

VISIONS
&
EXPERIENCES

CLASS

by Andrew Stones

**MULTIPLE
VIDEO PORTRAIT OF
SHOBANA JEYASINGH**

*by Marty St James
and Anne Wilson*

EAU D'ARTIFICE

by Chris Meigh Andrews

10 NOVEMBER - 1 DECEMBER

MONDAY - SATURDAY

10.00 - 5.00

HARRIS
MUSEUM & ART GALLERY

MARKET SQUARE, PRESTON, LANCS PR1 2PP
Telephone: (0772) 58248



EAU D'ARTIFICE

by Chris Meigh Andrews

We are all fascinated by water and invariably congregate around the fountains in parks or shopping malls. We are drawn to them for their calming, almost mesmeric presence.

With his installation **Eau d'Artifice** Chris Meigh

Andrews has created a fountain inside the art gallery.

Visitors can relax on a park bench and let themselves be

mesmerised by the light flickering on the water and the

plashing sounds. There is no chance of getting wet

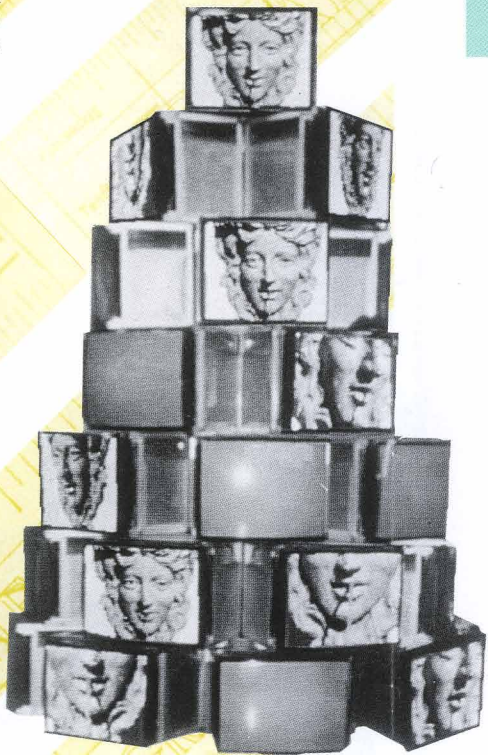
however, since this water has been filmed on video and

manipulated by computer.

This installation is presented in association with Samuelson

Communications Ltd.

Samuelson
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Anderson,

by Anna Douglas

VIDEO SCULPTURE & INSTALLATION: AN INTRODUCTION

A distinction is often made between "video sculpture" and "video installation", but for the purposes of this introduction it makes sense to look at both as part of the same phenomenon.

Video installation/sculpture developed out of the collision of several important cultural, economic and political initiatives.

The most significant connection was, perhaps, between video installation/sculpture and performance art. This can be traced back to the mid 'sixties when body-art and "happenings" were an important part of the American avant-garde art scene. It also coincided with the introduction of the first affordable video portapack in

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1965 which performance artists began using to document their activities.

During this period many artists were concerned to expand their political horizons by appropriating processes of the mass media. To quote Nam June Paik, acknowledged by many to be the first video artist, "Television has been attacking us all our lives, now we can attack it back".

As Chrissie Iles points out in her article "Reflections", the central tenets of the performance artist were shared by the earliest video installation works, for example the relationship between viewer and viewed, and the experience of the artwork in "real time". It is significant that many artists at this time used live closed-circuit TV systems in such a way that the artist and spectator could become participants within the work.

Connections between video installation and sculpture can be traced back even further. Nam June Paik made use of modified-image TV sets in his 1963 exhibition in Wuppertal, West Germany, as did Wolf Vostell in 1959 as part of his installation works "Ereignisse fur Millionen" and "TV Vernichtung".

The political dimension is significant here for television, unlike Cinema, was noticeably a one-way process, controlled by the state or large commercial institutions. It was (and is) based on the mass reception of a centrally transmitted signal.

Artists at this time became interested in criticising and uncovering the processes and content of television as a major factor in the shaping of society.

Much of this pioneering work was produced in reaction to the idea of art as object-based and it was intended to challenge the role of the gallery/museum/dealer. Ironically, however, it was often only in a gallery context that the work found an audience. In its twenty-five year history video installation has evolved from its conceptual or minimalist art beginnings to an almost inevitable post-modern celebration of technology.

The two crucial elements to any video installation are the video image itself, (which is inevitably seen as "television" - or at least with reference to the experience of watching television) and the sculptural object or materials (sometimes just the TV monitors and the way they are arranged). The meaning of the work comes from the relationship between the sculptural object (and/or its configuration/ and the video image itself. Although it is the image on the screen that almost always dominates the viewer's attention, the artist tries to convey meaning in the installation by creating a balance between the image on the screen, the space that the installation occupies, or moves across, and its overall shape.

Chris Meigh Andrews, September 1990