

2

MINOR WHITE - / ...
UNDA BATHCANT - 1 - AUG 29, 1972. Buffalo, N.Y.

(C) Starting with your birth, in 1937, uneventful youth?

(W) No, the war was very eventful.

(C) And you were six, was that what you said? When it ended?

(W) I was about seven years at the end.

(C) And you remember the equipment?

(W) I remember the life during the war, because, as a kid, you have certain sensitivities, you may not remember exactly certain things, but other things you do remember. So

I guess the war had been an overpowering experience. I don't think I had, except video, had any other overwhelming experience since. I mean the equipment, no doubt was

to the family tradition, my father had always workshop home, so I understand what his tools meant to a singular person. He was a good craftsman in metal. so through that and then through the resource of the war, after the war the

whole Europe was a junkyard, where ^{we} ~~he~~ would find great dumps full of war equipment, or ^{human} limbs all in one pile, so ^{we} ~~he~~ could go through it, and see the whole anthropology of war. So that's what

I was doing all the post-war period. During the occupation. I was very much interested to examine the remains of the war.

(C) Then you studied metallurgy and mechanics as part of the family.

(W) That was an intrinsic error, I would say, yes, because I was practically accustomed to working with tools and pieces of metal and some basic electrical systems but mentally I wasn't able to comprehend mathematical systems, principles, that is, if you want to practice, professionally

(W) usually you have to justify by means of a calculation, if you are an engineer, you have to calculate it a bridge before it falls down. so I could never master that part. I was continuously interested in ~~literature~~ ^{literature.} since that time onward.

(C) Were you reading poetry, or writing poetry?

[(W) Yes I started to write poetry, about the middle of my school of engineering, which was...

(C) We have 52 you started, but I don't know when you graduated,

(W) 52, It took me four years, that would be like 57,

(C) So this was a university,

(W) Yes, after high school, the fours years, I guess it would be here a university level.

(C) So you probably graduated in 56-57?

W) Yes.

(C) And then, you must have been also simultaneously interested in music, if you were a jazz critic for this newspaper.

(W) Yes, I mean, as a child, I was forced to play violin, almost a tragedy of a jewish kid, which I wasn't of course, but, it was a cultural thing, so like, kids are forced to play, and part of my environment was still this Austro-Hungarian kind of flavor to our views about education, so, I couldn't really... again, I could play empirically, like a melody, but I was very bad on reading it ^{code} ~~code~~, which was the music. It was very much what happened to me in mathematics. I was good in geometry, from geometry I was totally unable to cope with arithmetics. And in playing music, like jazz,

was the source of kind of a new esthetics, but of course jazz at that time in Europe was very popular thing, among new intellectuals, because it was almost opposite to the established culture, even _____ and modern music, because Jazz was a critical body that could possibly escape this popular acceptance. for which it _____ culture.

(C) So you had less music lessons. Did you have any art training at all, as a child?

(W) As a child, no. There were a few introductions to music, introductions to painting and drawing, but,...

(C) no lessons?

(W) Never, at no time had I ever shown a desire for lessons.

(C) So then, that was the end of your formal education, this engineering school.

(W) Yes, and I was yes that was it.

(C) And then you went out to work, and you were various things, you worked in a factory, and you were a critic for a newspaper,

[(W) But I went into the military service, which I should have put down.

(C) Not in here.

(W) Should I put it down, is it important.?

(C) How long was it?

(W) Two years.

(C) We can incorporate it. But you never took seriously the idea of being an engineer? You didn't think it would be your career?

(W) The total joke of my life that I would ever become a serious person who fits into a factory for example.

(C) How did you support yourself, for example, in 1960, you were at the

academy of Performing Arts.

(W) Oh, everything back home is supported by the state.

(C) So as long as you were a student...?

(W) Yes, with a scholarship and a grant.

(C) And you lived with your family...?

(W) No I left my home town, which is ~~Berno~~^{Berno}, I went to Prague.

but I was in a way, I lived in a hostel, or whatever, student place, infact met ~~Skina~~^{Skina} there. but once you are in an institution, you are sort of taken care of.

(C) And Prague was always a center of new activity in, wasn't it?

(W) Yes, but coming from Moravia, you see there's this kind a of a micro-
_____ relationship of cultural misunderstandings. Like Prague of course, has always recognized it so far as the center of the culture. yet, coming from Moravia, and Moravia had contributed tremendously, to the music and peotry for example, in the overall culture, that the Prague language seemed like, ^{the dialect,} sounds very artificial, to newcomers from Moravia, and especially the newcomers from Slovakia, who have a different language, so this cultural pressure, and also this overall, cultural arrogance of Prague, always reflected back on its provinces. I never took that seriously, but artificially, I engaged myself in these policies of irritation, of these established qualities, like Prague culture. But fortunately what I was interested in was more poetry than Moravia bred a substantial amount of significant poets, modernistic poets, which in a way dominated that time.

(C) You were still most interested in studying poetry when you entered this Academy.

(W) I would say I was interested, I found out, and I found poetry to be

the most interesting art form or genre, of all the art forms and all the genres and all the culture. And I still find it this way, and if I don't practice it, verbally, I still believe that I could. The modes of expression, are possible, the transformation of images, or state of existing, or a cause, of music, these things, I recognize in poetry the most powerful. So you can, you see, in process, you always have people that walk, with two legs, and two hands, in poetry you can have, wings, You can transform into anything in an instance, That kind of power is fascinating to me.

(C) So this is then, when you began to meet people who were involved in film, and become familiar with film equipment? In the sixties, beginning in 1960?

(W) You see, I got into the school, on my book of poetry, which has never been published and my photographs, I started to when I was in Berno hometown, I started to photograph, mostly, I don't know, traditional nostalgic, suburban scenes also a lot of industrial structures like factories, this kind of urban decay. So these materials that I got admitted into a film school, was my portfolio. [But I saw film, and I still see film, as extended literature. A kind of a literature practiced in space, a spacial way. At that time I also started to practice prosaic work, and I started to write, trying to figure out large formal structures, but I could never arrive at a larger form than a short story. I had written several short stories, dozens of short stories, But film, even in that time of European thinking was just like most neo-realistic, you know, post-French, It was quite obvious that many writers would migrate into writing for film, they were all making films. But I never saw it as mechanism, as I see it now. I saw it as a medium, as a material... a dimension of narrativity which

was the most modernistic, still not mastered. There was still space for me to worry. With the literature I had to compare myself daily with Kafka, or _____, or others, that is very hard to withstand. Poetry the same thing. Just, you know, if you practice poetry daily, you have to live with this milieu of tradition, and you get into this unbelievable competitive state. Film is still very much unmapped. It was free territory.

(C) And the equipment was there at the school?

(W) Oh, the school was like the services, the school had 35 millimeter equipment, with studios inside, and everything, rooms and laboratories, all free, so I went to the most expensive school in probably this universe. Making as many films as I wanted. So, don't think that _____ was a technological influence on me at all.

(C) So it was just the ^{beginning} ~~beginning~~ of your getting familiar with the equipment.

(W) I didn't pay any attention to any equipment - in fact I thought Television was a ridiculous thing, the first time I saw sound television I just wasn't at all interested - It was kind of a small picture.

(C) You saw television as completely separate from film.

(W) Absolutely. It was a degraded film. Also the power of information was destroyed by the lack of veritability of the government. Governmental system of information was appreciated more, it wasn't even recognized as information. The value of information, like in here in the states, is tremendous amount, but very poor information structures or information period.

(C) Television could be censored because it was owned.

(W) Yes, censored, and also the level of the news, or the veritability of the

news was continuously questioned. In papers and on television.

(C) Film was free, because it was more personal?

(W) It was recognized as art form. Even if it was, you must recognize

that I fell into a brief period of rather little pre-duchic era, which was
the end of the ^{NOVOTNY} novotne era, and beginning of ^{DUBČEK} ~~duchic~~ era. At that time,

as you know was the post-Stalinistic era, in fact all the art forms suddenly
flourished. And it was the ^{DUBČEK} ~~Duchic~~ way that came in, and at the same ^{2 mean}
period came out the new literature, the new hope. So we had a
tremendous amount of freedom, we were a very well informed.

New films were brought to us from world festival, so we had this
paradise, of mind there for awhile. at the school.

(C) You probably didn't realize that at all, it's just - hindsight?

(W) Yes, but strangely, the interest in information was immense. I mean
here when the information is accessable, you've declassified the last
volume,

(C) So then you made documentary films?

(W) Again, you know, I was interested in literature. but I couldn't write for film.
I made several attempts to actually express a literary model, and
to filmmake one. I said to _____ I also, the actors totally inhibited my
idea about ^{reality, or} the narrativity, because they brought so much of there own
thing that I thought its just absolutely no place for me to project a work
with them, so rather kind of withdrew into more free arranges as a
documentary. branch, because then I could bring out much more free
decisions in script writing, I didn't have to in fact writ4 anything, and it
was also capacity sources, I could make unlimited amount of things, less

guarded because it was less priveleged. So I found it much more possible.

(C) Were they color films? black and white films?

(W) You could choose. Some people that had capacity of working, on more films could make more films, with sound, 35 in color. But most of the people didn't have the capacity of making more than one a year. But I was lucky, I was kind of interested in editing out art, it was the syntactic way of, it ^{was the only thing} I inherited from literature, a fluent way of constructing a narrative piece, because that was again very much syntactic, so I had no problem, so a capacity of making quick, fast decisions I was able to amke many films, or more than regular. And I always solicit Canerafe help, because we had brought up to be specialists, to be a director as apposed to overcamera and the rest of the team, ;so I could make more films that...

(C) And ~~upper~~ ^{other} students helped you? They were the cameramen?

(W) Everything was team-structured there, beacuse film as I was brought up to understand was a group effort, in which there is a director, but the rest of the people paeticipate. Its kind of a post-operatic kind of model.

(C) What were some of the films about?

(W) Well, I have a list of films which I'm going to furnish...now I'm going to bring you the list of films.

(C) And then you worked for a television network, in 1963.

(W) I was a gain a joke in a way, I had a friend who worked there, so we said why don't you go with me. You see, in this system which is so completely controlled, there is a tremendous amount of personal freedoms.

Overall ideology may be controlled, but direct decisions are extremely ^{here} ^{tie} everything is economically is together.

At that time perhaps. In that environment everything was wide open, economically, so thats...

(C) So in 1964 you began to travel for the first time?
wasn't

(W) Yes, I wasn't married then I guess.

(C) We have marriage down in 1964.

(W) at Film school again, it was an international mileiu, we had students from all the world in fact later, even people from the west, what I mean, there were first, many African students, friendly nations like the east Europeans, but eventually it was opened to the west as well, and I recall after I left, there were Danish, or we don't have to speak about that. colleague

So I was invited by a colleague from Algeria, who became a , who worked for the government over there, to work with him in Algeria. but at that time the situation was quite disorganized, so we have shots of our films, but have never been completed. So I cannot really say that I worked, or have made complete it.

films in Algeria. I did direct it, but I never. The different situation in another travel to Iceland, where we got from Prague studio documentary films we got camera and material, so we went there to make documentary films, and then Stepana. got stuck with the bill. She actually had to pay for all the productions, because we got paid after we returned. It was me and a cameraman. Actually they were produced by Steana. But the impulse to

(C) But the impulse to go to Iceland was because it was her home.

(W) That's right. At that time, we knew each other of course already, and she invited me and a friend and I was curious about it. indeed.

(C) So that was the first travel. You hadn't ever traveled before.

(W) Iceland was the first travel. This was the first time I could get out of the country. It was not very much regular to travel. If you had a reason,

if you got an invitation, then you could, so I did.

(C) So then why did you decide to move to America the following year?

(W) It was obvious, I always known that I would be living elsewhere, so I was enjoying staying home, but It was totally clear to me probably one of the literary influences, influences from literature, that -----

_____ that leaving, was one of the most natural things that I was mentally totally prepared for,

(C) Why didn't you go to Paris, or...

(W) Oh, I was in Paris, going to Algeria, but I was seeking some kind of a

status of modernism which I fantasized, again probably through my involvement in literature, and I didn't find it in Europe. in the form I was hoping. And so that time I figured out what was most interesting and most mysterious, system was the American system for me. and also the most Aesthetic system I wanted to examine was the American aesthetic system. Whatever that means.

(C) Did you know artists and filmmakers in *America?*

(W) We got American literature or a radical or left literature was translated very widely, and is throughout the East Europe also of course in Russia it is very popular. And we got this generation for example of beatniks which were immediately taken as American radicals who were translated into within our Literary magazines. We got some, from look into American photography from various magazines, and we got all the American films from the film faculty. Films that have gotten through European festivals. In fact, the whole notion Chech film school was influenced by certain American films like The Savage Eye. - never heard about it? or On the Bowery, or The Connection by Clark, and these films have been very much important in formation of the Chech film school even if it

expressed totally different subject, the formal aspects, are taken from those.

(C) ~~T~~ And Steana was sympathetic to going to the United States?

(W) I think Steana was rather I guess interested in rather more exotic areas, like Balkan, or middle east, or far east, which wasn't my interest, but, she had a relative here. an uncle, so I got affidavit of support. I could legally migrate. from Checkoslovakia. And of course, Steana was also interested in these United States. It was somehow totally coherent decision which we had made.

(C) So you came to New York, and you settled in New York

(W) Well we came to Pennsylvania, but not for long.

(C) That's where her relative was?

(W) That's right. It's called Forty-four near Scranton? It was kind of an awful experience.

(C) When did you stay there?

(W) A summer. And then we just split for New York. That was the place I could feel in a way.

(C) Where did you live in New York when you first went there.

(W) First at International House. and then we lived all over as anybody else. Eventually we, it was in one of the summers with Schilling, have we mentioned that?

(C) No. Could you speak English?

(W) Not very well, No.

(C) You spoke good German and...

(W) No I spoke a strange kind of primitive English which got me through Algeria and Paris and Iceland.

(C) You didn't even speak French.

(W) No.

(C) It's Steana who speaks several languages?

(W) Yes, she speaks everything.

(C) So you just learned?

(W) I learned here mostly. All actually.

(C) What a task.

(W) What a task, yes.

(C) So you went to New York, and settled in, and what, did you have any friends, did you have any colleagues, did you know anybody,

(W) The connection I had found was a chic avant garde filmmaker. Alexander Habenschmidt. Who was one of the experimenters of film in the 30's. He immigrated before the war and had worked on several interesting films.

Like _____'s Forgotten Village, and other documentary works. And so he worked for Francis Thompson who was at that time at work for a EXPO exhibit, mostly a kind of humanistically oriented exhibit.

(C) He worked for this man?

(W) And he worked for this man as a cameraman and as a partner, or a kind of an equal. And so I contacted him, and through him I got the first job, in film. as an editor. And through this film which happened to be multi-screen, I got into three or four more multi-screen films.

(C) Now you said for an Expo, so it was like a trade fair kind of thing?

(W) Have you been in Montreal? An exhibit for example I worked with Francis Thompson as an editor for that project, which is not really, not much creative, but editing work, on thing called Thee I Am which is part of the

Canadian exhibit 6-screen presentation. Another 4-screen presentation of the Woods & Ramires, which I mentioned which had something to do with the beginning of life. But, cellular, molecular, kind of a typical exhibit of a humanistic contents. But from these places eventually I ended with ~~Henry~~ Lloyd, who also worked on industrial exhibiting. And I also worked briefly for American Can Company, on a project for American Can Company, and one _____ and all the business. That way I got very close to technology. It's actually the end of the chain, with _____ Lloyd, who where I got very close to the materials. Like even there was a Television involved on it which I was kind of one of the initiators. And he build a small studio, very cheap, not very cheap, but cheap small studio. But that was the first resource of the video experience. And about that time, that hit me, that this is the medium I want to work. It was actually 1969.

(C) They let you play around with the equipment, it was a liberal situation?

(W) Very liberal, but it eventually deteriorated into no jobs. And so it was somekind of open understanding that most of the equipment was to be used for each persons interests.

(C) But they paid you[?] enough to survive[?]

(W) Yes, I was paid salary, good salary through the projects, then later it was just by projects. I wasn't continuous working, but eventually I just quit and did full-time work in video, And...

(C) But you weren't teaching at that time, or anything...

(W) Oh, No. I had total aversion to any kind of school or educational system.

(C) So it's 1969 when you began to think about television.

(W) Right. There is a short period which I am working on home which I'm describing how I got involved in certain experimentation with film and

electronic sound. and stroboscopic lights Its between 1967-68-69

That time I met ^{ALFONS} Alvin Short, and with him, actually I lived on Front Street, at one time, and I was in Paris, It was number 40 or 50 where everybody lived, Do you remember the building? I lived _____ place after first run, so this place must have had some strange vibes, We started to meditate both about what to do, He was at the end of his painting era, I was at the end of my film era. And we started to play with ^{certain} projectors and turntables, and following figures and eventually he went into binocular systems and I went into electronic signal.

(C) But at that point you were using traditional filmmaking materials. Just manipulating the current.

(W) It was mostly film, but it was also I started to work with stroboscopic lights. Like As I got access to fast-repeating strobes. And I would do environments through many mirrors and

(C) Was that from documenting the rock concerts?

(W) No, that had no, you see that strangely enough I never got into the live show concert. It was too remote, I didn't understand the interest in popular culture. I mean that was a set of values I brought to these United States, had very little to do with popular culture. I know that time the popular culture models that were practiced by people, like pop art, something I was very much disinterested in. But I like the nature of the light, you see. In film you have this very traditional source of light.

Strobe, with this exactness of time control that excited me, and I have. **SOME** work which I'm going to also include, photographs, continuous 360 degree space recordings, and also I would work with activated screens that would use fluorescent paint on it and strobe and eventually I would burn

in. That kind of work led me into a instant acceptance of video. But there was about three years, I have listed about six works, which I going to put into them, So that was a prevideo, it was some time of preparation, at that time I also understood that film or any involvement of mine with film should not have to be industrial, and it doesn't have to be narrative. It can be personal. Ta That's the switch between the narrativity and the industrialization of the means of production. The personal expression and narrative elements and total control of the means of production, I found that a most critical period in fact between now and then. At that time I could leave my literary models and , they are creeping back now, oppressing, but at that time I was set free.

(C) Did you know about John Cage, ^{him Kaprow} ~~Capra~~?

(W) I had some aversion towards an avant garde I was very much informed about what's going on in European avant garde between the wars, and that was complete to me, whatever I heard about avant garde especially the Cages interest in silence, like I would go back to Arimetti, perform the piece, for radio called, ^{M NE} the constructions of silence, and I would find kind of a latecomers, always an emergence of latecomers into the modernism of European avant garde. So I disregarded it almost completely as interest, also as Andy Warhol, approached to continuous cinema I didn't make the cultural the ^{counter-} ~~content~~, the subject, the counter-cultural subject interesting at that time yet. Only through video I got very deep into counter-cultural - Probably get deeper.

(C) Because then you did begin things that had to do with counter-culture.

(W) Video came with a continuous like half hour recording medium. The reel, so in fact, one work of Warhol we have had to reinvent. in the actual sound and

And we also worked with image of video. The people that worked with Andy Warhol before, And its very _____ So I told them So I totally missed that pre-video in a way, appreciation of film, and out of the rest of them, like music, I guess I was still under an illusion that like _____ is good enough.

(C) What about performance and the things they did at Judson Church and ~~Udenberg~~ ^{Oldenburg} and the star and things like that. Did you know about all those things?

(W) The closest appreciation of those things I got through old mission house. It staged film very high, technological involvement and of course through Nine Evenings, "Nine Evenings of Art and Technology" It was the Big Event, and also through Schilling, who filmed about it and he knew all those people. I absorbed that very much, I also knew that a laser beam presentation through EAT, I would follow all those, I just didn't have any particular relationship to practically. Only when I touched it practically I started to develop actual interest in it. I was informed. At that time it was very much there were many places that I got inspired.

(C) But you didn't consider that part of your support system or consider working with those people or things like that.

(W) No, the only desisived omen in all those performances was La Montaians, The performance of an An audio piece, in _____ Center, in New York City in which he would place two speakers in each corner and created through a continuous sound wave form of sound would creat various density sound wave environment. This is the direct trigger for what I now understand as _____ process.

which is you ^{may well} make a technical, but its an expression in which one element or one cyclical process meets with another cyclical process and creates a third cyclical process. And this is a principal of synthesis, of image and sound synthesis, or its a control element in those processes.

(C) Which is your current. ^{intent?}

(W) Thats right. The realization of the materiality of the sound wave form that you can in fact build, various density holes in the face like a room, was very significant. in my thinking about what the medium is. It was total departure from literature. Because literature does not have that form.

(C) So then in 71 with Steana you founded the Kitchen, and we have quite a bit of material on that, and the impulse for that, in the other interviews so we can use that material. You said your house just became too crowded, too many people so you just wanted and outside space to put those things in and there wasn't enough to fill it up, so then you opened it to all kinds of people.

(W) Almost the whole homosexual scene, You would have to see the tapes we have, we have like tons of those. Ja...

(C) Jackie Curtis and those...

(W) Jackie Curtis and Gratzia, and like Patti Smith in it and all a package.

(C) Were they drawn to the Kitchen, or how did that...?

(W) Well, you see, the moment we had a meeting in which we could record things, we were kind of applying by going places, so we started to go like WBAI free music stores, So inevitably we met many people who would say, you should go and see this Francis Stein ballet, and as Europeans, you know, that was the part of the culture which was the most interesting. The most fragile

because that culture would not survive in my environment. It would be crushed, it would be sprayed and killed. Anyway, so that was my kind of poetical understanding, so we would first go and recall these things, and we would find it that people, especially the homosexuals, fantasies of recreation of stardom of the thirties or whatever, welcomed tremendously a television, a video, would offer themselves to me, and humble themselves, We were the producers, see, Me and Steana were the producers. If someone had something they would call us up, sometimes three times a week, and three nights we would just record things, the whole period, We just continuously recorded, we'd bring it home, and bring the crowd, and they would be just enjoy themselves.

(C) You'd turn it on and relive the event.

(W) That's right, that's exactly how it happened you see,

(C) And you didn't do anything to the tapes,

(W) No, just shot it. Sometimes we had friends who could come to recreate some of these events. But that's the way we perceived the culture, because with our the video I would never go to Fillmore East, because there's a popular culture. I was interested in some aspects of popular culture, but not to the degree of that I would go and stand on the balcony of Fillmore East, you know, videotaping. L. Once the medium is there, the charge of translating and looking at things becomes such an interesting thing that you'd continuously be drawing a collection of friends like these.

(C) You didn't go yourself for the initial experience, you went to make something about that but then you could come back and experience it.

(W) I'm still continuously bored by videotaping, in fact I hate to hold a camera. but I like to look at it. I record all the events in Fillmore East, but count

very much uninteresting. but bringing it back and piecing it together with of the things, sort of abstract so to speak video, and people coming to our own home a you suddenly can ^{bring} many elements which make total different senses all the different levels, its kind of a media level, but that was the common , you could get addicted to this possibility of creating a media experience. Because out of that new, otherwise people go out and experince the theatrical. experience or the concert, but they can't bring it home and just play it again.

(C) It's funny, I'm not quite sure I understand that

(W) So ask more

(C) What's the difference - you know the films they've made about the Rolling Stones, There's one that 's pretty straight-forward documentary, and then there's an other film which is a fantasy, and a narrative film, that one film of the Rolling Stones in it where they did, I mean they have dialog, I mean they have written for them and stuff. So in a way taking an experience and removing it kind of packaging it into something else. It's like, if you make this video tape of this concert and you bring it back and watch it in your own living room, there's a different kind of intensity or direction, of experience, there is, part of the thing about going to rock concerts is all to the people around you, noise, the theatre of it, and if you take it home and put it on the television screen then whoever you're surrounded yourself with while you watch that becomes the audience.

(W) Also, the If you do it yourself you videotape it yourself, you personalize it, see, you develop a different, much deeper emotional attachment with the content because somehow 's associated with you that have done it. Just to give you a sample, you have laid down the first , laid down the cable between showing us the roofs, 14th st.. and you have these friends from Europe, and

look at it and suddenly that we could take that and prese it and to other people in this totally media, or our version of media form that became the experience to us. so I still think, you know, that's why people would take their cassette recorders into concerts, and it would be this distorted music, and bring it home, and they play it, and a number of bootlegged records,

(C) I always thought those were souvenirs.

(W) No, its _____ of the event. Suddenly, its not given to you by any distributor, you bring it home. like you pick up a mushroom or whatever Its, that's what we call alternate cultural moral. At that time we misunderstand it as you do. That the sixties were full of alternate, counter-cultural or cultural morals against the establishment, so that a personalization of image was complete. and the immediacy and the lack of post production as in film you are never finished, but in video you are finished the moment the reels runs out.

(C) So you just made all of the, I mean, you when you look at this list, you have an incredible ^{number} ~~amount~~ of tapes, ~~just~~ reel after reel of raw material-which at that time you just showed as raw material? You didn't overlay sound with it?

(W) Audio production home, instead of doing it there, we took it home.

Also Steina most of the time, was home alone as I was working for the _____ so she worked with that, so she went through a lot of, I mean everybody goes through the self revelation turning on yourself at a certain point.

And many of these rituals. See I'm interested in video as a phenomena,

you see at that time, I never associated it with any traditional art, I know other artists who continue whatever they have done before, like _____ who simply integrate it into a way of thinking, or mini-conceptualize extend it.

(C) It became a tool for them.

(W) yes, I was actually free of it because I left what I had, which was the literature, and I found a new freedom, and for me it was the phenomena which I was totally interested in. That means I was more interested in the wholeness of it, why it is documentary media, medium to document, why is it medium to generate images, why is it medium to self, self processes, yourself, your personality, why is it medium to dispose, why is the medium you can record your own party, with no volume attached to this particular process, or without any artifact, and so that kind of thing was extremely interesting to me. That means that later, like soon, all right, we also start to work with it as an object, like for us the electronic image became the subject of manipulation, and if you can alter something, it has to be something tangible. So I would personally do it as the artist would do with the electronic image as physical, for domain as another art form like is comparable to or material.

At this point no

(C) _____ artists were showing video tapes as a that you were aware of?

(W) In 1969, already there was a few places that would start showing tapes.

like ^{Global} ~~Local~~ Villa ge. a few artists on the west coast also Video-Free America.

But the whole history is

(C) But in New York it was not part of the art system.

(W) No on the contrary, ^{everybody} working in video was disassociated as far

as I could meet people they had ^{totally} put themselves off the _____ art stream.

(C) Did they join the film makers or did they make their own little...

(W) Video was strong enough to exist on its own. and it was very much attached to the radical rhetorics, and also to the kind of rain dance, as manifested in the Rain Dance magazine,

(C) Where were they in New York

(W) It was called Radical Software. And the few groups that immediately Global Village took the Macluhan kind of turn, and like peoples Video Theatre, and Video Freaks,

(C) Was ~~all this~~ ^{the} attitude that ~~it was~~ ^{video} home-made TV? ~~That was~~ the approach not that it was art, to it, not that it was a film, not that it was poetry or literature, or even documentary, but that it was this kind of way of taking over a medium which was owned by somebody else, and somebody whos always the government or the establishment. in those days.

(W) Exactly, It was just robbing the government of the most powerful mythology

(C) Because you couldn't own your own TV station, (~~you still can't own your own TV station~~) but you can make TV.

(W) Also at that time people would experiment with illigitiment broadcasts, construct your own transmission, and you could broadcast into your neighbors home. And I

(C) Which is what you did through your cable television show?

(C) And those kids didn't Rochester, not that long ago?

(W) Many other people, like Video Freaks would broadcast, I've always liked that, and they had a small broadcast station. And now, that's exactly what it is, this idea that the power of the media can be centralized and it can be owned by a single person to be controlled, is the most interesting aspect of it.

(C) It was the same time at which radical newspapers began, but they had a kind of tangibility, magazines and newspapers so that you could take one away, and not find the press where they were being made any more than you could find the place where drugs were being distributed, There's something about using the air waves which makes you even farther removed from the authority that - I mean they would have to tape off TV what you had done. Instead of just going out and just finding one of your magazines. Its even that much further removed from the establishment.

(W) Along with that, you see, in my case personally, I was interested in this metaphysical concept that if it is an energy system, in the diffused as a sphere, you know, elsewhere, you see, its just and that was very important because the whole new kind of notion like of science and of course drug culture, has developed a lot of mythologies which could be suddenly made real. The metaphysical concept of transmission of energy, transmission of images, all that, time and energy system, not only that was coded, as it obvious that it is a course that can be mastered by an individual.

(C) But ybu didn't realize when you made the Kitchen that you were forming what would grow into an institution that would be a role model for other places and The Kitchen is now considered very much part of the art establishment. and not like electronic arts or the other place that shows

films.

(W) It was the phenomena in fact that made it possible, that video was not in any way structured, Our contribution is that we have provided certain mechanism around it, that means the space, and we initiated, that is we made certain paradigms or some limitations to it. which as we said, lets use it electronically, a place that does electronic music, and electronic sounds. We cross this barrier, but we protect it from the rest of the culture, see, like we would be very suspicious about legitimate avant garde to come there, and in fact legitimate avant garde are suspicious to come there.

(C) But, for example, you must have begun to be, things were reviewed there, or written up.

(W) Right, like _____ he was sensitive to things, and he would come there, and many others, eventually it became a place where most of new music was performed. And was the only systematic place for video. but it wasn't very hard at all, it was basically set of coincidences that we could have this thought and we could carry certain veritability. We didn't have to think hard.

(C) So then things began to happen, at the Whitney and all over, ~~and~~ they sort of spawned in 1970, 71, 72?

(W) The whole programming restructured itself, people would call here, [The Kitchen] book themselves, it was sort of self-programmed

(C) And you were involved for how many years in the Kitchen?

(W) Two years I guess. Then I started to withdraw, until it collapsed, again, this event of a collapse is in another article, But only for two years we would do kind of work there.

(C) And you showed these tapes that you made, of events and things.

(W) Right. We started to show the tapes that we had made, first off we had already about maybe forty hours material. So we would start showing that material, and play with music, with presentations we played with the monitors, the matrix, just the means of presenting it. And we did it three times a week. Then we did it twice a week, as there were more people to fill the holes then we get twice a month, and then we get twice a year. It started to fill itself. But that's how we started. We started to show them, and then we also bring people wanting to look at what we have done about them, then other people, we have these open Wednesdays when everybody could come, and so...

(C) But it was the first time you became aware of public presentation because then you had to decide how many monitors you wanted to show it on, that kind of thing. Was it the first _____

(W) It was the plural image, the single image was too weak to us, to present in a public so to speak, so we are trying to find this expression, the strength, from many monitors.

(C) So you did use more.

(W) We would like to use thousands, if you would have them.

(C) OK, so then you were asked to help put a program together for the Whitney— that Steana said that unofficially you ^{curated} ~~curated~~ at this time. ~~for~~ you were consultants because you knew what was going on in video? Why did they want to become involved in video in the first place?

(W) It was through ^{David} Bienstock and they wrote a script which dealt with a very advanced science fiction. Kind of first encounter _____ of time. They really had it all metaphysical, it was all kind of pure, pure religion. It was very

good. And so the first time they associated the effects they wanted to describe or translate on film, with the possibility of doing it electronically. So that's why _____ came many times first to look at the tapes and then to get an idea in making the show.

(C) And he was the film curator at the

(W) Ill tell you, he was a film maker, I ;don't know how much you know about him, but I saw by accident his film in probably 1967, at Columbia, I think he graduated from Columbia, and I went to the screening as at that time I still was interested in films, and I saw his film which took place in some _____ of a place, and I finally was very interested in his way of describing the space, interested me. So I recall vaguely that from that time I knew about him, but from that and that which is eventually artificially lapsed, and I made the connection. But he was a film maker, which felt very much deprived of film making by curatorial work. I think also contributory to his depression he found himself in a powerful position, unable to quit and unable to move to his private seclusion or whatever.

(C) So you became curators by accident?

(W) Yes, a kind of coincidence.

(C) But you didn't make a lot of aesthetic judgements according to your

Remarks
~~things~~ about the Kitchen. You just opened it up.

(W) Well we represented men to other people the aesthetic definition. They would group according to what we had done. Sometimes we have influenced the aesthetic school of video. but not by us curating it or critisizing it, but by us doing it.

As always people seek approval as we always seek approval of some sort of authority. But by having the Kitchen we became well an authority on that type of video.

(C) Did people come to you and ask you to help them learn how to make video?

Did students come to you?

(W) At that time also we worked for a place called alternate Media Center.

So it was place that instructed usage of portapack and we would help workshops continuously ;since the video, we would continuously help workshops on the video image. That was our involvement in kind of a public. Wasn't really through showing, it was kind of through interaction.

(C) That was your method of teaching without actually...

(W) It still is because I disrespect a school environment. I rather come to environment which kind of to account to this.

(C) But you're very generous with your time and information. You must have always been from the way you tell about having taken over and let them watch you and loaning your equipment Steana told me that story about finally realizing that must have been from the CIA or FBI Who just called and said he was interested in video and she said "Oh come on over any time and watch We'll help you."

(W) It was part of the Messianic part of the video.

(C) Did you consider anybody to influential on you, or your teacher in any way.

(W) Alphonse Schilling had a very precise idea of what is a definition of an artist, you see, so he kind of, because coming from printed media, which I always, without any artifact I had a hard time to proclaim myself to become an artist.

Artist always meant to me someone whom thinks, is an artist, but not really that good, It's probably obvious now, that as a painter he was always close to making things, and for him it was a perfect status, so he was connected to art, and he also was the artist. And I figured out that's possible which in him to be an artist, it is a status of living, which prepared myself to being an artist. So it's strange kind of contribution. The second ... I guess he was the only linkage I had to art. Then I gladly abandoned it after we were proclaimed to be artists. There was no need to maintain the status.

(C) You said Naim Jun Pike was..

(W) _____ Pike at the first time, he was probably the most influential I would say in sense of electronic media.

(C) The first experience was in the Howard Wise show. In terms of the equipment or electronics he was an influence, but not in terms of imagery or theory or concept. What about other people like _____. Were those people around then,

(W) Downey would do, a few things of Downey like his communications systems, but it was just at the border of art, and what I was interested in which was a structural mastery of some, I don't know at that time what I was interested in. I guess to, it was too much allegorical I would say, presented to something else.

(C) His work was too allegorical.

(W) It was trying to incorporate concept, a humanistic concept was attached to this plain function, of technology,

(C) One thing that occurs to me is that there was a, this kind of environmental aspect in just thinking about how to present for video material, you had to think in a way, it kind of made you all think about environment, and in a way that

may have come back and influenced a lot of other people. You had to think about how to set the stuff up ~~and how to ...~~ that seems to come back to the performance and musician people in a way.

(W) That, again, that's a continuous dilemma I don't think that's ever has been a solution to presentation of video. But that problem came up, _____ he was trying to present it, he eventually decided to be, it to be a single screen, and he would break down the room into various angles, so and watch only in a peripheral. He insisted in ;just having it in one place. Or circle coherent some coherency of that, of saying that the energy signal is part of the environment, but in some kind ^{of} organized part of the environment.

Others would use multichannel would use, you know, a checkerboard, or other combinations of multichannel for information Especially Globa Village and other people Gillette, he was interested in multichannel information.

But all these influences, other only interested in single screen as a statement, and that's how you can follow, like that's how television does. But the single relatives of the video screen I, it didn't excite too many people. I don't think so. /They would rather do some sort of more different configurations. and the part of the American mind was to dislocate, to make independent viewing areas, independent screens, and part of my heritage was probably to make coherent structures, and I was interested in the impact, which was coming from film, which has a great impact as a screen, I kept feeling that I need something larger, so that's why I was trying to and Douglas, who was a friend who came to eventually helped to deadlock the narrativities

(C) Now had you already started to think about that as early as 1971?

(W) Yes, that's why I left, I went into this 360 degree recordings and the space and the strobes because they left me without a frame. I was first rational

T was against the frame. And the video we used by configuring into multi-frames sort of escaped the singular frame, it created its own larger frame, but that was better than a single confinement.

(C) Which all comes back to impact in the

(W) In narrativity. It goes also to narrativity, because once you use a single frame follow something after something, it draws you into seeing this particular sequence of events are narrative.

(C) But the difference from a film is that you used it horizontally rather than vertically;

(W) If you think more screens, then you can escape the sequentiality which you save, because suddenly you deal with it as relationships of the elements.

I guess that must have been also a reason, but the horizontality of course was totally new to film. and film tradition.

(C) So put ^{it} simple then, when you were not so interested in documenting events that were already happening you started to think about some kind of movement of image? And that was how you developed it to the later things?

I'm trying to trace some sort of evolution of image or lack of or narrative between So its hard to know what you were thinking about in the time that you made the documentary things, and then the abstract and the sound derived images.

(W) So, first of all, I guess the easiest way to understand what happened was to just mention the tools, I would use an oscillator, or _____

generator, which is known in the sound, that gave us a source of time components and you could make patterns with it. No that means this particular instrument and its reaction on the screen somehow told us what this picture in how the picture is made. How it can be controlled.

That means the ^{aspect} effect of energy or organized energy in time became the

expression. It's totally different methods of thinking than documentary work.

It's the material.

(C) How did you find out about oscillators, where did you get the idea to use an oscillator.

(W) From the audio. Its part of the audio synthesis. Through the synthesis of sounds. Which had a tradition of about ten years before we started to do video. And also it is a technological instrument, ^{just} ~~AS~~ used for testing in audio studios and in television studios.

And generally in all the physical environments. Scientists are using it as just so anything the tests becomes something that reveals something about the system. That means that this as a test instrument, by deviating test methods gives us a tremendous amount of information about the system itself. So that became the tool No. 1, the most accessible, because you could buy in a surplus, you could go on the street and buy it, you could borrow it.

(C) So it was your first device to manipulate the image. Your first actual something besides the portapack.

(W) The first I would say was ~~the~~ turning ^{certain} ~~sort of~~ knobs on the monitor, rolling it squeezing it, yes that was a our first control. Steina did a lot of work on that.

(C) That was TV stuff, that you can do with the three knobs on the set.

(W) The first internal way of getting into the picture ~~ture~~ was the oscillator.

Also the oscillators provided us with the movement of the frame, same instrument that would make these patterns suddenly would participate in movement of the whole frame. which is a little bit more elaborate because

to enter that frequency into the camera and the camera manufacture's image in a different time, time in relationship, but that's a specific. That would have to be technologically explained.

(C) So it was a lot of a _____ sort of you'd hold it up and you'd say, "Ah, look at that" or "Now we can do this," or Like when you said ^{JOAN JONAS} ~~John~~ _____ said she wanted to know how to do she can do vertical rolls, ^{she} ~~she~~ wants to know how to do horizontal one, You'd just discovered that you could do them by various hookups with different things. What about all these things, they were black and white, they were of what?

(W) Patterns, there were feedbacks, they were like something like you saw, like insects, kind of heads, tissues, muscles,

(C) Whatever was the most obvious ^{mark} available?

(W) Yes, and whatever was strong visually, we would preserve. so that means

(C) And you showed them ~~at~~ the Whitney in 1971, and there are a limited number of places that show video, so you must put your things in all those places.

(W) Through this primitive processing we started to understand other levels of processing, for example keying, colorizing, and so that's all these techniques, which extended our original concepts of synthesis of image into more control. It's very natural to have a medium from the principle extend its vocabulary. It didn't depend on us, only depended on what the rest of the people involved have developed, or it was applied from more existing industrial television equipment.

(C) But there began to be more dialog among people, I noticed in 1972 there was National Video Festival, in Minneapolis - and that must have been the beginning, one of the first ones, So you actually gathered to gether and see

what other people have done and share ideas and things that . Do any of those conferences or events stand out more particularly in you mind?

(W) The biggest surprise to us, or not surprise, but delight came from San Francisco, there wer was a National Center for Experiments in Television, and a person that was involved in administering the place _____ will probably some work on that _____ came to the Kitchen, and said they saw some films in San Francisco that his group and they totally surprised that someone on the East coast would do that. So he came to sniff us out. To figure out what we are all about. Because meant certain threat to their hegemony of experimentation. And since then we have exchanged tremendous amount of information and we also visited them. Independently we would collect 6 or 8 or maybe ten names of people doing related stuff , know each other, exchange tapes, because at that times tapes exchange was still alive. You sent it around.

(C) You'd call up somebody and ask them to send something and you'd play it on your *equipment?*

(W) Oh, at that time the alternate culture had a network of what we call cosmic messengers people that would travel place and carry news and papers, tapes, there was a tremendously developed information system. Small enough that each person was connected through the mediator directly to the next person.

(C) And the centers were New York and San Francisco.

(W) New York, San Francisco, and scare places around like Chicago, Dallas, and something Los Angeles, and in Vancouver, but we would know.

(C) But Buffalo was not part of that circuit then.

(W) Buffalo was an empty white spot on the map.

(C) And then you came to Buffalo in 1973.

(W) We were invited to come here, yes.

(C) for ~~this~~ Media Study? Did it exist when you came, ~~or~~ was it the first year of it?

(W) You mean Media Study exactly? We were part of the second programming season for Media Study ~~as~~ as a workshop. Before us there were several others.

(C) Did it occur to you to maybe just commute^{here}? Were you and Steina both invited?

(W) Both.

(C) Did you consider still living in New York and commuting?

(W) At that time we were about at ~~the age of~~ our kind of capacity of dealing with the whole video scene. We just couldn't work any more at that time - we were very famous, you see, in a small circle of people. And were we were visited daily and called by phone like 30 times a day, we couldn't do anything any more. ~~we actually wanted~~ ^{picked} We were thinking about going to Long Island we had a house^{come} out there, but then we got this invitation ^{Clary} ~~to~~ we just decided to ~~stay~~ ^{stay} here.

(C) So it seemed like an escape? really you wanted to leave?

~~So that~~ you could go and ~~make~~ ^{make} work? And it was a paid position to support that?

(W) It all clicked in this possibility, in this area.

(C) When you got here there was no impulse to make another kind of set up, I mean another center for ~~you~~? I mean Media Study is not like the Kitchen in any way.

(W) It, strangely enough, the amount of people interested in showing and coming to the shows had decremented, had been decreasing from the time we came here, because it still had an audience, now going through, all the shows here the audience is not being enlarged. infact, it is being diminished.

(C) You have a larger audience in the other sense, in that now your tapes, the 40 tapes, which are now in distribution, are sent everywhere, you just don't have the one to one experience

(W) Of course by now also by working with television we probably have extended the people who can see the work, but the direct one-to-one contact, that kind of habit or ritual of coming to video show ceased.

(C) Do you find that affects the way you make your work?

(W) Yes, its the only way I can relate to anything I have done by being, showing it to people that have some sort of reaction to it. Because when I shows anomously or shown elsewhere, I think I'm at the mercy of the environment in which it was presented. At the mercy of the proceeding program and the succeeding one. It is not the controlled environment I would envision. Because you see, I don't think that I would like to create as little space on this little hole in a way of thinking that I would like to place this work. I just dont want to come indiscriminantly into particular unprepared moment. I'm very sceptical about a museum you know, contacts, of course, then I have to try that environment which accepts such a work which was not unfortunately designed for that environment. Because the only environment I could ever design in my own head is one I can controll. But other people are very much interested in environment of a museum. _____ forms this thinking to us in a room or a space of museum.

(C) So what you invision doing here is altering something to fit in this room?

W) What I am thinking, there are basically two components, first to present it as a structure, which is unlike lets say painting, unlike something that can be seen in a gallery, its the texture itself. It would be different image, by nature. Second I want to deposit some clue to what it is, of course this kind of explanation of this continuous try to interpret probably won't succeed. Its not a simple process in which things can actually be explained, so there will be some indications, maybe some material that will indicate for a person that somehow will pay attention and ask think about it, because it has to be referential, indicate some possibilities of the processes involved in those images. And the third aspect will be probably the the effect of it, like the kinetic effect, or the transformational effect, actually I was trying to prepare digital transformations for the show, I still think I could catch it, through this device

Would be a dynamic transformation of images but I'm going to be in race of time. with this effort. I only like to show the new things, because the old things I still believe somehow someone else can be seen where

C) Well, they're a part of the public domain. Just to go back to doing it

(W) chronologically, You come here in 1973, Then the chronology just breaks down to telling the bigger things you're in in the 70's. More international recognition. ^{lets now} There's ~~no~~ talk about what enters into the thinking

that changes the material, like when did you start to use color, new kinds of equipment, that'll probably be in your tree. Things like this recognition that you've said a couple of time in talking to me in these interviews before, that the image is not so impotent as the process, that kind of real zeroing in on that idea, when did that occur?

(W) You see, I come from kind of photographic image tradition, that's the

closest I can master any visual concept. Because I am no at all a painter. I can't draw, I have no control over visual concepts of anything. Mind-generated coordination of images. I don't have that established, that means all I can control is light, and by now I can control the image. which other people can't control because they make lines. I figure out as a necessity. It has become the unique territory on which I could compete with the rest of the visual world. But again I cannot compete on the world of image because first of all I am not interested in images, and I would have to first kind of study them, the preceding eras, kind of casually of course I was always interested in looking at pictures, but I'm not emotionally involved in them. in that particular medium. That means to come and compete with visual culture of the centuries without even having the being talented to compete, with the amount of control, mind-hand control as painting is deposited in to this particular medium, that is no possibility that I could invent a new image in the sense of perception of aesthetic perfection of brain image just is no way. But coming from film which is totally dependent on the reality of light or light accidentality or light situation within a space that would not be at all enough for me to respect an image, because you have done it, it is a process of adaptation. Cinematic or filmic or photographic and you say its mine, but its not yours, its made by God or whatever. There are other tendencies in film in which I have access to film material, like in Schultz's case and others. But in case of video, there is an internal mold of video image. Which is specified, ruled not by the aesthetic demand of a painting or process of thought, _____ but by ;the process of the behavior of the energy which system which puts it on the screen. Now you can bend that _____ tradition in painting, you can

somehow make connections, but I would say the courage would be not to make that connection. and develop your own appreciation and your own body of the image which would contain as many clues as you personally respect. as possible. I feel I am totally caught in this middle ground, I unconsciously Consciously I am trying to struggle to identify the the modes through which the image is made. And elevate, unconsciously I am relating this to the rest of the images. But I cannot _____ you know where it is in the rest of the images. Which if you look at it with a schooled eye, of fine appreciation you find it betrays all the innovative...

(C) But so the justification for the ^{having} an image at all is because that's how you know that the energy has been.

(W) That's right, because I can read in that image what unbelievable story that was told as the process of making it. Its a whole story, 525 lines long.

(C) So if you wrote down the process, or if you computerized it or coded it, there would be no evidence of that energy - the image becomes the evidence of that

(W) The understanding of the image becomes an aesthetic principle. That's what I cannot convey simply. I cannot say that for me the principle (aesthetic) is the process of understanding the principle. I cannot require this. I would like the people to read it the same way as I try to specify,

(C) Did this notion evolve, or ~~and~~ was there a point at which you made that decision. That you were going to have to do it that way. Or did it come gradually with the mechanics and with the

(W) In my case you see, the I come from a film, which ~~is~~ moving image, so I have a tradition of moving image, appreciation of moving image, I was suddenly looking at something which was a moving image, yet

its behavior, movement structure development from one point to the other was unlike photographic, filmic image. And that, of course, that aberration, it became the source of interest, or of beauty of the image. That curiosity within an image would specify then the aesthetic structure of it. If someone misses that, If someone relates, lets say overall color content as far as color to me has no specific meaning, and lately in digital, it follows the expression of a code, there is additional element of my working with image, that a code can't contain element like color. But color itself like in painting I have no comprehension of such a process.

(C) Because its arbitrary?

(W) It to me is arbitrary. It carries additional information which I wuld have to justify by a zpoetic principle, a literary principal.

(C) But still you don't mind the idea of making poetry which in a way personifies all those

(W) At the end, lets say, what I'm interested in now, which is an moving image, of transformation as I say in the beginning, that poetry I think is greatest power of transformation. I believe that the medium of electronically organized, or completely organized images, had the highest so far power of transformation of images, because film for example has to make a great effort to transform one image to the other. Kind of a primitive syntactic like cut or superimposition, effects, or kind of ambiguities of light, but in some way and in digital electronic imaging and you can specify the transformation the way you would write poetry.

These principles I hope are neat, and the result may be a new narrative structure.

(C) So you don't have any preconceptions about what's possible for the , for you

images or lack of images. Or future kinds of tapes. There's no territory that you say is out.

(W) I may see what the connection is, I don't know if I'm going to catch it in my lifetime, but the control of the image in a sense, I mean the control is the creation of the image. The mind-medium process, I see it accomplished accomplishable in these electronic means with an amount of power unlike any other. But only consistency, only appreciation of what I'm doing now is the consistency, that means the propaganda consistency of the process which is going to lead to some conclusion. But I don't have to experience that conclusion because that conclusion is there. I know. But I am just trying to trace down or put it down all on a video-tape this pathway This will happen.

(C) I didn't know you'd thought about it like that, that's very interesting. Back to chronology, 1975 it says you start showing things on Channel 21, but you had shown things on public television, cable television before? Was that the first time?

(W) I think that's the first time I had something on the cables, all over.

(C) All right, now, you understand that I'm trying to get at is any thing that happens that you can pinpoint in time. Chronology, a significant event which altered in your life, your images, your what have you. The banal stuff, the uninteresting bought a new car, published a so that's why I asked you about television, you said to be on TV, television, _____ in this video context. Doesn't make a difference, doesn't alter anything. What about this thing ;you're doing now, this Channel 17, I mean you're actually making something specifically for television.

(W) Yes, you see, there is this notion like video descending which doesn't bother me because I'm

(C) What do you mean, declining in popularity?

(W) Like this generation of image makers they have reached the state of maturity, yet it never emerged as a united or any specified movement.

I know at least 10 individuals which make excellent work, which have a craft, a good American Yankee craft, and yet there is this total without any support. Financial or cultural support. We both, Steina and I we both

feel that we are responsible for it to some degree, like _____

feels responsible, it is the most ^{active} ambassador of video, that there will be, that in a way that our, since we in a way were in the Kitchen, had access to media talent. We can make people visible.

(C) You owned an institution.

(W) Actually we created this kind of a this institution of recognition to some Now since we have withdrawn, from this particular process and we still are finding people or people finding us who exhibit talent, possibilities, and we would like to enter back into this process of curatorship. so to speak, and

mediate to some degree all those activities. Now as we see them again, this time it would be as a design, this time we are not innocent. as we were when the video started. Video was a period of total nonsense now we would put up a structure, we would do something. Which would be structured a priori like now we know that we would start or repeat or do another Kitchen, it would be Kitchen in air, would not be physical place anymore. Because we know that the tools have advanced, to the point at which the tools can be interfaced with broadcast instantly. L Our video-tapes are just technologically ^{apart} from broadcast. 1/2 inch format just wasn't transferable, or used that's the _____ no. 1. Also the editing process process of editing of

tapes now is fully automatized. So its getting more and more accessible, and eventually of course it will be very very much used form of using the tapes, also the new disk which is coming eventually closer and closer this bridge between the broadcasts, and eventual, one will have to be made.

(C) You can make it on a record now or something.

(W) It's coming to the degree closer we are waiting for ten years for this moment to come. It's seemed to be that this season like this year or two, becoming more and more a reality. Becoming personal communications, to an individual and a set of records.

(C) Who developed those kinds of things, You're not interested in making the technological advancements, The television people do it and then you use it when you find out about it.

(W) This is a popular cultural, it is an industrial task.

(C) Like the people who invented Beta-Max, or whatever it is?

(W) People like, itsd mostly a few firms, European firms, Phillips, _____, a few American firms, But its the expectation of the broad market that brought into it such huge investing. It's not our medium of distribution. So we are still challenging, we are now at a time where we are trying to mediate what we do which is different from television, as being presented through television, ^{since} the medium that's technologically identical, but formally is different. So we have a number of former problems how to interface our source with the broadcast. And that is the same identical form or problem of the rest of the people working in video. So that's what that would relate to your question about what, you asked me about

(C) When you started to work with television in 1975. Had that altered your way of making the tapes at all.

(W) It did, last year, the special of this grant for public television,

(C) last year for channel 17 in Buffalo,

(W) Not altered, but, not forced us, but we took this task of packaging ourselves as television. Kind of a very funny experience. Took everything, and when we started to experiment with the formats sometimes we sit and talk about it,

sometimes we just show it without comment. Until finally we are trying to put ourselves on television. So its an additional process to what we do, yes, it is different. from anything we had done before. But its a kind of peripheral genre or form of problem, its not really the content of our work with image has reached different, stepped through incorporating of the digital concepts. Its radically different, from what we have done before in video.

(C) The digital concept. Can you pinpoint.

(W) I have a very expressive explanation for my sort, and maybe for someone who experienced this, but an introduction of a code which is a binary code man-made code into a process of which regularly would be associated with naturalistic, nature-like, the light level, which is production of an environment can be encoded into a man-made code and I hope can be further stored, retrieved, altered, arranged, So that introduction of a code is a very significant contribution to all the expressions of sound,

(C) When did this begin.

(W) It started in 1975, we first decided that we are going to make, that we are going to upgrade that we are going to evolutionary ^{reached} ridge in which we will start incorporating digital tools into our, see again, going back, everything we had done came from the following this evolutionary path of new development.

(C) Up until that point.

(W) From that point. with the computer concept. that the largest entity to

to the process of imagemaking, I mean the largest in the sense of experience, knowledge, time, of acquisition of these knowledges and duration and understanding of the process, was the most complex task so far.

Also the digital or binary structures are in direct competition with other cultural systems. Scientific, mathematical, technological, aesthetic, is already tradition or computer art, and popular, so it is so different, so to our dimension is a gigantic multi-disciplinary area. Video was a unique ^{-oriented} small kind of individual image, production.

(S) So you had to make a decision to go from something intimate to push yourselves out into a totally other arena by doing that.

And that necessitated using the new tools and the computers for the systems.

The computer came about just simply in order to code the things? That's the most efficient way to do it?

(W) It became invaluable. It became available because the price. Suddenly the whole, the systems became dense enough and cheap enough for us to take them as quality and as a tool as personal possessions. You see all the *lite-motif* through our working is our own tools, to control them, to design them, through our own means. We won't accept any supporting system because then we come back to the film which is an operative medium with *prima ballerinas*, *light managers*,

(C) So when did you use the computer.

(W) We started to build the computer system. I mean, we bought a computer 1975, and since that, we have continuously added day by day thinking about it, sometimes building it, sometimes discussing it with the designer, and also by that time we have to again accept that it was a team work, before, as a process of creating the tools, and as process of creating the language for the

tools. We had to step away from the single person creative mold. But after tools are built, we have to go back to the reestablishment of the single relationship between person, one individual and its work.

(C) So when you build on it, you mean you make , do ;you take this basic computer and make it so it can do more things? Is that what you mean by build?

(W) The computer is usually is in our case it is two part process, one is the general purpose c omputer, which you buy, and the other is the image device, which makes images, which you then control by computer. Whic we couldn't buy in the way we wanted it, so we had to develop that. We had to involve ourselves in a dialog with the designer and took it piece by piece and eventually put together a console which we wanted.

(C) Your involvement with your computer, as with any of these other pieces of equipmatt, the synthesizer, the oscillator, its just to make a tool, there's no romance or mystery about all that is in the video, in the screen, the image on the screen.

(W) It starts as a mysterious because you don't know

(C) But its not a romance with the equipment at all, you just see it as a task. to build this thing so that it does what you want.

(W) In the evolutionary pathway, it begins to demythify itself. But of course in order to be heard you always have to involve yourself in something which is a mystery, but we have this simplistic appearance, all of which you can buy and demythify.

(C) The award of the grants is pretty straightforward, right, we'll incorporate them in one of the lists, but they don't change your life in any way. There wasn't any single grant that allowed you to buy something or make something, it just

all comes in. I'm trying to get at any specific cause and effect.

(W) You try to avoid specific, but of course they are there, just try to be as little entertainer as possible.

(C) Tell me, now you've said you're going to put in these photo-panel things, I don't know what they are, or what they look like or anything, where are those made? The ones you're going to put up on the show. Tableaus.

(W) They were made, actually most of them appeared in afterimage to be similar, some will be a little bit different. These, but also different ones.

(C) So they're stills from the screens.

(W) They're stills from the computer generated images.

(C) And when did you first begin to make such a thing?

(W) The first image in the other magazine was done in 1975, its the analog part, its pre-digital, and these are done like this year, 1978, and inbetween are some images, but I am not going to incorporate, most of them are binocular. I haven't decided on that.

(C) to you see those as a way of understanding what goes on on the screen. Is it just an explanatory device for people.

(W) This particular series is a vocabulary, it is not aesthetically motivated. it is a utility. If someone wants to make picture through the process which are true to the computer, he could open the page and dial, look at the numbers see, so you would turn this page and you say, I want a pattern like this, going in stair steps from left to right, so you would dial a function $A + B$. Regardless of what you have inside, these happen to have these inputs. If you had different like a human pictures, the arrangement of these would follow of course a human figure, but the age transformation would follow exactly these particular characteristics. So the whole purpose of this

work was to myself, to creat my personal vocabulary, so I know when I go to the machine what I should express this time.

(C) And it exists in the machine as A and B, so if you read it out on the print out it says A and B and this is to remind you

(W) Exactly what notation music does. Its C or C minor or C sharp,

This is a primitive range of images which can result in notational principles of higher images. Not only aesthetic images, I'm not goigg to attempt

in this second work dynamic transformations you can use formulas, write

A + B + S you can perform it and its going to perform up into a _____

It will be written in a human language, I use this mathematical language

because that is the most basic language But you can say transform upper

into orange push the button, zip. That's beyond us, so It's funny, Steina

sent it to _____ and he send me very interesting letter. Any way, his

work is somehow related to this, and he even asked me to translate it into

Checkh which I cannot do. He got the bug because he understand that certain

transformation through which about he must have been thinking. A long

time.

(C) OK , lets break.