

TAKAHIKO IIMURA

Lices 28 June 20h

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DVD1

"MA, A Japanese Concept"(2005)

"MA", a traditional Japanese word/concept for both meanings of "In Between" and "Intervals" as Time/Space as one.

MA: Space/Time in the Garden of Ryoan-ji

1989, 16mm, color, 16 min, sound (mono)

Produced : Program for Art on Film, New York, with support from Metropolitan Museum for Art, New York, & J. Paul Getty Trust, Los Angeles. Music : Takehisa Kosugi, Text : Arata Isozaki, An art film in which I made a filmic interpretation of "MA" as a theme with the classic Zen garden of Ryoan-ji temple. I did not illustrate "MA" as an usual instructional art-film. It is a realization of experiencing "MA" through watching a film. Especially, the concept of "MA" as an indivisible state of time and space. (T.I.)

The Making of <MA> in Ryoan-ji

1989, vidéo, b/w & color, 8 min, sound (mono)

As a video documentary of the making of the first film, we hear the morning sutras with gongs as well as the chirp of cicadas in the background. What surprised the audience most, I suppose, was that the computer was used to control a certain slow speed of the dolly which moved on rail to get an even speed which can't separate space from time. (T.I.)

MA: The Stones Have Moved

2004, vidéo, b/w & color, 10 min, silent

Co-produced : Kala Art Institute, Berkeley, Ca., USA

As an animated image, the outline of stones, taken from the still images, was drawn continuously like traditional "Ippitsu-ga" (one stroked drawing) with a breath and made fade-in/fade-out effects with every drawing in every second. There was a continuous rhythm like breathing. (T.I.)

MA (Intervals)

1977, 16mm, b/W & color, 10 min (Excerpt out of 22min), Sound (mono): Takahiko Iimura

A complete abstract film only using black film, which blocks light, and clear film, which is totally transparent, as the basic materials, adding , black with a white scratched line in the center, and clear with a black scratched line also in the center. These materials were measured in every second, a length of 1,2,3 seconds individually, as a basic unit.(T.I.)

DVD 2

Seeing / Hearing / Speaking (2004)

All quoting a sentence from *Speech and Phenomena* by Jacques Derrida.

I am (Not) Seen

2003, vidéo, color, 5 min, with Takahiko Iimura

Made for the opening piece of the DVD, "Seeing / Hearing / Speaking," and the video changes in quite rapid motion framewise with the occasional stills inserted. Though Derrida concerned with is "Hearing / Speaking," here it extends to "Seeing" combining all three perceptions together. The title, "I am (Not) Seen," indicates both the positive and the negative cases with the parenthesis while "I see you" interferes the two. Even I may be not seen by you, I see you.(T.I.)

Seeing / Hearing / Speaking

2002, vidéo, n/b, 7 min, avec Takahiko Iimura

The sentence I quoted, and Derrida calls "phenomenological essence" is that *I hear myself at the same time that I speak*.

The new DVD, not just a transfer of video, extends further with text, and graphics which work interactively. In "Hearing / Speaking", for instance, you can choose among the monitors with the picture of face, head, ear and mouth in the video-installation, and can read/see different programs. (T.I.)

Talking to Myself: Phenomenological Operation

(1978), 7 min

I produced first video "Talking to Myself: Phenomenological Operation " in 1978 (revised in 2001) quoting a sentence taken from the seminal book of Jacques Derrida, "Speech and Phenomena" translated by David B. Allison. . The video was highly appreciated as "the strongest, most effective statement one could make from the work of Derrida" by Allison, Professor of New York State University. Here I examined carefully the sentence speaking to a camera, and found that the I who hear and the I who speak is not necessarily identical in media. Later in Paris I showed this piece to Derrida himself, and he was quite enthusiastic about the piece.(T.I.)

Talking in New York

1981, revised in 2001, Video, Color, 8min., Sound

Produced in New York City at various locations such as Times Square, China Town, and Central Park where the artist speaks the quote from Derrida in the original and the inverted sentences switching the pronouns in English and Japanese or "speaks" without the voice, a monologue for himself. Also the quotes are superimposed over the images in various sizes emphasizing certain words. (T.I.)

Talking to Myself at P.S. 1

(1985), 11 min

A document of my video exhibition of *Talking to Myself: Phenomenological Operation* at P.S.1, in New York, 1985, where many funny things happened. Many people are wondering what's going on, some are reacting with funny gestures like peeking in the behind of the monitor, or making a comical face, or arguing openly the statements with his opinion. Even at the end a woman voiced loudly "This is how you are going to get crazy back and forth" and left.(T.I.)

TAKAHIKO IIMURA

The man is known.

Jonas Mekas* noticed his film *Ai (Love)* in 1964, at the Festival EXPRMNTL in Knokke-Le-Zoute in Belgium. Takahiko Iimura, realised the year before *Onan*. This film won him a first invitation to the United States, in 1966, to participate in the International Kissinger Festival at Harvard University where he obtained an instant notoriety for the eroticism of his realisations. In the 60's and 70's, Iimura was considered the person most representative and thereby spokesman of Japanese experimental films; which he made known with the organisation of numerous diffusions around the world. He became thereby a recognised member amongst independent filmmakers in both Japan and the United States. He is, as well as this, one of the founders of Japan Film Independent of Tokyo. As a director and distributor, Iimura travels continually between the two countries. He is influenced by the works of Brakhage, Bailly and Michael Snow, and plays in his turn a role in the development of minimalist and conceptual cinema. As of the 1980's Iimura turns particularly his attention towards video. He has conceived, over recent years, several CD-ROMs, in which he revisits his first films. These are already characterised by the double play between figuration and abstraction, where desire and humour are no less present. Dominique Noguez* points out that his film *Ai (Love)*, realised in 1962-63, appears simultaneously as a visual erotic poem where two bodies intertwine yet still almost non figurative by the use of synecdoche (the detail for the ensemble). By isolating with close-up small fragments of the body, we are brought into very close contact with enjoyment and at the same time the utilisation of hard contrasted black and white, slide us towards a symbol. This research led him to propose an essay entitled *For a semiology of video*, which came out in 1986 and was published in 1999 in the catalogue SEEING edited for the occasion of his retrospective at the National Gallery du Jeu de Paume in Paris. He proposes a third theory on image, induced by the video medium, which places itself between that of Einstein (image considered as a word and the editing as an ensemble of images that form a phrase), and that of Metz (the image is the equivalent of a phrase). He demonstrates that "the subject is not a necessity for the linguistic definition of an image" or "that a phrase without a subject is equally capable of furnishing an equivalent of the image". The image would be tantamount to a "phrase-object".

*Jonas Mekas: director, critic, programmer and, in 1961, co-founder of the Film-Makers' Cooperative with 21 other New York artists including amongst others, Shirley Clarke, Robert Frank, Jane Smith or Andy Warhol; as well as in 1969, the Anthology Film Archives with Jerome Hill, P.Adams Sitney, Peter Kubelka and Stan Brakhage. (www.anthologyfilmarchives.org)

*Dominique Noguez: writer, philosopher and director, is the author of reference works of including *Elegy of experimental cinema*.

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I see you