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Ray Rapp

September 14 - October 16, 1998
Ben Shahn Galleries, William Paterson University
Wayne, New Jersey 07470
973-720-2654
Nancy Einreinhofer, Director

foiled, fabric, circuit boards, disassembled tv, aluminum paint, and video. 23"(w) x 26"(d) x 76"(h), 1997

Foiled

Prologue

A shirt hangs on a wall. A foot jumps up and down on the mini-tv in the shirt pocket. Three disassembled televisions are mounted on carts fabricated from a giant's erector set. Disembodied body parts float in a viscous medium on each monitor. A face turns from side to side in blue liquid. A torso squirms in red paint, two feet perform a window wipe in a yellow field.

A chair sits in front of a coffee table with a disassembled tv resting on top. Sequences from a Bergman or Fellini movie pass by interrupted by a video animation pulsating in the background of each frame. The chair provides a comfortable place to watch video.

A tv springs from the ground on four steel rods. Another tv is suspended on pulleys and ropes from the roof trusses. Clouds pass by Rocks fall from the sky

The Ben Shahn Galleries become the setting for a *ray rapp* installation.

Erector Set TVs

The *Erector Set TVs* were first exhibited in *rayrapprayrapp* at TZ' Art & Co in 1997. Originally a video vignette entitled *Just the facts, ma'am* was played on monitors. That video was a colorized, synopsized version of an earlier work, *Jealousy*, in which three characters enact a triple murder on eight televisions hanging from the ceiling. *Just the facts, ma'am* re-edits the original with pertinent text and several additional new frames.

In the work exhibited at William Paterson, an entirely new video has been created. Isolated body parts are used to 'paint' on the screen. A video camera is set up under a plexiglass sheet. Colored paint or liquid is floated over the plexiglass. The *appropriate body part is submerged in the liquid film* and moves to an accompanying sound track. Thus the artist's face is used on the top monitor, torso for the center monitor, and of course the foot wipe performs on the bottom monitor.

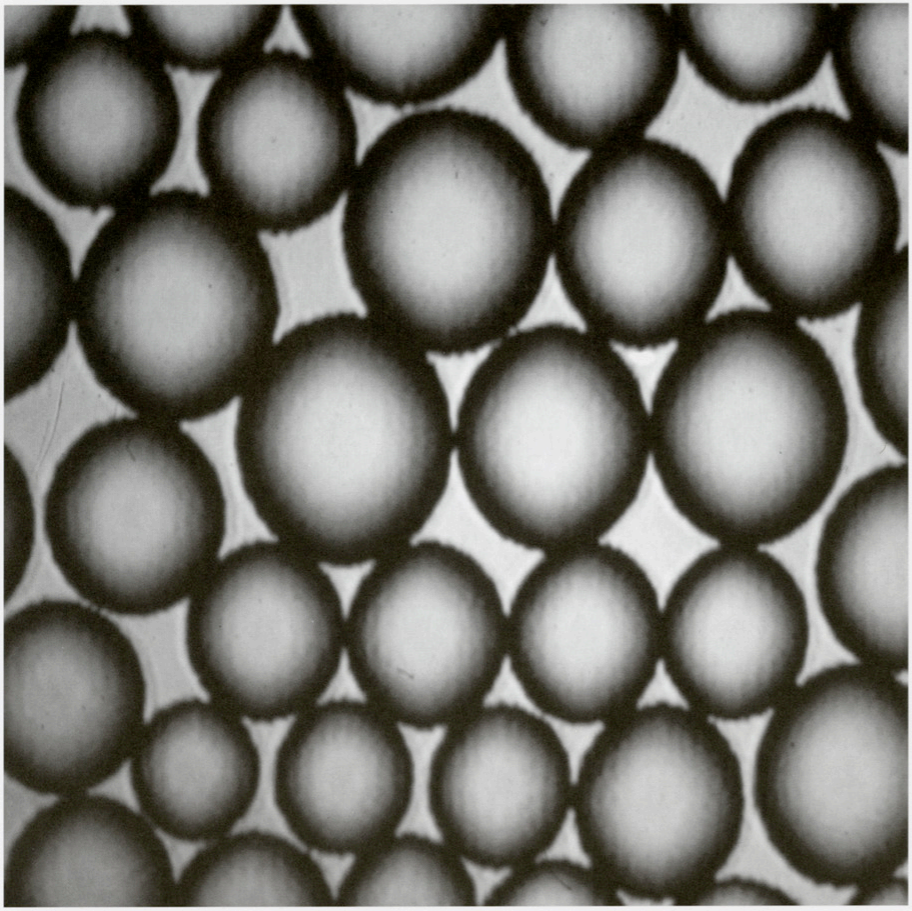
The original idea for face painting, torso painting, and feet painting came from the finger painting to opera video for *Truth in Painting* (1993) named after Derrida's tome of the same name. Somehow dissembling and disassembling seem to have something in common.

erector sets, disassembled tvs, plexiglass, perforated angle iron, wheels, and video. 28"(w) x 84"(d) x 74"(h), 1997.

Coffee Table

Coffee Table is the first example of a second generation of tv furniture. The first generation consisted of packing crate-like constructions stacked on top of one another and stained orange. The second generation is more decidedly furniture-like; a take off of 1950's livingroom furniture. A chair will be provided to watch tv in a more comfortable position.

coffee table, disassembled tv,
video, plywood, table legs, and stain.
21"(w) x 43"(d) x 17"(h), 1998.



bubblemation, still frame from computer animation, 1997.

Bubblemation is a computer animation played on the first generation of *tv furniture*. In *Coffee Table*, the animation becomes the background, 'keyed' onto selected vignettes from Bergman, Fellini and Tarkovsky movies. In this manner these classics are updated.

red shirt, shirt, tie, pocket tv, and video.
26"(w) x 4"(d) x 48"(h), 1997.

Red

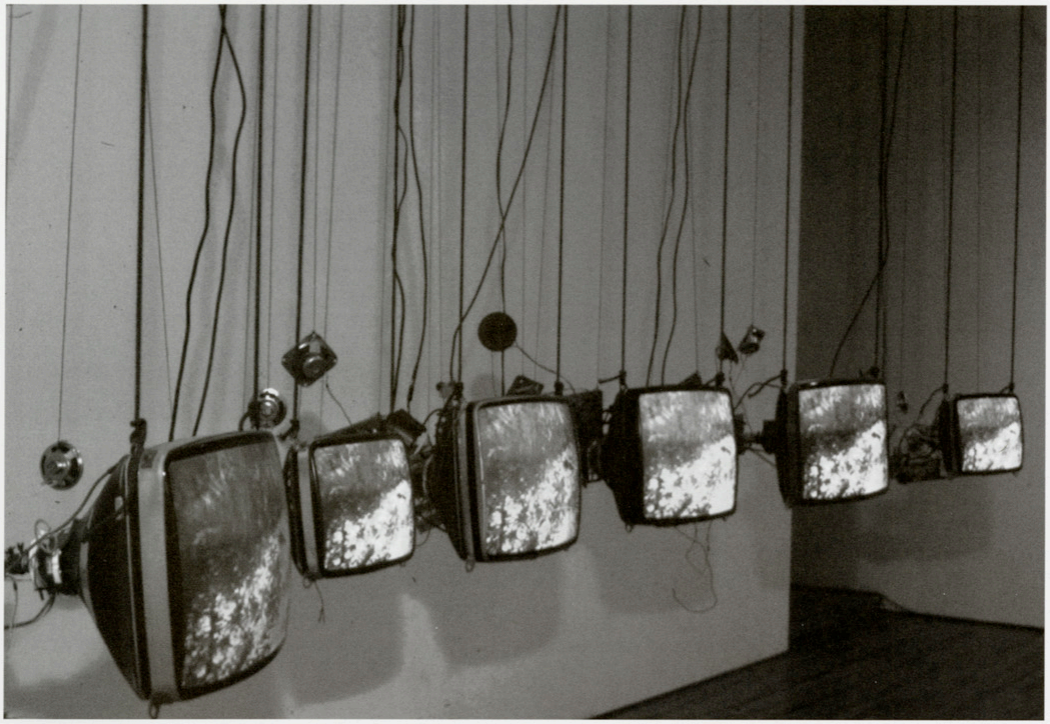
Red Shirt

Red Shirt was originally part of an installation entitled *Its Saturday Night in America*. In that installation the red shirt echoed the costumes worn by the male square dancers in the main video of the work. Now the shirt with a pocket mini-tv becomes a mini-series. A tie is added. The shirt with tie is a portrait. A disembodied portrait.

The pocket tv plays a video of a foot jumping up and down repeatedly. The "jumping foot" has been used in other video installations, such as *stepping down*, to create a rhythmic pattern. In the context of the red shirt, the hopping foot becomes just another frenetic movement.

Installation

Each installation takes on a character and meaning structure of its own, depending upon specific versions of the works chosen and the ambience of the exhibition site. I try to utilize the exhibition space to its fullest advantage. Taking apart televisions offered a readymade means of hanging the monitors and component parts due to the frame which attaches the monitor to the factory case provided by most tv manufacturers. In addition to the spatial use of disassembled televisions, I have begun to make my own cases for tvs either as furniture or sculptural combines.



spin, six disassembled tvs, rope, and video, 1995.

"Rapp's identification with abused zealots and busted TVs is complete, as evidenced in the show's centerpiece, *Spin*, an installation of six monitors suspended in a row showing a dizzying view of a country landscape spinning in circles. The video was shot by the artist as he hung up-side-down from a tree branch. As viewed on screen, the sensation suggests the trance induced rapture of a whirling dervish.

Robert Costa, *Cover*, 3/95

Selected Exhibitions

Selected Exhibitions:

1998 **Op at UP & Co,** Up & Co, organized by Tom Moody, NY, NY
One Person Exhibition, Ben Shahn Galleries, The William Paterson University of NJ, Wayne, NJ
Orkestra, Orkestra, organized by Susan Batu, NY, NY

1997 **rayrapprayrapp,** (one person exhibition), TZ'Art & CO., NY, NY
Affirm Identity, Kingsboro Community College Art Gallery, Director Lily Wei, Brooklyn, NY
Concrete Signal 2, Ben Shahn Galleries, curated by Robert Costa, The William Paterson University of NJ, Wayne, NJ
Sizzle, Jeffrey Coploff Gallery, New York, NY

1996 **New York State Biennial,** New York State Museum, curated by Ken Johnson, Albany, NY
Shopping: The Bake Sale, Deitch Projects, organized by Elaine Tin Nyo, NY, NY

1995 **Saints,** (one person exhibition), TZ'Art & Co., New York, NY
Hybrid Nights No. 3, (video installation), The Kitchen, New York, NY
Video Sculpture, Wake Forest University, Winston-Salem, North Carolina
Jealousy, (video installation), Dowling College, curated by Islip Art Museum, Islip, NY

1994 **(Of)f the Screen,** (two person exhibition), TZ'Art & Co., New York, NY
Redefining the Pop Icon in the Nineties, Pamela Auchincloss, New York, NY
stepping down , (video installation), Art Awareness, Lexington, NY
Random Access, Ramnarine Gallery, Long Island City, NY
The Return of the Cadavre Exquis, The Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington,DC
Phrenology: A Multimedia 'Electronic Magic Lantern' Show, Millenium, NY, NY
Defining Color, TZ'Art & Co., New York, NY
Cidade Imaginada, Forum of Visual Arts, Museum of Brasilia, Brasilia, Brazil

1993 **Images du Futur '93,** La Cite' des Art et Nouvelles Technologies, Montreal, Quebec, Canada
Zoo Extracts, (video installation), Islip Art Museum, Islip, NY

1993 **Xenographia - Nomadic Wall,** (video installation), Grunert & Scrocca, Venice Biennale, Italy
The Return of the Cadavre Exquis, The Drawing Center, New York, NY
Concrete Signal, Tribeca 148, organized by Robert Costa, New York, NY
Twisted State, 80 Washington St., organized by Primary Projects, NY, NY
Art Toys: Playful Art and Art You Can Play With, Madelyn Jordon Gallery, NY, NY

1992 **Standing Water,** (two person exhibition), P.S. 122, New York, NY
Apartment Store, Exit Art/The First World, New York, NY
Constructed Sculpture in Wood, The Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, NY
The Pull of Kinetics, Newhouse Center, Snug Harbor, Staten Island, NY

1991 **Tweeking the Human,** Minor Injury Gallery, Brooklyn, NY

1990 **The Expressionist Surface: Contemporary Art in Plaster,** Queens Museum, NY
Enclosure, (video installation), The Rotunda Gallery, Brooklyn, NY
An Obscure Object to Desire, Marymount Manhattan College Gallery, New York, NY
The Notion of Motion, (video Installation), Islip Art Museum Islip, NY

1989 **On the Cutting Edge,** Fine Arts Museum of Long Island, Hempstead, NY
Verticality, (one person exhibition), Nancy Bratton Gallery, New York, NY

1988 **Six Views: Installations,** (installation), City Gallery, Department of Cultural Affairs, NY
Three Artists, Nancy Bratton Gallery, New York, NY
Interference, (one person exhibition), ASAGE Gallery, New York, NY

1987 **Constructions and Drawings,** (one person exhibition), 55 Mercer, New York, NY
Petit format de papier, Cul-des-Sarts (Couvin), Belgique

Quotes

"Rapp's video loops of spheres growing and shrinking, made on a simple animation program, bear the same relation to the 'trip' sequences of Hollywood science fiction films as a Yugo does to a Mercedes... "

Tom Moody, "Op Art in the 90's", VERY, 6/98

"Cleverly deconstructed and retooled televisions."

Ken Johnson, New York Times 12/19/97

"Call it clever post--Paik video art. This frenetic installation of boob-tube sculptures titled *rayrapprayrapp* includes. .."

Kim Levin, Village Voice, 12/17/97

"Rapp literally deconstructs this avatar of our modern consciousness, dissecting and vivisecting his TV sets the way a welder uses scrap metal....Rapp's constructions contain the haphazard logic of play, at turns cruel, bored and ingenious."

Steve Mumford, Review, 12/15/97

"Rapp's gangly, lyrical constructions of disemboweled televisions are punctuated by working video monitors with sound loops.. .Rapp's references to Action Painting and the jumbled images and narratives with which we are bombarded daily are humorous and smart."

Susan Harris, ARTNews, 7/94

Credits

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Thomas Cordasco and William Storno

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WILLIAM PATERSON UNIVERSITY
300 POMPTON ROAD • WAYNE, NEW JERSEY 07470
www.wilpaterson.edu