

IN BETWEEN

Multi-media exhibit addresses dominance of land, individuals

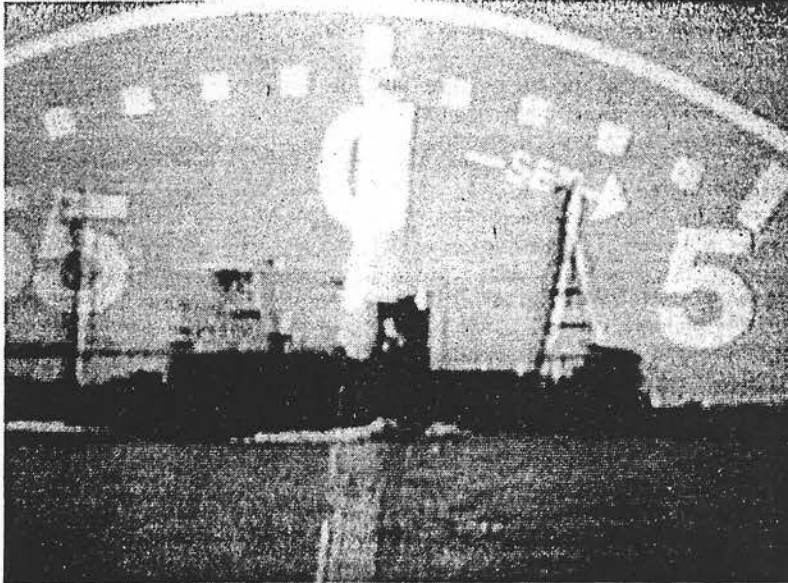
The John Michael Kohler Arts Center will present the multimedia exhibition, "Between Times/Between Worlds: Multimedia Works by Silvia Malagrino" Feb. 12 through April 17.

Originally from Argentina and now living in Illinois, Malagrino began photographing in 1976. She writes, "I was studying literature at Buenos Aires University when the school was shut down following the Argentinean Coup d'Etat of 1976. I turned to photography to resist and elude censorship, and as an anarchistic move into a spectacle of pathos — the preservation of a reality full of pain, humiliation, fear and helplessness."

"Habitat," a series of photographic murals and smaller photographs begun by Malagrino in 1992, addresses issues of power and dominance in relationship to land and individuals. This theme, which Malagrino has explored extensively through photography, is based on her personal memories of events that occurred in Argentina as well as from today's experiences and, in Jno Cook's words, "from a deep need for reconciliation between past and present, between thoughts and feelings."

The images in "Habitat" include aerial maps of territory invaded during the Gulf War, mappings of sacred landscapes, and abstracted images of the body, land and water. Through a labor intensive process developed by Malagrino, these images are layered on top of one another to create rich metaphors and highly textured surfaces. Malagrino states, "The blending of textures and the abstract and figurative elements of the photographs propose multiple, cross-referential readings between skin, fabrics, technology, organic and inorganic matter."

Malagrino began to expand "Habitat" after a trip she made this past summer to Colombia, South America. She photographed and



Submitted photo
SCREEN ART — "Cargo/Ship of Fools," from an exhibition "Between Times/Between Worlds: Multimedia works by Silvia Malagrino" at the John Michael Kohler Arts Center Feb. 12-April 17.

videotaped extensively at Guatavita, a crater lake in the Andes which was a sacred ritual place of the pre-Columbian Muisca Indians as well as the setting for the myth of El Dorado. Over the years, the land surrounding the lake has been destroyed by coal, gold, emerald, and salt mining; deforestation is extreme.

For her solo exhibition at JMKAC, Malagrino incorporates these new images into the video "Hotel America." The video, which is actually two tapes viewed side by side simultaneously, reveals

multiple visual and audio layers of Colombian culture — its history and environment, its people and the present political climate of unrest along with the impact of uncontrolled technology. One is brought to the realization that the world has become smaller and smaller with advancing communication and transportation systems bringing everything and everyone closer than ever before.

Malagrino also created the video "Cargo/Ship of Fools" for the exhibition. In this very short but potent work, a huge ship passes

endlessly on ocean waters as a clock ticks away. The cargo this barge carries is the rejected tonnage of hazardous waste material which no country will allow in its harbor. The ship, and others like it, Malagrino visually reminds us, travels the ocean waters perpetually.

Malagrino takes the viewer on a journey through time — objective, measured time, as a camera brings the ever-present digital clock on Sheboygan's Firststar Bank into the gallery to mark the minutes and hours, in contrast to and layered upon (like the images on the glass-plate negatives she uses) an intuitive, subjective experience of time.

Malagrino also heightens our awareness of space between the worlds — where technology merges with mythology, where cultures old and new mingle and repel, and where world crises persist with potentially far-reaching consequences regardless of whether or not one is aware of their existence.

"Between Times/Between Worlds: Multimedia Works by Silvia Malagrino" has been made possible by crucial corporate, foundation and individual contributions and grants from the Wisconsin Arts Board and the National Endowment for the Arts. A portion of the arts center's general operating funds for this fiscal year has been provided through a grant from the Institute of Museum Services, a federal agency that offers general operating support to the nation's arts centers and museums.