

INDEPENDENT
Media

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MERSEYSIDE MEDIA AND PHIL REDMOND - HYPE OR HOPE? TORONTO
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Right on Scotland, Wrong on Reeves

In our May issue DOUG AUBREY of the Scottish video production group 'Pictorial Heroes' commented on the Scottish media scene in 'Scotland: The State Of Independents'. The article has provoked a great deal of feedback. Below is one of the letters received by way of response.

Dear Doug,

While I sincerely appreciate and support your article on media in Scotland, (I sometimes think England should be sawn off of Scotland and set afloat during the middle of one of our long winter nights) I think it is only fair that you get your facts and/or innuendoes straight before you publish broadsides- shooting from the hip while sometimes fast is seldom on target! I have grown weary of having my name tossed about like a shuttlecock in Independent Media every time somebody has a gripe. In the previous months issue the subtle bit of mis-information was that "due to the complexity of my installation in Liverpool Marion Urchs own installation was postponed and rescheduled" -a complete fantasy as the delay was caused by the festivals own scheduling errors.

Now I learn that I am among a privileged few who have "benefitted from the resources, creative and cultural climate in Scotland". Well if that means living in the Outer Hebrides for three years and having a lovely Scottish wife then I stand accused and guilty but just for the record: I have

NEVER applied for or received one pence of fiscal support for my work in Scotland. I have never been invited to do a workshop, installation, public screening or had a show or been included in a group show in Scotland except for a film entry in the Edinburgh Film Festival. I have never been involved in jurying or selecting work and have at times felt very isolated and a tad frustrated by the insularity and spiteful nature of the so-called British Media Art Scene which continues to complain about its real or imagined lack of impact or presence on the international level while refusing to see what the costs of this incessant back biting and jaded put down of their peers really amounts to.

Lets face it media art is a truly bizarre phenomenon in that it is tremendously expensive and severely under funded and crippling in its financial return- but hardly any of us do it for the money. It's like poetry- its shadow work- but the real strength and beauty in that kind of sharing is the support, compassion and understanding we can offer others. I owe about

£20,000 to creditors for my last work. If that is success to be envious of then I would love to share the burden with many.

I love Scotland, I see Thatcherist me-ism destroying it from within and without. I believe a healthy, cantankerous and free thinking independent media community in Scotland can provide a strong facet in a dynamic antidote to Government and TV colonization of the mind- and would love to coalesce and collaborate with any artists and media makers who are likewise sincere. It helps to remember that our work speaks for itself and no amount of complaining or fault finding will relieve even a little of the suffering we see in the world. Can you imagine what the £8,000,000 paid to the Marquis of Bute for one Dutch canvas could do for the Independent Media field in Scotland? After you are through imagining think of what it could do for the homeless and destitute in Scotland's cities.

Warm Regards,

Daniel Reeves

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