Orlan, video still from 30 Second Spots: Paris, 1983



New York video artist Joan Logue collaborates with artists, dancers, writers and composers to create 30second, single-channel "video miniatures." Taking into account the short attention span of audiences conditioned by television, Logue encapsulates an aspect of each subject's artistic expression, utilizing sophisticated camera and editing techniques. Each brief spot is clean and succinct, like a video haiku.

Three series of spots--New York, Paris and San Francisco--will be shown in this exhibition. Taken as a group, each presents an image of the creative energy of the particular city. The New York series features such artists and composers as Maryanne Amacher, Laurie Anderson, Philip Glass and John Cage. Cage's wry humor and good nature come across as he relates advice from his father, "Remember, your mother is always right, even when she is wrong."

For the Paris series, Logue taped David Hockney, wearing a hat, afloat in a swimming pool, a favorite setting for his paintings and photographs. She also captured the dramatic presence of French performance artist Orlan and the split-second technique of street photographer Robert Doisneau.

The San Francisco series, produced during Logue's residency at the Capp Street Project, San Francisco, from October through December 1984, will premiere in this exhibition. The series includes poet Michael McClure, dancer Anna Halprin, composer Don Buchla, opera singer Diamanda Galas, video artist Starr Sutherland, and

a segment taped at the earthquake simulator at the California Academy of Sciences.

The purpose of the 30-second spots is to "produce a new form of television." Logue hopes eventually to air the spots on broadcast television, like commercials, ten to twenty times a day. She would like to see Steve Reich and Pierre Boulez become household words.

Logue was a pioneer in the field of video art, learning to use the medium soon after it became available to artists with Sony's introduction of the portable video camera in 1965. As a still portrait photographer, Logue immediately recognized the new medium's potential for expressing more fully the personality of the sitter in living, real-time portaits. Although Logue's background was not in film (she studied painting and photography), the technique she uses in her silent video portraits recalls that used in Andy Warhol's early films: in both cases the action takes place in front of a stationary camera. Since 1973 Logue has completed over 400 video portraits of artists, families, lovers and street people. Several of them have been seen here and abroad in installations Logue calls video portrait galleries.

In her non-static "ads for artists," Logue assumes a more active role, often interpreting as well as documenting the work of an artist. To do so, she sometimes makes use of complex special effects equipment like the Mirage, ADO, and DVE. For example, in the Halprin piece she used a technique called "track and

trailing"; as the dancer moves, sequential frames of her image remain on the screen.

Logue's future projects include working with artists Joseph Beuys and Pina Bausch with funding provided by the German government's DAAD grant and taping fishermen in Cape Cod under the Massachusetts Council on the Arts sponsorship. She is also planning a new series of 3to 4-minute mini-operas she calls Opera Television (OTV), stimulated by her recent MTV promotional video for Paul Simon, included in the current exhibition.

Logue was born in McKeesport, Pennsylvania, in 1942 and grew up in Southern California. She received a BFA and MA from Mount. St. Mary's College, Los Angeles, in 1970 and continued to live and work in Los Angeles until 1977, founding the first video program at the American Film Institute (1970) and teaching at California Institute of the Arts (1972-74) and Otis Art Institute (1977). After moving to New York in 1977, Logue received a series of grants from the National Endowment for the Arts (1977, 1978, 1979, 1982, 1983) as well as grants from the French Ministry of Culture (which enabled her to create the Paris series) and from the New York Council on the Arts and New York City's CAPS award.

Constance Lewallen

Works in MATRIX:

- 1. 30 Second Spots: New York, 1980-82, 3/4" color, sound, 18 min. Producer, Joan Logue; co-producer, The Kitchen, New York.
- 2. 30 Second Spots: Paris,
 1982-83, 3/4" color, sound,
 12 min. Producer, Joan
 Logue; co-producer, Centre
 Georges Pompidou, Paris.
- 3. 30 Second Spots: San
 Francisco, 1984-85, 3/4"
 color, sound, 5 min.
 Producer, Joan Logue;
 Executive producer: Capp
 Street Project, San
 Francisco.
- 4. Rene and Georgia Magritte
 with Their Dog after the War,
 1984, 3/4" color, sound, 3
 min. 43 sec. Executive producer,
 Alan Kleinberg, New York.

Selected one-person exhibitions:

The Museum of Modern Art, NY, Video Portraits from California, '78; Holly Solomon Gallery, NY, Video Portraits from California (window exhibition), '78; Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., Five American Painters, 36th Biennial Exhibition of American Painting, '79 (first video portrait gallery); Walker Art Institute, Minneapolis, MN, John Cage Video Portrait, '80 (also shown at Anthology Film Archives, NY); Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, Video Portrait Gallery, '81; The Kitchen, NY, Video Portrait Gallery, '81; Maison de Culture, Montpelier, France, Video Portrait Gallery, '82; Spring Street Drug Store, NY, Neighborhood Video Portrait Gallery, '82; San Sebastian, Spain, Video Portrait Gallery, Video Festival, '83; Capp Street Project, S.F., 30 Second

Selected group exhibitions:

The Kitchen, NY, '75; Otis
Art Institute, L.A., '76;
Long Beach Museum of Art, CA,
Southland Video Anthology
1976-77, '77 (catalogue); Los
Angeles Institute of
Contemporary Art, '77; San
Francisco Video Festival, '83
(catalogue; selected entry).

MATRIX is supported in part by grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, a Federal agency, Mrs. Paul L. Wattis, and the T. B. Walker Foundation.