

WHEN THE MEDIUM WASN'T San Francisco's Dilexi Series

February 16 - May 5, 2018

The Radical 1960s Broadcast that Put Art on TV



San Francisco, CA (February 2, 2018) – The McEvoy Foundation for the Arts (MFA) is pleased to present the *Dilexi Series*, a collection of groundbreaking, radical video and film works for television created by influential artists Julian Beck, Walter De Maria, Kenneth Dewey, Robert Frank, Anna Halprin, Phil Makanna, Yvonne Rainer, Terry Riley and Arlo Acton, Edwin Schlossberg, Andy Warhol, William Wiley, and Frank Zappa. Broadcast across the Bay Area in 1969, the *Dilexi Series* was one of the earliest projects where artists used television to disseminate their work to a wide public audience. Shown in its entirety for the first time in nearly 20 years, the *Dilexi Series* screens daily in the MFA media room from February 16 through May 5, 2018. See mcevoyarts.org for full schedule and program. Admission is free.

The *Dilexi Series* spans genres and mediums and is organized by curator Steve Seid into thematic programs – “Acts of Seeing,” “Paradigm Shift,” and “Marching Orders,” and others. All works were commissioned and produced circa 1968-1969. They include east Bay artist Walter De Maria’s *Hardcore*, an anti-war “western” set in the Black Rock Desert; Frank Zappa’s *Burnt Weeny Sandwich*, a music video created more than a decade before MTV; and Andy Warhol’s unfinished short *Paul Swan*, documenting an elderly, idiosyncratic artist and actor of the same name. Anna Halprin brought postmodern dance to the small screen with *Right On* and composer Terry Riley manipulated soprano saxophone and tape loops into a complex symphony in *Music with Balls*, accompanied by sculptor Arlo Acton’s large spheres and film overlays.

The *Dilexi Series* was the brainchild of Dilexi Gallery director Jim Newman, who partnered with KQED-Channel 9 to commission a collection of moving-image works by notable artists. Newman's Dilexi Gallery represented a pantheon of contemporary artists like Jay DeFeo, Roy De Forest, and Manuel Neri. KQED gained a reputation as a supporter of the arts through the Experimental TV Project, a cross-disciplinary residency charged with discovering new aesthetic uses for TV technology. The *Dilexi Series* was a complete disruption of the broadcast space, presenting Bay Area audiences with an unusual and utterly unique form of television that was visually original, thematically diverse, and subversive in its complete disregard for "good" TV.

Preservation of the *Dilexi Series* was completed at the UC Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive (BAMPFA). The MFA screening is curated by Steve Seid and co-presented with BAMPFA.

A panel of *Dilexi Series* artists will take place at MFA on Thursday, April 12 at 6:30pm. Participants to be announced.



The *Dilexi Series* is co-presented with the UC Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive.

###

Curator Biographies

Steve Seid

For 25 years, Steve Seid was the Film and Video Curator at the Pacific Film Archive, a department at the University of California, Berkeley. He organized over 1,000 programs involving video art, film, and new media. Seid also oversaw an ongoing video preservation project and conducted annual workshops on visual literacy for high school teachers for a decade. He curated numerous exhibitions including *Videoscape*, *Whose Side Are You On?*, *The Border*, and *Radical Light*.

Dilexi Series | Media Room Schedule

Program 1: Paradigm Shift (starts at 10 am)

Anna Halprin, *Right On*

In 1969, Halprin choreographed "Ceremony of Us" for her San Francisco-based company, Dancers' Workshop, and an all-black dance company from Los Angeles, Studio Watts. *Right On* documents the process of developing this work with the two companies.

Terry Riley & Arlo Acton, *Music with Balls*

Performing music from *Rainbow in Curved Air* (1969), Riley uses tape loops, a time lag accumulator, and a soprano saxophone while sculptor Arlo Acton manipulates several spherical objects containing speakers. The footage is delicately processed and montaged to great visual effect. The work was one of the very first stereo broadcasts, using a simulcast on KQED-FM as the second audio channel.

Phil Makanna, *The Empire of Things*

The Empire of Things is an experimental narrative using a short story by H.L. Mountzoures which describes a post-apocalyptic culture. Original and found footage anchors the tale in a Vietnam-era sensibility. Makanna used a 16mm film-chain to manipulate the image as it was being transferred to electronic media. Soon after, Makanna directed the avant-garde feature *Shoot the Whale*, also produced by Jim Newman.

Program 2: Marching Orders (starts at 11:15 am)**Yvonne Rainer, *Dance Fractions for the West Coast***

Rainer was 35 when she did a short residency at Mills College in the spring of 1969. She enlisted a small army of students to help her construct this large-scale dance movement. Central to the work are several skewed monologues (one on collaboration, the other penned by Lenny Bruce) and an unusual solo dance by Rainer. It offers a rare glimpse of the young dancer who recently turned 83.

Program 3: Acts of Seeing (starts at 12:15 pm)**Walter De Maria, *Hardcore***

Shot in the Black Rock Desert, De Maria's "western" is land art meets anti-war minimalism. Seven 360-degree pans of the desert culminate in a shoot-out between two gunslingers. The music is composed by De Maria as well.

Edwin Schlossberg, *Making Visible*

Making Visible is an essayistic look at communications theory and the potential of new information systems, including television. This is a unique work by a designer and author best known for his groundbreaking participatory exhibitions in museums.

Program 4: New Performance (starts at 1:10 pm)**Julian Beck, *Rites of Guerrilla Theater*
with Judith Malina**

Before each of their performances, Julian Beck's New York-based Living Theater would "orient" their audiences, often infiltrating their ranks and asking for participation in unnerving rituals. This hilarious work documents one such "orientation" at Mills College in which audience members were asked to repeat, "I'm not allowed to smoke marijuana."

Kenneth Dewey, *Night-Eye, Fire*

Using Marshall McLuhan's idea that television is the new family hearth, conceptual artist Ken Dewey created a "happening" around a campfire near Drake's Bay. The moment is interrupted by a domestic setting staged inside a TV studio.

Program 5: Young & Old (starts at 2:20 pm)

Robert Frank, *Conversations in Vermont*

"Maybe this film is about growing older, past and present. Some kind of family album, I don't know." With these words, Robert Frank describes his first film in the oblique autobiographical mode that he would patent in films to come. Here, he interviews his teenage children, Pablo and Andrea, confronting them with their own past through photographs, and the viewer with a dissociation between past and present.

Andy Warhol, *Paul Swan*

Swan was an artist and actor who died in 1972. Fascinated by the aging eccentric, Warhol began filming his life in the late sixties. It was never completed. The 30-minute short Warhol submitted to the *Dilexi Series* was the only time this footage was ever shown.

Program 6: Late Night Talk (starts at 3:30 pm) *

Frank Zappa, *Burnt Weeny Sandwich*

An early example of a music video made by Zappa to accompany his "Uncle Meat" LP, released in April, 1969. He released a full album titled "Burnt Weeny Sandwich" in 1970. The short includes shenanigans by The Mothers of Invention and a cameo by Captain Beefheart.

**William Wiley, *What do you talk about? Parts 1 & 2*
with Robert Nelson, Bill Allan, Dominic Laducier, and Lew Welch**

The talk show format is lampooned in this in-studio production directed by filmmaker Robert Nelson. Artist William Wiley is the show's host with guest appearances by painter Bill Allan discussing pool, Dominic Laducier chatting about fishing, and legendary Beat poet Lew Welch praising American football.

Program 6 will not be available on Saturdays but will play Tuesday - Friday.

Saturday schedule runs 11am - 5pm

###

Additional Programming:

Stories: Philip-Lorca diCorcia & Constance DeJong

Stories combines photographer Philip-Lorca diCorcia's *A Storybook Life* (1978-1999) and writer and performer Constance DeJong's *Radios* (2015-ongoing). DiCorcia's *A Storybook Life* creates a dreamland straddling documentary and staged photography through tableaux of domestic situations using friends and family as models. The work is arranged in a particular, nonlinear order, with only four complete sets in existence. For *Radios*, DeJong presents a set of vintage radios simultaneously playing intimate and disarming narratives. She says: "The speaking voice disconnected from a body can invoke intense listening, a kind of attention like no other." *Stories* is curated by Kevin Moore.

Constance DeJong will deliver a text performance on Wednesday, April 18 at 6:30pm. The event is free and open to the public.

###

Workshops and Performances

MFA presents Christine Marie's *Shadows in Stereo* and Danny Clay and Jon Fischer's *Turntable Drawings*, a series of workshops and performances in conjunction with *Stories*, MFA's Spring 2018 exhibition. Free and open to the public, these live experiments revisit the 20th century technologies of augmented reality (Marie) and vinyl records (Clay, Fischer) with visitors and invited artists, musicians, writers, and dancers. Artists will be working in the MFA gallery space throughout the *Stories* exhibition, developing their projects for final performances. Attendees will experience a behind-the-scenes look at the creative process. Visit mcevoyarts.org for the full schedule and program.

###

McEvoy Foundation for the Arts

Established in 2017, The McEvoy Foundation for the Arts (MFA) is a new San Francisco non-profit art space that presents exhibitions, conversations, screenings, and live events that engage, expand, and challenge themes present in the McEvoy Family Collection. MFA borrows from the McEvoy Family Collection as the primary source for all exhibitions and public programming. MFA is a 501(c)(3) presenting organization that does not award grants.

The McEvoy Family Collection encompasses the collections of Nion McEvoy and his mother, Nan McEvoy. It features works in a wide array of media such as painting, illustration, video, sculpture, and installation. Artists include Mamma Andersson, Diane Arbus, Carol Bove, Brassai, Richard Diebenkorn, Lee Friedlander, David Hockney, Alex Katz, Goshka Macuga, Christian Marclay, Robert Motherwell, Nathan Oliveira, Dario Robleto, Donald Sultan, Mark di Suvero, Wayne Thiebaud, Andy Warhol, James Welling, Edward Weston, Garry Winogrand, and Lisa Yuskavage, among others. A shared theme of books, newspapers, and letters reflects both McEvoy's careers as publishers.

Image: Still from *The Empire of Things*, Phil Makanna, c. 1968-1969. (20:25 min.) Courtesy of the UC Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive.

For more information:

McEvoy Foundation for the Arts
1150 25th Street, Building B
San Francisco, CA 94107
415.580.7605
mcevoyarts.org

Gallery admission free.