

SELECTED FILM AND VIDEO HISTORY

Documentation of Early Performances and Installations

1974

Commercials for *Forming a Sculpture Drama in Manhattan*
Four 30-second spots, 2 minutes total
16 mm film

Broadcast on ABC in New York in October 1974, these commercials advertise the site-specific hotel installations of *Forming a Sculpture Drama in Manhattan*.

1976

25 Windows: A Portrait of Bonwit Teller
In collaboration with Jackie Ochs
16 minutes
16 mm film

This documentary of *25 Windows: A Portrait of Bonwit Teller* details the site-specific installation at the Bonwit Teller department store in New York, which examined the future of shopping through photography, film, holograms, live action, and fashion.

1978

Commercial for Lynn Hershman
1 minute, 25 seconds
Video

This short “portrait” of the artist was screened on public television.

Lynn Becoming Roberta
In collaboration with Sue Marcoux
5 minutes, 30 seconds
16 mm film

This short film documents the transformation of Lynn Hershman into her performance persona, Roberta Breitmore.

1983

Chain Reaction

3 minutes

16 mm film

This comedic “trailer” for the performance *Chain Reaction: An Environmental “Light” Opera for Fog, Film, and Recombinant News* at Lincoln Center in New York demonstrates how toxic chemical spills affect unsuspecting victims. Features Nancy Fish; music by Will Power.

1985

Proxemics: A Study in Body Language

In collaboration with Lisa English

5 minutes

Video

This video is an adaptation from the performance *New Acquisitions* commissioned by the Santa Barbara Museum of Art. The dancers, dressed in plaster-soaked clothing to resemble Greek statues, performed a slow-motion ballet on the street and in the museum. Features the Valerie Huston Dance Theatre; music by Mediazone.

Videos

1979

Test Patterns

In collaboration with Rea Baldrige / Sponsored by Artcom

16 minutes

In this “factional docudrama,” a “test pattern man” personifies television media. When an interviewer asks him about his memories of the Kennedy assassination (which is shown in reenactment), he references the vapid content on other channels that day. Features Timothy Leary.

1982

The Making of the Rough and (Very) Incomplete Pilot for the Videodisk on the Life and Work of Marcel Duchamp According to Murphy's Law

16 minutes

This quasi-documentary about change and accident deconstructs the events that took place during the making of the videotape, which was originally intended to be an interactive videodisc. Features Jack Burnham, John Cage, Marcel Duchamp, Walter Hopps, Brian O'Doherty, Nam June Paik, Pierre Restany, Arturo Schwarz, and Calvin Tomkins.

1984

Prisoner of Paradise

6 minutes

Originally presented as an installation with two synchronized videos playing on monitors sitting on two “electric chairs,” this video offers a study of personality contrasts that typify American stereotypes and values. Features Debora Iyall and Blaise Simpson.

1986

Confessions of a Chameleon
Part 1 of *The Electronic Diaries*
10 minutes

This fractured narrative intimately explores one woman's view of the relationship between fantasy and reality.

Endangered Species
In collaboration with Lisa English
30 minutes

An adaptation of the successful San Francisco theatrical performance, this documentary casts a droll look at the trials and joys of being an artist. Features Jello Biafra, Victoria Morgan, and Michaeleppe.

Eyewitness
2 minutes

A computer-animated "eye" performs an electronic dance in this experimental work.

Marvelous Still
15 minutes

Five women artists discuss their experiences in the art world and how they have maintained creative energy. Features Nell Blaine, Leonora Carrington, Sue Fuller, Lois Mailou Jones, and Faith Ringgold.

Noh Video
5 minutes

Shot under the pseudonym Lester Nyle, this experimental video contemplates memory, disappearance, and death.

Radical Transgressions
6 minutes

Radical Transgressions offers a poetic look at the final performance by the Sankai Juko butoh company that resulted in the accidental death of one of the performers. Music by The Residents.

1987

Binge

Part 2 of *The Electronic Diaries*

30 minutes

Charting the main character's loss of thirty-five pounds during the making of the video, this piece considers the metaphors of hunger, deprivation, consumption, and fat in contemporary culture.

Information Whiteout

In collaboration with Michael Peppe

13 minutes

An example of Michael Peppe's Behaviormusik, this performance video documents the real-time composition of text and behaviors to the sound of a piano, two congas, and beats on a table.

New Time

9 minutes

New Time tells the stories of three women's conflicts about individuality, autonomy, career, and family through choreography and dance. Music by Robert Greenberg. Choreography by Victoria Morgan.

Rebecca 28–30: The Evolution of an Unknown Woman over Two Years

30 minutes

This video offers an intense look at a young woman's fight against alcoholism and memories of her battered childhood. The central character becomes involved in the taping of the video, and her involvement shapes her awareness of herself.

Verbatim Transcription of the Last Words of Jim Jones

13 minutes

This video showcases a performance based on the last recorded audiotapes of Jim Jones before the mass suicides in his camp. Features performance and music by Michael Peppe.

Zhu Zha and the Muse

6 minutes

Zhu Zha and the Muse reveals an artist who thinks she cannot create without her muse, and her muse's response to this dilemma. The artist considers the role of fantasy in her own self-image.

1988

First Person Plural
Part 3 of *The Electronic Diaries*
26 minutes

In the third installment of *The Electronic Diaries*, the central character reveals everything she was told not to say as a child. Stories about demons, incest, and the Holocaust surface in this story about abuse and the cyclical patterns of violence.

1989

Longshot
58 minutes

A video editor obsessively tries to capture and then possess the image of a young woman he has been secretly shooting with his camera. As he attempts to edit the footage, he also tries to control her destiny. During the process, the woman's sense of reality becomes fractured and fragile.

1990

Desire Inc.
26 minutes

Seduction advertisements, aired on television, asked for responses from viewers. Those who replied were interviewed as to why they wanted to meet a fantasy or artificial person. The footage was woven into a narrative about desire.

Shadow's Song
Part 4 of *The Electronic Diaries*
33 minutes

This part of *The Electronic Diaries* charts the different trajectories of progressive illness in a male African American dog trainer and an affluent white feminist.

1991

Conspiracy of Silence

15 minutes

Done in *Rashomon* style, this piece re-creates the final moments of Cuban-born sculptor Ana Mendieta. Using interviews, trial transcripts, and performance, the video explores the discrepancies surrounding Mendieta's untimely death, the subsequent murder trial, the sexual politics of the art world, and the racial, class, and gender inequities of the judicial system. Features Yvonne Rainer and Carolee Schneemann.

Seeing Is Believing

58 minutes

A thirteen-year-old girl uses a camera to search for her missing father, hoping that finding him will clarify her lapsed personal history. The video uses the film negative as a metaphor for her lost history and its negative psychological impact. The positive of the film represents the retrieval of her memory and, consequently, a positive self-image. Includes Rachel Rosenthal and Guillermo Gómez-Peña.

1992

Ring Cycle

Part 5 of *The Electronic Diaries*

15 minutes

This video diary meditates on remarriage, renewed hopes and dreams, and new beginnings.

Shooting Script: A Transatlantic Love Story

In collaboration with Knud Vesterskov and Ulrich Al Brask

52 minutes

This work addresses documentary elements of fiction in a story about video letters between a Danish man and an American feminist. Created by three artists from two different countries, this video focuses on gendered systems of representation, the construction of sexuality, and the loss of identity due to omnipresent surveillance and data systems in the modern world.

1993

Changing Worlds: Women, Art, History and Revolution
53 minutes

A documentary with archival footage re-creates performances by thirteen women artists. Features Judy Baca, Judy Chicago, Suzanne Lacy, Faith Ringgold, Rachel Rosenthal, and Miriam Shapiro, among others.

Cut Piece: A Video Homage to Yoko Ono
15 minutes

A video re-creation of Yoko Ono's 1964 *Cut Piece* performance, which addresses issues of voyeurism and violence.

For Marlon from Lynn
4 minutes

Created for a video memorial for the filmmaker Marlon Riggs, this video relays personal gratitude for his courageous spirit and powerful body of work.

Virtual Love
73 minutes

A shy woman, Valerie, discouraged by her plain looks, implants a beautiful woman's image into the computer of one of two identical twins with whom she is infatuated. This surrogate becomes a perfect simulated, virus-free mate in this modern version of *Cyrano de Bergerac*.

1994

Found Footage

Formerly titled: *Beautiful People ... Beautiful Friends*

75 minutes

The cycle of domestic violence becomes more and more apparent as we see the relationship of a couple unfold before the watchful eye of a video camera.

Re-Covered Diary

Part 6 of *The Electronic Diaries*

30 minutes

Recovered fragments of past diaries serve as a script for several women throughout the world who are linked by their indomitable spirit. Created for International Child Abuse Day.

Seduction of a Cyborg

7 minutes

The premise of this digital video is that technology can infect the body through manipulated computer chips and invisibly seduce women into cyborghood.

Twists in the Cord (or) ... Other Extensions of the Telephone

55 minutes

This docudrama presents the history of the telephone, updated and told from the point of view of a character who uses the screen as both a connection to intimacy and a condom for safe sex.

Virtual Voices

10 minutes

Several virtual reality experts talk about technology as their images warp in a counterpoint rhythm to the text. Features Jaron Lanier, Arthur Kroker, Marilouise Kroker, and Sandy Stone.

1995

Double Cross Click Click

29 minutes

This video noir comedy is about the RAMifications of cross-dressing on the Internet. The characters use the screen as a mask to conceal their true feelings from each other.

1996

First Person Plural: The Electronic Diaries 1986–1996
74 minutes

A feature-length compilation of *The Electronic Diaries*, this video reflects on the first five installments of the series.

1998

CyberChild
Part 7 of *The Electronic Diaries*
20 minutes

This video diary is about becoming a grandmother and an infant's relationship to its technological environment.

Film

1997

Conceiving Ada

35 mm

82 minutes

Distributed by **Winstar**

Themes of love, sex, artificial life, computer DNA transference, history, and memory intertwine in *Conceiving Ada*, an investigation of the brilliant mathematician Ada, Countess of Lovelace, the daughter of Lord Byron, who is credited with writing the first computer program. It was the first film to use virtual sets. Features Tilda Swinton, Timothy Leary, Karen Black, John Perry Barlow, and Francesca Faridany.

2002

Teknolust

24P high-definition video converted to 35 mm

85 minutes

Distributed by **THINKFilm, Skouras Films, and Cinemavault**

Eager to use artificial intelligence to improve the world, biogeneticist Rosetta Stone devises a recipe for downloading her DNA into a “live” brew she is growing in her computer. She succeeds in breeding three Self-Replicating Automatons (SRAs) that strive to find harmony between the real and the virtual worlds. Features Tilda Swinton, Jeremy Davies, Karen Black, Josh Kornbluth, and James Urbaniak.