

ALDO TAMBELLINI

Black Spiral (TV Sculpture), 1969



I PERSONALLY regard Tambellini's and Paik's concerns in the sixties as the true and direct inspiration to our generation of "synthesizing" artists. We had spotted Aldo's theater on Second Avenue, the Black Gate, and later when I met him, he indeed dressed in black. He was obviously a walking manifesto, obsessed and fully committed. He made a fabulous film with black kids and was dedicated to the black cause.

His artform seemed to center on a field of the blackest black, with a figure of light as the protagonist. I never read nor talked to him about it, nor do I understand why he had chosen electronic images as a part of his arsenal.

Of course, the Black Spiral made a completely different statement. Clearly it spoke to the perceptual issue so close to my own concerns. We would discuss the presentation of a frame in painting, photography, film and of course in video. The regularity of drawing a frame of video from left to right, from top to bottom was always suspect as the most unimaginative, traditional "reading of the book". Aldo's concept challenged that. But in spite of its elegance, as in all mythology of perception, the case remains inconclusive.

We exerted quite a disproportional effort to get his instrument exhibited. It is now at the Everson Museum in their depository. We even got Dave Jones to drive there and estimate the restoration cost. We also located one of the original builders at Bell Labs, but somehow the instrument could not be materialized on time. It shall have to wait for the next show. —W.V.

ALDO TAMBELLINI WAS BORN in 1930 in Syracuse, N.Y. He received a B.F.A. in Painting from the University of Syracuse and a M.F.A. in Sculpture from Notre Dame University. He was the founder of the "Black Gate" Electromedia Theater of environmental performances encompassing all areas of light, sound and motion. He has been particularly involved in film, television programming, communications and their impact on education. In 1969 he won the International Grand Prix, Oberhausen Film Festival.

IN COLLABORATION WITH Tracy Kinsel and Hank Reinbold of Bell Labs. Nature, as we will see it in the future, in circular or spiral form. No up — No down — No gravity. Floating. From live broadcasts.

"And what are we going to do through the media? Let's say we are going to keep it open and whatever I think is possible I would like to do. Whatever one might dream of which somebody would not want

if I had the possibility to do it. Let's break all the rules possible. Let's open up the possibility which everyone else has told you this is not right and this is not feasible. And I would like to start it from there, from a reality. So what one wants to do is more like an attitude rather than the specific of what one wants to do."

"To show that light is a constant moving force, an ever changing form. That light is energy and energy is going through us, the same energy which is going through the universe today. And when creative people begin to get involved, with this idea of energy rather than the idea of making pictures, then we will come to some creative aspect not belonging to one particular class but toward a new exploration which is for all . . ." —A.T.





Aldo Tambellini with Black Spiral prepared television set, 1969. Photo: Don Snyder



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