

II Medien/Kultur

Chaos-editions: International Directory of Electronic Arts 1995-1996

London/Paris: John Libbey 1995, 576 p., ISBN 0-86196-468-3, £ 24,-

Electronic arts is a term used for the various art forms that are computer-mediated. The International Directory of Electronic Arts is a guide that could help people to organize their access to the diverse forms of electronic arts. This is important because, according to the foreword by Roy Ascott, 'this edition of IDEA is published at a time which can be seen as a turning point in the place of „electronic art“ in our culture'. IDEA is divided in four main chapters: organizations; artists; people (researchers, theoreticians, critics and exhibition curators); periodicals, television and radio channels. The diversity of electronic arts is reflected in the thirteen artistic fields that are categorized: video, holography, laser-light and more general categories like performance, communication and (electronic) writing. Also the nature of organizations involved are divided into fourteen categories such as non-profit, museum, gallery, research-centre and fairs.

The guide provides information on 1270 organizations, 1736 artists, 336 people, 75 periodicals and 13 television and radio channels. This information consists of the names, addresses, people involved and their working area.

The guide is useful because organizations, artists and people from all over the world are listed. But the user must not expect a fully completed guide on electronic arts. In particular, the categories of people, periodicals and television seem incomplete. First because criteria used for listing are not clear, why for instance are only thirteen channels listed? Second, the information on periodicals, television and radio is limited to Europe, North-America and Japan, ignoring developments in South American and other Asian countries. Indexing the electronic arts is certainly a worthwhile initiative, and the IDEA project is best with organizations and artists. The choice of the term 'Chaos Editions' however, seems appropriate where the categories of 'people, periodicals, television and radio' are concerned. A good start, but let's hope the fourth edition is more systematic.

Bas Agterberg (Utrecht)