

Chik Tek '97

woman artists defining

TECHNOLOGY

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Silicon Valley Institute
of Art and Technology

woman artists defining technology

Rebeca Bollinger

E.G. Crichton

Susan Felter

Diane Fenster

Lynn Hershman

Lisa Jevbratt

Monica Lam

Iara Lee

Elisabeth Stephens

Christine Tamblyn

Tamiko Thiel

Geri Wittig

Nanette Wylde

Camera Obscura

TAMIKO THIEL



*The Totem of Heavenly
Wisdom, 1996*
5-Screen video installation

"My work, whether creating new media artworks on a shoestring budget or directing high technology projects worth millions of dollars, explores the sensuality of the machine and technology as an expressive vehicle for human fantasy. The constant development and use of technology to augment the capabilities of the body is what separated even the earliest humans from their animal cousins. In the modern urban environment it is the primary surface on which we project our most powerful fantasies and desires.

The Totem of Heavenly Wisdom is part of the Totem Project, a series of works that use technology to reclaim a sense of the human body as mysterious and powerful, a source of mythic significance. With the eye of the video camera I search for abstract forms and movements of the human body that trigger powerful associations with the processes of life and death, transforming images of "innocent" body parts into fetishistic objects, projections of the viewer's own desires and fears.

The works in the Totem Project are also practical exercises in the development of a theory of dramatic structure for abstract, time-based media.

As Kandinsky looked to music to learn how to create abstract painting, I have been exploring music, drama and dance to learn how to choreograph visual structures in time, hoping to develop the expressive capabilities

of abstract, time-based visual media to the level that music achieves when it creates meaning out of abstract sounds."

Tamiko Thiel studied engineering and design at Stanford and MIT and fine art at the Munich Academy of Fine Arts. She has exhibited her multimedia art works in the US, Europe and Japan and was creative director and producer of the Starbright Foundation's virtual reality playspace for seriously ill children, working closely with its chairman Steven Spielberg. She has taught design theory at Carnegie Mellon University and was director of packaging and industrial design for a series of massively parallel supercomputers, the Connection Machines CM-1 and CM-2.