

Edited Volume: Nam June Paik as a California Artist

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Deadline: Mar 15, 2026

Kyungso Min

Nam June Paik as a California Artist: West Coast Experiments, Networks, and Legacies.

Editors:

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Nam June Paik's artistic legacy is frequently framed through the lens of the Fluxus movement in New York and Europe. However, his rigorous engagement with California's unique media ecology during the 1970s remains a critical, yet under-examined, chapter in the history of video art. This edited volume invites contributions that reevaluate Paik's "California Period" (1970–1980), arguing that the West Coast provided a distinct "California Triangle" of infrastructure—broadcasting, education, and museum institutions—that was central to realizing his avant-garde vision.

Scope and Thematic Focus

We seek to explore how these three institutional frameworks intersected to democratize and institutionalize video art.

1. Broadcasting: We examine how regional public stations, particularly KQED in San Francisco, broadcast experimental works like Global Groove to general audiences. We welcome analysis of series like "Video Visionaries" that realized Paik's vision of bringing avant-garde art into ordinary living rooms.
2. Education: We explore Paik's tenure as faculty at the California Institute of the Arts (CalArts) from 1970 to 1972. Contributions may investigate his contributions to "bold education concepts" of rank-free learning and the development of the groundbreaking Paik-Abe Video Synthesizer.
3. Museum Institutions: We investigate the role of institutions like the Long Beach Museum of Art (LBMA), which established one of the first dedicated video art programs in the U.S.. Research utilizing the LBMA Video Archive (now at the Getty Research Institute) regarding collection, production, and distribution is encouraged.

Topics of Interest

We welcome proposals from art historians, media scholars, and Asian American studies researchers addressing:

Institutional Innovation: Early video art support structures in California museums.

Broadcasting the Avant-Garde: Collaborations with public stations (KQED, KCET).

Experimental Pedagogy: Curriculum development and teaching methods at CalArts.

West Coast Networks: Collaborations with engineers, artists, and performers.

Technology: Technical and art-historical analysis of the Paik-Abe Video Synthesizer.

Trans-Pacific Connections: Paik's work within Pacific Rim cultural exchange.

Legacies: The impact of California experiments on contemporary media art.

Submission & Contact

Abstracts should be approximately 400–500 words in length.

Contributors are asked to include a short biographical note (around 100 words) along with their institutional affiliation at the time of submission.

Please also include 5 keywords with the abstract.

The deadline for full papers will be communicated to accepted contributors at a later stage.

Please submit abstracts or inquiries to the editors:

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Reference:

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