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**INDEPENDENT
VIDEO
VIDEO ART SPECIAL**
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The Alban Interview: Alastair Snow with PERCY THROWER
(Filmed by Tony Booth: Photo: Greg Parkes)

INDEPENDENT VIDEO

INTRODUCTION



"The days of isolated video are fast coming to a close."
Philip Reevel. 1984.

"The medium of video/television, coupled with the computer, will come to play a paramount role in our world, but video art will be able to win no larger place than that which art has always held: a refuge in which sensibility and genius take on their aesthetic form."
Dorine Mignot. 1984.

"The revolution will not be televised."
Gill Scott Heron. 1975.

THE McLUHAN SYNDROME



"Video will become the popular art form of the 21st century."
Dov Eylath. 1982.

"We should use the new technologies of cheap, portable video-tape units and make a new kind of television that does not depend on broadcasting but, instead, draws its energies from communication and art."
John Hopkins. 1975.

"As video art merges with the computer, transforming cinema into simulation, we can gather in autonomous reality-communities and conspire to abolish once and for all the ancient dichotomies between art and life, destiny and desire."
Gene Youngblood. 1984.



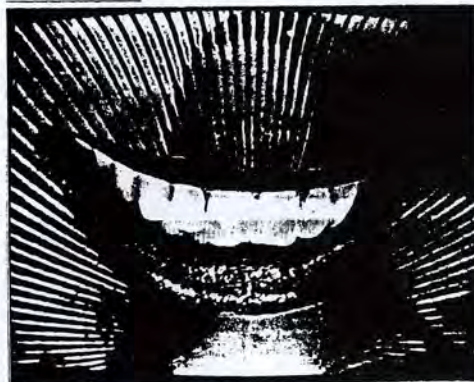
CREDITS

Edited Pat Sweeney, Barrie Gibson, Ben Hodgson, Dave Stewart.

Typed by Vi Wekch

VIDEO & TELEVISION

"Video as art largely seeks to explore perceptual and conceptual thresholds, and implicit in it is the decoding and consequent expansion of the conditioned expectations of those narrow conventions understood as television."
David Hall. 1978.



"Video art as we know it is not television, but for most people, video does mean television and that's why they don't like video art. They see it as bad TV."
Lorne Falk. 1983.

"TV has been attacking us all our lives - now we can attack back."
Nam June Paik. 1968.

"While many of the 'first-wave' of video artists used television as a jumping-off point, the second or third-generation not only rebut TV, but quite pointedly ignore it."
Dessa Fox. 1984.

PLEASURE & PROVOCATION

"My God, I can't take all this pleasure!" laughed a friend as we sat through the first-wave of New York video art."
Katherine Elwes. 1983.

"It is surely the establishment that needs to extend its view, not for the artists to compromise theirs."
David Hall. 1980.

THE LOW-DOWN ON VIDEO ART

Video art has attracted a good deal of comment and no mean amount of controversy during its brief and troubled history. (Only the most dedicated genealogist would mark the birth of video art much before the

mid-60's). In the course of that brief history the practice seems always to have been troubled by a contradiction which seems to have become basic to the conditions of its existence. Namely the contradiction between the populist impulses associated with the technology through which it has chosen to express itself and the rarified discourses and styles of visual expression it draws upon and strives to elaborate. Video artists have chosen to develop complicated arguments and articulate abstruse languages through a medium which has done more to simplify the world than anything since the time when illiteracy was the rule rather than the exception in society. Video art has as a consequence been forced to constantly debate and interrogate the relationship between the academic discourses it elaborates and the populist impulses of the medium it occupies. Paradoxically it is perhaps the fundamental and secret strength of video art that it has in fact failed to resolve those contradictions. Indeed one might suggest that the day video art ceases to slip and slide on the slippery interface between art and popular culture is the day it ceases to be an alternative/alternating activity and becomes an authoritative/authoritarian discourse. What follows is far from being a definitive analysis of the media which has never decided if it belongs in the museum or on the street, but an evocation of some of the questions confronting video artists in what already looks like becoming the media decade par excellence - the Flipping Eighties.



THE FUTURE IS JUST AN ART BEAT AWAY

Jeremy Welsh of London Video Arts and Jane Wright, a Canadian video artist, were both asked to write introductions to the British-Canadian Video Exchange Programme of the Spring of 1984.

In the following extracts Jez Welsh reads the recent history of British video art in terms of a "heroic" quest for a renegotiation of the relationship between Art and Pop Culture, whilst Jane Wright interprets the recent history of Canadian art video as manifesting a shift from the conventions of fine art towards a more political engagement with social issues and concerns.

It is no surprise that during 1984 there will be an unprecedented number of festivals, exhibitions and conferences devoted to video in all its forms and guises. Not that those involved in video have a particular fixation with the Orwellian vision. It just happens that the omnipresence of TV screens throughout Western society - perhaps even the world - and the prevailing international climate of suspicion, tension, aggression and the progressive erosion of individual liberties, create a chilling resonance that is perhaps less brutally obvious than the image of absolute and inflexible authority created by Orwell, but is nevertheless real and not to be ignored. When the video/TV medium could so easily be regarded (or used) as a tool of social control and repression it is important to make public demonstrations of the positive uses to which it is being put by artists, independent producers, community organizations and amateurs, who are determined not to be forced into the role of passive consumer when the medium itself offers enormous scope for intervention. It is Britain's proud boast that we own more video recorders per head of the population than any other country. Through events like the British-Canadian video exchange and a concentrated programme of education and exposure to fresh possibilities, it may be possible to demonstrate to the British public that all of these video recorders could be doing rather more than saving TV time or playing back commercial software.

The Question of Access.

The question of access always arises in any study of the development of independent video. Without control of its own means of production, distribution and exhibition the independent video community would never have developed to the point where it now has the confidence to look the TV industry straight in the eyes and say exactly what it wants to do. Access is the key to everything for the artist or independent producer.

The video workshop movement (if it can be properly described as such) began to have an impact in the early to mid-seventies. Canada was a few years ahead of Britain in the development of video access facilities, and is still probably

ahead of the world in its support of non-profit arts organisations. Through funding from the Canada Council, Canada now has a nationwide network of "parallel" art spaces: these are galleries, workshops and distribution centres dealing with all aspects of contemporary culture and providing access to a variety of media, including photography, sound, computer technology, dance and theatre, as well as video. The degree of technical sophistication that has been achieved in many of the video workshops, in Britain as well as Canada, can be seen in the quality of much of the work found in the British-Canadian exchange of video art.

In Britain, the situation is less developed. Obviously the country is a fraction of the size of Canada and so the decentralisation of resources is seen as less of a priority. On the other hand the population of Britain is considerably more dense, and given current social and economic conditions, the provision of more locally based media workshops and other cultural facilities should be seen as a priority. Though it is not funded on anything like the scale of the Canadian parallel network, there is a loose kind of network in Britain formed out of related organizations, some of which are community based and concerned specifically with the needs and interests of a comparatively small constituency, and others of which operate in a national or international context. Funded by the Arts Council of Great Britain, the regional arts associations, or local councils, these organisations are generally at the mercy of the prevailing political climate, and thus enjoy little or no security. However, at present, most are in a state of robust health and are able to provide a high level of service at a cost that is minute in national terms.

Access, which was the first objective in both Canada and Britain, has now been achieved, though it needs to grow further, and so it is now appropriate that the video communities of both Canada and Britain should begin to look outwards and exchange their ideas and concerns with one another.

Dominant Themes and Developing Practices in the world of Video Art.

Independent video is generally regarded as falling into three distinct categories: those of the single screen tape; the video installation; and the video performance. The first category is virtually self-explanatory. That is, video tapes which are intended to be watched from beginning to end on a single TV screen, and are thus closely related to the norms of televisual or cinematic presentation. The second category is more complex. The term "video installation" can cover a broad range of dissimilar quasi-sculptural arrangements of video monitors and other objects or technologies. At one extreme, the term is sometimes - and in my view incorrectly - used to describe the continuous replay of a video programme in a public space, and at the other end of the scale is the multi-

channel, multi-media work designed for a specific place and time, and engaging in an evolving relationship with the space it occupies and the spectators who enter into that space. Video installation is the most formal variant of video art and the one most closely related to other forms of modernist art. Early video art, developing out of minimalism and conceptualism, often took the form of installation, both as a means of differentiating this use of the technology from the accepted norms of television, and as a way of exploring the inherent possibilities of the medium including those 'defects' that the TV industry sought to eradicate or at least disguise. Many of these early installations used live closed-circuit camera systems, often in conjunction with pre-recorded material, to illustrate the transparency of the medium and to engage the viewer by allowing (or forcing) him/her to become part of the work.

The third category, video performance, is a hybrid form in which video either live or prerecorded, or even both, is used to add a further layer of information, action or imagery to a live performance, often exploiting the contrasts between the 'real' and the 'represented' or 'real time' and 'TV time'. This is the area in which the fragility of TV reality is made most apparent, and in which the illusionism of television can be most effectively appropriated.



While the primary concerns of the video installation or performance may often be inherent in the formal aspects of the works themselves, the single screen video tape needs to be approached from a different direction. The formal vocabulary of video technology and its applications is of indisputable importance to the consideration of particular works, but in making a general survey of independent video tapes it is more useful to look at broad categories of subject matter or genre than to concentrate upon technology and its uses. Whereas many early video productions were intimately concerned with the phenomenology of the medium, or else were unilinear explications of a single concept, most tapes produced since the beginning of this decade have been more 'subject' oriented, and generally speaking more complex in their manipulation, deconstruction and reconstruction of meaning. There has also been a shift towards mainstream television, so that most video artists/producers now see themselves as being related in some way to the broadcast medium, rather than being occupants of a separate world. The widespread introduction of domestic video tech-

nology has obviously effected the way artists approach it, and the new accessibility of technology has broadened the range of producers so that an isolationist attitude can no longer be maintained.

Perhaps the most significant development in recent years has been the exploration of narrative in video tapes. This came about both as a reaction to the reductive formalism of much video art, and as a positive way of addressing a broad range of issues while reaching out to larger audiences.

The development of so called 'new narrative' has been a significant aspect of video production in Britain in recent years, while in Canada, narrative has been an important element for somewhat longer. It has been used most effectively by women artists in both countries who have found that the best way of combining personal statements arising from personal experience with more general political issues raised by the women's movement is through narrative. The use of narrative also has clear connections with the conventions of story telling in culture as a whole, and on television in particular. Many video productions make direct reference to TV soap opera or cinematic narrative, often by incorporating 'off air' clips of TV programmes into the overall structure of the narrative.

In both Canada and Britain there is now a well established tradition of using video documentary as a means of addressing political and social issues. Much of the best work in this area recently has come out of a growing international peace movement but video has also been used very effectively by a variety of community groups dealing with problems of particular local concern and by organisations campaigning for civil rights, racial or sexual equality and for the recognition of sexual minorities.

The use of language, a matter that obviously relates very much to narrative and documentary, is also an issue that has in its own right given rise to a substantial body of video. The manipulation of language in relation to image and object is a theme that runs throughout twentieth century art and which as an area of academic study has provided a theoretical base from which a number of video artists have launched quite personal, idiosyncratic and structurally complex works which explore numerous layers of meaning and interrelationships in image-language juxtapositions.

One issue that cuts across much recent video production, and has also helped to establish a particular genre in its own right, is that of Populism; the setting up of two-way relationships between Art and Popular Culture. Within independent video the question of populism effects everyone concerned in some way. There are those who pursue it as an ideal or an end in itself; those who consider it as a repository of reference and information to draw upon; those who regard it simply as a means of attracting financial support, and those who regard it with suspicion and hostility as a threat to the integrity of Art. Populism in video is manifested in a variety of ways.

Within this exchange various of these, to varying degrees, will be illustrated, but the two that are probably most visible are the espousal of certain dominant methods or genres from television, and the development of music-video (or video-music) as an autonomous practice not fettered by the commercial demands that circumscribe the promo videos produced by and for the rock music industry. For many younger video artists pop music, fashion, trashy consumer products, advertising images and all the trivia of consumer culture provide a rich hunting ground for material and inspiration. Work in this area can range from the sardonically critical to the prettily trivial, but most of it, like the cultural sources it feeds on, is fast, digestible and ephemeral. In comparison to mainstream television, much of the work would still be seen as eccentric and at worst subversive, but in general, it is concerned mainly with a young audience which it addresses in the terms that the audience understands, and it is ephemeral out of choice. Whether it develops beyond its current status of agitational entertainment to effect a fundamental cultural shift, and whether such an heroic project is even appropriate to video as a medium, is something that can neither be affirmed nor predicted at present.

Jeremy Welsh.



Canada

Artists in Canada have been producing video tapes for over ten years but video is still defined in terms of television, film and conceptual or visual art. While the medium possesses some distinct properties, examination of these has not led to the clarification of contemporary video practices. Canadians, for instance, continue to produce video which reflects their concerns as independent media artists and these tend to focus on an examination of the medium. It is useful to look at Canadian video in terms of content rather than technique.

While alternative video producers are slowly gaining access to television technology and have consciously begun to use TV devices, the differences between TV and video remain firm. Video artists exist outside mainstream media and address experience from an alternative perspective. Despite the promise of community cable production facilities, a relatively small number of media artists sustained the production of artist's video for several

years. Those who continued, persevered within the limited access afforded by arts council supported production centres. The situation is now changing. Centres such as Toronto's Trinity Square Video and Charles St Video are learning how to serve their communities better, and new facilities are being developed in locations other than the traditional centers of Toronto and Vancouver. Center Art Video in Calgary, Video Pool in Winnipeg, and the Center for Art Tapes in Halifax, for example, are new foci for media art. As the producing community has expanded, a wider range of alternative video is being produced, all of it outside the mainstream of media production and distribution. This work expresses not only a continuing concern for art process, but also reflects a growing interest in social and political issues and conditions. Canadian video is developing a new profile as a result of these new energies, and the work is reaching beyond art gallery audiences. Canadian media artists are now consciously addressing a wider range of activity, a range which includes a growing awareness of social and political as well as cultural conditions.

English-speaking Canada has had a history of conceptual and language based video which informs much of contemporary production. After the early 1970s video existed not only outside mainstream media but also on the uneasy edge of arts production. Much Canadian work consisted of formal investigations into perceptual or cultural processes, and remained accessible to only a limited segment of the contemporary art audience.

These are important roots, however. Productions by Vancouver's Western Front artists such as Eric Metcalfe, Hank Bull and Kate Craig as well as video by artists such as General Idea and Tom Sherman, whose work is distributed by Toronto's Art Metropole, explore cultural practice and set the tone for much Canadian video. These artists and others such as Ian Murray, John Watt and Vera Frankel continue to investigate formal process on video tape. Performance artists such as Montréalers Monty Cantsin and Philippe Poloni continue this tradition. Cantsin's work, which he describes as neoistic and outwardly political, is also an example of the new social critique.

Work which most obviously reflects the growing concern for social and political conditions is current production by women about women's experience. Lisa Steele's work derives from performance tradition but for the past few years has used video drama to produce telling social commentary. Her work in a hostel for battered women provided real life experiences from which have emerged the women victims in Steele's narratives. They share more with documentary than fiction. Anne Ramsden's Manufactured Romance details the life of a more middle class woman, a writer of popular romantic novels, whose own life mirrors the soap opera format that Ramsden uses to expose the artifice which confines women's existence. Wendy Geller's performance in 48 Hour Beauty Blitz confronts the conditioned responses of women to the authority of media stereotypes.

More obviously political are the media documentaries which come from a tradition of production by women's collectives such as Vancouver's Amelia Productions and Quebec's Video Femmes. Recent work by Helen Doyle and Marion Barling, as well as Our Choice, a Tape about Teenage Mothers BY Toronto's Women's Alliance are advocacy video tapes which address the conditions of women's lives from a feminist point of view. These are the deliberately subjective expressions of alternative community expression.

But women producers are not the only ones reflecting a new political consciousness. Charlie Fox and Wade McGregor's installation Recreation of the Emergency is an eerie representation of bureaucratic authoritarianism. Michael Banger's Points of View reveals the effects of unarticulated political choice on male-female relationships. Rodney Werden and Colin Campbell broaden the scope of political context to include the desperation of social isolation and its effect on sexual relationships.

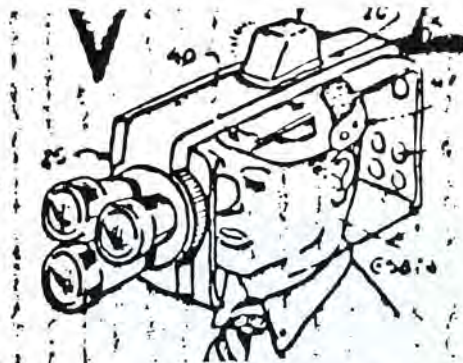
Derek Graham's study of homeless men in Toronto How Lucky Can You Get, Eh is a more personal view of urban social conditions. Like La Bonne by Barbara Steinman and recent work by Norman Cohn, Graham's video more accurately describes his own relationship to the dispossessed subjects of his work. Raphael Bendahan's video, more obviously first person like that of Jorge Lozano and Antony Lorraine, lays open the heightened struggle for meaning which results from chancing cultural and political conditions such as the immigrant experience. More traditional Canadian geographic and cultural isolation is represented in work by Vern Hume and Julie Healey. These are compounded by the challenge of modern technology, the subject of a video by Susan Britton. Paulette Phillips develops performance based on personal experience within Toronto's urban context.

Randy and Berenicci also confront the challenge of urban techno-society, but treat it and the remnants of history as wry cultural ritual. Theirs is a universe of poetic anarchy which puts all political systems in the same perspective.

Peter Wronski's concern with history manifests itself in an investigation of television. His installations often recombine off-air television images and challenge the spectator to recognize the effect of media format and its negation of history. Critique of television and the cliches of mainstream media have been the concern of many alternative video producers from the start, however. Rob Mabee's Amazing Powers, a recent Vancouver community cable production, is an hilarious take-off on human potential and TV game shows, a good example of how television can be turned on itself. Toronto's Video-cabaret also use television format such as the TV talk show to frame the various elements of performance in their live video-theatre presentations.

Because most media in Canada are dominated by U.S. product, video practitioners in Canada have tended to use television as a metaphor for communications processes rather

than as specific content. Only recently have images been used to illustrate the manipulation of event and perpetuation of dysfunctional values by the communications industries. Media stereotypes and the institutionalization of aggression by television are featured in a work by Christa Schadt. Ed Mowbray's Excerpts and Euphoria examines the coverage of the attempted assassination of Ronald Reagan in which television's audio-visual impact renders political analysis impossible. Trial by Media addresses a more specific Vancouver issue, and examines the way in which television served mainstream political prejudices in the jailing of five local anarchists. This video tape is another example of video advocacy and has been shown to community groups in several centres across the country.



So what happens when contemporary media artists look through video eyes at the world around them? Lorraine Duffor and Robert Morin reinvent video documentary in carefully textured portraiture. Byron Black and Dimitrije Martinovic look beyond appearance to cultural practice whereas Mark Verabiouff and Paul Wong examine practice to draw out the meaning of individual experience. In each case the work reflects social and political conditions. In each case the work is given meaning by its relationships to external content as well as by its unique artistic properties.



Canada is a country of highly developed communications hardware which is most often used to deliver a foreign cultural product (i.e. American television). The continuing support for video production centres across the country results from recognition of the vitality and importance of work produced by alternative media artists. As the number of producers expands, the definition of art video as a narrow examination of art process has been exploded.

Jane Wright.

In the Shadow of the Beast

Supporting the screenings of single video art tapes by Canadian artists during this month are three major Canadian video art installations which are on display in London until March 31.

In FIND THE PERFORMER, Paulette Phillips, wanders lonely as a crowd through the meek streets of Toronto. The installation comprises 4 monitors each of which features an exercise in street theatre, for instance, one features the artist talking to herself in the street. The purpose in the artists own words is to "document the random interactions that occur in the streets of an urban center". A comment which evokes Walter Benjamin's observation that in the street perception takes the form of visual shocks. But this latterday video flaneur discovers that the new urban man is 'cool' to the point of being completely numb: this could be a trip through any unfeeling city and is a modern variant on Edgar Allen Poe's vicious little urban parable - THE CROWD.

In the adjoining gallery Peter Wronski in IT'S ONLY A CITY, DARLING, THEY CALL NEW YORK has created a spectacle of mesmerizing magnificence. Twenty monitors adorn a large iron structure to compose a kind of electronic rainbow which reflects a garish melodrama of second-hand images. Nixon, Travis Bickle and John Hinckley Jr share the streets and screen with more anonymous New York 'crazies'. Wronski's point is that the electronic recording of images has caused the death of history and the rise of nostalgia as world-view. Television, film and the photograph dissuade us from thinking about history because they encourage us to believe that we remember everything. In this extraordinary installation history is perceived as a spectacle of epic cliches, the actual and the fabricated image being largely interchangeable, leaving the viewer with no alternative but to become a spectator at the funeral of his own imagination. Cldo is a broken mirror whose original founding image can never be recovered from its broken fragments.

Over at the Air Gallery Charlie Fox and Wade McGregor have mounted a more austere and problematic installation than those found at Canada House. RECREATION OF AN EMERGENCY is precisely that: an elliptical recreation of a moment when some unspecified crisis causes a government to declare a state of national emergency. In one room a monitor shows people's muted reactions to the civil emergency. In another room a chair is suspended in mid-air and a man in a monitor warns people to go away. A possible solution to the mystery lies among the papers which litter an office desk but no-one is sitting in the chair who might create a solution out of the debris of clues. Marvin Gaye said WHAT'S GOING ON with more style, but this installation says it with more urgency. A completely successful fabrication of a paranoid environment.

On this evidence Canadian video installations tend to open a broken window on the world whilst their British counterparts more

often turn a cracked window on themselves. The British video artist tends often to interrogate the conditions which allow him to articulate in self-referential aesthetic conundrums. The Canadians by contrast appear to use video art to confront, evade and parody the shadows thrown by the great American dream machine which looms over Canadian popular culture. This gives their work a degree of energy and intensity which works itself out in a social engagement with the world. They seem to be fighting for a space for their own dreams though appear reconciled to the fact that there is little possibility of escape from the universal image corporation.

Whilst in Canada this month British video art is enjoying extensive exposure, Canadian artists are having their show here; the British-Canadian Video Exchange is alive and well!

RECREATION OF AN EMERGENCY

Air Gallery 6-8 Rosebury Av London
Mon-Friday 11am - 6pm
Sat 11am - 2pm.

FIND THE PERFORMER & IT'S ONLY A CITY, DARLING, THEY CALL NEW YORK.
Canada House, Trafalgar Sq, London.
Monday 10am - 7pm
Sunday 12 - 5.30pm
Rest of the week 10am - 5.30pm.

Rest of the March Programme.

SOCIAL/POLITICAL CONCERNS on 16 March
Shawn Sutherland - IF YOU COULD SEE THE WORLD THROUGH MY EYES - 8 mins.
Barbara Steinman - LA BONNE - 16 mins
Tom Konyves - QUEBEC CAUSE - 2 mins
Stokely Seip - SNUFF FLICK - 6 mins
Derek Graham - HOW LUCKY CAN YOU GET EH - 55 mins.

PERSONAL IDENTITY/CONTEXT/METAPHOR on 23 March.

Vern Hume - OBSESSIVELY/IMMINENT 10 mins
Raphael Brendan - LE JARDIN DU PARADIS - 20 mins.
Antony Lorraine - IRELAND - 20 mins
Susan Britton - FREEZE FRAME - 5 mins.
Julie Healey - OUT OF CONTEXT - 11 mins
Jorge Lozano - CARCERI THE INVENZIONE - 15 mins.

MEDIA on 30 MARCH

Christa Schadt & Jorge Lozano - AND NOW THIS - 7 mins
Wendy Geller - 48 HOUR BEAUTY BLITZ - 40 mins
Christa Schadt - SUPERSTARS OF WRESTLING - 5 mins
Anne Milne - NEWSMAKERS - 10 mins
Ed Mowbray - EXCERPTS & EUPHORIA - 10 mins
B.C.J.A.M. - TRIAL BY MEDIA - 25 mins

(All programmes at the Canada House Cinema at 6.30pm)

MEN & WOMEN on 8 March

Chris Mullington - LET'S FALL IN LOVE - 4 mins
Michael Banger - POINTS OF VIEW - 30 mins
Videocabaret - HORMONE WARZONE - 12 mins.
Women's Media Alliance - OUR CHOICE - 40 mins.

REAL LIFE PERCEPTION on 15 March
Liz Vander Zaag - BABY EYES - 3 mins
Byron Black - WHAT'S A SENTIENT BEING LIKE YOU DOING IN AN INCARNATE - 16 mins
Lorraine Dufour & Robert Morin - TANT QU'Y AURA DE LA PLACE POUR MES COUTEAUX - 30 mins
Bruce Robb - AH-BAH-CAH - 7 mins
Mark Verabiouff - ROYAL FEVER - 15 mins
Dimitrie Martinovic - MY MOTHER MAKES SOUP NOODLES, MY FATHER CUTS A SIMPLE THREAD - 11 mins

on 22 March

Paul Wong - CONFUSED. - 11 mins

MEN & WOMEN on 29 March

David Askevold - RHEA - 7 mins
Elizabeth Chitty - TV LOVE - 4 mins
Gerry Kisil - DATING AND MATE SELECTION - 7 mins
Rhonda Abrams - GEOGRAPHY IS DESTINY - 15 mins
Colin Campbell - WHITE MONEY - 12 mins
Heather Elton & Kyle Wagner - WAIT FOR ME - 12 mins
Rodney Werden - BLUE MOON - 30 mins

(All programmes at the Air Gallery Basement, 6-8 Rosebury Avenue at 7.30 pm).



THE GHOST OF WILLIAM BLAKE

Pat Sweeney has a heart to art conversation with the leading video artist Steve Hawley.

Like many video artists Steve Hawley's route into the media was a complex and circuitous one. Born in the West Riding of Yorkshire his father was a joiner and his mother a wages clerk. A bright young man he went to Oxford to study Politics, Philosophy and Economics. A course which has launched the careers of many a famous politician not least that other Yorkshire man Harold Wilson. Steve Hawley however found little joy either in Oxford or his studies and left after his first year. He returned to Yorkshire where he got a job in insurance and married and settled down. For seven years he was to all intents and purposes a Joe Lampton who had turned his back on the room at the top. Then at the encouragement of his wife (from whom he is now getting divorced) he went to Brighton to do a three course in Fine Arts. There he met Mick Hartney who was and indeed still is Head of Media Resources at the college and a leading and pioneering spirit in British video art. Under his influence Steve Hawley discovered his metier in the form of video

art. An appropriately idiosyncratic medium for one who had pursued such an idiosyncratic path through life. Steve Hawley's early foray into academia was not entirely misplaced as philosophy was to become the abiding concern of his work as a video artist. Like many students and academics during the period 1979-82 he found himself exploring the exotic, difficult



and exciting world of French linguistic philosophy. The work of figures like Derrida, Foucault and Barthes had placed the problem of language at the centre of the humanist enterprise (in the process of undermining the concept of humanism) - the nature of words, the function of language, the relationship between words as signs and the objects and values they signified. In such a climate of thought Steve Hawley could hardly, given his long-standing interest in philosophy, avoid making tapes which dealt with the linguistic problems of philosophical discourse. BAD REASONS, and more recently THE DICTIONARY, are perhaps the most celebrated fruits of that period. Although the climate of thought generated by French structuralist and post-structuralist thought influenced Steve Hawley the details of that discourse did not. Wittgenstein rather than Saussure is perhaps his intellectual touch-stone and he tends to appreciate language in terms of puzzles and paradoxes rather than in the European tradition as a formal problematic of meaning and being. His concern with language is posited on a belief that imagination and intuition are ultimately superior too, or at they very least should not be relegated below, reason and highly formalized philosophical discourses. This belief in the value of intuition and imagination places him far closer to William Blake than any of the post-Nietzschean Continental philosophers. Which is as it should be for Steve Hawley is ultimately a very English artist working in a medium which is consistently reflective of English life, manners and attitudes.

P.S. Where do you place yourself as a video artist.

S.H. Well there's definitely a strong art college tradition in British video art and I'm definitely placed in that tradition. As opposed to the more populist - pop culture sector - represented by say John Scarlett Davis. I suppose I'm borrowing from television the visual forms which enable me to discuss problems of language

and reason against feeling and intuition.

P.S. Those concerns seem very apparent in your most recent tape THE DICTIONARY.

S.H. Well that's a kind of guided tour of language which I contrast with music which is a totally visceral media. I also parody various TV genres - like Open University language lessons, etc. The tape is concerned with how language is socially controlled and how language relates to me and is used by men in a special way that reinforces their status and power.

P.S. That's an interesting distinction to make. That there should be any difference between the relationship to language of men and women.

S.H. The first section of my tape BAD REASONS addresses itself to that very formal use of language which strikes me as peculiar to a certain kind of male use of language as a kind of instrumental reason. In philosophy more than any other discourse words and power seem inseparable. It is also a very exclusive language and is wrapped in the kind of male myth which regards logic as a value foreign to women.

P.S. What I found most interesting about BAD REASONS was that in the third and final section you replaced words with a tactile and entirely visual language.

S.H. I saw it as a tape which was against reason as a mechanism for understanding the world. Though having said that I don't think it says very much. It was very much placed in that kind of Art school tradition which regards the deconstruction of meanings as sufficient in itself.

P.S. The final section though was visually very engaging. Which leads me to ask why so much video art is figurative, literate and word-based.

S.H. Well I suppose it is though that is not necessarily a bad thing. I think video and television have certain qualities which are superior to film. In that video is good at disseminating information, acting out debates, etc. Whereas film is a more spectacular visual medium. You know the close-up of the talking head is the basic unit of grammar in television. So I think video is good at dramatizing dialogue, disseminating information and acting out debates.

P.S. Do you ever feel that critics (like myself) are prone to expect video art to push for the kinds of 'mass' audience which video artists themselves have no real desire to address.

S.H. I don't see video art as a mass medium in any sense. Any more than art is a mass media. I think it is easy to confuse television's status as the mass media with video art. The two are totally different things. And frankly I don't want or can't ever image video art being a mass media. The fact that

John Scarlett Davis is doing pop promos is a bit of a red herring because his promos bear no relation whatsoever to his work as a video artist. Video art is I suppose a bit of a ghetto in popular terms but I for one am quite content to remain in the ghetto.

P.S. In this issue Jez Welch suggests that at the moment video art is going through a period of infatuation with pop and junk culture.

S.H. I think that's true. A lot of people are taken with the trash aesthetic at the moment. I think it's all a bit unhealthy because Andy Warhol did it all so much better in the '60s and a lot of the current examples seem simply to illustrate a nostalgia for that era. Sixties imagery seems to be proliferating everywhere from the Smiths to neo-modernism in contemporary art. All of it seems to come back down to fashion and trends whereas I feel video art should attempt more 'serious' work than simply re-cycling, or making glib references to a fairly mythical version of the past.

P.S. But video art has always re-cycled images drawn from mainstream sources in a way that reinforces the kind of culture of nostalgia which post-modernism describes.

S.H. Video artists (myself included) have always used a lot of off-air material. Overall it probably is a bad thing. Though it all depends on how critical your use of the material is. I think what Dara Birnbaum does which is turn the material on it's head is fine.

P.S. British video art always seems remarkably uninterested in the visual innovations the post-production technology makes possible. I'm sure this is partly attributable to lack of funds and access but also to an element of apathy

S.H. There is a problem of access. Though paradoxically it has helped us to avoid the kind of excesses which led American video artists to produce reams of visual wallpaper. British video artists are to deal more with ideas and content which in my opinion is no bad thing.



P.S. Nevertheless it does strike me that English video suffers from a lack of concern with purely visual language.

S.H. Yes that is true. In fact I'm working at the moment on a

tape with a composer which shall visually accompany her score. That will be a purely visual piece and I'm glad to be working on such a project. But in a sense film does this kind of thing much better than video. Film is intrinsically visual far more so than video which is a basic device for recording moving images with words. The visual scale of film enhances the pure spectacle of the image in a way that video can never hope to emulate.

P.S. Do you think that installations restore to video art the possibilities of visual spectacle intrinsic to film.

S.H. Installations are often located in a sculptural tradition and are often very ambient and difficult to engage with. The trouble with the specularity of installations is that it more often than not simply involves multiplying the number of monitors used. Which is ultimately a bit pointless. Though installations can be great fun and give the audience a chance to participate in the event rather than passively consume a tape.

P.S. English video art is also very narrative based; or has become so in the '80s. Although, in fact, your work is an exception in that you spurn narrative or dramatic devices.

S.H. That's true. I actually prefer non-narrative video. If I was that interested in narrative I'd write stories. Although it is also true that a lot of contemporary video art is narrative based. Although with the exception of Ian Bourn - who has used video to tell stories - a lot of that work is investigating narrative in a critical manner rather than imitating narrative forms.

P.S. A lot of narrative based work is being produced by feminists. Because the personal is political and the political is personal. In general feminism has added a new dimension to video art yet remains curiously divorced from the main body of the movement.

S.H. Yes because I think their alliances are to women's art rather than video. Personally that kind of work has influenced me enormously. But the whole women's art movement is in such flux at the moment that it is difficult to make any tidy assessments of its role in or relationship with traditional video art.

P.S. You teach one day a week at the North East London Polytechnic. What kind of input do you get from your students. Do you find most of them want to make pop promos.

S.H. No. Not really. Whereas at somewhere like Sheffield that is in fact the case. No my students seem interested in humorous tapes, tapes about style and sub-culture and also narrative based tapes. Not a lot of political tapes actually.

P.S. How difficult is to make a living as a video artist.

S.H. Pretty difficult. In fact you need some kind of supplementary job. Either as in my case teaching, or in the case of John Scarlett Davis working in mainstream video and television. You can make some money from video art. I made about £800 on my tapes last year. There are talks and lectures for which you do get paid. But really you either have to be an academic, or a professional director in commercial television in order to sustain yourself as a video artist.

P.S. What does the immediate future hold for Steve Hawley.

S.H. Well I'm doing this video with Jane Wells at South Hill Park actually at the moment. I've just finished a tape with a performance artist called Rose Finn-Kelcey in which we have tried to make a video rather than a simple video recording of a performance. I'm still working on a tape with Tony Styger, with whom I did INDUSTRIAL SCIENCE MIX, which is going to be a short, fast-moving tape about the relationship between men and objects. I'm also interested in the possibility of interactive video art. Though that's perhaps Tomorrow's World rather than what I might actually be doing tomorrow.



John Adams.

Someone told me at a party once that painting is dead. Its the kind of thing people say at parties like that I suppose, and I shrugged agreement as he slid down the wall. But I didn't know then that he sprayed cars for BL. And he didn't know that I made videos. Now he looked up and murmured philosophically, 'Ideas lag behind technology'. Crouching, I asked, 'How far?' 'About 5 years'. Then he passed out. I tried to pick him up, and fell over. That was six years ago. He is probably out of work now, but he was right or both counts I guess.

So what happened to video art? I remember when we had all this stuff on dusty 1/2" spools, shooting for 30 minutes and turning around to see 5000ft. of tape spewed out of the portapak. And those interminable fixed camera shots of people wrapped in cling film dodging in and out of frame. Purists video, self referential and all that, but most of it seemed to be about painting somehow. And when there was an edit, there was time to get a coffee while the picture settled down. It took a particular kind of dedication to make tapes then, but you had

to be really strange to actually watch the stuff. As a student I attended countless seminars by visiting artists, attacking film, and demanding that their tapes should be shown on TV. Well it didn't happen of course, so very few people was the work, and for some reason nobody wrote much about it either. Which was a shame because some of it was worth looking at.

At one point it looked as though video was going to drop out of sight completely, but there was always that sneaking feeling that someone would figure out what to use it for. Well, somebody did, and Britain is a nation of time shifters and empty cinemas. All that seems such a long time ago, but it was 1978, and in six years the new medium has established itself in full colour. It's all happened so fast. Now we can afford to edit like the BBC. Six years ago, although we stuck to our guns and produced rational arguments about time and space, (why are art schools so obsessed by logic)? those mega long shots were all the technology could cope with. Its no accident that the so called new narrative emerges at a time when everyone has access to a type 5, trimming frames here and there to get the continuity right. The development of video and video art has exactly paralleled the economics of the technology. And its great. No other medium has changed so much in such a short time. But there are a few problems. Hands up all those who couldn't resist pushing the multi grab button on the cheap TBC's. Well it does look nice, but whats going to happen when Quantels cost three grand? Squee? zooms and flips with everything. You can see this weeks effect on Top of the Pops. Again and again. If you want to know what TOTP was using a couple of years ago look at some recent video art. It is hardly challenging the medium.

But there is some excellent work, and it covers a wider area than it ever has, so wide that the term Video Art is becoming restrictive. The edges are blurring nicely. And the work needs to be seen. Distribution is a key issue, and if broadcast is a possibility its importance will be to lift the profile of Video and create a wider audience for for cassettes. GalleriesVideo Libraries and festivals are providing new opportunities to see work. Perhaps public libraries will be the future distributors of independent video. All we need now are ideas.

PIECES PRESS RELEASE

A new compilation video will be released by Projects UK in April. 'Pieces', is a tape of short works, (45 secs - 7mins), by British artists including, Peter Savage, Mike Stubbs, Steve Littman, Neil Armstrong, Nigel Rolfe, Zoe Redman, Jon Bewley, Richard Layzell, Valerie Timmis, Jeremy Welsh, Steve Hawley, and Tony Steyger. The 55min tape will be available on either VHS (£40.00) or U-matic (£70.00). The low cost is designed to en-

courage purchase by collages, schools, and libraries which may use the tape as both an introduction to the work of the contributors, and as an indicator of the state of current British Video Art. An accompanying reference will list other work available by the artists, and distribution outlets. An international edition of 'Pieces' is planned for Autumn 1984. For further details contact Projects UK (Basement Group, Bells Court, Pilgrim St, Newcastle Upon Tyne. NE1 6RH Tel: (0632) 614527.

POP AROUND THE CLOCK

The pop video has come of age. But what kind of age have the children of the cathode tube inherited. Can the pop promo find a place for art amongst its commercial imperatives. Or is the pop promo the people's video art. Pat Sweeney get's on the set.

The pop video inherited the world in 1983. Celebrated by some, scorned by others, it spawned a thousand cliches and made the American record industry millions of dollars. In Britain alone 12 million pounds are spent by the record companies on the production of on average 1000 new pop promos a year. Pop videos are Britain's most successful export industry of the 80's. They are indeed model children of Thatcher's New England. High-tech. High-pressure. High-profile.

The domain of the competitive entrepreneur and the independent producer. Perpetuating with intoxicating persuasiveness an image of the world which sustains the illusions of glamour, speed, excitement and fun. One might date the birth of this sunrise industry with Bruce Gower's video for Queen's Bohemian Rhapsody in 1975. However though that video ushered in the contemporary phase of the visual promotion of popular music most people now accept that variants on the theme have been with us since at least the 1940s. The pop video then is not entirely new, but the importance it has gained in the ecology of pop culture in the course of the 80s is largely unprecedented. The pop video seems to be currently going through a stylistic period one might term epic classicism. Not only are they achieving ever more epic manifestations, but they seem preoccupied with imitating the classic forms and styles of Hollywood cinema.

David Mallet's video for Queen's Radio GaGa with its chromakey inserts from Fritz Lang's Metropolis, Julian Temple's re-staging of the war in El Salvador for the Rolling Stones Under Cover of the Night, are obvious indicators of the pop promos intoxication with the epic production values of celluloid. But is it perhaps Michael Jackson with Thriller, directed by John Landis, who most brazenly displays the burgeoning self-confidence of the pop video

industry. Thriller is in fact a mini-musical masquerading as a pop video: with a production budget of 1 million dollars, a running time of 15 minutes, and the screen titles and cinema exhibition befitting its pretensions. Performers of the stature of Michael Jackson, Queen and the Rolling Stones, can obviously afford to expend vast sums of money on their videos, but the reason their record companies chose to do so in 1983 was the realization that in America MTV (cable music television) was selling records like they'd just been invented. Not only was exposure on MTV consolidating and improving the performance of existing market leaders, but it was breaking a new generation of visual British bands - Duran Duran, Culture Club, Eurythmics, etc.

When in the '60s the record industry was waiting for the next Elvis they got the Beatles, when they were waiting for the next Beatles they got Led Zepplin, when they were waiting for the next Led Zepplin they got the Sex Pistols, when they were waiting for the next Sex Pistols they got MTV. The industry desperately needed some kind of stimulation for record sales in the wake of the recession had been steadily declining since 1979. In America MTV has put new life into the industry which is now busily investing the resulting profits in ever more grandiose video projects. In Britain the record industry and pop video companies anxiously await the advent of cable and the creation of their own music television channel. Originally there were three companies in Britain competing to provide a music channel to the new cable services. Music Vision supported by amongst others, Goldcrest & Yorkshire Television, have their own assured distribution base in the form of Redifusion's existing and proposed cable systems. The other two competitors Thorn-EMI's Music Box and Virgin Record's Cable Music are currently discussing a merger: as are a number of the original programme originating cable suppliers. If cable does not take off in any significant form in Britain one can imagine a great deal of pressure being brought to bear on ITV and the BBC to supply air-time for a programme designed to simply premier new pop videos.

For all the confidence & optimism of the sector it is riddled with confusion and supported by a very fragile economic infrastructure. The main source of confusion is the question of whether pop videos should continue to be regarded as advertisements, or whether in the wake of MTV, they should be considered as programmes. For what the success of MTV has shown, with an estimated audience of 16 million viewers, is that people want to watch music television. One could never imagine 16 million people (even 16 million Americans volunteering to watch 24 hours of non-stop conventional advertisements). Pop promos may be financed as adverts but they are consumed and critically received like independent creative programming. The forty competing production companies who exist in this country

obviously want their product to be regarded as programming. Not only would this allow bigger budgets, a more rational scheme for paying royalties, but would give directors and producers their legitimate public profile. At the moment, as with the confusion at the recent Rock and Pop Awards, the pop industry casually accords groups the creative responsibility for production they have often simply appeared in. Pop videos are not made for any profit which might accrue from retail sales. Polygram estimate that if they were to sell 15,000 copies of a video (highly unlikely in itself) they couldn't hope to make more than £2 profit on each tape. The record industry makes pop videos to promote pop records because such productions have a proven influence on sales. The record industry has in fact created a monster which it has to keep feeding. In turn creating a new and relatively cheap form of mass entertainment. If the pop industry originally made pop promos to sell records it is quite conceivable that it might one day find itself in the position of making records to pay for the production of pop promos.

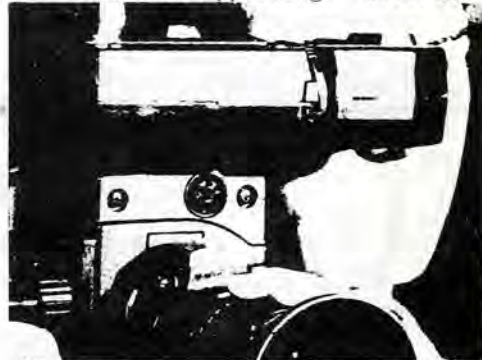
Such suppositions depend on the assumption (which I am increasingly driven to support) that pop culture is undergoing a major shift from the street to the screen. The live gig, the discotheque and the record player have traditionally been the main sources and the main sites for the consumption of pop music. The pop video potentially shifts the centre of gravity from the street - the communal consumption of pop - to the television - the private and domestic consumption of pop. Listening to records has always been a basically private and intensely narcissistic practice. But stepping out - be it to a disco, club, or pub, has always been the public and social supplement to that private practice. Video doesn't preclude stepping out but it does transform that activity from one of necessity to one of choice. Given that one can now (and even more so in the future) view and listen to pop from the single source of the television set, going out involves a certain conscious decision and becomes a stylistic gesture - like wearing certain clothes, sporting a certain haircut, or liking certain kinds of records. A new social formation is appearing on the horizon whom one might term the armchair teenager. A creature born of the coupling of the new technologies of video recorders, and the new media of the pop video. This figure signifies a possibly revolutionary change in the ecology of pop culture, a shift few people are consciously aware of participating in, whose long-term consequences no one can claim to understand or appreciate.

If the armchair teenager is a prophetic fantasy rather than a pathetic fallacy then his rise will simply be attributable to the sheer undemanding pleasurable of the pop video. One can gaze at pop videos for hours, seduced by the soporific glare of the images and held by the possibility that in a short while one of your favourite

tunes will break out of the television. Certainly the 3½ hour exhibition - A HISTORICAL LOOK AT POP VIDEO - currently playing at the Olympus Gallery in London is far less onerous a viewing marathon than one might have anticipated. The exhibition illustrates the primary appeal of the pop video - the irresistible combination of bright pop pulse with the repetition of glossy pop images - but it also provided some evidence for considering at least some of the output of the promo industry as representing a genuine people's art.

The pop video is subjected to the Face, Body and Sexuality of the performer. Its purpose is to construct Image & Image is sexuality fetishized in the plastic mask of cosmetic perfection. A face redesigned as a voyeuristic sculpture which at its worst petrifies into a mirror which refuses to accept the existence of any image other than its own. Basically pop videos are designed to make pop stars look attractive and in the process peddle innocuous and restrictive notions of sexual desirability.

The intrinsic narcissism of the pop video was most cleverly exploited and parodied in the Adam Ant's videos for PRINCE CHARMING and STAND AND DELIVER. Delicious technicolour confections which inscribed Adam Ant as the new pop dandy whilst cheekily playing with that narcissistic image: a play which of course only made the image at the centre of it all even more appealing. Neverthe-



less Adam Ant made a determined effort to expose the mechanics of narcissism even though he never for a moment considered rejecting that 'attitude'. His videos were saturated with references to the repetition and imitation of images fixated upon in early adolescence as though he were writing an illustrated history of his own sub-conscious. Storming the pop charts, Adam Ant seemed to suggest, consisted simply of occupying a mirror in which one could never find one's own reflection until one had become the reflection of one's own desires. The pop star then does not pursue his career in order to turn himself into message but in order to become a medium which can communicate messages which strictly lie outside of his own personality and experience. He is no more than the sum of his own fixations. So at the end of the PRINCE CHARMING video, Diana Dors, waved her magic wand and Adam Ant was transformed into the idols of his teen dreaming - Bryan Ferry, Clint Eastwood, Valentino, Brando, Adam Ant!

Sandra Goldbacher remarks elsewhere in this issue that pop videos tend to plunder innovations in

contiguous medias and turn them into shallow gestures designed to denote "artiness". In 1981 - the year of Adam Ant's great narcissistic trajectory through the pop firmament - videos were obsessed with the image of the pop star shattering his own reflection in a mirror. A casual deconstruction of the image which was laughably obvious in its implications. In 1983 the formalized violence of WEST SIDE STORY, the ritual mystery of film noir and the post-modern notion of images within images littered countless pop promos. Genres and signs deprived of meaning context and significance were re-employed simply as icons which suggested the grandeur of Hollywood teen romanticism, the exoticism of post-modernist video art and the nostalgic glamour of black & white B movies. But though it is easy to sneer at a media which routinely changes signs and symbols into gestures and icons to do so is to ignore the genuine quality of invention certain pop videos exhibit.

ROCKIT despite its irritating art video affectations was an undeniably clever and witty pop video. Most directors invited to make a promo for Herbie Hancock's "scratchesymphony" would simply have taken their cameras down to the Bronx and filmed black kids dancing in the streets. Godley & Creme at least had the wit to go beyond the obvious in the shape of a room full of automated mannequins. Godley and Creme's visual flair is coupled with a glib sexism (GIRLS ON FILM) and lack of narrative intelligence. If it is enough, as Brian Grant once argued, that pop videos feature "images which are good to look at" then Godley & Creme are masters of the art. Thankfully, as is shown by the work of Julian Temple, Steve Baron, David Mallet, Dave Robinson and Brian Grant it is possible to marry visual interest with critical self-consciousness.

Brian Grant's video for Olivia Newton John's PHYSICAL was a brilliant satire on the Californian cult of the body beautiful and the way it reinscribes bodies in the splendid isolation of a self-regarding narcissism. David Mallet's work from I DON'T LIKE MONDAYS by the Boomtown Rats to Bowie's CHINA GIRL has displayed a consistent concern with the visual ellipsis generated by the transformational grammar of video/film. Moments when the viewer is rudely displaced from one field of perception to another: as in Sydney suddenly appearing over the hill at the end of Bowie's LET'S DANCE. Steve Baron has invariably organized his work around the Culture of the Look and via the technique of the mobile tracking camera. In an inherently voyeuristic media Baron has privileged voyeurism as his mise en scene - a space in the video which is at the mercy of his 'auteurism' and largely safe from the demands of the music or the band. Dave Robinson's videos for MADNESS unfold in the manner of a comic series like the KEYSTONE COPS. To simply dismiss them as adverts is to deride one of the most original and engaging exercises in visual comedy this country has evolved since the popular demise of the music hall. Julian Temple

for all his lapses of taste and judgement consistently produces work which interrogates the mythical status of style in British culture.

All these directors share one common factor: a commitment to a consistent visual style or cluster of concepts and concerns. Their work signifies beyond the momentary delights of a current sound to form a visual discourse which has depth and meaning and character. A discourse which suffers analysis and often bears rich fruit. They are the people's video artists and are as worthy of consideration as those who more obviously foreground their 'art' impulses outside the constraints of commerce, production and marketing. Most dismissals of the media which I have read ultimately rest on little more than an appeal to cultural snobbery.

Pat (Don't Metz With Me) Sweeney.



Pleasure is Not a Dirty Word

Sandra Goldbacher is a young video artist whose graduation tape - Polka Dots and Moonbeams - won much praise and recognition during 1983. She is currently working on a new project - Night of a Thousand Eyes - in conjunction with Kim Flitcroft and funded by South East Arts.

In the following polemic Sandra Goldbacher argues that video art should not allow itself to be plundered by pop videos but should engage in that space to struggle for alternative visions of glamour, sexuality and desire.

If you spent an evening in the ICA Cinematheque a few months ago you could view a tape entitled STILL LIFE WITH A MONITOR - eight minutes of a small re-screened monitor on a table showing details of a painting. The same evening you could walk into the Sound and Vision pub to see Herbie Hancock's hands appearing on a re-screened monitor to add a touch of experimental, self-reflexive chic to the promo for ROCKIT. (Dir by Godley and Creme).

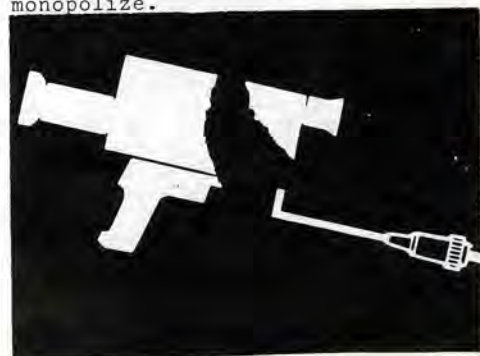
Around that time the re-screened monitor image appeared in countless pop promos. Was it likely that a similar post-modernist obsession with re-presenting split imagery was pre-occupying the directors of such diverse artists as Billy Joel, Mick Jagger and Shaking Stevens. Hardly! The world of advertizing has always drawn upon and drained

the language of experimental film and art whilst recycling its formalist devices. Just as pop video - an almost exclusively filmic preserve - has milked and vapourized a few notions of video art experimentalism. It has taken the very idea of video technology itself as an image of glamour by using the video monitor (itself a jaded image of a high tech myth) and in ROCKIT leave it sitting, bar-rolling in the corner of a glossy filmic frame. The pop video then steals the speech of experimentalism, empties it of meaning and uses it as a chic, throwaway and ultimately exhausted cliché. Another 'art' concern which the pop video is currently draining is the return to Hollywood and the Culture of the Look. It throws up videos obsessed with transitions from monochrome to technicolour, studded with such signs of glamour as venetian blinds, Ray Ban glasses and rim-lit film noir blondes.

Electronic treatment of images in post-production (surely the major technical innovation which distinguishes the aesthetics of video image generation from that of film) should be a means of questioning the dominant representations of glamour and sexuality in popular culture. Instead it is employed by the pop video-makers as at best a vapid gloss on the ever mutating plunder of film imagery and at worst as a means of covering-up mistakes made during shooting.

But experimental video instead of confronting this situation - this misuse of its own forms and misapplication of technology - seems to shy away from dealing with and generating a pleasurable symbolic language. It chooses rather to veil itself within a form of alienating puritanism. If it is to move into the new viewing contexts of cable and clubs (arguably theatres for the articulation of alternative sexuality and styles) then it must exploit this dangerous edge and confront popular cultural concerns in more imaginative ways than merely, for instance, re-editing off-air material. Experimental video should valuably explore the Hollywood canon by articulating new ways of approaching glamour and style as representations of sexuality and desire. A tape such as A-Z by John Scarlett Davis works successfully with pleasurable but one wonders if it would be so allowable in alternative circles to deal with heterosexuality as well as homosexuality in such a 'gay' manner.

If alternative video continues to avoid confronting pleasurable in image production it will a space space which the vapid, vapourizing forms of Pop Video will simply monopolize.

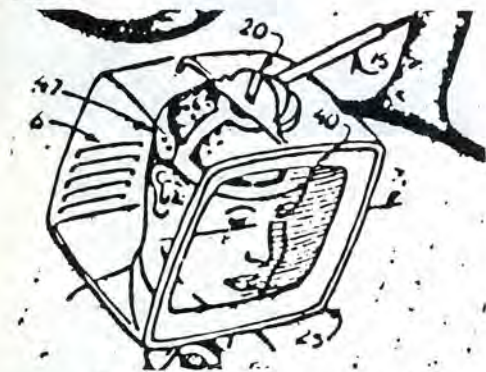


THE GLEAMING OF STYLE

John Scarlett-Davis is a man attempting to walk the tight-rope between art and commerce as he makes the transition from the world of video art to the art of making pop-videos.

John Scarlett Davis has recently completed the video for Simple Minds' new single Waterfront. While the spiv intellectual might read the video art of John Scarlett Davis as a semiological analysis of contemporary urban subculture, he claims that he is a sensationalist, not a structuralist, who is reflecting the surface of people who live entirely on the surface of themselves. One might say that Andy Warhol is alive and well and living in his suitcase.

The Simple Minds video applied Davis's particular sense of mood and style to the derelict Glasgow docklands, and the epic cliches which Jim Kerr allies to their symphonies of beat and rhythm. Dormant cranes straddle the grey horizon like stranded pelicans and the band performs in the old Barrowland dance hall whose floors which once were awash with glitter are now covered in dust and old newspapers. Using a split-screen technique the video shifts from the grit and despair of the docklands to the dance hall rejuvenated by the romance and passion of Simple Minds in a meditation which reflects if it does not consider the character of the city, and the band.



By the way of a university degree in geology, a spell as an assistant film director which culminated implosively on the set of Derek Jarman's 'The Tempest', and two years at Goldsmiths, Davis was adopted by Howard Schuman in his BBC Play Video Stars as the quintessential video artist. In fact, he breaks the mould rather than confirms the type.

Davis's work is witty, bright, colourful, rhythmic and accessible: symptomatic of a new generation of Vid Kids who are more artful in their use of style than stylized in their use of art. Style, particularly those people whose lifestyle is an exercise in performance art, preoccupies John Scarlett Davis in such lexicons of the 'dandy' as A-Z, Chat Rap, Tim & Jerry, and Wardrobes of the Mind. His career should be a fascinating one to observe as he attempts to negotiate a new kind of relationship between video art and the pop video.

Won't Get Faust(ed) Again

Dara Birnbaum was recently the subject of a major retrospective at the ICA videotheque. The excuse for replaying this particularly pleasurable body of work was the British premiere of her new magnum opus - Faust: Evocation.



The work was presented as a major departure from her early "scratch" roots as the acid queen of the New York "new wave" video stylists.

Subjects don't come much bigger than Faust, Goethe's often resurrected ubermensch who sold his soul to the devil for the knowledge which would allow him to obtain power over nature. Although Dara Birnbaum advertized such themes as being central to her work, in practice, they were subliminal elements in a video which had more to do with her previous rhythm noise compositions than with the metaphysics of power.

She uses images of glamour in a spirit of irony and interrogation whilst obviously being in love with the culture she parodies. A typical post-modernist double-bind. Because she basically likes television, pop music, and beautiful people, her videos ultimately celebrate the values they effect to despise. They are advertisements for people who are too blasé, or should that read Barthes, to watch advertisements. Faust: Evocation is dominated by the image of a beautiful Chicano girl blowing bubblegum in a tenement playing-yard. A girl who paces around inside the wire-fence with all the nervous aggression of a woman who is beautiful, but poor and powerless, and therefore doomed to exploitation even though she may always convince herself that it is she who is doing the exploiting. Another American gigolo. Another journey into the valley of the dolls. The modernist instincts of Dara Birnbaum impulsively lead her work away from the nominal flirtation with classicism.

Dara Birnbaum has traditionally made fun for her audience by making fun of American tube and pop culture with that mixture of affection and disdain one has come to expect from American pop intellectuals. Does Faust: Evocation find her still fooling around. Well. Yes and No. And you can quote me on that. Pat Sweeney.

PREVIEWS

INSIDE MEDIA ICA SEMINARS

Thursday 29th March at 7.30 in the Seminar Room.

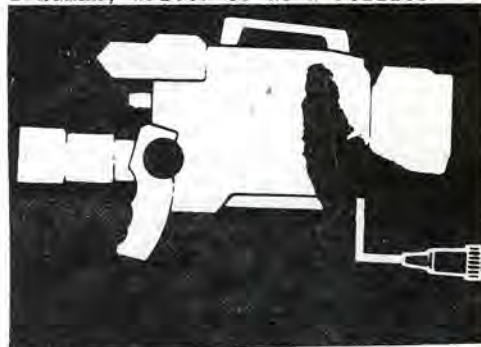
INITIATING CHANGE: TRADE UNIONS AND THE TV AND FILM ECONOMY

Gone are the days of a distinct demarcation in outlook between the public service broadcasting of the BBC and the commercial ITV companies. Changing structures and priorities within the broadcasting institutions, together with the emergence of a rapidly expanding independent sector make a rethinking of working agreements a priority on the TV and film agenda. What initiatives could be taken by employers and unions alike to protect or change existing relations and product? How far does the ACTT's important Workshop Declaration go to break with the either/or options of the past - either the blockbuster for an American market or the fringe film for a sophisticated elite? What more can be done? Roy Lockett Deputy General Secretary of the ACTT, discusses these issues with Richard Dunn, Director of Programmes at Thames TV, David Graham of Diverse Productions and Murray Martin of Amber Films. Nick Ross of 60 Minutes chairs.

Thursday 26th April at 7.30 in the Seminar Room.

FEEDING TV: NEW FORMS FOR OLD

Britain's thriving communications industries depend largely on the flow of new ideas and recruits from the arts sector. But while there is a demand from independent, commercial and public service "TV" for visual creativity design skills and imaginative presentation of many kinds, it remains remarkably difficult for writers, directors and producers to convince the powers that be to accept new forms. How far can people trained in traditional television production values be expected to be able to exploit video and computer graphics to their full potential? Is there reason to believe that 'tampering' with the very format of the pictures we receive upsets the viewer and subverts conventional balance? Howard Schuman, writer of Rock Follies



and Videostars, discusses the state of the art and the politics of innovation with Roger Kennedy and David Graham of Diverse Productions. Tickets £1.40. UB40's/OAP's half-price. ICA day pass 50p. Wed. 29th Feb. All tickets bookable in advance. 01 930 3647. Series organiser Lucy Hooberman 01 930 0493.

THE 2nd INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF PERFORMANCE

South Hill Park Arts Centre,
Bracknell. Friday/ Saturday/
Sunday 22/23/24 June 1984

Following the success of
the first Festival of Per-
formance at SHP in 1983 -
'the best presentation of
this genre of art which I've
seen in Britain' (Guy Brett)
South Hill Park is delighted
to announce the plans for
the second festival to be
held 22/23/24 June.



Essentially it will present
and celebrate LIVE performance
artworks, from artists from dif-
ferent backgrounds - visual arts,
music, dance, theatre, literature,
film, photography and video, re-
creating the atmosphere of experi-
ment, imagination, risk, humour
and diversity generated so success-
fully in the '83 Festival. Expect
to meet and see performance work
from; David Medella, Station House
Opera, P.D. Burwell, Laurie Booth,
Anne Bean, Plumelia Hairart, Dave
Stephens, Alastair Snow, Marty St.
James, Anne Wilson, Ian Hinchcliffe,
Art Naphro. From abroad, welcome
Jordi Cerda from Spain. From film
and video, welcome Jeff Keen;
Richard Layzell; Steve Hawley who
will work with Jane Wells; Mike
Adcock and Morrie Minamoto.....

Fine Art has always had a
very special appeal to Morrie
Minamoto. He loves to contemplate
a single object which has been
fixed in time to reveal its true
essence. What he particularly
likes about a static work or art
and that is, it is perfectly happy
to remain exactly what it is, and
isn't always lusting after some
new experience, like music, film,
or the theatre are. In Morrie
Minamoto's brand new work of satire,
'Only Zen can one hate photography'
sound and video recordings of his
latest performances as a stand-up
comedian happily mingle with his
landscape paintings, and after one
has enjoyed his sparkling wit and
deep appreciation of nature one is
left in little doubt that photo-
graphic illusion does not have the
range or expression capable of de-
picting reality as being charged
with compassion and loving kind-
ness. IF PHOTOGRAPHY HAS TAKEN
THE PLACE OF GOD IN YOUR LIFE, GO
AND SEE MORRIS MINAMOTO COMMIT
KAMERAKAZE LIVE. DON'T BE SATIS-
FIED WITH HIS VIDEO. I have been
to see Morris Minamoto perform

Kamerakaze many times before and
have become completely dependent
on it. Unless I go again and
again to see his performance, I
slip into my old ways of thinking
about photography. I have search-
ed the world over to find an al-
ternative to Morris's anti-photo-
graphy comedy act, something
which also poked fun at this high-
ly revered form of illusion, but
have come up with nothing. Kamer-
kaze is unique and utterly origi-
nal, I can thoroughly recommend
it. Morris believes passionately
that humour is a viable alterna-
tive to photographic illusion and
so do I. Whenever I come across
photography these days I burst out
laughing.

What does grieve me is that
regrettably there are people who
after seeing Kamerakaze on video,
don't make the effort to expose
themselves to a live performance.
It is regrettable because Kamer-
kaze on video doesn't tell one any-
thing about photography one doesn't
already know, it simply bolsters
up one's prejudices, whereas when
experienced live, one's whole atti-
tude, relationship, with photo-
graphy undergoes a radical change,
and photographic illusion emerges
looking completely different.

Morris usually needs an hour
to commit Kamerakaze live on stage.
Half an hour to tell the joke and
then another half an hour to ex-
plain it. Nobody ever gets the
joke without having it spelt out
for them, it is far too complicated
and involved, being made up of
dozens of short stories, remarks,
sayings, anecdotes, quips about
photography, photographic existence
and much about painting.

Once the audience have had
the joke explained to them, photo-
graphic illusion loses all its
appeal, becomes pointless. It
may be that you have already seen
the video and didn't find it at
all funny. The reason why you
didn't find it funny was because
half of it was missing. Morris
never does any of the necessary
explaining and elucidating when
presenting Kamerakaze on video,
he just delivers the joke as it
is, neat, so it is no wonder you
didn't get it, and laugh.

Morris Minamoto did once
have a go at making this photo-
graphic comedy performance, com-
prehensible on video, but it didn't
work. He is not quite sure why.
He thinks it could be that one
can't explain a joke about photo-
graphy on video, because video is
itself photography. Or it could
have something to do with the
fact that one can't step out of
video, because one is always a
part of what's going on. He is
unsure. Whatever the case, his
unravelling of the Kamerakaze joke,
when witnessed live, turns photo-
graphy into a laughing-stock,
whereas when seen on video, only
makes photography look more remote
and intriguing.

Morris is however very keen
that people should see his video.
A lot of people don't like going
to see live performances, especi-
ally given by solo performers,
who feel they have got something
which needs to be said. Much too
intense and embarrassing. You
probably feel this way yourself. You
like photography so much because

it keeps its distance, it is not
physical, it doesn't impose itself
on you. Morris is very much aware
of this. He feels sure that this
is the reason why a lot of people
are put off going to see him per-
form Kamerakaze live. They don't
care for the idea of somebody
standing a few feet away from them,
dressed up as a Japanese geisha
girl, with a very Jewish accent,
telling jokes about photography
and then going on endlessly about
what they mean. It is not a form
of entertainment which appeals to
them.

Morris works hard to try to
get these people to see his video.
After seeing his video, they are
generally so disorientated, be-
mused with photography, the mean-
ing of photographic reality, they
haven't got a clue whether Kamer-
kaze is a genuine comedy perfor-
mance or something got up to look
like one; they don't know why
anti-photography satire should be
so full of paintings; they are so
totally confused, they are pre-
pared to do anything to get en-
lightened, learn why photographic
illusion doesn't have a sense of
humour; they are even prepared to
go and see a live solo performer.
MORRIS MINAMOTO, Saturday 23 June,
6p.m. South Hill Park Arts Centre
Festival of Performance.



THE CABLE DEBATE LUNCHTIME LECTURES AT THE NATIONAL FILM THEATRE

Tuesday 27th March. 12.30

Gwyneth Dunwoody interviewed by
Geoffrey Robertson.

Gwyneth Dunwoody is MP for
Crewe and Nantwich and is Campaign
Co-ordinator for the Labour Party
with special responsibility for
broadcasting. One of the main
concerns about the Government's
proposals for cable television is
that they will open the flood-gates
to cheap off-the-shelf American
drama series since the finances
will not allow for original pro-
gramming. Setting aside arguments
about quality and national culture,
this would mean the weakening of
the film and television production
bases - with two results: dimini-
shed choice in variety of programme
and fewer jobs in this area.
Geoffrey Robertson will discuss
the proposed legislation with
Gwyneth Dunwoody.

Admission to all lectures will
cost 60p. The National Film Theatre
is on the South Bank, London SE1
8XT. Box Office Tel: 01 928 3232.
For further information contact
Mundy Ellis or Patience Coster in
the Press Office, 01 437 4355.

5th NORWICH WOMEN'S FILM WEEKEND



Women directors from Britain and Germany will be introducing showings of their films at the 5th NORWICH WOMEN'S FILM WEEKEND, to be held at Cinema City, Norwich, from Friday 13th, to Sunday 15th, April 1984. In the event's strongest international line-up of films to date, Diane Kurys' third major feature film, AT FIRST SIGHT, with Isabelle Huppert and Miou-Miou, will be the main film screened on Saturday 14th. Sally Potter, who made the acclaimed THRILLER, will introduce her new film, THE GOLD DIGGERS, which stars Julie Christie; and Jutta Bruckner, the latest in the impressive line of critics and film makers to emerge from West Germany's rich vein of feminist film culture, will be discussing her autobiographical film, YEARS OF HUNGER, made in 1979.

Other feature films to be shown at the weekend include Chantal Ackerman's latest release in the U.K., TOUTE UNE NUIT, and the American BORN IN FLAMES, directed by Lizzie Borden, which made a big impact at both the 1983 Edinburgh and London Film Festivals. Dealing with a similar theme of female violence, ON GAURD, is a controversial 50 minute feature from Australia, while Australian feminist cinema is also represented by an award-winning short, SERIOUS UNDERTAKINGS. There will also be a screening of some recent British film co-op and workshop productions.

The weekend's traditional archive section, which aims to rescue from neglect some of the work women film-makers have done in the past, focuses this year on two British women directors. Two of the films, BLUE SCAR and TO BE A WOMAN, were made by Jill Craigie, whilst a third, HOMES FOR THE PEOPLE, which was made in 1945, will be introduced by its director Kay Mander, who is still active in film-making.

Weekend tickets will cost £8 (£6 for the unemployed and students); Day tickets will also be available at £4 (£3 for the unemployed and students); tickets for individual performances cost £2.10. A limited amount of free accommodation will be available, and there will be a day-time creche facility.

Full details of the programme, and booking forms can be obtained by writing to CINEMA CITY, ST ANDREWS ST, NORWICH, NR2 4AD. (enclosing a s.a.e.) Tel: (0603) 22047

"SEXUAL MEDITATIONS" - A One-day Film and Video Event, Saturday 28th April.

PROGRAMME;

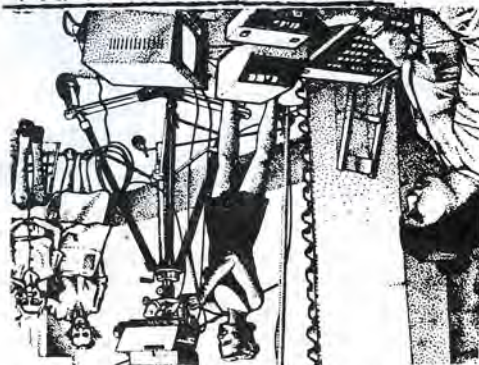
11 a.m. Eve Lomax introduces:
Stan Brakhage: Sexual Meditations:
1. Room with View, 2. Office Suite,
3. Hotel, 4. Open Fields.
Jean Genet: "Chant D'Amour", Steve
Dwoskin: "Moment", Salley Potter:
"Thriller"
1. p.m. Lunch
2p.m. "Broken Lines" - Slides and
Reading by Eve Lomax 3p.m. Tea
Break. 3.30p.m. Stuart Marshall
introduces on Video: "Kaposi's
Sarcome" by Stuart Marshall, "Con-
undrum Clinique" by Colin Cambell,
"Casual Shopper" by Judith Barry.
5.p.m. Discussion with Eve Lomax,
Stuart Marshall, and Steve Dwoskin
6.p.m. Dinner. 7.30p.m. Steve
Dwoskin introduces: "Hindered"
9.30p.m. FINISH. Tickets: Non-
members £3.60, Members £3.30, Un-
waged £2.50 At: 33, Guildford St
Luton. Tel (0582) 419584. '33' is
situated only 2 minutes walk from
the railway and bus stations.
Luton is also now only 30 minutes
by rail from London St. Pancras
or 1 hour by coach from Victoria
Bus Station.

B.F.I. 1984 SUMMER SCHOOL

The British Film Institute's 1984 Summer School will be held at the University of Stirling from 28th July - 4th August. Following on from last year's successful School on the Forties, this year the area for investigation will be British Cinema in the Fifties and the impact of television. Further details and application forms are available from The Summer School Secretary, British Film Institute, Education Department, 81, Dean St, LONDON W1V 6AA.

NEWS

"AUSIE ROOLS" From our own correspondent.



As I write this, it is 4am here and 7pm in Britain. That long news programme on Channel 4 will be starting.

Having seen a little Australian TV, I would be thankful at having such a programme despite it being rather boring! After the initial shock of seeing "Ausie Rules" for the first time on Channel 9, I was fairly well prepared for the rest of the schedule. Ausie Rules is a fantastic cross fertilisation of football, rugby and even cricket

plus gratuitous violence. I can't follow what goes on in the game, except that all the men are gig, tanned and "ockka" (yobbo-like)! and they use a funny shaped ball. The playing area is an oval shape (in acknowledgement of their cricketer heritage?) and they will throw or run with the ball from one end of the pitch to the other. Apparently, its the game played by footballers out of season. Only the Australians could have thought of it, which I mean is the best possible way. They are the most freindly and easy going caucasian people I have ever met outside Ireland. I say caucasian, because after 4 weeks here it is very apparent that there is an enormous cultural and social rift between the white Australians and the Aborigines, and very little is being done by the government to change this. I suppose that sounds very pat, and exactly what one would expect, but what shocked me was the general and complete lack of mechanisms for integration in the cities (I don't know about in the country).

This in a roundabout way leads me to channel 028. This rund through victoria and New South Wales TV. It's brief is to show "Ethnically biased programmes". Apparently, what that generally means is plenty of Fellini, Godard, Truffaut, in fact anything foreign! The only way for an Australian to get his/her work onto 028 is to have made a programme about the Aborigines. I'm exagerating, but basically the principle's right... (It's interesting to note that, in the video sector anyway, people do not run into problems from the Union if they sell/show their work on TV. I've met several bog-standard video makers who have shown their work on 028, but of course they weren't paid a cent). It was by a stroke of luck that I was shown the Film and Television Institute (F.T.I.) in Freemantle, W. Aus. A lady called Miss Austen had seen the tapes I had brought over to Australia ("Pieces" - a collection of works by British video artists and the "Basement Group Showreel" of work by us) and said she would like to show me what was going on in Freemantle! I'm talking of a town the size of Scunthorpe! However there was a lot going on. Cinematrix is a Women's Film Collective (address Pakenham St, Freemantle, W.A.) making its own work and programming screenings through FTI. At FTI I met Madelon Wilkens who immediately arranged a private screening of the work I had for the next day. Until this point the only video activity I knew of was in Melbourne and Sydney, centred on the access workshops set up during the Whitlam Administration. I couldn't believe my eyes. FTI had been PIFT, which ran like a small BFI type cinema. FTI had superceded this, and was literally being completed as I was being shown round (my tongue hanging out in disbelief). It is terribly opulent; thick pile carpets everywhere, three edit suites, a neat/small studio, a 50 seat cinema with video projector, and NO policy! According to Madelon

they were still formulating one, but it sounded like it would include an artist in residence programme. It was very impressive. Also by chance I met a lady called Sue who was washed worked for public television. She was knackered! Apparently this saga has been going on for five years and will probably go on for another five. Sue is a typical campaigner: she is deputy chairman of the Government Commission into public TV, she is also on two lobbying committees, which means that she, with other members, sends letters to themselves urging action. Sue (can't remember her surname) has just about had her fill, and is coming to Europe to see Access TV/ Channel 4 as if it is here. Public TV is the key to access to the airwaves though they are talking about franchises only for particular areas: a bit like a cross between Channel 4 and cable. So, Public TV for W.A., based at FTI, would serve Perth and that's about all (about 1.2 million people). So there's an active Public TV lobby in every state, but if its going to happen at all, it'll probably be W.A. first but then the gates will be open for the other states. One presumes that's all a long way away. As I have said, 028 is virtually impossible, and anyway there's no money. However, ABC (the equivalent of the BBC) is now being softened up for the big hit later this year by video producers in Melbourne, and they are confident of success and money.

Video activity generally is very low key, which is strange considering the access workshops which exist. I'm showing the work I've brought at Open Channel in Melbourne which is the biggest and longest established workshop in Australia. It has broadcast standard equipment 1" and high band, plus low band and VHS, all with edit facilities. It's a fantastic set up, but they are at such a high level of technology that the amount of money they need just to maintain the stuff is exhorbitant. Which means that the BVU is four years old, the 1" stuff is in need of adjustment and when one considers that a new head is \$10,000, you begin to understand why Kim Doulton has begun to take on that special video pallor of grey skin with blackened sockets for eyes! The money to be had is in W.A., all agree. It's a very rich state half the size of USA and full of minerals with only two million inhabitants. That's why FTI have crushed pile carpets and no policy - the government can't get rid of money fast enough. While I was at Praxis in Freemantle a person from the local CEP office actually phoned to ask them to submit a proposal to soak up their excess funds! They did so with a vengeance and asked for 1/2 million for some project or other which would employ about ten people for a year or two. Australia is still a very rich country. The 'recession' never really hit it, and its raw materials are the best to be had. It's just a bit depressing when you're watching TV and suddenly there's a very slick advert from guess who, yes, BP who are 'working for Australia! They are exactly equivalent to the ones they are showing on British TV, telling us how much they have done to subsidise the dole queues with their

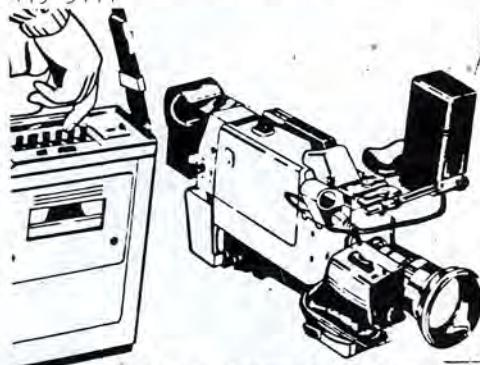
North Sea Oil. It just jars a bit when they haven't even bothered to change their name to 'AP', but it's indicative of the way Australia is seen by the West (Japan especially). It's a big quarry and it will be exhausted soon enough, and that will mean the end of access video workshops, Public TV and 028, and more Aussie Rules and inane comedy/chat/quiz shows. There doesn't seem to be much of a contingency plan.

Ken Gill, The Basement Group, Newcastle-on-Tyne.

**OPEN CHANNEL:
WHAT IT IS, WHAT IT OFFERS:**

"Open Channel is Australia's largest community based video organisation. We operate a broadcast standard television studio, hi-band and lo-band production and post-production facilities as well as VHS and Betamax domestic standard cameras, recorders and editing systems."

One of our major aims is to provide an adequate video resource for video makers, film makers, artists and community organisations in Melbourne. We also run a comprehensive training programme to assist members of the public, community groups and independent film and video producers to learn about and fully utilise our resources and facilities." "Our lo-band equipment is available at the following rates: * U-matic location kit (incl. Hitachi FP10 camera & Sony 3800 recorder)..... \$76 per day. *U-matic location kit (incl JVC KY310 camera & JVC. CR4700E recorder£150 per day. *Sony 5850 U-matic edit suite.. *National VHS edit suite..... Subsidised rates are available on all equipment. For further information contact; Open Channel, 13, Victoria St, Fitzroy, 3065 Tel: 419 5111



**LEICESTER INDEPENDENT
FILM & VIDEO ASSOC**

The Leicester Independent Film and Video Association is a newly formed organisation which specialises in the production, exhibition, and distribution of Super 8 film. Commencing 27th May 1984 we will be staging an international super 8 festival during which it is intended to cover a diverse range of subject matter. Other events such as exhibition and workshops are planned to take place during the week of the festival in venues around the city. Further application forms and details can be obtained from LIFVA: your contact is Laraine Porter. In addition we

will be publishing a super 8 directory/festival catalogue containing information about other groups, workshops and individuals currently using super 8. We would very much appreciate copy for this as soon as possible i.e. brief details of workshop facilities, group policies and contact names and addresses of individual film makers etc. also films available for hire and distribution. A copy of the directory will be forwarded to all contributors and we hope that it will be useful for future initiatives around super 8 production, distribution and exhibition and also facilitate the exchange of information between film makers and groups using the format. LIFVA, 11, Newmarke St, Leicester LE1 5SS Tel (0533)559 711.



ANARRES CO-OP

**LOW BAND EDITING AT ANARRES...
RATES.....FEBRUARY 84'**

Suite:

1. 2 Machine (Head to Head Dub)	
Self Drive/ With Editor	
8 hr day	£50.00 £75.00
40 hr week	* £200.00 £300.00
per hr extra	£10 .00 £15.00
2. 2 Machine Editing (Full Suite**)	
8 hr day from	£75.00 £135.00
40 hr week"	£300.00 £540.00
per hr extra	£15.00 £27.00
3. 3 Machine Editing	
8 hr day from	£260 £332.00
40 hr week"	£752.00 £1064.00
per hr extra	£52.00 £65.00

Equipment

- a) Sony 5850 Editor, 5800 Players RM440 Edit Controller.
- b) JVC KM2000 Vision Mixer
- c) CEL Time Base Corrector
- d) Caption Camera b/w with colouriser.
- e) Video Duplication available £10.00 per hour, Umatic to Umatic, Umatic to VHS (or vice versa), VHS to VHS.
- f) Tuition available for self drive; £10.00 per hour
- g) * Subject to availability
- h) ** Full Suite comprises: a,b,c, d, above.
- i) All prices subject to VAT @15%
- j) Blacked Tapes, Blank Tapes available from Anarres.
- k) Prices are negotiable for Community or Educational work.*

FILMING RATES...FEBRUARY 84'

Low Band Umatic
Camera/VTR/Sound/ Lighting/ 2 crew
8 hour day from £250
VHS
Camera/VTR/Sound/Lighting/Operator
1/2 day £40 8 hour day £80.00
Anarres, 10a Bradbury St, LONDON
N16 Tel: 01 249 9212

NEWCASTLE MEDIA WORKSHOP formerly SPECTRO ARTS WORKSHOPS

A Video Workshop has now been established at Newcastle Media Workshops and houses facilities for full video production. The workshop consists of: 1. Studio/Teaching Area. 2. Control room for studio work. 3. Editing Suites for full post production. 4. Portable Video Equipment. 5. Back-up information and advice for groups/individuals involved in making a video tape.

The Video equipment is of the U-matic format (recording and editing suites), however a VHS transfer and editing facility is available. It is intended to run training/teaching workshops in the future about using and working with video. The portable video equipment is now available for hire at a reasonable cost. The workshop is looking to be involved in as wide a spectrum of video production as possible and to encourage and develop an awareness of the possibilities of using video.

The workshop is intended to respond and work with any groups/individuals interested in using video in any way, from making a tape about a 'local' relevant issue to recording a band or just learning about video/TV recording. For further information please contact: Nick Oldham, Video Workshop, Newcastle Media Workshop, Bells Court, Pilgrim St, Newcastle upon Tyne. Tel: 322410

THE TELEVISION USERS' GROUP

The past year has seen Channel Four dramatically depart from its statutory obligations to provide an innovative, independent service, and appeal to tastes and interests not catered for by the existing channels. Perhaps as a response to the constant pressure from Fleet Street, Tory MPs, the ITV companies and the highly organised right wing media lobby concentrated around Mary Whitehouse's National Viewers and Listeners' Association, the Channel has recently sought refuge in a noticeably more conservative approach.

Meanwhile, the establishment of two breakfast television services, the Hunt Report's go-ahead to cable and the eventual multiplication of delivery systems, has placed broadcasting at the top of the political agenda.

The TV Users' Group aims to displace the 'shock horror' hegemony of right wing campaigners, commentators and legislators by providing an alternative forum to the NVLA, which will support progressive programming and oppose commercial and political pressure on all channels towards direct and institutional censorship, ratings-based programming and the marginalisation of original work.

While seeking to ensure that the provision of the 1980-1 Acts founding Channel Four as an 'innovative' channel are upheld, the Group will also seek institutional, organisational and legislative changes in the older channels to challenge their oppressive con-

struction of the political agenda. We'd like you to join us in campaigning for something more than the token representation of socialist, feminist and anti-racist perspectives in this country's most dominant medium.

In conjunction with the British Film Institute and the Society for Education in Film and Television, the TV Users' Group invites you to join in organising a day conference in July, aimed specifically at Channel Four it will analyse the Channel's strategy and performance in obtaining an innovative service of a distinctive character. The first meeting of the proposed 'TELEVISION USERS GROUP' was attended by some thirty people from a wide range of organisations (including the ACTT, a number of production companies, the British Film Institute, SEFT, the Independent Film and Video Makers Association, and various educational institutions) on February 21st, at 9, Poland St, London W1. The meeting focused on three main questions: 1. Should this group concentrate its initial efforts on Channel 4 or on the older channels.

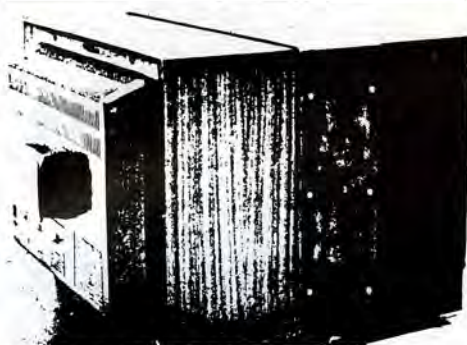
2. Should this group comprise television viewers only ('the vast majority of those affected by TV'... 'a lobby of concerned consumers') -- Or should it link TV production workers with viewers under the aegis of usage ('how do we want to use TV in a less passive way than mere consumption?').

3. Finally, should the group retain its provisional title (borrowed from the now defunct 'Channel 4 Users Group') or find a new one. These issues... and any others you may wish to raise... will be discussed at the next meeting of the group, on Monday, March 19th at 6.15pm BASEMENT, 9 POLAND ST, LONDON W1. For further details please contact MANDY MERCK, SEFT, 29 Old Compton St, London W1V 5PL Tel: 01 734 5455 / 3211

ARTS EXPRESS

Britain's first independent monthly magazine for the arts and arts education. Edited by Johnathon Croall and Ken Robinson. First issue published 2nd March, 1984. News, reviews, features, comment, letters, research, listings, advertisements. In the first issue: The launching of a new national arts lobby. Christopher Price attacks the government's funding policies. Rick Rogers looks at the row over MSC-funded arts projects. Rob Powell writes of his experience as a photographer in residence. Ken Robinson examines the growth of the National Association for Education in the arts. Andrew Pegg reports on the pioneering jazz education scheme. Other news and features: Theatre-in-Education crisis in Rochdale. Call for reform of the Arts Council. Norfolk's dance and mime month. Verbal arts pressure group move. The Brandt Report and the arts. Plus: Book reviews by Colin Ward, Gabriel Chanan, Robert Hutchinson, Brian Thompson, Howard Steel. Listings on dance, drama, film, literature, music, photography, video and the visual arts. For further information contact: Terry Robinson, Arts Express, 66, St John's Rd, London SW11 1PT Tel 01-223 1483

REVIEWS



WORD ON THE IMAGE

A new photography magazine joins a revamped one to spread the word on the image. CAMERAWORK used to arrive on the shelves in a cumbersome fold-out format (similar to ZG - which for the uninitiated is a kind of Camden Town alternative intellectual meets HARPERS & QUEENS stylists mag) and dealt with photography in a perspective which married Raymond Williams, John Berger and Roland Barthes. Under the new editorship of Kathy Myers, a regular contributor to CITY LIMITS, the magazine has adopted an A4 format and a broader editorial content. The political perspective is still rigorously socialist though of the new sub-culture and post-modern theory rather than Clause 4 and cloth-caps variety. The current issue features excellent articles on the failings of the Labour Party in the media battle with the Tories during the June General Election of last year, an interview with Stuart Hall on the need for a new kind of social imagery for the '80s and visual essays on women's photography and political photography. Witty, intelligent, stylish and sharp it is worth more than a passing glance. Obtainable from: CameraWork, 121 Roman Road, London E2 QQN. A Quarterly Magazine. Price £1.00.

Not entirely dissimilar in style and format is a new magazine from Spectro Arts entitled PRINTOUT. It describes its reason for existence in the following terms: "PRINT OUT is committed to the production of high quality photographic work seen within the context of publication. We believe that modern photography needs a radical new outlet, free from the constraints of the need to provide gallery listings, reviews, etc. We will be exhibiting, through publication, the work of a number of contemporary photographers. This work will in the majority of cases have been specially commissioned for the magazine." It features a very astute analysis of the work of new's photographers in the Darlington by-election. Issue No 1 features the work of Maureen Paley, Roger Wilson, Ian Breakwell, Peter Fryer, Chris Hunt and Bushy Kelly. CAMERAWORK would seem to provide the better and more varied read, PRINTOUT the better and more unpredictable look. Obtainable from: Spectro Photography, Bells Court, Pilgrim St, Newcastle Upon Tyne. A Quarterly Magazine. Price £1.50. Pat Sweeney.

VID-BITS

USED MISCELLANEOUS EQUIPMENT

Lab's whole job lot may be bought for £25.00 cash. You must take it all, it cannot be split up. 1. Caption Roller motorised, mechanical, home made plus paper rolls to fit. 2. Small Studio E/W camera, US System 525 line, plus various cables viewfinder. Will take "C Mount" lens. 3. Heavy duty Transformer, 110-230V, 1KW. 4. Trio Stereo radio tuner FM/MW. 5. Open reel mains VTR, monitor, cables plus approx 40 hours tape, some new unused. 625 lines, UK TV System. Fantasy Factory, 42, Theobalds Rd. WC1X 8NW London Tel 01-405 6862.

COMMUNITY VIDEO OUTREACH WORKER

The Media Arts Lab is an integrated resource centre for production, exhibition, research and education in the arts of film, photography, video and radio/audio. We are looking for a woman who will work primarily - but not exclusively - with women's groups and individual women in the community. The applicant will be expected; to have an active interest in women's issues; to have some knowledge/experience of community work; to have some practical knowledge/experience of video equipment to be concerned with issues of representation in the media; to hold a current driving licence. For any further details and an application form please phone Trudi Davies on 0793 26161 ext 3140, or write to Media Arts Lab, Town Hall Studios, Regent Circus, Swindon Wilts, SN1 1QF. The pay is £95 a week - 37 hour working. If you feel that you have any (or all) of the above qualifications then please get in touch.

TOUR OF THE BEST

The best of the Bracknell Festival is now on tour! Photomontage Today, Home Video Show, Eurythmics, A Slice of the Cake, Aberfan, Polka Dots and Moonbeams, and Framed Youth (2½ hours of exciting IV), it is magnificent value at £35 per complete screening plus VAT and carriage. Entitled 'What is Independent Video?' the package is supported by a leaflet giving details of the tapes and an essay on aims, practices and history of the various strands of independent video represented in the programme. The price includes up to 20 posters and 50 programmes. Details and bookings ring Barrie Gibson or David Stewart on (0344) 427272.

TYPED TALK SPECIAL OFFERS FROM BRACKNELL

If you missed the Community Video conference in Bracknell last November, or if, for some reason, you can't remember what you and everyone else said, the original transcript is available now from the Media Centre, South Hill Park, Bracknell, Berks. £5 institutions, £2.50 individuals.

BFI YEARBOOK 1984

Any information/ads you want included in the May 84 edition should be received by 16th/23rd March. Some of the subjects included in the BFI Yearbook are: Film & TV training courses, Film & Video production companies, TV & Cable companies, Film & Video facilities and labs, Film & TV festivals, Distribution of Film/Video, Film/TV periodicals & Reference books. Tel. enquiries to (0497) 820730 or 020453

WEEKEND COURSES AT THE MEDIA CENTRE

Experimental Video: Steve Hawley. 26th and 27th May. 10.30 - 8.30.

It took fifty years to build up a grammar of television techniques: now you have a chance to demolish all that in one weekend. You will have the opportunity to use video cameras and editing in ways that Lord Reith never imagined to question and explode some of the myths and conventions of broadcast tv. The results may be subversive or just very funny. Any resemblance to Nationwide will be purely accidental.

Video performance & Improvisation.

Fri 7.30p.m 4th May
5th & 6th May 10.30 am sat & sun.
So you want to be a star or maybe the great director. Well, here's a chance. A weekend workshop for performers and video makers; the group will work through improvisation, recording, playback etc to write a script for a short production to be made over the weekend. Video makers will work with and direct performers, they should already have basic video skills. Performers will initiate and contribute ideas using the environment and facilities of SHP.

Women's Video Workshop.

Jini Rawlings: Sat/Sun 12/13 May.
10.00 am - 8 pm.

This weekend course is aimed at total beginners as well as those with basic skills. The group will work on a project following it through all the production stages to a complete end product. Anyone requiring creche facilities please contact SHP 2 weeks before the weekend.

prices: Experimental Video: £30.
Performance Video : £30.
Women's Workshop : £30.
Bed & breakfast : £15.

INDEPENDENT VIDEO

SUBSCRIBE NOW.

Independent Video is a monthly publication launched in January 1982. It is the only magazine devoted to the interests of independent video makers, and reflects the diversity of a rapidly expanding sector. Not just concerned with the debates around production - innovative techniques, working practices, technical information and so on it also covers in detail the questions of distribution, marketing, exhibition and education. With so many possibilities - and pitfalls - opening up, can you afford to be ill-informed?

Independent Video contains news, articles, reviews, interviews and lots of useful bits of information. We also have a policy of

not taking advertisements (except from our subscribers) so there is no wasted space. This means that we rely on subscriptions to maintain standards and hopefully to improve on them. So send off for your year's supply of Independent Video now...the more subscribers we have the better the magazine you have to read.

Subscription to the magazine comes in three forms. (1) Group Subscription costs £38 a year and brings you 20 copies of the magazine each month, (2) The standard rate for libraries and educational establishments is £12, and entitles you to 2 copies. (3) The individual rate is £6, for 1 copy a month. All prices include postage and packing. Extra copies and back issues are available at cost. Subscribe now!

Cheques should be made out to 'South Hill Park Trust Ltd', please. Independent Video is published by the Media Centre in Bracknell, which accepts no responsibility for the accuracy of listings detailed nor of event's descriptions. All the views expressed in Independent Video are those of the individual writers and not necessarily those of the editors, South Hill Park Trust Ltd, or Southern Arts Association. The copyright on individual articles remains with the writer.



SOUTH HILL PARK ARTS CENTRE BRACKNELL BERKSHIRE (0344) 427272