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Aldo Tambellini at James Cohan Gallery

**We Are the Primitives of a New Era
Paintings and Projections 1961-1989
Curated by Joseph Ketner**

September 12th through October 19th

Iconoclastic and experimental artist Aldo Tambellini was among the first artists in the early 1960s to explore new technologies as an art medium. Tambellini combined slide projections, film, performance, and music into sensorial experiences that he aptly called "Electromedia." Such work informed Andy Warhol's *Exploding Plastic Inevitable* and Woody and Steina Vasulka's *The Kitchen*. With the rediscovery of this material, Tambellini's work has become the subject of great interest for early new media.

Tambellini's artistic practice is based on black and its polar opposite, white. The artist believes that the circle is a metaphysical manifestation of energy, stating "*Black is the beginning. It is birth, the oneness of all, the expansion of consciousness in all directions*" and "*Light is energy...the same energy we have discovered in the atom.*"

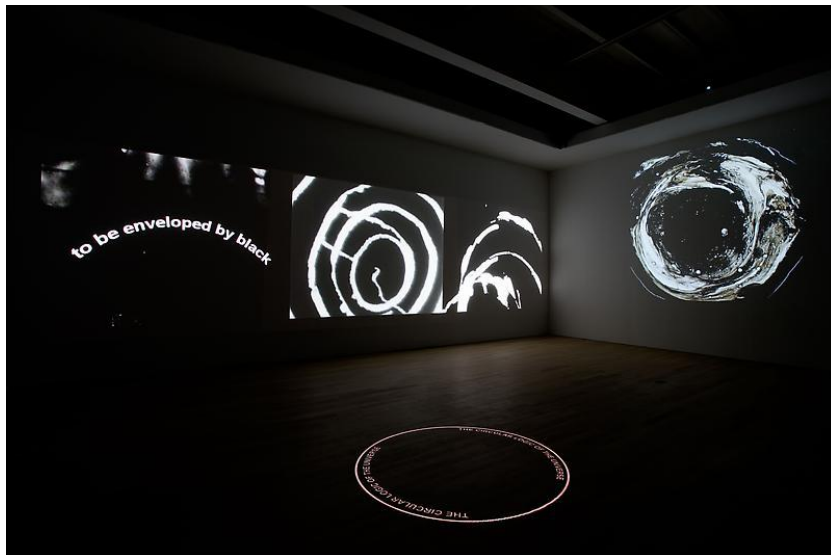
For this exhibition, Tambellini has created a multimedia piece incorporating his seminal cameraless films, "*Lumagrams*" (projected hand-painted glass slide), selections from the Black Film Series and sound in an immersive environment that is meant to "dislocate the senses of the viewer."

[James Cohan Gallery](#)

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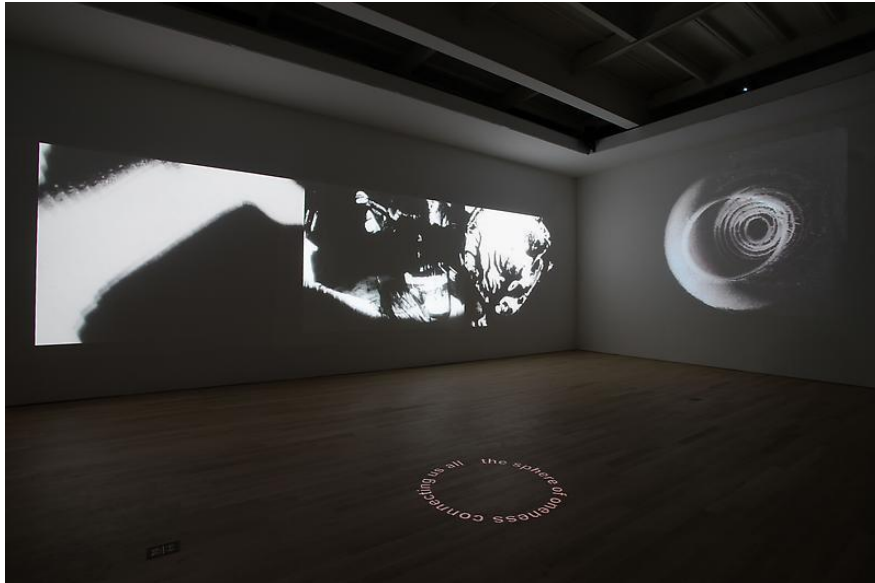


ALDO TAMBELLINI, *We Are The Primitives Of A New Era*, Installation view, photographer: Bill Orcutt. courtesy the artist and James Cohan Gallery.

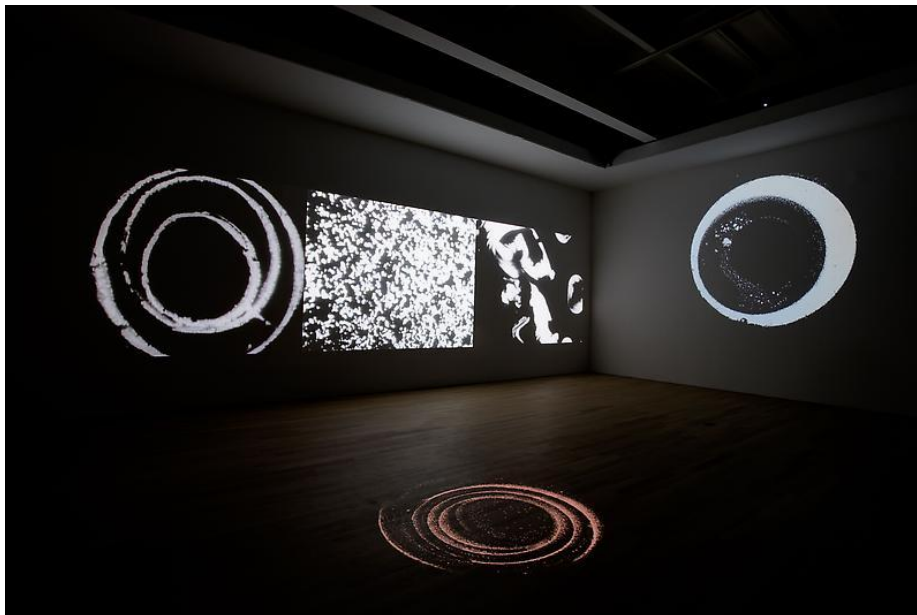


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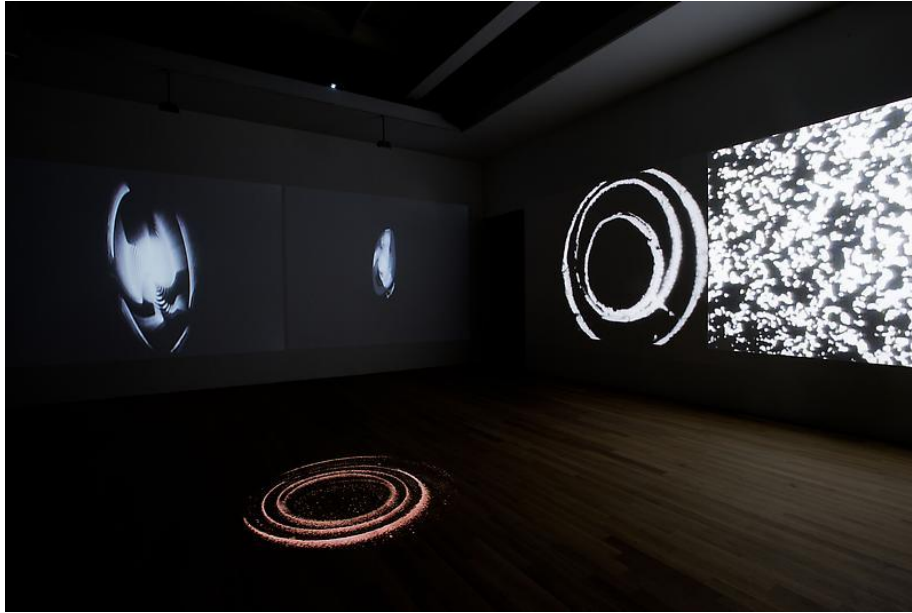


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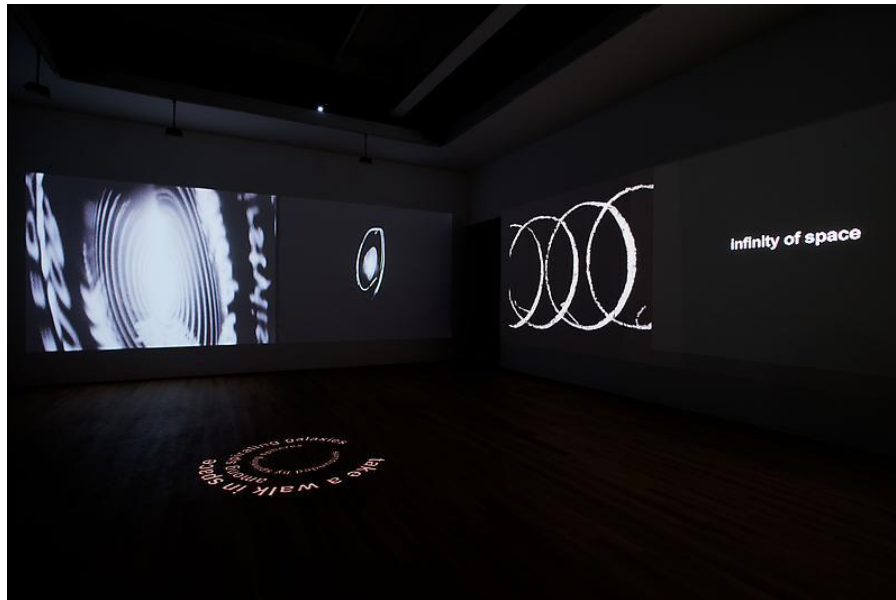
BLACK TRIP (1965) (above) - Through the uses of kinescope, video, multimedia, and direct painting on film, an impression is gained of the frantic action of protoplasm under a microscope where an imaginative viewer may see the genesis of it all. - *Grove Press Film Catalog*

See and read more at [Aldo Tambellini's website](#)

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Additionally on view is Tambellini's paintings and unique photographs, or "Videograms," most of which have not been seen since the 1960s and have only recently been rediscovered.

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The Black Film Series, a sequence of seven films made between 1965-69, is a primitive, sensory exploration of the medium, which ranges from total abstraction to the assassination of Bobby Kennedy, the Vietnam War, and black teenagers in Coney Island.

Before picking up a camera, Tambellini physically worked on the film strip, treating the emulsion with chemicals, paint, ink and stencils, slicing and scraping the celluloid, and dynamically intercutting material from industrial films, newsreels and broadcast television. Abrasive, provocative and turbulent, the series is a rapid-fire response to the beginning of the information age and a world in flux.

In 2012, Tambellini was awarded the Avant-Garde Masters Grant which allowed for the Harvard Film Archive to restore and preserve the entire Black Films Series. Read more on this [here](#)

All images courtesy the artist and James Cohan Gallery

Posted 2 days ago by [Ane Bülow](#)