

## ANYTHING FROM A HEARING AID TO A BUGGED TRUSS?

Audio Visual Workshop - what kind of label is that!? We must sit down sometime and think up a more appropriate title. It sounds like 'Audio Visual Aids' - a kind of dexion shelved store cum trade counter manned by slick white coated guys standing around issuing anything from a hearing aid to a bugged truss.

But it's not. It's an active, progressive, experimental, often prolific, slightly chaotic, definitely understaffed, fairly well equipped (more so every term), avant-garde (avant-garde!) sound, film and video workshop. With the emphasis on work and less on shop. We'll loan out the odd tape-recorder or 8 mil projector if you're stuck for one on something you're doing independently, but we'd prefer to get together with you on your idea. Ideally, and this is what it's all about, we'd like you to come to us with any idea at the point of conception (wow) which would exist as a 'duration' that is something that exists as an experience only through a literal time-span, like a sound tape, movie, videotape or even a live performance.

This year, for the first time, we have four or five students who are officially AVW fulltimers, plus the two or three (from mainly Painting and sculpture) who are effectively fulltimers, and many, many part-timers. So, predictably, it's going to be pretty heavy going (with all the technical crap involved) on the three staff:

Tony Sinden, Tom Cockburn and myself. Please therefore be patient, but keep pressing and we'll get things done. (Don't forget we still have no technician).

Interest on the contemporary art scene in the use of film, videotape and sound tape is as many of you will have recognised, fast developing. People are producing movies and videotapes as the art works, as well as using the media for documentation of event that would otherwise be inaccessible. And of course there's the more traditional narrative film-makers etc. All of these areas we encourage. But, I have to admit I have a personal bias toward 'the piece as the work' rather than the use of a medium to document another, or theatrical usage (don't let that deter you coming along to AVW if you've got a raging Ken Russell in your head though!).

When I say the piece as the work I mean ideas which inherently could only exist as film videotape or soundtape. Painting dealing with purely colour field, texture, surface etc., rather than the image, exist as themselves with no specific external reference. Sculpture concerned with purely it's material substance, apparent weight, relationship of parts to whole and 'perceptual' properties rather than having specific external reference exists as themselves. They exist as a 'bona-fide' experience. The same can be true for film, video and sound. But, the problems are considerably different. Film, for instance, has, almost from it's invention, been used as an extension of classic theatre, documentaries being an offshoot of this attitude. It was logical and money making. It is well rooted as a recording medium, as is television and sound recording techniques. A lot of what is produced is good of course, but we do not have to accept the historical pressures as absolute. We can consider these media for their own inherent properties rather than for their convenience. A film need be no more passive entertainment, it can be participatory to the point of the physical, if only by perceptual/psychological stimulation, with it as a 'real' experience rather than a facsimile of some past event. However, it's not possible to simply disregard assumptions that have developed in peoples minds over the years, so I believe it is not possible to simply throw all their expectancies out of the window.....

It's a subtle and intriguing game )- I could go on for hours, but there isn't the space here. Come and have a chat sometime.

Finally (back to the AVW), if your new to the college, we operate from a corner at the front of the building behind the Registrars office. There we have a store of most of our equipment: 16mm cameras, projectors (8mm and 16), taperecorders, synthesiser, film editing gear etc., plus my office. At the other far corner at the front (through Foundation and screen print) we have video recording studio, with TV cameras, mixer, lights the lot.

See You

David Hall.