of audience-participation.
Given this understanding we can securely put happening, the
art of audience-participation, into the tradition of
performance art, as much as we can insert it into the history
of art. This double aspect of happening suggests a new
direction in modern art, namely postmodern art, the merging of
art and performance, or even art and life. In fact,
happening seems to locate itself at the intersection of fine
art and performance art, deriving itself both from collage

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12. Goldberg, op. cit., pp. 59-62.

(art) and live action (life).

The art of the 1970's marked the golden age of performance art both as an extension of happening of the 60's and as a phenomenon of the diversification and the synthesization of the postmodern era. The performance of the 70's showed the unique synthesis of live art, from the tradition of performance art, and conceptual art, from the tradition of fine art. The ideal of conceptual art, art as an idea or a documentation based on concepts such as self-reference or process122, led to the total elimination of the art object, that is, its 'dematerialization'123, the most common issue of the time. This tendency towards dematerialization conformed with the aim of performance art that tried to establish a new direct relationship with the audience in terms of sharing live experience with them rather than producing or presenting the hermetic art objects to them. Under these conditions, the performance art of the 70's, while attaining the aim of live art, came to modify the shock method: tinged with the philosophical speculation of conceptual art, its impact upon the audience was in terms of

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122 U. Meyer, Conceptual Art (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1972), pp. viii-xx.

123 The term, dematerialization, first coined by Lucy R. Lippard in 1967, refers to the "deemphasis on material aspect." She understood the "chaotic network of ideas in the air, in America and abroad, between 1966 and 1971" as the dematerialization of art object, and, to clarify her notions, edited and annotated 6 Years : the Dematerialization of the Art Object from 1966 to 1972 (London: Studio Vista, 1973).

intellectual tension, rather than with the sensational

provocation of the earlier times. 'Body Art' of the first

half of the 70's was typical of this trend, which was also

called "conceptual performance" or "theatrical conceptualism,"

revealing its orientation.124   Vito Acconci and Bruce Nauman

practiced the notion of dematerialization to the degree of

using or objectifying their own body as an artistic medium.

As Acconci declared, the intention of body art was to

"activate space" and to intensify the "interaction of artist

and spectator," which maintained the aesthetics and the aim of

live art.125

    The last half of the 70's performance art was represented

by media-oriented performances, which seemed to accompany or

run parallel to the development of video art of the early

70's. The so-called media generation, or the second

generation of the 70's performance artists, such as Laurie

Anderson, Adrian Piper, Robert Longo, Philip Glass now

accepted, following Goldberg's description, the "ingredient

of pleasure that strict conceptual art had denied," while

preserving its "intellectual rigorousness."126 They added, to

the "personal histories, sentimentality and everyday life" of

the senior artists, "narrative and sequential presentations,"

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124 D. Bourdon, "An Eccentric Body of Art," The Art of
Performance, op. cit., p. 187.

125 Ibid., p. 183.

126 Goldberg, "Performance: The Golden Years." The Art of
Performance, op. cit., p. 73.

and thus retrieved the performance quality of the traditional variety theatre, cabaret, marking a shift from the "performance as documentation" to "performance as performance," according to Goldberg.127

The impact of the postmodern media performance comes, first of all, from the radical practice of intermedia. It can be called a culmination of intermedia, and thus most postmodernist, where, needless to say, different genres between arts, even the most irrelevant or contradictory elements, such as performance art/electronic art (using video, computer, or audio system), high-fine art/public-popular art, or even art/life, are intermingled in a novel way that gives birth to a new, hybrid concretion of art. For example, we cannot easily classify the performance of Laurie Anderson, because of its particular and complex synthesis of heterogeneous elements; it seems to be in between the visual (using slides or screens) and the aural (narration, singing), the musical (singing) and the literary (story-telling), 'high art' (using 'allegory'128) and popular art (pop song, everyday

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127 Idem.

128 Laurie Anderson has been regarded with her unique narrative art as the most renowned postmodern media artist. Craig Owens discussed her "Americans on the Move" (1979) in the context of "the fundamental unreadability of the signs," the postmodern problematic, discussed by Paul de Man in his "Allegory of Reading": "Americans on the Move continually returns to the fundamental ambivalence of signs and to the barrier they thereby erect in the path of understanding" Cf. C. Owens, "The Allegorical Impulse: Toward a theory of Postmodernism," Performance Text(e)s & Documents, ed., Chantal Pontbriand (Montreal: Parachute, 1981), pp. 37-47.

episodes). The music of Philip Glass would represent the
contemporary skill of synthesis: music somewhere between
classical music, electronic music, popular music, and oriental
music. As revealed in these examples, in postmodern media
performance, the intermedia itself serves as a tactic to shock
audience by giving them the novel and strange experiences that
require all the senses or new perceptions, paralleling the
same function of the video environment, as we shall see later.

Born from the boundary area between established genres
and principles, postmodern performance art, starting from
happening in the strict sense, is the true heir of live art,
the ultimate aim of which is to establish a two-way
communication between art and audience, or art and life.
Happening and other performance art since accomplished this
aim by transcending the objecthood of art work and by
emphasizing the process of working, in which artist and
audience alike share the common experience. The result
establishes a horizontal relationship between them, different
from the traditional vertical relation. In this horizontal
relation between artist and audience, the traditional role of
the artist is changed; rather than acting his role
aesthetically, he becomes a 'performer' who carries out his
task functionally.129 With no need to assume another

129 Bruce Barber noticed the significance of performance
art in the postmodern culture and pursued the change of
meaning of the word, perform: the original meaning of perform
was "to complete, or to furnish completely," corresponding to
art, meaning "something well made." And the modern synonyms

personality, he just displays his own presence. In this, the performer is no different from than the neutral presence of an audience, except for the factual difference between them. Furthermore, when performances occur in a found space or created environment of everyday life rather than in gallery or theatre space, it enhances the live art aspect of happening: the performer re-creates a life, not a fiction, nor the illusion. Hence, as Kostelanetz described it, happening resembles more "looking at a street or overhearing a strange conversation than deducing the theme of a drama."130 With this neutral quality in action as well as in space, happening creates a non-hierarchic, horizontal situation, where the audience becomes elevated to the status of participant, to the same level of the performer-participant himself.

The changes from acting to performing, which Michael

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for the verb, perform, was to conduct, execute, fulfil, and the noun performer was agent, doer, executive, artist, the sequence of the meaning shows a movement from the general to the specific; that is, fulfil as the ultimate act of doing. And in the context of art, the change in meaning of the performer speaks for the contextual and functional change of performances: the performer of pre-60's was referred to as entertainer, and during the 6C and the first half of the 70's, the period of happening and minimal dance, it was used as 'task performance' with "simple reference to the act of body or object . . . without regard for the inherent meaning or content of the activity." And from the end of the 70's in the context of postmodern performance, "the performance is not the simple . . . fulfillment of an act; it "must do or mean something . . . [the performers of this time] are in the act of 'telling' and not simply 'showing'." Cf. B.Barber, "The Function of Performance in Postmodern Culture: A Critique," Performance Text(e)s and Documents, op. cit. , p. 35.

130 Kostelanetz, The Theatre of Mixed-Means, op. cit., p. 9.

Kirby describes as "simplification of acting,"131 and from the

fictional world to everyday life in a happening situation

parallel or reflect an issue of poststructuralist

postmodernism, namely, the 'deconstruction of representation'

or the transition 'from representation to presentation'. The

issue of deconstructing representation was suggested already

by collage. The Cubist collage, though it was derived from

compositional concerns, was revolutionary in the sense that it

was the presentation of a "reality fragment" that negated

representation and broke the organic unity of the traditional

work. Dadaists, while ignoring the aesthetic concerns of the

Cubists, picked up the aspect of the reality of collage and

re-illuminated it with new emphasis. As Bürger suggested, the

Cubist collage, the "sign of reality," became "reality itself"

in the hands of Dadaists, and the reality principle culminated

in Duchamp's readymade, the anti-art provocation presenting

non-art, non-illusionistic realty.132

Like collage, Rauschenberg's 'combine' painting, by using

both elements of art and non-art in one canvas surface,

desires to unite art and life, and attempts the co-existence

of representation and presentation. In happening, the

representational aspect of the combine is deconstructed by the

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131 Kirby argues that this simplification of acting was
typical of modern performance that started in the early years
of this century and flourished in happening. Cf. M. Kirby, "On
Acting and Not-Acting," The Art of Performance, op. cit., pp.
110-12.

132 Bürger, op. cit., p. 78.

presentation of reality, or life. As Kaprow confessed in his
essay, "Performing Life," happening is a way of doing life:
"the alternatives of everyday life routines" performed on the
stage, such as "brushing your teeth, getting on a bus," are
not meant to be an "objective image or occurrence to be seen
by someone else," but rather "a matter of doing something that
was experiencable for yourself." In other words, happening,
according to Kaprow, is an "art/life genre," the art that
reflects "equally the artificial aspect of everyday life and
the lifelike qualities of created art."133 In this sense,
isn't it possible to conclude that happening, by
deconstructing art with life and life with art, accomplishes
the aim of the historical avant-garde to integrate art into
life praxis and at the same time contributes to the
postmodernist imperative to deconstruct representation ?

At this point, we may question whether the avant-gardiste
intent has been achieved or has failed, whether it is
legitimate or not to claim the anti-art with art. Peter
Bürger regards the consequence as failure, the inherent and
inevitable failure due to the nature of art and the mechanism
of the modern bourgeois society to support the autonomy of
art:

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133 Kaprow, "Performing Life" (1979), Performance
Anthology: Source Book for a Decade of California Performance
Art, ed., Carl E. Loeffler and Darlene Tong (San Francisco:
Contemporary Arts Press, 1980), p. x. Compare this argument
of Kaprow to the one of Melzer who discussed the Dada actors
performing "for himself," or "in search of himself." Cf.
Melzer, op. cit., pp. 43-46.

. . . the avant-gardiste attempt to reintegrate art into
the life process is itself a profoundly contradictory
endeavor. For the (relative) freedom of art vis-à-vis
the praxis of life is to be a critical cognition of
reality. An art no longer distinct from the praxis of
life but wholly absorbed in it will lose the capacity to
criticize it, along with its distance. . . . But in the
meantime, the culture industry has brought about the
false elimination of the distance between art and life,
and this also allows one to recognize the
contradictoriness of the avant-gardiste undertaking.134

Bürger exemplifies the case of the contradictoriness:

Duchamp's readymades commit a contradiction when he signs them

and exhibits them in the gallery or museum, because by signing

them, the non-art object enters the category of 'work', and by

exhibiting them, the work becomes part of the institution;

"the avant-garde movement did not put an end to the production

of works of art, and the social institution that is art proved

resistant to the avant-gardiste attack."135

From this assertion, Bürger deduces another failure of

the neo-avant-garde: once "the protest of the historical

avant-garde against art as an institution is accepted as art,

the gesture of the protest of the neo-avant-garde becomes

inauthentic."136 As Bürger maintains, the repetition of

provocation reduces the initial impact of shock, thus the

repeated provocation no longer provokes.137 If the failure is

inevitable, or if, as Jochen Schulte-Sasse writes in the

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134 Bürger, op. cit., p. 50.

135 Ibid., pp. 56-57.

136 Ibid., p.53.

137 Ibid., pp. 52, 80.

foreword of Burger's book, "in order for bourgeois art to be overcome, bourgeois society must be overcome as well,"138 then the question is whether, as Bürger asks himself, the "sublation of the autonomy status can be desirable at all."139

This is not the place to argue whether Bürger's pessimism or his theoretical limit is reasonable or not. But it seems sufficient to note that in avant-garde art and postmodernist art as well, the intent per se is important and valuable, because, though it may have failed in the integration of art and life, it contributed to change the way of thinking and to evoke a new consciousness of art and life, and promoted the invention of new artistic skills and concepts so as to expand the territory of art itself.

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138 J. Schulte-Sasse, "Foreword: Theory of Modernism versus Theory of the Avant-Garde," Burger, op. cit., p. xlii.

139 Bürger., op. cit., p. 54.

CHAPTER II

PAIK'S HAPPENING ACTIVITIES: PARTICIPATION-PERFORMANCE

"I always think that my past 14 years is nothing but an

extension of one memorable evening at Darmstadt '58."140 When

Paik wrote this in a letter to Cage in 1972 he implied, as

noted by David Ross, that "his video work was, in effect, an

extension of his notorious Fluxus concert/performance works of

the late fifties and early sixties."141 But Paik also might

suggest the importance of Cage's influence in his works. In

1958, shortely after Paik arrived in Darmstadt (in 1956) from

Japan, he met John Cage who was teaching a class of

'International Summer Course for New Music'.142 It was that

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140 D. R. Ross, "Nam June Paik's Video Tapes," Nam June
Paik, issued as the catalogue of his retrospective exhibition,
at the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York, (New York:
Whitney Museum of American Art, 1982), p. 102.

141 Idem.

142 Paik, born in 1932 in Seoul, Korea, started to take
piano lessons with Mrs. Shin Jae Dok while he attended the
Kyunggi High School in Seoul. Then, the Korean Civil War of
1949 forced his family to leave Korea for Hongkong, where Paik
attended the Royden School. In 1950, he moved again to Tokyo,
and enrolled in the University of Tokyo, where he graduated
with a degree in aesthetics majoring on Arnold Schonberg. In
1956, after graduation, he traveled to Germany via Calcutta

same year that he moved to Cologne to study electronic music in Westdeutsche Rundfunk's Studio with Karlheinz Stockhausen. In that so-called 'Cologne Period' which lasted untill the year 1962 (year that Fluxus Movement was initiated), his activities in terms of musical composition and performance were in the 'action music'[143] field that saw his emergence as a new figure of happening.

Paik's pre-happening action music was a special kind of hybrid music derived from Cage's contradictory synthesis of Zen-oriented musical concept and the provocative action of Dadaism. The resulting peculiar type of provocation not only marked the characteristic of his art, which he maintained throughout his career, but also functioned as a device to shock the audience and to communicate with it as directly as possible so as to accomplish the goal of his happening,

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and Cairo to continue his musical study. In Germany, he first studied at the University of Munich, and then at the Conservatory of Music in Freiburg with Wolfgang Fortner. In 1958, he attended the international summer course in Darmstadt where he met Cage. And then, settled in Cologne and enrolled in the University and began at Westdeutsche Rundfunk's Studio for Electronic Music where Karlheinz Stockhausen was working. Cf. Nam June Paik, op. cit., p. 11.

143 Concerning the term, 'action', Chantal Pontbriand suggested that compared to the word 'performance', which is essentially a North American term, the 'action' or 'demonstration' favored by the German artists like Klaus Rinke seems to refer more to "a confusion of genres among music, dance, and visual arts." Cf. C. Pontbriand, "Introduction: Notion(s) of Performances," Performance by Artists, ed., AA Bronson and P. Gale (Toronto: Art Metropole, 1979), p. 9. This may explain the reason why Paik, the German-based artist at that time, chose for all his performances the expression 'action music', and that the German artist, Joseph Beuys, called his performances 'action'.

participation-performance and later of his video art, participation-TV.

I will begin the present chapter with an overview of Paik's Action Music of the Cologne Period and then proceed to discuss his Fluxus Happening (that derives from Action Music) which embodies the essence of his happening activities. Although these two sections are divided by a chronological order of before and after the Fluxus Movement, it must be noted that they are in the same line of musical theatre performance that characterizes his happening as intermedia between music and theatre. And it goes without saying that the musical theatre was not only based on intermedia but also on concepts like indeterminacy and live art, three points that were discussed in the previous chapter and comprise the participatory aspects of happening.

A. ACTION MUSIC

"Cage, to me, is always [a] very great composer. He brings theatre into the concert hall."144 What is significant is that Paik perceived earlier than others the new direction taken by Cage's music and its significance in the artistic field resulted in the birth of a new genre, happening. In

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144 P. Gardner, "Turning to Nam June Paik," Artnews, vol. 81, no. 5, May 1982, p. 67.

fact, it has been reported that when Cage first met Paik and announced the death of electronic music and the new direction towards theatre performances, Paik readily agreed with him adding, "I saw the limit of electronic music . . . and I want to expand electronic music to include electronic visions."145 This statement, while announcing his future role as "video art's guru," suggests also his ardent groping for new music. Paik had realized the limitation of traditional music while undergoing his musical education in Tokyo and in Germany. Recalling the days at the Conservatory of Music in Freiburg, Paik said, "I was looking for sound that does not exist. [The] professor told me sound I wanted was between keys. So I buy [sic] two pianos and tune [sic] so both are [sic] slightly off. Then I try [sic] and find [sic] notes." But as he pursued his studies, he was not satisfied with such manipulations. In the end, the professor recommended that he look into the new field of electronic music and introduced him to the Rundfunk's electronic music studio.146

The meeting with Cage at this time of intellectual crisis meant a lot to Paik who referred to him as "the man who changed my life."147 The avant-garde notions of Cage, particularly those relating to indeterminacy, chance and

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145 D. C. Denison, "Video Art's Guru," The New York Times Magazine, sec. 6, 25th April 1982, p. 58, 62.

146 L. Werner, "Nam June Paik," Northwest Orient, Laureates, June 1986.

147 Idem.

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variability, provided a breakthrough in the field of new music. In November of 1959, Paik presented a pioneering piece of his action music, his version of the musical theatre, as a tribute to Cage: "Hommage à John Cage: Music for Tape Recorder and Piano." This piece, held in Galerie 22 of Jean-Pierre Wilhelm in Düsseldorf, marked the beginning of the Cologne Period and of his happening activities (famous for notorious actions), with Paik tipping over the piano and smashing it. However boisterous, the piece was not out of shape or disordered. It was constructed in two different parts unfolding at the same time: live actions to make sound on the stage and taped or prepared sound from playback recording.

The tape was edited as collage-typed mixture of sound taken from both musical and non-musical sources: "Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, a German song, Rachmaninoff's Second Piano Concerto, a lottery announcement of a foreign ministers' conference held in Geneva about the reunification of Germany, and a recording of concrete sounds--such as a Japanese toy car, a prepared piano, sine waves, noise, and so on."[148] This gathering of sounds became more clamorous along with the live sounds and actions that Paik made on the stage, which were deepened by the appearance of a live hen and a motorcycle, the animate and inanimate noise makers. According to his own recollection of the scene on the stage, Paik "kicked a tin box

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148 M. Nyman, "Nam June Paik, Composer," Nam June Paik op. cit., p. 82.

which hit a pane of glass which hit egg and toy car and pushed

over piano . . . "; and, he continues, these actions resulted

in a "scandal success in Cologne" that earned him an

"overnight reputation with the New York avant-garde."149

However, this reputation was gained due to the overt actions

which were in effect supposed to accompany the sound component

whether taped or live, in so far as his happening was

basically musical theatre. Paik's main concern was, as in the

concept of Cagean noise music, to show how every sound, live

or taped, music or noise, could become alike in the aural

experience. Thus, he regretted that people ignored the "tape

toil and tear" to make sound, even though he devoted most of

his working time to make the tape in preparing the piece,

"Hommage à John Cage."150

This fact suggests that his exceptional actions could

become easily misunderstood as mere sensationalism before the

philosophical motive could be recognized. But the more

important point here is the fact that he concentrated more on

making the tape than on acting itself, which not only suggests

his artistic endeavor towards intermedia, but also announces

the importance that editing was to have in tape production

which would put the emphasis on working with tape in video

art. Nevertheless, even though he complained that the primary

effect of his action superceded the sound element, the very

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149 Gardner, op. cit., p. 68.

150 Nyman, loc. cit.

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action became his signature, thus distinguishing him from Cage. In other words, Paik added to Cage's conceptual music a unique action of his own, thus transforming the noise music into action music, arousing the response of audience in a more direct and overt way.

The provocative quality of his action music was once more made evident in his "Etude for Piano Forte" of October 1960, held in Mary Bauermeister's Atelier in Cologne; at this performance Cage, who was not present at "Hommage à Cage" which Paik had dedicated to him, was in the middle of the audience. While playing Chopin on the piano, Paik jumped to attack Cage in the audience; with scissors Paik cut Cage's shirttail and necktie and th poured shampoo onto the head of David Tudor who was beside Cage. After this baffling action, he disappeared calmly and finally phoned from a nearby bar to mention that the piece was over.151 This unimaginable event shocked not only the audience but also his artist colleagues who were present in the studio; this incident still remains a myth, one of the most notorious events in the history of happening.

However, the artistic or philosophical purpose behind such scandalous action had been well planned and was more serious than it appeared to be, especially when we consider the following factors. Firstly, the act of cutting the necktie, the tie as a symbol of authority, can be understood

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151 Nyman, loc. cit.; Denison, op. cit., p. 62.

as an attack against the established value system of male-logocentric western civilization. An episode reported by Laurie Werner supports this view: Paik was very upset because he had known several weeks before enacting "Etude for Piano Forte" that Cage, in one of his own performances staged in Venice had worn a tuxedo, which was a "very conventional thing to do". Paik then decided to cut Cage's tuxedo off during the "Etude," but hearing that the man was poor, changed his mind and decided to cut his shirt instead. But on the day of the performance, Paik found that Cage was wearing nothing under the shirt, so he cut his necktie instead, screaming, "I hate your tie."152 Whether it was the tuxedo, the shirt, or the tie, it seemed evident that Paik was attacking the musical convention or social authority that the costume implied. In fact, attacking the established convention or authority was the most basic theme in the anti-art tradition of live art. Cage's 'prepared piano' provided a contemporary example for the attack: the various devices to attack the establishment used by Jarry, Wedekind or the Futurists and Dadaists, can be regarded as the historical source of the 'prepared piano' which Cage invented in 1938 and which also became a customary repertoire of Fluxus "'' _ The prepared piano was in effect a gesture of challenge towards authority and tradition of classical music, whether it was done by inserting any kind of accidental objects, such as wood, rubber, metal, or glass to

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152 Werner, loc. cit.

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various specified points of inner strings so as to get

unexpected, abnormal piano sound (as in Cage),153 or by

nailing the keys or painting the outer frame with nonsense

colors like yellow or green, thus causing an overall

distortion of piano both in sound and shape (as in Fluxus).154

But what distinguished Paik from Cage or other Fluxus artists

was that his gesture was as comic as it was radical: the

action of cutting the tie seemed as comic as any entertainment

scene and at the same time as radical as the destruction of

musical instruments, typical of Fluxus music.155 This 'comic

radicalism' embedded in his humor and spirit may be the main

characteristic of his art: it certainly differentiates it from

Cage's 'conceptual experimentalism', Vostell's destructive

'Décollage', or Beuys' 'mystical expressionism'.

Secondly and more relevant to our subject, by attacking

the members of the audience, Cage and Tudor were, as David

Ross indicated, making "a gesture designed to involve the

_____

153 Cowell, op. cit., p. 95.

154 The prepared pianos of Fluxus were usually the
results of destructive actions during performances rather than
prepared devices to get abnormal sounds as in Cage.

155 As the prepared piano of Fluxus exemplifies, the
Fluxus music is characterized by the destruction of musical
instruments: for instance, in George Maciunas's "Piano Piece"
(1964), the destruction is demonstrated in the action of
nailing the keys; Philip Corner's "Piano Activity" (1962)
shows it by taking apart the inner structure of the piano;
Paik's "One for Violin Solo" (1961) manifests the same urge by
lifting a violin and crushing it on the table or floor.

otherwise passive audience."156 Cage's noise music, as we

studied above, involved the audience in the indeterminate

environment, thus in a rather passive way. On the other hand,

Paik's action music aroused the audience with a more

pronounced and provocative action, thus in a more active way.

What was also interesting in this attacking incident was, as

Michael Nyman reports , that he proceeded his attacking

"scrupulously avoiding Stockhausen" who was also there beside

Cage.157 This exemption from attack suggests that Stockhausen

and electronic music were no longer meaningful to Paik, which

he expressed in such a furtive way.

Paik's consciousness of the problem of audience-

participation was revealed more clearly in "New Ontology of

Music" (1963) than through any other works; this essay was

written as a monthly review of his own independent movement,

"University for Avant-garde Hinduism" founded in 1961·

> I am tired of renewing the form of music.--serial or
> aleatoric, graphic or five lines, . . . I must renew the
> ontological form of music. In the normal concert, the
> sounds move, the audience sit down. In my action music,
> the sounds, etc., move, the audience is attacked by me.
> In the "Symphony for twenty rooms" [1961], the sounds,
> etc., move, the audience moves also. In my "Omnibus
> music No. 1" (1961), the sounds sit down, the audience
> visits them. In the Music Exposition [1963, Wuppertal],
> the sounds sit, the audience plays or attacks them. In
> the "Moving theatre" [1962] in the street, the sounds
> move in the street, the audience meets or encounters them
> "unexpectedly" in the street. The beauty of moving
> theatre lies in this "surprise ↗ priori," because

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156 D. R. Ross, "Nam June Paik's Video Tapes," Nam June
Paik, op. cit., p. 102.

157 Nyman, loc. cit.

> almost all of the audience is uninvited, not knowing what
> it is, why it is, who is the composer . . . "music for
> the long road"—and without audience, "Music for the
> large place"—and without audience are more platonic.158

What we can deduct from these remarks is that his action

music, while proclaiming its anonymity, was also concerned

about the existence of an audience and about its new

relationship with it. It seems that the new ontology of music

is no more than a renewed relationship with an audience.

The new ontology of music actually brought about a

transformation of music from aural music to visual music, as

the "Music Exposition" from the above quotation may imply.

The visual quality of his action music speaks for the new

musical theatre, which is the intermedia between music and

theatre, or audio/visual synthesis, that Paik perceived from

the works and theories of Cage. In Paik's musical theatre,

the visual effect was further emphasized by the seasonings of

eroticism. "Serenade for Alison" (1962) was, as Michael Nyman

noted, an early example of the "striptease theme" that would

characterize his performances with Charlotte Moorman after

his moving to New York in 1964.

"Serenade for Alison" which began with the score "take

off a pair of yellow panties, and put them on the wall,"

together with other pieces, such as "Chronicle of a Beautiful

Paintress" (1962), or "Young Penis Symphony" (1962),159

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158 As quoted in Kuhe, loc. cit.; Sohm, ed., loc. cit.;
Paik, Videa 'n' Videology , loc. cit.

159 Nyman, op. cit., pp. 86-87.

marked the final phase of the Cologne Period happenings or the early phase of Fluxus Happening, which were different in two respects from the heyday or later Fluxus Happening after 1964. The first difference relates to the scale and the quality of the performance. Although almost all the happening pieces of both periods share a common characteristic of comic radicalism and sexual provocation, they differ in that the Cologne happening is marked by a "minimal and repetitive" quality using a number of "scores-as-list,"160 thus closer to Fluxus Happening, while the later phase showed more spectacle as in American Happening, as if paralleling his move to New York. The second difference refers to his relationship with various collaborators and to his partnership, with Alison Knowles in Germany and Charlotte Moorman in America, before and after 1964. Alison Knowles, as a founding member of Fluxus with her then husband Dick Higgins, collaborated with Paik as an independent performing artist, performing pieces Paik had dedicated to her; Moorman, who was a Julliard trained cellist and a conversant avant-garde musician, also worked with him as an actress and played his pieces. Thus, if the Paik-Knowles combination was defined by an amateur partnership based on friendship, the Paik-Moorman combination was more professional in character and impressed the artistic world with its notorious erotica performances.

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160 Ibid., p. 86.

B. FLUXUS HAPPENING

> Serious avant-garde art here is always in opposition to
> American mass culture. In a way, mass culture conditions
> art. . . . Popular culture is setting the rules, so you
> have to define what you do against what they are doing.
> We want to make more crude if they are perfect, we want
> to make more boring if they are exciting.[161]

Such a critical view of Paik on high and fine art or "serious

avant-garde art" not only reveals his own artistic philosophy

of participation-art but also represents the Fluxus goal which

outlines as social collectivism, anonymity, anti-

individualism, anti-Europeanism, or anti-professionalism.[162]

George Maciunas, the organizer and theorist of Fluxus, had

proclaimed these several points in his manifesto:

> Purge the world of bourgeois sickness, "Intellectual,"
> professional & commercialized culture, PURGE the world of
> dead art, imitation, artificial art, abstract art,
> illusionistic art, mathematical art,--PURGE THE WORLD
> OF "EUROPIANISM"! PROMOTE A REVOLUTIONARY FLOOD AND
> TIDE IN ART, Promote living art, anti art, promote NON
> ART REALITY to be grasped by all peoples, not only
> critics, dilettantes, and professionals. FUSE the cadres
> of cultural, social & political revolutionaries into
> united front & action.[163]

The endeavors to save art from the extreme formalism, or

idealism, that isolated it from the general public came from

the common themes of the 60's avant-garde art. The revival of

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161 As quoted in B. Kurtz, "The Zen Master of Video,"
Portfolio , vol. iv, no. 3, May/June, 1982, p. 102.

162 Adriani et al, op. cit., pp. 82-83.

163 Ruhé, loc. cit.; Sohm ed., loc. cit.

the tradition of live art or the emphasis on the anti-art
gesture were the resulting expression of those endeavors. The
artists of such realizations were determined to choose
practice instead of theory, action instead of conception,
content instead of form, or environment instead of picture
surface, thus letting their art become a "magic mirror"
reflecting all aspects of life. Nouveau Realism, Neo-Dada, or
Pop Art might have a common endeavor of putting vigorous life
into art, while Fluxus and Happening would show a more
liberated and radical expression of it.

The Fluxus Movement seems to represent the complex and
compounded aesthetics of live art both in name and reality.
The term 'fluxus' first of all picked up by Maciunas,164
corresponds to the artistic concept of Fluxus in contrasting
with the "unfortunate" name of Happening by Kaprow. The
English word flux, derived from the word Latin fluxus
(Maciunas had included a ɟ ᵤᵤ from a dictionary in his
manifesto), shows subtle variations in meaning as if

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164 The Lithuanian refugee, George Maciunas, before the
launch of Fluxus Movement in 1962, in Wiesbaden, already
founded a cultural club with his hometown friends in New York
and conceived the publication of an art magazine, for which he
thought of the term fluxus. Cf. B. Mats, "Birth of Fluxus,"
Kaleidoslcop, Sweden, 1979. The idea of publishing the art
magazine was not realized, but he succeeded in founding a
gallery, the AG gallery in New York, which became a center of
avant-garde performance. A series of performances in New York
from March to July of 1961, along with other series performed
in the studio of Yoko Ono and organized by La Monte Young,
between December 1960 to January 1962, actually were the
predecessors of Fluxus Happening both in terms of quality and
members. Cf. P. Frank, "Fluxus in New York, USA," Lightworks,
1979 fall.

reflecting the indefinite character of the flux. Among them:

"2. Act of flowing: a continuous moving on or passing by, as of a flowing stream; a continuing succession of change" conforms exactly to the "flexibility, changeability, fluency," defined by Cage as part of the meaning of indeterminacy.[165] As well, "7. Chem. & Metal. a. Any substance or mixture used to promote fusion, esp. the fusion of metals of minerals . . ." seems not irrelevant to the concept of intermedia. As the meaning of the word flux suggests intonations of indeterminacy and intermedia, the character of Fluxus cannot be defined so easily. It is just, as George Brecht indicated, "something unnameable," a feeling that "the bounds of art are much wider than they have conventionally seemed, or that art and certain long-established bounds are no longer very useful . . ."[166] Dick Higgins tried to delineate it by setting up 9 criteria: Internationalism, Experimentalism and Iconoclasm, Intermedia, Minimalism, The Resolution of The Art/Life Dichotomy, Implicativeness, Play or Gag, Ephemerality, Specificity. These criteria, of course, are not absolute; a Fluxus work cannot or do not satisfy all of these criteria, nor does a given Fluxus work include all of these; only the more Fluxus-like works, as Higgins maintained, incorporate a broader scope

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165 See p. 24 above.

166 Sohm, ed. loc. cit.

of criteria.[167]

However, many of Paik's works seem to meet all these criteria. The quality of Intermedia is surely most applicable to his work because his happening involves not only music and performance but also video art, thus evolving into a new genre of video performance, the intermedia of happening and video art. In fact, Fluxus was not only an arena for his happening activity but it also provided a matrix for his video art. In a sense, we can say that his video art came as a by-product of his effort towards intermedia: it seems evident when we consider an excerpt from a letter to Cage written by Paik in 1959; "My new composition is now 1 minute. (For prof. Fortner) The title will be either 'Rondo Allegro', or 'Allegro Moderato', or only 'Allegretto'. Which is more beautiful ? I use here: Colour Projector. Film 2-3 screens. Strip tease. boxer. hen (alive). 6 year girl. light-piano. motorcycle and of course sounds. one TV.// 'whole art' in the meaning of Mr. R. Wagner."[168] We clearly see in this instance, his intention of using multiple media for his musical work, including a TV set; the seed of video art was from the start present in his action music, the initial effort leading him towards intermedia.

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167 Higgins, Fluxus: Theory and   'eption, loc. cit., quoted in M. Bech, loc. cit.

168 This excerpt printed in John Cage, A Year from Monday (Wesleyan press, 1969), p. 90, quoted in Paik, Videa 'n' Videology , loc. cit.

Among the nine criteria, the item Experimentalism and Iconoclasm seems to refer to the poststructuralist postmodern issue, the deconstruction of representation. by suggesting the negation of the traditional representation. Paik practices this task of deconstruction by employing the avant-garde concept of indeterminacy or variability. As Michael Nyman rightly understands, the ideal of Paik's musical performance was to create "variability as a necessary consequence of intensity," which was to be accomplished through "a series of rapid actions."169 Such actions have neither contextual meaning nor any logic; only the rapidness and repetition of the acting itself create a pure state of indeterminacy that deconstructs the traditional representation. As such, the concept of indeterminacy is as important to Paik as it is to Cage, serving as a crucial concept for his video art (this we shall see later).

Paik's "Sinphonie for 20 Rooms" (1961) provides a good example of the indeterminate musical work. The score shows the diagrams of 20 rooms and the detailed descriptions or indications of the musical and nonmusical events that are to happen in every room: for example, in a room, the sound of running water from a tap and the ticktock from an old loud clock are accompanied by the prepared sounds from a tape recorder, and in other rooms, various devices, such as a live hen in a cage, parallel readings, prepared piano, old record

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169 Nyman, op. cit., p. 80.

player, etc. are indicated.170   This musical happening piece
by Paik recalls Kaprow's first happening piece of 1959, "18
happening in 6 parts," which occurred in 3 compartmented rooms
in the Reuben Gallery during 6 days on October, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9,
10, at 8:30 P. M., thus making a total of 18 happenings.171
Both consisted of the indeterminate actions and sounds
occuring simultaneously in the compartmented-alogical
structure of separate rooms, and both expected the audience to
make a tour to meet or to experience the variability of these
happening indeterminate events.   However, the difference
between these happening pieces resides in the degree of
indeterminacy they employ: while on the one hand Kaprow's "18
happening" had occurred in a specific past time and specific
gallery space, thus showing a more defined character, Paik's
piece on the other hand was totally indeterminate   both in
time and space; it could occur any time and in any place in so
far as the indeterminate situation is created according to the
score instruction which indicates nothing of space and time
except assuming such 20 rooms conceptually.

His "Symphony NO. 5" (1965) shows more of the
indeterminate character, and is thus more conceptual. The
score indicates the series of performances starting from an

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170 The original score is presented in the essay of
Nyman, op. cit., p. 88.

171 For the script or the detailed description of this
piece, see Kirby, Happenings, op. cit., pp. 53-83. And also
refer to the discussion of pp. 35-36 above.

undefined first year, through a second and third year, lasting till an infinity of years, centuries, finally come to the incalculable year of "$1000^{10} \times 10^{99} \times 11^{11,1}$ th year."[172] But this conceptual music becomes concrete and physical when the scores indicate that everyday life should be acted on a specific time of an uncertain year, though in an absurd way: for example, "THE THIRD YEAR [.] MAY THE FIRST 18.43 o'clock. ride in a taxi and see ONLY the Taxi-meter."[173]

With such music of eternity, or the music of eternal indeterminacy, as Nyman suggests, Paik challenges Wagner's "Ring," the longest record of music, lasting 4 days, "the eternity-cult . . . the longest disease of mankind," as his "Symphony No. 5" states at the head of its score.[174] Paik once proclaimed himself, through his own publication, The Monthly Review of the University for Avant-Garde Hinduism, as a "heavy weight composer" working with "days, weeks, years, centuries, mega-years," and thus ranking himself above Webern who was a "feather weight composer" working with minutes, above Beethoven who was a "light weight composer" working with ten minutes, above Bach, a "middle weight composer" working with hours, and even above Wagner who was a "light heavy

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172 The original score is shown in Nyman, op. cit., pp. 84-85.

173 Ibid., p. 84.

174 Ibid., p. 89.

weight composer" working with days.175   Through this satirical

ranking, he not only parodied the authority of classical music

or musical figures, but also committed self-criticism by

including himself in such a ranking order. This self-critical

tendency, reflecting his skeptical side hidden in comic

gestures, is revealed clearly by some phrases from his "New

Ontology of Music" presented in the above mentioned Review: "I

never use therefore this holy word 'happening' for my

'concert', which are equally snobbish as those of Franz Liszt.

I am just more self-conscious less hypocritical than my anti-

artist friends. I am the same clown as Goethe and

Beethoven."176

     As such, his musical works during his Fluxus period,

specially based on score or written composition, became more

conceptualized, rooted firmly in concepts such as

indeterminacy, variability, or conceptual eternity, and were

thus less provocative in comparison to the coarse earlier

'striptease' score pieces. By the same token, the

performance-oriented action music became transformed or

systemized through the matrix of Fluxus, with the successive

presentations and sometimes repeated repertoires, since its

official launch in 1962 at the international festival,

"Fluxus International Festival, the New Music" held at the

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        175 Ruhé, loc. cit.; Sohm, ed., loc. cit.; Paik, Videa
'n' Videology, loc. cit.

        176 Ibid. Refer to the upper part of the same "New
Ontology of Music" presented in pp. 78-79 above.

Wiesbaden Museum in Germany.177 Nevertheless, no matter how

they became mitigated in provocation and stylized in form in

terms of the conceptualization and the systematization, his

musical works in terms of Fluxus Happening were not weakened

in their initial impact so as to shock the audience and thus

maintain Fluxus Happening as a participation-performance to

arouse the responses or participation of the audience. This

was made possible by employing the various shocking devices

that he incessantly searched for, like a true heir of live

performance art.

The episode of the bull's head attests to this point. It

refers to an incident that occurred on the occasion of his

first one man show, "Exposition of Music--Electronic

Television," held in 1963 at Rolf Jahrling's Galerie Parnass

in Wuppertal. This exhibition marked not on'y his first but

also the first case of video exhibition in the history of art

by displaying thirteen television sets, so called 'prepared

TVs' together with three 'prepared pianos' and some other

noise makers. The significance of the prepared TV as the

first example of video art will be discussed later, but it may

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177 This initiating festival was organized by Maciunas
who was in Germany at that time and who met there the avant-
garde artists from the German circle such as Faik , Vostell,
E. Williams, Benjamin Patterson, which the Higgins couple from
America joined during their trip in Europe. The participant-
performers who became the founding members were Dick Higgins,
Alison Knowles, N. J. Paik, Wolf Vostell, Robert Filliou,
Emmett Williams, Arthur Koepcke, and George Maciunas. They
presented 14 concertos during more than three weeks of
festival from September 1st to 23d. Cf. H. Sohm, ed., loc.
cit.; Ruhé, loc. cit.

be worth noting here that Paik had hung "the bloody head of an ox" over the door of the exhibition room.178 What was the meaning of the unexpected bleeding bull's head which made a strange parallel to those distorted mechanical objects in display ? Needless to say, it is a shocking method to evoke audience response, or a "stimulus to change one's conduct of life,"179 as striking as Jarry's "shit," or as aggressive as Wedekind's obscene talk,180 which is not far from the teaching method of the Zen master who, as Gene Youngblood pointed out, hits his pupil to make him perceive more.181 Or, isn't it another depiction of the Antonin Artaud's "electroshock" as expressed by himself "the sensitivity is put in a state of deepened and keener perception," so as to link the gap between art and life ?182 As Roger Shattuck writes of Artaud, the

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178 G. Youngblood, "Nam June Paik: Cathode Karma," Expanded Cinema (New York: E. P. Dutton & CO.,Inc., 1970), p. 302. This exhibition was famous for another incident next to bull's head: the true happening produced by Beuys who attended the vernissage. That is, Beuys, without any preparation or notification in advance, smashed with an axe one of the prepared pianos lying down on the floor, thus committing a double attack on the piano, already once attacked by being prepared by Paik. Recalling the day, in the catalogue preface of the memory exhibition of the late Beuys in 1986 at Won Gallery in Seoul, Paik confesses that he does not know still today the source of the axe, whether Beuys found it in the basement of the gallery or brought it with him from Düsseldorf.

179 Bürger, op. cit., p. 80.

180 See p. 53 above.

181 Youngblood, loc. cit.

182 A. Artaud, Theatre, p. 110, quoted in Schulte-Sasse, op. cit., p. xxxii.

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shocking effect of his theatre as "powerful an agent of
cultural and emotional change as plague, cruelty, or hunger"
will "goad us back to life" or "rescue us for culture,";
that is, it will move us from the realm of "forms, things, and
contemplation" of culture to the realm of "signs, acts, and
exaltation" of life.183 This position of Artaud, as
represented in his recollection of essays and manifestoes, The
Theatre and Its Double (1938), not only epitomizes the anti-
art aesthetics of dada/happening performance but also explains
the enigmatic actions or behaviors of such performers as
Jarry, Wedekind, or Paik.

The cruel and aggressive method, as in the case of the
bull's head, was not all that Paik employed to shock the
audience. Rather, his typical comic radicalism comes more
from humorous and satirical devices, among which his eroticism
is most effective in shocking the audience. The eroticism not
only has a shocking effect through overt exhibitionism, or
sexual connotation, but also functions as an amusement with
its element of popularity or universality. Thus, fulfilling
the Fluxus ideal of art as amusement, handed down from the
Roman circus or Vaudeville,184 the Paik-Moorman performance

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183 R. Shattuck, Innocent Eye: On Modern Literature and
Arts (New York: Washington Square Press, Pocket Books New
York, 1986), pp. 207, 217-18.

184 Art as amusement was one of the catch phrases of
Fluxus, especially claimed by Maciunas. Maciunas inscribed
the Roman circus or Vaudeville as the precursors of live
amusement art in his "Expanded Arts Diagram," his life time
project since 1966, showing in a glance the historical

erotica opened a new dimension in art, art as entertainment, or striptease amusement.

In 1965, Paik's "Cello Sonata No. 1 for Adults Only" was staged for the first time in the New School for Social Research in New York; there Moorman's exhibitionism began to be displayed. She played Bach ("Suite III for Cello"), alternating the playing with taking off her clothes until she became almost nude. In "Variation on a theme of Saint-Saëns "of the same year, performed in Judson Church, as a program of the "Third Annual New York Avant-Garde Festival," her exhibitionism went further.185 In the middle of playing "The Swan," she stopped, went to a tank full of water, climbed up and dove into the water, and then crawled out of the water to finish her play dripping wet. The silhouette seen through the dampened dress was more exciting than any other nudes.186 Finally, there was the troubled "Opera Sextronique" of 1967. This piece consisted of four acts: Moorman playing cello in a

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development of Fluxus. The diagram is reproduced in many Fluxus literatures including Ruhé's Fluxus.

185 This annual avant-garde festival was organized by Charlotte Moorman in 1963 before she met Paik and became his partner in 1964. Their first cooperative performance was presented through the second annual festival of 1964, in Judson hall, when Paik's first robot ("Robot K-456") performed with them.

186 These two pieces of 1965 were performed again at the time of his retrospective exhibition at the Whitney Museum, 1982, with other 16 happening pieces, without much alteration except some small details like costume. For example Moorman was dressed in blue satin in "Variation--" of Whitney, whereas she wore a cellophane dress at the premiêre.

lightbulb bikini, then in a topless evening gown, and wearing

a football helmet, and then in the last act, playing an

upright bomb instead of the cello, totally nude.187 After

carrying out a performance tour throughout Europe with this

piece, the New York show caused such a disturbance that

Moorman was arrested by the police during her playing of the

second act in half nudity (a nude upper body).188

What was the eroticism all about ? If Fluxus introduced

music into Dadaism,189 Paik introduced sex into Dadaist music.

As he so famously remarked, "Parameter sex is very

underdeveloped in music as opposed to literature and optical

art,"190 therefore why not sex in music as in literature or

as in visual art ? However, Paik's eroticism and his nudes

work contrary to the traditional usage. It is not the

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187 Werner, loc. cit.

·188 According to the "New York Law Journal" of May 11,
1967, Moorman "did perform as act in which she did willfully
and lewdly expose her private parts in a theatre where others
were present" allegedly in violation of section 1140 of the
Penal Law, and at the same time committed a "violation of
section 43 of the P.L. [by an] 'act which openly outrages
public decency' ." Cf. "From Jail to Jungle, 1967-1977: The
work of Charlotte Moorman and Nam June Paik," The Art of
Performance, op. cit., p. 279.

189 Many Fluxus artists have musical background; Nam June
Paik, Philip Corner, Dick Higgins, Joe Jones, Benjamin
Patterson, La monte Young, Eric Anderson. On the other hand,
most American Happening artists are or were visual artists;
Allan Kaprow, Jim Dine, Red Groom, Clas Oldenburg.

190 First appeared in 1964 through Fluxus organ in his
essay review for his own Wuppertal exhibition of 1963, this
phrase has been cited many times by himself and others. See
Paik, Videa 'n' Videology, loc. cit.

presentation of the ideal beauty of the female body of the classicists, neither the illustration of the 'femme fatale' of the Romantists and Symbolists, nor the 'parody' of the nude by the Realist Courbet. It is rather close to the 'pastiche' or "blank parody" of the nude by Manet in his "Olympia" (1865).191 As Timothy J. Clark maintains that Manet's "recalcitrant" Olympia is "neither a nude nor a prostitute," leaving us "with no primary system of signifieds to refer to, as a test for deviation."192 Like "unfinished sequences of signification," Paik's nude, the naked body of Moorman, shows neither the "decorum" of a nude nor the "disgrace" of a prostitute. But unlike Manet's hermetic pictorial nude, this living body is just the frank exhibition of sex, sex as universal as mass-media and as live as life, the presentation of which in the context of art is as much shocking as it is popular and entertaining. In this context, we can say that his eroticism, both as a shocking method and as entertainment, functions as a bridge between art and audience, or between art and life.

His eroticism produces a special effect in the context of

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191 The terms, parody and pastiche, are based on the notion of Fredric Jameson, who distinguished one from another in the context of modernism and postmodernism; the modernist creation of style in terms of parody and the postmodern vacancy of style, author, or subject resulted in pastiche practice. For a detailed discussion of this matter see pp. 195-6 below.

192 T. J. Clark, "Preliminaries to a possible treatment of 'Olympia' in 1865," Screen, vol. xxi, no.1, spring 1980, p. 32.

video performance: mechanizing female body with video; or
humanizing, thus eroticizing, video technology by using
mechanical parts to represent the female body. "TV Bra for
Living Sculpture" (1969) and "TV Cello" (1969) are the most
well known pieces in this vein. Moorman wears bra-sized
television monitors while she plays cello. Or, she plays the
TV-cello, the three part construction of television monitors
alluding to the cello shape, which, through the transparent
case shells, are exhibiting the internal machine organs, thus
inviting a contrasting effect with the cello-shaped live
female player. In both cases, when she plays the cello--
wooden or machinery, the monitors of bra or cello relay the
actual performance, the image of which changes indeterminately
according to the change of wave length of the played sound.193
There is a perfect accordance between mechanical image and
musical sound, thereby setting up at the same time intermedia
between the visual and the aural, and between technology and
art. To this, the live element, both in terms of live relay
and live body, makes the performance a complete intermedia
between arts (time/space), technology, and life, accomplishing
participation-performance in terms of live art, intermedia,
and indeterminacy.

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193 These pieces were also performed during the Whitney
Retrospective Exhibition.

CHAPTER III

THE PARTICIPATORY ASPECTS OF VIDEO ART

Paik's video art was not a sudden outcome of his genius.
Rather it was a by-product of a life-long effort to remove art
from its ivory tower, a life-long effort to create living art.
If happening opened a field for the practice of such an
avant-gardiste effort, video art provided Paik with new
possibilities, permitting him to achieve such a practice.

Video art, by the nature of its medium, involves the
idioms of live art. It not only shares the participatory
aspects of happening--the indeterminacy, the intermedia, the
resolution of the art and life dichotomy--but strengthens them
in its own particular way: the flux and the kinetics of the
moving image create a certain indeterminacy; the audio-
visuality of the medium articulates an intermedia between time
art and space art; television and video, above everything, are
a mass communication media with a potential of becoming a live
art for mass audiences. In this respect, video art can be
defined as participation-TV, as an extension or a consequence
of happening, a point which is most appropriate to Paik's

video art, who perceived, emphasized and developed the issue of participation earlier than others through his coherent activities of happening and video art.

Despite the common aesthetics video art shares with happening, these two practices are different ontologically and epistemologically; their participatory aspects are thus also distinctive. We will start our examination of the medium by distinguishing its three main dimensions: mass-mediatic, psychological and electronic. This division will not only help to clarify the nature of video art, but also facilitate the study of participation. On the one hand, the electronic medium can be seen as parallel to the concept of indeterminacy, and on the other hand, the psychological and mass medium as parallels to live art, the three dimensions being based on the concept of intermedia.

In fact, video art can be called a culmination of intermedia. It is, first of all, an intermedia of art and technology. To be more precise, according to Gottlieb, it is the synthesis of art and science, the sixth of the "Aesthetics of Merger," which uses physics as the principal tool.194 In a larger sense, as Gene Youngblood maintains, it is an intermedia between art and ecology. According to the latter's

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194 Though Gottlieb's discussion of this matter does not
include video art per se, it is nevertheless of interest in
the overall understanding of the relation of art and science,
or of the scientific spirit in art, which is no less important
in video art than our subject. Cf. Gottlieb, op. cit., pp.
293-317. Also refer to pp. 41-42 above.

concept of "expanded cinema," the artist's and the ecologist's

activities are and must be similar; it is in this sense that

Youngblood speaks about "the symbiosis of [the] artist and

[the] ecologist."195   To support this view, the theoretician

held up as an example the USCO group of the 60's, a union of

artists and engineers exploring "the multimedia performance

and the kinaesthetic event" which later became the Intermedia

Systems Corporation by including a group of behavioral

scientists from Harvard University.   According to them:

> Intermedia refers to the simultaneous use of various
> media to create total environmental experience for the
> audience.   Meaning is communicated not by coding ideas
> into abstract literary language, but by creating an
> emotionally real experience through the use of audio-
> visual technology.   Originally conceived in the realm of
> art rather than science or engineering, the principles on
> which intermedia is based are ground in the fields of
> psychology, information theory, and communication
> engineering.196

If one acknowledges the position of Youngblood and the members

of the Corporation, it becomes clear that video art is an

intermedia aiming to integrate the many aspects of human

activities such as art, culture, environment, technology,

science, etc., and attempting to create a symbiosis of art and

ecology in order to resolve the dichotomy of art and life.

Hence, video art is more concerned with problems of

participation and communication than with the production of

an art object; that is, as Benjamin Buchloh has noted, it

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195 G. Youngblood, Expanded Cinema (New York: E. P.   .
Dutton & Co., 1970), p. 347.

196 Ibid., p. 348.

focuses on the "transformation of audience relationship," on a new "model of participation" (art-audience communication), and on the "merger between avant-garde culture and culture industry" (high art-popular art communication), which are the most impending problems in postmodern contemporary culture.[197]

In what follows, we will see how the three aspects of video medium--the mass-mediatic, the psychological, the electronic--are related to postmodernist issues, and especially to the issue of audience-participation: how does video pose and solve the problems of participation, and how do these solutions reveal the artistic or art historical significance of live art handed down from the historical avant-garde via happening.

For a preliminary understanding of this premise, it is important to define briefly these three video characterizations. Video, considered as a Mass Medium, presupposes the participation of a mass audience. In order to examine this first characterization, we will first focus our study on the relationship between video and television to show how it evolved into a circular movement. Video art started with the manipulation of television (image and set) and, after a phase of experimentation of the medium, it returned to television broadcasting via the practice of live transmission.

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197 B. H. D. Buchloh, "Periodizing Critics," in "Theories of Art after Minimalism and Pop," Discussions in Contemporary Culture by Dia Art Foundation, ed., Hal Foster, number one, (Seattle: Bay Press, 1987), pp. 68, 70.

This latter type of television art, prime time live video,

Paik's "global-TV," is possibly the final phase of video art

considered as participation-TV. With this new television art,

the issues of communication and of high art-popular art

reconciliation become more important because of the mass

audience it is addressing. Video as a PSYCHOLOGICAL MEDIUM

derives from the assumption that video duplicates or extends

human psychology. The television monitor has a mirror

structure which reflects the observer (the artist or the

audience) and creates the same narcissistic situation of

split-self as in the psychoanalytical process of self-

identification. From this we can define video as an

aesthetics of narcissism involving the notion of the index

which is related to the poststructuralist practice of

deconstructing representation. Finally, while the

psychological medium doubles human psyche, THE ELECTRONIC

MEDIUM, the third characterization of video, is one which

doubles human perception. Here, I hope to demonstrate that

the electronic image (indeterminate, kinetic or double-

natured) facilitates and cultivates a new type of perception.

From a modern behaviorist point of view, the indeterminate

video image doubles human perceptual organism which is

dependent on the complex, indeterminate relationship between

the internal and the external or between the subject and the

object. As such, the analogical relation between the video

image and human sight is set up by the notion of indeterminacy

or 'dédoublement', a notion that is related to the

dematerialization of the art object and to the deconstruction

of representation.

A. THE MASS MEDIUM

> TV is as mass media. . . . As wife was just a sex-
> machine for her husband (before), public is just the
> Pavlovan [sic] dog for the network (presently). The
> infinite potentials of TV, such as: two-way
> communication, audience participation, "electronic
> democracy through instant referendum" (J.Cage) . . . is
> by far ignored or delicately suppressed.198
>
> Communication means the two-way communication. One-way
> communication is simply a notification . . . like a draft
> call. TV has been a typical case of this non
> communication and mass audience had only one freedom,
> that is, turn on or turn off the TV. . . . "TV tortured
> the intellectuals for long time. . . . It is about the
> time that intellectuals torture TV," John Canady said
> something like that a few years ago. . . . It is
> happening all over. . . . Now artists are striking back
> TV both in hardware and software.199

Paik's critical insight on the negative aspect of the TV

medium is indicative of the "homeopathic"200 relation of video

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198 Paik, Videa 'n' Videology, loc. cit. The Pavlovian
dog refers to the behavioral study of the conditioned reflex
in dog by the Soviet physiologist, Ivan Petrovich Pavlov
(1849-1936). Cf. The collins English Dictionary, 2nd ed.,
(1986), s.v. "Pavlov."

199 Idem.

200 This term is derived from Fredric Jameson, who used
it in the context of postmodern practice: "to undo
postmodernism homeopathically by the methods of
postmodernism". Cf. A. Stephanson, "Interview with Fredric
Jameson," Flash Art, no. 131, Dec. 1982/Jan. 1983, p. 71.

art with television, born from, but also against, the television medium. Indeed, the moment of "torturing TV" or "striking back TV" might be the moment of the birth of video art. Discussing the inseparable relation between video and television, David Antin states, "video seems to be defined by the total absence of any of the features that define television."201 Thus, according to him, to define the "distinctive features" of video art would be the same thing as finding out the problems inherent to television: video challenges and parodies TV by imitating its cliches or reversing them with alternatives.

The inherent problems of television are derived from the medium's ontological condition as a mass medium which poses two levels of communicational problems: at the social level, the communication between the medium (sender) and the audience (receiver), and at the cultural level, the communication between mass culture and high culture. The former refers to the one-way method of TV communication which practitioners of interactive video attempted to modify into a two-way communication. The latter corresponds to the postmodernist proposition to reconcile high art with popular art in which TV entertainment and video art become intermingled so as to evolve into a new type of TV art, suggesting in turn the possibility of a reciprocal and complementary relation between

201 D. Antin, "Video: the Distinctive Features of the Medium," Video Art, op. cit., p. 177.

television and video.

George Orwell (1903-1950) had already clamored the
negative aspect of the one-way TV communication when in 1949
he portrayed the medium in his Nineteen Eighty-Four as a
one-sided political tool used for surveillance and terror by a
totalitarian state of dictators: "Big Brother is watching
you" (through the TV monitor). In a way his premonition did
hit the mark, since the television audience has degraded to an
irresistibly passive audience satisfied to receive the one-
sided message of the medium, a stereotyped image which
controls and represses the audience like the presiding image
of a ruler. More than that, the one-sidedness and the
pervasiveness of the medium permeating into every aspect of
contemporary life blocks human imagination and prevents
personal expression.202 Thus, following Baudrillard's
description, in a world of "screen and network," of ecstasy,
obscenity and fascination for communication, television
becomes a necessary evil.203 The obscene and fascinating
effect of television governs and determines the contemporary
socio-cultural life: this is a fact which nobody can resist or

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202 Loeffler points out the pervasiveness of television
as such: "It has been said that today there are more
television sets in America than bathtubs and that the viewing
masses often equate television with a truth greater than
empirical reality (e. g. "Let's turn on the TV to see if it's
raining")." Cf., C. E. Loeffler, Performance Anthology, op.
cit., p. 383.

203 Baudrillard, "Ecstasy of Communication," Postmodern
Culture, op. cit., pp. 126, 132

ignore.

Antin regards the one-way aspect of TV communication as the result of the economical structure constituting the TV industry. The television industry, following the example of the earlier radio industry, not only secured special support from the government but also became involved in a system of complex relations of interest. Tied firmly to the electronic industry by the law of demand and supply, the television industry had certain advantages: the electronic components of television were developed and produced "entirely for the convenience and the profits of TV industry." This resulted in an enormous difference in costs between broadcast production and transmission on the one hand, and its reception on the other hand. As Antin points out, the broadcast production is unnecessarily and unreasonably expensive, whereas the receivers can purchase TV sets at a moderate price because they are mass produced.204 This economical asymmetry between transmission and reception, in Antin's view, determined the hierarchy of communication in which "transmission dominates reception" forming an unequal and asymmetrical social relation between the sender/medium and the receiver/audience.

This type of communication provided interactive video practice with a ground for improvement which resulted in the formation of 'participation-TV'. In regard to the homeopathic origin of video art, we can say that video art started with

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204 Antin, op. cit., p. 175.

television technology in the sense that it used and abused TV sets and TV broadcasting images in the context of art, as Paik or Vostell did in the early 60's. However it can be equally maintained that video art started with the invention of the portapack: the development of video art as an interactive, participatory artform came with the portable recording system using a half-inch tape and a mobile camera, a system employed by Paik to produce his first artistic video tape in 1965.

But the use of video was not new. From 1956, television broadcast production began to use video systems that allowed not only the recording and the replaying of programs, but also an improvement of the image which became "smoother," gradually replacing the roughness and the unpredictability of earlier live broadcast.205 This move from live broadcasting (the first network in 1946 connected New York, Washington and Philadelphia) to transcription broadcasting marked a 'TV revolution'.206 However, the huge and built-in equipment

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205 Antin points out that the change from the immediacy of live broadcast to the smoothness of the transcription reflects the "money metric" mechanism of the TV industry involving the complex relationship between program and advertisement in that the advertisers worry about the temporal difference between the regions in terms of live broadcasting; the prime and nonprime time of viewing due to the time difference that affects the effect of advertisement. Cf. Antin, op. cit., p. 176.

206 The 'iconoscope', an electronic scanning device employing the Braun cathode tube, was invented in 1923 by Vladimir Zworykin, a Russian immigrant, and when the cathode ray tube(CRT) was perfected in 1939, the first experimental TV broadcast was televised by the National Broadcasting Company, a RCA subsidiary. For a detailed description see Allison Simmons, "Television and Art: a Historical Primer for an

needed by the stations had nothing to do with the personal use of video by artists which was only made possible with the advent of the portapack. With its increased mobility and reduced price,207 the portapack provided the artists with the possibility to confront and to exploit the medium. With the portapack came the "half-inch revolution,"208 replacing the two-inch tape of the broadcast station and opening for the individual artists a new area for interactive video. The portapack revolution also affected television production and therefore promoted another TV revolution. Firstly, as Allison Simmons noted, together with cable TV, the portable video system contributed to the decentralization and the fragmentation of an otherwise monolithic TV broadcast network organization.209 Secondly, video art provided television with an opportunity for self-criticism and encouraged the

Improbable Alliance," The New Television: A Public/Private Art based on "Open Circuits: an Interaction conference on the Future of Television" held by the Museum of Modern Art, New York, in 1974, ed., D. Davis and A. Simmons (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1977), pp. 3-4.

207 The price of the portapack system (recorder and camera) was between US $1,000 to $3,000 during the years 1965-1970, whereas the price of a broadcasting camera was about $100,000. As well the price of tape was reduced almost ten times; the broadcasting two-inch tape was $260 per hour, whereas the same one-hour tape for a half-inch portapack was $18. Cf. Simmons, op. cit., p. 5; C. Dercon, "A Little Paragraph in a Text that is Missing," Video, ed., R. Payant, (Canada: Artextes, 1986), p. 220.

208 D. Ross, "A Provisional Overview of Artists' Television in the U.S.," New Artists Video, op. cit., p. 142.

209 Simmons, op. cit., p. 5.

broadcasting of artistic video works. These occurrences raised the public taste level and offered the possibility of a two-way communication by stimulating audience-participation with various interactive devices. The Public Broadcasting Laboratory Project set up at WGBH-TV in Boston in 1969 was to be the first example of artists' video broadcasting; it was conceived and produced by Fred Barzyk who invited six artists, including Paik and Kaprow, to present their video works for the program "The Medium is the Medium." This was followed in the same year by The Artist's Television Workshop of WNET-13 in New York which became, in 1972, the Television Workshop where Paik and others produced and presented many experimental video tapes.

Perceiving the significance of this change, Rene Berger divided the development of television into three phases: Macrotelevision, Mesotelevision and Microtelevision.210 Macrotelevision refers to mass-national-commercial television using the air waves for transmission. Here, the mode of the transmission is "centrifugal," "one-way," "hierarchical," and the aim of the broadcast is to "inform," "educate," "entertain" rather than to instruct or make criticism; and its operation is "homeostatic."211 Mesotelevision relates to local-regional-community television and uses the cable; its

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210 R. Berger, "Video and the Restructuring of Myth," The New Television, op. cit., p. 207.

211 Ibid., p. 208.

aim is to acheive a "two-directional" flow between the
transmitter and the receiver; it promotes a "cybernetic,"
"biotype" operation, and performs a critical function.212
Microtelevision, the individual or group television using the
video camera and recorder, allows "profound modification in
the structure of communication."213 In this case, the
communicational problem between the transmitter and the
receiver is changed into a "question of interoperators" where
creation and participation become equal activities that
require the faculty of "imagination."214 Thus,
Microtelevision, a private television using video, contrasting
with the former two types of television, operates through an
"open system" involving a "constant interaction with
environment."215 Though Berger did not push his argumentation
any further and did not look into the possibility of a
reciprocal relation between video and television, he spoke of
video as an alternative TV able to promote a two-way
communication (audience-participation) and as a creative
medium stimulating imagination and creativity.

This dual aspect of video as a communication medium and
as an art medium can foster a new type of TV art giving the
possibility to reconcile broadcast entertainment and video

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212 Ibid., p. 209.

213 Idem.

214 Ibid., pp. 209-10.

215 Ibid., p. 210.

art, or, to put it another way, popular art and fine/high art. Before considering video, we must note that television as a medium of communication and as an entertainment for the mass can be regarded as a possible locus of a popular artform rooted in mass culture. As Herbert J. Gans argues, popular culture is "provided by the mass media and consumer goods industries," and it is "shaped by that audience at least in part, albeit indirectly."216 This statement alludes strongly to the mechanism of the TV medium in a consumer society. The medium is a principal object of mass culture critique; this suggests that "popular culture is an aberration born of commercial greed and public ignorance."217 Following Gans, mass culture critique originated in the eighteenth century "with the beginning of popular literature, a forerunner of today's mass media" and continued throughout the nineteenth century along with the popularity of alcohol, sex, sports and films. In the first half of this century, criticism focused on movies, comic books, radio and sports. After the sixties, it concentrated on the "negative effects of television viewing."218

What is the criteria of mass culture critique ? What is the content of the debate between mass culture and high

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216 H. J. Gans, Popular Culture and High Culture: An Analysis and Evaluation of Taste (USA: Basic Books Inc., 1974), pp. ix, 3.

217 Ibid., p. x

218 Ibid., p. 4.

culture ? The criteria of mass or popular culture219 is

generally defined by the level of taste of an audience. As

Hal Himmelstein noted, the denomination of television as

belonging to popular culture comes from the mass audience and

their "underdeveloped aesthetic sensibility." However,

Himmelstein will argue that such generalizations tend to

ignore "the aesthetic design and cultural signification in

individual television works"220: here he seems to refer to

interactive video artworks or TV art. To account for his

position, he introduces and criticizes some examples of mass

culture critique.

This type of critique is anti-populist and conservatist:

it regards mass culture and popular art as "certain objects

and events that engaged the attention of all strata of the

population, as opposed to those objects and events that were

traditionally assumed to be private domain of some ill-defined

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219 Concerning the terms popular culture or mass culture,
Gans defines the difference between the concepts: the term
mass culture, as a combination of the two German words, 'mass'
and 'kultur', which are opposing concepts in that mass refers
to the nonaristocratic, poor, working class and kultur to high
culture, thus is used in a pejorative sense meaning the mob's
lack of culture, for which reason Gans himself prefers the
term popular culture. The popular culture, a more positive
term than mass culture, assumes the dichotomy of high and
popular, which reveals a contradiction when certain works of
high culture involve popularity, for which reason Dwight
MacDonald rejects the term and instead justifies the term mass
culture which is directed solely towards the articles of mass
consumption. Cf. Gans, Ibid., pp. 9-10.

220 H. Himmelstein, "TV Culture: Entertainment or Art?,"
On the Small Screen: New Approaches in Television and Video
Criticism (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1981), p. 2.

cultural elite."221   This position is represented by Dwight MacDonald, who points out that: "mass culture began as, and to some extend still is, a parasitic, a cancerous growth on high culture." From this contention, a series of oppositions were set up in order to define the criteria of each culture: artisan/artist, entertainment/art, impersonal commodity manufacture/unique vision and mass product/individual communication, the first term of each opposition referring to mass culture and the second to high culture. MacDonald will conclude that mass culture threatens high culture by the process of massification in which the traditional role of the elite-intellectuals is replaced by that of the specialists.222

Edward Shils relates the pervasiveness of mass culture which accompanies a weakening tradition to the great variety of options and choices that are available to the individual. The personal choice is not dictated by "tradition, scarcity, or authority" but comes to form a new mass society by integrating the mass at its center. And because the mass becomes the central gravity in the mass culture, it seems natural that the standard of taste becomes degraded. Nevertheless, he underlines that the very power of the population awakens the sensibility and the responsiveness of the mass, thus heightening its aesthetic perception.223

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221 Ibid., p. 3.

222 Ibid., pp. 3-4.

223 Ibid., pp. 5-6.

Compared to MacDonalds's negative view which maintains that
mass culture will bring about a decline of the public taste
level, Shils' theory reveals a kind of positivism whereas
public taste can be raised by the endeavors of each individual
while experiencing and understanding art. C. Wright Mills'
theory, on the other hand, begins by criticizing the role of
mass media. He regards the media as a tool used by the modern
elite to manipulate the mass, the result of which leads to the
"impersonization" of public life or the "destruction of
privacy" of the audience. Here, Mills proposes art as a
therapy, as a solution for the "private tension and anxiety"
of the audience produced by the mass media: once a member of
the audience understands art, "he should be able to transcend
his private world and become aware of a broader cultural
milieu as it relates to his own environment."224

No matter how different they are in the understanding of
mass culture, these critiques all show certain limitations and
misconceptions because they all ignore the cultural and
symbolic context of individual works that Himmelstein speaks
about, which play an important role in the creation of art.
In contrast to these positions, the aesthetician Abraham
Kaplan recognizes the inherent quality of popular art.
According to Himmelstein, he characterizes popular art as a
"mass art that is mass produced or reproduced and is responded
to by vast numbers of people" with the proviso that "there is

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224 Ibid., p. 8.

no fixed a priori relation between quantity and quality, especially not between quantity and certain specific qualities as distinguished from worth in general."225 Furthermore, he defends popular art in terms of its form and meaning before questioning its artistic value. Kaplan's position on popular art is paralleled and strengthened by Gans' considerations on the subject which favour autonomy for each culture, basing its claim on two value judgments:

> (1) that popular culture reflects and expresses the aesthetic and other wants of many people (thus making it culture and not just commercial menace); and (2) that all people have a right to the culture they prefer, regardless of whether it is high or popular.226

From this contention Gans concludes that "popular culture does not harm either high culture, the people who prefer it, or the society as a whole," and that

> popular culture is, like high culture, a taste culture [determined by "different aesthetic standards"], chosen by people who lack the economic and educational opportunities of the devotees of high culture.227

Such positions as those of Gans and Kaplan, while recognizing the positive aspect of popular culture, do not suggest any aesthetic or sociopolitical dimension in popular art. Walter Benjamin's approach does address this issue. In "The Works of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" (1938), he argues that the phenomenon of mass production of

225 Ibid., p. 9.

226 Gans, op. cit., p. vii.

227 Ibid., p. x.

works of art in the modern mechanical age has brought forward

aesthetical and perceptual changes: the authentic aesthetics

that emphas es the uniqueness of the original work of art as

well as the permanence of its "aura" is destroyed by a

pluralistic aesthetics that pursues equality and universality;

the "cult value" of the original work in the service of the

"ritual" is replaced by the "exhibition value" of the

reproduction based on "political" practice; and admiration

from a "distance" of the auratic work of art is subverted by a

new desire to "bring things 'closer' spatially and humanly"

which in turn will overcome the uniqueness of the original by

accepting its reproduction.228   Thus, the "works of art

reproduced become the works of art designed for

reproducibility" and consequently a "quantitative shift

between its two poles turned into a qualitative transformation

of its nature"229 assuming new functions relative to the

exhibition value and the political practice.

Benjamin's insight serves, as John Hanhardt notes, as a

"basis for appreciation of film as potent force in

modernism"230; this is equally true in case of photography and

228 W. Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of
Mechanical Reproduction," Video Culture: A Critical
Investigation, ed.,J. Hanhardt, (Giggbs M. Smith, INc.,
Peregrine Smith Books, Visual Studies Workshop Press (N. Y.),
1986). pp. 30-33.

229 Ibid., p. 33.

230 J. H. Hanhardt, "Introduction," Video Culture, op.
cit., p. 9.

video. While Benjamin's understanding of mass produced popular art suggests a new function for popular art which reconciliates high art and popular art, the recognition of popular art by the aforementioned theorists, Kaplan or Gans, still seems to reflect the traditional dichotomy between the two cultural forms. This dichotomy becomes evident when we consider the criteria set up by Kaplan, for distinguishing between the two arts, where he postulates that popular art is of a lesser quality and purity than high art, rather than establishing the value of popular art in its own social and political context. For example, Kaplan argues that popular art is dependent on the "formula" and not on the "form" as in high art.231 Furthermore, in its relation to the audience, popular art arouses superficial feeling instead of an intense awareness and calls for no aesthetic distance as opposed to the aesthetic distance of high art; it therefore relieves the audience's anxiety instead of disturbing it. Finally, it appeals to a distinctive majority taste instead of a common universal denominator as in the case of high art.232

These criteria consolidate a distinction between TV entertainment and video art before they merged and evolved into a new type of TV broadcasting art. In fact, artistic video is distinguished from TV broadcast, as Himmelstein maintains, by its "adherence to art's traditional concept of

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231 Himmelstein, op. cit.. p. 10.

232 Ibid., pp. 10-11.

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the personal expression, of the individual artist's struggle against the ordering principle established by a culture's dominant institution."233

If we believe that the experimentalism of modern avant-garde art derived from a spirit of subversion against the establishment, it becomes evident that video experimentalism started as a movement of opposition against the television conventions. Video, as ªn avant-garde art, first deconstructed the TV medium in every possible way, whether by imitating or by reversing its code. One of the effective strategies of video is to make the most of repetition, boredom, eroticism and social commentary, practices that are taboos in the television field. Boredom is a special trademark of video art, contrasting with TV programs based on entertainment. This difference between video boredom and TV amusement speaks for the different attitude toward time in each medium. TV time is commercial, saleable, determined by the relation between programs and commercial advertisements, the two operational codes of TV production. The resulting artificially segmented time unit234 produces visual and aural

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233 Ibid., p. 17.

234 The one hour program is divided into four units of 15 minutes, and the commercial consists of the multiple 10 seconds units. Cf. Antin "Video: Distinctive Features of the Medium," op. cit., p. 178. Sometimes the sequences are: four 30-second commercials, 12 minutes of program, one-minute break, 10-second spots, 12 minutes program, and again four 30-second commercials and so on. Cf. P. Gale, "Video has Captured Our Imagination," In Video, catalogue for the exhibition of Dalhousie Art Gallery, Halifax, Nova Scotia, 1977, n. p.

pleasure by its changeability and variety. On the other hand, video time is aesthetic, conceptual, determined either by the artistic intention or the physical length of the raw tape: he.e time spreads in the unbroken continuum often producing a psychological tension.

Acconci's "Center" (1971), "Air Time" (1973) and "Open Book" all typify video boredom as they record minimal 'events': Acconci pointing out to his reflection in the center of the screen with his index finger for twenty minutes of running time; Acconci dialoguing with his own image by speaking out the linguistic shifters 'I' and 'You' for forty minutes; Acconci speaking with an open mouth in such a way as to be unable to pronouce audible words, telling us an incomprehensible story that lasts for twenty minutes.

Video also parodies TV time by emphasizing its very structure. Paik's "Global Groove" (1973) epitomizes the fragmentation of TV time: because the flickering images and the accompanying sounds change incessantly, this tape provides more audio-visual splendor than any other TV entertainment. Ant Farm's (a multimedia collective in San Francisco) "Media Burn" (1974-5) satirizes TV convention in a more determined and provocative way. It consists of a documentary tape of a made-up event wherein the artists first set fire to a pyramid wall of TV sets and finally drive into the fire with a remodelled Cadillac. In recording the event, they not only employed the sports coverage technique such as slow motion and

instant replay, but also juxtaposed, through editing, their

shooting scene with the real news excerpts that had reported

the event. By doing so, they not only parodied the fragmented

structure of TV time, but in a larger sense, as Marita Sturken

pointed out, criticized the media's report system based on

fragmented and brief presentations that simplify and distort

the complexity of any event.235

Acconci, Paik and Ant Farm represent three important

tendencies in the video art of the 70's. The point here is

that however different they are in their artistic orientation,

they have a similar aim, that is to be interactive or

participatory as though it were the ultimate aim of video art,

or its precondition. Video art's interactivity is facilitated

by its medium: the home-size scale and handy mechanism permit

an intimacy with the medium, and the replay capacity favors

familarity with the medium.236

Indebted to this mechanical advantage, artists accomplish

interactive video both by exploiting a two-way communication

between the medium and the beholder, and by exploring the

environmental condition in which the artist and the audience

share a similar experience of time and space. The video

installation "Wipe Cycle" (1969) by Ira Schneider and Frank

Gillette was motivated by the aim to integrate "the audience

235 M. Sturken, "Video in the United States: Notes on the
Evolution of an Art Form," Video, op. cit., pp. 59-60.

236 B. Kurtz, "Video in America," The New Television, op.
cit., p. 179.

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into information": entering the gallery space, the spectator sees her/himself reflected into the multiple screens of monitors; after eight seconds, s/he sees her/his image recorded eight seconds ago when s/he was entering the gallery; sixteen seconds later, s/he sees her/his image recorded eight seconds ago while s/he was watching her/his image, the sixteen seconds delayed image of her/himself; and so on. The effects of such an installation, as Antin argues, is "the conversion of audience into actor," i. e. the integration with the matrix of the video mechanism and the realization of one's potential as an actor.237 By the same token, Bruce Nauman's installation "Live Taped Video Corridor" (1969-70) is also typical of interactive video:

> A live video camera is mounted ten feet from the floor just out side the corridor. On entering the corridor, you look into the top monitor to see your self entering the corridor, but the top monitor shows a tape of the empty corridor. You keep watching waiting for yourself to appear as you enter, and then notice that you are appearing in the bottom monitor.238

In these feedback installations, the interactive experience of the beholder with the medium involves a new experience of time which is derived from the dislocation of the time and space relation.239 In the case of "Wipe Cycle," the sequences of here and now, of there and now, of here and past, of there and

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237 Antin, op. cit., pp. 175-6.

238 Kurtz, "The Present Tense," Video Art, op. cit., p. 240.

239 Idem.

past, confuse the ordinary perception of time and space; in the case of "Corridor," the simultaneous presentations of presence and absence, of now and future, similarly arouse a new experience of the time and space relation.

Video introduced a new sense of time, a time characterized by a synchronization of tense. This is made possible both through the feedback operation and the replay mechanism, an exploration of the perpetual present. In the case of close-circuit installations, the tape replay, whether it is the live recording or edited version of it, always spreads in the present tense. As Paik declared, "once on video tape, you are not allowed to die"240: video changes our relation with life and death by eternalizing the present. Indeed, quoting Paik again, "video makes our time conscious radically different. . . . 1930's is alive everyday in our home screen as late shows . . . whereas 1920's is gone with wind but without video."241

The synchronization of time which reverses the absolute time structure with relativism corresponds to one important dimension of video aesthetics. Indeed, realization of live or prime time covers another important aesthetic dimension of video art. At its beginning, since the introduction of the portapack, video art, while appropriating television cliches, also developed its own strategy of interaction or

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240 Paik, _Videa 'n' Videology,_ _loc. cit._

241 _Idem._

participation-TV. But however interactive it was, it still remained in the context of high art, being diffused in the gallery space or the museum, appealing to the cultivated few, using fine art criteria for its evaluation. Now, interactive video art wants to be a full-fledged participation-TV by using live time immediacy and unpredictability, emphasizing the live elements of broadcast and seeking to appeal to the mass audience, to the TV public. Thus, if the video of the 60's and the 70's has contributed to the decentralization of the TV broadcast system and to the raising of the aesthetic level of TV programs, now television, in turn, provides a new direction for video art: TV art based on a prime time aesthetics.

Here, we can perceive the circular development of video art, starting from the appropriation of the TV set and the broadcasting image, developing into an experimental phase of the video medium, and finally coming back to the "unframed context"242 of television. This final stage corresponds to a new groping towards a new art for mass audience, a synthesis of TV entertainment and video art, an intermedia relating popular art and high art, broadcast and art, life and art. This synthesis is the ultimate aim of interactive video as participation-TV. The chronological order of the history of video—if we divide it into three decades: the 60's, the

242 The term, quoted from, C. Loeffler "Toward a Television Art: Video as Popular Art In the Eighties," The Second Link: View Points on Video in the Eighties, catalogue for the exhibition, (Canada: Walter Philips Gallery, 1983), p. 15.

period of groping, the 70's, the period of prosperity, and the 80's, the period of diffusion--concurs roughly with this development. Launched with the pioneering works of Paik and Vostell who manipulated TV sets and images, the video art of the 60's characterized itself by its homeopathic relation with television; it is an anti-TV aesthetics. The artists of the time, facing the portapack invention in 1965, exploited the nature of the video medium to the degree of demystifying or deconstructing both the TV and the video media. Paik's phrase, "I use technology in order to hate it more properly,"243 reflects the ethos of the time. Nauman's video installation and tapes appeared in 1967 and 1968 respectively.244 In 1969, independent artists like Joan Jonas, Peter Campus, Vito Acconci and Richard Serra presented their first video pieces. One of the remarkable events of this period of groping was the first video group exhibition held in America, "TV as Creative Medium," curated by Howard Wise at his gallery in New York in 1969, that is towards the end of this initial period. This exhibition, at first conceived as an extended presentation of kinetic sculpture, nevertheless announced the future of video art by revealing

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243 Paik, Videa 'n' Videology, loc. cit.

244 In discussing the video history that followed, the chronological records for the historical fact are obtained from several sources including Geneviève Van Cauwenberge, "Chronologie Art Vidéo," Art Vidéo: Rétrospectives et Perspectives , Palais des Beaux-Arts, Charleroi, 1983, pp. 11- 55.

the medium's artistic and interactive potentialities.

The next decade showed successive official recognition of video art. The first museum exhibition was held in 1970 in the Rose Art Museum at Brandeiss University in Massachussetts under the title of "Vision and Television." This was followed by exhibitions at the Finch College Museum (New York, 1971), at the Whitney Museum of American Art (New York, 1971), at the Dusseldorf Kunsthalle (Dusseldorf, 1971) and at the Museum of Modern Art in New York (1974). The museums also began to set up video departments: let us mention here the Folkwang Museum (Essen, 1970), the Everson Museum (Syracuse, 1971) and the Longbeach Museum (Longbeach, 1974). Museums also organized conferences such as "Open Circuit" (MOMA, New York, 1974) and "Video and Museum" (Everson Museum, 1974). Sturken notes that such a successful dissemination of video art entailed two major consequences: on the one hand, video art's assimilation to the artistic tradition and its resulting alienation from society and the general public, and on the other, the multiplication of genres and styles of video art.245 Among the diverse styles, three trends represented the video art of the 70's: first, the conceptual, perceptual or videographic body art that exercises a narcissistic aesthetics in closed-circuit feedback installations to which Acconci and Nauman belong; secondly, the visualist or formalist image in terms of tape production as employed by Paik, Eric Siegle and Bill

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245 Sturken, op. cit., p.61.

Viola; thirdly, the radical socialist or realist trend which uses video as a tool for a communication revolution, such as practiced by Ant Farm and the Raindance Foundation.

If the 70's were a period of prosperity in the sense of a vertical development, the 80's correspond to a period of diffusion in the sense of an horizontal expansion. In other words, video art, after its fascination with formalistic experimentation, seeks to widen its territory by accepting the social and public dimensions that the 70's had abandoned. This move was to be achieved by a return to TV conventions, by a reconciliation with public art idioms and by resorting to life. In this respect, the video art of the 80's can be seen as a counter anti-television or an anti-alternative TV, a practice which may be less radical and less experimental than the 60's and 70's experimentation. However, the prime time video of the 80's is motivated by a more far-reaching, more profound and more difficult aim: the reconciliation of two irreconciliables, i. e. of personal vision with mass taste, of high art with popular art.

To blur the distinction between oppositions and to deconstruct the division between disciplines are some of the postmodern issues that originated from the intermedia practice of happening. The intermedia performances by Laurie Anderson, the satellite projects by Paik and Douglas Davis, the various telecommunication projects realized by artists in collaboration with technicians, all attest to the

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postmodernist attitude 'living on the border'.246

Finally, video art, as an interactive practice and then, as a prime time activity, is primarily concerned with audience and life, thus manifesting itself as participation-TV: it interacts with the audience through a two-way communication that introduces participation and involves life processes in live-time transmission. Participation-TV is the result of video's anti and pro-relation with television. Indeed, video art can be characterized as practicing the interrelationship of video and television: video appropriates the potential of television as a mass medium and television employs artistic video so as to become a new TV art. As such, the two media make the most of each other. Given this understanding, we can say that the inseparable relation between television and video is nothing but a communal and reciprocal interrelationship where one medium makes up for the other's weak points: from this derives prime time video, the true participation-TV.

B. THE PSYCHOLOGICAL MEDIUM

> Verlaine wrote: "It rains in my heart, as it rains in
> the city." I say: "It rains in my computer, as it
> rains in my heart" --"Il pluit [sic] dans mon
> computeur" will be my first piece. It is the mix of

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246 The term derived from the Derridean concept expressed in his "Living ON: Border Lines," ed., H. Bloom et al, Deconstruction and Criticism (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1979), pp. 75-176.

real rain and simulated rain in the computer. My second piece will be called "La computeur sentimentale."[247]

The Baudelairean correspondence between art and nature in Verlaine's verse is being transformed by Paik into a McLuhanesque correspondence between machine art and human nature, a "cybernated video sphere." As Jacques Lacan noted, the anthropomorphism of the machine was manifest in the case of the automobile:

> The relation between this Homo psychologicus and the machines he uses are striking, and this is especially so in the case of motor car. We get the impression that his relationship to this [sic] machines is so very intimate that it is almost as if the two were actually conjoined—its mechanical defects and breakdowns often parallel his neurotic symptoms. Its emotional significance for him comes from the fact that it exteriorizes the protective shell of his ego . . . [248]

Jean Baudrillard regards this close interconnection between the machine-object and the user-subject as a symptom of the communication era of "screen and network."[249] For him, the fascination for the "obscene" communication—a type of communication occuring not from a scene but only from an off-scene, transmitting information in total transparency and visibility due to the "harsh and inexorable light of information and communication"—creates a "state of terror" of

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247 Paik, Videa 'n' videology, loc. cit.

248 J. Lacan, "Some Reflections on the Ego," International Journal of Psychoanalysis, 34 (1953), pp. 11-17, quoted in S. Marshall, "Video Art, The Imaginary and The Parole Vide," New Artists Video: A Critical Anthology (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1978), pp. 103-4.

249 J. Baudrillard, "The Ecstacy of Communication," Postmodern Culture, op. cit., p. 126.

an "unclean promiscuity," where one experiences a "too great proximity of everything." This fascination is symptomatic of schizophrenia250; the same schizophrenia that Fredric Jameson refers to as an "historical amnesia," a "fragmentation of time into a series of perpetual presents" characteristic of the postindustrial consumer society.251

In this schizophrenic "ecstasy of communication," the object no longer functions as a "mirror of the subject"; rather, the subject transforms him/herself according to the logic of the potentialities of the object. Roland Barthes, as quoted by Baudrillard, mentions that a "logic of driving has replaced a very subjective logic of possession and projection," implying by this the realization of a shift from a fascination with power and speed to a tactics of mastery and control. By the same token, Baudrillard asserts: "our own body and the whole surrounding universe become a control screen . . . unfolding like a televised screen."252

The significance of the Baudrillardean televised screen, which echoes, though in a negative sense, the electronized environment of the McLuhanesque "global village," comes from the logic of the machine-object, that is, from the . potentialities of the televisual or videographic medium.

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250 Ibid., pp. 130, 132

251 F. Jameson, "Postmodernism and Consumer Society," Postmodern Culture , op. cit., p. 125.

252 Baudrillard, op. cit., pp. 126-7.

Since the potentiality of a medium is partially determined by its technology, the logic of video derives on the one hand from its electronic nature and on the other hand from the psychological possibility of the medium. The electronic nature of video refers to a new type of image that doubles our perception, an aspect that I will discuss in the next section. For now, we will consider the psychological dimension of the medium which refers to the function of video as a mirror reflecting on the monitor screen the image of the beholder: the subject staring at his/her own image experiences the narcissistic tension of the split-self in the process of self-recognition. Under this consideration, we will see that the narcissistic aesthetics of video is interconnected with the theme of the index, the semiotic counterpart of psychoanalytic narcissism, on the conceptual basis that the mirror image of the self is the indexical imprint of its presence.

In order to understand the notion of the index, we must go back to the sign system of Charles Peirce. According to his theory, a sign can function either as an icon, a symbol or an index, depending on the type of relations linking the sign to its referent object.253 The Icon is based on the relation of analogy, which is a resemblance between the sign and its referent. The Symbol establishes a relation of contract or rule between the sign and the referent. This

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253 M. Iverson, "Saussure v. Peirce: Models for a Semiotics of Visual Art," The New Art History (New Jersey: Humanities Press International Inc., 1988), pp. 89-90.

parallels the Saussurean linguistic sign which is defined as arbitrary because there is no connection between the phonemo and the concept of a word except by cultural convention. The Index implies a physical and existential contingency between the sign and its referent. To this category belong weathervanes, physical traces like footprints, medical symptoms, as well as the shadow and mirror image, which are "the marks or traces of a particular cause," this cause being "the thing to which they refer, the object they signify."254

For Peirce, signification involves another relation, a triadic relation between sign, referent, and interpretant.255 The Symbol, relying on the conventional code between the signifier and the signified,256 requires an interpretant who knows the code of signification. The Icon, on the other hand, as a "representamen of what it represents," maintains a certain independence both from the referent and the

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254 R. E. Krauss, "Notes on the Index, Part 1," _The Originality of the Avant-Garde and other Modernist Myths_ (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1985), p. 198.

255 Iverson, op. cit., p. 89.

256 This code is determined by conditions of environment like Saussure's systems of difference in Saussure: "Both phonemes and the concepts are negatively differentiated from each other. This means that while the pronunciation of a word may vary from speaker to speaker, it maintains its identity as long as it does not overlap with another significant sound in the system. The same is true of conceptual values," as Saussure observes, "the value of just any term is accordingly determined by its environment; it is impossible to fix even the value of the word signifying 'sun' without considering its surroundings: in some languages it is not possible to say 'sit in the sun'." Cf. Ibid., p. 86.

interpretant. The Index, contrary to the Symbol, has nothing to do with interpretation and convention, since it is a sign that exists only through the physical presence of its referent. It has, as Rosalind Krauss pointed out, the same function as the linguistic "shifter" (Jakobson's term for the category of linguistic sign), which is "filled with signification only because it is empty."257 For instance, the demonstrative pronoun, 'this' or 'that', establishes its meaning only when it demonstrates its referent, such as 'this chair', 'that table'. The same holds true for the personal pronoun: 'I' or 'you' are interchangeable or shifting in their signification according to their function and context; "I am the referent of 'I' only when I am the one who is speaking. When it is your turn, it belongs to you." 258

This linguistic shifter, or indexical sign, when it is applied to the visual sign system, is related to a new aesthetic attitude that produces a displacement from representation to presentation. This attitude corresponds to the poststructuralist practice of deconstruction: by presenting with such immediacy the trace or the mark of the referent, the index challenges the traditional representation based on the mimesis principle. As Krauss maintains, "the pervasiveness of photography as a means of representation"259

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257 Krauss, op. cit., p. 197.

258 Idem.

259 Ibid., p. 206.

in the 70's operated this challenging of mimesis. Video

strengthens this photographic tendency, photography and video

becoming the two authorities in the indexical, presentational

postmodern art. Krauss sees an early example of the index in

the art of Marcel Duchamp, in his readymades, his photographic

works, his autobiographical self-portraits of split-self

employing visual or linguistic puns (shifter), all of which

are the "panorama of index."260 It seems very important here

to point out Duchamp's contribution to postmodern avant-garde

art. His art not only displays the sign as an index but it

also demonstrates narcissistic qualities. It thus shares the

two key terms of video: from "Rrose Selavy" (1920-21) to "The

Large Glass" (1915-23), Duchamp consistently repeats the same

theme, that of the autobiographical double portrait,

anticipating the narcissistic split-self of video reflection.

However, the index is not only a matter of Duchampean

postmodern art. As Philippe Dubois maintains, photography and

video, as indexical arts, are at the origin of painting.261 In

fact, as Dubois emphasizes, the first painting on record, the

prehistoric cave painting of Lascaux, was an index art created

260 Ibid., pp. 198-202. By considering Duchamp's art as
an example of index, Krauss considers him as the precursor of
postmodernism, thus as Benjamin Buchloh pointed out, "she
would reintroduce the unnameable 'other' tradition descending
from Marcel Duchamp that had been banished from history by
Greenberg and Fried." Cf. Buchloh, "Periodizing Critics," op.
cit., p. 66.

261 P. Dubois, "L'Ombre, Le Miroir, L'Index, à l'origine
de la peinture: la photo, la vidéo," Parachute (26), spring,
1982, pp. 16-28.

by physical contact: the contact of the artist's hand with the wall surface materialized by color powder, leaving the indexical negative imprint of the hand on the sprayed colored surface of the cave wall.262

The contact quality of index art is strongly referred to in Derridean deconstruction in terms of his theorization of the non-objective "chemical" senses—touch, smell, and taste. As Gregory Ulmer explains, Derrida's grammatological practice of deconstruction of the transcendental signified and of the logocentric order (where speech is defined as the signifier of thought, and writing, as the signifier of speech) favors the use of chemical senses as an alternative form of writing.263 For Derrida, writing is a means of deconstructing the logocentric definition of man as 'center' and 'origin'; as well, the exploration of contact senses— touch, taste and smell—is a means of deconstructing the metaphysical order by displacing the traditional hierarchy of the senses privileging sight and hearing.264

Painting, considered as an indexical art, begins with desire. Indeed, as Dubois explains it, Pliny considered painting as originating from the outlining of the shadow of

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262 Ibid. p. 17.

263 G. L. Ulmer, "Theoria," Applied Grammatology: Post(e)-Pedagogy from Jacques Derrida to Joseph Beuys (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1985), pp.34-35.

264 Ibid., p. 52.

one's lover. Here, the impetus to draw corresponded with the
desire to fix and preserve the image of the lover.265 The
contact quality is still retained in the case of photography,
the art of the shadow, an indexical art in which an object is
fixed not by natural shadow but by the physio-chemical process
that requires a direct contact with light. Experimental
photography, such as Schadography (by Schad) and Solarization
(by Man Ray), epitomizes the indexical nature of photography
through contact: the artificial shadow of the object is
produced through the direct contact of light and the sensitive
plate, without any mediating process or apparatus.266

In video art, he indexical nature of the image derives
from the mirror structure of the monitor which eventually
calls for the myth of Narcissus. Alberti paralleled pictorial
art with Narcissus' desire to embrace his own image reflected
by the water surface.267

But how can we explain the functional relation between
desire and narcissism psychoanalytically ? "The Libido Theory
and Narcissism" (1917) concieved by Freud gives us an answer.
Freud distinguished sexual instinct, for which he used the
term "libido," from ego-instinct. Whereas ego-instinct
alludes to the "self preservative instinct" to bring about
"advantages," libido, based on "pleasure," is defined by the

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265 Dubois, op. cit., p. 18.

266 Ibid., p. 17.

267 Ibid., p. 20.

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"cathexes of energy which the ego directs towards the object of its sexual desires."268   As such, libido is a notion basically attached to an object, but when "libido leaves the object and sets the subject's own ego in their place," it becomes narcissism, "the fixation of the libido to the subject's own body and personality."269   However, narcissism, according to Freud, is not an exceptional or abnormal state of neurosis, rather it is the "universal and original state of things, from which object-love is only later developed."270 The "auto-eroticism would thus be the sexual activity of the narcissistic stage of allocation of the libido. . . . [therefore], in normal circumstances, ego-libido can be transformed unhindered into object-libido and, this can once more be taken back into ego."271   But when the libido cannot find its way back to the object, it becomes narcissistic neurosis.   Thus, pathologically speaking, "the ego is obliged to send out its libido so as not to fall ill as a result of its being dammed up."272

The auto-erotic self-gaze of the narcissistic stage is

268 S. Freud, "The Libido Theory and Narcissism," The Complete Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis, trans.and ed. by James Strachey (London: George Allan & Unwin LTD, 1971), pp. 413-4.

269 Ibid., p. 416

270 Idem.

271 Idem.

272 Ibid., p. 421.

what Krauss defines as the "psychological condition" of video art, from which she develops her theory on the narcissistic aesthetics of video. This condition is demonstrated by the camera-referent-monitor triadic system that operates the closed-circuit feedback projection: when the camera receives the input image of the referent object, the monitor will project the output image of the object in question. One frequent referent object is the artist her/himself confronting the medium, implicated in a situation of "simultaneous reception and projection."[273] The point here is that the human psyche of the artist-beholder faces a complex situation, operating at the same time as object and subject: as a referent object, the artist is the physical center situated between the two machines (the camera and the monitor), but at the moment s/he perceives her/his own image reflected on the monitor screen, s/he becomes a psychological subject confronting the image of the self. Stuart Marshall argues that it is at this moment of confrontation that the artist's concern for the medium becomes converted into a concern for her/his own psyche, that is, for "the relationship of the subject to its representation."[274] Marshall relates this confrontation of the artist with her/his mirror image to the "Mirror Phase" of Jacques Lacan's theory on subjectivity. As

[273] Krauss, "Video: The Aesthetics of Narcissism," New Artists Video, op. cit., p. 45.

[274] S. Marshall, "Video Art, The Imaginary and The Parole Vide," New Artists Video, op. cit., p. 105.

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Lacan asserted in his "Mirror-Phase as Formative of the Function of the I" (1968), the mirror phase refers to the first step in the process of self-identification which takes place between the ages of six and eighteen months. In this founding stage, the presubjective self seeks its ego through the mirror image of the self. And this ideal mirror image is an "harmonious, unified image of an anticipated maturation," one that is set up usually through the mother's look275 and that does not correspond to the actual uncoordinated body movements of the child. Lacan:

> Unable as yet to walk, or even to stand up, and narrowly confined as he is within some support, human or artificial, . . . he nevertheless surmounts, in a flutter of jubilant activity, the obstruction of his support in order to fix his attitude in a more or less leaning-forward position, and bring back an instantaneous aspect of the image to hold it in his gaze.276

The ego in the mirror phase is thus an Imaginary construction, a recognition of the self which is really a misrecognition. This is followed by a splitting of the self which occurs at the Oedipal stage when the child enters into the world of language (the Symbolic Order) and becomes a "speaking subject."277 The structure of narcissism defined by Freud---the auto-eroticism (ego-libido), taking the subject's own body and personality as the object of love (object-

275 Ibid., p. 107; A. Rankin, "The legacy of the Real, or the Limits of Representation," Discussions in Contemporary Culture, op. cit., p. 94.

276 Marshall, op. cit., pp. 112-3.

277 Ibid., p. 107.

libido)--corresponds to the Lacanian Mirror Phase characterized by the fusion of the self with its representation before the separation.

For Krauss, the perceiving I and the perceived I face each other through video reflection and experience the psychoanalytical process of the split-self moving towards a narcissistic fusion. This type of experience is a negative one for the critic and should be undermined by a modernist self-reflexive practice. To clarify this point, she introduces a comparison between "Center"(1971) by Vito Acconci and "American Flag" (1954-55) by Jasper Johns. In "American Flag," the overlapping of the flag image with the picture surface introduces a visual ambiguity in the figure/ground relationship in which the flag functions both as an object and as a subject of painting. The reflexiveness inherent in this painting is, as Krauss claims, "precisely this fracture into two categorically different entities that can elucidate one another in so far as their separateness is maintained."278

In contrast to the separateness, or the "radical asymmetry from within" of Johns's "Flag," Acconci's "Center"--the projection of himself pointing to the center of a monitor, that is, pointing to his own reflection for twenty minutes of running time--typifies the narcissistic fusion of the self with the other self. Here, the reflective mode of video is one that "illusionistically erases the difference

278 Krauss, op. cit., p. 53.

between subject and object."279 Thus, as Krauss maintains,

while Modernism was based on the subject-artist's recognition

of history and of his objective concern for the medium, video

art negates the former's "temporality" and "objectivity."

Video reflection corresponds to a narcissistic "mise-en-scène"

of suspended time and space where the subject only

concentrates on the self by "bracketing out the object."280

We have already seen that the notion of the index is

related to the poststructuralist theme in its association with

tactile chemical senses, by which Ulmer suggested the

significance of the electronic medium (television or video):

"writing with video [the 'applied grammatology' in the age of

electronic communication] . . . will be directed . . . by a

new epistemology and a new set of philosophemes whose

metaphors are derived from the chemical senses."281

This chemical dimension of indexical arts essentially

suggests the potential of video to deconstruct representation,

whether it is a symbol or an iconic. Thus, Peirce's

trichotemy of the sign system--Symbol, Icon and Index--shows a

striking parallel with Lacan's three key concepts--the

Imaginary, the Symbolic, and the Real--where the real refers

to the inexplicability of the decentered origin. The

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279 Idem.

280 Ibid. pp. 44, 53, 56.

281 Ulmer, op. cit., p. 36. Also refer to p. 132
above and p. 150 below.

Imaginary belongs to "the dimension of images, conscious or unconscious, perceived or imagined" which is not simply the opposite of the Real, but which belongs to reality, the formative effect of which is comparable to that of the Mirror Phase.282 The Symbolic signifiers are defined as "differential elements, in themselves without meaning, which acquire value only in their mutual relation."283 Thus, the determining order of the subject is the Symbolic and not the Imaginary: "the subject, in Lacan's sense, is himself an effect of the Symbolic."284 Whereas these two terms are related to the reality of representation and to the order of signification, the Real, negating both reality and order, implies the "raw state,"285 the "mythic point of origin"286 of the decentered subjectivity. It is the kind of real "before which the imaginary falters, over which the symbolic stumbles--that which is refractory and resistant. It is the ineliminable residue of all articulation, the foreclosed element which may be approached but never grasped: the

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282 Lacan, Ecrits (New York: Norton, 1977), pp. ix-x, quoted in A.Rankin, "The Legacy of the Real, or Limits of Representation," Discussion in Contemporary Culture, op. cit., p. 94; A. Sheridan, "Translator's Note," Lacan, The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psycho-Analysis, trans., A. Sheridan, ed., J. A. Miller (London: The Hogarth Press, 1977), p. 279.

283 Idem.

284 Sheridan, loc. cit.

285 Ibid., p. 280.

286 Rankin, loc. cit.

umbilical cord of the symbolic."287

'The real is impossible': as such, it complies with the Baudrillardean impossibility, the "absence of basic reality" in the world of pure "simulacrum": "The real . . . no longer has to be rational, since it is no longer measured against some ideal or negative instance. It is nothing more than operational. In fact, since it is no longer enveloped by the imaginary, it is no longer real at all. It is hyperreal."288 This Lacanian Real and the "hyperreal" defined by Baudrillard speak for the loss of the "great narratives" that characterizes, according to Jean-François Lyotard, the postmodern condition from which arises the "sublime" feeling of the incapacity to represent.289

The parallelism between Peirce's and Lacan's trichotemies follows this triple pairing: 1. Icon/Imaginary which belongs to the world of representation; 2. Symbol/Symbolic to be situated in the world of signification; 3. Index/Real which refers to the theme of deconstruction by the fact that negates both mimesis and logocentrism. The point of this parallelism

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287 Rankin, loc. cit.; Sheridan, op. cit., p. 280.

288 Baudrillard, Simulations, trans., Paul Foss, Paul Patton, and Philip Beitchma. (New York: Semiotext(e), Inc., 1983), pp. 3, 11.

289 J. F. Lyotard, "Presenting the Unpresentable: the Sublime," Artforum, vol. 20, no. 8, April 1982, pp. 64-68. For a discussion of the postmodern condition, see Lyotard, The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge , trans., Geoff Bennington and Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984).

is that video art as the index, in terms of the narcissistic experience, manifests the impossible real. Here lies the aesthetic significance of video narcissism: in the deconstruction of the traditional representation based on mimesis and in the consequent alteration of the subject/object relationship between the artist/the art-object/the audience. By replacing representation with the indexical presentation, video changes not only the role of the artist but also the audience's relation with the art and the artist. The artist becomes a perceiving subject confronting her/his own image rather than a creator producing an art object: s/he becomes a practitioner of a new self-portrait, the videographic body art.290 The intersubjective possibility of video--the potential participation of an audience in terms of video narcissism--was recognized by Stuart Marshall who interpreted the process in terms of the Lacanean subjectivity: the fundamental misrecognition of the self oscillates between

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290 Helmut Friedel proposes several instances of video body language, such as unusual views of the body evoking strange feelings as if it were the body of the other (Joan Jonas's "Vertical Role"(1972)), or equal presentation of any parts of the body as if negating the "hierarchy of the individual body part" (Babara Hammann's "Question"(1979)), or recording the process of change of body under specific circumstances (Vito Acconci's exercise of "radical self-slander," or Bruce Nauman's "calisthenic type of performance" of body exercise). Friedel finds the prototype of the body language of video self-portraiture in the face language of Arnulf Rainer which is revealed in his photography series of self-portrait, "the distorted, exaggerated face" and which "does away with the separation of art and life." Cf. Friedel, "Video Narcissus--the New Self-Portrait," Video by Artists 2 , ed., Elke Town (Toronto: Art Metropole, 1986), pp. 115, 122.

self-ego and alter-ego originating from the Mirror Phase's

construction of the Imaginary Order. His argument starts from

the artist-subject's misrecognition of her/himself: "the

subject sees her/himself as the object of her/his look while

constituting her/himself as the object of the look of the

other self."291   This experience calls for another

misrecognition, where the reflected self takes the place of

the audience:

> The artist's identification with the camera . . .
> requires that s/he offers him/herself as object to the
> other s/he constructs in the image of the self.
> Communication with the absent other consequently becomes
> modeled on the relationship with present other. The other
> that is spectator is constructed in the place of the
> other that is alter ego, and it is this place that is
> alloted to the viewer."292

Is it possible to speak of an intersujectivity between

the artist, the camera and the audience ?   Dan Graham already

noticed the difference between the mirror reflection and the

video reflection: while the former "alienates the self "293 of

the perceiver in the Lacanean sense of the split ego, the

latter reverses or contradicts the mirror perception by

providing the self-perceiver a "measure of control"294 through

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291 Marshall, op. cit., p. 112.

292 Marshall, op. cit., p. 113.

293 D. Graham, Video-Architecture-Television: Writing on Video and Video Works 1970-1978, ed., B. H. D. Buchloh (New York: New York University Press, 1979) pp. 69.

294 Graham, "Excerpts: Elements of Video/ Elements of Architecture," Video By Artists, ed., P. Gale (Toronto: Art Metropole, 1976), p. 195.

the feedback process. The difference also derives from the time element that the video feedback process involves: the mirror image responds to the beholder optically, frontally and statically, according to the perceiver's time/space axis, thus, like the "flat visuality of Renaissance painting," it "creates illusory perspective boxes" which "conceal or cancel the passage of time"; on the other hand, in the video image, "the geometrical surfaces are lost to ambiguously modelled contours and to a translucent depth," thus the images transmitted from the camera instantaneously or with time-delayed manipulation are "in temporal flux and connected subjectively to experienced duration."295 This temporality evokes memory vision which, according to Graham's explanation, relieves the tension between the split egos--the self and the image, or the sensible self and the perceivable self. Thereby the difference between the interior "private mental intention and the external behavior are experienced as one" since "the difference between intention and actual behavior is fed back in the monitor and immediately influences the observer's future intentions and behavior."296 As such, video feedback by linking the internal and external perceptions, the intention and the behavior, thus by reversing the mirror model

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295 Graham, Video-Archtecture-Television, op.cit., p. 67.

296 Ibid., p. 69.

of self-perception, identifies performer and audience.297

Graham here interprets the problem of intersubjectivity between the artist and the audience via video feedback in terms of human behavior and perception, the same problem which Marshall examined by his psychoanalytical method. At this point of intersection between the ecological/biological and the psychological approaches, McLuhan's theory of narcissism is very enlightening, because his theory conjoins the two approaches in order to understand the (electronic) media as "the extensions of man." Curiously enough, McLuhan relates narcissism, a most private and internal state, to the social and ecological impact of TV technology in its evolution.298 He starts his argument by regarding narcissism as a physical or mental numbness caused by the extension of oneself. As the word 'narcissus' implies numbness (deriving its meaning from the Greek word 'narcosis'), the mythic young man was numbed by the "extension of himself by mirror" and thus misrecognized his own image reflected onto the fountain surface, identifying it as that of another man, rather than falling in love with his own image which he recognized as being his. In this sense, we can say, as McLuhan maintains, that this myth is a metaphor of human perceptual experience and that "men at once

297 Graham, "Excerpts: Elements of Video/ Elements of Architecture," loc. cit.

298 M. McLuhan, "The Gadget Lover, Narcissus as Narcosis," Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man (New York: New American Library, A Mentor Book, 1964), PP. 51-56.

become fascinated by any extension of themselves in any
material other than themselves."299   This point, according to
McLuhan, can be proved in terms of the physiological notion of
"autoamputation." From a medical point of view "all
extensions of ourselves, in sickness or in health, are
attempts to maintain equilibrium" and can be regarded as
autoamputation.   The autoamputative power is "resorted to by
the body when the perceptual power cannot locate or avoid the
cause of irritation."300   From the point of view of the
disease (discomfort) theory, the human desire to extend the
body by autoamputation is explained as follows: "in the
physical stress of superstimulation of various kind, the
central nervous system acts to protect itself by a strategy of
amputation or isolation of the offending organ, sense, or
function."301   For example, as McLuhan argues, a wheel can be
regarded as an extension of a foot, that is, an amputation of
the bodily function of the foot irritated under the pressure
of increasing communication. And in turn, the wheel as a
counter-irritant amplifies or intensifies the function of the
foot. Thus, such amplification or intensification of
isolated functions of the body can be explained biologically
in terms of the protecting function of the nervous system to
block the perception, to endure or to relieve the various

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299 Ibid., p. 51.

300 Ibid., p. 52.

301 Idem.

pressures or stimuli or strains of the external world.302   As

McLuhan points out, this explains the implication of the

Narcissus Myth: the mirror image of Narcissus, as a counter-

irritant to the self-amputation or extension of himself,

induced a numbness of perception that led him to misrecognize

himself; "self-amputation forbids self-recognition."303

As such, McLuhan interprets medically the

psychoanalytical fundamental misrecognition inherent in the

Lacanean Imaginary Order, by identifying the cause of this

misrecognition as a physical numbness required to relieve the

strain on the central nervous system. Narcissism thus

understood as a practice of self-amputation or extension of

oneself "applies very readily to the origin of the media of

communication from speech to computer."304   It is in this

context that one has to understand McLuhan's argument that any

technological invention extends our physical body by demanding

"new ratio or new equilibriums among other organs and

extensions of the body."305   And in the case of the electronic

invention such as television and video, the new image, by

opening the "doors of audible-tactile perception to the non-

visual world of spoken language and food and the plastic

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302 <u>Idem</u>.

303 <u>Idem</u>.

304 <u>Idem</u>.

305 <u>Ibid</u>., p. 54.

art,"306 evokes a new sense ratio, a new perception that changes "the scale, pace, or pattern of human affairs" which is the message of the medium.307 As he concludes:

> The principle of numbness comes into play with electronic technology. We have to numb our central nervous system when it is extended and exposed, or we will die. . . . With our central nervous system strategically numbed, the task of conscious awareness and order are transferred to the physical life of man, so that for the first time he has become aware of technology as an extension of his physical body. . . . In the electronic age we wear all mankind as our skin.308

C. THE ELECTRONIC MEDIUM

"As collage technique replaced oil paint, the cathode ray tube will replace the canvas." This famous phrase by Nam June Paik, cited almost as many times as the number of texts on video art, still deserves quoting, especially in the context of the deconstruction of representation. Like the collage techniques of Cubism and happening, the electronic movement in the cathode ray tube leads to the deconstruction of traditional representation based on mimesis. The significance of video art derives from this specific potentiality. The new type of electronic image, by deconstructing and dematerializing traditional representation, demands a 'new

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306 Idem.

307 McLuhan, "The Medium is the Message", op. cit., p. 24.

308 Ibid., p. 56.

sense ratio', a perception different from ordinary perception with which the audience is accustomed to. Furthermore, from a behaviorist point of view, the 'dédoublement' of the electronic image duplicates the human perceptual organism which is not determined by conditioned reflexes. Here the problem of audience-participation is related to the feedback principle of human behavior in a biological sense.

How then is the new electronic image different from the traditional representational images ? When we think of the specificity of the video image, the first thing that comes to mind is that it is a 'moving image' which is nothing but the physical displacement of electronic particles. Thus, a time element is introduced into the space of the visual image and a dematerialized electronic material replaces the traditional artistic medium. Two strategies arise from this assertion: 'time' and 'dematerialization'. These are used to deconstruct traditional static images and at the same time to determine a new type of video image, a new kind of hybrid where time and space coexist in a bi-form of image and object.

Marshall McLuhan noted this point of duality and defined the electronic image as "iconic," a characteristic deriving from the sculptural rather than the pictorial quality of the electronic deformation/dematerialization. Why then does the electronically dematerialized image appear sculptural ? He considered it as the consequence of the special type of projection of the electronic light:

With TV the viewer is the screen. He is bombarded with
light impulses [unlike film]. . . . The TV image is not a
still shot. It is not photo in any sense, but a
ceaselessly forming contour of things limned by the
scanning-finger. The resulted plastic contour appears by
light through, not light on, and the image so formed has
the quality of sculpture and icon, rather than of
picture.309

Why then is the image formed by this special type of

projection sculptural ?   McLuhan answered this question by

advocating his notion of the "tactile mode" of iconic

representation.   He alluded to the television image as a

"mosaic" which is not primarily visual but "synaesthetic" in

that it involves all the senses.310   While other visual

representations stress "continuity, uniformity, and

connectedness," the electronic "mesh of light and dark" of the

TV mosaic is "discontinuous, skew, and nonlineal," the

suddenness (or the strangeness) of which requires the

activation of all the senses, as is also the case in nonvisual

modern art and modern physics.311   As he maintains, "the

mosaic form of TV image demands participation and involvement

in depth of the whole being, as does the sense of touch."312

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309 McLuhan, "Television: The Timid Giant," op. cit., pp.
272-3. David Antin also noted the special type of light of the
medium: "With film you look with the source of light. In
television, the source of light and the source of information
are one," thus "you look into the source of light." Cf.
Antin, "Video: the Distinctive Features of the Medium," Video
Art , ed., Ira Schneider and Beryl Korot (The Raindance
Foundation Inc., 1976), p. 174.

310 Ibid., p. 291.

311 Ibid., pp. 291, 273, 291, respectively.

312 Idid., p. 291.

This description of the TV image is in conformity to Derrida's
practice of the chemical senses. For Derrida, as we have
mentioned before in our study of the index, the significance
of the electronic medium is not so much due to its audiovisual
property, but to the "reorganization of our sensorium" due to
its electronic nature. The electronic medium excites the
tactile, chemical senses. In this, the televisual image can
be described in the light of Einsteinian physics based on the
theory of "action by contact" and opposed to the Newtonian
theory based on "action at a distance" which supports the
traditional organization of pictorial perspective.313

The tactile mode of iconic representation involves time
differently from the spatial organization of the visual image.
Though this point was not mentioned by McLuhan, the tactile or
iconic quality of the TV image is the result of the electronic
dematerialization occurring in time. In other words, it is
the image that involves both time and space that is iconic or
tactile rather than pictorial or visual. Furthermore, the
description of the electronic TV image as a mosaic clearly
shows the existence of ɔ tension between the sculptural object
and the pictorial image in the electronic process. Thus as
McLuhan observes, "The TV image is a flat two-dimensional
mosaic . . . the third dimension is alien to TV, but it can

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313 Ulmer, "Theoria," op. cit., p.35. Also refer to pp.
132, 138 above.

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be superimposed."314   This suggests that the iconic image of television superimposes the two-dimensionality of the image and the three-dimensionality of the object, accumulating time and space.

The electronic light and movement, the factors which contribute to the task of deconstruction, are also elements which create a kinetic ambience that arouses audience-participation.   As Popper noted, the possibility of audience-participation in kinetic art comes from employing various environmental energy forms like light, movement or sound. These arouse the physical or mental participation of the audience by the feedback principle in a behavioral sense.315 The same holds for video art which, from its beginning, was recognized as an extension of kinetic art because of its electronic nature which is composed of energy forms.316   As we will see, kinetic art, happening and video art share the same goal of participation through the creation of an environment

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314 McLuhan, op. cit., p. 273.

315 Popper, op. cit., p. 212.

316 For examples, Paik was called a kinetic artist by Popper in his Art-action and participation, op. cit., and John Gruen in his The New Bohemia: The Combine Generation (New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1966) called Paik "composer, kinetic sculptor, actor, film-maker," thus regarding him as an embodiment of combine generation (p. 92) . And furthermore, the first video group exhibition in America, "TV as a Creative Medium," held by Howard Wise in 1969, was conceived as an extended presentation of kinetic art. Cf. M. Sturken, "Video in the United States: Notes on the Evolution of an Art Form," Video, ed., René Payant (Canada: Artextes, 1986), p. 58. Also Refer to p. 122 above.

evoking audience-participation.

As we have demonstrated in chapter I, in happening, the environment and the audience-participation are related by the concept of indeterminacy: the indeterminate happening environment automatically includes audience as an element of art. In video art, the relation between the electronic/kinetic environment and audience-participation is determined by, as Popper suggested, the feedback principle of human behavior: the video image, which creates a kinetic environment in terms of electronic dematerialization, evokes a new kind of perception in the audience-beholder, one that differs from the habitual perception of recognizing the static image of a traditional visual representation. From a behaviorist point of view, the double natured, indeterminate video image parallels human perception based on an intersubjective relation with the external world. This assertion shows a similarity between the video image and the human sight, which in turn implies the establishment of a new relation between art and audience.

In what sense then does the kinetic video image evoke or double the perception, and how can we explain the mechanism of the analogical relation between natural human sight and video electronic image ?   As we discussed at the beginning of this section, the specificity of the video image is defined by the electronic process which produces 'dédoublement', that is, ambiguity and indeterminacy in terms of a double form

(image/object) and a double dimension (time/space). In this
sense, we can say that what we see in the video image is, at
the same time, the image and the process of the electronic
dematerialization. René Payant characterizes the video image
as a "double scène"--the "dédoublement" of the "dimension
iconique" and the "activité électronique elle-même."317   While
his characterization rightly affirms the dédoublement of
video, the term 'iconique' here calls for a clarification. If
the term was used in relation to the mosaic, tactile quality
of the electronic image as in McLuhan, the result would be a
major contradiction, because the iconic image is already the
consequence of the double scene of the image and its
electronic substance. Payant used it to designate the
recognizable aspect of the scene as the counterpart of the
electronic substance, a term that does not exclude the
abstract or non-figurative image of video, even though the
'icon', according to Peirce's definition, "signifies by virtue
of a similarity of qualities or resemblance to its object."318
The term 'iconic' can include the figurative and the abstract,
as long as these have an "effect of reality" for the
spectator.319

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317 R. Payant, "La Frénésie de l'Image, vers une
esthétique selon la vidéo," Vidéo-Vidéo (Paris: Revue
d'Esthétique (10), 1986), p. 20.

318 Iverson, op. cit., p. 89. Also refer to p. 128 above.

319 J. M. Floch, "Images, signes, figures: l'approche
sémiotique de l'image," in Michel Zeraffa, dir., Images
(Paris: Revue d'Esthétique (7), 1984), pp. 109-114.

The double scene of the video image means that the iconic and the electronic never completely adhere: the resulting image is never complete, nor stable, it is in process, transforming itself at every moment. Referring to the indeterminate nature of the video image, Payant quotes Paik who defined the moving image as "mouvante" rather than "mobile," and who considered this indeterminacy as the result of the "metamorphosis" of the electronic passages, the process of which requires an "interpretation" from the spectator in order to stabilize the image itself.[320] Adding to Paik's point of view, Payant maintains that the incompleteness or the indeterminacy, while it functions as a weapon to attack the stability or the completeness of traditional forms of representations, gains a new kind of stability by the very principle of transformation: by transforming reality or by deconstructing representation, the video image secures a new stability, a newly interpreted reality.[321] And this newly acquired stability of the image demands a new perception, a subjective interpretation, from the beholder. The interpretation of reality by the video image evokes the interpretation of the image by the beholder; the image as object and the beholder as subject both meet on the screen, in the video image, in the process of the electronic metamorphosis.

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320 Payant, op. cit., p. 20.

321 Ibid., p. 21.

This theoretical definition of the video image is only possible on the basis of the establishment of an analogy between human perception and the video image. As recent behaviorist studies have demonstrated, the video image not only demands a new type of perception but, more precisely speaking, cultivates or develops human perceptual nature, because human perception is not only a matter of sight alone, but is determined by our dependency on our memory in order to give meaning to a lived experience, by subjective associations and by intersubjective relations. By the same token, all human behavior including mental activity such as perception is determined not by the senses' simple act of conditioned reflex, but by the interconnected multiple activities of the internal organism. Thus, as we will see, the double scene of the video image is more representative of the complexity of human perception than are the static or single-level representations.

Modern behaviorism, in overcoming the traditional notion of conditioned reflex, parallels research findings from many different fields, such as neurobiology, self-organization theory and cognitive psychology. Here, it may be worthwhile to assign some pages to the discussion of this subject in order to have a clearer idea of the relation between the video image and the human perception, so that we can grasp the meaning of the biological participation of the audience in terms of the feedback principle.

Recent discovery in brain science reveals that a complex network of neurons generates our perception, memory and thought.322 This theory implies a scientific revolution: from a neurobiological point of view, it postulates a dialogue between the mind and the brain, between the mental and the biological, thus challenging the persistent Cartesian dualism of soul and body. Jean-Pierre Changeux's Neuronal Man: the Biology of Mind belongs to this new school of thought. The starting point to this approach is the understanding of the brain's mode of operation not as a "computer-like machine" operated by step-by-step calculations, but more like a "beehive" or a "busy market place" in which the multiple networks of neurons interact with each other spontaneously and autonomously.323 According to Changeux, this network of neurons involves three levels of activity: the electronic impulse generated from the nerve cells themselves; the chemical substances such as hormones and neurotransmitters emitted from the synapses; and the connection of nerve nets that comprise specific graphs or topologies of the neuronal

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322 An article from U.S. News reports that recent brain researchers study human brain by experimenting with "neural networks," the laboratory models of the brain set up with the help of computer scientists, which "simulate the way neurons might join together in the vast networks that make up our mind." Cf. W. F. Allman, "How the brain really works its wonders," U.S. News (& World Report), June 27, 1988, pp. 49-50.

323 Ibid., p. 48.

system.324 These three codings of the nervous system govern

the totality of human behavior including the mental activity.

The latter is composed of an interaction between "mental

objects" such as percepts, concepts and mental images, each

corresponding to a specific form or state of neuronal activity

varying at each stage of development. Changeux defines the

mental object as "the physical state created by correlated,

transient activity, both electrical and chemical in a large

population or assembly of neurons in several specific cortical

areas."325

The "primary percept," the primary labile stage of the

mental object, is dependent on the interaction with the

external world for its activity is directly related to the

sensory organs. But the process of registering the sensation

involves the multiple activities of the internal cortical

neurons; for example, a sensory stimulus activates not only

the primary cortical area pertaining to it, but also several

secondary areas. As such, even the formation of a primary

percept directly related to the external receptor requires a

complex activity within the assembly of neurons or "neuronal

maps." The next stage of perception is the formation of an

"image" whose activity does not demand direct contact with the

external world. Instead, it relies upon the autonomous

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324 J .P. Changeux, Neuronal Man: tne Biology of Mind,
trans. Laurence Garey, (New York: Pantheon Books, 1985), pp.
84, 124.

325 Ibid., p. 137.

interactions between neurons. This internal activity

corresponds to the earlier stage of a memory object which is

transient and autonomous. The later stage of the memory

object is the "concept." This stage has almost nothing to do

with the sensory because the neuronal activity implicated in

the formation of the concept occurs in the associational areas

of the cortex or in other brain regions.326

As the formation of a mental object involves an

interaction between neurons, so does the storage of the mental

object as a "memory trace" known a·, knowledge or learning,

involving this time more complex processes such as "test" and

"selection."327 Further discussion would be beyond the scope

of this paper but, nevertheless, I would like to quote

Changeux's conclusive remarks on human behavior:

> All behavior can be explained by an internal
> mobilization of a topologically defined set of nerve
> cells. [This] proposition was extended, in a hypothetical

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326 Ibid., p. 138. Since the 19th century phrenology, established by Franz Joseph Gall, the cerebral cortex has been regarded as "the highest level of the brain," the development of which area "characterized mammals and man." (Ibid., p. 13) In the process of evolution from reptiles to man, the expansion of neocortex "taking over the projection function of the sense organs and the association function" of the brain took place "in a most striking manner," thus "the brain of modern man represents the most advanced stage of this cerebral 'corticalization'." Cf. Ibid., pp. 44-46. Concerning the 'cortical areas', Changeux explains in the Glossary: "distinct zones of the cortex characterized by their cellular architecture and function . . . Classically, one distinguishes the primary sensory areas, responsible for receiving input from the sensory organs; the motor areas, dealing with motor commands; and the remaining association areas." Ibid., p. 286.

327 Ibid., p. 139.

way, to those 'private' process that are not necessarily manifested by behavior visible to outside world, such as sensations or perceptions, the elaboration of memory images or concepts, and the linking together of mental objects into 'thought'.328

Changeux's new insight is confirmed by Heinz Von Foester's organization theory which applies external information theory to the internal organism of the nerve system. His argumentation begins by correcting the misconception in the field of communication theory, especially its formalistic version. According to Foester, the message transmitted by a sender through a channel cannot be proper information; it is mere signal. Only when the signal is interpreted by a receiver does it become information.329 That is, a signal necessitates subjective interpretation to become information. This point of view conforms with the new insight on human behavior which determines that senses alone are not responsible for perceiving, that they require subjective interpretation to become proper perception. One of the first scientists to make this point was Henri Poincaré, who, as early as 1895, regarded "movement" as the subjective element required to complete perception. As Foester indicates, Poincaré showed that "the construction of perception is contingent upon the process of changing one's sensation by

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328 Ibid., p. 274.

329 H. V. Foester, "Epistemology of Communication," The Myth of Information: Technology and Postindustrial Culture, ed. Kathleen Woodward (Milwaukee and Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin and Coda Press, 1980), p. 19.

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moving one's boa_ and correlating these changes in sensation with these voluntary movements."330   Foester understands the body movements as the cooperation of sensory activities and motor movements which together perform a "creative circle," each providing an interpretation for each other: "The motorium provides the interpretation for the sensorium and the sensorium provides the interpretation for the motorium."331

Following a mathematical formulation set up by Foester in order to explain the circular logic of the creative circle, we find in the last expression, $m_\infty = Op(Op(Op(Op$ . . .   the infinite concatenation of the Op, the sensorimotor operator332: the signals, an input from the senses, pass through the process of interpretation and in terms of the cooperative activity of sense and motor become a transformed output.   Hence the interrelated sensorimotor operation of the creative circle refers directly to the two-way or intersubjective communication between the subject and the object.   This is evident when Foester maintains that "objects are not primary entities, but subject-dependent skills which must be learned and hence may be affected by the cultural context as well."333   To put it another way, the object is not an absolute a priori, but a relative a posteriori, which could

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330 Ibid., p. 23.

331 Idem.

332 Ibid., p. 24.

333 Ibid., p. 26.

be interpreted variously and differently according to the subjective perceptual recognition.

Let us go back rapidly to Payant's double scene. This "dédoublement de la vision" occurring in video is described as involving a dual tense of time: the present which is passing on the screen and the past stored in the memory of the spectator which persists in coming back; in other words, the sequences of time flux as it perceives the moving images of the present and of the past.334 When observing a video image (and this is typical of all perception but not aknowledged by traditional forms of representation based on the mimesis principle), the spectator needs to activate mental images or concepts stored in his/her memory so that a stable representation can take place. The video image, because of its "double scene"—of its indeterminacy, vagueness and incompleteness—is not the locus of representation. Representation takes place in the interaction between the image and the spectator. Given this understanding, Paul Virilio characterized the video image as a "virtual image" because it depends upon the virtual vision of memory. Since the video image is living with time and not living on the space of the "support-surface," it has nothing to do with the material static support whose task is to refer or to imitate. Thus it becomes a virtuality or a "vision sans regard," not derived from any observation, but relying instead on memory

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334 Payant, op. cit., p. 22.

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images of the past.335 The virtual image of video, depending on past memory, parallels our own perceptual organism activating the memory trace. It is not enough to appeal to sight alone in order to perceive something; as Virilio puts it, "voir, c'est prévoir,"336 perception depends upon memory images of mental figuration.

Subjective interpretation is the pre-requisite for new perception. Changeux's "mental object" results from the spontaneous activity between neurons, thus from the interaction between the subject and the object. The body "movement" of Poincaré and the "creative circle" proposed by Foester demonstrate how perceptual recognition demands an extra subjective element by which a mere signal input transmitted through the sensory receptor becomes proper information. By the same token, Paik's "interpretation," Payant's "new stability" and Virilio's "virtual image" all refer to the fact that the electronic movement evokes and cultivates our perceptual nature by paralleling human natural perception.

Recent cognitive psychologists are attempting to establish a dialogue between the psychological mind and the biological brain, proposing a new interscience called

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335 P. Virilio, "Image Virtuelle," Vidéo-Vidéo (Paris: Revue d'Esthétique (10), 1986), pp. 33-34.

336 Ibid., p. 34.

'cognitive neuroscience'.337 The observations of the

experimental psychologists dealing with perception testify to

the intersubjective nature of the perceptual organism.

According to James E. Hoffman, the perceptual system involves

two different processes to reach an interpretation: "bottom-up

analysis" and "top-down knowledge."338 While the latter

corresponds to the immediate and global recognition of an

object, the former constructs a general representation of the

object from the input data through a process of analysis of

the component features. Among the feature-based approaches

founded on bottom-up analysis, the "feature-integration

theory" proves that the "pre-attentive vision" operates on

separable features and that "selective attention" plays a

crucial role in the integration of separable features.339 On

the other hand, the effect of global organization of the top-

down method is established on the concept of "emergent

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337 This effort is clearly revealed in the publication of
Mind and Brain: Dialogues in Cognitive Neuroscience, which is
a collection of essays where psychologists and neurobiologists
deal alternatively with perception, attention, memory and
emotion, groping for dialogue between their approaches by
providing 'reply' sections for each other in the final
discussions of each subject. Cf. Mind and Brain, ed., J. E.
LeDoux and W. Hirst, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press,
1986).

338 J. E. Hoffman, "The Psychology of Perception,"
op. cit., p. 7.

339 Ibid., p. 14. The four major approaches
characterizing the feature-analysis stage are: single-unit
recording, spatial frequency analysis, "texton theory", and
feature-integration theory. Cf. Ibid., pp. 8-14.

feature" which takes priority over the constituting parts;
here there is a "global precedence over the local."340 This
method is pertinent to speech perception, word perception and
scene recognition, where the prior knowledge of familarity
defined by syntax or semantic association plays an important
role following the principle of global precedence. Speech
perception and word perception are determined by the
interconnections between the lexical, syntax and semantic
levels. Scene recognition operates by the relation of five
elements: support, interposition, probability, position and
size, the first two being related to the syntactic level, and
the other three to the semantic level.341 This brief
discussion seems sufficient to recall the "beehive" as a
complex organism of neuronal network generating all the
"mental objects" of the "neuronal man." Thus, as Hoffman
concludes:

> [The] perception system is a highly parallel collection
> of processing modules with interaction of knowledge at
> different levels, giving an intelligent solution to the
> problem of determining the identity and layout the
> physical world.342

One of the revolutionary aspects of modern cognitive

psychology is that it understands memory not as an inert but

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340 Ibid., p. 18.

341 Ibid., pp. 26-31.

342 Ibid., p. 32.

as an "active and constructive" process.343 Daniel Schacter

stipulates that it is necessary to consider the three

functions of memory: the encoding operation, the retrieval

operation and the implicit form of memory. The encoding

operation , as the first step of the memory process,

transforms the external stimulus into a memory representation.

The initial stage of the encoding process shows a similar

mechanism to that of perception, while the later stage of the

process is regarded as a memory trace or "engram" which is the

product of the encoding process and which has already no

direct relationship with external stimuli.344 The retrieving

operation is as important as the encoding process in the

memory system, because memory is not determined only by the

memory trace, but also by the relation between the encoding

and retrieving conditions, that is, between the engram and the

cue.345 Whereas the first two operations refer to the

ordinary memory, the implicit form of memory is not

recollected by an explicit reference to the prior knowledge,

but revealed implicitly or tapped on automatically by the

"priming effect." Thus, if ordinary memory is the

recollection on the conscious level, the implicite form of

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343 D. Schacter, " The Psychology of Memory," op. cit.,
p. 189.

344 Ibid., pp. 193-7.

345 Ibid., pp. 198-201.

memory is the memory completion at the unconscious level.346

It is very surprising to see such a differentiation of memory functions which once again confirms the complexity of the mental activity. On the other hand, given this understanding, it seems logical for Virilio to compare the video image to a human memory image that evokes past associations both at the conscious and the unconscious levels. By depending on the memory perception of the spectator, the video image redefines the mimesis principle based on present sight, thus upsetting the transcendental order of traditional metaphysics. Indeed, human perception and the video image seem to meet at this point of deconstruction by interpreting or transforming reality: human sight as intersubjective perception displaces objective perception and the video image, practicising the indeterminate 'dédoublement', displaces the hierarchic order of the objective senses. With this indication of the analogical relation between the video image and human perception, we can now better understand not only the meaning of the feedback response of the audience in the electronic environment but also McLuhan's vision of the medium as an extension of man.

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346 Ibid., pp. 203-5.

CHAPTER IV

PAIK'S VIDEO WORKS: PARTICIPATION-TV

Our initial hypothesis positioned Paik's video art as an
extension of his happening activities. To be more precise, we
should say that Paik's video production started with his
happening. If the blossoming of the former came
chronologically later than the latter, Paik formulated an
artistic intention in 1958 which underlines that there are two
sides to a same 'electronical' entity: "I want to expand
electronic music to include electronic vision."347   In this
respect we can say that his musical happenings include the
video medium and that his video art, which deals with a new
type of image, takes place in the context of happening. Thus,
his video art can be defined as participation-TV and his
happening as participation-performance; happening and video
art are both manifestations of participation art. Summing it
up in 1971, Paik stated that "my obsession with TV for the
past 10 years has been a steady progression towards more

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347 Refer to p. 72 above.

differential participation by the viewers."348

In fact, his successive experiments with video, however varied in style and orientation, all deal with the problem of participation, exploring a two-way communication with the audience. Even the most formalistic phase of his video production focuses on the interactive effect of the image, the staccato variation which explores a new perception of/by the audience. In what follows, we will see how his video works accomplish the imperatives of participation-TV. I will proceed by dividing his career into three phases, phases that are not easily distinguishable from each other because of the cross-fertilization of Paik's oeuvre: sculptural work, video tape production and broadcast projects via satellite. This categorical division corresponds, though roughly, to the chronological order of his career. It also parallels the circular movement of video history, from (anti)television to video experimentalism to live TV art,349 a parallelism which illustrates Paik's involvement and important contribution to the formation of video art.

The first phase, the 'period of groping' which corresponds to the video art of the 60's, is characterized by his manipulation of TV technology. Paik's 'prepared-TV' appearing in 1963 marks not only the birth of (his) video art, but also provides the basis for his future video sculptures

348 Paik, Videa 'n' Videology, loc. cit.

349 See p. 121 above.

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and installations. The second phase, the 'period of prosperity' of the 70's, covers the formalistic aspect of his career in terms of image generation using VTR and the video synthesizer. Here the interactive nature of the video image in the behavioral sense is further strengthened by such devices as repetition, rapid change and 'dédoublement'. In the third phase, Paik accomplishes the goal of participation-TV under the strategy of 'global-TV ' via satellite hook-up linking the globe both in the vertical and the horizontal senses. This stage epitomizes one of the major tendencies of video art in the 80's, a 'period of diffusion'.

A. PREPARED-TV

Paik's idea of using a TV set as an element of art, which was first revealed in a letter to Cage in 1959,[350] was realized with thirteen 'prepared-TV' sets presented in the (his) first video exhibition entitled "Exposition of Music-- Electronic Television," held in Parnass Gallery in Wuppertal, Germany, in 1963. As the title implies, the prepared-TV followed the same manipulation principle as the 'prepared piano'[351]: it was the very embodiment of a new musical concept

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350 See p. 84 above.

351 See pp. 76-77 above.

expanded by an 'electronic vision'352 and displayed with

other musical instruments--three prepared pianos and some

other noise makers.

Why the television set or the electronic vision ? We can

find the prototype of such appropriation of common objects in

the 'readymades' of Marcel Duchamp. As Duchamp's readymades

were based on the "total absence of good or bad taste" and on

"complete anaesthesia,"353 Paik's interest in the medium was

"neither an expression of his visual curiosity nor from any

need to expand himself as an artist."354 Nevertheless, his

reasons differ from Duchamp's philosophical reasoning--"the

liquidation of art as an activity that is split off from the

praxis of life"355--; it derives from his keen artistic sense,

be it intuition or penetration, that forsees the many

prospects of the electronic fields and the rise of the

electronic stocks. As he confessed in an humble manner, "I

think [sic] maybe I can [sic] make electronic objects, sign

them, and put them on sale."356 Whatever the motivation,

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352 See pp. 72, 167 above.

353 M. Duchamp, "Apropos of 'readymades'," Esthetics of Contemporary, op. cit., p. 93.

354 L. Werner, "Nam June Paik," Northwest Orient, June 1986.

355 P. Bürger, Theory of Avant-Garde, trans., M. Shaw (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1984), p. 56.

356 Werner, loc. cit. Paik's mentioning of "sign," or "sale" seems to reflect the point that Peter Burger argues in the context of the failure of the avant-garde intention to integrate art into the praxis of life, the failure inherent or

while manipulating the interior circuit of television, he

became fascinated both by the visual effects and the aesthetic

possibilities that the medium offered; not only did the

results of the manipulation entail unexpected and

unprecedented visual images which were inevitably

'indeterminate' and 'variable' in nature, but the process

itself involved 'chance' and 'anonymity'. All these notions

were the very aesthetic concepts comprising his musical

happening.

Chance and anonymity here refer to a mechanical process

which precludes artistic skill and intention and which becomes

the principle of the 'machine aesthetics' that support his

video art. He explained in these terms the experimentalism of

the prepared-TV through the Fluxus organ, V TRE357, in 1964,

the year following the Wuppertal exhibition:

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necessary in late-bourgeois society: "The fact that he
[Duchamp] signs the Ready-Mades contains a clear allusion to
the category 'work'," which means that the work becomes a part
of the institution which the avant-gardiste art attacks, thus,
the "avant-garde movement did not put an end to the production
of works of art, and the social institution that is art proved
resistant to the avant-gardiste attack." Cf. Bürger, op. cit.,
pp. 56-57.

357 About V TRE, see p. 31 above. This issue was 'Fluxus
cc fiVe ThReE ' published in June 1964. As for cc, the V TRE
conceived and published by Brecht in 1963 became 'cc V TRE'
from 1964, when the publication became the official organ of
Fluxus with the intervention of Maciunas; cc was the
confidential code invented by Maciunas, who made a logotype
for each Fluxus artist; for example, k designates Bob Watt, P,
Allison Knowles, or c, for Brecht; the double cc means that
the Fluxus organ V TRE was the second Fluxus edition of Brecht
following his "Water Yam Box" of 1963. Cf. Ruhé, Fluxus, loc.
cit.

My experimental TV is the first Art(?), in which the
"perfect crime" is possible. . . . I had put just a diode
into opposite direction, and got a "waving" negative
Television. If my epigons do the same trick, the result
will be completely the same . . . that is . . . My TV is
NOT the expression of my personality, but merely a
"PHYSICAL MUSIC" . . . 358

This mechanical procedure reverses the traditional method of

composition which proceeds from a "pre-imagined idea" of the

complete work. Instead of this, Paik would "first seek the

way, of which I cannot foresee where it leads to," trying

"various feedbacks, to cut some places and feed the different

waves there, to change the phases of waves etc."359

The image obtained through this process bore the

unprecedented "indeterminacy" and "variability" which were,

according to him, the most neglected area in the domain of

visual arts. Paik felt very proud when he invented the

indeterminate image and especially when all thirteen TV sets

in the exhibition were manipulated so as to show different

images resulting from chance operations. These thirteen

images were defined by several levels of indeterminacy: a

first level was produced by using live images of TV broadcast;

a second one was determined by the different manipulations of

the inner circuits where "no two sets had the same kind of

technical operation"; a third came from the different waves of

various generators, tape-recorders and radio which were fed in

358 Paik, "afterlude to the Exposition of Experimental
Television," published in Fluxus organ, and collected in Videa
'n' Videology, loc. cit.

359 Idem.

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various points to give a specific rhythm to each apparatus; the fourth was created by the different sorts of TV circuits which were as varied as "French cheese-sorts."360

His feeling f pride was not limited to the creation of a multi-layered indeterminacy. He also felt proud of a novel aspect in this sculptural work, that of a simultaneous vision, i. e. the capacity to perceive thirteen variabilities at once, contrasting with the one-way direction of book reading: "But poor Joyce was compelled to write the parallely advancing stories in one book with one-way direction, because of the ontology of the book."361 Paik compared simultaneous perception with the ambiguous state of ecstacy which was at once conscious and unconscious, paralleling the double negation of Zen: "the absolute is the relative and the relative is the absolute." With this mystical interpretation of simultaneous perception, he concluded: "In Galerie Parnass, one bull's head made more sensation than 13 TV sets. Maybe one needs 10 years to be able to perceive delicate difference of many kinds "noises(?)" in the field of electronic music."362

At this point, concerning Paik's contemporary anxiousness about a new perception of/by the audience, it is very significant to recall "redric Jameson's acknowledgement in 1983 (twenty y' rs after Paik's proposition of simultaneous

360 Idem.

361 Idem.

362 Idem.

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vision) of Paik's contribution to the cultivation of a novel

form of perception through a "new logic of difference," i. e.

a "logic of subliminality."363   In fact, as Stephanson reports

in his discussion with Jameson, in the TV commercials of the

80's, scenes change every two seconds, following a rythm that

is almost 3.5 times faster than in the 60's.364   Paik's

creation of a rapidly changing image may have helped to

develop a new perception. For Jameson, this would be Paik's

contribution to postmodernism.

Indeed, his prepared-TV, as far as it concerns the

creation of a new image, functions as participation-TV in the

behavioral sense of feedback: as we have demonstrated in

previous section dealing with the electronic medium, the

indeterminate and the double nature of the electronic image

evokes a new perception and arouses the mental and physical

participation of the audience. Furthermore, this effect is

more pronounced when the images are manipulated so as to make

them different from ordinary television images: for example,

the single vertical scan line of "Zen for TV," the reversed

images from black to white and vice versa, the distorted face

of a famous or popular personage, all of these processes

produce novel visual effects that call for a new perception.

The aesthetic importance of the prepared-TV does not

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363 A. St ¬hanson, "Interview with Fredric Jameson,"
Flash Art, no. 131, Dec. 1986-Jan. 1987, p. 70.

364 Idem.

reside only in the indeterminacy of the image, but also in the sculptural quality of the medium as an object, thus making the medium a new form of sculpture, one that is constituted by a moving image, an object-image hybrid. Recalling that the "iconic" McLuhanesque image itself assumes this double nature, the prepared-TV becomes the very locus of the 'dédoublement'.

The prepared-TV is representative of the works of the early video artists before the introduction of the portapack, most notably the works by Paik and Vostell. As pioneers of video art, they had many things in common, both started their artistic interventions in the late 50's; both had studied electronic music with Stockhausen in the same studio; Paik collaborated with Vostell's Décollage publication; they were involved together in Fluxus Happening; finally, both of them conceived the electronic medium as an element of their happenings-- Paik, as an element of his action music and Vostell, of his Décollage activities.365 Nevertheless, in spite of these similar features, Paik and Vostell's prepared-TVs showed differences of conception and orientation. While Paik presented his first prepared-TV through the matrix of an

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365 The term, Dé-coll/age, a word he found in Le Figaro of 6 September 1954, derives its meaning from the word 'décoller', which has two meanings; aircraft takes off, and to unglue; "That a plane should take off and at the same time it should crash was for me a dialectic contradiction: . . . 'décollage' also means to tear glued things and to die." Cf. Vostell, in Flash Art, March-April, 1977, p. 34, quoted in Ruhé, Fluxus, loc. cit. With such allusion to destruction, his works which he calls "décollage" are characterized by a destructive and chaotic quality.

exhibition (the Wuppertal exhibition in 1963), Vostell showed

it first through his happening, "The Black Room" in 1958, in

which he wrapped a television set with barbed wire while it

was still emitting a distorted broadcasting image.366   In

1958, Vostell dedicated his décollage happening to television

under the name of "TV décollage for the millions," presenting

"broken, mistuned, paint-daubed, and even gunshot" TV sets.367

In 1963, two months after Paik's Wuppertal show, he had his

one-man video exhibition with six prepared-TVs at the Smolin

Gallery in New York.   And at about the same time, he performed

a happening, burning a TV set wrapped in barbed wire at the

Fluxus Festival that was taking place at George Segal's farm

in New Jersey.368   In 1964, in the happening "You," he

installed three color TV sets whose images changed according

to an alteration of inner circuits in a chaotic environment

constituted by four hundred pounds of beef bones.369

This brief description of Vostell's production reveals a

conception of the medium as an object to be destroyed and to

be deprived of its value, hence his concept of décollage.

Compared to Vostell, Paik's approach is based on more positive

terms, in that he explores the aesthetic possibilities of the

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366 Cauwenberge, op. cit., p. 11.

367 Idem.; Simmons, op. cit., p. 9.

368 W. Herzogenrath, "Video Art and Television in West
Germany 1963-1984," Vidéo, op. cit., p. 223.

369 Goldberg, Performance, op. cit., p. 86.

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medium. Thus, while Vostell's attack is focused on the exterior of the medium, Paik rushes to the interior circuit so as to attain the core of the medium, to grasp its nature. In this regard, to debate whether it was Paik or Vostell who first used the TV set, as Bill Viola explains, "seemed just plain ridiculous . . . Paik's contribution to video art is vastly more important, substantial, and far reaching than Vostell."370

Paik's video work based on prepared-TV was determined by two separate but connected efforts: to produce images and to erect sculptural constructions with monitors; thus, prepared-TV manifests itself both as a screen image and as a sculptural object. But while the image-generating work evolved into the independent area of videotape production, the sculptural installation always involved or presupposed the screen image. That is, his video sculpture, ranging from the mono-monitored prepared-TV to the multi-monitored monumental construction, can be seen as the synthesizing effort to produce image and sculpture at the same time. As long as it assumes this double activity, it practices participation-TV. Just like the electronic indeterminate image alters our viewing habits and evokes new perception, so does the sculptural environment, and it does so by dislocating the time/space relation, as we will

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370 B. Viola, "History, 10 Years, and the Dreamtime," Video: A retrospective 1974-1984, catalogue of the exhibition in Long Beach Museum of Art, ed. K. Perov and C. Fitzsimons, (City of Long Beach, 1984), p. 20.

see in the following discussion. In this context of enhancing

a new kind of perception, John G. Hanhardt from the Whitney

Museum considers Paik's video sculpture as the most

significant pieces among his video enterprises: "[Paik's]

video sculpture is emblematic of his entire output and central

to our understanding of his contribution to contemporary

art."371

Let us consider Paik's video sculptural works by dividing

them into three groups. The first group refers to mono- or

multi-monitored constructions where each circuit is altered to

produce specific visual effects on the principle of prepared-

TV. The second group relates to a construction in which

monitors project images from prepared video tapes and not from

the manipulation of the inner circuits (though sometimes the

video tape image is altered by internal manipulations). The

third implies a closed-circuit feedback operation using a

camera.

The first group of sculptures, starting with the thirteen

prepared-TVs of the Wuppertal exhibition, were made mostly

before the 70's when the tape production was not so active.

The "Magnet TV" of 1965, presented in his first one-man show

in America called Electronic TV, Color TV Experiments,/

Robots, 2 Zen Box & 1 Zen Can and held at the New School for

Social Research, testifies to the possibility of exploring

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371 J. G. Hanhardt, "Paik's Video Sculpture," Nam June
Paik, op. cit., p. 91.

prepared-TV as an active 'participation-TV':

> A large magnet was placed on the exterior of a television set; as the magnet was moved around (by audience), it generated interference with the electronic signals. The result was both the distortion of received images and the creation of abstract pattern of light on the screen surface.372

"Moon is the Oldest TV" (1965-1967) and "TV Clock" (1963-

1981) are typical examples of multi-monitored

installations.373 Both works are monumental in scale (the

former consisted of 12 monitors, the latter, 24 monitors) and

conceptual in orientation. Each monitor is prepared so as to

display the shapes of the phases from crescent to full moon

and to indicate time sequences through the electronic scan

lines. Here the visualization of time, already present in his

action music--a visualized time art--, is further emphasized

through the spatial visual disposition of the sequences of the

moon and the clock, the metaphors of time.

While the first group is characterized by a static black

and white image and ﹏ resulting mystic environment, the second

group provides a pop-oriented visual/aural extravaganza where

the prepared video tape images preside over the sculptural

frame of the installation. The latter works date from the mid

of the 70's, a period in which he produced a lot of tapes with

372 Ibid., p.93.

373 These works were included in his retrospective exhibition at the Whitney Museum, 1982. In what follows, unless specified by footnotes, the descriptions or arguments of the relevant works are based on my experience of seeing his work at the Whitney exhibition and others as well.

the portapack system and with the help of a video synthesizer. We have already discussed the importance of the portapack in the development of video art; for Paik this apparatus meant the possibility to create an unlimited range of images. The images provided by prepared-TV were limited to two kinds of variations: on the one hand, distorted figurative images obtained through the manipulation of broadcast images and on the other hand, abstract graphic images created by the manipulation of the scan line. Now, with the portable camera, the whole world becomes an image source, thus making the choice of the image and its resulting visual effect even more indeterminable and variable.

In October 1965, Paik bought a portapack system on the first day of its marketing and tried it out on the same day by shooting the parade scene of Pope Paul VI on his visit to New York. He then showed the tape intitled "Electronic TV" at the Café à Go-Go. He demonstrated the significance of adding VTR to television not only by showing the tape but also by distributing a manifesto-like pamphlet where these now famous phrases were inscribed: "As collage technique replaced oil paint, the cathode ray tube will replace the canvas; Variability and indeterminism is underdeveloped in optical art as parameter sex is underdeveloped in music."374 This first presentation of a tape production was followed by a VTR

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374 This pamphlet is reprinted in Paik's Videa'n' Videology. loc. cit.

installation in the Gallery Bonino in December 1965, where he presented a first example of the second group of sculptures integrating video tape. It was a kind of active 'participation-TV' like "Magnet TV" of 1965, but this time he added to the magnet device a "time manipulation" of the video tape, thus evoking more "physical" participation.375

However, the most representative marks among the second group were the multi-monitored constructions using color video tapes that displayed brilliant visual and sound effects. These demanded of the spectator the use of all his/her senses. "Fish Flies on Sky" (1975), first shown at the Martha Jackson Gallery in New York and exhibited again in the Whitney retrospective of 1982, is constructed with twenty monitors hung with their screens facing below. The audience has to lie down in order to see the screen images coming from different tapes and showing fishes, airplanes and dancers. This piece evokes new perception in many ways: by removing the fish from their ordinary context, by changing the viewing position from looking forward to looking up, and by showing the different images simultaneously, changing in tempo. In "Video Fish" (1975), live fishes appear. Numbers of fish tanks are lined up and behind them another line of monitors has been installed, showing taped images of fish swimming, of Merce Cunningham dancing, etc., that contrast with the live fish movement. Live fish and taped fish seen through the transparent tank

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375 Paik, Videa 'n' Videology, loc. cit.

glass seem to play together in a large electronic aquarium. The presentation of fish and the representation of fish are conjoined without competing one another.

"TV Garden" (1974-8), Paik's most popular installation, consists of 25 monitors and almost the same amount of potted plants, which are intermingled together to form an electronic garden constituted by colorful screen flowers and natural green leaves. Each monitor is simultaneously playing "Global Groove," Paik's typical pop collage tape, featuring heterogeneous images from Cage to a nude dancer. The visual spectacle of the tape is further emphasized by an aural equivalent exercising a same perceptual impact. This time, we look down and experience the electronic environment of an audio-visual garden in which Paik attempts an harmonious fusion of technology and nature.

"V-yramid" (1982) and "Beuys/Boice" (1987) represent the monumental wall pieces amongst the second sculptural group. "V-yramid" was installed in the shape of a pyramid with 48 monitors. Unlike "TV Garden," the monitors show three different scenes from three different tapes. As Paik expresses it, refering to the intensity of the visual and aural effects, "three images is much more interesting than one." One of the tapes, "Lake Placid '80," shot at the site of the Winter Olympic Games of 1980, reveals his interest in sports which will later develop into the concept "arts-sports-cocktail" explored in his future satellite projects.

"Beuys/Boice" is a recent piece dedicated to Beuys who
died in 1986 and submitted to Kassel's 'Documenta 8' in
September 1987.376 This room-sized wall piece using 50
monitors consists of a huge trapezoid of piled monitors
forming in the center a square surface of four by four feet
and on the side wings, two twin pyramids. While the monitors
of the side wings display abstract color images, the central
square wall shows a taped performance of the late Beuys for
which Paik employed a new 'blow up' technique. With the use
of five projectors, he blew up Beuys' image by spreading it
onto the four monitor screens, thus making Beuys appear as if
through a cross latticed window. This blow-up image is
repeated three times simultaneously and is spread out on
twelve monitors, leaving the four corner monitors to show the
normal image of the taped Beuys. Paik's most recent piece,
"The Television Spiral Tower (à la Tatlin)" (1988), erected
for the National Museum of Contemporary Art in Seoul, Korea,
consists of 1003 monitors (Height, 18.3 meters, Width, 15
meters). The number 1003 is to celebrate the National
Foundation Day of Korea, October, the third (10,03). Because
of this large number of monitors the tower was given the
Korean name 'Dadaiksun', meaning 'the more, the better'. The
monitors show, like " V-yramid," three different images

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376 The special issue of Art in America of September
1987, 'Europe '87', reports 'Documenta 8', using the screen
image of Paik's "Beuys/Boice" as cover image. The related
article, N. Marmer, "Documenta 8: The Special Dimension ?,"
pp. 128-.

transmitted by three tapes; this time, the operation of the huge structure requires three laser disk players, three VTRs and 67 image sharings. The increased number of monitors and the heightened visual effect created by introducing new, complex techniques speaks of Paik's dream for "wall-to wall TVs . . . walls of illumination, gradually changing landscape of patterns, like electronic oceans . . . that make people desperately happy."377

The third group of sculptures, the closed-circuit feedback operations obtained by the use of a camera, is constituted by live-time projects which can be subdivided again into three types of different settings. The first type uses the audience as a referent object. Because it involves the audience as a principal element, this type of installation assumes itself as an active 'participation-TV', its first example being "Magnet TV" (1965) followed by "participation-TV" (NO.1) presented in "TV as a Creative Medium"(1969), Howard Wise's first video group exhibition.378 These works were realized both by the method of the circuit manipulation of 'prepared TV' and by the feedback operation: "the viewer either made sounds into a microphone which created abstract patterns on the screen, or saw himself as a multi-colored shadow through the colorization of a black and white live

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377 Werner, loc. cit.

378 "TV Bra for Living Sculpture," which was also a kind of 'participation-TV', was a video performance that accompanied his pieces in this exhibition.

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video image."379 Other components of 'participation TV' were

featured as "Participation TV NO.2" in the exhibition

"Cybernetic Serendipity" held in Washington D. C. in the same

year. This installation involved

> three television cameras whose signals are displayed on
> one screen by the red, green, and blue cathode guns
> respectively; the tube shows three different images in
> three different color at once. Color brightness is
> controlled by amplitudes from three tape recorders as
> reverse phase. Thus the viewer sees himself three times
> in color on the same screen, often appearing to float in
> air or to dissolve in shimmering water as multicolored
> feedback echoes shatter into infinity. This was repeated
> on three and four different TV sets arranged around the
> environment.380

The second type of feedback uses a third person, neither

the audience nor the artist, as referent object, as in "TV

Buddha" (1974) and "TV Chair" (1974). In "TV Chair," a

monitor placed under a chair shows what the camera captures:

when the camera was installed underneath the chair, the

monitor showed the unfamiliar view of the chair seen from the

bottom; and when the camera was hung adjacent to a nearby

window, the monitor relayed the scene from the outside window,

anticipating the surveillance function of video. In "TV

Buddha," the antique Buddha statue keeps gazing at its own

image, the feedback image on the screen. In this perpetual

present, not only is the thousand years interval between the

historical Buddha and the present Buddha transcended, but also

the oppositions such as East and West: Zen and technology seem

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379 Hanhardt, op. cit., p. 93.

380 Youngblood, Expanded Cinema, op. cit., p. 306.

to find a dialogue of reconciliation. Here w~ see the

pronouncement of the narcissistic mirror reflection, though in

a peculiar, furtive way: the meditating Buddha seems to allude

to the artist himsel.C, the Zen oriented mystic. confronting

the medium until he penetrates the truth, the truth that video

technology in the end meets the teaching of Zen--the

indeterminacy by chance, randomness or accident.

The third type of feedback is actualized in the framework

of the performance by erotizing or humanizing video

technology. "TV Bra for Living Sculpture" (1969), "TV Cello"

(1971) and "TV Glass" (1971) are representative of this

subgroup, the performances where Moorman wears a TV bra and/or

TV glasses while playing a cello or a TV cello (in "TV

Cello"). The monitors in each case relay Moorman's image

playing in a 'here and now' situation w'-ich sometimes

interacts with prepared taped images of pre/ious performances.

The images both from live and taped sources are changed and

distorted in accordance with the sound wave of the cello,

which in the case of "TV Cello" is nothing but noise.381 The

resulted visual and aural clamor disturbs our ordinary

perception by demanding the attention of all our senses.

Furthermore, this environment upsets our general conception of

art by blurring the distinction between art and life. We can

see here how live art practices, which aim to integrate art

and life, occur at multiple levels: in the use of live time

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381 For the structure of the "TV cello," see p. 95 above.

through performance and live transmission, and in the use of the female body as the medium itself. Hence Paik's declaration: "Video art is not just as screen and tape, it is whole life, a new way of life. The TV screen on her body is literally the embodiment of live video art."382

Such feedback operations by Paik call for a comparison with other autobiographical narcissistic works, such as those by Acconci. Whereas the latter approaches the medium from the conceptualized body-art context, Paik deals with the medium in a more direct manner, exploring the technical and aesthetic core of the medium. In other words, for Acconci, the object is the artist himself, whether it is the psychological split self ("Air Time") or the physical body strained under specific conditions ("Open Book"). For Paik, the object is the medium itself, whether it is software or hardware. We can find a similar attitude in such works as "Wipe Cycle" by Schneider and Gillette or "Live Tape Video Corridor" by Nauman, though each artist shows certain personal differences in orientation.383

However, as we know, all feedback operations based on narcissistic aesthetics, whether we are dealing with Paik's, Acconci's or Nauman's works, presuppose the notion of live

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382 Paik, "Videa, Vidiot, Videology," in " Nam June Paik With Charlotte Moorman," New Artists Video, op. cit., p. 123.

383 For a detailed discussion of Acconci, see p. 117 above, and for the "Wipe Cycl" and "Corridor," see pp. 118-9 above.

time projecting, i. e. the 'here and now'. In this respect,

the feedback installation can be regarded as the sculptural

version of live time video categorized by Paik as "video art,"

a practice distinct from "video taped art."384 By the same

token, the second group of video sculptures using prepared

tape would be the sculptural version of video taped art. It

is this group that we will now proceed to discuss in the

following section.

B.INTERACTIVE VIDEO

> Video tape can supplant commercial broadcasting with
> highly selective programming to be played back anytime at
> all. When you have a video tape recorder you can make a
> video tape magazine. When you have a big screen 3-D
> color recorder it will kill "LIfE" magazine . . .

This is what Jud Yalkut wrote in his 1967 article, two years

after the portapack revolution.385 For Paik, a 'vidéophile',

the video tape would replace not only TV broadcast but also

printed mass communication media, such as newspapers and

magazines. "Nietzsche said hundred years ago . . . 'God is

dead'. I say now 'paper is dead . . . except for toilet

paper'"386: such mischievous remarks made by Paik, together

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384 Ibid., p. 125.

385 J. Yalkut, "Electronic Zen, the Underground TV
Generation," Westside News, 10 August 1967, quoted in Paik,
Videa 'n' Videology, loc. cit.

386 Paik, Videa 'n' Videology, loc. cit.

with his project, "Expanded Education for Paperless Society" (1968),387 reveal his vision of the future as a video future. This vision derives from the interactive possibilities of the video tape: on the one hand, video alters the one-way communication of television because of the replay capacity of the medium, and on the other hand, as we have seen, the electronic image per se evokes a new perception, demanding that all the senses be heightened and emphasized. Paik's tapes transmit repetitious and fragmented images that transform themselves constantly following a fast rythm: the impact of such tapes goes further than print media which addresses only the visual sense and abstract thinking, rather than appealing to direct sensation. The artist refers to the interactive condition of the video tape when he speaks of the "Electronic Zen," the embodiment of "Direct-Contact Art":

> Medical electronics and art still widely apart; but these two fields change each other's fruit, e. g. various signals can be fed to many parts of the head, brain, and body, aiming to establish a completely new genre of Direct-Contact Art. The electro-magnetic vibration of the head might lead the way to Electronic Zen.388

The heightened effect deriving from the "direct-contact" quality of the video tape is produced by Paik's collage editing technique. This method reflects the homeopathic aspect of video that follows TV convention in order to negate

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387 The project was held during his tenure at Stony Brook in 1968. The related report is shown in his _Videa 'n' Videology_.

368 Paik, _loc. cit._

it, i. e. the fragmenting video tape parodies the "money matrixed" fragmented time structure of official television programming. However, the technique itself can be seen as a derivation from the experimental musical tape where collage itself becomes a musical skill and even defines an aesthetics. The first example of such experimental music tape is found in Cage's "William Mix" of 1952, edited or 'collaged' by chance operation using I Ching, the Chinese Book of Change.389 It was followed by the musical tape which Paik used for "Hommage a John Cage--" in 1959, to which he devoted much "toil and tear."390 As suggested by both examples, the basic concept of collage editing is 'chance', the operated accident, or following Burger's categorization, "mediated chance" using "calculation," the result of which is 'unpredictable' indeterminacy, rather than 'arbitrary' spontaneity.391

Paik's video tapes went further in the exploration of the collage technique, and this was made possible by the invention and the use of the video synthesizer. Constructed by him around 1970 with the help of the Japanese technician Shuya Abe, the video synthesizer provided the artist with a visual extravaganza ranging from the figurative variations gained by re-scanning, distorting and re-coloring the live or pretaped

389 For Cage's chance operations using I Ching, see p. 28 above.

390 See p. 74 above.

391 See pp. 30, 34 above.

image, to the purely abstract graphics generated by the electronic signals. The synthesizer permitted a mechanical complexification of the manual devices elaborated for the prepared-TV which also produced distorted figurative images and purely abstract scan graphics. Paik applauded the magic power of the synthesizer by calling it a "versatile color TV synthesizer" which enabled him to shape the "TV screen canvas"

as precisely	as Leonardo
as freely	as Picasso
as colorfully	as Renoir
as profoundly	as Mondrian
as violently	as Pollock and
as lyrically	as Jasper Johns.392

Thus, because of the use of such a synthesizer, his video tape collage technique literally produced a "video compost," as David Ross pointed out, that is an artificial mixture of visual and aural elements.393

Paik's experimentation with the synthesizer and the consequent productions of synthesized tapes might not have been possible without outside support such as the financial aid of the Rockefeller Foundation and the production sponsorship of public television stations. In 1968, WGBH-TV in Boston first opened the "Public Broadcasting Laboratory" for video artists. As a project for the Laboratory, the pioneering producer Fred Barzyk organized a program called "The Medium is the Medium" for which Paik, invited with other

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392 Paik, Videa 'n' Videology, loc. cit.

393 D. Ross, "Nam June Paik's Video Tape," Nam June Paik, op. cit., p. 106

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artists, produced "Electronic Opera No. 1"(1968-9).394

This tape consists of two structurally different, but thematically connected parts: the first part is a fragmented image juxtaposition obtained by the collage technique, featuring among them "Nixon's distorted face, a psychedelic nude go-go dancer, etc."; the second part begins with the subtitle "This is participation-TV" which is followed by instructions ("close your eyes, three-quarter open your eyes, and so on.") and ends with the order to "turn off the TV sets."395 If the first part practices interactive video by creating speedy and kinetic interactive images and sounds, the second part manifests the importance of the interactivity by parodying the Orwellian one-sidedness of the television message.

With the impact of this work, Paik was allowed to build his first synthesizer in the studio of WGBH where his production of video tapes began to flourish: in 1970, in "Video Commune," he moved the synthesizer outdoors into the streets, manipulating it to a rock and roll sound track; in the same year he produced "Electronic Opera No. 2"; and in 1973, "A Tribute to John Cage."396 The example of the

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394 The references for the following chronological information or historical facts are derived from several sources including, Nam June Paik, the Whitney Catalogue, or G. V. Cauwenberge's "chronologie art video," in Art Video, loc. cit.

395 Ibid., p. 104.

396 Idem.

laboratory project of WGBH was followed by WNET-CH13 in New York. In 1971, the WNET not only established Paik's synthesizer in its studio but also opened the "Artist's Television Workshop" which would become, the following year, the "Television Laboratory" of WNET. Most of Paik's video tapes have been produced through this Laboratory, among which were "The Selling of New York" (1972), later incorporated into "Suite 212" (1975), "Global Groove" (1973), "Guadal Canal Requiem" (1977) and "Merce by Merce by Paik" (1978). These tape works, however varied in subject matter and technical involvement, all show his unique style based on collage fragmentation, repetition and the consequent abstraction. And at the content level, they share a Pop Art activity, the appropriation of reality.

His style also involves notions of 'double practice' and 'pastiche'. Jean- Paul Fargier characterized Paik's video art as "le double" ("dédoublement" and "redoublement").397 He claimed that for Paik, the double is an "obsession more than a mere procedure," thus "his entire work can be catalogued as long series of 'mise en double'."398 This is a valid claim, especially if one considers Paik's repetitive use of the same image. Let us mention here several examples such as the

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397 J. P. Fargier, "Last Analogy before Digital Analysis," Video by Artists 2, ed., E. Town (Toronto: Art Metropole, 1986), p. 67. "Dédoublement" is "dividing" and "redoublement" is "duplicating."

398 Ibid., pp. 73, 67.

second part of "Electronic Opera No.1" (1968), the commanding

"Participation-TV" that reappears in "Global Groove" (1973);

most of the scenes of "Global Groove," especially the half-

nude go-go dancer that reappears in almost all of his future

tapes; finally, images of Paik's old avant-garde colleagues,

Cage, Cunningham, Ginsberg and more recently Laurie Anderson,

all of which became fixed members of Paik's image making. What

then is the meaning of the repetition or the "remake" ?

Fargier writes, "everything can happen twice . . . the double

signifies the fragmentation of unity . . . it is the sign of

repetition, reproduction and renewal."399   The sign of the

remake, he continues, is related to the notion of

"coincidence" in terms of "names, dates, events, and

characters," a notion that fascinated James Joyce. This

"double syndrome" common to Paik and Joyce is regarded by

Fargier as a reaction both to twentieth century modern art and

to modern mass media reproduction:

> Ulysses is a remake of the Odyssey; Finnegan's Wake a
> nocturnal remake of Ulysses—and of Vico. Global Groove
> is a remake of all existing television. Paradoxically, in
> the age of technical reproduction, generalized and
> deliberate duplication seems to be the only way to elude
> the whole question of coping, thereby inventing radically
> new expressions that convey new and radical concepts,
> points of view and ideas.400

Here then, the 'paradoxical duplication to elude copying'

raised by Fargier corresponds to the 'homeopathic' practice of

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399 Ibid., p. 73.

400 Ibid., pp. 74-75.

postmodern 'pastiche' examined and supported by Fredric

Jameson: "to undo postmodernism homeopathically by the methods

of postmodernism; to work at dissolving the pastiche by using

all the instruments of pastiche itself . . . "401

Jameson sees "the stylistic diversity and heterogeneity"

of postmodernism as the consequence of the "death of the

subject" and of the "end of individualism" which cannot

provide a "stylistic uniqueness" or a "linguistic norm" to

imitate or to parody. In this postmodern vacancy, in this

situation impossible to parody, pastiche is a "blank parody":

pastiche has no humoristic tone and no ulterior motive

because there is no longer a prototype to imitate.402 Hence,

in the postmodern world left only with pastiche, there is no

style and only an imitation of style:

> In a world in which stylistic innovation is no longer
> possible, all that is left is to imitate dead styles, to
> speak though the masks and with the voices of the styles
> in the imaginary museum. But this means that contemporary
> or postmodernist art is going to be about art itself in a
> new kind of way; even more, it means that its essential
> messages will involve the necessary failure of art and
> the aesthetic, the failure of the new, the imprisonment
> in the past.403

Jameson's pessimism about postmodernism, while it parallels

Peter Bürger's pessimism about avant-garde art, shows a subtle

difference from the latter: while Bürger regards the 'intent'

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401 A. Stephanson, "Interview with Fredric Jameson,"
op. cit., p. 71.

402 Jameson, " Postmodernism and Consumer Society,"
Postmodern Culture, op. cit., pp. 113-4.

403 Ibid., pp. 115-6.

of the historical avant-gardiste as a failure, Jameson
understands the postmodernist failure in terms of artistic
style and aesthetics. This suggests, as I will discuss in the
conclusion, a change of focus in dealing with art in that we
can no longer discuss postmodern art in terms of a new style
but as a lesson of the historical avant-garde.

The point here is that Paik practices postmodern pastiche
in terms of a 'double strategy', both in form and content. In
form, the double effect comes from the dividing and the
duplicating of the image obtained by the collage technique
which operates a fragmentation and an accumulation of
heterogeneous images, and a juxtaposition and a multiplication
of the units. Rather than fusing into an harmonious 'organic'
entity typical of the traditional structure of the narrative,
each unrelated individual image assumes the status of an
independent visual element: this is the effect of the
'dédoublement', or of the 'fragment principle'. For instance,
each fragment from the multiplex image bank of "Global
Croove"--Ginsberg chanting, Navajo Indians, Korean traditional
dance, Living Theatre, the rock and roll dancer and the
recycled variation of these images transformed into purely
abstract patterns--operates independently, leaving in our
memory a vision of its own vestige like every mark of a
needlework.

As for content, we can consider the double strategy in
two ways. Firstly, Paik explores the simultaneous use of the

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idioms of popular art--images of pop music/dance/star--and of high art practice--the collage technique and the chance operation. Secondly, and consequently, his tapes function simultaneously as a social, political and aesthetic commentary on the one hand, and as a pop-oriented entertainment on the other hand, leading Ross to call Paik's work a "meta-critique" or a "pastiche" that "functions both as art directly and indirectly as a critique of the style, manner, and nature of the forms on which it is based."404 Ross sees "The Selling of New York" (1972) as a clear example of such a pastiche: by the insertion of the Japanese version of a Pepsi Cola commercial, Paik criticizes the commercial and media centered selling of New York.405 That is, Paik uses a commercial song to parody not only the commercialism of New York, but also the media structure that supports such commercialism; this type of practice refers once again to the homeopathic aspect of video- -a simultaneous imitation and attack of the television code-- and to the homeopathic aspect of postmodernism--the use of pastiche to dissolve postmodernism itself.

Paik's 'dédoublement' is not limited only to form and content; it sometimes becomes the subject matter itself. Fargier presents "Allan 'n' Allen's Complaint" (1982) as a tape representative of Paik's passion for the double. This

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404 Ross, "Truth or Consequences: American Television and Video Art," Video Culture, op. cit., pp. 170-1.

405 Ibid., p. 173.

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work is constructed by a means of a double binding, or a double 'invagination' that recalls Derrida's essay "Living On--Border Lines."406   This double binding is realized through the co-presence of the two Allan/Allen (Allan Kaprou and Allen Ginsberg); the double meeting of Allan and Allan's father, and of Allen and Allen's father; the two Jewish fathers and their sons; the dual identification of Allen and Orlovsky, and of Allan and Christ 407   "Merce by Merce by Paik"(1978) provides another example of the "dedoublement" as content. Part I, the "Blue Studio," consists of multiple doublings of dance movements: the images of a dancing Cunningham is doubled, tripled, and in the end five times repeated; this image will be juxtaposed by images of other dancers--a go-go dancer, folk dancers--, of a crawling and trotting baby, and of the "Taxi's Dance" in Park Avenue Manhattan. In part II, "Merce and Marcel," an old black and white film shows a discussion between Marcel Duchamp and Calvin Tomkins: this interview is doubled by a colored film showing a similar conversation with Cunningham.

Isn't it possible to think here of the 'double' as a reflection of the artist's split-self into a self-ego and an

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406 Not only the theme and but also the structure of the book itself exemplifies the issue of the 'double invagination' that deconstructs the transcendental center, thus lives on the border. Cf. Derrida, "living On--Border Lines," ed., H. Bloom et al., Deconstruction and Criticism, (London: Routlege & Kegan Paul, 1979), pp. 75-176.

407 Fargier, op. cit., pp. 70-72.

alter-ego ? In "TV Buddha," we have already pointed out the narcissistic reflection of the artist through a third person, the Buddha statue, divided between East and West, Zen and technology. Isn't Paik's obsession with the double then no more than an obsession with himself, an obsession similar to the narcissistic obsession of Acconci and other autobiographical body artists ? Yes, but with the proviso that Paik's narcissism is of an implicit and indirect kind, to be expressed through a third person, whether it is Buddha, Allan, Allen, Merce or Marcel, the artist's alter-egos.

In a sense, Paik seems a fortunate victim of technology and Zen 'dédoublement' from which his video art conceived as 'Electronic Zen' and 'Zen TV' originates. This point is clearly revealed in his anthropomorphic view of the machine, when he compares the birth of his video synthesizer to the asceticism of a Darma monk:

> Darma was so diligent for nine years in sitting and
> meditating that he did not even go to men.s room. . . .
> The accumulated shit eventually melted away his limb and
> Darma became to be loved as Buddha without legs. . . .
> This leg-less man's wireless transmission is all what TV
> is about today. . . . Video synthesizer is the
> accumulation of my nine years TV-shit, turned into a
> real-time video piano . . . my anti-machine machine.408

Indeed, for Paik, technology does not merely mean a mechanical support for his art; it provides him with inspiration so as to create a new type of machine art. His side-line production of robots and his use of the laser beam in the context of video

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408 Paik, Videa 'n' Videology, loc. cit.

art proves this point.

His fascination with the robot reflects an anthropomorphic attitude toward the machine and a desire to humanize technology. But in a larger context, it can also be viewed as a postmodern pastiche in the same way as the feature film "Star Wars," a movie that has been labelled by Jameson as a pastiche practice in the form of "nostalgia film."[409] "Robot K-456" (1974) was the first robot realized by Paik. It was constructed with 'electronic readymades', having twenty channel radic controls and ten channel recorders, and was manipulated by remote control when it walked along the streets ejecting grain excrements.[410] The human aspect of his robot anticipates the humane robot of "Star Wars," though his was not as sophiscated as the latter. The robot has reappeared recently in Paik's work, but in a different context: as a video sculpture constructed with TV monitors based on the principle of the prepared-TV. This 'video robot' is part of a group called the "Family of Robots" which was exhibited in 1986 in his one-man show in New York's Holly Solomon Gallery and at the Chicago Art Fair of the same year. As Laurie Werner reports, the grandparents were made out of 1950's TV

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409 Jameson, "Postmodernism and Consumer Society," op. cit., p. 116.

410 From several sources including Nam June Paik (Whitney catalogue), loc. cit.; Paik, Videa 'n' Videology, loc. cit. The robot was exhibited at his Whitney Retrospective, not in the original condition of the animation but as a displayed object.

sets, the sons, of sets of the 70's and the grandsons, of "tiny newly-minted sets," a composition which parodies the development and the fashion of the electronic industry.411

The aforementioned one-man show in the Holly Solomon Gallery presented another part of his video work, laser photography which could be called an 'electronic color print'. Actually, his interest in the laser beam developped from the early phase of his video production. Paik describes "Laser Idea No.3" (1965) in these terms: "because of VVHF [sic] of laser, we will have radio stations to afford Mozart-only stations, Cage-only stations, Bogard only stations, underground movie-only stations etc."412 "Utopian Laser TV Station" (1965-6) showed his determination to prevent the "monopoly of a few commercial TV channels" by establishing "thousand of large and small TV stations," using the high-frequency oscillation of the laser.413 However, the full-scale use of the laser started with the Whitney Retrospective Exhibition of 1982, where he presented a laser work which experimented a new vision in the context of audience- . participation: in a dark room installed in the exhibition hall, Paik, with the help of the German scientist Horst Bauman, floated the scenes from his video tape through a laser beam: a dancing Cunningham floated in the air and looked like

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411 Werner, loc. cit.

412 Paik, Videa 'n' Videology, loc. cit.

413 Idem.

an astronaut walking in a gravity-free state. The spectators

came in and out through the vaporized floating image and thus

intervened in the laser environment through their bodies,

participating more actively than in the electronic environment

of the video image. His laser photography of 1986 uses the

laser beam not to float the moving scenes in the air but to

fix the still image onto a canvas surface. The process of the

fixation requires a complex computer mechanism of a high

efficiency and the resulting mechanical picture is decorated

with Paik's symbolic objects such as an antenna, a TV screen

or a miniaturized satellite, thus becoming a sort of 'combine

painting'. The images consist of blow-ups of "Paper-TV"

drawings or of images taken from previous video tapes,

especially portraits of friends such as Cage, Ginsberg and

Anderson. What did he want to say through these cliches of

the conventional picture format ? Surely his laser

photographies are related to the notions of 'intermedia' and

'machine aesthetics', the basic concepts of his

experimentalism. There is a refusal here to fix oneself to a

specific medium and the exploration of a purely mechanical

process reflects an inclination for a machine aesthetics based

on chance and anonymity, an inclination already suggested by

the chance manipulations elaborated for the thirteen prepared-

TVs in 1963 and manifested by the invention of the video

synthesizer in 1970.

In an interview entitled "Art and Technology of Nam June

Paik" lead by Jud Yalkut in 1968, Paik maintains that a machine aesthetics supports his 'Electronic Zen'--a product of the 'dédoublement' between technology and Zen:

> The more it deals with the character of randomness and repetition, the more efficient is the computer. These are the two poles of human artistic materials. Total repetition means total determinism. Total randomness means total indeterminism. Both are mathematically simply explicable. The Problem is how to use these two characters efficiently. Therein lies the secret for the successful usage of the computer in the creative arts.
>
> I also envisage the day when the collaboration of artist and engineer will progress into the unification of artist and engineer into one person. According to my experience, the best results were achieved through accident and error. As you see, the transistor was discovered by accident. This means that present computer age was the product of chance to a high degree. . . . I often found that by-product is often more valuable than the first envisioned aim.414

Here, we see Paik connecting the computer, the most advanced western technology, to Zen oriented concepts such as indeterminacy, randomness and chance. In fact, isn't it possible to say that if video is a product of western civilization, Paik's video art is the product of a personal dédoublement between western technology and Zen ?415

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414 J. Yalkut, "Art and Technology of Nam June Paik," Arts Magazine, April 1968, pp. 50-51, quoted in Paik, Videa 'n' Videology, loc. cit.

415 A striking parallel to such machine aesthetics is found in the works of Bill Viola, whose creation of video images is based on the same principle of chance operation using "video-disque (video computer)," the source of image information; for him to create an image is to select certain numbers of images from the "geography of information." Cf. R. Bellour, "Entretien avec Bill Viola: L'espace à Pleine Dent," Où Va La Vidéo?, Paris, Cahiers du Cinema, Editions de l'Etoile, 1986 p. 69. This inclination of Viola reflects his conception of space and time--the suspended, relative time,

C. GLOBAL-TV

> One of the question is "Why did you do a live show when
> everything can be canned ?" That is a basic question
> which we really can't answer. You can't compare a live
> show with a canned show, or canned food and non-processed
> food. What exactly was the importance of being live ?
> Interactive things have to be live. We want to use
> interactive TV because the best use of TV is that you
> talk back to it like telephone.416

The above comment is Paik's reflection on his satellite

project "Good Morning Mr. Orwell" broadcasted on the first day

of 1984. For the interactive video art of the 80's, 'live'

became the key term as video artists came back to re-

recognize television after their stylistic exploration of

video throughout the 70's. In effect, 'live' and

'interactivity' designate the same phenomenon: from a

biological point of view, live art--i. e. "showing the

characteristics of life"417--corresponds to "the

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and non-perspective conceptual linear space--from which he
connects orientalism, pre-renaissance and computer technology.
Cf. Viola, "Sight Unseen: Enlightened Squirrels and Fatal
Experiments," Bill Viola, Paris, ARC, Musée d'Art Moderne de
la Ville de Paris, December 20-January 29 1984, p. 18. He is
known to have gone to Japan to study Zen during 1980 and 1981.

416 Paik, "Reflection on 'Good Morning, Mr. Orwell',"
Appendix 4, Art & Satellite, ed., R. Block (Berlin: Daad
Galerie, 1984), n. p.

417 The Collins English Dictionary, major new edition,
s.v. "live."

interconnected multiple activity of the internal organism"
like a neuron always altering its lines of communication with
every external experience."418   This means that the
interactive communication between the subject and the object
or between subjects goes hand in hand with the live show which
can be defined as follows: "Radio, Television, etc.,
transmitted or present at the time of performance, rather than
being a recording."419   Thus 'live' is related at the same
time to 'life' and to 'live time' and it is experienced
through interactivity.   Hence "interactive things have to be
live" and interactive TV has to be a live show to achieve, as
Paik will argue, a two-way communication like the telephone.
This association between live interactive TV and the telephone
leads directly to McLuhan's definition of the "cool medium."

McLuhan characterizes the live, interactive, two-way mode
of communication as "cool" because it "indicates a kind of
commitment and participation in situation that involves all of
one's faculties."420   McLuhan speaks here about the "large
structural changes in human outlook that are occurring today";
and his Understanding Media is designed to recognize the
perceptual change brought about by the media.   Henceforth,
"cool" means the "drop" of the "story line" or the "melodic

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418 See p. 155 above.

419 The Collins English Dictionary, loc. cit.

420 McLuhan, "Introduction to the Second Edition,"
Understanding Media, op. cit., p. vii.

line" which provides little visual or aural information; it is thus low in definition and encourages "hot" participation. Oriental art is cool, because Zen oriented creation involves participation "by means of the interval, not by the connection used in the visually organized western world. Spectator becomes artist in oriental art because he must supply all the connections."421 By the same token, while radio, movies, photography and the phonetic alphabet are hot media, television, telephone, cartoons and written characters are cool media implicating the audience because of their low definition.422 If we follow McLuhan's argument, to seek the two-way communication in television is to retrieve its cool nature. Given this understanding, Paik's 'global-TV' via satellite hook-up can be seen as an endeavor to make television or participation-TV video a cool activity, one that would permit the whole world to participate, thus exploring the live as life itself.

The global-TV that uses satellite hook-up practices symbolizes the imperative of participation both in the vertical and the horizontal senses. If the interactive video links the audience and the medium in the vertical sense, global-TV expands the interactivity to the horizontal dimension by conjoining different people of different countries by the simulcasts. Thus, "Global Village" realizes

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421 Ibid ., pp. vii-viii

422 McLuhan, "Media Hot and Cold," op. cit., p. 36.

a cool participation through global-TV. The ideal of global-

TV is accomplished by a 'live show' based on live, prime time.

Paik's justification for his satellite project rests on this

point:

> If video art would stay only as an inexpensive copy of
> film art, we don't need live show. If we want to deliver
> only the cost-efficient entertainment on TV, we don't
> need live TV. However, we want to develop video art not
> only as a high art but, as the highest art form which
> human kind invented.423

When Paik speaks about video art as the "highest art form," it

is not to 'raise' it to the status of pure fine art, but, on

the contrary, to experiment it as the most humanly life-like

art, one that would be based on the instant moment of present

time. As he continues:

> As the miracle is the cornerstone of every major
> religions of the world, onceness constitutes the very
> motor of human history. Important things happen only
> once in our lives and they are neither repeatable nor
> reversible . . . death, defloration, birth (where, when,
> in which social milieu). Through the live video art we
> are finally able to deal very concretely with central
> problem of human existence (chance, hazard, bet,
> venture).424

The fascination with 'live' both in the sense of life and

live time is not unique to Paik. Other artists have also

experimented with satellite and other telecommunication

technologies before him. The artistic use of satellite for

telecommunication came twenty years later after the first

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423 Paik, "Appendix 6," <u>Art & Satellite,</u> <u>loc. cit.</u>

424 <u>Idem.</u>

launch of "Sputnik" by the USSR in 1957.425 In 1976, Douglas

Davis first used a satellite for his performance "Seven

Thoughts." He read his "seven free private thoughts" to the

satellite in the empty Houston Astrodome on December 29th

between 9:40 - 9:50 A. M. After reading them, he put and

locked these thoughts in a small black box. Even the

documentary video tape of this reading was designed not to

bear the voice, so that the "moment of live reading" would

gain value.426 While Davis' satellite work emphasized live

time, Kit Galloway's and Sherri Rabinowitz' project was more

concerned with the interactive possibility of the satellite

hook-up. In 1977, they joined two dance performances via

satellite, one on the west coast in San Francisco and the

other on the east coast in Maryland. In the same year, Liza

Bear and Keith Sonnier, the founders of the New York based

'Send/Receive Satellite Network', also created an interactive

performance project linking New York and California. But this

time the event of the exchange was simulcasted by microwave

relay to several cities in the two regions.

In the same year, another satellite experiment was

realized, but this time it concerned more directly the

practice of video art. 'Documenta 6' in Kassel (the "Media

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425 The historical references are derived from B. London,
"Video + Satellite," Art & Satellite, loc. cit.; E. Gidney,
"The Artist's Use of Telecommunications," Art
Telecommunication, op. cit., pp. 9-15.

426 D. Davis, "Ten Ideas about My Work in Satellite Art
and Paik," Art & Satellite, loc. cit.

Documenta") not only exhibited video works such as Paik's "TV
Garden," but also presented a live performance by Beuys, Paik
and Davis. This show was transmitted simultaneously via
satellite to over 30 countries in Europe and America, probably
the largest audience for an art performance hitherto. Paik
performed his typical pieces with Moorman, Beuys telecasted
his monologue and Davis concluded this event with his "The
Last Nine Minutes" in which he "attempted in a most dramatic
way to 'break through' the TV screen and 'reach' the other
performers."427 In 1980, the Galloway/Rabinowitz team
produced "Hole in Space." They installed monitors,
microphones, speakers and cameras in the busy downtown stores
of New york and Los Angeles so that the passer-by participants
of each city, without knowing what was going on, would be able
to communicate visually and aurally with each other via a
"picture-phone." In May of the same year, Davis' "Double   .
Entendre" linked Paris and New York: a man in the Pompidou
Center and a woman in the Whitney Museum cited in French and
in English a Barthes' text on love.

   However, the full-fledged satellite project came with
Paik's "space opera," "Good Morning Mr. Orwell." This
performance was telecasted on the first day of 1984, the D-day
of Orwell's premonition. It was to be the first of Paik's
ambitious satellite trilogy. Part II, "Bye Bye Kipling" and
part III, "Wrap around the World," were to be broadcasted in

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   427 Gidney, op. cit., p. 9.

1986 and 1988 on the occasion of the Asian Games held in Seoul
and of the Seoul Summer Olympics.

"Orwell" reveals Paik's determination for using global-
TV. It's aim is to challenge Orwell's vision of television--
television as the one-way mode political tool controled by
'Big Brother'--and to attempt to demonstrate the possibility
of using the medium both as an art and as a two-way
communication system. More specifically, Paik wants to give
back to television its potential coolness and liveness by
providing a live space happening for a world wide audience.
"Orwell" is unique in terms of scale and scope. The one-hour
long live show involved over seventy artists from Europe and
America, and it linked cities from three continents: New York
(WENT-CH13) and Paris (FR3) as the two live broadcast bases;
Cologne(WDRIII) participating with a video tape; Berlin,
Bremer, Hamburg, Los Angeles(KCET-CH28), San Francisco(KCSM-
CH60, KQED-CH19) and Seoul(KBSI) simulcasting the event; and
other cities broadcasting the taped version of the event. The
participating artists were as various as in a variety show: in
New York, George Plimpton, the writer, hosted the show that
included both live and taped performances of Laurie Anderson
and Peter Gabriel's new song "This is the Picture" composed
for the project; the San Francisco pop group, Oingo-Boingo;
the English group, The Thompson Twins; Cunningham dancing and
Cage playing cactus, both accompanied by their tape images
transmitted from Paris; Allen Ginsberg and Peter Orlovsky

chanting their poems; comedians Leslie Fuller and Mitchell
Kriegman with the Kansas city video artist, Teddy Dibble,
acting as the Big Brother; Moorman with Paik's "TV Cello";
Dean Winkler's and John Sanborn's video tape accompanied by
the electronic music of Philip Glass.

In Paris, at the Pompidou Center, the show was hosted by
TV master Claude Villers; Beuys played the piano surrounded by
Calder sculptures; the pop singer Sapho and the group Urban
Sax performed musical works; a fashion parade from Studio
Bercot took place; Ben Vautier proposed a writing performance;
Robert Combas drew his picture-cartoon; Pierre-Alain Hubert
presented a firework in the courtyard of the center. In
Cologne, a prepared video tape showed Savador Dali in an
interview done in 1974, Maurice Kagel, the anti-opera
musician, and Karlheinz Stockhausen's "Momenta."

Such a complex, large-scaled production inevitably posed
new problems: it aroused the question as to whether such
satellite shows could be defined as art or not, and conversely
it suggested a new possibility of reconciliation between high
art and popular art. The 'artistic dilemma' derives from the
fact that this kind of project, before it can become an
artistic event, requires high technology, costly expenses, a
co-operative enterprise (like in the film industry) between
executives, technicians and performers, and it is furthermore
affected by sponsoring organizations. In "Orwell," the
involvement of extra-artistic elements eventually weakened the

artistic density because it had to accommodate the normalized 'public taste'. However, from a different point of view, this negative aspect suggests a new possibility for the reconciliation of high art and popular art. As Lynnette Tayler pointed out, this type of work "cannot be considered as a single artist's," it "represented a multiplicity of interests orchestrated within the public domain of television bringing forward the 'public taste' as a new-found critical definition of the work." And in this new-found "teleculture, . . . the interpretation of art is as diverse as the participants involved (in the creation) and the consumer audience."428

The production and the performance itself were a synthesis of diverse aesthetics, realizing an intermedia constituted by multiple levels of different elements where co-existed high art and popular art, classic art and modern art, diverse genres such as art, poetry, music, comedy, fashion, etc., and personal differences between the individual artists in terms of age, sex, origin, and so on. This multiplicity is exactly what Paik aimed at: "This may be the first time high art and mass art get together in this country ["which promises to be a merry mix of the old enfant terrible and the new."] There will be element of very serious art, like Beuys, and

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428 L. Taylor, "We made Home TV, Good Morning Mr. Orwell," Artcom, p. 14., reprinted in Art & Satellite, loc. cit.

also of just plain entertainment."429

Although this kind of project is not and cannot be an ♪
individual artist's work, the satellite artist, in order to
achieve the multiplicity of the 'space opera aesthetics', must
learn new skills. Paik discusses the point as follows:

> So, just as Mozart mastered the newly-invented clarinet,
> the satellite artist must compose his art from the
> beginning suitable to physical conditions and grammar.
> Satellite art in the superior sense does not merely
> transmit existing symphonies and operas to other lands.It
> must consider how to achieve a two-way connection
> between opposite sides of the earth; how to master
> differences in time; how to play with improvisation, in-
> determinism, echoes, feedbacks, and empty spaces in the
> Cagean sense; how to instantaneously manage the
> differences in culture, preconceptions, and common sense
> that exist between various nations.430

Only after mastering these, could Paik achieve a
"multitemporal, multispatial symphony."431 What can be
inferred from his remarks is that in satellite art the
technical matters and the ethnical problems are difficulties
that the artist has to face in the process of the production.

In fact, "Orwell" shows technical errors in timing and
distribution—for example Plimpton never appeared on Parisian
television and in turn neither did his counterpart Villers on
the American scene. (This was also due to the fact that the
directors of each side were to make their own selection of
what was to be televised at every specific moment among

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429 R. Baker, "TV Salutes the Spirit of 1984," Leisure,
New York Daily News, December,31, 1983.

430 Paik, "Art & Satellite," Art & Satellite, loc. cit.

431 Idem.

concurrent events taking place on both sides.) What is
interesting in this context is Paik's own reaction to these
errors which reflects his philosophy regarding live art
aesthetics: "Live TV is like life, you can't get everything
done, there is always some bitter sweet regret, some remorse.
You don't see what went well, you only see only what went
wrong. We always think only about what is missing in our
lives. . . . It is the same thing when you do a live show.
You forget what you achieve. . ."432

The analogy between live TV and life such as established
by Pa... derives from the use of live time, a process that
brings about the "onceness" of life, i. e. a time of every
instant, impossible to repeat, different from the synchronized
time of the video tape. If the time of video resides in the
artistic dimension, the time of live television proceeds with
life itself where the distinction between art and life cannot
exist any longer. Paik's obsession with the "onceness" of
time drives him to recognize the "mystery of [the] encounter."
According to him, important things happen only once in our
lives: a "chance meeting" with a person takes place as "one
meeting – one life."433 Paik explains the importance of the
chance meeting in biological terms: "the thinking process is
the jumping of electrical sparks across the synapses between

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432 Paik, "Reflections on 'Good Morning Mr. Orwell',"
loc. cit.

433 Paik,"Art & Satellite," loc. cit.

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the brain cells of arranged in multilayered matrices. Inspiration is a spark shooting off in an unexpected direction . . . " The possibility of a chance encounter and of a consequent enrichment of human brain activities increases with the use of the satellite technology which becomes the "main nonmaterial product of post-industrial society."434 "Orwell" proved the biological, communal potential of the satellite: as Paik pointed out, Cage and Beuys, though they were friends for a long time, performed together for the first time in "Orwell" while Beuys was in Paris and Cage in New York; and Beuys and Ginsberg, though they had many things in common, met for the first time through this work.435

The second project of the two-year-term satellite trilogy was "Bye Bye Kipling" realized in October 1986 in the context of the Seoul 'Asian Games'. This project linked three cities from the East and the West—New York (WNET-CH13), Tokyo (TV Asahi) and Seoul (KBSI)—and the event was simulcasted to Boston (CH44) and California (KVCR-24). In New York, the live performance was held in 4D, a disco and performance center, and hosted by Dick Cavett. It featured: the Philip Glass Ensemble, the graffiti artist Keith Haring, rock star Lou Reed, the Living Theatre Troupe, the avant-garde pianist David Tudor, percussionist David Van Tieghem, Korean traditional instrument player Byunggki Whang, Korean shaman Hiya Choi, and

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434 Idem.

435 Idem.

video tapes by Sanborn and Paik. In Tokyo, in the Ark Hills Plaza, a shopping complex, the performance was hosted by pop music star Ryuichi Sakamoto and featured: Japanese architect Isozaki, fashion designer Issey Miyake, a Sumo wrestler, three Japanese painters, and a Korean traditional percussion team, Samulnori. Seoul, Paik's birth place, was introduced by a prepared tape shot by Skip Blumberg who established a contrast between the modern cityscape and the traditional local scenes such as the market places. But more importantly, Seoul participated in this project with a live relay broadcasting of the marathon race, the highlight of the Asian Games which was reported on the spot by Fred Thompson, the American track coach, and Kathline Switzer, the first woman marathonner in America.

The overall impression seemed similar to "Orwell" except that "Bye Bye Kipling" was composed of "more events, more split screens, more prerecorded bits."[436] There was however a difference in casting in that local stars replaced Paik's regular customers like Cage and Cunningham. But the more noticeable difference was the insertion of a new element, sports, which speaks for the other meaning of "Kipling," the communication between art and sports adding to the communication between East and West. Against the verse of Rudyard Kipling (1865-1936), the English imperialist poet,

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436 C. Carr, "Beam Me Up, Nam June: Paik's Latest Global Groove," The Village Voice, October 14, 1986. p. 47.

"east is east, and west is west, and never the twain shall
meet," Paik attempted a one-and-half hour meeting of East and
West via live satellite hook-up. Thus "more split screens"
were included to enhance the dialogue between the two regions:
Haring and Miyake, Cavett and Sakamoto, and the twin sisters
of New York and Tokyo met on the split screen; the Korean
percussion team and the American percussion player were
juxtaposed side by side. But the most striking example
illustrating this dialogue is the visual and aural
correspondance established between the Seoul marathon and
Glass' electronic music in New York which proposes a perfect
harmony between sports and music/art. Thus, as Paik hoped,
the run of the champion and the elevation of Glass' electronic
music functioned as "the perfect mirror to the concentrated
struggle evident in the runner's face," the run of the
champion and the music finishing "at the same time in 'a kind
of electronic orgasm'."437 Finally, the correspondance
between the marathon and Glass' music signifies the criss-
crossed meeting of East and West, of sports and art. Paik's
concept of 'art-sport-cocktail' clarifies this necessary
meeting: for Paik, the geo-political differences between East
and West can only be, must be, solved by the "intertwining of
sport, art and culture."438 Hence the art and sports cocktail

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437 Idem.

438 Paik, "Bye Bye Kipling: art-sport-cocktail," a
personal letter to WENT-CH13, March 26, 1985.

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of "Bye Bye Kipling" where "live sports and live art chase

each other and culminate in a simultaneous climax."439

In this context, "Wrap aroud the World," the third

project of the trilogy realized on the occasion of the Seoul

Olympics on September 10, 1988, can be seen as a direct

extension and as the conclusive part of "Kipling." Paik

writes:

> Sports and arts are the most powerful forms of
> communication between different people. Therefore it is
> quite natural that a global music/dance festival should
> accompany the global sports festival; the next olympic
> game which starts on the 17th of September 1988 in Seoul,
> Korea.440

The "Wrap around the World" was a co-production of KBS in

Seoul and WNET in New York, a ninety minute program involving

ten countries: Israel, Brazil, West Germany, China, Soviet

Union, Italy, Japan and the two hosting countries. This time,

the scale and the scope were more spectacular, involving more

countries, and the structure was based on a story line unlike

the former ones: a space visitor, Dr. Mobius (acted by Tom

Davis), threatens to "destroy human race because of its

virulent nationalism, unceasing brutality and environmental

recklessness"441; replying, a spokesman of the earth, WNET's

anchor (played by Al Franken), begs for salvation by

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439 R. Gill, "Off Camera," Newsday, September 28, 1986.

440 Paik, "Olympic Fever: live from 21 countries," a
project draft for the "Wrap around the World," october 7, 1987.

441 J. J. O'Connor, "A Global Hookup on 13," The New York
Times, September 12, 1988, p. C 20.

presenting to him various shows from around the world. The program dedicated to Dr. Mobius becomes the content of Paik's live show which actually wraps around the world. (Davis and Franken are the emcees of "Saturday Night live" on NBC, New York.)

The global show started with the performance of David Bowie in New York's WNET studio who sang "Look Back in Anger" and danced with the Canadian dancing group La La La Human Steps; the camera moved to Seoul to show the spectacle of the Olympic Village; then a German rock band appeared and sang "Die Toten Hosen" (the dead trousers) in front of Beethoven's house in Bonn; this was followed by a hot Samba dance and song in Rio de Janeiro; then in Leningrad, Sergey Kuryokin and his rock band, "Popular Mechanics," played jazz with the accompaniment of live turkeys squawking; Beijing presented "Plim Post," a traditional martial art, and Cui Jian, a chinese rock band; next, a Vienna jazz orchestra played in a parking place in Hamburg which had once been Brahms' house; then, Samulnori-Duraepae and Joogja Kim's Dance group performed Korean traditional percussion music and dance in front of Paik's "Spiral Tower, the More the Better" newly erected for the National Museum of Contemporary Art in Seoul; accompanied in New York by the percussion music from Seoul, Paik performed a ceremonial happening to blemish the Korean traditional hat, "gat," the symbol of authority and aristocracy, by smudging the hat with shampoo and shaving

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lotion; this was followed by a piano performance by Tudor;
then Bowie in New York and Sakamoto in Tokyo met on the split
screen, after which the latter played one of his composition,
"The Last Emperor," winner of the Oscar prize; this was
followed by Japanese traditional music and dance;
simultaneously, in New York, Cunningham danced to the Japanese
music, thus creating a "transpacific duet"; then at the
sculpture garden of the Jerusalem Museum, the modern dance
company Kol Demama performed a piece; a car race took place in
Ireland; and the show concluded with a Korean fan dance
performed by Little Angels. The story ended with Dr. Mobius
forgiving the human race after having watched the whole
program dedicated to him.

This final project442 of the space trilogy confirms
Paik's belief in global-TV: not only did it involve more
countries than before including such nations as China and
USSR, but it also intended to wrap the whole world with the
art-sports-music cocktail. Paik considers that "sport and
music cater to large and often separate audiences. The
combination of these two vast population groups can find a new
critical mass for the new programming. Beyond MTV, there can
be SMTV. How many college kids watch football in silence,

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442 Paik mentioned in an interview in Seoul when he was
doing "Wrap . . " that he would not do again satellite work
but he hoped someone would link one day the USA and the USSR,
East Germany and West Germany, and South Korea and North
Korea. This reflects his political vision of unification of
nations to the whole world. Cf. Seoul Sinmoon (Seoul
Newspaper), September 5, 1988.

while their HI FI sound is on ?"443 Isn't the intermix of pop music (present throughout the trilogy) and sports, two types of events that guarantee vast audiences, the best way to accomplish participation-TV ? In this respect we can say that though the three works were varied in terms of situation and character--"Orwell," more calculated, "Kipling," more documentary and "Wrap . . . ," more programmed--they were all designed to achieve the goal of global-TV, audience-participation.

Paik's global-TV is based on mass participation and calls for a comparison with Davis' satellite work based on conceptualism and individualism. Davis declares, "I don't use the satellite to bring the world together but to keep it apart."444 He disagrees with mass-oriented television; instead, he recognizes the "individualizing, decentering, disorienting effect of television."445 The medium is one that could shape a mode of thinking typical of "tribes" gathering "as one voice . . . through the tube in prime time"; such an homogenization would produce "a blind, dumb, and benignly passive civilization."446 Thus, according to Davis, video art can be saved from "stripping down to naked communication" only

443 Paik, "Olympic Fever," loc. cit.

444 Davis, "Ten Ideas about My Work in Satellite Art and Paik," loc. cit.

145 Davis, "Video in the mid-70's: Prelude to an End/Future," Video Art, op. cit., p. 198.

446 Idem.

by the decentering effect of television.447 Recognizing

different approaches between Paik and himself, Davis writes:

> Let Paik and me divide the world. (He comes from the
> outside diving into the set: I come from the inside
> trying to get outside: he faces the monitor toward the
> world: I turn it around to face the wall. Two ways of
> saying the same thing.)448

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447 Ibid., p. 199.

448 Davis, "Ten Ideas," loc. cit.

CONCLUSION

The object of this study was to demonstrate that Paik's
video art can be considered as participation-TV, one that
extends his happening activities, participation-performances.
In order to do this, we have discussed the participatory
aspects of happening and video art in general and then
proceeded to examine how Paik employed the participatory
idioms to make his participation art. As we have seen, the
participatory aspects in each art, in spite of differences due
to the specificity of each medium, are interconnected. Video
art and happening share three basic concepts: indeterminacy,
intermedia and the resolution of the art/life dichotomy.

As we have noted, indeterminacy is the basic
characteristic of video art in the sense that the electronic
nature of the video image creates an indeterminate state of
'dédoublement' between the iconic image (indeterminacy between
image and sculpture, space and time) and the electronic
movement (indeterminacy between present and past), which
introduces a new type of perception that doubles human
perception. Hence, the art/life resolution is the basic theme

of video art: this dichotomy is resolved not only by the analogical relation between the video image and human visual perception, but also by the psychological nature of the medium, that is, by the fact that the narcissistic reflection of video imitates the split-self of the human psyche. Audience-participation occurs therefore at the biological and the psychological levels. As we have seen, video art, inseparably related to TV, poses the problem of communication between art and audience, between high art and popular art, between art and life.

Finally, intermedia, which is the basic ontological form of video art, links numerous media: pictorial art and sculptural art or visual/space art and aural/time art, art and technology (video as an electronic medium), art and life (video as a psychological medium), and art and society (video as mass medium). With respect to this 'symbiosis of art and ecology', we can say that video art, following the example of happening, reflects the ethos of poststructuralist postmodernism (the 'postmodernism of resistance') derived from the anti-art practice of the historical avant-garde seeking to integrate art into the praxis of life and society.

In fact, the three key concepts comprising both happening and video art were already revealed by Dadaist collage and readymades which presented indeterminacy in their work (art? or life?) and intermedia in their intermingling of genres. These new experiences not only shocked the audience but helped

to change perceptual behavior. Thus, Nam June Paik, who
practices participation art in terms of happening and video
art, is both a heir of Duchamp and an "emblematic feature" of
postmodernism as Fredric Jameson once called him.449

In viewing happening as an environmental chance collage
and video art as an electronic readymade, locating them in the
anti-art tradition of the historical avant-garde and
poststructuralist postmodernism, it seems appropriate first to
compare Cubist collage and Dadaist collage. Picasso and
Duchamp represent these two different streams of modern art:
Modernism based on aestheticism and avant-gardism based on
anti-art. These different positions are clearly revealed by
the use of the collage method. Picasso's use of collage
integrated a 'fragment of reality' on the canvas surface,
attempting the co-existence of presentation (life) and
representation (art) in pictorial space. However, as Bürger
pointed out, "the cubists do not content themselves with
merely showing a reality fragment. But they stop short of a
total shaping of the pictorial space as a continuum."450   In
other words, Picasso's use of collage was limited to a
compositional device that could not evolve into a new
aesthetic emphasizing the aspects of life and reality as the
Dadaists did. By contrast, Duchamp and other Dadaists, in
order to emphasize 'reality' and thus to purge the art

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449 See pp. 7, 174 above.

450 Bürger, op. cit., p. 78.

element, employed chance operations in making collage. Arp's collage compositions arranged by chance, Tzara's accidental poems and the "Trois Stoppage-Etalon" (1913) by Duchamp (the chance element resulting from the 'calculated' act of dropping three one-meter length strings from a one-meter height, the 'unpredictable' indeterminacy which is different from the spontaneous arbitrariness or improvisation) epitomized the Dadaist chance collage451 where the collage was no longer a mere aesthetic device, but became a manifestation of anti-art that emphasized reality. Duchamp's readymade was the culmination of chance collage in that the fragment of reality was replaced by reality itself, a reality selected by chance, by "complete anaesthesia."452 Hence, Duchamp's adoption of the term readymade: "it seemed to suit very well these things . . . which were not sketches, which did not correspond to any of the terms accepted in the world of art," things, as Gottlieb would say, "which were not works of art."453 The readymade was a perfect embodiment of anti-art in that it aimed to "purge the world of evil" and the "art of evil."454

As such, the difference between Picasso's collage and Duchamp's readymades is not merely a question of radicalness,

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451 See p. 29 above.

452 See p. 170 above.

453 Gottlieb, op. cit., p. 348.

454 Ibid., p. 346. Gottlieb distinguishes dadaist anti-art, intended to purge the world of evil, from Duchamp's anti-art, intended to purge art of evil.

but more importantly, a question of attitude towards art and life. We see a similar difference between conservative postmodernism and poststructuralist postmodern.sm: the practice of the former, clinging to the problem of representation and to the purity of the artistic genres and media, is based on aestheticism, while the latter practices anti-art by employing such concepts as indeterminacy, intermedia and live art. These anti-art concepts correspond to strategies leading to a deconstruction of representation. This is not the case for Minimalism and Neo-Expressionism: even though the former reflects the postmodernist sensibility of "theatricality" and "literalness"455, and even though the latter shares its 'multiplicity' and 'eclecticism', both produced works, sculptures and paintings, in the conventional sense of the categorization. Furthermore, if the new representations they bring about evoke or cultivate a new type of perception, this renewal operates at a stylistic level; the "primary structure" of Minimalism and the eclecticist painting of Neo-expressionism are mere reformations. In comparison, happening and video art cannot be defined simply as art, theatre or non-art. They require different criteria to be understood properly, that is, criteria relative to anti-art concepts such as indeterminacy or intermedia. Here, we face

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455 Refer to M. Fried, "Art and Objecthood," Minimal Art: A Critical Anthology, ed., G. Battcock (New York: E.P.Dutton, 1968), pp. 116-47; Fried, "Theories of After Minimalism and Pop," Discussion in Contemporary Culture, op. cit., pp. 55-58.

the same problem of evaluation as in the case of the historical avant-grade: even though they are based on an anti-art aesthetics, do happening and video art really achieve the aim of uniting art and life or art and audience ? Does Paik's practice of participation art through happening and video art really succeed in the context of audience-participation ? To consider this problem, let us go back to the readymade. If, as Bürger suggested, the intent of the historical avant-garde cannot be achieved because of the autonomous nature of art and the organization of bourgeois society, and if Duchamp's readymades become in the end works of art in spite of their anti-art manifestation, where can we find the legitimacy of such manifestations ? And in what respect can we speak of the significance of such art ?

In discussing both the negative and positive aspects of avant-garde art, Gottlieb speaks of its "ethical value" that functions as an antidote to the aesthetic value. His argument may provide us with an answer to the above questions. While Bürger's negative view of avant-garde art derives from its ontological failure, Gottlieb finds its epistemological legitimacy in its ethical value. Differing from Bürger, Gottlieb questions the nature of the readymade with regard to the audience and points out the hermetic nature of the work that isolates it from the audience. He writes:

> [The readymades] disorient further a public already badly
> in need of orientation. Instead of training our
> sensibility to art, and thus helping us to enjoy art
> properly, Duchamp obliterated the line between art,

craft, and nature, between masterpiece, ornament, and curiosity.[456]

Gottlieb suggests futhermore that the hermetic nature of the readymades is increased, even mystified, by the artist who will not explain the real intent of his curious activity. Hence, the resulting misreading of the readymade as an aesthetic object:

> It does not seem impossible, however, that he may have created the "Bicycle Wheel" to deride the pretensions of industrial design masquerading as art. He may have wanted to illustrate the difference between masterpiece and artifact, work of art and work of craft. If so, then, as public failed to grasp his intention, arriving at the opposite result, he would have had good reason to be annoyed at man's imbecility. Thinking him incurable in his inept appreciation of art, Duchamp had his revenge by mystifying him. Mystification bred mysticism, however. The Readymades teach us something by words and images; hence they carry expressive values as allegorical works. Confusing the domain of ethics with that of aesthetics, critics, connoisseurs, artists, and art historians declared the readymades to be masterpieces of art. As the Christian believes that the Holy Ghost has descended upon the Apostles, so the Duchamp admirers believe that the spirit of Duchamp has breathed into a bottle rack or a urinal.[457]

The hermetic nature of the readymade, and by extension of avant-garde and neo-avant-garde art, produces an autonomous art, the 'ivory tower' of 'Art for Art's Sake' that finally alienates the audience. The ivory tower, 'tour d'ivoire' assigned by Sainte-Beuve, implied, as Monroe Beardsley noted, an "aesthetic monasticism," a withdrawal from the social obligation to communicate with the audience:

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456 Gottlieb, op. cit., p. 349.

457 Ibid., p. 350.

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> Most of the strands in the theme of alienation are
> comprised in it, including the artist need for
> protection, for solitude, for special care; his self-
> imposed or at least resignedly accepted uniqueness,
> carrying his course as a pride; the transcendent
> importance of his calling; and something of Mallarme's
> view that the artist practices a mystery, which cannot be
> revealed to the masses who are not initiated into its
> rite.458

Ironically enough, the aestheticism of modern art and the

anti-art of the avant-garde meet in their hermetic nature,

both producing an autonomous art that isolates the audience.

It is precisely because of this autonomous tendency of art

that Bürger spoke of the limitation and finally of the failure

of the avant-garde intent to integrate art into the life

praxis. For Bürger, art has necessarily a "(relative) freedom"

vis-à-vis the praxis of life and if it was wholly absorbed

into life, it would "lose the capacity to criticize" social

and cultural reality.459 Hence his pessimism and his

conclusion regarding the impossibility of anti-art "unless it

be a false sublation of autonomous art."460 Furthermore,

Bürger sees neo-avant-garde art as autonomous, advocating that

its anti-art intent and its manifestation in the historical

avant-garde are no longer authentic: even though the neo-

avant-garde may be more organized, more prepared and more

perfectly executed than the historical avant-garde, the

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458 M. C. Beardsley, Aesthetics from Classical Greece to
The Present: A Short History (Alabama: The University of
Alabama Press, 1966), p. 285.

459 Bürger, op. cit., p. 50.

460 Ibid., p. 54.

provocation and the protest of the neo-avant-garde (such as in happening) lose their initial impact of shock and even their legitimacy as anti-art. Thus, as Bürger maintains:

> In a changed context, the resumption of avant-gardiste intentions with the means of avant-gardism can no longer even have the limited effectiveness the historical avant-garde achieved . . .: the neo-avant-garde institutionalizes the avant-garde as art and thus negates genuinely avant-gardiste intentions. . . . It is the status of their products, not the consciousness artists have of their activity, that defines the social effect of works. Neo-avant-gardiste art is autonomous art in the full sense of the term, which means that it negates the avant-gardiste intention of returning art to the praxis of life. And the efforts to sublate art become artistic manifestations that, despite their producer's intentions, take on the character of works.461

However, as Schulte-Sasse alleges in his criticism of Bürger's argument, the assumption that "the avant-garde's intention of reintegrating art into life praxis cannot occur in bourgeois society" implies, like in Adorno's pessimism, "that history is determined solely by objective laws of development independent of human subjectivity" and that progress is impossible except for "change in a state of paralysis."462 Bürger's view presumes the "totality" of the art object and the 'transcendentalism' of the subject where the audience, as a "self-assured center," is related to art only "through meditation, reflecting its critical contents from a distance."463 For Schulte-Sasse, "art as a medium for

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461 Ibid., p. 58.

462 Schulte-Sasse, "Forward," Bürger, Theory of the Avant-Garde, op. cit., pp. xli-xlii.

463 Ibid., p. xlii.

working through and organizing particular experiences" cannot

be conceived on such a transcendental subject.464   This

assertion emphasizes the intersubjectivity of artistic

experience on which could be grounded the anti-art potential

of neo-avant-garde art and poststructuralist postmodernist

art:

> I believe, however, that avant-garde's attack on the
> institution of "art" so brilliantly analyzed by
> Burger has opened up possibilities of both analyzing
> and institutionalizing art as a model for new modes of
> interaction and as a "public sphere of production"
> for the understanding of experience.465

The "interaction" or the "public sphere," advocated by

Schulte-Sasse, which implies an interactivity between art and

audience, refers directly to the ethical value of the avant-

garde work proposed by Gottlieb. Gottlieb suggests that the

significance of the readymade lies in its the ethical value

which surpasses the "empty" aesthetic value by assuming

"physical, biological, and social" references.466   She

maintains that "the closer one looks at these modern

allegories, the more one finds to think about. There is great

sense in their nonsense. The same is true, to a lesser degree,

of some of their following."467:

> If these Neo-Dadaist activities are not art, what are
> they ? They are moral warnings and, even if they are not
> intended as ethical manifestations in the first place,

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464 Ibid., p. xliii.

465 Idem.

466 Gottlieb, Ibid., p. 353.

467 Ibid., p. 351.

but as mischievous acts, even then they would become moral warnings if somebody interpreted them in such a way. As moralities, they should be more valuable for human society than for art.468

Thus, the ethical value when it is related to the audience refers to the intersubjectivity which Schulte-Sasse considers as the potentiality of neo-avant-gardism. The ethical value defines what is communicated between the art and the audience. To be more precise, the provocative shocking devices are a "stimulus to change one's conduct of life,"469 that is, to change one's perceptual habit, so as to get rid of the stagnation of the fixed idea which is more "valuable for human society than [only] for art." In this regard, we can say that chance collage or the readymade, by agitating the distinctions between presentation and representation, reality and art, life and art, forces us to re-think the concepts of art and life. The same holds true for the environmental chance collage (happening), for the electronic readymade (video art), for the bleeding bull's head displayed in Paik's 1963 Wuppertal exhibition as well as for his "TV Bra for Living Sculpture". In this context, we can say that the ethical value of the work of the avant-garde tradition contributes to change human perception by emphasizing such non-art elements as life, audience and society, which were hitherto alienated from artistic activity, but are now at

468 Ibid., p. 354.

469 Bürger, op. cit., p. 80.

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once subject and object of the work in the intersubjective
perceptual experience.

Still we have to stress the fact that the stylistic
reformation operated by the aestheticist modernists and the
conservative postmodernists also helped and still helps to
change our perception. Yet what we are concerned with here is
the fixed notion of art at the expense of life. As we have
mentioned before, the Cubist collage was based on aesthetic
concerns and limited itself to a stylistic invention. By the
same token, Minimalist sculpture, while arousing a new
perceptual experience, was determined by the stylistic idioms
such as new scale, new structure, new ratio. Neo-
Expressionist painting in its 'New Wild', 'Bad Painting' and
'Transavantgarde' trends, even though it reflects a postmodern
sensibility such as pluralism and fragmentation, does so only
in terms of stylistic eclecticism. Here, collage elements are
used as aesthetically as in the Cubist collage. Compared to
these works, the main concern of happening and video art sheds
light on ethical value. As intermedia and in their art/life
indeterminacy, they try to accomplish the ideal of the
'symbiosis of art and ecology', thus cultivating more deeply
and more radically a new type of perception apt to change
one's behavior.

The emphasis on life and intersubjectivity and the
consequent importance of the audience both in the historical
avant-garde and in poststructuralist postmodernism parallel

modern philosophical thinking: both phenomenology and analytic

philosophy, the two main representatives of twentieth century

philosophy, are based not on the abstract and transcendental

metaphysical world like traditional philosophy, but on

concrete and physical human life.   In the phenomenologist's

reasoning, even the most objective and conceptual knowledge is

rooted in the concrete 'life-world' [Cf. "Lebenswelt" by

Husserl]; and in analytic philosophy, a meaning of a word is

dependent on the 'forms of life' of the individual and on the

community that uses the word [Cf. the "Use Theory" by

Wittgenstein].470 Life becomes the very matrix of

philosophical knowledge: in phenomenology, life is the

"essence of existence" and in analytic philosophy, life is the

"basis of the meaning of language."471

For philosophers such as Wittgenstein, ordinary language

is not a metaphysical system apart from life, it is a "human

activity rooted in a form of life and, therefore, an intimate

part of the world."   With Wittgenstein, "language enters the

world, that is, the human life."472 A similar view is held in

avant-garde art.   The avant-gardistes conceive art not as an

autonomous entity apart from life praxis, but as an 'ordinary

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470 L. M. Park, Phenomenology and Analytic Philosophy
(Seoul: Ilsogak, 1977), p. 62.

471 Ibid., p. 65.

472 B. R. Tilghman, But is it Art ?: the Value of Art and
Temptation of Theory (Oxford: Basil Blackwell Publisher
Limited, 1984), p. 116.

art', a human activity rooted in life, in the world and in society. As for phenomenology, the process of 'phenomenological reduction' to free the phenomenon "from all transphenomenal elements"473 is dependent on the 'life-world', "the totality of each man's lived experience."474 Merleau-Ponty's 'phenomenology of perception', based on the Husserlian life-world, can be paralleled to the aesthetic video experience to perceive intersubjectively.

Merleau-Ponty's view of perception rejects simultaneously the empiricist's and intellectualist's understanding of it. For him, the ability to perceive something is neither grounded in the Cartesian a priori reason nor in the Kantian transcendental understanding, both of which emphasize the activity of the conscious self of the "ego parlé."475 It does not correspond either to the process of perception described by the empiricists, a passive perception reflecting one's consciousness.476 For Merleau-Ponty, perception is an active process, an intersubjective activity between the object perceived and the percieving subject, which is the bodily experiencing self of the "ego-vécu."477 The 'ego-vécu' is the subject of our bodily self, which is the 'umbilical cord' of

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473 Beardsley, op. cit., p. 368.

474 Ibid., p. 373.

475 Park, op. cit., pp. 128-9.

476 Ibid., p. 128.

477 Ibid., p. 131.

perception478: when the ego-vécu faces the object there occurs a dynamic called "expression" through which the body develops the initial, discursive sense into "sens" (meaning).479 In short, for Merleau-Ponty, perception is not only the source of knowledge, it is also defined by the dialectical intersubjective relation between the subject and the object. Thus, the object is not a given a priori, but exists as a signified object to be experienced and interpreted by the body of the ego-vécu.

We saw a similar play of intersubjectivity in the scientific studies such as neurobiology, organization theory and cognitive psychology. It was also found in the Grammatology of Derrida, which, while claiming that writing should be independent of speech, upset the traditional hierarchy of senses by recognizing the precedence of the chemical tactile senses over vision.

Postmodernist art parallels such philosophical thinking and such scientific research that confirm the importance of life and intersubjectivity. This art is concerned with problems of communication between art and audience, and between high art and popular art. Nam June Paik, as an heir of the avant-garde tradition and as a practitioner of postmodernism, approaches these problems by exploring participation-performance and participation-TV, the ethical

478 Ibid., p. 132.

479 Ibid., pp. 132-3.

value of which would speak for the evaluation of his artistic

activities. Among these activities, his selection of the TV

set as an artistic readymade and the appropriation of TV and

video technologies in the context of art must be appreciated

in relation to the ethical value, because television, as

Arthur Kroker and David Cook maintain, is the most "Real

World--the excremental vision par excellence--of postmodern

culture, society and economy in radical decline."480 Let us

conclude on this passage where the two authors expand their

argument:

> TV is the real world of postmodern culture which has
> 'entertainment' as its ideology, the 'spectacle' as the
> emblematic sign of the commodity-form, 'lifestyle
> advertising' as its popular psychology, pure, empty
> 'seriality' as the bond which unites the simulacrum of
> the audience, 'electronic images' as its most dynamic,
> and only, form of social cohesion, 'elite media
> politics' as its ideological formula, the buying and
> selling of 'abstracted attention' as the locus of its
> marketplace rationale, 'cynicism' as its dominant
> cultural sign, and the diffusion of a 'network of
> relational power' as its real product.481

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480 A. Kroker, D. Cook, The Postmodern Scene: Excremental
Culture and Hyper-Aesthetics (Montreal: New World Perspective,
1986), p. 5.

481 Ibid., p. 270.

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APPENDIX

NAM JUNE PAIK'S ART AND LIFE

1932   born in Seoul, Korea

1949   left for Hongkong, attended the Royden School

1950   moved to Tokyo, enrolled in the University of Tokyo

1956   moved to Munich via Calcutta and Cairo, studied at
         the University of Munich and at the Conservatory of
         Music in Freiburg

1958   -met John Cage in the International Summer Course for
         New Music in Darmstadt
         -settled in Cologne, enrolled in the University of
         Cologne

1959   performance:

         "Hommage à John Cage: Music for Tape Recorder and
         Piano" (première), Jean-Pierre Wilhelm's Galerie 22,
         Düsseldorf (November 13)

1960   performance:

         "Etude for Pianoforte" (première), Mary
         Bauermeister's Atelier, Cologne (October 6)

1961   -performances:

         various pieces in "Simultan," Galerie Laulus, Cologne
         (June)

         "Read Music-'Do It Yourself'-Answers to La Monte
         Young," "Simple" (all premières), in "Action Music,"
         Liljevalchs Konsthall, Stockholm (Sept.18), also

performed in Oslo, and Copenhagen (Sept.27)

"Zen for Head," "Etude Platonique No.3" (all
premières), in Stockhausen's "Originale,"
Theatre am Dom, Cologne (Oct. 26)

-met Maciunas
-collaborated with Wolf Vostell in the Decollage
(untill 1964)

1962   -performances:

"One for Violin Solo," "Sonata Quasi Una Fantasia,"
"Smile Gently(Etude Platonique No.5)." "Bagatelles
Americans" (all premières), in "Neo-Dada in der
Music," Kammerspiele, Düsseldorf (June 16)

"Simple" (1961), in "Fluxus International Festival:
New Music," Horsall Stadtischen Museums, Wiesbaden
(Sept.1-23)

"Serenade for Alison"(with Alison Knowles,
première), "Moving Theatre No.1" (street
performance with E.Williams, première), in
"Parallel Events of New Music," Kunsthandel
Monet, Amsterdam

"Music for the Long Road" (secret performance by A.
Knowles, première), Copenhagen

"Music for High Tower and Without Audience" (secret
performance by A. Knowles, première), Eiffel Tower,
Paris

various pieces in "Festum Fluxorum Fluxus,"
Copenhagen (Nov.23-28)

-group exhibitions:

"Music Notation," Minami Gallery, Tokyo

"Notations," Galleria La Salita, Rome

1963   -performances:

"Prelude in D-minor," "Fluxus Champion Contest" (all
premières), in "Festum Fluxorum Fluxus," Staatliche
kunstakademie, Düsseldorf (Feb2-March 3)

"Piano for All Senses" (première), Amstel 47,
Amsterdam (June 22)

various pieces in "Fluxus Festival of Total Art,"
Nizz (July 25-Aug.3)

-solo exhibition:

"Exposition of Music: Electronic Television" (the
(his) first video exhibition), Galerie Parnass,
Wuppertal (from March 11)

1963-4   traveled in Japan, performed, met Hideo Uchida and
Shuya Abe, the electronics experts

1964   performances:

"Prelude in E-flat Major" (1961), "Hommage à John
Cage" (1959), "Etude for Pianoforte" (1960), "Simple"
(1961), Sogetsukaikan Hall,Sogetzu Art
Center, Tokyo (March 29)

secret performance with Lieberman, Waikiki Beach,
Honolulu

"One for Violin Solo" (1962, performed by
G.Maciunas), "Zen for Film," "Street Composition to
be Unveiled," in "Fluxus Concerts," Canal Street, New
York (April 11-May 23)

various pieces in "Fluxus Concert," Carnegie Recital
Hall, New York (June 27)

various pieces in "Fluxus-a Little Festival of New
Music," Goldsmith's College, London SE 14, University
of London, London (July 6)

"Robert Opera" (performed with Moorman, première),
"Robot K-456" (constructed with Abe in Japan), as
part of Stockhausen's "Originale," in the "Second
Annual New York Avant-Garde Festival," Judson Hall,
New York (Aug.30-Sept.8)

"Pop Sonata" (première), Philadelphia College of Art
(October)

performed for A. Knowles's "Assorted Night Riders,"
in "Monday Night Letter" Series, Café à Go-Go,
New York (November)

various pieces in Rose Art Museum, Brandeis
University, Massachusetts

1965   -solo exhibition:

"Nam June Paik: Electronic TV, Color TV
Experiments, 3 robots, 2 Zen Boxes & 1 Zen Can" (his
first one-man exhibition in America), Wollman Hall,
the New School for Social Research, New York (from
January 8); performed "Cello Sonata No. 1" (by
Moorman, première)

-performances:

"Variation on a Theme of Saint-Saëns" (with Moorman,
première), in "Concert," Philadelphia College of Art
(Feb. 26)

various pieces with Moorman in "Musica Nova,"
Reykjavik, Iceland

various pieces in "Festival de la Libre Expression,"
American Artists Center, Paris

"Cello Sonata No.1 for Adults Only," Galerie Zwirner,
Cologne

various pieces in Studenhaus, University of Frankfurt

various pieces in Technische Hochschule, Aachen

"Robot K-456" in "24 Stunden," Galerie Parnass,
Wuppertal (June 5-6)

"Robot Opera," in a "Sixth Soirée," in "Seventh
Soiree," Galerie Rene Block, West Berlin (June 14)

-returned to New York in August
-purchased newly invented portapack system in October,
-and showed his first videotape (scenes from Pope Paul
 VI's visit to New York), cafe a Go-Go, New York (Oct.
 4, 11); performed John Cage's "26'1.1499" for a
 String Player"
-received a grant from the JDR 3rd that would support
 his experiment with video medium

-performances:

"Variations on a Theme by Saint-Saëns," in the "Third
Annual New York Avant-Garde Festival", Judson Hall,
New York (Aug.25-Sept.11)

"Videotape Essay No.1," "Zen for Film", "Variation on
a Theme of Robert Breer"(première) (Nov.2), in the
"New Cinema Festival 1," New York (November)

-solo exhibition:

"Electronic Art" (his first videotape recorder
installation), Galeria Bonino, New York (November-
December)

1966   -performances:

various pieces with Moorman in "Avant-Garde Music,"
Philadelphia College of Art, Times auditorium,
Philadelphia (March 13)

various pieces with Kosugi in "Toward a More Sensible
Boredom," April 21, Filmmakers Cinematique

performed Cage's "26'1.1499" for a String Player" in
a "Gondola Happening," Ponte Rialto, Venice (June 18)

   various pieces, Libreria Feltrinelli, Rome

"Variations on a Theme by Saint-Saëns," Galerie
Zwirner, Cologne

"As Boring As Possible" (première), Forum Theatre and
Galerie Rene Block, West Berlin, and also performed
for Erik Satie's "Vexations"

"Opera Sextronique" (première), "As Boring As
Possible," "Simple," "Johann Sebastian Bussotti,"
Techische Hochschule, Aachen

various pieces in Frankfurt (Studio Galerie,
Goethe Universitat), in Düsseldorf (Staaliche
Kunstakademie), in Stockholm (Pistol Teatern,
September)

"Variations on a Theme by Saint-Saëns," "Cello Sonata
No.1 for Adults Only," "Etude Platonique No.3,"
Galerie Parree, Galerie 101, Copenhagen (Sept. 30)

various pieces in "Eastern U.S. Physicists
Conference," Museum of Art, Rhode Island School of
Design, Providence

"Johann Sebastian Bussotti" (with Malcolm Goldstein),
in "Continuous Performances of New Musi:," Kirkland
House Music Society, Harvard University, Cambridge,
Massachusetts

-group exhibitions:

"Vision of the Today" held as part of the "Art and
Technology Symposium of Fylkingen," Museum of

Technology, Stockholm (September); premiered "TV Cross"

"Programed Art," Museum of Art, Rhode Island School of Design, Providence

"Art Turns On," Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston

-<u>videotapes</u>:

"Dieter Rot on Street" (black and white)

"Variations on Johnny Carson vs. Charlotte Moorman" (black and white)

1967   -<u>returned to New York</u> in January

-<u>performances</u>:

"Opera Sextronique," Philadelphia College of Art (January)

"Opera Sextronique" (performance interrupted by New York City Police Department), Filmmakers Cinematique, New York (Feb.9)

"Variations No. 2 on a Theme of Saint-Saëns" (by Moorman) in "The Merv Griffin Show" (WNET-TV, New York)

various pieces with Moorman, Black gate Theatre, New York

"Amelia Earhart in Memorium" (première), "Cheque or Money Order" (première), in the "Fifth Annual New York Avant-Garde Festival," Staten Island Ferry (Sept. 29-30)

"Cutting My Arm" (première) in "Twelve Evenings of Manipulation," Judson Gallery, New York (Oct. 5)

-<u>group exhibitions</u>:

"Festival of Light," Howard Wise Gallery, New York

"Light Orbit," Howard Wise Gallery, New York

"The Artist as Filmmaker," The Jewish Museum of Art, New York

"Light, Motion, Space," Walker Art Center, Minneapolis

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"Conce: t Fluxus," Galleria la Bertesca, Genova (June)

"Fifth Annual New York Avant-Garde Festival,"
Staten Island Ferry (Sept. 29-30); presented
'Electronic Television," "Video Tape Study"

-artist-in-residence, invited by Alan kaprow,
State University of new York, Stony Brook,
Long Island

-solo exhibition:

"Nam June Paik," Stony Prook Art Gallery, State
University of New York, College at Stony Brook

-granted from the Rockfeller Foundation for his video
research

-videotape:

"Variation on George Ball on Meet the Press" (black
and white)

1968   -performances:

various pieces in "Intermedia 68: Mixed Media Opera,"
State University of New York, College at New Paltz,
Rockland Community College, MOMA, and other
locations in New York (Feb.16-April 12)

various pieces in the program "Action Music" in
"Spring Festival," Wilson Auditorium, University of
Cincinnati

"One for Radio" (première), "Cutting My Arm," in
"Dias USA 1968-Destruction in Art Symposium," Judson
Gallery, New York (March 22)

various pieces in "The Destruction Art Group 1968
Presents," Judson Gallery, New York (May 10-18)

"Arias No. III and IV from Opera Sextronique,"
"Variations on a Theme by Robert Breer," "Variations
No.2 on a Theme by Saint-Saëns," in "Mixed Media
Opera," Town Hall, New York (June 10)

"Opera Sextronique," Lidelraum, Düsseldorf

-solo exhibition:

"Electronic Art II," Galeria Bonino, New York (from

April 17)

<u>-group exhibitions</u>:

"Sammlung Hahn" (Wolfgang Hahn Collection), Wallraf-
Richrtz-Museum, Cologne

"Cybernetic Serendipity: The Computer and the Arts,"
Institute of Contemporary Arts, London, The Corcoran
Gallery of Art, Washington D.C., Palace of Art and
Science, San Francisco

"The Machine: As Seen at the End of the Mechanical
Age," The Museum of Modern Art, New York

"Art in Edition: New Approaches," Pratt Center for
Contemporary Printmaking and New York University,
New York

1969   <u>-artist-in-residence</u>, the Experimental Workshop at
WGBH-TV, Boston

<u>-videotapes</u>:

"Electronic opera No. 1" (color, 5 minutes) as
part of the program of WGBH-TV, "The Medium is the
Medium" produced by Fred Barzyk

"Experiment with David Atwood" (color) at WGBH-TV,
Boston

<u>-group exhibitions</u>:

"TV as a Creative Medium" (the first video group
exhibition in America), Howard Wise Gallery, New
York (from May 17); <u>performed</u> "TV Bra for Living
Sculpture" (première)

"Electronic Art," Art Gallery, University of
California, Los Angeles

"New Ideas, New Materials," The Detroit Institute of
Art

"Electronic Art," UCLA Gallery, Los Angeles

"Art by Telephone," Museum of Contemporary Art,
Chicago; <u>performed</u> "Piano Sonata" (première),
"Variations on a Theme by Saint-Saëns"

<u>-performances</u>:

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"Fish Sonata" (première) in the "Seventh Annual New York Avant-Garde Festival," Wards Island and Mill Rock Island, New York (Sept.28-Oct.4)

"Action for René Block" (première), Galerie Rene Block, West Berlin

1970   -established Paik-Abe Video Synthesizer in the studio of WGBH-TV, Boston

-videotapes:

"Video Commune" (color, 4 hours of live telecast) for station WGBH

"Electronic Opera No. 2" (color, 7.5 minutes) as part of the program of WGBH "Video Variations" hosted by Russell Corner

-group exhibitions:

"Vision and Television" (the first video group exhibition in museum), Rose Art Museum, Brandeis University, Waltham, Massachusetts; performed "TV Bra for Living Sculpture"

"Happening & Fluxus," Koelnischer Kunstverein, Cologne (October)

1971   -solo exhibitions:

"Hit and Run Screening of Video Films" (films made with Jud Yalkut), Rizzoli Screening Room, New York

"Electronic Art III," Galeria Bonino, New York (from Nov. 23); performed "Concerto for TV Cello and Videotapes" (première), "Paik-Abe Video Synthesizer" (Première), "TV Glasses" (première)

"Video Film Concert" (films made in collaboration with Jud Yalkut), Millennium Film Workshop, New York

"Cineprobe" (Films made with Yalkut), The Museum of Modern Art, New York

-group exhibitions:

"Sonsbeek 71: Sonsbeek Buiten de Perken," Arnheim, Holland

"Eighth Annual New York Avant-Garde Festival," 69th

Infantry Regiment Armory, New York

"St. Jude Video International," De Saisset Art
Gallery and Museum, University of Santa Clara,
California

"Video Show," the first of the New American
Filmmakers Series, Whitney Museum of American Art,
New York

-artist-in-residence, TV Lab (directed by David
Loxton), WNET-TV, Channel 13, New York

-videotape:

"Paik-Abe Synthesizer with Charlotte Moorman" (color,
30 minutes), WNET-TV Workshop

1972   -performances:

various pieces in "Musica Nova", Bremen

"Concerto for TV Cello and Videotapes," "TV Bra for
Living Sculpture," in "Experimental Television
Center, Binghamton, New York", Everson Museum of Art,
Syracuse

"TV Penis" (première), "TV Bed" (première), in "Live
Video," The Kitchen, Mercer Art Center, New York
(June 29)

"TV Bed" in the "Ninth Annual New York Avant-Garde
Festival," New York Harbor aboard the Alexander
Hamilton (the "Riverboat" show), South Street
Seaport Museum, New York

-group exhibition:

"Twelfth Annual October St. Jude International:
Videotapes," Everson Museum of Art, Syracuse, New
York

-solo exhibition:

"Video Film Concert" (films made with Yalkut),
Millennium Workshop, new york; presented "Videotape
Study No. 3," "Cinema Metaphisique Nos. 1-5,"
"Electronic Moon No.2"

-videotapes:

"The Selling of New York" (color, 7.5 minutes, later

incorporated into Suite 212, 1975), WNET-TV, New York

"Waiting for Commercial" (color), WNET-TV, New York

1973   -performances:

various pieces with Moorman and Yoshi Wada Band, The
kitchen, Mercer Arts Center, New York

various pieces in "Concerto for Piano and Cello,"
Smith Music Hall, University of Illinois, Campaign-
Urbana

"Fluxus Sonata I" (première),"Fluxus Games," 80
Wooster Street, New York

various pieces in "The Television Show," WNEt-TV, New
York (May)

"TV Bra for Living Sculpture," Wesleyan University,
Middletown, Connecticut (Sept. 15)

"Train Cello" (by Moorman, première), "Concerto for
TV Cello and Videotapes," "TV Bra for Living
Sculpture," in the "Tenth Annual New York Avant-Garde
Festival," Grand Central Station, New York (Dec. 9)

-group exhibitions:

"Circuit: A Video International," Everson Museum of
Art, Syracuse

"New York Collection for Stockholm," Moderna Museet,
Stockholm

"Cremer Collection-European Avant-Garde, 1950-1970,"
Kunsthalle, Tubingen

-solo exhibitions:
"Electronic Video (Intermedia Presents a New
Experiment by Nam June Paik)," The Kitchen, Mercer
Arts Center, New York

"Videotapes from the Perpetual Pioneer of Video
Art," The Kitchen, Mercer Arts Center, New York

-videotapes:

"A Tribute to John Cage" (color, 60 minutes, revised
in 1976 as 30 minutes), WGBH-TV, Boston (broadcasted
in 1974 on WGBH)

"Global Groove" (color, 30 minutes), WNET-TV, New
York (first broadcasted in January 1974 on WNET)

1974   -solo exhibitions:

"Nam June Paik: Videa 'n' Videology 1959-1973"
(his first videotape retrospective in America),
Everson Museum of Art, Syracuse

"Electronic Art IV," Galeria Bonino, New York (from
Jan. 15); presented "TV Sea," "TV Garden"

-group exhibitions:

"Open Circuit: The Future of Television," The Museum
of Modern Art, New York

"Projekt 74: Aspekte Internationaler Kunst am Anfang
der 70er Jahre," Kunsthalle Koln, Kolnischer
Kunstverein, Cologne

"EXPRMNTL 5: International Film Festival,"
Knokke-Heist, Belgium; presented "Triangle Buddha"

"Art Now '74: A Celebration of the American Arts,"
John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts,
Washington, D.C.

"Eleventh Annual New York Avant-Garde Festival," Shea
Atadium, Flushing, New York (Nov. 16)

participated in the Program of Videotapes, Anthology
Film Archive, New york (November); performed Fluxus
Sonata (première) (Nov. 17)

-performance:

"Sans Video: Music for Merce Cunningham" (with the
Merce Cunningham Dance Company), Westbeth, New
York

1975   -solo exhibitions:

"Nam June Paik," Gallery Rene Block, New
York (February); presented "Paper TV," "TV Buddha"

"Fish on the Sky - fish hardly flies anymore - let
fishes fly again," Martha Jackson Gallery, New York

-group exhibitions:

"Video Art," the Institute of Contemporary Art,

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University of Pennsylvania, philadelphia, Chicago Art
Institute; presented "TV Garden"

"Arte de Video," Museo de Arte Contemporaneo, Caracas

"Illuminous Realities," Wright State University,
Dayton, Ohio

"Selections from the Collection of Dorothy and
Herbert Vogel," The Clock Tower, New York

"The Museum of Drawers," Kunsthuas, Zurich

"Video Art USA," XIII Bienal de Sao Paulo

"Art Transition," Center for Advanced Visual Studies,
Massachusetts, Institute of Technology, Cambridge;
<u>performed</u> "Concerto for TV Cello and Videotapes"

"Objekte und Konzerte zur Visuellen Musik der 60er
Jahre," Stadtische Kunsthalle, Düsseldorf; <u>performed</u>
"TV Bra for Living Sculpture," "Opera Sextronique,"
"Variation on a Theme by Saint-Saëns," "Zen Smiles"

-<u>performances</u>:

"TV Bra for Living Sculpture," "Concerto for TV Cello
and Videotapes," in "Benefit for the Once Gallery,"
Martha Jackson Gallery, New York

"Fluxus Harpsichord Concert," Anthology Film Archive,
New York (May 5)

"Violin to be dragged on the Street"(1961-1975), in
the "Twelfth Annual New York Avant-Garde Festival,"
Floyd Bennette Field, Brooklyn, New York (Sept. 27)

-<u>videotapes</u>:

"Suite 212" (color, 150 minutes, revised in 1977 as
30 minutes, incorporated "The Selling of New York"
(1972)), WNET, New York

"Nam June Paik: Edited for Television" (color and
black and white, 29 minutes), WNET, New York

1976   -<u>performances</u>:

"Revolving Stage," organized by Jean Dupuy, Judson
Memorial Church, New york (Jan. 9)

various pieces with Moorman in "Adelaide Festival of

the arts," Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaire
conducted a "Fluxus Tour" of Soho (May)

"TV Bra for Living Sculpture" for the shooting of
Guadalcanal Requiem, King George School, Guadalcanal,
Solomon Island

-group exhibitions:

"The River: Images of the Mississippi," Walker Art
Center, Minneapolis

"Monumente durch Medien ersetzen . . . ," Kunst und
Museumsverein, Wuppertal

"SoHo Quadrat," Akademie der Kunste, West Berlin
(September); performed at the piano (Sept.5)

"Dodsringet," Svend Hansen, Charlottenborg, Denmark

-solo exhibitions:

"Fish Flies on Sky," Galeria Bonino, New York (Jan.-
Feb.); performed "TV Bra for Living Sculpture"
(February)

"Moon is the Oldest TV," Gallery Rene Block, New York

"Video Film Concert" (films made with Yalkut), The
Kitchen, New York

"Nam June Paik: Werke 1946-1976, Musik-Fluxus-Video,"
Kolnischer, Kunstverein, Cologne (Dec. '76-Jan. '77,
traveled to Stedelijik Museum, Amsterdam); presented
"Rembrandt Automatic" (1963), "Video Fish" (1975-77),
"TV Buddha," "TV Rodin"; performed various works with
Moorman

-"A Tribute to Nam June Paik" (videotape) produced
in collaboration of Gallery René Block, Galeria
Bonino, and WNET-TV

1977   -performances:

"Opera Sextronique," "Guadalcanal Requiem," in "From
Jail to Jungle," Carnegie Hall, New York (Feb. 10)

various pieces in a group performance, Anthology Film
Archives (May)

performed Joseph Beuys' "Infiltration-Hommage fur

Cello," Town Hall, New York

-solo exhibitions:

"Fluxus Traffic," Galerie Rene Block, West Berlin
(February)

"Nam June Paik," Galerie Marika Malacoda, Geneva

"Projects: Nam June Paik," Museum of Modern Art, New
York

-group exhibitions:

"Documenta 6," Hessissche Rundfunk, Kassel (June);
presented "TV Garden"; performed for live satellite
broadcast with Douglas Davis and Joseph Beuys (June
24)

"1977 Biennial Exhibition," Whitney Museum of
American Art, New york

-participated in the CAYC Conference, Mexico City
-visiting professor at Hochschule fur Bildende Kunste
in Hamburg
-married to Japanese video artist, Shigeko Kubota in
New York

-videotape:

"Guadalcanal Requiem" (color, 50 minutes, revised
1979 as 29 minutes), WNET, New York

1978   -professor, Staatliche Kunstakademie in Düsseldorf

-solo exhibitions:

"A Tribute to John Cage," Gallery Watari, Tokyo

"TV Garden," Musée d'Art Moderne, Centre National
d'Art et de Culture George Pompidou, Paris

"Nam June Paik," Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de
Paris, Paris; performed "Concerto for Cello and
Videotapes," "TV Bra for Living Sculpture"

-performance:

"Piano Duet in Memoriam to George Maciunas"
(premiere, with Beuys), Staatliche Kunstakademie,
Dusseldorf (July 7)

-_videotapes_:

"Merce by Merce by Paik" (color, Part 1: Blue Studio: Five Segments, 30 minutes, Part II: Merce and Marcel, 30 minutes), WENT, New York

"Media Shuttle: Moscow/New York" (color and black and white, 30 minutes), WNET

"You Can't Lick Stamps in China" (color, 30 minutes), as part of the "Visa" series of the WNET-TV Lab and the Cable Arts Foundatio

-_terminated_ his formal association with the WNET-TV Lab

1979   -_group exhibition_:

"Sammlung Hahn" (Wolfgang Han Collection in Cologne acquired his important early pieces), Museum Moerner Kunst, Vienna

-_performance_:

"Duett Paik/Takis" (with Takis, premiere), Kolnischer Kunstverein, Cologne

1980   -_videotape_:

"Lake Placid '80" (color, 4 minutes, commissioned from the National Fine Arts Committee of the XIII Winter Olympic Games)

-_performances_:

"One for Violin Solo," "Variations on a Theme by Saint-Saëns," "Video Sonata (with Emie Gusella, premiere), in the "Intermedia Arts Festival," The Solomon Guggenheim Museum, New York

"Concerto for Cello and Videotapes," "Variations on a Theme by Saint-Saens," "Sinfonie No. 6" (1972-1980, conducted by Moorman, premiere), in "Musik der Zeit I: Begegnung mit Korea," WDR-Westdeutsche Rundfunk, Funkhaus, Cologne

-_group exhibitions_:

"Fur Augen und Ohren" ("For Eyes and Ears"), Akademie der Kunste, West Berlin

"Treffpunkt Parnass 1949-1965," Von der Heyde-

Museum, Wuppertal

"Mein Kolner Dom," with "Der Dom als Medium" ("The Cathedral as Medium"), Kolnischer Kunstverein, Cologne

-solo exhibitions:

"Nam June Paik" (retrospective of videotapes), The New American Filmmakers Series, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York

"Videa," Gallery Watari, Tokyo

"Laser Video" (with Horst Baumann), Stadtische Kunsthalle, Düsseldorf

1981   -group exhibitions:

"Partitur," Gelbe Musik, West Berlin

"1981 Biennial Exhibition," Whitney Museum of American Art, New York

"Westkunst," Musee der Stadt Koln, Cologne; presented "Robot," "The Moon is the Oldest TV"

"Ein Klein Dussel Village Video," Kunstakademie, Düsseldorf

-solo exhibitions:

held a program of videotapes, Sony Hall, Tokyo

"Random Access/Paper TV," Gallery Watari, Tokyo

"Laser Video" (with Horst Baumann), Die Nutzliche Kunste, West Berlin (traveled to Neue Berliner Kunstverein)

"Autobiography in P--," Tokyo

-performances:

"Life's Ambition Realized" (with Denise Gordon, première), in the "Tenth Anniversary Concert for the Kitchen," The Kitchen Center for Video, Music and Dance, New York

"A Tribute to Gregory Battcock," Anthology Film Archive, New York

-honored with the Willi Grohmann Prize given by the
Akademie der kunste in Berlin
-received a DAAD Fellowship to work in Berlin

1982   -solo exhibitions:

"Nam June Paik," Whitney Museum of American Art, New
York (April 30-June 27), traveled to Museum of
Contemporary Art, Chicago, Illinois

"Tri-Color Vidéo," Centre George Pompidou, Musée
National d'Art Moderne Paris

-group exhibitions:

"Videokunst in Deutschland 1963-1982," Kolnischer
Kunstverein, Cologne

"'60'80 Attitudes/Concepts/Images," Stedelijk Museum,
Amsterdam

"Korean-American Sensibility," Korean Cultural
Service, New York; presented a videotape "Allan and
Allen's Complaint"

-videotape:

"Allan & Allen's Complaint" (color, 30 minutes)

1983   -group exhibitions:

"From Minimalism to Expressionism," Whitney Museum of
American Art, New York

participated in an exhibition held in Carl Solway
Gallery, Cincinnati, Ohio

1984   -satellite broadcast:
"Good Morning Mr. Orwell," linking New York, Paris,
Berlin, Seoul (Jan. 1); live performances of Laurie
Anderson, Joseph Beuys, John Cage, Merce Cunningham,
Allen Ginsberg, Philip Glass and others (the first of
his trilogy of sa⌐ llite project)

-solo exhibitions:

"Mostly Video," Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum, Japan

"Tribute to Marshall McLuhan," Galerie Esperanza,
Montréal

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-group exhibitions:

"Content," Hirshhorn Museum and Sculture Garden,
Washington, D.C.

"XLI Exposizione Internationale la Biennale di
Venezia," Venice

"Art and Time," Brussels

"Multiples und Objekte aus der Sammlung Ute und
Michal Berger," Museum Wiesbaden Kunstsammlungen,
Wiesbaden (July 2-Dec. 8)

"Von Hier Aus," Düsseldorf

participated in a show held in Stedelijik Museum,
Amsterdam

participated in a joint exhibition with Joseph
Beuys sponsored by the Seibu Museum, Galerie
Watari, Tokyo

1985   -solo exhibition:

"Nam June Paik: Family of Robot," Carl Solway
Gallery, Chicago International Art Exposition,
Chicago

-group exhibition:

"Bienal International de Sao Paulo," Sao Paulo,
Brazil

"Biennale des Friedens" ("Peace Biennale"), Kunsthaus
und Kunstverein, Hamburg (Dec.1 '85-Jan.12 '86);
performed various pieces

1986   -group exhibitions:
"American Icons: Selections from the Chase Manhattan
Collection," Bruce Museum, Greenwich, Connecticut;
Heckscher Museum, Huntington, New York; The Robertson
Center for Arts and Sciences, Binghamton, New York

"The Freedman Gallery: The First Decade," Freedman
Gallery, Reading, Pennsylvania

"Toys as Art," First Street Forum, St. Louis,
Missouri

"Chicago International Art Exposition", Chicago

-satellite broadcast:

"Bye Bye Kipling" linking Seoul, Tokyo and New
York (Oct. 3); hosted by Dick Cavett, featuring
Philip Glass, Lou Reed, Kieth Haring, Issey Miyake,
Arata Isozaki (the second satellite project)

-solo exhibitions:

"Nam June Paik: Sculpture, Painting and Laser
Photography," Holly Solomon Gallery, New York (Sept.
24-Oct. 25)

"Nam June Paik, Bye Bye Kipling," Gallery Watari,
Tokyo

-received three awards during the year: Franklin
Furnace "Artie" Award, American Film Institute Award,
and New York State Governor's Award

1987   -group exhibitions:

"ARCO '87," Madrid

"Documenta 8," Kassel; presented "Beuys/Boice"

"Art LA '87: Contemporary Korean Art," Jean Art
Gallery, Los Angeles

"Animal Art," Steirischer Herbst, Graz

"Skultur Projekte/Münster," Münster

"L'Epoque, La Mode, La Morale, la Passion," Centre
George Pompidou, Paris

"Currents: Eight Contemporary Artists, American's
Korean," Korean Cultural Service, Los Angeles

"Computers and Arts," Everson Art Museum, Syracuse,
New York

"1987 Biennial Exhibition," Whitney Museum of
American Art, New York

1988   -solo exhibitions:
"Nam June Paik: Color Bar Paintings," Holly Solomon
Gallery, New York

"TV Family," Hundai Gallery, Seoul (Sept. 14-30)

-group exhibitions:

"1988: The Wc d of Art Today," Milwaukee Art Museum, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

"Video Art: Exy nded Forms," Whitney Museum of American Art at Equitable Center, New York

"ARCO '88," Madrid

-installed "The Television Spiral Tower, (Dadaiksun)" for the permanent collection for the National Museum of Contemporary Art in Seoul, Korea

-satellite broadcast:

"Wrap Around the World," linking 10 countries including China and Soviet Union, co-produced by KBS in Seoul and WNET in New York (Sept. 10); hosted by Al Frankin and Tom Davis (the third and last broadcast of his satellite trilogy)