

Wavelength (1966-7, 45:00)

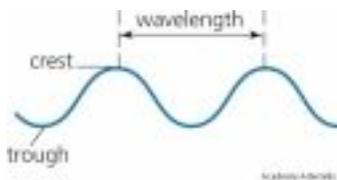
Dir. Michael Snow: b. 1929 in Toronto. First a painter, sculptor and a musician inspired by John Cage, he turned to film because he was interested in confronting the widespread assumption that a "true" artist should only excel in one medium. Snow believed that an artist could make interesting works in any medium. Since his first exhibition in Toronto (1955), Michael Snow has continuously worked in the fields of painting, sculpture, film, video, photography, holography, artist's books and music. While he was never that interested in film, he did produce a number of works that critiqued conventional cinema and of the audience-expectations that it engendered.

Before *Wavelength* [which established his reputation as a filmmaker] he made non-filmic works...installations, photography and then 3 short films. Most of these explored his interest in serial imagery. Snow says that *Wavelength* is "all about seeing."

Wavelength: sine wave

or

the big zoom.



AN EXPERIMENT WITH DURATION=DEVELOPMENT OF A MATERIALIST, ANTI-ILLUSIONIST FILM PRACTICE.

As Malcolm Le Grice states (in Abstract Film and Beyond), "the main basis of illusion in cinema stems from the manipulation of time and space relationships between shots."

The viewer is the subject of structuralist/materialist films. Document your experience as a first strategy of viewing.

Is this film also a narrative? Does "something" happen? Do we assume that the film is about these actions? What is the effect of this experiment in duration?

Wavelength explores three material elements in some depth:

1. the effects of the zoom lens on the camera's representation of space
2. the effects of lighting, film stock, filters and other variables on the reproduction of imagery
3. the nature and impact of film sound

[see Scott MacDonald's Avant Garde Film Motion Studies for a superlative discussion of this film.]

You might choose to write about these elements in your film journals.

Snow: "Cameras both intensify and diminish aspects of normal vision and they 'set apart' those aspects for possible examination."