

Vito Acconci
SPACE OPERA
1976

'The Kitchen,' New York
Installation (audio, video, props & furniture
Approximately 10' x 100' x 30')

I. Overture. The entrance room is 'occupied' by rows of folding chairs, facing the main space: an area for waiting, biding time, looking ahead. The only light is behind the chairs, where four audio speakers act as a kind of push, a voice in the back of the mind: on one channel, my voice provides a base-line, a yearning that turns into song ('We want to go there...') -- on the other three channels, my voice, as if trying to find the pitch, breaks into different tones, different qualities ('reason'...'belief'...'value'...'think'...'simplify'...'construct'...)

II. Scene. The large room is treated as a setting-in-process, a condition that has to be passed through, almost an obstacle course. Stretched diagonally across the floor are three strips of blue paper, like maps to walk on, diagrams to walk over: scrawled notes on potential scenes, places for 'drama' -- the physical space becomes a cultural space, an historical space -- the idea of 'here,' America, closes in. String leads from the note-paper to actual objects, like stage-props: empty frames for mental frame-works, criss-crossing lines in an open (unresolved) field.

III. Act (Acts of Omission). At the far end of the large space, around the corner, is a 'point of decision': a circle of five 'monitors' -- video monitors, like watch-dogs, set on black monument-like pedestals. The viewer comes inside, into the cen-

ter; the image jumps quickly from monitor to monitor. Three monitors: static camera, my voice, my face, my hands, my feet -- I'm approaching the viewer, demonstrating, asking, demanding (it's as if we need each other in order to perform a significant action). Fourth monitor: moving camera over objects ready to be grabbed (an object can be loaded, like a gun) -- instruments toward an action. Fifth monitor: still landscape -- like a dream, a projection, something outside (in the future) to point to.