DeCordova presents *Cool Medium*, a colorful look at the intersections of television, psychedelia, and visual art

Lincoln, MA, August 9, 2017—On October 6, 2017, deCordova presents *Cool Medium: Art, Television & Psychedelia, 1960-1980*, which explores how the emergence of color television and psychedelic culture—and the hypnotic properties of both—intersected with visual art. Drawn primarily from deCordova’s permanent collection, *Cool Medium* includes painting, photographs, and prints that relate to the visual language of the television screen and conditions of mass media culture. The works in the exhibition mirror the saturated colors and patterns shown on television in the 1960s and 1970s, and also address cultural issues of drug use, paranoia, space exploration, and media saturation.

Sarah Montross, deCordova’s associate curator, explains, “Some artists used the visual trickery of Op Art to simulate television’s mesmerizing qualities, while others borrowed psychedelic imagery to address issues of mind control and brainwashing associated with television. Other works express paranoia and the loss of self in the face of mass culture. Altogether, these artworks underscore the transfixed visions of many artists during the age of the television.”

Exhibition themes include:

- **Optical Art**: Featuring geometric shapes, concentric lines, and contrasting colors, these hypnotic artworks simulate the shimmering effect of television screens and drug-induced hallucinatory visions. Many of the works appear to pulsate or move, creating a kinetic experience for viewers.

- **Television Test Patterns**: Some artists were inspired by the symmetry and structure of test patterns—aired prior to a television programs and used as a control for measuring contrast, focus, and color on television screens.

- **Psychedelia and Spirituality**: Artists often created work that suggests a drug-induced state of enlightenment, or that are intended to provide access to higher levels of consciousness. Other artists were inspired by their studies of spirituality, such as the Kabbalah (Hebrew mysticism) and Eastern religions.

Cool Medium is organized by Sarah Montross, Associate Curator, with Scout Hutchinson, Curatorial Assistant. The exhibition opens to the public on Friday, October 6, 2017, and will be on view through Sunday, March 11, 2018.

Related Programming

**Workshop: Psychedelic Glass Mandalas**  
Tuesdays, November 7 and 21, 6:30 pm–9 pm  
$75 Members, $90 Not-Yet-Members

Inspired by the art of Paul Laffoley and other visionary artists in Cool Medium: Art, Television & Psychedelia, 1960-1980, create mosaic mandalas inspired by the psychedelic images in this dynamic exhibition.

**Curator-Led Tour of Cool Medium**  
Thursday, January 18, 12 pm  
Free with Museum admission

Explore the intersections of television, psychedelia, and visual art on this tour led by Curatorial Assistant Scout Hutchinson.

**About deCordova**

Established in 1950 and located just twenty miles west of Boston, deCordova Sculpture Park and Museum is dedicated to fostering the creation and exploration of contemporary sculpture and art through a dynamic slate of rotating exhibitions, innovative learning opportunities, a constantly changing thirty-acre landscape of large-scale, outdoor, modern and contemporary sculpture, and site-specific installations.

**General Information**

DeCordova’s summer hours (Memorial Day weekend through Columbus Day weekend) are every day, Monday–Sunday, 10 am–5 pm. DeCordova’s winter hours (beginning after Columbus Day weekend) are Wednesday–Friday, from 10 am–4 pm, and Saturday and Sunday, 10 am–5 pm. Admission: $14 for adults, $12 for seniors, $10 for students (ages 13 and up), and free for children 12 and under. Members, cyclists, Lincoln residents, and active duty military personnel and their families are admitted free of charge with proper ID. Visit decordova.org or call 781.259.8355 for further information.

deCordova Sculpture Park and Museum  
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