

FILM AT REDCAT PRESENTS

Mon Feb 11 | 8:30 pm |

Jack H. Skirball Screening Series

\$10 [students \$8, CalArts \$5]

Nancy Buchanan: Lines of Enquiry

Since the early 1970s, Nancy Buchanan's work in video has been marked by her consistent exploration of the spaces between political essay, poetry and performance. This screening presents an overview of her remarkable career, starting with early videos that disrupt representational stereotypes through feminist critique, such as ***Primary and Secondary Spectres*** (1989), to her polemics of the 1980s and 1990s, that address such issues as real estate speculation and U.S. interventionism in Latin America, including ***Sightlines*** (1989) and ***American Dream #7*** (1991). Other pieces combine political awareness with dry humor (***Pursed***, 2003-4, with Cynthia Maughan; ***Horses***, 2009), as well as insightful explorations of cultures at times of momentous changes, such as her collaboration with Sanda Agalidi, ***Windows and Mirrors*** (1995), shot in Romania.

In person: Nancy Buchanan

"Nancy Buchanan is a key figure of the performance art scene and of the feminist art movement that emerged in Southern California during the 1970s. There is an ethical core to her artistic practice, grounded in the observation of lived history. At the same time, a disarming element of 'serious play' characterizes many of her performances, installations and works in image and text." – Audrey Chan, *Afterall*

"Buchanan's work calls attention to the easily ignored, marginalized and all encompassing ethical issues—the lapses between recognition and action, complacency and terror—made manifest (or more often ignored) by mainstream media. It is this media which has served well as a target for Buchanan's strategy of black humor and political critique."— Erika Suderburg.

"Likening the role of the artist to that of the canary in the coal mine, Buchanan describes her work as a tool for raising awareness of contemporary political and social issues." – Andra Darlington

Program

Primary and Secondary Spectres (4:49', 1979)

A deconstruction of the power of "reality" as TV presents/manufactures it. While a young man narrates a formulaic TV movie (chase scene, romance, etc.), scenes set up entirely in either orange, yellow, green, blue, purple or red call attention to the unnatural quality of electronic color. (NB)

These Creatures (1:00', 1979)

followed by: ***These Creatures*** (1:00', 1979/2012)

by Gabriela Tuparova (Spain)

These Creatures was made for *30/60 TV Art*, a project organized by Kathy Huffman at the Long Beach Museum of Art. It was designed as a feminist anti-advertisement. Unfortunately, it still seems to be timely. (NB)

Pursed (4:55', 2003-2004), in collaboration with Cynthia Maughan.

Taste and the Sublime; a not-so-gentle approach of the last taboos in art: money and class. A discourse on the evils of marketing and the marketing of evil. What's *your* bag? (NB)

The Work Of Art In The Age Of Electronic Reproduction (7:34', 1985-6)

A personal homage to Walter Benjamin, considering issues raised by *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*, and the manner in which the questions that he raised have been compounded. Image-processing completed at the Experimental Television Center, NY, creates a handmade look, underscoring the lack of collective video art, and quotations about an artist's social responsibility (or lack thereof) are manipulated to force tension between the act of viewing and reading. (NB)

American Dream #7: The Price Is Wrong (13', 1991)

Property values and the changing notion of "home" in the post-Reagan era are examined. The piece explores various contradictions that have subsequently become more pronounced, such as those between real estate speculation in the 1990s and community needs in downtown Los Angeles and Watts. Interviews with attorney Mary Lee and author Mike Davis provide background. Ron Dillum's speech at the funeral of Huey P. Newton is included courtesy of Michael Zinzun. (NB)

Horses (3', 2009)

Invited by Natasa Prosenec to join her *Death of Socrates* project, I

selected Section XIV, in which Socrates characterizes himself as a biting fly on the flanks of humanity. (NB)

Flight: Let The Women Speak (5', 2009)

Although Kurdistan (autonomous region of northern Iraq) is progressive in a number of ways, with women filling important legislative positions, patriarchal attitudes are still very much in evidence. The video was shot during two visits to the region (sponsored by ArtRole), and includes documentation of a performance by UK artist Anne Bean. (NB)

Sightlines (8:08', 1988)

This tape explores the way we "see" one another, in the context of the way political propaganda creates an image of the "Other." The true story of a woman exposed to violence and murder in her native El Salvador frames a segment of manipulated imagery illustrating clichés about eyes, sight, and vision. (NB)

Windows & Mirrors (37', 1995) with Sanda Agalidi

An attempt to record and document a specific moment: two months (May-June 1991) following the Romanian revolution, when questions and doubts abounded, when hope was tinged with frustration. Was the revolution staged, or at least co-opted, by former officials? What were the challenges posed by the country's transition to market economy? (NB)

TRT: about 85 minutes

Nancy Buchanan studied at UC Irvine, where she was influenced by artist-instructors Robert Irwin, Larry Bell, Vija Celmins and David Hockney. She began making videotapes as an outgrowth of her performances, and her artistic practice also includes installation as well as drawing/mixed media.

She was a founding member of F Space Gallery in Orange County, as well as Grandview Galleries at the Los Angeles Woman's Building and LACE (Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions) in its early years. From 1988-1998, she assisted community activist Michael Zinzun with his acclaimed cable TV show, *Message to the Grassroots*, and traveled to Namibia to document the independence process for Zinzun's Southern Africa Support organization.

Buchanan's work has been exhibited nationally and internationally, at the Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris; MOMA, New York; MCA, Chicago; and MOCA, Los Angeles, among others. She was awarded four National Endowment for the Arts Individual Artist

Fellowships for her work in media and performance, and in 1996 received a Rockefeller Fellowship in New Media to complete an interactive CD-ROM, *Developing: The Idea of Home*. Buchanan's recent digital prints are currently included in a COLA (City of Los Angeles individual artists' grant program) exhibition inside Terminal 1 at Los Angeles International Airport.

In the 1980s, Buchanan was an Assistant Professor and created curricula for the first Non-Static Art Program at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. From 1988 to 2012, she was a faculty member in the School of Film/Video at the California Institute of the Arts.

Curated by Steve Anker and Bérénice Reynaud

Funded in part with generous support from the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences