

In explaining his work in a white paper entitled *Direct Video: Electronic Artform for Color Television* (available from the National Center), Beck has made the following remarks.

Within many of mankind's tools are latent properties unobserved even by those whose intuition has led to the design of the tool. Television is no exception. As an electronic system its range and complexity are astonishing; unfortunately, far more so than its usual content indicates. Let us go one step further than television might seem to permit and remove the TV camera, replacing it with electronic circuits which can be manipulated to effect the formation of an image on a video monitor. This is direct video synthesis. It presents the artist, or *videographer*, with a new potential for using television as a medium of personal expression.

I was led to color television in the search for a precise means of expressively controlling light. Conventional computer graphics displays seemed costly and neglected a common piece of hardware—the color television set—as a display terminal; hence, the notion of a visual synthesizer as intermediary between control and display of an image.

It remained, however, to assess and understand the aesthetic properties of the television medium, and to formulate an aesthetic model upon which to base the construction of electronic image-forming modules which would constitute a synthesizer. With a voltage-controlled parameter approach the computer could be used to direct the image-producing modules. But more important, the videographer would have intimate control of the image through various physical—and also possibly biologically controlled—transducers which would develop control voltages.

Sense impressions of both my inner and outer world and their subsequent intellectualization led to the formation of an aesthetic model comprised of elements of form, motion, texture and color. (A mathematical development of form as points, lines, planes and perspective illusions serves as a preconditioner for electronically realizing these elements.) The temporal changing of geometrical relationships between elements of form gives rise to motion. Texture arises as brightness gradients over the elements of form, or a macroscopic aggregate of microforms, while the spectral distribution of reflected and radiant energy of forms evokes color from our senses.

As remarkable as it seems the incredible pretentious First National Video Tape Festival held at the Minneapolis College of Art during the fall selected only one San Francisco submission as worthy of recognition. The New York conceptual art oriented judges (Stoney, Youngblood, Rose) failed to award any West Coast artist more than passing notice. Whether it was by accident or by design, however, the judges elected to give honorable mention to one of the really significant works done in video during the last few years. Artists Don



Paul Kaufman, executive director/Brice Howard, director/Marvin Duckler, associate director/Kurt Machein, technical supervisor/Don Hallock, artist in residence/Willard Rosenquist, designer of light as a medium/William Roarty, artist in residence/Stephen Beck, circuit engineer and electronic videographer/Warner Jepson, composer/Rick Davis, circuit engineer/Ann Turner, reports editor/Mimi Scott, secretary.

