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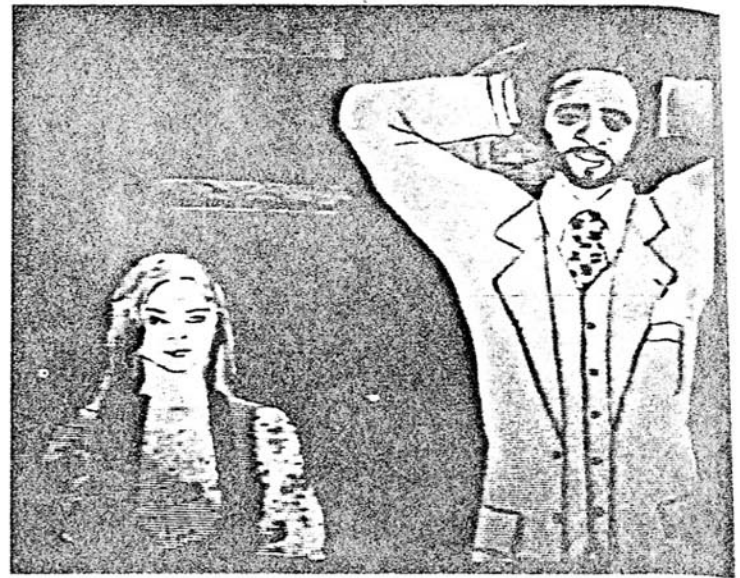
By NOEL FRACKMAN

ELEANOR ANTIN

It's a delightful, sophisticated form of play that Eleanor Antin presents in her exhibition *The Nurse and the Hijackers*. The show consists of a videotape shown at the gallery three times a day plus a display of the cast and sets that comprise the video performance. Antin has made a paper doll cast of performers and her cardboard sets are the interior of an airplane, plus a desert scene. What you see on the video monitor are these dolls, moved around by Antin within the sets which she has created. She also provides the male and female voices, sound effects, and has created the dialogue. Briefly, the story of *The Nurse and the Hijackers* tells of a plane on its way to Dulles airport in

Washington that is hijacked by four members of a Liberation movement whose chief gripe is against capitalist technology. Plane and passengers are taken to Algeria, Libya and Cairo and finally rescued by Israeli soldiers. Some of the passengers are Nurse Eleanor (Antin's alter-ego) who removes a bullet from a victim with tweezers and a sewing kit, a drunken movie star writing her memoirs, an ex-ball player turned sportscaster who hopes to become a TV anchorman by reporting on the hijacking, a saccharine-sweet stewardess named Crissy, and many other hilarious eccentrics.

This script tickles the funny bone, especially since Antin has caught every cliché having to do with airline travel and



Eleanor Antin, *The Nurse and the Hijackers*, 1977. Color videotape. Courtesy Ronald Feldman Fine Arts.

the Middle East in general, to say nothing of American life in the jet age. The sets displayed are also witty. The paper dolls, although they have their set roles in Antin's performance, have some familiar faces; among the recognizable physiognomies are those of Max Kozloff, Kim Levin, Newton and Helen Harrison, all friends. The airplane interior is perfection; the seats are painted an awful mottled orange, the perfect effect to reproduce those anonymous airline fabrics. The artist achieved these "fabrics" by spray painting through lace panties. Antin's imaginative form of play recalls years of dioramas made in grade school, the delight of playing with dollhouses, and the exhilaration of childhood performances staged impetuous-

ly for approving adults. Yet the humor and references will be most enjoyed by a highly sophisticated audience. (Ronald Feldman, *October* 1-29)