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AMERICANA FASHION ISSUE
SEYMOUR FOX DESIGNS IN BEAUTIFUL ANGLO FABRICS

BONWIT TELLER  MONTALDO'S  I. MAGNIN

VOGUE, February 1, 1970
Pulsa—the modest but cracking team of seven Yale men who shape environments out of light and sound—doesn’t care whether Pulsa’s mass entertainments are considered art or fun. They live and work together with their wives outside New Haven, Connecticut, in a roomy, old farmhouse where they compose perhaps the most startling of their experiments. The farm is hardly a retreat.

Pulsa lives within its work. The farmhouse, wired for sound and light, steps up the signals from the world outside, blazes and crackles with messages from out-of-doors, noises from the highway, plays of light on snow, linked electronically in a wildly erratic light-sound symphony projected into all rooms of the house and put together by a computer.

For the past three years, the members of Pulsa, all thirty or under, all Yale graduates, have pooled their ideas, their money (up to now, largely from grants) and cultivated an easy anonymity. “We want everyone to be aware of everything,” they said, collectively: “With no levels of secrecy leading to higher levels of control.” Trying out ideas, they find their life together as important as their output.

In their present work at The Museum of Modern Art until March 1, the Pulsa group fits their premise that everything is Nature into this city setting. The Museum’s garden filled with its own sculpture is separated from the street beyond by a high brick wall and surrounded on three sides by (Continued on page 219)

**Pulsa people,** the Yale University group, bridging the gap between art and science with light-sound environments, one of which is now in the garden of The Museum of Modern Art in New York, consists of these seven men: foreground, left, William Crosby; right, Patrick Clancy. Second row, left to right, Peter Kindlmann, David Rumsey, Michael Cain, William Duesing, Paul Fuge.
STARTLERS

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the walls of buildings of various heights.

Pulsa saw this space as a canyon and fed “information” into the computer that controls the “environment” from every level of the “canyon” with photocells, cameras, and microphones. Such natural phenomena as the changing light, wind speed, temperature, and flow of people trigger the constantly accumulating computer programs. Lights may flash traveling at 1,000 mph, sounds from the sidewalk beyond the wall may be amplified, slowed, distorted. This feedback is often so subtle and complex that a person passing through the garden is often not aware of it. “Not the limited, static information of sculpture but actual phenomena,” as one member of the group said.

Pulsa has a lot to do with the “empty” music of such composers as La Monte Young and Terry Riley, the system concepts of Ludwig von Bertalanffy, and the environmental ideas of Buckminster Fuller, particularly his Utopia. Out of patience with the current superstitions about technology or the anti-urban bias of many environmentalists, Pulsa has an open-end scientific base. Pulsa was started in 1966 by David Runsey, a filmmaker, who joined up with Michael Cain and Patrick Clancy, painters from the Yale graduate school. In 1967, they added to their New Haven loft Bill Crosby, who had been making light-sound pieces in New York. Soon after, Paul Fuge, a photographer and electrical designer, came with Peter Kindlimann, an engineer-physicist who teaches at Yale, and Bill Duesing, a photographer and former architecture student.

So far Pulsa’s work has been subsidized partly by Yale University, and the Graham Foundation for the Fine Arts, Chicago, and partly by industry. The split between science and the humanities doesn’t exist for people of Pulsa. They go quietly on, thinking up environments, and hoping their passion will catch on.