

# The Museum of Modern Art

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## CONSUMER TOOLS: PERSONAL VISIONS

September 5 - November 10, 1991

An exhibition of thirteen videotapes made since 1972 by artists using everyday consumer video equipment opens at The Museum of Modern Art on September 5, 1991. As a reaction to the highly polished stylization of commercial television, these artists have returned to making technically simple works to examine themselves and their environments. **CONSUMER TOOLS: PERSONAL VISIONS** is on view through November 10 in the Museum's third-floor video gallery.

When the portable video camera was put on the market in the mid-1960s, artists from many different disciplines began to explore a medium that was exclusively dominated by television. As video technology advanced with more flexible and precise hardware, many videomakers chose to use "high end" equipment. Recently, there has been a movement among artists to create videotapes that recall the energy and spirit of the first independently produced artists' tapes. Employing the children's video camera made by Fisher-Price, called pixel-vision, artists discovered a new system that makes black-and-white video images with a rough, unresolved quality. It provides artists with an inexpensive way to make diaristic works that reflect strong personal visions.

Among the videotapes featured in the exhibition are William Wegman's *Selected Works, Reel #3* (1972), in which the artist's Weimaraner, Man Ray,

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becomes his alter ego; Linda Montano's *Mitchell's Death* (1978), a poignant tape that laments the death of her former husband; and Shuntaro Tanikawa and Shuji Terayama's *Video Letter* (1982-83), which creates a new electronic genre featuring an exchange of video letters by the two friends. Also included in the program are George Kuchar's *Creeping Crimson* (1987), a portrait of the autumn he spent in New York to be with his hospitalized mother; and Sadie Benning's *A Place Called Lovely* (1991), a pixel-vision look at a woman's coming of age in contemporary America in an environment particularly hostile towards women.

**CONSUMER TOOLS: PERSONAL VISIONS** has been organized by Barbara London, assistant curator, Video, Department of Film, The Museum of Modern Art. The Museum's video programs are made possible by grants from the New York State Council on the Arts, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the MacArthur Foundation, with the additional support of the Sony Corporation of America.

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### Exhibition Schedule

#### PROGRAM I

Sundays, 12:00 p.m.; Tuesdays, 2:00 p.m.; Fridays, 4:00 p.m.

*Home Movies.* 1973. Vito Acconci. 32 min.

*Mitchell's Death.* 1978. Linda Montano. 22 min.

#### PROGRAM II

Sundays, 2:00 p.m.; Tuesdays, 4:00 p.m.; Saturdays, 12:00 p.m.

*About Media.* 1977. Tony Ramos. 25 min.

*Know Your Enemy.* 1990. Art Jones. 27 min.

#### PROGRAM III

Sundays, 4:00 p.m.; Tuesdays, 12:00 p.m.; Saturdays, 2:00 p.m.

*Video Girls and Video Songs for Navajo Sky.* 1973. Shigeko Kubota. 32 min.

*Shizue.* 1991. Emiko Tonooka. 23 min.

#### PROGRAM IV

Mondays, 12:00 p.m.; Thursdays, 2:00 p.m.; Saturdays, 4:00 p.m.

*Video Letter.* 1982-83. Shuntaro Tanikawa and Shuji Terayama. 75 min.

#### PROGRAM V

Mondays, 2:00 p.m.; Thursdays, 4:00 p.m.; Fridays, 12:00 p.m.

*Selected Works, Reel #3.* 1972. William Wegman. 20 min.

*Semiotics of the Kitchen.* 1975. Martha Rosler. 7 min.

*Direct Effect Public Service Announcements, Program #1.* 1990-91. C-00 Film Corp. and Direct Impact. 4 min.

*Sensible Shoes.* 1983. John Adams. 11 min.

*Elegy.* 1991. Joe Gibbons. 13 min.

#### PROGRAM VI

Mondays, 4:00 p.m.; Thursdays, 6:00 p.m.; Fridays, 2:00 p.m.

*Underscan.* 1974. Nancy Holt. 8 min.

*A Day in the Life of a Housewife.* 1977-78. Mako Idemitsu. 18 min.

*Creeping Crimson.* 1987. George Kuchar. 15 min.

*A Place Called Lovely.* 1991. Sadie Benning. 13 min.