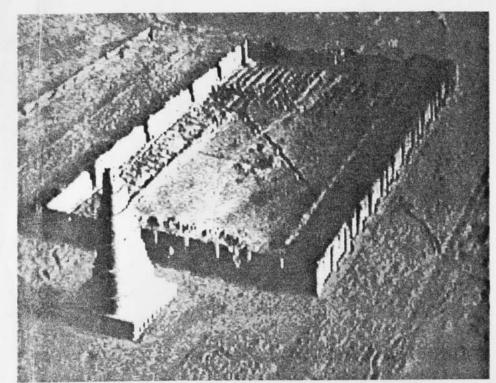
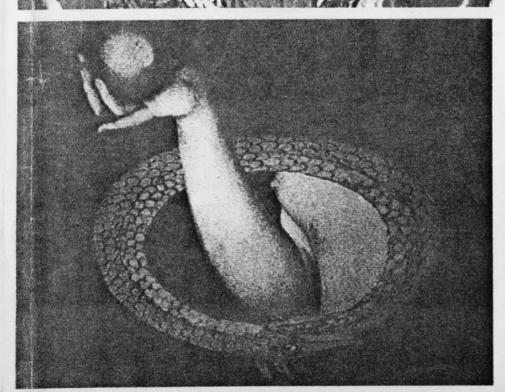
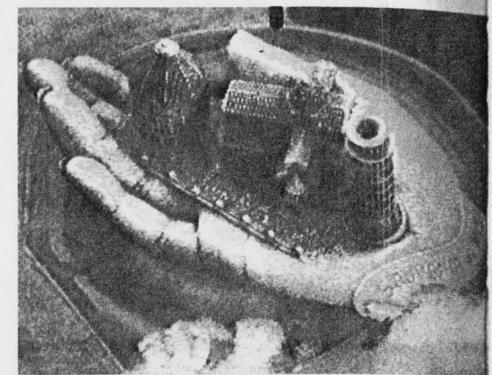
Narrative Landscape

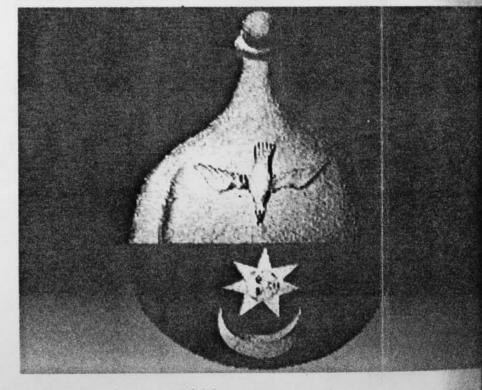












Jeffrey Shaw/Dirk Greeneveld, Narrative Landscape, 1985

Jeffrey Shaw/Dirk Groeneveld

A play is a landscape, Gertrude Stein

The Narrative Landscape is a work created with a computer that has been conceived and developed to articulate a new interactive artistic form.

It allows the spectator to travel within a prepared digital database of images and sound, and so to make a personal scenography out of the process of viewing and listening to the work.

The installation of the Narrative Landscape consists of its computer hardware, a video projector which projects the digital image down into a large white screen (3m x 4m) on the floor of the gallery, and a joystick with which each spectator can manipulate sound and image.

Both sound and image are digitally recorded in the computer, and the audiovisual output is controlled by the use of the joystick. The spoken text and other soundtracks are connected to specific images, and in some instances just to specific areas with in an image.

The action of the joystick gives visual movement in two ways – panning over the surface of an image in any direction, and zooming which progressively enlarges or reduces a chosen part of an image. At the points of extreme zoom-in and zoom-out the joystick generates a transition to a new image: a process which represents the idea of 'zooming through' to an image on another level (i.e. above or below the former image).

The Narrative Landscape is constituted by 28 images which are arranged in the following way: The first image is based on a satellite photo of the Earth over which has been superimposed an astrological map of the stars configured as Hebrew letters. This image is divided by a grid of red lines into nine areas, and each of these areas indicate the presence of an audio-visual 'story' which can be reached by zooming through the Earth image in that place.

Each of the nine stories is articulated by a group of three images which are arranged one below the other. These are also reached by the process of zooming through from one level to the next. Zooming through the lowest level (i.e. the third image) of a story returns the viewer to the original Earth image, in the same place it was left. It is here that the viewer can then travel to another of the nine areas, and zoom through to another group of three images that make up a story.

The nine groups of three images have all been structured in the following way:

the first and uppermost image represents
 a place – it has the scale of an aerial image of a city or landscape;

- the second and middle image indicates the body - it has the scale of people and human situations;

- the third and last image indicates a sign - It is a symbolic construction of the themes expressed in the first two images of place and body.

All the images in this work have been made with a computer and are digitally encoded. As a result, the action of zooming into an image is also a process of increasing abstraction because the point of the original image become increasingly larger squares of colour. The resulting transitions between varying levels of abstraction and representation are one of the important formal aspects of this work.

Another consequence is that the viewer can construct an almost infinite number of new images from the data of the original 28 images. But this is not to express an ideology of a fragmentary reality

- at the point where coherence of an image has been reduced to a few large blocks, a new representation emerges which is its reflection and extention, re-affirming the whole.

The texts for this work, written by Dirk Groeneveld, were concieved as nine distinct stories, relating to the nine groups of images. Digital recording of each story into the computer allows real time interactive access to any part of the spoken text, so that the actual order of words and phrases is structured differently in relation to each image.

Thus, per group of three images, the first image carries its related story as it was written; the second image carries selected words and phrases from that story linked to words and phrases from other stories; and in the third image, the words and phrases of that story are heard in reverse order (from end to beginning).

Jeffrey Shaw

THE CITY

The city of man and woman is devided Partition is a holy word in this land it is unspeakable there are forms to show the points of view there are points of view to show the city there are men taking you anywhere we know these men they look down on us we live how we live horizontally never looking up never looking down we are proud of what we did we raised these men they are, still, our children se we say, okay, once more we live horizontally and they giggle old as they are and we refuse them the entrance of our city how they live is not our burder our burden is to protect us against the elements of say sentimentality motherhood they understand they rarely shout for instance things like: our column stands erect

come up and visit us no they are silent enough they sit on the ledge holding their knees together hardly whispering waiting for us to come up and offer ourselves they are children wanting to become fathers how silly of them to think we adored the idea of having a father after chasing our husbands to the oasis and showing them our shiny apples they were unable to catch they ran after the catch biting their own tail

toy beasts so
we threw them away
one day
clenched with arm-strength
we suffocated the bitches
after they gave us exactly one baby
we couldn't help it
the babies were all men
it didn't change our attitude

as they grew up it showed as they grew up they stayed

we sent them away
they built a tower
erect
and there they sit
looking at us
night and day
no idea how or where they live from
they sat straight up in our laps
now they want to enter us
enlarge their vision
materialize the thought

we closed our gates once we close them now they bit their tails and it will stay that way.

One night the moon came in through the window he looked up with his bright eyes broke the rope and escaped

When it was shown it was erect intact it sat on a lap and stood out the tower was amazement of a superior kind

do not point at the paint do not point at the bird do not point at a heart point at soul in the province.

Pisa

When it was shown it was erect intact it sat on the lap and stood out the province was amazed the tower was superior

the simple fact of hands helping hands and the glory of molding a vision into flesh was made stone in an instant

single out a person single out a landscape we need a thread to hold it to the throne

the bird might fly the cage the child will walk away a caress is not enough to show our gratitude

do not point at the cement do not point at the paint hold your breath infront of the baby place the bird in his hands

he handled it with care though frozen with fear it tried to escape we wanted it in position so we placed it on a lap

our days were wonderful the sun shone as it had to over our hands playing on the white canvass a reluctant bird held with compassion

Our nights were spent awake a trembling energy held us together and body and warmth became one a province of man in the state of woman

How could this bottle be held without breaking How breath stopped when it moved deep within