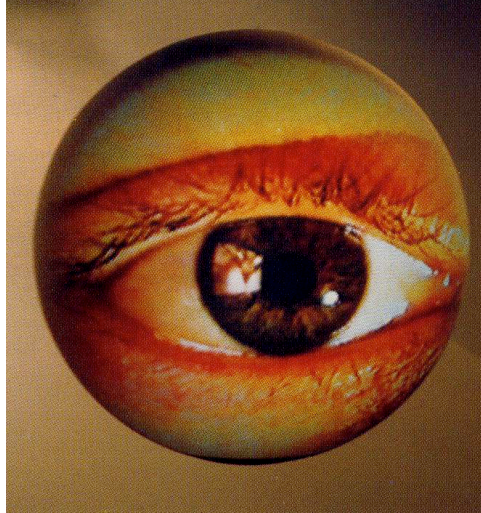


VIDEO ART AND THEORY

THIS IS A COMMUNICATION INTENSIVE CERTIFIED COURSE (CxC)



Tony Oursler, *No Skin*, 1996, video projected on fiberglass globe

*As collage technique replaced oil paint,
the cathode ray tube will replace the canvas.*

Nam June Paik 1973

Video art is time-based art and time-based art has a long history. In the 19th century some gallery goers viewed paintings at night by roaring torchlight in an effort to see images flicker and move. In the early 20th century, numerous European artists experimented with the new technology of film as a means to expand their work in painting and sculpture. But film was at first too costly and difficult for artists to produce and distribute. It was not until 1965 and the availability of the portable camcorder that visual artists on a broad scale (and in the context of conceptual and performance art trends) began to interrelate time, motion, sound, and image and developed a time-based art form distinct from the language of cinema.

About two thirds of the class focuses on the development of analog video art in the 1960s and 1970s. We explore the emergence of video projection in the 1980s and 1990s. In the last weeks of the course, we consider digitized video and video on the internet. The course will be chronological but proceed in terms of major topics that correspond to the historical themes of video art.

Class meets for 3 hours once a week.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

- 1) 3 short quizzes at intervals throughout the semester, the final quiz taking place during scheduled final exam time. Total 30% of final grade.
- 2) Each student creates an "Early Video Style," analog-style video that reflects themes and formal approaches of video artists of the late 1960s and early 1970s. Assigned and due early in the course. Videos are to be available for peer evaluation via class presentations and/or via the ART 4480 YouTube site. Total 20% of final grade.
- 3) Class participation and overall contribution to classroom activities 10% of final grade.
- 4) Major Video and Term paper. 40% of final grade.

Each student will prepare a video art work (3.5-7 minutes) that **comments clearly on some aspect of the history of video art**. The goal is to create something that utilizes and/or remixes a "moment" in the history of the genre (from the early 1960s through the early 2000s) *and* alludes to the theoretical underpinnings of that "moment." Students also prepare a draft essay that analyzes her/his own video in depth and describes how it elucidates its target subject in the history of video.

Both video and paper will be submitted first in draft form. Videos should be uploaded for class viewing and feedback via YouTube. Drafts will be handed for instructor's comments. After an open period of discussion/critique, each student will revise her/his video *and* revise their draft essay as a complete, expanded, and fully referenced paper (8 pages).

READINGS:

The course is reading intensive and materials are assigned on a weekly basis. Assigned readings are drawn from a variety of resources including books on Middleton reserve list, on line resources, and course text (below):

Course Text:

Meigh-Andrews, Chris. *A History of Video Art: The Development of Form and Function*. Oxford: Berg, 2006.

Recommended:

Illuminating Video: An Essential Guide to Video Art, Doug Hall and Sally Jo Fifer, eds., New York, Aperture in association with Bay Area Video Coalition (Berkeley, CA), 1990
THIS IS NO LONGER IN PRINT BUT USED COPIES CAN BE OBTAINED FROM AMAZON.com.

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE

Some adjustments may be made as the course progresses.

NOTE: ALL READINGS SHOULD BE DONE BEFORE THE CLASS WITH WHICH IT IS LISTED. WE WILL DISCUSS MANY OF THESE READINGS IN CLASS, ALONGSIDE THE VIDEOS, AND YOUR COMMENTS WILL COUNT TOWARD YOUR REQUIREMENT # 3 ABOVE.

AUG

1. 25 **Introduction:** Early 20thc. Artists' films as precedent for late 20th-century video art; a look at a video artist (Mary Lucier);
Film: Fernand Léger, *Ballet Mécanique*, 1924; Michael Snow, *Wavelength*, 1967; Mary Lucier video; Internet video: David Crawford, *Stop Motion Studies*, 2003 (http://artport.whitney.org/gatepages/artists/crawford/index_01.html)

Reading:

Meigh-Andrews, Chap. 4, pp. 71-88.

SEP

2. 1 **Theoretical and artistic context and context and characteristics** of video art.
Video: Dan Graham, *Performer/Audience/Mirror*, 1975

Readings:

Marshall McLuhan, Introduction, Chap. 1 (“The Medium is the Message”), and Chap. 2 (“Media Hot and Cold”), in *Understanding Media*, New York, McGraw Hill, 1964. [note: many later editions, page #s vary in some editions.

Walter Benjamin, “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction,” 1936, in *Illuminations*, trans. Hannah Arendt, New York, Schocken Books, 1968 (Middleton).

Gene Youngblood, *Expanded Cinema*, New York, Dutton, 1970:
Part One: “The Audience and the Myth of Entertainment” pp. 45-73 (Middleton).

Meigh-Andrews, Chap 1, pp. 5-18; also Chap. 6 pp. 101-110.

Recommended for students with no 4466 or 4468:

Barbara Haskell, *BLAM! The Explosion of Pop, Minimalism, and Performance*, pp. 15-59; 91-103 (Middleton)

3. 8 **Video and Narcissism**
Videos by Richard Serra and Nancy Holt, Joan Jonas, William Wegman, John Baldessari, Vito Acconci, and Paul McCarthy

Readings:

David Antin, "Video: The Distinctive Features of the Medium," pp. 147-166; and

Rosalind Krauss, "Video: The Aesthetics of Narcissism," pp. 179-191;

BOTH in: *Video Culture*, ed. John Hanhardt, Layton, Utah, Peregrine Smith, 1986 (Middleton).

Chris Hill, "Performing Video in the First Decade," *Video Data Bank Resources*, <http://www.vdb.org/resources/chrishill.html>

Over next two weeks:

Meigh-Andrews, pp. 149-150, and 158-161, and Conclusion 163-164

4. 15 **Video "Formalism":** What are the formal qualities of video?
Videos by Bruce Nauman, Charlemagne Palestine, Terry Fox, Gary Hill, Paul and Marlene Kos, Bill Viola

Readings:

Douglas Davis, "Time! Time! Time! The Context of Immediacy," from *The New Television: A Public/Private Art*, Douglas Davis and Alison Simmons, eds., Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1977. HANDOUT;

Bill Viola, "Notes" (1975); "Street Music" (1976) and "The Porcupine and the Car" (1981) from Viola, *Reasons for Knocking at an Empty House: Writings 1973-94*, Cambridge, MA, MIT Press, 1995 (Middleton)

Watch: Excerpt from Daniel Sandin, *How TV Works*, 1977, at <http://www.fondation-langlois.org/html/e/page.php?NumPage=461>

Recommended:

Vito Acconci, "Television, Furniture, and Sculpture: The Room with the American View," in *Illuminating Video*, pp. 125-134;

John G. Hanhardt, "Dé-collage/Collage: Notes Toward a Reexamination of the Origins of Video Art," in *Illuminating Video*, pp. 71-79.

5. 22 **Video Art and the Examination of Narrative:** Vito Acconci, *Red Tapes*, 1976 (excerpt)

“Early Video Style” videos presented in class.

Readings:

Robert Scholes, “Language, Narrative, and Anti-Narrative,” *Critical Inquiry* 7, 1 (Autumn 1980): 204- HANDOUT

See also: “Anti-Narrative” at

<http://narrative.georgetown.edu/wiki/index.php/Antinarrative>

6. 29 “Early Video Style” videos due; presentations to class

Also:

Quiz #1

OCT

7. 6 **Video and Difference in the 1970s**
Hermione Freed, Lynda Benglis, Julie Gustafson, Cara de Vito, Ilene Segelove, Nancy Angelo and Candice Compton

Readings:

Laura Mulvey, “Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema,” from *Art After Modernism: Rethinking Representation*, ed. Brian Wallis, New York, The New Museum of Contemporary Art with David R. Godine, 1984, pp. 361-373 ([Middleton Reserve](#))

Martha Gever, “Video Politics: Early Feminist Projects,” in *Cultures in Contention*, ed. Douglas Kahn and Diane Neumaier, Seattle, the Real Comet Press, 1985, pp. 92-101 ([pdf on Moodle](#))

Maria Troy, “I Say I Am: Feminist Performance Video in the ‘70s,” *Video Data Bank Resources*, <http://www.vdb.org/resources/isayiam.pdf>

Meigh-Andrews, Chap. 13, pp. 235-242.

8. 13 **Early Image Processing and Synthesizing**
Woody and Steina Vasulka, Skip Sweeney, Stephen Beck, Dan Sandin, Ernie Gusella, Peter Campus, Nam June Paik

Readings:

Stephen Beck, "Image Processing and Video Synthesis," from *Video Art: An Anthology*, ed. By Ira Schneider and Beryl Corot, New York, 1976, pp. 184-87 ([Book on Reserve in Middleton](#));

Lucinda Furlong, "Tracking Video Art: 'Image Processing as a Genre,'" from *Art Journal*, Fall 1985, pp. 233-237 ([Handout](#));

David Ross, "Nam June Paik's Videotapes," from *Nam June Paik*, ed. John G. Hanhardt, New York, Whitney Museum, 1982, ([Handout](#));

Yvonne Spielmann, "Video and Computer: The Aesthetics of Steina and Woody Vasulka" [2007], 8 pages at:
<http://www.fondation-langlois.org/html/e/page.php?NumPage=461>

Meigh-Andrews, Chap. 7, pp. 111-133, and p. 146

9. 20 **Video as Critique of Mass Media**

David Cort and Curtis Radcliffe, People's Video Theater, Richard Serra and Carlotta Fay Schoolman, Dara Birnbaum, Valie Export

Readings:

Guy Debord, Chaps. 1 and 2: "Separation Perfected" and "The Commodity as Spectacle" from: Debord, *The Society of the Spectacle*, New York, Zone Books, 1994 (originally published in French in Paris, 1967);

Hans Magnus Enzensberger, "Constituents of a Theory of the Media" (1974), *Video Culture: A Critical Investigation*, ed. by John G. Hanhardt, New York, 1986, pp. 96-123 ([On Middleton Reserve](#));

Deirdre Boyle, "A Brief History of American Documentary Video," from: *Illuminating Video: An Essential Guide to Video Art*, ed. By Doug Hall and Sally Jo Fifer, New York, Aperture, 1990, pp. 51-69;

Meigh-Andrews, Chap. 152-154; 170-174

10. 27 (!) **Video Art as Communications Media:** University Community Video; TVTV

Quiz #2

NOV

11. 3 **Video Art as Communications Media** (cont.)
Paper Tiger TV and Deep Dish Network; ALSO

Trends of the '80s and '90s: Single channel video—Sadie Benning, Marcel Odenbach, Edward Rankus

Readings:

Martha Gever, “Meet the Press: On Paper Tiger Television,” *Afterimage*, November 1983, (Handout);

Ernest Larson, “When the Crowd Rustles the Tiger Roars,” *College Art Journal*, pp. 73-76 (Handout);

Martha Rosler, “Video: Shedding the Utopian Moment,” from: *Illuminating Video: An Essential Guide to Video Art*, ed. By Doug Hall and Sally Jo Fifer, New York, Aperture, 1990

Fredric Jameson, “Surrealism Without the Unconscious” (1991) in D’Agostino and Tafler, eds., *Transmission: Towards a Post-Television Culture*, pp. 21-51

12. 10 **Trends of the '80s and '90s** (cont.)
Video installation and performance video--Gary Hill, Bill Viola, Matthew Barney

Major Video projects due: posted on YouTube Art 4480 class site.
Drafts of essays due in class.

Readings:

John Hanhardt, “Between Language and the Moving Image: The Art of Gary Hill,” from *Gary Hill*, Seattle, Univ. of Washington, 1994, pp. 61-67
Handout

Marc Mayer, “The Emergence of Video Projection,” from *Being and Time: The Emergence of Video Projection*, Buffalo, Albright-Knox, 1996, pp.28-32
Middleton Reserve

Meigh-Andrews, Chap. 14, pp. 243-260

13. 17 **Trends of the '90s-2000s:** Mainstream and Global video art--Shirin Neshat, Peggy Awesh, Ed Santos, Cory Arcangel, Kristin Lucas

Students receive Professor's evaluations of Final Project tapes & drafts.

14. 24

Digital Video I

Readings:

Meigh-Andrews, Chap. 15, pp. 261-276

DEC

15. 1

Digital Video II

EX 10

Final Exam (Quiz #3)

****Thu. Dec 10, 3-5 PM, 201 Design****