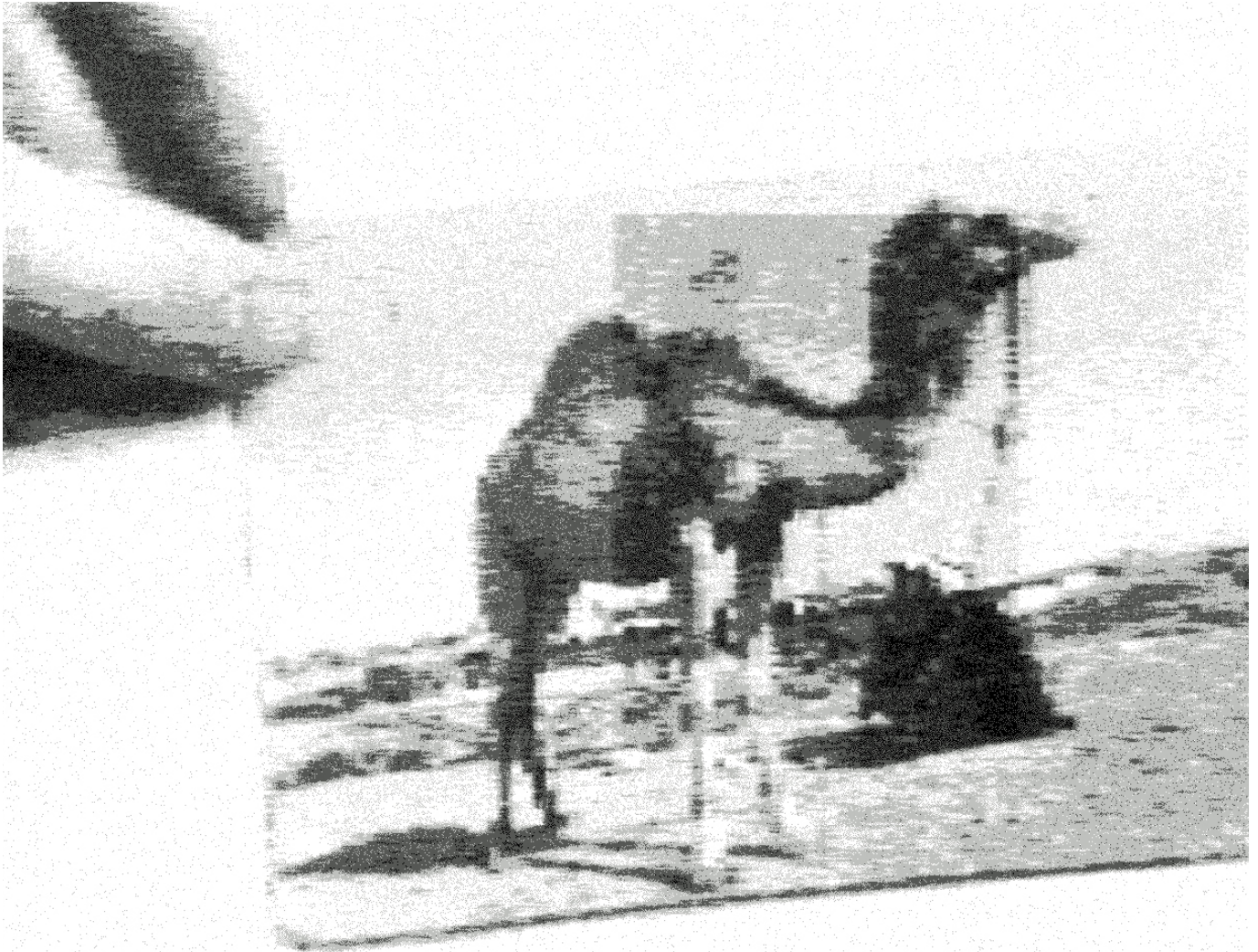


Salon

Spring

2026



# Electronic Echoes

Video Art from the 70s and 80s

## Electronic Echoes: Video Art from the 1970s and 80s

Thursday, February 26, 2206, 7-9 pm  
\$10, in-person

When video became a commercially available medium in the 1970s, artists quickly began to explore it as a form for creative expression. For the first time, an artist could simultaneously record both image and sound on a single substrate, independently operate the recording mechanism, and build their own tools to experiment with the possibilities of the electronic signal. Many of the earliest video experiments took place at art centers around Upstate and Western New York.

To celebrate the launch of VSW's current exhibition, Signal into Memory, this program highlights a range of approaches from abstract imagery to street documentary, made by artists over a two decade period when moving image tools, aesthetics and audiences expanded rapidly into the electronic realm. The screening will feature rarely seen video works by some of the most innovative video artists of the 1970's and 80's, including Sherry Miller Hocking, Ralph Hocking, Matthew Schlanger, Bridgid Polk, Peer Bode, Barbara Buckner, Steina and Woody Vasulka, Walter Wright, and Neil Zusman.

Program selected by Peer Bode, Nilson Carroll and Tara Merenda Nelson

***NOTE: There is a FLICKER warning for this screening.***

### Program

**Ralph Hocking and Sherry Miller: *Selection from Works from 1975-1978* (1979); Sound, Color, 7 min.**

"My early work began with single camera images processed with a keyer and limited special effects generator. When I acquired a Paik/Abe synthesizer in 1972, I began exploring multiple camera images based on mixing, image reversal, horizontal and vertical rate switching and color. The next development was voltage control of image processing. Most of this work was done in collaboration with Sherleen Miller. I would set up a situation and she would react to her image and I would keep changing the relationships she saw. The main body of the work was concerned with simultaneous views of Sherry in movement or in a single pose. Usually we would use between four and six cameras. Most often the cameras were black and white and the signals were processed through the synthesizer. I often used square waves to control the keyers' clip input allowing for offsetting of portions of the images. Most of the work during 1971 to 1978 was not edited. We would do several versions of the same setup, repeat ourselves, rather than try to edit on the decks that were available to us at that time. Time was not rearranged." - Ralph Hocking

**Matthew Schlanger: *Bad Knees* (1985); Sound, color, 3 min.**

Bad Knees was recorded at the Experimental Television Center, in Owego, over a couple of sessions in July 1985. This, and other material never shown, was the last of my work created at the ETC while living in Owego.

**Michael Netter: *Brigid Polk at the George Washington Hotel* (1971); Sound, B&W, 9 min.**

A recording of the Warhol associate Polk, a.k.a. Brigid Berlin, nursing a hangover. The tape is a "non-interview" in the form of a spontaneous monologue. Could be considered an episode of Warhol's Factory Diaries. - Archives of American Art catalogue

"I was Warhol's videographer from 1971 - 1973. I shot hundreds of videos for him (several include Brigid Polk — she was a great subject... couldn't stop talking). I met Andy through a mutual friend at a party to which I had carried (on my back) the Sony Portapak I had bought for myself — I was one of the very early adopters. Andy was shooting Polaroids and audiotaping people. Recognizing video was a better medium, he asked me to do videos for him. " - Michael Netter

**Walter Wright: *Paper Shoes* (1972); Sound, color, 8 min**

The video artist is a visual artist, a sound artist, a movement artist and, often, a writer - video is inclusive, embracing painting, sculpture, writing, poetry, theater, and choreography. - WW

**Neil Zusman: *ORBIT* (1982-83); Sound, color, 5 min.**

Recorded over several studio sessions from 1982-1983, this tape has been rescued by the Visual Studies Workshop. This tape has various studio interaction studies where I was working on creating a visual "fan," an idea I was emulating from my 1976 video installation shown at the Everson. The theme of tapping into the light coming from the screen to create wind and electricity guided these improvisations preceding Orbit. I used a "Sync Repositioner" I built with the guidance of Dave Jones during the Tuesday Afternoon Club in Barton in 1981.

**Steina and Woody Vasulka: *The Matter and Soundgated Images* (1975); Sound, color, 9 min.**

"They always tell you, 'We don't need any words. Let the image speak'. So, here I am."

"This Program is a unique broadcast presentation of the Vasulka's recent experiments with the electronic image. It is not "video on TV" but a "videobroadcast" direct from the Vasulkas' loft in Buffalo, New York." description from Portable Channel catalog, circa 1975

**Peer Bode: *Rutt Etra* (1977-78); Sound, B&W, 5 min.**

This is an excerpt from five-hours of recordings made at Media Study/Buffalo NY, where I was living and studying. In the years prior to these recordings at ETC Binghamton, I had developed a vocabulary of approaches to realtime recording and video processing. I was still regularly recording at ETC. The ETC strategies are apparent in the recordings made with the Rutt Etra Scan Processor.

**Peer Bode: *Camel with Window Memory* (1983); Sound, B&W, 5 min. (cover image)**

The "Camel with Window Memory" piece was made one weekend in the early 80s. I pulled out my post card collection and began to look at specific postcards run through the new digital video buffer I had built together with David Jones. The buffer had only one frame of memory but it was real time. It had the capability of displaying the image memory space, either as live or frozen. "Camel with Window Memory" was a live performance recording: hand held postcard, stop watch for timing and the live or frozen memory mode switch. A second key input to the buffer determined where the image would be live or freeze. I used two synched oscillators to create the square key clip shape. For sound, I sampled two areas of the image for grey level values that were turned into control voltages to control the Brewster and Bernie Hutchins modular audio synthesizer in the studio. The image and sound changes were live as I turned on and off the image freezing, watched the stopwatch and heard the sound changes as I moved the postcard, reactive, as in looking and listening, real time image and sound recording. The camel and man postcard also was particularly resonant as we were experiencing gas rationing and gas lines in the states, oil politics of the time then also. I remember reflecting that the camel was historically the traveling water storage unit of the desert, an organic system for storing water, energy and memory.

**Barbara Buckner: *Millennia* (1983); Silent, color and B&W, 6 min.**

An evolution reflecting everyday objects transforming through the ages of the human race, in cybernetic miniature.

**Matthew Schlanger: *Blue Mercury* (1986); Sound, color, 3 min.**

For Blue Mercury I returned to Owego a year later — July 1986, with synthesizers in the trunk of a car. That turned out to be my last trip to the ETC as a resident. The title was inspired from the first segment, after that the rest of the work veers toward a bloody place. Both [Bad Knees and Blue Mercury] are very short highly selective edits of larger bodies of work. As is most often the case with my work these are sequential assemblages of real time recordings presented in the order they were created. In this way the edits document the process and natural flow of my patches. The work uses periodic waveforms as source material and leaned heavily on Jones video modules I had built a couple years previously, as well as the Jones Frame Buffer.

**Peer Bode** has created an extensive body of work that experiments with electronic media events, active perception systems and culture. Bode worked at the Experimental Television Center (ETC), which his lifelong mentor and friend Ralph Hocking established in Binghamton in 1969. At the ETC, 1974-1987, Bode made his seminal early works with the Paik-Abe Synthesizer, the Jones Colorizer and at Media Study Buffalo, 1977 with the Rutt-Etra Synthesizer. Over the years, 1979 -1985, he built and made extensive recordings with an evolving digital video prototype instrument, which became a significant instrument within Bode's oeuvre. Working together with video engineer David Jones, in the mid 1980's the real time, analog/digital prototype became the Jones FB-1 Buffer, used by artists in numerous video studios.

**Barbara Buckner** - In her video works of the 1970s and '80s, Buckner employed video and computer technologies to create painterly works of strong visual and symbolic resonance. Her formal explorations of the transformative properties of electronic image-processing technology result in metaphoric works of great pictorial sophistication. In her non-narrative, often silent compositions, Buckner's dense and elusive imagery hovers between abstraction and figuration, resulting in startlingly mysterious manifestations of an otherworldly sensibility.

**Ralph Hocking** was a leader in the field of electronic media art starting in 1968, when he founded one of the first campus-based media access programs. In 1970 he established the independent non-profit Experimental Television Center, which offered training programs, equipment access, and exhibition programs.

**Sherry Miller Hocking** has worked since 1972 with the Experimental Television Center (ETC), which provided an international media arts residency program, educational opportunities and sponsorship for independent media and film artists and projects. Hocking directed the Electronic Arts Grants Program, providing funding to individuals and arts organizations. Since 1994 she has directed the Video History Project, an online research database for media scholars worldwide.

**Michael Netter** - A self-taught artist, Michael Netter became a protégé of Andy Warhol, fully immersed in the dynamic art world of New York City in the early 1970s. From 1970 to 1973 Netter worked with Warhol and shot over 200 videos of Factory superstars Joe Dallesandro, Jane Forth, Candy Darling and Brigid Polk, events like David Bowie's first visit to Andy's Factory, and celebrities including actor Dennis Hopper at the Chelsea Hotel, fashion designer Halston and fledgling actress Cybill Shepherd.

**Brigid Polk** (Brigid Berlin) was a painter, photographer and performance artist. Polk was a central figure in the New York art scene in the 1960's and 70's, and a close friend and collaborator of Andy Warhol. Polk was known for her obsessive taping and photographing of everyday life.

**Matthew Schlanger's** video work has been shown at Anthology Film Archives, Thread Waxing Space, Tibor de Nagy Gallery, The Kitchen, New Museum, PS1, and Bronx Museum, and was included in the 1987 Whitney Biennial. Schlanger was an artist in residence at the Experimental Television Center (ETC) from 1981 through 1987. He was introduced to ETC while studying with founder Ralph Hocking at Binghamton University. Schlanger's independent video hardware development and collaborations with Dave Jones resulted in significant contributions to the custom analog and digital image and sound synthesizers installed at the Experimental Television Center. Schlanger co-founded Black Hammer Productions, a company that specialized in the development of software products and solutions, and Black Hammer Game, which specialized in Game Boy Advance and original IP titles. He developed and/or designed several game titles including the original titles: The Nightshift Code, and Nightshift Legacy – The Jaguar's Eye. Schlanger has worked for various startups including as product manager and head of development for a social media network to foster learning. His current day job is as a VP Sr Software Engineer at JP Morgan Chase.

**Steina and Woody Vasulka** are early pioneers of video art, and have been producing work since the early 1960s. The VASULKAs, as they are sometimes called, were experimenting since the early 1960s with images, video tapes, computer graphics, and Digital Video Effector (DVE), a technique that was important for television programmes.

**Walter Wright** - I was hired by Computer Image Corporation as one of the first video animators. I became an Associate Director at The Kitchen and participated in The First Computer Arts Conference in 1971. I decided to create art using new media and the computer. I succeeded Nam June Paik as artist-in-residence at the Experimental Television Center in upstate NY. I took the Paik/Abe Video Synthesizer to schools, colleges, art galleries and museums. I built my own Serge Modular Music System and assisted David Jones and Rich Brewster in building the ETC's video synthesizer. Art is not just a product. It's also a process: the way we, as artists, go about making or creating something. - WW

**Neil Zusman** is the chief archivist of the Fracking Resource Guide and Earthstage: Palau Edition. He holds a Master of Arts in Humanities (1990) and a Master of Library Science (2007) from the University at Buffalo. He is the managing member of Mixplex LLC and has exhibited video art since 1976. His work bridges archival practice, media art, and software development. From 1983 to 1992, he curated exhibitions of artists working with computers, supported by grants from the New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA), the National Endowment for the Arts, and Meet the Composer. He has worked as an educator at both the college and middle school levels and continues to develop his practice as a software developer, artist, archivist, and videographer.



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