

# OCWEEKLY

## OCMA'S NEW SHOW IS SO MESMERIZING YOU'LL BE LOST WITHOUT THIS ESSENTIAL GUIDE

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It's easy to get lost for hours in "The Moving Image: Scan to Screen, Pixel to Projection" exhibition at Orange County Museum of Art. Deputy Director of Exhibitions and Programs Karen Moss and her curatorial staff have combed through the museum's permanent collection of video and dug up a greatest hits of previously seen installations and conceptual artwork. The bulk is from the video boom of the pre-MTV '70s and early/mid-2000s, with a smattering of '80s and '90s.

I spent more than five hours there and could have spent a lot more, but I understand that you're likely not getting a paycheck for your time, so feel free to use this brief road map to locate and review what I consider to be the most interesting work and still get out in less than three hours.

**Christian Marclay**, *Telephones*, 1995 (seven minutes): A cleverly edited series of Hollywood film clips of famous actors dialing, answering, talking on and hanging up phones. The clips are old enough to feature rotary dial phones; our current cell-dependent status doesn't date, but rather deepens, the work.

**William Wegman**, *Selections From 1970-78* (19 minutes, 11 seconds): Of the several videos presented here, most are humorous, a couple are serious, but the signature work featuring the artist's dogs—a handful of compliant Weimaraners—are the most fun. Make sure to catch *Dog Baseball*. I'm a cat person, but I laughed my ass off.

**Chris Burden**, *Documentation of Selected Works 1971-74, 1971-75* (34 minutes, 38 seconds): Former UC Irvine student and performance artist Burden was famous for placing himself in danger, and there are several rough/violent moments in the compilation—including a gunshot wound (*Shoot*, 1971) and a nude body near flaming gasoline (*Icarus*, 1972)—so these videos aren't for the easily agitated. I found his work consistently arresting, but even my cast-iron stomach called it quits after a long sequence of the artist basically waterboarding himself.

**Martha Rosler**, *Semiotics of the Kitchen*, 1975 (six minutes, nine seconds): Rosler stands in a kitchen and demonstrates cooking utensils, but the way she wields knives and spoons is more like a rape-prevention class than anything having to do with food.

**Bill Viola**, *Reflecting Pool—Collected Work 1977-80* (seven minutes): As the artist cannonballs fully clothed into a pool, he freezes mid-air and slowly disappears, until the surface of the pool bubbles, and he appears from under the still water, naked. It's on a 62-minute loop, so just stick around for a 10th of that, and you'll have seen what you needed. Hypnotic perfection.

**Bruce and Norman Yonemoto**, *Spalding Gray's Map of LA*, 1984 (27 minutes, 40 seconds): There were

problems with the audio for this on the day I visited, so I didn't watch, but *anything* with the late Gray is worth your time.

**Jem Cohen**, *This Is a History of New York: The Golden Dark Age of Reason*, 1988 (23 minutes): Postpunk legends Butthole Surfers play over funereal black-and-white Super 8mm and video footage of often solitary New Yorkers, swallowed up by the concrete surrounding them.

**Yucef Mehri**, *Atari Poetry IV*, 2004 (one minute): Read. Keep moving.

Duck into the small screening room for **Pipilotti Rist**'s perfectly titled *I Want to See How You See*, **Cory Arcangel** and **Frankie Martin**'s 2005 black-and-white *414-3-Rave-95*, and **Tim Sullivan**'s goofball *Magic Carpet Ride 2006*. Total: 11 minutes, 53 seconds.

**Shirley Shor**, *Landslide*, 2004 (two minutes): Puzzle over its meaning. Resist playing in the sandbox.

**Alan Rath**, *Watcher II*, 1999: Take a look. Move on. *1 minute*.

**Eija-Liisa Ahtila**, *Lahja—The Present*, 2001 (approximately 15 minutes): Five riveting, exquisitely cinematic, small films on five monitors, all based on the experiences of mentally ill women.

Step into the side room and watch **Kota Ezawa**'s 2005 Kennedy- and Lincoln-assassination low-tech animation *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*. Stick around for the aggressive poetics of South African artist **Robin Rhode**'s 2004/2006 digitally animated *Color Chart*, as a man dressed in white is assaulted by—and beats down—several primary “colored” assailants. Total: five minutes, five seconds.

A face projected onto a disfigured head in **Tony Oursler**'s *Come to Me* (1996) pleads for the viewer to “Make it Stop.” Using techniques similar to Disneyland's Haunted Mansion, this seems as good a place as any to stop, leaving you something discomfiting for the ride home. Total: approximately five minutes.

Total running time: Two hours and 45 minutes—or three hours with a bathroom break.

*“The Moving Image: Scan to Screen, Pixel to Projection” at Orange County Museum of Art, 850 San Clemente Dr., Newport Beach, (949) 759-1122; www.ocma.net. Open Wed.-Sun., 11 a.m.-5 p.m.; Thurs., 11 a.m.-8 p.m. Through Sept. 27. \$8-\$10.*