

The Museum of Modern Art

For Immediate Release
August 1993

TRAP/bat

September 17 - November 9, 1993

A sculptural video installation by Pittsburgh-based artist John Sturgeon is on view at The Museum of Modern Art from September 17 through November 9, 1993. *TRAP/bat* is a result of Sturgeon's work with both *vérité* video production and manipulated imagery.

The viewer enters the exhibition through a narrow doorway and faces a large, bat-like mask. The installation space resembles a dark cave, complete with projected images of stalactites and stalagmites and close-ups of flying bats. This is combined with images of the New Mexico and Utah landscape and news footage of the Gulf War and the fall of the Berlin Wall. Slightly obscured is a mysterious upside-down still frame of the just-entered visitor. Sturgeon's digitally processed audiotrack consists of spoken texts that resonate with the vastness of the recording locations, one of which is an old brewery vat. Mixed in to this are the high-pitched cries of bats.

Sturgeon discusses *TRAP/bat* and screens a selection of recent videotapes as part of the **VIDEO VIEWPOINTS** program, on Monday, September 20, at 6:30 p.m.

Initially a studio artist, John Sturgeon began exploring video and performance art at Cornell University in the late 1960s. While living in southern California in the 1970s, he mastered consumer video technology and made a series of performance-based videotapes and installations. Fascinated by the expanse of the American desert, Sturgeon concentrated on the perception and representation of limitless space, and studied Native American and Mexican myths. He is now using the computer as a versatile, multimedia controlling

device. Sturgeon holds a B.F.A. from the University of Illinois (1968) and an M.F.A. from Cornell University (1970), both in painting. His video work has been exhibited throughout the world. Currently, Sturgeon is a professor of electronic art at Carnegie Mellon University.

TRAP/bat was organized by Barbara London, associate curator, Video, Department of Film.

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For further information or film stills, contact Barbara Marshall, film press representative, Department of Public Information, 212/708-9752.