Vito Acconci
10-POINT PLAN FOR VIDEO

1. Video as an idea, as a working method, rather than a specific medium, a particular piece—something to keep in the back of my mind while I'm doing something else. (It can bring me up front, pull me back onto the surface, keep me from slipping away into abstraction.)

2. Thinking of landscape in terms of movie (I'm forced then to treat landscape as dream, myth, history of a culture). Thinking of person, close-up, in terms of video (I'm forced then to treat person as on-the-spot news, convoluted soap opera).

3. Video monitor as one point in a face-to-face relationship: on-screen, I face the viewer, off-screen. (Since the image is poorly defined, we're forced to depend on sound more than sight: "intimate distance").

4. Starting point: Where am I in relation to the viewer—above, below, to the side? Once my position is established, the reasons for that position shape the content: I can improvise, keep talking, fight to hold my stance in front of the viewer. (At the same time, I'm fighting the neutrality of the medium by pushing myself up against the screen—I'm building an image for myself lest I dissolve into dots, sink back into grayness.)

5. But my image breaks the face-to-face contact: The viewer faces a screen of me, an image under glass, me-in-a-fishbowl. Rather than being in a situation with me, the viewer is in front of a situation about me.

6. In order to keep up my image, I should give up my person. I could be dead—and therefore have no recourse but this ghost of myself, or I could simplify myself into a cardboard figure (superior stance: "I'm here to give you information, that's all you need to know, you'll...

Undertone (90 min; 1973)

MY HANDS ARE ON THE TABLE: I'M FACING THE VIEWER. 'I NEED TO LOOK YOU STRAIGHT IN THE EYE, TO PROVE I'M NOT HIDING ANYTHING...

MY HANDS GO UNDER THE TABLE: MY EYES ARE LOWERED: 'I WANT TO BELIEVE THERE'S A GIRL HERE—SHE'S TOUCHING MY LEG...'

FACING THE VIEWER AGAIN: 'I NEED YOU TO STAND UP AGAINST ME, TO KEEP ME FROM DECEIVING YOU...'

UNDER THE TABLE AGAIN: 'I WANT TO BELIEVE THERE'S NO ONE ELSE HERE—I'M TOUCHING MY LEG...'

Build myself up: viewer as believer

Tear myself away: viewer as witness

Air Time (60 min; 1973)

I'm facing a mirror, talking to you (special person): 'I want to see myself the way you've seen me for the last five years, the time we've lived together. I'm re-examining old times: 'Sneeze on my lips...yes, that's how I punched you...you're right; I sound as if I'm talking to a child, an animal...'

But I know that you (the viewer) are watching: 'Now that they see how I've been with you, I can't deny it...I have to face it...I have to admit I can't change...I have to leave you...'

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The product of television, commercial television, is the audience.

Television delivers people to an advertiser.

There is no such thing as mass media in the United States except for television.

Mass media means that a medium can deliver masses of people.

Commercial television delivers 20 million people a minute.

In commercial broadcasting the viewer pays for the privilege of having himself sold.

It is the consumer who is consumed.

You are the product of TV

You are delivered to the advertiser who is the customer.

He consumes you.

The viewer is not responsible for programming.

You are the end product.

You are the end product delivered en masse to the advertiser.

You are the product of TV

Everything on television is educational in the sense that it teaches something.

What television teaches through commercialism is materialistic consumption.

The NEW MEDIA STATE is predicated on media control.

Media asserts an influence over an entire cultural spectrum without effort or qualification.

We are persuaded daily by a corporate oligarchy.

Corporate control advocates materialistic propaganda.

Television establishments are committed to economic survival:

Propaganda for profit.

Television is the prime instrument for the management of consumer demands.

Commercial television defines the world in specific terms.

Commercial television defines the world so as not to threaten the status quo.

Television defines the world so as not to threaten you.

Soft propaganda is considered entertainment.

POPULAR ENTERTAINMENT IS BASICALLY PROPAGANDA FOR THE STATUS QUO.

Control over broadcasting is an exercise in controlling society.

Seventy-five per cent programming dominates the exposure of ideas and information.

There is inherent conflict between:

COMMERCE,

INFORMATION,

ENTERTAINMENT.

There is a mass media compulsion to

CORPORATIONS ARE NOT RESPONSIBLE.

CORPORATIONS ARE NOT RESPONSIBLE TO GOVERNMENT.

CORPORATIONS ARE NOT RESPONSIBLE TO THEIR EMPLOYEES.

CORPORATIONS ARE NOT RESPONSIBLE TO THEIR SHAREHOLDERS.

Shareholders do not organize and enforce their will.

Shareholders buy stock in companies and don't even know what the companies do.

Corporations mitigate information.

Every dollar spent by the television industry in physical equipment needed to send a message to you is matched by forty dollars spent by you to receive it.

You pay the money to allow someone else to make the choice.

You are consumed.

You are the product of television.

"TELEVISION DELIVERS PEOPLE"

Richard Serra

Carlotta Fay Schoolman

RICHARD SERRA 115
"I use video as a knife. To cut to the heart of the matter & the matter is me."

Willoughby Sharp