

To discuss these concerns and the relevance of Oppenheim's work for a current generation of artists, Jaskey will be joined by artists **A.K. Burns, Ajay Kurian** and **Yve Laris-Cohen** for an informal discussion in the second half of the evening. Burns' practice explores the intersection of desire, power and language, taking the form of sculpture, video, collage or social actions. In recent works, Burns has focused on object tactility and the cultural implication of fetish.

Cohen's performances layer bodies and objects, using strategies of repetition and endurance to map genealogies of material exchange. In his art, Kurian pursues new material languages and strategies that disregard divisions between nature, culture and human beings, creating conditions for exploring non-human agency within art.

Special thanks to the **Dennis Oppenheim ~studio** for their assistance in organizing this program.

Please note that Oppenheim originally presented his film works as full-wall projections. At EAI, the works will be shown as smaller-scale video projections to fit the format of the event.

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About EAI

Founded in 1971, Electronic Arts Intermix (EAI) is one of the world's leading nonprofit resources for video art. A pioneering advocate for media art and artists, EAI fosters the creation, exhibition, distribution, and preservation of video art and digital art. EAI's core program is the distribution and preservation of a major collection of over 3,500 new and historical media works by artists. EAI's activities include viewing access, educational services, extensive online resources, and public programs such as artists' talks, exhibitions and panels. The Online Catalogue is a comprehensive resource on the artists and works in the EAI collection, and also features extensive materials on exhibiting, collecting and preserving media art: www.eai.org

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DENNIS OPPENHEIM

Form-Energy-Subject

Screening + Conversation



Image: *Air Pressure (Face)* 1971, 14:03 min, b&w, sound; *Compression: Fern #1* 1970, 5:46 min, color, silent. (c) Dennis Oppenheim Courtesy **Dennis Oppenheim ~studio**

May 22, 2013

ELECTRONIC ARTS INTERMIX



DENNIS OPPENHEIM: *Form-Energy-Subject*

Screening + Conversation

PROGRAM

Aspen Projects: Dual Channel Projection

Air Pressure (Face)

1971, 14:03 min, b&w, sound

Compression: Fern #1

1970, 5:46 min, color, silent

Air Pressure (Hand)

1971, 5:25 min, color, sound

Compression: Fern #2

1970, 5:22 min, color, silent

Pressure Piece

1970, 1:40 min, color, sound

Extended Armor

1970, 2:08 min, b&w, silent

Material Interchange

1970, 2:44 min, b&w, silent

Nail Sharpening

1970, 2:58 min, b&w, silent

Lead Sink for Sebastian

1970, 4:42 min, color, silent

Disappear

1972, 5:57 min, color, sound

2-Stage Transfer Drawing: Dual Channel Projection

**2-Stage Transfer Drawing
(Advancing to a Future State)**

1971, 11:55 min, b&w, silent

**2-Stage Transfer Drawing
(Returning to a Past State)**

1971, 7:53 min, b&w, silent

* On view prior to the screening: **Pulling** 1975, 17:00 min, color, silent

“Take the phenomenon of grabbing: instead of grabbing clay, you grab your stomach. For the first time, instead of imposing form manually, you are feeling what it is like to be made. You might have felt your hands picking up a piece of wood and staking it, but you have never felt what the wood felt.”

- Dennis Oppenheim, Studio International (November, 1971)

EAI is proud to present a screening and discussion on the films and videos of **Dennis Oppenheim**, focusing on the *Aspen Projects*, produced between 1970 and 1974. These rarely seen works mark the evolution of Oppenheim’s practice from public earthworks in the late 1960s to more intimate material investigations of his own body. In the early 1970s, Oppenheim was in the vanguard of artists using film and video as a means to examine themes relating to Body Art, Conceptual Art, and performance. In his works from this time, Oppenheim used his own body as a site to challenge the self: he explored the boundaries of personal risk, transformation, and communication through ritualistic performance actions and interactions.

The screening program will feature selections from Oppenheim’s *Aspen Projects* (1970-1971), as well as *Disappear* (1972), and two of the artist’s *Transfer Drawings* (1971).

Oppenheim originally exhibited many of his film and video works as double projections or dual-monitor installations. At EAI, works from the *Aspen Projects* series and the two *Transfer Drawings* will be presented as double projections. The program titles, their side-by-side arrangement, and their timing, suggested by the **Dennis Oppenheim ~studio**, replicate Oppenheim’s original super 8 film installations from the early ‘70s. The film and video works have been rarely shown in this way.

The short pieces from *Aspen Projects* record performative actions that evolve as exchanges or interactions between Oppenheim’s body and natural and man-made elements—leaves, wood, hair, compressed air, glass. In some pieces, these gestures involve a kind of self-negation; others work in reverse, as Oppenheim leaves imprints or traces of himself. As his actions unfold, the distinction between his living body and the inanimate and non-living materials he uses are leveled, erasing the differences and categories that stand between his face or fingernail and a fern or piece of wood. Continuing this line of inquiry, in the equally mesmerizing and disquieting work *Disappear*, Oppenheim attempts to will his hand to dematerialize. Intoning a hypnotic and mantra-like wish for disappearance and dissolution, he moves his hand faster than the camera’s mechanism can process images, turning it into an indeterminate blur. In *2 Stage Transfer Drawing (Returning to a Past State)* and *2 Stage Transfer Drawing (Advancing to a Future State)*, both from 1971, Oppenheim investigates transference and communication through the body. Collaborating with his son Erik, in the *Transfer Drawing* pieces Oppenheim makes a drawing on his son’s back; his son tries to copy this drawing through tactile sensation onto the wall. They then reverse roles. Writes Oppenheim, “I am drawing through him.”

Curator **Jenny Jaskey** will introduce the screening, focusing on the artist’s concern with the interpenetration of human and non-human life, and the collapse of assumed hierarchies between subjects and objects in his work. Oppenheim once likened his performances during this period to “plugging into the solar system, communicating with an element,” and his immersive investigations presciently anticipate contemporary questions around ecology, matter and human agency.