

VIDEO

Report by David Hall

Washington – Tyne and Wear

At a time when London still awaits the experience of a selective show of the better video art tapes from this country and abroad, it is both ironic yet praiseworthy that I am able to report the arrival of such an event in one of the furthest reaches of England – Washington New Town, County Durham (that area now being known as Tyne and Wear). The only comparable show in Britain to date was the very successful and well-organised exhibition at the Third Eye Centre in Glasgow last March.

The Washington show is being arranged by the Biddick Farm Arts Centre and will be selected by Brian Hoey, who is video artist in residence there. It will take place from 18–31 October in the town's new covered shopping centre. Aside from a selection of artists already known to readers through this column (and who appeared in the May/June Video Art special issue), there will be others not so familiar whom Hoey finds particularly interesting – several working primarily in colour.

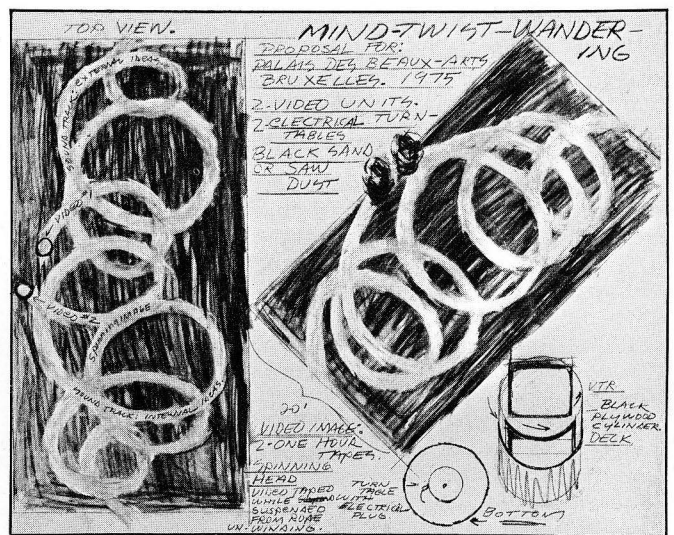
A number of large monitors will display the work in a shop unit and probably the Information Centre, and the layout will aim to 'create an intimate relationship between observer and screen, similar to that experienced in the home'. There will be programmed sessions lasting for two hours every evening, and daily showings to cater for the casual visitor, including special request times.

A third of the cost is being borne by the Arts Centre itself, and the other two roughly divided between the Northern Arts Association and the Arts Council of Great Britain. It is most encouraging that these two bodies are giving their support in the regions to a comparatively new experimental medium. Let's hope this is only the beginning of something big! Washington is eight miles south of Newcastle and lies just off the main A1 (M). Further information can be obtained from Brian Hoey or Michael Perks at Biddick Farm Arts Centre, tel: Washington (0632) 466440.

Video Art – An Anthology

Compiled and Edited by Ira Schneider and Beryl Korot 286pp; numerous black and white illustrations. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich 1976. Cloth £12.20, paper £6.10.

As an active European video-maker my initial reaction to this substantial and rather lavish compilation on



Dennis Oppenheim. Proposal for *Mind-Twist 1975*

world equally deserving of coverage under such a title.

However, taken as it stands, the book contains a number of worthy articles (though often reprints from earlier magazines and catalogues), among them distinctive pieces by David Ross, Eric Cameron and Frank Gillette. The rest is notes, statements, manifestos, diagrams and stills from a wide range of American artists, some well known (and perhaps a little too over-exposed), some unheard-of, for better or worse as the case may be. With a great deal of patience it is possible to find the occasional golden needle in the haystack which perhaps makes it all worthwhile in the end, like the coverage of Gillette, Snow and a very interesting installation by Oppenheim. Back to my pet grouse, there is one wholly vague and totally unrepresentative view of 'The European Scene' by Bill Viola, an American. He actually admits by implication that it is subjective and rather limited; why then didn't the editors remedy this and devote space to those who do know what *is* going on?

Video Research Fellowship

Wolverhampton Polytechnic is offering a two-year fellowship to a video artist who will work in collaboration with their Fine Art Department. This is the first time to my knowledge that such a post has been offered anywhere in this country. It is, of course, an excellent opportunity for an artist working in one of the most expensive fields of art activity, and since there are many polytechnics and colleges with equipment, often only used sporadically, Wolverhampton is setting an admirable precedent which has been paralleled only by the Royal College of Art/Arts Council Video Bursary. As I remarked in my July/August column, educational establishments would do well to look to their resources and consider similar arrangements at a time when there is emerging talent in this field willing and able to contribute a great deal.