

Lesson Plan

Theory: Rosalind Krauss

1. Makes claim – narcissism endemic to video – identifies its defining aesthetic
2. What does this mean?
3. Identifies psychology as a part of video
4. Psychological effect has always been a part of art (duh)
5. But there is something different about video...
6. Painting/sculpture rely upon the notion of a medium in which the medium is conceived of as comprising/resting upon an “object state” – a stable and durable material through which the artist’s intentions must pass
7. Video has this by means of the apparatus, kind of, but what of this apparatus?
8. Complex/electronic (dematerialization of the art object.)
9. “Keeps urging me towards the psychological model.”
10. Turns to psychoanalysis to define medium for generally
11. For videos
 - a. Simultaneous reception and projection of an image
 - b. Human psyche used as a conduit
12. BODY factors centrally into video works of the time (Acconci / Holt and Serra)
13. SELF-ENCAPSULATION “In all these examples the nature of video performance is specified as an activity of bracketing out the text and substituting for it the mirror-reflection”
14. Turns to a discussion of MIRRORS – What is at stake when we employ technology as a mirror? How does this work? What implications does it have for how we perceive ourselves?
15. Art & Psychology VERSUS Psyche as Conduit (“mirror-reflection implies the vanquishing of separate-ness... The agency of reflection is a mode of appropriation, of illusionistically erasing the difference between subject and

object. Facing mirrors on opposite walls squeeze out the real space between them.”

16. Psychoanalysis – MIRROR-PHASE

Example: Vito Acconci

Corrections, 1970

- Key example of video as a medium for rehearsal and means for seeing oneself as others see you
- According Rudolf Freeling, this immediate feedback without the pressures of audience, provided a means for witnessing and reflecting on oneself – exteriorize, deterritorialize, relationship with one's own body.

Centres, 1971

- Centres his body between the camera and the monitor and pointed to the centre of the monitor.
- Spatial closure, and infinite feedback loop, promote a condition of self-reflection > goes so far as indexical function of pointing in his case
- Gazing into the mirror of the feedback loop allowed entry into a locked-in world of self and self as other in the reflecting pool of the technology. No other crew or machinery was needed to create the image and natural light was sufficient to illuminate a scene.

Exemplifies Krauss' notion of the “aesthetic of narcissism” that is attached to video. (Funny given that video frequently robbed of it's own aesthetic.)

Krauss describes this narcissism as a kind of psychological strategy for examining the conditions and traditions of the relationships between the process of image-making and the viewer's perception of it.

Theme Song, 1973

- “I can feel your body right next to me... I know I'm only kidding myself... you're not here.”
- Despite promise of immediacy initially grafted to technological device, Acconci is critical of this in his later piece, Theme Song.
- Describing a relationship of trust and deception, Acconci ultimately acknowledges that the notion of being 'face to face' is, after all, a rather pathetic illusion: 'I can feel your body right next to me...I know I'm only kidding myself...You're not her
- Promise of immediacy negated in piece as an illusion of Desiring Machine – proximity that reminds of distance/absence and therefore facilitates more desiring.