



STEINA AND WOODY VASULKA are known as pioneers (people who stumble over images when there is no one else to do it) of electronic/video art. Santa Fe has been the Vasulkas' home base since 1980. Their video works are shown almost exclusively in Europe, except for the occasional show in New York, San Francisco, and the Center for Contemporary Art in Santa Fe.

ON VIDEO

STEINA: Video is a most interesting art form, but by now it's almost as obsolete as painting. Soon there will be no video left—it's all moving to computers.

WOODY: Video is the redefinition of dramatic spaces which equals transformation.

STEINA: In our work we have tracked the evolution of video tools.



Photo: Guy Cross

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that decides what and which
of these characters called artists
will be rewarded and given charms,
and which will be dropped.*

ON ART

STEINA: Art talks to the abstract part of your being. Deep down I think art is emotional—when it moves you to tears—but I really like the intellectual aspect.

WOODY: Being an artist is an attitude—it's a lifestyle.

STEINA: In all shamelessness, I like my art. After the first shock of nobody else liking it, I find I like it again. I call myself an artist by default. What else can I call myself? A plumber? A lawyer? A teacher? So I call myself an artist.

So, I'm an artist, I guess.

WOODY: In Europe, a person is called an artist when the community decides this is so. In America, a person declares himself or herself an artist.

ON LIFE, DEATH, REALITY, MUSES, & PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

WOODY: The evolution of one's work is mysterious.

STEINA: We don't look organized, but we are. Before every new project we take two weeks to clean our rooms.

WOODY: Muses are real. It's the metaphysical world, not the galleries, that decides what and which of these characters called artists will be rewarded and given charms, and which will be dropped. This is different than the gallery. The artist always knows when the muse is gone. Talent is divine. It can't be understood. It must be given.

STEINA: Of all of life's entrapments, I would like to be entrapped in enlightenment...

WOODY: Steina is unconventional...she has no education in picture-making. She composes each image as a voice. She comes from music, and her pictorial compositions come from musical composition.

STEINA: I trust his judgement.

WOODY: We started out in Prague where we met in the early 60s.

STEINA: We met when I was in school in Prague. I asked Woody to fix my motorcycle and realized that my motorcycle would need a lot of repairs. We had one big loft in New York. After hours and hours of working at different ends of the loft, we would meet for a cup of tea. We've always had the ability to work this way. Now we have separate studios here in Santa Fe.

WOODY: Death is a continuous awareness of the oncoming ravages of old age—especially the last two years. I question myself: did I do well, was I wise? A moment of experience is worth another day of life.

STEINA: Death is always here...it's always with me.

WOODY: Now each element is integrated by design and tied together by software.

STEINA: We take the abstract and create a narrative which only the abstract mind understands.

WOODY: We juggle images and sounds. We create an environment of voices, music, robotics, and video.

STEINA: We craft everything ourselves. Others (artists) don't have the time for this, so they design the project and have others craft it.