

Video Cassette Information

Richard Alpert is a recognized artist whose work has been exhibited widely in California, New York and Europe, making a strong contribution to performance sculpture, video and concept-oriented drawing and object sculpture. A central concern of his has been the use of sound as an integral part of his work. He is currently interested in action that possesses an inherent ordering system, which in turn creates a framework for information conveyed by sound. Contained on the video cassette are four pieces that reflect some of the areas of concern with which the artist has worked in the past. The first piece, "Strategy for a Dance", 1974, (b&w, 16 min.), is a tape of a performance with photographic inserts. The piece is based on the relationship which is established by initiating an action on an object which then causes a defensive position to be assumed in response to the result of this action. It is this relationship which determines the choreographic aspect of the piece. A lead ball suspended from the ceiling is hit about the space and the sound of it hitting the walls delineates the space and lends a tone of aggressiveness to the piece. The second piece, "Post Time", 1976, (color, 1 min.), is a metaphor for a situation in which a person tries to control events which are inherently beyond control. The text is correlated visually with drops of colored lacquer as they are dropped into a glass of water. Some of the drops sink to the bottom of the glass of water, some drops rise to the surface, some disperse on the surface of the water immediately, and so on. The third piece, "A Circular Route", 1979, (b&w, 19 min.), is centered around a statement about the circularity of emotions and reflects the artist's most current interest in self-ordering actions which generate sound. The framework of the piece is based on the production of a modulated sound made when a wooden stick is struck against the spokes of a spinning bicycle wheel. The fourth piece on the cassette "The Opacity of Order", 1979, (b&w, 3 min.), is a collaborative piece between the artist and the poet David Bromige. In it, as the camera traverses a grove of trees, a seemingly natural occurring forest is revealed to have been planted by man in discrete and organized rows. The text serves to underscore the question of how we understand the factual nature of our surroundings and how order seems to be the foundation of our perceptual understanding of things.

Audio Cassette Information

The work on this audio tape (16 min., 50 sec.) by Richard Alpert was produced in 1974 and 1975 as part of a series using the telephone system for distribution of the tapes. Each piece was recorded on a tape loop in a telephone answering machine which was set up with its own number. The machine functioned as a transmitting terminal only, so that a person could dial the number and be in contact with the work. Each piece ran for one month, and the number of the terminal and the title for that particular piece was published. It was the artist's intent that sound could be thought of and used as a physical material and thereby become an extension of his sculptural concerns. Some of those concerns were: sound used to describe a space, illuminating the special resonating qualities of spacial configurations and the materials used to construct the space; the associate connotations of a protracted sound; and the use of memory to shape sound.