

A Project Description for Rockefeller Fellowship Invitational:

Over the years, I have developed a special way of working, in a single screen, in matrixes of monitors, and various installations, using turntables, mechanized optical devices and other concepts of pre-programmed camera movements. My subjects have been urban, sea- and land-scapes, observed, altered and processed by machines, composed into videotapes, containing the perceptual, electronic and pictorial paradoxes.

I will be spending most of 1988 in Japan on a United States/Japan Exchange program. During my stay there and in other Asian countries I intend to tape extensively - Lands - People - Culture.

A Rockefeller Film/Video Fellowship would enable me to work with these materials further through my method of composing intermaterials, towards an eventual installation.

This process of working can be defined in four basic steps:

- 1) Image Gathering
- 2) Creating Intermaterials
- 3) Composition of Images and Sounds
- 4) Final configuration of display and its programming

Typically, I collect the image material through a video camera in the city or in nature, often employing optical or motor-driven devices. In Japan, I will have access to new and inspiring tools, the tools of robotics, through which I would like to look at the image materials of Asia.

The final compositional stage depends very much in character and relationship on the images I gather in the process. I am involved in multiscreen works, and this new work will most probably end as an installation, with multiple pictorial and sound tracks, operated by a programming device.

Santa Fe, 13-Aug-1987

Steina Vasulka

ROCKEFELLER GRANT

The application was submitted with a description and visuals of *the In the Land of the Elevator Girls* video. The footage for this video and those to follow was gathered during 1989 when Steina lived in Japan for a year as part of the Japanese/US Community _____. While in the East, Steina gathered a wealth of materials for her _____ project. Tragically, much of the footage was lost in shipping, but enough remained for three additional works. From this material came *In the Land of the Elevator Girls* (1989); a 2 channel production which developed into a 4 channel polyphonic visual compilation; and, a study of A So Desu Ka. With a generous grant from the Rockefeller Foundation, these three works were brought together in 1991 as Tokyo Four and presented as an installation. Tokyo Four was exhibited at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Helsinki (1992), Hallways Contemporary Art Center, Buffalo (1993, and Atlantic Center for the Arts, Smyrna Beach, FL (1993).

The Rockefeller Foundation

KENNETH PREWITT
SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT

August 18, 1991

In reply please quote: RF 90063, Allocation No. 82

Dear Ms. Vasulka:

I am pleased to report that the officers of the Rockefeller Foundation have taken action to award you an Intercultural Film/Video Second Stage Award of up to \$15,000 to enable you to produce a project entitled, **THE OTHER ASIA**. This sum is available for use during the one-year period beginning August 1, 1991, at the end of which time any unexpended grant funds will revert to the Foundation.

In recommending this grant, it was the officers' understanding that the funds would be used approximately in accordance with the budget submitted with your letter of acceptance. In accordance with Internal Revenue Service regulations governing this Foundation, we must require you to furnish us, upon completion of the undertaking for which the grant was made, a final report describing your accomplishments with respect to the grant and an accounting for the funds received under it.

Please confirm your agreement to the foregoing requirements by signing and returning the enclosed copy of this letter. We will be pleased to make quarterly payments on the grant; the first will be made upon receipt of a countersigned copy of this letter.

For your information, I am enclosing a copy of the Foundation's statement with respect to the announcement of grants.

It is a pleasure to report this action to you.

Sincerely,



Kenneth Prewitt

Ms. Steina Vasulka
Route 6, Box 100
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501

Accepted: _____
Steina Vasulka

_____ Social Security Number

enc.

The Rockefeller Foundation

April 22, 1991

Dear Steina Vasulka:

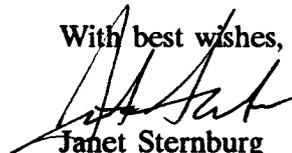
The Rockefeller Foundation is pleased to inform you that you are eligible for its **Intercultural Film/Video Fellowships: Stage II Awards**. This award is part of our fellowship program which, as you know, is designed to support innovative American film and video artists whose work reflects upon contemporary cross-cultural issues, both internationally and within the United States.

State II Awards, to be made available this year to 1989-90 Fellowship recipients on a competitive basis, are to aid in the continuation, completion and promotion of projects that have already been awarded Fellowships. These awards are in response to the many different needs that arise as a specific film or tape takes shape and becomes a finished work. We recognize that your Fellowship projects are at different stages, from research and development to exhibition and distribution; this program is intended to help fellowship recipients think creatively about that spectrum of needs. The awards, which will range up to \$50,000, may be used toward production, further research, creative development, post-production, distribution, and presentation activities (e.g. special screenings, new installation opportunities, study guides, and related ways to develop new audiences for your fellowship work).

If you wish to apply, you should submit a proposal in the form of a letter by June 3, 1991. You should summarize the project's progress to date (how the Fellowship has been used, other funding obtain for the project, work schedule, the current stage of the production); artistic aims (how the work is evolving, what possibilities you foresee; and needs (what would be accomplished by a Stage II Award). Any new materials such as a script or a work sample are useful to include. An up-to-date project budget as well as a brief budget for the use of these additional funds is required. Stage II Awards will be considered by a specially constituted panel. Awards will be based on the continuing relevance of the project to the international and intercultural goals of the program; the quality of the proposal; clearly demonstrated need and potential; and available resources. It will not be possible for us to fund every project, even though we are very proud of all of our Fellowships awardees.

I look forward to this opportunity to hear from you, to learn about your project, and to consider it for a possible next stage award. If you have any questions or would like to discuss your projects, please feel free to me at 818 990-7521.

With best wishes,



Janet Sternburg
Senior Program Advisor
for Media

STEINA VASULKA
Rt. 6, Box 100
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501

The Rockefeller Foundation

ALBERTA ARTHURS
DIRECTOR FOR ARTS AND HUMANITIES

December 7, 1989

Dear Ms. Vasulka:

It is a pleasure to be able to inform you that you have been selected to receive a \$35,000 Intercultural Film/Video Fellowship from the Rockefeller Foundation. The award was enthusiastically recommended by our Selection Panel in recognition of your previous work and in support of your current project.

The Intercultural Film/Video Fellowships were created to encourage artistic experimentation and to support individual artists in their explorations and interpretations of international and cross-cultural issues. A list of the fourteen artists recommended for the Fellowships is attached for your information. We have also enclosed the names of the members of the Selection Panel.

We will need to receive a letter of acceptance from you by January 5, which should include an estimated budget indicating how the funding will be used. You may apply the funds to any phase of development or production including living expenses while working on the project. Once we have received your letter, we will be able to complete the processing of the grant.

We would greatly appreciate it if you would allow us to keep the cassette of your sample work. For those of you who submitted a work sample on 16mm, we would appreciate, if possible, receiving a cassette of that work. In the meantime, we will return your 16mm film under separate cover. If this creates any difficulty for you, please let us know.

The Foundation is pleased to have this opportunity in the third year of our Fellowships program to recognize and support your work. We will be looking forward to seeing the completed film/video.

Sincerely,



Alberta Arthurs

Ms. Steina Vasulka
Rt. 6, Box 100
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501

enclosures

It will not be necessary to provide us with an itemized budget, but we will require information about the scope of your project and the ways in which the Fellowship award would be applied. Fellowship recipients may apply the awards to a variety of research and production needs, including travel and living expenses for exploratory visits or more sustained stays in foreign countries and all regions of this country; meetings with artists and scholars in various disciplines; access to film and television production and post-production facilities as well as academic and non-academic research and study centers where projects can be further developed.

The application for the Rockefeller Foundation Intercultural Film/Video Fellowships must be postmarked by July 30, 1989. At that time, we will need to receive your detailed proposal (a maximum of 7 to 10 double-spaced pages) for a project which you are planning or for a work in progress relevant to the Foundation's commitment to the support of innovative and creative exploration of the world's cultures and ways of life.

Please use the enclosed form as a cover sheet to provide us with specific information about your proposal and your sample work. In addition, we will require a resume, a list of completed works, and a sample of a completed work. Please select a sample work which relates, as closely as possible, to your proposed work and the program guidelines. If there is a particular ten-minute segment of your submission which you feel would be most important for the Panel to screen, please cue the work and label the cassette or film to indicate that a sequence has been selected. If you are proposing an installation, we request that you submit slides, photographs and video documentation to provide the Selection Panel with the strongest possible overview of the work.

The Panel of nine scholars, programmers and artists from throughout the country will meet in November at the Rockefeller Foundation. The Panel's comments are confidential and no information regarding the Panel's discussions will be made available to applicants. The Fellowships will be officially announced in January, 1990.

We would appreciate it if you would return the enclosed postcard, as soon as possible, to indicate whether or not you intend to apply for a Fellowship. Enclosed is an information sheet describing all of the current film and video programs in the Arts and Humanities division of the Foundation. If you have any questions, please call me or Karen Kaplan, Fellowships Coordinator, at (212) 869-8500.

I look forward to hearing from you and hope that you will choose to join us in this Media Arts program.

Sincerely,



Janet M. Sternburg
Senior Program Advisor in
Media
Arts and Humanities

Ms. Steina and Mr. Woody Vasulka
Rt. 6, Box 100
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501

JMS:kk

The Rockefeller Foundation

November 20, 1987

Dear Ms. and Mr. Vasulka:

The Selection Panel for the Foundation's Intercultural Film/Video Fellowships has now met to recommend recipients for this round. The panel and those of us on staff were enormously impressed with the quality of the 83 applications under consideration and with their imaginative grasp of international and domestic intercultural issues. Unfortunately, since our funds are limited and only seven fellowships are available, we could not provide fellowships for all the projects of merit. Your proposal for "Brotherhood" and an installation project was not among the seven final selections.

We hope next year to expand the Fellowships program in order to increase the number of the individual Fellowship awards. The Foundation will continue to accept nominations from a 30-member National Nominating Committee appointed annually to reflect regional diversity and an overview of the film and video community. A nine-member Selection Panel will again be responsible for recommending the Fellowship recipients.

We are returning your sample work and other materials under separate cover. Thank you again for your interest and participation in the first year of our new program. We hope you will be successful in finding the support necessary to complete your work.

Sincerely,



Steven D. Lavine
Associate Director
Arts and Humanities

Ms. Steina and Mr. Woody Vasulka
Route 6, Box 100
Sante Fe, NM 87501

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All artists nominated for the Fellowships will be invited to submit a recent example of completed work, a resume and a list of completed works, and a statement of purpose regarding a proposed project, or a work in progress, relevant to the Foundation's commitment to the support of innovative and creative exploration of the world's cultures and ways of life.

In identifying your four nominees, please give attention to regional artists as well as national figures. We want to give the nine-member Selection Panel a full representation of work produced throughout the country. We also ask that you include a brief comment about each of your nominees and, if possible, provide some general reflections on your nominations. Please feel free to speak with the artists you are nominating.

Please return the enclosed postcard to the Foundation, as soon as possible, to let us know if you will be available to serve as a Nominator. If you choose to serve on the Committee, we will require your nominations and comments no later than April 20. Please use the enclosed nomination form. The Foundation will officially notify the nominees and request the information we require from them. They will be notified in May and will be asked to submit their applications by September 4. The Fellowships will be officially announced in January, 1988.

The intention is to invite members of the 1987 Selection Panel to become nominators on next year's National Nominating Committee, and to select some members of the 1987 Nominating Committee to serve on future Selection Panels, in order to keep the process as open as possible. In addition, each year new people will be added to both groups. We welcome any suggestions you might have for participants to add in future years.

If you have any questions, please call me or Jan C. Grossman, Program Consultant, at (212) 869-8500. I look forward to hearing from you and hope you will join us in launching this new program in support of film and video artists.

Sincerely,



Steven D. Lavine
Associate Director
Arts and Humanities

Ms. Steina Vasulka
Route 6, Box 100
Santa Fe, NM 87501

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SDL:rmm

The Rockefeller Foundation

March 30, 1987

Dear Ms. Vasulka:

I would like to invite you, on behalf of the Rockefeller Foundation, to become a member of the National Nominating Committee for our new Intercultural Film/Video Fellowships. The Fellowship program is intended to identify and support innovative American film and video artists who, in their previous, current or proposed work, reflect upon contemporary cross-cultural issues, both internationally and within the United States. The work may be in the documentary, narrative, avant-garde/experimental, and installation/multi-media genres. This 30-member Committee will be a critical part of the process of selecting seven artists to be awarded Fellowships of \$35,000.

We are asking each of our Nominators to identify four film and video artists whom you feel would benefit from and meet the goals of the Fellowship. We are seeking to encourage artists who are interested in international and multi-cultural issues and whose innovative work comments on, and perhaps even changes, the ways in which we see the world. The expression of such intercultural concerns might be reflected in documentaries that examine and interpret intercultural realities while critiquing and transforming the traditions of the documentary genre; new narratives that provide imaginative stories and new ways of representing other cultures and ways of life; installations and multi-media projects which explore our cultural environment through images and structures; avant-garde and experimental works which, through the properties of the media, examine the textures and forms of life and culture. We would like to have artists from all regions of the United States represented in our nomination process, enabling the Selection Panel to have the opportunity to review work that represents various aesthetic, ideological and cultural points of view in the media arts in this country today.

Fellowship recipients may apply the awards to a variety of research and production needs, including travel and living expenses for exploratory visits or more sustained stays in foreign countries and all regions of this country; meetings with artists and scholars in various disciplines; access to film and television production and post-production facilities, as well as academic and non-academic research and study centers, where projects can be further developed.

The Rockefeller Foundation

May 5, 1987

Dear Ms. Vasulka:

Thank you for submitting your nominations for the Rockefeller Foundation Intercultural Film/Video Fellowships. Your thoughtful comments will be helpful as we proceed with the selection process.

Later this month, we will invite the nominees to submit their proposals. We hope to encourage innovative projects which will explore contemporary issues of cultural diversity, both internationally and within the United States, and challenge conventional genres and formats of representation. The Selection Panel will meet in early November to select the seven Fellowship recipients.

We will keep you informed as the program develops. Again, we appreciate your willingness to join us in the formative stages of this new program of support for American film and video artists.

Sincerely,



Steven D. Lavine
Associate Director
Arts and Humanities

Ms. Steina Vasulka
Route 6, Box 100
Santa Fe, NM 87501

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Project Description for The Rockefeller Foundation

To the Panel:

First some information. A year ago I was approached by Bruce Lyons, an enlightened industrialist and artist, during my show at LACE. After some discussion about image and object, he made me an offer, (which I could not refuse). As owner of Lyon Lamb, Inc., and a newly acquired digital arts incorporated software group, he suggested that his 3-D system continue in the direction of my previous work for a substantial discount, so I could spend full time to learn the machine. Lucky again, I was awarded a production grant from the NEA for my new project entitled Brotherhood, which enabled me to work on the 3-D system at once.

The logistics of establishing a private imaging facility has been well known by us (we built our first and second generation imaging computer in the late seventies) but this time the software protocol well-exceeded the casual learning and took more than six months to attain some fluency. Yet, I still maintain that the creative work with technology is an indivisible process and must be centered in the artist's hand.

In the process of exercising the new tool a peculiar dilemma appeared. The 3-D software package contains the notion of the cinematic space, based around the camera (obscura) operation with the suggested cinematic syntax. Given this renaissance space, one inevitably starts searching for its origin, and the methods developed by De La Francesco, Batista, or Durer. In fact the "Package" re-ignites the dormant dialogue, the modernist's rejection of the restraining rules of perspective. In summary, the new tool brought me up to a clear backward looking view of spatial treatment.

From the previous work in video and computer, I have accepted the hybrid method where the camera is responsible for a 3-D definition of space, and where the computer abstracts spatial texture or 2-D frame organization. This line of work is incomparable in 3-D generated space. In such a space, each element of representing space is constructed or can be reassigned, so the basic reality or (photo/cinematic truth) is questioned.

This first and severe dilemma resulted in building mechanical robotic devices capable of carrying the camera, controlled by the same software, constructing and dynamically operating within the space. The concept finally focussed to a notion of an electronic stage, where the confrontation of both electronic and actual stage space could take place.

As it happened, during my stay in Amsterdam in the spring I met a Dutch choreographer, Bart Stoyf, who has just abandoned a large and impressive project of dance performances with a mechanical arm capable of interacting with dancers (lifting them, for example) containing the nuclei of sensing and responding modes, with interactivity of sound and light by the video cameras.

The project eventually ended in manual control mode, since computer interface and programming became insurmountable. Besides Bart's grasp of the electronically defined and operated stage, he brought in another aspect

of stage control, an instant rearrangement of stage sets by means of computer controlled pneumatics.

My reason for staying in Amsterdam (at Steim) was to establish a control between the voice and the robotic camera head. Early fall, we plan to use these conceptual devices in theatrical experiments with Joan La Barbara in the "Electronic Opera House" project where other space and media-interactive devices are to be tested.

The Time Scale

Each frame of a complex object containing not only surface images but light and shadow, may take up to 45 minutes to present in full on the screen. This basic experiment requires fundamental rearrangement of one's working habits and puts in question the whole direction of making images in this fashion, it reduces the volume of one's yearly work from hours to seconds, it infringes on one's beliefs and ethical dogmas. It advocates the possibilities of purchasing faster time for money, giving up the autonomy of one's environment for "next door" professional facility, participatory solution of a mediator/operator, to short-cut the process of learning, to exchange the blue collar for the white, to spend time on raising funds instead of the man against machine struggle.

Indeed, the validity of making images by machine, is hardly challenging in contemporary cultural formulation except perhaps in its scientific visualization aspects. On the other hand, the conceptual framework becomes continuously challenging, particularly in the extended line of practice in media from photography-film-video-computer and this in a confrontation with realist-illusionist discourse in the tradition of cinema and in the basic and most challenging phenomenological aspect of this new synthetic principle, the critique of the perceptual and esthetic dominance of the camera (obscura).

The Project

The formal challenge of this project, as in my work before, lies in the confrontation with cinema. Cinema operates in the natural or man-made world in two basic sets of vectors, those pointing outward from the point as a camera on the tripod or, as a camera looks at a point, a protagonist, from the infinity of viewpoints. For telling the "story" these two great cinematic principles strategically reduced to human domain viewpoints may comprise the form of a cinematic syntax.

This basic and conventional description of the organization of cinema is violated by a multiplicity of creative strategies. Many opposing tendencies from the hands of experimentalists have been performed, for example, the way painters challenge the tradition of renaissance space in our century and the way film suggested many other kinds of formal autonomy.

Yet the two great cinematic vectors, even if set in the mutual choreography of motions, sizes and selections, cannot escape the paradigm of their operation. As the dependence on the light/space, the practicality of the systemic arrangement describes its powers and limitations.

R As this work describes the (pictorial) operation of cinema, it begins to intrude over the boundaries of cinematic space and cinematic modalities. From simple extension, perspective space, where a viewpoint is logged within the solid object, for example, to the logical transformations of Boolean functions, where once established, parameters of space, motion, light and textures become a subject of modal expression, generic to the machine, thus questioning our perceptual habits.

X This experiment to be performed in a graphic space, has its counterpart in the actual space. By accepting the necessity of establishing a creative playground, by involving myself in building forms of robotic devices, by being controlled by the parameter of the computer graphic space, I find myself in a situation, where one can no longer operate in a specialized pictorial branch, where a new summary of space now available, (indeed < pioneered by a whole generation of the past thirty years) in more unified form of tools, where all representation of media from visual illusion to accoustic generation and location combine with stage-like presence and control, prescribed and organized by the computer.

A Rockefeller Fellowship Project Description

We will use this fellowship to develop blueprints for an electronically animated environment, where interaction between the sensory modalities and those of technology may symbiotically unfold. This interactive, sensitive environment will store sounds, images, spatial strategies, temporal events and psychomodalities relevant to our narrative themes. The blueprint will apply to the first of these themes informing the coordinates, laying the matrix for future experiments.

The first project is called The Brotherhood. It uncovers the psychological interior of the undefined male force with its power to construct or destroy human communities. The machine-assisted environment will be programmed to respond to human signals, both intentional and inadvertent, cutting the space between everyday reality and the allegoric world we wish to describe. Within these cuts, places and peoples reveal their mystery, one bears witness to the crystallization of crowds, historically changing face, but often moving in unison in response to the cries and illusionary dreaming of various demagogues, recognizable-historical and unrecognizable-fantastic. In contrast to my previous work, The Art of Memory, which explored the macro-view of the human experience, the "Brotherhood" is looking into the human interior, physical and psychological. The physical interior examined as a biological anthropologist might examine the forms of migrating peoples of the past, the diocephalic slavs, the brachyocephalic turks, strange historic attempts to probe and examine what we are made of. The penetration of matter and dynamic phenomena rhythmically revealed as the neurophysiologist Jose' Delgado has done in his filmed analysis of the brain wave patternings of the bull in the arena. In this way we define an area impenetrable to the eye and to the entry of the individual and suddenly transverse matter, opening physical layers of phenomena in order to reveal their mystery, their kriptein.

The human intercourse with the machine has articulated essential coding systems: languages, protocols, scores and procedures. We have constructed a complete set of symbolic and time-perceptual models, and emulated the essential operations of analog electronic media. Our ambition is to clarify the specialized nomenclature so that an individual can participate creatively and intimately, with more rigorous control; or organize the stage and execute her or his vision more authentically. This new understanding would contribute toward the specification of future participatory genres, and to more enduring, more stable creative strategies. The blueprint for The Brotherhood would inform the primary matrix for translating a variety of processes and codes in the service of narrativity. As the architecture of the tools becomes visible in my work, we now begin to create an epistemic space in which, the psychic architecture of the makers becomes visible and interactive in time.

In my previous work, there have been three of these dialectic encounters between the technological architecture and the metaphysical structure of the signal (time, energy and intention). The Scan Processor (Rutt/Etra 1974) initiates the visual essay "Didactic Video" (Afterimage 1975), my first digital imaging tool (MacArthur/Schier 1976-79), produced "syntax of Binary Images" (Afterimage 1978) and the Image Articulator (Schier 1979)

was responsible for the videotape "Artifacts". I have always paid attention to a dialectic notion of the media: the metaphysical structure of the signal and the physicality of the tools through which the signal must propagate, and conversely to the reality of the basic code, waveforms or digital code structures and the illusionistic summary of all processes and codes in the service of narrativity. The existence and use of an underlying coding system in machine-assisted art suggests a tempting opportunity. At last we are prepared to move from a relationship with technology attempting to invoke the creative potential of a specific tool, to one with a technological environment; sensitive, interactive, synaesthetic, invoking a new creative potential from human discourse.

A Rockefeller Fellowship Project Description

The lexicon of signification stored in the human memory archive includes physical gestures that differ from culture to culture. The germinal psychic dispositions of cultures may be understood by detailed observation of the peculiar physical and vocal gestures of peoples. In my travels to Japan and Europe, I have been capturing on video, the particular quirks of physical and vocal gesture that exteriorize the psychic germs of cultural disposition. Reiterated over generations, these are almost indecipherable outside of their native realm and yet have a kind of exclamatory significance to those who carry them.

I would like to create a visual composition of these gestures as an aesthetic language. They contain the essential elements of aesthetic expression; kinetic beauty, indecipherable codes of behavior passed down for eons, secret non-verbal language, spontaneous and strange communications, expressions of personal identity.

To create a synaesthetic environment cut by doorways to unfamiliar regions, we may begin by treating these strange morphemes of behavior as living things just as the unconscious does in dreaming.

I would use this fellowship to re-travel these locations, as well as Africa, to collect complementary materials. Over the years I have worked in a single screen, in matrices of monitors, and various installations, using turntables, mechanized optical devices and other configurations of pre-programmed camera movements. In the past, my subjects have been urban, sea and landscapes, examined, altered and processed by machines, composed into videotapes, containing various perceptual, electronic and pictorial paradoxes. This time my method has been to gather material on a light weight, Super-VHS camcorder, which I carry with me daily as a one-woman operation. I found this intimate method very effective, especially in Japan, where camera presence instantly influences behavior.

Working language - unused

Travels in Japan, Iceland, Africa, examining secular and religious human gestures

to create a visual composition of these gestures

to begin to formulate a codex from these gestures

to stock gestural morphemes to incorporate into the media nomenclature/into the unified code system

to create from the gestures an overlay of ideograms

to involve this array of particularizing quirks into an aesthetic language

to use this aesthetic language to begin to uncover the psychic germinal disposition of various cultures

to involve the gestural language in the unified code of a machine-assisted environment?

to use the gestures as hieroglyphs triggering other three-dimensional visual and auditory structures

to observe the transformations of thought as visual notes

to robotically translate physical gestures into information triggers

to use the hieroglyphs of gesture as algorithms of signification to be robotically translated

physical gestures transform thought as visual notes, the figures

hieroglyph, lexicon of signification fusing signs, symbols, icons, connect the gestures to the unified code

to fold/combine the gestural code into the visual and auditory structures of an environment

to make the gestural code recognizable in an electronically animated space

this codex of gestures to be incorporated into the code of the technologically sensitive environment

Twenty-nine sense perceptions numbered in the human inventory. This doesn't include the extended senses and capacities of the yogis. Our intention is to lay the foundation, to contribute to the creation of a technology-driven, sensitive environment that would synaesthetically engage faculties and senses that we seldom use. This sensitive environment would, if properly made, synaesthetically open corridors to other worlds lacking conductivity to this one. The senses engaged exercising cross-state retention, exercising cross-state conductivity. To properly map a technology-driven, sensitive environment, we would include in its lexicon a wide range of non-verbal languages.

The lexicon of signification stored in the memory archive includes physical gestures that differ from culture to culture. The psychic germ of racial disposition, called the logoi spermatikoi, may be understood by detailed observation of the gestural sets of different people. To make a synaesthetic, sensitive environment, we will include the gestural sets of various cultures in the codex of the machine-assisted space. We imagine this synaesthetic, technology-driven, sensitive environment to include in its memory, gestural responses representative of culture-specific behavioral chreodes.

To the panel:

The Theatre of Hybrid Automata

I am seeking funds for a specific project entitled "The Theatre of Hybrid Automata".

In the recent past, I have been involved in a series of large works: "The Commission", "Art of Memory", and "The Brotherhood". All of these works have attempted to define unique narrative systems by electronic means. These videotapes were produced with hybrid technology, specifically my collection of analog and digital tools of diverse origins. In "Art of Memory", I began to seriously think about Image as Object, a concept which brought my work with video to a temporary crises.

Although I have constructed digital tools and worked with a computer since 1976, my encounter with 3-D imaging software has changed substantially my thinking about the medium. Unexpectedly this confrontation with virtual space has thrown me back towards questions of physical space.

What are the tools of the computer in physical space? One must enter the land of robotics, motion control, machine to machine communication, systemic feedback loops, handshakes, stepper motors, time code interlocks, MIDI/to other code interfaces and, eventually, back to the acoustical, mechanical, optical and purely synthetic computer graphic world.

Given the previous assumption, the core of this project is the concept of an Electronic Stage: a computer organized performing system, where the computer stores, coordinates and executes images, sounds, motion control parameters and additionally, provides a full sensor-based remote interactive environment for stage-to-performer and performer-to-stage command/control communication.

I have collected from the atomic junkyard of Los Alamos a set of hi-tech components and devices which comprise the backbone of my electro/mechanical stockpile and new creative playground. This playground is intended to transform the detritus of abandoned technology, in dialog with the state of the art, towards the articulation of potential aspects of the future evolution of a technological culture.

Although this project will generate videotapes, computer programs, memory based images, scores and scripts, audiotapes, photographs, and aesthetic documents of the processes involved, it is not focused upon a singular work or composition. This particular funding request is directed towards the legitimization of a private working environment for media research as an art work unto itself. The construction, operation, modification and maintenance of systems in concert with their necessary software development constitute the aesthetic domain as an environment which I desire to define as the art.

In keeping with this concern I intend to exhibit the systems and products of this environment as a total experience. This exhibition will encompass the actual robotic elements as sculptural objects, the aesthetic and technical documents as scores for action, and the resultant video and computer images as maps to the exploration of this private media environment.

My ambition is to "...initiate a cultural interface between the creative processes of writing, imaging, composing and scoring for a new media stage, operating autonomously or interactively under human control. My ambition is to clarify the specialized media nomenclature such that an individual can participate creatively and intimately with more rigorous control, to organize the stage and to execute their vision more authentically. This new understanding would contribute towards the specification of the future genres, and more enduringly stable creative strategies..."*

In Santa Fe, August 18, 1989

Woody Vasulka

*) Excerpt from article "The New Epistemic Space" (included)

COPY

July, 1989

Dear:

It is a pleasure to inform you that you have been nominated for the Rockefeller Foundation Intercultural Film/Video Fellowships (Media Arts). These fellowships are designed to identify and support innovative American film and video artists who, in their previous, current, or proposed work, reflect upon contemporary cross-cultural issues, both internationally and within the United States.

If you are interested in acting on this nomination, we request that you submit an application which includes a detailed proposal (a maximum of 7 to 10 double-spaced pages), a single example of completed work (16mm, VHS or 3/4" cassette--please note that we are unable to screen European format videotapes), a resume, and a list of completed works. If you are proposing an installation project, please submit visual documentation for one completed work. In November, a nine-member Panel will meet at the Foundation to select seven artists to be awarded Fellowships of \$35,000. In addition to the Media Arts program, the Rockefeller Foundation will also be providing seven Fellowships, through a separate nomination process, for documentary artists.

We have received 45 nominations and are inviting all those artists nominated to apply for the seven available Media Arts Fellowships. The nominations have been submitted by a 20-member National Nominating Committee appointed to provide an overview of the film and video community and comprised of artists, scholars, exhibitors, curators, producers, and programmers. We asked each of our Nominators to identify three film and video artists whom they felt would benefit from and meet the goals of the Fellowships and whose work challenges conventional genres and formats of representation. We are seeking to encourage artists who are interested in international and multi-cultural issues and whose innovative work comments on, and perhaps even changes, the ways in which we see the world.

We expect that such intercultural concerns will be reflected in narratives that provide imaginative stories and new ways of representing other cultures and ways of life; installations and multi-media projects which explore our cultural environment through images and structures; avant-garde and experimental works which examine the textures and forms of life and culture. Your program description should make clear your sense of the work's potential contribution to its genre, and its relevance to the international and intercultural goals of the program.

It will not be necessary to provide us with an itemized budget, but we will require information about the scope of your project and the ways in which the Fellowship award would be applied. Fellowship recipients may apply the awards to a variety of research and production needs, including travel and living expenses for exploratory visits or more sustained stays in foreign countries and all regions of this country; meetings with artists and scholars in various disciplines; access to film and television production and post-production facilities as well as academic and non-academic research and study centers where projects can be further developed.

The application for the Rockefeller Foundation Intercultural Film/Video Fellowships must be postmarked by 1989. At that time, we will need to receive your detailed proposal (a maximum of 7 to 10 double-spaced pages) for a project which you are planning or for a work in progress relevant to the Foundation's commitment to the support of innovative and creative exploration of the world's cultures and ways of life.

Please use the enclosed form as a cover sheet to provide us with specific information about your proposal and your sample work. In addition, we will require a resume, a list of completed works, and a sample of a completed work. Please select a sample work which relates, as closely as possible, to your proposed work and the program guidelines. If there is a particular ten-minute segment of your submission which you feel would be most important for the Panel to screen, please cue the work and label the cassette or film to indicate that a sequence has been selected. If you are proposing an installation, we request that you submit slides, photographs and video documentation to provide the Selection Panel with the strongest possible overview of the work.

The Panel of nine scholars, programmers and artists from throughout the country will meet in November at the Rockefeller Foundation. The Panel's comments are confidential and no information regarding the Panel's discussions will be made available to applicants. The Fellowships will be officially announced in January, 1990.

We would appreciate it if you would return the enclosed postcard, as soon as possible, to indicate whether or not you intend to apply for a Fellowship. Enclosed is an information sheet describing all of the current film and video programs in the Arts and Humanities division of the Foundation. If you have any questions, please call me or Karen Kaplan, Fellowships Coordinator, at (212) 869-8500.

I look forward to hearing from you and hope that you will choose to join us in this Media Arts program.

Sincerely,

Janet M. Sternburg
Senior Program Advisor in
Media
Arts and Humanities

JMS:kk

INTERCULTURAL FILM/VIDEO FELLOWSHIPS (MEDIA ARTS)

Name: Woody VASULKA

Address: RT6, Box 100, SANTA FE, N.M. 87501

Phone: (505) 471 7181

PROPOSAL

Title: THE THEATRE OF HYBRID AUTOMATA

Genre: VISUAL ESSAY on VIDEOTAPE

Production Format (16mm; 3/4" etc.): 3/4"

Anticipated Length: 40 MIN

Brief Project Description:

THIS ESSAY DESCRIBES AND ANALYSES
THE MODALITIES OF EVENTS OCCURRING
ON THE INTERACTIVE ELECTRONIC
STAGE IN AN EFFORT TO SPECIFY
CONTEMPORARY INTERACTIVE TECHNOLOGIES
AND CODES TOWARDS THE OVERALL ESTHETIC
SUMMARY — LANGUAGE

INTERCULTURAL FILM/VIDEO FELLOWSHIPS (MEDIA ARTS)

Name: Woody VASULKA

SAMPLE WORK

Title: THE THEATRE OF
HYBRID AUTOMATA

Genre: A REPORT

Length: 7 MIN

Original production format: 3/4" VIDEO

Year: 1989

Description of work:

A PROBE OF ELECTRO-
MECHANICAL ROBOTIC DEVICE
AND ~~IT~~ ITS FUNCTION IN
A CONCEPT OF ELECTRONIC
STAGE

Format submitted for screening (16mm; 3/4"; VHS; etc.):

Work is cued to a selected segment ANY

Work is not cued ANY

If slides or stills are included in this application, please list the title and year of the work:

Special information for screening:

ALSO:

ART OF MEMORY

ELECTRONIC NARRATIVE

36 MIN

3/4" VIDEO

1987

SERIES OF "SONG"
RELATED TO THE
POLITICAL EVENTS
OF TWENTY CENTURY

The Rockefeller Foundation

June 3, 1987

Dear Ms. and Mr. Vasulka:

It is a pleasure to inform you that you have been nominated for the Rockefeller Foundation Intercultural Film/Video Fellowships. These fellowships are designed to identify and support innovative American film and video artists who, in their previous, current, or proposed work, reflect upon contemporary cross-cultural issues, both internationally and within the United States.

If you are interested in acting on this nomination, we request that you submit an application which includes a detailed proposal (a maximum of 10 double-spaced pages), a single example of completed work (VHS or 3/4" cassette), a resume, and a list of completed works. If you are proposing an installation project, please submit slides, still photographs and other visual documentation for one completed work. In November, a nine-member Panel will meet at the Foundation to select seven artists to be awarded Fellowships of \$35,000.

We have received 90 nominations and are inviting all those artists nominated to apply for the seven available Fellowships. The nominations have been submitted by a 30-member National Nominating Committee appointed to provide an overview of the film and video community and comprised of artists, scholars, exhibitors, curators, producers, and programmers. We asked each of our Nominators to identify four film and video artists whom they felt would benefit from and meet the goals of the Fellowship and whose work challenges conventional genres and formats of representation. We are seeking to encourage artists who are interested in international and multi-cultural issues and whose innovative work comments on, and perhaps even changes, the ways in which we see the world.

The expression of such intercultural concerns might be reflected in documentaries that examine and interpret intercultural realities while critiquing and transforming the traditions of the documentary genre; narratives that provide imaginative stories and new ways of representing other cultures and ways of life; installations and multi-media projects which explore our cultural environment through images and structures; avant-garde and experimental works which, through the properties of the media, examine the

textures and forms of life and culture. Your program description should make clear your sense of the work's potential contribution to its genre, and its relevance to the international and intercultural goals of the program.

It will not be necessary to provide us with an itemized budget, but we will require information about the scope of your project and the ways in which the Fellowship award would be applied. Fellowship recipients may apply the awards to a variety of research and production needs, including travel and living expenses for exploratory visits or more sustained stays in foreign countries and all regions of this country; meetings with artists and scholars in various disciplines; access to film and television production and post-production facilities, as well as academic and non-academic research and study centers, where projects can be further developed.

The application deadline for the Rockefeller Foundation Intercultural Film/Video Fellowships is August 17, 1987. At that time, we will need to receive your detailed proposal (a maximum of 10 double-spaced pages) for a project which you are planning or for a work in progress, relevant to the Foundation's commitment to the support of innovative and creative exploration of the world's cultures and ways of life. In addition, we will require a resume, a list of completed works, and a sample of a completed work. If there is a particular ten-minute segment of your submission which you feel would be most important for the Panel to screen, please cue up the tape and label the cassette to indicate that a sequence has been selected. The Panel of nine experts and artists from throughout the country will meet in November at the Rockefeller Foundation. The Fellowships will be officially announced in January, 1988.

We would appreciate it if you would return the enclosed postcard, as soon as possible, to indicate whether or not you intend to apply for a Fellowship. If you have any questions, please call me or Jan C. Grossman, Program Consultant, at (212) 869-8500.

I look forward to hearing from you and hope that you will choose to join us in the first year of this new film and video program.

Sincerely,



Steven D. Lavine
Associate Director
Arts and Humanities

Ms. Steina and Mr. Woody Vasulka
Route 6, Box 100
Sante Fe, NM 87501

SDL:de

AA # 212 764 3468

The Rockefeller Foundation

May 16, 1989

Dear Steina and Woody Vasulka:

It is a pleasure to inform you that you have been nominated for the Rockefeller Foundation Intercultural Film/Video Fellowships (Media Arts). These fellowships are designed to identify and support innovative American film and video artists who, in their previous, current, or proposed work, reflect upon contemporary cross-cultural issues, both internationally and within the United States.

If you are interested in acting on this nomination, we request that you submit an application which includes a detailed proposal (a maximum of 7 to 10 double-spaced pages), a single example of completed work (16mm, VHS or 3/4" cassette--please note that we are unable to screen European format videotapes), a resume, and a list of completed works. If you are proposing an installation project, please submit visual documentation for one completed work. In November, a nine-member Panel will meet at the Foundation to select seven artists to be awarded Fellowships of \$35,000. In addition to the Media Arts program, the Rockefeller Foundation will also be providing seven Fellowships, through a separate nomination process, for documentary artists.

We have received 44 nominations and are inviting all those artists nominated to apply for the seven available Media Arts Fellowships. The nominations have been submitted by a 20-member National Nominating Committee appointed to provide an overview of the film and video community and comprised of artists, scholars, exhibitors, curators, producers, and programmers. We asked each of our Nominators to identify three film and video artists whom they felt would benefit from and meet the goals of the Fellowships and whose work challenges conventional genres and formats of representation. We are seeking to encourage artists who are interested in international and multi-cultural issues and whose innovative work comments on, and perhaps even changes, the ways in which we see the world.

We expect that such intercultural concerns will be reflected in narratives that provide imaginative stories and new ways of representing other cultures and ways of life; installations and multi-media projects which explore our cultural environment through images and structures; avant-garde and experimental works which examine the textures and forms of life and culture. Your program description should make clear your sense of the work's potential contribution to its genre, and its relevance to the international and intercultural goals of the program.

869 8500

The Rockefeller Foundation

ALBERTA ARTHURS
DIRECTOR FOR ARTS AND HUMANITIES

October 24, 1988

Dear Ms. Vasulka:

The Selection Panel for the Foundation's Intercultural Film/Video Fellowships has now met to recommend recipients for this year's awards. The panel and those of us on the Foundation's staff were enormously impressed by the quality of the 81 applications under consideration and with their imaginative grasp of international and domestic intercultural issues. Unfortunately, since our funds are limited and only fourteen fellowships are available, we cannot support all the projects of merit. Your proposal, "The Other Asia," was not among the fourteen final selections.

Next year, the Foundation will again accept nominations from the 40-member National Nominating Committee which is appointed annually to reflect regional diversity and an overview of the film and video community. A nine-member Selection Panel will again be responsible for recommending the Fellowship recipients. For your information, we are sending a list of the artists recommended by this year's Selection Panel and also a list of this year's panelists.

We are returning the materials you submitted under separate cover. Thank you again for your interest and participation in the program; we were grateful for the chance to learn about your work.

Sincerely



Alberta Arthurs

Ms. Steina Vasulka
Route 6, Box 100
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501

Enclosures

ROCKEFELLER FOUNDATION INTERCULTURAL FILM/VIDEO FELLOWSHIPS 1988

Documentary

St. Clair Bourne

Christine Choy

Ana Maria Garcia

Jill Godmilow

Richard Gordon and Carma Hinton

John Marshall

Marlon Riggs

MEDIA ARTS

Tony Buba

Julie Dash

Gary Hill

Enrique Oliver

Yvonne Rainer

Leslie Thornton

Billy Woodberry

The Rockefeller Foundation

April 11, 1988

Dear Ms. Vasulka:

It is a pleasure to inform you that you have been nominated for the Rockefeller Foundation Intercultural Film/Video Fellowships (Media Arts). These fellowships are designed to identify and support innovative American film and video artists who, in their previous, current, or proposed work, reflect upon contemporary cross-cultural issues, both internationally and within the United States.

If you are interested in acting on this nomination, we request that you submit an application which includes a detailed proposal (a maximum of 7 to 10 double-spaced pages), a single example of completed work (we'd prefer VHS or 3/4" cassette, but we will accept 16mm if a cassette is unavailable --please note that we are unable to screen European format videotapes), a resume, and a list of completed works. If you are proposing an installation project, please submit slides, still photographs and other visual documentation for one completed work. In October, a ten-member Panel will meet at the Foundation to select seven artists to be awarded Fellowships of \$35,000. In addition to the Media Arts program, the Rockefeller Foundation will also be providing Fellowships, through a separate nomination process, for documentary artists.

We have received 46 nominations and are inviting all those artists nominated to apply for the seven available Media Arts Fellowships. The nominations have been submitted by a 20-member National Nominating Committee appointed to provide an overview of the film and video community and comprised of artists, scholars, exhibitors, curators, producers, and programmers. We asked each of our Nominators to identify three film and video artists whom they felt would benefit from and meet the goals of the Fellowships and whose work challenges conventional genres and formats of representation. We are seeking to encourage artists who are interested in international and multi-cultural issues and whose innovative work comments on, and perhaps even changes, the ways in which we see the world.

We expect that such intercultural concerns will be reflected in narratives that provide imaginative stories and new ways of representing other cultures and ways of life; installations and multi-media projects which explore our cultural environment through images and structures; avant-garde and experimental works which examine the textures and forms of life and culture. Your program description should make clear your sense of the work's potential contribution to its genre, and its relevance to the international and intercultural goals of the program.

It will not be necessary to provide us with an itemized budget, but we will require information about the scope of your project and the ways in which the Fellowship award would be applied. Fellowship recipients may apply the awards to a variety of research and production needs, including travel and living expenses for exploratory visits or more sustained stays in foreign countries and all regions of this country; meetings with artists and scholars in various disciplines; access to film and television production and post-production facilities as well as academic and non-academic research and study centers where projects can be further developed.

The application for the Rockefeller Foundation Intercultural Film/Video Fellowships must be postmarked by June 15, 1988. At that time, we will need to receive your detailed proposal (a maximum of 7 to 10 double-spaced pages) for a project which you are planning or for a work in progress relevant to the Foundation's commitment to the support of innovative and creative exploration of the world's cultures and ways of life. Please use the enclosed form as a cover sheet to provide us with specific information about your proposal and your sample work. In addition, we will require a resume, a list of completed works, and a sample of a completed work. If there is a particular ten-minute segment of your submission which you feel would be most important for the Panel to screen, please cue up the tape and label the cassette to indicate that a sequence has been selected. The Panel of ten scholars, exhibitors and artists from throughout the country will meet in October at the Rockefeller Foundation. The Panel's comments are confidential and no information regarding the Panel's discussions will be made available to applicants. The Fellowships will be officially announced in January, 1989.

We would appreciate it if you would return the enclosed postcard, as soon as possible, to indicate whether or not you intend to apply for a Fellowship. Enclosed is an information sheet describing all of the current film and video programs in the Arts and Humanities division of the Foundation. If you have any questions, please call me or Jan C. Grossman, Program Consultant, at (212) 869-8500.

I look forward to hearing from you and hope that you will choose to join us in this Media Arts program.

Sincerely,



Steven D. Lavine
Associate Director
Arts and Humanities

Steina Vasulka
Route 6, Box 100
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501

enc.

SDL:kk

THE ROCKEFELLER FOUNDATION
INTERCULTURAL FILM/VIDEO FELLOWSHIPS

SELECTION PANEL 1988

James A. Boon
Professor of Anthropology
Princeton University

Cheryl Chisholm
Independent Producer/Programmer

Ed Emshwiller
Dean, School of Film and Video
California Institute of the Arts

Jean Franco
Professor, Department of Spanish and Portuguese
Columbia University

John Giancola
Director of Telecommunications
University of Tampa

DeeDee Halleck
Artist

Bruce Jenkins
Film/Video Director
Walker Art Center

Trinh T. Minh-ha
Artist

Michael Watts
Associate Professor, Geography Department
University of California, Berkeley

The Rockefeller Foundation

1133 AVENUE OF THE AMERICAS, NEW YORK, N. Y. 10036

HOWARD KLEIN
DIRECTOR ARTS

CABLE: ROCKFOUND. NEW YORK
TELEPHONE: (212) 869 - 8500

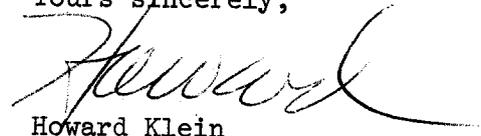
February 28, 1978

Dear Steina:

Thanks for your note of February 17. Your plans sound exciting and perhaps we might be able to help you and Woody in your various efforts in the future. Unfortunately, however, we have committed all of our funds for 1978 and have not yet begun to consider proposals for 1979. If you would like us to consider a proposal for support during 1979, please let me know in writing, with a description of the projects you and Woody will be involved in and what budget you require. I should caution you that we provide modest support in most cases.

I would like to see and talk with you both but I don't have the time available on the dates you mention and since we cannot provide funding during this year, perhaps we can wait for the talk. I would like to have the written description though.

Yours sincerely,



Howard Klein

Mrs. Steina Vasulka
257 Franklin Street
Buffalo, New York 14202

HK:olp

The Rockefeller Foundation

February 28, 1992

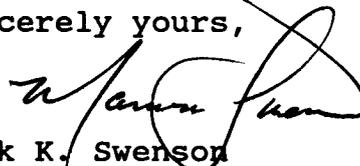
Our ref: RF 89067 #41

Dear Ms. Vasulka:

Thank you for your letter dated February 8, 1992 which included the final accounting statement for the above mentioned grant.

Since this grant has terminated and all funds provided have been accounted for, we shall consider this account closed.

Sincerely yours,



Mark K. Swenson
Senior Accountant

Ms. Steina Vasulka
Route 6, Box 100
Santa Fe, NM 87501

The Rockefeller Foundation

1133 AVENUE OF THE AMERICAS, NEW YORK, N. Y. 10036

HOWARD KLEIN
DIRECTOR ARTS

CABLE: ROCKFOUND, NEW YORK
TELEPHONE: (212) 869-8500

August 11, 1980

Dear Steina:

I wish to take this opportunity to again express my appreciation for your participation at the meetings on June 23 and 24 as a member of the Selection Panel of the Foundation's Video Artists Fellowship Program. You have rendered us a most important service and we cannot overstate our deep gratitude for your professional and personal assistance in helping us develop this program.

Enclosed for your records is a copy of the minutes of the meetings on June 23-24. Thank you also for submitting your nominations of possible candidates for the awards. We have collated the names and have enclosed a copy of the list with this letter. Would you please look it over and see if there are any omissions, changes or additions that should be made to this list and submit them to us by August 22. After we have received your comments we will write to the nominees and ask them to submit material for the Panel's consideration. The deadline date for them to submit the materials will be October 1.

The next meeting of the Panel is tentatively being scheduled for the week of November 10. The meetings will run approximately three days. Would you please contact Orneata and let her know if that week will be convenient for you. Also, for those of you who have not submitted resumes to us for our files, would you please send one to us.

Again, thank you for your assistance. We look forward to seeing you in November.

Sincerely yours,

Howard Klein

Howard Klein

Ms. Steina Vasulka
1600 Old Pecos Trail
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501

HK:ms
Enclosures

The Rockefeller Foundation

111 WEST 50th STREET, NEW YORK, N. Y. 10020

ARTS

CABLE: ROCKFOUND, NEW YORK
TELEPHONE: (212) 265-8100

July 25, 1974

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Vasulka:

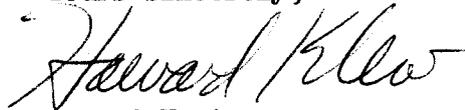
As part of its program of support to creative people, The Rockefeller Foundation is looking into the feasibility of developing a program of Rockefeller Foundation Fellowships for video artists. We envision making a modest sum available to selected artists - perhaps five a year - to carry out their work over a year's time.

This letter is to ask you if you could give us some names of highly qualified individuals who might serve on a panel to assist us in drawing up the guidelines for the Fellowships. Perhaps you could give us two names in each of the following categories:

- 1) artists
- 2) academics (teachers, theoreticians)
- 3) promoters (producers, curators, critics)

From the aggregate list of names we receive from you and others to whom we are writing, we will put together what we hope will be a representative panel. If you would care to make any comments about the appropriateness or inappropriateness of either the proposed Fellowships or the format for selecting recipients, please feel free to do so. Any help you may wish to offer will be greatly appreciated.

Yours sincerely,



Howard Klein
Director

Mr. and Mrs. Woody Vasulka
Instructional Communication Center
Foster Annex, Room 22
State University of New York at Buffalo
Buffalo, New York 14214

HK:hw

The Rockefeller Foundation

111 WEST 50th STREET, NEW YORK, N. Y. 10020

ARTS

CABLE: ROCKFOUND. NEW YORK
TELEPHONE: (212) 265-8100

June 9, 1975

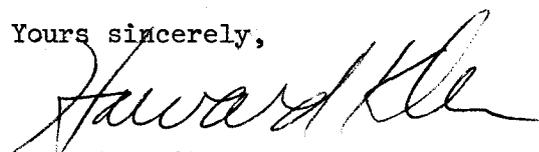
Dear Mrs. Vasulka:

Enclosed please find the revised minutes to the January 20 meeting of the television advisory panel. The panel itself has changed membership somewhat with the following having withdrawn: Ed Emswiller and Gene Youngblood; and their places having been taken by: Bob Jungels, Director, Television Studies Program, Rhode Island School of Design; and George Stoney, Director, Alternate Media Center, New York University.

It was our original hope to be able to develop a program of support for video artists which would be submitted to the Trustees for approval in September. The Board meeting for that month has now been designated a discussion meeting and therefore, we will prepare the material for a December meeting presentation. This means, if our plan is acceptable to the Trustees, that a meeting of the panel to recommend actual grants might not take place until 1976. Slowly grind the wheels of progress!

Hope you have a productive summer.

Yours sincerely,



Howard Klein
Director

Mrs. Steinunn Vasulka
257 Franklin Street
Buffalo, New York 14202

HK:ll

Enclosure

MINUTES

Video Artists Selection Panel Meeting
Rockefeller Archive Center
Pocantico Hills, New York
June 23-24, 1980

The place for the meeting turned out to be quite productive. Although the Ramada Inn had its drawbacks, the Archive Center was quiet and promoted thoughtful discussions. Especially nice was having the guided tours of the center itself and being shown the first ledger kept by the 16-year-old John Davidson Rockefeller!

The committee wrestled with a number of issues, including all those Howard Klein expected them to be concerned with. The makeup of the group-artists, scholars and persons from museums and stations-created a balance in discussions. By the end of the first afternoon, agreement was being reached on a number of issues: selection of nominees; procedure for considering fellowship awardees; and methods of approaching sponsoring institutions.

Among considerations of the panel were the following:

- Fellowships should recognize: installation artists, minorities, single-channel video works, video disc artists and others.
- Museums as well as television should be served.
- The program should "reflect the diversity of video art and its contribution to contemporary life through the development of hardware." The artist as scientist or engineer should be included in the Fellowships.
- There should be an effort to design The Rockefeller Foundation Fellowship program so it does not duplicate other support programs.
- It was agreed, in this trial year, to limit nominations to the committee itself. If each member submits six names, there will be up to 42 names to consider. This system will be adequate, since the most prominent names are the ones who should be chosen this first year. Problems will arise several years hence at which point the obvious choices will have been exhausted and a more thorough search will have to be undertaken to discover less well-known but equally deserving artists for the fellowships.
- It was felt that the amount of \$35,000 per fellowship was good.

The following guidelines were drawn up and approved unanimously:

- Each panelist would submit to Howard Klein by July 15 the names of six artists.
- Howard Klein's office would collate the list of nominees and share them with the Panel. After that, Howard Klein's office would write to those nominated and request the following:
 - 1) a resume
 - 2) a work which best illustrates their work over the past five years. That could be either two video tapes, if the nominee works in television, or documentation of a museum exhibition if that is the area of concentration. The materials could include, in the case of museum artists, visual scores-plans, photos, sketches, or catalogues or two installations; or documentation of work done in developing hardware.

The letter of request would inform the recipient that she/he has been nominated for the award and that the Panel will be considering the nominations later this year. It should also outline the program's guidelines and ask if there are any particular projects being worked on in the near future that the Panel might be interested in. These could form the basis of the proposal the Fellow would ultimately present to the Foundation.

If any artist in the first stage of nomination receives a total of seven votes, it should be considered that that person has been named a Fellow. It is highly unlikely that all six Fellows will be named that way, or even that one might be unanimously selected on the first nomination.

A deadline for receipt of materials will be imposed: October 1. The Foundation office will schedule the Panel sessions: the sessions would probably take two days, working from 9 AM to 12 noon; from 2 PM to 5 PM and from 8 PM to 10 PM. It would be expected that viewing tapes would be more time-consuming than exhibition materials. However, it may take three days to screen the nomination materials; balloting would be on the third day.

Once the six Fellows have been named, the Foundation would inform the Fellows and ask for a proposal for a project which would be presented to a sponsoring institution: a museum or television entity (station or media art center, or other non-profit organization capable of receiving and accounting for the grant funds under the terms of the grant, and of carrying out the projects proposed by the Fellows.)

Upon receipt of the proposals, the Foundation would contact the proposed host institution and enter discussions for accepting the grant. In some cases a Fellow may prefer to do his/her own negotiating with the proposed sponsor. There will be no residency requirement nor any insistence on broadcast or exhibition of completed work. The laissez-faire approach is preferred.

It is expected that the whole process will take several months and that the evaluation of the first year would take another series of months. Therefore the 1980 panel understands that it will be called upon to evaluate the program before Howard Klein resubmits it to the Trustees for further funding. This could mean that the next funding request would wait until late 1981 or 1982.

A proposal to the Rockefeller Foundation for continued funding:

1) A progress report (as of June 1, 1991):

I assembled the first draft of "The Other Asia" (still the working title) in June of 1990. From 50 hours of original tape recordings, transferred and cataloged from S-VHS source, I have composed 2-channel 20 minutes pilot presentation, which I had the good fortune to show at a video festival in Sydney, Australia last November. Up to date, I have continued expanding the work and in its latest form, it has become a four-channel synchronous video matrix installation in a repeating 20 minute cycle. It was previewed at l'immagine elettronica in Ferrara, Italy during the month of May of this year.

In my original proposal of "The Other Asia" I suggested the theme of the "otherness" of Japan in comparison to the culture of the "mainland" people, the stark contrast I observed in the short visit I paid to southeastern Asia during my stay in Japan (1988). However in the process of making the proposed work, I got totally absorbed by the Japanese theme, eventually ending with an elaborate composition for four channel video and multi-monitor installation dealing with the subject of Japan exclusively.

2) A request to continue and extend my project:

As I reflect upon the work now, the temptation of making "The other Asia" is still very much alive. Judging by the extraordinary reception of the work on "Japan" during its preview in Ferrara, and in my own assessment, I have decided to try to solicit an extension of my original budget to continue working on the original theme. I need to have another chance to develop yet another view on the Japanese culture in much broader, diverse and more provocative discourse.

At this point I estimate to spend another year working on existing material with visiting Asia again and at the end I expect to have a four-channel installation of at least 30 up to 60 minutes in duration. It would involve audio work, programming for a "Video Wall" and Post-production in a One

Inch or Betacam studio in preparation for video disc, its final distribution form.

I am submitting on a single tape, an aproximate representation of the multi-channel version of Japan for a review in a hope of receiving a continued funding for "The Other Asia".

Santa Fe, June 3rd, 1991

Steina

CANDIDATES FOR AWARDS - VIDEO ARTISTS FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

Ros Barron	Nam June Paik
Ed Burrell (Bodacious Bogorilla)	John Sanborn & Kit Fitzgerald
Peter Campus	• Dan Sandin
Douglas Davis	• Bob Schneider
• Juan Downey	Ira Schneider
Ed Emshwiller	Buky Schwartz
Frank Gillette	Bob Snyder
• Gary Hill	Keith Sonnier
Joan Jonas	Bill Stevens
Philip Jones (Ithaca)	Bill Viola
Shigeko Kubota	Willy Walker
Mary Lucier	Bill Wegman
• Phil Morton	

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6.24



THE ROCKEFELLER
FOUNDATION

July 12, 1989

Dear Steina and Woody Vasulka:

As John Hanhardt has discussed with you, you have both been nominated for the Intercultural Film/Video Fellowships. Karen Kaplan, the Fellowships Coordinator, is out of town until July 17, but I am forwarding the application materials to you. If you have any questions, please contact Karen next week at (212) 869-8500 (Ext. 308).

Sincerely,

Jan C. Grossman
Consultant
Arts and Humanities

Steina and Woody Vasulka
Route 6, Box 100
Santa Fe N.M. 87501

A Rockefeller Fellowship Project Description:

"THE OTHER ASIA"

Recently, I returned from a six months stay in Japan. There I collected images on video tape and found myself drawn to a theme of secular and religious gestures I observed in temples, subways, department stores, the gestures of worshippers, subway attendants, elevator girls, etc. Naively, I assumed that I was observing "the orient", until I had an opportunity to visit the "other" Asia, Thailand, Singapore, Hong Kong, China. It was from that perspective that I realized the uniqueness of the Japanese Gestural Set and their way of life in general.

This Asian contrast against my European and American experience is the essence of my upcoming work.

I want to create a visual composition of these gestures as an esthetic language. It contains the essential elements of esthetic expression; the kinetic beauty, well rehearsed and choreographed expression of a traditional culture, instantaneous and improvised street performance, expression of personal identity, all the elements on which video as a medium thrives...

I would use this fellowship partly to to re-travel these locations with an addition of India, Burma or Korea, and partly to post-produce all materials for single and/or multi-screen presentation.

*

Over the years, I have worked in a single screen, in matrixes of monitors, and various installations, using turntables, mechanized optical devices and other concepts of pre-programmed camera movements. In the past, my subjects have been urban, sea- and land-scapes, observed, altered and processed by machines, composed into videotapes, containing the perceptual, electronic and pictorial paradoxes. This time all of my Japanese footage, was gathered on a light weight, Super-8 camcorder, which I carried with me daily as a "one woman" operation. I found this intimate method very effective, specially in Japan, where camera presence instantly causes a behavioural change.

The final composition depends very much in character and relationship on the images I gather in the process. I am involved in multiscreen works now, and this new work will most probably end as an installation, with multiple pictorial and sound tracks, operated by a programming device.

Santa Fe, 13-Jun-1988

Steina Vasulka



Dave Barry

Ignorance Saps U.S. Strength

I FOR ONE am getting fed up with the way American youths keep falling behind the youths of other nations such as Asia in the fields of math and science. I was reminded of this problem just this morning while listening to the radio, which works by means of long invisible pieces of electricity (called "static") shooting through the air until they strike your speaker and break into individual units of sound ("notes") small enough to fit inside your ear.

The news person announced that yet another group of alarmed educators has released yet another shocking study, this one showing that in standardized science tests, 79 percent — nearly half — of American high-school seniors received lower scores than those obtained by Asian high-school cafeteria food.

This has got to stop. America has already become far too reliant on the "know-how" of foreign nations that manufacture virtually all of our electronic devices and are trying to destroy our economy by constantly changing the format of our recorded music. It used to be that the only format you needed was the 45-rpm record. Remember? That was a great format. You could stack your 45s into a pile, you could wash them in household detergent, and you could skim them across a gymnasium floor **WITHOUT HARMING THEIR SOUND QUALITY**. And America was strong.

But then, just about the time when foreign nations started to infiltrate the electronics market, we started to see a new format, 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ -rpm, which not only involved a fraction but also had a tiny hole that was much harder to fit onto the record-player spindle on those occasions when you had — admit it — been drinking bourbon directly from a shoe. Nevertheless we trooped out and replaced our record collections; but as soon as we were finished, they came out with 8-track tapes, so we bought **THOSE**, and then we bought cassettes, and now, having been forced to buy essential songs such as "Land of 1,000 Dances" by Cannibal and the Headhunters in **FOUR DIFFERENT FORMATS**, we are once again forming a large mooing consumer herd to rebuild our entire music collections, this time in the form of "compact discs," an allegedly wondrous new format which, if you examine it closely, looks **EXACTLY LIKE A 45-RPM RECORD**.

These people are toying with us! They are laughing their heads off, over in Asia! You know how, when you buy an appliance such as a VCR, the instructions are printed in six languages, but the English ones are always unintelligible, so that you consider it to be a Science Achievement Milestone when, six hours later, you are finally able to **SET THE CLOCK**? Well, did you ever wonder what the instructions in the **OTHER** five languages say? They say: "WARNING: These are **NOT REAL INSTRUCTIONS**. These are **JOKE INSTRUCTIONS** designed to keep Americans **CROUCHED ON THEIR FAMILY ROOM FLOORS** staring at this appliance with **NO MORE COMPREHENSION THAN SHRIMP EXAMINING A NUCLEAR SUBMARINE** while over here in Asia we get **FARTHER AND FARTHER AHEAD HA HA**."

Well, I say enough is enough. I say it's time that the American educational system emphasized science again, the way it did when I was in high-school biology class and we were constantly slicing frogs into tiny pieces with laboratory razors. Not only did we obtain invaluable frog parts for use in a ground-breaking prank involving Joanne DeVecchio's brassiere, but we also learned an important science lesson, namely that many animals found in nature are actually made up of tiny cells called "amoebas," which, through a ~~sexual~~ practice called "photosynthesis" can divide themselves into two cells, then four, then eight, and **so on**, faster and faster, never even pausing for a cigarette, so that you'd eventually wind up with frogs the size of Quonset huts bounding around if it were not for the natural counterbalance provided by razor-wielding biology students.

I realize I'm getting technical here, young people, but it just so happens that we live in a highly technical universe, as was discovered by Albert Einstein, a brilliant genius who had his hair styled at Mister Bob's House of High Voltage. Einstein proved that although the universe appears very dark to the naked eye, it is actually filled with relativity and literally thousands of very small molecules called "atoms," which can be used for peaceful purposes such as to form mailboxes, but also, if you shoot them from missiles, can have a "chain reaction" and kill everybody in the world, which is why the greatest challenge you young people face for the future is to learn to use them wisely. Mailboxes, I mean.

OK, young people, I have given you a solid technical background here, but now it's up to you to work toward achieving our ambitious goal of becoming, as a nation, less stupid. I wish you luck, and I look forward to the day when **once** again America is a scientific power to be reckoned with all over the Earth. Right up to the edge.

INTERIM REPORT:

I finished the first version of "Other Asia" (still the working title) in June of 1990. It was a 45 min., two channel work, which I showed for friends at home a few times. Having shot all the material, I was still too emotionally attached to it, and therefore hired an assistant, Hope Atterbury to log, categorize and guide me. The next version was still two channel, but cut down to 20 min. I had an opportunity to show it with some other two channel work at a video festival in Sydney, Australia last November. The latest version is four channel audio, four channel video piece which was shown in Ferrara, Italy this May (1991).

The above description demonstrates how I like to work, i.e. have a deadline and get some audience response, and the ideal forum are the video festivals which happen to usually take place outside the USA.

It is now quite clear to me how to proceed, I have still a lot of material to explore and I estimate a year of work. The originals are on S-VHS format, which in post-production I will have to return to. There is a lot of sound generating and processing to be done, and at this point I estimate the final work to be at least 30, but up to 60 min.

Due to the financial security this fellowship gave me, 1990 became one of my most prolific years. The time spent between the "Other Asia" versions, I used to finalize to multichannel installations, "Ptolemy" four audio- four video-channel, 16 monitor, 10 min. work, which premiered at Ars Electronica, Linz, Austria last September, and "Vocalizations", a two video- four audio-channel, nine monitor, 10 min. continuous play work, which premiered at Bowling Green State University Art Gallery last August. In addition I worked on "Violin Power", a performance piece. Ideas from all three works fed directly into the "Other Asia" project, and I therefore include portions of them on the demo tape. At the moment however, I have only one project going and that is the "Other Asia". I would be very grateful for any assistance the Rockefeller Foundation could give me in this effort.