

Nam June Paik (1932 - 2006) crafted marvelous and monumental works of video and television as art and sculpture. One of his last pieces, *Ruin* (2001) is currently on loan to [Milwaukee Art Museum](#), from the [Cincinnati Museum of Art](#), as MAM considers acquisition of the piece. **Pawn** had the pleasure of viewing it, mostly alone and undisturbed, in a fine white empty gallery this evening.



This piece (shown here in lame camera phone splendor) is more than just a pile of TV and bathing glow of video. Not to sound too much like Art School hopeless, but this truly important piece has much to teach us about ourselves. As the images flicker by on the 32 separate screens, jarring us and calming us and leading the eye back and forth across the stack of vintage sets (with modern monitors inserted, artfully, into the shells) it is easy to find oneself mesmerised and yet still aware that this is a sculpture, a commentary, and not just another TV.



The room is soon flooded with young children and attentive parents, here at the museum to celebrate family achievements in literacy. The children no doubt have a far different take on Mr. Paik's creation. **Pawn** slinks off.