

24 VIDEOFREEX

NEW YORK CITY

Videofreex is a dozen people who dig to make videotapes. We have a large production facility capable of producing 1/2 inch videotapes. We do a lot of mobile work using single and multiple camera systems. We are using Sony AV portable and studio decks for taping and an IVC 860C (one inch) deck for editing. In addition, our studio is outfitted with a gen lock (making possible mixing taped and live material on a 1/2 inch level), a video and sync proc, video and audio mixers, and complementary video and audio equipment.

We are presently showing our tapes at informal viewing sessions Friday nights at nine o'clock at our studio at 98 Prince Street, NYC... but we are interested in additional presentation outlets. For further information about making tapes or showing tapes, call Videofreex at 212/925-7286.



photo: Jasmina Boo

CHARLES BENSINGER

LOS ANGELES

Basically, what I am trying to accomplish here in Hollywood is the creation of an access route into the professional TV establishment for young artists and technical types interested in evolving the medium. The studio establishment here is of course very tight and structured, but there is a wealth of technical knowledge and equipment in the area. So in March, I founded a workshop called *Video Technology Laboratory*, in conjunction with a \$3 million color facility called *Hollywood Video Center*. A series of informal sessions were held over a 4 month period of time, and some of the best professionals in the industry discussed video operations and worked with our students in "hands on" classes. Much enlightenment was gained by a very enthusiastic group of young people, and they have become permanent video fanatics. Several experimental tapes in 2 inch color were produced during this time.

Specifically, I have been consulting with the California Institute of the Arts and have persuaded them to install a color video tape system this fall. I have collaborated with two artists, Andrea Brown and Janet Webb, in the production of a videotape theatre-audio environmental piece for the EAT Art and Technology festival at USC last spring. For this event, we managed to enlist the assistance of the Sony Corp. here in L.A. A 2-way video-audio dual lecture discussion experiment was also constructed in collaboration with Allen Kaprow and EAT.

I have also been working with Computer Image Corporation of L.A. and feel the joining of the computer and video on a comprehensive scale will provide us with the ultimate tool, allowing infinite possibilities. Unfortunately, the kinds that actually work with and apply this incredible machinery know and care so little about the broader and more vital applications of this equipment. It is my task to begin closing the gap between these magnificent electronic tools and the necessary and vital functions that only they can provide for men in this time of desperate world emergency.

I am also involved in an organization called CREATIVE IDEA COORDINATION, with an individual named Joe Klamon. Together, we are attempting to open new TV markets and develop a structure for creation and distribution of video cassettes. Also, Creative Idea Coordination is an artist's clearing house which will encourage ideas and projects in all media as well as provide distribution for television.

...some comprehensive information on partial activities and tech machinery with which I have contact.

ACTIVITIES

Video Technology Laboratory
7080 Hollywood Blvd., Suite 114, Hollywood, Calif. 90028

We held six week workshop sessions from March to June '70, worked exclusively with 2" high band color broadcast equipment—\$3 million facility called Hollywood Video Center. (Steve Allen, Virginia Graham, etc.) Much interaction took place between some of the best of the Hollywood press, underground elements, and the Ad contingent. Several experimental tapes were produced by class members under my supervision. Unfortunately, I do not have access to tapes, since they are the property of the studio until I can afford to ransom them back. The brochure, content and structure of the course breakdown is my own design and invention. I found we departed somewhat from this initial plan, since we were required to deal with an extremely wide range of people and background. Some sessions were much too technical and some not too relevant to certain student's needs. The course eventually became an 80% workshop situation, which is the only way it can be truly effective, in my opinion. We encountered extreme hassles always from the studio, technical people, especially the unions, and the Madison Ave. people also. However, it was an extremely enlightening though brief experience for us here. Some of the "hard core" members would join in the next control room and freak out on the switchers until 3 or 4 AM. Thus, it was an invaluable experience and forever ingrained in our minds what to work for and where it is. We shall return!

Viewer Sponsored Television
1939 Westwood Blvd., Los Angeles, Calif. 90024

I have met with them and they are a very hard working, extremely dedicated group of individuals trying to put a truly free controversial station on the air. I think their chances of success are fair. If they do succeed it will be a whole new ballgame for the public.

Excerpt from Prospectus:

What Is Viewer Sponsored Television?

Viewer Sponsored Television (VSTV) is a unique approach to Public Broadcasting which (1) focuses on in-depth public affairs programming that goes beyond the "safe" and popular points of view and (2) emphasizes close cooperation between socially concerned media professionals, community activists and the viewing public.

The Foundation is non-commercial, non-endowed and tax-exempt. Its Board of Directors, elected by the viewers, represents a broad spectrum of the involved community, including minority representation. It seeks a license to operate Channel 58 in Los Angeles, the last unused channel in a major U.S. city.

The VSTV concept means every effort will be made to involve the community in broadcasting and in community problem solving. Periodic scientific polls will be used to keep in contact with supporters' interests.

In short, VSTV is a means of giving the socially concerned viewer a voice and a vote in broadcasting.

Technicolor, Hollywood, Calif.

...Technicolor's Vidtronics division, which incidentally is one of the most modern and innovative video facilities in the country. Behind closed doors in secret labs, they are carrying on research on a whole new approach to electronic photography—called ASTRIONICS—which will, according to Technicolor, forever and finally make film obsolete, especially in the making of feature films. Technicolor is spending several million dollars on the process, and expects production capability in another year or so.

HARDWARE

Datatron Electronic Editing System
Datatron, Inc.
P.O. Box 11427, 1562 Reynolds Ave., Santa Ana, California 92711.

Am scheduling personal visit to facilities in near future. This system is the most sophisticated editing means to date as far as I know. NBC, and CBS and one or two other studios have systems here. I think Teletronics in NYC has one also. Incredible system, hopefully soon we will have a low cost electronic editor for 1/2 inch.

Norelco Camera
Phillips Broadcast Equipment Corporation
299 Route 17, Paramus, N.J. 07652 (201) 262-7300

I have worked mainly with the PC 70, a marvelous masterpiece of a video camera, giving truly spectacular color, even under very low light conditions. It can get beautiful color at less than 25 ft. candles. Night-time outdoor shooting is a real trip. Color is soft and beautiful. The PC 100 is highly complex but very compact, and has a very good signal to noise ratio. It also uses the new lightweight triax cable. The PC 100 costs @ \$100,000.

HS 200
Ampex Corporation, Video Products Division
401 Broadway, Redwood City, California 94063

Have observed machine in use at NBC and Technicolor. It is virtually an electronic optical printer, really a trip to play with and the disc and control apparatus is a sculpture in itself and performs as magnificently as it looks. As an editing tool or device of speed manipulation it is invaluable. A version of it called the HS 100 is usually used for the Football instant replays; a sad limitation for such potential machinery.

Odetics Time Lapse VTR 1/2"
Odetics, Inc.
1845 South Manchester Ave., Anaheim, California 92802
(714) 530-6900

Time lapse tape was shot last week in downtown L.A. which was then used in our recent Video Piece at Cal State L.A. The Odetics unit works quite well, very good quality if power source is constant—we used battery power and sync signals which would fluctuate on replay causing vertical to roll. The unit has a series of graduated speed increments and can even be set for single frame animation. (It's primary use now is for surveillance systems.)

Excerpt from brochure: THE ODETICS APPROACH

In a typical application, a time lapse video tape recorder records one television picture each second. Later, the recorder plays the tape back at rates much greater than one picture a second, for example, at 30 frames per second. Because of the increased rate, time and motion become compressed or speeded up. Advantage lies in the tremendous savings of time for the viewer. With a time lapse rate of one frame per second, a viewer watches twenty-four surveillance hours in only 48 minutes. Or, he can replay tape at exactly the picture taking rate. Even slower, if desired. Variations are unlimited.

ELECTRIC EYE

SANTA CLARA, CALIFORNIA

Electric Eye is an experimental video group that works with half-inch, black and white video equipment. It consists of five regulars working in Santa Clara and has irregular agents in Rome, New York and Fresno.

...Our current offering is the Philo T. Farnsworth Video Obelisk. This effort consists of a double-tracked, eighty minute video show which is played on a stack of seven television monitors varying in size from nine to twenty-two inches. Every Thursday night the Obelisk flickers at Intersection, 756 Union Street in San Francisco.

The Obelisk is a tribute to Philo T. Farnsworth, the man who invented television at 202 Green Street in San Francisco. The actual content of the Obelisk is a lead article on Philo T. Farnsworth II as told by his son Philo T. Farnsworth III. The show continues with such portions as video feedback; an exclusive and deliberately slanted interview with Richard Nixon; Dick Gregory in his role as the "Scholar in Residence"; The Top-Ten Vibrations of the week; various juxtapositional inquiries into the state of commercial television; a look at the future of Electric Zen in America and much more. The show concludes with a touch of jolly nihilism.

FOBILE MUCK TRUCK

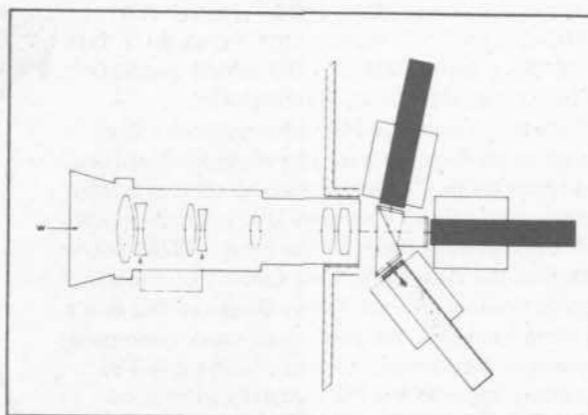
SAN FRANCISCO

...We're working on a tape involving a talk back approach with young black parolees who have been studying art under a friend of ours. People like to have their say into a camera. It lends authority for some reason—probably because they know their words will become indelible and someone somewhere may catch what they have to say. Anyway, it's exciting to really be free with the camera and let happen what may—much better than scripts which we haven't gotten around to yet. We're also into sound a lot and have been getting a lot of good material on a Sony cassette recorder which we mix in with the video sound to get a whole audiovisual picture, not just of one time and place. Still though, there's nothing quite so immediate and "alive" as natural sound right on the tape. It is that immediacy, instant replay of life that keeps everybody so excited and has never failed to blow a body's mind when coming in contact with videotape for the first time.

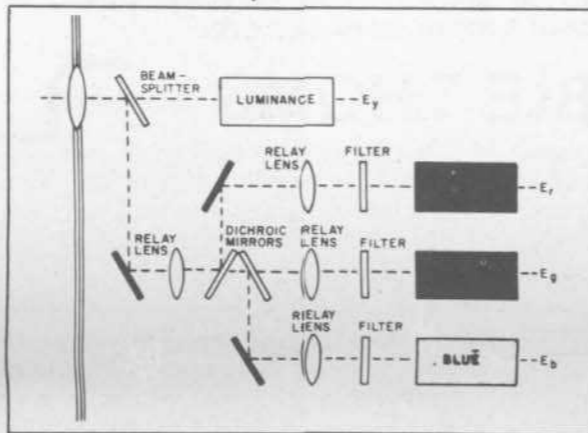
NY 02 16

Please take me off your mailing list. I sold my video stuff. Thanks.

Mark Hawthorne
290 Riverside Dr.
NY, NY 10025



Optical system of Norelco PC-70 three-tube color camera.



Typical optical system of four-tube color camera.

PHIL GIETZEN SAN FRANCISCO

DEJA VU

Kurt Vonnegut conceptualized in his book "Cat's Cradle" an Emersonian idea involving a kind of Karass or mind pool of mutually sympathetic energy synergized by its combined and interlocking relationship. That energy now links a number of significant people together in the cosmic and self-conscious realization of man as an alien being on EARTH. In his work "General Semantics" Korzibsky describes man as a third and completely different earth bound life system—different from plants—different from animals.

Was Darwin wrong??? Can anyone believe any longer that man is an earth evolved descendent of some anthropoid? Anyone but science? Tom Tadlock mentioned to me that as aliens to the planet it is our responsibility to build structures sympathetic to our present situation rather than attempt to technotize every inch of the planet.

IS FULLER OFF COURSE? Will the World Game enlighten and enrich man's cosmic being?

Charles Ankh (strong life) is a celestial being without human form (though I have since made contact with a similar being in human form) who appeared to me shortly after my first and second experiences of self-realization. Ankh's message to me at that time was directed toward the condition of man's mental being and psychic ability. The message was a vision in the nature of that designed by Paolo Soleri (little man from the sun/little spaceman) with whom I had studied shortly during the early sixties. That vision is of an environment in harmony with man. Latent to this phrase is the semantic inference that man's origin is extra-terrestrial, therefore alien to the planet where he must attempt to harmoniously adapt.

David Teske remarked to me on this subject that we are all in reality non-beings/energy which assumes the human role in an alien environment, as actors, for a short time we assume we lose our vision of the cosmic through our total involvement as human actors. As a life actor, became involved with television after having made some short films, was involved for a time with Scott Bartlett and Tom DeWitt. We worked at State College for one semester together. After that I met a number of media freaks and communications people which resulted in the formation of a foundation called Aumega. After a number of false starts and with only a handful of the original Aumega participants, including Radical Laboratory and Video Van, I decided that the time was right to attempt something never tried before.

Using new RCA equipment (one inch for the first time) we staged a rock show at the Palace Theatre and videotaped the whole show in one four hour episode... A second tape followed of feedback over records; then an eighty minute concerto of the Moon Walk mixed into a work called Spacedream and an hour tape for public consumption called Media Mind Massage, after the piece originally directed by Jeff Bower. As the work in the studio progressed, we began to realize that television holds the potential for really vast change within our own culture and extra-culturally as well (propaganda) and through that realization, and under the influence of its enormous power of light, we struggled to bring the work to a level that would be beyond anything ever achieved before. On the 21st of February 1970, we showed the first results at the Warehouse. We employed eight 23" screens, four on the bottom row and four on the top, all carrying the same information. It was so powerful that only a few people, most of them television artists like Tom Tadlock, could sit closer than fifteen or twenty feet from the flashing electric sets.

After the first show we began to hear from people that we did not know before about our work, its progress and its meaning. Radical Software in New York got in touch through Eric Siegel, Tom Tadlock's friend and partner in the construction of a number of television machines and synthesizers. Lee Myers and his wife Mary, who had been friends from the beginning had moved into Jack Byar's place above the Palace using it as a gallery for the people that they represent. Lee distributes films made by Bruce Conner, Scott, Bruce Baillie and Will Nindle, and others, to museums and libraries that are attempting to build up their collections. Lee's collection of films is one of the best and represents all the significant film makers in the area. When he saw our work he agreed to help and so he went from films and two dimensional art forms to videotape.

By now the Deja vu of my living which had led me to the meeting of all these psychic travelers and seekers of enlightenment had become an normal and significant aspect of television as a means of receiving light. That deja vu, life force that moved us for these years in the same circles, has been moving all of us. Each one of the people with whom I have worked has brought me some new awareness and has led me from an alley studio in Washington D.C. to the Palace Theatre in San Francisco. I believe that cosmic forces are at work within this mind pool and that my television experience has allowed me to look beyond what seem normal into the cosmic eye of those forces. I believe that television holds within itself a secret so vast and so cosmic that the movement of our lives seems only an illusion what really IS... I have come to believe that man is an alien to earth, that he is a truly cosmic being and that the light of an electron beam discharging on the retina of the TV tube at 186,000 miles per second can consciously evolve man. Tadlock made the same discovery and arrived at the same conclusions before I met him. When he finished ARCHETRON everyone who saw the machine sanctified it as an experience of intense enlightenment. It is time now to join hands across the nation and around the world; for the second coming, the Aquarian age, the manhood of man, IS AT HAND.

PEOPLEWARE?