1987

Contemporary Modes of Expression

University of Richmond Museums

Follow this and additional works at: http://scholarship.richmond.edu/exhibition-brochures

Part of the Art and Design Commons, and the Fine Arts Commons

Recommended Citation


This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the University Museums at UR Scholarship Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in Exhibition Brochures by an authorized administrator of UR Scholarship Repository. For more information, please contact scholarshiprepository@richmond.edu.
CONTEMPORARY MODES OF EXPRESSION

Tucker-Boatwright Festival
University of Richmond
Art Department
March 9-31
The Art Department of the University of Richmond presents

CONTEMPORARY MODES OF EXPRESSION

Tucker-Boatwright Festival
Schedule of Events
March 9-31, 1987

Monday, March 9
3:30 p.m.  Tri-City Inter-Action and The Magical DAX 3, lecture by Bruce Breland, Rm. 115
4:30 p.m.  Video Transformations (runs 6 hours), Rm. 109
7:30 p.m.  The New Nationalism/Regionalism, lecture by Donald Kuspit, Camp Theatre
8:30 p.m.  Contemporary Modes of Expression:VA/DC Artists, Opening reception of Marsh Gallery Exhibition

Tuesday, March 10
10:00 a.m.  Kuspit informal lecture to students, public
             Video Transformations (runs 6 hours), Rm. 109
1:45 p.m.   Panel Discussion, Camp Theatre
4:00 p.m.   Breland colloquium
8:00 p.m.   Panoply, concert by Claudia Stevens, Keller Hall Recital Room

Wednesday, March 11
10:00 a.m.  Breland tri-city telecommunications exchange
12:00 noon  Video Transformations (runs 6 hours), Rm. 109

Thursday, March 12
10:00 a.m.  Video Transformations (runs 6 hours), Rm. 109

March 16 and 17
10:00 a.m.  Video Transformations (runs 6 hours), Rm. 109

Tuesday, March 31
Last day of exhibition

All events will take place in the Modlin Fine Arts Center except concert. Events are free and open to the public. Marsh Gallery hours are Tuesday-Friday, 10:00-4:00 p.m., and Saturday and Sunday, 1:00-5:00 p.m.
FOREWORD

The Tucker-Boatwright Festival is an annual celebration of the arts at the University of Richmond, which features literature, theater arts, music and dance, art and film in a four-year cycle.

It is with pleasure that the Art Department presents the 1987 Tucker-Boatwright Festival. The purpose of this year's festival is to emphasize the diversity and vitality of art being made today by presenting to the students and the community a series of events entitled "Contemporary Modes of Expression." Included are lectures by noted art critic Donald Kuspit and by telecommunications artist Bruce Breland; an invitational exhibition of work by Virginia and Washington, D.C., artists; a tri-city digital art exchange by Breland and collaborators; Video Transformations, a traveling exhibition organized by ICI, New York; a performance in mixed musical idioms by Claudia Stevens, and a panel discussion involving artists and critics who will focus on the festival's theme and events.

Special thanks go to Donald Kuspit and Bruce Breland for their participation and enthusiasm. Roger de la Burde for his generosity, Carol Rand for her essay, and to Sheldon Wettack for his continued support.

Charles Johnson, Chairman, Art Department
Judy McLeod, Visiting Professor
Carlton Newton, Visiting Professor
Susanne Arnold, Director, Marsh Gallery

ESSAY

From the very onset, the Art Department had ambitious plans for the 1987 Tucker-Boatwright series. The fundamental concept was to provide a platform in situ for UR students to experience the art of the '80s. Insisting on nothing but the best and the newest, the department began building this project around one critic and one artist: Donald Kuspit and Bruce Breland. Mr. Kuspit's critical response to art has become an internationally significant contribution to the study of the late twentieth century. Breland's telecommunications art, so new it seems almost alien, boasts international expositions like the 1986 Venice Biennale.

As if the interaction with these men and their ideas were not enough for the students, the faculty also envisioned a program by Claudia Stevens, a video exhibition and a large invitational show that would interpret the festival's theme, "Contemporary Modes of Expression." The invitational show fell to the director of UR's Marsh Gallery, Ms. Arnold chose to feature artists in the Virginia/D.C. area. Quick to dispel the connotation of a "regional" or "local" art, she commented, "I see Virginia and D.C. as a small pocket of what's going on in the U.S., perhaps all over the world."

The theme of the show calls for, indeed, demands a display of the diverse approaches that artists are taking now. The audience will be stumped to find a stylistic relationship between a painting and the one hanging next to it. The cohesive thread of the show is its diversity.

Speaking as an artist herself, Ms. Arnold continued, "Very few artists are following a trend. We all know what's going on in art...through the media and art magazines. Nonetheless, artists today either choose to assimilate or ignore this information. This is not like the 50s when there was a predominant mode. Artists have chosen a medium, a sensibility and form that favors a personal idiom more than it favors a current "ism." The work of these V/A/D.C. artists characterizes this tendency as well as any. And what's more, this work doesn't fight for attention like much of the art in New York."

While the new art can reveal in its independence from the dominancy of past "isms," the diversity of much of the new art derives from the major movements of recent history, reacting to its form or underlying concepts. Bruce Breland's method of collaboration with DAX for his video images relies upon a practice that originated with the Surrealists. The simplicity of Betty Branch's provocative phallic-shaped female sculptures recall Brancusi's forms of the early 1900s. Frank Cole's brooding, impassioned images of women call on the heroics of 50s expressionism while they also convey the struggle of his own libido. Jerry Donato, painting's own recalcitrant child, creates to anger and bafflement. His mindless, "air-head" characters emerge on an elegant surface, challeging the beauty of the noblest of European palettes only to be disrupted by extraneous, ugly, flip chalk marks. Judy Mussoff's hot and flashy theatrical portraits of women deliver the raunch of 80s sexuality with a flair for emptiness that parallels the German flair for the insidious in the 30s.

The majority of the show is figurative. On the other hand, Ms. Arnold recognizes that in the last half of the 80s there remains a camp of formalist painters who are equally convinced about their work and has given them a balanced share of exposure. Stefanie Newman's abstract painting Against the Tangibles has vigorous, amorphous forms of translucent brilliant color and a jewel-like quality that rivals a Siennese altarpiece. Dean Dass uses geometric shapes to make oblique references to lunar diagrams, yielding a strong sense of myth, primitive rites, and cosmic forces. Conway Thompson's environmental sculptures are made of raw materials such as Virginia cedar logs and stones from ancient Indian burial grounds. This history in the materials themselves give her formalist constructions a sense of life.

The spectrum of art in this exhibition enjoys an extraordinary range. In addition to painting and sculpture, the show includes photography and ceramics. There is a mix of age, gender and race of these artists that orchestrates a balance in the presentation of styles and points of view.

The idea to call this conjunction of events a festival is appropriate. Indeed, it is a celebration of the freedom of expression and independence that began with Courbet in his Pavilion of Realism. Instead of Courbet's slogan "I paint what I see," these artists celebrate in the spirit that seems to say "I make what I choose."

Carol Rand
TRI-CITY INTER-ACTION

Bruce Breland will orchestrate the first tri-city interactive image/sound exchange during the Tucker-Boatwright Festival. Working in Richmond with URI students, Breland will be exchanging images with Jim Kocher and the DAX Group at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh and with Dana Moser at the Massachusetts College of Arts in Boston, March 9–11.

The theme of their collective authorship/image making will be the mythic symbol of three, playing on their tri-city collaboration. The results will be published in Monday Magazine.

Bruce Breland has been exploring communications art as an alternative form of expression for a number of years, and has been instrumental in the forming of the Digital Art Exchange (The DAX Group).

"The Digital Art Exchange consists of an eclectic group of individuals, each of whom contributes his and her special talents to the purpose of interactive art. Images are shared using a wide variety of technological equipment including slow-scan television (SSTV), which converts single frames of television into audible tones. The tones are sent to distant groups either by telephone or radio... Telefacsimile (FAX) is well suited to interarteographica (the sharing of art marks) by allowing the exchange of monochrome images. Electronic mail provides a primary interactive channel for artists to share inspiration and strategies."

"Art is now occupying the same electronic space as Chase Manhattan Bank. We're using the equipment that has been developed for corporate interaction and we're refining it for our own use."

quotes reprinted from Monday Magazine, 42nd Biennale issue, July 7, 1986

VIDEO TRANSFORMATIONS

Video Transformations presents current video works which reinterpret the performing and visual arts. Many of the works are collaborative creations of the video maker and artists in other fields. In some instances, most particularly in the ultimately non-collaborative area of visual art, the video maker is the artist.

The exhibition is divided into four programs, each about 90 minutes in length and each providing a sampling of art transformations. The video makers represented come from all parts of the United States, and include men and women of a variety of backgrounds and points of view. Many names in the exhibition will be known to those familiar with video; some names will, undoubtedly, become known in the future.

Video has emerged as a significant contemporary art form in its own right and as an adjunct to the artistic techniques of other fields. In this exhibition we shall see how today's video artists have dealt with the limitations and challenges posed by the medium, and how they have transformed other arts to video.

The exhibition is organized and circulated by Independent Curators Incorporated of New York, a non-profit traveling exhibition service specializing in contemporary art. The exhibition tour and catalogue are made possible, in part, by a grant from the New York State Council on the Arts. Lois Bianchi, Guest Curator.

reprinted from Video Transformations catalogue

INDEPENDENT CURATORS INC., NY

Meridith Monk Turtle Dreams, 1983
Dean Winkler/ Stefan Gosiewski Futura 2000, 1982
Laurie Anderson Sharkey's Day, 1983
Zbigniew Rybczynski Diana D., 1984
CONTEMPORARY MODES OF EXPRESSION: VA/DC ARTISTS

Artists in the exhibition:

Betty Branch
Lorraine Brevig
Allen Carter
Arleen Cohen
Frank Cole
Dean Dass
Darrell Dean
Gerald Donato
Ann Lyne
Judy McLeod
Jody Mussoff
Stefanie Newman
Carlton Newton
David Noyes
Allan Rosenbaum
Eleanor Ruffy
Roland Russell
Claudia Smigrod
Michele Smith
Chica Tenney
Conway Thompson
Barbara Tisserat
Denise Ward-Brown
Willie Anne Wright

Gerald Donato “Look at it this way,” 1985-86

Stefanie Newman Against the Tangibles, 1986

Denise Ward-Brown Model Post, 1985

Graphic Designer, Manuel Timbreza—ATLS
PARTICIPANTS

DONALD KUSPIT
Donald Kuspit is an internationally recognized writer and critic on modern and contemporary art. Professor of Art History and Philosophy at the State University of New York at Stony Brook, he is editor of *Art Criticism* and "Studies in Art Criticism" (UMI Research Press), contributing editor of *Art in America* and author of *The Critic is Artist: The Intentionality of Art* (Ann Arbor, 1984). Mr. Kuspit is a regular contributor of articles and reviews to such magazines as *Artforum* and *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*. In 1983 he was awarded the Frank Jewett Award for Distinction in Art Criticism by the College Art Association of America.

BRUCE BRELAND
Bruce Breland is Professor of Intermedia/Video, Art Department, and Research Center for Art and Technology, at Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh; director of the Digital Art Exchange Group (DAX); editor of *Monday Magazine* and invited participant, with DAX, at the 1986 Venice Biennale.

CLAUDIA STEVENS
Richmond-based Claudia Stevens has achieved national acclaim as a pianist for her performances of twentieth century American music. She has performed world premieres by more than 25 composers, including Aaron Copland and Elliott Carter. Her collaborations with composers have led to recitals of new music at Carnegie Recital Hall, Jordan Hall in Boston, the Dallas Public Library and the National Gallery in Washington, D.C. She is the recipient of a grant for new music performance from the Virginia Commission for the Arts. Recently she has turned to performance art, using piano in combination with vocal and theatrical idioms. She teaches at the College of William and Mary.

PANELISTS

Dr. Donald Kuspit,
Professor, Department of Art, SUNY at Stony Brook, New York; editor of *Art Criticism*

Bruce Breland,
Professor, Art Department, Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh; telecommunications artist

Paula Hovde,
Director, Hand Workshop, Richmond, VA; painter and printmaker

Dr. Roderic A. Taylor,
Assistant Dean and Chairman, Art Department, Norfolk State University; sculptor

Gayl Nalls,
Washington, D.C.; artist; recently showed at Ruth Siegel Gallery, New York

Dr. Howard Risatti,
Chairman, Art History Department, Virginia Commonwealth University

Carlton Newton,
Visiting Professor, Art Department, University of Richmond; sculptor; moderator