

From the mirror to the screen: some videoart's intuitions

Technology is the core of human development and it keeps on changing existences from the wheel to the touch screen. But technology alone is not sufficient to let mankind be happy in this world. Humans create technology to make life less tough. The direct consequence to this change of habits is the possibility of working less and living more.

As a part of technology, media have changed in time bringing changes in every aspect of life.

The big difference between the animal and the kingdoms is not the capability to survive in easier ways. The difference between a man and a dog is the capability to think of himself within variable space and time. In one word: self-consciousness. In the human kind, the artist is the only one who has present-perception (Mc Luhan). He can realize how new media – as well as new technologies – influence our sensation. The artist understands immediately how that invention is going to change lives: it is a matter of sense of timing.

Especially since the beginning of the XX century, many new vehicles upset society. Jackson Pollock used horizontality to pour his Ego into the canvas. Ed Ruscha understood that distances were supposed to be shortened by great auto routes, so he focused on [photographing](#) fuel stations and all those symbols of that new lifestyle. Thus, art was not as necessary as it used to be. Art does not immortalize reality anymore. Art is for its sake. On a hand, artists as Ryman said to be interested at making a paint crossed by paint. The subject of the work of art has become the art itself. On the other hand, Nouveaux Réalistes and New Dadaists needed to put reality on the attention of the artwork. In 1965, Sony produced the Porta Pack. Now, artists as Nam June Paik and Wolf Vostell could walk in Manhattan and film what they meant to bring in the gallery. After first experimentations of visual effects the video could generate, it became an introspective way to make art. An external device can show the artist to the artist, this is the point. So everything changed.

Video artists understand that the new medium could help in a deeper exploration of themselves. So, in Centres, Vito Acconci points at the eye of the camera for a long time making physical and psychic efforts in order to establish a personal relation with the camera and the screen. Camera and screen overlap and become a mirror. The relation between the subject and the camera is now closer. The artist plays with cine-camera like nobody is watching; nevertheless he conceived the whole performance in order to be shown. Intimacy can be put on the public view through the screen. Inner Ego becomes public Ego. It is a new era of self-consciousness. Acconci no longer wanted to see himself in the mirror as he saw himself, but as others saw him. Other artists used the video to create environments where the public could reach a new level of self-perception. Dan Graham, Bruce Nauman and others use cctv camera to mislead spectators who see their image in a video tape in time delay and this makes they feel like they are watching a stranger.

Hence, the power of the video generates a stimulus to look for the external self-perception: I can see myself in the video and I know that the person in the video is me just because I remember I have been there. People feel the necessity to watch their external version. Video artists worked on this in the Seventies and now this tendency is a social condition. We look for our public image and we find it into social networks. Sociality is a *conditio sine qua non* of human existence and social networks are the linear consequence of the technologic evolution. From the ritual archaic expressions, to the production of the art

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for art's sake, art has always been shared somehow. The environment of this kind of socialization is an ecology of media.

Art reaches its public mostly in a mediate way: catalogues, reproductions. Many people have not even ever seen live their favourite work of art. Despite this, people feel a benefit from their fruition of that piece of art. Things get viral and reach every part of the media ecology. It is a matter of sublimation: from the expressionism of Pollock to the craziness of social networks, human beings looks for reification of individual experience. You have never been to Louvre if you did not post a picture of it! Viruses always reproduce in a supportive environment; we need to know the environment to develop antibodies.



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