

Receipt 22 Oct 79

Statement by Brian Hoey.

The period during which I held the Arts Council of Great Britain Colour Video Bursary (1976 - 77) was a significant time in the development of my work in the field of video art. The Bursary enabled me to produce video tapes concerned with subject matter external to the medium whilst utilising the medium's intrinsic qualities to the full.

Whilst my work in the field of video installations has always been concerned with the participants' behaviour patterns as related to their perception of the work; my video tapes had dissatisfied me as being somewhat insular in their exploitation and demonstration of the medium for its own sake. The works resulting from the Colour Video Bursary, 'Spered Hollvedel' and 'Flow', were an important step towards relating elements fundamental to a meaningful use of video with other elements of equal importance to the subject matter. In the case of 'Spered Hollvedel' the issues presented ally the essential element of energy (radiant, magnetic, cyclic), as manifested in celtic art and music, with the manner in which video is a similar manifestation of the same energy. 'Flow', which is intended to evoke a quieter mood, is still concerned with energy, but deals with the constant physical flow of atmosphere and fluids as related to the flow of electron beams and progression of form and colour in the video image.

During the period in which I was in receipt of this Bursary I began to collaborate with Wendy Brown (my fellow Artist in Residence at Washington). Our most recent video tape 'Drift' is an example of this joint effort and our proposals for a Bursary to enable the production of further work reflect our mutual concerns and intentions.

Application for Bursary

This is an application for a Bursary to assist us in the development of personal work in the field of Video Art. Our present shortage of funds prohibits the growth of new work just at a time when our creative concern with video is particularly strong and our reputation as activists in the field is steadily increasing, both at home and abroad.

We consider that £2,000 would enable us to conduct a sufficiently intensive programme of research for the production of new work, in both video tape production and video installation. The facilities which we intend to utilize are those of Videokalos Studio (a video synthesiser facility developed by Peter Donbauer), the newly formed video workshop at the Tyneside Cinema, Newcastle, and commercial hire sources.

Whilst a period of increased creative activity in the field of Video Art would no doubt direct us towards new areas of endeavour; we would earnestly seek to expand on the conceptual bases of previous work and further investigate areas touched upon previously and shown to be worthy of closer examination. Installation work is one aspect that we feel the need to develop, as it is a means of artist/audience involvement that we have not seriously explored since 1976.

It is intended that all new work be in colour, as colour has always been an essential part of our work, both in video and in other media.

One aspect of previous work which we wish to investigate further is that of presenting the video image in a manner designed to disrupt the viewer's inevitable association of it with television programmes. In addition to tackling this problem in a conceptual manner by the content of the information displayed, we would also approach it at a perceptual level by effecting the

way in which the information is displayed. The passive act of watching a television monitor raises the perceptual issues of size, aspect ratio, superfluous visual stimuli such as control panels, the concept of narration and the '30 second sell'. All these and more influence the manner in which the viewer assimilates the information presented to him.

Our most recent piece 'Drift' is an attempt to reduce the effect of superfluous visual stimuli and conceptual irrelevancies. It is intended for exhibition in a darkened room with a black mask placed over the entire monitor. The work is viewed through a circular hole cut in this mask and the viewer sees a circular composition of colour and form, incorporating characteristics of the video process. What he (hopefully) does not see is a composition of colour and form which is emphatically a television picture. It is important to point out that we are not attempting to deny the actuality of the video image, indeed much of our past work has relied upon such blatant actuality, but rather we seek to increase our control over it by emphasising certain visual elements whilst negating others. Further investigation of this process will, we hope, enable us to focus attention on the actual nature of the information presented rather than its means of display, so producing artworks which can be seen devoid of peripheral irrelevancy and enhanced to a more powerful, directed level.

Another subject which we wish to clarify in future work is that of celtic culture, particularly Gaelic culture. A previous work 'Spered Hollvedel' is intended to operate largely emotionally, partially intellectually, and with a strong emphasis on it being: ".....a celebration of an ancient culture's survival and continuing relevance to the modern world." It overlooks much of the subtlety and sophistication to be found in the Gael and it is from

these that we wish to draw a basis for some future work, whilst also drawing attention to the individual's need for a solid cultural anchor in a society undergoing such rapid change as ours. Much of the reason behind choosing such an unlikely subject for a body of video work is to remind ourselves and others of a culture essentially British whilst transposing some of its 'feel' and nature to a medium technically new but essentially akin to much of that culture's self-chosen means of expression: the importance of energy, the cyclic nature of life, and the strong emotional content as expressed in celtic art and music.

It is extremely important to our creative development that we be able to conduct the proposed period of research and so generate new work, not the least reason being Brian's inclusion in the 'Video Artists on Tour' programme. Technological development has meant that British artists have only recently begun to work with colour video systems of a sophistication comparable with those used by many foreign artists. We consider that we have a solid contribution to make to this area of artistic endeavour, and hope to produce work of a high calibre, exploiting the video process to the full whilst transcending its more mundane characteristics.

Brian Hoey & Wendy Brown

BRIAN HOEY

- 1950 - Born Hartlepool.
- 1968 - 1969 Hartlepool College of Art.
- 1969 - 1972 Exeter College of Art: Dip.A.D.(1st.Hons.)
- 1972 - 1974 Slade School of Fine Art: Higher Diploma.
- 1974 - 1975 Freelance Artist/Designer.
- 1975 - 1976 Employed at Battersea Arts Centre.
Co-ordinator of the Two Borough Film & Video Project.
- 1976 - 1979 Artist in Residence, Washington.
- 1979 - Self employed artist. Video consultant for
Tyneside Cinema. Joint organiser of the 'Artists
Video' exhibition, Washington.

WENDY BROWN

- 1951 - Born Saskatchewan, Canada.
- 1966 - 1970 Middlesbrough College of Art.
- 1970 - 1973 Exeter College of Art: Dip.A.D.(1st.Hons.)
- 1973 (Summer) Worked with Space Structure Workshop(Inflatables
for children).
- 1973 - 1974 Audio Visual Technician to University College,
London.
- 1975 - 1976 Freelance Artist/Designer.
- 1976 - 1979 Artist in Residence, Washington.
- 1979 - Self employed artist. Joint organiser of the
'Artists Video' exhibition , Washington.

Exhibitions:

- 1975 - 'The Video Show', Serpentine Gallery, London. 1976 -
'Recent Kinetic Work', D.L.I. Museum, Durham; 'Video, Towards
Defining an Aesthetic', Third Eye Centre, Glasgow; 'Video Show'
Tate Gallery, London. 1977 Northern Arts Gallery, Newcastle upon

Exhibitions Cont.

Tyne; Cavillino Gallery, Venice. Film & Video Manifestatie,
Bonniefantemuseum, Maastricht, Holland; 'Current Work', Biddick
Farm Art Centre, Washington; 'Video Festival', Flykingen Foundation,
Stockholm, Sweden. 1978 'Northern Art Exhibition; Shipley Museum,
Gateshead (Invited); 'Video Art '78', Herbert Art Gallery, Coventry.
1979 'Videotapes by British Artists', The Kitchen, New York.