

VIDEO ART

COMS 157/ART 147

Identification vs. Alienation

Video Art, Experimental Film vs. Hollywood Narrative

- ☼ Goals of each?
- ☼ Hollywood Film Conventions
- ☼ Film vs. Video?



STAN BRAKHAGE, EXPERIMENTAL FILM



- ✱ scratched on negatives
- ✱ worked with 16mm film.
- ✱ Pure Cinema (throws out all narrative conventions)
- ✱ Experience of Viewer?

VIDEO ART

- ✻ How does the medium differ?
- ✻ Do it Yourself
- ✻ The Medium is the Message
- ✻ Can You Scratch the surface of video?
- ✻ Bill Viola
- ✻ Sadie Benning



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CATEGORIES

☼ Single Channel

☼ Installation



What is Art?

Immanuel Kant: *The Critique of Judgement*

Purposiveness without purpose: the aesthetic object exhibits formal unity or structure, which serves to unite the understanding and the imagination in free play.

We don't seek any practical use from the object.

“Beauty is the form of finality in an object, so far as perceived in it apart from the representation of an end.”

Fountain, Marcel Duchamp

"the most influential artwork
of the 20th century"
1917 Signed R Mutt

By World War I, Duchamp had rejected the work of many of his fellow artists as "retinal" art, intended only to please the eye. Instead, Duchamp wanted, he said, "to put art back in the service of the mind."

Made an effort to emphasize the conceptual value of a work of art, seducing the viewer through irony and verbal witticisms rather than relying on technical or aesthetic appeal.

Duchamp's readymade *Fountain* (1917) tested the limits of public taste and the boundaries of artistic technique.



By pushing and ultimately transgressing such boundaries within the art world
Under a pseudonym, “R. Mutt,”
Duchamp submitted *Fountain to*
Society of Independent Artists. It was a
prank, meant to taunt his avant-garde
peers. For some of the show’s
organizers this was too much — was
the artist equating modern art with a
toilet fixture? — and *Fountain* was
“misplaced” for the duration of the
exhibition.

A calculated attack on the most basic
conventions of art He CHOSE it. He
took an ordinary article of life, placed it
so that its useful significance
disappeared under the new title and
point of view — created a new thought
for that object.

**RADICAL
PLAGIARISM
ANARCHISTIC
HISTORICAL
CONTEXT
BEFORE WW1**

Andy Warhol,
Brillo Soap Pads Box, 1964
silkscreen ink on synthetic
polymer paint on wood,
17 x 17 x 14 in.



http://edu.warhol.org/aract_brillo.html#about

Fluxus, Nam June Paik and the Sony Portapak



Nam June Paik used his new Sony Portapak to shoot footage of Pope Paul VI's procession through New York City in the autumn of 1965. That same day, across town in a Greenwich Village cafe, Paik played the tapes and video art was born.

Historic Context: Portable video recording wasn't as pervasive

Live Television was relatively new--50's

From film to portable video: Mid 60's

Fluxus (Flow) encouraged a "do-it-yourself" aesthetic, and valued simplicity over complexity. Like Dada before it, Fluxus included a strong current of anti-commercialism and an anti-art sensibility, disparaging the conventional market-driven art world in favor of an artist-centered creative practice

In 1971, he made a cello out of three television sets stacked up on top of each other and some cello strings. He got a famous cellist to play the "cello" as well.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r9hTdaFz36c>

<http://collections.walkerart.org/item/object/881>

