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## Video Art - Under- and Over- Exposure/Exhibition: Early Exhibitions in French-Speaking Switzerland

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François Bovier, Adeena Mey,  
Thomas Schärer, Fred Truniger [eds.]  
*Minor Cinema:  
Experimental Film in Switzerland*

François Bovier, Adeena Mey,  
Thomas Schärer, Fred Truniger [eds.]

This comprehensive book traces the evolution of Swiss experimental film from the mid-1960s to the early 2000s. Addressing the relationships between contemporary art and underground film, formal and amateur films, video, expanded cinema and performance, the local scene and external influences, it also highlights the vital role of art schools, festivals, and various key protagonists. The volume thus proposes an active archaeology with which to rethink marginal, avant-garde cinema in Switzerland and open up new perspectives.

With contributions by François Albera, Jean-Michel Baconnier, François Bovier, Nicolas Brulhart, Renate Buschmann, Gabriel Flückiger, Marcy Goldberg, Michael Hiltbrunner, Ute Holl, Simon Koenig, Thilo Koenig, Geneviève Loup, Adeena Mey, Vrääh Öhner, Siri Peyer, Thomas Schärer, Christian Giuliano Tarabini, Fred Truniger, and Ian Wooldridge.

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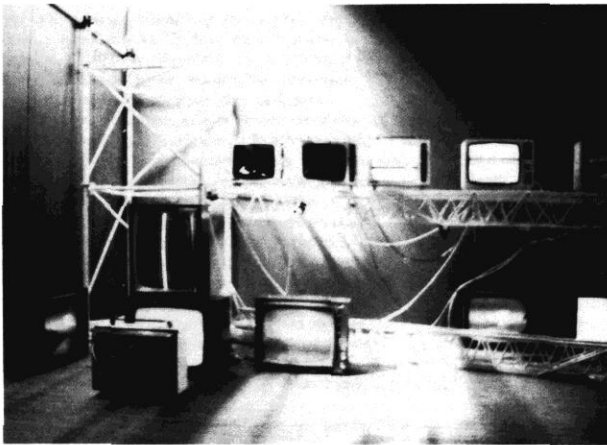
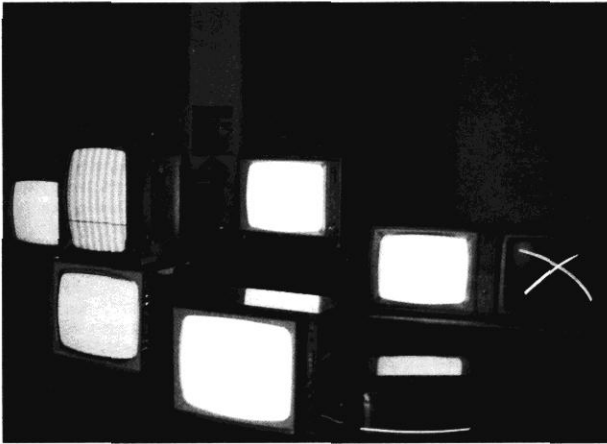
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# Video Art—Under- and Over- Exposure/Exhibition: Early Exhibitions in French-Speaking Switzerland

*Geneviève Loup*

Translated from the French by Miranda Stewart



Jean Orth, *Abécédaire télévisuel I*, 1972

Exhibition view, *Implosion*, Musée cantonal des Beaux-Arts de Lausanne, Lausanne, 1972

Jean Orth, *Abécédaire télévisuel II*, 1973

Exhibition view, *Regarder ailleurs*, Palais de la Bourse, Bordeaux, 1973

The video art practices that emerged in French-speaking Switzerland at the end of the 1960s rapidly made inroads into galleries and museums. Some years previously, artists in the United States had already placed their video practices within a broader context. In this article I shall explore the permeability of and differences between artistic and aesthetic uses of video and communication strategies, which both demand social involvement and employ different distribution channels. I shall examine the dominant history of video art as a production largely centered in the United States and set it against a more minor, local history. I shall focus on two essential questions. How did video art emerge in French-speaking Switzerland, a distinct cultural and geographical area, and to what extent did it displace what had been created in the United States, and to a lesser extent in Europe, in the late 1960s? To what extent do video practices

tend to define and rearticulate the conditions of the aesthetic experience in the course of their development?

### Video Art—A New Field of Artistic Experimentation?

When artists from various fields of activity first became interested in video, they did not initially focus on practices specific to the electronic image. It was not until the 1970s that video art became a field in its own right. It was an aesthetic field which largely defined itself by what it was not, and sought institutionalization by setting itself apart from the structures of *television broadcasting*, the *narrative* schemas and technical requirements of cinema, the immediacy of performance, and the picture-object of painting. While artists explored the medium's production and reception conditions, the legitimizing bodies evaluated video art's aesthetic properties against a backdrop of traditional artistic disciplines, failing to place it within any particular social or political context.

Rosalind Krauss' essay, "Video: The Aesthetics of Narcissism"<sup>1</sup> clearly exemplifies this trend. The art historian criticizes a lack of externality in the works produced with a *closed-circuit device at the beginning of the 1970s*, but takes no account whatsoever of their political context. For example, she construes Vito Acconci's *Centers* (1971) as a parodic gesture of self-reflective withdrawal typical of modern art. Indeed, her metaphorical interpretation of the artist's outstretched arm pointing in the direction of the screen as a narcissistic representation of the artist's double does not capture the wider picture. Acconci used this approach to question the mechanisms that underpin the involvement of the audience in the television image. Acconci's pointing gesture is not one of identification, but rather evokes the iconography of propaganda posters recruiting for the American army and the threat of the pointed gun. This act of intimidation prompts viewers to turn away from the image and focus their gaze on the monitor frame. This tension between a point that focuses attention and its deflection onto the broadcast medium demonstrates in itself an openness toward the medium.

The modernist approach to video as a medium would arguably appear to reject all consideration of cultural

references external to the field of art. Greenberg's focus on technical processes and the *different sensory systems* involved prevails—video is defined as a new territory to be explored via formal experimentation with the electronic image. Early historians of these practices saw the quest for unexpected aesthetic qualities in terms of their experience with other more familiar techniques. Dany Bloch,<sup>2</sup> who was, at that time, in charge of the video department of the musée d'Art moderne de la Ville de Paris, inscribed this territory of discovery within a very traditional lineage:

Video art, a 1970s research art, must essentially be defined through research. The artist becomes a researcher—camera and video recorder replace tubes of paint and brushes, and the *electronic apparatus*, through the creative imagination stimulated by technology, acquires the potential to become painting or sculpture.<sup>3</sup>

Yet, this model of artist/researcher harnessing new technical resources comes from an earlier, more inventive species. Initial approaches to video were based on a particularly productive cross-fertilization between disparate cultural practices. Effectively, even before Nam June Paik used one of the first “portable” video cameras that began to appear on the market in 1965,<sup>4</sup> he reconfigured television circuits, drawing on his research at the Electronic Studio of the Westdeutscher Rundfunk (WDR). *His approach sought to question indeterminacy and variability as parameters of musical composition,*<sup>5</sup> and yet this perspective took on a whole new meaning when his “prepared” television sets were exhibited at Galerie Parnass, in Wuppertal in 1963. The notion of a “prepared” instrument, borrowed from John Cage, refers to a different way of using ordinary objects to alter tones and their intensity and resonance. This changes the function of the instrument and generates unusual sound effects. It is an approach which, when adapted to the television set, distorts how television programs are broadcast, by connecting the device to signals from frequency generators, radios, and recording devices. These interferences *degrade the images and sounds that are broadcast, and result in dilated, duplicated, or diffracted*

patterns on the screen. At a different level, the exhibition visit is designed to take place in an acoustic environment with multiple entrances. By placing electronic circuits and the flow of the body through space in parallel, *Exposition of Music—Electronic Television* (1963) encouraged the audience to become aware of their active role in moving through space and time.

This interdisciplinary approach to experimentation was the result of attempts to decompartmentalize aesthetic fields at Black Mountain College, where John Cage, one of Paik's leading influences, had taught on an occasional basis from 1948. Courses at *Black Mountain*, following philosopher John Dewey's theory of experience, sought less to remove the constraints inherent to each practice than to reorganize the relationships between them. As Joëlle Zask succinctly observes:

according to Dewey, any theory aiming to set individuals apart from their body of knowledge [ ... ] is [ ... ] contrary to modern scientific thinking. Experience, on the contrary, refers to a phase when knowledge is constituted by an individual in a cognitive process unrelated to representation, contemplation, or recognition of an idea supposedly already in existence [ ... ] Experience is something that we do, not something that is done to us. Dewey explains that it consists of establishing a relationship between experiencing something and the fact of then going on to engage in an action. Without the guidance and channeling provided by both being affected and reacting to it, action is no more than agitation [ ... ] Experience therefore develops in a space introduced by the intermittent discontinuity between means and ends, between a receptive state and an action, between a stimulus and a response.<sup>6</sup>

Consequently, according to Dewey, it is under “conditions of resistance and conflict”<sup>7</sup> proper to an open environment that “a continuity with the very process of living”<sup>8</sup> is brought into play.

This idea of a confrontation between different fields of knowledge is also at the center of the collaboration



between engineers Billy Klüver<sup>9</sup> and Fred Waldhauer, and artists Robert Rauschenberg and Robert Whitman, which, in 1966, gave rise to Experiments in Art and Technology [E.A.T.], an organization dedicated to the interaction between art and technology. This organization emerged from the *9 Evenings: Theater and Engineering* (1966) festival, during which some 30 engineers specializing in new technology worked on projects by ten artists without interfering in the aesthetics of their work. This bringing together of different strands of knowledge created hitherto unknown technological instruments such as sound sensors and a modular system linked to theater production devices which adapted sound and light effects to the performers' movements.<sup>10</sup>

For believers in autonomous art, the adverse effects of technology were grounds enough for segregating aesthetic and scientific objects. Billy Klüver criticized this compartmentalization, which led to a loss of a sense of reality, as much in engineering as in art. In his view, interactions between art and technology demystified, in a practical way, those theories of communication that conferred on technology the power to extend the body by dilating it in space, thereby generating global awareness.<sup>11</sup>

Furthermore, the *9 Evenings* performances questioned the aims of industrial inventions. In Rauschenberg's *Open Score*, the lighting at the 69th Regiment Armory dimmed each time a tennis racquet hit the ball, until the room was plunged into darkness, and a crowd on the stage was filmed with infrared cameras. This technique had been used by the American army during the Vietnam War. In this instance, it did not serve to locate the enemy, but rather maintain a visual link between the performers' bodies and the audience. Other interventions used the moving image to question the economics of spectacle and the media and their physiological imperatives. In *Kisses Sweeter Than Wine* by Öyvind Fahlström,<sup>12</sup> the performers' actions were reproduced by a closed-circuit camera and set against intermittent projections of scenes taken from TV broadcasts, advertising, sci-fi films, and educational documentaries. All these different visual and auditory appeals, including the testimony of a soldier from the Korean War who had become a drug addict, reflected the background of political conflict and the

military history of the Armory building. *Grass Field* by Alex Hay, produced in collaboration with engineers Herb Schneider and Robert Kieronski, used sine waves and other electronic noises to convey the apparently inaudible sounds of the artist's bodily organs including brainwaves, muscle activity, and eye movements. Fluctuations were captured and stimulated by electrodes and then amplified by loudspeakers. When his body became still, the imperceptible movements of his face were amplified by a video projection onto a large screen.<sup>13</sup>

While the video images produced for *9 Evenings: Theater and Engineering* amplify the performers' actions with a view to rendering specific physical processes perceptible, the technical experiments developed in the research laboratories at television channels targeted communications systems. For example, WGBH Educational Foundation in Boston, supported by the Rockefeller Foundation, hosted artists in residence. In 1969, program producer and director Fred Barzyk invited Allan Kaprow, Nam June Paik, Otto Piene, James Seawright, Thomas Tadlock, and Aldo Tambellini to produce works to be presented in a 30-minute broadcast. *The Medium is the Medium* (1969) was the name of one program and alluded to McLuhan's well-known proclamation "The Medium is the Message"<sup>14</sup> with a down-to-earth tautology.

For this communications theorist, the medium shapes and controls the scale and form of human association and action. The contents and uses of such media are as diverse as they are ineffectual in shaping the form of human association. Indeed, it is only too typical that the "content" of any medium blinds us to the character of the medium.<sup>15</sup>

Of all electrical technologies, television plays an educational role as it requires the viewer's active participation. Effectively, the electrical circuit's configuration logic replaces the fragmentation and linear links of mechanical technologies. This transition from the sequential to the simultaneous affects modes of perception: specialized segments of attention have shifted to total field, and we can now say, "the medium is the message" quite naturally.<sup>16</sup> This sensory switch calls on artists to sensitize the audience so that it is in the appropriate conditions to receive the media.

In response to this, artists began to question the utopian vision of a community brought together by television by highlighting various types of disconnection. *The Medium is the Medium* presented, among others, *Black* by Tambellini, *Hello* by Kaprow, *Electronic Light Ballet* by Piene, and *Electronic Opera 1* by Paik. While Paik transformed images of a dancer in the studio and TV footage into graphic compositions, Kaprow connected four locations via video input. Two cameras were placed in the WGBH channel studios, with two more in a school and in MIT. All sites were linked via a closed-circuit television network, which allowed them to transmit and receive the broadcast through a device similar to one used for telephone conferencing. To connect, passersby had to introduce themselves with the following words: "Hello, I see you." The technicians in the control room randomly filtered the sounds and images from all four sites, broadcasting partial sequences, in a form of crosstalk that emphasized the falseness of exchanges based on phatic communication.

Following the success of this broadcast, between 1969 and 1970 Paik enjoyed a residency at this very channel. The artist used part of his grant to go to Tokyo and create a video synthesizer with engineer Shuya Abe. The Paik-Abe Synthesizer was designed to edit several live sources taken from television broadcasts, colorize them, and then alter relationships between contrasts and brightness. This research not only sought to trigger optical effects by manipulating sound, but also to push the boundaries of the technical equipment used by the television studios. Unlike the aesthetics of cinema editing which proceeds by shots, the electronic image is worked on from a scan line. This technical characteristic makes it possible to cut elements from a shot as well as to edit and overlay them to allow disparate spaces and times to coexist. Paik went on to deploy the different potential effects generated by this synthesizer in *Global Groove* (1973), a videotape produced and broadcast by the New York channel, WNET-TV.

In certain countries such as Germany, the cultural remit of television channels encouraged the production of artistic projects in response to individual initiatives. Gerry Schum's *Fernsehgalerie*, for example, was designed as a specific exhibition format intended for television. *Land Art*, which launched the gallery's program in 1969, presented,

on the Sender Freies Berlin public station, a series of artists' films shot on film. Although the use of film was a first experience for some of these artists, the transition from situated three-dimensional interventions to their optical transmission problematized the issue of moving works outside of their artistic context, and the impermanence of the exhibition itself. Television mediation also involves placing artistic projects in a particular slot in a TV schedule. This delocalization of production sites is problematized in terms of the migration of works toward what Robert Smithson referred to as "dissolving terrain."<sup>17</sup>

While, as *Philippe Dubois* has said, video was "a way of thinking television with its own forms," these attempts did not bring about the expected cultural transformation.<sup>18</sup> In "Video Art: Old Wine, New Bottle," *Allan Kaprow* concluded that the use of television as an art medium had not displaced traditional conceptual frameworks or aesthetic attitudes.<sup>19</sup> Indeed, the impact of any changes in artistic paradigms generated by taped art performances and video installations has been of lesser importance than the cultural and social transformations brought about by militant video. The art market has encouraged artists to adopt a particular frame of reference, and this has led to videotapes of artistic performances being presented as "if in a pocket movie theater."<sup>20</sup> Nevertheless, closed-circuit video installations have drawn attention to the circumstantial factors that encourage audiences to observe their own performances both as actors and viewers of a situation. This relationship with a particular environment seeks to regulate the ecology of what *Gilbert Simondon* has called an "associated" milieu that acts as a connective force between internal and external realities.<sup>21</sup> However, according to *Kaprow*, the use of hardware and linkage does not actually involve the participation of the audience unless the exhibition context is stratified and multifaceted. Consequently, the viewer's body cannot be directed by predetermined surroundings. The production of a changing space in which viewers can act allows individuals to develop relationships selectively, and organize simultaneous events with particular receptiveness. This local experience of attention is vastly more intense than the myth of a global awareness automatically stimulated by electronic media.<sup>22</sup>

Influenced by John Cage's classes on the composition of *experimental music* at the New School for Social Research in New York, in 1959, Kaprow called into question the aesthetic underpinnings of the categories established by the open forms of happenings and environments. He had participated in a WGBH research program in 1969 and also produced several videos and documented his happenings. His first tape, *Then*, dates from 1974. In this work, presented, among others, at the *Impact Art Video Art 74* exhibition in Lausanne, to which we shall return, the artist encouraged the audience to exercise its observation skills and put to the test its preconceived notions. In the first part, a close-up of a man's face draws attention to the main action—an ice cube is melting in his mouth. The voice of a woman offscreen asks, "How much longer?" In response, he silently shakes his head. He finally swallows the melted ice once it has changed from solid to liquid. In response to the spectator's potential impression of slowness, he questions our perception of time by repeating the same question over and over again. Then the man says, "Now," and this present moment stands in a counterpoint to the past evoked by the title of the tape.

In the next part, a hand holds a glowing object and its rays penetrate the skin. A woman's voice asks, "Is it light enough?"<sup>23</sup> A man's voice replies, "Not yet." Again, the situation is repeated until the heat of the light becomes intolerable and the bulb is dropped. When the woman asks the question again, the response is in the affirmative. The lightbulb swings from an electrical cord placed above a plate on which there is an ice cube melting under the effects of the heat. The woman's voice asks about the cube and its wetness.

By questioning the audience's recognition reflexes in this way, viewers are led to reconsider the various ways in which a same situation can be defined. Experimentation is now seen as the "testing or trial of a principle."<sup>24</sup> While the use of a video camera by Kaprow allowed him to measure the extent of local actions over a period of time and to contrast the cold light of the photons of the electronic image with incandescence, the real point of this technique was to enable the artist to carefully examine the apparent evidence of banal situations.

The definition of experimentation offered by Elie During, Laurent Jeanpierre, Christophe Kihm, and Dork Zabunyan sums up this approach:

Experimental art is a technique of questions rather than answers [ ... ] Experimentation, understood as the pivot between artistic activity and ignorance, is a strategy whereby incompetence contains within it the potential for a new regime of competence.<sup>25</sup>

Consequently, artists who experiment are not acting as experts or as guarantors of a particular aesthetic genre, nor are they guided in their approach by the innovation offered by new technologies. In the words of Laurent Jeanpierre, “to experiment, simply using a new material, transferring a unique gesture from one medium to another, or even producing new creative rules or new constraints, is not enough in itself.”<sup>26</sup> Artistic practices produce astonishment when they resist a preprogrammed transformation process and trigger the unforeseen in a particular set of circumstances—“Experimentation becomes a critical operator for art once the decision has been taken to make ‘local use’ of it.”<sup>27</sup>

### A Circumscribed Topos—The Early Days of Video Art in French-Speaking Switzerland

What effectively happens when these issues are framed within a local geographical area? What happens to research that first emerged in the United States and Germany when it migrates toward artistic practices that do not flourish under the same technological conditions? In our case, French-speaking Switzerland lacked any substantial industrial economy comparatively speaking. In America artists benefited from the technical infrastructure of television channels mainly funded by foundations of entrepreneurs, yet no such resources existed in Switzerland. However, its art and gallery markets were extremely active, as can be seen from the International Salon of Pilot Galleries. Three such salons had been organized by René Berger at the Musée cantonal des Beaux-Arts de Lausanne in 1963, 1966, and 1970, when he was director (until 1981). At the last of

the salons, exhibitors included the Howard Wise Gallery. In 1969, this New York gallery had produced one of the first video art exhibitions, entitled *TV as a Creative Medium*. The gallery owner declared in the exhibition catalogue that television had the power to transform education, and be the stepping-stone to a communications utopia.<sup>28</sup> Paik offered *Participation TV* as one of the works, an installation comprising several color television monitors with a feedback effect that offered the audience a multiplied image with blurred edges.

In French-speaking Switzerland *ACTION/FILM/VIDEO*, an early exhibition of video art and films, was held at the Impact Group Gallery and the Galerie de l'Académie in 1972.<sup>29</sup> This group, founded in 1968 by Jean Scheurer, Pierre Guberan, Henri Barbier, Jean-Claude Schauenberg, Jacques Dominique Rouiller, and Kurt von Ballmoos, with Bertrand Caspar, Archibald Ganslmayr, Mick Müller, and Jean-Pierre Tzaud, brought together painters and sculptors to work on a project designed to display contemporary art.<sup>30</sup> This exhibition, which jointly presented film and video, was organized by Barbier, Schauenberg, Scheurer, Janos Urban, and Claude Vallon.<sup>31</sup> Nevertheless, ultimately, interest in video was for the most part driven by Jean Otth, the main organizer of the *Impact Art Video Art 74* exhibition. By that time he had finished his studies in history of art at Lausanne University and subsequently at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts de Lausanne, and had also attended classes given by René Berger at the University since 1969: "Aesthetics and Mass Media: Television." In this course, Berger examined works by contemporary artists including Otth, Gérald Minkoff, and Fred Forest. Furthermore, Berger had been the expert consulted by cultural journalist Claude Vallon when he wrote "René Berger, Director-Curator of the Musée cantonal des Beaux-Arts, Lausanne. The era of the video recorder" for the *ACTION/FILM/VIDEO* exhibition catalogue.

As noted by François Bovier in his article "The Medium Is the Network,"<sup>32</sup> the artists participating in the *ACTION/FILM/VIDEO* exhibition were recruited by means of a registration form sent to local and international artists and to organizations such as the Yellow Now Gallery. In his opening remarks to the catalogue, Claude Vallon

declared that this event was designed to question “communication, image, and image content” through cinema. Nevertheless, the economy of cinema was challenged by the more independent economy of video:

Artists are now explorers, scientists, whose inventiveness (and this is the critical word) is needed by others and lays the ground for yet more works. We are now engaged in a research process, where we will, nonetheless, need to be careful not to fuel a new art market.

This familiar rhetoric around innovation was played out socially, where the video recorder was used in different ways to observe behaviors, and even became an instrument to bring people together in community interactions. As Berger declared in his interview with Vallon, this interweaving of relationships was the result of a technical metaphor for the continuous motion of the videotape and its simultaneous viewing:

There is a difference between the nature of cinema and that of video. The former involves editing while the latter abhors editing. It is a wild instrument that enables immediate confrontation, and that ultimately has its own particular character. Cinema is a spectacle that is repeated.<sup>33</sup>

Jacques Monnier, in his contribution to the catalogue, distinguishes between the artistic practices of video and the professional practices of filmmakers and camera operators for television. He also refers to the precarious nature of the exhibition, which has more in common with a workplace and *transit area than the planned layout of gallery space*:

some perforated crates which served interchangeably as seats or pedestals for the devices, wires trailing freely from electric plugs to projectors, video recorders, and monitors, three or four cathode-ray screens, the walls themselves serving as receptacles for images which, for brief moments, transformed their rough edges into lunar craters. Generally



speaking, the equipment rejected any value as a fixed asset and any monumental status which might have undermined the desire of visitors, who were free to enter and leave as they wish, to attend the simultaneous screenings standing up, sitting down, or even lying on the ground.<sup>34</sup>

In this early exhibition, the Impact Group related the concept of action to film and video production processes and also to the stealthy way in which an audience, invited to walk about in an unstable environment, views images. Unlike the optical absorption in a picture as advocated by Greenberg, here the viewer's body is brought into play by the exhibition's installation apparatus. While walls are no longer designed to be homogenous surfaces, the discontinuous space takes the display principle underlying the exhibition even further by applying a sequential logic; indeed, François Bovier notes that while "silver and magnetic tapes shared the space [they] were not screened simultaneously: from 6.30pm to 11pm, depending on the day, either videotapes or films were screened on the ground floor (in the Impact Gallery) and on the first floor (in the Galerie de l'Académie)."<sup>35</sup>

The artistic bent of video becomes even clearer in the second event, *Impact Art Video Art 74*, organized by the Impact Group two years later. There has been further research into historical significance of these two events in "Exhibited Cinema," a research project directed by François Bovier at the École cantonale d'art de Lausanne. Furthermore, a selection of videos from these two exhibitions was set up (rather than reconstructed) at the Circuit art space in Lausanne, from April 17 to May 23, 2015.<sup>36</sup> In the original *ACTION/FILM/VIDEO* catalogue, there was no indication of how the videos and 16mm and 8mm films were arranged in space. Artists including Jochen Gerz, Eric Andersen, and Jacques Louis Nyst participated, along with others who are less well known. There was a good representation of the first artists from French-speaking Switzerland whose practices included video: Minkoff (who also showed several Super-8 films), Otth, Urban, and René Bauermeister, who, on this occasion, only showed Super-8 and 16mm films. Filmmakers such as Erwin Huppert and Eva Lurati also took part in the exhibition.

The exhibition catalogue included texts by Minkoff and Otth—these were documents provided by the artists for the exhibition. While Minkoff used video as a medium to create a tautological *mise en abyme*, for Otth, “[the] televisual and videotape space is a pictorial space.”<sup>37</sup> These words were used when talking about *Ombre A (Shadow A)* (1972), Otth’s very first video work produced in collaboration with Jean Scheurer, which was shown in this exhibition, and is described in these terms in a monographic catalogue produced by the Centre d’Art Contemporain in Geneva:

In the first part, this tape is an attempt to capture a shadow graphically. To visualize a duration I used a spray of black paint to mark a shadow in the present, and an anticipated one in the future. The chosen topic was that of a menhir. In the second part, there is the formal destruction of my own shadow, first with black paint, and then with synthetic “sand.” In terms of televisual language, this work primarily uses the pictorial possibilities offered by values (video’s range from black to white).<sup>38</sup>

As part of the *Limites* series, this work contrasts a video recording with a primary gesture of inscription. The outline used to mark out the contours of a silhouette created by a light projection is constantly redefined by the instability of the shadow. This bringing together of two, arguably anachronistic, techniques, questions the historical and anthropological motivations for creating films through capturing images. To identify what is happening in the field of vision, the viewer must distinguish between different levels of reality, and yet any such demarcation is blurred by the way in which video images constantly reconfigure the situation.

This work, grounded in the anachronistic gap between the gesture, which is at the origin of the drawing, and video, which is the means of reproduction, was invested with new meaning at an exhibition curated by Michel Thévoz, and presented from November 3 to December 10 of that year at the Musée cantonal des Beaux-Arts de Lausanne: *Implosion, Musée expérimental 3 (Implosion, Experimental Museum 3)*.<sup>39</sup> This particular Otth video is associated with different types of perturbation streamed over 12 monitors. Half of these images

are captured on a video recorder and then manipulated for light and contrast: *Perturbation X*, *Perturbation I*, *Perturbation II*, *Perturbation III*, *TV—Autoportrait*, *Ombre A* (1972). These disruptions allow the artist to reveal the visual nature of “the very structure of televised material.” He also gives visibility to “underlying aesthetics” and forges a relationship between the instability of the TV picture and the luminescence of the electronic image in resonance with the variations in texture and light found in an Impressionist painting.

In *TV—Autoportrait*, the artist intermittently displays the “de-structuring” of the image by partially concealing the readability of his portrait. The use of scratches and stripes of different depths disrupts the distinction between the surfaces and the underlying strata of the image, which are swapped around by effects of over- and under-exposure to light. The video has no sound recording and yet the metamorphoses of the pictures created by technical interference are dynamic, in counterpoint to the relatively static position of the artist. These technical manipulations were created by an engineer and then selected by the artist: “In this experiment there has been no alteration of the image other than by electronic means.”<sup>40</sup> Its random, rhythmical noise is reminiscent of the flicker effect and the flapping of the frames at the heart of the very notion of cinema. This unstable electronic signal tests both the viewer’s concentration and the persistence of the image.

The artist covered the screens of the remaining monitors of *Découpages-Perturbations* (*Cuttings-Perturbations*) with cut up pieces of black plastic. By obliterating part of the image in this way, he reframes the reception of programs by partially restricting the field of vision and increasing the importance of sound. This focuses attention on random details; it also, paradoxically, intensifies observation by limiting the field of vision. The fourth exercise in this series, *Abécédaire télévisuel* (*Television Alphabet Book*) involves the television set, as described by the artist, as a “minimalist sculpture.”<sup>41</sup> Later called *Menbir TV*, this upturned monitor broadcast a white line in an analog orientation. But unlike the immobile axis of *Zen For TV* that was presented by Paik at the *Exposition of Music—Electronic Television* in 1963, the white line across the screen of *Menbir TV* subdivides as it oscillates from right to left. This movement then

accentuates the fragmentary nature of the electronic signal, evoking the pulses of an oscilloscope measuring amplitude variation.

This particular Otth collection of videotapes and monitors is associated with slides, to which the artist refers as “proofs.” In photographic documents of the exhibition which can be viewed on the *Autour du Concile de Nicée (On the Council of Nicea)* DVD,<sup>42</sup> monitors of different sizes are lined up on a shelf, others are placed underneath at different heights, set back against the wall. *TV—Autoportrait* is projected on the wall, as befits a permeable approach to video and film formats. This installation adopted a different configuration when it was shown again the following year in Bordeaux as part of *Regarder ailleurs (Look Elsewhere)*,<sup>43</sup> the first contemporary art exhibition organized at the CAPC-musée d’Art contemporain de Bordeaux by Jean-Louis Froment, in which the television sets were arranged on scaffolding reminiscent of a building site.

The principle of accumulation, dislocation, and reassembling, which underlies this installation, along with the manipulation of television programs, reflects descriptions of the *Implosion* exhibition, namely “the brutal disintegration of the TV receivers, the central tube of which is a vacuum.”<sup>44</sup> The exhibition curator evoked economic, social, and ecological disturbances, and referred to McLuhan to encourage artists to do something to offset the paralysis caused by technology by offering other relationships with the environment. Any “individual consciousness” elicited by a short-circuit to the nervous system was indeed threatened, under the twin pressures of information saturation and media processing. While this metaphor for a state of mind was potentially employed to refer to techniques other than electronics, the exhibition, which brought together different artistic practices, showcased video works that experimented with changes in sensory perception. In it, the media were no longer viewed as an extension of the body, but rather as a physiological constraint to be re-sensitized. The installations presented disorganized the principle of visibility appropriate to the museum as institution, and caused its premises to implode through entropic circulation.

Vilém Flusser, Professor of Communications Theory at the University of São Paulo, introduced the issue of the

exteriority of the field of art by offering a rereading of the closed-circuit device in “Minkoff’s Mirrors”:

Currently art is art about art and knowledge has started to become concerned with the possibility of knowing knowledge [ ... ] We are beginning to feel dizzy, because the reflecting mirror opens to show an abyss, a reduction “ad infinitum,” which threatens to swallow us up [ ... ] If we want an idea of what this abyss means, we should describe Minkoff’s experience in down-to-earth terms. Three mirrors reflect each other, namely a television screen, a camera, and a video recorder, and all three are linked to each other in a circle. The camera films the screen, the screen absorbs the camera, the video recorder records this process, the screen absorbs the videotape, the camera absorbs the tape on the screen and so on ad infinitum. But this is not, it should be said, a closed circuit [ ... ] The circuit that I am describing is open, we can *intervene between and within* the reflecting mirrors, we can become an integral part thereof, we can act and suffer therein, in terms of the hierarchy of the abyss, because the abyss of one mirror is none other than the surface of another and, at a second level, the abyss of a third, etc. [ ... ] surfaces are constantly being pushed back. We should consider two things: 1) chronology has changed perspective, what was once anteriority is now depth. 2) *Minkoff is not only the viewer’s object as in traditional mirrors, but he is his own object in a hierarchy that extends to the abyss, and in every level of this hierarchy.*<sup>45</sup>

Ott, further questioning the duplication of the roles of actor and viewer, launched *Impact Art Video Art 74* to delve further into the disparate practices of video. This exhibition lasted for eight days, similar in length to a festival format. It was presented at the Musée des Arts décoratifs de la Ville de Lausanne, and organized with two other artists, Henri Barbier and Jean-Claude Schauenberg, along with the engineer Serge Marendaz. It sought to “portray video as an artistic medium, without necessarily emphasizing this feature over all others, e.g. sociological, political, or

educational video.”<sup>46</sup> Works by 90 artists were presented, including videos by Vito Acconci, Trisha Brown, Valie Export, Luciano Fabro, Fred Forest, Simone Forti, Jochen Gerz, Luciano Giaccari, Frank Gillette, Dan Graham, Joan Jonas, Allan Kaprow, Jannis Kounellis, Shigeko Kubota, Les Levine, Urs Lüthi, Mario Merz, Gérald Minkoff, Antoni Muntadas, Maurizio Nannucci, Muriel Olesen, Dennis Oppenheim, Jean Otth, Nam June Paik, Charlemagne Palestine, Yvonne Rainer, Martha Rosler, Sarkis, Allan Sekula, Janos Urban, Woody & Steina Vasulka, Bill Viola, Wolf Vostell, and Peter Weibel.

The catalogue included an extract from a thesis by Luciano Giaccari, at the time the artistic director of Studio 970/2 in Varese, a center for video-related studies and activities. The author distinguishes between practices by format and viewing practice: videotapes, recordings of performances, and video environments. These artistic practices are separate from the mediating role of documentation, reporting, and educational and critical video. However, while different purposes can indeed be identified, individual fields are, unfortunately, viewed here as closed entities governed by predetermined categories.

Further academic support was provided by René Berger, who played an important role in giving this exhibition international importance. In “L’Art vidéo: défis et paradoxes”<sup>47</sup> (Video Art: Challenges and Paradoxes), video is seen as a specific art separate from television insofar as it reconfigures the latter’s modes of broadcasting and reception. Compared with traditional techniques, video art permits a reflexive experience in observation: “Painting stops at the portrait. Video captures the movement both of what is outside and what is within.”<sup>48</sup> Furthermore, by exposing the very structure of the image, it serves to demystify new technologies. By escaping the “economic imperative” of market value, “it is clear that under these conditions any judgments we may make about video art cannot simply be modeled on our habitual practice.”<sup>49</sup> He criticizes Allan Kaprow for framing the challenges of video art as issues of legitimacy. For him, its disparate uses open the doors to new fields of research related, among other things, to the introduction of a temporal dimension into the exhibition space. However, his objection is based on a

misunderstanding of the American artist, whose criticism was directed more at the difficulty experienced by the art world in shedding its dominant conceptual framework.

The temporal dimension introduced by video questions the unified character of the exhibition. Otth, in *Anatomie de l'éternité (Anatomy of Eternity)* (1974), makes simultaneous use of a live closed-circuit recording, and prerecorded video and sound tracks. The camera, set on a tripod, captures a bunch of dried flowers, and the image is conveyed live to a monitor. It alternately broadcasts previous recordings, in such a way as to disturb the temporal anchoring of the visible image. When viewers stand in front of the camera, they can verify its actual nature. At the same time, a soundtrack of a reading of *A Universal History of Infamy. A History of Eternity* by Jorge Luis Borges accompanies the image. In one of the photographs of the exhibition, the machines are placed at random on a worktable that would be more at home in a workshop than in the framed spaces of a museum.

Otth exhibited three more videotapes. *Hommage à Mondrian (Homage to Mondrian)* (1972), which is part of the *TV-Perturbations* series, and comprises a still shot of a painting by the modern artist. The frame shows a picture hung on the wall of a museum, and this lets the viewer see details of the architecture of the exhibition space and the neon lighting system. The geometric lines of the pictorial composition have been reconfigured by the lines of the technical interference found in video, and then obscured by distortions of the image, which create depth beneath the surface of the screen. The obliterations render the geometric pattern of the painting unreadable as the independence of the abstraction is overlaid by the infrastructure used to mediate it, namely the exhibition and the documentary shot. Video reproduction of the canvas highlights, by framing the shot in a particular way, the paradoxical visibility of the exhibition device, and redirects attention toward the environment outside the monitor screen. As Walter Benjamin has indeed noted, architecture attracts less rapt attention, with the viewer “noticing the object in an incidental fashion.”<sup>50</sup> This approach, which differs from the contemplation of the expert eye, raises the issue of the habituation produced by visual devices that occupy the social space.

Working at the limits of perception, the artist describes this as “an extremely simple operation where the primary action is to separate two forms” and create a rift between “two surfaces,” thereby questioning the ambiguous spatiality of the video image. The limit is part of the dialectic between a dark contour line that isolates, and a passage that “opens” and is in itself a fascinating problem that has been overlooked because of its ostensibly trivial nature.<sup>51</sup>

*Limite B (le lac) (Limit B [The Lake])* (1973) marks the gap that is needed to bring nuanced distinctions into play. The image of a sunset over Lake Geneva reveals the silhouette of a mountain range, and reflections of sunlight on water accompanied by the murmur of the waves. The sun’s rays reflected in the water make the horizon stand out. Superimposed on this recording is an electronic horizontal white line that moves up and down in counterpoint to the limits of the field of vision. *Limite E* (1973) handles the coexistence of different levels of reality differently; the artist attempts to mark the outline of his shadow against a wall, and then his image on a slide in which he appears, seen from the back, drawing on a wall, and finally, superimposed on the traced outline, his image is projected in Super-8. The limit does not signify confinement, but rather the possibility of redefining the parameters of an aesthetic experience.

### The Testing of Institutional Topos

Oth’s *Limite E* was the first video purchased by Lausanne’s Musée cantonal des Beaux-Arts, in 1973. The artist’s studio, essentially a confined area for experimentation, can be contrasted with the permanence of institutional collections, which are designed to preserve our heritage. In “Les mousquetaires de l’invisible: la vidéo-art en Suisse”<sup>52</sup> (*The Musketeers of the Invisible: Video Art in Switzerland*), an article published in 1977, Berger presented the first Swiss artists to work in video: Bauermeister, Minkoff, Muriel Olesen, Oth, Urban, Urs Lüthi, Jacques Guyonnet, and Geneviève Calame. These people may well have “started working later than Paik, Gillette, Ira Schneider, Peter Campus, Beryl Korot, and many others,”<sup>53</sup> but genealogy is no longer a principle that applies in this context; “this is perhaps the first time in the history of art that an



explanation by influence fails.”<sup>54</sup> Nevertheless, prior to this generation, Paik recognized Cage’s contribution in *A Tribute to John Cage* (1973/1976)—the composer’s *modus operandi* influenced his own approach to experimentation. To what extent was Switzerland really a “peripheral place for video”<sup>55</sup> to use Berger’s term? Why should it be seen as *immune to historical and geographical relationships*, when the overriding feature of the 1972 and 1974 Impact Group exhibitions was precisely its inclusion in an international context, thereby affording Swiss artists the opportunity to meet much wider challenges?

In the United States and certain countries in Europe, artists had used television as an additional venue for technical experimentation and a means of broadcasting and making works more publicly accessible. Why, then, would a move to an exhibition format have curbed ambitions such as these? For René Berger, experimentation had now been relocated in the break with the forms and patterns of television communication, and attention had now been focused on *clearly defined spaces, in counterpoint to the dominant structures of what he called “techno-communication.”* In 1981, Berger referred to the relationships of scale involved in moving from a place of exhibition to its exteriority: “In that case, installations are, if I may say so, relocation models with the corollary that ‘places’ other than those that we are accustomed to in our everyday practice are not only possible, but already exist latently.”<sup>56</sup>

Nevertheless, the relationship between a work and a particular political, social, or economic environment is governed by symbolic agency: “Topographic determination comes with a symbolic determination, which regulates and institutionalizes a particular type of social relationship (*this explains my use of the term ‘topos’*).”<sup>57</sup>

While these institutions set up partitions that restrict the movement of viewers, video installations, by encouraging the body to position itself in space, highlight this cultural segmentation. In addition to this topographic representation, authors such as Kurt Lewin have highlighted the psychological impact of topology, which does not derive from metaphorical relationships, but rather from behavioral effects produced by the positioning of an individual in a particular environment.<sup>58</sup>

Although the structures of this social and cultural environment are unlikely to have been reconfigured, which suggests, as does Jean Otth, that we would be better to stop “wasting our time justifying this medium,”<sup>59</sup> people like Berger have nonetheless helped to embed new artistic practices into a local landscape still steeped in cultural traditions.<sup>60</sup> The definition of a field specific to video later led to the creation of spaces specifically designed for these purposes. In French-speaking Switzerland, the International Video Week founded by André Iten in 1985 became the main video event; it was significantly renamed the Biennial of Moving Images in 1999 and was held at the Centre pour l’image contemporaine Saint-Gervais (CIC), in Geneva until 2005.<sup>61</sup> The CIC closed down in 2008, and the Biennial was taken over by the Centre d’Art Contemporain in Geneva in 2014. It is fairly safe to assume that greater independence is to be found in exhibition areas outside institutions that allow experimentation with current issues in video art.<sup>62</sup>

The aesthetic experience of video works is determined by the particular geographical and historical circumstances of the locality in which they are produced and disseminated; in return, video art offers insights at a local level into the production and reception conditions of different artistic practices. The traditional exhibition format marked the beginnings of video art in French-speaking Switzerland, and this has led art historians to reproduce familiar conceptual categories. In this regional context, the fact that artists have stepped outside museum institutions can be seen less in current social and political realities than in the transformations in perception brought about by new forms of communication.



Jean Otth, *Abécédaire télévisuel I*, 1972

Exhibition view, *Implosion*, Musée cantonal des Beaux-Arts de Lausanne, Lausanne, 1972

- [1] Rosalind Krauss, "Video: The Aesthetics of Narcissism," *October*, vol. 1 (Spring 1976), p. 50–64.
- [2] Dany Bloch, who was born in 1925 and died in 1988, was a video art specialist in France. She published her thesis on video art in 1982: Dany Bloch, *Art et vidéo 1960–1980/82*, Éditions Flaviana, Locarno 1982.
- [3] Dany Bloch, "L'Art-vidéo," *Traverses* ("Circuits/courts circuits") (16 September 1979), Centre National d'Art et de Culture Georges-Pompidou/Éditions de Minuit, p. 72–80.
- [4] The quotation marks are perfectly justified—the Portapak was neither portable nor light in 1965 and required an electrical socket.
- [5] Susanne Neuburger, "Terrific Exhibit. 'Time Art' alias Music in the Exhibition Genre," Susanne Neuburger (ed.), *Nam June Paik. Exposition of Music, Electronic Television, Revisited*, Walther König, Vienna/Cologne 2009, p. 31–43.
- [6] Joëlle Zask, "Le courage de l'expérience," Jean-Pierre Cometti, Éric Giraud (eds.), *Black Mountain College. Art, démocratie, utopie*, Centre International de Poésie/Presses universitaires de Rennes, coll. "Arts contemporains," Marseille/Rennes 2014, p. 20.
- [7] John Dewey, *Art as Experience*, Perigee Books, New York 1934, p. 35.
- [8] *Ibid.*, p. 68.
- [9] Billy Klüver had a PhD in electrical engineering and, from 1958, was employed by Bell Telephone Laboratories where he carried out research into lasers.
- [10] Sylvie Lacerre, "9 Evenings and Experiments in Art and Technology: A Gap to Fill in Art History's Recent Chronicles," Dieter Daniels, Barbara U. Schmidt (eds.), *Artists As Inventors. Inventors as Artists*, Hatje Cantz, Ostfildern 2008, p. 160.
- [11] Billy Klüver about 9 *Evenings*, quoted by S. Lacerre, p. 163–164: "It wanted to achieve very specific practical and social goals. Its development was coincident in time with the spreading mysticism about technology, the McLuhan concept that the communication means were the extensions of the body, the psychedelic experience as an element of art!" Harriet De Long, 9 *Evenings: Theatre and Engineering* [manuscript]; Series I. Project files; box 2, "9 Evenings," 1966; Experiments in Art and Technology; Records, 1966–1993; Getty Research Institute, Research Library, Accession no. 940003.
- [12] Descriptions of the performance found on The Daniel Langlois Foundation website, which contains all the records of 9 *Evenings*: <http://www.fondation-langlois.org/html/e/page.php?NumPage=1792>, last accessed March 2020.
- [13] Information from Catherine Morris, "9 Evenings: Theatre & Engineering," Sabine Breitwieser (ed.), *EAT Experiments in Art and Technology*, Walther König/Museum der Moderne, Cologne/Salzburg 2015, p. 84, 85, 89.
- [14] Marshall McLuhan, *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*, McGraw-Hill Company, New York 1964. It should be remembered that the first chapter of the book is entitled "The Medium is the Message."
- [15] *Ibid.*, p. 27.
- [16] *Ibid.*, p. 31.
- [17] "The Land Art films shot by Gerry Schum of the *Fernsehgalerie* in Berlin leave something to be desired; nevertheless, they do indicate an attempt to deal with art in the landscape. Television has the power to dilate the 'great outdoors' into sordid frontiers full of grayness and electrical static. Vast geographies are contracted into dim borders and incalculable sites. Schum's 'Television gallery' proliferates the results of Long, Flanagan, Oppenheim, Beuys, Dibbets, De Maria, Heizer, and myself over unknown channels which bifurcate into dissolving terrains." Robert Smithson, "Art Through the Camera's Eye," 1971, a text that remained unpublished during the artist's lifetime, Jack Flam (ed.), *Robert Smithson: The Collected Writings*, University of California Press, Los Angeles 1996, p. 374. Smithson mentions Beuys, who went on to participate in a later project called *Identifications*.
- [18] Philippe Dubois, "L'État-vidéo: une forme qui pense. Une histoire en deux mouvements," Christophe Boutin (ed.), *Vidéo Topiques. Tours et retours de l'art vidéo*, Musée d'art moderne et contemporain, Strasbourg 2002, p. 49.
- [19] Allan Kaprow, "Video Art: Old Wine, New Bottle," *Artforum*, vol. 12, no 10 (1974), p. 46–49.
- [20] "It is worth mentioning in the context of video art tapes, because this is the way the tapes are presented to the audience: as if in a pocket movie theater." *Ibid.*, p. 46.
- [21] See Gilbert Simondon, *L'Individuation à la lumière des notions de forme et d'information*, Éditions Jérôme Millon, Grenoble 2005.
- [22] "This hardware linkage proposes to positively alter the behavior of human and nonhuman participants alike, as if it were some infinitely readjustable ecology." Allan Kaprow, "Video Art: Old Wine, New Bottle," p. 47.
- [23] The phrase "Is it light enough?" plays on the polysemy of the word light, which is used both in terms of brightness and weight.
- [24] Allan Kaprow, "Experimental Art" [1966], *Essays on the Blurring of Art and Life: Expanded Edition* (articles compiled by Jeff Kelley), University of California Press, Berkeley/Los Angeles/London 2003, p. 72.
- [25] Elic During, Laurent Jeanpierre, Christophe Kihm, Dork Zabunyan, "Introduction," *In actu. De l'expérimental dans l'art*, Les presses du réel, Dijon 2009, p. 18.
- [26] Laurent Jeanpierre, "Introduction aux conditions de l'art expérimental," *In actu. De l'expérimental dans l'art*, p. 312.
- [27] *Ibid.*, p. 15.
- [28] See *TV as a Creative Medium*, exh. cat., Howard Wise Gallery, New York 1969.
- [29] In addition to information from original exhibition catalogues, further historical details can be found in François Bovier, "'The Medium Is the Network'—the Impact Group and the Emergence of Video Art in French-speaking Switzerland," translated from the French by Miranda Stewart, in François Bovier (ed.), *Early Video Art and Experimental Film Networks. French-speaking Switzerland in 1974: a Case for "Minor History"*, ECAL/Les presses du réel, Lausanne/Dijon 2017, p. 57–72.
- [30] The name of Christiane Cornuz appears in the introduction to the catalogue. List supplemented by research by François Bovier.
- [31] See Impact, *ACTION/FILM/VIDEO*, Lausanne, Galerie Impact, 1972, n. p. It should be noted that Janos Urban, an artist close to Fluxus, was a pioneer of video art in French-speaking Switzerland, and that Claude Vallon was a cultural journalist. This catalogue has been reproduced in part in François Bovier and Tristan Lavoyer (eds.), *Black White Box Cube*, ECAL/Circuit, Lausanne 2015.
- [32] François Bovier, "'The Medium Is the Network'—the Impact Group and the Emergence of Video Art in French-speaking Switzerland."
- [33] Claude Vallon, "Nouvelles aventures," *ACTION/FILM/VIDEO*, n. p.
- [34] Jacques Monnier, "Videonomad," *ACTION/FILM/VIDEO*, n. p.
- [35] François Bovier, "'The Medium Is the Network'—the Impact Group and the Emergence of Video Art in French-speaking Switzerland."
- [36] See François Bovier, Tristan Lavoyer (eds.), *Black White Box Cube*.
- [37] These words have been reproduced in "Espace TV" (May 1972), in *Jean Othé. Travaux vidéo 1970–1980*, exh. cat., Centre d'art contemporain, Geneva 1980, p. 1.

- [38] Jean Otth, introductory text to *Ombre A* (1972), in Jean Otth, *Travaux vidéo 1970–1980*, p. 59.
- [39] *Implosion, Musée expérimental 3: Otth, Grob, Huber, Urban, Zaugg, Bertin, Camesi, Gramse, Minkoff, Villalba, Olivotto, Kalkmann, Ducimetiere, Brocklehurst*, Musée cantonal des Beaux-Arts, Lausanne 1972.
- [40] Jean Otth, introductory text to *Autoportrait I* (1972), Jean Otth, *Travaux vidéo 1970–1980*, p. 19.
- [41] “Exercice IV de l’abécédaire télévisuel,” Irene Schubiger (ed.), *Reconstructing Swiss Video Art from the 1970s and 1980s*, JRP|Ringier, Zurich 2009, p. 92.
- [42] Jean Otth, *Autour du Concile de Nicée, Anarchbreve 4* (DVD edited by Anne-Marie Duguet), 2007.
- [43] *Regarder ailleurs: Jean Otth, Gina Pane, Gérard Titus-Carmel, Claude Viallat*, Palais de la Bourse, Bordeaux 1973.
- [44] Michel Thévoz, “Implosion,” *Implosion, Musée expérimental 3*, p. 1.
- [45] Vilém Flusser, “Les Miroirs de Minkoff,” *Implosion, Musée expérimental 3*, p. 41.
- [46] *Impact Art Vidéo Art 74*, Galerie Impact, Lausanne 1974, n. p.
- [47] This text was initially published in the *Impact Art Vidéo Art 74* catalogue, and was later reproduced in the volume edited by François Bovier and Adeena Mey, René Berger, *L’Art vidéo et autres essais (1971–1997)*, JRP|Ringier/Les Presses du réel, Zurich/Dijon 2014, p. 28–54.
- [48] *Ibid.*, p. 41.
- [49] *Ibid.*, p. 35.
- [50] Walter Benjamin, “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction,” Hannah Arendt (ed.) *Illuminations: Essays and Reflections*, trans. by Harry Zohn, Schocken/Random House, New York 1969, p. 240.
- [51] Jean Otth, “Les Limites (Interrogation sur les “réalités” de l’image)” (1973), Jean Otth, *Travaux vidéo 1970–1980*, p. 49.
- [52] René Berger, “Les mousquetaires de l’invisible: la vidéo-art en Suisse,” *Cinéma, Lausanne*, no. 4 (1977) (special issue “Vidéo & Cie”), p. 39–43. This text has been reproduced in the volume edited by François Bovier, Adeena Mey: René Berger, *L’Art vidéo et autres essais (1971–1997)*, p. 84–88.
- [53] *Ibid.*, p. 85.
- [54] *Ibid.*, p. 86.
- [55] *Ibid.*
- [56] René Berger, “Les installations vidéo: au carrefour des topiques,” *L’Art vidéo et autres essais (1971–1997)*, p. 100–108, here p. 107.
- [57] *Ibid.*
- [58] Kurt Lewin, *Principles of Topological Psychology* (1936), Martino Publishing, Eastford, Connecticut 2015.
- [59] “Quelques réponses aux questions de Maria-Gloria Bicochi” (February 1980), Jean Otth, *Travaux vidéo 1970–1980*, p. 3.
- [60] In 1981, René Berger founded the International Association for Video in Arts and Culture (AIVAC) and launched a series of talks at the Locarno VideoArt Festival.
- [61] See Jean-Michel Baconnier’s history in “BIM 2014: Des anciennes à la ‘nouvelle’ Biennale de l’Image en Mouvement,” *Décadrages, Cinéma, à travers champs*, no. 29–30 (Spring 2015), p. 225–238.
- [62] Since 2007, Association Trafic’s Home Cinéma, founded by artist Jean-Michel Baconnier in Lausanne, has designed its programs to redefine the inheritance of this history, and test out new screening formats such as websites thus exploring the connections between the arts and digital technology. See H. C. 2.0: <http://www.trafic.li/home-cinema-2-0.php> (last accessed March 2020).