

# The Museum of Modern Art

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## VIDEO SPACES: EIGHT INSTALLATIONS

June 22 - September 12, 1995

A major exhibition that provides a survey of recent work produced by nine internationally acclaimed video artists opens at The Museum of Modern Art on June 22, 1995. Organized by Barbara London, Associate Curator, Department of Film and Video, **VIDEO SPACES: EIGHT INSTALLATIONS** features work by Judith Barry and Brad Miskell, Stan Douglas, Teiji Furuhashi, Gary Hill, Chris Marker, Marcel Odenbach, Tony Oursler, and Bill Viola. On view through September 12, the exhibition demonstrates how artists have released video from its traditional two-dimensional context by placing it in three-dimensional space.

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*HardCell* (1994), by frequent collaborators Judith Barry and Brad Miskell, uses high-tech detritus to warn against the current infatuation with

technology. Spilling from a battered wood crate, flickering and groaning computer components, wire, tubing, and "fleshy parts" resemble the remains of a cyborg or space creature that has just crash-landed. Disembodied messages and bits of computer code stream across computer screens in "conversation" with each other, blurring the distinction between mechanical and human.

Barry (b. 1954) received an M.A. in Communication Arts and Computer Graphics from the New York Institute of Technology, New York (1986). Miskell (b. 1957) is primarily known as a producer and dancer. Both artists currently live and work in New York.

In *Evening* (1994), Stan Douglas examines late 1960s American television, when stations became more concerned with the stardom of their anchors than with the substance of their newscasts. Three stations are represented by large video screens mounted side by side. Using archival clips, Douglas intercuts newsroom banter with nine developing news stories including the Vietnam War, the trial of the Chicago Seven, and the investigation of the murder of a local Black Panther leader. Douglas resides in Vancouver, Canada, where he was born (1960) and studied at Emily Carr College of Art.

The work of Japanese artist Teiji Furuhashi, *Lovers* (1994), involves the projection onto the black walls of a square room the life-size image of dancers in repetitive and familiar motion. Whispered, indistinguishable phrases and metallic "tings" make up the soundscape, while words of admonition float visually across the walls. Furuhashi was born in Kyoto (1960) and graduated from Kyoto University of Arts. In 1984 he cofounded Dumb Type, a collaborative, interdisciplinary performance group that performs internationally.

For *Inasmuch as It Is Always Already Taking Place* (1990), Gary Hill uses sixteen video rasters (monitors stripped of their outer casings) of various

proportions to display life-size parts of the body. By positioning an ear or an arched foot near a thumb or a belly, the disjointed configuration invites a meditation on each part. Although none of its segments are "still" (the continuous-loop video creates life-like movement), the installation has the quality of a still life. Born in California (1951), Hill was originally trained as a sculptor and began working in video in 1973.

French film and videomaker Chris Marker (b. 1921) creates a tower of five oversize monitors in his installation *Silent Movie* (1994-95). The black-and-white images on the screens resemble clips from silent movies; subtitles appear genuine but are fabrications, as are the film posters and glossy pinups tacked to adjacent walls. Marker creates a nostalgic anachronism by restricting his video and computer technology to the visual effects available to silent film directors. Known for his political documentaries, fiction, poetry, and essays, Marker's film *La Jetée* (1962) is considered a classic experimental film.

Marcel Odenbach's *Make a Fist in the Pocket* (1994) displays seven monitors arranged in a row at eye level. Each monitor depicts how, in 1968, the media from different countries portrayed their political revolutionaries. On the opposing wall, a large color video projection intercuts Odenbach's warm and exotic travelogue of Thailand with disturbing clips of recent German racial violence. Odenbach, born in 1953 in Cologne, West Germany, studied art history and architecture in Aachen, and has been working in video since the mid-1970s.

In *System for Dramatic Feedback* (1994), Tony Oursler endows doll-like effigies with androgynous human character by projecting video onto their bodies. The dolls portray a range of expressions, from poignant cries to murmurs of resignation, as a video-projected audience on the opposite wall

becomes silent witness to the emotional rituals. Currently living and working in Massachusetts and New York, Oursler (b. 1957) received a B.F.A. from the California Institute of the Arts, Valencia.

In the center of *Slowly Turning Narrative* (1992), Bill Viola places a twelve-foot panel -- mirrored on one side and blank on the other -- rapidly rotating on its vertical axis. Projected onto this spinning wall, an immense black-and-white face gazes fixedly. Another projection of various animated color images are simultaneously seen and shattered as they hit either the screen or the mirror. The overall impression is of a slowly turning mind absorbed with itself. Born in New York (1951), Viola received a B.F.A. from the Experimental Studios at the College of Visual and Performing Arts. He currently lives and works in California and is the featured artist in the American Pavilion at the Venice Biennale this year.

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**PUBLICATION**     *Video Spaces: Eight Installations*, by Barbara London, with an introduction by science fiction writer Samuel Delany. 80 pages. 41 color photographs, 35 black-and-white illustrations. Published by The Museum of Modern Art. Paperbound (\$22.50); distributed in the United States and Canada by Harry N. Abrams, Inc., New York, and outside the U.S. and Canada by Thames and Hudson, London; available in The MoMA Book Store.

**ARTISTS TALKS**     June 22, Stan Douglas; June 23, Teiji Furuhashi; June 29, Tony Oursler. 6:30 p.m. Tickets are \$5.00, students with valid i.d. and seniors free; available at the Lobby Information Desk, beginning at 5:30 p.m. on the evening of each talk. The Edward John Noble Education Center. 212/708-9781.

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For further information or photographic materials, contact Samantha Graham, Department of Public Information, 212/708-9752.