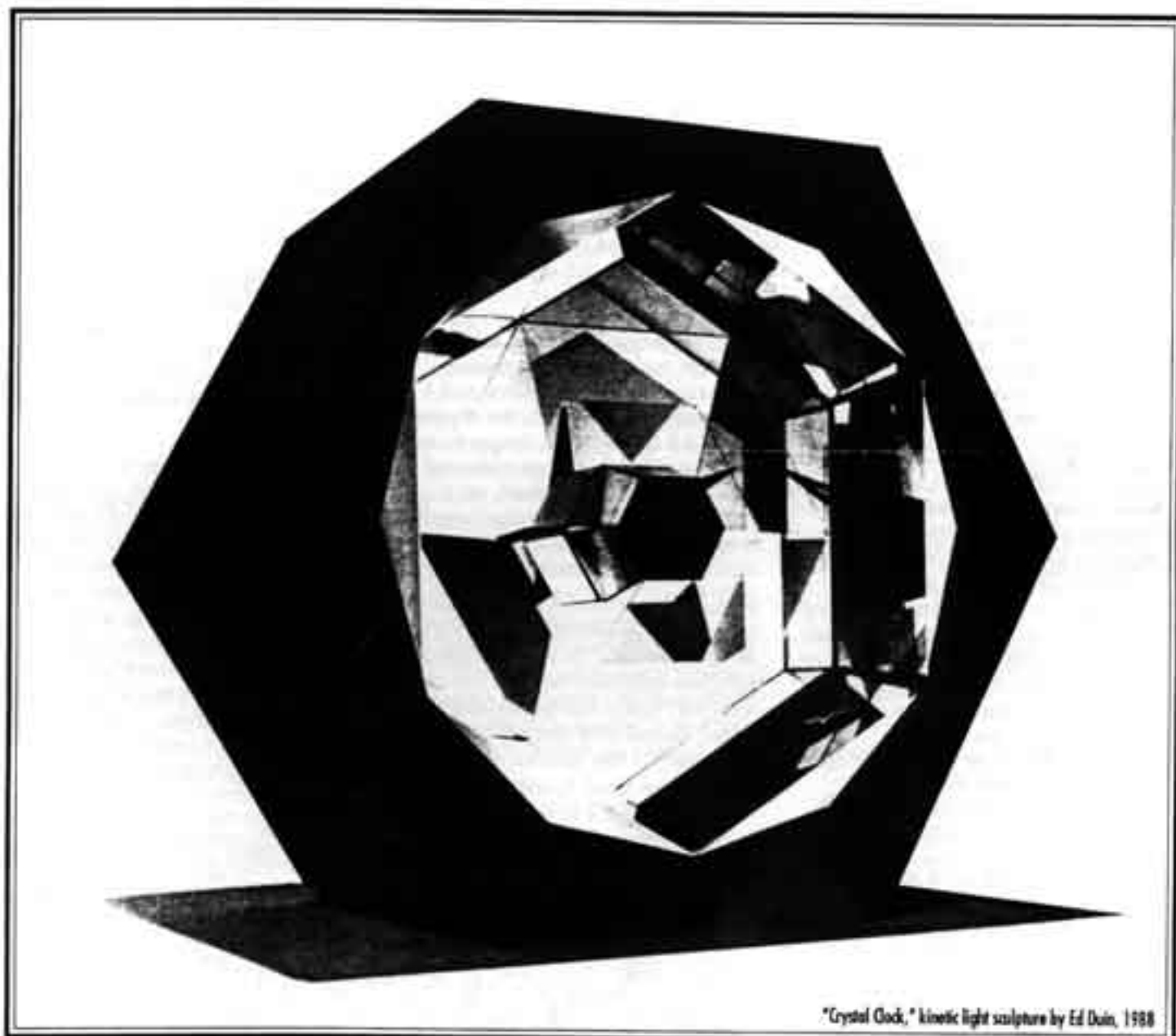


**Artists Using Science and Technology**

Ylem (Eye-lum): The primordial stuff out of which the universe emerged in the Big Bang

PO Box 749, Orinda CA 94563

Vol.10, No. 11 December 1990



*"Crystal Cuck," kinetic light sculpture by Ed Duin, 1988*

## **Explore Oregon** by Ed Duin

*Ed Duin creates colorful kinetic sculptures from transparent materials and polarized plastic film (see above). He comes from Seattle, Washington, where he says the well-developed art establishment pays hi-tech art little heed. Imagine his surprise when he travelled 150 miles south to the smaller city of Portland, Oregon to find a great amount of organized activity in computer art.*

*It was the promise of a computer conference to bring together a variety of professionals, including artists, to explore the visual expression of ideas via the computer that attracted him south last September. This conference was organized by the University of Oregon Continuation Center in Eugene, Oregon.*

*Continued on next page*

## Explore Oregon, continued

At the brand-new Portland Center for the Performing arts an electronic sign flashed "Eighth Annual Pacific Northwest Computer Conference." Inside, lavish cherry wood covered the walls, and sculpted staircases curved up to the theatre. The visual delights of the post-modern architecture were equalled by the visual projection system: three screens, with the middle one able to display the pencilled word, "VIZTHINK" 20 feet tall directly from the computer.

In my comfortable theatre seat I mused that this was an Oregon that I'd never imagined. The images I'd had had always been of vast, mist-shrouded forests and early explorers. My first reaction was "This isn't Oregon!" But today's Oregonians are exploring the new frontier, computer graphics and visualization, with curiosity, self-reliance and vision. I wouldn't have been surprised to hear David Foster, the first speaker, say that they had renamed the state "Explore Oregon."

Foster, an art professor from the University of Oregon, began by projecting slides of his Oregon childhood. One showed his mother, "who could swing a double-bladed axe with the best of them." Another showed a neighbor hardly visible way up a tree. His height was only half the diameter of the tree at the place where he was topping it: "Big trees back then." Next, a slide of a felled tree that had almost demolished their log cabin. The professor's lifespan encompassed both the old and the new Oregon.

I found one of Foster's first experiences at the Institute of Design in Chicago in 1950 quite illuminating. One day Buckminster Fuller overheard him tell other students that he hated mathematics and wouldn't need it because he was going to be an artist. Fuller burst in from the next room and said, "I can't let you get away with that!" He told the group plainly that uneducated people aren't artists. Anyone who aspired to be an artist in the technological future had better be broadly educated, and that included a deep understanding of all branches of knowledge, including

science, and especially mathematics.

That afternoon Steve Cunningham, a mathematician, gave a presentation on the "visualization revolution" occurring in mathematics education. He started with beautiful drawings of early Greek and Arab geometry proofs. A computer-animated video of the Theorem of Pythagoras used line, color and movement to quickly demonstrate the proof. The startling power and simplicity of the visual proof sparked loud applause—this mathematics wasn't boring!

He covered new mathematical research as well, projects that have become possible primarily because of computer graphics capabilities.

Notable among the industry exhibitors, Tektronix showed a unique computer workstation. An LCD faceplate and polarized glasses worn by the observer cycled left and right eye images rapidly so that a virtual 3-D image appeared. Seeing real-life dimensionality on a video display terminal opened a world to me of futuristic graphics. Think of the implications for sculptors!

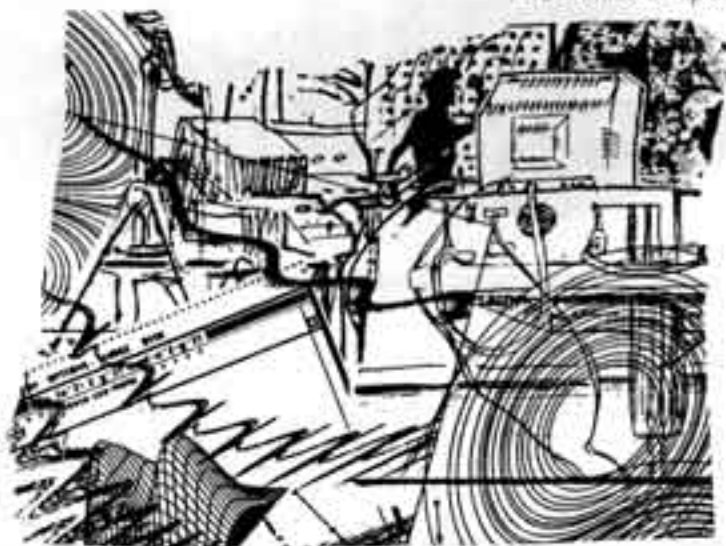
Interactivity, a common theme in the talks, was also evident in one of the art exhibits. *Life on a Slice* was a video/computer installation by Ylem members Marjorie Franklin and Beverly and Hans Reiser. People were jumping with excitement as they became involved.

Several computer art exhibits were taking place. The principal one was organized by Portland's Abaci Gallery of Computer Art. This gallery and Verbum Gallery in San Diego are the only two I know of in the United States devoted exclusively to the computer fine arts, and the Abaci was first. Again, the question crossed my mind: What's so special about Portland?

Everywhere at the conference events unique Oregon computer graphics involvements were evident. Visualization, the second computer graphics revolution, had found a home. The "Explore Oregonians" get it. Why?

Education is one reason. The University of Oregon, sponsor of the conference for eight years, offers computer education in fine arts, architecture and landscape architecture—including a computer graphics masters program that is interdisciplinary.

The presence of pioneering manufacturers in Oregon is another reason. For many years Tektronix has manufactured instruments for electronic measurement, including advanced oscilloscopes. Oscilloscopes not only measure waveforms, they let you see them. It pioneered computer graphics with its CAD systems, workstations and printers that remain on the leading edge in computer graphics. "Tektronix University" has educated many people who have gone on to start other electronics companies in Oregon.



Collage by Russell  
and Trudy Keagan, 1990

Finally, the Oregon Economic Development Department has for years been actively enticing Japanese companies such as Epson, Fujitsu, Hitachi and Toshiba to locate manufacturing plants there. Oregon's Japan Representative Office in Tokyo is one of the largest business development offices of any state.

The motive? With their main resource dwindling they are switching from trees to sand, from lumber to silicon chips. That's intelligent and visionary.

## A Proposal for NASA

by Jon Alexandr

I propose that the Comet Rendezvous and Asteroid Flyby (CRAF) mission be renamed *Monet*, after the well-known landscape artist. Claude Monet devoted his artistic explorations to the study of light, including the misty, ethereal light of early morning along the river Seine and in his own private water garden. It is a light that glows in the imagination like the misty, ethereal halo and veils of an awakening comet. When the spacecraft and comet perform their celestial pas de deux, scientists (and artists) will patiently wait, as did Claude Monet in the pre-dawn hours, for Sol's warm touch to stir the volatile molecules and lift them from their parent body.

Naming the mission after an artist may also be recognized in the future as the second example, following the international Giotto mission to Halley's Comet, of a fine tradition of naming all missions to comets after artists. Like comets (and asteroids) throughout history, artists will often burst onto the scene from eccentric orbits and inspire fear, awe and wonder. The tradition would also be a fitting tribute to the artists who have done so much to illuminate our scientific pages, like the illustrator of ancient religious texts, for the pioneers who will actually voyage to the heavens, in the realm of the comets and beyond.

Yuko Nakano is the founder of the Kalá Institute, a gallery, performance space and printmaking workshop in Berkeley, CA.

The modern sense of "self" was born at the same time as the invention of the watch. Before this time, people lived by the church clock and lived in "shared time". With the advent of the watch, our concept of time has turned from what I wish to call "essential time" to a notion of time as purely quantitative. A watch has never been able to document "essential time", it simply ticks out the passage of hours, minutes, seconds—"quantitative time". Experiences beyond the limitation of this ordinary space and time do not usually occur in our environment, which is tied up with causality. However, they might occur in "essential time" (or non-time), which is flowing outside of us, not within us. We may know of it or may be seeing it, but it is beyond us. There is an influx of "essential time" when one experiences a sudden shock. It is possible to intentionally create a shock situation through a "happening" or event (or performance), which allows us to glimpse "essential time." The latter comes to us when linear time is collapsed and/or abandoned and a flood of sensory experience is allowed. "Seeing Time" means to observe the total vision (or holovision) that occurs with the perception of "essential time".

A visualization of "essential time" and the observation of it is not possible when we are asleep, for we are locked in a moment when our senses are unbalanced. To achieve such a visualization, we must advance and speed up our perception of consciousness by activating total, maximum sensation (i.e. all senses operating simultaneously to their fullest).

Any form of artistic expression (physical or conceptual) should be based on our experience. In our aim to make a reproduction of this experience, we, as artists, should not be limited to any one medium and direction. However, we should be aware of the distinction

between personal self expression of the self in relation to the totality of nature. The art forms that Kalá Institute has been seeking in the SEEING TIME series consist of innovative, mixed-media environments, making it possible for us, if we are receptive, to observe that total or holovision of "essential time." The final responsibility for what is observed is shared between the artist and the viewer.

In Japanese, Kalá means sky, emptiness, the void, non-time.

## Member News

Computer Etchings by Edith Smith will be seen in the National Computer Art Invitational at East Washington University, Spokane, WA, in January. Some are presently on view at Cadence Corporation, San Jose, CA. Smith is also showing a mixed media painting in "Issue Earth" at Loma Linda University in Riverside, CA. Her article, "The Jim Dine Sensibility," appeared recently in *California Printmaker*.

Rhonda Shearer had a solo show of her bronzes at Wildenstein Gallery in New York last month. The show now travels to Los Angeles (see Exhibits).

Aaron Marcus, designer of people/computer interfaces, spoke at the Pacific Northwest Computer Conference in Portland, OR.

At the Small Computers in the Arts Conference in Philadelphia in November Mike Mosher spoke, and Eleanor Kent's computer art was in the art show.

Also in November the following Ylem members were speakers at SISEA in Groningen, Holland: Josepha Haveman, Roger Malina, Joel Slayton, Vernon Reed, Ken Knowlton, Larry Polansky, Bev Reiser and Fred Stitt.

NCGA '91 will be held in Chicago next April 22-25. Joan Truckenbrod will be involved in organizing computer art events in conjunction with it.

"Liquid Crystals in Decorative Arts," by D. Makow, was included in the second volume of *Liquid Crystals—Applications and Uses*, published this year by World Scientific in London.



## Events

### Limited engagement

#### The Architecture of Catastrophic Change

George Coates, a theatre arts inventor, was in the midst of producing a new work at the Geary Theatre in 1989 when the Loma Prieta Earthquake struck, gravely damaging the building. Coates has found an architecturally lovely new theatre space, and now presents a new work inspired by the earthquake. It features amazing transformations of the stage, strange illumination, South African and East European musicians, and more. Shows daily except Mon., Tues., 8 pm. Tickets \$12-30. **George Coates Performance Works, Box Office, 110 McAllister St., San Francisco, CA 94102; (415) 853-8520**

Nov. 10

#### Ylem Field Trip

Postponed to Dec. 1. See elsewhere in newsletter for details.

Nov. 14 - Dec. 4

#### Computer Graphics Film Festival (Montreal)

The most recent computer graphics films from all over the world. Each theatre will also hold a computer animation workshop to the public. Acclaimed artists will take part. Info: **M. Yves Pilon, Festival International du Film par Ordinateur de Montreal, 3708 boul. St-Laurant, Montreal, Canada, H2X 2V4; (514) 765-3275**

Nov. 19, 7:30 pm

#### The Aesthetics of Technology

San Francisco Museum of Modern Art is focusing its 12th annual lecture series on a subject dear to our hearts. **Herbst Theatre, War Memorial Bldg. (same bldg. as SFMDA), Van Ness & McAllister Sts., San Francisco.**

Nov. 23, 24, 8:30 pm

#### Pangean Dreams

Renowned performance artist Rachel Rosenthal produces a grand-scale operatic spectacle that focuses on the theme of plate tectonics and the precarious nature of humankind's current position in the geological continuum. Sponsored by Kalá Institute's "Seeing Time" program. Tickets \$12 & \$16. **Julia Morgan Theater, 2640 Collage Ave., Berkeley, CA 94704; info and tickets, (415) 549-2977**

Nov. 26—Dec. 7

#### Electronic Sounds and the Computer (Mexico City)

Organized by Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes. Info: **Manuel Enriquez, music director, Torre Latinoamericana, Piso 31, Eje Central Lazaro Cardenas #2, Mexico 06000 D.F.; FAX 518 11 18**

Nov. 27, 7:30 pm

#### The Aesthetics of Technology

San Francisco Museum of Modern Art 12th annual lecture series. **Herbst Theatre, War Memorial Bldg., Van Ness & McAllister Sts., San Francisco.**

Nov. 29, 7 pm

#### We Are Not Sugar and Spike and Everything Nice

A collection of shorts from the Video Data Bank of Chicago by women film and video artists which contradicts the 19th century family album. Free. **San Jose State University Engr. Bldg. #189, 1 Washington Sq., San Jose, CA; (408) 924-6330**

Dec. 1, 2 pm

#### Ylem Computer Graphics Field Trip to Western Imaging

Hah! If you thought you missed it, here's your chance. Our 8th annual graphics tour was postponed because of a scheduling conflict with a big trade show. **Western Imaging**, specialists in customizing Targa workstations, welcomes us to their new and larger headquarters at **115 Constitution St., Menlo Park**, just off Hwy. 101 at Marsh Road Exit. (Turn toward the Bay, make a right U-turn onto Independence Dr., then left on Constitution). We'll investigate the latest in PC-based hardware, 2-D and 3-D graphics software, and interactive multi-media. Lots of room! RSVP: **Trudy Myrrh Reagan, 967 Moreno, Palo Alto, CA 94303; (415) 856-9593**

Some calendar items are from *Art Calendar*, *Rough Draft* and *FineArts Forum* e-mail.

Dec. 1

#### A Day Without Art

Artists in the US and Canada will acknowledge the impact of AIDS on the arts community in various ways. To find out how you can participate, contact: **Patrick O'Connell, Clocktower Gallery, 108 Leonard St., New York, NY 10013. Or, Western Front Society, 303 E. 8th Ave., Vancouver, BC, V5T 1S1**

Dec. 3-9

#### Sound Basis Visual Arts Festival (Poland)

This festival is devoted to collaborations of music with other media with an emphasis on music-based video and computer art. Info: **Richard Kolodziejwski, WRD 90, PO Box 744, P1 50-950 Wroclaw 2, Poland**

Dec. 4, 7:30 pm

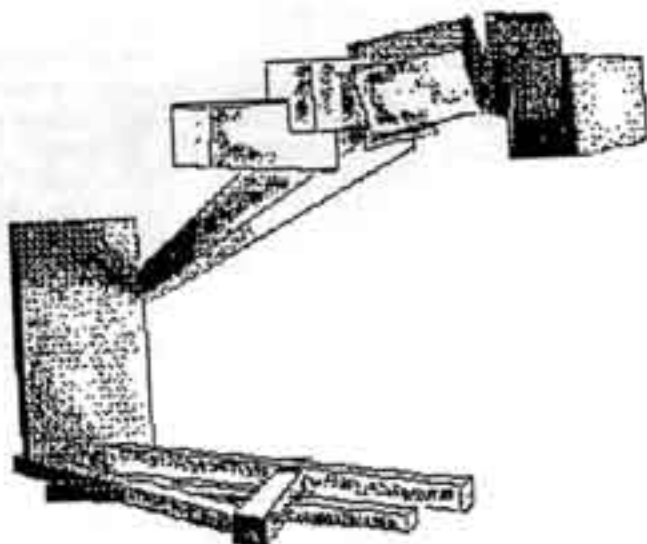
#### The Aesthetics of Technology

San Francisco Museum of Modern Art 12th annual lecture series. **Herbst Theatre, War Memorial Bldg., Van Ness & McAllister Sts., San Francisco, CA**

Jan. 12, 4-6 pm

#### Ylem CyberOptics Gathering

Come join us at the Ylem art show to see slides and videos of Ylem artists' work, and to mingle with the artists. Dr. Roger Malina will speak briefly about the Extreme Ultraviolet Explorer Satellite and give a tour of the lab. Attendees, please bring edibles for an informal wine-and-cheese table. **Center for Extreme Ultraviolet Astrophysics, 2150 Kittredge St., Berkeley, CA**



"Storm," cast bronze by Bruce Beasley, 1989

## Exhibits

Nov. 29—Jan. 4

### **Ambiguous Figures (Los Angeles, New York)**

Yiem member Rhonda Roland Shearer shows bronzes that incorporate patterns of plant forms; some are shaped like Platonic Solids as well. She has been strongly influenced by chaos theory and fractals. Catalog available.

**Feingarten Gallery, 8380 Melrose Ave., Los Angeles, CA**

Also look for her large bronze, *Pangea*, outdoors at 23rd & Broadway, New York City.

Through Nov. 30

### **Techno-Romantic Images.**

Computer artist Roz Dimon believes that technology and beauty can peacefully coexist as "Techno-Romanticism." **Verbum Gallery, 670 Seventh Avenue Second floor, San Diego, CA 92101; (619) 233-9977**

Through Dec. 1

### **Earmarking: On the Nature of Communication**

"The ear enables us to perceive sound waves and establishes the position of our bodies in relation to the ground. The inner ear contains the mechanisms that enable us to maintain our posture and balance. "Earmarking" draws attention to these functions." Part of the "Marking Time" series at Kalá Institute. **Kalá Gallery, 1060 Heinz, Berkeley, CA 94710; (415) 549-2977**

Through Dec. 1

### **New Computer Works by Emily Young (Portland)**

"Most of my work evolves from images I see when people verbalize concepts...concepts that people use as excuses for happenings in life, like time, gravity, work..." Emily Young is professor of art at Portland State University. **Abaci Gallery of Computer Art, 312 NW 10th St., Portland, OR 97209; Phone ahead: (503) 228-8642**

Through Dec. 2. (Th-Sun 12-5 pm)

### **Bay Area Techno-Metal**

Includes industrial music by member Walter Alter. The curator writes: "There has been an explosion of technology in this century; it has engulfed us...Just as the moon and the bison were inevitable studied by paleolithic artists so technology must be by our own...In recent years a large number of Bay Area artists have been producing works in metal which reveal, celebrate or castigate the technology which increasingly fills our environment." **Berkeley Art Center, 1275 Walnut St., Berkeley, CA 94709; (415) 644-6893**

All Events and Exhibits occur in the San Francisco area unless otherwise stated.

Through Dec. 4

### **Geometric Bronzes (Houston, TX)**

Yiem member Bruce Beasley shows large bronzes designed with aid of the computer. He was reluctantly driven to use one when his ideas became rather complex. **Hooks-Epstein Galleries, 3210 Eastside, Houston, TX 77098; (713) 522-0718**

Through Dec. 8

### **New British Holography (Toronto)**

**Interference Hologram Gallery, 1179A King St. W. #008, Toronto, Canada M6K 3C5; (416) 535-2323**

Through Dec. 21

### **Lines of Force**

Art exposition featuring Yiem member Sonya Rapoport. **Bayfront Gallery, Pier 2, Fort Mason Center, San Francisco.**

Through Jan. 5

### **Graven Images**

Fortress-like sculptures combining neon light with shamanistic artifacts by Maurice Gray; also "Totems and Towers" neon group show. **Museum of Neon Art, 704 Traction Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90013; (213) 617-1580**

Through January

### **Yiem Art**

Computer graphics, mixed media, interactive works and video; neon, electro-kinetic and polarized light sculptures by the following artists: Herrick, Reiser, Duin, Franklin, Mosher, Snelson, Grossberger, s'Soreff, Nicoloff. **Center for Extreme Ultraviolet Astrophysics, 2150 Kittredge St., Berkeley, CA**

## Opportunities

### **Emerging Expression Biennial: The 3rd Dimension and Beyond**

Slides and videotapes sought for Jan. 1991 event. Info: **Bronx Museum of the Arts, 1040 Grand Concourse, Bronx, NY 10456; (212) 681-6000**

Deadline Dec. 1

### **Mail Art Show**

Open to all. All 2-D media postage stamp size max. 1" x 1". No fees, Show Jan. 7- Feb. 1. **Mimi Holmes, Art Dept., Cornell College, Mt. Vernon, IA 52314; (319) 895-4264**

Deadline Dec. 5

### **Photowork '91**

Photography, or works incorporating photo. **Photowork '91, Dutchess County Art Assn., Barrett House Galleries, Poughkeepsie, NY**

Deadline Dec. 14

### **Crossings of the Moon**

All media; work must contain lunar imagery. Show Mar. 8-Apr. 26. **Luna Sea, 284 Concord Ave., Cambridge, MA 02138**

Deadline Dec. 15

### **Seeing Time**

Performance, installations, late 1991. Budget \$1500. Info: send SASE to **Kalá Institute, 1060 Heinz, Berkeley, CA 94710; (415) 549-2977**

Deadline Dec. 31

### **Mystery Trip.**

Mail art show. Media and size unrestricted. Documentation to all. **Belin Czachowicz, ul. Dragonow 8 m. 16, 00-467, Warsaw, Poland**

Deadline Jan. 21

### **The Lost Landscape.**

Work reflecting current state of the world's environment. Send up to 10 slides, resume, SASE. **The Lost Landscape, Newport Art Museum, 76 Bellevue Ave., Newport, RI 02840; (401) 847-0179**

Deadline unclear

### **Emerging Expressions Biennial.**

Sculpture, installations, video, etc. Work to be concerned with 3+ dimensions: 3-D, movement, and/or time. **Bronx Museum of the Arts, 1040 Grand Concourse, Bronx, NY 10456**

Deadline March 1, 1991

### **International Workshop on Man-Machine Interaction in Live Performance Computer Music, Computer Graphics, Robot Dance.**

Call for papers, for conference June 7-8, 1991 in Pisa, Italy. Send abstract, final report and video cassette.

**Leonello Tarabella, Computer Music Dept. of CNUCE/CNR, via S. Maria 36-56126 Pisa, Italy. Music5@ICNUCEVM.CNUCE.CNR.IT.**

Deadline unclear

### **New York Hall of Science**

Exhibits include scientifically oriented interactive art projects. Reviewing proposals for exhibits to begin in the spring of 1992. Projects may be kinetic, electrical, mechanical, audio/visual, etc. **New York Hall of Science, 47-01 111th St., Corona, NY 11368; (718) 699 0005**

MAIL ART: Send mail to a series of exhibitions and publications in 1990 and 1991. Planetary ecology, global awareness, sacred locations, etc. Your art will not be returned but you will be sent another artists contribution. Documentation to all. **Earthling Survival Party, Museo Internacional de Neu Art, Box 3655, Vancouver, BC, V6B 3Y3.**

## Needs & Offerings

Apply Now (before Dec. 1)

### Lugano Academy of the Electronic Arts Summer Program (Italy)

Computer and Art is the theme of these master classes to be given July 15-26, 1991. Intended for artists, media designers, performers and composers as well as teachers and students of the arts. Besides outstanding teachers (Ylem member Prof. Joan Truckenbrod is one), students will be beta-testers for the newest technologies. Tuition and room about \$500 per week at today's exchange rate. Admission limited and highly selective. Info: Dr. James Finkelstein, Coll. of Ed. and Human Services, George Mason University, Fairfax, VA 22030; (703) 323-2400; FAX (703) 764-6716; Bitnet jfinkel@gmu.edu

### Inter-Society for the Electronic Arts

This new umbrella organization has just met at the SISEA Conference in Holland and elected a board composed of representatives from seven different countries. It proposes to connect existing associations, institutes, and individuals worldwide, making it easier to share expertise, to enhance the now-pervasive electronic media by encouraging new approaches to electronic production. Eventually it hopes to finance worthy electronics art projects. Info: ISEA, PO Box 60103, 9703 BC Groningen, Holland; Bitnet: scan@hgrug5

Dec. 2-5.

### The New Tools Conference.

Computer Graphics for Design, Grand Hyatt, New York. As design offices adopt computer graphics power tools, keeping up with changing technology becomes a major problem. The New Tools seminars will help cope and compete in the 90s: \$185-\$815. Center for Computer Graphics for Design, 45 Stephenson Terrace, Briarcliff Manor, NY 10510; (914) 741-2850, Fax (914) 741-2853

### The Jaffe Report

The Jaffe Report is an important publication because of the dynamics of the technology. It gives an overview of the important things going on within the design industry and, most importantly, in our (the designer's) language. \$115 per year, \$146 foreign. The Jaffe Report, 45 Stephenson Terrace, Briarcliff Manor, NY 10510; (914) 741-2850, Fax (914) 741-2853

### Down to Earth—CD Clip Art

600 high resolution color and monochrome PICT images ready for use in desktop presentations, desktop publishing and education. This disc represents 5 years of work by Ylem member Josepha Haveman, an environmentally conscious artist.

photographer, and college professor of fine arts. Art categories include: environmental impact, food, marine environment, foliage, landscapes, sky. A version in the native file formats (TIFF, EPS, or McPaint) of each of the pictures is also included on this disc, totaling to over 1200 original pictures ready for immediate use or modification by the user. Available immediately with an introductory price of \$199. Wayzata Technology Inc., 16221 Main Ave., PO Box 87, Prior Lake, Minnesota 55372; (612) 447-7321, (800) 735-7321

### Ylem Newsletter Art needed.

See your High contrast B/W art in the Ylem Newsletter. Send us works on paper or Macintosh disks. Send to Trudy Myrrh Reagan, 967 Moreno, Palo Alto, CA 94303; (415) 856-9593

### Ylem Video

Two copies left! Twenty-three minute show featuring 26 Ylem artists in many hi-tech media. Interviews, demos. 1/2 inch format, \$24/copy; members, \$12. Send to: Mark Briggs, 3601 Kelso Ct., San Jose, CA 95127. The 3/4 inch copy will continue to be available for rental from T. M. Reagan (address above).

### Creative Artists Network

Takes selected artists under wing for 2 years. Artists will receive show(s), no sales commission taken; possibility of commissioning of work; assistance in portfolio development, P.R., grantwriting, taxes and other legal issues; one month residency in a foreign country, more. Creative Artists Network, PO Box 30027, Philadelphia, PA 19103

### Art, Science and Technology Institute

This is a small, non-profit group of Eastern Europeans who teach and sell holograms. ASTI, 2018 R St. NW, Washington, DC 20009; (202) 667-6322

### TECH 2000

Washington's New Center for high Tech adventure. 70 "Hands-on" Exhibits. Techworld Plaza, 800 K Street N.W., Washington, D.C. 20001; (202) 842-0500

### Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers, Inc.

AIVF is an association for independent film and video producers, providing a broad range of educational, informational and support services relied on by the film and video community. "We do the research and provide the services that save you time and money, freeing you to do what you do best - produce". Includes magazine subscription. \$60 per year. 625 Broadway, 9th Floor, New York, N.Y. 10012; (212) 473-3400, Telex: 226078 Aegisur

### Mail Artists' Network

Addresses of several mail artists are available from: Brian Salzberg, Box 131, Block Island, RI 02807. And/or, send him your mail art, and he will send you something back.

### New Museum of Contemporary Art

Exhibits works completed within the last 10 years by contemporary living artists. Painting, sculpture, mixed media, performance, video, installations. Send up to 20 slides (or video in 3/4" format, or photographic print in 8 x 10 glossy form), resumé, statement, SASE. Curatorial Dept., The New Museum, 583 Broadway, NY, NY 10012 (212) 219-1222.



Computer art by Carol Hines, 1990



## Graffiti by Trudy Myrrh Reagan

There's nothing like being in a different cultural context to rethink the uses of art. I have a friend who had spent most of her childhood in Japan. She moved to Long Beach, CA when she was a teenager and was revolted (easy for teens) by the complete disregard for beauty in daily life in America. Another travelling in Indonesia marvelled, "Everyone there is an artist!"

My trip to Austria and France was not as dramatic, but did lay bear some surprising thoughts and prejudices.

Versailles was at the bottom of my list of things to see in France. Something in me balks at grandiose displays of wealth and power, but since it was in the home town of my hostess, we spent a whole day there. My problem is that I contemplate the peasants and colonies that made it possible. Artists were the brains and talent behind these displays designed to legitimize the fat cats. Was this "right livelihood"?

But, I realized, when all is said and done and empires have collapsed of their own profligacy, the art remains. In France and Russia the monuments became the source of national pride, in spite of the revulsion against royalty. (What will be the American "patrimony"? Trump Tower?)

De Tocqueville, writing 200 years ago about America, predicted that art wouldn't be supported in an egalitarian society. Human nature being what it is, the rich in America show off like aristocrats. But they don't often do this with art. By European standards our malls and mansions are bare in this respect. Huizinga, a Dutch historian of the Middle Ages, noted that before the days of banks the only evidence a king could give of wealth to bolster his legitimacy was to spend it—the more ostentatiously the better. In the towns, cathedrals gave a sense of a civic identity. To some extent, these traditions continue in European governmental support for the arts.

As far as tech art goes, the Ars Electronic Festival in Austria had terrific government and corporate backing that

was passed on to the artists and speakers. In France I learned of several projects, including an Art and Technology Center opening in 1991 in Rheims. However, another French tradition interfered with the production of electronic art: protectionism. Practised by Louis XIV to promote local industries like weaving, it is used today to prop up French electronics. The duty on computers and video equipment puts the price too high for home users. The tech artists I met were downcast.

Before mass production, the goods the rich acquired were hand-crafted. Embellishment which may look overdone to us was equated with value. Our magnates are from a later tradition, where wealth is judged on bank balances and the number of gas-guzzling items owned. What would be a more ecological way to earn prestige? Labor-intensive art? So says urban planner Ian McHarg. (Maybe there's a place for us in the post-Post-Modern world... if we can persuade some buyers.)

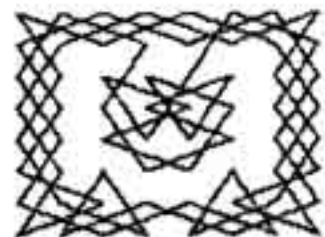
I spent an afternoon at La Defense, eight miles from the center of Paris, a neighborhood of skyscrapers placed at the periphery so as not to spoil the historic heart of the city. It centers on an immense pedestrian mall containing a number of very, very large sculptures and fountains that nevertheless do a poor job of visually filling it. Armed with a map of the art works, I hiked all around, finding many surprises: Planter boxes with human faces, air conditioner ducts with mosaics, and a forest of "train signals" on corkscrew posts blinking merrily. At five o'clock when the great mall filled with pedestrian office workers heading for the commuter train, its principal fountain by the Israeli artist, Agam, burst into a jolly fury of timed waterworks.

The newer buildings are more sculptural, and work with the art better. The French government, obviously, has invested generously in art big and small to humanize a controversial modern development. Not much was specifically hi-tech, but the kinetic pieces made the

biggest hit. Most was abstract, flamboyant, stimulating, but smaller sculptures and mosaics of people were lovable and warmed the place up. I came away wondering how much more art it takes to leaven such a loaf. Half buildings and half art?

On the way to the Charles de Gaulle airport I got a brief eyeful of unofficial art: a wall with a colorful graffiti perhaps 200 feet long. It looked as if it had been masterminded by one person. Also, documentation I had just seen of Berlin Wall graffiti showed colorful, boisterous paintings in defiance of what it stood for. I saw punk-style graffiti in both Vienna and Paris, some enjoyable, most deplorable. We live in a Global Village, all right. How widespread is New York-style calligraphic spray painting, anyhow?

We gripe about those who fail to fund public art, our lack of tradition in this regard. We bitch about the bureaucracy involved in the opportunities that do exist. Why do artists always wait to be invited? I once arose at dawn on the summer solstice to do a hand-run mural over some cuss words in a pedestrian underpass with my friends. Mail art is another effervescence of art that shapes the Global Village by direct action of each artist, not just the transmigration of a style. New venues are presenting themselves in the electronic age, public access TV, e-mail collaborations. While these things may not belong on a resume or last for ages, it keeps fun alive. I hope everyone reading this has done his or her part, whether decorating a hospital corridor, a computer start-up screen or a letter from jail.



Computer Art by Myrrh, 1990

*Postponed! Note new date*

## **Ylem Computer Graphics Field Trip to Western Imaging, Sat., Dec. 1, 2 pm**

Western Imaging, specialists in customizing Targa workstations, welcomes us to their new and larger headquarters at 115 Constitution in Menlo Park, just off Hwy. 101 at Marsh Road Exit. (Turn toward the Bay (east), make a right U-turn onto Independence Dr., then left on Constitution). We'll investigate the latest in PC-based hardware, 2-D and 3-D graphics software, and interactive multimedia. Lots of room. RSVP by phone. Trudy Myrrh Reagan, 967 Moreno Ave, Palo Alto, CA 94303. (415) 856-9593

**MAILING LABELS OF YLEM MEMBERS**  
are available to Ylem members for \$20.  
Info: Fred Stitt, (415) 254-0639.



Computer Art by Myrrh, 1990

Please send a **membership application** and sample newsletter to (me) (my friends) at:

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_

Membership is \$25 per year,  
\$30 foreign. Students \$15.

### **Newsletter seeks submissions**

We are seeking submissions of member art and articles. Black-and-white copies of the art that will reproduce well by b&w copy machine needed. Please include title, date, and medium. Mac disks with art in MacPaint, PICT, TIFF, EPS formats accepted. Articles should be 400-800 words long. Deadline November 15. Send to:

**Ylem Newsletter, 967 Moreno Ave.  
Palo Alto, CA 94303;  
(415) 856-9593**

Also, please continue to send notices of events, needs, opportunities, exhibitions and talks.



**Artists Using Science and Technology**  
PO Box 749, Orinda, CA 94563

**Ylem: Artists Using Science and Technology** is a non-profit organization.

President: Beverly Reiser

Vice-President: Trudy Myrrh Reagan

Secretary: Fred Stitt

Membership development: Eleanor Kent

Newsletter: Russell Reagan, Trudy Myrrh Reagan

Member-at-large: Cynthia Kurtz

#### **Advisory Board:**

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## **December Newsletter**

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