

Dec. 3, 1971

Office

Chloe Aaron, Director
Public Media Program
National Endowment for the Arts
806 15th Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20506

Dear Ms. Aaron;

The press release and Guidelines on the Public Media Program for 1972 have just come to my attention, otherwise I should have addressed you sooner.

Electronic Arts Intermix is sponsoring a program called "Perception" which I believe fits into the announced aim of the million dollar pilot program designed "to bring the arts to more Americans through film, television and radio".

"Perception" is directed and manned by a group of artists who have chosen TV as their medium. As artists, they have sensed some of the potentials of TV as an art medium and within stringent limitations imposed by lack of funds and high cost of materials (parts and hardware run high) they have made remarkable achievements.

These artists are of the "TV Generation". They are familiar with the technology of TV, either because of their training in the army, in school or because they were naturally curious and taught themselves. Nevertheless, they are first of all artists, perhaps artist-technicians. However, they fall between the industry and art. On the one hand they do not care to devote themselves to work where the scope of their creativity is limited as it is in the TV industry, and on the other hand because they are not using conventional materials their work is not regarded as "art" by industry executives, art critics or the art public. Because of this, and because of the nature of their work, they have little if any possibility of generating income.

"Perception" is in effect an electronic-image workshop, where a whole new area of electronically generated images is in process of coming into being. This is made possible by the development of video synthesizers and other frequency generators, two important instruments of this new genre having been developed under the aegis of Electronic Arts Intermix. These are the Electronic Video Synthesizer and the Chrominance Processing Synthesizer, both being the products of the ingenuity of Eric Siegel, 27 year-old Video Artist and Electronic Engineer who is Technical Director of "Perception".

The Director of "Perception" is Woody Vasulka, former Czech filmmaker and artist now residing in New York. He has recently been experimenting with the movement of abstract images on multiple screens which afford an unusual psychic illusion suitable to his expression and which generate their own electronic sounds which complement the visual movement and forms.

In addition to the workshop, a video-equipped location is made available to artists where they may carry on experiments in the media with or without live audiences.

It is our hope to expand these facilities in order to increase the effectiveness of the experiments being carried on, for the equipment now on hand is minimal in scope, in quality and in quantity.

One end effect that is being worked towards is the creation of a Video Art program in the true sense that may be made available to cable TV so that one channel may be devoted to this program continuously, and thus the viewer would be enabled to turn to the "art" channel whenever the urge came upon him, either from boredom with conventional programs or because of his need for spiritual refreshment.

We do hope that we may merit consideration for a grant under the Pilot program, and that you will, because of the nature of our work and its pertinence to the objectives of your program, permit us to file an application for a grant even though we will not be able to do this in time to meet your deadline.

Yours truly,

Howard Wise. President