

INTERCONNECTION AND NETWORKING
OF ARTS ORGANIZATIONS IN
NEW YORK STATE

Preparation for a Study

For discussion at:

Whitney Museum, April 1, 1974 meeting of
video production groups supported by the
New York State Council on the Arts

Video and the Museum, Everson Museum,
April 4-6, 1974, a discussion of a
museum video network

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This summer, Innervision Media Systems will undertake a study of the video interconnection possibilities for arts organizations in New York State. With Technical Assistance support from the New York State Council on the Arts, Innervision will serve as coordinators and actively encourage the participation of all interested parties in the gathering of information and the planning and implementation of a program including experimentation. It will concentrate on both electronic interconnection and tape distribution systems for the use of production facilities, experimental centers, museums, galleries and libraries.

The report you are now reading contains no final recommendations on the subject of video interconnection. Rather it reflects some initial findings and most importantly it briefly describes a field of factors we hope to take into consideration.

For the purposes of stimulating discussion, this draft is prepared primarily for two important events in the first week of April 1974. An April 1 meeting for video production centers supported by the New York State Council on the Arts will be held at the Whitney Museum. The possibilities for interconnection should have an influence on a discussion of cooperation among video groups, a stated priority for that meeting. As part of a large conference on "Video and the Museum" to be held at the Everson Museum on April 4-6, this report is intended to provide some background for the discussion of museum video networking. Our hope is to integrate feedback from both discussions as well as to begin active relationships among people and organizations interested in a higher level of interdependence.

Gooperation

In a 1973 publication of the Legislative Commission on Expenditure Review entitled "Educational Television in New York State," the lack of coordination among all State organizations is strongly criticized. The Commission, which reviews State programs for the purpose of aiding legislators in making spending decisions, adds that, "If this fragmented approach continues, it is difficult to ascertain how both the technological opportunities and the State's classroom and cultural production needs can be effectively met." I am not suggesting that arts organizations necessarily take on the task of Statewide coordination. However, it is important that arts organizations develop a proposal which indicates how its uses of an interconnection system might also contribute to a synergism in the whole State media environment.

Few, if any, states have witnessed the kind of evolution in video, the arts and educational television that continues to be present in New York. The simultaneous existence of many different uses of video in the state creates new uses that transform the original structures. In the same way, electronic media generally, and increased interconnection specifically, defy our ability to categorize and contain. For example, what becomes the role of the museum video gallery if the curator could make everyone's home into a gallery by using cable television? How is this different than the function of a library? The interconnection study for arts organizations will attempt to look as broadly as possible into the many uses of video in New York and at the organizations and technologies that continually revise the future of those uses.

There is much that has been learned by artists, arts organizations and video groups in New York that may be ready to have an impact on the larger media environment. Interconnection between museums, production facilities, broadcast and cable television systems can both be of great use to the arts organizations and at the same time these extended systems can now benefit from the experience of the artist. Some arts programs have no need for systems that reach out to large numbers of people, whereas others can best grow within interactive systems that permeate the culture which generates new stimuli for the artist.

The need to work with expanded systems is matched by a new set of capabilities among the artists and the technologies they use. Sophistication of both process and product, the ability to broadcast half-inch video formats, the new commitment by museums to video as an art form and the growing potential of cable television all present the realization of a new environment by the people who have worked hardest at its redefinition. Fortunately, New York contains many individuals and groups who have refused to re-enforce the traditional categorization of art, systems and information science, community and service oriented video, etc, etc.

A Tentative Proposal

Based on our contact with other video groups and the level of interest among other State Agencies, we foresee networking possibilities as continually growing. In the next year, our first consideration includes an experimental use of the New York Network and public television stations around the state. The Network headquarters at Albany exists to serve the needs of State Agencies, which of course includes the Arts Council. Mr. Chase, the Network's director, expressed interest and explained how the Network headquarters could be used as the most economical origination location for tapes produced by video groups who receive Council funding. Of course, the participation of the State's educational broadcasters is necessary, which creates the need for local grassroots activity.

A regular program might eventually be put together after the normal broadcast day is over. Our ideas include a live, real-time interactive experiment with production centers gen-locked to each other over the Network Microwave system. Origination locations could either be at the experimental centers or the ETV studios, depending on the relationship with each group and the cost of studio time vs. phone company line rental. Tape playback or live origination from the Network studio in Albany would be considerably easier. The shape of this project should be determined by the Council funded production groups as a whole.

limited to these groups?

The Long Term Study

*get their materials
+ functions
etc*

The major portion of our study will explore a total approach to microwave networks, PTV and cable television systems.

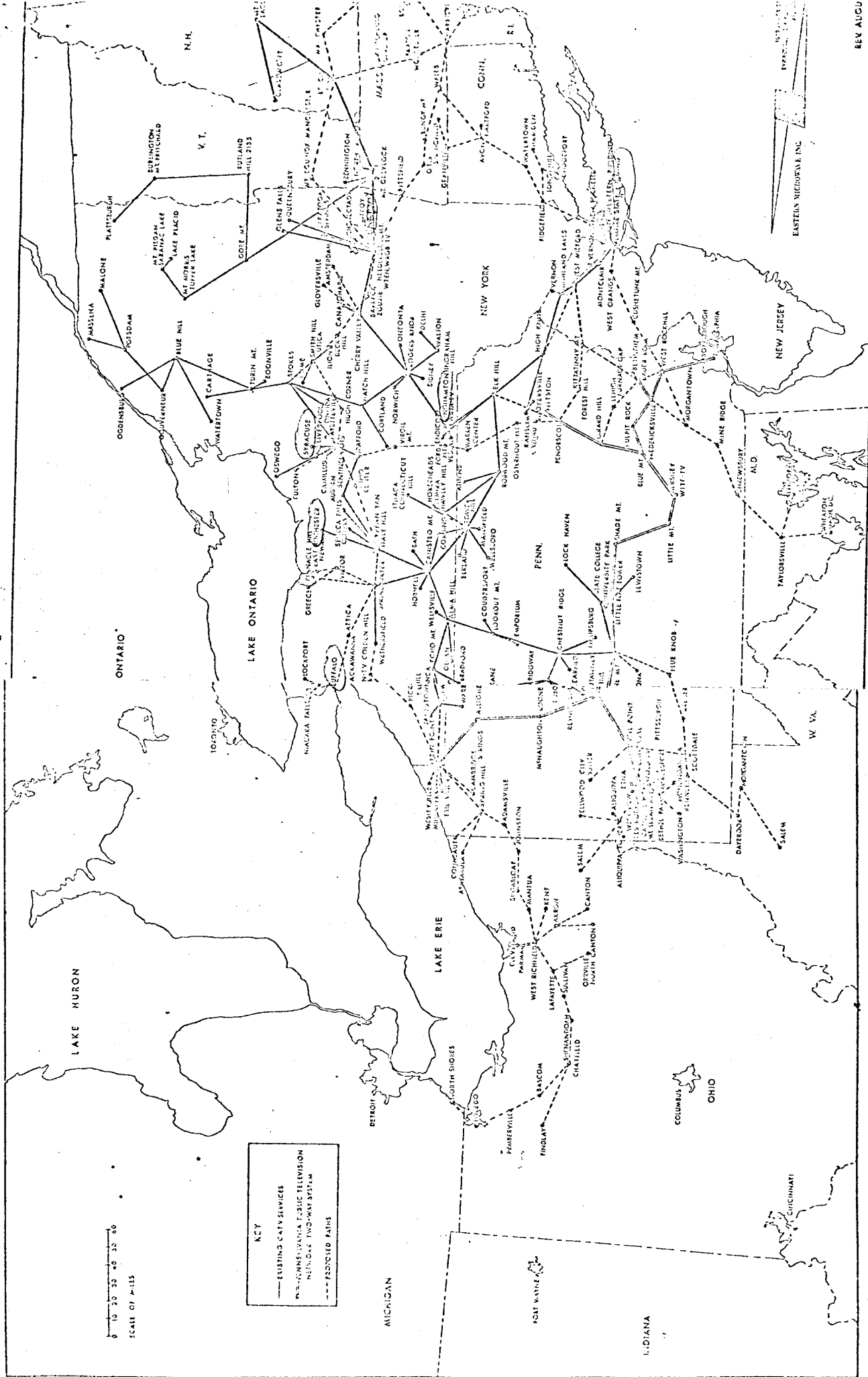
The New York State Cable Television Commission and the New York Network are close to the aspirations of many video groups and continue to be of visionary assistance.

Another State Agency has established a precedent which should be of great interest to video groups. The SUNY Library Services office has organized a growing number of bibliographic data bases with real-time computers for the purpose of random access retrieval by any institution in the state.

ERIC, Psychological Abstracts, several medical bibliographic data bases and the Ohio College Library Center bibliography, to mention only a few, are soon to be on-line. This existing information network is by no means the extent of their plans. An upcoming proposal will extend the function of the library system to cover the storage and retrieval of all forms of information, regardless of its format.

Even

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KEY

- EXISTING CABLE SERVICES
- - - PENNSYLVANIA PUBLIC TELEVISION NETWORK TWO-WAY SYSTEM
- - - PROPOSED PATHS

0 10 20 30 40 50
SCALE OF MILES

CINCINNATI

COLUMBUS
OHIO

INDIANA

INDY

MICHIGAN

OHIO

W. VA.

NEW JERSEY

NEW YORK

ONTARIO

N.H.

V.T.

EASTERN WIRELESS, INC.

CINCINNATI

COLUMBUS
OHIO

INDIANA

INDY

MICHIGAN

OHIO

W. VA.

NEW JERSEY

NEW YORK

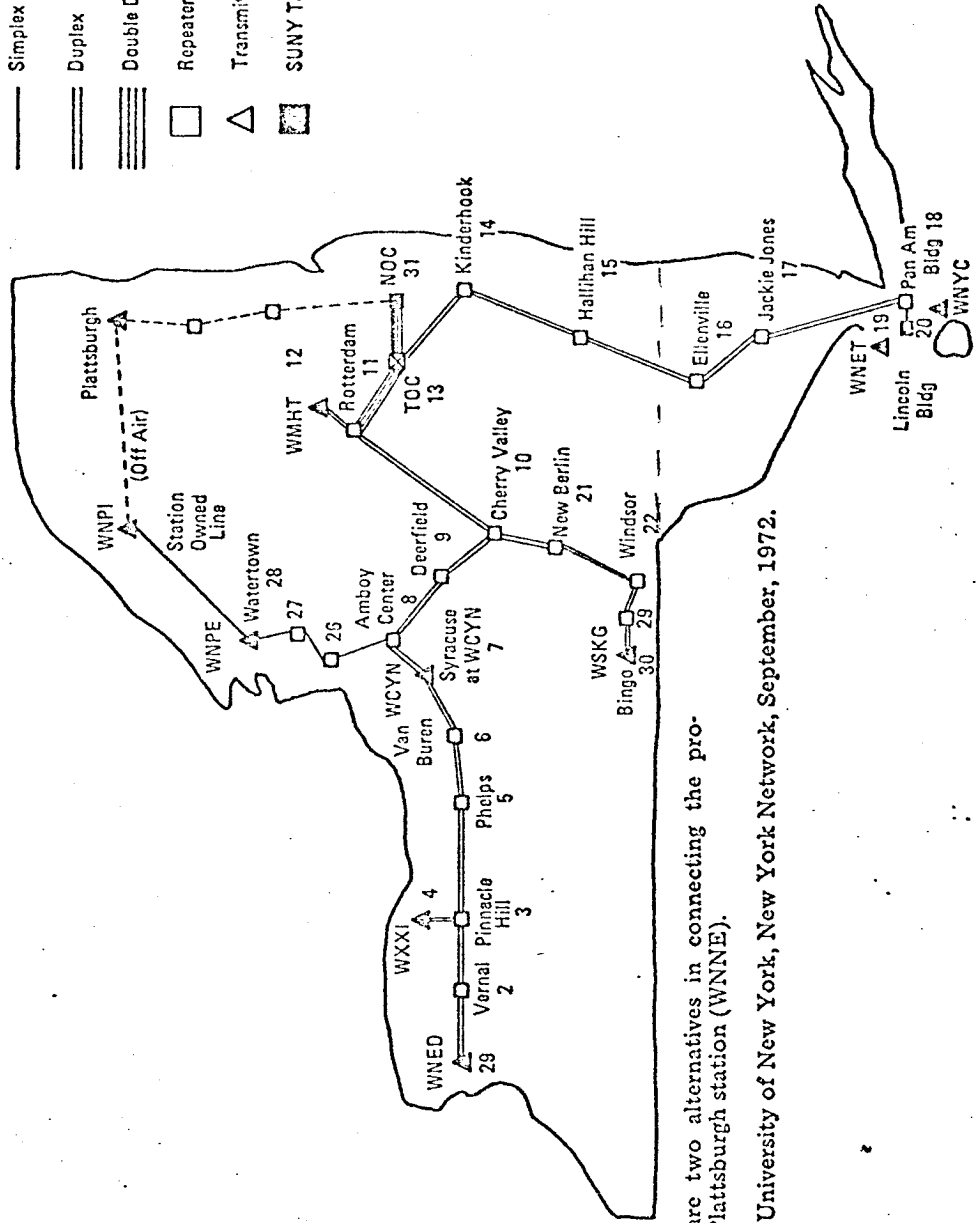
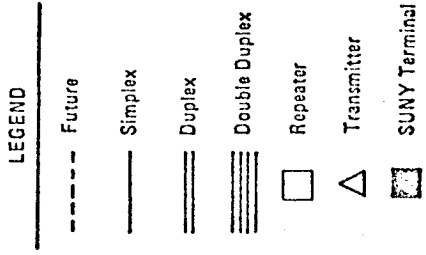
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EASTERN WIRELESS, INC.

Map 2
 New York Network
 System of Microwave Repeaters
 September, 1972



Note: There are two alternatives in connecting the projected Plattsburgh station (WNNE).

Source: State University of New York, New York Network, September, 1972.