

PRESS PREVIEW

#586

Thursday, April 29

NAM JUNE PAIK

11:00 am - 3:00 pm

RETROSPECTIVE AT WHITNEY MUSEUM

The Whitney Museum of American Art is presenting the first New York retrospective of the work of NAM JUNE PAIK, from April 30 through June 27, 1982. The largest exhibition ever devoted to a single video artist, it comprises more than 60 works, including music scores, drawings, objects, video sculpture, six large-scale installations, a projected laser/video environment, and videotapes, illustrating all aspects of Paik's career.

John G. Hanhardt, Curator, Film and Video, who organized the exhibition, wrote in his introduction to the accompanying publication,* "Through the 1960s and 1970s video emerged and established itself in America as a new art form. The key figure in this development has been the Korean-born composer, artist, and performer Nam June Paik." This exhibition and publication exemplify the Whitney Museum's commitment to presenting the achievements of artists working in video, a commitment that began eleven years ago with the first major videotape exhibition in a New York City museum.

"Nam June Paik" is supported by public funds from the New York State Council on the Arts with additional assistance from the Rockefeller Foundation and Mr. and Mrs. Howard Wise. Equipment is donated by Sony Corporation of America. After its New York showing the exhibition is tentatively scheduled to travel to the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; National Galerie, West Berlin; and Museum Moderner Kunst, Vienna. The U.S. tour is supported in part by the National Endowment for the Arts.

*Nam June Paik by John G. Hanhardt, with essays by John G. Hanhardt, Michael Nyman, Dieter Ronte, and David A. Ross. Illustrated chronology; lists of selected performances, one-person exhibitions, group exhibitions, videotapes, and published writings; and brief bibliography. 144 pages; 16 pages of color illustrations, 25 of which were made by a new Polaroid process; 199 black-and-white illustrations. Published by the Whitney Museum of American Art in association with W.W. Norton & Co. Paper \$15.00

From Paik's earliest works and participation in performances with the alliance of artists known as Fluxus, to his latest work with lasers, he has transformed materials and technologies into unique objects. There is no linear, diachronic progression from one set of Paik's works to another because of the interrelationship and cross-fertilization between all aspects of his art in various media. He often refashions earlier work in a process that constantly reflects on the past while thinking about the future.

Paik's Participation TV (1963-71) is an extension of his Fluxus strategy of breaking down the barrier between the viewer and the artwork by having the sculpture's potential activated by the viewer. Several of Paik's best-known video sculptures combining video with performance were done for Charlotte Moorman, a classical cellist, who described TV Cello (1971) as the first development in the cello in centuries. As she bows across the cello constructed with monitors, Moorman plays with the form of the sculpture and the video images of herself, video collages of other cellists, and live images from the studio or performance area.

One of the distinctive features of video is the ability to show on a monitor what the camera is recording in real time. Paik employed this technique in many pieces. It is the central strategy, together with the additional sculptural elements of a statue and chair, for TV Buddha (1974), in which a statue of a Buddha faces a monitor on which it "sees" itself, and TV Chair (1968) where a monitor directly under the chair shows what the camera views through an adjacent window. Further illustrating the great variety of his video sculpture are works ranging in size from Candle TV (1975), a single television with a candle positioned in place of the picture-tube, to one of Paik's newest pieces, V-Yramid (1982), a floor-to-ceiling six-level pyramid constructed with 48 televisions.

In the late 1960s, Paik initiated a series of large-scale, multi-monitor video sculptures distributed within an exhibition space. Works in which the monitors form a shape or are placed in a context that has specific connotations, thus disposing the viewer to receive and interpret the works in specific ways, include Fish Flies on Sky (1975), 36 suspended color TVs showing a 2-channel collage of airplanes, dancers, and fish; Video Fish (1975-77), 16 fish tanks with live guppies placed in front of 16 color

TVs; and TV Garden (1974-78), 30 color televisions on their backs (showing Paik's landmark videotape Global Groove, 1973, produced at the WNET/TV Lab with John Godfrey) in a garden of live plants. Moon is the Oldest TV (1965-76) and TV Clock (1963-81) consist of 12 and 24 monitors, respectively. Both works are viewed in a darkened space, the image on the screen is minimal and static, and each is perceived as part of a sequence which must be read as a whole.

Also presented are two video projections. Imagine There are More Stars on the Sky than Chinese on the Earth (1981) comprises seven color televisions fitted with special lenses which project moon-like shapes in an arc from one wall, across the ceiling, and down the opposite wall. The second is the New York premiere of the Paik/Baumann Video/Laser Projection (1981-82). Developed with Horst Baumann, one of Europe's leading laser experts, the system projects laser images from Paik's videotapes in diffused patterns across the gallery walls.

One of the works in the exhibition will be demonstrated by Paik at the press preview. The remote-controlled Robot K-456, first fashioned in 1964 out of spare parts and found objects by Paik in collaboration with Shuya Abe, walks and talks.

NAM JUNE PAIK/CHARLOTTE MOORMAN PERFORMANCES June 2 and 3 8:00 pm

Paik has created a number of works specifically for Moorman, a classical cellist by training and noted interpreter of avant-garde music, who has been performing with Paik since the early 1960s.

PANEL DISCUSSION May 21 6:30 pm

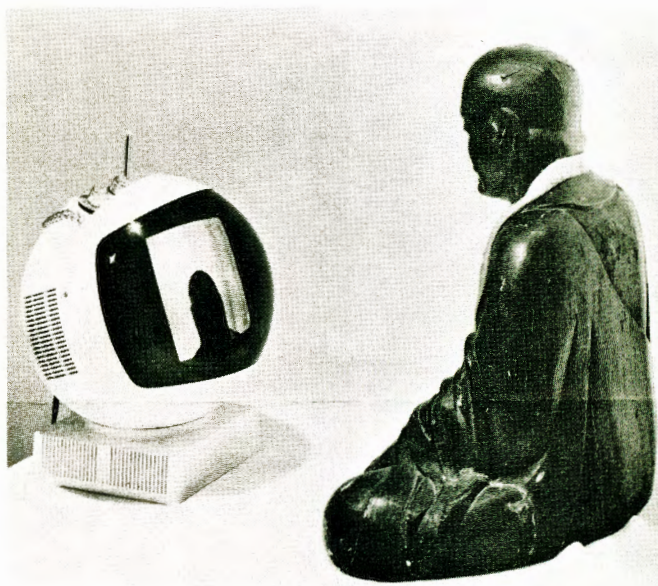
Paik's art will be discussed by John Cage, composer; John G. Hanhardt, Curator, Film and Video, Whitney Museum of American Art; Dr. Wulf Herzogenrath, Director, Kölnischer Kunstverein, Cologne, West Germany; Pontus Hulten, Director, The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; and David A. Ross, Director, Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston.

A free illustrated brochure with an essay by John G. Hanhardt will be available to the public.

A retrospective of Paik's videotapes will be broadcast by WNET/Thirteen Sunday evenings from May 16 through June 20 following "Independent Focus."

PRESS INFORMATION: Linda Gordon or Steven Schlough (212) 570-3633

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TV Buddha, 1974. Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam.

ADVANCE INFORMATION

EXHIBITION NAM JUNE PAIK

DATES April 30 - June 27, 1982
Whitney Museum of American Art

Schedule of tour in United States and Europe to be announced

CURATOR John G. Hanhardt, Curator, Film and Video

CONTENTS The most comprehensive exhibition ever devoted to a single video artist, this retrospective of work by Nam June Paik recognizes Paik's contributions to the development of video as an art form. All aspects of Paik's career as artist and composer will be presented with over 60 works, including music scores, multi-media sculpture, environments, and more than a dozen video installations, exploring the full achievement of Paik's art and its relationship to art issues since the 1950s. Supplementing the exhibition will be a number of special events and a major publication.

SPECIAL EVENTS Paik's important performance work will be highlighted by performances by Paik with Charlotte Moorman and a television performance with Paik in New York and Joseph Beuys in Germany broadcast live via satellite. A symposium will also be scheduled during the period the retrospective is on view.

PRESS INFORMATION: Linda Gordon or Steven Schlough (212)570-3633

October 1981

Whitney Museum of American Art

For Release

Madison Avenue at 75th Street New York, New York 10021

(212) 570-3633

#599

NAM JUNE PAIK AND CHARLOTTE MOORMAN

TO PERFORM AT WHITNEY MUSEUM

Nam June Paik and Charlotte Moorman, his long-time collaborator and noted interpreter of avant-garde music, will perform on two consecutive evenings, Wednesday, June 2 and Thursday, June 3, at 8:00 pm at the Whitney Museum of American Art. The performances, representing a significant part of Paik's music and performance activity, are presented in conjunction with the current Nam June Paik retrospective at the Whitney Museum through June 27. Tickets at \$5.00 may be purchased at the Museum's Sales Desk. The programs for each evening are attached.

Paik's move from Germany to New York and his meeting with Charlotte Moorman in 1964 signalled the beginning of an extraordinary period of creativity during which he has made a unique contribution to American art and culture. In that year he participated in the "Second Annual New York Avant-Garde Festival," organized by Moorman, with the premiere of Robot Opera, and since then they have collaborated on many projects. Paik has created performances and sculptures specially for her. One of their first collaborative pieces, "Variations on a Theme by Saint-Saëns," 1965, will be among the works performed on Wednesday evening.

Moorman will demonstrate TV Bra for Living Sculpture (1969) and Concerto for TV Cello and Videotapes (1971) both evenings prior to the 8:00 pm performance.

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PRESS INFORMATION: (212) 570-3633
TICKET INFORMATION: (212) 570-3651

May 1982