

CHURNER *and* CHURNER

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Exhibition: **Jaime Davidovich**
Museum of Television Culture

Dates: **November 7 – December 21, 2013**
opening reception: Thursday, November 7, 6-8pm

Churner and Churner is pleased to present “Museum of Television Culture,” an exhibition of single-channel video and installation work by Argentine-American conceptual artist and television-art pioneer Jaime Davidovich. The exhibition focuses on the uneasy interrelationship of mass media, electronic art practice, and traditional institutional exhibition; specifically, the overlooked historic role of cable programming experiments in early video art.

Jaime Davidovich is the creator of legendary downtown Manhattan cable television program *The Live! Show* (1979-1984). Billed as “the variety show of the avant-garde,” *The Live! Show* was an eclectic half-hour of live, interactive artistic entertainment inspired by the Dada performance club Cabaret Voltaire and the anarchic humor of American television comedian Ernie Kovacs. The program featured interviews and performance work by visiting artists, including Laurie Anderson, Eric Bogosian, Tony Oursler, and Michael Smith, along with musical performances, ersatz commercials, and viewer participation via live call-in segments. Presiding over the show's disparate collaborative elements was Davidovich's own satirical character, “Dr. Videovich, specialist in curing television addiction,” whom the *New York Times*' television critic John J. O'Connor described as “a persona somewhere between Bela Lugosi and Andy Kaufman.”

Among other strategies for soliciting viewer participation, Dr. Videovich addressed his audience directly with a home shopping segment, the “Video Shop,” where he advertised his collection of “Videokitsch,” a mix of store-bought novelties and self-designed limited edition objects depicting television sets in the form of savings banks, cookie jars, planters and wind-up toys. These items, along with episodes of *The Live! Show*, will be on display at Churner and Churner.

“Museum of Television Culture” demonstrates that, despite the program's absurdist tone, *The Live! Show* had a serious ideological agenda. It was an explicit effort to eliminate the curatorial mediation of museums and galleries by presenting works directly to the public at home through the new medium of cable television. In this way, *The Live! Show* was far ahead of its time, anticipating the ubiquity of interactive media and unfettered content distribution in the digital age. By staging elements of mass-communication in the institutional context of the gallery – a site Davidovich's original work was intended to sidestep through this direct-to-the-public mode of presentation – Davidovich's concept comes full circle, in a renewed investigation of the role of ephemeral electronic works in the art world.

An illustrated catalog with essays by Ian Wallace and Leah Churner will accompany the exhibition.

CHURNER *and* CHURNER

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Jaime Davidovich is a multidisciplinary artist whose work encompasses painting, photography, video art, television art, installation, and media activism. Best known as a pioneering advocate for artist-run, local cable television programming, Davidovich was a founding member of Cable SoHo (1976) and founder and president of the Artists' Television Network (1978-1984). Davidovich was born in Buenos Aires in 1936 and moved to New York in 1963. He was educated at the National College of Buenos Aires, the University of Uruguay, and the School of Visual Arts, New York.

Davidovich is the Joan Mitchell Foundation's 2013-14 Creating A Living Legacy (CALL) Artist. He is also the recipient of three National Endowment for the Arts Visual Arts Fellowships, for the years 1978, 1984, and 1990; and two grant awards from the Creative Artists Public Service Program, New York State Council on the Arts, for 1975 and 1982. In 2010 he was honored with a retrospective exhibition at ARTIUM, Centro-Museo Vasco de Arte Contemporaneo in Spain. Other solo exhibitions include Cabinet, Brooklyn, New York; MAMBA: Museo de Arte Moderno de Buenos Aires; Vanguardia, Bilbao, Spain; and the American Museum of the Moving Image, Astoria, New York. Davidovich has participated in a wide range of group exhibitions, at institutions such as J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles; 2007 Bienal de São Paulo, Brazil; Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid, Spain; the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Long Beach Museum of Art, California; and the Museum of Modern Art, New York. Davidovich lives and works in New York.

For image and information, please contact Rachel Churner at 212-675-2750 or rachel@churnerandchurner.com.