LANGUAGE

&

THE MOVING IMAGE

a retrospective analysis

WRITTEN BY DANIT ELGEV

Mentor: Irene De Craen
VAV   department
Gerrit   Rietveld   Academie
October   2015

CONTENT

1.   INTRODUCTION

One of the dictionary's definitions of language is: "The method of human communication, either spoken or written, consisting of the use of words in a structured and conventional way" [1] . Language is used as a direct way to communicate with an audience, through spoken words or by text. Human beings are using it since the beginning of time. As the writer-critic Roland Barthens defined it in one of his writings from the sixties: "there exists a general category language/speech, which embraces all the systems of signs; since there are no better ones, we shall keep the terms language and speech, even when they are applied to communications whose substance is not verbal." [2] Barthens placed language and speech at the center of semiotics.

Language, whether spoken or in the form of text, always had a prominent, yet constantly changing role in the history of video art. It manifested itself in the form of script monologue, dialogue, or title cards. Around the sixties, the ideas of direct communication in art started to have an impact on artists, and therefore they looked for a more direct way to communicate to their audience. Video equipment started to be more available as technology advanced and as a result artists had new and affordable tools to 'play' with. The use of language in video art was also influenced by social changes and events, which artists responded to and criticized through their work. These factors transformed the use of language through video art and formed it into what it is today.

My interest in this developed through my own works. I use language very often, and mostly in video. I find the transformation between text, language, and video, fascinating. Therefore, I wanted to explore the relationship between these two "methods" (language and video), and how it evolved through time. I studied who were the artists who set the milestone when using language was not so

---

[1] Oxford English Dictionary, definition for 'language'.

[2] Elements of Semiology, Roland Barthes, 1964.

common as today, and how the development of technology helped it progress to what it is today. In this paper I discuss the development of video, the use of verbal communication in video, and what influenced video art since it first emerged in the 60's until today. I found this subject challenging to write about due to the fact there is not so much literature focused on language in video art, and a lot of the connections I had to make myself.

To summarize, I discuss the general development of video with a focus on the linguistic kind of video art. This resulted in the following research question:

What triggered artists to use verbal communication in video work, and what were the changes and developments since the sixties that resulted in the language based video works of today, taking into consideration changes in technology and culture?

To answer this question I am going to look at the theories that affected the artists of the sixties to start using language and video. Further, I explore the changes in video art, and the use of language in video art, during the decades since it appeared. Finally, I discuss the current use of language in video and compare it to the past, to understand what has changed.

2.   THEORIES   AND   EARLY   INVENTIONS

Artworks that combine video and language already appeared in the early twenties. Back then, the works were strongly influenced by text's function in silent film, avant-garde experiments in film art, and by the practices of Conceptual visual artists. For example, in a film work of surrealists such as Marcel Duchamp, text began to be incorporated as a tool to challenge the viewer. Other artists were Salvador Dali, Man Ray, Luis Bunuel, and in their works, they began to use language to create another layer of meaning that could not be conveyed in the image. Rather than appear as inter-titles for dialogue or narrative development, text was manipulated the way images were, to create unusual juxtapositions.

1. Marcel Duchamp,
Anemic Cinema, 1926

Nevertheless, the use of language in art was very rare in this period of time. It really started to thrive parallel to the 'new spirit' and the ideas of the sixties. The theories of philosophers that came up in the sixties were in a way 'radical' compared to the old way of thinking. They were influencing artists and thinkers and contributed to the beginning of language-based video art.

One of the main theorists that affected the beginning of video art was the radical philosopher Herbert Marcuse. He suggested that mass media has a direct relation to social control. In 1965, Marcuse published a book named *One Dimensional Man.* In this book he claimed that there are other dimensions of human existence in addition to the present one, and that these other dimension have been eliminated by the progression of technology and media. This "one dimensional man" lives in a bland world of conformity and has become too comfortable to engage in ideas and actions that criticize the mainstream society. A review in the NYROB says that "the spheres of existence formerly considered as private (e.g. sexuality) have now become part of the entire system of social domination of man by man, and it suggests that totalitarianism can be imposed without terror.[3]" Marcus influenced a lot of individual artists and artists groups, especially in relation to the television era. Besides Marcuse, more theorists that were inspired by new technologies and by television's influence appeared by the end of the fifties, when television became a very powerful source of information.

---

[3] The New York Review Of Books, One-Dimensional Man, Georg H. Fromm, March 19, 1964.

While the masses were overwhelmed and excited by television's presence, others, particularly intellectuals and media theorists, saw that it was influencing the population while showing them a simple reality that wasn't accurate to the real world.

While there was a lot of criticism on television programming, Canadian media theorist Marshall McLuhan offered a new and creative interpretation of how new technologies could transform society, and in many ways predicted the expansion of media to what it is today. In his book *The Gutenberg Galaxy* from 1962, McLuhan pointed out that men are using, in a lot of their life aspects, an extension of their senses. For example, a house and clothing are an extension of our body temperature mechanism, and a weapon is an extension of our fists. That's how technology and media are turning to be an inseparable extension of our senses. McLuhan also spoke about the use of language, and how it is an extension to our non-verbal feelings. He also mentioned that the use of language by media is an extension of the senses in such a way that disturbs the viewer's other senses. These ideas spoke directly to artists, media visionaries, and those in the counterculture that were already actively experimenting with altered states of consciousness. He also set the terms "hot" and "cool" regarding mediums of communication. 'There is a basic principle that distinguishes a hot medium like radio from a cool one like the telephone, or a hot medium like the movie from a cool one like TV.'[4]

While the theories and attraction for using video as a new media emerged into artists' awareness, there were also language-centered theories and ideas in Humanities that influenced artists' approach. These theories appeared parallel to the theories around video and media, and in a way spoke about a similar situation; a direct communication. These theories were reacting against how subjective and emotionalists were the old existentialist approaches. The new thinking was concentrating on the ways in which structures of consciousness works, and how they often actually hide more than they reveal on how the world

---

[4] Marshall McLuhan, Understanding Media The extensions of man, 1964.

really is, by making a separation between thoughts and ideas on the one side, and real actions on the other side. This new focus had the effect of moving attention away from the author and onto the words themselves and how they are received.

There were a few main philosophers that were leading this phenomenon of thinking. The French anthropologist Claude Levi-Strauss, for example, is discussed the impact of writing on culture. He argued that just by the simple act of inscription, authority is being implement.

The writer–critic Ronald Barthes searched for a theory of the sign, and put verbal language in the center of semiotics (the study of signs), by arguing that 'there exists a general category language/speech, which embraces all the systems of signs; since there are no better ones, we shall keep the terms language and speech, even when they are not applied to communications whose substance is not verbal'. [5] Influenced by Marxism, Barthes speaks about the manipulations that are used by the mass media in its messages, and how they should be really read in order to expose their true intention. Barthes stated that these myths delivered to us by mass media were fabricated in order to hide the real social and political conditions, and it is necessary for critics and artists to recognize this, in order to resist these myths.

Thus, there were revolutionary ideas in the sixties that affected the way artists chose to communicate their message. Both in a linguistic manner and by using video, which was a new and exciting medium waiting to be explored by conceptual artists. All these theories were part of the spirit and the desire of artists to create something new.

But only by the invention of The Portable Video Camera in 1965, things really started to change. The industrial and military technological research into video in the sixties resulted into the creation of an affordable and portable video equipment. The first portable video camera, called "Portapak", was introduced by Sony in 1965 and was initially developed for military use in the Vietnam War. Immediately after its release, the use of portable video equipment exploded in

---

[5] Marshall McLuhan, Understanding Media The extensions of man, 1964.

many directions simultaneously. It was a brand new medium, with no history of its own, but with tremendous potential to carry out several different cultural and political agendas. [6] What is surprising is that there was basically no video art before the invention of the Portapak. In the sixties, television played a big part in American society, people were interested in art and technology, and it was common to use popular culture in art. So it would make sense to presume that artists would somehow find a way to use video in there art works. However, until the Portapak became available, the use of video in art was very limited.

The Portapak camera was initially used in video art as a low-cost tool to document live performances that had no mobility or permanence. Thereby, the recording of these "events" made them transportable and more accessible to audiences beyond the original space and time they were presented. These performances were solo pieces in which the artist performed with few or no props in front of a single camera. They presented a variety of conceptual or perceptual exercises investigating the body, self, place, or relationship to others and society itself. These performances were based on conceptual art that emphasized the significance of the actual process and idea over form. Incorporating text into such a work was an easy task. The video work of Vito Acconci and John Baldessari shows the experiments they carried out in this art form. Their project investigated the psychological impact of self-reflection. Acconci's *Open Book* from 1974 explores intimacy, confession, and comparing public notion to private self by directly addressing the viewer. Repeating the promises "I'm open. Come in… you can do anything with me. Come in. I won't stop you…"Acconci uses language to reveal its sexual connotations. Similarly, Baldessari's ironic use of text that was not his, deals with accessibility of language and ideas. In *Baldessari Sings LeWitt* (1972), Baldessari parodies the ideas of his peer about conceptual art- as well as his own involvement- by singing Sol LeWitt's manifesto, "sentences on conceptual art," to the tunes of familiar popular songs. These works, which deal with representation, communication, or self-expression, show video art's dependence on language

---

[6] Busting the Tube: A Brief History of Video Art, Kate Horsfield. 2006.

whether or not text is visible.

2. John Baldessari, *Baldessari Sings LeWitt*, 1972.

3. Vito Acconi, *Open Book,* 1974.

As we saw in the previous chapter, theorists were reacting to the appearance of television. This had a very strong impact on video art and using verbal communication within this world. Basically, television had been unchallenged from the late forties until video started to have a strong presence in late sixties, although intellectuals were concerned about television's effect on printed media and how television made viewers passive.

The first two decades television existed, from 1948 to 1968; there was no alternative, as video didn't exist yet. Beside theorists, independent video producers and video artists were the first people to challenge television's complete control of culture and politics. Throughout the seventies artists made video art criticizing television. Television, as a corporate-controlled mass medium, was being "attacked" with every creative gesture in video. Television programming, was aped, torn apart, and sometimes completely ignored by artists working in video. Television, in a lot of aspects, was a video base language communicative form, and the video art that was made around it was using the same elements of language and verbal communication in their video art to criticize the television world of that time. Some artists even made real "television art", as they were broadcasting through cable access and the public television networks. One of the pioneer artists groups that have used television as an influence for their work was *Videofreex*. 'They were active for nine years, and produced thousands of videotapes, installations and multimedia events and trained hundreds of video-makers in the brand new video medium[7]'. They even produced their own television station and were attempting to change the face of television.

4. Videofreex TV pirate broadcast, Lanesville TV: *Truck wreck,* 1974.

Other artists were addressing the ideological structures in Western society that were featured in television, specifically as reproduced in commercial television. Martha Rosler is a pioneer of a project of many feminist artists working in video, this is a project that was characterized by filmmaker and theorist Laura Mulvey as "decrypting the patriarchal system of representation and

---

[7] The Videofreex official website.

deconstructing normalized linguistic systems that create and perpetuate marginal communities."[8] In *Semiotics of the kitchen* (1975), Rosler humorously resists the passivity notions of a woman in a domestic space, while expressing repressed anger. This video is criticizing the image of women as it was represented in television and commercials of the seventies. Another example from Rosler's work is *if it's too bad to be true, it could be DISINFORMATION* (1985). It discusses the language used in television news, showing the contradictions and suggesting that the broadcasts are not understandable on purpose.

5. Martha Rosler, *Semiotics of the kitchen*, 1975.

6. Martha Rosler, *if it's too bad to be true, it could be DISINFORMATION*, 1985

A movement that had an important contribution to the use of language in video art, and video art in general, was Fluxus. The television era, the rebellious spirit of the sixties, and the need to create something new in art inspired them. Fluxus was an avant-garde art movement that was working between the beginning of the sixties until the end of the seventies. It consisted out of an international group of artists, composers and designers that were interested in mixing art and other cultural institutions. Unlike previous artistic movements, Fluxus sought to change the history of the world, not just the history of art. The goal of most Fluxus artists was to destroy any boundary between art and life. George Maciunas, the founder of Fluxus, especially wanted to "purge the world of bourgeoisie sickness..." He stated that Fluxus was "anti-art", in order to emphasize the revolutionary mode of thinking about the practice of art.

A central Fluxus principle was to "mock the elitist world of high art" and to find any way possible to bring art to the masses. This purpose fit well with the social revolution of the sixties. Fluxus' artists used humor to express their intent and, along with Dada, Fluxus was one of the few art movements to use humor throughout history. Despite their playful attitude, Fluxus artists were serious about their desire to change the balance of power in the art world. Their attitude towards "high art" had an impact on museums to determine what, and who, can define "art".[9] Fluxus was promoting the idea that 'anything is possible' while trying to break the boundaries of art. Their idea was that anything can be art, and
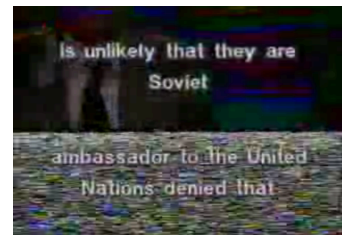
[8] Articulations, form of language in contemporary art, a manifestation of text in video art, Cylena Simonds, 1995.
[9] The Art Story Foundation website, Fluxus.

the old definition of art had to be changed. Among other subjects, they were producing a lot of video works, and combining linguistic platforms, as for example poetry, into visual art and video.

One of the main members of Fluxus was Nam June Paik. Today, he is considered as "the father of video art", as he was one of the main artists that started and established video art. The range of his work with video covers most of the categories within the genre, with a lot of installation, live performance and broadcast. A good example of an installation work of Nam June Paik is *TV Garden.* In this work from 1973 Paik montages performers from around the world into a spinning visual mix, and the videotape's sound track serves as musical and spoken counterpoint to the monitors' flickers of light. All of these TV monitors are placed in a real garden like surrounding. His purpose was to emphasis the fusion created between natural and technological environments.

7. Nam June Paik, *TV Garden*, 1973.

Thus, during the seventies the use of video in art was very popular. The technology quickly improved as color was added, video camera lenses improved, and engineers started to pay attention to audio. Video's use as a sculptural medium, such as Paik's installation work *TV garden*, was beginning to flourish. The equipment was still expensive, but tape stock was relatively cheap and could be erased and recorded over. Video was clearly about process, not product.

From television to cable networks, to museums and also non- profit artist-run media centers; different institutions were starting up everywhere, showing the medium's social dimensions. Painting, sculpturing and the other traditional, material art forms were still "damaged" from the implications of conceptual art, and looked like they might not recover. Video art was a superb sculptural form as it could multiply and radically alter space and time through the installation of multi-monitor layouts. Guerrilla media also successfully used video in the early to mid-seventies, to extend awareness to subjects like civil rights, feminism, and environment. Performance art had found its perfect form of document in video.

4. MTV AND THE DECLINE OF VIDEO ART IN THE EIGHTIES

By the early eighties, institutional support for video art from public broadcasters and museums began to decline. The hot new medium was starting to lose its novelty. Video artists, for all the work they had done, didn't make a change in television. Museums had done too many group video shows by this time, and its curators had grown tired of paying audio-visual companies for the necessary equipment and expertise to exhibit video art. Museum staffs did not have the necessary expertise to mount video shows. Private galleries couldn't figure out how to commoditize video art. Collectors were slow to embrace this immaterial form. Public broadcasters were now losing interest in experimentation, as a global recession in 1981 forced cutbacks. Video art appeared to be history, while music video and personal computing were being born; In 1981 MTV began cablecasting broadcasting music videos and IBM released its first PC (personal computer).

In the eighties there was still hope that video artists might be able to crossover into the entertainment industry. It was thought that the energy and success of the music video scene might open up some room for performance and video art to move into mainstream media. The strategy was to inhabit the forms of popular culture to gain a broader audience, and then to twist these forms into art that was critical of entertainment and the status quo. This idea of connecting to pop culture was growing by the expansion of media into broader, more specialized media channels (early pay TV) and the potential audiences of these different networks. As was discussed in chapter 2, it was also encouraged by the texts of different intellectuals such as Roland Barthes, which were interested in defining mass media and industrial culture.

A good example of this development is an artist like Laurie Anderson, who was making crossovers. She was proving that art could still be framed as unconventional, and fit in with the music video industry. Anderson's work *O Superman* was a music video that was half-sung, half-spoken, and eventually rose got to the second place in the UK singles charts.

8. Laurie Anderson, *O Superman*, 1982.

Many of the visual strategies in video of the eighties were based on post-

production technology, such as multiple camera inputs, fades and wipes, slow motion, collage effects, scrolling text, and animation. The wide availability of VHS (video home system) recording equipment also had an enormous effect on video art, allowing artists to record information directly from television and to use it in their works. Artists no longer had to rely on images made by themselves with a camera, but could take images directly from television programming, advertisements, archival films, Hollywood films, or home movies. Appropriation became a new type of post-modern visual and textual critique, based on separating images from their original context and giving them a new meaning, which was determined by the artist. Three good examples are:

Joan Does Dynasty 1986, by Joan Braderman, which is a classic feminist deconstruction of the popular prime time soap opera in which the artist inserts herself on screen between appropriated images to analyse the patriarchal elements of popular culture.

9. Joan Braderman, *Joan Does Dynasty*, 1986.

An exploration of how identity is related to language is a major component in Tony Cokes and Don Trammel's *Fade to Black* from 1990. This work is made out of chronological videos of stereotyped representation of African American, as they are shown in the Cinema and Television. In voiceover, two black men describe events that are unnoticed or discounted by whites. This work also consists of text comments that are being presented on the screen to emphasize the idea of the artists. The text being shown on screen also represent the strength language has, in this case- to impose racism.

10. Tony Cokes and Don Trammel, *Fade to Black*, 1990.

Another example of a work by Tony Cokes is *Black Celebration* (1988) different footage of the riots in the black community of the 1960s are shown with a voice-over reading from the Situationist text by Guy Debord *The Decline and Fall of the Spectacle-Commodity Economy.* The combining between the text and the images was done in order to interpret rioting as a refusal to be part of a capitalist society. These tapes are examples of how artists have combined existing texts to construct new and critical meanings and to show how media reinforces cultural ideologies, thereby creating social control.
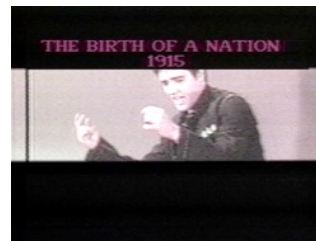
11. Tony Cokes, *Black Celebration*, 1988.

5. THE NINETIES: A TRANSFORMATION TO THE PRESENT

By the early nineties, nearly twenty-five years after video art began, video artists were seriously embraced by museums and galleries. No curator would continue to speak of video in terms of "the medium is the message," to quote Marshall McLuhan. Museums around the world collected video art as installation (video as sculptural objects marketed in limited editions), working with galleries to develop a base of institutional and private collectors.

By the mid-nineties, the use of video by artists was done in many ways, but museum curators had decided that video installation was the only form of video that made sense in their institutions. Video programming for a single monitor or screen had always been problematic to show in the museum or gallery. Audiences remained uncomfortable with the idea of watching television-like displays in the public galleries of museums. The video display had to be integrated into something that made sense and that was more similar to the sculptures and paintings in the museum space.

Museum interest in single-channel video had disappeared. If an artist were not part of the small, exclusive group of masters that quoted visual art or cinematic art history and worked hard to integrate their video in a sculptural form, he or she would have stay out of the museum space. Basically, museum curators became very conservative as their resources became dependent on the market for video installation. Luckily, independent artist-run spaces continued to screen single-channel video art along side of experimental film, a genre abandoned before video art.

A technological development, which had a big influence on video art, was the digital video projector. This replaced the slide projector and the overhead projector, and changed the way people would show videos to a large audience. It also changed the face of video art and gave artists more options to present their works. It was possible for example to create sculptural installations, or two screens next to each other, in any size (with the limitations of the space it was presented in). As mentioned in chapter 3, the form of installation was also very

popular during the seventies, but the nineties were indeed the time when the video was not dealing anymore with the monitor itself, but with the different shape and idea that the artist wanted to pursue. This helped to make the verbal communication in their work appear stronger in the exhibition space.

A good example of an installation artist from the nineties is Tony Oursler, who created installations of talking characters that allowed him 'to explore a relationship of constantly shifting hierarchy between text, performer, installation, and viewer.' [10] Oursler placed his video projections of talking faces within a sculpture. This made the viewer feel much more connected to the work because the viewer could allegedly stand next to the character, and not looking at it through a monitor.

12. Tony Oursler, *Blue and White State*, 1997.

Another example is a work by the artist Sam Taylor-Wood, *Travesty of a Mockery* that is a 10-minute video installation that depicts a man and a woman having an argument. This domestic drama is enacted simultaneously on two separate projected screens.

13. Sam Taylor-Wood, *Travesty of a Mockery*, 1995.

Gary hill was one of the main contemporary artists that were investigating the relationships between words and electronic images. The work *I believe it is an image in light of the other* is a video installation of several projections of images of body, mixed with visible text and spoken text, is representative for his work.

14. Gary Hill, *I Believe in an Image,* 1996.

By the end of the nineties museums had shifted their interest to group shows in "new media". The term *new media* appeared in 1994, as major media companies formed *new media* divisions, to keep up with the social changes with the technological changes around media communication. Around the same time, artists, curators, and critics started to use the term "New Media art" to refer to works as interactive multimedia installations, virtual reality environments, and Web based art that were made using digital technology. Group shows featuring artists working with the Web and other "information technologies" had replaced group shows organized around the medium of video. According to Mark Tribe, a contemporary artists and writer "video art, transmission art, and experimental
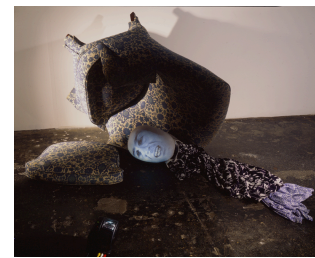
---

[10] Tony Oursler official website.

film art are forms that incorporate media technologies, which by the nineties were no longer new. New media art is thus the intersection of these two domains." [11]Video art is an old form of new media, and in a technology-driven culture, only the latest things are hot.

[11] New Media Art, Introduction, Mark Tribe, Brown University, 2007.

6. THE NEW MILLENNIUM AND A COMPARISON TO THE PAST

Back in the seventies, artists like David Hall claimed video to be art. Hall, and many of other artists of his time, were not interested in making work that used video as a medium, but was trying to produce tapes, which presented video *as* the artwork. Peter Donebauer, with perhaps more practical attitude to technology, argued against this perspective. He claims that the look toward video and the use of it in art is changing. Artists are becoming accustomed to using video as an instrument for delivering their artistic message, and not as an art form of its technological capabilities and aesthetics, as was commonly used in David Hall's time. In his words: "It is perhaps worth noting at this point that video signals may be projected directly onto a screen without need for television sets at all. This rather deflated the theories of certain academics in this country that have tried to define an aesthetic based around television cameras, monitors and video tape recorders. Video can exist happily without any of them!" [12]. Donebauer's view seems to have been widely accepted by artists today.

Current artists see video not so much as a medium to be explored and celebrated for its own sake, but as a complex communicational medium that can be used for a much broader set of cultural and contextual purposes. Video art of the new millennium broke down the boundaries of the old TV box and is now being projected, shown as part of an installation, and on different screens and monitors.

In order to emphasize this notion we can look at works of conceptual artists from the past. If we take, for example, the work by David Hall *End Piece* from 1972, it consists out of a large number of screens, showing TV broadcasts of different shows and channels, all played in the same time. The voices that are coming out of the different television monitors create a loud chaos of sounds, and this was the purpose of this work. Hall was playing with the voices not as a tool to deliver a message, but the voices and sound itself was the message.

We can also look at the work *Mediations* by Gary Hill from 1986. Hill

15. David Hall, *End Piece,* 1972.

---

[12] Peter Donebauer, 'Video Art and Technical Innovation'. 1976.

created a video with a voice and a technological instrument (the speaker) being the point of focus. This work deals with manipulation of the voice and it is about the voice. Again here, instead of using a voice as a source to deliver a message, the voice becomes the message.

16. Gary Hill, *Mediations*, 1979.

Artists today are mainly using voice and language in their work as a tool to deliver their message or to emphasize their idea. Due to the long history between television and video art, and the connection between performance art and documentation in video art which were discussed in the previous chapters, we can learn that the use of language in video art turn out to be a natural tool of communication. As Donebauer's stated, the work is not about the medium anymore, but about the message. Artists don't explore the sound of voices and the technology in the video art anymore, but try to tell a story and a narrative in their work through this verbal communication and video.

New Media had a strong effect on the video art of today. As a result, video has became much more interactive and communicates. It can adopt a multitude of formats and can contain cultural forms as diverse as narrative story telling, documentary, theatre, dance, music, virtual reality and animation.

The video work *Memory Bucket* by Jeremy Deller is a perfect example for showing the interaction between documentary and video art. His video work about Texas is blending of sophisticated home movie aesthetics with TV-style documentary. Images of the south Texan landscape were cut together with talking-head presentations and close-ups of fauna and flora. Presented on a large plasma screen TV, this work offered a very conventional viewing strategy, the wall-mounted screen acting as a gallery presentation of painting.

The technological changes of the millennium also had a tremendous effect on video and how our society perceives and communicate through it. Video stopped being an exclusive medium of specialists, artists or journalists; it became the people's medium. A big percentage of the population is carrying a video reordering device in their pocket every single moment.[13] Whether it's online or through direct messaging, Video became a way of self-expression, and

---

[13] The Video Vortex Reader, Responses To YouTube, Vernacular Video, Tom Sherman, 2008.

an undoubted source of the masses for everyday verbal communication. This also affected video artists of today; they are working a lot with the Internet as a source of information and inspiration, and criticize current phenomena. A good example of this is Ryan Trecartin, who criticizes video commonly used by teenager girls and its effects on their lives, by making a "selfie" like YouTube videos of extreme teenager characters.

17. Ryan Trecartin, *The Re'search*, 2009.

The work *I love Alaska* is another good example for the mix between film and art, and the impact of new media and Internet. In 2006 AOL (American search engine) accidently leaked out a file that contained its users search inquiries. Lernert & Sander, two artists and graphic designers created short clips telling the story of one of those users by using her search keywords.
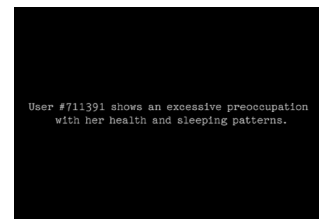
18. Lernert & Sander, *I Love Alaska*, 2007.

Another internet-base artist is Oliver Laric. His ongoing video project *Versions* 2009-2012 reflects the conditions the digital world. His work is made out of series of documentary style monologues by a mechanic female voice, describing what is happening to the images in the digital world. This voice is played over montaged images and video clips. His idea is to show how the digital world changes original images and with this changes their historical context.

19. Oliver Laric, *Versions*, 2009-2012.

We can say about today and the future that although video art as a genre is clearly alive and well in the contemporary visual art context, Video art, as a separate and distinct practice within the fine art has been absorbed into a larger and less clearly defined moving image practice that includes filmmaking, interactive computer-controlled gaming, multi-screen projection, sculptural installation and Internet-based moving image work. The future can go to many interesting directions.

In my paper, I found out that revolutionary theorists from the 60's were the triggers to artists to start using video and language in their art. These theories were about linguistic communication and the affect of mess media and technology on our culture. Influenced by this, artists were investigating and searching for more direct way to communicate their message.

Nevertheless, the use of video and verbal communication in video really began with the invention of Portapak camera, that was used in the beginning mainly to document live performances and artists who made works in which they directly verbally communicate with their audience.

Changes and developments go by decade, as in the seventies and eighties video art was tremendously affected by television, making art using verbal communication, and in a way imitating, yet criticizing, the communication used by television production. In the 70's we could see that TV installations were popular, and the attraction was to the process and not so much to the product. Whereas in the eighties the video art world was going downhill, artists were trying to stay up to date, trying to take part in the pop culture and MTV. In the nineties, with the invention of the projection artists could have move their video work out of of the old fashioned TV monitor and project it in an installation in space, in different sizes and forms. This form of art attracted galleries and museums, and video art relevant again. These installation forms made the verbal communication much more present and strong within the space of the exhibition.

Part of the nineties and in the millennium time, Internet took off and new media forms started penetrating the field of video art. Video artists were very much influenced by this and implement it in their video works.

At the end of my paper, I could compare the changes that were made between the seventies and the eighties with the work of currant artists, and evaluate that beside the technological changes, the attitude towards video and use of verbal communication within this sphere have changed. The old use of video art was more about the form and video itself, and today it's more about the

content, which can be place outside of the old TV box. Today, instead of using verbal communication and video for its technological aesthetics, verbal communication is used for story telling, and to convey a message in a direct spoken way.

8. SOURCES

- Archey, Karen. *Casting the Net: Internet Art In The Present Tense*, 2010.

- Barthes, Ronald. *Elements of Semiology*, 1964.

- Barthes, Ronald. *Image Music Text*, 1977.

- Bensinger, Charles. *The Video Guide*, 1981.

- Boyle, Deridre. *Journal Of Film And Video 44.1-2: from portapak to camcorder: a brief history of guerrilla television*, 1992.

- Burris, Jon. *Did the Portapak Cause Video Art? Notes on the Formation of a New Medium,* 1996.

- Donebauer, Peter. *Video Art and Technical Innovation,* 1976.

- Downing, John D. H. *Encyclopedia of social movement media.*

- Furlong, Lucinda. *A manner of speaking: interview with Gary Hill*, Afterimage magazine, march 1983.

- Horsfield, Kate. *Busting the Tube: A Brief History of Video Art*, 2006.

- Kotz, Liz. *Words to be looked at: language in the 1960's art*, 2007.

- Marcus, Herbert. *One-Dimensional Man*, 1964.

- McLuhan, Marshall. *The Gutenberg Galaxy*, 1962.

- McLuhan, Marshall. *Understanding Media The extensions of man*, 1964.

- Meigh-Andrews, Chris. *A History Of Video Art*, 2014

- Morley, Simon. *Writing on the Wall: Words and Image in Modern Art*, 2003.

- Sherman, Tom. *The Nine Lives of Video Art*, 2008.

- Sherman, Tom. *The Video Vortex Reader, Responses To YouTube, Vernacular Video*, 2008.

- Tribe, Mark. *New Media Art,* Brown University, 2007.

- Simonds, Cylena. *Articulations, form of language in contemporary art*, 1995.

- Vasulka, Steina and Woody. *Notes towards a history of image-processed video,* Afterimage magazine, December 1983.

9. IMAGES LIST

1. **Marcel Duchamp,** *Anemic Cinema,* 1926.

Black and white, silent. 7 min, one screen, Ratio 133:1.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dXINTf8kXCc

2. **John Baldessari,** *Baldessari Sings LeWitt,* 1972.

Black-and-white video, sound; 12:50 min. loop. New Media Art Study Collection.

Art Institivte Chicago website.

http://www.artic.edu/aic/collections/artwork/189072?search_no=1&index=7

3. **Vito Acconi,** *Open Book,* 1974.

Color video, 10:09 min, sound. Electronic Arts Intermix Collection.

http://www.eai.org/titleOrderingFees.htm?id=901#terms

4. **Videofreex TV pirate broadcast, Lanesville TV:** *Truck wreck* 1974.

Black and white, 2:21 min, sound. Bay Area Video Coalition video data bank.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BFkeoVkQUe8

5. **Martha Rosler,** *Semiotics of the kitchen,* 1975.

Black and white, 6:09 min, sound. MoMA collection.

http://www.moma.org/collection/works/88937

6. **Martha Rosler,** *if it's too bad to be true, it could be DISINFORMATION,* 1985.

color, 16:26 min, sound. Electronic Arts Intermix Collection.

http://artfem.tv/id;14/action;showpage/page_type;video/page_id;if_it_s_too_bad_to_be_true_it_could_be_disinformation_by_martha_rosler_flv/

7. **Nam June Paik,** *TV Garden,* 1973.

Video installation with color television sets and live plants. Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York.

http://www.softpyramids.info/post/121224909613/nam-june-paik-tv-garden-19742000-video

8. **Laurie Anderson,** *O Superman*, **1982.**

Color video, 8 min, sound. MoMA collection.

Image taken from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-VIqA3i2zQw

9. **Joan Braderman,** *Joan Does Dynasty,* **1986.**

Color video, 4:22 min, sound. From the artist's personal Vimeo account.

https://vimeo.com/48620458

10. **Tony Cokes and Don Trammel,** *Fade to Black,* **1990.**

Color video, 32:51 min, sound. Electronic Arts Intermix Collection.

http://www.eai.org/title.htm?id=2113

11. **Tony Cokes,** *Black Celebration*, **1988.**

Color, 17:17 min, sound. Video Data bank, the artist video collection.

http://www.vdb.org/titles/black-celebration

12. **Tony Oursler,** *Blue and White State*, **1997.**

Video installation, 91 x 182 x 91, sound. Gemma De Angelis Testa collection, Milan.

http://arttattler.com/designkeepyourseat.html

13. **Sam Taylor-Wood,** *Travesty of a Mockery,* **1995.**

Color video installation, two screens, 6:05 min. me Collectors Room Berlin.

http://www.me-berlin.com/pressebilder-stanzerooms-works-from-the-sandretto-re-rebaudengo-collection/lang/en/

14. **Gary Hill I believe in an image, 1996.**

Black and white Mixed media installation, mono sound, 15 x 20 ft. Donald Young

Gallery, Chicago.

http://dig.henryart.org/northwest-artists/artist/gary-hill

15. **David Hall,** *End Piece,* 1972.

Video installation, with color television sets, sound. Guardian Eyewitness series

from Marylebone, London.

http://www.theguardian.com/world/picture/2012/mar/19/london-art

16. **Gary Hill,** *Mediations*, 1979.

Color video, 4:17 min, stereo sound. Image from the artists personal Vimeo

account.

https://vimeo.com/5596880

17. **Ryan Trecartin,** *The Re'search*, 2009.

Color video, 40:06 min, stereo sound. Image from the artists personal Vimeo

account.

https://vimeo.com/24631059

18. **Lernert & Sander,** *I Love Alaska*, 2007.

Color HD video- 13 episodes, sound. The artists official website.

http://lernertandsander.com/i-love-alaska/

19. **Oliver Laric,** *Versions*, 2009-2012.

Color HD video, 6:17 min, sound. Seventeen gallery.

http://www.seventeengallery.com/artists/oliver-laric/