

### Eric Siegel's Statement:

An emphasis on technology is not what should be done with me. The technology was a means to an end, not the destination. In "Einstein" I tried to transport the mind of the viewer into Einstein's multi-dimensional world.  $E=MC^2$ . The other worldliness of "Einstein" is what caught Howard Wise's attention and is what got me into the show. When I was a child I wanted microphones, radios, televisions, and television cameras. Television cameras were totally out of the reach of boys in the 1950's. I taught myself electronics in order to build a television camera they cost \$50,000 dollars back then.

When I was thirteen I built a television from scratch. The following year at the age of fourteen I completed my first vacuum tube Image Orthicon camera. It was entered into the science fair in high school and I won a second place prize. The technology always held back seat in my life. It was used as an economic substitute to the fact that I could never get the money to buy a TV camera. The artist and Brahman in me sought expression. During my childhood in the Bronx I used to watch the Allen Watts series on channel 13 what would become the public television channel. It was unusual for a child to watch Allen Watts talk about Zen, the Tao, and Hinduism but that's what I sometimes did, I think it was the times I played hooky from school.

A few years later I destroyed the first camera and built a solid state transistorized new one recycling its parts. It worked much better. About this time I met Bob Goldman of Mira Sound Studios. He recognized me as a brilliant electronics nerd and invited me down to the studio. *The Who* were in the studio recording 'I can see for miles'. I didn't realize how big they would become in the future. Mr. Goldman had just returned from Redwood City California from the Ampex Corporation (inventors of the video tape recorder). He had purchased a load of non-functional video recorders. I was enthralled with them! VIDEO RECORDERS! Mr. Goldman saw how much I wanted one, that he made me one of the greatest offers of my life back then. Fix two and keep one. I fulfilled my obligation and was the proud owner of an Ampex 660. The tape was two inches wide and a roll weighed about 25 lbs. I now had all I needed to create video that the world would some day see. I played and experimented a lot together with smoking a lot of pot with my newly acquired friend Thomas Tadlock who introduced me to Howard Wise.

I was also hanging around with Michael Kirsh a filmmaker that I met at the First Bardo a head shop in my neighborhood on the upper West Side of Manhattan. Michael was friend with Michael Lang (the producer who put on Woodstock) he invited him up to my apartment and we showed videos to him. It was the late 60s and the Beatles were singing "Revolution". One night I had this strange dream about Einstein. The next day I called up Mike Kirsh and asked him to come over and help me make this video that was triggered by the dream. He came over and we did Einstein in real time. We did two takes but I used the first in the final edit. Through an ad I put in the Village voice I met Peter Sorensen. We would smoke a bowl and then do what was called video feedback. Pointing the camera back into the TV monitor. I had created a special effects box, which expanded the range of effects that could be achieved. After some time about an hour of finished video had been created. Tadlock thought that Howard Wise would dig this stuff I was doing so he invited him over to my house (where I worked) and we gave a showing of what I called 'Psychedelelevision in Color'. Howard was blown away by "Einstein" and asked me if it could be in color. I told him I could display it in color for \$300 (the price of a used color TV then). He told me he was planning a show and asked me if I would enter Einstein. I agreed. The TV as a creative medium show opened, and I got to meet all these other video-artists Nam June Pike, Frank Gillette, Ira Schneider. I remember us all going to the East village to a famous macrobiotic restaurant, Frank Gillette, Ira Shneider, Berol Karolt, Paul Ryan, and others and

someone asked “what we should do next.” For an alternative television movement had begun. I said, “We should make a magazine.”

Ira and Berol and Frank all picked up on that forming the Raindance group. They found Michael Shamberg to be the Editor of the new magazine called “Radical Software.” I had a running technical article where I talked about standardization of the equipment. Radical Software went on to be a tremendous success. A video movement was underway all started at a little Art Gallery on 59<sup>th</sup> street in New York City. Howard closed the Gallery after that and devoted himself to Electronic Arts Intermix. The rest is history.