

# ARTFORUM

MAY, 1977

## REVIEWS New York

BERYL KOROT, Leo Castelli Gallery

There were four different components in BERYL KOROT's show—and a myriad of equivalences. Materially heterogeneous, the piece consisted of drawings, plans, wall hangings and videotapes. Yet together, they formed a seamless, interwoven whole.

Five drawings charted the detailed underpinnings of five wall hangings. Five plans mapped out the patterned editing of a five-screen video piece. The videotapes revealed the processes involved in making the hangings: the strings being woven, the feet moving on pedals, the gathering of strings to be tied, the smack of wooden bars. And the tape also showed the appearance of the actual patterns which emerged in the fabric. Process was reduced to a small set of actions repeated in space (repeated diamond designs in each hanging, and on each screen) and time (repeated in the work on the loom and repeated on the tape). The patterns in drawing, in making, in editing, in form

and design—all converged little by little, after close scrutiny, creating a unified work which reflected a larger reach of human time—from primitive loom to modern video. The human mind is reflected in this operation: the complexity of perception and the transformation of the complex into the simple in cognition, and back again to multiplicity of concepts. To understand Korot's work is to follow a sequence of steps, each with its own set of details and rules, to have those details accumulate into patterns, and then to have pattern allow discrimination.

The videotapes stressed process in medium shot, demystifying the actual making. The close-ups revealed the detailed formal strategies of the hangings which were equivalent to the rather symmetrical appearances of actions from screen to screen. By the end of the tapes, the diamond patterns were scanned on all five monitors, creating pure pattern, pure disembodied decoration. It would not be going too far to say that the work hangs together on the structural integrity of pattern.

Korot titled her work *Text and Commentary*. It would be as simple-minded to ask what was what as it would be to ask if part of the work was "crafts" and

the other part "art." Hangings which look useful as mats can become art subjects on videotape. In a work of such conceptual complexity, definitions are leveled every time they are attempted.

—JEFF PERRONE

