

Rapture (1987, 3/4" or VHS tape, color, sound, 20 min)

A pseudo "rock video" which will never be shown on MTV. There are often visual resemblances between grief and joy and between mystical experiences and the varieties of body contortions of convulsive psychotic states (just as there can be a fine line between the "beautiful" and the "repulsive"--some of Goya's late monster paintings are an example). "Rapture" is defined as a state of being ecstatically carried away. There is a thin line which I attempt to portray in these tableaux, the border line between the sublime and the repulsive. I wish to have the viewer respond to the tape in an intense but very ambiguous way.

One interesting example of the relation of convulsive and ecstatic states is found in the similarities of brain waves of advanced Zen monks, at satori peak levels, and epileptics having grand mal seizures. At the onset of both the satori and seizure states there are greatly amplified alpha waves, which, at certain points of intensity, shift to high amplitude theta waves. The difference between these nearly identical patterns is that all of the epileptic's brain waves become synchronized and his/her mind is flooded while the Zen monk is trained to allow only one region of the brain to move into a deep theta state and the monk will not visually exhibit any body convulsions. Also, aside from Christian literature stating such things as St. Theresa lifting off the ground in ecstasy, it is well known that shamans, voodoo practitioners, et al. are known to self-induce physical states which resemble convulsions and who for purposes of religious ecstasy/catharsis/insight often collapse after muscular spasms. Perhaps the notion of catharsis is applicable in some of these rites.

At the technical level, the chief post-production tool was the ADO (Ampex Digital Optics), a 2-channel digital video synchronizer which digitizes the entire screen image, allowing one to control size, shape, direction, movement, etc. of the whole picture. This is a device often used in T.V. commercials but is an "effect" which is used as one gimmick among many other electro-gimmicks. I've tried to use it as a creative device and to articulate it in a more extensive and meaningful way.

"A fierce vision of Dionysian ecstasy"--C.E.P.A., Buffalo

Selected for inclusion in "INFERMENTAL 7" (Travelling exhibition of world video.

"38th International Filmfest spiele Berlin" February 12-23. 1988

"Offensive Video Kunst", Dortmund, West Germany, Jan. 17, 1988 (the 2½ hour anthology will travel to other German cities).

FILM AND VIDEO

CEPA VIDEO PROGRAM

Tuesday, November 17 at 8:00 PM (Free)

The World Premier of a major new video work by **PAUL SHARITS!**

RAPTURE (1987, 17 minutes, VHS Videotape)

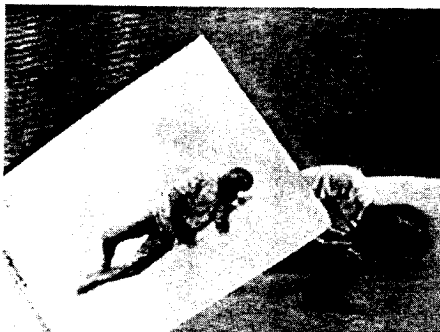
RAPTURE is a fierce vision of a Dionysian experience, a tightly controlled visual statement about the abandonment of self to heightened transportive states. It is also an exploration of the similarity between "religious" and "visionary" ecstasy and psychotic states.

"Very rapidly altering frames of different colors in a video can produce an apparent infinity of iridescent color "chords," shimmering time-color fields. Sequential tensions and balances of these chords and solid units of a color characterize the leitmotif of this tape."

"The only special effect used in this tape is the Ampex Digital Optics Computer which digitizes whole image frames and controls their movement, size and location on the screen. This device was employed to perform a common digital articulation of the picture plane in a way that is more creative than is usually employed in broadcast TV, commercials and so on, rather it has been manipulated as a truly expressive tool rather than a mere gimmick."

— Paul Sharits

RAPTURE is dedicated to Kate Manheim. RAPTURE features Paul Sharits and Bob Hewitt as actors, Scott Sweeny as editor, and Jim Santella on camera. The text was written by Paul Sharits and was narrated by Nastasha Norelli. RAPTURE features music by HEMORRHAGE, a group which includes Roger Bourdeau on drums, Keith McCormick on guitar, George Scherer on bass/vocals and Scott Sweeny on keyboards. RAPTURE was made at the Educational Communications Center and the Electronic Music Studio at the State University of New York at Buffalo with post production at TELESIS in Rochester, New York.



Paul Sharits is an internationally respected artist whose creative efforts span two decades of pioneer filmmaking. In addition Sharits is recognized as an innovative painter and RAPTURE is his debut effort in video. Paul Sharits is a professor of film at the State University of New York at Buffalo's Center for Media Study. Sharits work has been exhibited at the Whitney Biennial, the Museum of Modern Art, the Long Beach Museum of Contemporary Art, the Albright Knox Art Gallery and numerous other important venues. CEPA would like to thank Paul Sharits for the opportunity to present the world premier of this important new work of art.



Tuesday, November 17 at 8:30 PM (Free)

SATANISM IN BUFFALO (1986, 45 min., VHS Videotape)



SATANISM IN BUFFALO is a videotaped lecture by Tom Hinchey of the Town of Kenmore Police Department (a suburb of Buffalo) about the relationship between juvenile delinquency, drug abuse and the occult presented at Villa Maria College to the student body.

"Satanic Cults in our own backyards? The devil and the teenager? Is it the music, or the drugs, or the banality of the middle-class lifestyle of the suburbs, or is it perhaps 80's angst about a bleak postnuclear future, that has caused Satan to tighten his hairy grip on the souls of today's youth? This videotaped lecture reveals real eyewitness accounts of bizarre rituals, drug crazed mayhem, occult related crime, and even murder occurring in our own neighborhoods! This is a video program which must be seen to be believed!"

— Patty Wallace

5 PART AMIGA GRAPHICS WORKSHOP with PETER BABULA

A fee of \$5.00 for each session will be charged (Limit 10 participants in each session — advanced registration required).

Saturday, October 31, 12:00 - 4:00 PM

Introduction to the AMIGA

Saturday, November 7, 12:00 - 4:00 PM

Paint Program Basics plus Digitizing and Processing

Saturday, November 14, 12:00 - 4:00 PM

Advanced Paint Program

Saturday, December 5, 12:00 - 4:00 PM

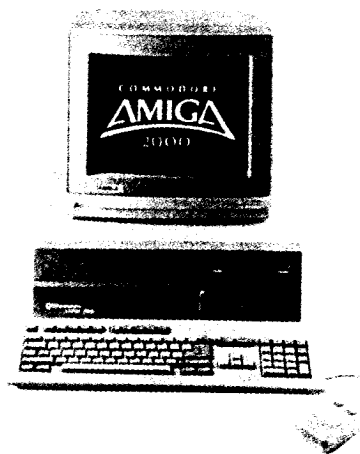
Deluxe Video plus Animation Basics

Saturday, December 12, 12:00 - 4:00 PM

Advanced Animation

This workshop will be conducted on CEPA's new AMIGA 2000 computer which is equipped with 2.5 meg of RAM and numerous graphics options.

Peter Babula is a Buffalo computer artist, film & video maker and is also a graduate of Kent State University.



PASSARE I video, color, silent, 30 minutes

This and other chapters of Passare were intended to be films; however, after making the videotape Rapture (1987), I came to appreciate the special color luminosity of video. I am now using an Amega 500 to program the articulation of time-color. Because of the small size of video monitors, I recommend small, chamber viewing of the work; the viewing space should be darkened.

Passare I is only the first of many more 30 minute "chapters," many of which are basically planned but not yet precisely "scored." I want these pieces to be aesthetically delightful for the viewer, to provide an experience like classical music (although the videotapes will be silent). Passare will be the most complex and intricate work I've ever done.

While composed of pure/blank color frames (often "flickering"), it is not at all related to "structural film;" there is not a predetermined overall structure or any looping, or other "features" of "structural film." The work, in its entire form, will be related to a novel, with a beginning, a middle, but not an end (until I end). This is an "abstract narrative" or chronicle.

The tape moves from "episode to episode" (different lengths and moods/ rhythms/melodies) without any apparent cause-effect, like life itself, which passes on ("passare"--to pass, to pass on) from one unpredictable event/emotion to another. Each "episode" is based upon some feeling, event, or place and is aesthetically resolved; but there are no links from one episode to another. The episodes may be as short as one second or as long as ten minutes; each is my subjective interpretation of actual incidents, places, feelings, etc. into the terms of pure temporal color. Everything is in actual chronological order. One could regard the work as an "abstract chronicle" but my own sense of it is as an "abstract narrative" (because it does not "document" every experience but represents my editorial choice of which "scenes" to omit and/or include, join together. It is not important that the viewer "know" what any of the "episodes" represent; however, it is hoped that the viewer will have a strong sense that a life-like series of "scenes-emotions-psychological states" is moving along. (This is a quality we are familiar with in music of the Romantic Era and in various impressionist or expressionist musical "tone poems"--we sense that there is a drama or narrative going on but we are unable to translate it into words, into a definite story; I believe successions of pure color video "frames" can also suggest this sense of reality-life/narrative.)

millennium

FILM WORKSHOP INC.

66 EAST 4th STREET, NEW YORK, N. Y. 10003

(212) 673-0090

JUNE 2 (Sat.) PAUL SHARITS

"DECLARATIVE MODE" (42 min.)—1978, "INFERENTIAL CURRENT" (8 min.)—1971, and "TAILS" (4 min.)—1976. Paul Sharits has been releasing films since the mid-Sixties. He had his first one-person show at Millennium ten years ago, in 1969. He teaches film at SUNY at Buffalo at this time. A recent issue of *Film Culture Magazine* (No. 65-66, 1978) was devoted to his films and theoretical writings.

Despite variations in stress and structure, all his films, related drawings and "frozen film frame" works are unified by their concentration on uniquely filmic processes and/or materials. This inherently modernist attempt to determine and use only the basic features of the medium has been characteristic of his concerns from their earliest incarnation. His explanatory statement prepared for the Fourth International Experimental Film Festival at Knokke-Le-Zoute remains a comprehensive summary of his aims.

I wish to abandon imitation and illusion and enter directly into the higher drama of: celluloid, two dimensional strips; individual rectangular frames; the nature of sprockets and emulsion; projector operations; the three dimensional light beam; environmental illumination; the two dimensional reflective screen surface; the retinal screen; optic nerve and individual psycho-physical subjectivities of consciousness. In this cinematic drama, light is energy rather than a tool for the representation of non-filmic objects; light as energy, is released to create its own objects, shapes and textures. Given the fact of retinal inertia and the flickering shutter mechanism of film projection, one may generate virtual forms, create actual motion (rather than illustrate it), build actual color-space (rather than picture it), and be involved in actual time (immediate presence).¹⁰

Despite Sharits' dedication to modernist principles, however, his films are never bluntly didactic. Though comprehensively and systematically organized by an abstract schema drawn up in advance,¹¹ his films cannot be reduced to a mere rendering of the formal procedures constituting the work. Experiencing their sensual complexity remains an integral part of the films' statements. His cinema is ultimately less committed to an analytic reflection on the materials, filmic processes and psychological conditions of the medium than they are to celebrating the intricacy and variety of their combinations and consequences. To paraphrase Roland Barthes' characterization of the ancient soothsayer: Sharits is content to speak the locus of filmic meaning but will not name it.¹²

* FROM A REVIEW IN —

MILLENNIUM FILM JOURNAL Vol. 1, No. 2

STUART LIEBMAN Apparent Motion and Film
Structure: Paul Sharits' Shutter
Interface



**ALBRIGHT-KNOX ART GALLERY
FILMS AND LECTURES SERIES
IN CONJUNCTION WITH
PAUL SHARITS: DREAM DISPLACEMENT AND OTHER PROJECTS
8:30 p.m. Auditorium**

FILMS

The artist will be present at the screenings

OCT. MON. 4 **Razor Blades**, 1965-68, color and black and white, stereo sound, 25 minutes, two-screen projection
Ray Gun, 1966, color, sound, 14 minutes
Piece Mandala/End War, 1966, color, silent, 5 minutes
Word Movie/Fluxfilm 29, 1966, color, sound, 3¼ minutes
T,O,U,C,H,I,N,G, 1968, color, sound, 12 minutes
Inferential Current, 1971, color, sound, 8 minutes

OCT. MON. 11 **N:O:T:H:I:N:G**, 1968, color, sound, 36 minutes
S:TREAM:S:S:ECTION:S:SECTION:S:SECTIONED, 1968-70, color, sound, 42 minutes

OCT. TUES. 12 **Analytical Studies I: The Film Frame**, 1971-76, color, silent, 30 minutes
Axiomatic Granularity, 1972-73, color, sound, 20 minutes
Analytical Studies III: Color Frame Passages, 1973-74, color, silent, 30 minutes

OCT. MON. 18 **Apparent Motion**, 1975, color, silent, 36 minutes
Color Sound Frames, 1974, color, sound, 26½ minutes
Tails, 1976, color, silent, 4 minutes

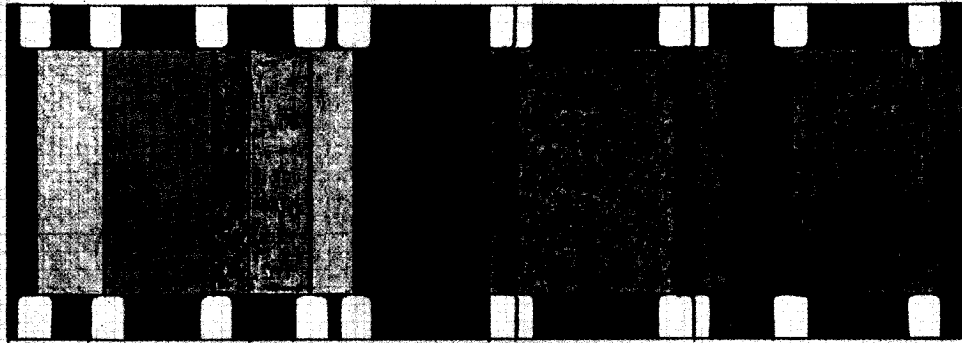
LECTURES

OCT. TUES. 5 TONY CONRAD, Artist in residence at The Center for Media Study, State University of New York at Buffalo and at Media Study Buffalo
PAUL SHARITS: PRESCRIPTION AND COLLAPSED TEMPORALITY

OCT. THURS. 14 LIZZIE BORDEN, Critic and filmmaker
SOME QUESTIONS ABOUT FILM, CONTENT, ART AND SOCIAL STRUCTURE

OCT. TUES. 19 STANDISH LAWDER, Filmmaker and Chairman of the Department of Visual Arts, University of California at San Diego
PAUL SHARITS: IMAGE AND ILLUSION

These programs are made possible by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, Washington, D.C., a Federal agency.



each screen is composed of a slow rate of movement of "specimen II" in one direction, superimposed with similarly slow-moving images of "specimen II" moving in the opposite direction. slight variations in rate of frame passage generates, in oppositional superimposition, a constant emergent expansion and contraction of color areas; frame images from one screen seem to slide into adjacent screens. A suspicious "presence". Brandy glasses falling-shattering, displacing attention, like a dream, etc.

Dream Displacement/Location (10x30)

Paul Sharits '75

The President and Board of Directors of The Buffalo Fine Arts Academy cordially invite you to the Members' Preview of the exhibition

PAUL SHARITS: DREAM DISPLACEMENT AND OTHER PROJECTS

Monday, September 27, 1976

8:30 - 11 p.m.

Albright-Knox Art Gallery

This invitation admits two. Please present at door.

The exhibition will continue through October 31, 1976

2-19-88

Dear Woody & Steina,

How great that you've been in Japan (I've tried about 3 times & always get to the semi-finals & then get bumped - I imagine that's because I have a bad reputation).

Still painting but feel like shifting my attention to ----- video (!)
I have recently bought an Arnegz 500 & trying to learn it. I'm going to send you a tape I did last year - RAPTURE (kinda odd - not what I intend to pursue --- but it is in Infermental &, under other auspices, will be in Berlin Festival. Hopefully, by the time you ~~the~~ read this, it will be in other shows) - I am sending you a copy of it. I hope you will give me a good letter of recommendation for Guggenheim (I'm so sick of being rejected over & over & over again for "film"). I want to do some intricate color field type stuff & am thinking about multiple monitor pieces.

The tragic history of the "Vasulka Electronic Color Generator has been taxing (& very expensive) - finally, after changing R&B filters and buying an IBMPC (now Tony Conradi's) etc etc etc --- horrible - so, my last assistant Henry Tesionka (very good young artist & very good with equipment) said he just

couldn't get it work right. Now it
may be that I can get it workable
if I find some genius (+ if I get
some software from David Held) +
can interface with Arnezka.

I'm going to Berlin DAAD this
summer — will work on some more
scores for my PASSARE series / "novel."
Passare, score for "part I" was done in Italy when
we had the sabbatical — 1979? I did the
next 30 minute chapter last spring 1987 in
TAMMNASSEE, on leave of absence. I need
large blocks of time to concentrate on
these scores — — — And it will take a long
time for me (no assistants) to translate the
scores on to disc. Because of TV set sizes,
these works will have to be seen only
in darkened, chamber-type context — — —
otherwise it will just look like a blinking
box.

Certainly do miss you both — what more
can I say? well, I hope you are well
& happy

Light,
Paul