

# The Pioneers of Pixels, Feedback & Glitch

This program highlights short films by animation, experimental film, and video art pioneers who unearthed new aesthetic realms through computer art, image processing, and appropriation in the 1970s and early 80s.

**Lillian Schwartz** *Mutations*, 1972, 7 min., electronic score by Jean-Claude Risset. Courtesy of the artist

Combining various technologies Schwartz was engaged with at AT&T Bell Labs, this short film includes early computer program animation, lasers experiments, and crystal growth (being actively researched for fiber optics at the time) *Mutations* received a CINE Golden Eagle in 1973 and was one of the first two computer animations screened at the Cannes Film Festival in 1974 alongside *Hunger* by Peter Foldès.

**Lesley Keen** *Taking a Line for a Walk*, 1983, 10 min. score by Lyell Cresswell. Courtesy of the artist.

Created in residency with Cambridge Labs while working on computer-assisted animation, Keen's film pays homage to Paul Klee's visual language, and literally enacts his language of "taking a line for a walk" in the 2D animation space. "The computer used vectors (or lines) to describe the movement. The individual phases of the sequence were sent to a plotter which transcribed the lines onto a continuous roll of computer printout paper. The plots then had to be cut up and reregistered manually before being traced onto to create the colour."

**Mary Ross** *Chamber Suite*, 1982, 5 min., Courtesy of the estate of the artist and Eric Ross.

At the Experimental Television Center, Ross (1950-2012) began using video synthesizers and computers for her video work. Frequently collaborating with her husband, electronic composer Eric Ross, films like these were screened with live electronic scores. Some of her earliest video art also used cameras in closed circuit installations that were manipulated live during music performances by Eric Ross.

**Doris Chase** *Circles II*, 1983, 6.75 min., music by George Kleinsinger. Courtesy of Film-Makers' Cooperative. Digitized and restored by

*Making/Breaking the Binary* in collaboration with The Film-Makers' Cooperative and Anthology Film Archives.

A dizzying and seductive videodance film with kinetic sculptures that explores filmic color inversions and play with additive/subtractive color. Choreography in collaboration with Mary Stanton. "The central image of spiraling, revolving circles is reminiscent of Duchamp's ANEMIC CINEMA and enlists the viewer in a very pleasurable game." - Joan Braderman, ArtForum, 1983

**Barbara Aronofsky Latham** *Arbitrary Fragments*, 1978, 13 min., video, Courtesy of Video Data Bank.

Using highly manipulated over-processed images, Latham investigates video as inherently fragmented. The work demonstrates important parallels between video, storytelling and the formation of identity – all processes of active fabrication that blend 'lies' and truth. Labelling an image of herself talking, Latham addresses 'the construction of her video personality' as an identity outside of herself.

**Lynda Benglis** *Collage*, 1973, 9 min., Courtesy of Video Data Bank and represented by Locks Gallery.

Three basic compositions are played and recombined: a hockey game; arms; and oranges. As in her other early video work, Benglis plays with several generations of each shot, rescanning the screen, and placing objects in front of the monitor creating levels of mediation.

**Dara Birnbaum** *PM Magazine/Acid Rock*, 1980, 4 min., Courtesy of Video Data Bank and represented by Marian Goodman Gallery.

Set to the soundtrack of an acid rock version of The Doors' L.A. Woman, appropriated commercial images emphasize the idea that woman is a spectacle arranged for the (male) viewer's pleasure. This tape is one of four shown at Birnbaum's installation at Documenta 7 in 1982.

**Martha Rosler** *If It's Too Bad to Be True it could be DISINFORMATION*, 1985, 16 min., Courtesy of Video Data Bank

In a fusion of text and images, the NBC Nightly News and other broadcast reports are re-presented and distorted back into the news script. Emphasizing distortion and absurdities that can result from technical interference, Rosler stresses that there is never a straight story.

**Max Almy** *Leaving the 20th Century*, 1982, 11 min., Courtesy of Video Data Bank.

Believing that we are, "dragging our feet into the 21st Century," Almy made this video trilogy to celebrate technology and the future in an ironic melange of politics, sociology, sexuality, and economics.

## EXHIBITION

Rosenwald-Wolf Gallery at The University of the Arts  
on view October 8-December 8, 2017  
Opening reception on Sunday, October 8th from 4-7pm

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Women, Art & Technology (1968-1985)*  
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