

Keith Sonnier, *Live Video*, 1970

January 20 – April 10, 2026

24 W 40

Castelli Gallery is pleased to present Keith Sonnier's *Live Video*, 1970. First exhibited in Los Angeles, *Live Video* is a seminal work that helped shape the history of video installation.

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, Sonnier turned to new media and technologies that had yet to develop a history of their own. Alongside artists such as Vito Acconci and Bruce Nauman, Keith Sonnier was a pioneer in establishing video as a medium within contemporary art. In this age of super technology, *Live Video* continues to retain its intuitive vitality and reinforces the radical and pioneering nature of Sonnier's work.

Live Video consists of two live video projections on opposing walls. Various pieces of technical equipment lay on the floor, including a video camera on a tripod, four lasers, several electrical boxes, and numerous wires. The video camera, pointing into the open space, projects its feed onto the walls. Viewers are invited to walk through the space and, whenever they pass in front of the video camera, they appear simultaneously as a double. Yet, they are not actively being filmed, and no record of the live video exists.

In creating a video without a recording, Sonnier plays with the ideas of presence, absence, and the "double." Although it may seem that the viewer activates the work by simply being present, it is in fact the camera that makes the viewer conscious of their physical presence. In this ambiguous space, where the viewer moves between searching for their projected image and navigating the wires on the ground, the only elements guiding the viewer are four red dots positioned onto each projection. Two red dots, from the lasers, are fixed on each live image. The result is ultimately a video installation without video.

Keith Sonnier was born in 1941 in Mamou, Louisiana. His first solo show at Castelli was at the Castelli Warehouse in 1970. Sonnier's work is included in museum collections worldwide including the Museum of Modern Art, New York, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, and Tate, London. Keith Sonnier died in 2020 in Southampton, New York.

For further information, please contact Chloe Greisman at chloe@castelligallery.com.