

AHST 4342-501 (80555)
History of Media and New Media Art

Fall 2016

Dr. Charissa N. Terranova
University of Texas at Dallas

Arts & Humanities

Wednesday 7-9:45

Class Location: AH2 1.204

Wednesday November 30

Simulations and Simulacra

Simulacra and Simulation

From Object of Unidirectional Communication
to Responsive Environment

Simulacrum: noun, plural simulacra

1. a slight, unreal, or superficial likeness or semblance.
2. an effigy, image, or representation: *a simulacrum of Aphrodite*.

Simulation: noun

1. imitation or enactment, as of something anticipated or in testing.
2. the act or process of pretending; feigning.
3. an assumption or imitation of a particular appearance or form; counterfeit; sham.
4. Psychiatry. a conscious attempt to feign some mental or physical disorder to escape punishment or to gain a desired objective.
5. the representation of the behavior or characteristics of one system through the use of another system, especially a computer program designed for the purpose.

“Whence the possibility of an ideological analysis of Disneyland (L. Marin did it very well in *Utopiques, jeux d'espace* [Utopias, play of space]): digest of the American way of life, panegyric of American values, idealized transposition of a contradictory reality. Certainly. But this masks something else and this "ideological" blanket functions as a cover for a simulation of the third order: Disneyland exists in order to hide that it is the "real" country, all of "real" America that is Disneyland (a bit like prisons are there to hide that it is the social in its entirety, in its banal omnipresence, that is carceral). Disneyland is presented as imaginary in order to make us believe that the rest is real, whereas all of Los Angeles and the America that surrounds it are no longer real, but belong to the hyperreal order and to the order of simulation. It is no longer a question of a false representation of reality (ideology) but of concealing the fact that the real is no longer real, and thus of saving the reality principle.”

— Jean Baudrillard, *Simulacra and Simulation* (1981)

HYPERREALITY

COPY WITHOUT AN ORIGINAL

“Pictures Generation”
Artist’s Space 1977 and Metro Pictures

Simulacrum
Original versus Copy
Rephotography
Appropriation
Postmodernism

“Pictures Generation”

Artists Space 1977 and Metro Pictures

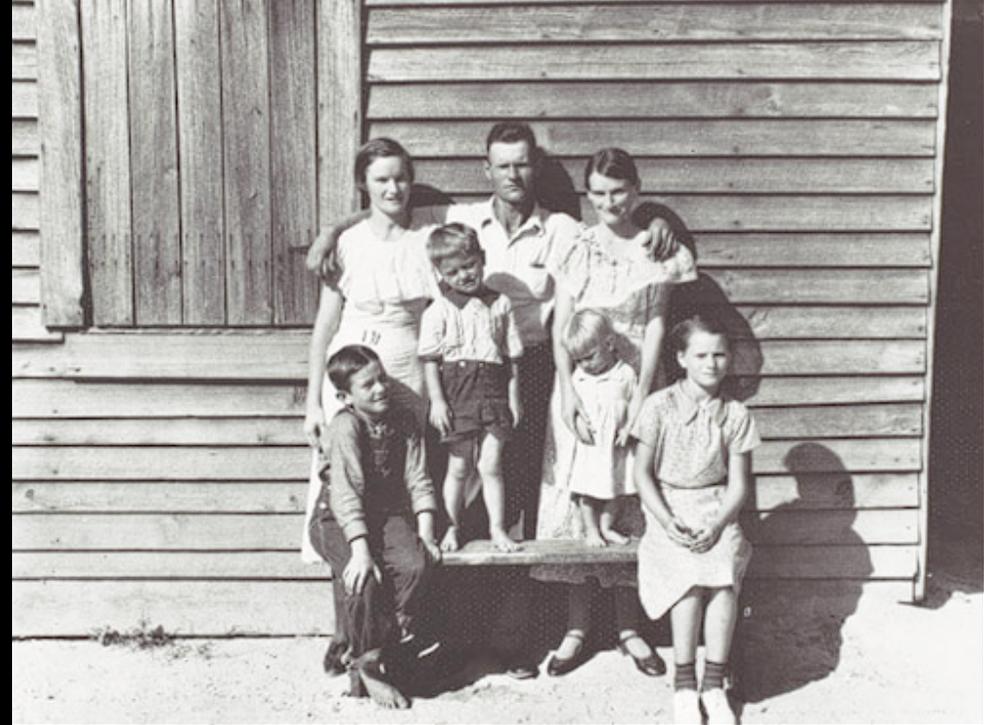
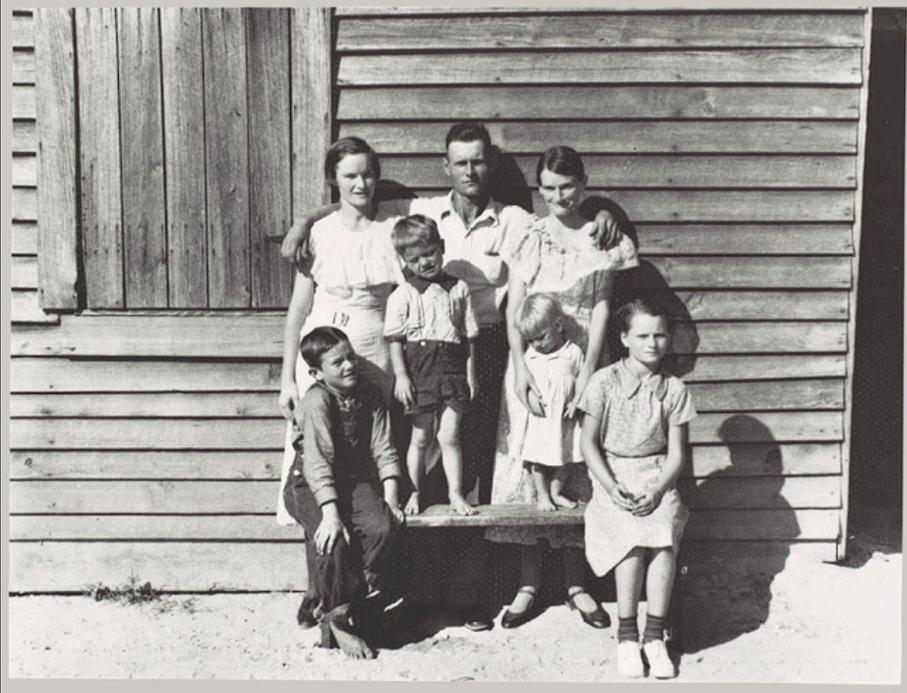
What then are these new aesthetic activities? Simply to enumerate a list of mediums to which “painters” and “sculptors” have increasingly turned – film, photography, video, performance – will not locate them precisely, since it is not merely a question of shifting conventions of one medium to those of another. The ease with which many artists managed, some ten years ago, to change mediums – from sculpture, say, to film (Serra, Morris, et. al.) or from dance to film (Rainer) – or were willing to “corrupt” one medium with another – to present a work of sculpture, for example, in the form of a photograph (Smithson, Long) – or abjured any physical manifestation of the work (Barry, Weiner) makes it clear that the actual characteristics of the medium, per se, cannot any longer tell us much about an artist’s activity.

In choosing the word pictures for this show, I hoped to convey the work's most salient characteristic-recognizable images-but also and importantly the ambiguities it sustains. As is typical of what has come to be called postmodernism, this new work is not confined to any particular medium; instead, it makes use of photography, film, performance, as well as traditional modes of painting, drawing, and sculpture. Picture, used colloquially, is also nonspecific: a picture book might be a book of drawings or photographs, and in common speech a painting, drawing, or print is often called, simply, a picture. Equally important for my purposes, picture, in its verb form, can refer to a mental process as well as the production of an aesthetic object.

Douglas Crimp, “Pictures,” *October*, Vol. 8 (Spring, 1979), pp. 75-88



Sherrie Levine, Untitled (After Walker Evans: 2), 1981



L: Walker Evans, *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men: Shields Family*, 1936/39

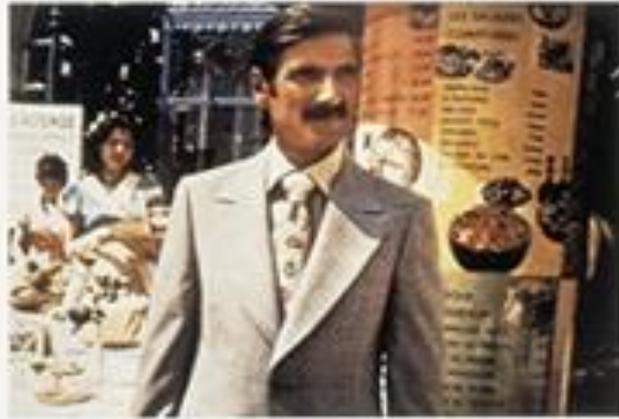
R: Sherrie Levine, *Untitled (After Walker Evans: 2)*, 1981



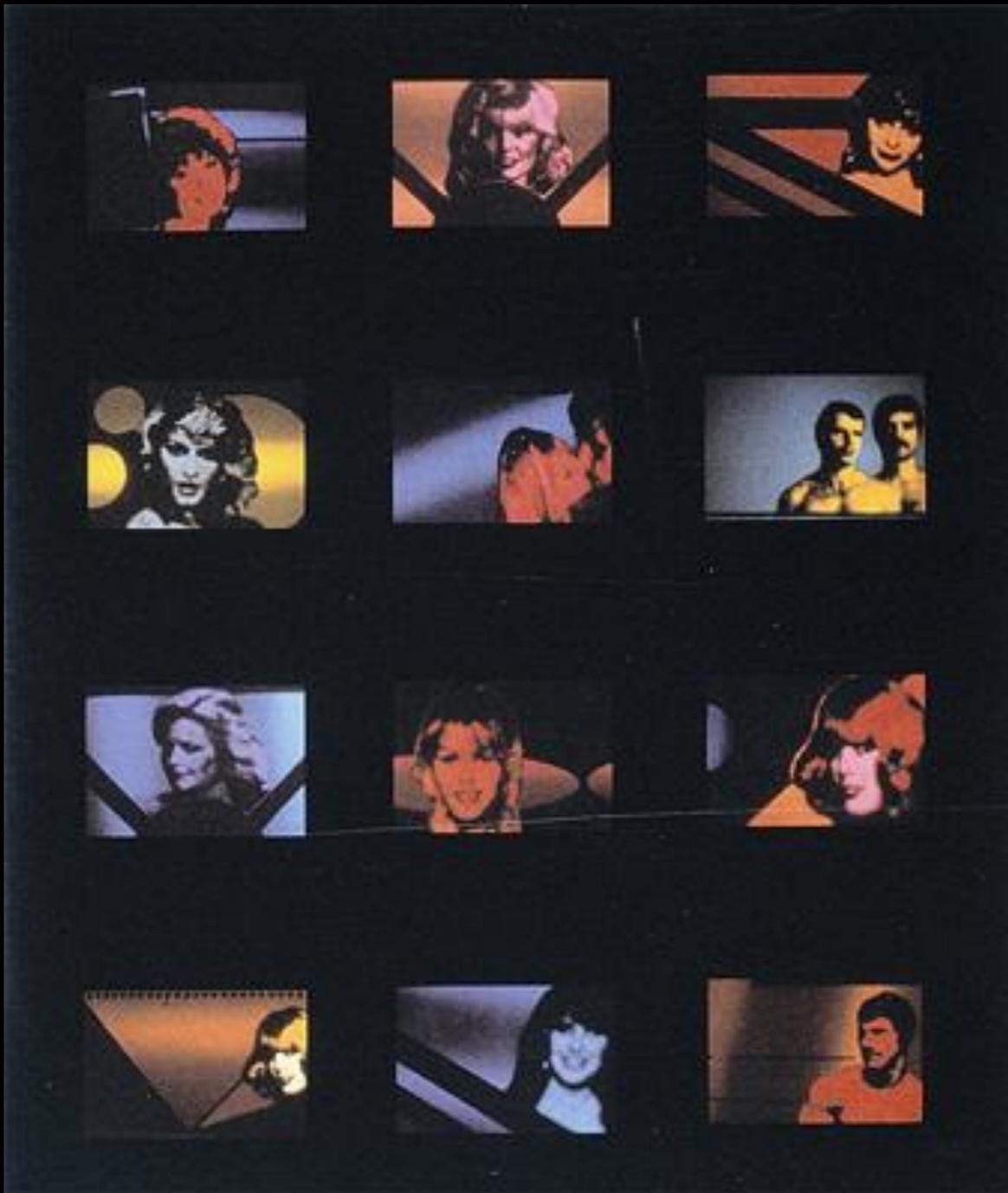
[Walker Evans, Let Us Now Praise Famous Men: Shields Family, 1936/39]



L: Walker Evans, *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men: Shields Family*, 1936/39
R: Sherrie Levine, *Untitled (After Walker Evans: 2)*, 1981



Richard Prince, Untitled (Three Men), 1978



Richard Prince, Entertainers, 1982



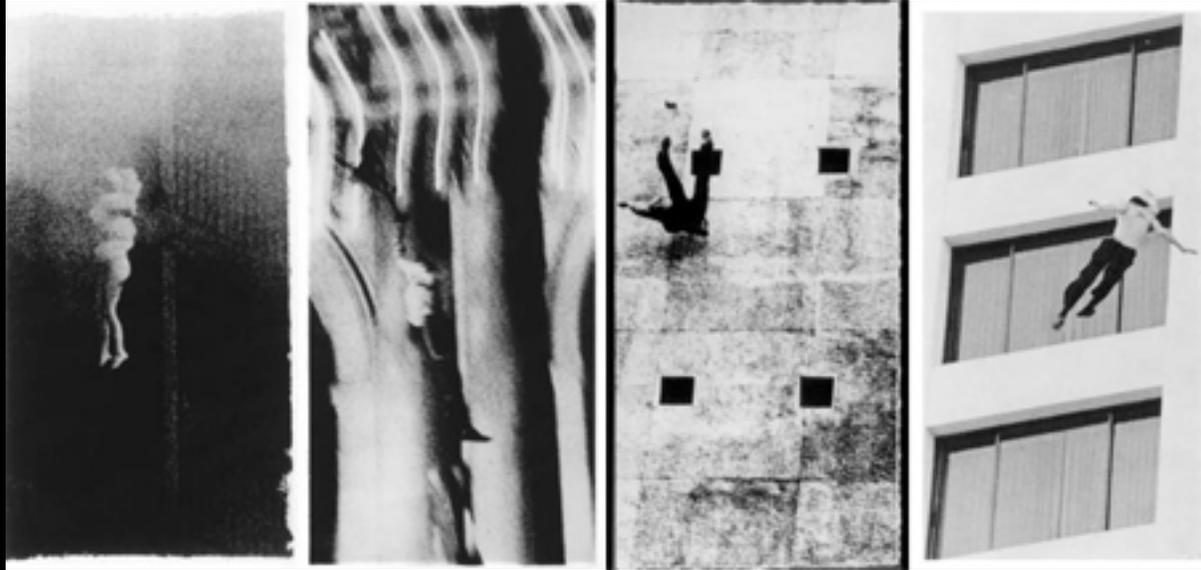
Richard Prince, Untitled (Kool-Aid),
1982-84



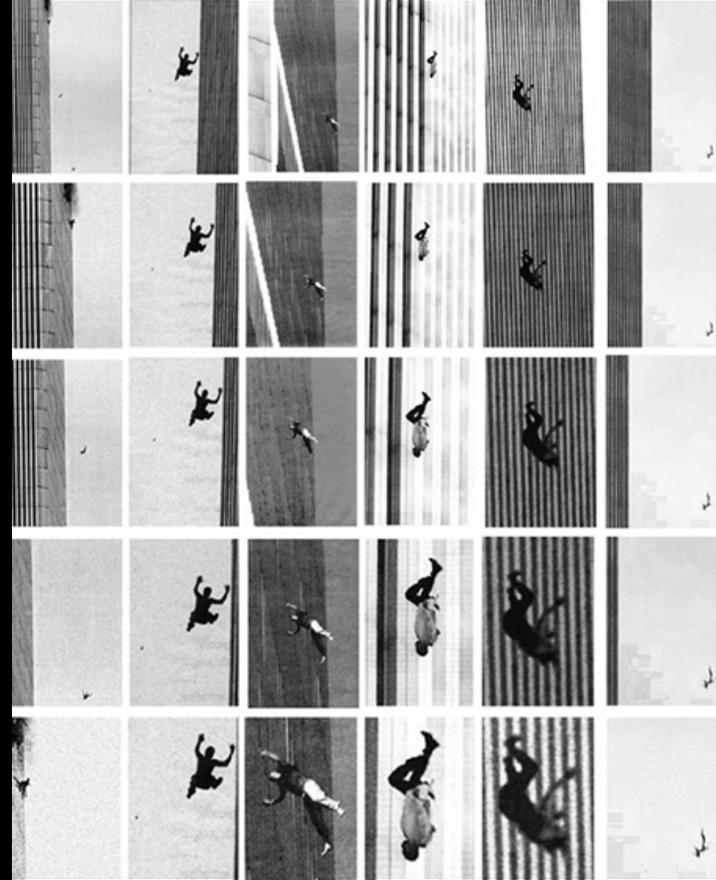
Richard Prince, Untitled
(Cowboy), 1989

Richard Prince, Untitled
(Cowboy), 1991-92

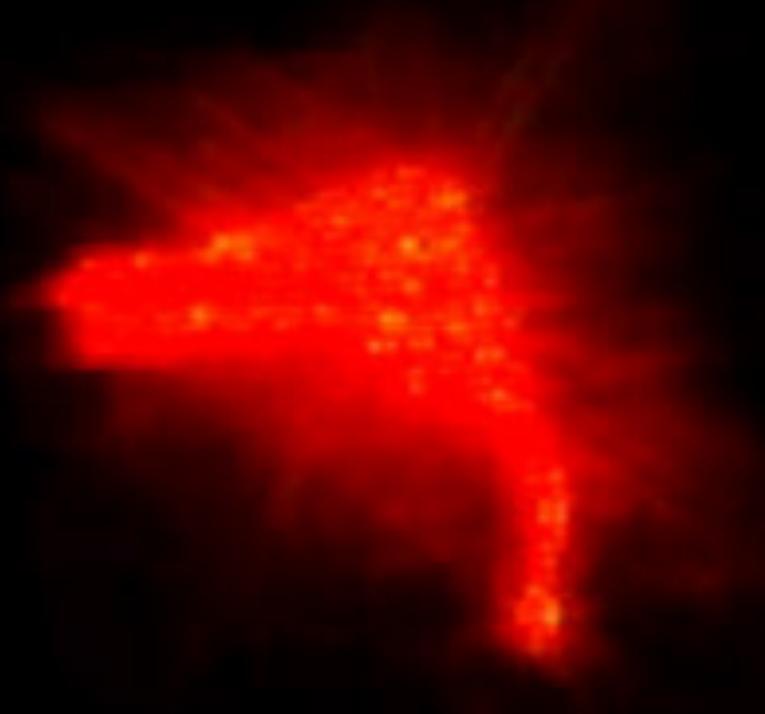




Sarah Charlesworth, Stills, 1980



Carolee Schneeman, Terminal Velocity, 2001



“The first show I did was with Jack. He showed a new work—the extraordinary film loop *The Jump*. I watched that film loop every day for three weeks and never got tired of it. I was hypnotized. I can still see it: The endless red and gold gleaming figure, rotating and tumbling in a non-space, outside of time and place. It was beautiful and miraculous. I still believe that it was one of Jack’s greatest works; he made it long before the video effects that are available today. It was an absolute vision.” - Robert Longo in *Jack Goldstein and the CalArts Mafia*

Jack Goldstein, Still from *The Jump*, 1978
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gqwIXyqwZZg>

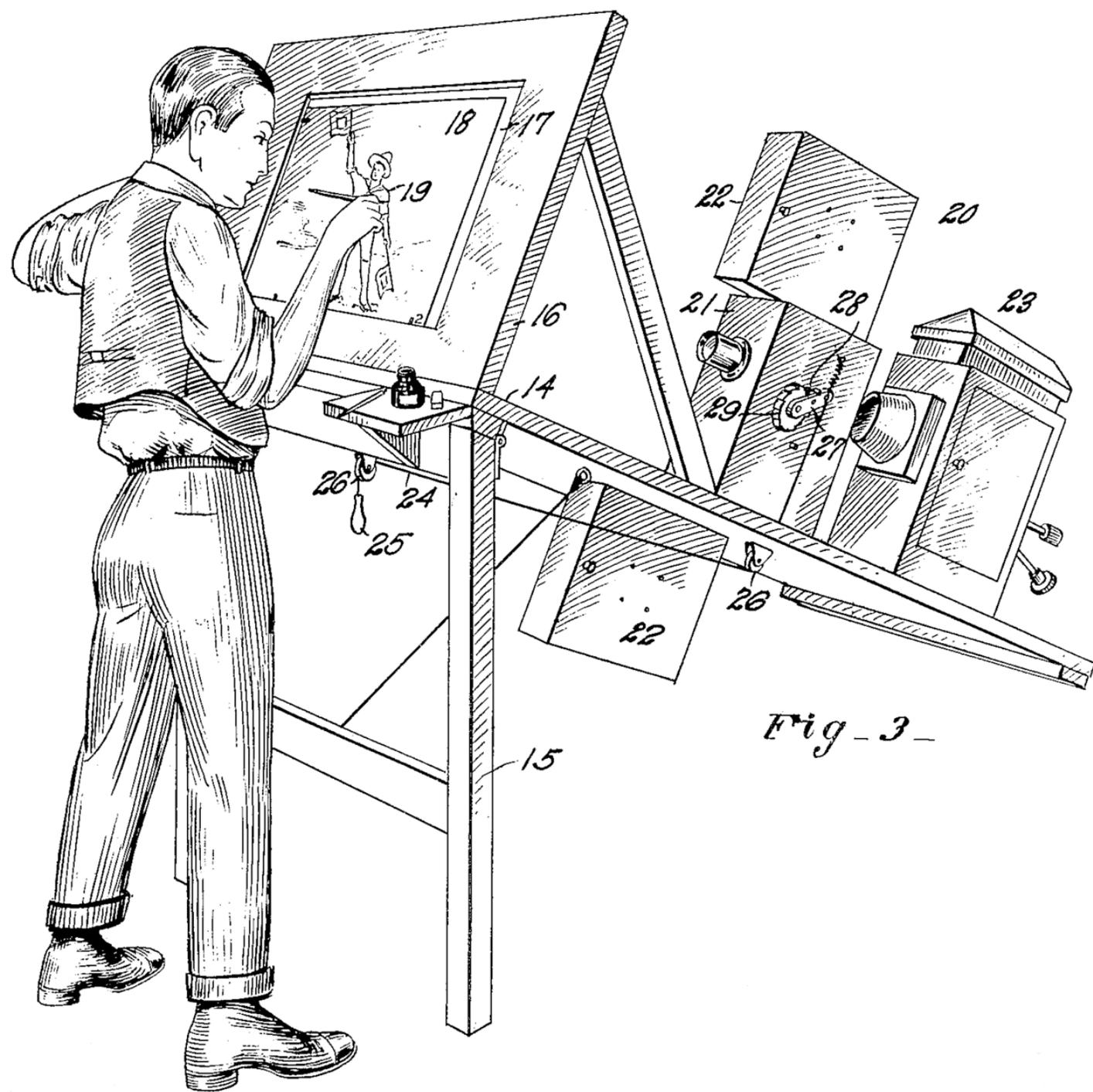


Fig. 3

Rotoscoping is an animation technique used by animators to trace over motion picture footage, frame by frame, when realistic action is required. Originally, photographed live-action movie images were projected onto a glass panel and re-drawn by an animator. This projection equipment is referred to as a Rotoscope. Although this device was eventually replaced by computers, the process is still referred to as Rotoscoping. In the visual effects industry, the term Rotoscoping refers to the technique of manually creating a matte for an element on a live-action plate so it may be composited over another background.



Jack Goldstein's *The Jump*, digitally remastered for the billboards in Times Square, launched on August 1st, 2013

Antonin Artaud

“The Alchemical Theatre” [1938]

All true alchemists know that the alchemical symbol is a mirage as the theatre is a mirage. And this perpetual allusion to the materials and the principle of the theater found in almost all alchemical books should be understood as the expression of an identity (of which alchemists are extremely aware) existing between the world in which the characters, objects, images, and in a general way all that constitutes the virtual reality of the theater develops, and the purely fictitious and illusory world in which the symbols of alchemy are involved.



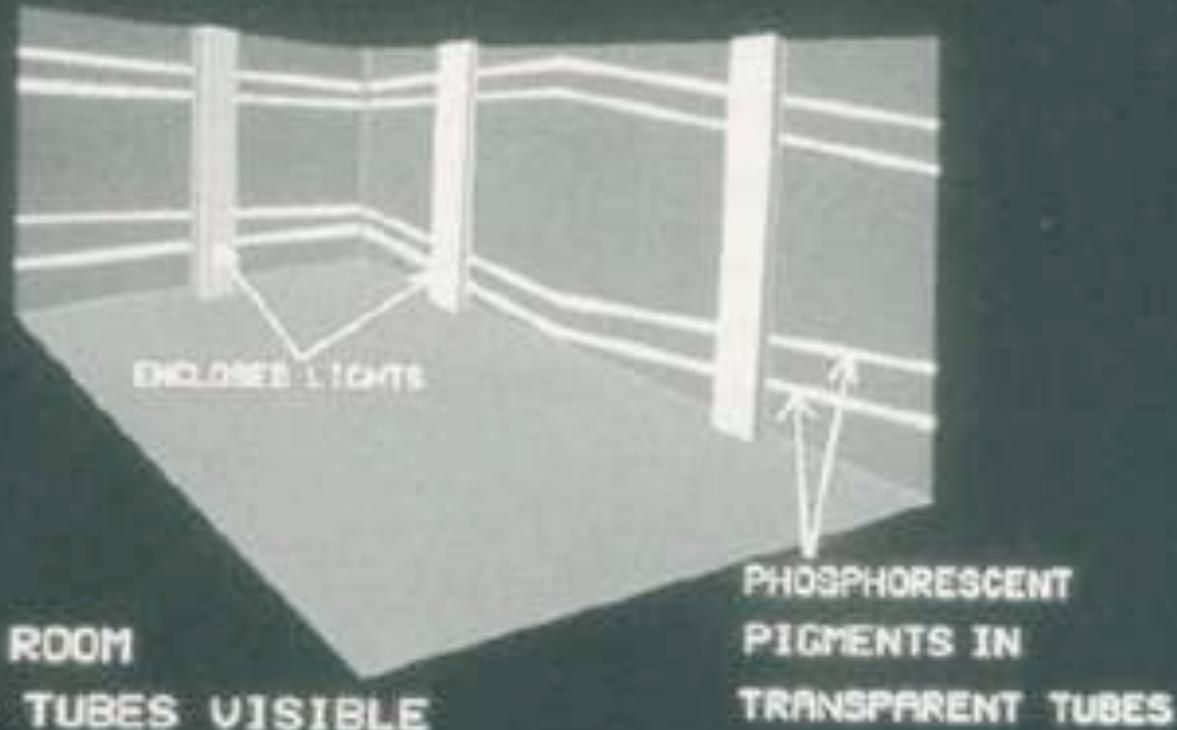
- Alchemical Theatre

- alchemy [noun] 1. the medieval forerunner of chemistry, based on the supposed transformation of matter. It was concerned particularly with attempts to convert base metals into gold or to find a universal elixir. 2. a seemingly magical process of transformation, creation, or combination.

- Theatre of Cruelty

- For Artaud, theatre does not merely refer to a staged performance before a passive audience. The theatre is a practice, which “wakes us up. Nerves and heart,” and through which we experience, “immediate violent action,” that “inspires us with the fiery magnetism of its images and acts upon us like a spiritual therapeutics whose touch can never be forgotten.”¹

GLOWFLOW



The idea was simple - create a darkened room with tubes of light. The floor was covered in sensors. A computer would respond to footsteps by "lighting different tubes or changing the sounds generated by a Moog synthesizer or the origin of these sounds." To Krueger, GLOWFLOW was successful visually, but it lacked the fundamentals of a responsive environment because the user/audience was not aware of the response taking place. There was no dialogue going on between man and machine.

Myron W. Krueger, Glowflow, 1977

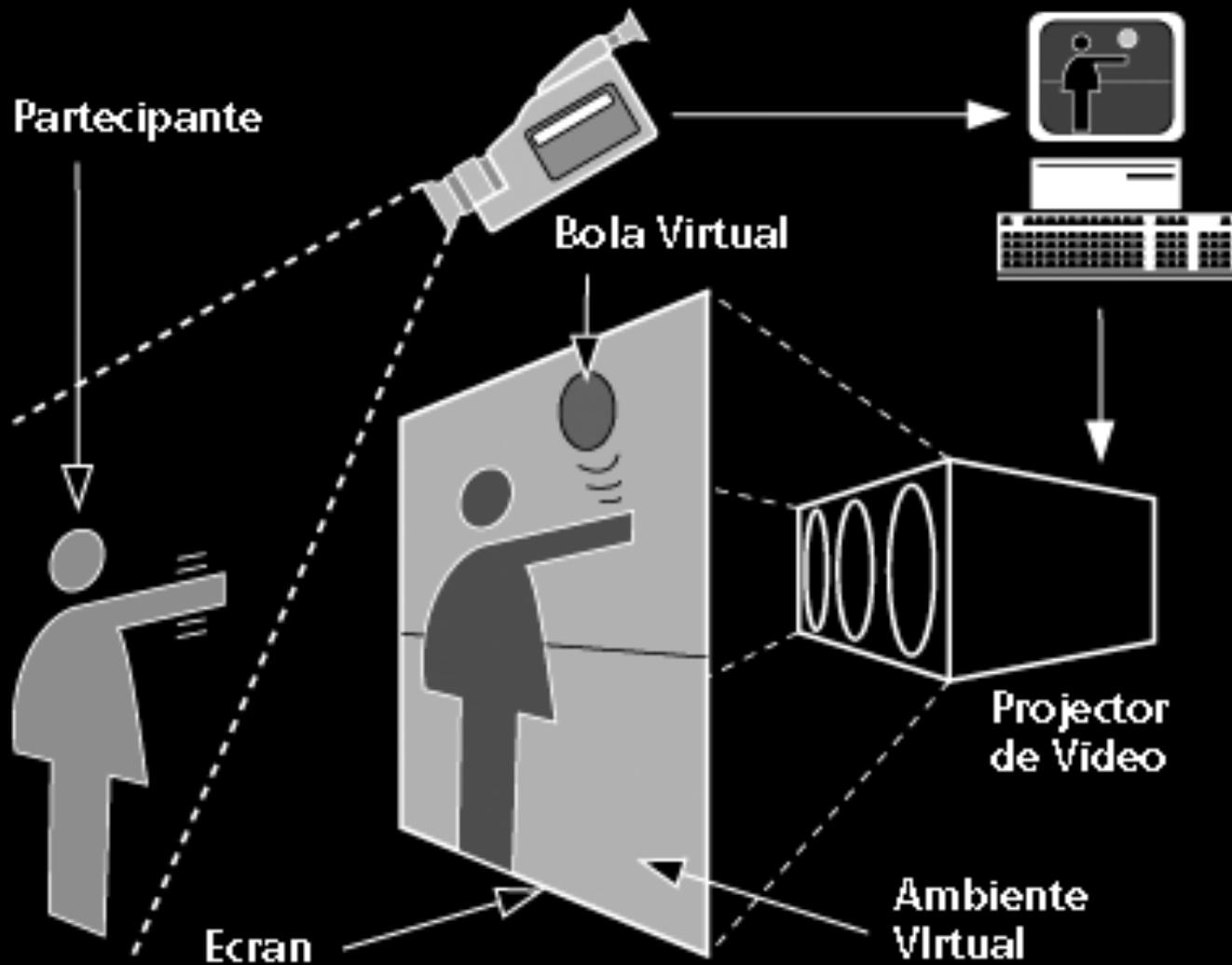
Myron W. Krueger

Responsive Environments [1977]

Man-machine interaction is usually limited to a seated man poking at a machine with his fingers or perhaps waving a wand over a data tablet. Seven years ago, I was dissatisfied with such a restricted dialogue and embarked on research exploring more interesting ways for men and machines to relate. The result was the concept of a responsive environment in which a computer perceives the actions of those who enter and responds intelligently through complex visual and auditory displays.

...

The responsive environment has been presented as the basis for a new aesthetic medium based on the real-time interaction between man and machines. In the long range it augurs a new realm of human experience, artificial realities which seek not to simulate the physical world but to define arbitrary, abstract and otherwise impossible relationships between action and result.

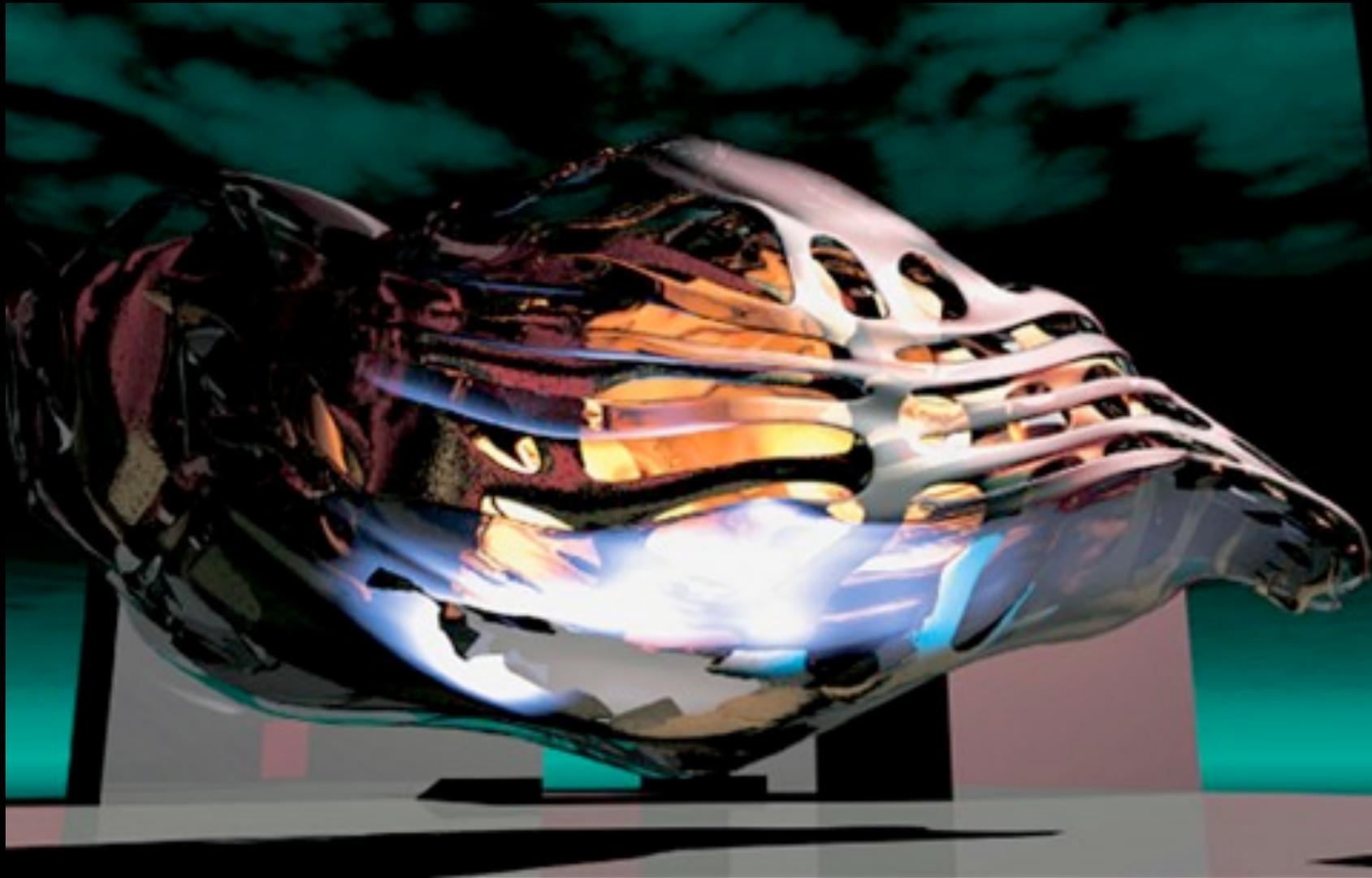


In 1975, Krueger began his major work, "VIDEOPLACE." The VIDEOPLACE concept is simple, it consists of two or more rooms that can be placed anywhere from next to each other to thousands of miles apart. Within the room, a 8' x 10' rear projection screen is utilized so that when a person enters, they are confronted with their own image as well as the images of those in the connected rooms. Those in the connected rooms are also witnessing the same image that the user himself sees. By moving about the their respective rooms, the user's image itself moves about and can interact with other users' images. In addition, the user's image can be shrunk, rotated, colored or keyed in various ways. The user also has the chance to interact not only with the other users, but with graphically represented objects. For Krueger it was these relationships between action and response that were most important: "The beauty of the visual and aural response is secondary. Response is the medium"! As an art form, this is unique. Instead of an artist creating a piece of artwork, the artist is creating a sequence of possibilities. Conversely, the audience is not looking at a piece of artwork. Instead, they are actively involved, sharing in the creation of the art.



Myron W. Krueger, Videoplace, 1970s-80s

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dmmxVA5xhuo>



“If we described liquid architecture as a symphony in space, this description should still fall short of the promise. A symphony, though it varies within its duration, is still a fixed object and can be repeated. At its fullest expression a liquid architecture is more than that. It is a symphony of space, but a symphony that never repeats and continues to develop. If architecture is an extension of our bodies, shelter and actor for the fragile self, a liquid architecture is that self in the act of becoming its own changing shelter. Like us, it has an identity; but this identity is only revealed fully during the course of its lifetime.” -- Marcos Novak

Marcos Novak, Liquid Architectures, 1991

"Without reflexive mirroring no memory, without memory no flow of ideas.

The world as metaphor visualized by interactive narrative models!

We work on interactive installations, participatory environments and public performances: The YOU_ser not only becomes a consumer, as Peter Weibel puts it, but also a Data Performer. The dispositif of the Data Performer refers to visualization and reification of immaterial data, and to the performance of the viewer, that becomes the driving force for knowledge discovery. Being inspired by Aby Warburg's neologisms such as "space of thought" (Denkraum) or "psychological containers of energy" (psychische Energiekonserven), we develop an aesthetic of knowledge space. The Data Performer is part of a space-time environment, that we define as walkable space of thoughts (begehbare Denkräume). The artwork becomes a laboratory that produces narrative voids (Leerstellen) for reflection. The void offers the audience an access to its own thoughts and consequently a feeling of real and virtual presence."

-- MFWS 2010

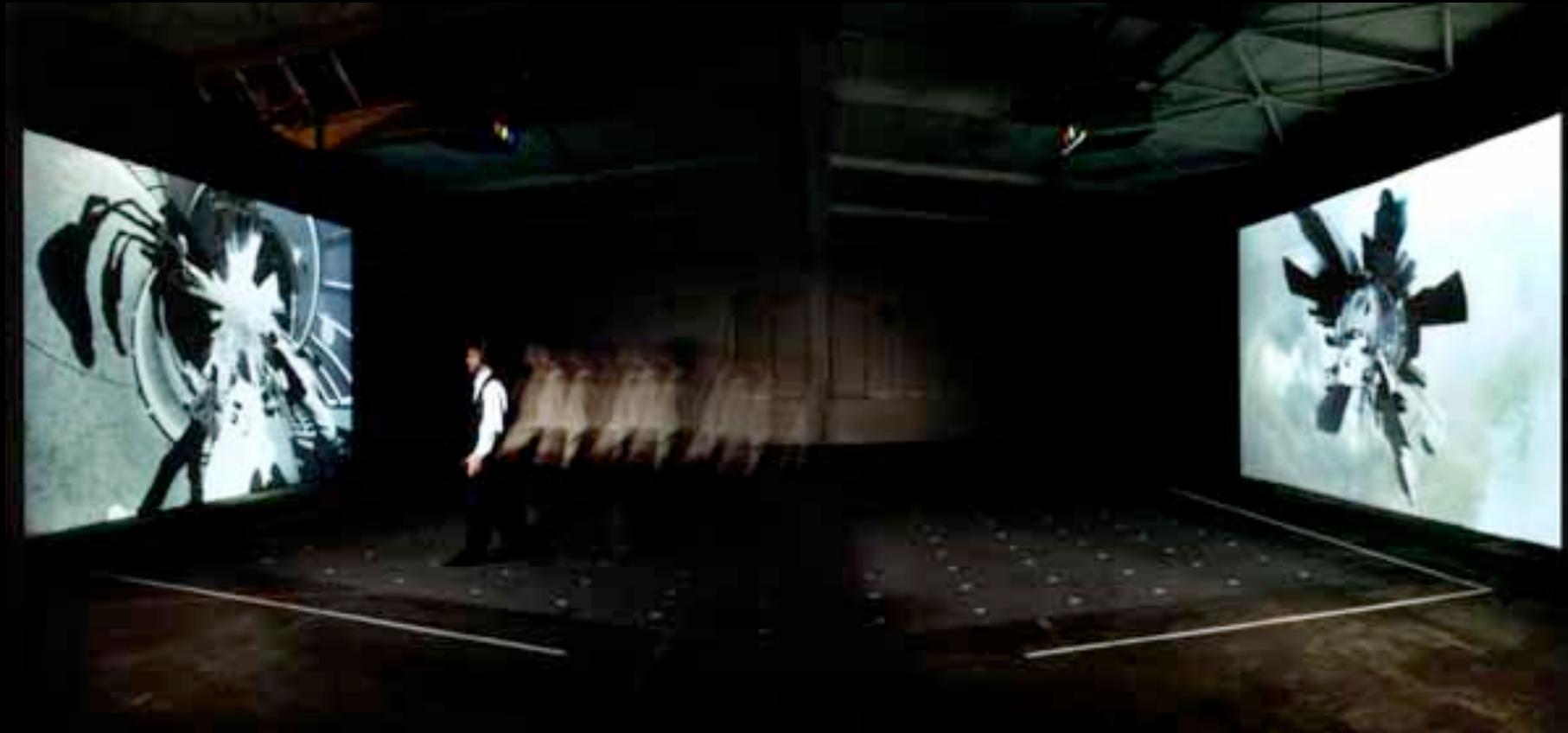


Monica Fleischmann/Wolfgang Strauss,
Home of the Brain, 1992

<http://vimeo.com/7560336>



Ulrike Gabriel, *Breath*, 1992
<http://vimeo.com/30020632>



Miroslaw Rogala with Ford Oxaal and Ludger Hovestadt, Lovers Leap, 1994
<http://vimeo.com/47685756>