

# Video library information

The library is open from tuesday to saturday 4.00-8.00 and at other times by prior arrangement. A nominal fee of 25p is charged for tapes under 30 minutes and 50p for longer tapes. In the video resources area (off the upper gallery) one monitor is permanently available for viewing library tapes and a second monitor is used for screening contextual programmes relating to gallery, film, music, dance, or other current Arnolfini events.

Headphones are used to isolate the viewer from distractions. The video library provides a quiet and comfortable place where the additional facilities: a selection of current film, performance and art magazines, a reference section of books on film and video and also an extensive collection of artists' bookworks can be utilised.



## OPEN ACCESS

In developing the video library we are now including an Open Access section where tapes may be deposited (they remain the property of the producer). They should be in Sony Umatic format (either NTSC or PAL/SECAM). The Arnolfini retains the right to exclude material on legal grounds (obscenity or libel). To enquire further about this section contact Tony Broad, Arnolfini Video Assistant.



## FILMS AND TAPES ON ART

The library will soon be opening a section of tapes on art expanding the small number of Arnolfini produced tapes about previous exhibitions (on artists such as Tony Cragg, Bruce McLean and Cioni Carpi) with a wide selection of programmes on art and artists . . .

## TAPES ON SALE IN THE BOOKSHOP

A selection of video tapes are on sale in the bookshop; titles include: Tati's *Jour de Fete* and *Mon Oncle*, Polanski's *Cul de Sac* and *Repulsion*, a series of Spagetti Westerns and films on art.

Arnolfini Video Library  
Narrow Quay  
Bristol BS1 4QA  
Open Tuesday to Saturday, 4-8 pm.  
Telephone (0272) 299191.

## January screenings

This series of screenings by film and video artists provides a continuing forum to view and discuss a wide spectrum of experimental work and extends the context of the library itself.

### Finnegans Chin — Temporal Economy

A new film by Malcolm Le Grice  
Wednesday 6 January 5.30pm  
Cinema Admission Free.

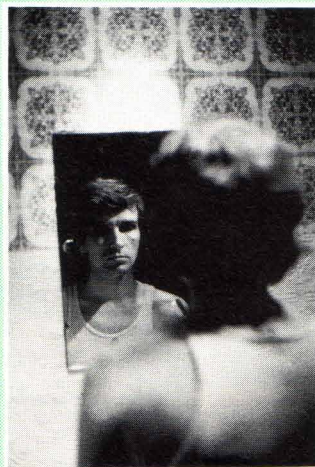
Daily repetitions — constrained by economics, history, politics, habits, psychological formation . . . problematically represented (or represented problematically)/cinematically represented. Large questionmark?

Forced, perhaps smaller questionmark? into aesthetic elaborations . . . unconscious elaborations . . . should have been on the boards . . . was at one stage . . . Professor Einstein at his leisure . . . symbolic figure of a Goat about to nibble at a tree . . . Cycle of repetition . . . some little difference . . . Weekly cycle.

Malcolm Le Grice

"It's not often that you laugh out loud alone in a preview theatre. Not often that a joke from Joyce meets a man shaving in the deep of night or a mime artist playing chamber music on a handsaw. Not often that you find a parrot (a parrot?!) in the latest work by one of the London Film Co-op's founder members. But Malcolm Le Grice's new movie is an extraordinary gambol (and gamble), a breakthrough after the dry headbanging of *Emily* or *Blackbird Descending*. Perfect framings and glowing, shadowy colour schemes are the symptom. But the philosophy also seems to have changed at root — towards fragments of narrative (rather than its denial); and forward into a sensuality drawn from daily life. In its brief 80 minutes *Finnegans Chin* wipes out the repressed, circular trace of avant-garde cinema in the late '70s. Only one word for it: magic."

(Chris Auty, *City Limits*)



### Videotapes by Stephen Partridge

Thursday 14 January 6pm  
Video Resources Area  
Admission Free.

My first videotapes were made during the period 1974-6 and were 'structuralist' in nature, overtly formalised in time scale and non-narrative. From 1975 I concentrated on installations and multi-channel works, but in 1979 started making new videotapes the first of which is *Episodes-Interposed*.

This work is made up of four disparate but related sections. The tape investigates two main formal themes: colour and editing. The first two sections are fast-moving with constant edits, while the second pair are static single takes. The editing explores random 'rhythms' which are carefully orchestrated to produce a richly patterned visual and aural experience.

The Arnolfini gratefully acknowledges assistance for the video library from HTV, South West Arts and the Arts Council of Great Britain.



# Video '82 supplement



**At the same time as a nationwide boom in video viewing the Arnolfini has established a video library of independent work, critical of the industrially produced film and television now becoming available on tape.**

John Russell Taylor's throwaway remark — "Usually at the Arnolfini one seems to be required to peer at smudgy video or tread carefully lest that piece of garbage one has just kicked aside proves to be part of an artwork"<sup>1</sup> — reveals prejudices widespread among art critics and journalists. Peter Fuller, decrying the post-war profusion of mixed media work, states with characteristic bigotry "All this has failed to produce a single work of stature let alone a masterpiece."<sup>2</sup>

It is against this background of im- and explicit ignorance that the Arnolfini's video facilities and activities have been initiated. The Video Library, conceived as a dynamic resource and linked with a planned series of screenings and discussions from its inception, offers new and radical possibilities for increasing the availability and accessibility of independent film and video. Tapes can be viewed only at the library, both to ensure that the maximum material is available for viewing at all times, and also to protect the interests of the producers.

In the first few months of its existence there has been considerable interest in the library and initial indications suggest that the attempt to extend the opportunities of new technological developments for public use has been popular. Even if art critics are still unconvinced about the value of video most people seem to be a good deal more open-minded and enthusiastic. A small book and magazine reference library is also available, providing some of

the cultural background and stressing the importance of the autonomous producer organisations, the Independent Filmmakers' Association, London Filmmakers' Co-op and London Video Arts, which provided the necessary productive context for much of the work in the library.

A great deal of recent British video (and arguably the strongest work) has concentrated on an overt opposition to the pervasive characteristics of broadcast television, whose social and economic implications are seen as pernicious. This has been encouraged by the consistently resistant and unco-operative attitudes of broadcasting authorities to independent film and video.

In Marceline Mori's *La Belle et la Bête* for instance, the images of broadcast television are placed within the space of their consumption — the sitting room, site of domestic electronic entertainment; provoking a complex of questions about artists' and broadcasters' attitudes towards the medium. Stuart Marshall's work, exemplary in its combination of wit and didacticism, maintains a dual focus on the forms and functions of broadcast television and sexual-political issues. Ian Breakwell's *News* gently parodies the format and criteria of news bulletins as a newsreader reports the hilarious minutiae of local life in a small community. It is this category of work, explicitly taking up a critical position in relation to dominant television practice, which seems to offer the greatest potential for a critical avant garde.

Some of the original video tapes in the library involve work which derives from the characteristics of the medium itself (rather than using video as a neutral recording device for a pre-defined 'content'). For example, Mick Hartney's *Orange Free State* works with imagery of a still life and its televisual re-presentation in a complex meditation on art and politics. *TV Cam Era Plane* by David Hall manipulates a series of dramatic shots from aircraft strafing trains and convoys in the Second World War and by refilming them in several layers fore-

grounds the viewer's perspective, while Richard Layzell's *Floor* hovers on the borderline between being a record of a performance/sculpture and an integral use of video.

The inclusion of tapes of independent films in the library raises questions about the changes of scale, form and concept when one medium is reproduced by another. As Guy Sherwin indicates in a note in the library catalogue, many experimental films work with the physical processes of film (shooting, printing and projection) and some of their meaning is inevitably lost on transferral to video. In most cases the change is justified by the greater accessibility of tape — enabling viewers to plan their own encounter with independent film in their own time and order and repeat viewings of demanding material.

In film too a high proportion of material relates, if tangentially, to mainstream forms — *Sigmund Freud's Dora* by the Jay Street project is a complex theoretical reflection on Freud's famous case study from a feminist perspective. *News and Comment* in addressing the form of television news and discussing the way that its form functions, refuses a simple pre-formulated didactic approach. In fact this is parodied in the opening sequence when a small child mechanically repeats, without understanding, the 'correct' analysis spoken by an adult — the rest of the film explores other ways in which understanding can be produced.

The library is now expanding to include an Open Access section where any tapes may be deposited (legal requirements exclude the libellous or obscene). We are also hoping to open a section of films on art early in the New Year providing general background information, criticism and comment on Twentieth Century art movements, as well as specialist programmes related to particular exhibitions.

<sup>1</sup> "The English rural scene in art: hysteria and healing", (a review of the Ruralist exhibition) *The Times*, 21 April 1981.  
<sup>2</sup> *Seeing Berger — A Reevaluation*, p 26.

Rod Stoneman

**ARNOLFINI**

# Video library

A selection from the wide range of tapes available for viewing in the video library.



**David Hall**  
THIS IS A TELEVISION RECEIVER  
1976 10 mins  
TV FIGHTER (CAM ERA PLANE)  
1977 12 mins

This is a Television Receiver was commissioned for a BBC TV programme on video art, and is a remake of an earlier work entitled 'This is a Video Monitor'. It uses a familiar newsreader and was intended to re-appraise the TV illusion/narrative convention by exploring viewer expectations through some of the indigenous properties of video recording.

"TV Fighter (Cam Era Plane) adheres to an emphasis on decoding the medium's conventions through the presentation of process as an intrinsic condition of the work by the manipulation of perceptual assumptions, contextual expectations, as well as primary technical properties, recording procedures etc."

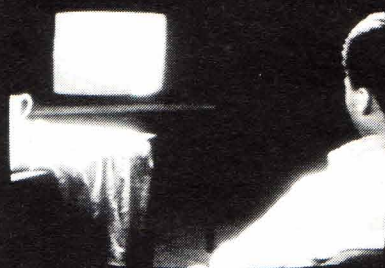
David Hall



**Tamara Krikorian**  
VANITAS 1977 9 mins

"I am interested in the imagery employed in broadcast TV, in particular that of the newscaster whose presentation as the archetypal portrait figure has become the 20th century equivalent of an icon. The 'vanitas' paintings in which butterflies, bubbles and other still life objects appear with the artist's self portrait as symbols of transience and draws a parallel with the ephemeral nature of television."

Tamara Krikorian



**Mick Hartney**  
ORANGE FREE STATE 1978 24 mins

"In Orange Free State, the visual 'content' consists of a still life, derived from a Cezanne, the image and voice of a girl, and the disposition of objects and people within the TV studio. The aural 'content' is an amalgam of music, text and dialogue."

"I employ techniques which are parallel to those found in conventional broadcasting, though with aims, and images, which are quite different. The tape is 'about' the medium of video, but it also contains references to a social or political situation."

Mick Hartney



**Vida**  
THE FASHION SHOW 1979 5 mins

With a montage of still and moving images. The Fashion Show contrasts front and back-stage scenes in colour and blue monochrome video to build up a critical record of a particular fashion show, and by implication fashion shows in general. Set to 'Showroom Dummies' by Fatwerk.



**Chris Welsby**  
SEVEN DAYS 1974 20 mins

The location for this film is by a small stream on the northern slopes of Mount Carniny in south-west Wales. The seven days were shot consecutively and appear in that same order. Each day starts at the time of local sunrise and ends at the time of local sunset. One frame was taken every ten seconds throughout the film. The camera was mounted on an Equatorial Stand which is a piece of equipment used by astronomers to track the stars. Rotating at the same speed as the earth, the camera is always pointing at either its own shadow or at the sun. Selection of image, (sky or earth, sun or shadow), was controlled by the extent of cloud coverage, i.e. whether the sun was in or out.

**Malcolm Le Grce**  
BERLIN HORSE 190 9 mins  
AFTER LUMIERE 174 16 mins

Berlin Horse

Berlin Horse is a synthesis of a number of works which explore the transformation of the image by re-filming from the screen and by complex printing techniques. There are two original sequences: a piece of early newsreel and a section of 8mm film shot in Berlin — a village in North Germany.

The music is composed for the film by Brian Eno and like elements of the image, explores off-setting loops with each other so that the phases shift.

After Lumiere - l'arroseur arrose

Like all the works I have done which refer directly to another artist, After Lumiere is not directly about the Lumiere original. It is the starting point for an investigation.



**Richard Layzell**  
FLOOR 1980 18 mins

"This is a story of a floor, we look hard at it and then stretch it a little."

I see the video-work as drawing from my experience of other media, but also existing very much in its own right, in other words, doing and saying things that would be impossible to achieve in another medium.

I am also interested in how video can combine with other media, including performance and sculpture."

Richard Layzell

**Steve Dwsokin**  
MOMENT 1970 10 mins

"One single continuous shot of a girl's face before, during, and after an orgasm. A concentration on the subtle changes within the face — going from an objective look into a subjective one and then back out."

Steve Dwsokin

"The purest, simplest and strongest of Dwsokin's shorts, and his clearest definition of the (sexual) spaces between people in film terms."

Tony Rayns

**Chris Garratt**  
ROMANTIC ITALY 1975 8 mins  
VERSAILLES Part 1 1976 8 mins  
FILMUSIC Part 1 1977 15 mins  
COMMERCIAL BREAK 1980 3 mins

The films in this series are sound/image constructions in which the representational structures of the original material (mostly pinal travelogue footage) are disintegrated and reworked using various systemic procedures of painting and/or editing. In Romantic Italy for example four copies of a 50-foot sequence were cut up and interspersed breaking up the fades, dissolves, pans etc and soundtrack mix to produce partial repetitions stretched out sound and picture images and whole new meanings to the relentless commentary.

"Chris Garratt's films use a 'structuralist' project with wit and humour. In Romantic Italy the material is dense enough to allow a really thorough critique of the 'found material' he uses (in this case, a really boring travelogue) where the result is educative without being condescendingly didactic. Other films out being: condensing manipulating imagery to produce new ways of seeing the image, illusion and materiality neatly combined. 'Commercial Break' uses a DAZ commercial as the base for showing the manipulation of the people acting in the advert by re-manipulating them."

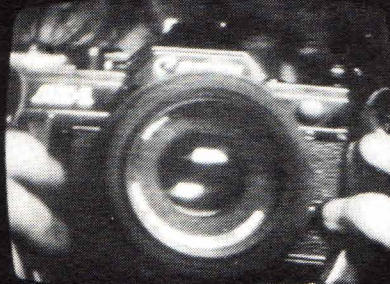
Jeanette Iljon



**David Critchley**  
PIECES I NEVER DID 1979 35 mins

"... then there was the one about all the ideas I never made into works. The ones I didn't get round to doing because I couldn't work out why I wanted to do them in the first place, or I couldn't afford to make, or were too much like something else, or were just plain bad ideas. I thought I would go ahead and make them anyway, just go back through my old notebooks, find the ideas that never got any further than being written down, and then simply do them on video."

David Critchley



**Stephen Partridge**  
INTERPLAY 1980 9 mins

"Interplay is the first of my videotapes to allude directly to narrative, both in terms of its content and structure. The work presents a sequence of events connected by the recurring image of a young woman who looks out from the screen. A storyline is sketched out but is later questioned by the woman herself — heard offscreen as the events and images repeat themselves. The tape reveals my developing interest in narrative devices and their implications for meaning, message, structure, and form."

Stephen Partridge

"Partridge is working, particularly in his recent tapes, with a light and slightly ironical touch that is sometimes surprising to people and the importance of which is sometimes overlooked."

Hugh Stoddart



**Marceline Mori**  
LA BELLE ET LA BETE 1977 9 mins

An exploration of the combination of two distinct experiences. The combination is created by the superimposition of related images and sounds. The tape shows a specific interplay between sounds and images which invokes a combination of video and off-air recording.

"I am interested in widening the field of possibilities in video by questioning the forms of representation and narration and by challenging habits organised by tradition and reinforced by the mass media, which purport to give an authentic transcription of 'reality', where in fact it is an ossified representation of a limited ideology."

Marceline Mori



**Stuart Marshall**  
THE LOVE SHOW Parts 2 & 3  
1980 25 mins

The Love Show

"Love on television — television's constant narration and articulation of representations of sexuality — the viewer's libidinal investment in those representations. Love of television — the ideology of professionalism — the television producer's libidinal investment in the production of those representations."

The Love Show, Part 2

The narrative taken up and reworked. The gaps within and the limits of heterosexual representations of sexuality. The articulation of sexuality by the mode of the narration.

The Love Show, Part 3

What if the news were to be read differently? Would 'committed television' produce an analysis rather than a 'reportage'? What kind of images would it use?"

Stuart Marshall

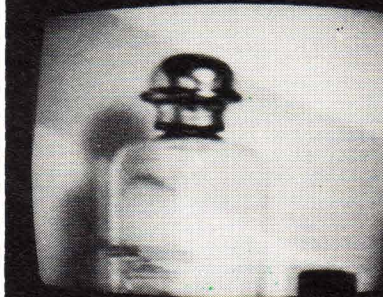


**Ian Breakwell**  
THE NEWS 10 mins

A hilarious parody of television news bulletins.

"The more I stare at objective reality the more I wonder what is on the other side; what is behind those brick walls, those closed curtains; what is behind surface appearances."

Ian Breakwell

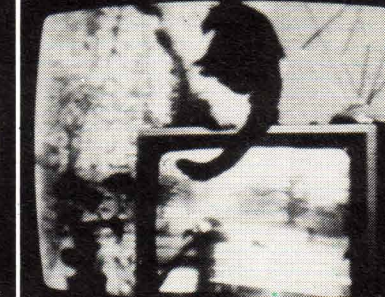


**Peter Gidal**  
SILENT PARTNER 1977 35 mins

"Peter Gidal's films have tackled directly the tension that (arguably) underlines all cinema: the tension between the material process of film and cinema on the one hand, and on the other the processes of signification whose basis they are. Dominant narrative cinema tends to repress the materiality of film, and to direct the process of signification towards one aim: the representation of a reality that is considered to be 'outside' and anterior to the processes of the film ..."

(In Silent Partner) you can't tell where you are, where objects are in relation to each other. This control and ordering of space is an absolute pre-requisite for any form of narrative cinema. Silent Partner for the most part refuses it."

John Ellis



**Guy Sherwin**  
SHORT FILM SERIES 1977 12 mins

Short Film Series is made up of a variable number of black and white silent films, each about 3 minutes in length. Not only is the number of films shown variable, but so is their order of presentation. Every screening can be different. Again this defeats any linear or climactic interpretation. Furthermore, the series is in continual evolutionary flux as new sections are introduced and others discarded. The overall shape of the Short Film Series is modular and open ended. There are as many meanings as there are combinations, and as many interpretations as there are viewers.

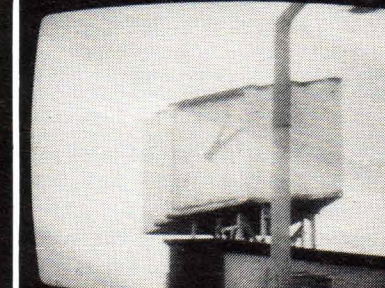
"One of the aims of the Short Film Series has been that watching film should be a primary experience, with the elements of the films construction apparent to the viewer. Transfer to video comprises this aim, the film being mediated by another medium with its own characteristics. With this in mind, the sections of Short Film Series that have been transferred to video were chosen because they suffer least in the process, since they use fewer techniques that are specific to film."

Guy Sherwin



**Peter Wollen, Laura Mulvey**  
AMY! 1980 30 mins

Amy! could be subtitled 'Portrait of a Heroine?': it was made to coincide with the fiftieth anniversary of Amy Johnson's solo flight to Australia in 1930. Neither a drama nor a portrait in the conventional sense, Amy! is an assembly of sounds and images which evoke the subject through historical traces, re-enactment and metaphor. The film also asks an underlying question: 'What is a heroine?'



**John Smith**  
ASSOCIATIONS 1975 7 mins  
GIRL CHEWING GUM 1976 12 mins

Associations

"By using the ambiguities inherent in the English language, the film sets language against itself. Image and word work together/against each other to destroy/create meaning. The film developed out of my obsession with the pun, and an interest in perceptual psychology."

Girl Chewing Gum

"I am writing this with a black 'Tempo' fibre-tip pen. A few months ago, I bought fifteen of these pens for sixty pence. Unfortunately, because they are so common, other people pick them up thinking they are theirs, so I don't have many left now. I bought the pens from a market in Kingsland Road in Hackney, about a hundred yards from where the film was shot. The film draws attention to the cinematic codes and illusions it incorporates by denying their existence, treating representation as absolute reality."

John Smith



**Mike Leggett**  
FILMLANE 1973-74 18 mins  
SHEEPWOMAN 1976 20 mins  
BLUE + GREEN + RED 1976 15 mins

Film Lane

Film is shot from a moving vehicle; from its roof pointing forward, from its rear pointing backwards. This occurs on two occasions, the summer of 1973 and the winter of 1974. The camera runs at either 24 or 12 frames per second. The film is assembled according to predetermined factors.

Sheepwoman

Returns to the camera image of Sheepman together with control of camera and then examines the image resultant in conjunction with synchronous/non-synchronous sound and written word image.

Blue plus Green plus Red

Colour 'generated' from the sky, the grass and berries, a system of graphic loops attempts in the printer to synthesise not only changing hues of complementary colours but white light itself.

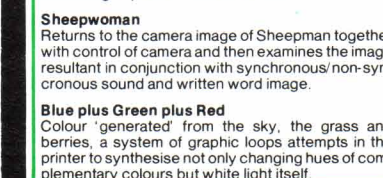


**Frank Abbott**  
NEWS & COMMENT 1978 35 mins

A film about television and the way we watch it.

"In order to make new meanings out of images and sounds we have to look at the forms in which those experiences are delivered to us in the mass media. Most of my films relate to our everyday experience with those constructed products of the media industry. Through a process of re-construction and the application of different formal devices I attempt to make the familiarity of everyday sounds and images become strange and unfamiliar. In that context expectations become confounded, assumptions can be questioned and political questions asked."

Frank Abbott



**KEY**  
Original video tapes ■  
Films transferred to tape □