

SOUND STRUCTURES

by
Liz Phillips

My interest when I began to build sound structures was to create a new kind of environmental space where the structure of the space was only defined by human interaction. In the space people could act as individual systems within a larger system. To build sound structures I use electromagnetic fields where people actually become electronic components in the circuit. Therefore, the collective presence and movement of the people in the field feeds back audio responses. The field operates at radio frequencies. It takes a three-dimensional form which can be found only through physical involvement with the space. Then the structure is perceived as changes in audio tones. The tones are in response to the total actions and relationships of the participants. The people themselves, are also potential sound structures realized only through contact with other people. With the new feedback, audio and kinesthetic patterns evolve.



TENTATIVE DESIGN FOR A FLEXIBLE VIDEO ENVIRONMENT

By Ira Schneider



The design includes three basic zones: the feedback introduction corridor, the process television interaction space, and a video information center or observation area.

The feedback introduction corridor is designed as a transitional zone between recognitions of where the entrant has been and where he is going. The monitors in the corridor will feed back live television of the entrance to the space itself, the walk up the staircase and/or the elevator exit, and a preview of what the entrant will experience in the process television interaction space and the observation area. (Such a preview helps reduce the initial self-consciousness which people experience upon first seeing themselves "on television." (e.g., "Hi mom, I'm on TV").

Upon turning the corner the entrant finds himself in a more brightly lit space in which he can observe (through a two-way glass pane) others participating in the process TV interaction space. (There is a possibility at this point that the entrant is picked up on a camera held by participants in light pool C).

After this point the entrant can choose to be a participant by entering into the process television interaction space. If one of the cameras which hangs from the ceiling is free then he can become an operator or he can enter the space as an actor. As an operator the participant can interact with other operators or mirrors (one or two-way) or monitors. If the entrant chooses not to participate he can pass on to the observation area and watch live TV

of the antics of the actors and operators and perhaps of the observers, himself included. He may then choose to become a participant at some level or to remain and observe himself in the private self-observation chamber. The entrant therefore has the choice of being a passive observer or an active participant, either in a social space or in relative private. Unlike other museum video pieces (e.g. the "Information" show at the Modern), the participant is given maximum control over his own feedback.

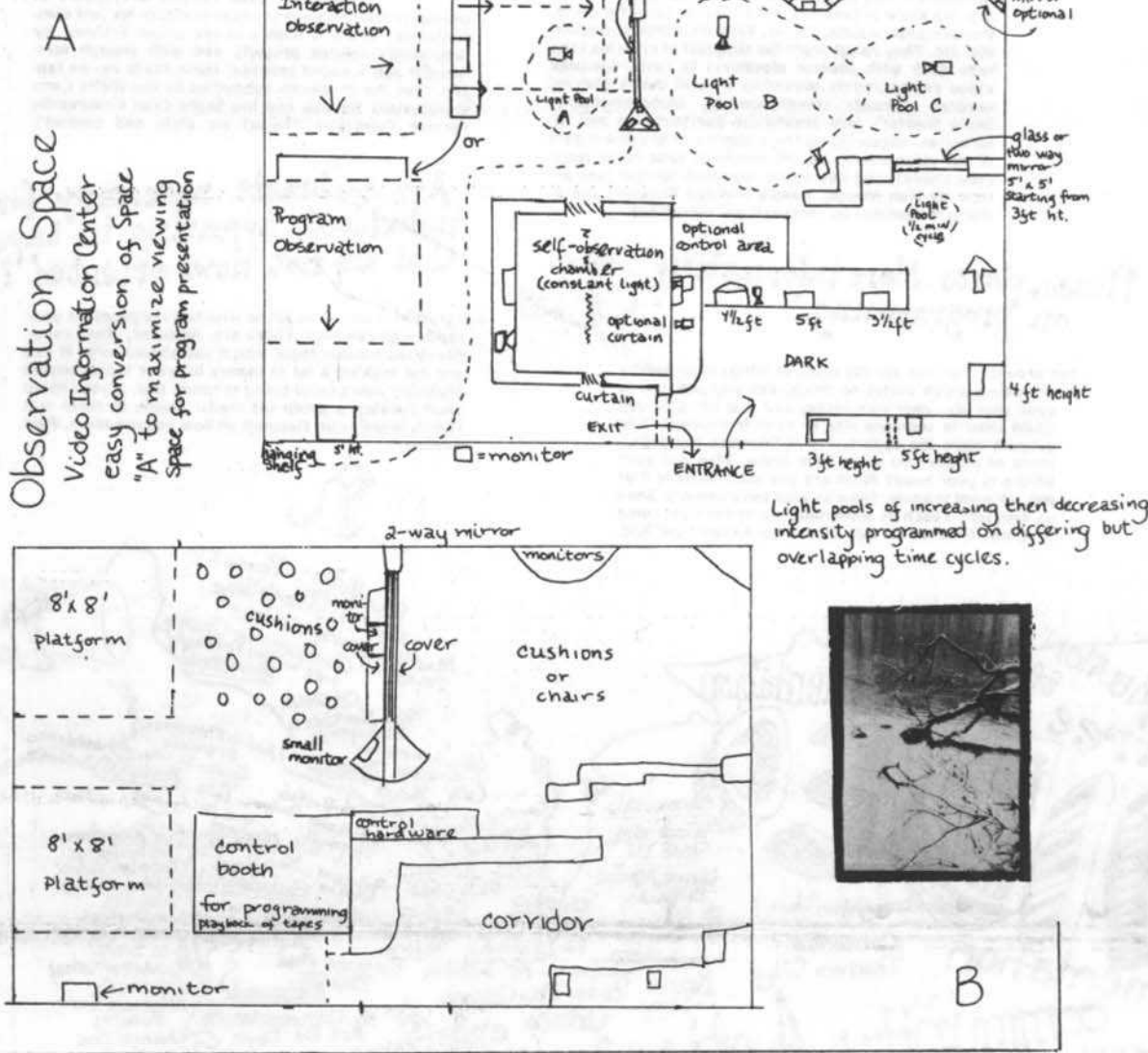
If it is desired the gallery can be easily converted into a video information center (for showings of pre-taped programs) by simply turning off the cameras (and raising them to the ceiling or removing them) and possibly providing cushions for additional seating. The pre-tape programs can be played back through any or all of the monitors.

The gallery can also serve as a studio where tapes are recorded of the ongoing activity or of other planned activities. (In the latter case the two-way mirror can be removed to provide more space, while the self-observation chamber can be used as a control booth).

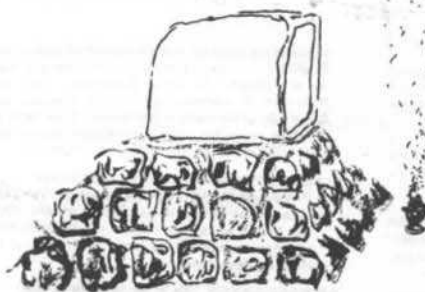
Storage of equipment not being used is provided for under the partitions and monitor stands.

Video cable can be strung across the ceiling beams and dropped through the hollows of the frame construction partitions to the built-in monitors and hanging cameras.

Process Television Environment



ALTERNATIVE FOR ALTERNATE MEDIA II PEOPLE'S VIDEO THEATRE HANDBOOK



On the basis of relinquished responsibility by the many, the few have been able to monopolize power. Power is access to resources and control of access to resources. The technologies of mass media communications (satellite, broadcast, cable and closed circuit) make opportune a people's tool for access and input by the many into the decision making function of whatever social system prevails at any given moment. Here exists the arsenal of weaponry by which to confront the imperialization of human intellect inherent in our present systems of education, economics, government and culture. Relinquished power must be reassumed by the people forcing those whose vested interests are consumerships, constituencies, congregations, audiences, etc. to respond or go under in the mire of their own economics of dog eat dog competition. News is not information disseminated from a place of responsibility down to places of relinquished responsibility. We support government to have men oversee necessary bureaucracies but we do not hand over to them our rights of defining reality nor can we condone censorship and manipulation by information brokers salaried by any elite in the power struggle. The power struggle belongs to the people.

The closed circuit video tape system is the basic component of electronic media. Playback is instantaneous and the tools of production are one and the same with those of distribution: the VTR and monitor which can be carried into any situation; i.e., a living room, the street, a school, a TV broadcast station or cable channel for further transmission by air or line. Depending on the content, one could find their living room functioning as a city council chamber, the street, a psychology lab, a school, study halls in the Library of Congress, TV stations and cable channels as national and local polling precincts.

There are three basic areas in structuring a video theatre which is the basic unit for the production and exposure of individual information: 1) the facility; 2) content; 3) and broadening exposure. Facility refers to advertising, personnel, environment and admission charges. In NYC the *Village Voice* carries ads for about \$15.00 weekly which in size and reach will suffice. Posters and fliers also help. Posters giving information on theatre location and hours of operation can be made up for about \$50.00 per 1000 on cardboard. At least two people to take admissions and run tapes is necessary. PVT has, since its inception, conducted the Live-Forum during showings. This type of feedback format necessitates, then, a shooting crew (camera and interviewer). The environment—seating, number of monitors, size of space, etc., can be simply chairs facing one monitor or as has been created by Raindance in NYC, a multiplicity of space, alcoves, platforms facing a number of monitors placed in a variety of locations at different viewing levels providing a comfortable, lounging atmosphere. Global Village (also in NYC) orients their audiences towards nine monitors placed at one end of an open large loft space. PVT has evolved from a one monitor format to a livingroom, rug covered space, using three monitors in a half circle facing a larger half circle for seating on couches, chairs and on the floor. Lighting is sufficient for indoor shooting using 150 watt floods hung from ceiling pipes. Generally, a space designed to stimulate interaction between members is most applicable to the video experience. Videofreex, for example, has people up to their NYC production studio loft creating an atmosphere of intimacy between themselves and the audience. As to admission, whatever the traffic bears to cover at least advertising costs. In NYC a fair fare is \$2.00. In Memphis, a group has access to a local movie house and shows tapes prior to film showings asking 25 cents above regular admission.



Content is not only the tapes shown but the program of tapes and the format. It can be anything from continuous showing of a variety of tapes, to tape-jockeying with live introductions to one tape, one-subject shows, to showings of tapes interspersed with live-forums for audience involvement. A proper show length is two hours. The best structures provide for maximum audience interaction. Video is not the frontal oriented theatre of movie house consumerism of product: it is process. On Thanksgiving 1970, the American Indians held a variety of demonstrations at Plymouth Rock. Out of PVT coverage was produced a 40 minute video newsreel. The following two weeks at PVT in NYC the tape was shown to Indian and non-Indian audiences. The Live-Forum that followed promoted dialogue between the various represented ethnic groups producing a tape having a unique interest of its own. Presently PVT is cooperating with the Younglords Party's Inmates Liberation Front (a group relating to the jails in NYC) in a three part, three week People's Video Forum. Besides showings of tapes on the issue, speakers are also present. All is videotaped in process and one week's tape provides the tape shown the next week. Each

consecutive forum will involve more and various inputs of points of view. At this juncture, "Broadening Exposure" need be discussed. The production and exposure of information, whether entertainment or news, within the present video theatre context is limited. Cross communications between video theatres need be developed. Tape exchanges are a way. Considering the growth of cable in this country video people must address themselves to the macrocosm of the rampantly developing technology. For example, People's Video Forums on the jails could be extended via cable to larger audiences. The Forum format as a cablecast program could be made up of tapes produced at the theatre forums with speakers in the studio answering phoned-in questions from people throughout the city in living rooms. A resource of input could be activated and a city-wide consciousness of the issue raised. As we have seen, especially on FM radio in the music field, entertainment tapes could be aired on tape jockeying shows to a multiplicity of cultural and ethnic audiences. Locally originated and special interest-oriented news programs produced by the newsmakers themselves could provide more insightful public service programming. It must be remembered that media exposure is power and journalistic objectivity a romantic myth. The only potential for any semblance of fairness is to provide each citizen with an amplifier for the expression of self to others. There can be no better report on housing than the Spanish or broken English statements of a Puerto Rican telling and showing his or her East Harlem living condition of a rat infested, garbage stinking, 2 room, fifth floor walkup. The video theatre can function as a local information producing unit gaining the support of a constituency of citizens made up of individuals and groups based in the community. Local information services to the constituents, as to material, public services, health, etc., resources can become a new kind of advertising at low-low cost to the advertiser and can be of prime support value to the survival of the theatre. All this might be seen as community communication's centers, self-sustained by the community, open and accessible to all members of the community. Both as to production and exposure of their information. These centers then having access to cable could realize much needed media power. It is obvious that to cable owners this kind of situation would maximize subscription to their service, for the programs aired would be the desired fare of the people in the community since they'd produce them.

Some idea of cost for a producing/exposing theatre are as follows: 1) space—\$150 monthly rental; 2) equipment—\$5000 for two portable 1/2" video units and support systems; 3) tape—100 hours costing \$6000 yearly; 4) Telephone, utilities, stationery, \$700 yearly; 5) advertising—\$2500 yearly; 6) transportation—\$2000 yearly; and 7) personnel—4 full-time staff at \$5000 each with a support video producers' collective who are compensated for work performed only and who share profits of tapes which prove to be lucrative. About \$35,000 the first year can be cut in subsequent years as major equipment disbursements are no longer needed and community support through advertising and services is realized. Keep in mind that the above outlines the ideal condition from which to start. PVT (see *Radical Software II—Alternative for Alternate Media (I)*) was started with \$1700 worth of equipment and a paid for loft space. However, due to the growth of cable many foundations are becoming interested in supporting independent video program producers. Federal and state granting agencies are also beginning to act, if there can be enough collective insistence on funders, on cable owners, and local community powers. For development of community communications centers, the people can affect the course of events in confronting the imperialization of human intellect. As it stands now, cable ownership is monopolizing right under our noses not only hardware but software production and distribution. The FCC, which has questionable jurisdiction over cable because in most or all cases there's no crossing of state lines, must also be challenged. We, the people, must demand rights to access and exposure to cable lines of communications. None of us should sign cable service contracts without clauses which guarantee access to expose our information without censorship on a regular basis on that cable line. We must make this issue a national political issue involving even presidential candidates' support. We must assume our responsibility of power and inherent right of self-expression without censorship. No one owns line of communications. If human intelligence has developed a means of broadening those lines, we thank the men and women as individuals who were instrumental in that effort, but we must not allow them to be rewarded with the power to determine our rights to utilization of those lines.

ALL MEDIA TO ALL THE PEOPLE.

In response to the above we invite your intellectual and material feedback to assist PVT in forming *The Committee for Democratization of Electronic Media (COMDEM)*. Donations will go to establish a legal staff to approach redefining cable contracts, FCC rights over cable, campaigning for better cable, etc. COMDEM—PVT, 544 6th Ave., NYC 10011, 212-691-3254.