

# Ronald Feldman Fine Arts

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## **CHRIS BURDEN**

### **C.B.T.V. (Chris Burden Television)**

**November 4-December 3, 1977**

In this exhibition, Chris Burden will recreate and demonstrate John L. Baird's original apparatus - the first television. According to Chris Burden, "the theory behind television, or the instantaneous transmission of a moving image from one place to another, was known for sixty years before it was physically possible to demonstrate it. Around 1915, John L. Baird, an English inventor, succeeded in transmitting shadowy images from one room to another in his home.

Baird's primitive television was mechanical rather than electronic, and employed a rapidly revolving metal disk, perforated with a spiral of holes. Each tiny hole in the disk was able to scan a single line of the picture area. Behind the disk a condenser lens focused the light passing through the hole on to a single photo electric cell. The photoelectric cell could turn on and off very rapidly corresponding to areas of light and dark. Thus, the image area was 'scanned' or broken down into a discreet number of on and off electronic impulses.

The image could be reconstructed when these impulses were transmitted and decoded by a similar mechanism some distance away."

Burden says, "I believe that, as a technological invention, television is of extreme significance as it is a most successful solution to man's historic desire to 'see beyond' his immediate surroundings, and it has made instant visual communication possible. As technology becomes more and more complex, fewer and fewer people have any understanding of how anything really works. By reduplicating and demonstrating television in its original mechanical and relatively simple form, I hope to enable people to understand the principle behind today's electronic television."