



## Juan Downey: The Play of Irony

### Lecture by John Hanhardt

Senior Curator of Film and Media Arts  
Guggenheim Museum

**Tuesday, December 14th, 2004**

**6:30 pm**

Admission Free

### **Electronic Arts Intermix (EAI)**

535 West 22nd Street, 5th Floor  
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Please join EAI for a special presentation on the work of artist [Juan Downey](#) by John Hanhardt, Senior Curator of Film & Media Arts, Guggenheim Museum.

This presentation will reflect on Juan Downey's unique contribution to the history of video art. Through an examination of selected videotapes and installations, John Hanhardt will examine how Juan Downey employed a variety of narrative strategies to construct critical engagements with culture and society. Hanhardt will reflect on Downey's deployment of irony to expose the contradictions in cultural and institutional discourses of power. Downey's interest in cognitive studies, architectural history and the politics of an emerging globalism inform a rich and complex body of work. The talk will be illustrated with slides of installations such as [Plato Now](#) (1974) and [Video Trans Americas](#) (1976) and excerpts from videotapes including [The Laughing Alligator](#) (1979) and [Information Withheld](#) (1983).

The video works of Juan Downey are available from EAI. For more information, please click [here](#).

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Juan Downey was born in Santiago, Chile in 1940 and died in 1993. He produced a major body of work that interweaves a sophisticated multicultural discourse with an idiosyncratic search for identity. In an artistic practice that included installations, videotapes, drawings, and performances, Downey investigated the self through the historical texts of European art and culture, as well as the cultures of his native South America. His works have been exhibited internationally.

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### **About EAI**

Founded in 1971, Electronic Arts Intermix (EAI) is one of the world's leading nonprofit resources for video art and interactive media. As a pioneer and advocate of the media arts and artists, EAI's core program is the international distribution of a major collection of new and historical media works by artists. EAI's leadership position in the media arts extends to our preservation program, viewing access, educational services,

online resources, exhibitions and events. The Online Catalogue provides a comprehensive resource on the 175 artists and 3,000 works in the EAI collection, including artists' biographies, descriptions of works, QuickTime excerpts, research materials, Web projects, and online ordering. [www.eai.org](http://www.eai.org)

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