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Woody & Steina Vasuika
Santa Fe, New Mexico

Dear Woody & Steina,

You may remember the book that I talked to Woody about briefly in Venice. It has now expanded into a big fat book, 100 illustrations, mostly in color, into an exhibit at the Museum of Art and Science, La Villette, of the ten artists in the book, and a video disk of a selection of everybody's work. There will probably also be a series of television broadcasts of work. I hope it will be a very major statement on the artistic creation of the medium of electronics, and I seem to have the support to make it happen. All the artists have agreed, so I think it will be a very important event, a milestone.

I'm writing now most urgently for the exposition. The dates are May-June, 1988, a year and a half from now. What I need as soon as possible, no later than the end of February, is a proposal for two installations. It could even be more if you wish, except that that seems like a lot to do. I hope to be able to do two from each person and since you are listed separately in the book, that could mean two from each. I will leave it up to you. I would like things that have not been seen here, and wherever possible new works done for this exhibit. I'm looking for installations that will reveal the specific nature of the medium, underlining the differences from other art forms in the treatment of time, space and duration, and the transformation of reality taking place in the work.

I would like pieces that can be presented in the open in order to create an ensemble of work rather than a series of black rooms visited by a few people at a time. This will obviously have an influence on lighting and sound. The space is the north end of the "Grande Halle" at La Villette, if you ever saw it. We will have approximately 3,000 square meters of space. I am going after a single video manufacturer for support to have a unity in the design of the tools in the show. I hope to have an overall landscape designer to give it an extra visual dimension and unity. What I want is a Japanese gardener to finish off the space, not necessarily a garden, but a decor in that spirit, lending an element of space which I think is very similar to the notion of space in video, the same kind of abstraction and participation of the spectator.

What I need for each piece is a description with a drawing or photo if possible, a technical list, an approximate budget including all fees, the amount of time you need here to install it, and some bio. We are going to do a brochure very rapidly in order to sell the show. I hope to have sponsorship from Japan, and the show may travel there. La Villette is going to try to interest Barcelona and at least one city in Germany and maybe England. This part is vague for the time being.

We are still searching for a name, if you have any great ideas.

The book will be published by Denoël in time for the show. My text will describe the change in the definition of matter and universe that underlies our time, and the fact that we are moving out of a view of the world based on a mechanical universe to one based on the notion of interactive process. I will rely on definitions of quantum physics, probability theory and complementarity to support that idea. You've heard me go into it before. Each artist would have his own text of 5 to 10 typed pages on the philosophical base of his own creativity and the world view from which he functions. Each will have the same number of illustrations, which can be photos of work, drawings, future projects, anything that will help explain the base from which he works. I would like an article from each of you, since I think your approaches are different and both very strong. What I would like the work to show is, while remaining in the broad tradition of artistic creation, artists in electronics are working from a different base, a different world view, a different concept of nature, which I think is closer to the truth as presently understood and more nuanced than other media of creation.

I am requesting payment for each artist for each stage of the project. I have not yet signed a full agreement with the publisher, so don't do anything on the article, except think about it, until I get back with a concrete agreement. The same will be true for the video disk, and if we get any other countries involved in any of the three elements. The entire project will cost a considerable amount of money. There will be funding, not unlimited amounts, but I think reasonable support for each part.

The main reason I have had the reaction I've had is that everyone here recognizes that there is not yet a book that attempts to describe the philosophical base of this kind of artistic expression, and whether this book supplies it or not, it will kick off the debate. Properly done this can be an extremely important starting point, the kind of work that has been needed for a long time. All of you have made the medium what it is artistically and that's what makes me really excited about the project and totally involved in making it happen as well as possible. I am looking forward to all of us working together again.

If all goes well, I hope to be in the States in August, coming through Santa Fe to see you and discuss the details for the exhibit and the book. Will you be there? We're going to Buffalo for Christmas. Sylvie and her son have never seen snow like that. Everyone should experience it once in their life. Possibly no more than that.

Everybody is fine here. Jon just changed his major at the U. of Mass. from philosophy to film and video. Read what you wish into that. Giulie has just been accepted at the Boston Museum School of Art. Another wasted life. Bob is becoming a video cameraman. Inevitable I suppose.

All the very best for the new year to you both. Hope to hear from you soon. I really look forward to visiting Santa Fe again, so I hope you will be there.

love,

Don Foresta

P.S. I lost your address as you can see, and had to come to Buffalo to get it. I'll be in touch by phone soon.