To whom it may concern: Nam June Paik's wobbulator and playful identity

Devereaux, Emile (2013) To whom it may concern: Nam June Paik's wobbulator and playful identity. Leonardo Electronic Almanac, 19 (5). pp. 22-35. ISSN 1071-4391

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Leonardo Electronic Almanac
Volume 19 Issue 5
December 19, 2013

ISSN 1071-4391

The issue is provided by Goldsmiths, University of London.

LEA Publishing & Subscription Information

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LEONARDO ELECTRONIC ALMANAC CATALOG, VOLUME 19 ISSUE 5

Far and Wide

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ÖZDEN ŞAHİN AND CATHERINE M. WEIR
This catalog is a LEA production with FACT (Foundation for Art and Creative Technology). It follows the first major retrospective on Nam June Paik in the UK with an exhibition and conference organized by Tate Liverpool and FACT. The exhibition Nam June Paik, December 17, 2010 to March 13, 2011, was curated by Sook-Kyung Lee and Susanne Rennert.

LEA acknowledges and is grateful for the gracious support provided to this publication by the Estate of Nam June Paik. In particular special thanks go to Ken Hakuta, Executor, Nam June Paik Estate.

Also, special thanks go to Mike Stubbs (Director/CEO of FACT) for his support.
Contents

Lanfranco Aceti 06 The Global Play of Nam June Paik: The Artist That Embraced and Transformed Marshall McLuhan’s Dreams Into Reality

Omar Kholeif 10 The Future Is Now?

Emile Devereaux 22 To Whom It May Concern: Nam June Paik’s Wobbulator and Playful Identity

Tom Schofield 44 Data Materialism in Art Making

Gabriela Galati 54 The Electronic Representation of Information: New Relationships between the Virtual Archive and its (Possible) Referent

Jamie Allen 70 Traveling at the Speed of Paik: An artist-researcher visits the Nam June Paik Art Center

Jeremy Bailey 96 A Statement on Nam June Paik

Richard H. Brown 106 Zen for TV? Nam June Paik’s “Global Groove” and “A Tribute to John Cage” (1973)

Introductions and John G. Hanhardt Keynote Speech

107 John G. Hanhardt Q&A session chaired by Sarah Cook

Roy Ascott Keynote Speech

182 Ruth Catlow Speech

184 Anton Lukoszevieze performance

Roy Ascott in conversation with Mike Stubbs
THE GLOBAL PLAY OF
NAM JUNE PAIK
THE ARTIST THAT EMBRACED
AND TRANSFORMED MARSHALL MCLUHAN’S
DREAMS INTO REALITY

What else can be said of Nam June Paik and his artistic prac-
tice that perhaps has not been said before? My guess is not very
much... and while I write my first lines to this introduction I realize
that it is already sounding like a classic Latin ‘invocatio,’ or request
to assistance from the divinity, used by writers when having to
write complex waters.

Nam June Paik and Marshall McLuhan are two of the numerous art-
ists and authors who inspired my formative years. If one cannot deny
Paik’s love of play and satire imbued in popular culture and used to
disguise a real intellectual and conceptual approach to the artwork,
neither can easily be discounted McLuhan’s strong advocacy of the
top technologies and forms of expression. The end of video
being perhaps the most revolutionary artist, for his
visions of the world to come, made of light, optics and
his time, of what were considered ‘non-artistic-media.’ Some of the
establishment. He also challenged the perception of what art ‘should
be’ and at the same time undermined elitisms through the use, at
its time, of what were considered ‘non-artist-media.’ Some of the
choices in his career, both in terms of artistic medium and in terms
of content, can be defined as visionary as well as risky to the point of
bravery or idiocy, depending on the mindset of the critic.

Taking risks, particularly taking risks with one’s own artistic practice,
may also mean to risk a downward spiral; and Paik did not seem to
shy away from artworks’ challenging productions and made use of
varied and combined media, therefore re-defining the field of art and
placing himself at the center of it.

In the following decades, Paik was to transform virtually all as-
pects of video through his innovative sculptures, installations,
per-formances. As a teacher, writer, lecturer, and advisor to founda-
tions, he continually informed and transformed 20th century
contemporary art.

Therefore, it seems limited to define Paik as ‘the father of video
art’ when his approaches were to resonate in a multiplicity of
fields and areas.

Paik’s latest creative deployment of new media is through laser
technology. He has called his most recent installation a “post-
video project,” which continues the articulation of the kinetic
image technologies and forms of expression. The end of video
and television as we know them signals a transformation of our
visual culture.

When Mike Stubbs and Omar Kholeif approached me to create this
book, the challenge was to create a structure for the material but
also to keep the openness that characterizes so many of Paik’s art-
works and so many of the approaches that he has inspired.

I found the best framework in one of Paik’s artworks that was pre-
sented for the first time in the United Kingdom, at FACT, in Liver-
pool, thanks to the efforts of both Stubbs and Kholeif.

My fascination with the Laser Cone’s re-fabrication in Liverpool
was immediate and I wanted to reflect in the publication, albeit sym-
bolically, the multiple possibilities and connections that underpinned
the Laser Cone’s re-fabrication and its medium, as well as Paik’s and
McLuhan’s visions of the world to come, made of light, optics and
lasers.

The word laser is actually an acronym; it stands for Light Ampli-
fication by Stimulated Emission of Radiation. Nam June Paik und-
took a residency with Bell labs, who were the inventors of the
laser. It was here that he created his 1966 piece Digital Experi-
ment at Bell Labs, exploring the stark contrast between digital
digital and analogue and his fascination with technology in its material
form. His work with Bell set the precedent for artists and musi-
cians to start using technology creatively in a new way.

The construction of this hybrid book, I hope, would have pleased
Paik for it is a strange construction, collage and recollection, of
memories, events, places and artworks. In this volume collide pres-
ent events, past memories, a conference and an exhibition, all in the
name of Nam June Paik, the artist who envisaged the popular future
of the world of media.

Paik remains perhaps one of the most revolutionary artists, for his
practice was mediated, geared towards the masses and not neces-
sarily or preeminently dominated by a desire of sitting within the
establishment. He also challenged the perception of what art ‘should
be’ and at the same time undermined elitisms through the use, at
his time, of what were considered ‘non-artist-media.’ Some of the
choices in his career, both in terms of artistic medium and in terms
of content, can be defined as visionary as well as risky to the point of
bravery or idiocy, depending on the mindset of the critic.

That some of the artworks may be challenging for the viewer as well
as the art critic is perhaps obvious – as obvious was Paik’s willing-
ness to challenge the various media he used, the audience that fol-
lowed him and the established aesthetic of his own artistic practice.

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cians to start using technology creatively in a new way.
This catalog became a tool to mirror and perhaps ‘transmediate’ the laser installation “made of a huge green laser that [... ] corpse(ed) FACT with Tate Liverpool. Travelling 800 metres as the crow flies, the beam of light [... made] a symbolic connection between the two joint exhibition of video artist, pioneer and composer Nam June Paik. Artist Peter Appleton, who was behind the laser which joined the Anglican and Metropolitan cathedrals in Liverpool during 2008 Capital of Culture, [was] commissioned by FACT to create the artwork, Laser Link, which references Nam June Paik’s innovative laser works.

The catalog is in itself a work that reflects the laser connections, the speed of contacts, the joint exhibition of connecting a variety of media as easily as connecting people from all parts of the world. In this phantasmagoria of connections it almost seems possible to visualize the optic cables and WiFi that like threads join the people and the media of McLuhan’s “global village” and the multiplicities of media that Paik invited us to use to create what I would like to define as the contemporary “bastard art.”

Lanfranco Aceti
Editor in Chief, Leonardo Electronic Almanac
Director, Kasa Gallery

A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR IN CHIEF

For me personally this book represents a moment of further transformation of LEA, not only as a journal publishing volumes as in the long tradition of the journal, but also as a producer of books and catalogs that cater for the larger community of artists that create bastard art or bastard science for that matter.

ENDBOXES AND REFERENCES

7. Art as a bastard is interpreted, in this passage, as something of uncertain origins that cannot be easily defined and neatly encapsulated in a definition or framework. “Art is often a bastard, the parents of which we do not know.” Nam June Paik as cited in Florence de Meredieu, *Digital and Video Art*, trans. Richard Elliott (Edinburgh: Chambers, 2005), 110.
The Future Is Now? 

Far and Wide: Nam June Paik is an edited collection that seeks to explore the legacy of the artist Nam June Paik in contemporary media culture. This particular project grew out of a collaboration between FACT, Foundation for Art and Creative Technology, and the Tate Liverpool, who in late 2010-2011 staged the largest retrospective the artist’s work in the UK. The first since his death, it also showcased the premiere of Paik’s laser work in Europe. The project, staged across both sites, also included a rich public programme. Of these, two think tank events, The Future is Now: Media Arts, Performance and Identity after Nam June Paik and Superhighway: Art after Nam June Paik, brought together a forum of leading artists, performers and thinkers in the cross-cultural field together to explore and dissect the significance of Paik within broader culture.

This programme was developed by a large group of collaborators. The discursive programme was produced by FACT in partnership with Caitlin Page, then Curator of Public Programmes at Tate. One of our primary research concerns was exploring how Paik’s approach to creative practice fragmented existing ideological standpoints about the visual field as a hermetically sealed, self-referential canon. Rather, it serves to discover open-ended questions about how an artist charged with bringing so much openness to the visual arts, fought for the protection of licensing? This question remains: could Paik have been accepting of it, if it were ephemeral, or would he have been willing to contribute or speak on the record about Paik’s influence? It always seemed that there were many interested parties, but so very few who were eager to commit to our forum.

The second and perhaps more open-ended question is: what would Nam June Paik have made of the post-internet contemporary art scene? Would Paik have been an advocate of the free distribution of artwork through such platforms as UbuWeb and YouTube? Would he have been accepting of it, if it were ephemeral, or would he have fought for the protection of licensing? This question remains: could an artist charged with bringing so much openness to the visual arts, have been comfortable with the level of openness that has developed since his death? There is much that remains unanswered, and that, we can only speculate. Far and Wide does not offer a holistic biography or historical overview of the artist’s work or indeed its authority. Rather, it serves to extract open-ended questions about how far and wide Nam June Paik’s influence may have travelled, and to consider what influence it has yet to wield.

Omar Kholeif
Editor and Curator
FACT, Foundation for Art and Creative Technology

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It is worth mentioning at this stage that there were many who joined in contributing to this process, who did not partake formally in this reader or the public programme. Dara Birnbaum, Tony Conrad, Yoko Ono, Cory Arcangel, Laurie Anderson, Ken Hakuta, Marisa Olson, all served as sources of guidance, whether directly or indirectly through conversations, e-mails, and contacts.

Still, there remain many lingering questions that are not answered here, many of which were posed both by our research and organizational processes. The first and most straightforward question for Caitlin and I was: why is it so difficult to find female artists who would be willing to contribute or speak on the record about Paik’s influence? It always seemed that there were many interested parties, but very few who were eager to commit to our forum.

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Abu Dhabi
BARCELONA
To Whom It May Concern: Nam June Paik’s Wobbulator and Playful Identity

Abstract

Following Nam June Paik’s lead, at times this scholarly analysis takes the form of a letter, intertwining personal voices with an investigation of media technologies. The practices of Nam June Paik are seen as a negotiation between the materiality of media and an articulation of identity. Reproductions of Paik’s letters inform written records about his early interactive video technologies such as the Wobbulator built in 1972, technologies that invite us to mix our voices with his. Paik’s playful approach to identity is reflected not only by his experimental warping and global transmission of familiar cultural forms such as dance, but also through his light-hearted comments reflecting his position as a nomadic artist. The techniques Paik left behind continue these light-hearted cultural negotiations, as demonstrated both by Emile Devereaux’s visual practices and e-mail correspondence surrounding work exhibited at the Fondo Nacional de las Artes in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

By

Emile Devereaux

Digital Art & Culture, Lancaster Institute for Contemporary Art

To whom it may concern: I am interested in the nether reaches touched by digital media networks. These most distant navigations of scale and time include intimate spaces, linking private thoughts with unknown destinations. Nam June Paik left us with new media words to reach these dimensions, wobbling inventions with which we may inject ourselves into media channels in the first person, like a written letter. If the letter I write here mixes what is personal with what is philosophical and scholarly, it also follows Paik’s writing approach. Like the media technologies he left behind, Paik’s

“...The path of evolution silently passes over the silent ones; they are outside of all discourse... Since they don’t write anymore, they cannot respond to possible inconsistencies in their personal file... As if swallowed by the earth, nobody knows them anymore, they are neither seen nor heard... [T]he honourable law does not spare anyone who has dishonourably excluded him—or herself, just as the laws of natural selection themselves know no exception.”

Figure 1. A Wobbulator at the Experimental Television Center, Owego, New York. © Sherry M. Hocking, Experimental Television Center, 1973. Used with permission.
letters, too, have been republished, reaching many more eyes than originally anticipated, conveying his thoughts about his experimental video techniques. Paik's playful voice resonates equally through his electronic works and letters, part typewritten, part handwritten (a reminder of a post-structuralist emphasis on writing as both visual and material).

‘Long-hand’ implies that our very hands can stretch across distance. Even this written form, however personal it may seem, is highly structured. Hill's writing guide from 1875 instructs, “Your letter should be a representation of yourself, not of anybody else. The world is full of imitators . . . who pass on, leaving no reputation behind them.” At the end of the 19th century, Hill’s volume provided detailed writing instructions for every business and social occasion, interspersed with electrotyped image plates; exemplary models of cursive alphabets, scripts and symbols to repetitively and painstakingly copy in attempting to refine one’s hand. Laboriously training one’s handwriting to conform allowed for the communication of an authentic self. Hill’s writing guide emphasizes the mastery of penmanship and the fluidity of expression while excluding entirely from its pages any mention of innovations in writing technologies. Within this Chicago-based publication there is no mention of the telegraph, patented by Samuel Morse some thirty-five years earlier. Perhaps more understandably, typewriters are also absent, as the first serial production of the typewriting machine in 1874 fell just after the manual’s registration in the Library of Congress, its actual publication year coinciding with the first secretive submission of a typescript novel to a publisher, Mark Twain’s *Tom Sawyer*.

Although forms of communication change through the introduction of new technologies, individuals continue to struggle and push at the frameworks in order to articulate their experiences. Nam June Paik’s experimental approaches stretched understandings of a media-inflected world, at times dismantling the constitution of the very media used to convey his thoughts. If forms are solidified through struggle, then difficulties that Paik encountered in practices such as recording video after chopping holes in the stabilizing signal were more than absurd Dadaist gestures. Paik was leading the way towards increasingly more interactive media technologies and practices by destabilizing the structures of the television medium. What happens when other artists pick up Paik’s inventions? What voices emerge when these approaches are applied within different historical, technological and geographical landscapes?

I would like to argue that bits of Paik’s life are retained in all his works, just as identities often leak through forms of communication. Proper historical forms of longhand, for example, obviously conveyed gender (as the term ‘penmanship’ implies). Hill’s writing guide politely suggests that, “Ladies can, if they wish, terminate with the finer hand, while gentlemen will end with the bolder penmanship.” With a much less gentle touch Friedrich Kittler asserts that the gendered articulations of writing, far from optional, were hotly contested, especially in the use of an inappropriately feminine script. In contrast, when the typewriter and other mechanical writing replaced longhandwriting the character of the writer was thought to be concealed. Since the typewriter machine made “everyone look the same,” the new technologies radically transformed the social terrain of writing, allowing women access to an almost exclusively male writing process. If male pseudonyms at first granted women access to formal writing, assistance in operating the machines created a new source of employment for women, until the word ‘typewriter’ implied a convergence of “a profession, a machine, and a sex” and took on the meaning of “both typing machine and female typist.”

Identity is conveyed through the form of the typewritten letter, therefore, with an inverted gender; the authoritative voice of the assumed masculine writer filtered through a feminized machine.  

Figure 2. The Ninth Penmanship lesson from Hill’s Manual of Business and Social Forms, 1875, repeats the phrase, “Commodations generally animate men.” Electrotyping by Shniedewend, Lee, & Co., Chicago. Used with permission via the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 Unported license.
Of course, media records the social hierarchies and misunderstandings of any particular historical moment. For example, Fred Stern’s documentary film interviews Paik’s collaborator Charlotte Moorman in 1980, revealing some of the reactions Paik initially encountered upon arriving in New York in 1964. Mixed with the obvious admiration and respect that Moorman holds for Paik are frank, humorous, and somewhat painful articulations of her first attempts to understand Paik’s proposals and professional positioning as a well-connected male Asian artist in the 1960s: “What? . . . I can’t believe that I’m sitting here talking to this oriental man about these things.”

It could be argued that through their collaborations and Paik’s technological experiments, cultural understandings developed in conversation around the work. Besides recording changing social circumstances, technologically-mediated communication itself always seems to threaten conventional expectations of gender, culture and space. Nam June Paik consciously confronted all three—pushing forward and combining a variety of practices, including explorations in performance, sculpture, installation and television signals. If by appropriating the global reach of television networks into his practice, Paik’s work touched a wider audience than earlier artists, it’d also like to suggest this is due to the fact that his personal voice was woven into the very materialities of his practice; intimacy is conveyed despite the work’s technological basis. The retention of Paik’s touch is a part of his ongoing influence, part of the draw that he continues to exert on the development of new artistic approaches and technologies.

To whom it may concern: Inappropriately, I feel I could almost write a letter to Nam June Paik, as if somehow I grew up with him and knew him casually and distantly. I would explain my familiarity by including in my letter years of postgraduate study at the University of California, San Diego, walking past one of Paik’s video walls almost daily, my mind nervously preoccupied with a conversation to take place in my advisor’s office overlooking Paik’s TV Buddha. If in attempting to grasp Paik’s work the letter format frames my words in a compatibly mobile container, the personal voice in my letter also runs the risk of sounding sentimental, casual or lacking in authority. Paik’s work...
Paik’s work, like that of a letter posted in the mail, establishes an improvisational framework for conversational exchange. He also feels informal and approachable, operating as correspondence, reaching across space.

At this moment in technological history, in which social media sites such as YouTube encourage the dissemination of autobiographical voices, the private, intimate, also inevitably finds its way across disciplinary boundaries and other frameworks that have attempted to limit or discredit this vulnerable voice. Electronic mail, Facebook readily illustrates one of we position ourselves and our private lives in relation to discourses that are communicated to us. Paik’s television object, the same body as the set in the nostalgic past containing siblings, cousins and grandparents, wearing funny clothes and partaking in holiday celebrations. We recognize this television image, techniques displayed in works such as Demagnetizer (1965) and Magnet TV (1965). Like other thinkers in the 1960s such as Marshall McLuhan or Guy Debord, Paik’s work commented upon the inescapable prevalence of television imagery and its expansive circling of the globe through the rapid development of satellite transmission. Yet Paik’s techniques for manipulating the television signal have resonated among viewers tangibly, as demonstrated through the medium of television. Paik’s equation is arguably even more direct than Guy Debord’s analysis of commercialized media through film production. Paik had always worked at the forefront of new practices and by 1969-70 his collaboration with Shuya Abe resulted in one of the earliest electronic devices for manipulating television imagery: the Paik/Abe Video Synthesizer, suggesting that viewers could themselves place their hands in the video signal and make changes. By this time, other artists started experimenting with techniques similar to those that Paik had already explored. The well-known early video artist Steina Vasulka describes this spirit of inventiveness among New York City artists at the time: Participation TV and the future. Artists continue to rework Paik’s gestures and the transferability of cultural forms, Paik’s consistent medium of television transmission cements a long-distance relationship between here and there without fixing a precise location.

How Paik’s work both connects locations in time and space and maintains a letter-like intimacy requires a closer look. Starting in 1964, Paik had already begun experimenting with distorting the television image, techniques displayed in works such as Demagnetizer (1965) and Magnet TV (1965). Like other thinkers in the 1960s such as Marshall McLuhan or Guy Debord, Paik’s work commented upon the inescapable prevalence of television imagery and its expansive circling of the globe through the rapid development of satellite transmission. Yet Paik’s techniques for manipulating the television signal have resonated among viewers tangibly, as demonstrated through the medium of television. Paik’s equation is arguably even more direct than Guy Debord’s analysis of commercialized media through film production. Paik had always worked at the forefront of new practices and by 1969-70 his collaboration with Shuya Abe resulted in one of the earliest electronic devices for manipulating television imagery: the Paik/Abe Video Synthesizer, suggesting that viewers could themselves place their hands in the video signal and make changes. By this time, other artists started experimenting with techniques similar to those that Paik had already explored. The well-known early video artist Steina Vasulka describes this spirit of inventiveness among New York City artists at the time: Participation TV and the future. Artists continue to rework Paik’s gestures and the transferability of cultural forms, Paik’s consistent medium of television transmission cements a long-distance relationship between here and there without fixing a precise location.

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The easy availability of television sets contributed to a playful and accessible sense of experimentation around these technologies. With the tools at hand, techniques could be owned by each individual and belong to no one in particular. It was common to feel the right to possess a technique as much as one could possess a television set; when viewing Paik’s work, one also feels a sense of being able to accomplish similar works oneself.

The friendly television box, a much cherished focal point for most of early video artists uprooted from ‘home,’ as if they were moving with the tools at hand, techniques could be owned by each individual and accessible sense of experimentation around these technologies. With the tools at hand, techniques could be owned by each individual and belong to no one in particular. It was common to feel the right to possess a technique as much as one could possess a television set; when viewing Paik’s work, one also feels a sense of being able to accomplish similar works oneself.

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the comedian Eddie Cantor may not be as recognizable, he appears to be so – his classic vaudeville style and suit, bowler hat and tap dance, hold him hovering at the edge of memory, a familiar figure who’s nearly forgotten. Although I feared that my production choices evoked feelings of sentimentality, I would take any measure to connect with audiences in this case. The curator had published my private e-mail correspondences in order to represent me at the outer edges of feminism, announcing me as a man born female, and in so doing shaping my identity differently than I would myself. Not wanting to market an identity better placed in a freak show, and at the risk of social isolation, I strategically sought common ground, embracing historical imagery from popular culture to draw viewers closer to my work.

This experience represented simply another of the many moments when my identity is bereft of the hands of an individual and distorted, almost like Paik’s webbulating image of the tap dancer in Global Groove. These manipulations may be performed by others, corporations or taken on ourselves. If the dissemination of tap dance can first be traced to the transportation of slaves from the West Indies in the 1800s, its subsequent adoption and alignment with vaudeville and its proper or improperly within the histories of several nations and cultures around the globe. Cultural forms are recognizable and therefore identifiable based on what has been seen before. They are rendered visible based on one’s own experiences, whether the exposure is articulated by living persons or media screens.

Nam June Paik certainly seemed to understand these inseparable connections to identity and to official histories and identities, despite the alternatives. What other choice did he have but to speak of “Westerners” and “we Asians” as he did in his Binghamton Letter written in 1972? An earlier artist statement from 1963 expresses Paik’s reluctance to market himself as a representative of Asian culture at all: “Now let me talk about Zen, although I avoid it usually, not to become the salesmen of ‘OUR’ culture.” Paik does speak of Zen, but he ambitiously balances the discussion with a more global perspective, positioning his practices and observations of his experimental television discourse at a distance threatened to produce uncomfortable confrontations in my actual physical expectation, potentially shaping future encounters as well. Here, my playful visual practices collided with forms of writing through e-mail correspondence. Boundaries tested and visually stretched within the confines of art seemed at risk of being pinned down by words. The narrative I sent for the catalogue on its own did not articulate identity with the directness that Ovejero sought. The negotiation of voices occurring through this e-mail correspondence between Argentina and New York, direct address and exposure in confrontation with poetic speech, was eventually resolved through publication of what was originally intended as a private exchange.

Alongside the debates his work generates, Paik also suggests a utopia. Paik represents a freedom of aligning oneself with technology, allowing for a positioning that moves through cultural referents and varying degrees of otherness. Media imagery contributes to a superficial reading of identities, projected onto us despite our refusal, based on assumptions like gender, race and nationality, representing the political, economic and historically based goings-on of our ‘home’ nations. Meanwhile, other identities remain outside of media recognition, but never permanently or ‘safely’ so. Within Paik’s improvisational frameworks for conversation and the exchange of ideas, the who speaks, like that of the Fluxus performer, forms a fleeting, unfixed and unavoidable nodal point that nonetheless conveys identity. Other republished letters indicate more formal aspects of migration, such as Paik’s request to John Cage for visa sponsorship: “It is not easy to get the U.S. visa for a South Korean citizen.” Here he provides a sample letter for Cage to copy: “The content can be harmless, f.i. ‘TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN, MR. NAM JUNE PAIK IS MY OLD PUPIL AND FRIEND SINCE’” followed by an unprintable type. Even this sample letter written for official purposes does not alter Paik’s light-hearted tone; it still implies an ambiguous destination, a nameless reader, and points to the arbitrary legal requirement that seeks to assign an identifiable date as a marker for the start of a friendship.

Treating identity playfully, however, is dangerous, particularly when local legislation places individuals within intolerable, exploitable, or otherwise unprotected categories and when distances are obliterated through the contemporaneity of the digital. Paik admirably played his unavoidable game of identity and in so doing, demonstrated methods for confusing the media’s identifying systems and introducing distortion. Even my work I do in pet (Under The Skin), which draws upon Paik’says in order to gather strangers together on common footing, sets up systems of recognition based on disguise (as a joyful gesture and act of rebellion against establishing fixed categories). Underemphasized Can-can girls in the centre of the frame, upon looking more closely (or perhaps remaining unnoticed) are WWII soldiers in drag. The types of distortions and weaving together of cultural codes that media allows do not undermine our connections with our hearts or homes but rather help us to inventively craft the world as we see it, rather than accept definitions that are handed to us.

The revolutionary invention of the typewriter adjusted women’s access to education, employment and the act of writing itself, adding levels of text to official hand-written discourse. Let’s follow the typewriter’s lead and use technologically-mediated means to shift cultural or sub-cultural markers in discourse. Only as long as women remained excluded from discourse technologies could they exist as the other of words and printed matter. As Kittler eloquently states: “Only the excessive media link of optics and acoustics, spellings and acronyms, between the letters, numbers, and symbols of a standardized keyboard makes humans (and women) as equal and equal signs.” Creating new combinations...
Figure 8. Bajo La Piel (Under the Skin), documentation of installation at Fondo Nacional de las Artes, Buenos Aires, Argentina. Image by Emile Devereaux. © 1980.

REFERENCES AND NOTES

5. H. E., 59.
6. Kittler, ibid. Kittler’s footnote credits Cynthia Cockburn as the source of this example, her 1980’s feminist historical analyses of the male domination of technology likely provides the fuel behind Kittler’s words. For example see Machinery of Domination: Women, Men and Technical Knowledge (Boston, MA: North Eastern University Press, 1985).

7. Ibid, 199.
8. Ibid, 183.
9. Ibid.
11. For example, Elizabeth Armstrong’s description of Paik’s performance, Zen for Head (1963), emphasizes its shared ownership with La Monte Young and its intermedia qualities, thereby linking this work with future art works involving acts of appropriation and “culture-jamming,” facilitated by the development of digital imaging technologies. Elizabeth Armstrong, “Fluxus and the Museum,” in the Spirit of Fluxus, ed. Janet Jenkins (Minneapolis, MN: Minneapolis Institute of Art, 1997), 138-139.
12. This observation was reinforced by Patricia Clough’s lecture, The New Aesthetic: Auto-biography and Sociality, Lancaster University, May 30, 2010.

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18. Furlong, “Notes Towards History of Image-Processed Video: Steina and Woody Vasulka.”
20. Ibid, 129.
21. Thank you and appreciation to Sherry Miller Hocking for all of her assistance and correspondence around this amazing experience.
25. For example, Paik retrospectively described keeping his critiques of Com- munism to himself during the late 60s and 70s when living among artists in Western cities. See also the interview with Ken Paik Hakuta about his self representation as “A poor man from a poor country,” in Sook-Kyung Lee and Susanne Rennert, eds., Nam June Paik, exhibition catalogue for Tate Liverpool and Museum Kunstpalast, Dusseldorf.
29. “Many different layers of meaning are built into my artworks, like hidden ‘visual tracks’ available to be read; out in the open, but not necessarily pos- sible for everybody to see.” Devereaux, 198.
31. Ibid, 231.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to Sherry Hocking, Ralph Hocking and Hank Rudolph of the Experimental Television Center in Owego, New York for use of Nam June Paik’s Wobbulator and other equipment in 2008. Graciela Ovejero, curator of Subjected Culture, encouraged and motivated my visual production, and the Susan B. Anthony Institute for Gender & Women’s Studies at The University of Rochester in New York provided funding for my participation in the show. Thoughts and thanks to Valerie Hartouin and Steve Fagin as this article has returned me to my student years at the University of California, San Diego and gratitude and admiration to Avital Ronell. Great appreciation is also extended to Níkolás Altamir, Frances Charteris, Anastasia and Iota Macagni, and other who so warmly embraced my participation in the exhibition at Fondo Nacional de las Artes in Buenos Aires, Argentina and to Jon Southern and my current colleagues at Lancaster University (UK) for creating a vibrant research environment.

To identify is not the point – let’s follow Paik’s lead and participate in systems of playful exchange. ■