

The Museum of Modern Art

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PROJECTS: VIDEO XII

A new program of videotapes by artists active in the performing arts-- music, dance, and theatre--will be on view in the Video Gallery of The Museum of Modern Art beginning June 9 and continuing through July 31. Included are tapes by composer Robert Ashley, choreographer Merce Cunningham (working with Charles Atlas), writer/theatre director Richard Foreman (working with Babette Mangolte), and by a group whose members were dancer Viola Farber and her company, painter Robert Rauschenberg, and musician David Tudor. These tapes have been selected by Barbara London, Curatorial Assistant in charge of the Museum's continuing video series.

"Video has frequently been used to document works for broadcast on television or for studio use as a teaching or choreographic tool," notes Ms. London. "Here, however, the focus is on the synthesis of video with elements of performance including sound, movement, and language, away from the older approach of 'you are here with us at the concert hall' towards a newer form of expression created solely for presentation on the TV screen."

The works on view in PROJECTS: VIDEO XII include two segments of Robert Ashley's seven-part video portrait of some leading younger American composers, Music with Roots in Aether. The portions to be shown include Ashley's own musical composition What She Thinks as well as an interview with Gordon Mumma. Rather than a simple documentary, Ashley considers the work a "music-theater piece in color video." Blue Studio: Five Segments, also in color, was made by Merce Cunningham in 1976, with the aid of cameraperson/editor/director Charles Atlas. Richard Foreman, widely hailed for his innovative theatre pieces, made Out of the Body Travel with cameraperson Babette Mangolte and the students of the American Dance Festival of New London, Connecticut. Foreman begins the tape: "The story concerns a young woman who finds herself

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in a library surrounded by the relics of western culture, and, in addition concerns her problems in confronting a musical audience which waits to see her." Brazos River is the result of a collaboration between Viola Farber and her dance company, Robert Rauschenberg, and David Tudor. It was produced by the Fort Worth Art Museum at TV station KERA (Dallas).

Ms. London observes: "Looking at a performance videotape, where the viewer's attention is focused on a specific activity within a lighted frame, differs greatly from watching a live performance in a recital hall, dance studio, or theatre, where the viewer has a greater range of sensations to respond to and more vantage points to choose from...."

"As finite physical locations, these works are spatially defined by the movement of the camera, performers, and props. A more cerebral, synthetic space is created on videotape by the merger of reality with fictive elements. It is this image that lingers on provocatively in the observer's mind."

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JUNE

Monday Music with Roots: What She Thinks
 Tuesday Brazos River
 Thursday Music with Roots: Gordon Mumma
 Friday Out of the Body Travel
 Saturday Blue Studio
 Sunday Out of the Body Travel

JULY

Blue Studio
Out of the Body Travel
Blue Studio
Music with Roots: What She Thinks
Brazos River
Music with Roots: Gordon Mumma

June 1977

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