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Media Arts Madness

In the most devastating blow ever to the media arts field's infrastructure, the NEA eliminates regrants and slashes its Media Arts Program budget

NEA chair Jane Alexander devastated the country's media arts community last October when she announced the agency was suspending seven categories within its Media Arts, Music, and Presenting & Commissioning programs. Individual media artists and small arts

organizations were at the eye of the storm, since their primary link to the NEA is through various regrant programs—such as the American Film Institute's Independent Film and Videomaker Program (IFVP) and the National Alliance for Media Arts and Culture's Media Arts Fund—which have been eliminated indefinitely.

While the NEA's rationale for suspending the programs is described as budgetary, both the field and First Amendment advocates have attributed other possible motives.

One such motive is politics. Arthur J. Kropp, president of People for the American Way, a Washington, DC-based organization that advocates for First Amendment rights, states, "The targeting of these cuts looks clearly political and is surely not even-handed." Jill Bond, also of People For, adds that "The administration is quick to cave in on anything that appears to be a political loss. The NEA is throwing a bone to the critics on the Hill." Many media artists also believe the cuts were politically motivated.

In a post-announcement letter to Alexander, for example, filmmaker Gregg Araki (*The Living End*, *Totally F***ed Up*) says he wants to give her and the present administration more credit, "but I can't help conclude that it is film's ability to provoke, stir up, to make trouble (ie: the controversy surrounding the work of Todd Haynes, Marlon Riggs, etc.) that has influenced your decision."

While most in the field were aware of the controversy surrounding the arts in Congress, many were shocked at the NEA's internal decision to

eliminate an entire tier of support for artists without any

consultation or communication. "This deep cut

goes against what the NEA stands for—creation, production, and dissemination of art," says Judy Golub, executive director of the American Arts Alliance. "Most unfortunate is the 'unequal pain' this decision has caused the arts community. The program side has taken a lot of hits."

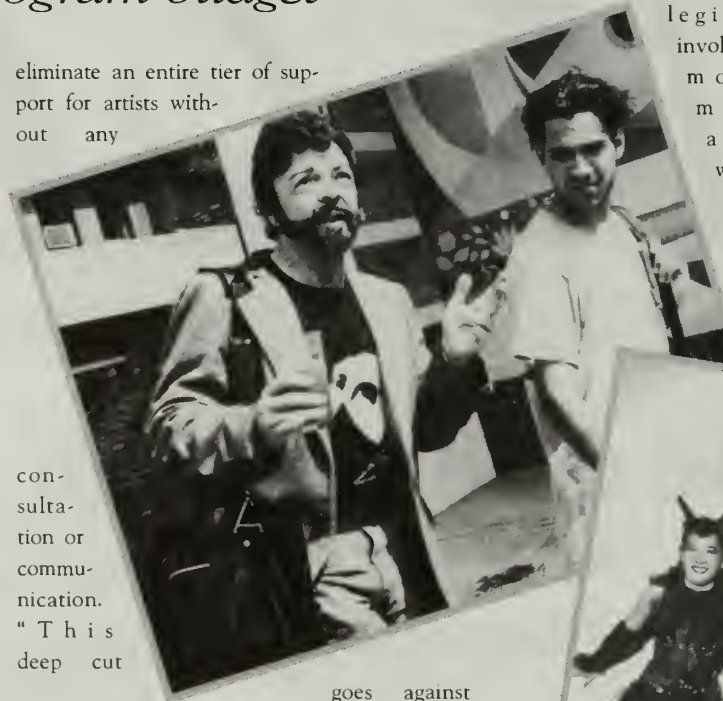
Just how bad are the cuts? For fiscal year 1995, Congress lopped off two percent (or \$2.9 million) of the NEA's total budget, which now stands at \$167.7 million. The elimination of the regranting programs represents \$1.6 million or more than half of the total budget cut.

Four of the regrant programs suspended, with funds totaling close to \$1.2 million, were in the Media Arts Program: Regional Fellowships (\$315,000); the American Film Institute/Independent Film and Videomaker Program (\$350,000); the National Alliance for Media Arts and Culture/Media Arts Fund (\$170,000); and the American Film Institute/National Endowment for the Arts Film Preservation Program

(\$355,000). In addition, cuts to other programs such as the Artist Projects Regional Initiatives (\$250,000), which support interdisciplinary projects, also may impact directly or indirectly on the media arts community.

"All of us involved in the arts are being threatened by forces out of our control," says the NEA's deputy of programs Susan Clampett in response to the cuts. When asked why the Media Arts budget took such a disproportionate hit, she

points fingers at legislators involved in moving money around within the



endowment during the budgeting process. Brian O'Doherty, director of the Media Arts Program, observes that "The program has made an effort to put resources out there, closer to the community... When the subgrants were decreased, we were by virtue of that fact, more vulnerable."

Regional Fellowships: The NEA's Regional Fellowships, awarded to a geographically diverse

mix of new and established media artists, were offered through regional media arts centers, including Appalshop (Whitesburg, KY), Northwest Film Center (Portland, OR), Center for New Television (Chicago,

IL), the now-defunct Film in the Cities (Minneapolis, MN), SWAMP (Houston, Texas), and Pittsburgh Filmmakers (Pittsburgh, PA). Between 1981 and 1991, the NEA contributed over \$4.5 million to the program, and 1,028 grants were awarded, with an average grant size of \$4,395.

Gordon Quinn, executive producer of the acclaimed documentary *Hoop Dreams*, says their project may have been scrapped without funds received from a Regional Fellowship. A \$5,000 award from the NEA, administered through the Center for New Television in 1989, allowed the producers to get the production off the ground. "It was very little money, but it attracted other money down the road. We were two years into the project before we got funding from CPB," Quinn adds, "If we are going to have a diverse society, we need diverse sources of funding. NEA support is an important part of the mix."

Another maker, Les Blank, who received a \$5,000 Regional Fellowship for his film *Gap Toothed Women*, which aired on the Discovery Channel, echoes Quinn's sentiments. "Eliminating the fellowships is disastrous," he says. "It's like yanking out the life preserver." Blank received his fellowship through the Northwest Film Center, and subsequently garnered a \$20,000 grant from the American Film Institute/IFVP.

Twenty-four state arts agencies contributed to the Regional Fellowship Program as well as the Jerome Foundation in St. Paul and the LEF Foundation in Boston. The Jerome Foundation, which had matched the NEA's \$45,000 with between \$82,000 and \$86,000 each year in the mid-west, took over administering the fellowships after Film in the Cities closed its doors last year. The foundation's president, Cynthia Gehrig, says she was

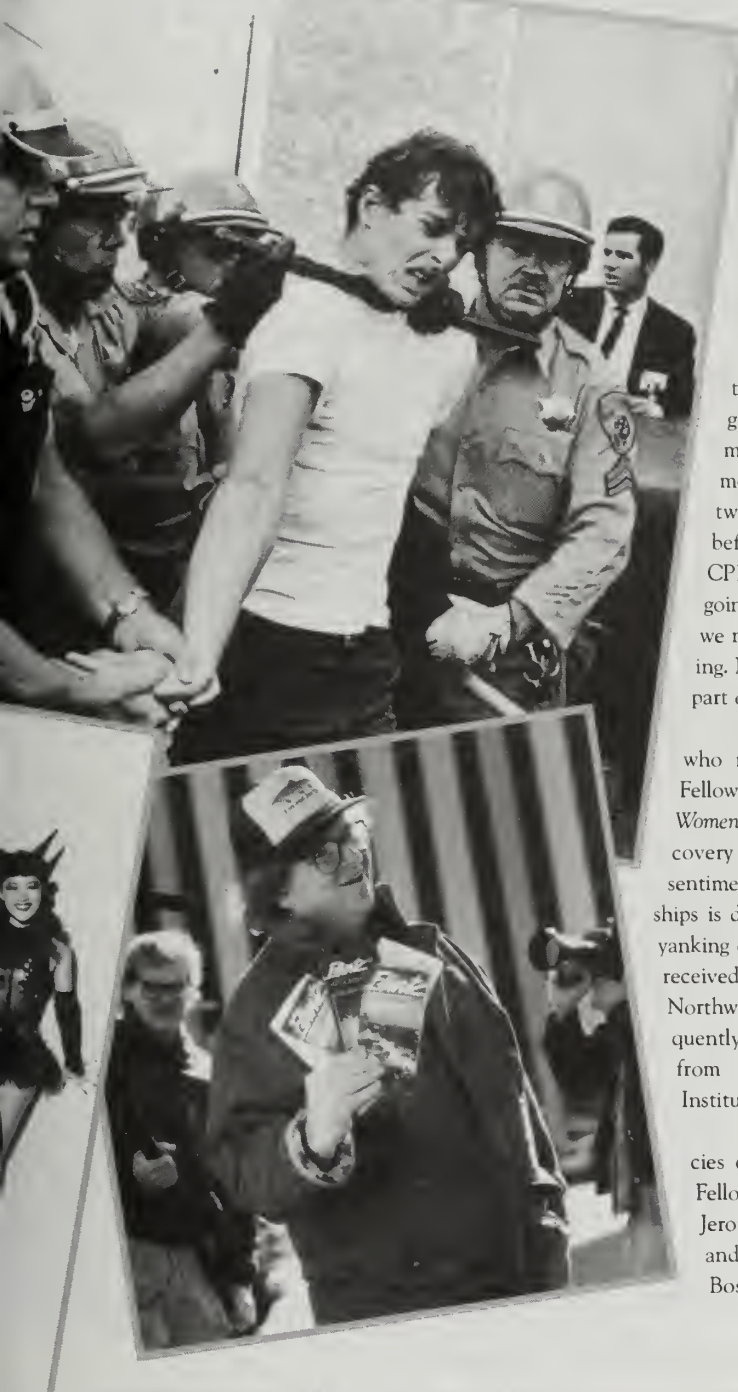
not consulted by the NEA about its decision to pull out of the program. "I share most of the constituency's sense of anger and sadness," she says. "This will not, however, affect Jerome's commitment to support individual media artists." Gehrig adds that her board will most likely continue regional fellowships, but will limit eligibility to Minnesota artists.

Richard Gage of the Illinois Arts Council and a member of the media arts affinity group within the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (NASAA), says state arts agency staffers want to find a way to collaborate on funding with regional arts organizations. But, as he points out, "This was the first year that media arts was even recognized on our conference agenda. Realistically, I don't know how effective we can be in terms of a systematic response."

AFI'S Independent Film and Videomaker Program: Cuts to AFI's Independent Film and Videomaker Program (IFVP) may prove equally devastating to individual media artists across the country. Since 1968, the program has awarded more than \$6 million to approximately 600 artists in 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the various trust territories. The IFVP grant program was one of the first sources of public funding for film artists in the nation's history and was used to fund experimental and narrative projects, as well as documentaries. Several of the program's animation and documentary projects, including Barbara Trent's *The Panama Deception*, Joan Gratz's *Mona Lisa Descending a Staircase*, and Barbara Kopple's *Harlan County, U.S.A.*, have garnered Academy Awards. Other artists who have received grants, ranging in size from \$10,000 to \$20,000, include Christine Choy, Gregg Araki, Julie Dash, Hollis Frampton, Leslie Harris, Barbara Kopple, Trinh T. Minh-ha, Mira Nair, Marlon Riggs, and Gus Van Sant.

For Leslie Harris, director of *Just Another Girl on the IRT*, "NEA funds simply made the difference between doing the film or not doing the film," she says. "A young Black woman coming of age in Brooklyn is a subject too risky for the studios."

The Media Arts Fund and the NEA/AFI Film Preservation Program: The Media Arts Fund, administered by the National Alliance for Media Arts and Culture (NAMAC), is regranted annually to organizations to promote the growth and stabilization of the media arts field. In particular, it was designed to support those new or smaller projects and organizations that might be overshadowed during the NEA's peer panel review sessions by larger organizations with national profiles. Since 1991, NAMAC has distributed \$842,000 to over 200 organizations in 33 states, including the Spokane Art School, South Florida Black Film Festival, and the Native American Producers



For emerging filmmakers, NEA subgrants—which Jane Alexander announced in October would be suspended indefinitely—have been a primary source of funding to get new projects off the ground. One category, Regional Fellowships, averaging \$4,395 each and administered by media arts centers, have fueled projects including (clockwise from left) Richard Linklater's *Slacker*; Mark Kitchell's *Berkeley in the Sixties*; Michael Moore's *Roger & Me*; and Arthur Dong's *Forbidden City*.

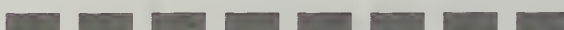
Courtesy filmmaker (*Slacker*); photo: Jeffrey Blankfort, courtesy P.O.V. (*Berkeley*); photo: Dirck Halstead, courtesy Warner Bros. (*Roger & Me*); courtesy DeepFocus Productions (*Forbidden City*).



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Alliance. According to Julian Low, NAMAC's national director, "The regrant programs have broadened the reach of the NEA and accomplished the endowment's goals, including supporting cultural diversity and bringing the arts to more people." Margaret Caples, NAMAC co-president and executive director of Community Film Workshop in Chicago, says, "The abolition of the Media Arts Fund guarantees the demise of smaller media organizations, especially organizations of color."

Absorbing the remainder of the NEA's cuts, The NEA/AFI Film Preservation Program has supported the major archives in America in their nitrate and acetate conversion programs. Since the program began 27 years ago, more than \$9.5 million has been granted to archives, including the Museum of Modern Art, the George Eastman House, and the UCLA Film and Television Archive.

Balancing a Fragile Arts Ecology

Since Alexander's announcement in late October, the field has strategized on how to impress upon the Endowment just how crucial the cuts are to individual media artists and arts organizations. Both The Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVE) and the AFI met directly with Alexander to voice their concerns. NAMAC organized communication among the regional centers distributing grants and the endowment. The field is also encouraging letter writing campaigns and Op Ed pieces in local newspapers.

At a gathering of Boston filmmakers held at the Newton Television Foundation in late October, which was cosponsored by the AIVE, 150 attendees sent a letter signed by all to the Endowment, and at a pot luck gathering of makers at PIFVA in Philadelphia days later, members decided to put together a compilation tape about awards that regional fellows' projects have supported. In addition AIVE, NAMAC, AFI, and the National Association of Artists' Organizations (NAAO) have requested that the NEA maintain an ongoing dialogue to explore the most effective and efficient ways for the arts community to resolve budgetary and political challenges.

As Ruby Lerner, executive director of AIVE, explained to Alexander, "A fragile 'arts ecology' exists between artists, artists' organizations, and more mainstream conservative arts organizations. The cuts have definitely disturbed this ecology." The regrant programs, a lifeline to artists and small organizations, Lerner adds, are the very programs that ensure the future of the arts in America. "They have truly been a model of the public-private partnership the agency touts. And perhaps, most important, these regrant programs have been case studies of cultural democracy in action. Not the rhetoric of cultural democracy, but the reality."

During the National Council meeting on November 4, at which the budgets for each of the NEA's program categories were presented for the coming fiscal year, news was not good for media artists: The NEA announced a Media Arts Program budget of \$9.5 million for FY 1995; down from \$10.3 million in FY 1994. Within this budget, \$1 million has been allocated for the Film/Video Production category, an increase of \$367,000 from FY 1994. However, the Media Arts Centers/National Services allocation was slightly reduced. Subsequently, the endowment will offer one or two once-in-a-lifetime \$100,000 National Endowment for the Arts Moving Image Production grants in FY 1996. The grants are for productions by established film and video artists whose artistry and contributions to the field are widely recognized, according to NEA materials.

For those not yet "established" artists, the NEA's O'Doherty says applicants who previously applied to the regrant programs may apply directly to the Media Arts Program for grants in FY 1996. Media Arts guidelines have been revised so panels will have the flexibility to recommend grants in amounts smaller than the previous minimum of \$10,000.

Although sources present at the Council meeting in November say Alexander pledged to restore money to the Media Arts Program in the FY 1996 budget, how she will do so has yet to be determined.

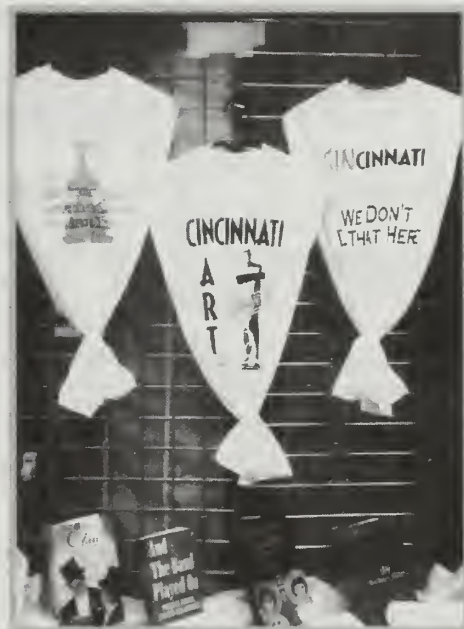
No Time Like the Present

"The issue now is where do we go from here?" says AIVE's Lerner. "I think we must convince the NEA of the impact that small grants can have on the life of a project and that there is a value in a regional distribution system." While Lerner doesn't foresee the return of the regrant programs in their current form, she stresses that the field must help the NEA create structures that achieve the same ends.

Those concerned about the cuts and program changes should write to: Jane Alexander, Chair, National Endowment for the Arts, 1100 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC 20506, and should send a copy to their congressional representatives. Any individual or organization who has received a grant should communicate the impact it had. If the work won awards, was broadcast or exhibited, it would be helpful to include this information.

MARY ESBJORNSON

Mary Esbjornson is vice president for Advocacy on the National Alliance for Media Arts and Culture's Board of Directors and is on the Governing Council of Media Democracy in Action, a national consortium representing independent, minority, and community media service organizations and individuals.



Little Shop of Horrors: The window of Cincinnati's Pink Pyramid bookstore, where employees were nailed by undercover officers for renting a Pasolini tape.

Courtesy Pink Pyramid Bookstore

Cincinnati's Morality Squad Targets Pasolini

Pedestrians in Cincinnati tend to obey Don't Walk signs, even at night, when no car is approaching.

A Chanukah menorah on the city square at the same time as city Christmas decorations? It took a federal judge to clear the way. A Ku Klux Klan cross to join the menorah? Only with the same judge's intervention.

Nude dancing? Go across the river to Northern Kentucky. X-rated videos? Rent them elsewhere and bring them home. *Playgirl* or *Penthouse*? They're there, just not handily displayed.

These are manifestations of Cincinnati civility; some things just aren't done. Much of this is natural to a community where even the poor are conservative.

When it comes to pornography, modern limits are the legacy of now-Sheriff Simon Leis Jr., a former county prosecutor, and Charles H. Keating Jr., who founded Citizens for Decent Literature here and pursued purveyors until he left Cincinnati to enter the savings and loan business.

Late last year, stills from the Pier Paolo Pasolini movie *Salò: 120 Days of Sodom* were neatly excised from the public library's copy of Naomi Greene's biography of the gay, Marxist Italian filmmaker. In 1994, the right of Cincinnatians to know Pasolini's work once again was challenged when Gary Allgeier, co-owner of the Pink Pyramid book store, and two clerks, Steven Austin and William Dean,

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were charged with the same misdemeanor: pandering obscenity for renting the *Salo* videotape.

Boosters say this intolerance to smut is one reason Cincinnati is rated among the most livable U.S. cities. Others say Cincinnati is a community in which the First Amendment must be defended constantly against censors and the censorious.

Yet when seven Robert Mapplethorpe photos provoked pandering obscenity indictments against the Contemporary Arts Center and its director, Dennis Barrie, in 1990, jurors acquitted them. These were eight men and women whose familiarity with the art scene was minimal, but they said the charges were baseless when the 175-photo exhibit was considered as a whole.

Popular response to the Mapplethorpe prosecution ranged from satisfaction at seeing cultural arbiters humbled to pride in the good sense and integrity of ordinary Cincinnatians who sat on that jury. More recently, local prosecutors decided not to prosecute the play *Poor Superman*, with its gay themes, although there was anxiety over the intimidating investigation. But now, Cincinnatians again are pondering their city prosecutor's zeal.

The Pink Pyramid bookstore employees don't deny renting Pasolini's 1975 film, *Salo*, to undercover vice officers in mid-1994. Rather, they say they are innocent of pandering obscenity. Allgeier won't talk about the charges with reporters as per orders from his attorney.

As Jeffrey Douglas, a Santa Monica lawyer and obscenity scholar put it, "*Salo* is a great film, not pornographic at all, unless one is an unreformed Nazi."

On September 30, defense attorney H. Louis Sirkin and his co-counsels, Cathy R. Cook, Cathy Adams, and Laura Abrams, explained to judge William Mallory, Jr. how Pasolini took the eighteenth century book by the Marquis de Sade, *120 Days of Sodom*, and placed it in the northern Italian town of Salo, the last refuge of Italian Fascists in World War II. They explained how Pasolini used cruelty, depravity, and sex to illustrate the corruption of the powerful church hierarchy, nobility, and industrialists.

So did a friend-of-the-court brief from the American Civil Liberties Union, signed by the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF), the American Museum of the Moving Image, Film Forum, the Sundance Institute, the Coalition against Censorship in the Arts, and many other organizations and individuals, tracing Pasolini's themes and the evolution of modern standards for obscenity in U.S. Supreme Court decisions. "If they can ban the work of a creative giant like Pasolini," said Martha Wallner, advocacy director for AIVF, "then no AIVF member is safe from censorship. We suggest that the money being wasted on undercover rental agents or video cops in Cincinnati be used for indepen-

dent media projects instead."

Mallory was not moved by the argument or the brief. He rejected defense arguments that *Saló*, when taken in its entirety, has serious literary, artistic, scientific, or political value and, as such, is exempt from obscenity prosecution as a matter of law (*Miller v. California*, 1973). Incidentally, the judge who handled the Mapplethorpe case had done the same thing in 1990 when Sirkin, who was then defending Barrie and the Contemporary Arts Center, said the charges should be dismissed. Mallory left it to a jury to decide whether *Saló* is obscene.

On November 10, Sirkin again attempted to have the case dismissed on First Amendment grounds. Judge Mallory surprised many locals when he ruled to suppress the case's evidence, saying inept or overzealous vice unit officers kept the videotape for so long after its two-day rental period that it became prior restraint and violated the First Amendment. Mallory said that made the videotape essentially stolen goods and it violated the Fourth Amendment ban on unreasonable search and seizure when officers used it to get a probable cause finding and a search warrant from a judge. City Prosecutor Terrence Cosgrove said he would appeal the judge's decision.

After his November 10 victory, Sirkin said, "I'm really appalled personally that police ever considered bringing a charge." He also said that an appeal would be a further waste of taxpayer money. "If the city had any sense they'd let it be."

A second ingredient in this theater of the absurd played out in a courtroom is local antipathy to sex that strays from celibacy or the heterosexual norm, preferably within marriage. Pink Pyramid, a modest downtown bookstore on Court Street, caters to gays, lesbians, and bisexuals.

As defense attorney Cathy Cook put it, vice squad officers would never raid "straight...guys in suits" enjoying heterosexual pornography at downtown newsstands on their lunch hours.

True? Is the Pink Pyramid being harassed because it caters to a gay clientele? "Not that I'm aware of," prosecutor Cosgrove has said.

Underlying this sense of anti-gay hostility is the unresolved fight over the constitutionality of Issue 3, the city charter amendment that stripped Cincinnati's human rights ordinance of any protections based on sexual orientation. Voters approved Issue 3 overwhelmingly in 1993 after a brutal, divisive campaign.

Quickly, Alphonse Gerhardstein, a civil rights attorney in private practice, and ACLU counsel Scott Greenwood challenged the new law in U.S. District Court, aided by Lambda Legal Defense Fund lawyers. Facing them were the city solicitor's office and lawyers hired by Equal Rights-Not Special Rights, a group formed to pass Issue 3.

The gay rights advocates won. Initially, Judge S. Arthur Spiegel temporarily barred Issue 3's

enforcement. Then, in the first decision of its kind by a federal judge, Spiegel said the law singled out a group for hostile, disparate treatment and denied their Constitutional rights.

The city and Equal Rights-Not Special Rights asked the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit to overturn that judgment; a decision could be months away.

BEN L. KAUFMAN

Ben L. Kaufman covers federal courts and legal affairs for The Cincinnati Enquirer.

VIRGIL GRILLO

1938-1994

Just a week before he died, Virgil Grillo, creator of the film studies program at the University of Colorado, was resting on his massage chair. He was exhausted from showing a TV reporter his exhibit of paper cutouts at the Boulder Center for the Visual Arts and his oxygen generator was acting up.

Grillo had fought mightily against lung cancer, but we all knew that time was running out. To prepare for the opening of the art show, he got a blood transfusion, like a marathon runner doing some blood doping before a big race.

And the show was just the beginning of his last weekend. About 50 friends came from out of town, and they were invited to Grillo's for dinner after the show. Grillo was a fabulous, enthusiastic host and the best kind of hedonist. He created lasting friendships among people who met for the first time at his home over wonderful meals.

That Saturday night, in the Glenn Miller Ballroom on campus, the university held an official retirement party. After 90 minutes of speeches, a rock n' roll band came out.

A hundred people leaped to their feet to join Grillo and his wife, Joanne, dancing to "Brown Sugar." The Grillos had started the dancing at parties in Boulder since 1968, when Grillo became an assistant professor in the English department. And for the last time—but with the same exuberance—he trundled out on the floor, oxygen tube and all. He shook his bottom, and he banged his tambourine.

But two days earlier he was tired. He looked over for a second and said, "I'm sorry I can't make eye contact. I'm just too tired. Hold my hand."

So we held hands for a few minutes. A couple who were among his closest friends came in, and we talked a bit. I said I had to go home and cook dinner.

"What are you making?" he asked.

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Virgil Grillo, 1938-1994.

Photo: Cliff Grassmick, courtesy Boulder Daily Camera.

"I don't know. Maybe some pasta."

"Just make some *aglio e olio* (garlic and olive oil)," he said, and paused. "And if you have some cream cheese throw that in and maybe a can of clams, if you have some. It's a great *alfredo*." He said it with such affection and delight, my mouth watered. This was the same excitement he brought to his work.

Grillo did more than develop a program in film studies that finally became a major in 1989. He came to a university that had a low level of interest in film and a snobbish resistance to film study. He bullied, pushed, cajoled, and encouraged until he made film a valid subject of study and an appreciated art form on campus.

I was never a student of Grillo's, nor did I work for him, but I caught the bug anyway. Grillo as a benign—actually a wonderful—version of the pod people in *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*. From him the love of film spread over an enormous territory.

Early in his career at Colorado University, Grillo established the Rocky Mountain Film Center, a campus organization that ran the International Film Series and initiated a list of

public programs involving the cinema. The center now has cameras, sound, and editing equipment available at minimal cost.

The center sponsored the Colorado Film Network, which sent films by foreign and independent American filmmakers to small towns around the state that would never otherwise have had access to those movies. Grillo directed the Colorado Humanities Program for several years, and he went to Washington to serve as assistant director to the National Endowment for the Arts for two years. Later he became a consultant for the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation.

The essence of the foundation work was to get money to independent filmmakers and to find ways for them to show their films to audiences. Grillo created several series of independent films for public television and cable, and helped create a score of media arts centers around the country.

And at home, his creations continue to grow and develop. The film studies major is one of the largest on the CU-Boulder campus. The faculty includes Bruce Kawin, one of the finest film historians in America, and filmmaker Stan Brakhage,

honored in New York, Chicago, San Francisco, and in Europe for his 40 years and work.

Few knew Grillo was an artist in his own right. He'd made paper cutouts for years without spilling the beans, but in his last year he started to show them. They're beautiful and ingenious, but the revelation only confirmed what was obvious all along: that Grillo shaped his own life as a work of art.

That work came most clear in his illness. His friends—even casual acquaintances—knew he was sick. We all heard about the course of treatments. The "Virgil Hotline" on his university telephone contained an up-to-date bulletin on his progress. Grillo never became morbid; he simply asked that his friends, his community, be part of this aspect of his life as well as the other parts.

So we did it. We listened and talked and asked questions. No one ever took chemotherapy with such vigor, enthusiasm, and knowledge. He grabbed at life and held on to it with incredible, but still gentle, ferocity.

He hoped for the best and sought every possible treatment—medical, holistic, spiritual—without denying the seriousness of his lung cancer. And his friends went through it with him, feeling up at the good news and depressed at the bad. But everyone was glad to be with someone who lived with such spirit.

He died the same way. Friday, Saturday, and Sunday he partied and talked with his friends. He got them to see him before he died rather than after. On Monday and Tuesday he rested. On Wednesday he spent two hours in his swimming pool, hooked up to the oxygen and having fun with his closest friends. And on Thursday, October 13, he died.

"He scripted the whole damn things," one of his closest friends said. "Incredible."

HOWIE MOVSHOVITZ

Howie Movshovitz is a movie critic for the Denver Post.

This article was reprinted with permission from the Denver Post. It originally ran in the paper on October 25, 1994. A scholarship fund has been established in Grillo's memory. Donations may be made to: University of Colorado Foundation, Inc.: The Virgil Grillo Fellowship in Arts and Humanities, c/o C.U. Foundation, Box 1140, Boulder, CO 80306.

ERRATA

A photo credit for Patricia Torkildsen was inadvertently omitted from the December issue for the photographs of AIVF's 20th anniversary celebration on p. 52-54. We regret the oversight.

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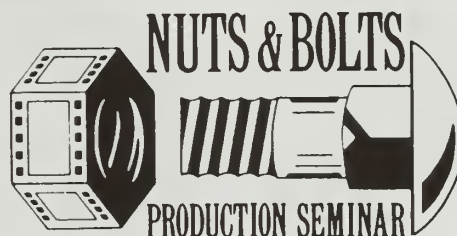
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MICHEL NEGROPONTE *documentarian* **JUPITER'S WIFE**

BY ROB EDELMAN

At a time when Hollywood films routinely cost tens of millions of dollars, filmmaker Michel Negroponte has managed to make an entertaining and provocative feature on what is truly a bargain basement budget.

His secret: He shot it on video, using the S-VHS format. Negroponte's camcorder cost \$1,500. The price of the tape stock for 45 hours of material, from which he culled his 78-minute final version, was under \$400. "It would have cost about \$50,000 to do the same shoot in 16mm," says the filmmaker. "I knew that I'd have to spend several years fundraising in order to shoot on film, so I committed myself to shooting on S-VHS."

Negroponte's film, *Jupiter's Wife*, is a mystery/documentary about a homeless woman he chanced to encounter in Central Park. "My original idea was to do a documentary portrait of Central Park," Negroponte explains. "I cast about a half-dozen people who use the park in different ways. I photographed a lawn bowler, a Greek hot dog vendor, a diverse cross-section of people.

"One day I was sitting at the boat pond and I saw this woman with a huge backpack and, at that point, four dogs," he continues. "She had this aura of someone who had just stepped out of the wilderness. I just sat there gaping.

"I introduced myself. She said, 'Oh, I've been expecting you for a couple of weeks!' Her name was Maggie, and she began telling me stories of her life that were extraordinary."

Maggie is a middle-aged woman who had been living in the park for several years; she describes herself as "a member of the class of '86." She

explains that she has ESP. She claims to be the wife of the god Jupiter and the daughter of the late Hollywood actor Robert Ryan. She also hears voices.

"There was this element of myth about Maggie and her persona," notes the filmmaker. "I immediately decided that she would become a part of the project. I was still committed to doing the broader piece. But I found myself photographing Maggie most of all. Everyone else was becoming a

in discerning tube slots."

That was when it existed only on video. By the time the film was presented at the Independent Feature Film Market in September, it had been transferred to 35mm. At first, Negroponte had no plans to do so. "Even a year ago, when I knew I had a solid rough cut, I figured TV would be the primary outlet for the film," he says.

It was around that time Negroponte showed his film to Doug Block and Jane Weiner, coproducers of *Silverlake Life: The View From Here*, a video diary of filmmaker Tom Joslin and his lover Mark Massi, both of whom had been diagnosed with AIDS. Block and Weiner had made a S-VHS-to-16mm transfer, and the film ended up getting a distributor and theatrical bookings. "Because of their experience," says Negroponte, who later gave them coproducer credits, "I was able to be convinced that there were outlets for my film beyond television."

Jupiter's Wife is not Negroponte's debut feature. His credits date back to *Space Coast* (1980), co-directed with Ross McElwee, his thesis film made



Courtesy filmmaker

cameo. And so Maggie became the focus of the piece."

Over a two year period, Negroponte chronicled his growing friendship with Maggie. Along the way he delved into her past and discovered that back in the late sixties she had been a minor celebrity as Central Park's first female hansom cab driver. Within a couple of years, after appearing in a Universal newsreel and as a guest on *What's My Line?*, Maggie had two children. While committed for a time in a mental hospital, she permanently lost custody of them. As she cradles a newborn puppy in her arms in the film, she seems to be reliving the experience of mothering her own offspring.

Jupiter's Wife had its world premiere last June at the fifth International Documentary Festival in Marseilles, where it was screened in its original format. *Variety* called it "a wonderful piece of sociological detective work," noting that *Jupiter's Wife* "should enjoy a long career on the fest circuit and

while in the graduate film program at MIT. He describes it as a "dark, gothic, Southern tale about the remnants of the fifties and sixties boom that brought people to Cape Canaveral, Florida, to work in the space program." For PBS, he and McElwee also directed *Resident Exile* (1981), a portrait of a young Iranian who had been imprisoned for two years under the Shah and then escaped to the United States. On his own, Negroponte made *Silver Valley* (1984), which he calls a "portrait of a border town in trouble. It's about the extended family of the mining town of Kellogg, Idaho, and what happens when the economy collapses." He also contributed a segment about street vendors in Washington, DC to the ITVS series *Declarations* (1992).

The filmmaker describes himself and his MIT classmates (including McElwee and Robb Moss) as "completely indebted to the heroes of cinema verité, like Ricky Leacock, Ed Pincus, and D.A. Pennebaker. It's just that our work is quite differ-

ent. We've tried to chart out new territory and extend the boundaries of cinema verité. We feel that a filmmaker doesn't have to mask his or her presence during the making of the film and in the end result."

When he started directing films, Negroponte adapted the more conventional cinema verité approach. "But what bothered me was that I felt a personal connection was absent," he explains. "After all, there's a person—a living, breathing, feeling human being—experiencing the unfolding events as well as photographing them."

Negroponte thus has come to allow himself to be a part of his films. "In *Jupiter's Wife*, Maggie is responding to someone, and that's me," he says. "In the film I reveal that my parents are European, my mother's Greek, and that I'm a twin. I think this had an impact on how Maggie related to me. So it's important for the viewer to know this information about me."

"But at the same time, it's important to remember that Maggie remains the subject of the film. She's its main component."

Rob Edelman is the author of Great Baseball Films (Citadel Press), the first mass-market book about the national pastime on screen.

Chicanos from East L.A.—Richard Estrada and brothers Flavio, Oscar, and Efrain Morales—is called *The Illegal Interns*. It began four years ago at the Buena Vision public access station, located in the heart of Latino L.A., where Estrada, 28, and Flavio Morales, 22, were interning at the time. *The Illegal Interns* has subsequently evolved from a fledgling music video program into a successful outlet for local bands, filmmakers, spoken word artists, activists, and community updates.

"The show explores hip, urban culture from a Chicano perspective," says Estrada. "We want to be a place where people with talent who don't [usually] get a chance to be heard [can be heard]." The producers don't stick to one particular style or ethnic group. "We are promoting our generation and want people to know that just because someone might be from East L.A., it doesn't mean we all sound the same," says Flavio.

Being four Chicano guys producing television in a town where there's a dearth of media by and for their bilingual generation, they tend to get singled out. "Some people think that because of the color of our skin, we have to put them on our show," says Flavio. But they refuse to be categorized. "Our biggest thing is be yourself and inform yourself. Yeah, we're Chicanos, but that's not all we're about."

with their kids," adds Flavio.

What makes their show so different is what comes between the featured guests: humorous commentary and skits by the Interns themselves. They might demonstrate how to heat up tortillas, show up at a concert with fake press passes, or flash text on the screen like, "Is Anyone Watching?" What the Interns will do next is always a surprise. "One of our first videotaped segments was a trip to the corner gas station to fill up Richard's car," recalls Flavio. "The audience appreciates that we are honest. We're not host material in the typical sense, and they know they are not getting something rehearsed."

The Interns embody the definition of "self taught". "We got so excited when Richard figured out how to turn the cameras on," says Oscar. The equipment at Buena Vision made for a makeshift show: cameras without viewfinders, no tripods, and no directions as to which cable went where. Flavio adds, "As Richard started gaining more technical knowledge, we started to expand: messing around with cables and putting live cameras on. No one at Buena Vision had ever put a live camera on a music show, so it was a totally different thing for the audience."

The Illegal Interns has evolved over the years. For one thing, Flavio's younger brothers, Oscar,

RICHARD ESTRADA & FLAVIO, OSCAR & EFRAIN MORALES *alternative TV* **THE ILLEGAL INTERNS**

BY JULIA MELTZER

Hosts Richard Estrada and Flavio Morales are bantering back and forth on air, when suddenly Morales' stomach audibly growls. He looks into the camera and announces to his television audience that he is hungry. Twenty minutes later, there is a knock on the studio door and a full meal appears, delivered by a devoted viewer, Mrs. Hernandez. "We say we're hungry on the show, and food shows up!," says Morales. Now that's community television!

The program, produced by four young



Photo: Manny Guzman, courtesy videomakers

Although serious about providing an outlet for under-represented artists, one rarely catches an Intern in a serious mood. This has helped earn them a large and devoted following. "We've received letters from New York City, people tape our program and air it in Pomona, and we've been seen in Guadalajara via satellite poaching," says Flavio proudly. While their main audience is college age, they've heard that whole families watch. "Everyone is trying to figure out what is going on

21, and Efrain, 18, have joined the production team. When that happened, Flavio recalls, "we changed the format of the show from being shot right in the control room to having actual hosts in the studio and a director and a sound person." However, there is some nostalgia for the old days. "At the beginning there were no boundaries. Now that we have people helping us who know things, it's different."

Different indeed, especially since September,

when the Interns left public access for Channel 38 on the UHF band, which now broadcasts their show citywide five days a week. This has made for a busy production schedule, juggled between jobs and attending college.

The widened audience is appreciated by the Interns. "People like Mrs. Hernandez appreciate what we're doing—that we're young, and we're doing something," says Flavio. But his biggest satisfaction is more personal. "One of the things that makes me really happy is that my youngest brother, Efrain, decided to help us on the show, and now he's going to Cal State LA, taking production classes, and looking into film as a career. For me, that's cool, because when we started the show, he had no clue what he was going to do with his life, and now he has directed himself."

Julia Meltzer is a videomaker, media literacy teacher, and writer living in Los Angeles.

NICK GOMEZ writer/director **NEW JERSEY DRIVE**

BY VERONICA MIXON

"I backed into filmmaking after trying to figure out what to do. It seemed like a vocation that I could handle," says Nick Gomez of his life in the mid-eighties, after attending State University of New York (SUNY) at Purchase. "And here I am at midnight, in the middle of Brooklyn." It's spring of 1994, and Gomez has been battling bad weather during the shoot of his film-in-progress, *New Jersey Drive*, about Newark teenagers heisting cars and engaging the police in high-speed chases, which Gomez shot in Brooklyn.

New Jersey Drive was conceived in 1992, after Gomez read a *New York Times* article about this volatile situation. His debut feature, *Laws of Gravity*, had just opened. "I used to steal cars when I was a kid, and I like the frenetic energy of a little kid behind a big car," he explains. "Newark was a focused version in a visual way [of] a lot of the problems in this country."

The Boston-bred Irish-Italian director, who left home at 15, doesn't ignore the knuckleheads in American society. Nor does he glamorize them, as

seems to be the trend in Hollywood fantasy films. "I think the people from the margins of society in this country are much more reflective of what our psyche is, because all of our values are pushed to the forefront in a very finite way," says Gomez. In *Laws of Gravity*, the director depicted the tough, brutal world of two white petty criminals in Brooklyn, while *New Jersey Drive* concerns black urban youth stealing cars out of boredom. "The values of consumerism, power and control, influence, machismo, and love and hate become much more important," he notes. "People who don't have a place that's comfortable, [with] economically secure foundations, and somehow in the workings of society are forgotten or abandoned, seem to be better a reflection of who we are as a people than the middle-class and upper class."

Gomez works with producers Larry Meistrich and Bob Gosse, who operate The Shooting Galley, a Manhattan-based independent production com-

pany in terms of people, scale, and union regulations, but still low budget by Hollywood standards. Gomez launched the project after meeting with Spike Lee, who drummed up interest at Universal and is executive producer of the film. However, Gomez spent a year in "development hell," enduring an endless series of meetings and rewrites while revising his original script. "It was easier to make a film with pocket money—you and your buddies get together," Gomez recalls. "It is a little frustrating working on a bigger scale. I'm interested in trying to find a happy medium where I can find a certain amount of independence and yet make films that people will still go see."

New Jersey Drive focuses on the friendship between two teens, Jason and Midget, as well as on Jason's relationship with his mother. The parallels with *Laws of Gravity* are easily recognizable (though his newer film has more action and a lot less hand-held camera): for one thing, Gomez

doesn't hesitate to create strong women who are intricately involved with male characters. He doesn't flinch from a story with African American characters, either. The director says, enthusiastically, that he's trying to capture a certain vibrancy in black life, as opposed to a dark, pessimistic interpretation.

"There are a lot of great reasons for whites not to make black films: *Zebrahead*, *Fresh*. They don't feel real," says Gomez. "When I saw *Fresh*, my first question was 'Is this his first time in New York City?' It just didn't feel like any world I'd ever



Courtesy Gramercy Pictures

seen before. "It didn't really occur to me until I started getting asked the questions about it. I haven't felt any shortcomings or drawbacks or stumbling points along the way. There were enough black kids in my neighborhood growing up that it wasn't any great leap for me."

Gomez has discovered one hurdle he'll have to

With *New Jersey Drive*, Gomez has leapt to a \$6-million budget—a significantly larger produc-

Gomez has discovered one hurdle he'll have to

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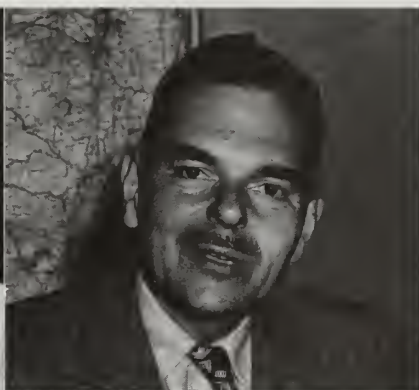
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resolve with future film projects. He concedes that a director's job is to be a gracious host to an army of talented people and to create an environment where no one feels stifled. But wearing two hats can be tricky. "When you're a writer/director, you suddenly realize if you need to change something for budgetary reasons, it's me who's got to go home and rewrite the fuckin' thing!," he laughs. "Also, I have limits as a writer. I definitely want to work with other writers."

Gomez is already thinking about future projects, and the urban grittiness of his past films still play an important role. He's interested in boxing, particularly the story of sixties heavyweight champion Sonny Liston. There's also the Dominican kids' cocaine trade in Washington Heights in upper Manhattan and the recent New York City police corruption cases. "Police are like the mob in uniform. The way they operate, they're out there doing everything except protecting people."

New Jersey Drive, which Grammercy Pictures is distributing, will open theatrically on March 3.

Veronica Mixon is a film critic for *Carib News* based in New York City.

ROBERT MUGGE
music
documentarian

BY STEVE DOLLAR

Few independent filmmakers embody the work ethic as visibly as Robert Mugge, or get as much mileage from a shoestring.

The 44-year-old Philadelphia-based director has made 16 films in a 20-year career devoted to documenting the myriad cross-currents of American music, with an eclectic catalog that bounces between diverse genres and colorful personalities with the enthusiasm of a kid cut loose with \$20 in the coolest record store imaginable.

"In all my films, I see music as a metaphor for the human spirit," says Mugge, whose camera has focused on such performers as salsa star Ruben Blades, smooth soul preacher Al Green, cosmic jazzman Sun Ra, and Mississippi deep blues musicians Junior Kimbrough and R.L. Burnside. "If I'm doing nothing else, at least I hope I'm documenting artists that have that spirit, that really speak to what it is to be human."

Most recently, Mugge has focused on a trio of theme-oriented pieces that now are making the

festival rounds: *True Believers: The Musical Family of Rounder Records*, about the roots-oriented Cambridge record label; *The Kingdom of Zydeco*, which captures the antics of high-spirited Louisiana zydeco musicians amid a controversial battle-of-the-bands; and *Gather at the River: A Bluegrass Celebration*, a visit to the 1993 International Bluegrass Festival in Owensboro, Kentucky.

What's remarkable about the films is that Mugge shot all three in one 10-day trip that took him from Massachusetts to the bayous. "You have to find someone crazy enough to put in a little money, move real fast and work cheaply," says Mugge, who got the \$350,000 financing which he parlayed into three films from BMG Video, where he found a corporate advocate impressed with the favorable press generated by his 1992 film, *Deep Blues*. Mugge pressed the executive, David Steffen (who has since left BMG) to fund a film on Rounder Records, and in turn was asked to do a bluegrass movie, "something as a leaping off point for an overview of regional American music today. We figured out that with one big trip through the South, I could make both films for him."

Mugge had intended to stop in Lake Charles, Louisiana, to film a concert by zydeco bandleader Beau Jocques, who records for Rounder, and ended up with a front row seat for a zydeco battle royale featuring Jocques and salty zydeco legend Boozoo Chavis. "I thought, my God, we've got a real story here," Mugge says. "So I figured I could squeeze a zydeco film out of it, too."

Interestingly enough, *The Kingdom of Zydeco*, shot totally on the fly, offers the strongest vindication of Mugge's method. Its vivid characters, intimate framing, and high-quality sound recording makes it both a valuable archive of folk mania and a shameless piece of entertainment. Likewise, both the Rounder and bluegrass films are primarily about performance; the songs are always included in full, from first note to last.

This is what separates Mugge from most music documentarians. If it sometimes causes his films to drag—depending on the tastes of whomever's watching—he offers no apologies.



Courtesy filmmaker

"I'm really hardcore," he says. "People sometimes wonder why I spend so much time on musical performance, where somebody else will give you a couple of bars and go to some interviews. One of the main goals of these films is to preserve musical performances for the future, and the best way to show respect for the performer is to let it run."

As of late 1994, Mugge had no video distributor for his five most recent films, including *Deep Blues* and his 1992 *Pride and Joy: The Story of Alligator Records*. The work sits in limbo while BMG, after a management shift, attempts to sell the video rights. Mugge, whose previous films are distributed on video by music specialty companies like Rhapsody Films in New York, isn't worried. "Someone will get them," he says.

By managing to find such corporate sponsorship, he hasn't made a grant application in 18 years. "These grant agencies don't know how to deal with these projects either," he says. Instead, they foster films about "folk and blues artists who are on the verge of death, beyond their ability to perform at their best. They don't really understand why it might also be important to film someone who's 20 or 30 or 40, working in a genre that's somewhere outside the mainstream."

Steve Dollar writes about popular and other forms of music for the Atlanta Journal-Constitution.

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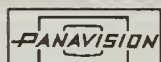
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THOMAS HALACZINSKY

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BY ALBERT STERN

Bitter experience led Thomas Halaczinsky to create the

European Production Office, a New York-based consulting firm that links American independent filmmakers with European sources of funding. Twice since 1991, the 36-year-old German producer and director of documentary and feature films encountered financial disaster at critical junctures during major projects. As a result, production on one film was halted and the other was shelved before being com-

pleted, leaving Halaczinsky with lessons about the vicissitudes of international financing that he now passes on to his clients.

Although linkages between U.S. independent filmmakers and European backers are largely unexplored, Halaczinsky believes there is considerable affinity between the two groups. "Europeans are both interested in the United States and used to doing smaller pictures," he explains. "Even top directors overseas may work on what in America would be considered low-budget films. Europeans in general are used to paying less money for high quality."

Clients of the year-old European Production Office access Halaczinsky's personal contacts and knowledge of the technical and monetary resources available overseas. In the early eighties, he was an executive of the firm that set up the first

privately-operated cable television networks in Germany. By the end of the decade, he started his own film company, which produced documentary films for German television.

He received development funds from the North Rhine-Westphalia Film Fund for Bronsky's *Confession*, a \$3.5-million feature that was to be directed by Peter Patzak (*Killing Blue* and *Rochade*) and shot in New York, but the project fell apart because he could not secure enough funding. His next project was *Facing the Forest*, a German/Israeli coproduction that Angelika Films was slated to distribute in the United States. When its German distributor went bankrupt, the nearly-completed



Photo: Bethany Jacobson, courtesy European Production Office

film languished unreleased, even though it had been invited to the 1994 Berlin Film Festival as an official German entry in the Competition section.

Following those back-to-back disappointments, Halaczinsky was hired as the U.S. representative for Project ITRA, the film-production subsidiary of a large German corporation that conducts trade with Russia. After relocating to New York for ITRA, Halaczinsky learned about independent filmmaking in the United States by participating in the 1992 Sundance Producers' Conference and producing and directing two documentaries. He soon recognized the potential for linkages with Europe.

"The nature of funding in Europe is completely different than it is in the States," Halaczinsky explains. "For one, governments are a major source of money and are oriented toward the eco-

conomic goal of employing their citizens. Consequently, they are looking for talent and projects to employ their workers and use their technology."

Halaczinsky is not a business or legal advisor. Instead, he examines the viability of his clients' budgets and ideas, and formulates appropriate overseas marketing strategies. For a screenplay set in the Caribbean that could not find U.S. backing, Halaczinsky seized on the idea of marketing the project in France, which maintains close cultural ties to several former colonies in that region. His role entailed contacting a producer he knew in France and presenting him with project. To finance postproduction costs of New York filmmaker Mandy Jacobson's essay film on the Bosnian war, Halaczinsky negotiated with a German TV magazine program to use the footage for a 45-minute documentary. Payment will fund the 90-minute essay project Jacobson had envisioned initially. For a third project, Halaczinsky is attempting to secure European funding for a feature film by Manhattan-based production company Cinepax. Based on a novel by Israeli author Amos Oz, the film, *A Perfect Tease*, is set in Israel and will be an American/Israeli coproduction. "I was told so many times that there's no market for Israel-oriented films in the States," he says. "I spoke to distributors in Cannes. They all commented that if you put the word 'Israel' in a treatment for a film, the chances of it being picked up are smaller."

In addition to utilizing his overseas production contacts, Halaczinsky also works closely with foreign distributors, including Cori Films in London, which he refers to as a powerful player in the international TV market.

At present, Halaczinsky wants to read treatments, which he will review at no cost. For consulting work, he charges \$125 per hour, although for projects with which he becomes personally involved, he may defer his fees. He estimates that the European Production Office will be able to handle 20 to 25 projects a year.

"Europe is interested in the United States," he says, "which makes it easier for American filmmakers to get European money than it would be for a European who came here. Independents haven't found effective ways to present their ideas to overseas investors and have to depend on unreliable sources of funding in the United States—say a rich dentist who wants to be involved in the film business."

"With business in general becoming more global, that way of raising money can't represent the future of independent films."

Contact: European Production Office, 208 W. 30th St., #1205, New York, NY 10001; (212) 465-0652; fax: (212) 465-0653.

Albert Stern is a freelance writer living in New York.



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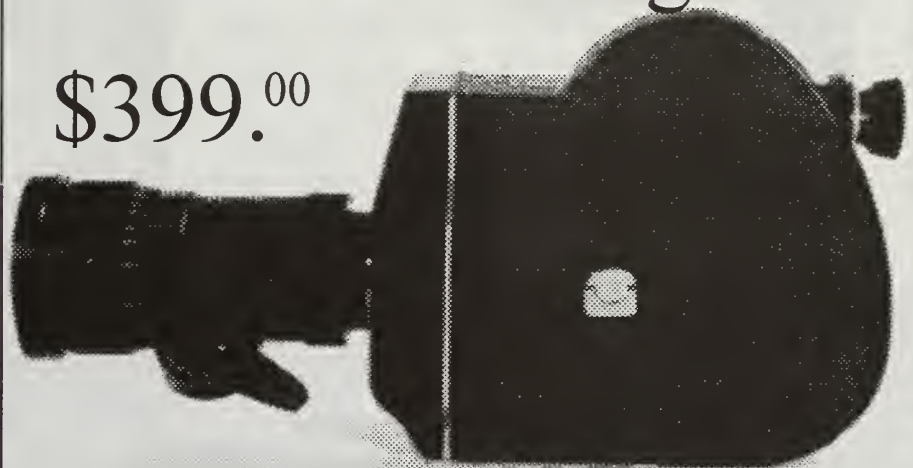
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**Field
Reports**

Your Fest of Fests

The Toronto International Film Festival, now in its nineteenth year, continues to be a user-friendly festival and one of the major stops on the North American circuit. The 10-day program of 300 films is so packed with low-budget, independent, experimental, documentary, and foreign films that one may not even notice the glitzy blockbusters. Festival programmers manage to give preference to more challenging important work while allowing commerce to keep its wheels greased in large part because of the sheer volume of work shown. Moreover, most of these screenings sell out to a receptive and diverse local audience.

The Toronto International Film Festival

THE FILMS SELECTED FOR TORONTO ARE ACTUALLY A REFLECTION OF THE SPECIFIC "BEATS" AND TASTES OF ABOUT 11 PROGRAMMERS. Kay Armatage, for instance, has developed Toronto's connection with U.S. independents over the years, and her choices often show up in the more cutting-edge programs, such as The Edge and First Cinema. The First Cinema program has helped launch an astonishing number of careers—many thanks to Armatage's selections—including those of Julie Dash, Hal Hartley, Charles Burnett, Todd Haynes, Michael Moore, Susan Seidelman, and Joel and Ethan Coen. This year Armatage's U.S. selections in this category included Mark Malone's *Killer*, Steve McLean's *Postcards from America*, and Matira Giovanni's *Bar Girls*; others included George Huang's *The Buddy Factor*; *Hoop Dreams* by Steve James, Frederick Marx, and Peter Gilbert; Shu Lea Cheang's *Fresh Kill*; Kevin Smith's *Clerks*; and Jyll Johnson's *Martha and Ethel*, all in addition, of course, to many foreign selections.

Everything that gets sent to the festival is seen by at least two festival programmers, so any work is likely to get a fair viewing. "A cassette comes in, a few programmers watch it, and if they don't like it, they'll steer it to someone else," Armatage says. "For example, David [Overbey] will write, 'Pretentious, arty piece of crap—try Kay or Piers [Handling],' or I'll write, 'Sentimental and

Crumb's popularity at the fest's public screenings had distributors lining up.
Courtesy Superior Pictures



melodramatic—David will like it.”

The festival receives several hundred submissions each year from international independents. This year there were 200 more than in 1993, according to programmer Cameron Bailey. Although the festival was “deluged” with American independents, Armatage says, “the American independent scene was not as strong as in past years.” She speculates, “I think there are a lot of rich white boys making films, film students who work at a sophomoric level but don’t know their work is sophomoric.”

While the number of films screened at the festival has remained level at about 300 over the past three years, the number of publicists, distributors, and sales people has tripled—which helps explain the parallel climb in film submissions. “Toronto was never designed to be a market,” Bailey says, “but business has become a focus almost by default, especially for American independents.”

John Pierson, a former producer’s rep who now finances films for completion, notes that the public and critical response to films screened at Toronto can be crucial to securing distribution. Though he no longer represents films, Pierson made an exception this year in Toronto for *Crumb*, a slow-burn kind of film. Pierson admits *Crumb* had “major problems with distributors” at the press screening: a number of distributors walked out 90 minutes into the two-hour documentary about the life of cartoonist R. Crumb. However, it subsequently received an enthusiastic response at the public screening and near-unanimous praise from critics, which “brought the distributors back in line,” says Pierson. By the time it screened at the New York Film Festival, word on the film was out from Toronto. A number of large and small distributors bid on the film, and Sony Classics eventually picked it up.

Pierson notes that for American independents who’ve set their sights on Sundance, it can be a problem to screen at Toronto first, because by the time Sundance occurs in January, the film is “old, tired news.” If a filmmaker is lucky enough to be invited to both, following Toronto with the New York Film Festival is a more effective strategy, “a one-two punch.” Toronto-Berlin or Sundance-Berlin are good sequences for gaining the recognition of international distributors. The Berlin Forum used to avoid exhibiting works that had screened in Toronto, but Pierson finds that policy has relaxed.

Toronto does not have a strict policy on premieres, according to Bailey. World premieres are preferred, of course; North American premieres of certain films are insisted upon; but some films are screened after they have been to major U.S. festivals such as Sundance or Telluride, or even if they

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have just been at the Montreal Film Festival two weeks earlier.

Steve MacLean's first feature film, *Postcards from America*, premiered at Toronto. Based on the writings of artist and AIDS activist David Wojnarowicz, it was one of the more experimental features at the festival: the film is not a biopic of



Sandy Zeig's *Central Park* was one of many shorts given prominent space at the Toronto fest. Courtesy filmmaker



Experimental features like *Postcards from America* generally receive as hearty an audience as the studio productions at Toronto. Photo: Joyce George, courtesy filmmaker

Wojnarowicz, but a fragmentary narrative that evokes the appalling beauty of his literary work. Craig Paull, *Postcards'* coproducer with Christine Vachon, found Toronto a friendly place—"not like the zoo at Cannes." He notes, "The audiences [at Toronto] seem to be more open to more experimental work, and that's refreshing."

The Q&A sessions that followed the public screenings were lively and intelligent. Shu Lea Cheang, whose *Fresh Kill* screened in Toronto, was as much impressed with the debate and dialogue at her screenings as with the sheer volume of audience members. "Audiences are well educated about screen languages. Screenings at 10:30 a.m. are full. It's totally amazing," she says.

The festival also offers a number of programs for international shorts, as well as a selection of Canadian shorts. Makers of short films generally come to Toronto looking not for distributors but for prospective collaborators, sponsors, and exhibitors. Industry representatives in turn attend screenings of shorts to find prospects for feature directors.

Sandy Zeig's *Central Park* was in a program of international shorts selected by Armatage, who saw it at the Berlin Film Festival. Films must be Toronto premieres, which meant that Zeig had to turn down an invitation to show *Central Park* at the Toronto Lesbian and Gay Film and Video Festival.

"Toronto is one of the most important film festivals, and for those of us in New York the most accessible," Zeig says. "It's the ideal place to meet everyone." Though she lives in New York, Zeig finds many of her New York contacts in Toronto. All participants receive industry, sales, and guest lists, which help filmmakers make contacts during the festival. Zeig was able to meet festival programmers, international festival organizers, distributors, and exhibitors, and met with producers who expressed interest in her forthcoming feature script. "If you don't have a sales agent, you can make it your business to talk with those people," she says.

Some independents, like Zeig, are successful at Toronto on their own.

Nevertheless, Armatage and Bailey strongly recommend that filmmakers either come with a publicist or work with publicists based in Toronto. The festival has become so huge over the last few years that filmmakers cannot count on the close attention they would have received earlier. Programmers do their best to help filmmakers network with distributors, Armatage says, but "filmmakers really need to come with someone who will look out for their film, some kind of publicity machine, no matter how small, that can operate for them." Distributors come looking for the "films that are more easygoing. But there are also films that are serious work. [Makers] who know in their hearts that it's a good film often don't recognize that it's not popular."

However, Armatage emphasizes, this is also a festival for filmmakers who are looking for an art or academic audience. Toronto is well attended by exhibitors from noncommercial cinemas and museums, such as the Wexner Center, the American Museum of the Moving Image, Cornell Cinema, Railroad Square Cinema in Waterville, Maine, and nonprofit spaces. Many exhibitors do a year's programming based on their finds at Toronto. As the festival circuit has become tantamount to an alternative distribution network, Toronto is an important stop for independents who are not courting Hollywood.

Laura U. Marks is a writer and programmer living in Rochester, NY.

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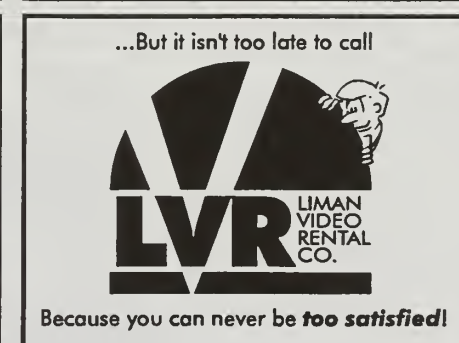
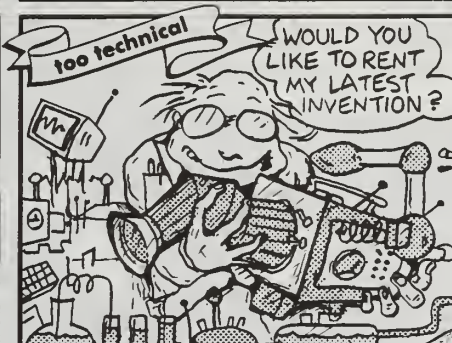
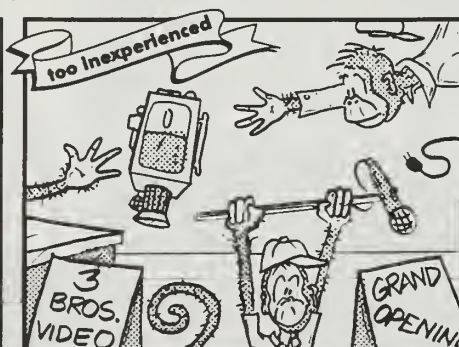
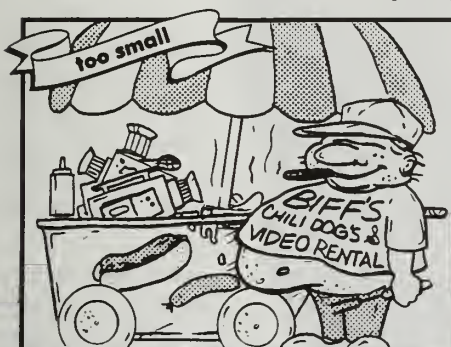
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tion, Looney Tunes and Super Mouse comic books, fly-tying equipment, your stamp collection, your Boy Scout handbook with requirements for cooking and art merit badges, a mouth organ, a squirt gun, a boomerang, your camera equipment including camera, flash attachment, filters, and exposure meter, and your diary. Your clothing included an undershirt, tie, four socks, three shirts, gray flannels, a blue blazer, and two handkerchiefs. Not included were pajamas, robe, slippers, underpants, comb or brush.

Keep in touch.

Love, Mother

Dana Atchley's Digital Campfire Stories

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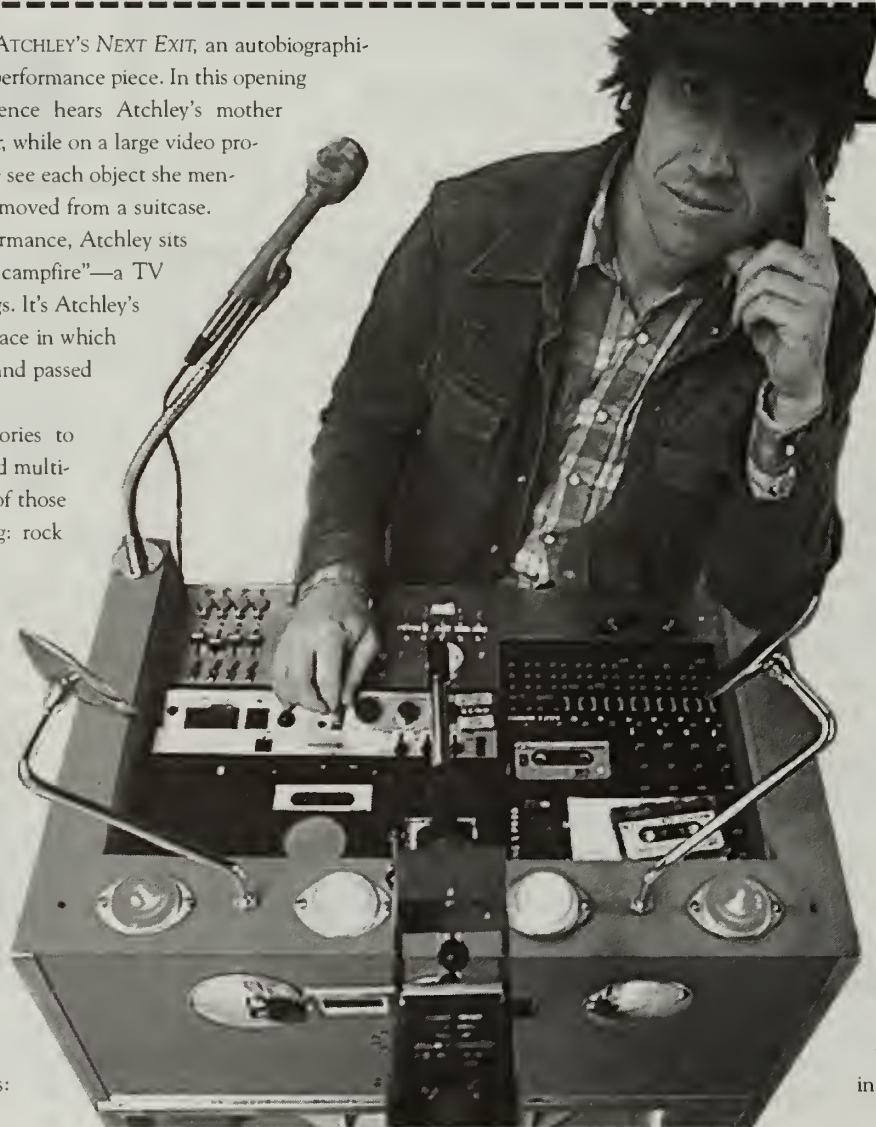
O BEGINS DANA ATCHLEY'S *NEXT EXIT*, an autobiographical, multimedia performance piece. In this opening scene, the audience hears Atchley's mother reading her letter, while on a large video projection screen we see each object she mentions carefully removed from a suitcase.

During the performance, Atchley sits

or stands stage left near his "video campfire"—a TV screen with an image of flickering logs. It's Atchley's play on the traditional campfire, a place in which stories are developed, told, re-told, and passed on.

This first story portends the stories to come. Atchley, a San Francisco-based multimedia artist and proselytizer, is one of those people who keeps nearly everything: rock collections, letters, friends, photographs, adventures, tucking them away for later use. For the duration of the show, he narrates personal anecdotes while collage-like images illustrating his stories appear on screen. Often the video clips and other images appear like magic, summoned by a click of his mouse, and then just as magically dissolve and disappear.

Many of Atchley's stories are epochal, centering around emblematic moments of the fifties, sixties, and seventies. Each decade has its own tall-tale characters:



Dana Atchley in the seventies, and (right) Atchley today, sitting before his multimedia set.

Courtesy artist

Atchley's friend Mr. Peanut, who ran for mayor of Vancouver; the artist who tried to lace up the San Andreas fault with rope; the couple who celebrated their divorce by cross-dressing in their wedding outfits.

Atchley also figures in these tales: The time he persuaded town officials in Crested Butte, Colorado, to arrest his TV set, take it to the local dump, and execute it with a .357 magnum for crimes against humanity.

His experience of the sixties: "Dartmouth, Yale, LSD, and marriage. Your basic liberal arts education." His 40th birthday in Nothing, Arizona.

At the beginning of each show Atchley selects the stories he will tell by using a wireless mouse he calls his "air mouse". He chooses among a collection of on-screen objects or "sprites"—a silhouette of his Dad; playing cards with big red numbers; a photo cut-out of The Ace of Space; a pair of red lips. During the show, his stories can be told in any order, but each story has a set length, and from the stage, Atchley has only limited control over the playback.

Atchley's stories are so intense, so hilariously and touchingly honest, that although there's a lot of technology driving *Next Exit*, the techno-spectacle aspect of the performance is easy to forget. The piece involves hundreds of pages of computer code written by his friend Patrick Milligan. The code allows Atchley to control the sprites, the movies, the images, the sound effects, the music, and the graphics from the stage. His hard- and software is not particularly



high-end. It includes a Mac Quadra 800, Radius VideoVision Studio to capture high-resolution full motion video, Adobe Premiere for editing, PhotoShop to design and modify his still images, Audio Media for sound, and MacroMedia Director (along with Milligan's code) to control the interactivity.

Atchley doesn't intend to "wow" people with technology. "Many people are infatuated by the tools," he says. "I like to have fun with them, but I don't want people wondering how I did it. Then they're not getting the stories. That's why you don't see a computer on stage."

It's the stories that matter, he stresses. That's the key difference between artist son and engineer father, an Oedipal struggle central to *Next Exit*. Atchley's father, a ham radio operator, once said to his son: "I want to get one thing straight with you: I like antennas. You like entertainment." Atchley concurs. "I'm interested in the message," he says.

Although today Atchley's message is about his own life and times, he wasn't always comfortable making himself the focus of scrutiny. During the seventies, he crisscrossed the country as Ace, the Colorado Spaceman, an alter-ego that shielded Dana Winslow Atchley III from unwanted self-disclosure. Ace compiled his adventures into a performance called *Road Show*.

Ultimately, however, Atchley realized that what he cared about were his own stories and his own voice. Probing the depths of his past has put him in touch with his family and its history. That

means a lot to him. "We're losing the importance of who we are in relation to our families," he says. "We're losing our soul in this country."

Atchley hopes his work will help other people realize that "the accrued stories of their own experiences are useful, valid, and worthy of passing on." That's one of the reasons he and collaborator Joe Lambert set up the San Francisco Digital Media Center, established a year ago in a studio on Army Street. The Media Center provides workshops for people who want to learn multimedia. Atchley has also given similar workshops at the American Film Institute in Los Angeles, in which people learn the tools by telling stories.

At this point in his life, Atchley says, he'd most like to be "evangelizing" for the new medium. He wants to be able to reach the America outside the video and film community. "Most Americans could care less about the information highway," he says, "but when they see the show their eyes light up."

So far however, his opportunities to evangelize have been limited. Demand for multimedia performance artists has not yet taken off. For a brief moment he acknowledges his frustration, then he lets loose with a strange philosophical rhyme. "Stick and stay, you'll make it pay," he says and laughs.

In the meantime, Atchley supports himself working on commercial multimedia projects. His own work is self-financed with the help of "generous friends" and donated equipment. "Everybody but Apple has given me something," he says. "Corporations are the NEA for the nineties. They need me and I need them. They need to put a human face on their technology. I need their technology to pursue the humanity of what I'm trying to do."

And that humanity seems to emerge through the work. After a performance at the Digital World Conference in Los Angeles last June, a Japanese woman approached him. She told him she had been living in the U.S. for five years and was still trying to decide whether she liked America and its people. "After your show," she said, "I decided I did."

Unlike Dana Atchley, Barbara Bliss Osborn throws out everything. She is a contributing editor to The Independent and writes frequently on new technologies.

Dana W. Atchley, San Francisco Digital Media Center, 3435 Army St., Studio 221, San Francisco, CA 94110.

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LITTLE ORPHAN VIDEO

New York Video Festival

BY ERNEST LARSEN



Shelly Silver's *Former East, Former West*, a portrait of how Berliners define themselves today, was among the video fest's highlights.

Courtesy Film Society of Lincoln Center

SINCE ITS WELCOME INAUGURATION THREE YEARS AGO, THE NEW YORK VIDEO FESTIVAL HAS UNASSUM-

INGLY PLAYED SECOND FIDDLE TO BIG DADDY, the one and only New York Film Festival. Given the latter's allure and prestige, you might think the spillover hoopla would work wonders for poor orphan video in a white citadel of culture like Lincoln Center.

Think again. The mainstream press, which oohs, aahs, or at least squeaks in printed response to just about every cinema screening in Alice Tully Hall, routinely, deafeningly ignores the video sidebar at Walter Reade with the notable but all-too-predictable exceptions of one-shot-does-it-all pieces in the *New York Times* and *Village Voice*. It takes roughly two minutes to walk from Alice Tully to Walter Reade, but the legions of media mavens almost never make that long march.

It's true that attendance was up 17 percent for this year's event, held from September 30 to October 8, which may indicate a modestly improved climate of audience reception to video, the least-noticed, least-

funded, most-placeless of the arts. But since the arts in general have become so overwhelmingly publicity dependent that the dismal art of self-promotion has superseded all other forms of expression, the failure of the New York Video Festival to attract as much attention, not to mention passion, as a traffic jam on Columbus Avenue becomes more glaring each year.

Which makes me wonder: Isn't it about time for somebody to seize the bullhorn? Shouldn't an alert video programmer in such a ho-hum situation take care to make noise, to seduce, to swash the buckle, to talk the talk, to force the issue, to create a scandal, if necessary? Maybe it's unfair to expect much in the case of video, permanently exiled from its natural home on television and scorned in the world of theatrical distribution. But it is

precisely the case up at Lincoln Center that, despite an enviable position of public influence amidst the red velvet backing of such an important venue—maybe even the most important in the U.S., pathetically enough—something continues to arrest the development of serious attention among press and potential audiences. Shouldn't the New York Video Festival be exactly in the right place to make video seem as hip as it is, the most conspicuously in-your-face, consistently experimental, con-

sciously politicized art form going?

I would much prefer to rabbit-punch the print media for their studied indifference than bite the hand or two over at Lincoln Center that's at least trying to feed some of us video bumpkins. But it's difficult to protest too violently against mainstream resistance to video when the mainstream doesn't even know what video is. If, for

instance, the *New York Times* is any measure at all, the print media really can't even figure out what the difference is between a video and a film. This year, Stephen Holden's sympathetic piece repeatedly used the word 'film' to describe the videotapes he'd seen. It's particularly difficult to hold Holden's confusion against him when the so-called video he liked the most, Obitani Yuri's *The Hair Opera*, is not only a Super-8 film transferred to video, but the filmmaker makes it absolutely unmistakable within the piece that he's using Super-8. If the festival's programmers prefer, for whatever obscure reasons, to elide a crucial distinction when it's this obvious, why should the press pay any attention?

The Video Festival's unresisted temptation to spotlight numbers of well-known filmmakers working in video has, of course, helped to perpetuate this confusion. Among this year's crop of film names were a slight Hal Hartley, a first-rate Godard, and an Errol Morris. Good arguments could be made for the Godard, and perhaps even for the Hartley on experimental grounds, but Morris's overproduced *Interrotron Stories*, the three-part residue of a unaired and unfinished network-funded pilot resembling *America's Most Wanted*, doesn't belong in anything calling itself a video festival. Or at least such a festival has yet to be invented. Surely by the end of the nineties, there will be a Festival of Aborted TV Pilots, hosted, I imagine, by Mistress of the Thighmaster Suzanne Somers.

Why do I think prominent film names help perpetuate the mysterious curse on video? Put simply, there's no such animal as a well-known videomaker. So guess who steals whose thunder? To go for the allure of celebrity is understandable, but it's become the universal standard of discrimination in our culture. Such a confused and confusing strategy is a temporizing use of energy better put into educating the public about the rich history of a neglected medium.

Maybe the press can't or won't be educated, and maybe the programmers can't or won't be bothered. But then mightn't the festival be much better off transforming itself into something like the New York Experimental Film and Video Festival? This would at least separate it generically from Big Daddy Festival, which tends to neglect experimental



The LAPD's longstanding history of brutality and racism is at the center of Canner and Meltzer's *State of Emergency: Inside the LAPD* Courtesy Film Society of Lincoln Center

Shouldn't the New York Video Festival be exactly in the right place to make video seem as hip as it is, the most conspicuously in-your-face, consistently experimental, consciously politicized art form going?

independent media. Video has for some time been the primary experimental medium formally, as MTV gleefully rediscovers every three minutes, but it is also the primary and even natural medium for exploring social and political issues. The fact that video is historically based in a mode of independent production radically different from narrative film often seems lost from view up in Lincoln Center. This is

evident from the largely uncritical embrace of a predictable and mostly inappropriate festival format inherited from Big Daddy. Shouldn't it be obvious that experimental work requires experimental presentation to broaden and deepen its inherent appeal and importance?

A seriously adventurous sense of experimentation was missing from the organization of the Festival this year. Instead there seemed to be a premature willingness to settle into a groove. Once again there was little discernible attempt at an open call for new work. I have no principled objection to encountering video producers whose work might have been programmed in the previous two years. But in whose service is it that in almost every case that new video was weaker than yesteryear's choice? George Kuchar's video jottings, for example, can be hilarious or even oddly moving oddball studies of arrested development. One such work whose title I forget (they jostle in my memory like gangly boys playing basketball) played the first festival.

This year Kuchar's noodle-brained *The Tower of the Astro-Cyclops* was one of the eternal pubescent's compulsive efforts that had nowhere to go and went there anyway. Which is fine. Kuchar evidently needs to slap together three or four silly numbers before ringing the bell with a winner. Maybe he can't tell when he's got one in hand or doesn't care since he is so obviously a playaholic, but a curator ought to be able to tell the difference.

Similarly, Michael O'Reilly's *Orion Climbs* suffers in comparison with his earlier heartfelt Pixel meditation *Glass Jaw*, which also played the first New York Video Festival. *Glass Jaw* made the most of that primitive toy medium's child-like tendency to transmute the mundane into the hallucinatory. Its fixed-focus was O'Reilly's intense examination of the socio-psychic consequences of severe head injuries. This time out *Orion Climbs* makes you wonder if he's been hit over the head with a video toaster. The piece is mostly an extended homage to his grandparents tricked out with toaster effects and a densely pretentious voiceover, all of which I'd be more likely to put up with, given O'Reilly's evident seriousness of purpose, if he'd have found a subject more engrossing to explore than dear old gramps. The recourse to autobiography and family memoirs as a grounding for presumed authenticity is a booming genre in U.S. video,

but too often the genre exhibits the tautological limits of identity politics rather than its potential for transgressive exploration. "I yam what I yam," Popeye said, but he was only a cartoon, wasn't he?

Regrettably, one unmistakable sign of misdirected programming also cropped up this year. Two programs, "New Voices, New Visions" and "Turbo Video: HDTV," weighed in under sponsor names like Voyager Corporation, Sony, *Wired* magazine, the Tokyo Broadcasting System, and Interval Research Corporation. To blithely accept corporate handouts is a more meretricious means of attracting attention to the festival than signing on big-name filmmakers—and much more dangerous. To spotlight new technology is to buy in. Which is okay so long as you fess up that you're in the business of supporting corporate culture.

Setting aside the dubious provenance of the HDTV and CD-ROM programs, among the 10 remaining video programs, I counted no less than 11 pieces under seven minutes in length, plus another cluster of 10 to 12 minute videos. Whatever their positive qualities, development by definition is extremely unlikely to be one of them. Intensity should be their game.

It does video no great service to sprinkle the programs with such short pieces. Inevitably audiences are impatient for the 'real' videos on the program; implicitly such a programming strategy encourages contempt for the little dwarfish video, too stunted to stand on its own two feet. Audiences wriggle through them, or yawn, or laugh at the 'humor.' Not good choices. Better, I suspect, to program a spectacular marathon of short pieces, which would undoubtedly draw a sizable and enthusiastic audience of videophile experimentalists—and students wishing to size up the competition.

It was refreshing when Dutch artist Pieter Thoenes introduced his conceptually-invigorating 10-minute *Cyclic* by noting that everyone was undoubtedly there to see Godard's *The Children Play Russian*. But why shouldn't his piece be allowed its own due space, so that he didn't feel the necessity to give way graciously to his own belittling? Godard wasn't

festival. But here they were stunted by programming choices that inadvertently trivialize interesting work just because they're short.

The festival's arrested development was reflected in some of the major programming choices as well. The self-conscious narcissism that has always haunted art video was perceptible in works like *The Hair Opera*, Peggy Ahwesh and Margie Strosser's downbeat *Strange Weather*, Edin Velez's extravaganza *Memory*, and Ken Kobland's meditative *Moscow X*. In each case the artist either portrayed or exhibited the tendency to model complex social realities as a limiting reflection of the self, and in each case struck hard against the palpable limits of the self as a springboard for representation.

For instance, *Strange Weather*, a Pixel video shot with pointillist passion by Peggy Ahwesh, unfortunately dissipates too much of the observant rigor of its camerawork by serving up a disconnected series of instantly forgettable anecdotes delivered by drearily self-absorbed, middle-class young druggies. Dispense with conventional dramatic structure if you like—good riddance! We're sick to death of it!—but the more you throw overboard, the more your actors need to project character, if you wish to prevent your audience from drowning in alternating waves of boredom and resentment. Drug-sorted younguns need to be supported by a scenario perverse or even plotted enough to make us want to watch their antics.

The tendency to dispense with dramatic structure also derailed Velez's *Memory*, which was apparently finished only hours before its premiere at the festival. Its self-indulgent incoherence was matched by staggering production values. Its putative subject is that weird old narcissist Christopher Columbus. Everybody was kicking him around two years ago, but Velez props him up yet again to construct extraordinarily elaborate tableaux that swirl around him in lavish displays of symbolism and avant-gardish spectacle. Velez's Ken Russellesque taste for visionary myth would go a lot further if he spent a little of the cash oozing from the mise en scène on a knowledgeable scriptwriter who would force him to lighten up every so often.

Ken Kobland meditates with a kind of stunned absorption on the utterly destroyed myth of Soviet Communism in *Moscow X*. The sequence that sticks in my anti-mythic consciousness occurs during an outdoor political rally, in which Kobland slowly, painstakingly observes the anxious exhaustion on the faces densely crowded about him as the speeches drone on somewhere off-screen. However, Kobland is much more content telling us what he thinks he sees and feels



Sadie Benning's *Girl Power*, one of the many Pixel videos shown at the NY Video Fest.
Courtesy Film Society of Lincoln Center

there, but Thoenes was. In that case, his video should have been a centerpiece, not the warm-up. The unpredictable possibilities of direct encounters between makers and engaged audiences can be the heart of a

than he ever is engaging with the citizens he encounters. As a result his essay becomes peculiarly solipsistic, impressing the viewer as much more about his own alienation in the great city than it is about the historical

moment. And given the shattering import of what's occurring in Russia, we can't help but become impatient with yet another American thinking deep thoughts while the world turns upside down.

The festival rewardingly programmed a number of interesting and not so self-referential documentaries ranging from Not Channel Zero's resolute attempt to de-commodify *The Legacy of Malcolm* to Shelly Silver's detailed portrayal of how Berliners currently define themselves, *Former East/Former West*; Folke Ryden's bitterly ironic *United States of Guns*; and Elizabeth Canner and Julia Meltzer's *State of Emergency: Inside the LAPD*, a Paper Tiger-style look at the Los Angeles Police Department's longstanding history of brutality and racism. The documentaries on the U.S. demonstrate all too bleakly another dimension of arrested development, the continued resistance to political change in a reactionary era. Here the festival is aptly performing a necessary service.

Undoubtedly the single most absorbing video was Godard's *The Children Play Russian*, a dense and allusive deconstruction of the West's exploitative relationship to Russia. For Godard, when the West runs out its power of invention, it turns to Russia, which he describes as the land where fiction was invented. The world-wide phenomenon of arrested development, which Godard's scenario ironically traces to Jack Valenti, figurehead of Hollywood capital, can be overcome by reinventing our commitment to the subjective power of invention. I am here horribly abridging the imaginative wealth of Godard's scenario in order to return to where I started. A festival worth its salt has to reinvent its own terms of engagement. The New York Video Festival need not be stalled in its current impasse.

After all, for more than a century, we've known that poor Anna Karenina leapt to her death under the wheels of an oncoming train. In *The Children Play Russian* Anna reappears at the train station in present-day Moscow. I instantly became filled with dread as she approached the tracks. But this time she doesn't throw herself under the train. Surely her unprecedented release is some kind of sign that even representation doesn't have to be in a permanent state of arrest.

A writer of fiction as well as a video producer, Ernest Larsen has just about completed his new novel, No Vacancy.

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North for Senate:

It's being called a nonfiction variant of *Nashville*, with the black humor of *Bob Roberts*, in the style of *The War Room*, with shades of *All the President's Men*. It's *Semper Fi*, R.J. Cutler and David Van Taylor's backstage look at Oliver North on the campaign trail.

WOULD
HAVE
THOUGHT
GORDON
LIDDY
WOULD BE
OBSESSED
WITH SEX? AT
THE NERVE
CENTER OF
HIS SYNDI-
CATED TALK

RADIO SHOW, TACKED UP ON THE SOUNDBOOTH WALL, IS A TABLOID HEADLINE: "SEXY DJ TURNS ME INTO JELLY!" AND THERE THE FORMER WATERGATE BURGLAR SITS, SMOOTHLY ADMONISHING AN ADMIRING FAN NOT TO DIDDLE HERSELF WHEN SHE LISTENS TO HIS VOICE ON THE CAR RADIO.

"He's not an ideologue; he's a madman," whispered independent film producer R.J. Cutler moments earlier in the lobby of Infinity Broadcasting station WJFK in Fairfax, Virginia, where "Mr. Geeee," as Liddy calls himself, broadcasts daily.

It's just over two weeks before the election, and today is a special day for Liddy. His guest is the Senate challenger from Virginia and Liddy's political soul mate, former Marine lieutenant colonel Oliver North.

We first spot him on the surveillance monitors, striding down the corridor in a crisp blue jacket and tie. Seconds later North is outside the soundbooth window, and he quickly spreads his palms against the glass, like a Garfield toy suction-cupped onto a car window, grinning goofily.

Moments later, the Marine anthem trumpets over the airwaves, and North and Liddy swing into action, alternating conservative campaign rhetoric with phone calls from North's fervent admirers.

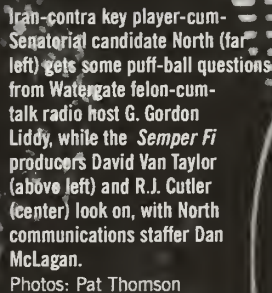
Wedge into the tiny soundbooth is a documentary crew. There's



Cutler, who produced *The War Room*, the 1993 film on the Clinton campaign. Shouldering the Beta SP

camera is director of photography Nick Doob, also a *War Room* veteran. Handling audio is David Van Taylor, producer of *Dream Deceivers*, the 1992 documentary about the trial of heavy metal band

★ ★



DDLY ENOUGH, *SEMPER FI* WAS CONCEIVED LONG BEFORE NORTH announced his candidacy: it started out as a joke. "I had coffee with a college friend the day North was sentenced to community service, before his conviction was overturned," Van Taylor recalls. "This guy said to me, 'Don't worry. He'll be out of

The following year, after a screening of *Dream Deceivers* at the Independent Feature Film Market, “somebody asked me that dreaded question, which is, ‘So, what are you going to do next?’” Van Taylor recalled his friend’s remark and quipped, “I’m going to make a film about Oliver North running for Congress.” This was 1991, over two years before North’s announcement.

The IFFM projectionist for *Dream Deceivers* happened to be Cutler, a former Harvard classmate of Van Taylor's. "After *Dream Deceivers* screened, he came down and said, 'I just saw your movie, and it's incredible,'" Van Taylor recalls. "He went off to USC right after that, and we sort of kept in touch."

Cutler had been trying to arrange this shoot with Liddy and North for several months. It took some convincing. Liddy initially was disinclined to let filmmakers associated with *The War Room* anywhere near his show,

Another year passed. The next time they saw each other, Cutler was trying to produce a project on the three-way Presidential race. "At that point, R.J. was planning to make three films. He was talking to me about possibly doing one, he was talking to Joe Berlinger and [Bruce] Sinofsky, and he was talking to [Chris Hegedus and D.A.] Pennebaker. And it became the one film...about the War Room."

Van Taylor mentioned his idea for the North documentary. "At which time, it was just fantasy," he recalls. "Then you flash forward to 1993, when, in the interim, the *New York Times* had done several real stories, and I, who had had this idea for two years already, was kicking myself for not having gotten anywhere on access."

Midway through 1993, Cutler and Van Taylor crossed paths again, this time at their tenth college reunion. *The War Room* was finished and awaiting release. Cutler asked about the North film. "I said, 'I'm doing so much, I let that fall by the wayside,'" Van Taylor recalls, "and right now, I bet it's too late.' He said, 'Come on, it's not too late.' So I said, 'Well, look. If you'll do it with me, I'll do it.' And that's when we really started in earnest," he says. "And of course we were six to nine months ahead of anybody, even though I had this idea so long I thought I'd missed the



Your support is greatly appreciated.

Semper Ti,

Vintage North (with attorney Brandon "potted plant" Sullivan), in a photo mass-mailed along with a plea for campaign contributions. The candidate and his advisors were banking on Virginians to vote for him because of Iran-contra, not despite it.

Courtesy Oliver North

boat."

Getting access to North was neither easy nor immediate. "We were very up-front," says Van Taylor. "Our first letter said, 'We are liberals, but....' We explained we're not in this to nail Ollie...but we wanted to understand why \$9 million in \$30 checks was raised" for North's candidacy so early in the game. (North ultimately spent twice that amount, versus Robb's \$5 million.)

Their first meeting with North's handlers was in October—the weekend *The War Room* opened. "We took a gamble," Van Taylor admits, "because it could swing one of two ways. One is: 'These guys are obviously God-damned liberals. Let's not let them anywhere near us.' Or it could be, 'Hey, I'd like to be the star of that movie.'"

The War Room ended up working both for and against them. Initially the response was negative. "In some ways, we had to distinguish ourselves from *The War Room*," explains Van Taylor, "because one of the responses

from the North camp was, 'We don't want to make a film that glorifies the staff.' To which we agreed; this is a different film. It's not about the staff; it's about North and his relationship to the media, and his relationship to his followers, etcetera. Which of course played right into our argument that they have to keep giving us more and more access to him."

The filmmakers used two key arguments to get their foot in the door. One was that no one would see the footage before the election, therefore the film could not affect the vote. The second was that the candidates would have limited right of review. Like *The War Room*, says Cutler, "We explained to the subjects that we considered them a part of the process, that on an important level, it's a collaboration.... Our objective was not to catch them with their pants down, making mistakes, but to capture as honestly as possible who they are. We told them, truthfully, that when we're in the process of making the film, probably at a rough cut point, we will show them the material of them and ask for their response to it. And then we'll take it from there."

With that, the door opened—very gradually. By August, Cutler was saying, "It's not as though we're sitting in on top-level secret meetings.... The control that they exercise is the same control that George [Stephanopoulos] and James [Carville] exercised, which has to do with when they chose to let us shoot." But gradually, the producers slipped their feet in deeper and deeper, until finally they were on the inside of closed-door strategy sessions. By October, Van Taylor could boast, "We've gotten all the access we want from everybody at this moment."



WE HAVE TO BREAK FOR SOME CRASS COMMERCIAL MESSAGES," barks Liddy. As the telephone lines silently flash during the break, he and North chat about their mutual loathing of National Public Radio and Liddy's media stats. Despite North's animosity towards the press, the retired marine knows the turf.

"How are your Arbitron ratings?" North asks. "And did you get to NAB this year?"

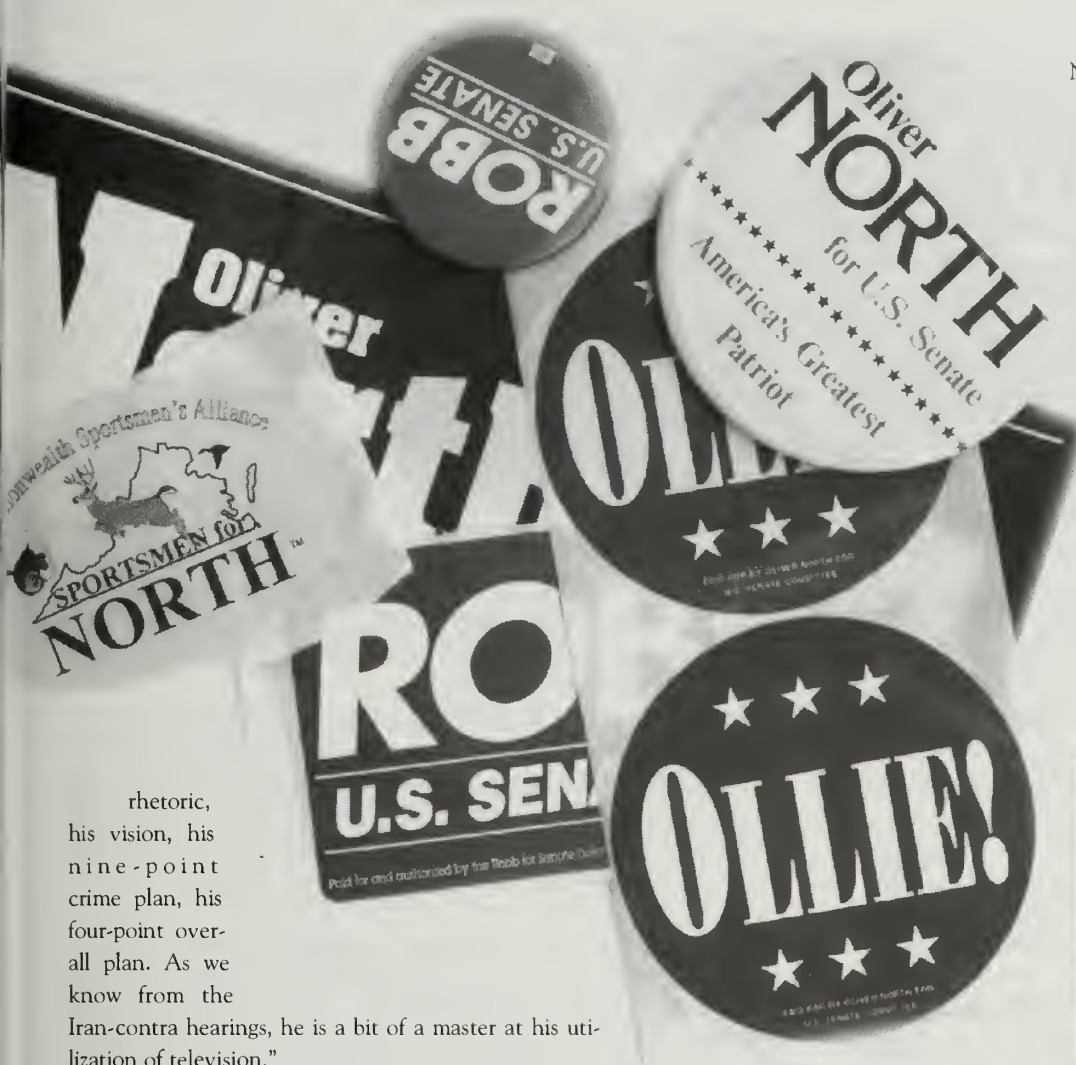
"Yeah, we did pretty well. I think we'll pick up several more stations," says Liddy, whose program blankets the state of Virginia and is carried by 199 stations nationally.

"That's great," says North. "This kind of radio is really the answer to the liberal media."

"THE LIBERAL MEDIA" IS SOMETHING NORTH SUPPORTERS HEAR A LOT about. On the campaign trail, he rarely lets an opportunity pass without lobbing a grenade at "the Washington Compost," "New York Crimes," or "Readers' Disgust". He fundraises using his "victimization" by the press. He disparages critical editorials as examples of "liberal media bias." In the warm-up film before his primary acceptance speech, he includes Sam Donaldson and Dan Rather among his foes, alongside Clinton, Robb, Jesse Jackson, and Jane Fonda.

But North's day-to-day relationship with the media is far more nuanced than his rhetoric would lead one to believe.

"The press is obviously a critical player in this campaign," says Cutler. "First of all, [North] runs against the media. Yet at the same time, he is very dependent on the media for his presentation to the public—of his



rhetoric, his vision, his nine-point crime plan, his four-point overall plan. As we know from the Iran-contra hearings, he is a bit of a master at his utilization of television."

Early on in the shooting of *Semper Fi*, it became clear that this relationship would be a central theme. At the same time, one reporter stood out in terms of his seniority, his newspaper, and his willingness to spar with North. This was Donald L. Baker, a 24-year veteran of the *Washington Post*, who was "in some ways the personification of the Liberal Media, which North is constantly bashing and yet on whom he totally relies," says Van Taylor. Baker is "a bit of central casting," in Cutler's view. "He's brilliant, amusing, an engaging character, and he fulfills the need of a filmmaker for a character who's passionate about what he does and is doing it extremely well in high-stakes circumstances."

Furthermore, Baker's newspaper is a favorite target of North. "One of the stories he likes to tell," Baker relates, "is that every morning when he gets up, he reads the Bible and the *Washington Post*—so that he can get both sides."

But in Baker's experience, North's bark is worse than his bite with the press. His rhetoric "doesn't translate into a different relationship between the candidate, the staff, and the media," says the 61-year-old reporter, who covers Virginia's state politics from his base in Richmond. "They're professionals. We get along fine. It's pretty much part of his shtick. It's an act."

That might surprise his supporters. So might the amount of joking, schmoozing, and bargaining that goes on between North and his presumed media foes in *Semper Fi*. So might any number of scenes, like the one with the missing press van, which brought North's caravan to a grinding halt while five staffers stood on the highway with cellular phones and walkie-talkies, frantically try to locate them—the Liberal Media. Or

North recalling how he phoned Baker after a tough debate to say how much he likes sparring with him. Or North and Baker at dinner, casually arguing about the press' negativity. Or Baker explaining how, far from conspiring to defeat North, the press will "vote the story" and "Oliver North is by far the best story out there."

This dynamic between North and the press fascinates the filmmakers.

"The contradiction of bashing each other, then going out and having a beer afterwards is quite often there [in other campaigns], but the contrasts are starker," says Van Taylor. "That's why Don Baker wants to be a part of this movie. He wants to tell that story. It's a story that has been apparent to him and any other self-aware political journalist for a long time. And here it is, writ large."

LIDDY PULLS A FAX FROM A STACK OF LISTENERS' QUESTIONS. HE'S BEEN saving this one, and reads it with a devilish grin: "Mr. North, if you were elected President, would you offer G. Gordon Liddy a pardon?"

The two erupt in hoots of laughter, then segue into a series of allusions to Bill Clinton soon needing such a pardon. The filmmakers don't know it yet, but North is hoping to drop a bombshell related to this later that afternoon.

Reporter Mike Allen from the *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, the only campaign reporter attending the radio show, alerts the film crew to a press conference North has scheduled immediately afterwards.

Cutler and Van Taylor had planned to stick around for a short interview with Liddy, then drop by North's headquarters to pick up a tape of his political ads, which media consultant Mike Murphy would later review with them. Their hidden agenda was to get invited inside headquarters—one of the only places they hadn't been able to penetrate.

All those plans are dropped with news of the press conference. Moments later, Van Taylor and Doob are running alongside Allen's car, equipment ahoist. They jump in as it pulls out of the parking lot, with Cutler close behind.

WHEN YOU'VE GOT A TIGER BY THE TAIL, YOU RUN WITH IT, WHEREVER IT goes. Flexibility is what enabled the *Semper Fi* crew to snag and hang on to their catch: flexibility, persistence, and a little bit of luck.

Serendipity played a part when they stumbled on to a direct mail factory near one of the campaign stops, which happened to be used by North, Newt Gingrich, and other conservatives. Not only that, it was run by Jerry Falwell's brother-in-law. "And all of a sudden," says Cutler, "we have this 45-minute tour of the heart and soul of Ollie's mass mailing operation."

It also helped salvage what began as a disastrous day: A travel agent's screw-up, compounded by a traffic jam, caused them to completely miss Robb and North at a Labor Day parade and campaign kick-off. They ran into Murphy, who was shooting footage for a North ad, tried to latch onto him, but he essentially blew them off. With eight hours to kill until the next event, the discouraged team shuffled over to a local barbecue pit. It appeared closed. "Just our luck," they thought, until taking a second look. Not only was it open, but there was Murphy, eating lunch.

They scored. "We sat down and had lunch with him, and he told us incredible stories," recalls Van Taylor of Murphy's first-hand accounts of the Bush '88 campaign and Christy Todd Whitman's run for Governor of New Jersey. "So we seized the opportunity and hopped into Murphy's car afterwards, and had a very good car interview/conversation with him."

Murphy admitted he had initially been lined up against them. "He revealed that he was one of the big guys many moons ago saying 'Pull the plug on these documentary guys,'" Van Taylor recalls. "It was clear from the way he was telling it that we had made a major breakthrough with him, which translated into a pretty important breakthrough with the campaign."

This unexpected encounter began paying off the very next night, at one of the official, four-way debates between candidates North, Robb, L. Douglas Wilder, and J. Marshall Coleman. The film crew was treated essentially as insiders, allowed backstage to film Merritt, Murphy, and Mark Goodin, North's chief strategist who later became a central figure in their shoots, as they watched and critiqued the televised proceedings.

A shift in attitude was taking place among the candidates and their staffs as a sense of investment in the film was gradually crowding out whatever suspicions or doubts were previously felt. North was heard referring to the filmmakers as "my crew." His willingness to allow the documentary team ever closer owed to several factors, in Don Baker's view. The film "appeals to North's ego," the reporter commented during the campaign's final weeks. "And I suspect he thinks he'll come off as a softer kind of guy. Assuming he wins, he'll want to enlarge his reach beyond a kind of fanatical core of supporters, and he sees this [film] as an implement of that."

Meanwhile, North's men started suggesting where the wireless mike should go and what their film might be. Murphy, for instance, argued that a film about "pointed-headed fundamentalists for North" would be less interesting than one that looks at North's appeal to people like him: a Georgetown graduate, Beltway insider, communications consultant—part of the intellectual elite, in fact.

Increased access, the filmmakers were finding, was a double-edged sword. In some ways, control was exercised not by keeping them out, but by inviting them in, closer and closer.

Which leads one to ask: Were they being used? Cutler admits it's a question they've been thrashing out since day one. So how do they respond?

"We say, 'Gosh, are we?' And we look at what we're doing, and we



R.J. Cutler and David Van Taylor at North's press conference in Alexandria, VA, on October 20, 1994. Photo: Patricia Thomson

have long talks," Cutler says. "Look, the movie is going to be a reflection of the experience we've had over the course of the year. We're seeing a lot of other things: The campaign of Lt. Col. Oliver North for the Senate [and] the campaign of his opponents. We're seeing an environment of an electrified, conservative voting populace. We're seeing a figure like G. Gordon Liddy, one of North's most ardent supporters, utilize the very media that North criticizes to generate support for

him throughout the state of Virginia, where his radio show is enormously popular. We're seeing the *Washington Post* and Don Baker and their relationship to the campaign. So ultimately I don't worry that we're making a propaganda piece for North, on any level."

As Van Taylor explains it, "I think Oliver North will probably look at the film and say, 'This is a fair and a good representation of me, and I think it will show me off well to my followers or potential followers.' And I think people who are opponents of Oliver North will say, 'This is a fair and a good representation of Oliver North, and it demonstrates all of his flaws and contradictions that he represents for our culture.'"

MAINTAINING A STANCE OF NEUTRALITY AND CREDIBILITY WITH THEIR SUBJECTS is one reason why the filmmakers never took a partisan route when fundraising. They didn't see *Semper Fi* as a way to "get" North and never pitched it that way. Instead, their efforts to finance their film—projected to run somewhere under \$600,000—proceeded just like any other documentary. Meaning it's been a long, hard road. North's defeat—while blessedly good for many reasons—won't make this process any easier.

Their credits on *The War Room* and *Dream Deceivers* opened doors, but not checkbooks. A few weeks before election day, the *Semper Fi* war chest was empty, though there were some live prospects. They'd gotten this far through the usual no-budget production route: travel and equipment expenses paid out of pocket; no salaries; partially deferred fees for cameramen Nick Doob and Doug Block and the trailer's editor; plus a donation of Hi8 and Beta tape stock from Sony.

"We're putting together the necessary pieces," Cutler said during the summer, "and the ones we don't have to pay for, we don't, and the ones we do, we do. The credit cards are maxed out. Diner's Club remains convinced that the check is on its way. Until they wise up, we'll be able to cover some costs. But isn't it like that for everybody?" He pauses. "I hope it [isn't], and somebody lets us in on the secret."

Gains were being made on several fronts, however. Cutler managed to snag a no-interest loan of \$50,000 from a "concerned wealthy industrialist." But the paperwork and delivery schedule were dragging on; three weeks before the election, the check was still rumored to be in the mail.

There was also a deal being negotiated with ABC's *Prime Time Live*. The filmmakers balked at allowing the network to show their unedited footage on election night—ABC's initial goal. They ultimately negotiated a \$10,000 agreement to broadcast an excerpt when the film is done.

Most significantly, the filmmakers were also hammering out a presale agreement with Universal Pictures—a process that took over four months, dramatically concluding on election night. The deal began with

a cold call. In between shoots, the filmmakers were sending out feelers in every direction, meeting with Jonathan Demme, *sex, lies, videotape* producer Nick Wexler, and others. Cutler also sent a letter to Norman Lear, which began, "Help!"

He did. Lear brought the project to the attention of Tom Pollock, chair of MCA/Universal Motion Picture Group, who became interested, along with Zanne Devine and Russell Schwartz of Universal subsidiary Gramercy Pictures. (The studio's bean-counters, however, were less than enthusiastic about taking on a documentary—an unprecedented move for the company.) The advance the studio initially offered was in the low-to mid-six-figure range for North American rights—very enticing to Cutler and Van Taylor, who had tapped out their personal savings. But it was a risky proposition, since Universal was not willing to commit to theatrical prior to the film's completion and the universe of distributors who handle only theatrical is relatively small.

"Theatrical distribution for independent documentaries is not a big bread-winning proposition by itself. The reason most people do it," Van Taylor explains, "is because they get a bunch of rights bundled with it, the theatrical raises the value of the other rights, and it all comes out in the wash."

"Our objective is to have the movie in theaters and to pay the bills," says Cutler. "We're willing to take a risk; we took a big risk with *The War Room*. Our advance on *The War Room* was not a large amount of money, but the distributors did a great job with it and as a result, the money came in. That's great. But the deal with Universal had to be structured in a way that the possibility for theatrical distribution realistically exists."

The final deal, closed in Virginia by conference call just as the election results were being reported and filmed, provides the filmmakers with an advance they are "very happy with," reports Cutler. It includes in-kind postproduction services, and, "It addresses everyone's concerns about theatrical release in a very flexible way that's allowing us to sleep easy at night," says Cutler. "This way, if everything works out, we'll definitely be able to achieve our original goals: having it exhibited in theaters and keeping the folks at Diners Club happy." Now with Universal signed on, they're in a good position to move ahead with additional fundraising, targeting foreign sales prospects and private investors.

A FEW DOZEN REPORTERS AND PHOTOGRAPHERS ARE MILLING ABOUT ON THE fifth floor of the Hilton in Alexandria, Virginia, waiting for North to arrive at his press conference. Van Taylor and Doob slide among them, hovering near Kent Jenkins, a *Washington Post* reporter, and Mike Allen, who writes many of the campaign "color pieces" for the *Richmond Times-Dispatch*. The reporters seem fairly adept at ignoring the boom and camera a few feet away. But the rest of the press corps is watching, if only out of the corner of their eye.

Baker acknowledges that there has been a fair amount of curiosity among the press about the shoot. But more importantly for the filmmakers, "There's been a welcoming attitude," Baker says, adding, "They're good at it. They're as unobtrusive as you can be with those huge implements they carry around. And they are nonjudgmental about things. They don't talk about what they're doing; they don't express what their feelings are. They're going about it as cinematic journalists."

Baker confides, "I think one of the things that everybody has been surprised at is the access that David and R.J. have had with North."

That day the producers made even more headway after the press conference. North had scheduled it in order to assert publicly that President Clinton had made an illegal quid-pro-quo offer to Douglas Wilder, who had dropped out of the Senate race some weeks before. On the basis of one article in the arch-conservative *Washington Times*, North accused Clinton of offering Wilder a roving ambassadorship in Africa in exchange for throwing his support behind Robb. (Both the White House and Wilder flatly denied the report, and the story was soon overtaken by other news events, including North's silence about the drug-running on his contra supply planes and Nancy Reagan's attack on her husband's former employee.)

After fielding a few questions from the press, North was whisked down the hall to a conference room, closely followed by a pack of reporters. None were able to get into the conference room—but the *Semper Fi* crew did.

When they emerged, Cutler could barely contain himself. Though nothing exceptional had occurred with North, they had been invited to shoot in North headquarters, one of the few places they hadn't been able to penetrate. More than a tour, Merritt was going to let them attend a real strategy session, where, it ended up, they discussed truly sensitive issues, including how and when to play the race card and what to do about that troublesome report on drug-running in North's cargo planes.

All in all, it was a good day.

P

OSTSCRIPT: November 9, election day: Back in January 1994, Van Taylor and Cutler named their operation Arpie Productions, which stands for R.P., or "rat's patootie." The reference is to a line *New York Times* reporter Maureen Dowd quoted when North declared his candidacy: "Mr. North believes that as far as Iran-contra goes, 'most people don't give a rat's patootie.'"

North was wrong; enough people did care to deny him the Senate seat. He was one of the only Republicans who didn't ride the tidal wave that crashed over and transformed the political landscape of Washington, D.C. Ultimately, pundits concluded that North's Achilles heel was his character. As Robb memorably summed it up on election eve: Oliver North is "a document-shredding, Constitution-trashing, Commander-in-Chief-bashing, Congress-thrashing, uniform-shaming, Ayatollah-loving, arms-dealing, criminal-protecting, résumé-enhancing, Noriega-coddling, Social Security-threatening, public school-denigrating, Swiss bank-law-breaking, letter-faking, self-serving, election-losing, snake oil salesman who can't tell the difference between the truth and a lie."

But this is surely not the last we'll hear of Oliver North, nor of his supporters: the military, the gun lobby, the right-to-lifers, the Religious Right, the Pat Robertsons and Jerry Falwells, the Republican Presidential aspirants, like Robert Dole and Dan Quayle, and the rising tide of bitter, anti-government, conservative voters. When *Semper Fi* is released later this year, we'll see this potent mix all over again—both on the screen, and across the nation, as conservatives gear up for the '96 campaign.

Patricia Thomson is editor of *The Independent*.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Legal/Briefs

Casting is crucial to a film, whether it's produced on a shoestring or with a megabudget. But casting may pose significant problems for the no-budget independent who wants to expand the potential talent pool to include Screen Actors' Guild (SAG) members.

Guild members are prohibited from appearing in non-SAG films, so to hire SAG talent, producers must become signatories to SAG's Producer-Screen Actors' Guild 1992 Codified Basic Agreement. Producers often balk at becoming SAG signatories: on budgets significantly below \$500,000, they frequently cannot afford to accommodate the regulations on compensation, work schedule, and benefits. For these micro-budget films, there is SAG's Limited Exhibition Agreement (LEA), which applies solely to independently conceived and produced motion pictures not intended for national theatrical release, "straight-to-video," commercial television broadcast, or cablecast.

Feature films produced under the LEA must be budgeted under \$200,000 excluding deferrals and must not exceed \$500,000 including deferrals. Accordingly, a producer may employ both SAG and non-SAG performers. (It should be noted that SAG agreements also cover professional, non-SAG performers from such unions as Equity and AFTRA.)

Minimum performer rates under the LEA are set on a per day basis. The agreement specifies rates of \$100 per day or \$225 for three days. Additional days are \$75 per day. Producers are not required to pay SAG performers for any "off days" during the course of shooting. However, performers must be paid for any day the producer wishes to hold that talent available. The LEA waives producers from having to pay performers premium rates for weekend or holiday shooting.

Although these provisions appear relatively straightforward, there are problematic issues to bear in mind. The LEA is not available for West



To LEA, or not to LEA: that is the question.

WANTED: GUILD ACTORS AT A DISCOUNT

Navigating SAG's Limited Exhibition Agreement

Coast productions with budgets exceeding \$100,000 excluding deferrals and \$250,000 including deferrals and running times of over 60 minutes. SAG spokesperson Harry Medved says SAG/West believed too many West Coast genre films were violating the terms and spirit of the LEA, an arrangement originally designed to assist emerging filmmakers and non-mainstream projects. Medved said most films longer than 60 minutes are generally produced with some kind of commercial exploitation in mind that would be beyond the parameters of the agreement.

Producers must also grapple with explicit provisions in the LEA stating that it is intended

for "independently conceived motion pictures of a creative/experimental nature." The LEA does not specify how SAG determines if a film is sufficiently creative or experimental; SAG evaluates each on a case-by-case basis.

According to Sallie Weaver, SAG/East's Executive Administrator for Theatrical and Television Contracts, the LEA "was intended to allow young filmmakers and performers to learn together or to experiment with different kinds of cameras and shooting styles. It's obviously a fluid concept, since something may be experimental the first time it is tried [such as the use of improvisation or black and white photography], but it is no longer so the tenth time, when it can then have commercial potential."

Ideal LEA eligibility means "a project without commercial potential," Weaver explains. "We're not looking to undercut our Low-Budget Agreement for features. Our goal is for producers to raise [at least] enough money to shoot under the Low Budget Agreement." If a film's budget under the LEA exceeds \$200,000, the producer is obligated to pay all performers any additional monies necessary to bring the film into compliance with the minimum rates and terms under the SAG Low-Budget Agreement, which is intended for commercial-venture films with maximum budgets of \$1.75 million. If the film's cost exceeds \$1.75 million, then rates and terms under the SAG Basic Agreement apply. However, Weaver cautioned that the additional payments to all performers do not assure a producer's film exhibition beyond the LEA's scope. "They're two different issues that are handled separately," she notes.

LEA producers may release their films for either nontheatrical exhibition for non-paying audiences; semi-theatrical exhibition with film societies; and limited run exhibition in "showcase theaters" (i.e., "runs of up to two weeks in 'art houses' and small audience theaters"). The LEA provides a list of what they consider showcase theaters, including New York's Film Forum, San Francisco's Roxy, Washington, D.C.'s Biograph, and others.

If a LEA film has a theatrical run that exceeds two weeks at a showcase theater or is released at a regular commercial theater, Weaver advises filmmakers to approach SAG ahead of time to discuss

the issue. "We want to support the filmmaking experience," she says. "The Guild has to look at ways of dealing with this situation by taking into account what threat is posed by the situation to the spirit of the LEA and to the Guild's performers in a film."

Signatories to the LEA do not have to pay non-SAG performers the rates stated under the agreement. However, if a film violates the LEA (e.g. exceeding the budget restriction), it may then come under the SAG Low-Budget Agreement. SAG would in turn be obligated under labor law to negotiate on behalf of all performers, regardless of their affiliation with the Guild. The result: a requirement to pay all performers the rates required under the Low-Budget or Basic Agreements.

If a LEA film traveling the festival circuit snags a distributor, it may overstep the agreement's scope. "The producer is only permitted to distribute in certain markets," Weaver says. "Once a film goes beyond those markets, payment is owed to the performers [that is more than] the rates under the LEA. SAG members are free to negotiate any amount of money above minimum scale under the Low-Budget or Basic Agreements when the film obtains distribution."

In this case producers are required to renegotiate only with SAG and other professional performers and need not renegotiate with the non-professional talent.

Theoretically, a SAG performer may object to distribution of a film beyond the scope of the LEA. "Then that project could go no further," Weaver says. "A performer can also say, 'I want \$4,000 for any distribution beyond the LEA.'" However, she adds, most SAG members are pleased their work might be seen by a larger audience. SAG performers may agree to SAG scale payment under the Basic Agreement or to a percentage of the distributor's receipts. In some cases, SAG will negotiate with the producer and distributor to have some of these monies paid as receipts are generated. One scenario is for payment up front of half the money owed, with the remainder (including residuals) to be paid directly from the distributor's receipts to SAG cast members.

Producers and SAG performers cannot negotiate in advance for the possibility of a film going beyond the LEA parameters. "If you're doing that, you're not within the scope of the LEA, in which the actors are agreeing to work for these extraordinarily substandard wages," Weaver says. Therefore, any time a producer surpasses the scope of the LEA, he or she must renegotiate with the SAG performers and SAG. If a film is distributed beyond the boundaries of the LEA and the SAG performers are not willing to renegotiate,

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there is the possibility of the parties going into arbitration to seek a remedy, which may include SAG exercising a lien against the film. "The reality," Weaver says, "is that the film is a mutual venture, and it's very seldom that it doesn't work out, but that's the risk of using the LEA. The best way to handle this situation is to come to SAG ahead of time and say 'These are our possibilities. What does the Guild see as a way to deal with this?'"

Methods of distribution permitted under the LEA include educational, public broadcast, non-commercial basic cable, and non-pay channel exhibition. Weaver explains that such distribution includes broadcast on PBS for films conceived and produced independently of PBS (otherwise, the SAG PBS Agreement applies). LEA projects cannot be aired on a regular dramatic series, such as *Great Performances*, but can be included in acquisition showcase series for independent producers. If a film is aired on basic or pay cable, then SAG performers must be paid at minimum television scale under the SAG Television Agreement.

Under the LEA, producers may also self-distribute videocassettes at festivals, markets, and in a filmmaker's own community. However, if a film under the LEA is sold in videocassette form through a third party distributor, then SAG performers must be paid the minimum SAG scale under its Television Agreement, which is also applicable to "straight-to-video" films.

Once a LEA has been granted, a producer must post a security deposit with SAG prior to rehearsal or production. This requirement protects the performers and SAG against default by the producer of his or her obligations under the LEA. The amount of the security deposit is not fixed but depends on such factors as the number of performers in a film, their salaries, the length of employment, the proposed cast list, and a film company's prior payroll performance. SAG's Board of Directors has required that signatory producers offer a security deposit of no less than two weeks' worth of cast salaries and a total security deposit or bond of no less than 45 percent of the total cast budget. This rule can force producers to allocate sufficient funds both to cover the deposit and pay the performers during production. "The goal of a security deposit is not just to protect salaries but also to cover any claims for overtime and violations of the agreement and damages due to those violations," Weaver says.

Under the LEA, SAG performers may work eight consecutive hours per day with overtime at 3/16 (time and a half). SAG performers may not work in excess of 12 hours during any 24-hour period. Producers are also required to make a contribution to the Producer-SAG Pension & Health (P&H) plan in an amount equal to 12.65 percent

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of the total compensation earned by the performer. If the cost of a film oversteps the LEA minimum, a producer's P&H contribution must be increased commensurately.

If a SAG performer works for a non-SAG signatory producer, it is the SAG member who is liable for penalties and fines, suspension, or even expulsion from the Guild as determined by a committee of the SAG performing membership.

SAG members may invest in a film, but such an investment may not be a condition for the actor's employment. In addition, SAG members may not defer their minimum compensation under any SAG agreement. Therefore, deferrals of SAG minimum rates that could be triggered for acquisition by a distributor or until a certain date are not permitted by the Guild.

Sometimes a distributor, upon acquiring a LEA-covered film and thereby 'upgrading' its status, will assume the costs of compensating the SAG talent according to minimum Basic Agreement terms. Such was the case with director Charles Lane's black and white silent film, *Sidewalk Stories*, which was picked up by Island Pictures.

SAG has experimented with some less stringent deals. In the case of Michael de Avilas' *Burnzy's Last Call* and Wayne Chesler's *Hotel Manor Inn*, the producers agreed to pay at least 60 percent of the low-budget scale to the cast. They also agreed to double the residual rate—to 7.2 percent—of any distributors' gross receipts payable on a deferred basis as they are received. "There was a groundswell of privately-financed projects from young independent producers that didn't qualify for the LEA and didn't have the money to produce under the Low-Budget Agreement," Weaver says.

However, she cautions that the deals struck between these producers and SAG were waivers specifically for those films. Any continuation of this experimental plan is subject to SAG's evaluation of the results, if and when the films acquire distribution.

Producers seeking a LEA should approach SAG's theatrical contracts department and submit a film's script with a detailed production budget at least two months in advance of principal photography.

It is encouraging that SAG has taken steps toward providing a flexible arrangement for "no-budget" filmmakers. The Guild must protect its members, but must also take into account the changing realities of the marketplace. After all, the new independent film scene has resulted in the success and release of low-budget films often featuring the union's own membership.

Robert L. Seigel is a NYC entertainment attorney and a principal in the Cinema Film Consulting company. Robert L. Seigel is a NYC entertainment attorney and a principal in the Cinema Film Consulting company.

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Adobe's Latest Premiere

Since its initial release in 1991, Adobe Premiere, a nonlinear editing program for Macintosh (and now Windows), has built the largest user base of desktop editors in the industry. Its latest release, version 4.0.1, makes Premiere even more valuable as a resource for independents.

Like other nonlinear editing systems, Premiere functions as an audiovisual word processor. Once images and sounds are input into high capacity memory devices, they can be easily arranged and rearranged. Premiere is one of the most affordable nonlinear editing programs, costing only about \$500. For users who are starting from scratch, hardware costs can add an additional \$5,000 to \$20,000 [see sidebar p. 45]. A basic system includes a high-end Macintosh Quadra or Power PC; a video capture card such as Radius VideoVision Studio; and a large storage device, most often a hard disk array.

Premiere will only broaden its base with the solid improvements offered in version 4.0.1. Some of the changes are technical, such as the introduction of a true 29.97fps frame rate. The Premiere development team has also been highly responsive to user feedback. As a result, editing tools have been expanded, and a new command window can be customized for each user. Editors can now organize clips in an infinite array of folders within the "Project Window," which amounts to a digital trim

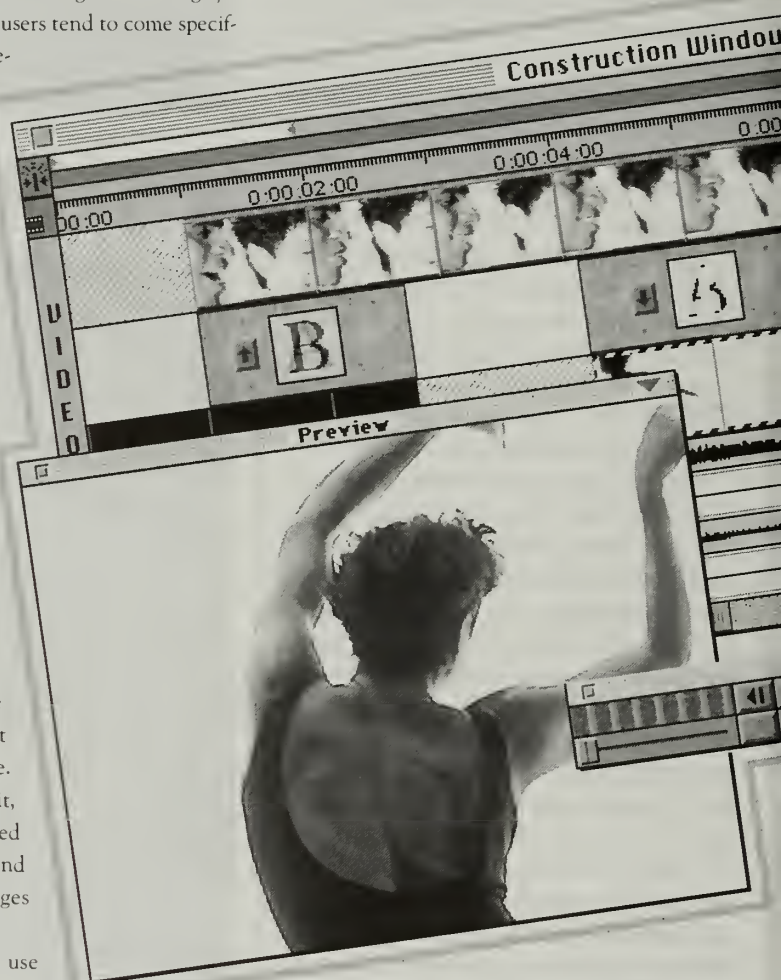
bin. A new trimming window allows editors to easily nudge the transition frames at the intersection of clips. And time code can now be read optically from video images with time code burn-in.

Multimedia Independents

Premiere has attracted producers from diverse backgrounds, in contrast to integrated editing systems like AVID, whose users tend to come specifically from film and television backgrounds. "Many Premiere users have experience in graphic arts and other areas, so everyone seems to bring new approaches to the software," says Mark Pace of Synapse Media in Seattle, who teaches courses in Premiere. Since the software allows users to easily incorporate many different source elements, "People are weaving image and text, so that each frame is composed like a print design," comments Pace. "The more I get into it, the more I am interested in productions that blend many layers of images together."

Many people use Premiere for short-form editing, in the 30-second to five-minute range. Kristin Harris, for instance, is an independent animator and producer in Northern Virginia who came to Premiere from a background in painting. Her animation sequences have been used by Voice of America television, instructional documentaries, and public television's *The American Experience*. "I focus on short,

5-to-15 second animation pieces that I create [at home] using After Effects, a 2-D compositing and animation program. I then use Premiere to create longer edits by combining the short sequences." For Harris, a "longer edit" is three to four minutes. Indeed, the definition of "long-form" edits seems to have changed in today's multimedia environment. "Few customers



Construction windows with preview screen from the latest Adobe Premiere software.

Courtesy Adobe Systems, Inc.

are focusing on truly long-form projects," confirms Tim Myers, product marketing manager at Adobe.

"Most people showing interest in Premiere are small- to medium-sized production companies

LEAVING THE TRIM BIN FURTHER

who have little experience and have no idea of where to go, since Mac places have little idea about the requirements for video," explains Nicholas La Galle of the Image Vision Design Studio in Blackburn, Australia. "In Australia, digital video is just taking off," continues La Galle. "I

am currently setting up a bureau service." Producers using La Galle's bureau will be able to enjoy the benefits of nonlinear editing without extensive investment in equipment. The filmmaker drops off his or her footage marked with the appropriate timecodes. An operator then captures the selected footage to disk at a high resolution and creates working low-resolution files called "miniatures", which the producer then takes to edit on his or her own computer. When that's done, the producer returns with an edit decision list which is reassembled and output to tape with La

Galle's higher-end system.

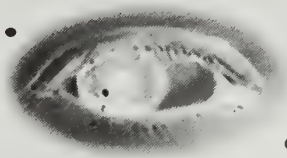
Off-line with Premiere

Some editors are using Premiere for the conventional purpose of creating an edit decision list for use in an on-line edit. This may be the greatest immediate promise Premiere offers to independents.

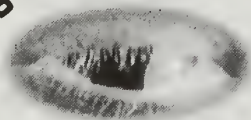
Northern Virginia producer Tom Davenport is an independent filmmaker who had been grinding out films for over two decades using a Frezzolini 16mm camera, a battered Nagra, and a Steenbeck with one of the two audio tracks inoperable. "Film has always the most reliable and flexible format," Davenport explains. "I always avoided video pro-

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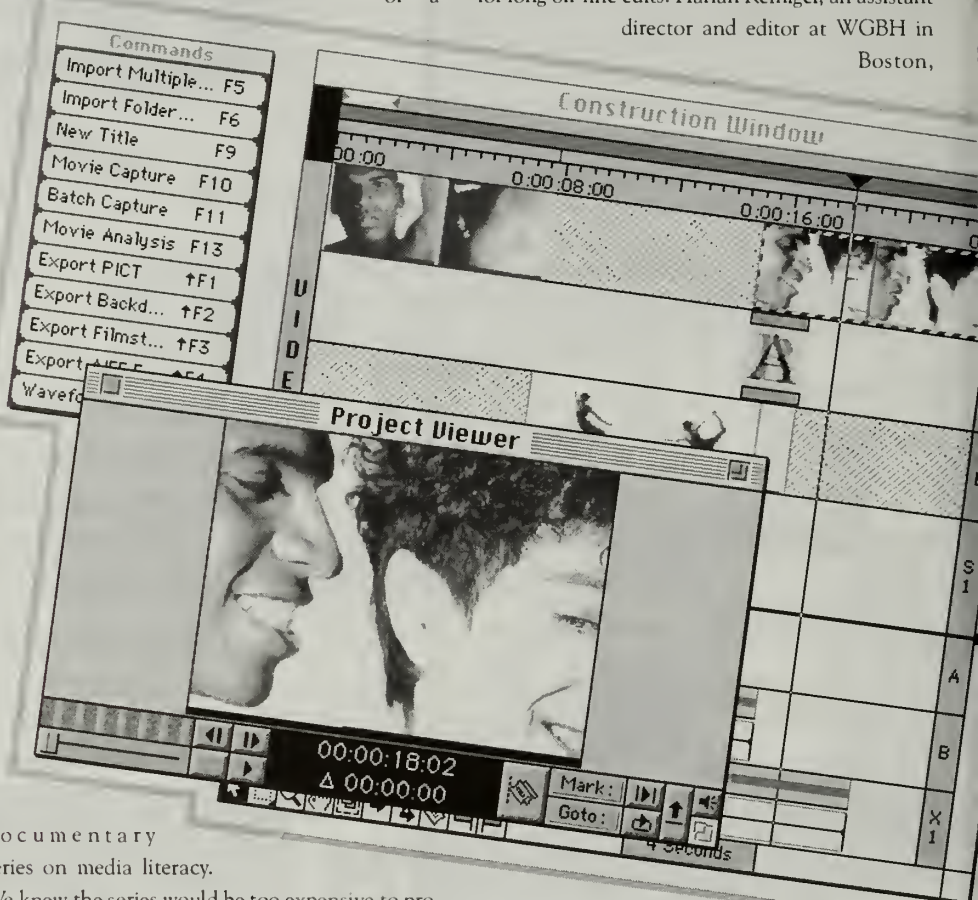
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ductions, because I wanted to avoid the expense and nuisance of linear editing."

That changed a couple of years ago. I arrived to work with Davenport as editor of a

Super 16mm and recorded sound using time code DAT, we will eventually matchback to the film negative and edit the sound digitally.

Davenport Films is not alone in using Premiere for long off-line edits. Harlan Reiniger, an assistant director and editor at WGBH in Boston,



documentary series on media literacy.

We knew the series would be too expensive to produce in film, because it required a variety of source materials. Nonlinear editing was the natural choice. I had previously worked with Premiere 1.0, but did not consider it appropriate for any stage of a broadcast production. We ordered a low-end AVID system, but then reneged—the cost was simply too high.

We settled on Adobe Premiere once 2.0 was released with time-code capability. Whereas an AVID would have offered a single-purpose editing system, Premiere functioned as one component of a larger Macintosh environment that also included word processing, design, and photo imaging. Adobe's various programs, like PhotoShop and Quark Express, are all compatible with Premiere. We used our single Macintosh Quadra to complete the off-line edit of the media literacy series, write and layout an illustrated study guide, and create full-color videocassette box covers.

Davenport sold his Frezzolini and Steenbeck for a mere \$700 each. While he laments the loss of film and mag track texture between his fingers, he estimates that he is editing up to at least three times faster than in the past. We are now using Premiere to edit a feature film. Having shot on

began using Premiere when he needed to recut a British program for domestic broadcast on Nova. "We were trying to find a cheap way to cut some new acquisitions," says Reiniger, who normally edits with an AVID. He found that Premiere 3.0 was not always up to the task. In particular, Reiniger had trouble compiling long previews for review by producers. He ultimately used Premiere to create segments that required special image processing, then imported the effects to an AVID.

Reiniger sees great promise in Premiere. "Premiere has its own advantages, such as almost unlimited audio tracks and special effects," he argues. "Things like timeline editing are seeping from the Quicktime world into the AVID and other systems. Premiere is an editing interface that crosses many boundaries, and it is becoming so widespread that it is important to know."

Jonathan C. Hamilton was a Beta tester for Premiere 3.0 and 4.0 and now offers seminars and consultations on nonlinear editing. His latest production is Into the Russian Winter, a documentary shot on location in Belarus and Russia. He lives in Arlington, Virginia.

DIGITAL EDITING EQUIPMENT: THE MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

Computer: \$2,500 to \$5,500

Macintosh Power-PC or Quadra-class computer. Adobe recommends a minimum of 16MB RAM, which is standard on the more powerful computers.

Storage devices: \$1,000

Hard disk arrays are the fastest choice for storage. A 1GB disk array will allow the capture and editing of about 35 to 40 minutes for footage at 30fps and average-to-best resolution.

Monitors: \$500 to \$1,000 each

There are so many windows in digital editing software that it is a near necessity to have more than one monitor. A standard computer monitor is useful for the main monitor. The second monitor connects directly to the video capture card. A high resolution composite monitor is preferable, but a second computer monitor will suffice.

Input Devices: \$200

Video decks can be with or without timecode. Any cheap VHS player will do, though more professional uses will require a higher end deck. Any audio device such as a CD player can be fed into the system as well.

Software: \$500

Adobe Premiere 4.0.1 is the basic software. Other "plug-ins" may be added. For instance, the \$99 Abbate Video VTK Remote allows the Mac to read the timecode from an address track tape deck. Some other accessories are helpful, such as a disk defragmentation utility.

Backup storage device (optional): \$1,200

Devices such as DAT can easily store several Gigabytes of data, backing up 1GB in about two hours. This allows users to backup their hard drive or archive their material for future work.

Video capture card (optional): \$4,500

Newer Macs include an internal video capture card. For serious users, Radius Videovision Studio has been the card of choice as an addition to the internal capability. It offers 60-field, 30fps input and output through a convenient patch bay. Be sure to check compatibility of the card with your computer. Some cards are not ready for the new Power PC or Quicktime 2.0.

Audio card (optional)

For CD-quality sound, invest in a 16-bit sound card. At the "prosumer" level, the Pro Audio Spectrum 16 comes bundled with sound editing software and a MIDI interfact for musicians.

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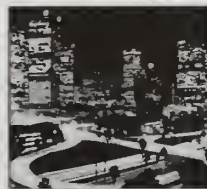
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Festivals

FESTIVAL LISTINGS DO NOT CONSTITUTE AN FIVE ENDORSEMENT. SINCE SOME DETAILS MAY CHANGE AFTER THE MAGAZINE GOES TO PRESS, WE RECOMMEND THAT YOU CONTACT THE FESTIVAL FOR FURTHER INFORMATION BEFORE SENDING TAPES OR PRINTS TO IMPROVE OUR RELIABILITY AND MAKE THIS COLUMN MORE BENEFICIAL TO INDEPENDENTS, WE ENCOURAGE ALL FILM AND VIDEO MAKERS TO CONTACT FIVE WITH PERSONAL FESTIVAL EXPERIENCES.

DOMESTIC

ASIAN AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, July, NY. Sponsored by Asian CineVision, noncompetitive fest, founded in 1978, is country's oldest showcase for works by Asian & Asian-American filmmakers. Films produced, directed &/or written by artists of Asian heritage eligible. Features & shorts in all cats accepted. Entries originally produced in film only; no video-to-film transfers. Asian-American Media Award to honor filmmaker. Last yr fest added market & children's programming sections. After NY run, fest begins 10-mo. tour of N. America. Previous editions have showcased films from US, Canada, Australia, UK, Singapore, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Korea, Japan, China, Iran. Formats: 35mm, 16mm; preview on cassette. Deadline: March 1. Contact: Asian American Int'l Film Festival, Asian CineVision, 32 E. Broadway, 4th fl., NY, NY 10002; (212) 925-8685; fax: (212) 925-8157.

ATHENS INTERNATIONAL FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, May 5-12, OH. Now in 22nd yr, one of older fests in US focusing on ind. film. Last yr's competition received 305 entries; 84 were chosen for public screening. Fest looks for works "that evidence a high regard for artistic innovation, sensitivity to content & personal involvement w/ the medium." Entries must have been completed during or since 1993. Each entry pre-screened in entirety by panel of filmmakers, videomakers & other artists associated w/ Athens Center for Film & Video. \$20,000 in cash, equipment & prod. services awarded to competition winners by panels of judges comprised of festival guest artists. Entry fee: \$25 plus pre-paid return shipping/insurance. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2"; preview on cassette for all formats. Deadline: Feb. 10 (film); Jan. 27 (video). Contact: Ruth Bradley, director, Athens International Film & Video Festival, PO Box 388, Athens, OH 45701; (614) 593-1330; fax: (614) 593-1328; email: rbradley@ohiou.edu.

CAROLINA FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, March 29-April 1, NC. Now in 5th yr at Univ. of North Carolina-Greensboro, fest showcases "works of ind. artistry & personal vision." Works in all genres & cats accepted, incl. animation, doc, experimental & nar-

rative, as well as works falling outside trad. cats. Last yr over 55 works screened in competition. Awards expected to match or exceed last yr's \$2,500 in cash & film stock. Entry fee \$15 for students, \$25 others. Formats accepted incl. 16mm, S-8, 3/4", SVHS, VHS. Deadline: Feb. 15. Contact: Michael Frierson/David Gatten, Broadcasting/Cinema Division, 100 Carmichael Bldg., UNCG, Greensboro, NC 27512-5001; (910) 334-5360.

CHARLOTTE FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, May, NC. Sponsored by Cablevision of Charlotte, fest is one of larger ind. film fests in Southeast. Cash awards to ind. filmmakers. Screening locations incl. Spirit Sq. Ctr. for the Arts, Public Library of Charlotte & Mecklenburg County, Afro-American Cultural Center Manor Theatre, Light Factory Photographic Arts Ctr. & Mint Museum of Art. Entry fee: \$30, plus return postage. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", CD-ROM. Deadline: Feb. 15. Contact: Robert West, film curator, Charlotte Film & Video Festival, Mint Museum of Art, 2730 Randolph Rd., Charlotte, NC 28207; (704) 337-2109; fax: (704) 337-2101; email: mintfilm@aol.com.

CHICAGO LATINO FILM FESTIVAL, Mar. 24-April 3, Chicago. Now in 11th yr, noncompetitive fest presents film & video from Spain, Portugal, Latin America & US. Public's Choice award presented to 1 winning film, which receives plaque & closes following yr's fest. No entry fee. English subtitles requested, if necessary. Deadline: Feb. 1 for appl. & 1/2" cassette preview. Contact: Pepe Vargas, director, Chicago Latino Cinema, 600 S. Michigan Ave., Chicago, IL 60605; (312) 431-1330; fax: (312) 360-0629.

CINE GOLDEN EAGLE FILM & VIDEO COMPETITION, DC. Short & doc films, videos & multimedia prods (w/ exception of TV ads) eligible for competition. Golden Eagles awarded in following cats: amateur, agriculture, animation/children's, arts/crafts, business/industry, doc, educational, entertainment, shorts, nature/environmental, history, interactive, medicine, oceanography, public health, safety/training, science services, sports, travel. Entries must be US prods. CINE enters some award winners in foreign fests. Entrants should send entry form first & films/tapes when instructed. Entry fees: \$45 & up. Formats: 1/2" for preview, w/ exception of multimedia formats. Deadline: Feb. 1 (also Aug. 1). Contact: Awards Director, CINE, 1001 Connecticut Ave., ste. 638, NW, Washington, DC 20036; (202) 785-1136; fax: (202) 785-4114.

HOMETOWN VIDEO FESTIVAL, July, CA. Sponsored by Alliance for Community Media, this competitive fest, founded in 1978, recognizes outstanding local programs produced for or by local organizations & public, educational & gov't access operations. Awards: special awards for overall excellence in public access, local origination, educational & gov't access; finalists, honorable mentions & winners in 37 cats incl. performing arts; ethnic expression; entertainment; sports; by & for youth; live; municipal; religious; educational; instructional/training; informational; innovative; int'l; by & for seniors; PSA; event/public awareness; video art; music video;

local news; magazine format; original teleplay. Entries must have been shown on local cable TV in previous yr. Fest annually receives 2,000 entries. Deadline: Feb. 17. Contact: Randy Van Dalsen, Hometown Video Festival, The Buske Group, 3001 J St., ste. 201, Sacramento, CA 95816; (916) 441-6277; fax: (916) 441-7670.

HUMBOLDT INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, April, CA. Oldest student-run fest in US (now in its 28th yr), fest provides showcase for ind., student & emerging filmmakers. Films selected by student pre-screening committee & judged by panel of professional filmmakers. Fest selections screened at oldest operating feature-film house in US, Minor Theatre. All genres accepted; entries must be under 60 min. & completed in last 3 yrs. Last yr featured workshops & program incl. People's Choice Night (incl. AIVF Membership Award), Best of Fest award program w/ awards going to best narrative, animation, doc, experimental, cinematic disobedience & retrospective of women filmmakers. Over \$2,000 in cash awards & numerous product & service prizes awarded. Entry fee: \$30. Formats: 16mm, S-8. Deadline (film entries): March 11; (video, for preview only): Feb. 25. Contact: Humboldt Int'l Film Festival, Theater Arts Dept. Humboldt State Univ., Arcata, CA 95521; (707) 826-4113; fax: (707) 826-5494.

INTERNATIONAL WILDLIFE FILM FESTIVAL, April 8-15, MT. Annual celebration of wildlife, this is longest running fest of its kind in world, founded by well-known bear biologist Dr. Charles Jonkel in 1977. Judging panels of 6 people each have 3 types of judges: wildlife biologists, media & prod. specialists & wildlife writers, artists & teachers. Awards: Best of Fest; 1st, 2nd & 3rd place, Best of Category: editing, soundtrack, script, use of music, photography, scientific content, educational film, merit awards, honorable mention. Special children's events incl. WildWalk opening day parade, Children's Day w/ wildlife activities such as storytelling, games, music, puppet shows, children's matinées (over 3,000 children have attended), Kids' Wildlife Art Club. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, video. Deadline: Feb. 18. Contact: International Wildlife Film Festival, 802 Front St., Missoula, MT; (406) 728-9380.

MEDICINE WHEEL ANIMATION FESTIVAL, traveling tour begins May, MA. Noncompetitive fest now in fifth year travels to universities & theaters across US. Accepts films/videos in all cats. Submit 1/2" cassette for preview. Entry fee: \$10. Deadline: Jan. 28. For appl. contact: Medicine Wheel Animation Festival, PO Box 1088, Groton, MA 01450-3088; (508) 448-3717.

MONITOR AWARDS, October, NY. Sponsored by Int'l Teleproduction Society, an int'l trade association, competition honors excellence in electronic prod. & postprod. Cats & craft areas incl. TV series; TV specials; theatrical releases, music video; nat'l commercials; local commercials; promotions; children's programming; sports; docs; short subjects; show reels; corporate communication; opens, closes, & titles; transitions; logos & IDs. Awards: best achievement honors to producers, directors, editors, etc. in each cat. Entries produced or postproduced

during 1994 calendar yr. Entries originating on film must be postprod. electronically. Entry fees: \$130-170. Format: 3/4". Deadline: Feb 7. Contact: Julia Hammer, Int'l Monitor Awards, 350 5th Ave., ste. 2400, NY, NY 10118; (212) 629-3266; fax: (212) 629-3265.

NEWARK BLACK FILM FESTIVAL, July, NJ. Held for 6 wks during summer, fest of films by black filmmakers showcases int'l black culture. Filmmakers, scholars, historians & other guests discuss films w/ audiences, who are admitted free to all screenings, many of which are held at Newark's Symphony Hall. Program also features special films for children. Co-sponsored by Newark Museum, Newark Public Library, Newark Symphony Hall, Rutgers-Newark & NJ Inst. of Technology. Entry fee, 1995 Biennial Robeson Competition: \$25. Formats: 16mm, 1/2". Write for call for entries. Deadline: March 1. Contact: Jane Rappaport, Newark Black Film Festival, Newark Museum, 49 Washington St., Box 540, Newark, NJ 07101; (201) 596-6550; fax: (201) 642-0459.

SEATTLE ASIAN AMERICAN FILM FESTIVAL, Sept. 21-24, WA. Northwest's leading showcase of ind. Asian Pacific American film & video seeks new works by/about Asian Pacific Americans. Cats incl. doc, experimental, narrative, animation, graphic video art. Films must be in 16mm or 35mm; videos on 3/4" tape. Submissions must be accompanied by entry form & received no later than March 1. For info & forms, call William Satake Blauvelt evenings at (206) 329-6084.

SEATTLE INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, May 18-June 11, WA. Fest in 21st yr is one of largest non-competitive film events in Northwest. Features (over 60 mins.) & shorts (under 30 mins.) accepted. Each yr about 140 films from 45 countries screened. Program incl. US & world premieres, new directors showcase, children's series, archival, Best of Northwest & special events. Entry fee: \$25 (shorts), 50 (features). Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Deadline: March 15. Contact: Darryl Macdonald, Seattle Int'l Film Festival, Egyptian Theater, 801 E. Pine St., Seattle, WA 98122; (206) 324-9996; fax: (206) 324-9998.

SILVER IMAGES FILM FESTIVAL, May, IL. Sponsored by Terra Nova Films, prod. & distribution co. specializing in films/videos on aging-related issues. Seeks "contemporary works which portray older adults in a positive yet realistic manner." Short- & feature-length narrative, doc & experimental works, produced no earlier than 1990, are eligible. No training films or TV prods. No entry fee. Deadline: Feb. 10. Contact: Becky Cowing, 9848 S. Winchester Ave., Chicago, IL 60643; (312) 881-8491; fax: (312) 881-3368.

SLICE OF LIFE FILM & VIDEO SHOWCASE, July, PA. 13th annual fest features competitively chosen observational doc films & videos, incl. those using experimental technique. Narrative works & films/videos over 30 min. not accepted; shorter works encouraged. Winning producers will be guests of fest, receive cash prize & participate in "Meet the Artists" public reception & professionals conference. Fest is part of annual Central PA Festival of the Arts, which

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SOUTH BY SOUTHWEST FILM FESTIVAL, March 10-18, TX. Fest is part of SxSW Film & Media Conference, held March 10-12. Accepted are features (over 60 mins.), shorts (under 45 mins.), doc features, doc shorts & music videos. Entry fee: \$15 (\$20 for return of preview cassette). Entries must have been completed in 1993/94. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2"; preview on 1/2". Deadline: Jan. 13. Contact: Nancy Schafer, South by Southwest Film Festival, PO Box 4999, Austin, TX 78765; (512) 467-779; fax: (512) 451-0754.

USA FILM FESTIVAL, April, TX. Annual fest celebrates excellence in film & video arts w/ major curated film showcase (now in 25th year) & nat'l short film & video competition (now in 17th yr). Fest presents world, national, or regional premieres of hundreds of feature films & short works to audiences of 16,000. Awards for shorts competition announced during fest; competition open to submissions by all film & videomakers in US. Entries should be under 60 min. & compete for cash prizes up to \$1,000 in cats such as dramatic, nonfiction, animation, experimental, music video/film, advertising & promotion. Family Award honors work intended for general audiences, Student Award goes to exceptional work by registered student & Texas Award goes to current TX residents. Deadline: March 1. Entry fee: \$40 (shorts only, features free). Contact: USA Film Festival, 2917 Swiss Ave., Dallas, TX 75204; (214) 821-6300; fax: (214) 821-6364.

VIDEOSCAPE: ASIAN AMERICAN VIDEO SHOWCASE, presented by Asian CineVision, showcases work by Asian & Asian American video artists since 1982. Works must originate in video. Categories: narrative, doc, animation, experimental, installation, performance pieces. Formats: 3/4" only. For preview purposes, send 1/2" or 3/4". Deadline: Jan. 15. Contact: Minnie Hong, Asian CineVision, 32 E. Broadway, NY, NY 10002; (212) 925-8685.

VIDEO SHORTS COMPETITION, March, WA. National competition of short video artworks. General cat as well as revolving special cat each yr (1995- "PSA's about Public Access"). Competition accepts works up to 6 mins., all PSA entries must conform to standard 10, 20, 30, 60 sec lengths. Only noncommercial works accepted. Ten winners picked; six public access PSA's chosen for distribution to local broadcast & cable channels. Cash prizes awarded. All entries considered for inclusion in "best of" Video Shorts collections. Entry fee: \$20 (\$10 for each add'l entry on same cassette). Deadline: Feb. 1. Contact: Video Shorts, PO Box 20369, Seattle, WA 98102; (206) 325-8449.

FOREIGN

BANFF TELEVISION FESTIVAL, June, Canada. All-TV fest incl. competition, which awards Banff Rockies, conference for TV professionals & informal

coprod. marketplace. Cats: made-for-TV movies, miniseries, continuing series, short dramas, TV comedies, social & political docs, popular science programs, arts docs, performance specials, children's programs, information programs, animation programs. Entries for competition must be made for TV, i.e. no prior theatrical release. Entries originally in English or French must have TV premiere between April 1, 1994 & April 1, 1995. Producers of programs judged best in each cat receive Banff Rockie sculptures. Grand Prize awarded to program determined Best of Fest. Jury may also give two special awards for outstanding achievements. Special on-demand screening facilities for all programs. Contact: Jerry Ezekiel, Banff Television Festival, 204 Caribou St., #306, Box 1020, Banff, Alberta, Canada T0L 0C0; (403) 762-3060; fax: (403) 762-5357.

CANNES INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, May, France. Now 48th yr of Cannes, one of world's best known, most prestigious int'l fests. Over 35,000 guests partake in continuous screenings, parties, press conferences & one of world's major film markets. Selection committee, appointed by Administration Board, chooses entries for Official Competition (about 20 films) & for *Un Certain Regard* section. Films must be made w/in prior 12 months, released only in country of origin & not entered in other film fests. Official component consists of 3 sections: In Competition, features & shorts compete for major fest awards (*Palme d'Or*, Best Director/Actress/Actor/Jury Prize); Special Out-of-Competition, features ineligible for competition; *Un Certain Regard* (noncompetitive), for films of int'l quality which do not qualify for Competition, films by new directors, etc. Parallel sections incl. *Quinzaine des Réalisateurs* (Directors Fortnight), main sidebar for new talent, sponsored by Assoc. of French Film Directors; *La Semaine de la Critique* (Int'l Critics Week), selection of 1st or 2nd features & docs chosen by members of French Film Critics' Union (selections must be completed w/in 12 mos. prior to fest) & Perspectives on French Cinema. Market, administered separately, screens films in main venue & local theatre. Top prizes incl. Official Competition's *Palme d'Or* (feature & short) & *Caméra d'Or* (best 1st film in any section). For info & press accreditation from US (deadline: March 31), contact: Catherine Verret, French Film Office, 745 Fifth Ave., NY, NY 10151; (212) 832-8860, fax: (212) 755-0629. Official Sections: Festival International du Film (deadline: March 10), 99 boul. Malesherbes, 75008 Paris, France; tel: 011 33 1 45 61 66 00; fax: 011 33 1 45 61 97 60; *Quinzaine des Réalisateurs*, Société des Réalisateurs de Films, 215 rue du Faubourg St. Honoré, 75008 Paris, France; tel: 011 33 1 45 61 01 66, fax: 011 33 1 40 74 07 96. *Semaine Internationale de la Critique* (deadline: March 30), 73, rue de Lourmel 75015 Paris, France; tel: 011 33 1 45 75 68 27. Cannes Film Market, attn: Marcel Lathière, Michel P. Bonnet, 99 boul. Malesherbes, 75008 Paris, France; tel: 011 33 1 45 61 66 00; fax: 011 33 1 45 61 97 60.

GOLDEN ROSE OF MONTREUX, April 30-May 6, Switzerland. Celebrating 35th yr & organized by Swiss Broadcasting Corporation & City of Montreux, annual competition for light entertainment TV programs. Broadcasters & ind. producers may compete in cats of humor, music & general light entertainment, w/ each cat having own int'l jury. Format: Beta

SP Deadline: Feb. 15. Contact: John Nathan, N. American representative, Rose d'Or de Montreux, 488 Madison Ave., ste. 1710, NY, NY 10022; (212) 223-0044; fax: (212) 223-4531.

HIROSHIMA INTERNATIONAL AMATEUR FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, August, Japan. Accepts all genres of film & video that "manifest an effort toward peace or reverence for life." Formats: 16mm, super 8, 1/2" & 3/4" under 20 min. produced since 1989. Cash prizes. No entry fee. Deadline: Feb. 28. Contact: Hiroshima Int'l Amateur Film & Video Festival Working Committee, c/o Chugoku Broadcasting, 21-3, Motomachi, Naka-ku, Hiroshima, 730 Japan; tel: 81 82 222 1133; fax: 81 82 222 1319.

MELBOURNE INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, June, Australia. Now in 44th yr, this FIAPF & Int'l Short Film Conference-recognized fest is Australia's oldest & programs an eclectic mix of ind. work. Int'l short film competition is important part of fest. Kino Awards for Short Film (sponsored by Kino Cinemas) incl. Grand Prize (AUD\$5,000) & awards of AUD\$1,500 each in cats of experimental, animated, doc & fiction. Other awards are ANZAAS-CIRO for outstanding film/video dealing w/ science-related subject (AUD\$1,500). Fest also incl. Youth Film Fest (6-18 yrs.) & program focusing on architecture & design. Good window for Australian theatrical & non-theatrical sales, educational distributors & Australian networks. Feature-length narrative & doc films over 60 min. considered; work must have been completed on 35mm & 16mm (video prods considered at discretion of fest director) since Jan. 1994 & not screened in Australia. Short film competition open to films up to 60 min. on 35mm & 16mm (S-8 & video accepted out of competition), completed since Jan. 1994 & not screened in Australia. Entry fee: USD\$25 (int'l money order). Deadline: April 1 (features); March 17 (shorts). Contact: Tait Brady, fest director, Melbourne Int'l Film Festival, 207 Johnston St., PO Box 2206, Fitzroy 3065, Melbourne, Australia; tel: 011 61 3 417 2011; fax: 011 61 3 417-3804.

YAMAGATA INTERNATIONAL DOCUMENTARY FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 3-9, Japan. Fest focuses on ind. work w/ "commitment to intelligent, meaningful programming." Best works of doc art promoted in main competition & in special events like last yr's Indigenous Peoples' Film & Video Festival, continuing Asia Program, & forthcoming commemoration of 100th anniversary of cinema. Entries must have been produced after April 1, 1993 & not released publicly in Japan prior to showing at fest. Shorts not accepted. Director of each selected film invited to fest w/ expenses covered by organizing committee. Awards: Robert & Frances Flaherty Grand Prize (¥3,000,000); Mayor's Prize (¥1,000,000); two runner-up prizes (¥300,000 each); one special prize (¥300,000). Fest held in Yamagata city, 360 km NE of Tokyo. No entry fee. Formats: 35mm, 16mm; preview on cassette. Deadline: March 31. Contact: Kazuyuki Yani, director, Tokyo Office, Yamagata Int'l Documentary Film Festival, Kitagawa Bldg. 4 fl., 6-42 Kagurazaka, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo 162, Japan; tel: 011 81 3 3266-9704; fax: 011 81 3 3266-9700; e-mail: hhg02034@niftyserve.or.jp.

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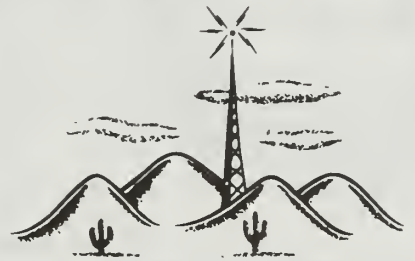
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FILMMAKERS, new computer conference dedicated to NYC area film & videomakers avail. on Eastnet BBS: (718) 767-0157. Mac & Windows users can get free FirstClass™ software to dial in. E-mail DougAbel@aol.com for more info.

HARVESTWORKS in Manhattan offers classes in subjects ranging from audio/video synchronization to multimedia prod. & audio preprod. All classes (1-2 days) held at 596 Broadway, NY, NY. To register, call: Annie Ferguson (212) 431-1130.

IFFCON '95: OPEN DAY held in San Francisco on Jan. 13. 2nd Int'l Film Financing Conference announces Open Day, a full day of panels & networking opportunities w/ key int'l film financiers & buyers, open to anyone who wants to register. Topics incl.: foreign TV opportunities, navigating Euro film funds, rallying US dollars, coproducing ind. multimedia. Registration fee: \$115 w/ \$35 discount for members of FAF, Frameline, Cine Accion & NAATA. Info/registration: (415) 281-9777; e-mail: iffcom@media-planet.com.

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES has set up an electronic bulletin board system that can be used to access agency guidelines, deadlines, grant info, etc. The NEH BBS is available to all users with modems at (202) 606-8688 (8-N-1). Connection w/ Internet, commercial networks not necessary. For more info call (202) 606-8400.

SAN FRANCISCO ART INSTITUTE holds extension education classes in fine art filmmaking. For more info or to register, call (415) 749-5554.

FILMS • TAPES WANTED

90's CHANNEL, embracing controversy & search-

ing for programming that offers fresh approaches to TV, welcomes tapes for submission. Topics that have run on 90's Channel incl.: Racism, (*Framing the Panthers in Black and White*); Jewish/Palestinian issues (*We Dare to Speak*); sexuality issues & programs on reproductive rights. Send 3/4" tapes to: The 90's Channel, 2010 14th St., #209; Boulder, CO 80302; (303) 442-8445.

47 GALLERIES, computer bulletin board service that promotes ind. artists & producers nationally, is looking for narrative, experimental, doc, animation & performance films/videos to be sold on VHS through bulletin board systems. Send: VHS, description of tapes, résumé, SASE to: 47 Galleries, 2924 Bellevue Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90026.

ART IN GENERAL seeks video works & guest-curated video programs for new monthly screening series. All kinds of work welcome, from experimental film & video to home videos; doc & activist to public access works. Send VHS tape (cued), résumé &/or brief statement & SASE. For more info, call Joanna Spitzner (212) 219-0473.

ART ON FILM DATABASE wants to know: Have you produced a film, video or video disc on the visual arts? Send info on prod. to Program for Art on Film Database, computer index to over 19,000 prods on the visual arts. Interested in prods on all visual arts topics, & welcomes info on prods about artists of color & multicultural art projects. Send info to: Art on Film Database, Program for Art on Film at Columbia University, 2875 Broadway, 2nd fl., NY, NY 10025-7805; (212) 854-9570; fax: 854-9577.

ARTISTS' CD(ROM) EXHIBITION, int'l exhibition of work by artists using CD-ROM, is proposed for Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA) in Sydney, Australia in mid-1995. Seeking innovative presentations by artists using CD-ROM, of work in variety of media (eg., photography, video, slide). Artists requested to submit work for consideration; no original materials, please. Also interested in receiving info about discs planned for completion by early 1995. Institutions & writers welcome to send info about works by artists using CD-ROM that they consider to be of interest to curators. Deadline for submissions: Feb. 17. Send inquiries & material to: Mike Leggett; Artists' CD (ROM) Exhibition, c/o Museum of Contemporary Art, PO Box R1286; Sydney 2000 Australia.

BLACK ENTERTAINMENT TELEVISION seeks films & videos by black ind. makers, directors, or producers for "Black Vision," portion of *Screen Scene*, weekly 1/2-hr show that previews TV lineup & latest theatrical releases. Deadline: Ongoing. For more info, contact: Screen Scene, BET, 1899 Ninth St. NE, Washington, DC 20018; (202) 636-2400.

BLACK VIDEO PERSPECTIVE, new community TV prod. in Atlanta area, seeks works for/by/about African Americans. For more info, contact: Karen L. Forest (404) 231-4846.

BRONXNET (Bronx Community Cable Programming Corporation), nonprofit organization controlling 4 access channels on Bronx Cable-TV System, seeks works by ind. video- & filmmakers for access airing. Bronxnet produces programs, facilitates

& assists community in producing & cable-casting programs for, by & about Bronx. Contact: Fred Weiss, program director, (718) 960-1180.

CAROUSEL, series for municipal cable channels 23 & 49 in Chicago, seeks films/videos for children 12 yrs & under, any length, any genre. Send w/ appropriate release, list of credits & personal info to: Carousel, c/o Screen Magazine, 720 N. Wabash, Chicago, IL 60611. Tapes returned if accompanied by postage.

CATHODE CAFE seeks short video-art interstitials to play between alternative-music videos on Seattle's TCI/Viacom Channel 29, Sundays 9:30 pm. Format: 3/4" preferred; 1/2" OK. Contact: Stan LePard, 2700 Aiki Ave. SW #305, Seattle, WA 98116; (206) 937-2353.

CELEBRATED CUCARACHA THEATER seeks 16mm films for series of Tues. night screenings in Jan. & Feb. 1995. Send 1/2" tapes to Chris Oldcorn/Janet Paparazzo, c/o Cucaracha, 500 Greenwich Street, NY, NY 10013.

CINCINNATI ARTISTS' GROUP EFFORT seeks proposals for exhibitions, performances & audio/video/film works to show in their galleries. Experimental, traditional & collaborative projects encouraged. Contact: CAGE, 344 W. 4th St., Cincinnati, OH 55202; (513) 381-2437.

CINETECA DE CINE ACCION seeks film & video submissions by & about Latinos for regular screening series. Fees paid. Will hold preview tape for 3-4 mos. Formats: 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", video. Contact: Cine Acción, 346 9th St., San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 553-8135.

CINEWOMEN SCREENING SERIES will showcase works of women filmmakers in ind. film community & is now accepting completed works on film & video for LA screenings. Please submit work on VHS tape by Jan. 14 along w/ \$10 check payable to: Cinewomen, 9903 Santa Monica Blvd., ste. 461, Beverly Hills, CA 90212; (310) 855-8720. SASE for tape return.

CITY TV, progressive municipal cable access channel in Santa Monica, seeks work on seniors, disabled, children, Spanish-language & video art; any length. Broadcast exchanged for equip. access at state-of-the-art facility. Contact: Lisa Bernard, cable TV manager, City TV, 1685 Main St., Santa Monica, CA 90401; (310) 458-8590.

DATABASE & DIRECTORY OF LATIN AMERICAN FILM & VIDEO organized by Int'l Media Resources Exchange seeks works by Latin American & US Latino ind. producers. To incl. work in this resource or for info, contact: Karen Ranucci, IMRE, 124 Washington Place, NY, NY 10014; (212) 463-0108.

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(DCTV) accepts 3/4" & VHS tapes for open screenings & special series w/ focus on women, youth, multimedia performance video, Middle East, gay/lesbian, Native American, labor & Asian art. Contact: Jocelyn Taylor, DCTV, 87 Lafayette St., NY, NY 10013; (212) 941-1298.

DYKE TV, weekly national cable-TV show, seeks films & video shorts (under 10 min.). For info, call (212) 343-9335 or fax: 9337.

ECOMEDIA seeks film & video works for ecological screening series at the Blagden Alley Artscience Warehouse. All genres accepted; emphasis on ecology. Send 3/4" or VHS tape, info, or queries to 926 N St., Rear, NW, Washington, DC 20001; (202) 842-3577.

EN CAMINO, KRCB, seeks works of 30-60 min. in Spanish & English concerning the Latino community. Formats: 3/4", 16mm. Contact: Luis Nong, Box 2638, Rohnert Park, CA 94928.

ESSENTIAL CINEMA GROUP continually accepts works for Ind. Short Cinema bimonthly film series. 16/35mm short films, 30 min. max. Seeking new experimental, narrative, doc & animation. Send preview tapes on VHS (NTSC, PAL) w/ return postage to: Pike Street Cinema, 118 Pike St., Seattle, WA 98101. For more info on ECG, write: 2011 Fifth Ave., #301, Seattle, WA 98121-2502; (206) 441-6181.

EZTV seeks film/video shorts (under 20 min.) for L.A.-based UHF TV show. Submit 1/2" or 3/4" tapes. Narrative, experimental, doc. Contact: Jean Railla, EZTV, 8547 Santa Monica Blvd., W. Hollywood, CA 90069.

GREAT LAKES FILM & VIDEO seeks 16mm & videos for ongoing exhibition of gay/lesbian, Jewish, & women's work. Experimental & animation are sought, as well as work fitting into program on the aesthetic/anti-aesthetic. Contact: Matt Frost or Michael Walsh, Great Lakes Video & Film, PO Box 413, Milwaukee, WI 53201.

HALCYON DAYS PRODUCTIONS seeks video segments (1-5 min.) by 15- to 25-year-olds for video compilation show. If piece is selected, you may have chance to be video correspondent for show. Work may be editorial, real-life coverage, political satire, slapstick—you decide. Just personalize. Submit VHS or Hi8 (returnable w/ SASE) to: Mai Kim Holley, Halcyon Days Prod., c/o Hi8, 12 West End Ave., 5th fl., NY, NY 10023; (212) 397-7754.

HANDI-CAPABLE IN THE MEDIA, INC., nonprofit organization, seeks video prods on people w/ disabilities to air on Atlanta's Public Access TV. No fees. Submit VHS or 3/4" tape to: Handi-Capable in the Media, Inc., 2625 Piedmont Rd., ste. 56-137, Atlanta, GA 30324.

IN VISIBLE COLOURS FILM & VIDEO SOCIETY seeks videos by women of color for library collection. Work will be accessible to members, producers, multicultural groups & educational institutions. For more info, contact: Claire Thomas, In Visible Colours, 119 West Pender, ste. 115, Vancouver, B.C. V6B 1S5; (604) 682-1116.

INDEPENDENT FILM & VIDEO SHOWCASE, cable access show, seeks student & ind. films & videos to give artists exposure. Send films or video in

3/4" format w/ paragraph about artist & his/her work. Send to: Box #1626, 4202 East Fowler Ave., Tampa, Florida 33620.

INT'L SCHOOL OF FILM & TELEVISION, created in 1986 as non-governmental institute by Gabriel Garcia Marquez Foundation for the New Latin American Cinema, is compiling audiovisual material produced in film schools based on, or inspired by, work of Nobel Prize founder. Send all info avail. by students from film or TV schools based on the work of Marquez, regardless of its place & date of prod., format & license clearance status. If possible, send VHS video (NTSC or PAL) of those projects produced by your school or avail. at your video library. For details, contact Lisandro Duque, fax: (537) 33 51 96; 33 53 41; e-mail: eictv@ceniai.cu.

LA VOZ LATINA seeks videotapes made by Latinas/os living in US for presentation at Festival Internacional de Video del Cono Sur in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay & Uruguay in 1995. Any genre; under 40 min. Deadline: Jan. 15. Send VHS preview copy w/ description, reviews, résumé, bio & SASE to: Luis Valdovino, Fine Arts Dept., University of Colorado, Boulder, CO 80309; (303) 492-5482; fax: (303) 492-4886.

LATINO COLLABORATIVE, bimonthly screening series, seeks works by Latino film/videomakers. Honoraria paid. Send VHS preview tapes to: Latino Collaborative Bimonthly Screening Series, Vanessa Codorniu, 280 Broadway, ste. 412, NY, NY 10007; (212) 732-1121.

LAUREL CABLE NETWORK, nonprofit in Maryland, seeks variety of works of all lengths & genres for regular access airing in 3/4", SVHS, or VHS. No payment & tapes cannot be returned. Submit tape & release form/letter to: Laurel Cable Network, 8103 Sandy Spring Rd., Laurel, MD 20707, Attn: Bob Neuman.

METRO SHORTS, program of Metropolitan Film Society, seeks 35mm prints, 15 min. or less, for regular screenings. Subject matter needs to suit audience that would view film w/ R rating. VHS/S-VHS preview tape would be helpful. Two-way UPS ground shipping costs provided. Contact: Michelle Forren, exec. dir., Metropolitan Film Society, 3928 River Walk Dr., Duluth, GA 30136-6113.

MYPHEDUH FILMS, INC., nat'l distributor of *Sankofa*, is seeking new black ind. films to showcase in Black Preview Sunday series at Thalia Theatre in NYC. Student prods. welcome. Submissions may be any genre/length. For info, contact: Kathryn Bowser, Mypheduh Films, 100 E. 17th St., NY, NY 10003; (212) 505-1770; fax: 1670.

NEW AMERICAN MAKERS, nationally recognized venue for new works by emerging & under-recognized videomakers at Center for Arts in SF, seeks works that challenge boundaries of creative video/TV. Videomakers receive honorarium of \$2/min. for tapes. Send VHS tape, \$15 entry fee & SASE to: New American Makers, PO Box 460490, San Francisco, CA 94146.

NEW CITY PRODUCTIONS seeks works-in-progress & docs on all subjects for monthly screenings. Committed to promoting ind. community by establishing forum of new voices. Have professional large screen video & 16mm projectors. Prefer projects

originated on Hi8. Send cassettes to: New City Productions, 635 Madison Ave., ste. 1101, NY, NY 10022; (212) 753-1326.

NYU TV, channel 51 in NYC, is offering opportunities for inds to showcase finished films & videos. Submit materials to: Linda Noble, 26 Washington Place, 1st fl., NY, NY 10003.

NYTEX PRODUCTIONS seeks video interviews from across US. Looking for political, entertainment, & PSAs in S-VHS or VHS. Send to: NyTex Productions, PO Box 303, NY, NY 10101-0303, Attn: Don Cevaro.

OFFLINE, hour-long, biweekly, national public-access show, seeks ind. & creative works. Submissions should be 3/4", SVHS or VHS & should not exceed 20 min. (longer works will be considered for serialization). For more info, contact: Greg Bowman, 203 Pine Tree Rd., Ithaca, NY 14850; (607) 272-2613. e-mail address: 72137.3352@compuserve.com.

ORGONE CINEMA, non-funded monthly film/video series, looking for handmade, nature, silent, random, noisy, sex, science, home, paranoid & perverse movies. All formats. Prefer VHS for preview. Deadline: Ongoing. Send to: Orgone Cinema & Archive, 2238 Murray Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15217.

PLANET CENTRAL TELEVISION seeks broadcast-quality films, videos & animation censored by US TV as too controversial or political. Bonus considerations for submissions that are smart, funny, sexy & exhibit irreverent attitude. Send tape to: Jay Levin, director of program acquisitions, Planet Central Television, 309 Santa Monica Blvd., ste. 322, Santa Monica, CA 90401; (310) 458-4588.

PRESCOTT COMMUNITY ACCESS CHANNEL requests non-commercial programs for local airing. No payment, but return by post guaranteed. Contact: Jeff Robertson, program coordinator, Channel 13, PO Box 885, Prescott, AZ; (602) 445-0909.

REEL TIME AT P.S.122, ongoing quarterly screening series, is accepting submissions of recent ind. film & video works for 1995 season. Exhibition formats include S-8, 16mm, 3/4" & VHS. Send VHS submission tapes, written promotion & return postage to: Curator, Reel Time, P.S.122, 150 First Ave., NY, NY 10009; (212) 477-5829 (x327).

RIGHTS & WRONGS, weekly, nonprofit human rights global TV magazine series scheduled to resume broadcast in February seeks story ideas & footage for upcoming season. Last yr. 34 programs covering issues from China to Guatemala were produced. Contact: Danny Schechter or Rory O'Connor, exec. producers, The Global Center, 1600 Broadway, ste. 700, NY, NY 10019; (212) 246-0202; fax: 2677.

REBIS GALLERIES seeks works by artists working in video/film & computers. All subjects considered. Formats should be in VHS/Beta, 8mm, S-8, 16mm. For computers 3.5 disks in PC or low density Amiga files. Contracts to be negotiated. Contact: Rebis Galleries, 1930 South Broadway, Denver, CO 80210; (303) 698-1841.

SOUTH CAROLINA ARTS COMMISSION welcomes work of film/video artists for 1994-95 Southern Circuit tour of 6 artists to travel 10 days to 8 southern sites & present 1 show per city. No appl. form

required. Submit VHS, 3/4" or 16mm film program of approximately 1-hr. in length (can be cued for 30 min. section for judging purposes) in addition to résumé & publicity. Submission deadline: Jan. 16. Send material to: South Carolina Arts Commission, Media Arts Center, 1800 Gervais Street, Columbia, SC 29201. Attn: Felicia Smith or Susan Leonard; (803) 734-8696.

SHORT FILM & VIDEO: All genres, any medium, 1:00 to 60:00 long. Unconventional, signature work in VHS or 3/4" for nat'l broadcast! Submit to: EDGE TV, 7805 Sunset Blvd., ste. 203, Los Angeles, CA 90046.

SHORT FILMS WANTED for *Twilight Zone*-type anthology series. Looking for short (up to 30 min.) films in color, covering suspense, thriller, fantasy, science fiction, action/adventure & light horror. Prefer strong narrative films w/ plots twists & surprise endings. For more info, call (310) 396-3115.

SHORTS SOUGHT by NYC producer & marketing co. for new TV programs being produced this spring. Planning cycle of 60-min. programs comprising 3-4 thematically linked shorts, 20-min. max ea., book-ended by conversations w/about mediamakers. Submissions must have no entangling contracts & incl. synopsis, list of prior submissions, bio & SASE. Contact: Mitchell Banks, M&L Banks, 330 Fifth Ave., ste. 304, NY, NY 10001; (212) 563-5944; fax: 5949.

SCULPTURE CENTER GALLERY invites video artists to submit installation concepts for new video program. Emerging & mid-career artists w/o affiliation should submit résumé, narrative description, documentation of previous work on VHS tape, slides or photos. (incl. SASE) to: Sculpture Center, 167 E. 69th St., NY, NY 10021.

SUPER CAMERA, prod. of Office KEI, int'l TV company, seeks unique & never-before-seen footage. Areas incl. cutting edge of camera tech, footage that is dangerous to shoot, such as in volcanoes or underwater & events from both natural & physical science worlds. For more info, contact: Makiko Ito, Office KEI, 110 East 42nd St., ste. 1419, NY, NY 10017; (212) 983-7479; fax: 7591.

UNQUOTE TELEVISION, 1/2-hr program dedicated to exposing new, innovative film & video artists, seeks ind. doc, narrative, experimental, performance works under 28 min. Reaches 10 million homes via program exchange nationwide. 1/2" & 3/4" dubs accepted. Submit to: Unquote TV, c/o DUTV, 33rd & Chestnut St., Philadelphia, PA 19104; (215) 895-2927.

URBAN INSTITUTE FOR CONTEMPORARY ARTS is accepting video & 16mm film in all genres for next season of programming. Fee paid if accepted. Send VHS tape w/ SASE to: Film Committee, UICA, 88 Monroe Ave. NW, Grand Rapids MI 49503.

VIEWPOINTS, KQED's showcase of ind. point-of-view works, seeks films & videos expressing "strong statements on important subjects." Submit VHS or 3/4" tapes (1 1/2 hr. length preferred) to: Greg Swartz, Manager of Broadcast Projects & Acquisitions, KQED, 2601 Mariposa St., San Francisco, CA 94110; (415) 553-2269.

VISION FOOD, weekly public access show in LA &

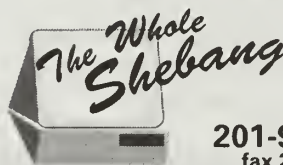
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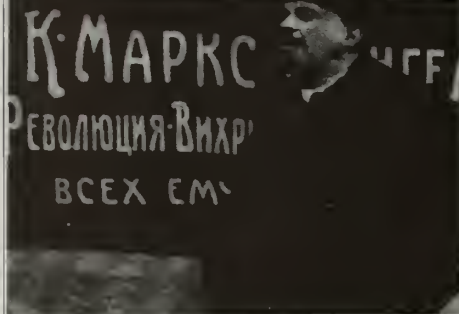
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NYC, seeks visually exciting pieces in all genres (art, music & film on video). Under 20 min., 1/2", 3/4" dubs. No payment, videos credited. Send letter of permission to air material & video to: Jack Holland, 5432 Edgewood Pl., Los Angeles, CA 90019.

WORLD AFRICAN NETWORK (WAN), first premium cable network for people of African descent worldwide, is accepting submissions for 1995 launch. Featuring films, docs, shorts, news & info, children's programs, sports, concerts, drama series & sitcoms. Send to: Eleven Piedmont Center, ste. 620, Atlanta, GA 30305; (404) 365-8850; fax: 365-8350.

WYBE-TV35, Philadelphia's ind. public TV station, seeks work for series featuring film & video from ind. media artists from around nation. This 10-hour, 10-week series airs in weekly prime-time slot each Spring. All styles welcome. Shorts up to 30 minutes are preferred. Acquisition fee: \$25/min. Deadline: Jan. 18. Entry forms: Through the Lens 5, WYBE-TV35, 6070 Ridge Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19128; (215) 483-3900; fax: 6908.

WNYC-TV seeks films/videos for new primetime series on NY inds. Doc. or experimental (incl. video art); under one hour; completed; all rights cleared. Pays \$35/min. Send VHS, 3/4" or Betacam preview tape, to: NY Independents, c/o WNYC-TV, One Centre St., rm. 1450, NY, NY 10007. No phone calls, please.

WOMEN OF COLOR in Media Arts Database seeks submissions of films & videos for database that incl. video filmographies, bibliographical info & data. Contact: Dorothy Thigpen, Women Make Movies, 462 Broadway, 5th fl., NY, NY 10013.

WTN (WOMEN'S TELEVISION NETWORK) is one of Canada's newest specialty cable channels. On air in Jan. 1995, WTN is quality TV for women, by women & about women & their worlds. *Shameless* Shorts program incl. 30 min. of programmed short films/videos by Canadian & int'l directors/producers. Broadcast 3 nights/wk. w/ repeats on weekend, series will showcase work created by women or work portraying women's perspectives, stories & interests. All shorts incl. drama, animation, doc & experimental accepted for preview. Prefer 15 min. or less. Submit VHS copy of work w/ publicity material. License fees will be negotiated at that time. Address submissions to: Laura Michalchysyn, programming coordinator, WTN, ste. 300-1661 Portage Ave., Winnipeg, Manitoba R3J 3T7.

WYOU-TV, cable-access station in Madison, WI, seeks music-related videos for weekly alternative music show. Send 1/2" or 3/4" tapes. No payment; videos credited. Contact: WYOU-TV, 140 W. Gilman St., Madison, WI 53703.

XTV, a new, ind. cable TV channel, seeks student & ind. works from around country. For more info, call: Otto Khera (602) 948-0381.

OPPORTUNITIES • GIGS

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR/LECTURER to teach all levels of film & video/doc. prod. Tenure track if assistant prof., non-tenure if lecturer. Position requires demonstrated ability & exp. in film/video prod. & evidence of strong teaching abilities.

Commitment to building new program in dynamic Central Florida film industry. Candidate must engage in research/creative activity. Begin Aug. 1; send résumé, 3 letters of reco & samples of prod. to: Dr. Rick Blum, Film Production Search Committee, Motion Picture Division, School of Communication, University of Central Florida, Orlando, FLA 32816-1344. Prog. is highly selective & maintains close working relationship w/ Disney/MGM, Universal, & other professional prod. facilities. Appls received by Jan. 20 will receive priority consideration. EEO/AA.

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR sought by Dept. of Media Arts invites appls. for tenure-track faculty position to start fall 1995. Salary range \$34,500-\$36,500. Seek outstanding scholar who takes critical approach to study of media institutions. Areas of specialization incl.: history & technology & emerging technologies; information society theory & telecommunications; media organizations, management & policy processes. Responsibilities incl.: teaching at grad & undergrad levels (lowe-division core course in media history; upper-division & MA level courses in area of specialization); develop & sustain significant program of research & publication; supervise grad teaching assts & participate fully in work of dept. Minimum qualifications incl. earned doctorate & university-level teaching experience. Send curriculum vita; detailed statement of teaching & research interests & names/addresses of 3 refs to: Dr. Ellen R. Meehan, search committee chair, Dept. of Media Arts, 265 Modern Languages Bldg., University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ 85721. EO/AA/ADA compliance employer.

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF VIDEO PRODUCTION & CRITICISM, Hampshire College. F/T, fall 1995. Prefer candidates using doc. or mixed forms to represent oppressed minorities, or alternatives to dominant media. Critical/analytical approach to issues surrounding cultural prod. essential. Strengths in minority/3rd world representation or writing for or about media valued. Graduate degree and/or equivalent professional exp. req. Individualized liberal arts instruction in innovative setting, opportunity for cross-disciplinary teaching & research. Send letter, vita, 3 letters of recom. to: Video Production Search Committee, School of Communications & Cognitive Science, Hampshire College, Amherst, MA 01002. Appl. review beg. Jan. 15. EOE/AA. Women & minorities encouraged to apply.

DEAN, College of Arts and Architecture, Montana State University, sought. Must have terminal degree or excellent record to achieve; progressive record of successful administration in college, university, or arts advocacy organization. AA/EO/ADA/Veterans Preference. Request complete appl. materials from: Dean, Arts/Architecture Search, 250 Reid Hall, MSU, Bozeman, MT 59717; (406) 994-6752; fax: 1854.

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER will help inds find outlets for product. Finished works only incl. films, docs, TV pilots & other quality product. Please send work on VHS to: John Gabriel Matonti, executive producer, c/o Matonti Enterprises, Inc., 26 Lake Shore Dr., Montville, NJ 07045.

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AIVF helps you save time and money as well. You'll find you can spend more of your time (and less of your money) on what you do best—getting your work made and seen. To succeed as an independent today, you need a wealth of resources, strong connections, and the best information available. So join with more than 5,000 other independents who rely on AIVF to help them succeed. **JOIN AIVF TODAY!**

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year's subscription to *The Independent*. Thought-provoking features, news, and regular columns on business, technical, and legal matters. Plus festival listings, funding deadlines, exhibition venues, and announcements of member activities and new programs and services. Special issues highlight regional activity and focus on subjects including media education and the new technologies.

FESTIVAL SERVICES

AIVF arranges screenings for festival representatives, handles customs and group shipping of members' materials to foreign festivals, and publishes the AIVF Guide to International Film and Video Festivals—considered the definitive resource in the field. We also host periodic evenings with festival consultants for members to receive personalized counseling on strategy and placement.

ACCESS

Membership allows you to join fellow AIVF members at intimate events featuring festival directors, producers, distributors, and funders.

COMMUNITY

We are initiating monthly member get-togethers in cities across the country; call the office for the one nearest you. Plus members are carrying on active dialogue online—creating a "virtual community" for independents to share information, resources, and ideas.

ADVOCACY

Members receive periodic advocacy

alerts, with updates on important legislative issues affecting the independent field and mobilization for collective action.

INSURANCE

Members are eligible to purchase discounted personal and production insurance plans through AIVF suppliers. A wide range of health insurance options are available, as well as special liability, E&O, and production plans tailored for the needs of low-budget mediamakers.

TRADE DISCOUNTS

A growing list of businesses across the country offer AIVF members discounts on equipment and auto rentals, film processing, transfers, editing, and other production necessities.

WORKSHOPS, PANELS, AND SEMINARS

Members get discounts on events covering the whole spectrum of current issues and concerns affecting the field, ranging from business and aesthetic to technical and political topics.

INFORMATION

We distribute a series of books on financing, funding, distribution, and production; members receive discounts on selected titles. AIVF's staff also can provide information about distributors, festivals, and general information pertinent to your needs. Our library houses information on everything from distributors to sample contracts to budgets.

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

Individual/Student Membership

Year's subscription to The Independent • Access to all plans and discounts • Festival/Distribution/Library services • Information Services • Discounted admission to seminars • Book discounts • Advocacy action alerts • Eligibility to vote and run for board of directors

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Dyke TV, weekly NYC cable TV show. For info, call (212) 343-9335; fax: 9337.

PUBLICATIONS

AFRICAN AMERICAN FILM STATISTICS & MARKETING STRATEGIES is thorough volume of data of value to any African American filmmaker trying to raise funds. Incl. are stats on profits of black-directed films since 1970 & numbers for theatrical releases & home video. Send \$29.95 to: Greener Grass Prods, 1041 W. 98th St., Chicago, IL 60643; (312) 779-8717.

MONEY FOR FILM & VIDEO ARTISTS, publication listing more than 190 sources of support for ind. film- & videomakers, is avail. for \$14.95 + s&h. Contact: Doug Rose, ACA Books, dept. 25, 1285 Ave. of the Americas, 3rd fl., area M, NY, NY 10019.

NATIONAL VIDEO RESOURCES' Strategic Plan, a 24-page booklet on NVR's strategic planning process & results. For free copy, write or call: National Video Resources, Inc., 73 Spring St., ste. 606, NY, NY 10012; (212) 274-8080.

PROTECTING ARTISTS & THEIR WORK, publication of People for the American Way, answers questions regarding artists' rights as well as federal & state law. To request copy, call People for the American Way (202) 467-4999.

SIX ROUTES TO FILM FINANCING, free tip sheet published by Hollywood Film Institute, breaks down 6 basic ways producers can finance films. For free copy, contact: Hollywood Film Institute, PO Box 481252, Dept. 1, Los Angeles, CA 90048; (213) 933-3456.

VIDEOS FOR A CHANGING WORLD, new catalog of multicultural & social issue video docs. Videos in collection relate to common themes of building bridges across cultures & working for grassroots social change. Topics incl.: indigenous peoples, Central America, environmental issues, cross-cultural music & theater, oral history, etc. Avail. free. Contact: Turning Tide Productions, PO Box 864, Wendell, MA 01379; (800) 557-6414, (508) 544-8313; fax: 7989.

WHO FUNDS PTV? CPB pamphlet containing listings of public-TV series, entities, & organizations that provide funding to ind. producers. To obtain copy of third edition, send SASE to: Who Funds PTV?, CPB Publications Office, 901 E St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20004-2037.

RESOURCES • FUNDS

BRAVO NETWORK announces "Arts for Change" award of \$2,500 to arts organizations promoting projects w/ the "positive & meaningful impact the arts can have on a young person's life." Sponsorship of a local cable company must be obtained for eligibility. Deadline for submission of appl. is Feb. 1. For forms and info write: Bravo at 150 Crossways Park W., Woodbury, NY 11797; (516) 364-2222.

CAROL FIELDING GRANTS for students in film or video. \$4,000 for prod.; \$1,000 for research. University Film and Video Assoc. (UFVA) &

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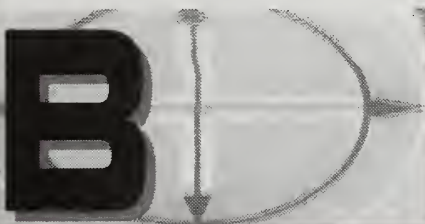
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University Film and Video Foundation (UFVF) offer grants for student projects. Must be undergrad or grad student & sponsored by faculty who is active member of UFVA. Deadline: Jan. 15. Awards announced by March 31. Send 3 copies of résumé w/ SS#; 1-pg. description of project incl. statement of purpose, indication of resources avail. & summary of prod. or research project; statement by sponsoring UFVA member indicating willingness to serve as supervisor; 1-pg. budget, indicating what portion of project will be supported by grant. For narrative prods., incl. copy of script (up to 30 min.); for docs, incl. short treatment (limit 1 hr.). For experimental or animated, incl. treatment &/or storyboard. For research projects, incl. description of methodology to be employed & statement indicating relationship of proposed study to previous research in field. Send to: J. Stephen Hank, Dept. of Drama & Communications, U. of New Orleans, Lakefront, New Orleans, LA 70148.

CENTER FOR MEDIA, CULTURE AND HISTORY AT NEW YORK UNIVERSITY announces Rockefeller Humanities Fellowships. Scholars, media makers & cultural activists invited to apply for 1- or 2-semester residencies to develop projects on how social movements & countercultural communities, past & present, have used film, video & TV to forge collective identities around issues such as AIDS, labor, feminism, ecology, & the rights of gay men & lesbians. Deadline: Jan. 20. Contact: Barbara Abrash or Faye Ginsburg, NYU Center for Media, Culture & History, 25 Waverly Place, NY, NY 10003; (212) 998-3759.

CHICAGO RESOURCE CENTER awards grants to nonprofits who serve gay & lesbian community. For more info, contact: Chicago Resource Center, 104 S. Michigan Ave., ste. 1220, Chicago, IL 60603; (312) 759-8700.

CREATIVE SCREENWRITERS GROUP, nat'l organization dedicated to advancement of writing, is launching free service for everyone interested in improving their writing skills. CSG will provide assistance to anyone interested in joining a writers' group in his/her community. CSG also provides info on how to form new groups. Send name, address & phone w/ description of writing interests & SASE to: Creative Screenwriters Group, 518 9th St. NE, ste. 308, Washington, DC 20002.

DCTV ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE is now accepting appls. for \$500 worth of equipment access on an ongoing basis w/in one year. When 1 funded project is complete, DCTV will review appls. on file & select next project. Preference given to projects already underway. For appl., send SASE to: AIR, c/o DCTV, 87 Lafayette St., NY, NY 10013-4435.

HUMANITIES PROJECTS IN MEDIA administered by the NEH have following deadlines: March 3 for projects beginning after Oct. 1, 1995 & Sept. 1995 (specific day not yet avail.) for projects beginning after April 1, 1996. 20 copies of appl. required on or before deadline. For appl., guidelines, write: National Endowment for the Humanities, Division of Public Programs, Humanities Projects in Media, rm. 420, 1100 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20506; (202) 606-8278.

INSTITUTE OF NOETIC SCIENCES, thru gift from Hartley Film foundation, will grant \$10,000 for

prod. of film or video addressing topics of relevance to Institute interests (incl. consciousness research, healing, death & dying, sustainable development, etc.). Deadline: March 1. Call or write: IONS, 475 Gate Five Rd., #300, Sausalito, CA 94965; (415) 331-5650.

GEORGE FOSTER PEABODY AWARDS, recognizing distinguished achievement & meritorious public service by radio & TV networks, producing orgs, cable TV orgs, & individuals, welcomes entries. TV submissions must be on first gen. 3/4" U-matic w/o visible time-code window. Also submit 1/2" VHS copy per entry for judging. Each TV entry must be submitted in North American NTSC standard, w/ protective case & entry fee of \$125 in U.S. currency. Deadline: Jan. 13. For details call Barry Sherman at (706) 542-3787; fax: -9273.

LEDIG HOUSE WRITER'S COLONY offers published writers & translators quiet workplace, meals, lodging, & meetings w/ other writers at Ledig House in Columbia County, NY. 2-month sessions 3 times/yr. For appl. info contact: Ledig House, ART/OMI, 55 5th Ave., 15th fl., NY, NY 10003; (212) 206-6060.

LOUISIANA CENTER FOR CULTURAL MEDIA now makes professional camera packages & cuts-only editing systems avail. free to indivs. who agree to produce arts & heritage programming regularly & exclusively for the Cultural Cable Channel of New Orleans. To qualify, interested parties must be members of Cultural Communications (\$35/yr.) & will have to produce minimum of 6 shows & complete at least 1 program per month. For more info, contact: Mark J. Sindler, exec. director, Cultural Cable Channel (504) 529-3366.

MACDOWELL COLONY seeks film/video artists for residencies of up to 2 mos. at multidisciplinary artist community in Petersborough, NH. Deadlines: Jan. 15 (May-Aug. session), April 15 (Sept.-Dec.), Sept. 15 (Jan.-April). Ability to pay not factor for acceptance. Ltd. travel grants avail. Write or call for info, appl.: MacDowell Colony, 100 High St., Peterborough, NH 03458; (603) 924-3886.

NY FOUNDATION FOR THE ARTS awards Artists' Fellowships to individual NY artists. Applicants must be 18 year & older, resident of NY for at least 2 yrs. Cannot be grad or undergrad student, NYFA recipient of the last 3 yrs, or employee or board member of foundation. For more info, call NYFA at (212) 366-6900.

ORAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION announces start of awards program recognizing outstanding work in oral history in several cats. In 1995, award will be made for nonprint format production, incl. film, video, radio program or series, exhibition, or drama that makes significant use of oral history to interpret historical subject. Deadline: April 1. For more info, write: Jan Dodson Barnhart, executive secretary, Oral History Association, Box 3968, Albuquerque, NM 87190-3968.

PENNSYLVANIA HISTORICAL & MUSEUM COMMISSION invites appls for 1995-96 scholars-in-residence program. Provides support for f/t research study at any of facilities maintained by Commission for 4 to 12 consecutive weeks between May 1 & April 30, 1996 at rate of \$1,200/mo. Program open to college & university affiliated schol-

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ars, incl. grad students, ind. researchers, public-sector professionals, writers & others. Deadline: Jan. 20. For info, contact: Division of History, PA Historical & Museum Commission, Box 1026, Harrisburg, PA 17108; (717) 787-3034.

POLLOCK-KRASNER FOUNDATION gives financial assistance to artists of recognizable merit & financial need working as mixed-media or installation artists. Grants awarded throughout yr., \$1,000-\$30,000. For guidelines, write: Pollock-Krasner Foundation, 725 Park Ave., NY, NY 10021.

PRINCESS GRACE FOUNDATION-USA makes awards to thesis film students enrolled in accredited film programs. Please write to determine if your school/university is eligible to apply. Jennifer Reis, Director of Grants Programs, Princess Grace Foundation, 725 Park Ave., NY, NY 10021.

SET IN PHILADELPHIA Screenwriting Competition is accepting submissions nationally for original feature-length screenplays set primarily in Greater Philadelphia Metropolitan Area. All genres accepted; scripts judged on quality & extent they tell genuine Philadelphia story. Awards: \$3,000 prize money, fest passes, story notes by industry professional. Postmark deadline: Jan. 20. Entry fee: \$20. Competition sponsored by Philadelphia Fest of World Cinema produced by International House and Greater Philadelphia Film Office. Winner(s) announced May 1995. Submissions not accepted w/o completed appl. For guidelines/form, send SASE to: PFWC/Screenwriting Competition, Int'l House, 3701 Chestnut St., Philadelphia, PA 19104; (215) 895-6593.

SOUTHERN HUMANITIES MEDIA FUND accepting grant proposals for film/video prods of American South from nonprofit orgs in AL, GA, KY, MS, NC, SC, TN, VA & WV. Deadline: Mar. 6. For apps & info, contact: Virginia Foundation for the Humanities & Public Policy, 145 Ednam Dr., Charlottesville, VA 22903-4629; (804) 924-3296.

TRAVEL GRANTS FUND FOR ARTISTS makes grants to US artists to enhance their professional growth through short-term int'l experiences that enable them to collaborate w/ colleagues. Indiv. media artists should contact Arts International for 1994 apps. & guidelines at: Arts Int'l, 809 United Nations Plaza, NY, NY 10017; (212) 984-5370.

UTAH ARTS COUNCIL offers grants to encourage development, to support realization of specific artistic ideas & to recognize significant contribution artists make to creative environment of Utah. Deadline: Feb. 1. For info, contact: Tey Haines, Utah Arts Council, 617 E. South Temple, Salt Lake City, UT 84102-1177; (801) 533-5895.

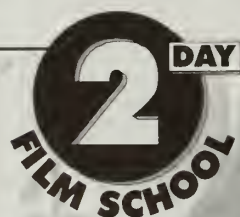
VISUAL STUDIES WORKSHOP MEDIA CENTER in Rochester, NY, accepts proposals on ongoing basis for its Media Access program. Artists, ind. producers & nonprofits awarded access at reduced rates, prod. & postprod. equipment for work on noncommercial projects. For an appl., tour, or more info, call (716) 442-8676.

WRITERS WORKSHOP NATIONAL SCRIPT-WRITING CONTEST is accepting scripts from throughout US. 5 to 6 winners will be chosen to receive \$500 cash award. Winners also receive free tuition for critical evaluation of scripts before panel of

motion picture agents, producers, writers, & directors. This program continues throughout the year. For submission info, send legal size SASE w/ 52¢ postage to: Willard Rogers, Writers Workshop Nat'l Contest, Box 69799, Los Angeles, CA 90069; (213) 933-9232.

TV'S BRIGHT SPOTS

Quentin Tarantino, Julie Dash, and Gregg Araki on public TV? They and other independent filmmakers are coming soon as part of a 10-part series, *American Cinema*, on the art and industry of film in Hollywood and beyond. Produced by the Center for Visual History in NYC, KCET/Los Angeles, and the BBC, the series begins on Monday, January 23, with an examination of "Hollywood style", then turns to the studio system and works its way through the Western, film noir, the romantic comedy, the combat film, and other genres. The last two episodes look at "The Film School Generation" and "The Edge of Hollywood" (running consecutively, from 9-11 pm, Feb. 27). Also appearing on the latter program are the Coen brothers, Jim Jarmusch, Spike Lee, Tom Kalin, John Pierson, Jim Stark, and others. Tune in to see how these independent stalwarts define and defend independent film before a national audience.



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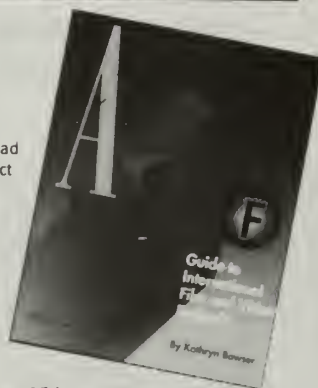
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An important reference source which belongs in the library of every media professional: independent producers, distributors, festival directors, programmers, curators, exhibitors.



AIVF Guide to Film and Video Distributors
A Publication of the Foundation for Independent Video and Film
edited by Kathryn Bowser
184 pages, \$19.50

A must-read for independent film and video-makers searching for the right distributor. The *AIVF Guide to Film and Video Distributors* presents handy profiles of over 150 commercial and nonprofit distributors, practical information and company statistics on the type of work handled, primary markets, relations with producers, marketing and promotion, foreign distribution and contacts. Fully indexed, with additional contact lists of cable/satellite services and public television outlets, as well as a bibliography. This is the best compendium of distribution and information especially tailored for independent producers available.



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Continued from p. 64

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Contact: Sowande Tichawonna (202) 232-0353

MOVING FORWARD ...

Members are organizing AIVF salons in Austin and Dallas, TX, Stamford, CT, Rochester, NY, Durham, NC, Madison, WI, Kansas City, MO and Phoenix, AZ! For specific information on where and when, or to talk to us about starting something in your area, call Pam Calvert (212) 473-3400.

PRODUCTION INSURANCE UPDATE

After an excruciating quantity of legal paperwork with the State Insurance Commissioner to change the carrier since the last one went out of business, we are pleased to announce that we are once again able to offer discounted commercial general liability insurance to our members through Reliance Insurance Co. of Illinois. Coverage is available to members in almost all states, basic premium is \$500-\$1500 depending on term. For info, contact broker Coulter and Sands (212) 742-9850.

...AND A HEALTH INSURANCE REMINDER

California members who are applying for the Cigna health policy during the open enrollment period should remember the **January 30, 1995** postmark deadline for returning these materials to TEIGET. To recap the information in the December magazine, *this health plan is open to all applicants regardless of medical history during the open enrollment period only*. Coverage may begin January 1, February 1, or March 1, but the deadline is the same regardless of the date the policy begins. Members may choose between an HMO and a combination plan that allows you to go outside the HMO network. For specific info and appl., contact: TEIGET, 845 3rd Ave., NY, NY 10022; (212) 758-5675; (800) 886-7504.

TRADE DISCOUNT UPDATE

The New York office of Studio Film and Tape is expanding their discount offer to AIVF members. In addition to offering a five percent discount on Kodak short-ends and recans, they will also offer a 10 percent discount on new Fuji film. They are at 630 9th Ave., NYC; contact John Troyan, (212) 977-9330. At press time, we are contacting Studio's LA branch to negotiate a similar discount; if we are successful, it will be announced in the March issue of the magazine.

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

It's not too soon to begin thinking about nominations for the AIVF board of directors. Board members are elected to a three-year term of office; the board gathers 4x/yr in NYC for weekend meetings (AIVF pays the travel costs if you live elsewhere).

We have an active board; members must be prepared to set aside time to fulfill board responsibilities, which include:

- Attendance at all board meetings and participation in conference calls when necessary;
- Prep for meetings by reading advance materials;
- Active participation in one or more committees as determined by organization's needs and as requested by board chair or exec. director; fulfillment of commitments within agreed-upon guidelines;
- General support for the executive director/staff.

Board nominations must be made by current AIVF members in good standing; you may nominate yourself. Board members must be at least 19 years old. To make a nomination, send or fax (212/677-8732) the name, address, and telephone number of the nominee and nominator; we cannot accept nominations over the phone. Deadline: Friday, April 7 at AIVF's annual meeting.

AIVFONLINE

Find information, technical tips, advocacy updates, and member gossip, questions & news on AIVF's America OnLine niche.

KEYWORD: ABBATE

Look for AIVF under the ABBATE message center topics.

FILM & VIDEO #INDEPENDENT MONTHLY

In upcoming issues:

- Inside public TV: What is a Program Director's role and how can media-makers reach them?
- The hows and whys of single-person shoots.
- Feminist Film Theory and Female Directors
- The National Endowment for the Humanities: An update and interview with Media Program officers.
- Intellectual Property Rights in the New Information Age.

Plus, festival reviews of Sundance and Raindance, the Hamptons Film Festival, and much more!

The Foundation for Independent Video and Film (FIVF), the foundation affiliate of the Association for Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF), supports a variety of programs and services for the independent media community, including publication of *The Independent*, operation of the Festival Bureau, seminars and workshops, and an information clearing house. None of this work would be possible without the generous support of the AIVF membership and the following organizations:

The Center for Arts Criticism, Consolidated Edison Company of New York, John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts, National Video Resources, New York State Council on the Arts, The Rockefeller Foundation, and The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc.

We also wish to thank the following individuals and organizational members:

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Nonprofit Members

ACS Network Productions, Washington, DC; Alternate Current, New York, NY; American Civil Liberties Union, New York, NY; American Film Institute, Los Angeles, CA; Ann Arbor Community Access TV, Ann Arbor, MI; Ann Arbor Film Festival, Ann Arbor, MI; Appalshop, Whitesburg, KY; John Armstrong, Brooklyn, NY; The Asia Society, New York, NY; Assemblage, New York, NY; Athens Center for Film & Video, Athens, OH; Bennu Productions, Yonkers, NY; Benton Foundation, Washington, DC; Black Planet Productions, New York, NY; Blackside, Inc., Boston, MA; Breckenridge Festival of Film, Breckenridge, CO; Carnegie Institute, Pittsburgh, PA; Carved Image Productions, New York, NY; Center for Investigative Reporting, San Francisco, CA; Center for New Media, New York, NY; Chicago Access Corp., Chicago, IL; Chicago Video Project, Chicago, IL; Citiruma LTDA Film and Video Productions, Bogota, Columbia; Coe Film Associates, New York, NY; Colelli Productions, Columbus, OH; Columbia College, Chicago, IL; Columbus Community Cable Access, Columbus, OH; Command Communications, Rye Brook, NY; Common Voice Films, New York, NY; MHCC Communication Arts, Gresham, OR; Community Television Network, Chicago, IL; Denver International Film Society, Denver, CO; State Univ. of New York-Buffalo, Buffalo, NY; Documentary Resource Ctr., Lemont, PA; Duke Univ., Durham, NC; Dyke TV, New York, NY; Eclipse Communications, Springfield, MA; Edison-Black Maria Film Festival, Jersey City, NJ; Educational Video Center, New York, NY; Edwards Films, Eagle Bridge, NY; Empowerment Project, Chapel Hill, NC; Eximus Company, Fort Lauderdale, FL; The Film Crew, Woodland Hills, CA; Fox Chapel High School, Pittsburgh, PA; Gay Men's Health Crisis, New York, NY; Great Lakes Film and Video, Milwaukee, WI; Idaho State Univ., Pocatello, ID; Image Film Video Center, Atlanta, GA; International Cultural Programming, New York, NY; International Audiochrome, Rye, NY; International Film Seminars, New York, NY; ITVS, St. Paul, MN; The Jewish Museum, New York, NY; Komplex Studio Merdeka, Selangor, Malaysia; Little City Foundation/Media Arts, Palatine, IL; Long Beach Museum of Art, Long Beach, CA; Manhattan Neighborhood Network, New York, NY; Mesilla Valley Film Society, Mesilla, NM; Milestone Entertainment, Irving, TX; Miranda Smith Productions, Boulder, CO; Missoula Community Access, Missoula MT; NAATA, San Francisco, CA; NAMAC, Oakland, CA; KCET National Latino Community Center, Los Angeles, CA; National Center for Film & Video Preservation, Los Angeles, CA; National Video Resources, New York, NY; Neighborhood Film/Video Project, Philadelphia, PA; Neon, Inc., New York, NY; New Image Productions, Las Vegas, NV; New Liberty Productions, Philadelphia, PA; 911 Media Arts Center, Seattle, WA; Ohio Arts Council, Columbus, OH; Ohio Univ., Athens, OH; One Eighty One Productions, New York, NY; Outside in July, New York, NY; Paul Robeson Fund/Funding Exchange, New York, NY; Pittsburgh Filmmakers, Pittsburgh, PA; Pro Videographers, Morton Grove, IL; Univ. of Nebraska-Lincoln, Lincoln, NE; Merlina Rich, New York, NY; Ross-Gafney, New York, NY; San Francisco Art Institute, San Francisco, CA; Santa Fe Community College, Santa Fe, NM; School of the Art Institute, Chicago, IL; Scribe Video Center, Philadelphia, PA; Southwest Alternate Media Project, Houston, TX; Squeaky Wheel, Buffalo, NY; Strato Films, Hollywood, CA; SUNY/Buffalo-Dept. Media Studies, Buffalo, NY; Swiss Institute, New York, NY; Terrace Films, Brooklyn, NY; Thurston Community TV, Olympia, WA; Tucson Community Cable Corp., Tucson, AZ; Univ. of Southern Florida, Tampa, FL; Univ. of Arizona, Tucson, AZ; Univ. of Hawaii, Honolulu, HI; UMAB/School of Social Work Media Center, Baltimore, MD; Univ. of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, WI; USA Film Festival, Dallas, TX; Vancouver Film School, Vancouver, British Columbia; Veritas International, Elmhurst, IL; Video Data Bank, Chicago, IL; Video Pool, Winnipeg, Manitoba; View Video, New York, NY; Virginia Festival of American Film, Charlottesville, VA; West Hollywood Public Access, West Hollywood, CA; WNET/13, New York, NY; Women Make Movies, New York, NY; Yann Beauvais, Paris; York University Libraries, North York, Ontario; Zeitgeist Film, Tampa, FL

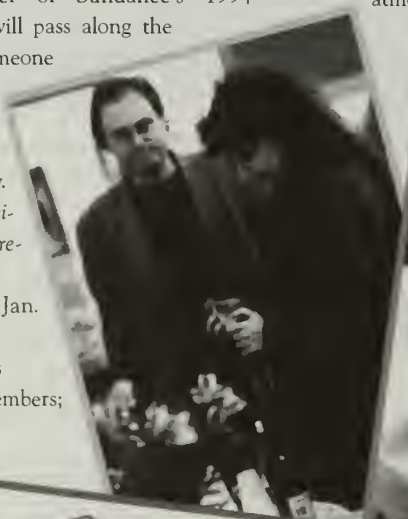
UPCOMING EVENTS

WORKSHOPS

THE REAL DEAL: SUNDANCE

Sundance is now without a doubt the single most important festival for American independents—but it's all too easy to wander around dazed and confused, especially if it's your first time. Kevin Smith and Scott Mosier, the producers/directors of *Clerks*, co-winner of Sundance's 1994 Filmmakers Trophy, will pass along the advice they wish someone had told them before they went last year. Not to be missed—reserve early. *Limited to 20 participants; pre-payment required.*

When: Thursday, Jan. 12, 6:30 pm
Where: AIVF offices
Price: \$8 AIVF members; \$10 others



Boston Celebration: At a launch party for *The Independent's* Regional Spotlight on Boston issue [November 1994], area filmmakers Jeanne Jordan and Steven Ascher (*Troublesome Creek: a Midwestern*) check out the spread (top left); Anne Marie Stein (BF/VF) and Susi Walsh (Newton Television Foundation), cosponsors of the event (top right); during a solemn moment in the festivities, party attendees plot a strategy for dealing with cuts in the NEA's Media Arts Program budget as well as the elimination of the agency's subgrant categories. Photos: Hélène Caux (top right) and Patricia Thomson.

CONSUMER'S GUIDE TO PRODUCTION INSURANCE

And speaking of dazed and confused... Debra Kozee of Coulter and Sands will present a much-needed overview of the various kinds of coverages needed for shoots and how to sift through the pages of jargon on an insurance policy to decide what's right for your situation. She'll tell you the questions you should ask a broker and what to look for—and look out for—in shopping around. *Limited to 20 participants; pre-payment required.*

When: Monday, February 13, 7 pm
Where: AIVF offices
Price: \$12 AIVF members; \$15 others

MEET & GREETs

These are opportunities for members to meet producers, distributors, funders, programmers, and others, to exchange information in an informal atmosphere at the AIVF offices. *Free; open to AIVF members only.*

Back by popular demand!

RICARDO BLOCH

New York film & video program consultant, Jerome Foundation.

When: March date tba; call office for update
Note: This Meet & Greet only open to members who did not register for the October Jerome Foundation event.

LOS ANGELES MEET AND GREET: ELLIOT GROVE

Director, Raindance Market
 New festival and market in London for independent film and videomakers.

When: Monday, Feb. 27, 7:00pm
Where: tba; members will receive mailing
 Call Doug Lindeman, (213) 936-6677, for more information and to reserve.

MEMBER ORIENTATION

Come to our offices for a half-hour briefing on the organization's services, meet the membership program staff, and be introduced to the resource library. *RSVP encouraged.*

When: Wednesday, February 15, 5:30 pm
Where: AIVF offices

"MANY TO MANY" MONTHLY MEMBER SALONS

This is a monthly opportunity for members to discuss work, meet other independents, share war stories, and connect with the AIVF community across the country. *Note:* since our copy deadline is two months before the meetings listed below, be sure to call the local organizers to confirm that there have been no last-minute changes.

Boston:



When: Jan. 10 (Tues.), Feb. 8 (Wed.), 7 pm.
Where: Newton Television Foundation, 1608 Beacon St., Newton
 Contact: Susan Walsh (617) 965-8477

Chicago:

When: Jan. 10, Feb. 14, 7:30 pm
Where: Chicago Filmmakers, 1543 W. Division St. Contact: Kirk Pennak (312) 275-5326

Denver:

Meeting not set at press time.
 Contact: Diane Markrow (303) 989-6466

Los Angeles:

When: Jan. 4, Feb. 1, 7 pm
Where: Lou de Chris Cafe, 8164 Melrose (beside Improv)
 Contact: Doug Lindeman, (213) 936-6677

New York:

Continued on p. 62.

Limited to 20 participants. RSVP required.

ABBY TERKUHL

Senior VP, On-Air Creative & Animation MTV: Music Television
 Terkuhle develops new characters and shows, oversees MTV's in-house animation studio, and is exploring new options for interactive programming.

When: Tuesday, Jan. 24, 6:30 pm

PAUL BYRNES

Director, Sydney Film Festival
 Major international Australian film festival.

When: Late February date tba; call office for update

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- ☐ You're sued for film content, unauthorized use, or failure to obtain clearance?
- ☐ What if you're not insured?



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INSIDE: What Public TV Program Directors Do

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THE INDEPENDENT

M O N H L Y

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MCELWEE, JENNIFER FOX &
ALAN BERLINER DISCUSS THE INS
AND OUTS OF SOLO SHOTS

ON THEIR OWN

A publication of the Foundation for Independent Video and Film

Maggie Cogan in *Jupiter's Wife*



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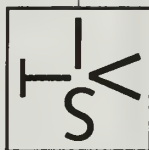
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DEAR COLLEAGUES

THE MIGHTY MORPHIN' POWER RANGERS

— NOT BIG BIRD — OPENED THE 104TH CONGRESS

with a rousing demonstration of strength and agility. By now, the American public has heard that the intentions of the new leadership in the U.S. House of Representatives are clear — to “zero out” funding for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), the institution that provides the core dollars to public television and radio stations and critical production and programming support, such as the Independent Television Service (ITVS). The same proposal may be introduced concerning the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH).



While the call for the elimination of public television and radio are being made on the arguments of the squeeze to balance the federal budget, the proliferation of cable television, and the “necessity” of creating a market-driven system, it is clear that ideology is driving this debate.

In the words of the new House Speaker, it is important to stop the “eating of taxpayers’ money.” In reality, it means the elimination of democratic forums for public education, ideas, and exchange.

- Each taxpayer spends under a dollar per year on public broadcasting.
- In the 63% of American households which are able to subscribe to cable, the average annual cost per household is \$389 per year.
- The Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) is an independent, non-profit corporation that administers federal funds for the public broadcast community. The bulk of federal funds that go to CPB are

redistributed to television and radio stations throughout the nation, assist in funding numerous PBS and NPR programs and activities, and support specific services such as ITVS and the national Minority Consortia.

- CPB money is often “first dollar”, and in turn, leverages other support — viewer support, membership, corporate underwriting, and creative partnerships within the community at the civic, educational, and cultural level. This is a successful and documented example of how federalism and localism can work together.

• Public broadcasting’s educational programs, materials, and outreach services to schools, viewers, and communities represent an important part of our federal government’s responsibility to provide affordable quality services for all segments of our society, regardless of age, income, geography, gender, culture, or race. Public broadcasting remains a steadfast and critical forum to address the needs and challenges of the nation’s diverse communities as well as serving the educational needs of children and adults.

- The bipartisan Carnegie Commission in 1967 recommended to Congress the creation of a public broadcasting system to be an alternative to commercial television. In the 28 years since, public broadcasting has demonstrated time and again its invaluable contribution as a counterweight to the barrage of commercialism and violence-prone programming that is offered on commercial and cable television. We know what a more commercial system of broadcasting would look like...it’s called commercial broadcasting.

• Public broadcasting is the one of the few public forums that is committed to programming that reflects the issues and needs of our communities including minorities, youth, senior citizens, and other “invisible” segments of our society. To define public media as “conservative” or “liberal” is to fail to understand the richness and service of public television and radio, and their respective contributions to public dialogue and discourse.

• The Independent Television Service (ITVS) in its brief four years of operations, has been fulfilling its mandate to fund, distribute, and promote programming about issues which are consistently under-represented in the medium and/or of interest to under-served communities. We are a successful example of a challenging and fruitful partnership between independent producers, the station community, and audiences.

The elimination of CPB, as proposed by new Congressional leaders, will inflict great injury to stations — rural and urban. It will savage, if not kill off, efforts by independent producers and minority communities to represent a whole America. Ultimately, the public will lose — permanently.

Now is the time to act. This is *not* just another skirmish. The current proposals are the most significant threat ever to wipe out public media and for Congress to abdicate this public trust. Please act now.

Most sincerely,

James Yee
Executive Director
Independent Television Service

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We are accepting applications for the position of Film Programmer. Bachelor's or master's degree in an arts-related field is preferred; minimum of two years hands-on experience organizing film programs and screenings required. Applicants should have wide-ranging contacts with independents and studios, and should possess programming experience with festivals or theaters. Booking experience, negotiation skills, and computer literacy needed.

Consideration will be given only to candidates who submit a cover letter, complete resume and salary history to:

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FILM & VIDEO #INDEPENDENT MONTHLY

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Letters to *The Independent* should be addressed to the editor. Letters may be edited for length.

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Producers trying to sell their work to individual public TV stations will most likely wind up dealing with the program director. Four program directors shed some light on what their jobs involve and how they interact with independents.

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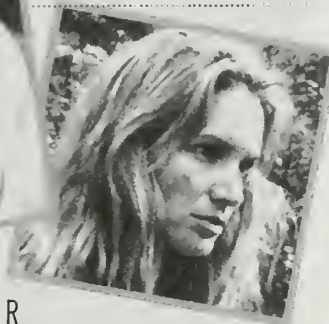
BY ERIN BLACKWELL

Kayo Hatta, writer/director: *Picture Bride*

BY FATIMAH TOBING RONY

Marilyn Freeman, talk show producer: *American Values* BY RAY KELLEHER

COVER: From *Jupiter's Wife*, Michel Negroponte's portrait of a homeless woman living in Central Park. In this issue, Mitch Albert talks to Negroponte and other mediamakers about solo shoots and why some choose to act as their own one-person crew. Photo courtesy filmmaker.



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ACCESS FOR ALL

To the editor:

It was good to see public access cable mentioned positively in your recent Boston issue [November 1994]. Public access centers do play an important role in Boston's independent media scene. Christine Sandvik correctly reported my observation that new immigrants in particular have made tremendous use of Somerville Community Access Television (SCAT) and other local access channels. But she misinterpreted me as disparaging the use of public access "merely for personal expression." I have often seen artists and people who might not call themselves artists use SCAT in revealing and provocative ways.

I'll give two examples: For her experimental *Test Tape*, video artist Sarah Smiley recorded people in Harvard Square telling how they feel when they're about to take a test. She combined this anxious soundtrack with computer-processed video. The short tape repeated on the access channel from midnight til morning, periodically inviting viewers to call a phone number, where an answering machine recorded their responses. Smiley planned to incorporate the responses into an expanded *Test Tape*.

At around the same time, high school student Natalia Veléz videotaped two friends on their way home from school. Then she audiotaped them as they watched the footage. Her edited video, *Amigas*, conveys movingly the intimacy between teenage girlfriends.

I could add dozens of other examples of beautiful or disturbing work that could only have been produced at a public access center that encourages freedom and competence in independent video production—either because uncensored narrowcasting allows a broad spectrum of unknown local viewers to interact and collaborate with the artists (as with Smiley's *Test Tape*), or because the producer would never otherwise have access to sympathetic training and free, accessible facilities (as with Veléz's *Amigas*), or because the center brings together such an astounding diversity of people within four walls and a channel.

There is no place besides public access where people can express themselves—personally or politically—on television without money, without grants, without on-line high-tech standards, without knowing how to knock on doors, without perfect English, without approval, without having to appeal to consumerism or sensationalism. I have found this openness invaluable to having community dialogue, yes, but also to the development and exchange of personal expression.

Abigail Norman

Somerville Community Access Television
Somerville, Massachusetts

HOW ABOUT HAMPSHIRE?

To the editor:

I was disappointed that Hampshire College was omitted from the article "Nine Film Schools Not To Be Overlooked" [August/September 1994]. Of course,

you couldn't include every film school, but Hampshire has so many alumni working at the highest levels in every sector of the film business, it is a major oversight not to include it.

A liberal arts college with 1,000 students, located in western Massachusetts, Hampshire has probably graduated fewer filmmakers in its brief 25-year history than just one class at UCLA or NYU. But if credits equal success—how about four Academy Awards and 15 nominations?—then Hampshire will go head to head with the biggest universities.

Choose a field and Hampshire grads are doing some of the finest work in it. In documentary, Ken Burns changed the face of public television with *The Civil War*. Rob Epstein won two Oscars for *The Times of Harvey Milk* and *Common Threads*. Peter Friedman made *Silverlake Life*, about dying from AIDS. Buddy Squires is one of the busiest cinematographers in the business, shooting most of Ken Burns's films and the Oscar-nominated *Chimps*, as well as *So Like Us* for Kirk Simon and Karen Goodman, also alumni. Terry Hopkins shot the architecture series *Pride of Place* and *Carlos Fuentes' Latin America*, while Tom Sigel shot the Oscar-winning *Witness to War: Dr. Charlie Clements*.

In Hollywood, Michael Peiser produced *Ruthless People* and *Distinguished Gentlemen*, Barry Sonnenfeld directed *The Addams Family* and *Addams Family Values* after a successful career as a director of photography on *Raising Arizona*, *Big*, *Misery*, and *Miller's Crossing*. Ezra Swerdlow produced *Stand By Me* and was associate producer of seven of Woody Allen's films. Jeff Maguire wrote *In the Line of Fire* and Hildy Gottlieb Hill, formerly an agent at ICM where she represented Eddie Murphy, Jeff Goldblum, and Dana Carvey, is now an independent producer.

On network television, John Falsey created *Northern Exposure* and *I'll Fly Away*. Paul Margolis was a writer on the *MacGyver* series and is now executive story editor on *Sirens*. Martha Morgan was the first woman to shoot national network news. In children's television, Mark Mannuci won two Emmys for directing *Reading Rainbow*. Finally, let's not forget animation, where Steve Oakes created *Pee Wee's Playhouse* for CBS and *The Bud Bowl* series of spots, while Emily Hubley has won a slew of awards for her animation.

The list could go on for pages, but you get the point. Hampshire is a school that stresses how one sees rather than developing technique alone, a progressive college where students design their own curriculum. Students can take classes at any of the four colleges in the area: Amherst College, Smith College, the University of Massachusetts and Mt. Holyoke College, giving large school offerings to a small program.

Hampshire College celebrates its twenty-fifth anniversary in 1995 and continues to turn out filmmakers who distinguish themselves by making great films. It is a vibrant place that definitely cannot be overlooked when doing even a small survey of film schools.

Roger M. Sherman

Producer/director; Founder of Florentine Films
New York, New York

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TOUGH COOKIES

The House Republican majority

has done away with the

Congressional Arts Caucus.

Government funding for public

television and the NEA may be

next. Capitol Hill still has a

few media-arts supporters

pulling for the field.

Who are they? Read on.

Norman Mailer's proverbial "shit storm" hit the arts community last November when the GOP electorally massacred the Democratic party, taking control of Congress for the first time in 40 years. The question posed by supporters of both the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and public broadcasting was not whether or not the two institutions would be affected, but just how severely.

James Yee, executive director of the Independent Television Service (ITVS), summed up the current climate in a December letter to constituents: "Public television has never been subjected to as close (and partisan) a scrutiny as it will face in 1995. Like it or not, we must accept the reality that the new Congress will do its utmost to pare down federal funding by weeding out programs its new majority feels should no longer be the business of government."

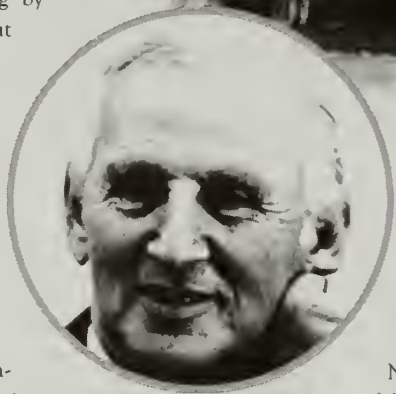
Yee lists a number of agencies and organizations—from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS), and the NEA to the National Black Programming Consortium, the National Asian American Telecommunications Association (NAATA), and ITVS—all of which lack immunity from the right-leaning Republicans' philosophical objection to government involvement in arts funding of any kind.

In the Senate, Republican leadership is more moderate. Jim Jeffords (R-VT), for one, says sav-

ing
t h e
NEA is one
of his top priorities. With Jeffords and Nancy Kassenbaum (R-KS) chairing relevant committees, reauthorization looks quite possible in the Senate.

But in the House, Speaker Newt Gingrich has moved reauthorization into a subcommittee called Early Childhood, Youth, and Families. The committee chair Randy "Duke" Cunningham repeatedly has voted to abolish the NEA. Observers on Capitol Hill believe legislation to reauthorize the Endowment will never leave

CHEW ON THIS: Despite all you've heard, media artists do have some friends in Congress. Supporters include (L. to R.) Sidney R. Yates (D-IL), who recently introduced legislation that would extend the NEA for two more years; Ralph Regula (R-OH), a member of the Subcommittee on the Interior; Marge Roukema (R-NJ), chair of the Subcommittee on Labor-Management Relations; and William Goodling (R-PA), the new chair of the House Committee on Education and Labor. Courtesy offices of Sidney Yates, Ralph Regula, Marge Roukema, and William Goodling; Cookie Monster photo courtesy PBS



Cunningham's subcommittee. If the worst-case scenario comes to pass, the NEA's fate may land in the hands of a conference committee, which would include members of the House and Senate.

LSO LONG, DEARIE

Demonstrating its clout, the incoming House Republican majority's first potentially damaging move was to abolish 28 Legislative Service Organizations (LSOs), including the Congressional Arts Caucus (CAC), in December. LSOs are support organizations that members join voluntarily to receive independent research, legislative analysis, and information on specific issues of shared interest. Among its other tasks, the CAC worked to highlight the benefits of federal support for arts and culture to Congress. Word on how successful the caucus's efforts were are mixed among members of the arts community.

"The CAC was hardly a bastion of support, at least vocal, for our concerns," David Mendoza, executive director of the National Campaign for Freedom of Expression (NCFE), announced over the Artswire network. "It was like a

social group that liked to take trips to New York City to meet stars and go to the theater. Let's face it,"

he added, "if it had any clout, we wouldn't have been in the fix we've been in. But they would blame those pesky

artists."

Yet, as another Artswire correspondent pointed out, "Losing

these caucuses means more special interest and less independent analysis."

The voice vote to eliminate the LSOs does not bode well for bastions of governmental arts funding, namely the NEA; nor does Gingrich's position on the agency. He has said he would privatize the NEA and CPB, but he's yet to explain what he means by "privitization."

"The private sector is constantly being presented as the thing that's going to fill the gap," Ella

King Torrey, president of Grantmakers in the Arts, which represents Ford, MacArthur, and other foundations, recently told the *Village Voice*. "We can tell you absolutely and for sure that that is not going to be the case in arts funding."

The House Republican's Contract with America, which is now making its way through various committees, includes support for an amendment that would cut the budgets for the NEA, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, the Smithsonian Institution, and the National Gallery of Art by two percent each year for the next five years. At press time, Congress was slated to vote on each of the points outlined in the contract within their first 100 days in office.

Plans such as these have prompted media arts supporters to ask: Is anyone out there sympathetic to our cause? Fortunately, the answer is yes. Unfortunately, the number of arts-friendly senators and congressmen has dropped considerably, and the community will have to rely on the remaining lot to voice their concerns.

HELLO OUT THERE

The short list of returning Republican Senators who have 100-percent NEA voting records are Bob Packwood (R-OR), John Chafee (R-RI), and James Jeffords (R-VT). In the House, which will presumably be taking the lead on legislative issues this session, solid NEA supporters include Sherwood Boehlert (NY); William Clinger (PA); Vernon Ehlers (MI), Benjamin Gilman (NY), Amo Houghton (NY); Stephen Horn (CA), Nancy Johnson (CT); Jim Leach (IA); and Connie Morella (MD). An informal poll of Congressional Republicans with pro-NEA voting records indicates they haven't turned their backs on the arts; No one said they would vote against the NEA, but a few said they may vote to trim the Endowment's budget.

William Goodling (R-PA), the new chair of the House Committee on Education and Labor (which is where legislation to authorize the work of the endowment originates), previously voted against elimination of the NEA. He did, however, support cutting the agency's budget by \$92.6 million (54 percent) and now says he would like to see the budget reduced "in gradual steps." Marge Roukema (R-NJ), chair of the Subcommittee on Labor-Management Relations, also opposed elimination but supported budget cuts, as did the new chairs of the Appropriations committees, Joe McDade (House Appropriations) and Ralph Regula (Subcommittee on the Interior).

In a move to keep the NEA from being eliminated on technical grounds, Sidney Yates (D-IL), a longtime NEA supporter, recently introduced legislation that would extend the agency for another two years. This, says Yates in a letter to

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MONEY [FOR PUBLIC TV],
BUT I THINK THEY OUGHT TO BE
HONEST. THESE ARE A BUNCH OF
RICH, UPPER-CLASS PEOPLE
WHO WANT THEIR TOY
TO PLAY WITH."**

— Speaker of the House
Newt Gingrich, discussing the future of public
broadcasting on C-Span, January 1995.

* The Independent is soliciting quotes about the media arts for "On the Record." If you come across a brilliant, funny, stupid, or enlightening quote, send it to Michele Shapiro (see masthead for mail/fax/email; no calls, please). Include name & date of publication in which quote first appeared. If your quote is used, you'll receive a free one-year individual membership to AIVE.

constituents, will "give the NEA the breathing room necessary to prepare a plan for passing a longer reauthorization at a later date."

With both the NEA's reauthorization and appropriation slated for early 1995, the agency's supporters will be put to their first true test. "NEA funding could be zero in the new few months," said a spokesperson in the office of Representative Ralph Regula (R-OH). "If the House votes against funding, that's 50 percent right there. Someone at the NEA needs to seriously look at the possibility that this may be what will happen." The NEA counts Regula, the new House Appropriations Committee chair, as a valuable moderate. But one Capitol Hill congressional insider said when the actual votes come up for NEA-related issues, congressmen like Regula will vote the party line regardless of any perceived under-the-table handshakes.

On the surface at least, the NEA remains cool. "We still have a lot of friends on Capitol Hill," spokesman Cherie Simon told *Daily Variety* shortly after the elections last November. Josh Dare, spokesperson for the Media Program, said a month later that the agency isn't "hunkering down and digging in just yet. Instead we're going on the offensive and getting out letters [to arts administrators encouraging them to rally their constituents]."

PBS ON THE LINE

Staunchly conservative House subcommittee chair Jack Fields has PBS shaking in its booties. Fields, a former door-to-door cemetery plot salesman, will control public television's budget with a large pair of figurative scissors in his grasp.

In January, a House Appropriations Subcommittee met to mull over possible cuts to CPB's \$285 million budget; the cuts could take effect as early as this year. CPB, a federally funded, private corporation chartered by Congress in 1967, appropriates funds to PBS and National Public Radio as well as contributing to independent productions and local stations.

PBS's situation is not as bleak in the Senate, where Mark Hatfield (R-OR), reputedly the most liberal Senate Republican, heads its oversight committee. Incoming Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole, however, has long been an outspoken critic of public television's "leftist bias." He is friendly with David Horowitz (once a speechwriter for Dole), who has devoted much of his career to criticizing PBS's alleged bias. In a recent issue of *Comint*, the publication Horowitz coedits with Laurence Jarvik (another high profile conservative critic of PBS who created a controversy around its miniseries *Tales of the City*), the two maligned ITVS, a CPB-funded programming entity formed by Congress in 1989 to increase the diversity of programs available to public television. Currently ITVS has over 80 single programs and eight limited series in production or distribution.

Horowitz' and Jarvik's attack on ITVS may be a harbinger of congressional action. ITVS's Yee has issued a call-to-action on the part of the media arts community to support public broadcasting efforts. He suggests connecting with a local media organization, arts institution, or public television station to find out the latest word on legislative news around public broadcasting and the cultural arts; lobbying opinion leaders and legislators; committing to become involved in future efforts to drum up support for public broadcasting; examining partnership possibilities with local stations; and, most fittingly in his case, keeping apprised of new developments at ITVS.

In response to Congress's threats thus far, arts administrators and artists who are already stretched to the limit are mustering the strength—and the financial means—to fight the culture war. "I think it's a challenge the arts community can meet," said Judy Golub of the American Arts Alliance. "But there's a lot of work ahead. We have jobs to be advocates for the arts, and we need to do our jobs."

CHRISTOPHER BORRELLI, WITH ADDITIONAL
REPORTING BY MICHELE SHAPIRO

*Christopher Borrelli has contributed articles to
Premiere and Wired.*

For AIVE activity surrounding these issues, see
"AIVE Advocacy" column on p. 59.

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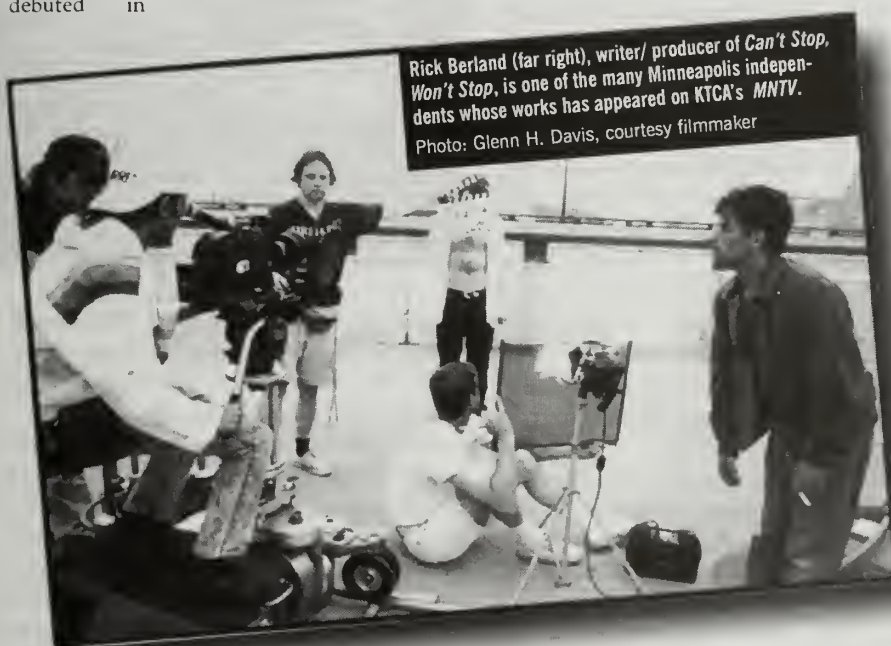
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I WANT MY MNTV

A revamped MNTV, the television showcase for Minneapolis-based independent film and video artists, is scheduled to return to Twin Cities public television later this year. The series, which debuted in

the number of local artists whose work is featured in the program. KTCA enters each season with no preconceived plan regarding how many episodes will be produced. All submissions considered acceptable for the series make the cut. The upcoming season will include 15 episodes. About half will present single half-hour works, and the rest will compile groups of two to five different pieces, often linked by common subject matter or themes.

KTCA typically receives 150 to 200 responses to its annual call for entries for



1990,

presents weekly collections of local work selected by a panel of representatives from some of the area's top media arts support organizations.

MNTV was originally scheduled to begin its fifth season last fall, but demands of other KTCA-TV projects forced station staff to postpone the program. Now, new series producer Andy Rothschild is set to edit the latest shows in April, with air dates tentatively scheduled for the summer.

The upcoming season will introduce some changes in the series. Episodes will run a half-hour, rather than an hour, and individual pieces will be preceded by brief on-camera interviews with the mediamakers featured that week.

"I hope that it will make the series as much about making films and videos as it is about watching them," says Rothschild, whose own work, *Closed Circuit*, aired on MNTV during the show's fourth season. "There is a lot of passion and enthusiasm that goes into doing your work as a filmmaker or videomaker, and I'd like to convey some of that to people who are watching."

MNTV's shorter format will not cut down on

MNTV. Artists submit completed works that are viewed separately by representatives from two of the program's nine participating partners: Cable Access of Saint Paul; Independent Feature Project North; Intermedia Arts Minnesota; KTCA; the Minnesota Film Board; the Playwrights' Center; Screenwriters' Workshop; the University Film Society; and the Walker Art Center's Film/Video Department. Entrants who receive at least one positive vote remain in contention and advance to a second round of judging, at which time representatives from all nine organizations screen and discuss the works before casting their votes. There is no ranking or scoring system. A simple majority rules. Six votes puts a piece on the air.

"We don't pretend that it's scientific," Rothschild admits. "We each apply personal criteria." Judges are encouraged, however, to favor work that is personal, idiosyncratic, and original in form or content. Particular consideration is given to pieces that present a voice or point of view underrepresented by the media. Production values are definitely downplayed during the selection process. This season's fare ranges from one-minute pieces edited in-camera by first-time filmmakers to

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"Television is the most popular medium for consumption right now. There is this huge audience," says Kim Downing, whose *Evening at Home* will soon appear on MNTV. She expects her inclusion in the series will add credibility to future bids for film festival appearances. Other producers, however, are pleased the program offers an alternative to such screenings.

"The majority of the audience that would see festival work is kind of converted already," says Geoff Seelinger, whose *Its Outsides Turn With Us*, is also slated for the upcoming MNTV season. "You never know who's going to be influenced by, or who's going to see MNTV. There are a lot of people who will tune in and catch it that will have a new experience through it. It seems like every public broadcasting station should have some kind of a venue like that. I can't imagine why they wouldn't."

For the time being, Downing is just happy to have such an outlet close to home. She says it helps alleviate the myth that a Midwestern artist's career path must go by way of one of the coasts. "There was always that feeling before," she explains. "MNTV means I don't have to move to New York and come back to get shown in my own town."

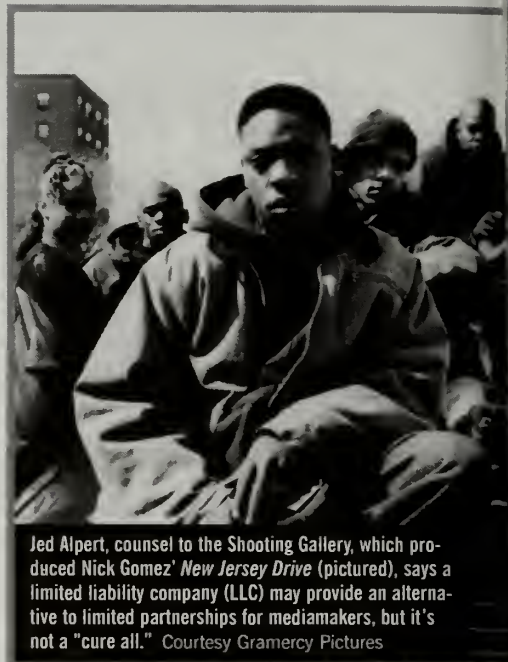
MNTV will begin to accept submissions for its sixth season in the fall of 1995. For more information, contact KTCA after September 1 at (612) 222-1717.

SCOTT BRIGGS

Scott Briggs writes about the arts in Minneapolis.

AT LAST: AN ALTERNATIVE TO LIMITED PARTNERSHIPS

Traditionally, independent medi makers are as creative in financing projects as they are in producing them. New York- and California-based producers have used the conventional business structure of the limited partnership to raise funds for projects, since it allows a producer or production company to act as a general partner and investors as limited partners with liability limited to the extent of their investments [see Stephen M. Goldstein, "The Money Lenders: Loans vs.



Jed Alpert, counsel to the Shooting Gallery, which produced Nick Gomez' *New Jersey Drive* (pictured), says a limited liability company (LLC) may provide an alternative to limited partnerships for medi makers, but it's not a "cure all." Courtesy Gramercy Pictures

Limited Partnerships," April 1994]. Although the general partner has unlimited liability, producers often form corporations to insulate themselves from unlimited financial exposure.

Within the past year, New York and California joined 43 other states in adopting a new form of business entity: the Limited Liability Company or LLC. Flexible in structure, the LLC shares many benefits with both limited partnerships and corporations. It offers limited liability for *all* investors (or "members"), including the party or parties that operate the LLC ("manager[s]"). An LLC's manager need not be a member. Unlike the conventional C-Corporation, which under many state and federal laws is taxed at both the corporate and shareholder levels, an LLC provides the benefit of single or "flow through" taxation on the members themselves (similar to taxation of the partners in a limited partnership) and is not taxed on the LLC level.

In addition, the LLC affords its members the opportunity to participate in management without putting their limited liability at risk. This is not the case with limited partnerships, which preclude a limited partner's active participation in business affairs. With an LLC, however, independent producers who may not relish the possibility of an active managerial role by investors can limit members' power by amending the operating agreement so producers have most or sole authority to manage the project's business affairs.

As managers, independent producers can restrict the sale or transferability of a member's LLC interests. Although the Internal Revenue Service has not yet ruled on whether an LLC should be treated as a partnership or a corporation, characteristics such as the limitation or restriction on transfers of a company's interests

have led state and federal tax authorities to treat a business as a partnership with single, "flow through" taxation on investors rather than a C-Corporation's double taxation.

An LLC may also be less expensive than a limited partnership in the short term, since both a limited partnership and its corporate general partner must file at formation with a state and pay filing and accounting fees to maintain both entities. Yet there are added costs for a New York state LLC; the LLC must pay a \$50-per-member annual fee (\$100 total for LLCs in New York City) and New York continues the arduous publication requirement also required for a limited partnership, in which a notice of the LLC must appear in two newspapers (decided by the county clerk) twice a week for six weeks within 120 days of LLC filing. California has no publication requirement and there is no individual member fee as in New York. However, California LLCs must pay \$800 annually in franchise taxes. It is still uncertain how states that do not offer an LLC (i.e., Hawaii, Vermont, Massachusetts, and Pennsylvania) will treat an LLC seeking investors in their states.

When Laura Lau, producer of the feature film *Grind*, formed an LLC in New Jersey this past year (since New York had not yet enacted LLC legislation), she encountered difficulties opening production accounts with New York banks and obtaining a New York State resale certificate to avoid paying sales taxes on expenditures that went directly into the production of her film.

According to Jed Alpert, counsel to The Shooting Gallery, in Manhattan, which produced Nick Gomez' *Laws of Gravity* and *New Jersey Drive*, the LLC may not be a "cure all" for independents. "There can be different classes of interest [in the LLC], corporate and foreign members, and limited liability for the manager," he observes. Alpert adds that a limited partnership or S-Corporation may be just as effective a business vehicle and that any upfront savings from forming an LLC may be more than offset by the annual member fee—especially when several investors are involved.

As with shares in a limited partnership, LLC interests are subject to securities laws for registration or exemption from registration on both the federal level (through the Securities and Exchange Commission) and each state's "Blue Sky" laws. The LLC member may offset passive losses incurred by investors who do not actively participate in a business to the extent of his or her passive gains. However, because laws may vary by state, a producer should consult an attorney and/or tax advisor on legal and business issues regarding LLCs.

ROBERT L. SEIGEL

Robert L. Seigel is a NYC attorney and a principal in the Cinema Film Consulting firm.

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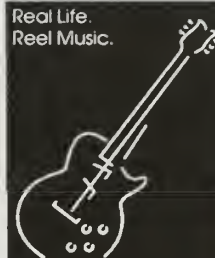
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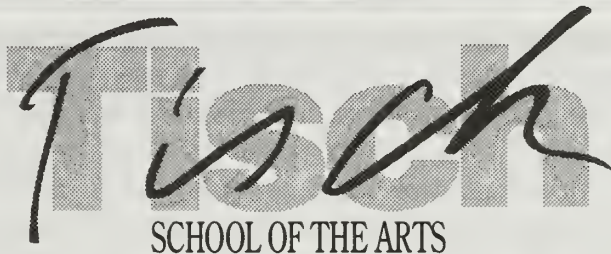
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MARK FINCH: 1962-1995

Mark Finch, artistic director of Frameline and the San Francisco International Lesbian & Gay Film Festival, died in January. At press time, his death was presumed to be suicide.

A native of Manchester, England, Finch, 33, served as distribution manager of Frameline, a nonprofit lesbian and gay media arts organization, from 1990 to 1991. He then returned to London to head the British Film Institute's distribution arm. In 1992, Finch moved back to SF and became Frameline's artistic director. He was the prime force behind the first Lesbian and Gay Media Market, which will be held in conjunction with the 1995 Lesbian and Gay Film festival.

Contributions in his memory can be made to the Mark Finch Fund for Film & Video, c/o the Frameline Film & Video Completion Fund, 346 Ninth St., SF, CA 94103.

SEQUELS

Since *The Independent* reported on the devastating elimination of the regrant programs at the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) ["Media Arts Madness," January/February 1995], some in-house job shuffling has occurred. Two Media Arts staffers, former program director Brian O'Doherty and former assistant director Arthur Tsuchiya, have assumed new staff positions within the NEA. O'Doherty is now director of the Millennium Projects, overseeing projects from all of the agency's programs and disciplines for a kick-off celebration of the new millennium. O'Doherty will continue to serve as Director of the Media Arts Program until the position is filled. Tsuchiya has moved to the NEA's office of Policy, Planning, and Research. According to an NEA spokesperson, no one will be hired to fill his previous post.

The National Film Registry of the Library of Congress recently tapped 25 films for preservation. The new selections bring to 150 the total designated for protection as historically and culturally significant by the Library of Congress and the preservation board. Among the works chosen in 1994 are: Frederick Wiseman's *The Cool World* (1963); *Louisiana Story* (1948), produced by Robert Flaherty, Richard Leacock, and Helen Van Dongen; Bruce Conner's *A Movie* (1958); and *Tabu* (1931), written by Robert Flaherty.

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DEBORAH HOFFMANN
documentarian
**COMPLAINTS
OF A DUTIFUL
DAUGHTER**

BY ERIN BLACKWELL

Leaving the "nasty, dark room" where she made her reputation as an editor, Deborah Hoffmann has taken her place in the spotlight as producer, director, writer, and co-star of *Complaints of a Dutiful Daughter*. The tragicomic 44-minute film portrays the middle-aged filmmaker's coming to terms with her mother's transformation by Alzheimer's. In a heart-warming quid-pro-quo twist, the Jewish matriarch simultaneously overcomes long-standing prejudice to fully accept her lesbian daughter.

What inspired the editor of Marlon Riggs' documentaries *Ethnic Notions* and *Color Adjustment* and Robert Epstein's *The Times of Harvey Milk* to trade the invisible creativity of the cutting-room for the personal revelations of the screen? "I was unaware of what I was doing," claims Hoffmann, a San Franciscan since 1968. "I wasn't aware enough to be as scared as I should have been. It wasn't until we were just about through and I realized I was going to let the world see it, that I started to lose massive amounts of sleep. By then it was too late."

After an award-winning debut at last year's San Francisco International Lesbian and Gay Film Festival, *Complaints* was invited to Sundance and given a slot on PBS' *P.O.V.* series. One thing the film has going for it is its quirky visual style. "*Complaints* is in numerous formats, and you can kind of see that," explains Hoffmann. "The stuff of my mother and me, which looks extremely home-movie-ish, is shot with a consumer camera

the filming while she did the interacting. "It had to be the person who knew my mother as intimately as I did. It couldn't have been anyone else. The film wouldn't have happened without her."

In the film's pivotal moment, the then-84-year-old Doris Hoffmann takes the camera into her own hands and films the filmmakers. A smiling, doe-eyed Reid appears beside a slightly conflicted-looking Hoffmann. Twenty-five minutes in, the



Deborah Hoffman (right) with her mother in *Complaints of a Dutiful Daughter*.

Photo: Cappy Coates, courtesy filmmaker

that you can twirl around on your little finger. The stuff of me talking is shot on Beta SP, a big huge camera with big huge lights. The night-time stuff with the moon was actually shot in 16mm. No real reason, except Frances [Reid, the film's cinematographer,] owns a 16mm camera, and we knew we just wanted to run and get the moon."

At age 47, Hoffmann finds herself in the role of "expert" on video diaries, which led to her invitation to speak at *P.O.V.*'s workshop on the genre in Los Angeles last year. "What I've done—that just so happens to put me on the cutting-edge, which is nowhere I imagined myself being—is that I used a lot of this home-video equipment," she says. "I'm held up as an example, but it's all just a big old accident. And it's also a big old accident that Alzheimer's is now Disease of the Year."

Hoffmann is quick to credit the contribution of Frances Reid, a producer and director in her own right who is also her domestic partner of 10 years. "It's hard to separate out the film and dealing with my mother; neither would have worked without Frances," she says. "For some peculiar reason, my mother went nuts for Frances." In order to make what she originally thought of as a home movie, Hoffmann needed someone to do

film has suddenly defined itself as lesbian-positive. "That was a big decision for me, whether to include that moment or not," says Hoffmann. "I'd worked on a lot of gay films, mostly social-issue films. Now, Ronald Reagan is interested in Alzheimer's, and he and I have seemingly nothing in common. So here I am making a film that would appeal to people who don't usually see films I work on. And yet, my mother kept looking at Frances and saying Frances' name. She insisted Frances be in the film, basically. So I had to decide: am I going to throw this monkey wrench into this nice, middle-American subject of Alzheimer's? Suddenly, it's a gay film."

Editor Jennifer Chinlund, who is not a lesbian, was responsible for the scene's inclusion. "Jennifer was the one who really insisted when I would get cold feet. 'No, you really have to put this in,' she'd say. And she's right. It's so revealing that my mother could have this deep-seated [homophobic] prejudice, which the Alzheimer's makes you realize is based on nothing," says Hoffmann.

Uncomfortable in the role of Pollyanna, Hoffmann nonetheless acknowledges a silver lining when she sees one. "I tell people my mother has Alzheimer's and they say, 'Oh, I'm so sorry.'"

Well, I'm sorry, too, but there's an incredible positive side. I get unconditional approval in a way that I never had when she was who she used to be." Having overcome her prejudices, Doris Hoffmann has apparently accessed a new level of consciousness. "The really weird thing about this is my mother does appear to be on an incredible, other plane now, intuiting on some very deep level," Hoffmann suggests, wary of sounding too New Age. "When I finished the film, the next day I went to visit her. I walked in and she looked up and said, 'Is the film done?'"

No longer able to recognize images of herself, Doris Hoffmann will never see her dutiful daughter's portrait of their breakthrough to unconditional love. However, she may somehow know that together they have created an inspirational message that Ronald Reagan may find irresistible.

Complaints of a Dutiful Daughter is available through: Deborah Hoffman, 5569 Lawton Ave., Oakland, CA 94618; (510) 654-5846; fax: 4783.

Erin Blackwell is arts editor at *Dykespeak*, a San Francisco-based monthly.

KAYO HATTA

writer/director

PICTURE BRIDE

BY FATIMAH TOBING RONY

Like most first-time filmmakers, Kayo Hatta is driven, passionate, and poor, thanks to five years of pouring all her labor and financial resources into her debut feature. Hatta's *Picture Bride*, which won a coveted Audience Award at Sundance and will be released this spring by Miramax, has been heralded as the first dramatic feature film produced and directed by an Asian Pacific American woman. But its genesis has little to do with being the new Asian American flavor of the month. This film, which tells the story of a young Japanese woman who comes to Hawaii in the early 1900s

for an arranged marriage with a sugarcane plantation worker, was over half a decade in the making.

Hatta, a Hawaii-born, second-generation Japanese American, began working in independent film in the mid-eighties with documentary-makers Pat Ferrero and Felicia Lowe. This was "a real good introduction to independent filmmaking," recalls Hatta, who was inspired by their example as women filmmakers. She learned a thing or two about the process of raising money through grants, an education she later put to use when financing *Picture Bride*.

In 1986 Hatta went to the UCLA film school, getting her MFA in 1991. Combining her interests in women's studies and ethnic history while in school, Hatta began researching the plantation period in Hawaii at the turn of the century, a time when 20,000 women were brought from Japan (including Okinawa) and Korea to become wives of the plantation laborers.

"Photography made it possible for these men to find wives," she explains, "instead of matchmaker meetings in the homeland." She began interviewing many former picture brides, but what really inspired Hatta was hearing the recordings of *hole hole bushi*, the songs Japanese women sang when

because, "I had a concept in mind, but I really didn't have a story," she admits. "Trying to make history come to life is very hard. I didn't want it to feel like a docudrama, I wanted it to feel like a real story."

Hatta was convinced the story she wanted to tell couldn't fit into the constraints of a 16mm, 30-minute thesis film. Nonetheless, she used school assignments to film parts of her script, cowritten with her sister, Mari Hatt, which then became visual samples for her grant applications. Because of the historical component of her subject, Hatta applied to sources that traditionally emphasize documentary film, such as the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Paul Robeson Fund, and the Hawaii State Foundation for Culture and the Arts, as well as the American Film Institute and the National Endowment for the Arts.

After graduation, Hatta brought Lisa Onodera and Diane Mei Lin Mark on board as producers. Onodera was previously associate producer of Arthur Dong's *Forbidden City, U.S.A.*, and Mark was writer/associate producer of *Pearls*, an Asian American film series that aired on PBS, as well as former director of development for Asian

Picture Bride director Kayo Hatta (front) with DP Claudio Rocha.
Photo: James Delano, courtesy filmmaker



working in the sugar cane fields. These were "very simple poems expressing their daily life and the hardships they were going through," says Hatta. But they could also be surprisingly bawdy. The raunchiness of the songs and the hardship and abuse they described flew in the face of the stereotype of Japanese women as docile geisha girls. This prompted Hatta to write a film that explores plantation history "from a very personal view... from the eyes of a woman."

It took five years to make the film partially

CineVision. They were able to attract well-known actors to the project, including Youki Kodoh (*Mystery Train*), Tamlyn Tomita (*The Joy Luck Club*), and the legendary Toshiro Mifune, who has appeared in countless Akira Kurosawa films. Mifune was cast in the role of the *benshi*, the silent film narrator. During the era of silent pictures, *benshi* brought films to life by reenacting the different character roles. It was the *benshi*, more than the on-screen actors, who were the main stars of Japanese silent movies. Casting Mifune felt like a

miracle to Hatta. "I realized, 'Oh my God, I'm going to be directing Mifune! What am I going to say to him?'" During the shoot, she found him "wonderful to work with, totally respectful of me as a much younger woman director. He took it seriously, even though it was a small part."

When hiring the crew, Hatta's goal was to work with as many women as possible. "I knew it was going to be a long labor of love," she explains. "It would need people who had a real personal interest in the subject matter, because so much of what is going to carry you through with the crew is the connection to the subject." She also brought in like-spirited and talented men, such as director of photography Claudio Rocha (*Like Water for Chocolate*).

In addition, Hatta received much support from Asian-American communities in Hawaii, who donated catering, hotel rooms, rental cars, and labor (some women's groups, for example, sewed the period costumes).

The seven-and-a-half-week shoot was finished in August 1993. However, *Picture Bride* had a long postproduction period. It was accepted to the 1994 Sundance Film Festival in rough-cut form. A month before the festival, Miramax bought worldwide rights. However, Hatta felt that the film needed more editing and withdrew it from Sundance. The distributor's backing allowed Hatta to undertake some important reshoots and to bring in another editor for major structural reediting. After the picture premiered at Cannes, there was further editing and a whole new music score and sound design added. This version finally had its U.S. premiere at Sundance 1995.

Hatta is aware of the limits feature films face when dealing with the complexities of history. She expresses frustration in not being able to fully portray all aspects of Hawaiian plantation life, especially how the *haoles* (white) plantation owners encouraged the racial stratification of their labor force, which generally included native Hawaiians, Portuguese, Chinese, Koreans, and Filipinos. But in the end, Hatta is satisfied that her vision was realized after those five long years of work.

"It was incredibly hard," she concludes. "For your first film, you normally don't do a period film, set on location, in another state, in another language, with costumes, horses, babies, special effects, fire... everything that people tell you not to do on your first feature, especially if it's low budget. But whenever I got really depressed, I would put on tapes of these old women singing. That would inspire me and keep me going."

A cultural critic and videomaker, *Fatimah Tobing Rony* is currently writing *The Third Eye: Race, Cinema, and Ethnographic Spectacle* (Duke University Press).

This article was published with support from the St. Paul, MN-based Center for Arts Criticism, with a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts.

MARILYN FREEMAN talk show producer AMERICAN VALUES

BY RAY KELLEHER



Marilyn Freeman, producer of the *American Values* series (left) with host Reiko Callner. Courtesy *American Values*

Sometimes a filmmaker chooses the work and sometimes the work chooses her. Whipping up a talk show series with no plan, no money, and no time was not an item on filmmaker Marilyn Freeman's list of fun, spare-time projects. In the summer of 1993, however, a civil rights battle was brewing in the state of Washington, and Freeman, who lives in Olympia, saw that images would be the primary weapons. To counter a campaign of disinformation and fear mongering, gay-positive video and intelligent discussion were needed fast. As an artist and lesbian with a career in video journalism, Freeman hap-

pened to have precisely the combination of skills, motivation, and media savvy to make it happen.

The result is *American Values*, a series of 12 half-hour talk shows designed to put human faces on the civil and political concerns of gays and lesbians. The series uses a panel-and-moderator format and a buttoned-down tone to explore issues like adoption, family, Christianity, and hate crimes as they affect sexual minorities. According to Freeman, the show has aired in more than 15 cities in Washington and has reached half a million homes.

Freeman conceived *American Values* in direct response to an inflammatory documentary, *The Gay Agenda*, being distributed by anti-gay groups

to churches and public access cable channels throughout Washington. At the time, a state-wide campaign was underway to outlaw legal protection for gays and lesbians. "The film was incredibly disturbing," says Freeman, who describes it as a collection of outrageous shots from gay-pride parades interspersed with commentary from fringe psychologists and apocalyptic voiceovers. Freeman saw the video at a public screening and discussion organized by Hands Off Washington, a coalition formed to defeat the anti-gay initiatives.

"After seeing it, everyone was saying we needed a video that tells our story. I always figured someone else would do it, but that night something changed for me. I knew there was no way, given the skills I had, I could not do something."

Those skills come primarily from five years of reporting, writing, and producing shows for National

College Television in New York. Presently, Freeman serves as head of video telecommunications for the Washington State Department of Information Services. Through her production company, Olympia Pictures, she produced and directed the film version of *In My Father's Bed*, Randa Downs' one-woman show about incest which screened at the 1994 San Francisco Lesbian and Gay Film Festival.

American Values cost \$12,000 to produce with an all-volunteer crew. That includes 12 episodes, public service spots dropped into the breaks, and a half-hour documentary about the series and the production team. The funding came entirely from private donations of anywhere from \$10 to \$1,000, "and every single one blew my mind," says Freeman.

She explains that she wanted to give the show a generic, network look that would make it marketable anywhere in the country and could be easily refreshed with new segments. For this reason, discussion topics are intentionally broad and panelists tend to be mainstream, often heterosexual, representatives from government, the religious community, and human rights groups. Reiko Callner, a prosecuting attorney with a civil rights background, hosts the show.

American Values was shot live to tape with three cameras. According to Freeman, the bulk of the expense came in postproduction, particularly for the public service spots. "We needed them to break up the program and give it a little gloss," she says.

In the interest of expediency and budget Freeman searched for gay-rights PSAs and footage she could use off-the-shelf, but she could find nothing targeted for a middle-of-the-road, heterosexual audience. She knew going in that it was pointless to preach to the choir, which left her no choice but to work from scratch.

"I felt it was important to get straight people to listen to other straight people talk about gays. We needed to talk to them in their comfort zone," explains Freeman. *American Values* addresses this audience from the assumption that no one wants to fear or hate gays, but if a vacuum of knowledge is allowed to exist, fear and hate have a way of filling it. As Americans, the show continually reminds us, our values are rooted in neither homosexuality nor heterosexuality but in tolerance, interdependence, and dignity.

When asked if she considers herself an activist, technician, or artist, Freeman lunges at the third choice as if it were a good meal about to go cold. As of this writing, she's in the midst of casting her first narrative film, *Meeting Magdalene*, a quirky, lesbian romance from her own script. "I want to work with actors and tell stories," the 37-year-old Freeman says, recalling a point three years ago when a breast cancer scare prompted her to sort her priorities. Ultimately, she turned down a chance to enter NYU's graduate film program in order to pursue her life in the Northwest and find her own way into filmmaking.

The anti-gay initiatives failed to make last November's ballot, and the boards are clear for her to do work from the heart. Even so, the political and creative sides of Marilyn Freeman continue to share close quarters. As she puts it, "I'm not hardcore. I'm just personally very out. That ends up making you an activist these days."

American Values is available through: Olympia Pictures, Box 341, Olympia, WA 98507-0341; (206) 438-9502.

Ray Kelleher is a freelance writer living in Olympia, Washington.

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"ALMOST NOTHING IN VIRTUAL REALITY IS NEW OTHER THAN THE APPARATUS ITSELF," ASSERTS MULTIMEDIA ARTIST PERRY HOBERMAN. "THE IDEA OF COLLECTIVE HALLUCINATIONS AND POSSIBLE SCENARIOS HAD ALREADY BEEN WRITTEN ABOUT IN A NUMBER OF SCIENCE FICTION NOVELS IN THE FIFTIES AND SIXTIES."

The genealogy of today's multimedia art can be traced to performance artists in the seventies and eighties, such as Laurie Anderson, with whom the Brooklyn/Bay Area-based Hoberman worked as an animator, producer, and occasional flutist. Preferring tangible objects rusted with history, Hoberman admits to having avoided computers and computer-generated images for as long as he could. But working with Anderson reinforced his interest in using technology to create a shared, media-enhanced environment.

According to Hoberman, most virtual reality environments "require an endless wait on an interminable line, only to briefly enter a rudimentary

world in which one is a solitary inhabitant with *nothing* to do." Aiming for a more social, more genuinely participatory virtual environment, Hoberman created the *Bar Code Hotel*. First designed during a residency at the Banff Centre for the Arts in Alberta, Canada, as part of their Art & Virtual Environments Project, this virtual reality environment was created on the Silicon Graphics platform, using SGI Performer, a tool kit designed for programming virtual reality environments. So far, the *Hotel* has welcomed guests at Banff and Ars Electronica '94 in Linz, Austria.

Cumbersome virtual reality headsets and data gloves are nowhere to be found in Hoberman's VR world. Nor are there standard colorful pixellated images. Upon checking into the *Bar Code Hotel*, guests pick up a supermarket bar code scanner suspended from the ceiling and a pair of old-fashioned 3-D glasses. *Bar Code Hotel* is the consummate Super Store; only the commodities have disappeared. What's left behind are the sober black-and-white stripes of bar code, covering every surface of the room.

Each bar code represents an object or action. When the bar code for cheese, scissors, or bowl-

ing ball is scanned, for example, a 3-D image of the object is projected onto a 12' by 16' silver screen. Guests can then coax these computer-generated objects into performing an eclectic range of activities by scanning additional bar codes. Commands include punch; merge; tremble; wallflower; drunk; rough seas; and suicide.



Hoberman performing his earlier installation piece, *Symphonic Appliance System*. Photo: Marion Gray



The Bar Code Hotel, Perry Hoberman's virtual reality piece. Photo: Don Lee

(The more lofty activities—think, assimilate, remember, and ruminate—are printed too high on the wall to be reached.)

Instead of being isolated in their individual headsets, *Bar Code Hotel* guests can see, hear, and speak to each other, so interaction occurs between participants and not just on-screen. The *Hotel* can accommodate any number of guests, limited only by the space in which it is installed and the available number of bar code wands.

Unlike the "choice-mode" prevalent in com-

mercial interactive programs, *Bar Code Hotel* does not offer predictable multiple-choice answers to predetermined questions. Participants are not handed a narrative, but create one—harmonious or hostile, sensical or not—as they go along.

For Hoberman, virtual reality doesn't necessarily make a radical break from other participatory art forms, but it raises questions about what interaction really is. What is the difference, for example, between imagining a scenario and being able to push a button and perform it?

"There is a lot of rhetoric about the work that's being done with computers and technology and about how artists are visionaries leading us into the future," says Hoberman. "It's not so important that the artist come up with some great new medium, as much as the artist be the one who makes sense of it and gives us a handle on what all this technology is going to mean."

By KRIS MALDEN

Kris Malden is a freelance writer living in New York City.

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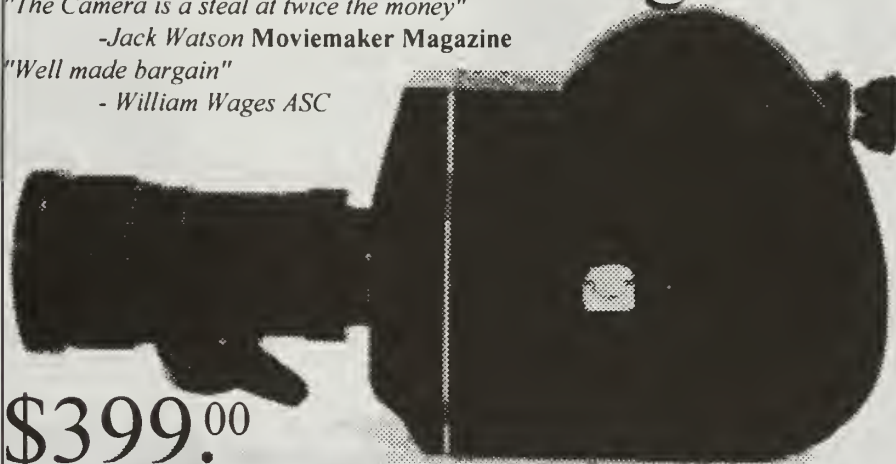
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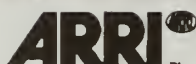
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of video and music, in addition to text, brings the genre closer to the TV magazine, with the added plus of interactivity, i.e., go where you want to go. The most surefire way to get one of these magazines is to subscribe, as distribution channels for CD-ROM magazines are still in the process of establishing themselves. Are CD-ROM magazines software? Are they newsstand magazines? Are they CDs? They're an amalgam of all the above, which is why they might turn up in software stores, bookstores, or record stores. Unlike other CD-ROM titles, magazines are intended to remain on shelves for a limited time, until the next issue is released, and, in the words of *Blender*'s David Cherry, "they have the potential to become collector's items."

You don't need a degree in nonlinear scriptwriting to get involved in one of these magazines. A Hi8 camcorder and a willingness to show your work on the really small screen will do. Also required is a willingness to collaborate with programmers and designers on a multimedia fusion in which the video segment is only one part of the whole.

The predecessor for CD-ROM magazines is the interactive *Electronic Hollywood*. The first two issues were released on PC floppy (though never on CD-ROM) in 1991 and 1992. *Electronic Hollywood 3* was released on

the World Wide Web in February 1995. Within *Electronic Hollywood*'s digital memory base are nonlinear stories from filmmakers and screenwriters, interviews with multimedia digital artists, animations to download, and digital music from Elliot Sharp's band Carbon and Baiter Space. The February on-line issue contains interactive stories by Chris Gore, publisher of *Film Threat*, and Bruce Benderson, who wrote the screenplay for *Monika Tretz's* feature *My Father Is Coming*.

Although "low bandwidth" *Electronic Hollywood* producer Jamie Levy prefers not to work with the CD-ROM format, because it reaches fewer people, her experience with film- and video-makers crossing over into interactive, nonlinear storytelling is the most extensive among those involved in the multimedia publishing field. She started off as a film/video production major at San Francisco State, moving on to become one of the first graduates at New York University's Interactive Telecommunications program.

"Filmmakers and screenwriters have a ten-

dency to write linear stories," says Levy. "I tell them, 'Let's stop at the first paragraph and break the story into three paths.' Break things into short stories, as opposed to long narratives."

Electronic Hollywood, Box 448, Prince Street Station, New York, NY 10012; jlevy@echo.com.

Another early pioneer is Eric Swenson, co-publisher of *Blam!*, an anarchistic, multimedia assault on the senses. *Blam!*'s premiere issue, released in 1993, was text-based, featuring click-and-read features on Tom of Finland, plus sound and light intensive poetry readings such as the William S. Burroughs-like "Ode to Interactivity." While the first issue was made with Hypercard and included no video, *Blam!*'s second issue (dubbed "The Dog and Flower Issue," released in February 1995) is the first to be produced with Macromedia Director and includes video. According to Swenson, *Blam!* is "moving beyond the standard QuickTime video

insertion mode."

Blam! is interested in artists "who have proven they can move into different domains and still maintain their edge," Swenson says. "We don't want to be utilizing video for its own sake. We want to work with people who have found ways to utilize their video technique as a component tool and subset to a greater multimedia vision. And we want them to collaborate with us as artists."

Contact *Blam!* at: *Blam!*

@mindvox.phantom.com.

Digital Culture Stream, a pop culture magazine with everything from 900-foot Jesus video clips to DC comics to features on caffeine, was launched last fall. Editor-in-chief Dan Newman says he welcomes submissions from independent media artists. "Our general theme is any way in which digital technology affects pop culture," Newman says. The magazine runs a digital gallery in every issue, highlighting a particular artist's work. Newman is interested in works that foreground how the mediamaker is using digital media to enhance their works. And, contrary to the popular notion, Newman says multimedia doesn't necessarily have to be nonlinear. "As an art form, all it has to do is include a combination of video and music," he observes. "It has to be an experience. You can get one without being nonlinear."

Contact *Digital Culture Stream* at: 1-800-5-STREAM or dstream@netaxs.com

The first issue of *Blender*, released last fall, was music heavy, including filmed interviews with



Henry Rollins, Alice Cooper, Luscious Jackson, and a host of indie bands. Future issues will broaden to include a focus on film and technology. Besides reviews, *Blender* intends to introduce a gallery section that will contain two minute submissions from independent mediamakers, plus video interviews. "We're more interested in discovering and publicizing unknown filmmakers," says *Blender*'s programmer David Cherry. While Cherry admits that the medium is in its infancy at the moment, he expects full screen, full resolution video by mid-1996 at the latest.

Blender: (212) 302-2626 or BLENDME@echo-nyc.com.

These CD-ROM magazines are no doubt a sign of things to come. "I think interactive scriptwriting has a huge future, and people might consider learning how to write within that paradigm, unless they prefer narrative storytelling," says *Electronic Hollywood*'s Levy. "All of the sudden, Time Warner's interactive TV test went ahead. As soon as that's in all of the homes and people watch TV through their computer monitors or vice versa, it's going to be a huge market."

TOM SAMILJAN

NYC-based Tom Samiljan (100331.2517@compuserve.com) writes about film, music, and technology for *Interview*, *Time Out*, and is venturing into multimedia journalism with *Blender*.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ON THE INFOBAHN

"INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY" IS A BUZZWORD THAT NOW APPEARS DAILY IN THE NEWSPAPERS, ON RADIO AND TELEVISION, IN SCHOOLS AND THE WORKPLACE.

But for most of us, this phrase has no precise meaning. To some, the concept of intellectual property sounds elitist, scary, and remote from our everyday lives. Yet intellectual property is what will drive the economy in the 21st century.

So what is intellectual property? Call it "invisible property." For mediamakers, it is the invisible component of a film, record, book, CD-ROM, etc., which is generally dealt with in one specific area of intellectual property: copyright.

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protect inventions), trademarks (which protect distinctive symbols and names), and trade secrets and confidential information.

Copyright does not protect ideas, themes, or stories. Rather, it protects the "fixation" or the particular expression of an idea, theme, or story. A script for a film, video, or CD-ROM is protected by copyright. In many ways, copyright, or intellectual property, is what protects the content of the information superhighway as well.

And without content, there would be no information superhighway. Since the late eighties, investors have been quietly acquiring content to fill the Infobahn, purchasing electronic rights to intellectual property. Time Warner has been acquiring electronic rights to material for years. A major impetus behind the recent bidding war for Paramount was that the winner would control the Paramount movie/television inventory and the intellectual property assets of Simon & Schuster, one of the country's largest book publishers. Bill Gates has been busy acquiring shares of smaller software and multimedia developers, as well as companies like Darling Kindersley, a major international book packager. The business press is full of stories about companies such as CBS, QVC, Blockbuster Video, the telcos, and Steven Spielberg looking to acquire or merge with other companies to ensure they have valuable intellectual property inventories. Hollywood is aggressively trying to assert its role as content provider. Large talent agencies like CAA and ICM and guilds like the WGA, DGA, AFTRA, and SAG are busily promoting the creators and artists they represent as the ones who will create the content of the information superhighway.

Intellectual property has always been the underlying basis of the film industry. Now, with the information superhighway developing before our eyes, issues of intellectual property are becoming more complex. Nonetheless, when creating a work that will be distributed on-line, the utilization of copyrighted material (e.g., scripts, music, stock footage, etc.) should follow existing rules: if the work is in the public domain, you may freely use it. If your use of a work is covered by the "fair use" doctrine, it will still be considered fair use on the Infobahn. If you previously had to obtain permission to use a copyrighted work, you still must do so in order to reproduce, adapt, or distribute it over the information superhighway [see Mark Litwak, "Getting the Goods for Multimedia," August/September and October 1994].

Increasingly, distribution over the Internet is becoming a plausible model. Last July, Columbia Pictures announced a plan to promote its films on-line. The studio intends to create video clips, photo, and text materials based on its movies, which on-line service subscribers will be able to screen and download to their personal computers. On November 12, the Rolling Stones made histo-

Solo Flyers

or ZEN and



Filmmaker Alan Berliner (*Ultimate Stranger*) in a contemplative moment. Courtesy filmmaker

Like monks, they are devoted to the totality of process, literally minding their own business as they move along the pilgrim's path wending from Concept to Realization. Independents who produce and shoot their own projects often discover that the process of working as a one-person crew invigorates their art in subtle ways not easily realized when collaborating with a larger group.

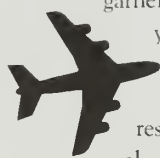
BY MITCH ALBERT

Going it alone precludes many of the most common anxieties, such as the cost of maintaining a crew; the undesirability of distracting or intimidating people while documenting them; the angst over the DP's/gaffer's/sound person's competence, and so on.

Of course, the one-man-band approach yields its share of migraines.

The more variables one must control at once, without any immediate technical or moral support, the more problems tend to multiply.

he ART of SOLO shoots



ZEN AND THE ART OF DOCUMENTARY

The genre overwhelmingly associated with "solo flying" is documentary, in which compelling drama and social relevance may be conveyed without the extensive financing, and prep work required by even the most pared-down narrative film. Moreover, once the notion of heading a crew has been done away with, a new perspective on the nature of the documentary experience unfolds. If film is being shot, the impracticality of sync sound may lead to full concentration on the image and equally so when the time comes for separate interviews, voiceover, music, and effects. If video is being shot, the convenient housing in one unit of both audio and visual equipment maximizes the ability to get closer to the subject.

There is a sense of wholeness that arises when the same mind that develops a concept and mines a theme must also position the microphone and squint through the viewfinder. Working alone saves scads of money, but a greater goal might be the attainment of something pure.

"A director often cannot answer for certain aspects of a film: cinematography, sound, editing, whatever," says Alan Berliner, whose documentary *Intimate Stranger* is a character-driven examination of his grandfather's life choices. "When you do everything yourself, you are responsible for all the decisions. All roads go through me. Actually sitting and recording a subject is a different feeling than standing aside while someone else does it. You feel the words etched onto the tape; it's an engagement with the material."

There can be no insulation from even the most piddling problems when working alone. The boundary between life and art may begin to dissolve, leading to a true merging with craft. "Filmmaking is a process tied to the contour of my life at the time," Berliner says. "Doing the laundry and making dinner are part of making the film."

For Jennifer Fox, a documentarian who has logged considerable time both alone and with crews of two or more, the process is a subsuming one. Following her acclaimed film *Beirut: The Last Home Movie* (shot with a crew), Fox traveled the world with a Hi8 rig alongside a wandering Tibetan lama and, most recently, spent two years—nine months alone—training her video camera on the life of an interracial family living in New York for *American Love Story* (currently in postproduction). "You're living someone else's life, and your own does not matter," she says. "I have no life while documenting [my subjects]. That's the beauty and the difficulty of it all."

Patience, tenacity, and equanimity are necessary attributes that must

be cultivated in order to shoot alone and survive. Is this monastic forbearance worth it? With a crew to blanket all the angles, the filmmaker becomes a choreographer arranging the elements of production. Alone, he or she must plot the steps and dance them as well.

Ross McElwee, a veteran maker whose film *Sherman's March* has become a classic of autobiographical exploration, is another true believer. He "love[s] the autonomy," the privilege of making absolutely every decision concerning the direction of the work. "I have enjoyed collaborating with others," he says. "But the films I do myself are the ones that have garnered the most attention."

"Certainly, your work is compromised," McElwee continues. "There is shakier camera-work, the sound is off more. But the end result is that you get something more personal, more satisfying. A crew can accomplish things more easily than an individual, but certain things can be accomplished more distinctly by [shooting solo]. It means the use of the camera like a pen, as in writing a novel or an essay."

THE SOUND BARRIER

The most intractable difficulty encountered among the crewless, working in either video or film, is the attempt to snare good sound without the comparative luxury of even a boom operator. Sound becomes a hydra-headed hassle best tackled by thinking ahead and equipping oneself with several options.

First, does the project require on-camera interviews or exchanges of dialogue? Berliner's *Intimate Stranger* depended a lot upon the recollections of family members, yet no interviews were filmed. Instead, he obtained them with a high-quality cassette recorder and decided at the editing stage which images best suited which sound and vice versa. Berliner shot "intuitively, without thinking about which images would match the interviews. I am more concerned about making discoveries about the material as opposed to preconceived notions about it."

Fox, on the other hand, cannot imagine separating the duties in her work. "When live dialogue happens, [sync sound] is crucial," she says. "If you're alone, you have to adapt your shooting style to get better sound. Use a wider focal length, get closer to your subject; the closer the mike is, the better." In her solo video work, Fox has used a combination of a wireless lavalier microphone worn by her subject and powered by a battery pack around her waist, along with a Sennheiser ME80 (shotgun) mounted atop the camera body.

"The short shotgun combo is the way to go for live action," she says. "When the lavaliers work, they're like gold, but they can destroy you when there are problems. A sound person would take care of it, [but when you're alone], you have to stop shooting and fix it yourself. There is a reason to use high-grade radio mikes, but it's surprising how well the cheap ones work." The more expensive lavaliers can mean significantly less stress, however—their advantages include better sound and smaller power packs, and they are more easily concealed on the subject's body. (Fox suggests bending a wire in a "half moon" around the microphone to shield it from clothing rustle.) Fox also recommends a Sennheiser extension that adds about three feet to a microphone's range and affords "a little more sound control, except you're always wrestling with it as you move around."

When Michel Negroponte shot his feature *Jupiter's Wife*, about a homeless woman living in New York's Central Park, he "thought of himself as more of a sound person than as a cameraman," he says. "There were certain restrictions that became uncomfortable. I would find a fixed

focal length, frame the shot, and keep it there for the whole interview. It was impossible to pan away, because the mike moved with the camera. More elaborate ways of shooting became very difficult."

Negroponte shot the film for more than two years, and on S-VHS. The camera, like many older models and current consumer grade camcorders, had Automatic Gain Control (AGC). "The AGC was one of the biggest problems," Negroponte says. "It searches for a new sound level when something just slightly louder occurs in the background or nearby, and makes the adjustment when it isn't appropriate."

The sound quandary is bypassed when interviews and live-action dialogue are less the heart of a work. Su Friedrich and Karen Kramer are two 16mm soloists who work largely with silent Bolex cameras. (Friedrich alternates with a Canon Scoopit, also silent.) Their use of sound depends more upon their own sensibilities than the words of their subjects. Friedrich's films, like *Sink or Swim* and *Rules of the Road*, are personal, experimental narratives rich in lyrical commentary. She is also fond of using music and 'found' wild sound, such as a sermonizing priest or a Coney Island afternoon, as contrapuntal or complementary to her images. Without the need for sync sound, Friedrich enjoys freedom from worry about her license to shoot being hampered in any way. "I've worked out over the years how to shoot and be very inconspicuous," she says. "People tend to get nervous and ask you to stop filming" if they see a lot of gear.

Kramer's films are ethnographic studies ranging in topic from Brooklyn street carnivals to snake-handling religious fundamentalists to Haitian voodoo rituals. She shoots silent footage and later adds music and voiceover, though she has at times had friends help out with sound and boom. Kramer has also figured out a means of obtaining sound while working alone: "In Brazil I was shooting a dance ritual in honor of a sea goddess, and my assistant never showed up. I had to keep changing 100-ft. loads, so I pulled someone aside and asked him to hold the boom. Everything came out fine."

TOO CLOSE IS COMFORT

A sense of shared intimacy with the subject is one of the key elements motivating solo flyers. "Following a Haitian peasant woman around as she went about her daily routine would have been impossible with a full crew," Kramer says.

"The more elements you bring in, the more removed you are from the subject." When the filmmaker is an out-

sider, unobtrusiveness is a greater advantage. "My films tend to be about other cultures," Kramer says. "And ordering a crew around really detracts from contact with the subject. I like the duet I am able to have because there is no one else."

"People will tell you their stories [and] be vulnerable," says AIVF board member Barbara Hammer, who has been shooting mostly solo for about 25 years. "They'll tell you about that suicide attempt, which they might not if someone is holding a boom in their faces." Hammer is best known for *Nitrate Kisses*, her experimental film essay on the reconstruction of lost histories from a gay and lesbian standpoint. Some of that film's most remarkable scenes occurred as a result of the access granted to Hammer by several couples to film their lovemaking. "For these explicit sex scenes, it was imperative to be alone," she says. "By the fourth couple, I was more comfortable; it took some time to get used to the situation. But with only one person there, they could really get into themselves, and my relationship to them became more appreciative. I became a participant, in a way."

Fox acknowledges that the multiplicity of technical tasks that must be performed may threaten that sought-after intimacy. "There is an emotional problem there," Fox says. "An interview is all about creating rapport. If you're shooting alone, you're



working double time. You're watching not only the frame and focus, but there is also psychological work to be done. You must develop the capacity to split your focus." She suggests locking the camera down if the subject has difficulty talking to it instead of a person. "Otherwise, begin by looking through the eyepiece so lifting your

head becomes the exception and not the rule—it's good to be consistent."

What's more, Fox continues, the necessity of dividing your attentions can lead to bad camera moves and bad sound. "It's impor-

Above: Barbara Hammer completed her most recent project, *Out in South Africa* (pictured), in 1994. Courtesy videomaker

Below: Documentarian Jennifer Fox recently spent two years filming *American Love Story*. "You're living someone else's life, and your own does not matter," she says. Courtesy videomaker

tant to get a lot of cutaways and coverage. Reenact hand movements later if you have to, to provide a cut." Fox now works with a former student of hers, who handles sound. "I don't recommend shooting your own interviews if you can afford not to," she says. "The concept is to create a sacred space, an uninterrupted space."

Ellen Bruno extols shooting single for both the easier intimacy with a subject who might be otherwise reluctant and the lightweight traveling that makes it possible. Bruno has made two films documenting troubles in Cambodia (*Sansara*, crewed) and Tibet (*Satya: A Prayer for the Enemy*, solo). Currently she is heading, alone, to Thailand and Burma to document on Hi8 the selling into sexual slavery of young Burmese women. In Tibet she focused on victims of torture by the occupying Chinese forces.

"The camera was so small, it enabled me to keep a low profile," Bruno says. "It would have been very difficult for me to go to the places I wanted to go if the authorities thought I was

anything but a naïve tourist. Every time I pulled out the camera I had to risk attention from one of the many undercover policemen, and in fact, I did get a lot of scrutiny from them. I had to be calculating, asking questions about this or that hotel, but the camera helped."

FILM VS. VIDEO

Film costs big time, video not. This truism is widely

respected among

independent mediamakers, especially those who shoot single-crewed documentaries, and has led more and more filmmakers to set foot onto video terrain.

Friedrich's newest film, about lesbians and childbirth, is 16mm but for the interviews, which are being shot on Hi8. Kramer also is using Hi8 in her new work, which documents the Hasidic Jewish community in Brooklyn. She positively vouches for "the more flexible approach" afforded by her "toy," a TR-101 camcorder. Negroponte, who comes from a film background, has also been won over to Hi8 via S-VHS.

"I spent \$120 on tape," says Friedrich, who worked solo on her current film for almost two years before attracting financing (from ITVS); the project will be completed with a crew. "To film the same material would have cost me \$40,000. Of course, a tape transfer to film is costly, but it's still less expensive." Likewise, Negroponte estimates that the footage he shot for the \$400 he spent on tape stock would have cost over \$50,000 to shoot in 16mm. "It's totally liberating," he says of the savings. "I experimented, did

stuff I would never have done otherwise."

Friedrich grudgingly accepts the video alternative, but calls it "too easy." She adds, "There is something so mindless about it—it makes me lazy. With film you have to imagine the end product in a way that's hard to put into words. There's a psychological preparation involved when you can't shoot something, play it back, and keep going."

McElwee echoes this impression, though he, too, may incorporate Hi8 into his films "in a marginal way" if financing is unavailable for a 16mm production. "Two pieces of equipment are more cumbersome than one, but shooting film enforces a kind of discipline I might not have with video," he says. "You have to anticipate more with film."

Negroponte, on the other hand, has fallen for the medium's aesthetic. "There's a little technical sideshow in each film I make," he says. "In *Jupiter's Wife* it was the macro lens. I shot the park, subtle things like rocks and trees with it, and it was very appropriate—a particular way of seeing the world, like my subject has." For his new project, Negroponte is using a Canon A-1 consumer grade Hi8 to shoot a scripted, "impressionistic performance piece" about New York. He adores the "gain up" device, which creates a very subtle strobe effect. You can aim the camera into a dark corner, trigger the gain up, and details come out, like pushing [the ASA of] film stock."

Bruno came from a 16mm, crew-oriented approach, and also had much experience working as an activist for the release of political refugees. For *Satya*, she had planned to shoot 16mm, and prepared to leave for Tibet to conduct preliminary interviews on audio tape. A last-minute whim persuaded her to switch to Hi8 for the interviews, and her enthusiasm for this new medium swelled to the point where she elected to shoot the entire project on video. "It totally changed my mind about filmmaking," Bruno says.

She, too, is a fan of the A-1. "I like what it does in low light and low contrast situations," she adds. "I have lit fires or candles that have been enough to boost the light to obtain a reasonable image. But in high contrast, bright, wide shots, the image falls apart. The way it records light is harsh and unappealing, because it doesn't handle a lot of information well. It can at best look like 16mm shot with grainy film and a crummy lens. So I kept *Satya* to close and low-light shots, and people are surprised it was shot on tape. The warmer light in the close shots bring out the texture of people's skin in a really beautiful way.

"But then, I've seen amazing images shot with a Kodak Brownie. It gets to a point where you have to stop blaming the limited technology and look at the person operating the camera." Furthermore, Bruno says, viewers "forgive" a less-than-satisfying image if it is consistent with the visual timbre of the rest of the film. "If you intercut with Beta or 16mm," she warns, "you'll be begging for comparison."

Certain topics may be better suited to either Hi8 or film. An assessment of the project's aims is as much in order as the number of dollars saved or the solo work involved. While working on her latest documentary, Fox observed this axiom in operation. "Shooting Hi8 allowed me to shoot for two years in a small environment, at any given moment, with intimacy. What was financially imperative ended up being right for the project. In Beirut I was documenting the end of an aristocracy; it had to be lush and beautiful. So I shot [*Beirut: The Last Home Movie*] in 16mm."

Negroponte's imperative was as much logistical as financial. He, too, shot his documentary over two years, juggling a schedule that included a "real" job. The video format granted him the leeway to pick up the thread with minimal planning. "Gathering a crew, all the gaffers and gophers, really inhibits the process," he says.

The decision to shoot video is usually based upon the economic value



A Jolo serpent handler, in Karen Kramer's film of the same name, sways with a rattler during a religious trance. Courtesy filmmaker



dailies immediately if desired. However, the video option may not be as dreamy as it appears.

"Ironically, Hi8 is not cheaper [than film]," Fox says. "It's cheaper when you start, but once you begin bumping up to Beta, that can finish you off financially. For a 10-minute film you can take a chance mastering from Hi8 to Hi8, but for a big project with a lot of money, there is no choice. Everything you save in production, you pay for in post."

The immediate footage-review gratification—the rushes rush—is not unreservedly recommended, either, on account of the demon dropout. To various degrees with various tape stocks, dropout occurs the more frequently Hi8 originals are played back: playback means more dust on the tape, and dust causes dropout. Fox suggests dubbing straight to VHS for viewing rushes, and to avoid stopping and starting the tape repeatedly. "If you must, use a home VCR to go to VHS," she says. "But the ideal situation is not to screen anything at all. We stayed component, and mastered straight to video; most of our stuff was never looked at." Of course, the downside of staying component is the inability to gauge progress, to see which blanks need filling in, to nip a problem that has occurred without making itself evident during production. "There is not much time to spend looking at stuff when you shoot so much," says Fox, whose *American Love Story* has accumulated over 800 hours of footage. "Being independent means being understaffed."

SOLITARY REFINEMENT

Ultimately, the decision to work alone depends less upon the balance sheet benefits than upon personal inclination. The women and men who shoot crewless are like an order of ascetics who value the world but understand the serenity of detachment. It might be argued that solo flyers are the most independent of independents. To work alone means no compromise, no reliance upon the abilities of anyone else.

"It's much like traveling alone," says Bruno, who should know. "If you're with someone else, you tend to take refuge in them. By yourself, you become immersed in the community

it delivers; the two-hour coverage afforded without changing mags, film stock, etc.; and the ability to watch

you're in, and that serves the project very well. There are always plenty of shoulders to cry on. Your subjects become your primary advisors, and the project becomes more community-based. With a crew, there is a tendency to keep the production more insular."

Berliner says the idea of a crew as an *a priori* assumption is a wrong-headed one. "Working with a crew presupposes there's a way to make films," he says. "Every time I shoot alone, I reinvent my knowledge of filmmaking. I rediscover the art through that alchemy, and I can create something unique."

Being crewless means acknowledging the realities of a given situation as they are, according to Hammer. "If something goes wrong, I just accept it," she says. "I've been doing this for too long to get emotionally involved [with imperfections]. I'm always thinking about the next step." That composure carries over to the physical attributes of production. "Lights are always whatever you can find at the location," Hammer says, by way of example. In South Africa, where she recently shot a camcorder documentary on gays and lesbians in the townships, she "found some old lights at a collective. You do whatever; throw a scarf over a reading lamp, whatever you need. I also use my body as a tripod."

However, no man is completely an island. Most solo-operation media-makers build bridges at least occasionally to the populated mainland. "There's something false about claiming to work entirely solo," Friedrich says. "From the moment I start a project, I'm talking to someone about it. People whose work I respect are always reading my scripts—I can go through 30 drafts—and I get incredible input. Other people help me understand [issues of] structure; if I only did what I know how to do, my films wouldn't be the same."

Likewise, Berliner: "I have a group of friends and colleagues I bring in at certain stages to show a film, to measure how it's working.

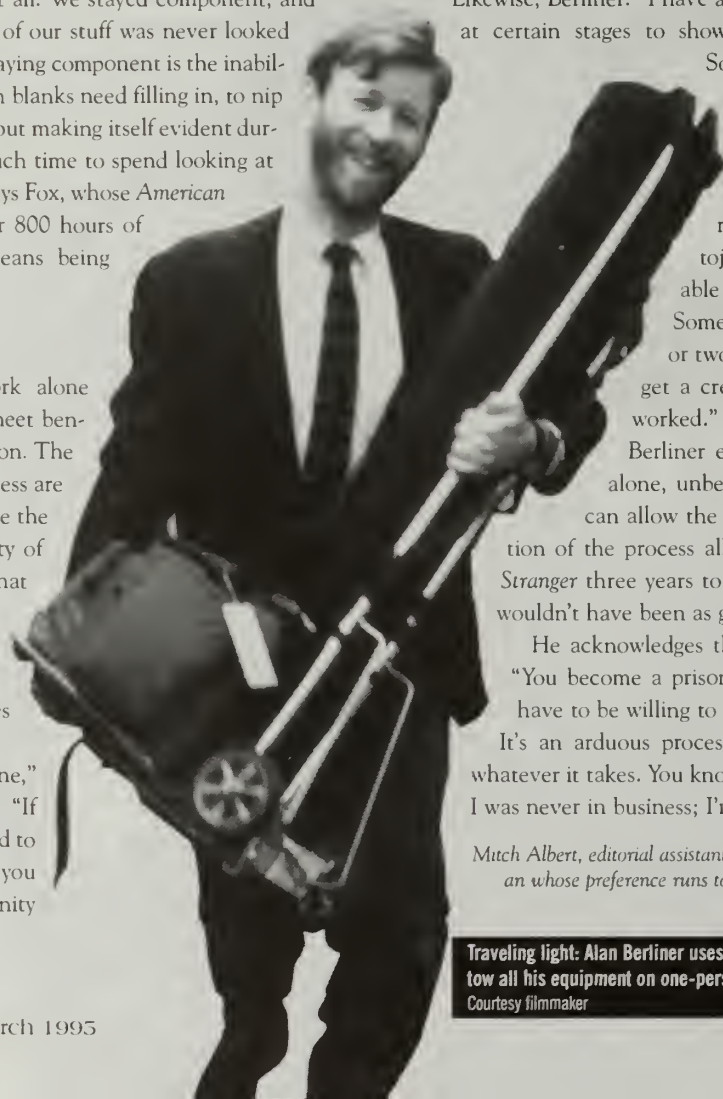
Something happens when you show a film before 'the clay is dry.'"

Single-crew directors also cherish the freedom to pace the progress of a film according to their own sense of the rhythms of time. "I had always envied photojournalists," Negroponte says. "To just be able to throw a camera in a bag and go out. Some days I would go out [to shoot] for an hour or two, and others for the whole day. If I had to get a crew together every time, it wouldn't have worked."

Berliner enjoys the "perverse benefits" of working alone, un beholden to the timetables of others. "You can allow the whole thing to ferment, and the elaboration of the process allows the film to mature. It took *Intimate Stranger* three years to bloom. If it had taken one and a half, it wouldn't have been as good."

He acknowledges the flip side of all that freedom, however. "You become a prisoner of your own joy," Berliner says. "You have to be willing to suffer the patience of getting things done. It's an arduous process, but you make whatever sacrifices, do whatever it takes. You know, some people think of film as a business. I was never in business; I'm in love."

Much Albert, editorial assistant at *The Independent*, is a fledgling documentarian whose preference runs to a maximum crew of two (the catering's cheaper).



Traveling light: Alan Berliner uses a luggage cart to tow all his equipment on one-person shoots. Courtesy filmmaker

BY TIM WRIGHT

Despite possessing substantially identical technical specs and cost, Hi8mm and S-VHS resonate very differently among producers. Hi8 is cool, S-VHS is L7. S-VHS is marriage, Hi8 is an affair. The Boston Film/Video Foundation fills day-long Hi8 workshops as fast as they can schedule them. They have never done an S-VHS workshop. Paul Reynolds of CF Video, a Boston postproduction house, reports getting about five calls a day about Hi8, the same number he gets about S-VHS in a year.

What's going on here? Perhaps it's time to interrupt the heavy breathing, at least long enough to scrape away at the image and ponder what's underneath.

I use Hi8 myself almost exclusively and teach others how to do so as well, but I am skeptical about the universality of Hi8's appeal. I have come to believe that perhaps as many as half the people I encounter in Hi8 workshops might well find S-VHS a more appropriate format for the media work they are doing.

Why? The Hi8 advantages are four: size, size, size, and audio quality.

Let's take size first. If you do most of your shooting on a tripod, the size difference between Hi8 and S-VHS is largely irrelevant, and S-VHS tapestock is much more reliable than Hi8 (ask any post house that has experience with both). In addition, there are appealing low-end editing options in S-VHS that don't exist in Hi8. For instance, you can do true insert editing (i.e., split audio/video edits) on an industrial S-VHS edit system, whereas you are stuck with assemble editing only in Hi8 unless you edit to another format, which brings with it other problems. So in this case, if you can't afford Beta, you should be shooting S-VHS, not Hi8.

But what about the lower S-VHS audio quality? It's true that all consumer and professional Hi8 camcorders record AFM audio across the entire width of the tape, which gives Hi8 higher fidelity audio than consumer S-VHS camcorders, which record audio only on two narrow bands near the edge of the tape. But if you are doing script-driven, tripod-mounted work in which you can close-mic your subjects, even an audiophile cannot hear the difference. Only in music recording does a Hi8 difference become discernible.

So when should you use Hi8? When size and weight matter. Some obvious examples:

- 1) When you're shooting at times and in places where you're not supposed to be shooting at all.
- 2) When you're documenting your own life and trying to live it at the same time.
- 3) When you're documenting a process as it unfolds and need to be ready to shoot at any time.

Here's an example. I'm in downtown Osaka, Japan, with my cameraperson, Karen Ellzey. She is carrying a Hi8 camcorder mounted on a "steadycam." I'm carrying all our accessories (batteries, lights, mics, tape, etc.) in a canvas bag. We are attempting to trace the fate of the steel from a recently demolished elevated subway line in Boston. The steel has been put on the world scrap market and sold to a factory near Osaka for re-smelting. We are waiting for permission from Tokyo, which may never come, to tape here. Meanwhile, we just walk around and notice a high-rise under construction. We peek in at the canvas-shrouded first floor and see a group of workers cutting up 50 gallon oil drums with torches. A security guard comes to shoo us off, but ultimately gives way to friendly persuasion.

"The steel workers are having an 'end of the job' party," he reveals. "You are invited." We wind up shooting the whole party and interviewing many of the workers. Within two hours, the party is over. The construction workers will not be back.

If we aren't carrying our rig on our shoulders, we don't get it. If we're not shooting Hi8, we don't carry a rig with us. It's just too heavy. That, in a nutshell, is why I shoot Hi8 and would continue to do so even if I had the money to buy a Beta rig (which I don't). It's not that the quality is wonderful. It isn't. The paradox of shooting in marginal formats like Hi8 or S-VHS is that you have to shoot and light more skillfully than with higher formats, which have much more latitude for error. But you get stuff you simply don't get with other formats. Period.

So when you're trying to decide which format to use, try to resist the Hi8 mystique. Instead, ask yourself coldly what kind of shooting this kind of project and—if you are buying—future ones will require. If they can be scripted in advance or involve mostly sit-down interviewing, if they don't require the recording of live music, and if Beta is beyond your budget, chances are you will be better off shooting S-VHS.

Tim Wright is a documentary producer and teacher in Boston.



IN THE PROGRAM DIRECTOR'S CHAIR

YOU SUBMITTED YOUR PROGRAM TO PBS'S NATIONAL PROGRAM SERVICE AND WERE TURNED DOWN. DITTO WITH THE REGIONAL PUBLIC TV PROGRAMMING SERVICES. WHAT NEXT? SOME PRODUCERS PEDDLE THEIR PROGRAMS STATION BY STATION. THE TOP GATEKEEPER AT THIS LEVEL IS THE STATION PROGRAM DIRECTOR.

MICHAEL FOX TALKS WITH FOUR OF THEM ABOUT THEIR JOBS, THEIR PROGRAMMING PRESSURES, AND THEIR INTERACTION WITH INDEPENDENTS.

At its most basic, the job of program director (or programming director or programming manager) at a public television station consists of acquiring and scheduling the monthly programming. The program director has one eye on the budget, one eye on the PBS feed, one eye on the Nielsen ratings, and one eye on the hot issues, unique demographics, and shifting trends that distinguish his or her constituency from those of other public stations. For an independent producer looking to sell his or her work directly to a local station, this is the person to contact.*

While much of a station's programming is culled from PBS or one of the regional programming services, most stations also generate a few hours a week of news and public affairs broadcasts. The number of slots is increasingly limited for independent productions, especially with public stations whipsawed by the vicious financial climate.

The more ambitious program directors construct their monthly schedules with an emphasis on recurring themes rather than merely programming 30 individual nights. They'll often match new national programs with existing shows that tackle the same theme from a local angle. In addition, program directors will often propose ideas to their associates on the production side for original programs to run in conjunction with a



PBS piece set for a few months in the future.

The wild card, and one that is played with decreasing frequency, is the independent producer. Most program directors are in agreement that independent film- and videomakers represent a valuable resource;

however, their flexibility in airing such works is limited. I spoke with four program directors from around the country about the way they approach their job and their openness to working with independents.



Courtesy KCET-TV

KCET-Los Angeles

At KCET in Los Angeles, one of the largest public television markets, the responsibilities of program director fall in the hands of director of broadcasting Jackie Kain. In Kain's view, the nature of the job shifts from station to station, depending as much on personality as job structure. At KCET, Kain's position entails creating events, giving shape to the monthly schedule, and making viewers aware of programming. "There's a difference between scheduling, programming, and curating," says Kain, a six-year veteran of public broadcasting following stints as a curator at The Kitchen in New York City and director of the National Video Festival

at the American Film Institute, among other posts in the nonprofit media-arts world. "It involves looking at the schedule as a whole—not only the voices, but the forum in which they are arguing." For example, Kain is sensitive to factors such as getting a representative number of women producers on the air each week and avoiding the pitfall of concentrating programming on African-American issues in February (Black History Month).

KCET's support of independents includes *Independent Eye*, a Friday night summertime series underwritten by the California Arts Council that features programs of short works curated by local media arts organi-

* Contact information for all public TV stations and personnel can be found in the CPB *Public Broadcasting Directory*, available for \$15 from: CPB, 901 E Street NW, Washington DC 20004; attn: Rick Schooley; (202) 879-9600.

zations, such as L.A. Freeways and Visual Communications. (KCET pays \$50/minute for *Independent Eye* programs and \$30-\$40/minute for other acquisitions.) The station also has produced several editions of *The Works*, a three-hour special consisting of five essays created by Southern California artists who utilize the station's camerapeople and editors. KCET also picked up one 90-minute program from KQED-San Francisco's 13-week *Living Room Festival* of short independent films and videos. And it's worth noting that KCET also employs independents as staff producers—Taylor Hackford and Arthur Dong are among the notables who've done stints there over the years—knocking out public affairs documentaries on tiny budgets and tight deadlines.

Kain, assisted by program manager Claire Aguilar (formerly of UCLA's Film and TV Archive), administers an open solicitation process for finished work on an ongoing basis. Kain describes KCET's outreach as "fairly aggressive" and, because she serves on NEA, California Arts Council, and P.O.V. panels, she considers herself aware of new work.

The bad news is the station's chronic three-month backlog of unwatched tapes. "A big problem for us is we have so few screeners," Kain concedes, "and I would get really upset if I were a producer and dealing with us." While she encourages independent producers to approach her, she acknowledges, "Most of the things we license, we have gone after. We get a lot of stuff over the transom, such as local public access tapes, that I don't think is very good. And because I'm in Los Angeles, I want to work with producers from Los Angeles first and foremost. But I can always use more."

As for proposals for new work, KCET's flexibility—like that of all public stations—is limited by financial constraints. But, Kain maintains, "If it's something we think we can raise money for and we like, we'll get involved." The station is currently in production on *Chicano*, a series aimed for national broadcast in 1996 or 1997, with the National Latino Communications Center, executive produced by Hector Galan.

KET-Kentucky

Kentucky Educational Television is the largest public broadcast network in the country, with 15 stations operated by a single licensee. Thanks in part to an enlightened state legislature, KET may also be the most supportive network for independent filmmakers—although most of the resources are limited to locals. Programming director Dick Hoffman, who's based in Lexington, rattles off a slew of arrangements that provide independent programming for his schedule.

The four-year-old KET Fund for Independent Production annually funnels \$100-200,000 of state money to Kentucky independent producers, in individual grants of up to \$20,000. Separately, KET gives the Appalachian media arts center Appalshop \$50,000 a year. Appalshop's film production unit is given the leeway to decide which programs to offer the network. Hoffman also programs a Saturday night series, consisting primarily of independently produced documentaries, as well as a summer series under the banner *Kentucky Independents Presents*. In addition, Hoffman writes a column, "Dick's Pick," in KET's monthly program guide that spotlights potentially overlooked programs (such as Greg Waller's *At the Picture Show*, a 48-minute work that documents a small Kentucky town and its local movie house). "We've tried to build up an audience for independents," he says.

Another way Hoffman backs independents is with letters in support of grant applications to the Kentucky Humanities Council. "We help them leverage as best we can so they can get funded," Hoffman explains. He

airs about 10 works per year by Kentucky people who received funding (whether or not he had written a letter of support). KET pays \$300 for a half-hour program and \$500 for a one-hour show.

Hoffman culls about 10 to 15 percent of his schedule from the American Program Service (APS), an alternative national programming service, and the regional programming services, including Southern Educational Communications Association (SECA) and Central Educational Network (CEN). But he sees no substitute for the passion and style that are hallmarks of work by independent producers. "If you take it with good humor and understand the problems independents have, you can form a terrific alliance," Hoffman asserts. "There are a lot of things independents can do that we can't do. Some of the most popular things we've had on the air over the years were independent productions."



Courtesy KET

KCTS-Seattle

KCTS reaches 1.3 million viewing households in the Seattle area, plus another 900,000 over the border in British Columbia. Program manager Jane Sheridan describes her primary responsibility as constructing the program schedule. "The underlying notion in our station—and most major markets—is we have far more programs available to us than we have time to schedule," Sheridan states. Faced with the usual budget constraints on one hand and the availability of free shows from numerous sources on the other, Sheridan points out, "The least efficient way is [for an independent producer] to sell individually to stations."

Sheridan's major criteria for an acquisition are its local/regional interest and its appropriateness for primetime.

"The HUTs (households using television) are higher in primetime, with more of a potential audience. With our acquisitions budget, we can't pay for programs we can't air in primetime," Sheridan explains. Primetime programs receive \$10 per minute—roughly the same rate as KET's. Programs outside of primetime receive nothing. However, they do have some steady visibility there. Sheridan has instituted a late-night Saturday series, *Wild Card*, for cutting-edge programs like ITVS' *TV Families*, *The*

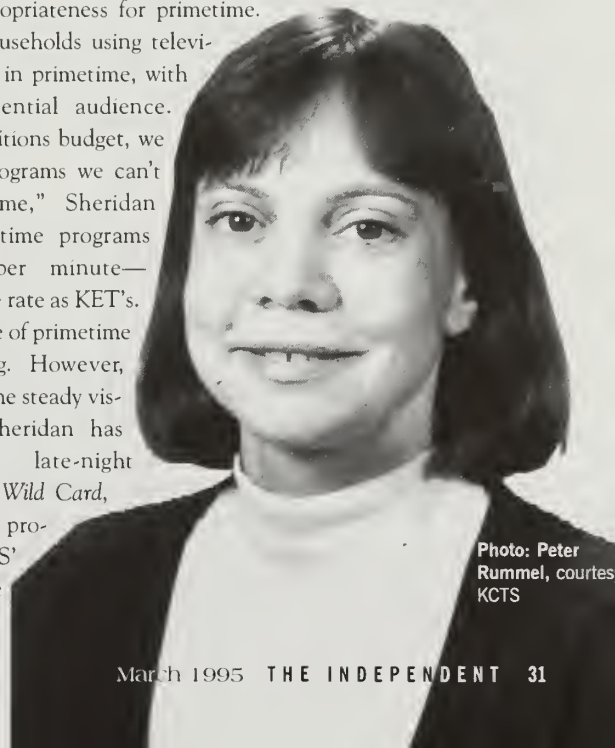
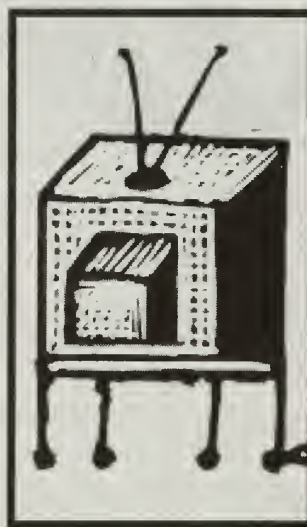


Photo: Peter Rummel, courtesy KCTS

Ride, and *In the Life*.

When an independent producer approaches Sheridan with a finished work, she's more interested in the topic and the filmmaker's credentials than in where the filmmaker lives. However, like KET's Hoffman, she'll write a letter to funders in support of a project with a local hook—as she did with a proposal centering on children who rode the rails to Washington state during the Depression. (Sheridan always makes it clear to the producer that she doesn't guarantee she'll air the program.) The ideal situation, Sheridan suggests, would be a producer with extensive television experience who came to KCTS with partial funding already in place for a high-visibility, primetime series based on a nonfiction book about the West. The station would jump on the project and help find the rest of the financing.



"Program managers are getting busier and busier," says KCTS's Sheridan.

"The broadcast channel is just one aspect of what we do."

Also on the plate is interactive television, HDTV, satellite compression, and electronic education.

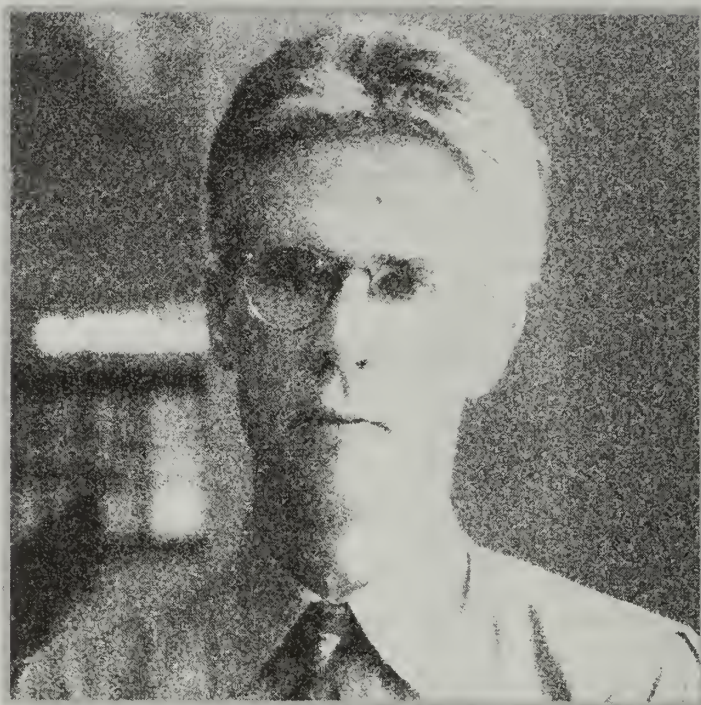
Sheridan's advice for producers with finished stand-alone programs is to get the show to a regional distributor such as APS, SECA, Central Educational Network (CEN), or Pacific Mountain Network (PMN). She encourages producers at the development stage to budget extra funding upfront for distribution, i.e., either to cover the cost of giving the program to a regional programming service or to eliminate the need to generate revenue from broadcast.

From a broader perspective, Sheridan notes that the wave of new technology is gradually transforming her job. Her energies are increasingly spread among interactive television, HDTV, satellite compression, and the changing face of electronic education. "Program managers are getting busier and busier," Sheridan says. "The broadcast channel is just one aspect of what we do. Evaluating and dealing with each idea is very time-consuming."

KTCA-St. Paul/Minneapolis

Tom Holter is director of programming for KTCA and KTCI (a UHF station that airs weeknights only), which serve the nation's 12th largest Nielsen market. Holter includes audience analysis and tracking viewer trends among his responsibilities, along with constructing the schedule. He also collaborates with KTCA's in-house cultural, public affairs, and community affairs producers.

Cohesiveness is Holter's aim: "It's nice if there's a thread that ties through." For example, when in 1991 KTCA aired *P.O.V.*'s presentation of *Tongues Untied*, Marlon Riggs' video about being black and gay, the station produced a live local call-in with Riggs (via satellite from the Bay Area) and Twin Cities gay and lesbian representatives.



Courtesy KTCA

Echoing a theme heard around the country, Holter emphasizes that the local angle is increasingly important. "In the last 12 months, we've had to more narrowly define our priorities to the upper Midwest," Holter says. "We will still buy things from independents, but we really only can when they speak directly to local concerns. A film about the Minneapolis Teamsters strike of 1934—those are the projects that are particularly hard to find."

When it comes to programming of independent producers, the station's jewel is *Alive TV*. This series of commissioned and acquired independent works, offered nationally by PBS, is, of course, also a presence on presenting station KCET's schedule. (*Alive*'s acquisition rate for the 1995 season—\$600/minute—is among the best for national distribution via PBS.) The station also airs *MNTV*, a Sunday late-night slate of finished works by regional independent filmmakers that KCTA curates with local media centers, such as the Minneapolis Film Board and the Walker Art Center. [See "I Want My *MNTV*," p. 9.] The station pays \$600-800/hour for most independent acquisitions; *MNTV*, which oftens features short works, pays \$20/minute. In addition, Holter says, "We try to carry virtually everything ITVS offers," referring to the Saint Paul-based Independent Television Service. KCTA's production department, meanwhile, gets involved in development; *Hoop Dreams* began life as a half-hour KTCA production.

As is the case throughout public television, KCTA is far more supportive of independent producers in principle and philosophy than in reality. "We have all the flexibility to pick them up," Holter says. "The wherewithal to pay the filmmaker is a different story." Holter readily acknowledges that, as a result, questions about his station's relationship with independent producers don't always provide the most positive answers. "Those are exactly the questions that are going to be tough ones for public television for a while," he says. "It's an issue we need to address at every juncture."

Michael Fox is a critic and columnist for SF Weekly, Film/Tape World, and other Bay Area publications.

BY JAMES RYAN

SCREENWRITERS, UNITE!

Field
Reports

A Writers Unit, organized by James Ryan (left), meets in Manhattan's West Village.

Photo: Patricia Thomson



**FEELING ISOLATED?
PART SALON, PART
SUPPORT GROUP, A
WRITERS' UNIT CAN
PROVIDE THE FEED-
BACK AND CAMA-
RADERIE YOU CRAVE.**

YOU'VE GRAPPLED WITH SYD FIELD'S EXERCISES, SAT at the feet of Robert McKee for a very long weekend, got shrewd with William Goldman's *Adventures in the Screen Trade*, honed your British sneer with *Naked Hollywood*, and opened your heart to Viki King in 21 days.

Now you sit at your desk and write. Isolated, day after day, tapping the keyboard, going through the cycles: talent, no talent; original, derivative; I am sick, you are sick.

Considering that many "experts" claim you need at least six or seven screenplays or 10 years under your belt before you can say you're really in control, it seems that, one way or another, you are going to be spending a lot of time doing this. The process of writing is long and slow and, at times, utter drudgery. But, ultimately, it is the deepest and most complicated issue you'll have to wrestle with as a screenwriter.

Books outlining the modalities of creation and

the chaos of the market, and pronouncements from the high priests of the seminar circuit do have their benefits. But where do you find support when in the midst of the most mundane task of actually creating something?

The answer is to organize. Create your own support system. You need feedback that is immediate and regular in order to maintain the difficult practice of creating good work consistently. You need to talk. Discuss what you do, your trade, your work, with somebody who gets it.

Here's the rub. How do you create community in our postindustrial society, one predicated on atomizing all of us into increasingly separate islands? Assuming you'd rather not explore your pathology and imperfections in one of the 300-odd 12-step programs, how can you hang out with others and talk about your craft?

No one said this was going to be easy. Collectivism, altruism, and selflessness may be necessary.

A writers workshop, or, as they call it in the theater, a Unit, is the best way to help you with these elusive yet profoundly real matters.

A Writer's Unit is part salon, part support group. Suppose you need to pitch something before you have to really pitch something. Or you have a germ of an idea for your next project and need to talk it through with your peers. Perhaps you want to do a reading of your new screenplay with actors after a rehearsal period in front of other writers, because writers give the best notes. A Unit can provide all of this. It breaks the isolation and generates the inspiration that comes from being challenged by your peers. It costs little or no money to do and is one of the best ways to keep yourself growing as a screenwriter.

I have organized or helped organize several Units in the theater over the last decade. What works well for playwrights will work well for screenwriters. Here are the things I have learned:

First, find an umbrella organization or institution that can lend you credibility and support—a film school, a respected journal or periodical, a local nonprofit theater, or a YMCA. A Screenwriters Unit will appeal to an institution's self interest for many reasons. Identify these and act upon them. However you choose the umbrella organization, you should make sure it has a staff in place that can give you some of its time in sup-

porting the Unit—mailing notices, scheduling, etc.

The Unit must be a safe haven. If its members have agendas other than sharing their work or giving and receiving support, it will not work. It will implode, wither, or worse, twist itself into an entity infused with Vatican intrigue, an endemic quality of the film studios and mini-majors—and who needs *more* of that in their lives? Writers need a place just for writers and their concerns. They need a place to bring their work when everything is raw and fragile. If someone enters the group to make contacts or hustle a deal, the Unit loses its integrity and violates its organizing principle.

Keep the size to something manageable. Fifteen writers is more than enough to begin. Organize writers based on talent and experience. Get a mix of sensibilities and interests, people who are different. A group is healthiest this way. It creates an environment where everyone can grow.

Someone is going to have to make the first move, give the time and energy to get things started. Altruism again. Someone is going to have to be the head of the group for no pay. Or at the very least, the facilitator. It is just a fact. Someone has to lock up and shut off the lights. It is best if this position rotates within the group. It prevents the consolidation of power, gives everyone the task of being responsible, and strengthens the group.

Meet every other week on Monday night. Meeting every week puts a strain on most people's schedules. Monday night is a very lonely night and ripe for the picking. The meeting should last, at the most, three hours. People can listen only so long.

Everyone should go out for a drink and dinner after the meeting. This is very, very important. Just do it. It explains itself.

Tailor your group to meet the needs that arise. Let it evolve and become what it needs to be. It is a participatory democracy.

Each group has its own life span, like studio heads. This is okay. People come and go, drift apart, the energy dissipates. Don't fight it. Let it disband when it must; if you get three years out of a group then you are doing very well. Organize again. That's what it's all about.

James Ryan is a playwright, screenwriter, and teacher who works in both New York and Los Angeles.

Stormy Weather for Raindance

DESPITE THE LONDON FILM MARKET'S PROMISING DEBUT IN 1993, THE CLIMATE IN '94 WAS HEAVY DRIZZLE, LITTLE SIZZLE.

BY MICHELE SHAPIRO



The Raindance Market takes place in Central London, just minutes from London's Times Square, Piccadilly Circus. Photo: Michele Shapiro

recently completed their first projects and were looking to drum up interest in a second. The few reps came away pleased with their discoveries. Paul Almond, executive vice president of production and acquisitions for Live, who was scoping out "accessible, wider-release" features at the event, considers Raindance a great way to meet Britain's newest generation of independents—specialists in the art of producing

commercially viable films for well under \$1 million. Approximately 70 percent of the market's participants reside in the U.K., while 25 percent hailed from the U.S.

Sara Lewis, executive director of acquisitions for Republic Pictures, was equally impressed with the untapped talent at this year's market. "Many of the filmmakers are passionate about what they're doing, which bodes well for their future projects," she says. Although Lewis adds that several films she screened this year "just missed" in terms of acquisition, such is the nature of film markets, which, unlike festivals, are accessible to anyone who pays an entry fee.

But for many of the makers who scraped together between \$75 and \$300 to have their shorts, features, and works-in-progress screened during the week-long event, the reception was a bust. "I wanted more buyer for my buck," says Brett Renwick of Manhattan, who flew to London in search of funding for his new screenplay. Renwick had read in Raindance's application

materials that 300 buyers attended last year's market. According to Elliot Grove, Raindance's founder and director, at least one-third of the 150 projects screened in 1993 were sold to various outlets, including home video companies and pay cable networks. But only around 100 buyers returned in 1994.

The concept behind Raindance appears sound. Grove, a fledgling filmmaker who made his name conducting film workshops for micro-budget producers, kept two critical factors in mind when he conceived the event a few years back: timing and location. Raindance is held the week between the Mipcom market in Cannes and the Mifed market in Milan, when buyers from around the world flock to London for preview screenings—a pattern that has gained momentum in recent years. Its '94 venue, the massive, eight-screen, Bugs Bunny-studded Warner West End is centrally located and close to the hotel where many buyers stay while in town. By making it easy for them to drop by, Grove anticipated he could attract those who don't usually attend the U.S.'s major market for non-studio films, New York's Independent Feature Film Market (IFFM).

Despite the apparent need for such a market in Great Britain, Raindance '94 failed to live up to its potential. Betsy Spanbock, director of European acquisitions for the Samuel Goldwyn Company, attributes the significant drop in buyer attendance between '93 and '94 to the increased number of companies that held private screenings, which kept buyers otherwise occupied. "I think the amount was almost double last year's," she estimates.

The buyer shortage aside, many of Raindance '94's shortcomings resulted from Grove's inability to plan and orchestrate a full week of screenings, seminars, and informal gatherings with virtually no assistance. During Raindance's first year, Grove had worked closely with Jamie Ader-Brown of Manhattan-based In Pictures. Ader-Brown, a producers' rep with firsthand knowledge of the overseas market and the IFFM (which Grove had never attended), administered and programmed the U.S. portion of the 1993 market. By actively pursuing her contacts, Ader-Brown managed to solicit about 50 entries and attracted hundreds of buyers itching to discover the next Quentin Tarantino. The strong showing of films from the U.S. in 1993 included Jon Jost's *All the Vermeers in New York*, Chaim Bianco's *The Pope of Utah*, and Matthew Harrison's *Rhythm Thief*.

This past fall, however, Ader-Brown took a less active role to concentrate on her own business. The number of U.S. submissions dropped to 24. Grove, with a three-person volunteer staff and a micro-budget of approximately \$550, was on his own. He served as the market's director, administrator, programmer, and publicist, as well as its

FREE DRINKS AND HORS-D'OEUVRES WERE IN short supply at the "Meet the Buyers" reception, one of the Raindance market's most highly touted events. What's worse, the afternoon's main draw—buyers—were almost as scarce.

More than 200 filmmakers, screenwriters, and video artists checked out Raindance '94—London's only independent film market and showcase, held from October 15 to 21—in hopes of generating a buzz for their projects and, more importantly, clinching deals with buyers from the U.S., the U.K., Asia, and Australia. But at the bare-bones reception, they found themselves vying for elbow room and a chance to chat with the few buyers present.

Distributors who took a few hours to attend the banner event included reps from two Los Angeles-based ventures, Republic Entertainment and Live Entertainment, and a lone Brit from Visionary Productions, a U.K.-based home video company. The buyers had their hands full, fielding screenplay pitches and swapping business cards with zealous market participants, many of whom had

buyer liaison.

Try as he did to juggle tasks and put on a happy face, Grove was in over his head—and it showed. Buyers complained about a lack of advance materials. Makers went without a seminar schedule. Most screenings began anywhere from 10 minutes to a half-hour late. Esteemed publications like the *London Times* and the *London Independent*, which covered the event in year one, ignored year two. Even Britain's alternative weekly, *Time Out*, and the London-based trade publication *Screen International* devoted no more than a mention to the screenings. Similarly, potential sponsors adopted a wait-and-see attitude.

Grove accepted the sophomore slump as a matter of course. "It is very difficult to start anything new in London, where novel ideas are almost always met with great resistance," he explains.

But Grove, a transplanted Canadian, was also met with resistance outside the U.K. Geoffrey Gilmore, director of the Sundance Film Festival, took offense to Grove's play on the Sundance name and publicly denied any affiliation with Raindance. As a result, Grove considered changing the event's name to the SoHo Screenings, but eventually decided against it.

From the outset, Grove also neglected to spell out whether Raindance is a market or a festival. This year there were four private screenings for buyers, with 120 film- and videomakers paying the market fee (down from 150 in 1993). The remainder were "showcase" screenings open to the public. Three of these were invited films, for which the market fee was waived.

The event's schizophrenic nature, Grove explains, stems from the insistence on the part of the London Film Festival, which runs from late October through November, to screen only U.K. premieres. Since, technically, a closed-door screening doesn't hurt anyone's chances of getting in to the more established festival, "I give makers the option of showing their films to the public or inviting only buyers," he says.

RAINDANCE '94's MARKET ROSTER WAS MADE UP primarily of U.S. and U.K. features with a smattering from France, Germany, and Canada. A number of works-in-progress and three programs of short films—New British Shorts, New American Shorts, and New Horror Shorts on Video—rounded out the schedule.

One of the biggest crowd pleasers of the week was Trey Parker's *Alfred Packer: The Musical*, a farcical Western that Parker says was rejected from several festivals because of its sometimes graphic content. The feature, which Parker shot for \$125,000 while studying film at the University of Colorado, traces the steps of six gold panners as they trek across the Rocky Mountains in the late 1800s. Musical numbers such as "When I was on Top of You," a ballad that Packer sings to his miss-

ing horse, elicited chuckles from throughout the packed theater. While the film is more a send-up of standard American musicals than a socially significant work like Canadian maker John Greyson's AIDS-themed musical, *Zero Patience*, it is a lot of fun. Unfortunately, *Alfred Packer* might be Parker's first and last independent film; he now lives in Hollywood and recently completed a pilot for Fox.

Several U.S. films at Raindance '94 had screened at the IFFM a month earlier, including Michael Corrente's *Federal Hill*, K.B. Pugliese's *Blue Days Lost*, and Scott Felixson's *Helium Head*. Ader-Brown considers the double-screening strategy a plus. "New makers need as much exposure as possible," says. "It usually takes at least two screenings to sell a film."

Another plus is that no more than two films screened simultaneously at the Warner West End. "Buyers only had to choose between two films rather than the hundreds that screen at one time during markets such as MIFED," she explains. Raindance's screening fees are comparable to IFFM's, she adds, and far less than other markets. [See "Raindance & IFFM: A Comparison," p. 37] "At the AFM and Mifed, you can't even get in the door without a sales company's representation."

Furthermore, many of the foreign buyers who attended Raindance '94 weren't at this year's IFFM. Rachael Shapiro, IFFM market director, confirms that the number of foreign sales reps at IFFM has declined in general since the event's 1978 inception (although it remained level this past year, at 62 companies and 96 reps). Shapiro links the decline to increased competition. "There are so many festivals and markets out there now," she says. "Also, the IFFM follows the Toronto [International Film Festival], and people will either come because they're not far from New York or decide that they've been out of the office for too long and return home."

It's no surprise that the two features Ader-Brown represented at Raindance '94 attracted the greatest number of buyers. *Federal Hill*, former handyman Michael Corrente's stunning depiction of a tough, working-class Italian neighborhood, had secured a U.S. theatrical distribution deal with Trimark Pictures prior to the October screening. But about 20 foreign buyers caught the feature at Raindance, including Spain's Cine Musy, Holland-based Meteor, Italy's Delta Video, and Scandinavia's TV 1000. As a result, In Pictures sealed at least one deal for overseas theatrical distribution the following week at Mifed.

Another of In Pictures' offerings, Vern Oakley's *Mr. 247*, premiered at Raindance and attracted a slew of high-powered U.S. buyers. Reps from Samuel Goldwyn, October Films, and Sony Classics turned out to watch the sugary nineties' tale of a pregnant woman who falls heart-first for her anonymous sperm donor. At press time, the ink was drying on a U.S. distribution deal.

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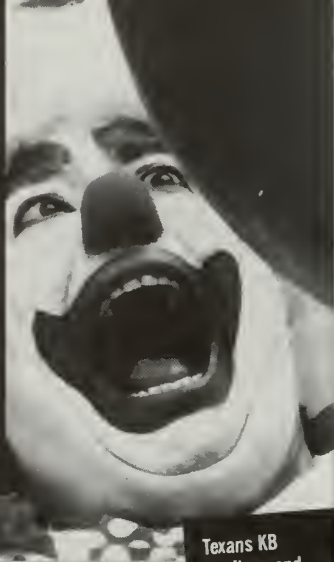
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Tears of a clown: Curious Londoners attended Scott Felixson's short film, *Helium Head*, at Raindance, but in terms of racking up potential sales deals, the screening was a bust. Courtesy Lighter Than Air Productions



Texans KB Pugliese and Jennifer Payson, who coproduced the Gen-X feature *Blue Days Lost*, were looking for finishing funds at Raindance. Courtesy film-makers



Filmmakers unfamiliar with overseas territories had a more difficult time luring buyers to their screenings. Scott Felixson, who opted to show his 30-minute short *Helium Head* publicly, attracted a decent crowd of curious Londoners. The film's name star, Dick Cavett, worked in Felixson's favor, as did his idea to rent a helium tank and hand out balloons in front of the Warner West End. But the promotional strategy failed to attract the European TV and theatrical buyers Felixson had hoped to meet.

In the Warner theater's only gathering place—a lounge where coffee cost \$3 a pop and the chairs are fastened to the carpeted floor—Felixson expressed his overall disappointment with Raindance: "I was under the impression that [Grove] would contact buyers in advance about the screenings, and that far more would attend. Instead, when I arrived, Elliot sent me to the Meridian Hotel in search of buyers. I don't know what they look like, and the concierge certainly wouldn't disclose what rooms they were in." Fortunately, Felixson took advantage of his proximity to British buyers by arranging appointments with Channel 4, the British Film Institute, and several film and home video distributors.

IN ADDITION TO SCREENINGS AND RECEPTIONS, Raindance '94 offered a number of panel discussions, but these proved another weak link. Typical was a screenplay pitching seminar at which I ended up serving as a last-minute recruitment on the panel of "experts."

The Live Ammunition seminar drew more than 100 published and novice screenwriters. Feeling exhausted and a bit flustered after a full week of screenings and other lackluster events, I slid quietly in to a back-row seat of the dark theater at the Warner West End.

How Grove spotted me, I'm still not sure, but

he immediately insisted I join the panel. I had never written a screenplay. I had never funded one. With those credentials, I thought, I would fit right in.

Far from representing Europe's funding community, the panel included only two professional producers, Sophie McHetchard of U.K.-based Zed Productions and Eliza Mellor of BFI Productions. The others, like myself, were recruited by Grove, who had promised market participants a rainstorm of activity and so far delivered only drizzle, to fill seats. Other last-minute recruits included Jason McHugh, Alfred

Packer's student producer; Phil Alberstat, an entertainment attorney who had to dash after hearing the first few pitches; and, to my surprise, the American comedian Emo Phillips.

I tried to remain alert throughout the two-plus hour session while a host of ghostlike figures rattled off pitches in the dimly lit theater. But after the nineteenth or twentieth, the ideas melded together into one long romantic fantasy drama action adventure rife with swashbucklers space invaders secret amulets political rebels and religious fanatics. All I could think about was downing a warm pint of ale, no matter how bitter, at the closest pub. I imagine many of the screenwriters in attendance wound up feeling similarly drained.

DESPITE ALL ITS SHORTCOMINGS, RAINDANCE '94 did provide an opportunity for makers to network in an often chaotic atmosphere that, for better or worse, accurately reflected the low-budget aesthetic. Independent camaraderie is a paradox that prevailed, as did the event's raw energy and casual feel. "I'm all in favor of low-key opportunities for makers to chat with distributors," says Samuel Goldwyn's Spanbock.

When asked if she feels Grove can bounce back from a scathing, hastily reported *Variety* review, which declared Raindance '94 "a washout," Spanbock is optimistic. "Most buyers make decisions based on what we tell each other, rather than what we read," she says. The *Variety* article aside, it remains to be seen whether Raindance can recover from poor word-of-mouth. Several infuriated makers felt Grove falsely inflated their expectations. One even asked for a refund—and got it.

Yet Grove, a tireless soul, already is looking ahead to Raindance '95. He says he has lined up two new sponsors, London Radio and *Empire* magazine, and is looking for a third to underwrite a

buyer's catalog. Grove also hopes to create "much more public involvement" by initiating a nightly Best Short Film program in conjunction with the British Short Film Festival. The addition of a multimedia platform may seem a grand leap given the projection problems at this year's event. But who knows, maybe the new technologies will prove more cooperative than old-fangled film projectors.

Although Spanbock acknowledges most buyers have yet to add the Raindance market to their list of must-attend events, she notes that it's still very young, and one sleeper film like *Slacker* or *sex, lies, and videotape* could easily make it an A-list attraction. Ader-Brown agrees. "Elliot should be commended, not criticized, for furthering the movement," she says, and pauses a moment before concluding, "With all the talent that exists in the U.K., there's no reason why London shouldn't have the same type of launch pad New York already has with the IFFM."

Contact: Elliot Grove, market director, 6 Chelsea Wharf, 15 Lots Rd., London SW10 0QJ; tel: 011 44 71 351 7748; fax: 011 44 71 352 7385.

Michele Shapiro is managing editor of *The Independent*. She covered the Rotterdam International Film Festival in the May 1994 issue and most recently wrote about the Independent Television Service.

MARKET MATTERS

Confused about which film and video markets are worth attending? Below is a list of domestic and international markets. Call ahead for specific dates and submission guidelines.

EUROPEAN FILM MARKET

When: February; **Where:** Berlin, Germany (held in conjunction with the Berlin International Film Festival); **US Contact:** Linda Hansen, AIFA, c/o New York Foundation for the Arts, 155 Spring St., NY, NY 10013; (212) 366-6900 x333; fax: 1778; **What's on offer:** Features, docs; **The Scoop:** American Independents and Features Abroad (AIFA) reps U.S. theatrical features and docs with theatrical potential.

MIP-TV AND MIPCOM

When: April, October; **Where:** Cannes, France **US Contact:** Barney Bernhard, Reed Midem Organization, 475 Park Ave. South, NY, NY 10016; (212) 689-4220; **What's on offer:** TV programming, home video; **The Scoop:** Independents are best represented by a sales company but they can register for about \$1,700.

AMERICAN FILM MARKET

When: February; **Where:** Los Angeles; **Contact:** Tim Kittleson or Missy Huger, American Film Marketing Association (AFMA), 10850 Wilshire Blvd., 9th fl. LA 90024; (310) 446-1000; **What's on offer:** Features; **The Scoop:** AFMA is a member organization for sales companies. One must be a member to screen films at the event. Membership currently runs around \$10,000.

THE INDEPENDENT FEATURE FILM MARKET

When: September; **Where:** Manhattan; **Contact:**

Rachael Shapiro, market director, c/o Independent Feature Project (IFP), 104 W. 29th St., 12th fl., NY, NY 10001; (212) 465-8200; *What's on offer:* Features, docs, shorts, works-in-progress; *The Scoop:* One must be a member of IFP to screen films at the market, which caters to independent producers.

ROTTERDAM CINEMART

When: January; *Where:* Rotterdam, the Netherlands *Contact:* The Rotterdam Cinemart, PO Box 21696, 3001 AR Rotterdam, the Netherlands; tel: 011-31 10 411 8080; fax 011 31 10 413 5132; *US Contact:* IFP (see above); *What's on offer:* Screenplays, works-in-progress, features; *The Scoop:* In 1994, the IFP began organizing U.S. submissions for the CineMart. Rotterdam selects screenwriters and makers to participate in the market, which prearranges meetings between makers and potential funders.

MIFED

When: November; *Where:* Milan, Italy; *Contact:* Mifed, Largo Domodossola, 1, 20145 Milan, Italy; tel: 011-39 2 499 7267; fax: 011 39 2 499 77020; *What's on offer:* TV, features, docs, shorts; *The Scoop:* One of top int'l commercial markets. Fifty-five percent of attendees are top company execs; best to be represented by sales agent.

MARCHÉ DU FILM

When: May; *Where:* Cannes (held in conjunction with Cannes Film Festival); *Contact:* Danielle Birge, tel: 011 331-499-50269; *US Contact:* IFP (see above); *What's on offer:* Features, shorts, docs; *The Scoop:* The market caters to sales companies like the IFFM caters to indies.

RAINDANCE & IFFM: A Comparison

A quick glance at the stats shows the difference in size and scope of the Raindance market, which took place last year in London, and the Seventeenth Annual Independent Feature Film Market in New York last September.

	IFFM '94	Raindance '94
features screened	87	34
shorts screened	70	70
works-in-progress	77	12
buyers/fest reps in attendance	706*	100**
films selected for Sundance '95	19	0
volunteers	250	3
receptions	9	1
Screening fees:		
Features	\$375	\$300
Shorts under 40:00	\$325	
Shorts 40-60:00	\$350	
Shorts under 15:00		\$75
Shorts 15-30:00		\$100
Works-in-progress	\$325	\$175
Scripts	\$250	

* Total number overseas and domestic reps

** Estimate of reps/buyers attending 1+ screenings

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On The Waterfront

THE HAMPTONS INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

BY LAUREL BERGER

On certain days in Eastern Long Island, the confluence of land and light reminds me of a Tarkovsky film. I'm thinking of the houses that squat unnaturally in the middle of cleared fields, illuminated by a brilliant storm of light. Of days when the gunmetal sky threatens to

rain, but doesn't, and the sighing noise of wind and insects rising up from the wheat fields, indiscernible at first, becomes louder than your own breath.

Tarkovsky wasn't on the program of the second Hamptons International Film Festival, held October 19 to 23, but the tenor of the annual event was dominated by an arthouse crowd and not, as the location might lead one to suppose, by their Hollywood counterparts (many of whom have second homes out here). For some industry denizens, the festival was a convenient excuse for a mid-week visit. Representatives from Miramax,

Samuel Goldwyn, and Arrow Entertainment were glimpsed around and about the streets of Easthampton, a fashionable beach-front town about a three-hour drive east of Manhattan.

But the festival also attracted abundant "general" audiences and a fair amount of press. Nudged, perhaps, by last year's media hype, ticket sales were up 40 percent this year, as was corporate sponsorship. Some 20,000 viewers packed into the United Artists Theatres on Easthampton's Main Street. To gain entry, however, one had to cross a picket line of union projectionists. They were there to protest UA's imminent lay-off scheme, and they did so with almost courtly grace.

Forty-eight international features (75 percent looking to attract a distributor) were the main focus of a lively program that also included shorts (programmed thematically), student films, a tribute to Hamptons resident Robert Benton, and seminars. Of the latter, the most interesting were "New York, New Film" (panelists included *Spanking the Monkey* producer Dean Silvers and *Barcelona* director Whit Stillman) and "Documentary Filmmaking," deftly moderated by Stephen Schiff, critic-at-large for the *New Yorker*.

This year, festival director Darryl Macdonald had plenty of quality independent features to consider. A few years ago, "maybe only two or three talents would emerge each year, but that isn't the case anymore," says Macdonald, a man with a warm, straightforward demeanor, who also cofounded the Seattle Film Festival. "I didn't have to struggle to find that number of good films from new independent directors." But he did have another kind of struggle.

FOR THE MOST PART, THIS SECOND EDITION OF THE Hamptons International Film Festival was a smooth operation, discounting a few minor glitches. By noon the first day, the box office, a stuffy narrow storefront teeming with polite, yet maddeningly uninformed volunteers, had acquired a kind of purgatorial air. This was where all non-VIPs—i.e., student competitors, makers of shorts, journalists (all 150 of us), and



Severo Perez' *...and the Earth Did not Swallow Him*, a childhood memoir exploring the immigrant experience of Mexican farm workers in the 1950s, was one of several films addressing social issues at this year's Hamptons festival. Photo: Carlos Rene Perez, courtesy filmmaker



Arthur Bjorn Egeli's *Unconditional Love* snagged the Golden Starfish Award for "excellence in concept and execution despite budget limitations." Courtesy filmmaker

industry representatives—languished in limbo upon arrival.

Critics turned indignant when they discovered that no tickets were left for the opening night world premiere of Bob Balaban's *The Last Good Time*, a Samuel Goldwyn acquisition with Armin Mueller-Stahl and Maureen Stapleton that will be released this spring. Nor were there any tickets for the opening night gala; indeed, no tickets were left for anything but the festival's most obscure films. This situation was rectified when the organizers, puzzled by the number of empty seats on opening day, realized the problem was computer-generated.

By opening night the festival apparatus was running considerably more smoothly. Balaban's *The Last Good Time*, about the intersecting lives of a lonely widowed violinist and his former upstairs neighbor, a street-tough babe with an abusive boyfriend, won the Golden Arrow Award for most popular film and best director.

Although five other world premieres were among the pickings, the most talked-about films were ones that had already been on the festival circuit. Highlights included Dorota Kedzierska's *Crows* (Poland), He Ping's *Red*

**Festival director
Macdonald maintains
that the laid-back
atmosphere, where you
can gauge audience
reaction, is subtly
conductive to
deal-making.**

Firecracker, *Green Firecracker* (China/Hong Kong), and Jyll Johnstone's *Martha and Ethel* (USA), which took the Golden Arrow for best documentary and played to sold-out theaters. (Picked up by Sony Picture Classics at Sundance last year, it opened theatrically in New York, Chicago, and L.A. last month.)

"*Martha and Ethel* isn't the kind of film you can actually sell," says Johnstone. "It's a real word-of-mouth picture about two nannies, two families, and life in general. And the Hamptons is a word-of-mouth festival, so we were well-matched."

In fact, the atmosphere was decidedly soft-sell—perhaps too soft for certain tastes. Instead of the endless parties and receptions that dominated last year's festival, the organizers decided to limit



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the kibbitzing to a filmmakers' breakfast and opening- and closing-night galas. Part of the reason was to mollify the local restaurateurs, who jumped on the festival gravy train by providing specially priced "quick" meals. The drawback was that since there was no main gathering place, it was sometimes tough to locate people. Although a guest list was available upon request, phone numbers were not provided and all messages had to be relayed through the mostly volunteer-run hospitality center,

which was less than hospitable to the press. However, this didn't affect media coverage, with articles appearing in *Variety*, *Billboard*, the Long Island section of the *New York Times*, and the local weeklies, as well as some local cable coverage, along with New York's Channel 11 News.

Macdonald maintains that the laid-back atmosphere, where you can gauge audience reaction, is subtly conducive to deal-making. "I've been to festivals, like Berlin, where you've got industry types walking in and out of screenings," he says. "They'll watch half an hour and think they've seen the film, or else they're sitting on their hands because they don't want to clue in their competitors that they're really getting off on it. To my reckoning, the great thing about [the Hamptons] festival is that it brings audiences together with industry, so they can see what really works. It's an integral event."

Arthur Bjorn Egeli, a young, bearish-looking man, agreed. The producer/director/ writer of *Unconditional Love* almost wept when he won the juried Golden Starfish Award for "excellence in concept and execution despite budget limitations"—which translates into \$111,000 in goods and services from Silvercup Studios in Astoria, Queens.

"No one has expressed any interest here," he said, "but I just called my machine in Los Angeles and three distributors had left messages saying that they knew I was in the Hamptons and could I see them as soon as I got back; they couldn't make it because of schedule problems. So there is





Forbidden temptation is the theme of Jennifer Warren's *The Beans of Egypt, Maine*, which was screened in the Hamptons. Courtesy filmmaker

some kind of networking going on, even if it's indirect."

Unconditional Love is a loosely autobiographical coming-of-age story that unfolds at an artists' colony in Provincetown, Massachusetts. Egeli made his debut with a horror film called *Maximul*, starring TV's *Batman* veteran Adam West. "I was a director-for-hire," he recalls. "You can rent it at Blockbuster. But this is my auteur film!"

Budding auteurs were encouraged to participate. Ten \$2,500 scholarships for best shorts were awarded to graduate and undergraduate filmmakers. In many cases their themes echoed those of the main lineup.

Among the U.S. feature filmmakers—over a third of whom were women—social issues were prevalent, like the ones addressed in Gordon Erikson's and Heather Johnston's *Scenes from the New World*, a there-goes-the-neighborhood dramatic comedy that evolved from a workshopped script; Michael Corrente's *Federal Hill*, set in the scruffy blue-collar suburb of the same name in Providence, Rhode Island; and Severo Perez's *...and the Earth Did not Swallow Him*, a childhood memoir exploring the immigrant experience of Mexican farm workers in the 1950s. The same held true of British documentaries like Nick Broomfield's tragicomic *Tracking Down Maggie*, a

portrait of Margaret Thatcher, or Michael Apted's *Moving the Mountain*, which chronicled the student uprising in Tiananmen Square. Another trend was the number of seasoned actors trying their hands at directing short films, albeit none very memorably. Treat Williams, Gregory Hines, and Alan Arkin headed the pack.

One filmmaker who completely broke the mold (along with everyone's heart because of his sad tale) was P.J. Pesce, director of *The Last Trail*, a quirky little western

that won the juried Silvercup Award for best American independent director, totalling \$20,000 in soundstage services. A few days into shooting, "I dreamed I sold my soul to the devil," Pesce recounted at the Filmmakers' Breakfast. "The next day, a representative from Turner Pictures knocked on my door with a contract in his hand." Turner later decided it wasn't their kind of film, and they now plan a straight-to-video release. Having bagged the Silvercup Award, Pesce now prays that a buyer will step in to rescue his film from video hell.

"My only hope is to create some sort of a distributor buzz," he said, "which I'm going about in my own amateurish way. I would come back here in a minute, if only out of loyalty to Darryl Macdonald, who has treated me exceptionally well and has been so supportive of my particular plight."

At age two, the Hamptons festival is still forging its identity. Critical consensus is mixed; many are taking a wait-and-see attitude. But as Severo Perez notes, "At the IFFM, the distributors were like Elvis sightings—you thought you saw someone from Fine Line, but it turned out to be someone who looked like someone from Fine Line. At least here they're not moving targets." If the organizers can continue to attract talent and a bit more industry, the Hamptons could well become a force to reckon with.

Laurel Berger is a writer who lives in the Hamptons.

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Christina Craton and Tim Schwab's documentary *The Burning Barrel* uses 8mm home movies, family snapshots, the prairie landscape, and advertising images to contemplate the decline of a small rural community. Courtesy filmmakers



First there was Ingmar Bergman, now there's St. Clair Bourne. The New York-based Bourne has produced, executive produced, written, and directed more than 35 documentaries, TV programs, and educational films, including *Making Do the Right Thing* and *Langston Hughes: The Dream Keeper*. Most recently Bourne penned a deal with Cinetofon, a Swedish film company, for a new feature-film project, *Exiles and Allies* (120 min., 35mm). Bourne also has received development funds and a commitment for partial production funding from the Swedish Film Institute. The drama is based on real events during the Vietnam War, when the Swedish government offered refuge to American war resisters and deserters as part of a national anti-war policy. It follows five such men who were treated as heroes by the Swedes until the end of the war, when they were abandoned by the government and turned to crime for survival. The script is now in the works, and Bourne is seeking additional financing both in the U.S. and abroad. *Exiles and Allies*, Sharon Kahn, Kahn & Jacobs Public Relations (212) 647-1850.

Carol Jacobsen's video and photography exhibit *Porn Imagery: Picturing Prostitutes* was the subject of a national anti-censorship protest after it was shut down by students at the University of Michigan Law School in 1993. Jacobsen was represented by the ACLU in a year-long battle to force the school to reinstall the exhibit she curated, which eventually came to pass. Jacobsen recently completed a new documentary project, *From One Prison...* (70 min., video), about four women serving life sentences for murder in Michigan. The doc, says Jacobsen, "presents a powerfully political exposé of the negligence of police, lawyers, and penal systems with regard to women's human and civil rights." [See "Cue & A," p. 44.] In January, it accompanied the first group of clemency petitions for women prisoners in Michigan who killed in self defense. incidentally, an exhibition of documentary video and photography featuring *From One Prison...* that took place last November in New York came off without a hitch. *From One Prison...*, 1980 Alhambra, Ann Arbor, MI 48103; (313) 662-0776.

Photographer Dorothea Lange once said, "One should really use the camera as though tomorrow you'd be stricken blind." California-based documentarian Meg Partridge did just that in her recently completed documentary, *Dorothea Lange: A Visual Life* (52 min., 16mm). The film includes interviews with the photographer, her family, and friends, and traces the evolution of Lange's images, many of which have become icons of American history. *Dorothea Lange: A Visual Life*, Meg Partridge, Pacific Pictures, 1400 Valley Ford Freestone Rd., Valley Ford, CA 94972-0305; (707) 876-3135, fax: (707) 876-9807.

Stephanie Wasserman's *Voices from the Storm* (57 min., video) contrasts the mainstream media's coverage of the Persian Gulf War against the personal human experiences of four vets. Included in the doc are personal archives—photos, journals, letters, and personal video footage—intercut with interviews of the veterans at home and news footage. When one of the vets was asked why he risked threats of discipline and possible court-martial to record their experiences at the Kuwaiti border, he replied: "I wanted to be able to leave a record for my kids so they could know what happened to me in the Gulf. God only knows what my boy saw on T.V." *Voices from the Storm*, Tell Take Media, 1490 16th Ave., San Francisco, CA 94122; (415) 661-3664.

If the feature *Born to Lose* (94 min., 16mm) reminds one of *Reservoir Dogs*, it may be because first-time director Douglas Cawker was inspired by Tarantino, with whom he worked as an apprentice editor on *Dogs*. Cawker scraped together around \$40,000 to make his drama and shot the film, about a drug-addicted punk rock band, the Spoilers, in just 13 days. All rights are currently available. *Born to Lose*, Gwen Field or Carolyn Schroeder, Cine-cism Films, 2802 Forrester Dr.,

Los Angeles, CA 90064; (310) 204-2700; fax: (310) 204-2809.

Filmmaker Kathy Fredricks is at work on a new documentary, *Prescott* (56-58 min., Hi8), which uses real estate development in her home town of Prescott, Arizona, to examine the effects of the global human population explosion. In 1994, *Money* magazine named Prescott the best place in America to retire. In February 1994, one of every three Californians leaving the state moved to Prescott. County population has doubled in the last five years and is expected to double again in the next three to seven. In the piece, Fredrick will study how population explosions in cities such as Prescott often lead to higher crime, lower wages, environmental devastation, and increased diseases, and how political and religious pressures prevent anyone from addressing the issues. *Prescott*, Kathy Fredricks, 9 Juniper Ct., Wildwood, Prescott, AZ 86301; (602) 445-3329.

In Dallas, filmmaker Joseph F. Alexandre has completed production on *Psychotropic Overload* (80 min., 16mm, super 8 & Hi8), a thriller made specifically for the home video market. The plot revolves around a well-respected therapist who takes on an aspiring fashion photographer for a client. "Unlike many low-budget thrillers that rely heavily on cheap gore and slice and dice special effects," says the film's producer, writer, director, and editor, "Psychotropic Overload instead titillates on a more psychological and visceral level." *Psychotropic Overload*, JFA Films, 4151 Beltline Rd., ste. 124-156, Dallas, TX 75244.

Violence: Dealing with Anger (24 min., video), produced by Ronald C. Meyer, Diane Evans, and Aiki Works, is geared to children in grades 4-6 and teaches them skills to use before violent reactions become habitual. *Violence: Dealing with Anger*, c/o Centre Communications, 1800 30th St., ste. 207,

Boulder, CO 80301; (303) 444-1166.

Forget the gorgeous, pre-Raphaelite style 1935 film designed by Max Reinhardt. *Ill Met by Moonlight* (127 min., 35mm) is a radical departure from these and other visions of Shakespeare's timeless comedy *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Thai novelist, composer, and director S.P. Somtow's feature is highly urbane, full of gothic-punk images and stark vistas of L.A.'s seediest neighborhoods. Puck meets punk. *Ill Met by Moonlight*, Titania Pictures Corp., 6440 Bellingham Ave., ste. 192, N. Hollywood, CA 91606; ph./fax: (818) 982-9455.

The Burning Barrel (30 min., 16mm), by Christina Craton and Tim Schwab, uses 8mm home movies, family snapshots, the prairie landscape, and advertising images from the last 35 years to contemplate the decline of a small rural community. The burning barrel, a fixture on most Dakota farms, is a 50-gallon oil drum farm owners use to burn garbage. Each week, say the filmmakers, they spend hours feeding direct mail appeals, catalogs, magazines, and product packaging into the fire. The film is a meditation on the personal and spiritual realities of a society based on consumption. *The Burning Barrel*, Christine Craton and Timothy V. Schwab, First Light Films, 4007 Willowwood, Aberdeen, SD 57401; (605) 225-2559; fax: (605) 225-4737.

Two young professionals, an African American man and an African Caribbean woman, face the ultimate crisis in their relationship when she unexpectedly becomes pregnant. That's the premise of Spencer Clapp's *Forever and a Day* (30 min., 16mm). Says Clapp in his program notes: "There is unquestionably a dearth of positive African American iconography in contemporary television and film, and imagery concerning African Caribbean culture is almost non-existent." This is particularly true in Connecticut, where the short film was shot in 1994. With a budget of approximately \$45,000 and the support of high-profile types including Spike Lee and Norman Lear, Clapp is hoping to market the film to TV outlets and film festivals this year. *Forever and a Day*, Spencer Clapp, 58 South Highland St., West Hartford, CT 06119; (203) 233-4532.



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FROM ONE PRISON

Q: Was it difficult for you to obtain access to the Michigan State Prison for your project?

A: Absolutely. The prison system is as good at keeping citizens out as people in. I've been forced to deal with censorship on many levels with this project.

Q: What kinds of censorship did you encounter?

A: Once I was granted permission to shoot in prison, I was forced to erase footage and told by prison officials I couldn't ask about sexual assault in the prison. One time a ward seized my footage and sent it to the Department of Corrections, which didn't return it for several months. Also, before I completed the project, the State Department of Corrections demanded copies. The A.C.L.U. advised me not to hand them over without a court order.

Q: What topics does the documentary cover?

A: Women address abuse by prison guards and prison officials. They talk about rapes that took place in prison and sexual harassment by the guards. They discuss rats and bugs in their food and nonexistent medical care. The abuse they're subjected to daily reflects the abuse they encountered from men that caused them to kill, or to hire someone to kill for them, in self defense.

Q: How long did you spend video-taping the project?

A: I began my research in 1989 and started taping in '90. I've been documenting three women for five years and worked two years on this specific project. I'm now working on a video projection called Political Prisoner #150376 about a woman who killed in self defense.

Q: What attracted you to the subject matter?

A: I was drawn to women serving life sentences for murder. I saw myself. I had barely survived a battered marriage and had to hide out for months after leaving my husband.

Q: What did you learn from the women?

A: How they are criminalized for defending themselves in a system where there's no police protection

or social support and no shelters.

Q: The film has screened in L.A. at the Women in Film Foundation and at the Center for New Television in Chicago. What has the response been?

A: People are drawn to the screenings for different reasons. Some are video artists like myself. Others are lawyers and social workers. There is a broad spectrum of professionals interested in distributing the video because there's so little information available now about what goes on in prisons.

—Michele Shapiro



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DOMESTIC

BRAZEN IMAGES: WOMEN IN FILM, July, TX. Sponsored by Women's Media Project, fest offers program of best & most recent films & videos from women throughout world. Name reflects "programming that challenges concepts of what it means to be woman." Two sections: invitational, for which fest staff solicits & previews works & Regional Showcase, juried competition open to women directors from TX & surrounding states. Fest held at Dobie Theatre in Austin. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4" Deadline: May 30. Contact: Claudia Sperber, fest dir., or Jana Birchum, regional showcase coordinator, Brazen Images, c/o Women's Media Project, Box 49432, Austin, TX 78765; (512) 473-2766; fax: (512) 472-1043.

BRECKENRIDGE FESTIVAL OF FILM, Sept. 14-17, CO. Ind. film & videomakers may submit prods for 15th annual edition of this fest. Cats: doc, drama, comedy, alternative. 1st & 2nd place awards given in each cat. Entry fee: \$35. Deadline: June 30. Contact: Kelly Sanders, Breckenridge Festival of Film, PO Box 718, Breckenridge, CO 80424; (303) 453-6200; fax: (303) 453-6292.

BROOKLYN WATERFRONT ARTISTS COALITION FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, May, NY. As part of 16th annual spring show, coalition of over 300 NY area artists has added film & video fest. Short films & videos will be screened as part of May show on Red Hook Piers. Cats: drama, doc, experimental, animation. Formats: 16mm, 8mm, S-8, all video formats; preview on 1/2" only. Deadline: March 15. Contact: Gary Handel, BWAC Film Fest, PO Box 020072, Brooklyn, NY 11202-002; (718) 858-4702.

CANYONLANDS ALTERNATIVE FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, Apr. 7-9, UT. New fest to be held in Moab in southeastern Utah desert will focus on alternative ind. film & video & is looking for "quality prods not likely to find venue on the mainstream circuit." One-third of fest will be devoted to docs that represent positive change & solutions to problems. Cats: environmental/social issue docs (emphasis on southwestern issues/cultures); outdoor adventure (river running, bicycling, etc.); short drama; art/avant garde; children. Entries must be under 60 mins & completed after Jan. 1, 1990. Non-cash awards offered for best of fest, best regional, best

children's, best doc, best drama, best outdoor adventure, best college. Entry fee: \$20. Formats: 16mm, 1/2". Deadline: Apr. 1. Contact: Nicholas Brown, fest dir., Canyonlands Alternative Film & Video Festival, c/o Country Pumpkin Prods. L.C., 400 North 500 West, Unit #1-8, Moab, UT 84532; (801) 259-3330.

COLUMBIA COLLEGE INTERNATIONAL DOCUMENTARY FESTIVAL, Apr. 21-23, IL. Cosponsored by International Documentary Association & Columbia College, first yr for fest dedicated to films "that challenge or attempt to redefine doc & that address any preconceptions about the form." Fest will incl. screenings, seminars & panel discussions w/ filmmakers. Student entries encouraged. Preview formats: 16mm, Hi8, 3/4", 1/2" (NTSC, PAL, or SECAM); fest, these plus 16mm. No entry fee, but return postage required. Deadline: March 15. Contact: Columbia College Int'l Doc Film Festival, c/o Documentary Center, Columbia College, 600 S. Michigan, Chicago, IL 60605; (312) 663-1600 x306 or x788.

INTERNATIONAL LABOR FILM FESTIVAL, July 5-9, CA. The Labor Video Project is organizing fest as part of Laborfest '95. Cosponsored by ILWU, UFCW 101, Musicians AFM Local 6, Yerba Buena Center for the Arts & other orgs. Videos about struggles & issues of all working people in US & around world are important for int'l solidarity. Send video or 3/4" tape in NTSC, PAL or Secam. If video not in English or Spanish, voice-over or subtitles requested. Will list all videos submitted to fest and info on where to obtain whether or not they are programmed. Deadline: June 1. Contact: Labor Video Project/Labor Tech, Box 425584, San Francisco, CA 94142; (415) 255-8689; fax: (415) 695-1369; e-mail: lvpsf@igc.apc.org.

JEWISH FILM FESTIVAL: INDEPENDENT FILMMAKERS LOOKING AT OURSELVES, July 20-Aug. 3, CA. Now celebrating 15th yr, fest showcases new ind. American Jewish-subject cinema, along w/ diverse selection of foreign films. Accepted are dramatic, doc, experimental & animated shorts & features about Jewish history, culture & identity. Fest is held at Castro Theatre in San Francisco & U.C. Theatre in Berkeley. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2"; preview on video. Deadline: March 31. Contact: Jewish Film Festival, 2600 Tenth St., #102, Berkeley, CA 94710; (510) 548-0556; fax: (510) 548-0536.

JEWISH VIDEO COMPETITION, June, CA. Second annual competition which encourages ind. video prod. & interactive media on Jewish themes. Special new cats this yr incl. interactive media, video from the 1970s & WWII remembrances. Fest also presents Lindheim Award for program which "best explores relationship between Jews & other ethnic religious & political groups. Entries must have originated on video or computer only. Awards: 1st prize (\$700); 2nd prize (\$300); 3rd prize (\$100). Entry fees: \$15 (under 60 mins); \$35 (over 60 mins). Format: 1/2". Deadline: March 21. Contact: Bill Chayes, Video Competition Coordinator, Judah L. Magnes Museum, 2911 Russell St., Berkeley, CA 94705; (510) 549-6952.

LOS ANGELES INTERNATIONAL GAY & LESBIAN FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, July, CA. Presented by Gay & Lesbian Media Coalition, fest programs film & videos by &/or about lesbians, gays,

bisexuals & trans-genders. Features, shorts, docs, experimental & animated works accepted. Entry fees:

\$20, features over 60 min.; \$15, 30-60 min.; \$10, under 30 min. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2"; preview on 1/2". Deadline: Apr. 1. Contact: Out On the Screen, 8455 Beverly Blvd., Ste. 309, Los Angeles, CA 90048; (213) 951-1247; fax: (213) 951-0721.

MANDALAY LAS COLINAS FESTIVAL OF ARTS VIDEO ARTS EXHIBITION & COMPETITION, Apr. 28-30, TX. New works that are "artistic, explorational, socially conscious & otherwise provocative" of any style/genre are accepted for fest, which is part of annual "multi-cultural, European-style fest" that celebrates visual, performing & culinary arts. Cash prizes totalling \$2,000 awarded to 4 winners. Entries must be under 10 mins. Entry fee: \$15. Format: 1/2". Deadline: March 21. Contact: Mary Evans, Video Exhibition & Competition coordinator, Las Colinas Festival of Arts, 215 Las Colinas Blvd., Mandalay Canal, ste. 400, Irving, TX 75039; (214) 831-1881; fax: (214) 831-1882.

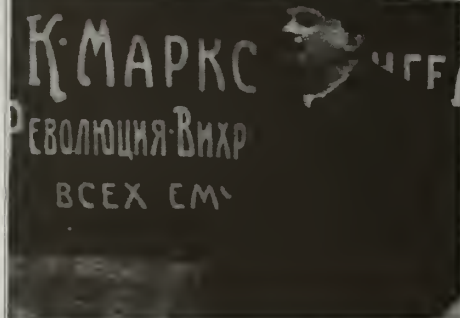
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NATIVE AMERICAN FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, May, NY. Film & Video Center of the National Museum of the American Indian is accepting submissions for fest that showcases best new works produced by & about Native Americans & Native Hawaiians. Will feature film/video works produced since 1992 from North, Central & South America & Hawaii. Deadline: March 15. Formats: 3/4" or VHS video. Contact: Film & Video Center, National Museum of the American Indian, George Gustav Heye Ctr., One Bowling Green, NY, NY 10004; (212) 823-6894; fax: (212) 825-8180.

NEWARK BLACK FILM FESTIVAL, June, NJ. 21st yr. of fest featuring films by black makers. Fest cosponsors Paul Robeson Awards, presented during fest. Formats for competition: 16mm, 3/4", 1/2" released since Jan. 1993. Cash awards determined by

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NEW YORK NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL FILM FESTIVAL, Apr. 7, NY. Fest was created to provide visibility & recognition for high school film- & video-makers & is entirely founded & run by teen students. Award plaques & promotional items given & each filmmaker receives written evaluation of work. Cats determined by entries received; all genres & styles welcome. Entry fee: \$10. Formats: 16mm, super-8, 8mm, Hi8, 3/4", 1/2". Deadline: March 6. Contact: New York National High School Film Festival, c/o Trinity School, 101 W. 91st St., NY, NY 10024; (212) 371-6171 (Nina Kontos); (212) 289-1166 (Graham Campbell).

NORTHERN LIGHTS INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Aug. 1-6, Alaska. This new int'l fest presents cinema art of northern regions (Alaska, Russian North, Lapland, northern regions of Sweden & Norway, Iceland, Greenland, & northern regions of Canada, Japan & China. Accepted in both non-competitive & competitive sections are films that cover all aspects of life in Arctic & North, incl. people, nature, traditions & customs, folklore & crafts, religions & history, celebrations & problems. Competition cats & awards: docs (Best Film, Best Director), features (Best Film, Best Director, Best Actor/Actress), educational (Best Film), animated (Best Film, Best Animator). Films selected for non-competitive section shown in movie theatres in Anchorage during fest. Entries must have been shot no earlier than 1985. Entry fee: \$100 (competition), \$20 (noncompetitive). Formats: 16mm, 1/2" (competition); 16mm (out of competition). Deadline: Apr. 1. Contact: Marina Moukhamedianova, general manager, International Audio-Visual Fund of Northern Peoples, 1101-2 Cordovan St., #321, Anchorage, AK 99501; (907) 561-3280 (Jacqueline Clark); fax: (907) 277-7925.

ONION CITY FILM FESTIVAL, May 5-7, IL. Sponsored by Experimental Film Coalition, competitive fest now in 9th yr is "committed to excellence in exhibition of all vital & diverse forms of experimental film, to support community which produces these films & to provide information & access for community & general public interested in medium." Entries must have been completed after March 1, 1993. All genres of experimental film accepted. Cash prizes awarded. Fest dir hopes to establish "Best of Fest" program to screen at various media centers across country. Entry fee: \$25 nonmembers, \$20 members/students. Formats: 16mm, S-8; preview on original, 3/4" 1/2". Deadline: Apr. 10. Contact: Johnny White, fest dir, 1467 S. Michigan Ave., 3rd fl., Chicago, IL 60605; (312) 986-1823.

26th SINKING CREEK FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, Nov. 7-12, TN. Oldest Southern film fest w/ focus on ind. media. Awards \$8,000-\$10,000 in prizes in all genres incl. animation, dramatic & music video. Special presentations by important mediamakers & seminars in film analysis. Program incl. area premieres, children's matinees & midnight screenings. Held on Vanderbilt Univ. campus in Nashville. Entry fees: \$15-\$55, depending on length. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4"; video. Deadline: May 12. Contact: Meryl Truett, exec. dir., Sinking Creek Film & Video

Fest, 402 Sarratt Center, Vanderbilt Univ., Nashville, TN 37240; (615) 322-2471; fax: (615) 343-8081.

TAOS TALKING PICTURE FESTIVAL, Apr. 6-9, NM. First edition of this int'l fest for new, ind. features, docs & shorts. Program will feature 20 diverse programs, w/ focus points being conference on media literacy, Native American & Hispanic filmmakers, new film discoveries "steeped in the mystique of the Southwest" & exposition/hands-on lab for children & adults illustrating history of storytelling & demonstrating new digital/interactive technology. "Open Sheet" screening section invites film/video producers to personally screen their short works for each other & public in informal cafe setting. Entries may have originated in any format but will be shown in 1/2"; 20-min. maximum, entrants must be present to show video; first come, first served, but fest committee will prescreen entries. Deadline for "Open Sheet": March 25. Contact: Joshua Bryant, executive director/Kelly Clement, events director, Taos Talking Pictures "Open Sheet", 216M North Pueblo Rd., #216, Taos, NM 87571; phone/fax: (505) 751-0637; email: taos-film@laplaza.taos.nm.us.

FOREIGN

ANNECY INTERNATIONAL ANIMATED FILM FESTIVAL, May 30-June 4, France. One of world's largest & most celebrated showcases for animated works. The biennial fest features large program, incl. official selection (w/ 1,035 films in 1993); official programming (15 programs in competition, 10 programs in panorama, short fiction film programs, full-length feature film programs, films for TV & TV series programs, commissioned film programs); int'l competition for student films & graduation films; int'l film-project competition (short films, feature films, TV series); poster competition; retros; tributes; exhibitions; seminars; video center w/ free screening of films submitted to selection; open-air screenings. MICA film market is held during the fest. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, all video formats. Deadline: Apr. 15. Contact: Festival International du Film d'Animation, 2, Blvd. du Lycée, 74013 Annecy, France; tel: 011 33 50 57 41 72; fax: 011 33 50 67 81 95.

FILM + ARC INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL FOR FILM & ARCHITECTURE, Nov. 22-26, Austria. Second biennial fest for "thematic treatment of the multi-layered relations" between film & architecture. Works should deal w/ cinematic explorations of architecture or experiments w/ spacial structures; historical, philosophical, social, psychological & political aspects of architecture; relations between art & architecture, such as architectural sculptures, land art & installations. Film program incl. official competitive section, special screenings, retrospectives & panel discussions. About 200 films in cats of fiction, doc, animation, experimental will make up program. Entries must have been completed after Jan. 1, 1993; films/videos of all lengths accepted. Awards: Grand Prize ATS100,000 (Austrian shillings), 3 Main Prizes ATS 60,000, Public Prize ATS 50,000. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, super 8, Hi8, all video formats. Contact: International Biennale film+arc-graz, Art Image, Rechbauerstrasse 38, A-8010 Graz, Austria; tel: 0316 84 24 87; fax: 0316 82 95 11.

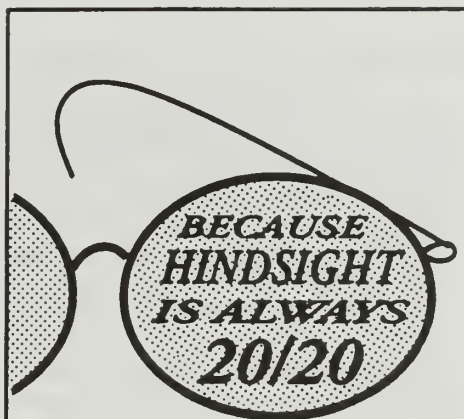
LOCARNO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, August, Switzerland. Now in 48th yr., competitive fest has been described as "one of world's top half-dozen fests" w/ reputation for innovative programming & support of alternative visions from ind. directors. Unique open-air screenings in Piazza Grande, which holds 7,000. 1994 attendance was over 140,000. Special sections & out-of-competition screenings. Competition accepts 1st, 2nd & 3rd fiction features, art films, low-budget films, inds & cinema d'auteur. Must be over 60 min. European premieres only, completed w/in previous yr. Educational, advertising & scientific films ineligible. Prizes: Golden Leopard (Grand Prix) & City of Locarno Grand Prize (30,000SF); Silver Leopard (Grand Prix de Jury) & 2nd Prize of City of Locarno (15,000SF); Bronze Leopard & 3rd Prize of City of Locarno (5,000SF), Special Jury Award (10,000SF). Films should be subtitled in French. Fest provides 5-day hospitality to director plus 1 rep of films in competition. More than 100 buyers chosen from biggest US, European & Japanese distributors & TV. Format: 35mm, 16mm. Deadline: May 1. Contact: Marco Muller, director, Locarno Int'l Film Fst, Via della Posta 6, CH-6600, Locarno, Switzerland; tel: 011 41 93 31 02 32; fax: 011 41 93 31 74 65.

TORONTO WORLDWIDE SHORT FILM FESTIVAL, May 31-June 4, Canada. All-shorts competitive fest is soliciting int'l entries for program. Purpose of fest is "to broaden people's perspective on short films so as to view them on an artistic & commercial level... to help educate & expose the culturally diverse audience to the short film genre." Awards: Best Animated Short, Best Short Doc, Best Dramatic sSort, Best Short Comedy, Best Experimental Short. Sections of fest incl. Galas, Int'l Program, Visions Canada, First Nations Prods (for submissions from aboriginal filmmakers around world), Established Directors First Short & Award Winning Shorts. Entries must not exceed 40 min. & must have been produced w/in last two yrs. Entry fee: \$8. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Deadline: Mar. 15. Contact: Brenda Sherwood, exec. dir., Toronto Worldwide Short Film Festival, 258 Wallace Avenue, Box 142, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M6P 3M9; (416) 533-2053; fax: (416) 532-3132.

ERRATA

The listing for the **SOUTH BY SOUTH-WEST FILM FESTIVAL** (March 8-10, TX) that appeared in the January/February 1995 issue contained a typographical error. The correct phone number for the festival is (512) 467-7979.

Also, the Jan/Feb listing for the **YAMAGATA INT'L DOCUMENTARY FESTIVAL** (October 3-9, Japan) was incomplete. The additional information is as follows: Preparing for its fourth biennial event, the festival offers a competition of 15 int'l features, w/ \$53,000 in prize money dispensed by int'l jury. Previous winners include Barbara Kopple & Fred Wiseman. No entry fees. U.S. contact: Gordon Hitchens, Apt. 3W, 214 W. 85th St., NY, NY 10024-3914; tel & fax: (212) 877-6856.



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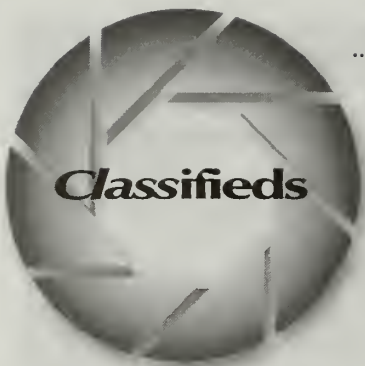
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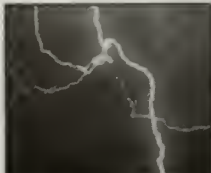
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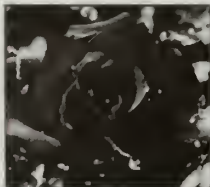
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CONFERENCES • SEMINARS

DCTV offers technical workshops, incl.: Basic TV prod., camera seminar, S-VHS & 3/4" editing, Amiga titling & graphics, intro. to doc. Register: DCTV, 87 Lafayette St., NY, NY 10013-4435; (212) 966-4510.

FILM ARTS FOUNDATION offers ongoing workshops & seminars, from S-8 & 16mm film & video prod. to fundraising, distribution, screenwriting, special effects & guest lectures. Technical workshops taught by professionals. Contact: FAF, 346 Ninth St., 2nd fl., San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 552-8760; fax: (415) 552-0882.

FILMMAKERS: New computer conference dedicated to NYC area film & videomakers avail. on Eastnet BBS: (718) 767-0157. Mac & Windows users can get free FirstClass™ software to dial in. E-mail DougAbel@aol.com for more info.

HARVESTWORKS in Manhattan offers classes in subjects ranging from audio/video synchronization to multimedia prod. & audio preprod. All classes (1-2 days) held at 596 Broadway, NY, NY. To register, call: Annie Ferguson (212) 431-1130.

MID-ATLANTIC REGION ARCHIVES CONFERENCE (MARAC) & Oral History in Mid-Atlantic Region (OHMAR) are hosting annual conference, "It's About Time: Archivists & Oral Historians," in Baltimore, Apr. 20-22. For more info on how to register, to display local materials, or to rent booth space, call (410) 539-0872, x 345.

NEWVIEW 95, marketing venue for distributors of ind. film/video, will be broadcast via C-ban satellite on March 1 to over 100 sites nationwide. NewView gives programmers, buyers, educators & curators vehicle to expand & broaden their collections to incl. recent work of diverse artists & puts them in touch w/ distributors whose catalogs incl. titles ranging from social and cultural docs to animation & video art. NewView is broadcast free. For info on site near you or becoming downlink site, contact: South Carolina Arts Commission Media Arts Center, 1800 Gervais St., Columbia, SC 29201 or call Mitzi Swisher, Noah Malden (803) 734-8696.

ROUSER INSTITUTE, Texas nonprofit corp., offers media literacy training to youth & their families. Workshops incl. discussions about various media forms, how media is planned & how media operates to communicate powerful messages that influence what we think about people & situations. For more info call Rhoda Cato at (512) 649-5563.

SAN FRANCISCO ART INSTITUTE holds

extension education classes in fine art filmmaking. For more info or to register, call (415) 749-5554.

UC SANTA CRUZ EXTENSION PROGRAM offers certificates in graphic design & visual communication. For more info or to register, call (408) 427-6660.

FILMS • TAPES WANTED

90's **CHANNEL**, embracing controversy & searching for programming that offers fresh approaches to TV, welcomes tapes for submission. Topics that have run on 90's Channel incl.: Racism, (*Framing the Panthers in Black & White*); Jewish/Palestinian issues (*We Dare to Speak*); sexuality issues & programs on reproductive rights. Send 3/4" tapes to: The 90's Channel, 2010 14th St., #209; Boulder, CO 80302; (303) 442-8445.

47 GALLERIES, computer bulletin board service that promotes ind. artists & producers nationally, is looking for narrative, experimental, doc, animation & performance films/videos to be sold on VHS through bulletin board systems. Send: VHS, description of tapes, resumé, SASE to: 47 Galleries, 2924 Bellevue Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90026.

ART IN GENERAL seeks video works & guest-curated video programs for new monthly screening series. All kinds of work welcome, from experimental film & video to home videos; doc & activist to public access works. Send VHS tape (cued), resumé &/or brief statement & SASE. For more info, call Joanna Spitzner (212) 219-0473.

ART ON FILM DATABASE wants to know: Have you produced film, video or video disc on visual arts? Send info on prod. to Program for Art on Film Database, computer index to over 19,000 prods on visual arts. Interested in prods on all visual arts topics, & welcomes info on prods about artists of color & multicultural art projects. Send info to: Art on Film at Columbia University, 2875 Broadway, 2nd fl., NYC 10025; (212) 854-9570; fax: (212) 854-9577.

BLACK ENTERTAINMENT TELEVISION seeks films & videos by black ind. makers, directors, or producers for "Black Vision" portion of *Screen Scene*, weekly 1/2-hr. show that previews TV lineup & latest theatrical releases. For more info, contact: Screen Scene, BET, 1899 Ninth St. NE, Washington, DC 20018; (202) 636-2400.

BLACK VIDEO PERSPECTIVE, new community TV prod. in Atlanta area, seeks works for/by/about African Americans. For more info, contact: Karen L. Forest (404) 231-4846.

BRONXNET (Bronx Community Cable Programming Corporation), nonprofit organization controlling 4 access channels on Bronx Cable- TV System, seeks works by ind. video- & filmmakers for access airing. Bronxnet produces programs, facilitates & assists community in producing & cablecasting programs for, by & about Bronx. Contact: Fred Weiss, program director, (718) 960-1180.

CAROUSEL, series for municipal cable channels 23 & 49 in Chicago, seeks films/videos for children 12 yrs & under, any length, any genre. Send w/ appropriate release, list of credits & personal info to:

Carousel,
c/o Screen
Magazine,
720 N.
Wabash,
Chicago, IL
60611. Tapes
returned if
accompanied by
postage.

CATHODE CAFE seeks short video-art interstitials to play between alternative-music videos on Seattle's TCI/Viacom Channel 29, Sundays 9:30 pm. Format: 3/4" preferred; 1/2" OK. Contact: Stan LePard, 2700 Aiki Ave. SW #305, Seattle, WA 98116; (206) 937-2353.

CINCINNATI ARTISTS' GROUP EFFORT seeks proposals for exhibitions, performances & audio/video/film works to show in their galleries. Experimental, traditional & collaborative projects encouraged. Contact: CAGE, 344 W. 4th St., Cincinnati, OH 55202; (513) 381-2437.

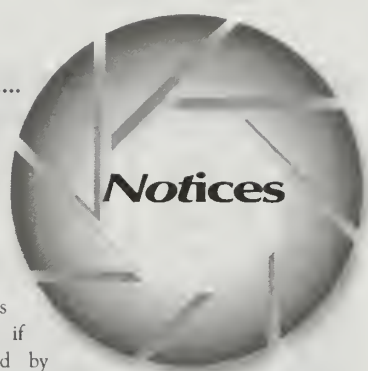
CINEMA VIDEO, monthly showcase of works by ind. video- & filmmakers, seeks S-VHS or VHS submissions of any style, content, or length. Utilizing high-end projector, selected videos are projected onto 10.5' x 14' screen. Monthly shows are collections of several artists' videos, but occasionally features are shown as special events when work merits it. Cinema Video is prod. of Velvet Elvis Arts Lounge Theater in Seattle, WA, non-profit fringe theater. Send submissions to: Kevin Picolet, 2207 E. Republican, Seattle, WA 98112; (206) 323-3307.

CINEQUEST, weekly, half-hour TV series profiling best of ind. cinema & video from US & around world, looking for films/videos less than 20 min. to air on 30 min. cable show. Work over 20 min. will air on monthly special in Orlando, FL market during prime-time. Seeking all genres. Concept of show is to stretch perceptions of conventional TV & expose viewers to scope & talent of inds. Submit on 1/2" or 3/4" video. Submissions need not be recent. No submission limit or deadline. Will acknowledge receipt in 10 days. Send pre-paid mailer if need work returned. Contact: Michael D. McGowan, producer, Cinequest Prods, 2550 Alafayia Trail, Apt. 8100, Orlando, FL 32826; (407) 658-4865.

CINETECA DE CINE ACCION seeks film & video submissions by & about Latinos for regular screening series. Fees paid. Will hold preview tape for 3-4 mos. Formats: 16mm, 3/4", 1/2" video. Contact: Cine Acción, 346 9th St., San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 553-8135.

CITY TV, progressive municipal cable access channel in Santa Monica, seeks work on seniors, disabled, children, Spanish-language & video art; any length. Broadcast exchanged for equip. access at state-of-the-art facility. Contact: Lisa Bernard, cable TV manager, City TV, 1685 Main St., Santa Monica, CA 90401; (310) 458-8590.

DATABASE & DIRECTORY OF LATIN AMERICAN FILM & VIDEO organized by Int'l Media Resources Exchange seeks works by Latin American & US Latino ind. producers. Contact: Karen



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DOWNTOWN COMMUNITY TV CENTER (DCTV) accepts 3/4" & VHS tapes for open screenings & special series w/ focus on women, youth, multimedia performance video, Middle East, gay/lesbian, Native American, labor & Asian art. Contact: Jocelyn Taylor, DCTV, 87 Lafayette St., NY, NY 10013; (212) 941-1298.

DUTV-CABLE 54, nonprofit educational access channel operated by Drexel University in Philadelphia, is looking for works by ind. producers for broadcast. All genres & lengths considered. No payment; will return tapes. VHS, SVHS & 3/4" accepted. Contact: George McCollough or Maria Elena Mongelli, DUTV-Cable 54, 33rd & Chestnut Sts., Philadelphia, PA 19104.

DYKE TV, weekly national cable-TV show, seeks films & video shorts (under 10 min.). For info, call (212) 343-9335 or fax: 9337.

EASTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY seeks ind. prods for nonprofit cable channel in Spokane. No payment. Any genre or length. S-VHS, VHS, or 3/4". Tapes will be returned. Submit release form/letter & tapes to: Radio-Television Department, MS#104, Eastern Washington University, 526 5th St., Cheney, WA 99004-2431.

ECOMEDIA seeks film & video works for ecological screening series at Blagden Alley Artscience Warehouse. All genres accepted; emphasis on ecology. Send 3/4" or VHS tape, info, or queries to: 926 N St., Rear, NW, Washington, DC 20001; (202) 842-3577.

EN CAMINO, KRCB, seeks works of 30-60 min. in Spanish & English concerning Latino community. Formats: 3/4", 16mm. Contact: Luis Nong, Box 2638, Ronherth Park, CA 94928.

EZTV seeks film/video shorts (under 20 min.) for L.A.-based UHF TV show. Submit 1/2" or 3/4" tapes. Narrative, experimental, doc. Contact: Jean Railla, EZTV, 8547 Santa Monica Blvd., W. Hollywood, CA 90069.

FILMBABIES COLLECTIVE, co-op of NY-based writers & directors, seeks new members w/ short films for screening series (16mm, under 15 min.). Filmmakers must reside in NY area. For more info, contact: PO Box 2100, NY, NY 10025 (incl. SASE); (212) 875-7537.

FLIP seeks VHS copy of animation 3 min. or under &/or xerox copy or original flip book for exhibition planned for May/June in NY. Send brief bio & SASE for return of materials by May 1 to: Flip, 163 Third Ave., #297, NY, NY 10003; (212) 254-2812.

GREAT LAKES FILM & VIDEO seeks 16mm & videos for ongoing exhibition of gay/lesbian, Jewish, & women's work. Experimental & animation are sought, as well as work fitting into program on aesthetic/anti-aesthetic. Contact: Matt Frost or Michael Walsh, Great Lakes Video & Film, PO Box 413, Milwaukee, WI 53201.

HALCYON DAYS PRODUCTIONS seeks video segments (1-5 min.) by 15- to 25-year-olds for video compilation show. If piece is selected, you may have chance to be video correspondent for show. Work may be editorial, real-life coverage, political satire,

slapstick—you decide. Just personalize. Submit VHS or Hi8 (returnable w/ SASE) to: Mai Kim Holley, Halcyon Days Prod., c/o Hi8, 12 West End Ave., 5th fl., NY, NY 10023; (212) 397-7754.

HANDI-CAPABLE IN THE MEDIA, INC., nonprofit organization, seeks video prods on people w/ disabilities to air on Atlanta's Public Access TV. No fees. Submit VHS or 3/4" tape to: Handi-Capable in the Media, Inc., 2625 Piedmont Rd., ste. 56-137, Atlanta, GA 30324.

IND. PRODUCER who owns rights to book on bombing of Nagasaki in 1945, looking for collaborators & add'l material for multimedia project. Possible venues incl. exhibits in SF, NY & Japan honoring 50th anniv. of event. Contact: Duncan Chinnock, 630 9th Ave., #907, NY, NY 10036; (212) 765-0555.

IN VISIBLE COLOURS FILM & VIDEO SOCIETY seeks videos by women of color for library collection. Work will be accessible to members, producers, multicultural groups & educational institutions. For more info, contact: Claire Thomas, In Visible Colours, 119 W. Pender, ste. 115, Vancouver, B.C. V6B 1S5; (604) 682-1116.

IND. FILM & VIDEO SHOWCASE, cable access show, seeks student & ind. films & videos to give artists exposure. Send films or video in 3/4" format w/ paragraph about artist & his/her work. Send to: Box #1626, 4202 E. Fowler Ave., Tampa, Florida 33620.

LATINO COLLABORATIVE, bimonthly screening series, seeks works by Latino film/videomakers. Honoraria paid. Send VHS preview tapes to: Latino Collaborative Bimonthly Screening Series, Vanessa Codorniu, 280 Broadway, ste. 412, NY, NY 10007; (212) 732-1121.

LA PLAZA, weekly half-hour doc series produced at WGBH Boston for & about Latino community, is interested in acquiring original works by ind. film- & videomakers that deal w/ social & cultural issues concerning Latinos. Works between 25 & 28 min. encouraged. Please send tapes in Beta, 3/4" or VHS format to: La Plaza/Acquisitions, WGBH, 125 Western Ave., Boston, MA 02134.

LAUREL CABLE NETWORK, nonprofit in Maryland, seeks variety of works of all lengths & genres for regular access airing in 3/4", SVHS, or VHS. No payment & tapes cannot be returned. Submit tape & release form/letter to: Laurel Cable Network, 8103 Sandy Spring Rd., Laurel, MD 20707, Attn: Bob Neuman.

METRO SHORTS, program of Metropolitan Film Society, seeks 35mm prints, 15 min. or less, for regular screenings. Subject matter needs to suit audience that would view film w/ R rating. VHS/S-VHS preview tape would be helpful. Two-way UPS ground shipping costs provided. Contact: Michelle Forren, exec. dir., Metropolitan Film Society, 3928 River Walk Dr., Duluth, GA 30136-6113.

NAT'L POLICE ATHLETIC LEAGUE seeks videos that foster strong self image of teens. All genres—art, music, etc.—on video. Send letter of permission to air. Contact: NPAL, 1626 32nd St. NW, ste. 270, Washington, DC 20007.

NEW AMERICAN MAKERS, nationally recognized venue for new works by emerging & under-recognized videomakers at Center for Arts in SF, seeks

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Diverse, committed, opinionated, and fiercely independent—these are the video and filmmakers who make up the national membership of AIVF.

Documentary and features filmmakers, animators, experimentalists, distributors, educators, students, curators—all concerned that their work make a difference—find the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers, the national service organization for independent media producers, vital to their professional lives. Whether it's our magazine, *The Independent Film & Video Monthly*, or the organization raising its collective voice to advocate for important issues, AIVF preserves your independence while letting you know you're not alone.

AIVF helps you save time and money as well. You'll find you can spend more of your time (and less of your money) on what you do best—getting your work made and seen. To succeed as an independent today, you need a wealth of resources, strong connections, and the best information available. So join with more than 5,000 other independents who rely on AIVF to help them succeed. **JOIN AIVF TODAY!**

Here's what AIVF membership offers:

THE INDEPENDENT FILM & VIDEO MONTHLY

Membership provides you with a

year's subscription to *The Independent*. Thought-provoking features, news, and regular columns on business, technical, and legal matters. Plus festival listings, funding deadlines, exhibition venues, and announcements of member activities and new programs and services. Special issues highlight regional activity and focus on subjects including media education and the new technologies.

FESTIVAL SERVICES

AIVF arranges screenings for festival representatives, handles customs and group shipping of members' materials to foreign festivals, and publishes the AIVF Guide to International Film and Video Festivals—considered the definitive resource in the field. We also host periodic evenings with festival consultants for members to receive personalized counseling on strategy and placement.

ACCESS

Membership allows you to join fellow AIVF members at intimate events featuring festival directors, producers, distributors, and funders.

COMMUNITY

We are initiating monthly member get-togethers in cities across the country; call the office for the one nearest you. Plus members are carrying on active dialogue online—creating a “virtual community” for independents to share information, resources, and ideas.

ADVOCACY

Members receive periodic advocacy

alerts, with updates on important legislative issues affecting the independent field and mobilization for collective action.

INSURANCE

Members are eligible to purchase discounted personal and production insurance plans through AIVF suppliers. A wide range of health insurance options are available, as well as special liability, E&O, and production plans tailored for the needs of low-budget mediamakers.

TRADE DISCOUNTS

A growing list of businesses across the country offer AIVF members discounts on equipment and auto rentals, film processing, transfers, editing, and other production necessities.

WORKSHOPS, PANELS, AND SEMINARS

Members get discounts on events covering the whole spectrum of current issues and concerns affecting the field, ranging from business and aesthetic to technical and political topics.

INFORMATION

We distribute a series of books on financing, funding, distribution, and production; members receive discounts on selected titles. AIVF's staff also can provide information about distributors, festivals, and general information pertinent to your needs. Our library houses information on everything from distributors to sample contracts to budgets.

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works that challenge boundaries of creative video/TV. Videomakers receive honorarium of \$2/min. for tapes. Send VHS tape, \$15 entry fee & SASE to: New American Makers, PO Box 460490, San Francisco, CA 94146.

NEW CITY PRODUCTIONS seeks works-in-progress & docs on all subjects for monthly screenings. Committed to promoting ind. community by establishing forum of new voices. Have professional large screen video & 16mm projectors. Prefer projects originated on Hi8. Send cassettes to: New City Prods, 635 Madison Ave., ste. 1101, NY, NY 10022; (212) 753-1326.

NEWTON TELEVISION FOUNDATION seeks proposals on ongoing basis from ind. producers. NTF is nonprofit foundation collaborating w/ ind. producers on docs concerning contemporary issues. Past works have been broadcast on local & national public TV, won numerous awards & most are currently in distribution in educational market. Contact NTF for details: 1608 Beacon St., Waban, MA 02168; (617) 965-8477; ntf@tmn.com; walshntf@aol.com

NEW TELEVISION seeks video works up to 30 min. in any genre using medium in artistic ways. Screened works receive \$110/min. Contact: WGBH, 125 Western Avenue, Boston MA 02134; tel (617) 492-2777.

NYU TV, channel 51 in NYC, is offering opportunities for inds to showcase finished films & videos. Submit materials to: Linda Noble, 26 Washington Place, 1st fl., NY, NY 10003.

NYTEX PRODUCTIONS seeks video interviews from across US. Looking for political, entertainment, & PSAs in S-VHS or VHS. Send to: NyTex Prods, PO Box 303, NY, NY 10101-0303, Attn: Don Cevaro.

OFFLINE, hour-long, biweekly, national public-access show, seeks ind. & creative works. Submissions should be 3/4", SVHS or VHS & should not exceed 20 min. (longer works will be considered for serialization). For more info, contact: Greg Bowman, 203 Pine Tree Rd., Ithaca, NY 14850; (607) 272-2613. e-mail: 72137.3352@compuserve.com.

ORGONE CINEMA, non-funded monthly film/video series, looking for handmade, nature, silent, random, noisy, sex, science, home, paranoid & perverse movies. All formats. Prefer VHS for preview. Deadline: Ongoing. Send to: Orgone Cinema & Archive, 2238 Murray Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15217.

PLANET CENTRAL TELEVISION seeks broadcast-quality films, videos & animation censored by US TV as too controversial or political. Bonus considerations for submissions that are smart, funny, sexy & exhibit irreverent attitude. Send tape to: Jay Levin, director of program acquisitions, Planet Central Television, 309 Santa Monica Blvd., ste. 322, Santa Monica, CA 90401; (310) 458-4588.

PRESCOTT COMMUNITY ACCESS CHANNEL requests non-commercial programs for local airing. No payment, but return by post guaranteed. Contact: Jeff Robertson, program coordinator, Channel 13, PO Box 885, Prescott, AZ; (602) 445-0909.

REEL TIME AT PS.122, ongoing quarterly screening series, is accepting submissions of recent ind. film

& video works for 1995 season. Exhibition formats include S-8, 16mm, 3/4" & VHS. Send VHS submission tapes, written promotion & return postage to: Curator, Reel Time, PS.122, 150 First Ave., NY, NY 10009; (212) 477-5829 (x327).

RIGHTS & WRONGS, weekly, nonprofit human rights global TV magazine series scheduled to resume broadcast in February seeks story ideas & footage for upcoming season. Last yr. 34 programs covering issues from China to Guatemala were produced. Contact: Danny Schechter or Rory O'Connor, exec. producers, The Global Center, 1600 Broadway, ste. 700, NY, NY 10019; (212) 246-0202; fax: 2677.

REBIS GALLERIES seeks works by artists working in video/film & computers. All subjects considered. Formats should be in VHS/Beta, 8mm, S-8, 16mm. For computers 3.5 disks in PC or low density Amiga files. Contracts to be negotiated. Contact: Rebis Galleries, 1930 South Broadway, Denver, CO 80210; (303) 698-1841.

REGISTERED seeks experimental and non-narrative videos about consumerism and/or modern ritual for nationally touring screening. Send VHS for preview w/ SASE & short description to: *Registered*, Attn: Joe Sola, PO Box 1960, Peter Stuyvesant Station, 432 E. 14th St., NY, NY 10009.

SHORT FILM & VIDEO: All genres, any medium, 1:00 to 60:00 long. Unconventional, signature work in VHS or 3/4" for nat'l broadcast! Submit to: *EDGE TV*, 7805 Sunset Blvd., ste. 203, Los Angeles, CA 90046.

SHORTS SOUGHT by NYC producer & marketing co. for new TV programs being produced this spring. Planning cycle of 60-min. programs comprising 3-4 thematically linked shorts, 20-min. max ea., bookended by conversations w/about mediamakers. Submissions must have no entangling contracts & incl. synopsis, list of prior submissions, bio & SASE. Contact: Mitchell Banks, M&L Banks, 330 Fifth Ave., ste. 304, NY, NY 10001; (212) 563-5944; fax: 5949.

SCULPTURE CENTER GALLERY invites video artists to submit installation concepts for new video program. Emerging & mid-career artists w/o affiliation should submit résumé, narrative description, documentation of previous work on VHS tape, slides or photos. (incl. SASE) to: Sculpture Center, 167 E. 69th St., NY, NY 10021.

STATEN ISLAND COMMUNITY TELEVISION PRODUCER seeks experimental works, all subjects, by ind. video & film artists. The more explicit, the better; film & video on 3/4" preferred, but 1/2" &/or 8mm acceptable. Send tapes to: Matteo Masiello, 140 Redwood Loop, Staten Island, NY 10309.

SUPER CAMERA, prod. of Office KEI, int'l TV company, seeks unique & never-before-seen footage. Areas incl. cutting edge of camera tech, footage that is dangerous to shoot, such as in volcanoes or underwater & events from both natural & physical science worlds. For more info, contact: Makiko Ito, Office KEI, 110 E. 42nd St., ste. 1419, NY, NY 10017; (212) 983-7479; fax: 7591.

THE NEWZ, half-hour, late-night comedy TV show based on topical news events, is actively seeking submissions. Footage will be showcased on national

series. Formats: D2, Beta SP, Beta, 3/4", SVHS, VHS, or Hi8. Cats: News-style stock shots (skylines, panoramas, local landmarks, local sports icons, etc.) & comedic shots. Must include signed submissions release for stock footage. For info or release form, contact: The Newz Submission Line (407) 354-6590.

TV POLONIA is looking for entertainment, family, sports, drama & reality programming to fill cable TV channel sent to Poland in English w/ Polish translations. For more info, send SASE to Stefani Kelly, Southfield Park Tower 1 #700, 12835 E. Arapahoe Rd., Englewood, CO 80112.

UNQUOTE TELEVISION, 1/2-hr program dedicated to exposing new, innovative film & video artists, seeks ind. doc, narrative, experimental, performance works under 28 min. Reaches 10 million homes via program exchange nationwide, 1/2" & 3/4" dubs accepted. Submit to: Unquote TV, c/o DUTV, 33rd & Chestnut St., Philadelphia, PA 19104; (215) 895-2927.

URBAN INSTITUTE FOR CONTEMPORARY ARTS is accepting video & 16mm film in all genres for next season of programming. Fee paid if accepted. Send VHS tape w/ SASE to: Film Committee, UICA, 88 Monroe Ave. NW, Grand Rapids MI 49503.

VIDEO DATA BANK seeks experimental doc & narrative tapes on women's conflicted relationships w/ food & eating. Tapes should've been produced after 1990, maximum length 30 min. Please submit preview tapes in 3/4" or VHS format & brief written statement on producer's relationship to subject matter, no later than March 15 to: Video Data Bank. Unacceptable Appetites Program, 112 S. Michigan Ave., Chicago, IL 60603; (212) 875-4277.

VIEWPOINTS, KQED's showcase of ind. point-of-view works, seeks films & videos expressing "strong statements on important subjects." Submit VHS or 3/4" tapes (1 1/2 hr. length preferred) to: Greg Swartz, Manager of Broadcast Projects & Acquisitions, KQED, 2601 Mariposa St., San Francisco, CA 94110; (415) 553-2269.

VISION FOOD, weekly public access show in LA & NYC, seeks visually exciting pieces in all genres (art, music & film on video). Under 20 min., 1/2", 3/4" dubs. No payment, videos credited. Send letter of permission to air material & video to: Jack Holland, 5432 Edgewood Pl., Los Angeles, CA 90019.

WEIRD TV, satellite TV show airing weekly on Telstar 302, specializes in alternative viewing. Will consider works of 3 min. max., animation or shorts. Submit work to: Weird TV, 1818 W. Victory, Glendale, CA 91201; (818) 637-2820.

WORLD AFRICAN NETWORK (WAN), first premium cable network for people of African descent worldwide, is accepting submissions for 1995 launch. Featuring films, docs, shorts, news & info, children's programs, sports, concerts, drama series & sitcoms. Send to: Eleven Piedmont Center, ste. 620, Atlanta, GA 30305; (404) 365-8850; fax: 365-8350.

WNYC-TV's New York Independents completes its first season at the end of April. We hope to hear about funding for a second season sometime in early summer. We would like to thank those of you who supported us & made our premiere season successful. We will continue to accept preview tapes (under 60

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min.) from NY film- & videomakers. Send VHS, 3/4" or Betacam preview tape, to: NY Independents, c/o WNYC-TV, One Centre St., rm. 1450, NY, NY 10007. No phone calls, please.

WOMEN OF COLOR in Media Arts Database seeks submissions of films & videos for database that incl. video filmographies, bibliographical info & data. Contact: Dorothy Thigpen, Women Make Movies, 462 Broadway, 5th fl., NY, NY 10013.

WYOU-TV, cable-access station in Madison, WI, seeks music-related videos for weekly alternative music show. Send 1/2" or 3/4" tapes. No payment; videos credited. Contact: WYOU-TV, 140 W. Gilman St., Madison, WI 53703.

XTV, new, ind. cable TV channel, seeks student & ind. works from around country. For more info, call: Otto Khera (602) 948-0381.

OPPORTUNITIES • GIGS

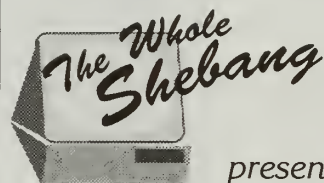
ASSISTANT/ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR position in Video beginning in Fall 1995. Applicants should have Ph.D. or Masters w/ at least 3 years professional experience. Appls should incl. vitae & three letters of recom. Send to: Dr. Ted Schwalbe, chair, Dept. of Communications, McEwan Hall Room 326. SUNY College at Fredonia, Fredonia, NY 14063. EOE/AA.

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, DIGITAL IMAGING (Still & time-based). F/T, 1-yr., non-tenure track. Teach undergrads & assist dept. in learning & applying technical processes of digital imaging. Should be professional artists w/ skills in still and time-based digital imaging. Working knowledge of PC, Mac & Amiga & competency in digital imaging processes. Univ. level teaching experience req'd. Deadline: April 1. Send appl. letter, resumé, 3 refs, documentation of art work, SASE for return of appl. materials to: Digital Imaging Faculty Search Committee, Dept. of Media Studies, Syracuse Univ., 102 Shaffer Art, Syracuse, NY 13244-1010; (315) 443-1202; attn. Prof. John Orentlicher).

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF VIDEO PRODUCTION & CRITICISM, Hampshire College. F/T, fall 1995. Prefer candidates using doc or mixed forms to represent oppressed minorities, or alternatives to dominant media. Critical/analytical approach to issues surrounding cultural prod. essential. Strengths in minority/3rd world representation or writing for or about media valued. Graduate degree &/or equivalent professional exp. req. Individualized liberal arts instruction in innovative setting, opportunity for cross-disciplinary teaching & research. Send letter, vita, 3 letters of recom. to: Video Prod Search Committee, School of Communications & Cognitive Science, Hampshire College, Amherst, MA 01002. EOE/AA. Women & minorities encouraged to apply.

BOSTON JEWISH FILM FESTIVAL seeks director & associate director to head up 1995 season of this wonderfully successful fest. Strong fundraising background is must. Send resumé & cover to: BJFF, c/o 9 Kelly Rd., Cambridge, MA 02138.

DEAN, College of Arts & Architecture, Montana State University, sought. Must have terminal degree or excellent record to achieve; progressive record of successful administration in college, university, or arts advocacy organization. AA/EO/ADA/Veterans



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Preference. Request appl. materials from: Dean, Arts/Architecture Search, 250 Reid Hall, MSU, Bozeman, MT 59717; (406) 994-6752; fax: 1854.

CITY COLLEGE OF NY has two positions avail. The first is a tenure-track lecturer in communications (salary: \$27,454-\$45,499). Applicants must have a bachelors degree plus minimum 8 yrs experience in installation of hardware, software & systems integration/networking; departmental budget planning; working knowledge of prod. & postprod film/video equipment, incl. 16mm synch-sound, non-linear editing systems & broadcast video. Course development on tech in communications, teach students word-processing, research, e-mail & Internet-related communications programs. Teach courses in prod. as necessary. Second position is college lab technician, communications (salary: \$23,197-\$36,452). Candidates must have working knowledge of prod. & postprod. Film/video equipment, incl. 16mm synch-sound, lighting pkgs. & nonlinear editing systems. Minimum 4 yrs experience or combination higher ed & experience req'd. Bachelors degree preferred. Deadline: March 30. For both positions, send resumé & 3 letters of rec'd to: Prof. E. Gilmarten, chair, CFV, Dept. of Communications, Film & Video, City College of NY, 138th St. & Convent Ave., NY, NY 10031. EOE.

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER will help inds find outlets for product. Finished works only incl. films, docs, TV pilots & other quality product. Please send work on VHS to: John Gabriel Matonti, executive producer; c/o Matonti Enterprises, Inc., 26 Lake Shore Dr., Montville, NJ 07045.

FILM/VIDEO ARTS has internships avail. in NYC. Minimum 6-mo. commitment. In exchange for at least 16 hrs./wk. of work, interns receive free media courses, access to equipment & postprod. facilities at nonprofit media arts center. Appls. must have plan for ind. project. Film/video knowledge helpful. Deadline: Ongoing. Contact: Intern Program, Film/Video Arts, 817 Broadway, 2nd fl., NY, NY 10003; (212) 673-9361.

VIDEO CAMERAWOMEN needed to work as stringers covering local events throughout US for Dyke TV, weekly NYC cable TV show. For info, call (212) 343-9335; fax: 9337.

PUBLICATIONS

AFRICAN AMERICAN FILM STATISTICS & MARKETING STRATEGIES is thorough volume of data of value to any African American filmmaker trying to raise funds. Incl. are stats on profits of black-directed films since 1970 & numbers for theatrical releases & home video. Send \$29.95 to: Greener Grass Prods, 1041 W. 98th St., Chicago, IL 60643; (312) 779-8717.

ANIMATION JOURNAL, peer-reviewed scholarly journal devoted to animation history/theory, welcomes submissions. Manuscripts should be double-spaced, following Chicago Manual of Style. Papers are blind-referred, so author's name should not appear on body of manuscript, only on attached cover sheet. Send 2 copies, 1 hard (paper) copy & 1 copy on computer disk, preferably Mac in Microsoft Word file. Send SASE for returns. Deadlines: July 1 for spring issue. For more info, call or fax (714) 544-6255, or write: Dr. Maureen Furniss, editor, AJ Press, 2011

Kingsboro Circle, Tustin, CA 92680-6733; e-mail: maureen@aol.com.

CHICAGO FILMLETTER, magazine for those into film/TV prod., covers both ind. & Hollywood on-location prod. in Chicago. Also contains listing of job opportunities, film classes & day-by-day calendar of film-related events. For more info, contact: Al Cohn, Chicago Filmletter, 1532 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, IL; (312) 235-3456.

CRITICAL CONDITIONS: ARTS CRITICISM IN MINNESOTA IN THE NINETIES is comprehensive 92-page report & assessment of outlook for arts coverage in state. Edited by Patrice Clark Koelsch & compiled & written by Roy M. Close, it is culmination of two-year survey of trends in arts coverage in state's daily & weekly newspapers, magazines, electronic media & elsewhere. To order, send \$10 to: The Center for Arts Criticism, 2402 University Ave. West, Saint Paul, MN 55114. For price info on bulk orders, call the Center at (612) 644-5501.

DEALMAKING IN THE FILM & TELEVISION INDUSTRY provides layman's guide to hazards of dealmaking in Hollywood & "self-defense" tactics for filmmakers. Author Mark Litwak is entertainment attorney & advocate for ind. filmmakers. Book available in stores Mar. 31.

FCC REPORT: Learn your rights to leased access time, as FCC describes them. Get report & order on rate regulations from FCC. This outlines Cable Act of 1992 & how it affects leased access, including: Rate Calculations; Filing Complaints; Resolving Disputes. Send \$39 for your copy to: FCC Report, PO Box 4591, Chico, CA 95927.

GAUNTLET, Exploring Limits of Free Expression, is open forum on First Amendment Rights covering issues of pornography, racism, film censorship, media manipulation, prostitution, cults, sexual harassment, etc. For copies or more info, send SASE to: Barry Hoffman, editor, 309 Powell Rd., PR94A, Springfield, PA 19064.

GUIDELINES TO INTERNATIONAL PROD.: Info on shooting overseas. Topics cover everything from pre- to postprod. Incl. chapters on int'l standards & formats, insurance, using foreign crew, int'l contacts & tips on how to keep out of jail. Written by David Calderwood, experienced int'l producer, respected conference presenter & widely published author. Send \$15 to: Euro-Pacific Prods, 703 Broad St., Shrewsbury, NJ 07702; (908) 530-4451.

HOLLYWOOD SCRIPT READERS' DIGEST showcases outlines of avail. screenplays & TV series concepts. Regularly distributed free to hundreds of established TV & film prod. cos., ind. producers, lit agents, etc. For \$100, will publish your screenplay synopsis of not more than 150 words; \$200 for 251-300 words; \$400 for 351-500 words. For TV series ideas, 300-word proposal costs \$150; up to 400 words is \$225; up to 500 words, \$275. Send name, phone number, typed proposal & cashier's check or m.o. to: The HSRD, 3917 Riverside Dr., ste. 9433, Burbank, CA 91505; (818) 954-0425.

INDEX ON CENSORSHIP, magazine for free speech, is produced 6 times/yr. in paperback format. Avail. by subscription. 1 yr. for \$48. Send check or credit card info (Visa, MC, Amex) to: Index on Censorship, Lancaster House, 33 Islington High St.,

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JACK MACKEREL VIDEO MAGAZINE, quarterly video compilation on VHS videocassette, is accepting submissions of short films, music videos, docs, interviews w/ artists, erotica, computer-generated imagery & animation & video/film whatnot. Send contributions (VHS format) to Jack Mackerel Video Magazine, PO Box 80024, Minneapolis, MN 55408-8024; attn.: Greg Bachar. (Send \$5 cash for sample volume.)

MONEY FOR FILM & VIDEO ARTISTS, publication listing more than 190 sources of support for ind. film- & videomakers, is avail. for \$14.95 + s&h. Contact: Doug Rose, ACA Books, dept. 25, 1285 Ave. of the Americas, 3rd fl., area M, NY, NY 10019.

NATIONAL VIDEO RESOURCES' Strategic Plan, 24-page booklet on NVR's strategic planning process & results. For free copy, write or call: National Video Resources, Inc., 73 Spring St., ste. 606, NY, NY 10012; (212) 274-8080.

PROTECTING ARTISTS & THEIR WORK, publication of People for the American Way, answers questions regarding artists' rights as well as federal & state law. To request copy, call People for the American Way (202) 467-4999.

SIX ROUTES TO FILM FINANCING, free tip sheet published by Hollywood Film Institute, breaks down 6 basic ways producers can finance films. For free copy, contact: Hollywood Film Institute, PO Box 481252, Dept. 1, Los Angeles, CA 90048; (213) 933-3456.

VIDEOS FOR CHANGING WORLD, new catalog of multicultural & social issue video docs. Videos in collection relate to common themes of building bridges across cultures & working for grassroots social change. Topics incl.: indigenous peoples, Central America, environmental issues, cross-cultural music & theater, oral history, etc. Avail. free. Contact: Turning Tide Prods, PO Box 864, Wendell, MA 01379; (800) 557-6414, (508) 544-8313; fax: 7989.

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CHICAGO RESOURCE CENTER awards grants to nonprofits who serve gay & lesbian community. For more info, contact: Chicago Resource Center, 104 S. Michigan Ave., ste. 1220, Chicago, IL 60603; (312) 759-8700.

CREATIVE SCREENWRITERS GROUP, nat'l organization dedicated to advancement of writing, is launching free service for everyone interested in improving their writing skills. CSG will provide assistance to anyone interested in joining writers' group in his/her community. CSG also provides info on how to form new groups. Send name, address & phone w/ description of writing interests & SASE to: Creative Screenwriters Group, 518 9th St. NE, ste. 308, Washington, DC 20002.

DCTV ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE is now accepting appls. for \$500 worth of equipment access on ongoing basis w/in one year. When 1 funded project is complete, DCTV will review appls. on file & select next project. Preference given to projects already underway. For appl., send SASE to: AIR, c/o DCTV, 87 Lafayette St., NY, NY 10013-4435.

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HUMANITIES PROJECTS IN MEDIA administered by NEH have deadline of Sept. 1995 (specific day not yet avail.) for projects beginning after April 1, 1996. 20 copies of appl. required on or before deadline. For appl., guidelines, write: National Endowment for the Humanities, Division of Public Programs, Humanities Projects in Media, rm. 420, 1100 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20506; (202) 606-8278.

JAPAN FOUNDATION is providing film prod. support to experienced ind. or corp. for prod. of films, TV programs, or other a/v materials that further understanding of Japan & Japanese culture abroad. Contact: Japan Foundation, 152 West 57th St., 39th fl., NY, NY 10019; (212) 489-0299.

LEDIG HOUSE WRITER'S COLONY offers published writers & translators quiet workplace, meals, lodging, & meetings w/ other writers at Ledig House in Columbia County, NY. 2-month sessions 3 times/yr. For appl. info contact: Ledig House, ART/OMI, 55 5th Ave., 15th fl., NY, NY 10003; (212) 206-6060.

LOUISIANA CENTER FOR CULTURAL MEDIA now makes professional camera packages & cuts-only editing systems avail. free to indivs. who agree to produce arts & heritage programming regularly & exclusively for Cultural Cable Channel of New Orleans. To qualify, interested parties must be members of Cultural Communications (\$35/yr.) & will have to produce minimum of 6 shows & complete at least 1 program per month. For more info, contact: Mark J. Sindler, Exec. Director, Cultural Cable Channel (504) 529-3366.

LYN BLUMENTHAL MEMORIAL FUND FOR IND. VIDEO: Grants go to individuals & collectives in cats of video criticism & prod. Fund seeks work which aims to do any or all of following: test limits of technology; extend language of personal expression; question aesthetic convention; explore complex issues of gender, sexuality & cultural identity; challenge prevailing social system. Prod grants \$1,000-\$3,000. Fund encourages projects that make inventive use of newly evolving/small-format media technologies w/ low budgets (\$6,000 or less). Deadlines: Criticism, March 15; Prod., Sept. 15. Potential applicants are asked to write for appl. form & funding guidelines. No phone calls accepted. Write to: Lyn Blumenthal Memorial Fund for Ind. Video, PO Box 3514, Church St. Station, NY, NY 10007.

MACDOWELL COLONY seeks film/video artists for residencies of up to 2 mos. at multidisciplinary artist community in Petersborough, NH. Deadlines: Apr. 15 (Sept.-Dec.), Sept. 15 (Jan.-April). Ability to pay not factor for acceptance. Ltd. travel grants avail. Write or call for info, appl.: MacDowell Colony, 100 High St., Peterborough, NH 03458; (603) 924-3886.

MEDIA ALLIANCE assists NYC artists & nonprofit organizations in using state-of-art equipment, postprod. & prod. facilities at reduced rates. Contact: Media Alliance, c/o WNET, 356 West 58th St., NY, NY 10019; (212) 560-2919.

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES is accepting proposals to any of its six divisions that address any of complex topics & themes related to American pluralism & identity. For further info, deadlines & guidelines write to: NEH, rm. 406, 1100 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W., Washington,

The Foundation for Independent Video and Film (FIVF), the foundation affiliate of the Association for Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF), supports a variety of programs and services for the independent media community, including publication of *The Independent*, operation of the Festival Bureau, seminars and workshops, and an information clearing house. None of this work would be possible without the generous support of the AIVF membership and the following organizations:

The Center for Arts Criticism, Consolidated Edison Company of New York, John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts, National Video Resources, New York State Council on the Arts, The Rockefeller Foundation, and The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc.

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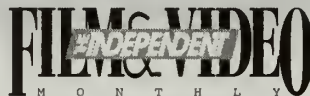
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NY FOUNDATION FOR THE ARTS awards Artists' Fellowships to individual NY artists. Applicants must be 18 year & older, resident of NY for at least 2 yrs. Cannot be grad or undergrad student, NYFA recipient of last 3 yrs, or employee or board member of foundation. For more info, call NYFA at (212) 366-6900.

ORAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION announces start of awards program recognizing outstanding work in oral history in several cats. In 1995, award will be made for nonprint format prod., incl. film, video, radio program or series, exhibition, or drama that makes significant use of oral history to interpret historical subject. Deadline: April 1. For more info, write: Jan Dodson Barnhart, executive secretary, Oral History Association, Box 3968, Albuquerque, NM 87190-3968.

POLLOCK-KRASNER FOUNDATION gives financial assistance to artists of recognizable merit & financial need working as mixed-media or installation artists. Grants awarded throughout yr., \$1,000-\$30,000. For guidelines, write: Pollock-Krasner Foundation, 725 Park Ave., NY, NY 10021.

PRINCESS GRACE FOUNDATION-USA makes awards to thesis film students enrolled in accredited film programs. Please write to determine if your school/university is eligible to apply. Jennifer Reis, Director of Grants Programs, Princess Grace Foundation, 725 Park Ave., NY, NY 10021.

SOUTHERN HUMANITIES MEDIA FUND accepting grant proposals for film/video prods of American South from nonprofit orgs chartered in AL, GA, KY, MS, NC, SC, TN, VA & WV. Deadline: March 6. For appls & info, contact: Virginia Foundation for the Humanities & Public Policy, 145 Ednam Dr., Charlottesville, VA 22903-4629; (804) 924-3296.

TRAVEL GRANTS FUND FOR ARTISTS makes grants to US artists to enhance their professional growth through short-term int'l experiences that enable them to collaborate w/ colleagues. Indiv. media artists should contact Arts International for 1994 appls. & guidelines at: Arts Int'l, 809 United Nations Plaza, NY, NY 10017; (212) 984-5370.

VISUAL STUDIES WORKSHOP MEDIA CENTER in Rochester, NY, accepts proposals on ongoing basis for its Media Access program. Artists, ind. producers & nonprofits awarded access at reduced rates, prod. & postprod. equipment for work on noncommercial projects. For appl., tour, or more info, call (716) 442-8676.

WRITERS WORKSHOP NATIONAL SCRIPT-WRITING CONTEST is accepting scripts from throughout US. 5 to 6 winners will be chosen to receive \$500 cash award. Winners also receive free tuition for critical evaluation of scripts before panel of motion picture agents, producers, writers, & directors. This program continues throughout year. For submission info, send legal size SASE w/ 60¢ postage to: Willard Rogers, Writers Workshop National Contest, PO Box 69799, Los Angeles, CA 90069; (213) 933-9232.

This year, I'm sure, will go down as one of the most challenging our field has ever faced in terms of advocacy. At press time, there's talk of the abolition of NEA, CPB, ITVS, and many other programs. We stand to lose a lot of ground.

My question is: Will we lose faith in our visions, too? If our institutions are weakened or destroyed, will we have the individual and collective strength to rebuild them or the imagination to create new structures and new ways of doing things?

One thing is certain, networking—sharing information and strategies—are antidotes to despair and isolation. This column has been created to make more visible the small and not so small steps that indies are taking to defend their right to create images and express viewpoints, many of which challenge the status quo, in the most powerful media of our time. It will include snapshots of activity spearheaded by AIVF members in various regions and will let you know how to get involved. If you have advocacy news to contribute from your area, let us know!

COALITION MEETS WITH WNET

This past year, AIVF helped to organize the ad hoc Coalition of Independent Producers and Public Television Audiences. The New York City-based coalition was formed to address the lack of independent programming on PBS's flagship station,

WNET/New York. In November the coalition sent a number of recommendations to WNET president, William Baker and the station's board of directors.

On December 19, coalition representatives Ruby Lerner of AIVF and Terry Lawler of Women Make Movies met briefly with Mr. Baker and at greater length with WNET programming staff. The ideas discussed include: the reinstatement of an independent series like Independent Focus; the acquisition of more independent work for use throughout the schedule, especially on "theme" days; the establishment of residencies or fellowships for independents at the station; and the creation of an advisory board made up of local independent producers. The coalition reps report that the tenor of the meeting was upbeat and another meeting will be scheduled in early 1995.

GET INVOLVED

Board members around the country are teaming up with local colleagues to visit their Congressional representatives and express support for (media) arts funding, public television, and policies that guarantee access to the information superhighway. If you would like to find out how to get involved in advocacy work in your area, contact: Martha Wallner, AIVF, 625 Broadway,

9th fl., New
York, NY
10012;
(212)473-
3400; e-mail:
aivffivf@
aol.com.



AMERICA FOR THE NEA

March 14 is Arts & Culture Advocacy Day. Americans from all walks of life will converge on Washington, DC, to speak to their Senators and Congressional leaders about the importance of the NEA. The aim of the newly established "America for the NEA" Day is to talk to every member of Congress and preserve federal funding for the arts. Congressmen Jerry Nadler (D-NY) and Amo Houghton (R-NY) have organized the bipartisan effort.

If you plan to join the march on the capitol, you can call (800) 862-1113 for information on transportation or to obtain contact information for your state coordinator.

MEMORANDA: Continued from p. 60

MEMBERABILIA

The Planned Parenthood Federation of America and Center for Reproductive Law and Policy will cosponsor the world premiere screening of *Dorothy Fadiman's From Danger to Dignity: The Fight for Safe Abortion* on Monday, March 13 at 7 p.m. at the Town Hall in New York City (123 W. 43rd St.). Tickets can be purchased by calling (212) 261-4659. *From Danger to Dignity* is the second doc in a series about abortion coproduced with PBS affiliate KTEH-TV. The first, *When Abortion Was Illegal*, was nominated for an Oscar and was awarded CPB's Gold Medal for Independent Production.

AIVF member Rob Katz's one-hour documentary *Roger Daltrey: The Music of the Who*, which he codirected with Michael Lindsay Hogg, aired on the Disney Channel in January.

Those of you who tune in to WNYC's *First Exposure* series may have seen Matt Bass's *Chester Turnoil*, about a pair of scientists who tap in to a young boy's dreams, last November. Bass, a film student at Manhattan's School of Visual Arts, also had his work screened at the 1994 New Orleans Film and Video Festival.

Another SVA student, Nuria Olivé Bellés, recently represented the school on Bravo/Independent Film Channel's first student film showcase. Her *Alicia Was Fainting*, a coming-of-age film that won several awards at SVA's 1994 Dusty Film Festival, aired in the series. Eight films from other schools rounded out the mix.



Ira Deutchman, former president of Fine Line Features, discussed the current climate for independent makers at an AIVF-sponsored "Meet and Greet" session held last November at the AIVF offices in Manhattan. Courtesy Fine Line Features

Several members have recently screened their works in New York. *Twitch and Shout*, a documentary about Tourette's Syndrome, which was produced and directed by Laurel Chiten, recently screened at the Museum of Modern Art. Dina Marie Chapman and Tod DePree's *Rhinoskin: The Making of a Movie Star* screened as part of the First Look series, which takes place the second Tuesday of every month at the Tribeca Film Center.

Henry Hills wrote to say his short film *Little Lieutenant* will be included in the short film mart at the 1995 Cannes Film Festival. Congrats, Henry!

More congratulations are in order for Jeff Walker, whose experimental short *Tall Tale* was shown at the European Media Art Festival in Osnabrück, Germany and at the New Orleans Film Festival. The video was also a runner up in Sony's "Visions of the U.S." video competition.

Boston member David Sutherland brought home more than bacon from the WorldFest Charleston International Film & Video Festival, where he was

awarded the WorldFest Gold Award in Feature Film Documentary for *Out of Sight*.

AIVF members are garnering grants and fellowships left and right: Alonzo Rico Speight received a 1994 Artist Fellowship in Video from NYFA. Tod S. Lending and Danny Alpert, coproducers of the documentary series *No Time to Be a Child*, were awarded \$350,000 in grants from the Ford and MacArthur Foundations to begin production on the series, which explores issues of violence and children. The Illinois Arts Council (IAC) recently announced the recipients of fiscal year 1995 Artist Fellowship Awards: Annette L. Barbier was a finalist in the Media Arts category, while Kathleen Wrobel received a \$5,000 award. Six video producers have received grants of \$1,500 to \$3,000 from the Lyn Blumenthal Memorial Fund, including Michael O'Reilly (*A Year and a Day: Dad's in Jail*) and Paper Tiger TV (*Hot-Wiring the Information Highway*). Nine members snagged Mid-Atlantic Region Media Arts Fellowship grants, including Diane Boder, Michael Dennis, Robert Gates, Louis J. Massiah, Allen D. Moore, Frances Negrón-Muntaner, Peter Rose, Lisa Marie Russo, and Margie Strosser. The grants range in size from \$1,000 to \$15,000.

When the National Black Programming Consortium announced its '94 grant recipients, AIVF members included Salem Mekuria, Stanley Nelson, Alonzo Speight, Lisanne Skyler, and Herb Avery, and Ada Babino.

In Tuscon, Dave and Cyndee Wing won the Best Documentary Short prize at the 19th Annual American Indian Film Festival for *Toka*, about a centuries-old game played by Tohono O'odham women.

Memoranda

UPCOMING EVENTS

MEET & GREET

These are opportunities for members to meet producers, distributors, funders, programmers, and others to exchange information in an informal atmosphere at the AIVF offices. Free; open to AIVF members only. Limited to 20 participants. RSVP required.

NANCY GERSTMAN

Vice President, Zeitgeist Films

Distributor of innovative feature films, including *Careful; Poison; and Silverlake Life*.

When: Monday, March 27, 6:30 pm

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

The AIVF annual membership meeting will be held Friday evening, April 7, at Anthology Film Archives, 32 Second Ave., NYC. The meeting is open to all; AIVF members will receive a separate notice in the mail.

SEMINAR SERIES

CLOSE-UP ON

THE REAL FESTIVAL CIRCUIT

This four-week series will take a close look at festivals throughout the U.S. and overseas. Each session will focus on a different type of medium, recognizing the variety of specialized festivals that makers can approach with their work. Panels will include festival representatives and makers, and will provide targeted, specific, useful information.

April 3: Shorts - Gunter Minas, Mannheim Film Festival; Robert Withers, NY Expo of Short Film and Video; maker tba

April 10: Video - Marion Masone, NY Video Festival; Bart Weiss, Dallas Video Festival; maker tba

April 17: Documentary - panel tba

April 24: Narrative Features - panel tba

At Anthology Film Archives, 32 2nd Ave., NYC. All programs at 6:30 pm. Panels in formation and subject to change. Single session: \$15 members; \$20 others. Series of 4: \$50 members; \$75 others. Seating limited. Preregistration with payment required to hold place.

20TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION - FIERCELY INDEPENDENT

The Donnell Library hosts a series of conversations—two makers each evening will show their work and talk about the thrills, chills, challenges, and triumphs of the independent life. Each program pairs an emerging young

maker with one in mid-career ("still crazy after all these years") to compare notes and see how the field has developed these past two decades.

April 27: Michel Negroponte (*Jupiter's Wife*)

May 18: Isaac Julien (*Looking for Langston*) and Karim Ainouz (*Seams*)

June 8: Barbara Hammer (*Nitrate Kisses*) and Cheryl Dunye (*Greetings from Africa*)

All programs at the Donnell Library Center, 20 W. 53rd St., NYC, at 6:00 pm. Admission free and open to the public. No reservation necessary, but seating is limited. Programs May 18 and June 8 are co-sponsored by the New York Lesbian and Gay Film Festival.

"MANY TO MANY" MONTHLY MEMBER SALONS

This is a monthly opportunity for members to discuss work, meet other independents, share war stories, and connect with the AIVF community across the country. Note: as our copy deadline is two months before the meetings listed below, be sure to call the local organizers to confirm that there have been no last-minute changes.

Albany, NY:

When: March 2, April 6, 6:30 pm

Where: Mother Earth's Cafe, Quail St.

Contact: Mike Camoin (518) 895-5269.

Boston:

When: March 9, April 10, 7 pm

Where: March: Newton Television Foundation, 1608 Beacon St., Newton; April: Multi Vision, 161 Highland Ave., Needham Heights

Contact: Susan Walsh (617) 965-8477

Chicago:

When: March 14, April 11, 7:30 pm

Where: Chicago Filmmakers, 1543 West Division

Contact: Mark Hubert (312) 384-5533

Dallas:

Meeting not set at press time.

Contact: Bart Weiss (214) 948-7300

Denver:

Meeting not set at press time.

Contact: Diane Markrow (303) 989-6466

Los Angeles:

When: March 1, April 5, 7 pm

Where: Location TBA

Contact: Pat Branch (310) 271-4385

New York:

When: March 21, April 18, 6-8 pm

Where: Call to confirm location.

Contact: Jennifer Lytton (212) 473-3400

Washington, DC:

When: March 15, April TBA, 7-9 pm

Where: Herb's Restaurant, 16-15 Rhode Island Ave. NW

Contact: Sowande Tichawonna (202) 232-0353

MOVING FORWARD...

Members are organizing AIVF salons in Rochester, NY; Austin and San Antonio, TX; Stamford, CT; San Diego, CA; Durham, NC; Madison, WI; Kansas City, MO; and Phoenix, AZ! For contact information, or to talk to us about starting something in your area, call Pam Calvert (212) 473-3400.

BY PAMELA CALVERT

CALL FOR AIVF NOMINATIONS

It's not too soon to begin thinking about nominations for the AIVF board of directors. Board members are elected to a 3-year term of office; the board gathers four times a year in NYC for weekend meetings (AIVF pays the travel costs if you live elsewhere).

We have an active board; members must be prepared to set aside adequate time to fulfill board responsibilities, which include:

- Attendance at all board meetings and participation in conference calls when necessary;
- Preparation for meetings by reading advance materials sent by staff;
- Active participation in one or more committees as determined by the organization's needs and as requested by the board chair or executive director; fulfillment of commitments within agreed-upon guidelines;
- General support for the executive director and staff as needed.

Board nominations must be made by current AIVF members in good standing; you may nominate yourself. Board members must be at least 19 years old. To make a nomination, send or fax us the name, address, and telephone number of the nominee and nominator; we cannot accept nominations over the phone. We will also accept nominations at the AIVF annual meeting on April 7.

TRADE DISCOUNT UPDATES



Success! The Los Angeles office of Studio Film and Tape is matching New York's discount offer to AIVF members. In addition to offering a 5% discount on Kodak short-ends and recans, they will also offer a 10% discount on new Fuji film. They are at 6674 Santa Monica Blvd, Hollywood, CA 90038; contact Carole Dean (213) 466-8101.

We also have four (!) new discounts to announce: In Evanston, IL, Brelia Productions will offer members 35% off nonlinear editing and 3D animation work. The address is 1840 Oak Ave., Evanston, IL 60201; Bernadette Burke (708) 866-1884.

In NY, Robert Seigel and Paul Rosenthal of Cinema Film Consulting offer members discounts on legal and consulting services. Address is 333 West 52nd St., ste. 1008, NY, NY 10019; (212) 307-7533.

In Naples, FL, DHA Production offers members a discounted hourly rate of \$325 for their edit suite, a Beta SP Component Digital Sony Series 6000, with use of an Abekas A-65, Sony DME-500 and Chyron Max included. At 2375 N. Tamiami Trail, Naples, FL 33940; George Steinhoff (813) 263-3939.

In Miami Beach, FL and New York City, Film Friends offers a 30-percent discount on equipment rentals to members. They have an extensive range of camera, sound, lighting, grip, and editing equipment. Florida address is 4019 No. Meridian Ave., Miami Beach 33140; Mick Cribben (305) 532-6966; (800) 235-2713. In New York, they are at 16 East 17th St., NY, NY 10003; Mike Gallagher (212) 620-0084.

Watch the April *Independent* for news of new discounts on long-distance telephone and overnight courier services!

Continued on p. 59



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THE INDEPENDENT

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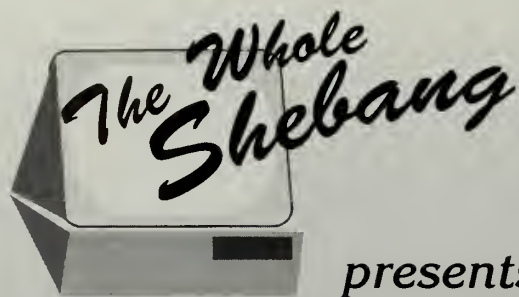
Mina Shum, director of *Double Happiness*

FILM FEMMES

Changing
the Ground Rules
of Feminist Cinema



A publication of the Foundation for Independent Video and Film



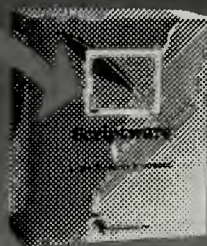
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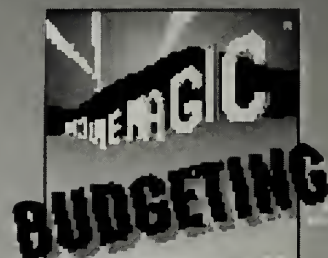
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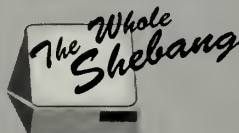
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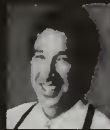
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VENI, VIDI, VIDEO

To the editor:

I was so excited to see a major story in *The Independent* about the New York Video Festival ["Little Orphan Video: The New York Video Festival," January/February 1995]. There is so little writing about video in general and the *Village Voice* and *New York Times* gave the video fest only marginal ink, ignoring many of the works, giving minimal mention to others, and offering no real sense of the richness and importance of independent video—both at the festival and in the field as a whole. I'm sure if Mark Rappaport's *Exterior Night* were shot in film rather than HDTV, it would have been reviewed.

With so many independents working in video and so little writing about it, I thought a story in *The Independent* would be a great opportunity, but Ernest Larsen's rant on the festival does more of a disservice than anything. If this piece had been in *Felix*, where there is a broader discussion of video, it would be fine, but a rare review of a video festival in *The Independent* is not the place. Sure, any critic has a right and duty to call them as he or she sees them, but in this current climate some bit of good press is necessary, and Mr. Larsen hated everything, although he did call some things "interesting."

The most perplexing part of the story was his rant against HDTV and interactive media. Mr. Larsen feels that by obtaining equipment from "corporate culture" the festival is selling out. Is the festival supposed to ignore new ways artists are working with material? Going that road, there would never be any video festivals, because borrowing a Sony projector is selling out, and any affordable equipment would surely not be good enough for a festival showcase.

By exhibiting how artists work with new technology, the festival's interactive component introduces audiences to something other than corporate drivel, and perhaps can make the industries see that people want to watch something other than shoot-'em-ups.

Video is elastic; it changes much more than some old fogies, who can only see one way of producing and envisioning electronic time-based work. We need critical discussion of video, we need support, and, most of all, we need open minds.

Bart Weiss, Director
Dallas Video Festival, Dallas, TX

Ernest Larsen responds:

I suspect that Bart Weiss and I share a long-term commitment to improving the sorry lot of poor orphan video. But we only undermine our position the more we imagine that we can afford to dispense with honest criticism. Check out the largely positive piece I wrote for *Art in America* on the first New York Video Festival. It too is critically supportive. During the second festival I participated in a panel that explored video's relation to the press. If I'd written a piece that year I could have coasted by praising such work as Joan Braderman's *Joan Sees Stars*, Mindy Faber's *Delirium*, and Ellen Spiro's *Greetings From Out Here*, among others. However, Weiss's disingenuous

recommendation that I should have piously sworn off this year because the videos selected weren't so very hot would effectively reduce *The Independent* to the status of a publicity rag. (If, on the other hand, Weiss wants to hire me to write some gaseous quotable quotes on his pick hits, I'm available.) Weiss's claim that "some bit of good press is necessary" confuses the role of the critic with the role of press agent. My article begins by criticizing the festival's programmers for being much too reticent about promoting the event for all it's worth. I could have made myself the apple of everyone's eye by doing precisely what Weiss recommends—making nice—but instead took the pronouncedly more difficult route of taking on the manner and organization of the festival itself.

Somehow Weiss got my point about the festival's HDTV and interactive programs upside-down. Am I saying the festival is selling out by obtaining equipment from corporationland? No. Or that the festival should ignore artists' use of new technology? A thousand times no, as Betty Boop used to say. But the trick is to get corporate culture to buy into your thing, not vice-versa. In my humbly open-minded view, Sony et al. buffaloes the programmers into spotlighting the tech rather than the artists.

Finally, my piece was chock full of cranky but rationally argued suggestions for possible ways that the New York Video Festival might really come into its own as we'd all like it to. Therefore, much as I'd like to, I cannot accept Weiss's warmly reiterated accolade of "rant." The rant is a passionate literary form that relies on verbal violence to achieve its ravishing effects. While I'm not a pacifist, I do rely on nonviolent irony. What I like about irony is that it constructs a bridge across the River Kwai between what is and what should be. The idea is to place the reader in the sometimes uncomfortable, sometimes exciting position of acknowledging that there is a gap, if not a yawning abyss. Unlike your everyday ranter, I did not throw my hands up in disgust upon confronting the spectacle of the New York Video Festival. Nor did I pull a *Candide* and claim that this was the best of all possible festivals. Instead, I detailed how the festival might next time out give video the radical impact it should have. As for the videos I criticized, I made a point of being tough on videomakers whose work I admire. Surely, for example, the truly adventurous work of artists like Peggy Ahwesh, Michael O'Reilly, and George Kuchar, to mention a few, can bear up under a few cross words from a critic who has liked their work so much more in the past. If not, we all ought to hang it up and start channel-surfing into a dismally upbeat future.

PBS's PLACE

To the editor:

Let me make one clear point about public television. It has no network. There are no national broadcasts. PBS cannot "air" anything. I note that in Michele Shapiro's article about the ITVS ["ITVS Gets Serious

Continued on p. 6

FILM & VIDEO THE INDEPENDENT MONTHLY

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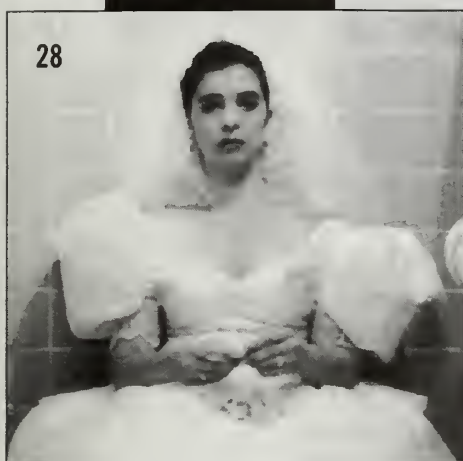
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It's Showtime! Sundance Film Channel Gives Cable Competitors a Run for the Money

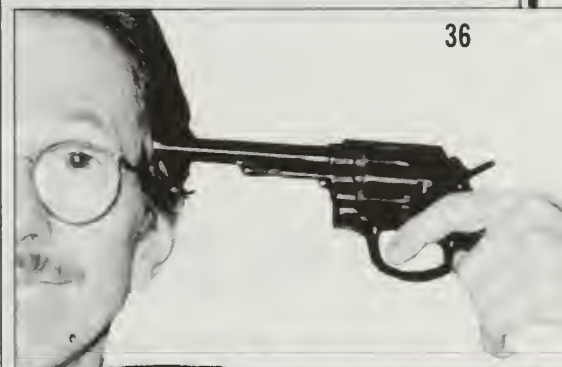
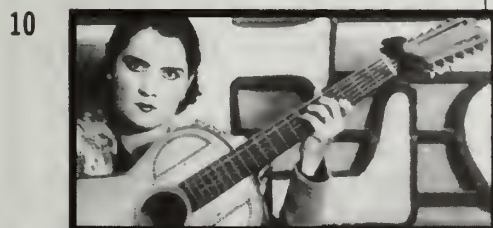
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COVER: Mina Shum, director of *Double Happiness*, the top prize winner in the Berlin Film Festival's Forum section, is among the new breed of women directors who deal with issues once associated with feminism, but under different groundrules than those laid out by feminist film theorists in the seventies. In this issue, Laurie Ouellette looks at the new wave of women's films. Photo courtesy Fine Line.

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PHOTO RIGHT: Laura Carney, *Trees* (Left) and Addison Cook, *Wildgirl's - Go - Go - Rama* (Back): Opening night party in October, 1994.
Photo by Dina Williams



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The stock footage company whose stock footage doesn't look like stock footage

LETTERS: Continued from p. 2

About Series," December 1994], she writes with the misunderstanding that PBS can do something it cannot.

PBS is the Public Broadcasting Service. It is a service funded and operated by public television stations. PBS is not a network. Even though PBS does offer a national primetime schedule and encourages at least one station per market to broadcast certain national productions, each station individually makes a decision about each program. PBS cannot and does not decide for them.

PBS has no broadcast license and therefore cannot decide to broadcast any program regardless of the pressure that any organization of producers applies to PBS.

Public TV stations are licensed to local communities and select their program schedules based on the needs of their viewers. Only that local station can and does decide whether or not to broadcast any program from any distributor.

Those doing the marketing for ITVS are on the right track.

David J. Brugger, President
Association of America's Public Television Stations

Michele Shapiro responds:

Thank you for attempting to clarify the Public Broadcasting Service's role in the complex web of public television. As you point out, PBS *does* offer a core program schedule to all its member stations via PBS's National Program Service (reorganized in February), which is how programs like *MacNeil/Lehrer NewsHour*, *Great Performances*, *Nova*, and *Wall Street Week* come to viewers. While it's true that stations are not required to air these shows, many do. In addition, these programs benefit from press promotion, handled in part by PBS. The series are also sent via satellite at times that are convenient for stations, so many don't have to bother recording them.

Only one of ITVS's series, *Declarations of Independents*, has been approved by the National Program Service to date and offered through its national satellite feed. ITVS's highly regarded *The Ride* and *TV Families* were both turned down. Since, as you say, it's the stations that make decisions about airing each program or series, perhaps PBS's programming executives need to put more trust in the individual stations: offer them more series via the national feed, then let them decide whether or not each is suitable for their particular primetime audience. (Donald H. Thoms, PBS' director of program management, said on the record he "liked and loved" most of the *TV Families* installments.)

If PBS is becoming only an outlet for game shows and run-of-the-mill documentary series and ignores its mandate to air innovative programming, it's hard to see how it will survive in the long run.

EDITED BY MICHELE SHAPIRO

IT'S SHOWTIME!

**Showtime's Sundance Film Channel,
Bravo, and Cinemax Vie for Independent Fare**



OF THE RECORD \$5.4 BILLION COLLECTED IN U.S. BOX-OFFICE RECEIPTS LAST YEAR, BETWEEN SIX AND 10 PERCENT CAME FROM INDEPENDENT FILMS. HENCE MAJOR STUDIOS AND DISTRIBUTORS, ARMED WITH THE HEAVIEST

ARTILLERY AVAILABLE—blank checks—are in the market for high-quality, low-budget fare. Adding to the competition, a number of cable networks have either launched separate channels devoted to independent work or have set aside funds for the cultivation of indies.

More than a year after *Variety*'s "Buzz" column first announced Robert Redford's plans to launch a cable channel featuring independent work, the Sundance Film Group, Redford's commercial wing, struck a deal with Showtime Networks, Inc. to launch the Sundance Film Channel. The deal for the 24-hour, commercial-free network was announced just prior to this year's Sundance Film Festival, which took place January 19 to 29 in Park City, Utah.

The Sundance Channel, scheduled for a fall 1995 launch date, will showcase approximately 50 films per month as well as shorts, docs, and animated work. A sampling of the service will initially be provided to approximately 12 million viewers of Showtime and the Movie Channel, both of which are owned by Showtime Networks.

Redford's loose definition of "independent" product includes everything from projects made in conjunction with Hollywood studios to those written, directed, and produced for well under \$1 million. Yet initially the channel will draw upon existing agreements that Showtime has in place with



A deal inked with Robert Redford makes Showtime home to independent films (like *Boxing Helena*, left). Bravo's Independent Film Channel has been screening indies (like *My Own Private Idaho*) since last fall.

Courtesy Orion Classics & Fine Line Features

MGM-UA, Castle Rock, and TriStar. Negotiations are also underway with independent distributors, including Orion Classics and October Films, to acquire new titles. Features slated to have their pay-TV premiere on the channel include *Claire of the Moon*, *Belle Epoque*, and *Sleep with Me*. Other first-run titles slated to air include *Four Weddings and a Funeral*, *Orlando*, *Romeo Is Bleeding*, and *Barcelona*.

"What we're going to do in programming for the channel is to create an environment around each project," Redford told the *Hollywood Reporter* in January. "We'll have interviews with the filmmaker so [the maker] can talk about his or her work rather than having some host talk about it, or me talk about it." In addition, filmmakers will produce their own on-air promotional spots.

The logical issue that was raised repeatedly after the Sundance Kid unveiled his plans in late January was just what the link would be between films selected to screen at the Sundance festival and the Sundance Channel. A Showtime

spokesperson told *The Independent* that details of the relationship are not yet concrete. "But because several films come in to Sundance this year with theatrical distribution already in place, the projects will have to be looked at on a case-by-case basis," said the source.

As for coproductions, the spokesperson said that while the channel has no coproduction budget per se, it will consider coproducing projects the network finds particularly compelling and appropriate. The channel has already received a number of scripts and treatments from makers and the projects will be considered individually. Redford has said he hopes programming ideas will come out of the Sundance Institute workshops. Showtime, which has a strong coproduction track record, produced more than 20 original films in 1994 and hopes to double that figure in 1995.

Deja Vu All Over Again

If the announcement of a cable network devoted entirely to independent work sounds a bit familiar,

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it's probably because just last fall Bravo launched the Independent Film Channel (IFC), which currently reaches approximately 3 million viewers. [See "Bravo Launches Independent Film Channel," August/September 1994.]

Prior to penning his deal with Showtime, Redford had talked to Bravo about becoming involved with IFC. The deal, however, fell through at the eleventh hour when Redford and Kathy Dore, executive vice president and general manager of Bravo, reached an impasse on the issue of creative control. "At the end of the day we couldn't figure out a way to give Sundance and Robert Redford the control they wanted and maintain the integrity of the channel," Dore told *Multichannel News*. Although Redford will not be involved in managing the Sundance Film Channel, he will choose the staff and have veto power over films.

Sniping between the two networks was played out in the press shortly after Showtime's announcement. The IFC labeled the Sundance Channel "an imitator" and Sundance retaliated by dismissing IFC's claim of clout within the community. Although IFC is emphasizing a broader range of films—400 to 500 titles annually versus Sundance's 300—the latter's anticipated viewership is nearly four times greater, according to Showtime. And while IFC's advisory board boasts names such as Scorsese, Altman, and Spike Lee, Showtime's Cox has said, "There's a big difference between an advisory board and a direct investment. We're not into this smoke and mirrors game."

In an attempt to counter all the publicity the Sundance Channel received both prior to and during the Sundance Festival, the IFC announced plans for a fund called IFCheap, short for IFC Helps Emerging Artists Produce, which would support independent production. The fund will be financed from IFC profits. Theoretically, the fund will both provide money for project development and finishing funds for independent features. But since the network doesn't expect to turn a profit for at least two to three years, details about just how much money will be available are sketchy at best. IFC has already committed to funding independent productions, however, and plans to produce six short films in 1995, including Ileana Douglas's *Girl Crazy*, *Boy Crazier*.

Taking It to the (Cine)Max

Another hot player in the cable market, HBO-owned Cinemax, is also getting into the funding game. Documentary filmmakers have long approached HBO to finance projects created specifically for *America Under Cover*, such as Susan and Alan Raymond's *I Am a Promise*, about an inner-city school in Philadelphia. Now HBO has unveiled plans to provide completion funds for feature-length documentaries that will premiere

on Cinemax.

Jonathan Moss, director of documentary programming for HBO, said the announcement means HBO now can consider a much broader range of films for funding and licensing through Cinemax. "We are thrilled to have these funds. HBO has always been committed to independents, and we have wanted to do this for some time. It was a matter of resources," Moss told *The Independent* in February. He added that HBO has finishing funds available for approximately four or five projects per year, depending on how much is allotted to each. "The whole thing is very new, and we haven't defined the rules yet," said Moss. The projects are intended for broadcast on Cinemax's *Vanguard Cinema* series, a weekly program spotlighting feature-length independent features and documentaries.

The first two projects for which HBO has provided partial funding are Nick Broomfield's untitled film on Heidi Fleiss and *Jupiter's Wife*, Michel Negroponte's documentary about a homeless woman in Central Park. Both projects will air on Cinemax in mid- to late 1995.

Jupiter's Wife coproducer Doug Block said the filmmakers approached HBO for funding in the early stages of the film, but HBO execs felt it wasn't right for *America Under Cover*. Those same execs, however, recommended the project to *Vanguard Cinema*. The filmmakers in turn received completion funds and a "generous licensing fee," according to Block.

Asked if Cinemax feels pressure to compete with the new Sundance and Independent Film channels, Camilla Carpenter, vice president of

ON THE RECORD

"IF THIS WORKS OUT, I'D LIKE TO BE ASSURED OF MY OWN SHELF AT BLOCKBUSTER. O.K.?"

—Robert Redford to Tony Cox, chairman of Showtime, in announcing the launch of the Sundance Film Channel, from *Variety*, January 1995

* *The Independent* is soliciting quotes by and about the media arts for "On the Record". If you come across a brilliant, funny, stupid, or enlightening quote, send it to Michele Shapiro (see masthead for mail/fax/email; no calls, please). Include name & date publication in which quote first appeared. If your quote is used, you'll receive a free one-year individual membership AIVE.

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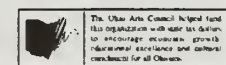
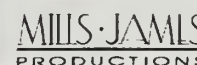
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programming, replied that Cinemax has long been a home for independent work, and added that the network has long searched festivals and theaters for quality independent work. Having premiered films like John Dahl's *Red Rock West* and *The Last Seduction*, Cinemax considers itself the model that other networks are now duplicating. "We love the fact that there is more interest in independent films," said Carpenter. "There are plenty out there looking for a home, and rather than being competition, Cinemax feels that new channels spotlighting independents will only increase the audience for all independent work."

Contact Information: *The Sundance Film Channel*, Nora Ryan, exec VP, business development, c/o Showtime Network, 1633 Broadway, 37th fl., NY, NY 10019 (no calls, please); *The Independent Film Channel*, Caroline Kaplan, director of development, or George Lentz, manager of acquisitions and scheduling, c/o Bravo, 150 Crossways Park West, Woodbury, NY 11797; (516) 364-2222; Jonathan Moss and Sheila Nevins, Documentary Dept., HBO, 1100 Ave. of the Americas, New York, NY 10036; (212) 512-1000.

MICHELE SHAPIRO AND INGALISA SCHROBSDORFF

Michele Shapiro is managing editor of *The Independent*. Ingalisa Schrobsdorff is a Manhattan-based freelance writer.

NVR OFFERS LIBRARIES ALTERNATIVE VIDEOS AT A DISCOUNT

It took several years, a grant, and a loan as well as a cast of unpaid actors and donated props to bring filmmaker Victoria Maldonado's film *Cafe Norte y Sur* to life. A former boss gave her the loan. The New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA) gave her a postproduction grant. Maldonado found the time (working as a waitress during the day and a director at night), and her friends often stood in as actors, dreaming up their own dialogue. ("If Truffaut did it, why can't I, right?" Maldonado jokes.)

Maldonado's film, completed in 1989, lives on thanks to *Videoforum: A Videography for Librarians*. *Videoforum* is a joint project of the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation's Library Video Project series and National Video Resources (NVR), a Rockefeller initiative. Since the library distribution project's start-up around four years ago, NVR has published two catalogs—the first



Gracias a la video: Via the Latino edition of NVR's new library catalogue, works like Chris Strachwitz's *Chulas Fronteras* may gain larger audiences than ever before. Courtesy Les Blank-Flower Films

offering Native American titles (1992) and the other Latino videos (1994). Through the MacArthur Foundation's marketing and distribution efforts, the project has facilitated the sale of 175,000 hours of tape.

The *Videoforum* series represents a spectrum of video titles selected and written about by librarians, media programmers, videographers, and filmmakers. The catalogs are primarily distributed to public librarians, many of whom are trying to build video collections; the Latino catalog boasts roughly 70 titles, the Native American catalog about 40. "Librarians want to respond to their constituencies," says NVR senior consultant Mary Keelan, who is also the head of audio-visual services for New York State's Mid-Hudson Library System (which has the state's largest collection of independent videos outside of the city). "They don't want to make a mistake in purchasing. With the *Videoforum* project, they have a curated collection. They know they are going to be okay."

A main benefit of the project is that it offers video titles at a discount. For example, the standard list price of *Against Wind and Tide: A Cuban Odyssey*, a one-hour documentary included in the Latino catalog, is \$295; *Videoforum* offers it for \$89. Another plus for librarians is that the discounted price tag includes public performance rights as well as shipping and handling costs (with a few listed exceptions). Having public performance rights allows for the works to be screened at librarian-curated festivals.

The catalog also benefits makers and distributors (in many cases they are one and the same) on several levels. First, the maker or distributor can decide how much of a discount to offer. Second, the catalog has the ability to generate what for

many makers will be their biggest viewing audience ever. "I've received a number of requests for my work through *Videoforum*'s Latino catalogue," says California-based filmmaker Juan Garza, who agreed to have his video, Albert Pastor's *First Video Project*, which screened at the Whitney Museum and the San Antonio Cine Acción Festival, included in the catalog. "Some of the requests are from Kansas, from Oregon. It's really incredible."

In addition, working on a project with which the MacArthur Foundation is affiliated has its own advantages. "The foundation has the *Good Housekeeping* Seal of Approval," says Marie Nesthus, senior editor of *Videoforum*'s first two catalogues and head of the Donnell Library Media Center. (Bill Sloane, film curator at the Museum of Modern Art, will edit *Videoforum*'s third catalogue on health issues, due out in June.) "While it's very aggravating for filmmakers to be put in a category, it is a way for them to get out there. The message we want to send is that librarians can be allies of filmmakers."

Maldonado, whose *Cafe Norte y Sur* has just been purchased by the Salt Lake City Public Library, has mixed feelings about being included in the catalog. "Filmmakers are often labeled as 'Latinos' or 'women' or 'Native Americans.' We need to overcome this." Still, she is pleased that her work is being considered by librarians outside of New York and Los Angeles. "There's no other network like this project right now. It reaches 14,000 libraries across the country."

Nesthus says critics have accused NVR and MacArthur of taking advantage of struggling filmmakers, but libraries are under pressure to justify the materials they purchase, to select those that circulate, and to spend as little as possible.

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"There's been animosity on both sides," Nesthus says. "The filmmakers understandably don't want to put out their work for nothing, and many librarians will ask why they should buy an independent feature for \$250 when they can get *Citizen Kane* for \$59."

Nesthus adds that, by the mid-to late eighties, the home video market had swallowed up nearly every reason for a library administrator to budget for independent videos; mass market home videos equaled instant circulation figures that immediately eclipsed acquisition costs. Most administrators can't resist such an "easily quantifiable" cost, Nesthus observes.

NVR's executive director Tim Gunn agrees. "There was this hope that [mass market] video was going to open up the bottleneck for independent work. As it turns out, it's very rare to find independent films in video stores."

MacArthur, however, has a history of offering librarians video collections at discounted prices. Back in 1988, the foundation offered its Library Video Classics, a series of top-notch PBS programs including *I Claudius* and *The Jewel in the Crown*, at a reduced price to thousands of librarians across the country.

Then came the MacArthur Library, a gift of films for the librarians who participated in the Classics project. "This is a process of evolution, not revolution," says NVR's Keelan. "It marks a change in the way libraries are selecting their materials. The seeds were planted with the MacArthur Classics Project."

With the MacArthur Foundation handing marketing for the project, makers can receive far greater exposure than their own budgets allow. "What makes *Videoforum* unusual is that [our videos are] being marketed out [of house]," says Lawrence Spotted Bird, the Native American Broadcasting Consortium's development and marketing manager. A number of the Consortium's titles are included in *Videoforum*'s Native American catalog. "I don't know what the MacArthur Foundation's marketing budget is, but I know it's bigger than ours." Spotted Bird adds that the Consortium offered the video project roughly a 30-percent discount on their titles and, in a year, the catalog has netted \$27,510 in sales. "It's been very beneficial," he acknowledges. "They have a mailing list of about 12,000. We've never had a mailing list like this before."

What pleases Nesthus most about the *Videoforum* project is that, despite the fact it can only "represent a fraction of what's out there," she says the collection is a "balanced, valuable representation of a period of history" and that no matter how much time goes by, these curated collections will not lose their relevancy. "It's a collection that is continually looking to the past as well as to the future," she says.

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KATE BOBBY

Kate Bobby writes full-time for the North Jersey Newspapers, Co., and does freelance writing for a variety of publications.

CANADIAN NETWORK GIVES WOMEN A VOICE

In the U.S., the Lifetime Television Network has defined women's programming mainly as third-rate disease-of-the-week movies, dreary domestic sitcoms, and game shows in which contestants try to beat the clock while piling groceries into shopping carts. Some Canadians, however, have begun to explore the possibilities of a cable network for, by, and about women.

One of several new networks granted licenses by the Canadian government in recent years, Women's Television Network (WTN) began broadcasting nationwide at the beginning of this year. The channel currently airs for 20 hours a day,

Although it's been compared to the Lifetime Network, WTN is radically different not just because its programming is geared toward women, but also because most of its films and programs are created by women. As Barbara Barde, vice president of programming, notes, "It matters to us that women are involved in key positions in the creation of our programs, so that we are strengthening the women's independent production community in Canada." In addition, 96 percent of WTN's staff is female, including all of its executives and the entire senior management level. "It's a real breakthrough in the broadcast industry," says Laura Michalchshyn, programming coordinator for WTN.

WTN was licensed over a year ago, but its conception goes back five years. A group of shareholders, induced by the new channel licenses becoming available on Canadian television, asked some women they knew to develop a network that would appeal to female viewers. Four years of market research made it possible for the women to determine what their peers would like to see on television. Says Barde: "We took about fifteen women of all ages from around the country, many of whom had not been involved in television before, locked them away for a weekend, and

Network was licensed on June 7, 1994.

"We were delighted when they were awarded their license," says Jennifer Stott of the women-focused, nonprofit distribution company, Women Make Movies. "They approached us about a year ago when they were trying to obtain their license. They needed information regarding potentially available films by and about women that hadn't been broadcast before in Canada. We have since established a working relationship with them," she continues. The New York-based Women Make Movies has licensed a number of films to WTN, including the short films of Jane Campion, Julie Dash, Alice Walker, and Pratibha Parmar.

The network is currently buying North American programming (both original submissions and previously-aired product) for series, including *Girl Movies*, feature films directed by women or which star women in leading roles. The network is also acquiring product for *Shameless Shorts*, broadcast three times a week, featuring both Canadian and international shorts directed by women; *The World Film Festival*, featuring independent productions from around the world; and *Through Her Eyes*, a four-hour showcase that includes a feature and short films by one director as well as a pretaped interview with her. Showcased directors have included Jane Campion, Angela Pope, Martha Coolidge, Diane Keaton, Julia Reichert, and Sally Potter. "Through Her Eyes is very innovative, because never before has a broadcaster in Canada dedicated a block of programming to a director and her work," says Michalchshyn.

Rates for licensing and acquisitions are based on the length of the piece and whether it has been broadcast before in Canada. Since the network is relatively new, the general price for acquisitions starts at about \$3,000 Canadian per hour. "Once revenues start coming in, our big mandate will be to increase the acquisition budget and pay higher licensing fees," says Michalchshyn. "So far we've had great response because we are so innovative."

One of the emerging filmmakers to whom WTN has given voice is New York-based Bianca Bob Miller. A few of her shorts were purchased by the network after they were screened at the St. John's International Women's Festival. "Laura [Michalchshyn] saw some of my pieces there and contacted me," Miller says. "I think the idea of a women's network is great. I wonder if we'll ever see the equivalent in this country." Miller has been able to recommend other women filmmakers to WTN and said that the staff has been approachable and open to her suggestions.

Contact: Laura Michalchshyn, programming coordinator, WTN, ste. 300-1661 Portage Ave., Winnipeg Manitoba R3J 3T7.

FRANCES HILDAGO

Frances Hidalgo is a freelance writer and filmmaker living in Manhattan.

Women's Television Network? Canada has one, films like Jane Campion's early short, *A Girl's Story*, have a new venue.

Courtesy Women Make Movies



but will expand to 24 hours in September. Aimed at amplifying the woman's voice in Canada, the Winnipeg-based network's programming is a blend of informative series and entertainment features. The good news for U.S. filmmakers is that the network is currently looking beyond Canada for programming to fill its schedule.

asked, 'If you could create television programs and had a blank slate, what would you do?' A lot of what is now in our schedule stems from ideas generated by that group." Set to be launched as Lifestyle Television, the network changed its name after a marketing survey revealed that the earlier name didn't distinguish it as a network aimed at women. The Women's Television

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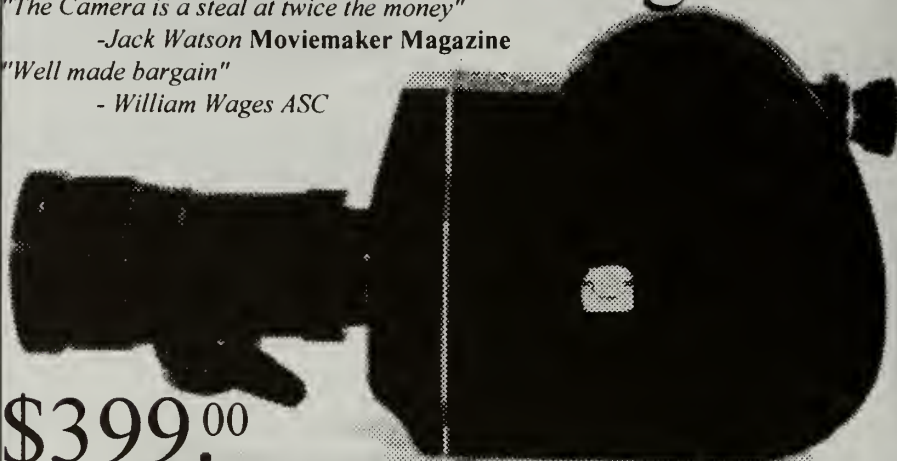
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Snow-defying wunderkind James Gray.
Photo: Patricia Thomson

JAMES GRAY writer/ director

LITTLE ODESSA

BY PATRICIA
THOMSON

MOST NEW YORKERS WILL NEVER FORGET THE winter of 1994. Fourteen blizzards pummeled the city in rapid succession, piling snowdrifts up to the tops of street signs, sending cars into hibernation under deep white mounds, leaving backs and arms sore from repeated shoveling and the city's salt reserves staining our boots and streets. Who could forget that winter?

Certainly not James Gray, whose first shoot as a feature director took place smack in the middle of those snowstorms. Twenty-six days of the usual production headaches, compounded by an obstinate snow.

But what a miracle it became in Gray's *Little Odessa*. That blinding white snow endowed Coney Island and the adjacent neighborhood of Brighton Beach (known as "Little Odessa" because of its large Ukrainian and Russian population) with a Siberian look, and it reflected the emotional chill that pervades the Jewish Russian family at the heart of the film's story.

Little Odessa opens with Joshua Shapira (Tim Roth) returning to Brighton Beach to complete a hit for the Russian mafia. He is drawn back to his family's apartment, from which his father (Maximilian Schell) has exiled him because of an

earlier murder. Through his younger brother, Reuben (Edward Furlong), he learns his mother (Vanessa Redgrave) is dying of a brain tumor and becomes determined to visit her one last time.

Despite casting Tim Roth as a hit man, Gray's frame of reference is far from Quentin Tarantino, the king of contract killers, smart-boy witticisms, and intricately woven, fast-paced plots. *Little Odessa* is an elegiac, deliberately-paced drama about the destruction of a family, inspired more by the stately tragedies of Shakespeare and the brooding, interior characters of Dostoyevsky.

"Since 1980, the film industry has exorcised tragedy from its consciousness," Gray says with honest regret. With *Little Odessa*, the director tried to make a consciously "unhip" film "about silences and emotional repression," he says. Tim Roth's character has "closed down emotionally," Gray explains. "The film is about a person who is trying to re-establish himself, but of course his tragedy is that he can't succeed, because he's gone too far."

Another element that distinguishes *Little Odessa* is its stunning cinematography, which finds beauty even in the most prosaic of urban settings. In a deep shot by the Coney Island boardwalk, distant roller coasters loom like giant, frozen dinosaurs. A raking light catches the grainy texture of a bedroom wall. Black becomes a lustrous color—and there is much of it, as numerous scenes take place at night or in dark interiors, with the characters backlit or barely emerging from deep shadows.

Not surprisingly, Gray once wanted to be a painter. During preproduction, in fact, "I painted 75 watercolors, and I gave them to [DP] Tom Richmond and said, 'I want the movie to be like this.'" He, Richmond, and the production designer also roamed the Museum of Modern Art and

the Metropolitan together. Baroque painters like Caravaggio and Georges de la Tour—both masters of dramatic candle-lit scenes—served as inspiration. Seeking a "painterly format," Gray and Richmond chose to shoot widescreen, using a 2.35 aspect ratio, which better enabled the kind of pictorial tableaux they were after. "I think my greatest strength, perhaps, is setting up a good shot," Gray admits when pressed. An articulate and thoughtful person, Gray is also extremely self-deprecating. He continues, "The greatest strength I want to have is being able to direct actors, or to write a brilliant narrative."

Others might say Gray's most awesome strength is his ability to attract talent on the level of Vanessa Redgrave and Tim Roth for his first feature outing, not to mention financing from LIVE Home Video and Fine Line Features, which each pitched in roughly half of the film's \$2.3 million budget. The 25-year-old director sheepishly acknowledges that *Little Odessa* came about relatively easily.

It all started when Gray was about to graduate from USC's film program. The annual screening of thesis shorts regularly brings in a flurry of agents. But word had gotten out early about Gray's 12-minute, 16mm dramatic thriller, *Cowboys and Angels*. "It was bizarre," he recalls. "Agents were calling me during the editing process; I honestly don't know how they knew about it." Gray signed on with United Talent Agency, which sent a cassette of *Cowboys and Angels* to producer Paul Webster (*Bob Roberts*, *Romeo Is Bleeding*). On the strength of this and a meeting with Gray, Webster decided to produce something with Gray as director.

"I had no idea what I wanted to do, so he started sending me screenplays. I didn't want to write; I thought screenwriting was horrible," he recalls. So Webster began sending him scripts—"cop movies, serial killer stories, and I hated all of them. I couldn't get more than four words into it: 'A hesitant rookie cop...' then I'd throw it in the corner. So I figured, screw this, I'd better start writing, even though I hate it. And I started writing and thought, jeez, this is the key to filmmaking! I fell in love with screenwriting."

Gray set to work. His second script, *Little*





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Odessa, was smaller, more personal—and more affordable—so it got the green light. Tim Roth was the first actor to sign on, which opened the gates to everyone else. "It's kind of nauseating that I got all the actors I wanted," Gray admits. Through his line producer, he also brought on board a talented and well-oiled crew for the grueling winter shoot, many of whom were used to working together from previous independent shoots. *Little Odessa's* production manager Christopher Goode, production coordinator Victoria McGarry, and location manager Eddy Collins all moved directly from Hal Hartley's *Amateur* to Gray's feature, then to David O. Russell's (*Spanking the Monkey*) second film, *Flirting with Disaster*, along with production designer Kevin Thompson and coproducer Kelly Orent.

For the Brooklyn-born Gray, who is of Russian Jewish descent, *Little Odessa* was a homecoming of sorts. These were his childhood stomping grounds; raised in Flushing, Queens, he used to play in many of the film's locations and wrote the script with them in mind. He also dug for hard information about the Russian mafia—the subject of many childhood rumors and tales—getting background from the newspapers, interviews with police detectives, and other local sources.

Now an eager scribe, Gray is in the midst of writing an ambitious screenplay for Fox Searchlight "about the world underneath the world—the New York subways and political corruption. It's a very Neo-Realist movie," he says. "It's an open, expansive text, like life itself."

Little Odessa opens in New York on March 31 and goes wide on April 14.

Patricia Thomson is editor of *The Independent*.

JEM COHEN
film/video
artist

BURIED IN LIGHT

BY STEVE DOLLAR

POISED BETWEEN CENTURIES OF TRADITION AND AN hour with the wrecking ball, the Eastern Europe that Jem Cohen observes in his video installation *Buried in Light* is about to realize the American Dream—and it's not an ideal fantasy. If, as a character mused near the end of German director Wim Wenders' road movie *Kings of the Road*, the "Yanks have colonized our subconscious," then by 1992 the West was moving in for real: lock, stock, and Big Macs by the handful.



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"One of the primary functions I have as a filmmaker is to document things that are disappearing," says Cohen, who shot the footage on an array of vintage Super-8 cameras over two months of travels in '92 and '93, taking trains to Berlin, Dresden, Prague, Budapest, and Krakow as those cities came to terms with a post-*perestroika* gold rush. "I'm always shooting," he says. "Sometimes I'm able to complete projects and sometimes not. I hope the shooting has value regardless. If I end up with footage of a performer, a building, a street—anything that's going to disappear—at least I know that on the shelf, there's documentation."

Buried in Light offers a visually poetic glimpse through what Cohen terms a "specific historical window" that opened after the fall of the Berlin Wall. The genre-blurring work, which the filmmaker likens to "visual short-wave," was commissioned by the High Museum of Art in Atlanta and exhibited there in late 1994. It takes the form of an anti-travelogue, complete with an ironic tourist's dictionary and an aesthetic sensibility somewhere between German essayist Walter Benjamin and film-diarist Ross McElwee.

Transferred from film to laser video, the hour-long centerpiece is part of a three-channel installation in which monitors create a triptych of different images, all surrounded by still photographs, text, and other artifacts from Cohen's travels.

The piece makes intriguing use of visual effects created by what Cohen calls "organic" manipula-

tions. Minimal and low-tech, these are accomplished in-camera or in the film-to-tape transfer, and allow the images to flow in a dream-like fashion. Cohen, who also shoots work in 16mm and Hi-8, chose Super-8 film for this project for both economic and aesthetic considerations. "I fell in love with the medium because of its extraordinary beauty and versatility," he says. "There's a rawness to it that often gets closer to the truth of what you're shooting."

The film's meditative tone is enhanced by original music from Athens, Georgia singer-songwriter Vic Chesnutt, downtown New York cellist Tom Cora, Ian MacKaye of Fugazi, the group House Sleep Fire, and even cartoonist Ben Katchor, whose weekly *Village Voice* strip, *Julius Knipl, Real Estate Photographer*, shares Cohen's perspective on the collisions of old and new.

"Basically, I work with what I run into in the world as it exists," Cohen says. "It's a simple notion. The Italian Neo-realists are very important to me, as is work like *Salesman* by the Maysles, and a whole tradition of street shooting—Walker Evans, Helen Levitt, Robert Frank, Leon Levinstein, Adam Cohen. I can't afford to do movies with sets and actors, so I work with what's out there and it's free."

Like much of Cohen's work, however, *Buried in Light* may be difficult to see. Chicago's Video Data Bank will distribute a single-channel version of the video, but as yet the installation isn't slated to travel elsewhere. Other, unfinished projects such

as *Late City Final* (a collaboration begun in 1991, on the so-called revitalization of Times Square) have been sitting on the shelf while he scrapes up finishing funds. More often than not, funding comes out of pocket, though Cohen just received a New York State Council for the Arts grant to complete *Lost Book Found*, a project begun in 1989 built around the filmmaker's days as a New York City pushcart vendor. The filmmaker's refusal to fit specific molds makes it harder to secure financing for his work. Cohen's career is a testimony to gumption in limbo.

"I'm not sure I would have survived without the occasional grant, programs like Standby, and institutions like the Wexner [Center for the Arts in Columbus, Ohio] and the High Museum," Cohen says. "I'm afraid I've never really felt part of any film/video community, if such a thing exists. It often seems limited by some exclusionary agenda, and I think independent media should be just that—*independent of any imposed agenda*."

"For some, my work isn't politically engaged enough. I find that ironic. *Buried in Light*, *Lost Book Found*, and the Times Square project are all concerned with the erasure of history and regional character, the Disneyfication of the planet, and capitalism as it's experienced at street level," he continues. "Even where there isn't any explicit political agenda, the act of documenting can be a political act."

Some of Cohen's previous works include *This Is a History of New York* (1988), a "history" of New York City from prehistoric times through the space age, illustrated entirely with documentary street footage, and the video installation *Black Hole Radio* (1992), which is based on actual recordings of anonymous phonecalls to a "confession line." But Cohen's widest exposure comes through his association with R.E.M., the media-savvy Athens rock band that, to various degrees, has involved independent filmmakers in its visual presentations—from rock videos to the massive film installation used on the group's current world tour. Cohen, whose latest musical video for R.E.M. was "Nightswimming," has also directed videos for Miracle Legion and a Vivaldi clip for Deutsche Grammophon.

"As for the recent work with R.E.M., I have mixed feelings about giant rock 'n' roll spectacles, and I think they do too," says Cohen, who shot footage for the tour. "I don't feel it's exactly what I want to do, but it's a really wonderful opportunity on a kind of experimental level and it helps me to fund other work."

Back in the sixties and seventies, people were having crazy film screenings. There was a lot more crazy shit going down in terms of enjoying



Right: From *Buried in Light*, by Jem Cohen, courtesy filmmaker; photo of Cohen: Ghretta Hynd

the medium and exploring possibilities for how to present it. That's rare now, so if it takes R.E.M. to get me back into that magic lantern experience on a grand scale, then I really dig it."

Cohen is currently working with the Washington, D.C.-based band Fugazi on a long-form video that bears little relation to MTV-type product, and gathering footage for a personal document on the Atlanta band Smoke and its vocalist, Benjamin. The music-related work is important to Cohen, but is only part of his output. "I wish there was more support and more venues for independent, experimental work, but sometimes music videos and rock band projects are the only way to make things happen. I try to stay away from the conventions of both the music and film 'businesses,' and to search out the independent spirit in both realms."

Jem Cohen, c/o Video Data Bank, 112 South Michigan Avenue, ste. 312, Chicago, IL 60603; (312) 345-3550.

Steve Dollar is from Tallahassee and writes about pop culture for the Atlanta Journal-Constitution.

Leonardson's sound/music track effectively capture this hopeless grasping at straws. Not just the tragedy of one couple's desperation, it is a metaphor of the constant false hope that popular culture and the medical establishment inflict on the sufferers of this plague and those who love them.

So what is poetry video? Poetry and film have had a long relationship. This year, San Francisco will host the 20th annual Poetry Film/Video Festival. But recently two activities have pumped new energy into this hybrid art form. One is performance poetry, the other music video. The new performance edge in the poetry world is demonstrated by the "poetry slam." The slam is a round robin contest that judges a poet's work as well as the energy with which it is presented. Poetry inspired by the street and projecting a raw, in-your-face emotional content has an advantage, and as a result, across the country the staid poetry reading has given way to a sort of literary spectator sport.

Meanwhile, the

Kurt Heinz has been one of the premiere practitioners of this new art form in the Chicago area. A poet and performer, he has been producing poetry videos since 1991 with a variety of poets, including Paul McComas, Dean Hacker, and Cin Salach.

Patricia Smith was also a regular participant in Chicago's poetry slam scene. The author of three books of poetry, Smith is a three-time National Slam champion—once with the first national Chicago team in 1990 and twice since with the team from Boston, where she moved the next year to work for the *Boston Globe* as a newspaper reporter. Smith's newspaper skills are on a par with her poetry. Her dispatches from South Africa during the historic first open election were written with an immediacy that captured the excitement and optimism the elections brought to the country.

In September 1993, Heintz organized Chicago's third National Poetry Video Festival. Afterwards

PATRICIA SMITH & KURT HEINTZ *video poets* **CHINESE CUCUMBERS**

BY GEORGE FIFIELD

CHINESE CUCUMBERS IS A VIDEO OF UNCOMPROMISING edginess. On the hottest day of the year, a gay man walks the city streets, propelled by the headlines that "screamed at him from supermarket tabloids: 'CHINESE CUCUMBERS: MIRACLE CURE FOR AIDS.'" In this five-minute poetry video, a collaboration between poet Patricia Smith and videomaker Kurt Heintz, Smith forcefully reads her eponymous verse that recounts how a desperate Everyman has leapt from one New Age quackery to another in order to save his dying lover. After the crystals and the chanting, he wanders through Chinatown, searching for the miracle vegetable. Smith punches out the words:

Right in the middle of poking around a dusty stall, slapping away the maggots and the fruit flies, he realizes, he doesn't even know what the damned things look like.

Smith's performance, Heintz's brilliant chop-chop editing, and the gritty whine of Eric

growth of music videos over the last decade as a result of MTV has redefined video as an art form. Video artists, whether they like music videos or not, have been forced to reexamine their own rhythms and editing techniques. Although many videographers and filmmakers are not interested in providing image candy to help sell pop music, using some of these same techniques to present a work of poetry is a challenge that more and more are accepting. Heintz explains, "I don't want to make the mistakes MTV did, but I want to appropriate the good stuff." And MTV has started showing these poetry videos with programs like *Spoken Word Unplugged* and *Fightin' Words*.

he and Bob Holman, who produces *Poetry Spots* for WNYC in Manhattan, were standing on an El platform on the way to the airport. *Poetry Spots*, winner of three local Emmys, has been producing video poetry shorts and airing them between station programming since 1988. Holman asked Heintz, "What would you like most to do?" Heintz recalled having seen Smith perform *Chinese Cucumbers* at the National Poetry Slam in Boston the year before. "If I had my choice of any poem in the universe," he replied, "that would be it."

WNYC provided the money, and Smith flew back to Chicago. This was her first time working on a video. "I know nothing about filmmaking, so



I had to put absolute trust in [Kurt]," she says. Their collaboration was aided by the fact that she was already familiar with his work. Still it was strange. For the opening sequence, Heintz took her out of town to a farm. "Kurt had this vision, and part of it included me standing in a field of soybeans for an hour and a half," Smith recalls.

Doing *Chinese Cucumbers* has given Smith confidence to work on other video projects. She says that she is "up for anything that's going to increase the poetry audience," but adds, "poets must maintain control over their poems." One of her worries, as poetry videos become a staple on television is that the poem will be lost in the process. Her advice to poets is to "work with someone you trust and who knows what that poem means to you."

Chinese Cucumbers has been making the rounds, airing on *Poetry Spots* since March 1994 and on *Image Union*, a show featuring the work of local independent producers on Chicago's WTTW, in November. It was also included in the Poetry Video exhibition at the DeCordova



Cool cucumbers
Kurt Heintz and
Patricia Smith.
Photos courtesy
Kurt Heintz.

Museum and Sculpture Park in Lincoln, Massachusetts (curated by this writer) and in the International Lesbian and Gay Film Festival in Chicago.

Both Smith and Heintz are working on new video projects. Heintz is shooting two poetry videos for poet Quraysh Ali, another with Lucy Anderton, and one for himself featuring his own poetry, called *was an elvis*. Smith was recently in San Francisco shooting with Rachel Libert and Barbara Parker of Tied to the Tracks Films, who are producing *Undertaker*, another powerful poem about the violence committed to young black men and the resultant pain of their mothers.

Poetry performance is one of the oldest art forms and video one of the newest. Combining them is not a simple feat. *Chinese Cucumbers* is not

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just a testament to the talent of these artists, it also anticipates the exciting future for this combined new art form.

Chinese Cucumbers is available through: Kurt Heinz, 4742 N. Oakley, #2, Chicago, IL 60625-2051; email: malachit@xochi.tezcat.com.

George Fifield (gwf@tiac.net) is a video artist, adjunct media arts curator at the DeCordova Museum and Sculpture Park, and video curator for The Space in Boston.

▼
**LOURDES PORTILLO
filmmaker
THE DEVIL
NEVER SLEEPS**

BY ANDREW THOMPSON

"IT TOOK SOME COURAGE TO PUT MY FAMILY ON FILM—IT'S SO MUCH EASIER FOR A DOCUMENTAR-
IAN TO MAKE A FILM ABOUT SOMEBODY ELSE'S SORDID LIFE." SO SAYS SAN FRANCISCO-BASED FILMMAKER LOURDES PORTILLO OF HER LATEST WORK, *THE DEVIL NEVER SLEEPS* (EL DIABLO NUNCA DUEME). THE FILM EXAMINES THE CIRCUMSTANCES SURROUND-
ING THE DEATH OF HER 70-YEAR-OLD UNCLE, OSCAR RUIZ ALMEIDA, WHO WAS FOUND MURDERED IN THE SUMMER OF 1993. "THERE'S A TENDENCY FOR US TO
HEROIZE OUR FAMILY," SHE ADDS. "IT'S A VERY MEXICAN WAY OF LOOKING AT THE FAMILY."

A year after the event, Portillo returned to her birthplace of Chihuahua, Mexico, to investigate. Her family members were more than willing to offer their own takes on his life and death, except for Oscar's widow, who believes her husband killed himself. Portillo, who emigrated at the age of 13 to East Los Angeles, found that 36 years as a California resident put her outside the cul-
tural loop. Deciphering the motives of friends and relatives proved challeng-
ing.

"They had other agendas," she says. "Some were trying to hide things that maybe had nothing to do with [Oscar's] death. There were times people felt they couldn't tell me the awful things about my uncle."

Nonetheless,

the film's stylistic collage struck the right chords last fall with a predominantly Mexican audience during a screening at Berkeley's Fantasy Films.

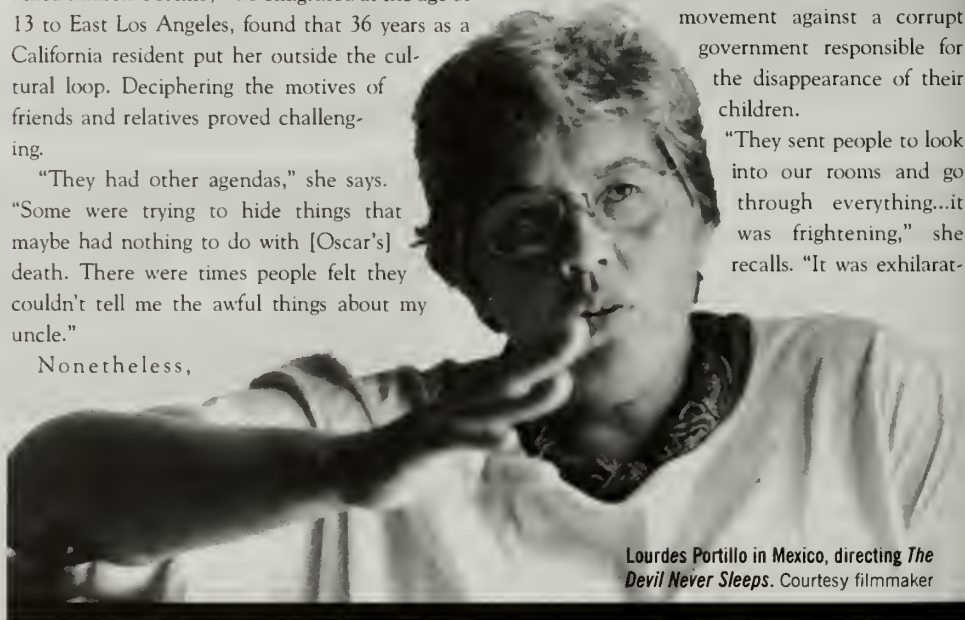
"The film is deeply Mexican, more so than any I've ever made, because it contains all the seeds of a Mexican family—it has a melodramatic tone, the focus on values, and gossip." The crowd's most impassioned response was to "the dirtiest of all gossip. That's very human. We all love that, but in Mexico we relish it."

A self-professed author of immigrant cinema, Portillo probes the complexities of Mexican-Chicana identity. Frustrated that Latina filmmakers had "no network save for the odd personal relationships," she spearheaded the Crusando Fronteras (Crossing the Border) conference in Tijuana three years ago to initiate dialogue between Mexican film- and videomakers, critics, and their American colleagues. In 1980 Portillo also cofounded Cine Acción, a nonprofit exhibi-
tion organizer and information clearinghouse meant to develop a "coherent voice among Latino filmmakers."

Her debut film, *After the Earthquake* (1979), is a dramatic short about a Nicaraguan maid adjust-
ing to life in San Francisco's Mission District. Under the tutelage of the Marxist film collective Cinemanifest, Portillo had acquired a taste for political cinema; but she learned you can't please everyone. A Sandinista support group, with which she and her collaborator (poet Nina Serrano) were allied, declared the film's feminist tone "too play-
ful." They wanted something militant, factual, and strong."

One project that certainly has a strong activist tone is *Las Madres de La Plaza de Mayo* (1986), which Portillo made with Susana Muñoz, an Argentinian classmate from the graduate program at the San Francisco Art Institute. With \$3,000 between them, Portillo and Muñoz captured the fierce spirit of a mothers' resistance movement against a corrupt government responsible for the disappearance of their children.

"They sent people to look into our rooms and go through everything...it was frightening," she recalls. "It was exhilarat-



Lourdes Portillo in Mexico, directing *The Devil Never Sleeps*. Courtesy filmmaker

ing and emotionally painful. [But] the mothers were eloquent and people really opened their doors to us."

It took three years of painful fundraising to acquire the additional \$300,000 needed to complete the film, but *Las Madres* earned some 20 international awards, plus Emmy and Oscar nominations.

La Ofrenda: The Day of the Dead (1993), also done with Muñoz, is a poetic analysis of the Mexican holiday celebrating the spirits of the deceased every first of November. Atypically, the film included a look at the AIDS-racked gay community, which had adopted the rite. "The Latino gays were very much a part of the whole Chicano Renaissance," Portillo says. "It would have been an omission not to include them."

Mirrors of the Heart, her segment for the 10-part PBS series *The Americas*, deconstructed issues of color consciousness among black Caribbean inhabitants. Portillo argued endlessly to let the subjects "speak for themselves." Instead, the use of academic narration left her "embittered by the conventionality of public television."

Although Portillo dislikes documenting issues in a dry, textbook fashion, she recognizes that certain topics require "hard-hitting facts." The next documentary for her Xochitl Films production company will examine how 30 years' worth of American-educated Mexican leaders have contributed to the downfall of the Mexican economy.

During Portillo's 16-year career, numerous grants have come her way. Much of *The Devil Never Sleeps*' estimated \$350,000 budget came from an ITVS grant. She's also received funding for some upcoming fictional feature films, including an NEA research grant for an experimental narrative on the life of 16th century intellectual poet Sor Juana, and two Rockefeller grants for a love story focusing on the "culture clash" between a lesbian immigrant and her American lover.

The projects closest to Portillo's heart include a Chicana reinterpretation of a white lesbian detective novel set in San Francisco, and an adaptation of *Mara Villa*, Laura Delfuego's 1950s-era novel about a 15 year-old girl "looking for love in all the wrong places." Portillo is gearing up to pitch *Mara Villa* to studio executives.

"Who would trust a woman who looks like your maid with \$5 million?" she laughs. "The studio heads think like that. They'll say 'Oh, we already made *Mi Vida Loca*.' But this is more like, as one producer said, 400 *Blows*."

Portillo wants to see more Latinos control their own images. "I have a lot of resentment toward the stereotypes that have been put on the screen for the last 100 years," she says. But she also cautions up-and-coming filmmakers against inadvertently constructing "beatific stereotypes of who we are" in their enthusiasm to break into the industry.

"We have to make films that are deeply honest.


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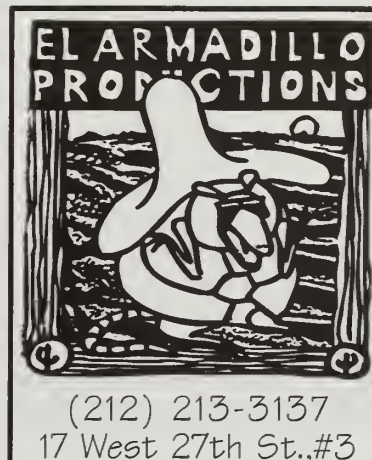
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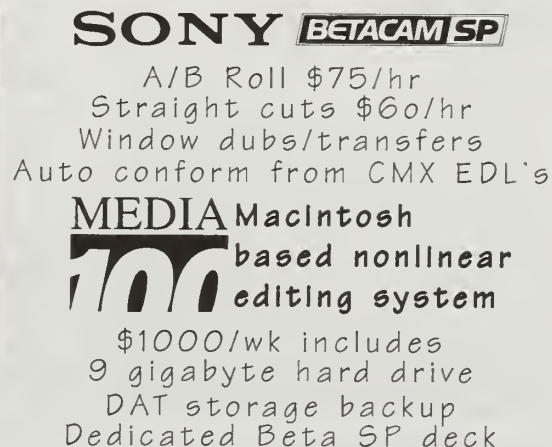
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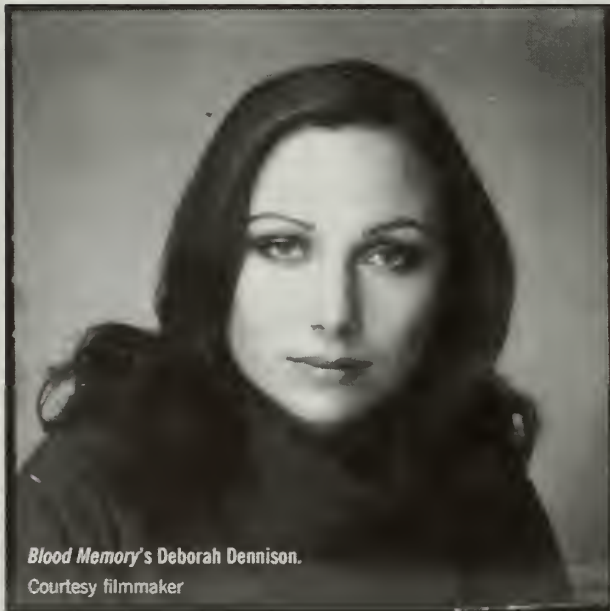
Andrew O. Thompson is a freelance journalist enrolled in the Master's program in Critical Studies at UCLA's Graduate School of Film & Television.

▼
DEBORAH DENNISON

*director/
producer*

BLOOD MEMORY

BY ROSEMARY ZIBART



Blood Memory's Deborah Dennison.
Courtesy filmmaker

HALFWAY THROUGH THE FILMING OF *Blood Memory*, the son of the film's Native American associate producers, Donald and Alfreda Beartrack, was murdered, probably by three white supremacists.

The murder served as an eerie parallel to the film's account of the bloody Sand Creek massacre of Cheyenne Indians in Eastern Colorado. The Beartracks' 17-year-old boy was left to die in a dry river bed similar to the site at Sand Creek, where over 400 Cheyenne women, children, and old men were killed and their bodies mutilated 130 years ago. This tragedy did not disrupt the production; instead director/producer Deborah Dennison decided to incorporate it into the historical saga, opening *Blood Memory* with a dramatic re-enact-

ment of the boy's kidnapping and murder.

Dennison says this contemporary link may help viewers understand that the history portrayed in *Blood Memory* is not safely locked away in the past. Many Native Americans today feel the legacy of betrayal and death has never ended.

For Dennison, *Blood Memory* was an important undertaking. For a long time—practically since she first heard the story of Sand Creek while researching another story about the Warm Spring Apache tribe—she had wanted to produce a feature about this event. It was the first project she undertook after deciding to venture out on her own as a producer and director.

Dennison began her career as an actor in London and New York. Twelve years ago, she wrote and produced the award-winning documentary *To Win at All Costs*, a social history of the Americas Cup race. She then joined a small motion picture company based in London and Vancouver, line producing a number of independent features. She also worked with screenwriters to budget, package, and negotiate network distribution. Although she had some degree of success in

getting scripts optioned and put into development, Dennison ultimately felt frustrated with seeing these scripts remain unproduced, and decided to produce and direct on her own.

Failing to obtain significant funding for *Blood Memory*, Dennison decided to commit her own resources, maxing out five credit cards and depleting all her personal savings. In addition, due to her experience in all phases of theater as well as film production, Dennison took on the job of sewing the period garments, creating the authentic plains props, obtaining the horses and cavalymen, and just about every other task.

Determined that *Blood Memory* would accurately reflect a Native

American perspective, Dennison, a non-Native, made coproduction arrangements with the media department of the Institute of American Indian Arts in Santa Fe. When this plan fell through, she recruited the Beartracks and Jeri Ah-be-Hill, a Kiowa-Comanche businesswoman, as producers. For the music, she turned to composer Lance Tailfeathers of the Canadian Blood tribe.

"Obviously, I believe that more Indian people should be making films about Indian people," says Dennison. "But I don't think it's a disservice for non-Indians [to make a film] if they take the time. I have a real problem with writers from New York or L.A. barging into a culture and then barging out again." One time-consuming aspect of *Blood Memory*, for example, was the traditional ceremo-

nial blessings that were undertaken at all the film sites.

Dennison's desire for authenticity also affected various stylistic choices. Believing that subtitles are distracting but wanting to include as much Cheyenne speech as possible, Dennison chose a production style that hovers between docudrama and dramatic feature. Sequences are narrated in English by various characters while their native language can be heard beneath the narration. At present, however, Dennison wants to push *Blood Memory*, which is still in the rough-cut stage, more in the direction of a narrative feature and is trying to raise money to film additional dramatic scenes.

The two primary perspectives in the film are presented by Chief Lean Bear's Wife (Francine Blythe) and Captain Silas Soule (Gabriel Folse). Soule, a soldier sympathetic to the Cheyennes, was eventually murdered for his testimony at a United States congressional hearing against the officers responsible for the massacre. The testimony from this hearing was the major source of information Dennison used in scripting *Blood Memory*. Details such as the murder of infants and mutilation of women's bodies are all part of the record.

Dennison claims that Sand Creek is a crucial, but ignored, piece of American history. The Cheyenne chiefs—White Antelope, Black Kettle, and Lean Bear—were involved in one of the last efforts by Native Americans to make peace with the political leaders in Washington. The story of their betrayal by the Colorado militia and the state's new governor reverberated throughout the Indian community in the West. It galvanized belligerent Indian groups to make an all-out war on white settlers and ultimately led to the massacre of General Custer and the U.S. Cavalry by the Little Big Horn.

For Americans to know about Little Big Horn but not Sand Creek is an unforgivable omission for Dennison, who believes the wounds of the past cannot heal until they are publicly known and acknowledged. The fact that murders like that of Donny Beartrack still occur is, in her opinion, the result of this uneven silence about the past.

Dennison's point of view was recently vindicated during a rough-cut screening of *Blood Memory* at the 19th annual Native American Film Festival in San Francisco. A number of descendants from the Sand Creek Cheyenne thanked her for the honest portrayal. More poignant was the reaction of several white viewers who sat in pained silence at the end of the screening. "We just didn't know," they finally said. "We had no idea this ever happened."

Blood Memory is available through: Heartline Films, 201 Sunny Slope, Santa Fe, NM 87501; (505) 983-4002.

Rosemary Zibart, author, scriptwriter, and journalist, is currently working on a feature screenplay about Dr. Elizabeth Blackwell, the first accredited woman physician.

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Real Estate as Art: CD-ROM Artist *Nancy Buchanan*



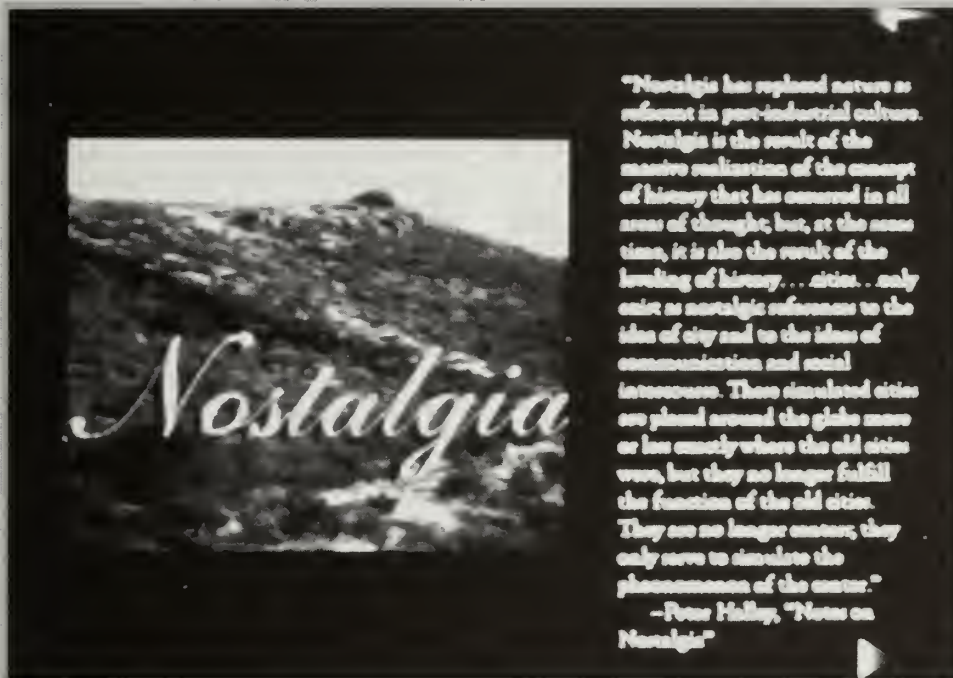
"There's history everywhere: navigators, conquistadors, padres, rancheros, prospectors, wildcatters. But there's so much Now, the Then is hard to find..."

—from *The Californias*, published by the California Office of Tourism

Viewers of Nancy Buchanan's interactive journal *Developing: Some Snapshots and Home Movies*

itate on them."

The project's main menu affiliates aspects of development with different steps of the photographic process: angle of view, exposure time, dodging and burning, development, and fixing. Created in Macromedia Director with the video clips linked to a laserdisc player, the images, text,



From Nancy Buchanan's interactive CD-ROM *Developing*. Courtesy mediamaker.

might encounter the above screen of text while attempting to link the NOW with the THEN of Southern California's real estate development. Buchanan, 48, an interactive mediamaker and member of the faculty at Cal Arts School of Film/Video, has also been a painter, performance artist, and videomaker. In each medium, she has attempted to understand how her present relates to the past. "I am not so much interested in my personal life as in how the time that I am living in fits into an overview of history," Buchanan says.

Developing: Some Snapshots and Home Movies, a work-in-progress for the last five years, is the result of Buchanan's obsession with the subject of real estate development, particularly in Southern California. "If you look at the past cycles of boom and bust, even though the population keeps growing, it's not clear that growth is inevitably good," says Buchanan. "[This project] is a way for me to try and make sense of it. My art work has always been a way for me to learn about things and med-

and video are organized loosely according to topic. Says Buchanan: "It's like my own personal journal or diary on this subject. It isn't like an encyclopedia of real estate issues. In terms of where you are going, a lot of it is a surprise. I thought that if I surprised you, it would be similar to flipping through my notebook and finding I had pasted something here and that it reminded me of this.... The connections are not always entirely logical."

One of the most successful aspects of her journal is that it does not offer a comprehensive overview; rather, it puts the ebbs and flows of Southern California's real estate development in an interesting perspective. The journal is a patchwork of stories about real estate and growth ranging from the impact of Savings and Loan deregulation in the eighties to a story of a failed housing project that was sold to the makers of *Lethal Weapon III* for the sole purpose of being burned and then razed.

What makes the project compelling is that

structures and patterns begin to emerge as you flip through various screens. Manipulated images of rows upon rows of model homes are linked to interviews with homeless activists. The structure of the project itself mirrors the cyclical nature of real estate growth in Southern California and emphasizes how overdevelopment in one area inevitably leads to losses in another. Buchanan is subtle in the placing of her information; the viewer is encouraged to ask the question of why more affordable housing isn't being built in Southern California.

Developing contains stories, images, and video clips of interviews with urban planners and affordable housing activists. In the "Dodge and Burn" section there is a spin-the-dial game that offers random access to "three true fire stories." Images of burning buildings peer out from behind the dial's face. The fire stories are unrelated vignettes having to do with housing. One story that Buchanan couldn't get out of her mind was about a woman in her neighborhood who was so upset with the condition of her house and the squalor she was living in that she set herself on fire in an attempt to purify herself. The intensely personal is linked to the more historical, which helps put a human face on a seemingly impersonal topic.

The project was originally created for the California Museum of Photography in Riverside. Coincidentally, Riverside also has the distinction of being the fastest growing area in terms of real estate development in California during the eighties. Buchanan designed a section of the project to deal specifically with the history of Riverside and how it developed around the citrus industry. "One of the reasons why the piece has so much specific information about Riverside is because I really thought about putting things in for that piece that would be for that local audience," Buchanan says.

She has continued to add to her project since the June 1994 exhibition in Riverside. "What I'd like to do is set up samples of the piece in different places and work with local community groups to put their comments and histories into the piece," Buchanan says.

What draws her to the interactive, nonlinear medium is that it can always be torn apart and changed based upon the context in which it is

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NTIA Program Analyst Don Druker said that of the 1088 applications, the NTIA did not receive a large number of arts or media arts proposals and of those that were submitted, the majority didn't address the guidelines in a way that made them competitive. Quite a few, he said, dealt with creating specific arts projects. Other applicants tried to get funding to enhance their existing operations.

Still others were rejected for technical reasons. "We are not funding content creation or internal operations—what we called closed networks," Druker said. "Arts organizations did not grasp the potential of the program." All applications were evaluated by a peer review panel of content and technical experts.

Despite the inappropriateness of most of the arts proposals, Druker acknowledged that some of them were quite strong and that a number of these were eliminated on sheer competitive grounds. "The strong proposals," he said, "looked beyond their own organization to the community to develop and facilitate the exchange of resources." Next year, says Druker, "I hope arts organizations will look at the big picture. Networking is the key word. Networking is about the infrastructure, about getting people on-line, and providing on-line resources."

TIAP guidelines are currently being revised. For 1995, Congress has allocated \$64 million, nearly three times the 1994 amount. However, on February 24 a rescission bill was introduced into Congress aiming to cut that amount in half, to \$32 million, so 1995 funding levels are up in the air as this issue goes to press. The "notice of availability of funds" will be made early in February. Applications are expected to be due approximately three months later. For the TIAP information packet, call (202) 482-2048.

BARBARA BLISS OSBORN

Barbara Bliss Osborn writes on technology and independent media from Los Angeles.

The Video Service Bureaus of the Future

Imagine this: You want to make a 10-minute broadcast quality videotape. Your only equipment

is a Hi8 camcorder and a computer with some consumer nonlinear editing software, most likely Adobe Premiere (for Mac or Windows) or AVID VideoShop. After shooting, you drop off your raw footage at a local video service bureau.

A few hours later, you return to pick up a hard drive containing 1 to 5 gigabytes of memory and all your video footage, digitized at a very low resolution. You might end up with a couple of hours of Quicktime video at a resolution of 160 x 120 pixels and perhaps 15 frames per second. You take the rented hard drive home, hook it up to your desktop computer, and edit the piece. At this point you might also drop in scanned still images and Postscript illustrations and fonts. You might add exciting transitional effects and use 8-bit or even 16-bit MIDI audio engineering software on the soundtrack. All of this is done with the video at Quicktime resolution. If you were producing a CD-ROM, this might be the final stage, and you'd take your finished Quicktime production and fold it into the multimedia project.

For a broadcast quality videotape, however, you would return to the service bureau with the hard drive containing your edited Quicktime movie, plus the original tapes. The video service bureau would then re-digitize only that portion of the video needed for your finished project and rebuild (note: I didn't say re-edit) your video at a higher resolution. The new video would be at the broadcast quality resolution of 640 x 480 and 60 fields per second. The bureau would use the same soundtrack you engineered and all your still images. They would use your Postscript fonts for character generation. There would be no edit decision list (EDL) and no online session.

In a day or two, you would pick up the master tape in 3/4", Beta format, or better, and your original tapes. Basically, you would have done the offline and online at home with little or no digitizing equipment. The cost would be based on the amount of raw video digitized and the length of the finished product, plus the number of digital effects at various prices depending on computing complexity. If you wish, the original digitized Quicktime video could then be archived on a CD-ROM for future use.

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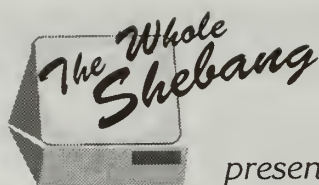
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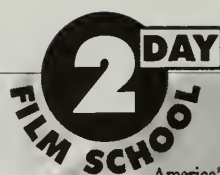
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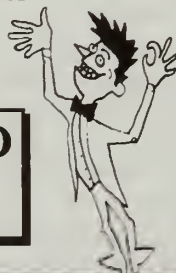
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At this point in time, resolution is the fundamental concern about nonlinear editing. Crude video composed of low frame rates and low resolution can be manipulated on most high-end home computers. But to produce broadcast quality video, the computer needs massive processing and memory requirements outside the budget of the small producer. Furthermore, expensive video digitizing boards are needed to translate the analog signal to digital information and then shove this fat sludge in and out of the computer at the high speeds necessary to provide a glitch-free image. This kind of processing hardware is getting cheaper, but it, and the requisite computer, still cost well over \$15,000, and a complete system can cost as much as \$100,000. So why not have one company provide access to this equipment in such a way that the end product is designed on your home computer and merely rebuilt somewhere else?

The key to this rebuilding process is a component of these new software programs called "batch digitizing." The computer will redigitize at the highest resolution only that batch of clips used in your project. Using time code, even the RC time code found in consumer camcorders, the software can match up the original footage on tape with the digital images your project is composed of and capture what it needs at higher resolution

By far the biggest obstacle to a video service bureau at this point is compatibility. It's all very easy to take one computer system like the Macintosh or one video card and limit the service bureau to that, but that's no longer enough. Though the Macintosh has been the platform where the most impressive desktop video has traditionally been available, that is changing. New, powerful boards for PCs are coming onto the market. Apple has made their Quicktime available for Windows, where it competes with Microsoft's AVI video format, "Microsoft for Windows." And Adobe has also released their Premiere 4.0 for Windows. A video service bureau must be able to work with all these different platforms and be able to read all the different compression/decompression algorithms (CODECs) used by the different boards. (CODECs compress the signal to a manageable size when digitizing.)

Hopefully we will see this revolution in desktop video take place in the next couple years. The power of nonlinear editing is too great to keep it in the hands of high-end video production houses and broadcast companies. The video service bureau will provide everyone with that access. Independents want to share in the fun, too.

GEORGE FIFIELD

George Fifield (gwff@tiac.net) is adjunct media arts curator at the DeCordova Museum and Sculpture Park in Lincoln, Massachusetts, and video curator for The Space in Boston. He is a member of the Desktop Video Group and edits their newsletter, Focus Video.

Many of the ideas for this article come from the Desktop Video Group, an educational organization focusing on desktop video and multimedia authoring in Cambridge, MA. Besides the author, Bob and Holly Doyle, Leo Cierpial, Jeff Sauer, and other DVG members are all working to identify and resolve the technical problems mentioned. DVG can be reached at (617) 876-8080.

Women On-Line

The Lab, a 10 year-old interdisciplinary arts organization in San Francisco, presents the third annual Conference on Feminist Activism and Art. This year's conference, to be held April 7 to 9, will focus "on those processes by which women-centered communities and information systems are formed, with respect to both traditional communities and new networks sustained through interactive technology." Items on the agenda include information on relevant on-line projects; CD-ROM info; access stations; and technical/activist/artistic resources.

Appropriately, plans for the conference at press time highlight a number of technological-community aspects, listed below:

- A World Wide Web site on the Internet, which will provide a comprehensive overview of the conference, including participants, organizers, and topics discussed. A messaging center will be available for people to respond to the Web page.

- The creation of a permanent networking system for cultural activists interested in feminist activism and art. Through this network, artists and activists could send information quickly and inexpensively to a diverse group of people who do not all have direct access to the Internet. Existing communications systems like fax, radio, print, clubs, and organizations would be integrated into this network.

- The creation of a Virtual Conference, which will extend discussion on issues raised at the conference to people unable to attend, and create a yearlong, ongoing dialogue.

Other features include a curated CD-ROM exhibit and a video screening room for the conference site.

For more information on conference participants and programs, or for updated information on its online section, contact: The Lab, 1807 Divisadero St., San Francisco; (415) 346-4063; fax: (415) 346-4567.

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REEL WOMEN

FEMINISM AND
NARRATIVE PLEASURE IN
NEW WOMEN'S CINEMA

BY LAURIE OUELLETTE



Mother, Daughter, and Baby Grand, all abeach in Jane Campion's *THE PIANO*. Courtesy Miramax

What constitutes a feminist film in the 1990s? I found myself pondering that question halfway through *The Piano*, Jane Campion's lush and eerily disturbing period film about a Scottish woman transplanted to nineteenth century New Zealand. On one level, the strong feminist undertones were hard to miss: Here was a story about an unwed mother so silenced by a patriarchal culture of arranged marriages, domesticity, and male dominance that she literally does not speak. At the same time, Campion's adoption of Hollywood conventions long mistrusted by feminist film theorists—a traditional narrative structure, realist aesthetics, an emphasis on romance, and a happy ending—left me wondering whether Campion felt any allegiance toward feminism and its critiques of Hollywood. While thinking this, I also found myself taking pleasure in the very conventions that feminists criticized, as did many others: *The Piano* grossed \$65.5 million in box office receipts, making it one of the most successful films ever made by an independent female director. This fact makes the tension between theory and practice—specifically, between feminist film theory and feature films written and directed by women—appear all the more significant.

Campion is only one of a growing number of female directors who are negotiating feminism, along with other political and social issues, within the conventions and structures of popular narrative filmmaking. The success of directors like Allison Anders, Nancy Savoca, Darnell Martin, Kayo Hatta, Maria Maggenti, Mina Shum, Stacey Cochran, Tamra Davis, Leslie Harris, Julie Dash, Rebecca Miller, and Rose Troche (among many others) in recent years suggests the emergence of a viable independent women's cinema, one that is decidedly different from the experimental and "deconstructive" cinema advocated by early feminist film theory. Since the latter approach never generated audiences outside a tiny circle of feminist intellectuals, one could take the success of today's women directors as an incentive to pause and reappraise the thorny relationship between feminism and feature filmmaking.

The split between convention and experimentation can be traced back to the 1970s, when feminist theorists—many of whom were also independent filmmakers—applied psychoanalytic and structuralist theories to the study of gender representation in film. In her extremely influential 1974 essay "Visual Pleasure in Narrative Cinema," Laura Mulvey proposed that it wasn't only the content, but the very *form* of classical Hollywood film that was oppressive to women. Since the actions of male characters always advanced the narrative and framed the perspective of the viewer, she argued, pleasure in narrative cinema was inherently a male pleasure. For female spectators, forced to participate in endless voyeuristic fantasies about female characters, watching these films was nothing short of contributing to their own oppression.

It followed from this gloomy situation that in order to challenge both Hollywood film and the sexist assumptions upon which it was founded, women would also have to change the forms of representation. "If women's cinema is going to emerge, it should not only concern itself with substituting positive female protagonists or focusing on women's problems," wrote theorist Claire Johnston in an early argument for a feminist

Sad Girl
(Angel Aviles)
and lover Ernesto
(Jacob Vargas)
during a calm moment,
in Allison Anders'
MI VIDA LOCA.
Courtesy Sony Picture
Classics



counter-cinema. "It has to go much further if it is to impinge on consciousness." Theorists like Johnston believed neither realist documentaries nor narrative films could truly subvert

the hidden mechanisms of patriarchal ideologies. To do that, films by women would require a revolutionary counter-aesthetic, one that revealed how film itself operates as a signifying practice.

Many independent feminist filmmakers have experimented with a variety of alternative aesthetics—nonlinear narrative, unconventional editing, lack of closure, etc.—in attempts to encourage audiences to notice and question mechanisms of representation. Yet more often than not, these strategies have emphasized intellectual decoding skills over accessible popular pleasures, thereby

alienating most audiences. Indeed, some feminist film theorists have come forward to challenge the class biases of counter-aesthetics. Jane Gaines, for instance, has argued in the film journal *Jump Cut* that the taste for such films is an acquired one, gained through education and privilege. She notes that women filmmakers who recognize these biases, including working-class women and women of color, have mostly chosen not to produce media work that strays from conventional formats and calls attention to its own structural devices.

Recent feminist film theory has devoted even more attention to the limitations of overly theoretical and psychoanalytic views of feature filmmaking, especially in terms of female pleasure. Some theorists have argued that Mulvey's model of female spectatorship posits women as cultural dopes, while ignoring the lesbian viewing experience completely. Others have pointed to the more complex negotiations women viewers undertake when making sense of Hollywood films. But few theorists are focusing on the new wave of independent feature films by women and considering their feminist possibilities. While these films should not be lumped together as essentially female-oriented or feminist because they happen to be directed by women, neither should they be viewed as individual "success stories" outside the cumulative history of women's filmmaking. Women feature directors exploring women's issues across race, class, and sexuality are creating a popular aesthetic that, for all its diversity, shares some powerful strategies and continuities.

One reason feminist film theory has paid scant attention to women's feature filmmaking is that, until relatively recently, features directed by women were practically nonexistent. According to a 1991 study by the Directors Guild of America (DGA), only 14 feature films were directed by women guild members between 1940 to 1980. That figure has improved somewhat since then. In 1990 alone, women directed 11 feature films, slightly more than five percent of the 207 features that were produced that year. By 1994, women comprised 20 percent of the DGA, yet a significantly disproportionate number held jobs as second assistants rather than directors. The success of blockbuster directors like Penny Marshall and Martha Coolidge may be one reason doors are beginning to open a crack for women in mainstream filmmaking. But the most innov-

ative work comes from the independent scene, where female directors are less pressured to prove profitability and freer to emphasize the perspectives and experiences of a diversity of women. Outside the rules of Hollywood, they are also freer to explore—and sometimes subvert—the gendered aspects of conventional feature filmmaking.

Sometimes women directors turn the tables on male-dominated genres to emphasize the position of women in a patriarchal society. In her dark comedy *My New Gun* (1992), Stacey Cochran explores the confused universe of Debbie, a New Jersey housewife imprisoned within her subdivision. When her domineering husband buys her a pearl-handled revolver, the gun becomes a catalyst for a series of events, including an unlikely affair with a kind but seedy neighborhood boy named Skippy. She finally divorces her husband and the yuppie lifestyle he represents, but the focus is not Debbie's awakening and "liberation." Alongside subtle pokes at marriage and upper-class consumerism, what Cochran mimics in her seemingly random plot is the deep ambivalence that keeps women in prescribed situations long after feminism has allegedly set them free.

In *Guncrazy* (1992), Tamra Davis subverts the film noir genre by focusing on the experiences and emotions of a female character. Fifteen-year-old Anita lives in a gritty world of substandard trailer homes, sexual abuse, and emotional turmoil rarely visited by Hollywood. Abandoned by her prostitute mother and sexually abused by men since early childhood, she falls in love with an impotent convicted murderer and eventually joins him on a killing spree. Violence and sexual promiscuity permeate the film, but the social origins and gendered connotations of Anita's troubled behavior are always emphasized. Her first kill, for instance, is her mother's repugnant boyfriend, who rapes Anita and is shot by her immediately afterward.

There is also a morality to the film that is lacking in violent Hollywood films and even independent cult hits like *Pulp Fiction*. In one scene, for

example, Anita prevents the murder of a social worker who has snubbed her as "white trash" and threatened to jail her boyfriend, because Anita happens to be friends with his daughter and doesn't want to see her friend fatherless. Even the complexities of the mise-en-scene suggest the eye of a woman director. Davis deliberately did not dress Anita like a stereotypical "tart" because, she explains, "Girls who are sexually abused and messed up generally hide themselves more. They can be plain and dowdy and overweight."

Is *Guncrazy* a feminist film? Despite its heady subject matter, Davis says the film is really a "love story." "I wanted to make a film that told a very straightforward story, technically and narratively. *Guncrazy* isn't an esoteric and arty film; it's a populist love story. Anita represented so many things: how society abandoned this young girl, allowed her to be abused by men, gave her guns," she says. "This boy was the only one who accepted her for who she was, who loved her for reasons other than sex. I wanted to make a love story to show how people like this would do the things they do, to make you sympathize with these characters and realize that if their situations had

been different, they would have been different. They didn't have control over their lives, and they used what they knew: violence."

Other women, like Allison Anders, director of *Gas Food Lodging* (1991) and *Mi Vida Loca* (1993), have adopted and re-worked the genre known as the "woman's film." Anders has little interest in what she calls the "masculine" model of filmmaking, with its three-act structure that sets out goals and resolves things. For her, the decision to work in the genre she calls "melodrama" is part of a conscious effort to redefine filmmaking from a female perspective. "Men see life in terms of goals, and they either succeed or fail in reaching those goals," she says when discus-

The bride takes five: Annabella Sciorra in Nancy Savoca's *True Love*, a not-quite-rosy look at the wedding ritual.

Courtesy MGM/UA



suings her approach to *Gas Food Lodging*, a story about a truck-stop waitress and her two teenage daughters. "Women might set goals, but by the time they get to them, everything has already changed. They move forward through process and instinct. It makes a difference in how you tell a story."

As its title might suggest, *Gas Food Lodging* explores the interior worlds of women who aren't going anywhere, except perhaps to their low-paying restaurant jobs off the interstate and back home to the trailer park. The gritty realism of fathers who walk out, screaming fights at home, teenage pregnancy, money shortages, packaged macaroni and cheese dinners, and empty tampon boxes presents a nuanced portrait of female working-class life that is practically invisible in Hollywood. It also suggests the eye of someone who has been there herself, and Anders, who raised two children alone and has been on welfare, clearly has. Yet despite the gender and class issues foregrounded by the film, Anders insists that the real story is the "territory of a woman's heart."

Men are an especially obsessive theme, although the relationship between the sexes is more troubled than rewarding. While the mother, Nora, settles for an incompetent lover, the youngest daughter, Shade, pines for recognition from the father who abandoned her as a child. The oldest daughter, Trudi, is sexually promiscuous because she has been gang raped as a child; when she finds someone who respects her and sees her as something other than the town slut, he disappears and is killed. While Anders' own autobiographical experience brings a layer of gendered realism to these scenarios (she frequently discusses her own childhood and gang rape in interviews), she has insisted that men don't "take a beating" in the film.

"I didn't want to do that. I have my own demons like any other female...but I don't find those are my best qualities," she told *New York Newsday*. "Someone had a project they were considering for me, a story about a woman avenging a rape; really hard-edged stuff. I couldn't do it, 'cause I knew it would bring out the worst in me...It would be unwatchable for people, anyway." Anders, who calls herself a "humanist filmmaker," hopes that male audiences will respond to her work, even though female characters and their emotions propel the narrative. She says she once saw a man come out of *Gas Food Lodging* with tears streaming down his face. For Anders, that kind of male reaction is among the most gratifying and subversive consequences of her films.

While Hollywood "women's films" are almost always about white women, a number of independent directors are using the genre to explore the gendered experiences of ethnicity and race. In *Mi Vida Loca*, Anders explores the world of teenage mothers in her own Los Angeles Chicana neighborhood. Unlike most gang movies, this film depicts the impact of drug culture and drive-by violence on the fiercely independent girls who

have to fend for themselves and their children when their male counterparts are getting killed, maimed, and put into jail at an increasingly young age. "The Chicano culture hasn't had much attention or validation as a whole, and there hasn't been any focus on the women," Anders told the *Los Angeles Times*. "There's still this macho thing that says the hardcore is in the boy's story. Well, this is about girls getting pregnant at 13 and getting thrown out of their homes, and that's hardcore to me."

Based on a real incident Anders learned about from her daughter, the film explores the lives of girlfriends Sad Girl and Mousie, who become pregnant by the same boy and then become arch-enemies. When the boy is killed, the girls eventually come together to share the burden of raising children alone. Once again, the strength of this film is its gritty realism and emphasis on female bonding. Anders spent two years researching the lives of female gang members to get an accurate feel for their lives and used a number of them as actors. What is the goal of a film like *Mi Vida Loca*? "My hope is that it humanizes these girls...and

boys, too, so that when people walk down the street they don't think there's nothing valuable about their experience," Anders told the *Los Angeles Times*. "I hope [audiences] realize there are stories in every single one of them."

Director Nancy Savoca has emphasized the lives and cultures of Italian American women in a number of dark dramas. In *True Love* (1989), the underside of the wedding ritual is presented through the eyes of a disillusioned

working-class Italian woman in the Bronx. In the more recent *Household Saints* (1993), the everyday rituals of food preparation and religious worship across three generations of women in Little Italy are backdrop to a complex portrait of gender and sexism in Catholic culture. Loving, lavish close-up photography of Italian cooking and women's daily shopping and cleaning rituals suggest both the importance and confinement of these activities for women. Her motivation in making the film, she explained during an interview on National Public Radio, was that "I always wondered what the women did when they stayed behind [in the house]."

Most audiences have seen Italian American culture through the eyes of male directors. The filmed worlds of Scorsese and Coppola, for instance, revolve around a male society in which women are peripheral players or props. But "the women are the ones who really hold all the details of the family trees and the history of the family and hand it down," says Savoca. In her films, women are also the ones who bet for marriage in pinochle games, the ones who deliver the babies and mind their manners around their husbands, the ones who deeply internalize religious myths, and the ones who go quietly crazy. We come to know these women intimately because, as with the other films discussed here, female actions and emotions propel the cycles and flow of the narrative. Certainly

Mina Shum's "new female hero" Jade Li (Sandra Oh) and Mark (Callum Rennie), all smiles. From Shum's *Double Happiness*.

Courtesy Fine Line Features



Driving the narrative: Ariyan Johnson and Kevin Thigpen in Leslie Harris' *JUST ANOTHER GIRL ON THE IRT*.

Courtesy Miramax

Household Saints emphasizes female themes, but is it feminist? Savoca has expressed discomfort with Hollywood's treatment of women in published interviews, but she doesn't promote her work with that label.

Other women who choose to work in popular formats are more explicit in their views. "I'm not afraid of the word feminist. It really defines my work," says Kayo Hatta, director of *Picture Bride*, a "women's story" about the experiences of Japanese brides

specifically made for the 18-year-old girl who was once me, who had to deal with family pressures and patriarchal pressures to be something else." Is the director comfortable with the label of "feminist"? "Sure, I'm feminist, if it means that anything you can have, I can have," says Shum.

African American women's culture has also been successfully explored over the past several years by feature directors. In her romantic drama *I Like It Like That* (1994), Darnell Martin—the first female African American director to be backed by a major studio—explores barrio culture from the perspective of Black and Hispanic women. Although Columbia Pictures gave her \$5 million to direct her own script, the film



brought to Hawaii at the turn of the century. She says that the women explored in her film, while not "feminists" by today's standards, are nonetheless powerful female role models. "They embodied strength and independence and self-respect, against incredible social and cultural odds. Japanese society is very chauvinistic."

In her romantic comedy *Double Happiness*, first-time director Mina Shum explores the daily life of an aspiring Chinese-Canadian actress whose biggest problem is that she must choose between a handsome Chinese lawyer her father has fixed her up with and a white university studnet. "I felt it was important to create a new type of female hero," says Shum. "One who's smart, irreverent, got her shit down, but is also vulnerable to her heart and ambitions." Because young women "need role models right now," Shum also felt it was crucial to make her film accessible to a wide audience, especially young women. "[*Double Happiness*] is

has independent sensibilities for a variety of reasons, including its autobiographical perspective. Based roughly on Martin's own childhood in the projects of the Bronx, the story unfolds through the eyes of Lisette, a young mother whose traditional role is challenged when her husband lands in jail and she is left to take care of her three kids. The nuances of the themes explored—interracial tension, machismo, family violence, sexual harassment, and a longing for an inaccessible commodity culture—reflect the experience of someone who knows barrio life intimately.

Despite the complexity of these issues, Martin takes a down-to-earth approach to her filmmaking. "You don't need great actors or a great director to make a movie," she says. "You just need a story with characters you understand and can talk to." While Martin focuses on some of the most impoverished and invisible women in America today, she also keeps the

story decidedly upbeat. There is a deep strength and dignity to her characters and a bit of American Dream mythology, too. Penniless, Lisette somehow lands a job as an assistant to a Manhattan record producer who drives a Lamborghini; she quickly moves up the company ladder, much to the shock of her family and neighbors. Do fantasy solutions to women's problems distract from the gender and racial issues raised by the film? Perhaps, but for cultures who have been denied access to the Horatio Alger myth, the act of reclaiming it on screen is understandably pleasurable. And whatever one makes of "make-good" endings, Martin's film, which grossed \$5.5 million in eight weeks, drew audiences.

Leslie Harris' *Just Another Girl on the IRT* (1993) was among the first commercially-released feature films to show young Black women as something other than appendages to men. The story evolves through the eyes of Chantel, a spirited 17-year-old homegirl from the projects who gets straight A's and plans to go to college. When Chantel accidentally gets pregnant, she is unable to make a decision about the baby. She uses her smarts only for the immediate problem—hiding her pregnancy—and procrastinates until she finds herself in labor. She makes some serious, immature fumbles—as in the scene when she and her best girlfriend go on a clothes shopping spree with the money her boyfriend gave her for an abortion. But ultimately Chantel lands on her feet. Throughout, the director non-judgmentally exposes Chantel's ways of thinking, including her initial impulse to abandon her newborn baby, allowing the audience to understand and empathize with this young, conflicted teen. Strong themes of female solidarity, materialism, and inner-city life result in a complex and vivid portrait of the character's culture.

Harris' strong commitment to her subjects is one shared by a number of women directors. To capture the intimacies of life for urban girls of color, she spent two years interviewing teens contacted through women's health and reproductive centers, learning about their experiences, relationships, emotions, world views, and trying to understand how girls today, with information about birth control so readily accessible, can still be so misinformed as to half-believe a soft-drink douche after sex will kill those nasty sperm, as one character professes.

What she ultimately found was that many girls felt their stories weren't important—a phenomenon she partially attributes to the lack of representation of African American women. "I wanted to give voice to these young women," Harris explains. "They don't see their stories on screen, so they don't feel they are validated in some ways. Women should see themselves not just as arm pieces of a guy. They should have aspirations."

Despite the difficulties in doing so, Harris says it was important to "go against the grain" of most women in independent filmmaking, who are "pigeonholed into documentary." She wanted to present her story as a narrative feature with a female perspective and female characters who were human and realistic. "Chantel wasn't the stereotypically good girl or bad girl, but was complex," Harris notes. "Women in film are usually one-dimensional, but she was more of a human being—vibrant, intelligent, and very opinionated." The ending of the film, which finds Chantel in a community college while she cares for her baby, is for Harris an important counterpoint to some dominant myths about inner-city teenage motherhood. "I wanted to show that her self-esteem was still intact," she

explains. "It was important to show that a young woman who becomes pregnant doesn't have to be destined for welfare or be a marked woman; she is a human being who had a baby early, but she went on with her life."

Harris speaks about *Just Another Girl* at high schools and universities across the country, and says the film can be inspirational for young people facing problems that can seem "like the end of the world." She is cautious about calling it a feminist film, however, because she feels the term can be so narrowly prescribed. "The film has some feminist elements to it, but it is also a film that...has emotions anyone can relate to, male or female," she says. "Feminism is a compliment to the film, if that means we have a young woman who is making choices about her life and that's what feminism means to her. But some people feel the word excludes men, and that is a detriment."

In her film *Daughters of the Dust* (1991), Julie Dash explores the matriarchal Gullah Sea Island culture through a lyrical style and leisurely pace that she says is geared toward women. Some of the most beautiful scenes are lavish depictions of women's rituals, including food gathering and preparation. "Very few men would have a huge food scene, because they

"I felt it was important to create a new type of female hero. One who's smart, irreverent, got her shit down, but is also vulnerable to her heart and ambitions." — Mina Shum

didn't sit at the feet of people cutting up onions, listening to them talk," she explained in the *Village Voice*. Dash also owes a debt to the kind of oral-based narrative structure she admires in Black women writers, such as Toni Morrison, Toni Cade Bambara, and Alice Walker, and she feels her aesthetic is accessible, especially to women. Responding to criticism to the contrary, she told the *Voice*, "It clearly frightens most white males, and they are the ones who get to say what kind of audience is out there for *Daughters of the Dust*. They don't understand it for the most part, and don't want to say they don't, so they say it's not good, or it's not well crafted, or the dramatic themes were spotty."

While directors like Dash emphasize the differences between men and women in their aesthetics and subject matter, others are trying to present the notion that gender (and all the assumptions about sexuality that go with it) is a socially-constructed and regulated category. In her romantic comedy *Go Fish* (1994), Rose Troche presents a lesbian love story that

counters the dominant heterosexuality of women's film. Exploiting the realist conventions of the Hollywood romance, while adding some more formally experimental touches, Troche presents a touching and funny "girl meets girl" story about lesbian desire that opens up the pleasures of narrative film for women audiences.

Maria Maggenti embraces similar strategies in her lesbian comedy, *The Incredible Adventures of Two Girls in Love*. The film presents the tale of two suburban high school girls who fall for each other, but not without complication. One girl is a white, out, rock 'n' roller who works at a gas station and lives in a chaotic household of lesbians, while the other is a black, Mozart-loving, popular new girl in town. Maggenti, who has a long history in grassroots video activism and AIDS-related documentaries, felt it was politically important to take her story of two girls in love to a much wider audience. "I chose to do a commercial narrative picture not only because of my sensibility, but because I wanted the so-called general public to see it," says Maggenti. "I wanted to say this happens everywhere, in the 'normal' world and with 'normal' kids. If this could reach teenagers in malls, we'd really have an incredible experience."

In her 1993 film adaptation of Virginia Woolfe's novel *Orlando*, Sally Potter subverted not only heterosexuality, but the notion of gender itself. Potter collapses distinctions between male and female by presenting 400 years of history through the eyes of an androgynous and sexually ambiguous character. First male and then female, Orlando receives treatment in society according to the social constructs of each gender, neither of which seems to have anything to do with the true nature of his/her personhood. As a man, for instance, Orlando is unwilling to participate in wars and senseless killing. As a woman, she is unwilling to settle into her "proper" role by marrying, thereby sacrificing all material possessions. Despite astute social commentary playing here, Potter's story is also entertaining and engaging. Indeed, *Orlando* marks a populist turn for the filmmaker, who earned her reputation as a feminist filmmaker by producing short experimental films, including *Thriller* (1979), a deconstruction of the 19th century opera *La Bohème*.

Is *Orlando* a feminist film? Potter suggests the label does not adequately capture the ideas about gender she is trying to get across. In an interview in the *Village Voice*, she insisted that *Orlando* should not be constructed as a statement exclusively about the role of women: "[*Orlando*] strengthens women in many ways. But it has touched a nerve in men. One of the things we're saying here is that men and women have far more in common than we've imagined, that the differences between us have been grossly exaggerated and made the basis for huge pain, grief, and misery. Women have difficult lives, but men have difficult lives too."



High school lovebirds Evie (Nicole Parker, left) and Randy (Laurel Holloman, right) in Maria Maggenti's *THE INCREDIBLY TRUE ADVENTURE OF TWO GIRLS IN LOVE*. A lesbian Wedding Banquet?

Courtesy Fine Line Features

In the 1970s, when arguments for a feminist counter-cinema were first developed, women were virtually excluded from the feature filmmaking enterprise. From that position, it was imperative to learn ways to dismantle Hollywood's power to shape ideologies about sexuality and gender. But as today's women's cinema suggests, the pleasures audiences get from narrative films are not so easily dismantled—nor should they be.

From myths and folk tales to urban legends and melodramas, stories have always played an important role in all cultures, for both sexes. But outside the oral tradition, women's stories have been overshadowed (or told) by men. This has been even more the case in film than in literature. In her work on the history of women's involvement in filmmaking, Barbara Koenig Quart has noted that women directors, virtually phased out of the early film industry with the advent of sound, never had the opportunity to move from silence to speech. Only recently have women directors gained a voice in feature filmmaking, thereby bringing untold stories

to the screen, ones that explore and validate women's experiences, cultures, sexualities, and emotions.

Is the new independent women's cinema a feminist cinema? The answer is in the eye of the beholder. If the word "feminism" has been opened up by women who challenged the white, middle-class focus of the early feminist movement, it has also been stigmatized by a reactionary conservative backlash. Whether or not they choose to accept the label of "feminist filmmaker," today's independent women directors are bringing a range of feminist issues to the screen. Moreover, their films negotiate feminist insights alongside experiences of class, race, and sexuality—just as real women do. While they don't purport to solve women's immediate problems, directors working to reclaim the power of narrative pleasure are engaging women in far greater numbers than the usual audiences for more experimental feminist films. And for that reason, they may be far more successful at subverting patriarchal assumptions than all feminist ventures into experimental and deconstructive cinema to date. However useful feminist film theory has been for theorists, it has never been able to deliver hope, validation, and pleasure to the vast majority of women. As Jane Campion once said, explaining her decision to ignore her own academic training in deconstructive semiotics, "Being able to pull things apart is not the same as knowing how to put them together."

Laurie Ouellette writes about feminism, media, and popular culture for the alternative press. She is completing a Ph.D. in Communication/Cultural Studies at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst.

THERE'S NO BUSINESS AT SHOWBIZ

The 1995 ShowBiz Expo East

BY MITCH ALBERT

Who doesn't love a good trade show? All that sleazy hawking, the eyeing over of colleagues/competition, the air kissing, hand claspings, biz card switching, dining and whining.... Well, alright, trade shows are generally carefully constructed orgies of self-importance, where flea market mentalities masquerade as the Bazaar of Dreams, but hey, that's showbiz.

And that was Showbiz Expo East, held for the fourth time in as many years last January 5 to 7 at the New York Hilton and Towers.

There was no compelling reason for an independent mediamaker to attend the 1995 Expo. To begin with, precious few panels or merchandise was targeted at independents. The exceptions included mike 'n' podium events like the New York University-sponsored panel, "Get Real: Writing, Producing, and Directing the Documentary," and the Independent Feature Project (IFP)-hosted panel, "Producing a Feature Film: East Coast Style," during which successful independent producers like Larry Meistrich (*Laws of Gravity*, *New Jersey Drive*) and Dean Silvers (*Spanking the Monkey*), among others, fielded a highly specific and eclectic batch of questions from novice feature filmmakers.

Another panel that seemed like it might have offered something specifically for independents was the four-hour "Legal Affairs for the Independent Producer," with a full range of topics (acquisition, finance, production, distribution). There were interesting info-nuggets to be gleaned, particularly on issues of intellectual property and the libel-flirting boundaries of parody. But they were useful only insofar as an independent could compare his or her situation to that of the major players; the issues seemed largely relevant to deep-pocketed biz types. In the words of Darryl Byers, an NYU graduate looking to scare up funds for his first feature, the conference was "a role-playing game" for independents of his financial caliber. "I could pretend that I'm actually concerned about Japanese distribution, or getting working visas [for overseas shooting], or hiring Keanu Reeves," he said, referring to some topics covered by the panel.



The huddled masses of Showbiz Expo at one of the convention's only real indie-relevant panel, "Producing a Feature Film: East Coast Style."

Photo: Steve Sands, courtesy Advanstar Expositions

"But come on, I'm here to get the dope on basic legal stuff to shoot a low-budget local feature." One related Expo offering of value—at least to those whose powers of verbal concision were up to speed—was the chance to ask one question during a consultation (limited to 10 minutes) with an attorney from Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts. However, the VLA "Legal Drop-In Center" was open for only six hours during the three-day event.

Upstairs were the toys—a mind-blistering array of gadgetry to remind the observer of the technological hurricane we're living through. For an independent mediamaker used to thinking of a wireless lavalier microphone as the highest-grade equipment available for the money at hand, the industry exhibits were a beggar's feast, showcasing digital film wizardry, advanced lighting systems, fluid-directional camera mounts that sculpt air, and the absolute LATEST! in cameras and accessories.

The main floor was occupied by various state film commissions shilling for their respective Back 40s as the perfect locations for any project. The International Documentary Association had a booth, as did the IFP. There were various stock-footage libraries, of interest to those who required one. Expo-goers could browse books at the stands of film-related publishers, or watch Steadicams being demonstrated at the far end of the hall.

All told, it was a trade show like any other, the



Industry wooing the Industry with bells, whistles, hype, promises, and Gadget Envy.

Despite all the future-speak, it was still a film-oriented party. Canon had a booth displaying one-chip cameras, but there wasn't much else in evidence that related to video rigs, even at the broadcast level. The fact that video artists received no acknowledgement at all is one of the Expo's most serious omissions.

If you could afford the price of admission, which ranged from \$35 for exhibition-hall entry to \$205 for the whole ball of wax (parking extra), or managed to get a hold of a free pass, the Expo was undoubtedly stimulating in small ways. You might have paused to consider that North Carolina would be a better location for your film than the one you had in mind; or you might have picked up the *Creative Industry Handbook* for continent-wide resource listings; or you could have compared prices, all at once, for various snippets of stock footage. And if you weren't previously clued in, you certainly would have been forced to realize that digital editing has arrived, and it behooves the recalcitrant mediamaker to learn the basics. But these are hardly urgent inducements to attend.

Perhaps the outlook of the Expo, insofar as independents were concerned, was summed up by its choice of keynote speaker for the Film & TV track. That role was played by Fred Zollo, producer of *Quiz Show*, *The Music of Chance*, and *Naked in New York* (among a slew of other films). Zollo's bent is nominally "independent", but there are degrees. Zollo seems to epitomize the commercial film industry's concept of an East Coast independent: an unconventional rake who navigates the mainstream with fluidity, able to merge with the majors and still produce an unlikely film from time to time. No reason to have any truck with that, but the definition leaves shivering on the doorsteps everyone from camcorder documentary guerillas to struggling proto-Spikes. We all know that independents live on the margins; but it would be gratifying to discover at least a niche within a high-profile affair like Showbiz Expo.

Mitch Albert, The Independent's editorial assistant, last wrote about solo shooting in the March issue.

IT'S A WRAP

The 1995 Sundance Film Festival

BY PATRICIA
THOMSON

Sundance's "**HOLLYWOODIZATION**" has more to do with the audiences that flock to Park City than with the nature of the films shown there. Once again, low budget features triumphed.

The camera is running, and a boom mic dips into the frame. Then the focus is off. Street noise disrupts the next shot. The actors start fumbling their lines. The camera isn't running, and the actors tap into a special memory and pull out a stunning performance.

Welcome to the world of independent film, as brought to you by cinematographer-turned-director Tom DiCillo in his latest feature, *Living in Oblivion*. This film-about-a-film—in this case, a no-budget, downtown-hip, independent production—is a comic homage to the technical snafus, clashing egos, libidinous pursuits, and moments of pure, existential despair that constitute the reality of shoestring production. It's a world of head-banging frustrations and stalemates between neophyte directors and big-name actors. Chad Palomino (played with relish by a blonde, tanned James LeGros) turns out to be inept, arrogant, and stunningly stupid in his "suggestions" to the director.

Living in Oblivion couldn't have found a more sympathetic audience than the crowd at the sev-



Steve Buscemi (center) plays the beleaguered director of a scene from a scene in Tom DiCillo's *LIVING IN OBLIVION*. Courtesy filmmaker

enteenth annual Sundance Film Festival, which took place in Park City, Utah, from January 19 to 29. So many of the filmmakers had stories that rivaled those in DiCillo's farce.

Take Edward Burns. While shooting his first feature, *The Brothers McMullen*, production stopped when his appendix had to come out. Then coproducer/cameraman Dick Fisher threw his back out. With only \$15,000 raised towards production (mostly from his father, a police sergeant), Burns shot on the cheap—meaning on weekends at his parents' house. But every time he pushed the wrap date back—from Thanksgiving, to Christmas, then Easter, stretching on for eight months—he risked losing his unpaid actors and crew to other jobs.

Then there's Kayo Hatta. When developing *Picture Bride*, her drama about the Japanese brides who were brought to Hawaii, their marital matches made through photographs, she was advised to

include the white plantation owners and tell the story from their perspective, or else make it into a horror flick, with the ghosts of the picture brides rising from their graves.

Rebecca Miller ran up against what she calls "the kitsch machine" when attempting to veer away from saccharine depictions of children in her story of two sisters, *Angela*.

Terry Zwigoff was told to make *Crumb*, his painfully honest documentary about the underground cartoonist R. Crumb, into something more "peppy and snappy and MTV style," he says.

Matthew Harrison made his first feature, the "bowling noir" *Spare Me*, following other people's advice, and nothing came of it. His second feature, *Rhythm Thief*, about a Lower East Side boot-

legger of local bands' tapes, was made for one-third the cost and attracted a good buzz at Sundance. "When I did it just the way I wanted," he says, "people responded."

All ended up sticking to their guns and producing strong, personal work, nothing like the filmmaking-by-committee-and-marketing-department approach that turns the wheels in Hollywood. And all were rewarded with top prizes at Sundance: the Grand Jury awards for best dramatic film (*Brothers McMullen*), best documentary and nonfiction cinematography (*Crumb*), best screenplay (*Living in Oblivion*), and best dramatic director (*Rhythm Thief*); the Audience Award for best dramatic feature (*Picture Bride*); and Filmmakers Trophy for best dramatic feature and fiction cinematography (*Angela*).

This is what continues to make Sundance worthwhile: true independent films, those low-budget labors of love, still get programmed, prized,

get the bigwigs now [and] they're all here at the beginning, because it's become a place to be. There's food here for them," says John Cooper, one of the festival's programmers. Publicists rule the roost at the Claimjumper restaurant, the festival's new hospitality suite. Cellular phones are a running joke (each screening begins with a request to turn them off). Parties are so packed there's literally no elbow room. The waiting lines for sold-out screenings are themselves maxed out, turning dozens away. Distributors are beginning to address the latter problem by holding press screenings during the weeks prior to Sundance. That's great for the working press, but it further emphasizes the hierarchy in visibility between films with distributors and those without.

In sum, the tenor has changed. It's something the festival organizers recognize and frankly don't know how to stop. "We've created this monster," says Cooper. Even Sundance Institute president

Slamdance's organizers have already reserved two screening rooms for next year. "We continue to push for the recognition of the smaller independents and first-time filmmakers—and the idea of discovering new talent," says cofounder Jon Fitzgerald.

Ironically, this year Sundance had an impressive roster of first-time filmmakers. In fact, the big story is so many of these neophyte feature directors came to the festival with distributors already attached. This was the case with seven out of 19 films in the Premiere section: David Frankel's *Miami Rhapsody* (Buena Vista), Mina Shum's *Double Happiness* (First Generation Films), Milcho Manchevski's *Before the Rain* (Gramercy), David Salle's *Search & Destroy* (October Films), James Gray's *Little Odessa* (Fine Line Features), Danny Boyle's *Shallow Grave* (Gramercy), and Scott Kalvert's *Basketball Diaries* (New Line).

In contrast, the Competition—the heart of the festival, which is supposed to present more cutting-edge, less exposed work—included only three directorial debuts in the dramatic category: Steve Chbosky's *Four Corners of Nowhere*; John Young's *Parallel Sons*; and Kayo Hatta's *Picture Bride* (Miramax).

What does this mean? It shows, for one, that distributors are not waiting for Sundance anymore to gamble on new films that show signs of commercial viability. "It used to be that distributors came here and wouldn't touch any of these films," says Cooper. Now they're acquiring independent work during and before the festival. Nearly a quarter of the films coming to Sundance '95 already had distributors attached, many of whom are using the festival as a launch pad for spring releases, much as the New York Film Festival serves as a fall kick-off.

But that still leaves three-quarters of the films looking for distribution. And ultimately this is what the festival is all about. Which is why you don't hear filmmakers, at least, complaining about the rampant numbers of industry dealmeisters and distributors. For them, the more the better. As *Nadja* director Michael Almereyda said during the press conference for the dramatic competition, "It's a false issue to accuse the festival of warping itself into the mainstream. We all want audiences."

"Why [Sundance] feels mainstream is that there's so many industry people coming into this tiny place," Hatta said later. "The fact of the matter is the material is still very independent. It just shows you where the mainstream is looking for the new voices; it is independent cinema."

As much as Sundance's organizers officially play down the matchmaking—publicly emphasizing the *art* of the festival—they know they're the only game in town (actually, in the United States) for this level and degree of interaction between top-level executives in the film industry and inde-



Finding fame on \$15,000: THE BROTHERS MCMULLEN took the top dramatic prize. (L-R): Actors Mike McGlone, writer/director/actor Edward Burns, and Jack Mulcahy.

Courtesy Good Machine

Robert Redford acknowledged the problem, calling the festival "a mistress out of control."

Something's got to give, and chances are, in another five years, the festival will either evolve to accommodate the increasing numbers (there's already been some talk about a concurrent market), or else some other festival or event will emerge as a competing locus of dealmaking and exposure between independents and the industry.

Slamdance '95 isn't it, but it does expose a crack in the monolith. This scruffy little festival, subtitled "Anarchy in Utah," is a new alternative showcase for dramatic feature work turned down by Sundance. Twelve films were screened in Salt Lake City and Park City venues—the latter boldly located right under the official festival's nose, in a room 50 paces down the hall from the Prospector Square theater. This guerrilla event managed to attract decent audiences, no doubt benefiting from the Prospector theater's overflow.

and picked up. The downside is getting to be an old refrain: Sundance is overly crowded and, as the make-up of its audience has changed, so has the tenor of the 10-day event.

Top festival programmer Geoffrey Gilmore calls Sundance "a bridge between aesthetic achievement and commercial demands, between Hollywood and independents." True, it embraces both, but the balance has shifted. Sundance is evolving into something more mainstream and manic, less edgy, and certainly less friendly.

The festival's attendance has doubled over the past five years. Journalists outnumber films by about three-to-one, and there are countless more publicists, agents, talent scouts, producers, distributors, and other handmaidens of the industry. "We



Sisters Ellie (Charlotte Blythe) and Angela (Miranda Stuart Rhyne) in Rebecca Miller's *ANGELA*.

Courtesy filmmaker

pendent filmmakers. And they know that all the *sturm und drang* during Sundance is over a pathetically tiny piece of the domestic theatrical market—somewhere between three and six percent. So they do all they can to provide a leg up for indies. "A lot of this is about building relationships," says Cooper. "That's half of what I do here... It's the relentless, unsung part—the constant introductions."

The roster of films distributors brought to Sundance far outnumbered the acquisitions they carried away, but, as usual, each pick-up caused a tremor of excitement to ripple through the festival. *The Brothers McMullen*, an affable ensemble comedy about three Irish Catholic brothers living together on Long Island, was the first acquisition this year, snapped up by Twentieth Century Fox's new specialty division, Fox Searchlight Pictures. Sony Pictures Classics picked up *Living in Oblivion*. Fine Line took on *Unzipped*, a documentary by fashion-photographer-turned-filmmaker Douglas Keeve about designer Isaac Mizrahi, which also netted an Audience Award for Best Documentary.



Twisted comic artist Robert Crumb tests his luck in Terry Zwigoff's award-winning documentary *CRUMB*.

Courtesy Miramax

Sundance always provides an enticing peak at the year's coming independent attractions. The following dozen films, in addition to the festival's award winners, are among the ones to watch for:

- Antonia Bird's *Priest* (Miramax) was probably the hottest ticket and most intelligent, provocative

film at the festival. Bird, a former BBC producer and theater director, put together an emotionally gripping story of a homosexual priest grappling over religious strictures on the expression of love and on what actions are permissible after he encounters a young incest victim during confession.

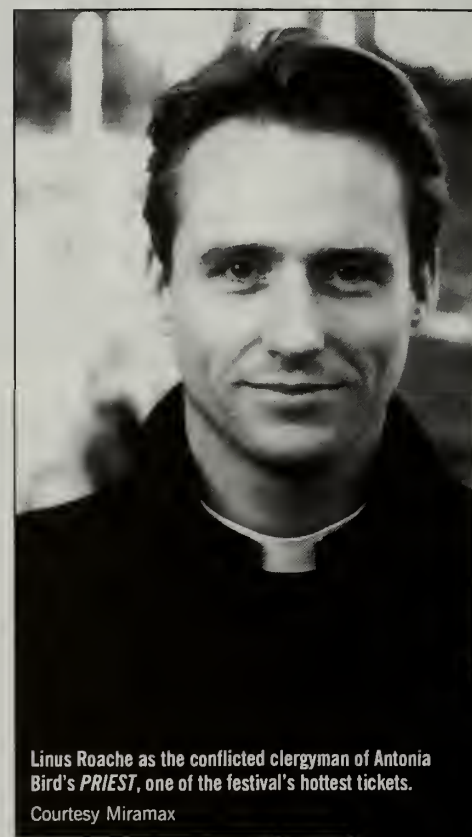
- The New Zealand film *Once Were Warriors* is a surprising feature debut by TV commercial director Lee Tamahori. Nothing slick about this: it's a tough, uncompromising look at the destructive impulses within a contemporary Maori family and how traditional native rites are ignored, perverted, or offer a route to personal redemption.

- Canadian Bruce McDonald, hailed at Sundance in 1992 for his *Highway 61*, earned accolades this year for *Dance Me Outside*, a humorous and provocative view of Gen X youth on the Kidebanesse Reservation.

- From the United States, the most controversial work by far was *Kids*, by still photographer Larry Clark, which had an unannounced sneak preview at the festival. Described by some as exploitative porn, by others as an eye-opening look at modern youth, *Kids* is rife with graphic sex and

drug-taking. Acquired by Miramax for \$3.5 million, this film will test the limits of Miramax's relationship with parent company Disney and its no NC-17 policy.

- *The Incredible Adventures of Two Girls in Love* is Maria Maggenti's pure-fun farce about lesbian teens in Westchester. If Sundance's audience is



Linus Roache as the conflicted clergyman of Antonia Bird's *PRIEST*, one of the festival's hottest tickets.

Courtesy Miramax

any measure, this one is headed to be a major lesbian breakthrough.

- Todd Haynes (*Poison*) is back with another thought-provoking AIDS-allegory. *Safe* is about a housewife who develops "environmental illness," a debilitating reaction to the 60,000 chemicals that are

now an everyday part of our lives. The second part of the film, in which the protagonist turns to New Age self-healing, has left audiences divided, depending on whether they see it as an ironic and ultimately condemning critique of New Age cures, or as an endorsement.

- *Plan 10 From Outer Space*, in the festival's midnight film sec-

tion, should take the Roger Corman or Edward Wood Prize for no-budget effects. This cult flick, by Utah native son Trent Harris, is perhaps the first alien invasion story to weave in Utah history and Mormon ideology.

• Fans of the thriller genre were raving about *The Usual Suspects*. Working with a plot even more convoluted than is typical for this genre, sophomore director Bryan Singer (*Public Access*) had all his ducks in order for this ambitious undertaking.

• Creating a buzz in the documentary section was *Jupiter's Wife* (awarded a

Best Director jury

prize), Michel Negroponte's film about a homeless, schizophrenic woman living in Central Park, which

combines cinema verité with elements of a mystery quest.

• Beach Boy Brian Wilson made an unforgettably wiggled out appearance in last year's *Theramin*. This year he was the focus of a feature-length documentary, *I Just Wasn't Made for These Times*. Made by record producer Donald Was (who is reportedly producing an album with Wilson), the film occasionally turns a bit fawning and leaves out some of the most bizarre and significant elements from the musician's biography. But Wilson is such a character that he's well worth the visit.

• Two activist films also attracted a wide following. *When Billy Broke His Head... and Other Tales of Wonder*, an ITVS production by David Simpson and Billy Golphus, shows how Golphus, after being seriously disabled through a motorscooter accident, gradually becomes an activist for the physically impaired. This film netted the Freedom of Expression Award.

• Heather MacDonald's *Ballot Measure 9* chronicles the defeat of the Oregon ballot measure that would have denied civil rights protection to gays and lesbians. In the process, the film

provides a clear look at the organizing methods of the Religious Right.

Ballot Measure 9 shared the Audience Award for Best Documentary with its complete opposite, the fun and frivolous *Unzipped*. That a festival audience would split so evenly and diametrically is a welcome reminder that people follow different drummers, even at Sundance.

Patricia Thomson, editor of *The Independent*, last wrote about *Semper Fi*, the documentary on Oliver North's Senate campaign.

Ed Wood if he could: Deva Cantrell as a space-man in Trent Harris' *PLAN 10 FROM OUTER SPACE*. Courtesy filmmaker

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LOOKING FOR FUNDS IN SOME OF THE RIGHT PLACES

The International Film Financing Conference

BY MICHAEL FOX

Independent filmmakers are a paradoxical lot, and the second annual International Film Financing Conference provided an intensive, weekend-long reminder. Given a crash course in reality from the worldwide array of panelists at IFFCON '95 (which took place January 13 through 15 in San Francisco), the 60 producers and directors in attendance bounced back with revised strategies and undampened enthusiasm. When informed that a previously supportive distributor of independent features is now emphasizing "inspirational endings," they responded, "Fine, we'll look elsewhere for money." Extraordinary persistence is required to make inroads into Japan? "Okay, where do I begin?" Maybe the truth can set you free after all, rather than lead to discouragement. Or as Susan Stern, producer/director of *Barbie Nation*, a nonfiction film in production, said, "Making documentaries is disheartening whether you come to this conference or not."

The major goal of IFFCON, according to Wendy Braitman of EBS Productions (which produced the event in association with the Film Arts Foundation), is "to create a vital forum where independent filmmakers could hook up with international coproduction partners and find potential pre-sales for their work." The format of the conference was similar to last year's, with an assortment of panel discussions, case studies, small-group roundtables, one-on-one pitch sessions, meals, and receptions. Like last year, there was a mix of feature and documentary makers from around the country, all hunting for production dollars.

The major structural change of the conference was the introduction of an Open Day aimed at Bay Area filmmakers, which launched the three-day event. Three hundred people jammed the hall for panels on "Rallying U.S. Dollars," "Looking at Foreign Television," "Understanding Tools of Selling: Festivals, Markets & Sales Agents," and



"Exploring New Financial Territories: The Independent Producer and Multimedia." As an indication of both the hunger for this information and its unavailability elsewhere, a substantial number of filmmakers journeyed from Los Angeles, Honolulu, and even New York just for Open Day.

The remaining two days were the heart of IFFCON: an intensive weekend of pitching and schmoozing for the filmmakers accepted into the conference. (Those lucky 60, selected from 181 applicants, were required to have a "current project for which [they were] seeking international financing, coproduction, or acquisition." Each paid \$310 for the full weekend, or \$275 for members of Film Arts Foundation (FAF), NAATA, Cine Acción, and Frameline; Open Day alone cost \$115/\$80.) Braitman and her partner, Michael Ehrenzweig, improved upon last year's successful debut in three areas: they increased the number of panelists who specialize in documentaries, added representatives from Mexico and Japan, and expanded the emphasis on distribution and overseas rights for finished works, rather than

focusing exclusively on coproduction possibilities for start-up projects or works-in-progress.

The doc expertise was provided by returning panelist Anna Even of ZDF and Arte; Robin Gutch, Channel Four's deputy commissioning editor in film and video; and Tomio Shomiyama of Media International Corp. (MICO), who buys documentaries for NHK's four channels (two satellite and two terrestrial).

"I'm looking for something different, that Japanese producers cannot make," Shomiyama told attendees. He acquires 150 hours of nonfiction programming a year, of which 40 percent is American. This "different" work rarely includes gay and lesbian issues, however; Japan is a particularly difficult market for such films, Shomiyama admitted, although it is not completely closed. More generally discouraging was Kiki Miyake, who acquires Japanese distribution rights and arranges coproductions through her New York company, Little Magic Productions. She painted such a bleak picture that she felt compelled to apologize during IFFCON's closing session. "I hope I wasn't too pessimistic about Japan," Miyake said. "It is a tough nut to crack, even for the Japanese."

Mexico may be more accessible for Americans, according to Mexican producers Bertha Navarro

and Jorge Sanchez, but the collapse of the peso has snuffed coproduction possibilities. "We have talent and services," Sanchez said. "We don't have cash at this time; we won't have cash for a long time, I don't think." Navarro added, "Ninety-eight percent of the screens show Hollywood films. In all of Latin America, you can raise \$50,000."

For all the grim news and hard questions, the conference was not without its moments of levity. Dieter Kosslick, executive director of the Filmstiftung Nordrhein-Westfalen, Germany's

young men, there was little common ground between Tehranian's needs and the indie projects on hand. But Tehranian analyzed pitches in her roundtable (where each panelist met with six to eight attendees at once), determined who in Hollywood would be appropriate for each project, and rattled off their numbers from her address book.

National Geographic Television's Gayle Gilman, who's developed several films for the company's *Explorer* series, went home with more



For the chosen 60, IFFCON '95 was crammed with panels, roundtables, and valuable contacts. Here, U.S. producers huddle 'round Robin Gutch (center) of England's Channel 4

Photos courtesy EBS Productions

largest film fund, and president of the European Film Distribution Office (EFDO), proved to be IFFCON's designated comic. After receiving a glowing introduction from Braitman on Open Day, Kosslick remarked, "I don't know how important I am, but if you have money you are important." At the end of the conference, he quipped, "Coproduction is like sex: The most bizarre people are doing it, everybody else wonders why, and I just think it's fun."

Irreverence was the watchword of the 15-minute guide to pitching delivered by Beverly Hills agent Thomas Garvin of Ervin, Cohen & Jessup. The bearded, no-nonsense Garvin's salient tips included the advice not to pitch distributors and producers at AFM, Cannes, MIFED, and other markets ("They're in sales mode, not buying mode") and to hone one's project description into one page, one paragraph, and one line. "You are your best representative," he summed up, "and best suited to communicate the passion, the vision and, hopefully, the content."

Also noteworthy was the contribution of Yalda Tehranian, vice president of production and acquisitions at Live Entertainment and former executive director of acquisitions and international coproductions at New Line. Since Live specializes in highly accessible features aimed primarily at

in her bag than Tehranian did. She told Braitman she had never been to a market as productive as IFFCON and left with three documentary projects to explore further—Richard M. Lewis' *The Snow Monkeys of Texas*, Wendy Hanamura's *Honor Bound*, and Mel Halbach's *The Long-Haired Warriors*.

While indie producers love those kind of stories, so do acquisition execs—and IFFCON's organizers. The continued success of the forum is tied not only to demand from the independent producer community, but also to attracting first-rate panelists. In addition to ZDF's Even, returning panelists included Sandra Schulberg (Playhouse International Pictures, formerly American Playhouse) and Jack Lechner (formerly in Channel Four's drama department and now with HBO Showcase in New York). Based on their enthusiasm at the conference's conclusion, several of this year's first-time panelists will be back in 1996. At this stage, Braitman and FAF have every intention of maintaining IFFCON as an annual event.

As far as the participants are concerned,

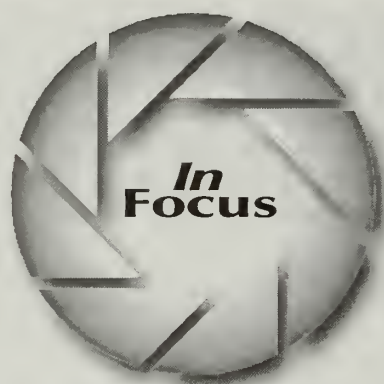
Timothy Schwab journeyed from South Dakota for the second year—and the fact that his agenda was different says something about how IFFCON has evolved. While Schwab was looking for funding for his documentary *The Freeway Film* at the first IFFCON, this time he was interested in issues of distribution and overseas rights for *The Burning Barrel* (fully funded by ITVS). He welcomed the presentation on sales agents by Helen Loveridge of Fortissimo Film Sales. "That's something that's totally mysterious to most people," Schwab explained. Among other sales tips picked up during the course of the weekend was Schulberg's advice that filmmakers should talk to lots of other producers and ask what price they got for their film in each territory.

First-time attendees were equally positive. New York filmmaker Bridgett Davis, who's in postproduction with her dramatic feature *Naked Acts*, asserted, "This conference is ideal for the new producer trying to navigate the whole foreign maze. I initiated some good relationships, and I learned who isn't right for the project, where not to go and not to spin my wheels." Or as another filmmaker was overheard to say after his one-on-one meeting, "In five minutes I got a reading that might have taken me a year otherwise." Tricia Regan, a New York-based producer who's in postproduction on the documentary *A Leap of Faith*, took a longer view. "As a first-time producer, you're not only trying to finish your film, you're building your career. I need to know people at National Geographic and in Germany."

Roughly half of the 60 attendees came from outside the Bay Area, which speaks not only to the desperation for information about markets abroad but to the lack of alternative settings. Morrie Warszawski, a consultant and the author of *Shaking the Money Tree*, concluded, "Absolutely the most important aspect is being able to meet these people directly who you can't meet in any other context. This is one of the few venues that brings people in internationally who have control over money." To put it another way, although Braitman and Ehrenzweig conceived IFFCON as a resource for Bay Area filmmakers, the event has quickly developed a national profile.

The closing night party was held at San Francisco's brand-new Museum of Modern Art, which opened to the public the following week. As a bartender mixed martinis, Sandra Schulberg summarized the philosophy behind IFFCON: "There's a very low bullshit quotient here, and that's what I like about it." A few moments later and a few steps away, filmmaker Tim Schwab corroborated Schulberg's observation: "We make fantasies. We don't want to deal with fantasies."

Michael Fox wrote on public television programs directors in the March Independent and regularly covers the Bay Area media scene for numerous publications.



HOW TO AVOID A NOISE DIVE

Producing a Fool-Proof Audio Track

BY LUKE HONES

A video, multimedia, or film producer is also an audio producer. Your ability to produce a compelling audio track that integrates well with your concept will, in part, determine your project's success; begin planning the final mix from the first day of preproduction.

Microphone choice, sound design, and recording to disk aside, audio requires a certain amount of housekeeping throughout the production process. The following remarks will have a video bias, but are technology-independent and apply to multimedia and film as well.

Preproduction

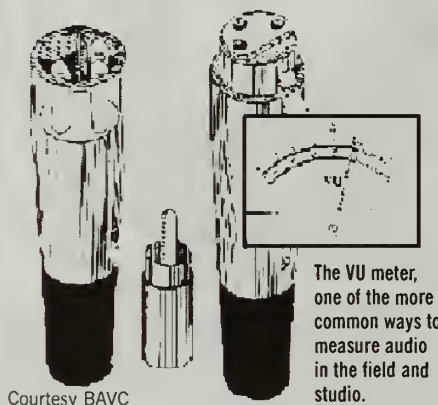
Facility: As early as possible, talk to someone at the facility where you will work. He or she may have some time-saving, money-saving, production-saving suggestions.

Budget: The final audio mix is usually the last step in preparing your master tape. Practically, that means you're probably out of money when it's time to do the mix. Are you going to forego the audio mix? Are you going to go with the lowest price for a mix? Are you going to beg or bamboozle a facility for a break? Are you going to stiff them?

As naïve as it may seem, you should budget for an audio mix and *protect that money*. Any of the other possibilities listed above will probably result in 1) a bad mix, 2) bad feelings, or both. Choose the facility that will work best for you, and approach that facility with a long-term relationship in mind.

Videotape stock: Use 30-minute tape stock, 60-minute maximum. Using two hour tapes will seem like a false economy after countless dropouts, tape manglings, and all that time in the editing suite searching through two hours of material per tape.

Time Code: Time code is an audio signal. It is the language of electronic editing and the key to synchronization. Before going out to shoot, you must understand how time code will be recorded on your field tapes and how it will play a role in the rest of the production.



Courtesy BAVC

The VU meter, one of the more common ways to measure audio in the field and studio.

Production

Rental Equipment: Make sure you understand how to use your equipment before you go out in the field. Do not just show up to rent the field package and then ask for a primer. Set up an appointment with the staff and go over the package, or you risk a rushed, distracted introduction to the equipment. Make sure you have enough batteries.

Recording audio: Use an audio recording package that has a tone generator, audio meters, and adjustable recording levels. A tone generator emits a 1 kHz tone (the tone you hear when looking at color bars). In a perfect world, you will record tone (and color bars) at the beginning of each tape. Record the tone by adjusting the audio levels until the meters are at 0 dB (this is known as zeroing out the tone). Once tone is recorded at 0 dB, you should watch the audio meters and make sure audio levels average below 0 dB (with digital audio, the levels should constantly remain below 0 dB).

There is a very good reason for including this step in production. When it is time to dub the field tapes or edit the final piece, you may have many different tapes recorded at many different times. The 1 kHz tone at the beginning of each tape is a reference for the facility technicians. They will adjust playback levels and record levels with the tone set at 0 dB, and they will assume that the range of your audio will average below 0 dB. The result: the audio will not be unpre-

dictably loud or quiet; every tape's audio will be in the same range.

Before beginning to record with a mic, close your eyes and be very quiet. Is that a fluorescent light humming? The refrigerator? Any miscellaneous sound removed from the audio before recording will give you more flexibility later.

If you are planning on doing postproduction, try not to mix your audio in the field. You'll want to leave all your options open.

Don't record audio or video at the beginning of the tape or at the very end. Set a time limit, such as 29 minutes for a 30-minute tape, and stick to it. The end of the tape is a bad place for valuable footage, because it is difficult to edit. Also, because the amount of tape on each cassette varies, you may record 33 minutes of material on a 30 minute Betacam SP tape and the dubbing facility may do a window dub for you using a 30 minute VHS tape with only 32 minutes on it.

Be aware that different pieces of audio equipment have different levels of impedance. Impedance is a topic for an audio engineering course, but here are some examples of what can go wrong when there are impedance mismatches.

Example 1: Microphone plugged into a line input. Broadcast cameras like BVW 300/400s often have a switch near the audio input for setting the input to "line" or "mic." This is also true of portable mixers like the Shure FP32. When using a mic, set these switches to "mic." Failing to do so will result in distorted audio.

Example 2: Transferring audio from a broadcast-level VCR to a consumer-level machine. When dubbing from Betacam SP to VHS, be aware that VCRs designed for a broadcast facility (often distinguished by XLR connectors) are probably outputting audio at +4 dB. The inputs on a VHS machine or audio cassette recorder are rated at around -10 dB. When dubbing from +4 dB to -10 dB, it may be best to use a level matching box (about \$200). Without a matchbox (the generic term for these devices), you run the risk of recording distorted audio. Matchboxes also match levels going the other way, and it is a good idea to use one for transfers, such as CD audio to Betacam SP.

From the time you record in the field until the final mix is finished, always monitor the audio.

Labeling: On the tape label, identify the audio on each channel. (e.g. "Ch 1: Mike Nesmith Intrvw, Ch 2: Room ambience"). Labeling is not only important for the production process, but also invaluable when the tapes are archived.

Postproduction

Dubbing Audio: If you need dubs of your tapes, know the difference between discrete and mixed audio. Discrete (i.e., separate) recording of audio is when audio from channel 1 of the master is recorded onto channel 1 of the dub; likewise, channel 2 on channel 2. This is the type of dubbing to ask for when doing window dubs, where you need an exact copy of the master.

Mix audio when making an exhibition copy of the master. Because you cannot be sure how your work will be exhibited, you must make sure all audio will be heard by the audience. Horror story: some producers have sent tapes with discrete audio to broadcast stations; their programs aired with the narration, but without the musical accompaniment.

Some dubs are not so easily defined, like foreign distribution dubs where the narration and music are mixed on to channel 1 and music alone is on channel 2. Often dubs require special handling because of time code issues. For example, if you have to post stripe (record time code after the original recording) a 3/4" tape, you will lose one of the audio channels for the time code. You will also lose use of an audio channel if you are putting time code on a VHS tape.

Labeling: Be very clear about what is on each track of your tapes. One client requested that our facility mix audio for a dub. There was no label on the tape, so we started the dub as per the client's instructions. When we mixed the audio, there was a distortion that swooshed like wind whipping down a canyon. We discovered that the master's audio was not discrete, but that it was a foreign language master (mixed narration on channel 1, music on channel 2), and the distortion we heard was because the 2 channels were out of phase.

The Final Mix: By this time, you have spoken to your audio facility throughout the entire process. The facility knows what your final output is (video, film, CD-ROM) and has prepared to get you there. You have planned the use of available resources, such as sound effects libraries and narration booths. The audio you need to fix is minimal, but the staff is aware of the problems and has lined up the necessary equipment.

This is the ideal scenario for producer and facility. While it may not always be reached, acknowledging and striving for it will lead to a more satisfying audio production with fewer snafus along the way.

Luke Hones (videonet@aol.com) researches, writes, and speaks about community use of old and new technology.

He is director of research and development at the Bay Area Video Coalition.

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DOMESTIC

AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, Sept. 15-17, CA. Now in 66th yr, this is 1 of world's longest running film/video fests; open to all motion picture makers in film & video. Entries made by college students judged separately from ind. entries; awards duplicated in both classifications. Cash awards, certificates & trophies given. Screenings held in San Mateo, CA. Formats: 16mm, S-8, video. Entry fee: \$5. Deadline: Aug. 15. Contact: American Motion Picture Society, Box 4034, Long Beach, CA 90804-0034.

AUSTIN HEART OF FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 5-8, TX. Fest celebrates writers' contributions to motion picture & TV industry; consists of screenwriters' conference by day & film fest by night. Screenwriting competition cats: adult/mature (action/drama/etc.): feature-length, prize \$3,000 & conference pass; children/family: feature-length, prize \$3,000 & conference pass; student short (30 min. & under): prize \$750 & conference pass. Fest also holds student shorts competition (30 min. & under) w/ accepted entries screened before features. Deadlines: June 15 (screenplay competition); Aug. 1 (short film showcase). Contact: Austin Heart of Film Festival, 707 Rio Grande, ste. 101, Austin, TX 78701; (512) 478-4795; (800) 310-FEST; fax: (512) 478-6205.

COLUMBUS INTERNATIONAL FILM AND VIDEO FESTIVAL/CHRIS AWARDS, October, OH. Now in 43rd edition, fest accepts ind. & corporate prods for Chris Awards competition. Prods compete in 11 divisions w/ approx. 90 subject-area cats, incl. special divisions for students, print media & screenwriters. Awards: first place Chris statuette, sec-

ond place Bronze Plaque, third place Certificate of Honorable Mention. Winning Chris Award qualifies film for Oscar consideration in the doc short cat. Deadline: July 15. Contact: Joyce K. Long, awards administrator, Columbus International Film & Video Festival/Chris Awards, 5701 N. High St., ste. 204, Worthington, OH 43085; (614) 841-1666.

LUCKY CHARM AWARDS, August, WA. 4th annual fest features low-budget, shot-on-video works, all lengths & genres. Last yr's screenings featured 75 works from US & Canada. Held at 911 Media Arts Center in Seattle. Deadline: Apr. 30. Contact: Lucky Charm Awards, 2319 N. 45th St., #181, Seattle, WA 98103, Attn: Festival; (206) 522-6195.

MARGARET MEAD FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 18-23, NY. This is premiere fest in US for anthropological & ethnographic film & video. Organized by education dept of American Museum of Natural History, fest accepts non-fiction work only. 1995 themes: films on & about the representation of children; works by media collectives/community produced media; any non-fiction work looking at cultural themes in general on western & non-western culture. Film- & videomakers whose works are selected will receive certificate of participation & pass to fest events. Some financial assistance & housing avail. & some titles invited to participate in nat'l tour. Entry fees: \$15 student; \$30 ind. film/video; \$75 TV/commercial film/video. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4"; preview on 3/4" & 1/2". Deadline: May 3. Contact: Elaine Charnov, Margaret Mead Film & Video Festival, American Museum of Natural History, Central Park West at 79th St., NY, NY 10024-5192; (212) 769-5305; fax: 5329.

MIX: NEW YORK LESBIAN & GAY EXPERIMENTAL FILM/VIDEO FESTIVAL/MIX BRASIL: FESTIVAL DAS MANIFESTAÇÕES DA SEXUALIDADE, November, NY/Brazil. Fest focusing on films/videos by or about lesbians/gays encourages submissions from "every imaginable genre": A-V installations, cyber-submissions of interactive & digital media, performance incorporating film &/or video. Mix Brazil tours Oct. through Dec. Formats: 3/4", 1/2". Submissions for installations & performance must be accompanied by written description & résumé. Fest also seeks guest curators to curate, take active part in designing & publicizing fest & bringing new communities & new venues to fest. Deadline: June 15. Contact: MIX, 341 Lafayette St., #169, NY, NY 10012; (212) 501-2309; fax: (212) 477-2714; email: mix@nyo.com.

REELS IN COLOR FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 15-21, GA. First annual fest at Clark Atlanta University, "designed to promote and celebrate films written by and created for & about African Americans." Open to both professionals & students, who will compete in 4 main cats: features, featurettes, short & student films. Entries must be submitted on VHS or 3/4" videocassette. Deadline is Apr. 30; entry fee is \$60 for pros, \$30 for students. Contact: The Reels In Color Film Festival, PO Box 3410, Atlanta, GA 30302; (404) 249-7578.

SILVER IMAGES FILM FESTIVAL, May 17-20, IL. 2nd annual fest featuring films & videos that celebrate images of aging. Sponsored by Terra Nova Films, Chicago-based prod. & distribution co. that specializes in films & videos on aging issues, fest showcases US & foreign feature-length prods that "counteract the negative stereotypes about older adults that are prevalent in today's media." Deadline: Apr. 15. Contact: Rebekah Cowing, Terra Nova Films, 9848 S. Winchester Ave., Chicago, IL 60643; (312) 881-8491.

UNIVERSITY FILM AND VIDEO ASSOCIATION STUDENT FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, August, PA. Founded to recognize & exhibit "very best in student work worldwide," fest accepts submissions for third annual competition in cats of animation, doc, experimental & narrative. At least \$2,500 awarded; nat'l tour of selected work. Entry fees: \$10 (UFVA members), \$15 others. Deadline: May 31. Contact: Dave Kluff, fest director, Dept. of Radio-TV-Film, Temple University, Philadelphia, PA 19122; (800) 499-UFVA; (215) 923-3532; fax: (215) 204-5280; email: dkluff@astro.ocis.temple.edu.

FOREIGN

EUROPEAN MEDIA ART FESTIVAL, Sept., Germany. Worldwide event for innovative experimental film & video art accompanied by video installations & interactive projects. Seminars, workshops & TV projects also part of program. Sections incl. New Film & Video Visions for recent German, European & int'l prods in field of experimental film & video art & for related experimental features/docs, music video & computer animation. Kunsthalle Dominikanerkirch (art gallery based in deconsecrated church) is central venue. Playful approaches, experiments w/ technology & contemplative works are sought. Int'l student forum invites students & media ed. lecturers to present works. Deadline: May 15. Contact: European Media Art Festival. Postfach 1861, D-49008 Osnabrück, Germany; tel: 011 49 05 41 2 16 58; fax: 011 49 05 41 2 83 27; email: emaf@bionic.zer.de.

LEIPZIG INTERNATIONAL DOCUMENTARY FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 31-Nov. 5, Germany. Annual fest for short & feature-length doc & animated films & videos; fest seeks "to promote int'l doc & animated films." Fest program consists of int'l competition; special programs; video workshops; retro. Competition incl. separate cats for docs of all genres. Separate cash prizes awarded for feature-length prods & prods under 45 min. Prods entered for competition must not have been screened in public prior to June 1, 1994. Prods awarded prizes at int'l fests may enter. Deadline: May 15. Submit VHS tapes only w/ brief synopsis & SASE to: Leipzig International Documentary Film Festival, 104 W. 29th St., 12th fl., NY, NY 10001, Attn: Steve Gallagher. For info, contact: Jurgen Bruning in Berlin: 011 49 30 782 8702; fax: 011 49 30 782 9740.

PARNU VIDUAL ANTHROPOLOGY FESTIVAL, July 2-5, Estonia. 9th annual fest & conference is scientific & artistic event aimed to support cultural survival of people. Don't accept films that are

against human values. Films of high level of creativity w/ scientific content preferred. Length under 60 min. Formats: 16mm or 35mm or U-matic video. Video for preview. Participation fee: \$300 (covers hotel, conferences, etc.) Deadline: Apr. 10. Send entry form, English transcription & 2 photos from film w/ non-returnable tape to: Pärnu VA Festival, PO Box A, Pärnu EE3600, Estonia; tel: 372 44 43869; fax: 372 2601 247.

ST. PETERSBURG "MESSAGE TO MAN" INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, June 16-21, Russia. Now annual event, which takes place during Russia's "White Nights," fest accepts short- & feature-length doc films (up to 120 min.), animation (up to 60 min.) & short fiction (up to 60 min.). Program incl. main competition, out-of-competition, best debut. Cash prizes awarded from \$5,000. Invited filmmakers pay airfare to Russia; room & two meals/day provided. Entry fee: \$35. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. For info. & appls, contact: Anne Borin, US coordinator, St. Petersburg Film Festival, c/o Marie Nesthus, Donnell Media Center, 20 W. 53rd St., NY, NY 10019; (212) 362-3412. Deadline: Apr. 15. Fest address: St. Petersburg Int'l Film Fest, "Message to Man" 12 Karavannaya, 191011, St. Petersburg, Russia; tel: 011 7 812 235-2660/230-2200; fax: 011 7 812 235-3995.

SAO PAULO INTERNATIONAL SHORT FILM FESTIVAL, August, Brazil. Estab. in 1990, noncompetitive event celebrating 6th yr as major stop on int'l short film fest circuit. Organized by Museum of Image & Sound of São Paulo (MIS) & supported by State Dept of Culture, fest exhibits short work of all genres. Fest organizes panoramas of Brazilian & Latin American prods. as well as special int'l programs. Fest is well attended by local audiences & filmmakers from throughout Latin America; program also incl. panel discussions & daily newsletter. Formats: 35mm, 16mm; preview on cassette. Deadline: May 15. Contact: Zita Carvalhosa, fest dir., Int'l Short Film Festival of São Paulo, Museu Da Imagem e Do Som, Av. Europa 158, 01449 São Paulo, Brazil; tel: 011 55 11 280 0896; fax: 011 55 11 282 8074.

The 1995 edition of the **AIVF GUIDE TO INTERNATIONAL FILM AND VIDEO FESTIVALS** will be published this summer. For a section on "The Independent Producer's View of the International Festival Circuit," AIVF/FIVF is soliciting brief essays from AIVF members and others discussing any aspects of their experiences at both American and foreign festivals. We are looking for thoughtful, insightful, witty and/or penetrating festival "report cards" or general advice/comments about the successes, joys, and disappointments of taking the festival route. Entries should be 300-400 words. \$25 will be paid for selected essays, which will be credited in the guide. Please submit to: Kathryn Bowser, **AIVF Festival Guide**, 625 Broadway, 9th fl., NY, NY 10012; or fax to: (212) 491-9364. Deadline: May 19.

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Blvd., ste. 474, Los Angeles, CA 90046; (213) 466-0801; fax: (213) 455-5980.

ESTABLISHED EUROPEAN PARTNERSHIP attending Int'l Program Market, Cannes in April seeks quality prods/series, all genres, for exclusive distrib. West Six Media Ltd., 8 Poplar Grove, London W6 7RE; 011 44 71 603 7435; fax: (71) 602 0402.

FANLIGHT PRODUCTIONS, distributor of award-winning film & video on disabilities, health care, mental health, family/social issues, etc. seeks new work for distribution to educational markets. Karen McMillen. Fanlight Productions, 47 Halifax St., Boston, MA 02130; (800) 937-4113.

VARIED DIRECTIONS INT'L, distributors of socially important, award-winning programs on child abuse, health & women's issues, seeks select films & videos. Call Joyce at (800) 888-5236 or write: 69 Elm St., Camden, ME 04843; fax: (207) 236-4512.

FREELANCERS

16MM PROD. PKG. w/ cinematographer from \$200/day. Crystal-sync camera w/ fluid head, Nagra mikes, Mole/Lowell lights, dolly/track, etc. Full 16mm post avail.: editing, sound transfer, 1/4" to 16 mag (.055/ft). Sound mixer \$70/hr! Tom (201) 641-5532.

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BETA SP cameraman w/ Sony 3-chip BVP-70/BVV-55R, avail. for your project. Equip. pkg, DP kit, Sennheiser mics., 5-passenger van. Audio engineer avail. 3/4" Sony offline editing system. Thomas (212) 929-2439, (201) 667-9894.

BETA SP LOCATION PROD.: Daily or long-term. Also Professional Hi8, 3/4" avail. NYC-based, will travel. For rates & info, call (718) 847-4667.

BUSINESS SUPPORT SERVICES: Budgets, financial management, staffing, personnel, admin. Start-up & on-going support avail. Consult someone w/ 15 yrs. professional. exp. incl. PBS/ITVS. Kate Lehmann (612) 822-1240; e-mail: KATEL3317@aol.com.

CAMERAMAN: Award-winning, sensitive, efficient. 10 yrs experience in docs & industrials, overseas projects. Complete broadcast-quality Sony BVW-300A Beta SP pkg. Rates tailored to project & budget. Can speak Japanese. Scott, Public Eye Prods., (212) 627-1244.

CAMERAMAN: Owner Sony 3-chip EVW-300 broadcast quality Hi8 pkg. NYC-based, very flexible rates. Will travel. Conversational French & Italian. Comprehensive background in photography & sculpture. More info, contact John Anderson (212) 875-9731.

CAMERAMAN: Beta SP, Aaton 16mm/S-16, Pro Hi8 pkgs. Award-winning & experienced w/ features, PBS docs, commercials, music videos, etc. D-Vision non-linear editing also avail. Flexible rates for inter-

esting projects. (212) 254-4566.

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DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY looking for interesting features, shorts, ind. projects, etc. Credits incl. features, commercials, industrials, short films, music videos. Aaton 16/S-16 pkg. avail. Call Abe (914) 783-3159.

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY w/ 15 years experience *Nat'l Geographic*, music videos, network, looking for right dramatic feature to shoot on negotiable basis. Has complete 16SR2 pkg. Zeiss lenses, video, HMI lighting. Fluent French. Barry (203) 854-9334.

DP: Award-winning w/ experience, expertise & attention to detail, seeks ind. prods. Docs, features, shorts. Great w/ people, action & aerials. Own complete Aaton S-16/16mm pkg., video & 35mm avail. Located in Utah; will travel. Jeffrey (801) 265-3444.

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ENTERTAINMENT ATTORNEY: Frequent contributor to "Legal Brief" columns in *The Independent* & other magazines, offers legal services to film & video community on projects from development through distribution. Reasonable rates. Contact: Robert L. Seigel, Esq. (212) 307-7533.

ENTERTAINMENT LAWYER: Former AIVF exec. director & founding chair of ITVS has returned to legal practice. Have your project represented by lawyer w/ in-depth understanding of ind. prod., financing, distribution & public TV. Reasonable rates. Call Lawrence Sapadin (718) 768-4142.

EXPERIENCED AVID INSTRUCTOR: Private lessons or classes on high-end AVIF system. Media composer, film composer, FX & graphics. Debra Anderson (212) 995-1966.

EXPERIENCED DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY w/ Arri 16 SR pkg. & Mole Richardson lighting pkg. Seeks interesting film projects in feature or short-subject form. Very reasonable rates for new

directors & screenwriters. (212) 737-6815; fax: 423-1125.

IND. CINEMATOGRAPHER w/ interesting credits owns 16mm or Super 16mm Aaton pkg. & lights for your music video, feature film, or short. Call Brendan Flynt for more info & reel at (212) 226-8417 (ph/fax). In Boston call (603) 599-9938.

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PROD. SOUND MIXER: Network credits, (60 Minutes, 20/20, etc.) Doc, feature. 10 yrs. experience. Nagra, Schoeps, Wireless, Mixer & more. Interested in film projects. Phone Jeff (201) 592-1260.

PROFESSIONAL FUNDRAISER WANTED. Doc on integration of baseball in postprod., searching for sponsorship, underwriting, grants. Aaron, Fetter, O'Neil, Joe Carter involved. If interested, contact Rick Morris at Kimshi Productions (610) 354-0863.

RIGHTS CLEARANCE SERVICES: Don't want to clear the rights on your film? I'll do it for you. Music, audio, archival footage, artwork, stills, the works. MB Clearances (212) 243-1067; fax: (212) 243-0627.

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SU-CITY PICTURES PRESENTS: The Screenplay Doctor & Movie Mechanic. Story editors/postprod. specialists will analyze your screenplay/treatment/synopsis & evaluate your film-in-progress. Multimedia, advanced tech & interactive consultations. Studio & ind. background. Reasonable. Call (212) 219-9224.

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FORTY ACRES AND A MULE Filmworks, Inc., is accepting WGA-registered, feature-length screenplays. Please send script & script-sized SASE to: Forty Acres and a Mule Development, 8 St. Felix St., Brooklyn, NY 11217; (718) 858-9620.

RUSSIA & C.I.S. LOCATION SERVICES: American company in Moscow w/ 3 yrs. exp. will make all arrangements for your doc. or feature. Also offering world's lowest prices on AVID & Silicon Graphics. Fax: 011-7095-216-8162; e-mail: moscine-ma@glas.apc.org.

POSTPRODUCTION

\$10/hr VIDEO VHS EDIT SUITE: \$20-3/4", \$15-interf., incl. titles, Amiga & SEG. Also avail.: A&B; dubs; computer; photo; Slides; audio; mixed media; prod./postprod.; total S-8 sound film svcs; editor/training. The Media Loft, 727 6th Ave. (23rd); (212) 924-4893.

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16MM & 35MM OPTICAL SOUND TRACKS! If you want "High Quality" sound for your film, you need a "High Quality" sound negative. Contact: Mike Holloway, Optical Sound/Chicago Inc., 24 W. Erie, Chicago, IL 60610; (312) 943-1771 or (708) 541-8488.

3/4" NONLINEAR EDITING at \$15/hr. (incl. operator) w/ D/Vision Pro 2.2 & Sony 9850. 9GB hard drive. Reads SMPTE time code. Produces EDL. 6 channels audio mix. SVHS/VHS/Hi8 editing w/o TC or EDL. Weekly/monthly rates. (212) 254-4361.

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3/4" SONY OFFLINE SYSTEM delivered to you & installed: 5850, 5800, RM 440, 2 monitors \$500/wk., \$1,600/mo. Delivery & installation incl. Equipment clean & professionally maintained. Thomas (212) 929-2439; (201) 667-9894.

A-RAY DELIVERS: Beta SP component online edit pkg. \$1,500/wk. Sony 3/4" offline \$500/wk. Do it yourself or w/ our award-winning network editors. (203) 544-8114; fax: (203) 544-8334.

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NYC. (212) 560-6904.

BRODSKY & TREADWAY: S-8 & regular 8mm film-to-video masters, scene-by-scene to 1" & Betacam. By appointment only. (508) 948-7985.

DELAWARE VALLEY EDITING: SVHS/VHS A/B roll editing w/ effects, titles & slo-mo \$25/hr., \$40/hr. w/ editor. Instruction avail. Time code striping & burn-ins \$15/hr. 10 miles from Philly, 90 miles from NYC. Call Obo Video for details (609) 354-0074.

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EDIT AT HOME: Rent our mint condition Sony 3/4" off-line system (5800, 5850, RM440, 2 monitors). \$400/week, long term rates negotiable, one month minimum. Call Deborah (212) 226-2579 or Jane (212) 929-4795.

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NOTICES ARE LISTED FREE OF CHARGE. AIVF MEMBERS & NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS RECEIVE FIRST PRIORITY; OTHERS ARE INCLUDED AS SPACE PERMITS. THE INDEPENDENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO EDIT FOR LENGTH. DEADLINES ARE THE 1ST OF THE MONTH, TWO MONTHS PRIOR TO COVER DATE (E.G., MAY 1ST FOR JULY ISSUE.) COMPLETE CONTACT INFO (NAME, MAILING ADDRESS & TELEPHONE NUMBERS) MUST ACCOMPANY ALL NOTICES. SEND TO: INDEPENDENT NOTICES, FIVE, 625 BROADWAY, NY, NY 10012. WE TRY TO BE AS CURRENT AS POSSIBLE W/ INFORMATION, BUT PLEASE DOUBLE CHECK W/ ORGANIZATIONS BEFORE SUBMITTING TAPES OR APPLICATIONS.

CONFERENCES • SEMINARS

DCTV offers technical workshops, incl.: Basic TV prod., camera seminar, S-VHS & 3/4" editing, Amiga titling & graphics, intro. to doc. Register: DCTV, 87 Lafayette St., NY, NY 10013-4435; (212) 966-4510.

FILM ARTS FOUNDATION offers ongoing workshops & seminars, from 8-S & 16mm film & video prod. to fundraising, distribution, screenwriting, special effects & guest lectures. Technical workshops taught by professionals. Contact: FAF, 346 9th St., 2nd fl., San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 552-8760; fax: (415) 552-0882.

FILMMAKERS: New computer conference dedicated to NYC area film & videomakers avail. on Eastnet BBS: (718) 767-0157. Mac & Windows users can get free FirstClass™ software to dial in. E-mail DougAbel@aol.com for more info.

HARVESTWORKS in Manhattan offers classes in subjects ranging from audio/video synchronization to multimedia prod. & audio preprod. All classes (1-2 days) held at 596 Broadway, NY, NY. To register, call: Annie Ferguson (212) 431-1130.

MID-ATLANTIC REGION ARCHIVES CONFERENCE & Oral History in Mid-Atlantic Region are hosting annual conference, "It's About Time: Archivists & Oral Historians," in Baltimore, Apr. 20-22. For info on how to register, display local materials, or rent booth space, call (410) 539-0872, x 345.

ROUSER INSTITUTE, Texas nonprofit corp., offers media literacy training to youth & their families. Workshops incl. discussions about various media forms, how media is planned & how media operates to communicate powerful messages that influence what we think about people & situations. For more info call Rhoda Cato at (512) 649-5563.

VIDEOMAKER EXPO, April 27-29 at the Meadowlands Convention Center, first trade show exclusively devoted to video prod., will take place in Secaucus, NJ. Event features video industry's leaders & experts. Series of discussion panels will incl. desk-top video & editing. For more info, call (916) 891-8410; fax: (916) 891-8443.

FILMS • TAPES WANTED

90's **CHANNEL**, embracing controversy & searching for programming that offers fresh approaches to

TV, welcomes tapes for submission. Topics that have run on 90's incl.: Racism, (*Framing the Panthers in Black & White*); Jewish/Palestinian issues (*We Dare to Speak*); sexuality issues & programs on reproductive rights. Send 3/4" tapes to: The 90's Channel, 2010 14th St., #209, Boulder, CO 80302; (303) 442-8445.

47 GALLERIES, computer bulletin board service that promotes ind. artists & producers nationally, is looking for narrative, experimental, doc, animation & performance films/videos to be sold on VHS through bulletin board systems. Send: VHS, description of tapes, résumé, SASE to: 47 Galleries, 2924 Bellevue Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90026.

ART IN GENERAL seeks video works & guest-curated video programs for new monthly screening series. All kinds of work welcome, from experimental film & video to home videos; doc & activist to public access works. Send VHS tape (cued), résumé &/or brief statement & SASE. For more info, call Joanna Spitzner (212) 219-0473.

ART ON FILM DATABASE wants to know: Have you produced film, video or video disc on visual arts? Send info on prod. to Program for Art on Film Database, computer index to over 19,000 prods on visual arts. Interested in prods on all visual arts topics, & welcomes info on prods about artists of color & multicultural art projects. Send info to: Art on Film at Columbia University, 2875 Broadway, 2nd fl., NYC 10025; (212) 854-9570; fax: (212) 854-9577.

BLACK ENTERTAINMENT TELEVISION seeks films & videos by black ind. makers, directors, or producers for "Black Vision" portion of Screen Scene, weekly 1/2-hr. show that previews TV lineup & latest theatrical releases. For more info, contact: Screen Scene, BET, 1899 Ninth St. NE, Washington, DC 20018; (202) 636-2400.

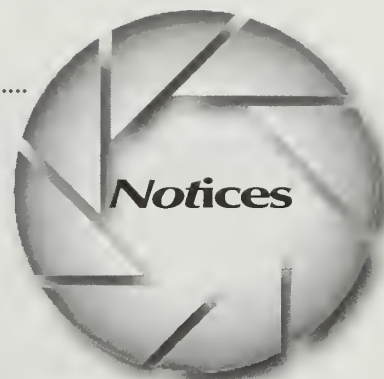
BLACK VIDEO PERSPECTIVE, new community TV prod. in Atlanta area, seeks works for/by/about African Americans. For more info, contact: Karen L. Forest (404) 231-4846.

BRONXNET (Bronx Community Cable Programming Corporation), nonprofit organization controlling 4 access channels on Bronx Cable-TV System, seeks works by ind. video- & filmmakers for access airing. Bronxnet produces programs, facilitates & assists community in producing & cablecasting programs for, by & about Bronx. Contact: Fred Weiss, program director, (718) 960-1180.

CAROUSEL, series for municipal cable channels 23 & 49 in Chicago, seeks films/videos for children 12 yrs & under, any length, any genre. Send w/appropriate release, list of credits & personal info to: Carousel, c/o Screen Magazine, 720 N. Wabash, Chicago, IL 60611. Tapes returned if accompanied by postage.

CATHODE CAFE seeks short video-art interstitials to play between alternative-music videos on Seattle's TCI/Viacom Channel 29, Sundays 9:30 pm. Format: 3/4" preferred; 1/2" OK. Contact: Stan LePard, 2700 Aiki Ave. SW #305, Seattle, WA 98116; (206) 937-2353.

CINCINNATI ARTISTS' GROUP EFFORT seeks proposals for exhibitions, performances &



audio/video/film works to show in their galleries. Experimental, traditional & collaborative projects encouraged. Contact: CAGE, 344 W. 4th St., Cincinnati, OH 55202; (513) 381-2437.

CINEMA VIDEO, monthly showcase of works by ind. video- & filmmakers, seeks S-VHS or VHS submissions of any style, content, or length. Utilizing high-end projector, selected videos are projected onto 10.5' x 14' screen. Monthly shows are collections of several artists' videos, but occasionally features are shown as special events when work merits it. Cinema Video is prod. of Velvet Elvis Arts Lounge Theater in Seattle, WA, non-profit fringe theater. Send submissions to: Kevin Picolet, 2207 E. Republican, Seattle, WA 98112, or call Kevin for info at (206) 323-3307.

CINEQUEST, weekly, half-hour TV series profiling best of ind. cinema & video from US & around world, looking for films/videos less than 20 min. to air on 30 min. cable show. Work over 20 min. will air on monthly special in Orlando, FL market during prime-time. Seeking all genres. Concept of show is to stretch perceptions of conventional TV & expose viewers to scope & talent of inds. Submit on 1/2" or 3/4" video. Submissions need not be recent. No submission limit or deadline. Will acknowledge receipt in 10 days. Send pre-paid mailer if need work returned. Contact: Michael D. McGowan, producer, Cinequest Prods, 2550 Alafayia Trail, Apt. 8100, Orlando, FL 32826; (407) 658-4865.

CINETECA DE CINE ACCION seeks film & video submissions by & about Latinos for regular screening series. Fees paid. Will hold preview tape for 3-4 mos. Formats: 16mm, 3/4", 1/2" video. Contact: Cine Acción, 346 9th St., San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 553-8135.

CITY TV, progressive municipal cable access channel in Santa Monica, seeks work on seniors, disabled, children, Spanish-language & video art; any length. Broadcast exchanged for equip. access at state-of-the-art facility. Contact: Lisa Bernard, cable TV manager, City TV, 1685 Main St., Santa Monica, CA 90401; (310) 458-8590.

CONNECT TV, new series on ind. videomakers seeks work for 1/2-hr. show. Progressive, social issue docs, art, humor. Will air on Cablevision of CT. Metro Video, 16 McKinley St., Rowayton, CT 06853; (203) 866-1090.

DATABASE & DIRECTORY OF LATIN AMERICAN FILM & VIDEO organized by Int'l Media Resources Exchange seeks works by Latin American & US Latino ind. producers. To incl. work in this resource or for info, contact: Karen Ranucci, IMRE, 124 Washington Place, NY, NY 10014; (212) 463-0108.

DOWNTOWN COMMUNITY TV CENTER (DCTV) accepts 3/4" & VHS tapes for open screenings & special series w/ focus on women, youth, multimedia performance video, Middle East, gay/lesbian, Native American, labor & Asian art. Contact: Jocelyn Taylor, DCTV, 87 Lafayette St., NY, NY 10013; (212) 941-1298.

DUTV-CABLE 54, nonprofit educational access channel operated by Drexel University in Philadelphia, is looking for works by ind. producers for broadcast. All genres & lengths considered. No payment; will return tapes. VHS, SVHS & 3/4" accepted. Contact: George McCollough or Maria Elena Mongelli, DUTV-Cable 54, 33rd & Chestnut Sts., Philadelphia, PA 19104.

DYKE TV, weekly national cable-TV show, seeks films & video shorts (under 10 min.). For info, call (212) 343-9335 or fax: 9337.

EASTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY seeks ind. prods for nonprofit cable channel in Spokane, Washington. No payment. Any genre or length. S-VHS, VHS, or 3/4". Tapes will be returned. Submit release form/letter & tapes to: Radio-Television Department - MS#104, Eastern Washington University, 526 5th St., Cheney, WA 99004-2431.

ECOMEDIA seeks film & video works for ecological screening series at Blagden Alley Artscience Warehouse. All genres accepted; emphasis on ecology. Send 3/4" or VHS tape, info, or queries to 926 N St., Rear, NW, Washington, DC 20001; (202) 842-3577.

EN CAMINO, KRCB, seeks works of 30-60 min. in Spanish & English concerning Latino community. Formats: 3/4", 16mm. Contact: Luis Nong, Box 2638, Ronher Park, CA 94928.

EZTV seeks film/video shorts (under 20 min.) for L.A.-based UHF TV show. Submit 1/2" or 3/4" tapes. Narrative, experimental, doc. Contact: Jean Railla, EZTV, 8547 Santa Monica Blvd., W. Hollywood, CA 90069.

FILMBABIES COLLECTIVE, co-op of NY-based writers & directors, seeks new members w/ short films for screening series (16mm, under 15 min.). Filmmakers must reside in NY area. For more info, contact: PO Box 2100, NY, NY 10025 (incl. SASE); (212) 875-7537.

FLIP seeks VHS copy of animation 3 min. or under &/or Xerox copy or original flip book for exhibition planned for May/June in New York. Send brief bio & SASE for return of materials by May 1 to: Flip, 163 Third Ave., #297, NY, NY 10003; (212) 254-2812.

GREAT LAKES FILM & VIDEO seeks 16mm & videos for ongoing exhibition of gay/lesbian, Jewish, & women's work. Experimental & animation are sought, as well as work fitting into program on aesthetic/anti-aesthetic. Contact: Matt Frost or Michael Walsh, Great Lakes Video & Film, PO Box 413, Milwaukee, WI 53201.

HALCYON DAYS PRODUCTIONS seeks video segments (1-5 min.) by 15- to 25-year-olds for video compilation show. If piece is selected, you may have chance to be video correspondent for show. Work may be editorial, real-life coverage, political satire, slapstick—you decide. Just personalize. Submit VHS or Hi8 (returnable w/ SASE) to: Mai Kim Holley,

Halcyon Days Prod., c/o Hi8, 12 W. End Ave., 5th fl., NY, NY 10023; (212) 397-7754.

HANDI-CAPABLE IN THE MEDIA, INC., nonprofit organization, seeks video prods on people w/ disabilities to air on Atlanta's Public Access TV. No fees. Submit VHS or 3/4" tape to: Handi-Capable in the Media, Inc., 2625 Piedmont Rd., ste. 56-137, Atlanta, GA 30324.

IND. PRODUCER who owns rights to book on bombing of Nagasaki in 1945, looking for collaborators & add'l material for multimedia project. Possible venues incl. exhibits in SF, NY & Japan honoring 50th anniv. of event. Contact: Duncan Chinnock, 630 9th Ave., #907, NY, NY 10036; (212) 765-0555.

IN VISIBLE COLOURS FILM & VIDEO SOCIETY seeks videos by women of color for library collection. Work will be accessible to members, producers, multicultural groups & educational institutions. For more info, contact: Claire Thomas, In Visible Colours, 119 W. Pender, ste. 115, Vancouver, B.C. V6B 1S5; (604) 682-1116.

IND. FILM & VIDEO SHOWCASE, cable access show, seeks student & ind. films & videos to give artists exposure. Send films or video in 3/4" format w/ paragraph about artist & his/her work. Send to: Box #1626, 4202 E. Fowler Ave., Tampa, Florida 33620.

LATINO COLLABORATIVE, bimonthly screening series, seeks works by Latino film/videomakers. Honoraria paid. Send VHS preview tapes to: Latino Collaborative Bimonthly Screening Series, Vanessa Codorniu, 280 Broadway, ste. 412, NY, NY 10007; (212) 732-1121.

LA PLAZA, weekly half-hour doc series produced at WGBH Boston for & about Latino community, is interested in acquiring original works by ind. film- & videomakers that deal w/ social & cultural issues concerning Latinos. Works between 25 & 28 min. encouraged. Please send tapes in Beta, 3/4" or VHS format to: La Plaza/Acquisitions, WGBH, 125 Western Ave., Boston, MA 02134.

LAUREL CABLE NETWORK, nonprofit in Maryland, seeks variety of works of all lengths & genres for regular access airing in 3/4", SVHS, or VHS. No payment & tapes cannot be returned. Submit tape & release form/letter to: Laurel Cable Network, 8103 Sandy Spring Rd., Laurel, MD 20707, Attn.: Bob Neuman.

METRO SHORTS, program of Metropolitan Film Society, seeks 35mm prints, 15 min. or less, for regular screenings. Subject matter needs to suit audience that would view film w/ R rating. VHS/S-VHS preview tape would be helpful. Two-way UPS ground shipping costs provided. Contact: Michelle Forren, exec. dir., Metropolitan Film Society, 3928 River Walk Dr., Duluth, GA 30136-6113.

NAT'L POLICE ATHLETIC LEAGUE seeks videos that foster strong self image of teens. All genres—art, music, etc.—on video. Send letter of permission to air. Contact: NPAL, 1626 32nd St. NW, ste. 270, Washington, DC 20007.

NEW AMERICAN MAKERS, nationally recognized venue for new works by emerging & under-recognized videomakers at Center for Arts in SF seeks works that challenge boundaries of creative video/TV. Videomakers receive honorarium of

\$2/min. for tapes. Send VHS tape, \$15 entry fee & SASE to: New American Makers, PO Box 460490, San Francisco, CA 94146.

NEW CITY PRODUCTIONS seeks works-in-progress & docs on all subjects for monthly screenings. Committed to promoting ind. community by establishing forum of new voices. Have professional large screen video & 16mm projectors. Prefer projects originated on Hi8. Send cassettes to: New City Prods, 635 Madison Ave., ste. 1101, NY, NY 10022; (212) 753-1326.

NEWTON TELEVISION FOUNDATION seeks proposals on ongoing basis from ind. producers. NTF is nonprofit foundation collaborating w/ ind. producers on docs concerning contemporary issues. Past works have been broadcast on local & national public TV, won numerous awards & most are currently in distribution in educational market. Contact NTF for details: 1608 Beacon St., Waban, MA 02168; (617) 965-8477; ntf@tmn.com; walshtntf@aol.com

NEW TELEVISION seeks video works up to 30 min. in any genre using medium in artistic ways. Screened works receive \$110/min. Contact: WGBH, 125 Western Avenue, Boston MA 02134; tel.: (617) 492-2777.

NYC producer & marketing consultant seeks various short film/videos for inclusion in new television programs being produced this Spring. Cycle of hour-long programs to be sold to TV networks & cable or individual stations for airing. Each program will be comprised of three or four short films, each no more than 20 min. long, all joined by similar theme or style. For more info contact: Mitchell Banks; M&L Banks; 330 5th Ave., ste. 304, NY, NY 10001; tel.: (212) 563-5944; fax: (212) 563-5949.

NYU TV, channel 51 in NYC, is offering opportunities for inds to showcase finished films & videos. Submit materials to: Linda Noble, 26 Washington Place, 1st fl., NY, NY 10003.

NYTEX PRODUCTIONS seeks video interviews from across US. Looking for political, entertainment, & PSAs in S-VHS or VHS. Send to: NyTex Prods, PO Box 303, NY, NY 10101-0303, Attn.: Don Cevaro.

OFFLINE, hour-long, biweekly, national public-access show, seeks ind. & creative works. Submissions should be 3/4", SVHS or VHS & should not exceed 20 min. (longer works will be considered for serialization). For more info, contact: Greg Bowman, 203 Pine Tree Rd., Ithaca, NY 14850; (607) 272-2613. e-mail: 72137.3352@compuserve.com.

ORGONE CINEMA, non-funded monthly film/video series, looking for handmade, nature, silent, random, noisy, sex, science, home, paranoid & perverse movies. All formats. Prefer VHS for preview. Deadline: Ongoing. Send to: Orgone Cinema & Archive, 2238 Murray Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15217.

PLANET CENTRAL TELEVISION seeks broadcast-quality films, videos & animation censored by US TV as too controversial or political. Bonus considerations for submissions that are smart, funny, sexy & exhibit irreverent attitude. Send tape to: Jay Levin, director of program acquisitions, Planet Central Television, 309 Santa Monica Blvd., ste. 322, Santa Monica, CA 90401; (310) 458-4588.

PRESCOTT COMMUNITY ACCESS CHANNEL requests non-commercial programs for local airing. No payment, but return by post guaranteed. Contact: Jeff Robertson, program coordinator, Channel 13, PO Box 885, Prescott, AZ; (602) 445-0909.

REEL TIME AT P.S. 122, ongoing quarterly screening series, is accepting submissions of recent ind. film & video works for 1995 season. Exhibition formats include S-8, 16mm, 3/4" & VHS. Send VHS submission tapes, written promotion & return postage to: Curator, Reel Time, P.S.122, 150 1st Ave., NY, NY 10009; (212) 477-5829 (x327).

RIGHTS & WRONGS, weekly, nonprofit human rights global TV magazine series scheduled to resume broadcast in February seeks story ideas & footage for upcoming season. Last yr. 34 programs covering issues from China to Guatemala were produced. Contact: Danny Schechter or Rory O'Connor, exec. producers, The Global Center, 1600 Broadway, ste. 700, NY, NY 10019; (212) 246-0202; fax: 2677.

REBIS GALLERIES seeks works by artists working in video/film & computers. All subjects considered. Formats should be in VHS/Beta, 8mm, S-8, 16mm. For computers 3.5 disks in PC or low density Amiga files. Contracts to be negotiated. Contact: Rebis Galleries, 1930 S. Broadway, Denver, CO 80210; (303) 698-1841.

REGISTERED seeks experimental and non-narrative videos about consumerism and/or modern ritual for nationally touring screening. Send VHS for preview w/ SASE & short description to: Registered, Attn.: Joe Sola, PO Box 1960, Peter Stuyvesant Station, 432 E. 14th St., NY, NY 10009.

SHORT FILM & VIDEO: All genres, any medium, 1 min. to 1 hr. Unconventional, signature work in VHS or 3/4" for nat'l broadcast! Submit to: EDGE TV, 7805 Sunset Blvd., ste. 203, Los Angeles, CA 90046.

SHORTS SOUGHT by NYC producer & marketing co. for new TV programs being produced this spring. Planning cycle of 60-min. programs comprising 3-4 thematically linked shorts, 20-min. max, bookended by conversations w/about mediamakers. Submissions must have no entangling contracts & incl. synopsis, list of prior submissions, bio & SASE. Contact: Mitchell Banks, M&L Banks, 330 5th Ave., ste. 304, NY, NY 10001; (212) 563-5944; fax: 5949.

SCULPTURE CENTER GALLERY invites video artists to submit installation concepts for new video program. Emerging & mid-career artists w/o affiliation should submit résumé, narrative description, documentation of previous work on VHS tape, slides or photos. (incl. SASE) to: Sculpture Center, 167 E. 69th St., NY, NY 10021.

STATEN ISLAND COMMUNITY TELEVISION PRODUCER seeks experimental works, all subjects, by ind. video & film artists. The more explicit, the better; film & video on 3/4" preferred, but 1/2" &/or 8mm acceptable. Send tapes to: Matteo Masiello, 140 Redwood Loop, Staten Island, NY 10309.

SUPER CAMERA, prod. of Office KEL, int'l TV company, seeks unique & never-before-seen footage.



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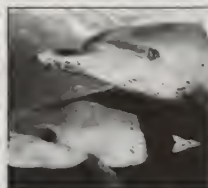
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THE INDEPENDENT FILM CHANNEL 34 seeks shorts, experimental films, docs, animation for TV broadcast & CD-ROM titles. Send 1/2" or 3/4" tapes to: Maureen World, Precise Entertainment Inc. 1 Irving Pl, ste. P20E, NY, NY 10003; (212) 529-9687.

THE NEWZ, half-hour, late-night comedy TV show based on topical news events, is actively seeking submissions. Footage will be showcased on national series. Formats: D2, Beta SP, Beta, 3/4", SVHS, VHS, or Hi8. Cats: News-style stock shots (skylines, panoramas, local landmarks, local sports icons, etc.) & comedic shots. Must include signed submissions release for stock footage. For info or release form, contact: The Newz Submission Line (407) 354-6590.

THIRD ANNUAL NEW YORK DIGITAL SALON, hosted by School of Visual Arts in NYC, is seeking computer-assisted artwork or catalog essays. Jurors will incl. Regina Cornwell, Manuel DeLanda, & Ken Feingold. Exhibit scheduled for Nov. 1995. Deadline: May 1. To enter, send description of work & artist's statement, w/ slides, videotape &/or CD-ROM to: Timothy Binkley, chair, NY Digital Salon, SVA, 209 E. 23rd St., NY, NY 10010; (212) 592-2535; fax: 2509.

TOXIC TELEVISION seeks broadcast-quality, creative video shorts (under 10 min.) for alternative TV experience. Looking for works in animation, puppetry, experimental, computers, etc. Send VHS or 3/4" tape, SASE & résumé to: Tom Lenz, 12412 Belfran St., Hudson, FL 34669.

TV POLONIA is looking for entertainment, family, sports, drama & reality programming to fill cable TV channel sent to Poland in English w/ Polish translations. For more info, send SASE to Stefani Kelly, Southfield Park Tower 1 #700, 12835 E. Arapahoe Rd., Englewood, CO 80112.

UNQUOTE TELEVISION, 1/2-hr program dedicated to exposing new, innovative film & video artists, seeks ind. doc, narrative, experimental, performance works under 28 min. Reaches 10 million homes via program exchange nationwide. 1/2" & 3/4" dubs accepted. Submit to: Unquote TV, c/o DUTV, 33rd & Chestnut St., Philadelphia, PA 19104; (215) 895-2927.

URBAN INSTITUTE FOR CONTEMPORARY ARTS is accepting video & 16mm film in all genres for next season of programming. Fee paid if accepted. Send VHS tape w/ SASE to: Film Committee, UTICA, 88 Monroe Ave. NW, Grand Rapids MI 49503.

VIEWPOINTS, KQED's showcase of ind. point-of-view works, seeks films & videos expressing "strong statements on important subjects." Submit VHS or 3/4" tapes (1 1/2 hr. length preferred) to: Greg Swartz, Manager of Broadcast Projects & Acquisitions, KQED, 2601 Mariposa St., San Francisco, CA 94110; (415) 553-2269.

VISION FOOD, weekly public access show in LA &

NYC, seeks visually exciting pieces in all genres (art, music & film on video). Under 20 min., 1/2", 3/4" dubs. No payment, videos credited. Send letter of permission to air material & video to: Jack Holland, 5432 Edgewood Pl., Los Angeles, CA 90019.

WEIRD TV, satellite TV show airing weekly on Telstar 302, specializes in alternative viewing. Will consider works of 3 min. max., animation or shorts. Submit work to: Weird TV, 1818 W. Victory, Glendale, CA 91201; (818) 637-2820.

WORLD AFRICAN NETWORK (WAN), first premium cable network for people of African descent worldwide, is accepting submissions for 1995 launch. Featuring films, docs, shorts, news & info, children's programs, sports, concerts, drama series & sitcoms. Send to: Eleven Piedmont Center, ste. 620, Atlanta, GA 30305; (404) 365-8850; fax: 365-8350.

WNYC-TV seeks films/videos for new prime-time series on NY inds. Doc. or experimental (incl. video art); under one hour; completed; all rights cleared. Pays \$35/min. Send VHS, 3/4" or Betacam preview tape, to: NY Independents, c/o WNYC-TV, One Centre St., rm. 1450, NY, NY 10007. No phone calls, please.

WOMEN OF COLOR in Media Arts Database seeks submissions of films & videos for database that incl. video filmographies, bibliographical info & data. Contact: Dorothy Thigpen, Women Make Movies, 462 Broadway, 5th fl., NY, NY 10013.

WYOU-TV, cable-access station in Madison, WI, seeks music-related videos for weekly alternative music show. Send 1/2" or 3/4" tapes. No payment; videos credited. Contact: WYOU-TV, 140 W. Gilman St., Madison, WI 53703.

XTV, new, ind. cable TV channel, seeks student & ind. works from around country. For more info, call: Otto Khera (602) 948-0381.

OPPORTUNITIES • GIGS

ASSISTANT/ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR position in Video beginning in Fall 1995. Applicants should have Ph.D. or Masters w/ at least 3 years professional experience. Appls should incl. vitae & three references. Send to: Dr. Ted Schwalbe, chair, Dept. of Communications, McEwan Hall Room 326. SUNY College at Fredonia, Fredonia, NY 14063. EOE/AA.

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF VIDEO PRODUCTION & CRITICISM, Hampshire College. F/T, fall 1995. Prefer candidates using doc. or mixed forms to represent oppressed minorities, or alternatives to dominant media. Critical/analytical approach to issues surrounding cultural prod. essential. Strengths in minority/3rd world representation or writing for or about media valued. Graduate degree &/or equivalent professional exp. req. Individualized liberal arts instruction in innovative setting, opportunity for cross-disciplinary teaching & research. Send letter, vitae, 3 references to: Video Prod Search Committee, School of Communications & Cognitive Science, Hampshire College, Amherst, MA 01002. Appl. review beg. Jan. 15. EOE/AA. Women & minorities encouraged to apply.

BOSTON JEWISH FILM FESTIVAL seeks director & associate director to head up 1995 season of

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AIVF helps you save time and money as well. You'll find you can spend more of your time (and less of your money) on what you do best—getting your work made and seen. To succeed as an independent today, you need a wealth of resources, strong connections, and the best information available. So join with more than 5,000 other independents who rely on AIVF to help them succeed. **JOIN AIVF TODAY!**

Here's what AIVF membership offers:

THE INDEPENDENT FILM & VIDEO MONTHLY

Membership provides you with a

year's subscription to *The Independent*. Thought-provoking features, news, and regular columns on business, technical, and legal matters. Plus festival listings, funding deadlines, exhibition venues, and announcements of member activities and new programs and services. Special issues highlight regional activity and focus on subjects including media education and the new technologies.

FESTIVAL SERVICES

AIVF arranges screenings for festival representatives, handles customs and group shipping of members' materials to foreign festivals, and publishes the *AIVF Guide to International Film and Video Festivals*—considered the definitive resource in the field. We also host periodic evenings with festival consultants for members to receive personalized counseling on strategy and placement.

ACCESS

Membership allows you to join fellow AIVF members at intimate events featuring festival directors, producers, distributors, and funders.

COMMUNITY

We are initiating monthly member get-togethers in cities across the country; call the office for the one nearest you. Plus members are carrying on active dialogue online—creating a "virtual community" for independents to share information, resources, and ideas.

ADVOCACY

Members receive periodic advocacy

alerts, with updates on important legislative issues affecting the independent field and mobilization for collective action.

INSURANCE

Members are eligible to purchase discounted personal and production insurance plans through AIVF suppliers. A wide range of health insurance options are available, as well as special liability, E&O, and production plans tailored for the needs of low-budget mediamakers.

TRADE DISCOUNTS

A growing list of businesses across the country offer AIVF members discounts on equipment and auto rentals, film processing, transfers, editing, and other production necessities.

WORKSHOPS, PANELS, AND SEMINARS

Members get discounts on events covering the whole spectrum of current issues and concerns affecting the field, ranging from business and aesthetic to technical and political topics.

INFORMATION

We distribute a series of books on financing, funding, distribution, and production; members receive discounts on selected titles. AIVF's staff also can provide information about distributors, festivals, and general information pertinent to your needs. Our library houses information on everything from distributors to sample contracts to budgets.

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EXECUTIVE PRODUCER will help inds find outlets for product. Finished works only incl. films, docs, TV pilots & other quality product. Please send work on VHS to: John Gabriel Matonti, executive producer; c/o Matonti Enterprises, Inc., 26 Lake Shore Dr., Montville, NJ 07045.

FILM/VIDEO ARTS has internships avail. in NYC. Minimum 6-mo. commitment. In exchange for at least 16 hrs./wk. of work, interns receive free media courses, access to equipment & postprod. facilities at nonprofit media arts center. Appls. must have plan for ind. project. Film/video knowledge helpful. Deadline: Ongoing. Contact: Intern Program, Film/Video Arts, 817 Broadway, 2nd fl., NY, NY 10003; (212) 673-9361.

HEAD, DEPT. OF MEDIA ARTS, University of Arizona. Salary commensurate w/ experience. Demonstrated success in admin. position; distinguished rep in Media Artrrs; earned terminal degree. Responsible for all admin. aspects of Media Arts dept. incl. providing leadership & Advocacy for diverse & progressive dept.; financial development; foster innovative Media Arts curricula. Start date July 1. Send CV & names of at least 4 refs to: Michael Gillette, chair, Dept. of Media Arts Search Committee, Office of Dean of Fine Arts, Music 111, U. of Arizona, Tucson, AZ 85721. EOE/ADA/AA.

VIDEO CAMERAWOMEN needed to work as stringers covering local events throughout US for Dyke TV, weekly NYC cable TV show. For info, call (212) 343-9335; fax: 9337.

PUBLICATIONS

AFRICAN AMERICAN FILM STATISTICS & MARKETING STRATEGIES is thorough volume of data of value to any African American filmmaker trying to raise funds. Incl. are stats on profits of black-directed films since 1970 & numbers for theatrical releases & home video. Send \$29.95 to: Greener Grass Prods, 1041 W. 98th St., Chicago, IL 60643; (312) 779-8717.

ANIMATION JOURNAL, peer-reviewed scholarly journal devoted to animation history/theory, welcomes submissions. Manuscripts should be double-spaced, following Chicago Manual of Style. Papers are blind-referred, so author's name should not appear on body of manuscript, only on attached cover sheet. Send 2 copies, 1 hard (paper) copy & 1 copy on computer disk, preferably Mac in Microsoft Word file. Send SASE for returns. Deadlines: July 1 for spring issue. For more info, call or fax (714) 544-6255, or write: Dr. Maureen Furniss, editor, AJ Press, 2011

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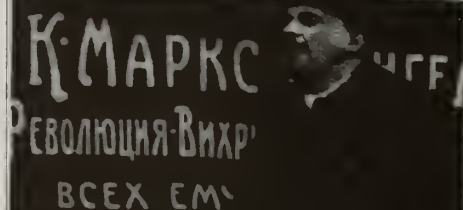
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CHICAGO FILMLETTER, magazine for those into film/TV prod., covers both ind. & Hollywood on-location prod. in Chicago. Also contains listing of job opportunities, film classes & day-by-day calendar of film-related events. For more info, contact: Al Cohn, Chicago Filmletter, 1532 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, IL; (312) 235-3456.

CONCERNS, publication of Women's Caucus for the Modern Languages, invites manuscripts on feminist involvement in development of film studies an academic discipline. Suggested issues of interest incl.: What has feminist contribution been to the discipline? How might it be characterized? What's women's influence been on the research and teaching interests (& practices) of the discipline? What's status of women in the profession? Anticipated date of publication is late '95, early '96. Send submissions to: Harriet Margolis, Theater & Film, Victoria University, Wellington, New Zealand; e-mail: harriet.margolis@vuw.ac.nz; fax: 00 64 4 495 5090.

CRITICAL CONDITIONS: ARTS CRITICISM IN MINNESOTA IN THE NINETIES is comprehensive 92-page report & assessment of outlook for arts coverage in state. Edited by Patrice Clark Koelsch & compiled & written by Roy M. Close, it is culmination of two-year survey of trends in arts coverage in state's daily & weekly newspapers, magazines, electronic media & elsewhere. To order, send \$10 to: The Center for Arts Criticism, 2402 University Ave. West, Saint Paul, MN 55114. For price info on bulk orders, call the Center at (612) 644-5501.

DEALMAKING IN THE FILM & TELEVISION INDUSTRY provides layman's guide to hazards of dealmaking in Hollywood & "self-defense" tactics for filmmakers. Author Mark Litwak is entertainment attorney & advocate for ind. filmmakers. Book available in stores Mar. 31.

FCC REPORT: Learn your rights to leased access time, as FCC describes them. Get report & order on rate regulations from FCC. Outlines Cable Act of 1992 & how it affects leased access. Send \$39 to: FCC Report, PO Box 4591, Chico, CA 95927.

GAUNTLET, Exploring Limits of Free Expression, is open forum on First Amendment Rights covering issues of pornography, racism, film censorship, media manipulation, prostitution, cults, sexual harassment, etc. For copies or more info, send SASE to: Barry Hoffman, editor, 309 Powell Rd., PR94A, Springfield, PA 19064.

GUIDELINES TO INTERNATIONAL PROD.: Info on shooting overseas. Topics cover everything from pre- to postprod. Incl. chapters on int'l standards & formats, insurance, using foreign crew, int'l contacts & tips on how to keep out of jail. Written by David Calderwood, experienced int'l producer, respected conference presenter & widely published

author. Send \$15 to: Euro-Pacific Prods, 703 Broad St., Shrewsbury, NJ 07702; (908) 530-4451.

HOLLYWOOD SCRIPT READERS' DIGEST showcases outlines of avail. screenplays & TV series concepts. Regularly distributed free to hundreds of established TV & film prod. cos., ind. producers, lit agents, etc. For \$100, will publish your screenplay synopsis of not more than 150 words; \$200 for 251-300 words; \$400 for 351-500 words. For TV series ideas, 300-word proposal costs \$150; up to 400 words is \$225; up to 500 words, \$275. Send name, phone number, typed proposal & cashier's check or m.o. to: The HSRD, 3917 Riverside Dr., ste. 9433, Burbank, CA 91505; (818) 954-0425.

JACK MACKEREL VIDEO MAGAZINE, quarterly video compilation on VHS videocassette, is accepting submissions of short films, music videos, docs, interviews w/ artists, erotica, computer-generated imagery & animation & video/film whatnot. Send contributions (VHS format) to Jack Mackerel Video Magazine, PO Box 80024, Minneapolis, MN 55408-8024; attn.: Greg Bachar. (Send \$5 cash for sample volume.)

MONEY FOR FILM & VIDEO ARTISTS, publication listing more than 190 sources of support for ind. film- & videomakers, is avail. for \$14.95 + s&h. Contact: Doug Rose, ACA Books, dept. 25, 1285 Ave. of the Americas, 3rd fl., area M, NY, NY 10019.

NATIONAL VIDEO RESOURCES' Strategic Plan, 24-page booklet on NVR's strategic planning process & results. For free copy, write or call: National Video Resources, Inc., 73 Spring St., ste. 606, NY, NY 10012; (212) 274-8080.

NE FOUNDATION FOR THE HUMANITIES offers paperback transcript of '93 nat'l conference, "Telling the Story: The Media, The Public & American History." Historians, filmmakers, public programming pros explore ways in which Americans learn about history. Send \$12.50 (MA residents add 5% sales tax) to: NEFH, 46 Temple Pl., 4th fl., Boston, MA 02111.

PROTECTING ARTISTS & THEIR WORK, publication of People for the American Way, answers questions regarding artists' rights as well as federal & state law. To request copy, call People for the American Way (202) 467-4999.

SIX ROUTES TO FILM FINANCING, free tip sheet published by Hollywood Film Institute, breaks down 6 basic ways producers can finance films. For free copy, contact: Hollywood Film Institute, PO Box 481252, Dept. 1, Los Angeles, CA 90048; (213) 933-3456.

VIDEOS FOR CHANGING WORLD, new catalog of multicultural & social issue video docs. Videos in collection relate to common themes of building bridges across cultures & working for grassroots social change. Topics incl.: indigenous peoples, Central America, environmental issues, cross-cultural music & theater, oral history, etc. Avail. free. Contact: Turning Tide Prods, PO Box 864, Wendell, MA 01379; (800) 557-6414, (508) 544-8313; fax: 7989.

WHO FUNDS PTV? CPB pamphlet containing listings of public-TV series, entities, & organizations that provide funding to ind. producers. To obtain copy of third edition, send SASE to: Who Funds PTV?, CPB

Publications Office, 901 E St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20004-2037.

RESOURCES • FUNDS

CHICAGO RESOURCE CENTER awards grants to nonprofits who serve gay & lesbian community. For more info, contact: Chicago Resource Center, 104 S. Michigan Ave., ste. 1220, Chicago, IL 60603; (312) 759-8700.

CREATIVE SCREENWRITERS GROUP, nat'l organization dedicated to advancement of writing, is launching free service for everyone interested in improving their writing skills. CSG will provide assistance to anyone interested in joining writers' group in his/her community. CSG also provides info on how to form new groups. Send name, address & phone w/ description of writing interests & SASE to: Creative Screenwriters Group, 518 9th St. NE, ste. 308, Washington, DC 20002.

DCTV ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE is now accepting appls. for \$500 worth of equipment access on ongoing basis w/in one year. When 1 funded project is complete, DCTV will review appls. on file & select next project. Preference given to projects already underway. For appl., send SASE to: AIR, c/o DCTV, 87 Lafayette St., NY, NY 10013-4435.

HEART OF AMERICA AWARDS The American Legion Auxiliary is currently accepting nominations for this year's Heart of America Awards, given to print and broadcast professionals who make positive contributions to American Women, children, and families by informing the public on timely issues, by providing valuable or thought-provoking information, or by promoting a positive image of women and children in our society. Categories are Film/Videotape/Multimedia, Audio Productions, and Magazine/Newspaper. Deadline: May 1. For an entry form write: American Legion Auxiliary, 777 North Meridian, 3rd Fl., Indianapolis, IN 46204-1189.

HUMANITIES PROJECTS IN MEDIA administered by NEH have deadline of Sept. 1995 (specific day not yet avail.) for projects beginning after April 1, 1996. 20 copies of appl. required on or before deadline. For appl., guidelines, write: National Endowment for the Humanities, Division of Public Programs, Humanities Projects in Media, rm. 420, 1100 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20506; (202) 606-8278.

JAPAN FOUNDATION is providing film prod. support to experienced ind. or corp. for prod. of films, TV programs, or other a/v materials that further understanding of Japan & Japanese culture abroad. Contact: Japan Foundation, 152 West 57th St., 39th fl., NY, NY 10019; (212) 489-0299.

LEDIG HOUSE WRITER'S COLONY offers published writers & translators quiet workplace, meals, lodging, & meetings w/ other writers at Ledig House in Columbia County, NY. 2-month sessions 3 times/yr. For appl. info contact: Ledig House, ART/OMI, 55 5th Ave., 15th fl., NY, NY 10003; (212) 206-6060.

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Stretch your dollars by becoming a joint member of AIVF and one of the following partner organizations; get full member benefits in both organizations for one discounted fee!

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1126 Boylston Street, Boston, MA 02215; (617) 536-1540

CHICAGO FILMMAKERS
1543 West Division Street, Chicago, IL 60622; (312) 384-5533

IMAGE FILM/VIDEO CENTER
75 Bennett Street, Suite M-1, Atlanta, GA 30309; (404) 352-4225

NEWTON TELEVISION FOUNDATION
1608 Beacon Street, Waban, MA 02168; (617) 965-8477

WOMEN MAKE MOVIES
462 Broadway, Suite 500, New York, NY 10013; (212) 925-0606

Benefits and prices vary; call the organizations listed above directly for specific information.

cuts-only editing systems avail. free to indivs. who agree to produce arts & heritage programming regularly & exclusively for Cultural Cable Channel of New Orleans. To qualify, interested parties must be members of Cultural Communications (\$35/yr.) & will have to produce minimum of 6 shows & complete at least 1 program per month. For more info, contact: Mark J. Sindler, exec. director, Cultural Cable Channel (504) 529-3366.

LYN BLUMENTHAL MEMORIAL FUND FOR IND. VIDEO: Grants go to individuals & collectives for video prod. Fund seeks work that aims to do any or all of following: test limits of technology; extend language of personal expression; question aesthetic convention; explore complex issues of gender, sexuality & cultural identity; challenge prevailing social system. Prod. grants \$1,000-\$3,000. Fund encourages projects that make use of newly evolving/small-format media technologies w/ low budgets (\$6,000 or less). Deadline: Sept. 15. Write for appl. form & funding guidelines. No phone calls. Write: Lyn Blumenthal Memorial Fund for Ind. Video, PO Box 3514, Church St. Station, NY, NY 10007.

MACDOWELL COLONY seeks film/video artists for residencies of up to 2 mos. at multidisciplinary artist community in Petersborough, NH. Deadlines: Apr. 15 (Sept.-Dec.), Sept. 15 (Jan.-April). Ability to pay not factor for acceptance. Ltd. travel grants avail. Write or call for info, appl.: MacDowell Colony, 100 High St., Peterborough, NH 03458; (603) 924-3886.

MEDIA ALLIANCE assists NYC artists & non-profit organizations in using state-of-art equipment, postprod. & prod. facilities at reduced rates. Contact: Media Alliance, c/o WNET, 356 W. 58th St., NY, NY 10019; (212) 560-2919.

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES is accepting proposals to any of its six divisions that address any of complex topics & themes related to American pluralism & identity. For further info, deadlines & guidelines write to: NEH, rm. 406, 1100 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20506; (800) NEH-1121.

NY FOUNDATION FOR THE ARTS awards Artists' Fellowships to individual NY artists. Applicants must be 18 year & older, resident of NY for at least 2 yrs. Cannot be grad or undergrad student, NYFA recipient of last 3 yrs, or employee or board member of foundation. For more info, call NYFA at (212) 366-6900.

POLLOCK-KRASNER FOUNDATION gives financial assistance to artists of recognizable merit & financial need working as mixed-media or installation artists. Grants awarded throughout yr., \$1,000-\$30,000. For guidelines, write: Pollock-Krasner Foundation, 725 Park Ave., NY, NY 10021.

PRINCESS GRACE FOUNDATION-USA makes awards to thesis film students enrolled in accredited film programs. Please write to determine if your school/university is eligible to apply. Jennifer Reis, Director of Grants Programs, Princess Grace Foundation, 725 Park Ave., NY, NY 10021.

THE SAN FRANCISCO FOUNDATION is seeking candidates for its 1995-96 Multicultural Fellowship Program, established to advance profes-

NOTICES

sionals from underrepresented ethnic groups in nonprofit service through work experience in a major foundation. The Fellowship is a F/T, one-year assignment, beginning June/July, assisting a program executive in research, analysis and grantmaking in one of six program areas: Arts/Humanities, Community Health, Education, Environment, Social Services or Urban Affairs. Requirements: self-directed person with demonstrated interest in nonprofit service; strong writing, communication, and analytical skills; volunteer experience and/or work background in one of the specific program areas. Master's degree preferred. Stipend: \$27,000 plus benefits. Applications will be reviewed through April 15, 1995. Send letter of inquiry with resume to Paula Jackson, The San Francisco Foundation, 685 Market Street, Suite 910, San Francisco, CA 94105. Details on Arts Wire (AWNEWS Item 651.)

SCREENWRITING COMPETITION Third annual contest awards outstanding screenwriters and playwrights for their original literary work. Entries will be accepted from Jan. 6 and must be postmarked by April 18. Please include a \$10 entry fee. Winners will be chosen by July 12. First prize: \$2,500; Second prize: \$1,500; Third prize: \$500. Please send SASE for return of materials. Mail entries to: Parkplace Productions, PO Box 48703, Doraville, GA 30362.

TRAVEL GRANTS FUND FOR ARTISTS makes grants to US artists to enhance their professional growth through short-term int'l experiences that enable them to collaborate w/ colleagues. Indiv. media artists should contact Arts International for 1994 appls. & guidelines at: Arts Int'l, 809 United Nations Plaza, NY, NY 10017; (212) 984-5370.

VISUAL STUDIES WORKSHOP MEDIA CENTER in Rochester, NY, accepts proposals on ongoing basis for its Media Access program. Artists, ind. producers & nonprofits awarded access at reduced rates, prod. & postprod. equipment for work on noncommercial projects. For appl., tour, or more info, call (716) 442-8676.

WRITERS WORKSHOP NATIONAL SCRIPTWRITING CONTEST is accepting scripts from throughout US. 5 to 6 winners will be chosen to receive \$500 cash award. Winners also receive free tuition for critical evaluation of scripts before panel of motion picture agents, producers, writers & directors. This program continues throughout year. For submission info, send legal size SASE w/ 60¢ postage to: Willard Rogers, Writers Workshop National Contest, PO Box 69799, Los Angeles, CA 90069; (213) 933-9232.

LOOKING FOR WORK?

Let others know you're out there!

Each month, dozens of DPs, cinematographers, editors, and composers find jobs through *The Independent's Classifieds*.

Ads cost just \$25 for AIVF members, \$35 for non-members. Pay by check, Mastercard, or VISA. See Classified section or call (212) 473-3400 for details.



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Grants In Aid Deadline: April 28, 1995



CHICAGO MEDIAMAKERS GET ORGANIZED

Independent producers, artists, and arts organizations in Chicago began 1995 with a flurry of advocacy activity. The Chicago Arts Strike Force, initially formed in response to the abolition of the National Endowment for the Arts' (NEA) regional regrant programs, has expanded its agenda to include advocacy for the preservation of the NEA and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB). The group is working on the production of PSAs and is pursuing the development of new regional funding sources, including an artists' trust and a video rental or filmmakers' tax.

In late January, Margaret Caples of the Community Film Workshop and independent producer Gordon Quinn of Kartemquin Films represented another coalition, the Chicago Area Film and Video Network (CAFDN), in a discussion of government funding of CPB and NEA on *Chicago Tonight*, a public affairs program on PBS affiliate, WTTW. CAFDN, which unites producers, distributors, public access cable, and media art centers, is expecting to make more media appearances after it issues a press release in late February on the impact that government cuts to CPB and NEA will have on Chicago's independent media arts community.

"Cry 'Foul' Now!," reads a flyer being distributed by Kartemquin Films in front of local theaters showing their successful documentary, *Hoop Dreams*. The flyer reminds viewers that seed money for the project came from both the CPB and NEA.

What Has Grassroots and a Dialtone?

In January, indies quickly mobilized phone trees to alert their colleagues to the CPB rescission hear-

ings held on January 19 by the Labor, Health, and Human Services Subcommittee of the House Appropriations Committee. Advocates in the San Francisco Bay Area, including members of Film Arts Foundation, focused on Rep. Frank Riggs, a potential swing vote. Working from local phone lists and a list of AIVF members in the area, Chicagoans urged people to contact subcommittee chairman Rep. John Porter from Wilmette, IL. The AIVF board made calls to AIVF members in every state with a subcommittee member. According to ITVS' Suzanne Stenson, the Hill received a flood of calls in support of CPB.

Californians Caucus

On February 18 a number of organizations, including FAF and the National Alliance of Media Arts and Culture (NAMAC), hosted a regional town hall meeting, "Federal Arts Funding: An Endangered Species?" California Rep. Nancy Pelosi and other Bay Area congress-

sional reps were present to gather information from arts advocates on the impact of proposed cuts to the NEA, NEH, and CPB.

On February 25, NAMAC hosted a meeting to plan its next conference, "Rewiring Our Networks: Cultural Equity and the Information Superhighway." The Oakland meeting, which was attended by Rep. Ron Dellums and other Bay Area community leaders, was linked by video conferencing with a similar gathering in Los Angeles, hosted by Visual Communications. Organizer Norman Jayo says, "The planning meeting will center on finding real strategies to empower our communities for the information age" and the goal of the conference, planned for fall, is both to "maximize opportunities to shape information infrastructure policy and access."

Martha Wallner is advocacy coordinator for AIVF. For more information, call her at (212) 473-3400.

Remembering your roots: The Kartemquin folks pulling out the stops for the NEA and CPB.

CRY "FOUL" NOW!

Arthur Agass takes his best shot at *Hoop Dreams*, an independently produced film funded in part by both the CPB and the NEA.

SAVE PUBLIC TV · RADIO! SAVE PUBLIC ART!

CALL YOUR REPS AND SENATORS TODAY!

Don't throw this flyer away! Please pass it on or leave it where others will see it. Thanks!

- General support for executive director and staff.

Board nominations must be made by current AIVF members in good standing. Board members must be at least 19 years old. To make a nomination, send or fax the name, address, and phone number of nominee and nominator (no nominations taken by phone). We will also accept nominations at AIVF's annual meeting on April 7.

SUCCESSFUL GRANT APPLICATIONS

We are thrilled to announce that the National Endowment for the Humanities has sent us an enormous package of successful proposals that it has funded in the past. Because the NEH requirements are so demanding, these applications are in a way exemplars of grantsmanship; members can learn a great deal from reviewing how materials are presented and how projects are pitched in this kind of major institutional context. (It only gets easier from here.)

The NEH materials are available for review during regular library hours (11 am to 6 pm, Monday through Friday).

TRADE DISCOUNT UPDATES

More new discounts! We've just signed up with **Business Advantage** through Trans National Communications, Inc. Members save up to 25 percent on long distance telecommunications and also save up to 40% on overnight air express service. The Business Advantage long distance features include: low flat interstate rates based on usage—not distance—with volume discounts retroactive to your first call; guaranteed low rates for international calls to the 40 most frequently called locations; detailed management reports for cost control and no installation or transfer fees. For information call (800) 435-6235. (Promocode: 04641005)

Now AIVF members are also entitled to savings on overnight air express services from **Airborne Express**. You can save up to \$6.25—or more—on every overnight letter that it sends. Member rate is \$9.25 for an 8 oz. overnight Letter Express. If you ship more than 10 packages a month you will be eligible for even greater savings, with Airborne's volume rates starting at \$8.75 per 8 oz. overnight Letter Express. If you ship 20 or more packages per month, save even more! Call (800) 642-4292 and you will receive a free starter kit to start shipping and saving. (Discount code: 1340130100)

Members will receive a mailing with information about both of these great new member benefits. It's a win-win situation: not only do you get low-cost services, also every time you use one of these services Business Advantage will give a percentage of your monthly bill back to AIVF. So do us both a favor and take advantage of these new member discounts.

Also, in New York, **DuArt** now offers members negotiable discounts on color negative developing, workprinting, blow-ups from 16mm and S-16mm to 35mm, and titles. *DuArt*, 245 West 55th St., NY, NY 10019; contact David Fisher, (212) 757-4580, x 637.

The Foundation for Independent Video and Film (FIVF), the foundation affiliate of the Association for Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF), supports a variety of programs and services for the independent media community, including publication of *The Independent*, operation of the Festival Bureau, seminars and workshops, and an information clearing house. None of this work would be possible without the generous support of the AIVF membership and the following organizations:

The Center for Arts Criticism, Consolidated Edison Company of New York, Funding Exchange, John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts, National Video Resources, The New York Community Trust, New York State Council on the Arts, The Rockefeller Foundation, and The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc.

We also wish to thank the following individuals and organizational members:

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UPCOMING EVENTS

MEET & GREET

These are opportunities for members to meet producers, distributors, funders, programmers, and others, to exchange information in an informal atmosphere at the AIVF offices. *Free; open to AIVF members only. Limited to 20 participants. RSVP required.*

CAROLINE KAPLAN, director, program development
Bravo Network/The Independent Film Channel
New cable channel showcasing independent media
When: Thursday, May 11, 6:30 pm

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

The AIVF annual membership meeting will be held Friday evening, April 7, at Anthology Film Archives, 32 Second Ave., NYC. This year's meeting will feature a sneak preview screening. The meeting is open to all; AIVF members will receive a separate notice in the mail.

SEMINAR SERIES

CLOSE-UP ON THE

REAL FESTIVAL CIRCUIT

This four-week series will take a close look at festivals throughout the U.S. and overseas. Each session will focus on a different type of media, recognizing the variety of specialized festivals that makers can approach with their work. Panels will include festival representatives and makers, and will provide targeted, specific, *useful* information.

April 3: **Shorts** - Gunter Minas, Mannheim Film Festival; Peter Sillen; Robert Withers, NY Expo of Short Film and Video

April 10: **Video** - Kit Fitzgerald; Marion Masone, NY Video Festival; Bart Weiss, director, Dallas Video Festival

April 17: **Documentary** - Joe Berlinger; Elaine Charnov, Margaret Mead/Human Rights Watch Film Festivals; tba

April 24: **Narrative Features** - Lawrence Kardish, New Directors/New Films; Mary Jane Skalski, Good Machine; tba
At Anthology Film Archives, 32 2nd Ave., NYC. All programs at 6:30 pm. Panels in formation and subject to change. Single session: \$15 members; \$20 others.

Series of 4: \$50 members; \$75 others. Seating limited. Preregistration w/ payment required to hold place.



20TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION: FIERCELY INDEPENDENT

The Donnell Library hosts a series of conversations: Two makers each evening will show their work and talk about the thrills, chills, challenges and triumphs of the independent life. Each program pairs an emerging young maker with one in mid-career to compare notes and see how the field has developed these past two decades.

April 27: **Michel Negroponte** (*Jupiter's Wife*) & **Nina Davenport** (*Hello Photo*); Moderator: **Barbara Abrash**

May 18: **Isaac Julien** (*Looking for Langston*) & **Karim Ainouz** (*Seams*); Moderator: **Wellington Love**

June 8: **Barbara Hammer** (*Nitrate Kisses*) & **Cheryl Dunye** (*Greetings from Africa*); Moderator: **Robin Vachal**

All programs at the Donnell Library Center, 20 West 53rd Street, at 6 pm. Admission free and open to the public. No reservation necessary, but seating is limited. Programs May 18 and June 8 co-sponsored by the New York Lesbian and Gay Film Festival.

INDEPENDENT CD-ROM PRODUCTION

The American Museum of the Moving Image hosts a panel and demonstration of the creative and pioneering work being done by independents in the emerging multi-media technologies. Four independent interactive media producers/designers will discuss the challenges and rewards of do-it-yourself CD-ROM production in today's wide-open marketplace, and demonstrate their current work. "Start-up" information on training and equipment access will also be distributed. Panelists include **Rodney Allan Greenblatt** (*Dazzeloids*), **Tony Grossman** and **Sondra Desmond** (*Duelin' Firemen*), and others.

When: Sunday, May 21, 2-5 pm

Where: American Museum of the Moving Image, 35th Avenue at 36th Street, Astoria, NY

Cost: \$7 AIVF & AMMI members; \$10 others
Limited seating; advance purchase suggested. To charge by phone and for transit information, please call (718) 784-4520.

"MANY TO MANY" MONTHLY MEMBER SALONS

This is a monthly opportunity for members to discuss work, meet other independents, share war stories, and connect with the AIVF community across the country. *Note: since our copy deadline is two months before the meetings listed below, be sure to call the local organizers to confirm that there have been no last-minute changes.*

Albany, NY:

When: April 6, May 4, 6:30 pm

Where: Mother Earth's Cafe, Quail Street

Contact: Mike Camoin, (518) 895-5269

Boston:

When: April 10, May 9, 7 pm

Where: April: Multi-Vision, 161 Highland Ave., Needham Heights; May: Newton TV Foundation, 1608 Beacon Street, Newton

Contact: Susan Walsh (617) 965-8477

Chicago:

When: April 11, May 9, 7:30 pm

Where: Chicago Filmmakers, 1543 W. Division

Contact: Mark Hubert (312) 384-5533

Dallas:

Meetings not set at press time.

Contact: Bart Weiss, (214) 948-7300

Denver:

Meetings not set at press time.

Contact: Diane Markrow (303) 989-6466

Los Angeles:

When: April 5, May 3, 7 pm

Where: Call to confirm location.

Contact: Pat Branch, (310) 515-1175

New York:

When: April 18, May 16, 6-8 pm

Where: Call to confirm location.

Contact: Jennifer Lytton (212) 473-3400

Washington, DC:

Meetings not set at press time.

Contact: Sowande Tichawonna (202) 232-0353

MOVING FORWARD ...

Members are organizing AIVF salons all over the country! For contact information, or to talk to us about starting something in your area, call Pam Calvert (212) 473-3400.

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

AIVF is governed by a board of directors elected from among the membership. The board sets policy, evaluates all the organization's activities, and ensures that we remain responsive to the needs and interests of the membership. Please consider nominating yourself or another AIVF member to stand for election this summer. Board members are elected to a 3-year term of office; the board gathers four times a year in NYC for weekend meetings (AIVF pays the travel costs if you live elsewhere).

We have an active board; members must be prepared to set aside adequate time to fulfill board responsibilities, which include:

- Attendance at all board meetings and participation in conference calls when necessary;
- Preparation for meetings by reading advance materials sent by staff;
- Active participation in one or more committees as determined by the organization's needs and as requested by the board chair or executive director; fulfillment of commitments within agreed-upon guidelines;

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Dear AIVF members and readers:

We're proud to announce that the Foundation for Independent Video and Film (FIVF), publisher of *The Independent*, has been awarded a National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) Challenge Grant for \$100,000. The Challenge Grant is a prestigious award, but one with stringent matching requirements: We must raise \$300,000 in order to receive the NEA's share, and that will certainly be a challenge!

Ironically, this NEA support has come to FIVF at a moment when we have a number of grave concerns about the future health of our field. Congress' newest proposed cuts to the Endowment specifically target grants to individuals, which could mean a further assault on media artists, already hard hit by last November's cuts. We're also concerned about the future of the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting—especially, the Independent Television Service (ITVS) and the PBS Minority Consortia.

As I was wandering through the halls of Congress on March 14—Arts Advocacy Day—along with almost 2,000 other arts advocates from across the country on a mission to keep the NEA, NEH, and CPB alive, we got the news that Congressional offices had received over 50,000 phone calls and 60,000 telegrams that day. This high volume of citizen response in support of these agencies was heartening and served as an unqualified reminder that the work you are producing is making a difference to people's lives in communities all across the country. And this means that AIVF and FIVF's efforts to represent the field and provide the information resources you need to continue in your work are perhaps more necessary than ever.

Our Challenge grant is for a new initiative called *Information Services for the 21st Century*, designed to revolutionize and diversify the ways we collect, organize, and disseminate information. In the future, we hope to be able to offer you timely, up-to-the-minute, individualized information in variety of formats—in person, via phone, fax and on-line, as well as in print.

• Over the next three years, we be embarking on ambitious plans to expand our **book publication program**, as well as continue to publish *The Independent*. We will be working harder to get these important publications into more libraries, media organizations, bookstores, and newsstands through-

out the country and will be asking for your help to identify outlets.

• We'll be creating **Information Toolkits** on a variety of topics, and we'll be asking you to help us prioritize the areas of greatest concern. For example, a toolkit on fundraising might contain: an annotated contact list of key media funders with grant deadlines, a bibliography, sample grant proposals, specially commissioned essays on what a panelist looks for or what a funder looks for in a grant proposal, tips from other independents who have had success getting grants, articles from back issues of *The Independent*, and so on. Our first toolkits will be out this fall, both focusing on finding money for projects.

• We'll also be putting together a group of **Information Specialists** from across the country, individuals with expertise in areas such as distribution, legal matters and festival strategies, who will be able to provide you with individualized advice about your particular project.

• The **Media Arts Database Project** will enable us to create databases of essential information on production resources, personnel, funding, distributors, services, etc. We'll also be putting together a members' skills bank, maintaining current listings of employment opportunities, and creating and promoting a database of your completed works and work-in-progress.

We hope you're as excited about these ambitious plans as we are. They won't all happen this year or next, but the Challenge funds will make it possible to start the research and preparations (and the rest of the necessary fundraising) now. It's our goal to phase in these programs gradually over the next three years. Clearly, we're going to need a high level of involvement and guidance from our members, educators, the industry, and exhibitors and distributors to ensure that we're heading in the right direction.

We have set ourselves a challenging work agenda. Producers live in a rapidly changing environment in which opportunities are fast disappearing as new ones are simultaneously being created. We firmly believe that if we are going to continue to be a valuable information provider, we'll need to dramatically re-envision and expand our services. We'll be turning to you for assistance and advice throughout this process, as we experiment to create the programs that best serve you.

Thank you for your support, encouragement and involvement.

Ruby Lerner, Executive Director & Publisher

FILM & VIDEO #INDEPENDENT M O N T H L Y

May 1995

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The National Endowment for the Humanities is the third largest funder of public broadcast programming, after CPB and PBS, and it far outranks its sister agency, the NEA, in direct support of media production. Yet among medi makers, less is said and known about this federal agency.

BARBARA ABRASH looks at the NEH in detail, talking to program staff and applicants about the agency's mission, its grueling application process, and what kind of media projects pass muster.



28 No Guts, No Glory: The Production Assistant

In answer to the age-old question, "How do I break into the movie production business?" there's the age-old reply: "You pay your dues." This often translates as doing time as a PA. Good Machine staffers

ANTHONY BREGMAN AND MARY JANE SKALSKI break down the different tasks of the PA, offer tips in landing and keeping the job, and demonstrate why this is a great place to learn the lay of the land, figure out your own job preferences, and begin to make a name for yourself.

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Trash Those Grant Applications! A Dozen Creative Ways to Finance Your Next Project

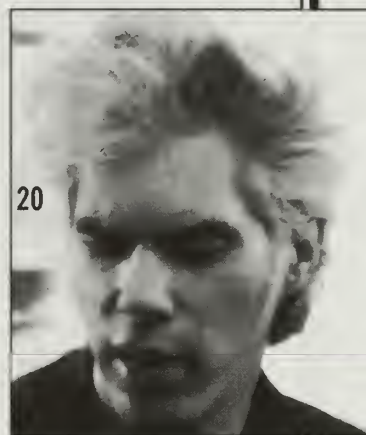
BY BARBARA BLISS OSBORN

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Foreign Exchange: A Conversation with Tapestry International's Nancy Walzog

BY SUSAN HORNICK

COVER: Rather than rob from the rich, filmmaker Richard Gordon and partner Carma Hinton have turned to the NEH for funding, receiving four grants for three of their films on China, including their work-in-progress on the Chinese democracy movement. Gordon here takes near the temples of Wu Tai Shan, in the Shanxi province. Courtesy Richard Gordon



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ANOTHER SEASON, ANOTHER REASON FOR MAKING MONEY

Changes to Film/Video Arts' Education Program result in much-needed revenue



You might say Film/Video Arts (FVA) is a bright spot in New York. Lining nearly every inch of the walls in its 12th and Broadway offices are flyers printed on astro-neon paper: "Spring Workshops" on electric blue; "Call For Applications" on traffic-cone orange; "Directing the Independent Documentary" on lime green; "Gay & Lesbian Cinema" on shocking pink.

It all starts to make sense once you meet Stephen Desmond, FVA's director of education and the man responsible for the aggressive color scheme. He is, to say the least, enthusiastic about FVA's course offerings and workshops, which he has spent the last year revamping, expanding, and promoting: "I want to make this the most successful, well-known program in New York City. Nothing less," he says. His efforts thus far have paid off in a big way: current enrollment—1,500—is nearly double that of 1994's, and income from courses has risen from \$135,000 last year to well over \$250,000 this year.

The upswing could have to do with independent film's near-overexposure in the mainstream media during the past year; it seems everyone and his dog has taken up a camera in the name of Tarantino and Linklater. But FVA's success is also fueled by its bargain prices, especially for people who can't afford even one three-credit undergraduate class (\$1,677) at New York University Film School—eight blocks and hundreds of dollars away from FVA. A six-session course in production management at FVA costs a member \$225 and a nonmember \$250. A 10-session Beginning 16mm class runs members \$525 and nonmembers \$550. Even the membership dues are reasonable: \$40 a year.

Jennifer Fox, an award-winning documentary filmmaker and an FVA teacher for five years, says it doesn't take a degree program to learn how to use a camera and sound equipment. She should know—she left film school after a year. "After you learn the basics, you can cut and paste your own curriculum to strengthen your weaknesses," she says. "The courses at FVA are tailored to the real needs of filmmakers."

FVA's classes also provide an option for people like Salime Okuyan, an installation artist who



Film/Video Arts' Stephen Desmond and employee Mary Ann Toman test some of the media arts center's new editing equipment.
Photo: Michele Shapiro

enrolled in two FVA workshops to fashion a documentary-type film from eight hours of Hi8 footage she shot during a five-month trip to Central Asia. With camera rental, editing time, and access to lights included in fees for many of the production classes, FVA is a good place for the curious-but-not-committed to make low-cost mistakes.

And for those who can't remember the last time they saw the inside of a classroom, there's another advantage: the classes take place in a decidedly non-academic environment. On any given day, a professional editor could be working in a roughcut room two doors away from a Beginning 16mm class. "Students here don't leave a rarefied academic setting and then have to go out and find a community," Desmond says. "We're creating a community, not just servicing one."

Desmond has big plans for FVA's future: he's working on instituting a certificate program, offering courses in digital sound, and gaining college accreditation for FVA courses. These days, though, his mantra is "AVID." "AVID does for flatbeds, roughcut, and offline facilities what the PC did for the typewriter," he says. Last November, when FVA invested \$100,000 in AVID equipment, Desmond anticipated offering three sessions of AVID workshops in 1995. He has already had to double that number.

Both
Fox
and
fellow

instructor Roddy Bogawa enjoy the student population at FVA. "It's so mixed," says Bogawa, who teaches Beginning 16mm Film Production. Fox has taught at both NYU and the School of Visual Arts. "There's a very different energy at FVA," she says. "The students can range in age from 20 to 70. They've spent their hard-earned money to take the class. They're more involved and dedicated." Fox also likes FVA's informal, no-grades approach to education. She says it parallels the independence and self-motivation that it takes to be a successful filmmaker.

For Gilly Hutchinson-Houa—a freelance assistant director in the Chinese film industry who is trying to cram as much film education as possible into her eight months in New York—FVA's weekend workshops mean two more days of learning. Both she and classmate Valerie Edwards, a producer at an ad agency, have taken courses at other New York schools and say they appreciate FVA's "down-to-earth" approach. "It feels like the independents are here," says Edwards. "It's more reality-based."

At times, maybe a little too reality-based. As a tardy student maneuvers a folding chair into an

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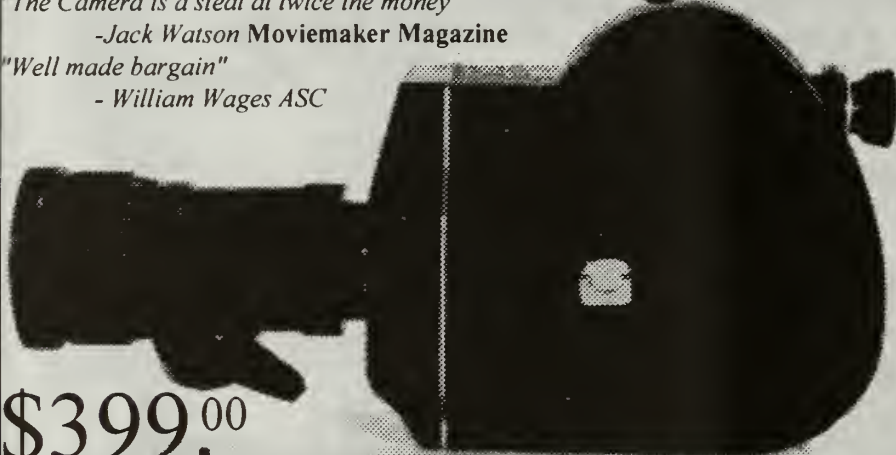
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already-cramped, hot conference room where Jim Hubbard teaches his Production Management class, Hubbard says, "I enjoy teaching in this room because it feels like a production meeting on a low-budget film."

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LYNNE PALAZZI

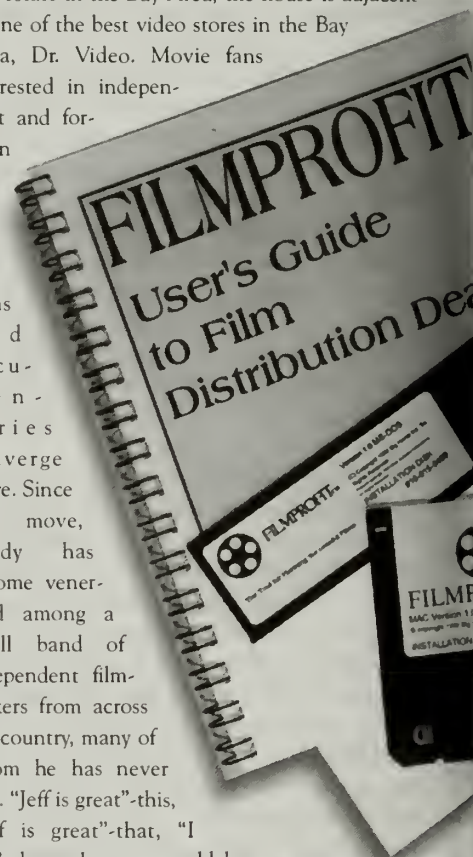
Lynne Palazzi is a freelance writer based in New York.

Customized Business Reports for the Entrepreneurially Challenged

In 1992, Jeffrey Hardy bought a small two-family home surrounded by the media barons of San Francisco's Potrero Hill. Aside from being prime real estate in the Bay Area, the house is adjacent to one of the best video stores in the Bay Area, Dr. Video. Movie fans interested in independent and foreign

films and documentaries converge there. Since his move, Hardy has become venerated among a small band of independent filmmakers from across the country, many of whom he has never met. "Jeff is great"-this, "Jeff is great"-that, "I don't know how we could have done it without Jeff," they gush. The makers love him, and he loves helping them.

Hardy is to filmmakers what those ads in the back of *Rolling Stone* declaring relief from the "Term Paper Blues" are to college juniors—a short cut. He sells cheat sheets or time savers, depending on how you look at it. Through Big Horse, Inc., the film consulting/production company he started in 1987 following a



L.A.-based Big Horse, Inc. provides independents with customized business reports they can use to lure potential investors to their projects. Courtesy Big Horse, Inc.

Revenue		
Domestic Box Office Gross	4500	
Exhibitor Share of Domestic Box Office Gross	60%	
Projected Video Sales in Thousands of Units	15	
Retail Price per Unit	75	
Wholesale Percentage	62%	
Video Royalty (Percentage)	20%	
(Dollars)	139	
Theatrical	1800	60%
Video	697	23%
Pay TV	450	15%
Public TV	0	0%
Network TV	0	0%
All Other	60	2%
	3007	100%
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A screen from FilmProfit, Big Horse, Inc.'s budget planning software. Courtesy Big Horse, Inc.

two-year stint as the president of the Independent Feature Project in Northern California, Hardy offers filmmakers advice, but he sells info-laden FilmProfit Reports with titles like "Marketing Position and Audience Demographics," tailored to the filmmaker's project.

It's general knowledge that finding numbers pertaining to films—budgets, grosses, etc.—is a laborious task often left to interns and only if they are capable of playing mind games with major studios and are willing to pore through trade papers that contain few numbers people can agree on.

So in late 1994, Hardy had an idea for the creativity-driven filmmaker, the kind who just "wants to go the beach and start shooting," as he puts it: He opted to provide simple information for the maker to present to prospective investors, including advice on a particular film's target audience and a comparison of how similar films have fared. He has compiled the information in customized reports; the more information that's included, the higher the pricetag. Choices include the Comparable Pictures Report, which compares the maker's films with one other for \$75, three others for \$175, and five for \$250. There's also a complete Profile Package, comprising stats and charts on revenues for theatrical, home video, cable TV, and foreign markets at \$300 (\$250 for those who purchase a second report). A third report, The Making of a Modern Film, for investors new to the industry, can be had for just \$100.

Hardy sees the whole thing as an educational tool. "Not having access to numbers is a stumbling block for filmmakers who have long studied how they want a shot to look and how the technical aspects of film will work," he says. "All of a sudden they need another degree. Only people who have business direction can find a way around it. Now these folks don't need to go and learn a whole new curriculum."

So far his reports have been used by dozens of non-MBAs, including Scott McGehee and David Siegel, makers of the feature *Suture*. First-time filmmaker Derrick L. Carr laughs as he explains his reason for ordering one of Hardy's comparative

film reports: "I had people tell me if I did everything, then the film will be dedicated to me... because I'd be dead." Carr is a former member of the New Orleans Saints and the Los Angeles Rams. He went into football right after graduating from Bowling Green University, where his major was film. "When I came to town after leaving the NFL, my dream was to put together a crew and a few hundred grand and basically start filming," he says. "The idea was if you're gonna do it, do it right. Everybody wants to just get out there. What I didn't realize was all the red tape, man."

For more information on Big Horse's FilmProfit Reports, or other advice, including budget and organizational consultations, call (800) 474-3060 or (415) 431-5149; 536 Eighteenth Street, San Francisco, CA 94107-2804.

CHRISTOPHER BORELLI

Christopher Borelli, a freelance journalist, has contributed to *Wired* and *Premiere*.

Blockbuster Offers Funds to Minnesota Makers

Minnesota media artists soon may get more than inspiration from their local video rental outlets. Blockbuster Video of Minnesota, the state's Blockbuster Video franchisee, has initiated a new program committing \$225,000 to the production of work by Minnesota filmmakers.

The Minnesota Blockbuster Film Fund will provide three \$25,000 awards per year for the next three years to writers, directors, and producers with specific feature film proposals. Applicants must be current Minnesota residents who have lived in the state for at least one year, or former residents who resided there for at least seven consecutive years. Applications require a project description, a script or treatment, development plans including budget, schedule, and marketing information, and examples of previous work. Projects will be judged equally on artistic merit and the perceived ability to complete production.

The program is designed to provide seed money to beginning and mid-career filmmakers who demonstrate potential for acquiring additional financial support. Organizers do not expect to see all funded projects reach the big screen, but hope a high percentage can enter production. Award-winners who secure full financing or distribution must eventually repay the Blockbuster grant money. Recipients, however, will not be penalized for failure to complete a film.

The Minnesota Blockbuster Film Fund is guided by a steering committee of figures from the



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Christine Vachon, producer of Steve McLean's *Postcards From America*, is serving on the steering committee for Blockbuster of Minneapolis, which will dispense more than \$200,000 in grants to emerging filmmakers over the next three years. Photo: Joyce George, Courtesy filmmaker

Hollywood film industry and the national independent film community. Chaired by Jordan Kerner, producer of *Fried Green Tomatoes* and the Minnesota-filmed *Mighty Ducks* series, the committee

also includes independent producers such as Christine Vachon (*Safe*, *Postcards from America*) and Islet Films' John Pierson (*Go Fish*, *Clerks*), as well as writers, directors, distributors, and representatives from related fields.

In addition to the cash awards, winners will receive 10,000 feet of 16mm or 35mm film from Eastman Kodak, free postproduction services, and personal mentoring from steering committee members on subjects such as script development and distribution in foreign markets. "What we're really delivering here is a relatively small amount of money and great contacts into both the independent world and the studio world," says Blockbuster Video of Minnesota president Mike Sweeney. "That's every bit as valuable as the money we're coming up with. The goal here is to get films made. That takes some money and a lot of contacts."

The new fund was prompted, in part, by the recent wave of feature film production activity in Minnesota. Attracted by the state's strong pool of acting and technical talent, more than 30 studio and independent projects have used Minnesota as a shooting location during the past five years. Most of those films originally were developed outside of the state, however, says Sweeney. The Minnesota Blockbuster Film Fund is designed to nurture creative work close to home.

Based on successful grant programs in other countries, the Minnesota Blockbuster Film Fund is the first feature film development of its kind in the United States. The program was created by the Minnesota Film Board, a nonprofit organization dedicated to boosting the state's film industry.

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Independent Feature Project/North will administer the fund. Blockbuster Video of Minnesota has raised all the money for the programmer's initial three-year pilot period. Additional sources will be sought to continue the grants beyond 1997.

The deadline to apply for this year's Minnesota Blockbuster Film Fund grants is May 26. Finalists will be interviewed in the fall, and winners will be announced during an awards ceremony in October. For information, or to receive application materials, call (612) 338-0871.

SCOTT BRIGGS

Scott Briggs writes on arts and culture in the Minneapolis/St. Paul area.

Canadian Distributor Opens US Office

For 30 years Cinepix Film Properties, Inc., a leading Canadian independent film distribution and production company, has brought Canadian audiences films such as *The Piano*, *The Crow*, *The Crying Game*, and *La Reine Margot*. In 1995, it opened a New York office to house its US distribution and production operations.

The team in New York is headed by Michael Paseornek and includes Adam Rogers, previously with Miramax, as vice president of US distribution. With the emergence of companies such as Miramax and Fine Line as mini-majors looking to acquire films that potentially will gross at least \$5 million, Rogers feels there is a niche in the market for other smaller distributors. "It gives us the opportunity to acquire the festival films, English-language independents, and a smattering of foreign films," Rogers adds that the budget of the film is immaterial. "What we are looking for is quality features and documentaries."

CFP is looking mainly to major festivals such as Cannes, Toronto, Montreal, and Sundance for product, but they also pay close attention to mid-sized fests in

Seattle, Boston, and Houston. Because it has been around for 30 years, the company also has established relationships with producers and sales agents who are, as Roger puts it, "thrilled that CFP is mov-

ing into the marketplace. A lot of films are being shown to us before anyone else can look at them." Paseornek agrees that the history and track record of the company work to its advantage. "We already have a reputation for distributing this kind of film in Canada," he says, "and are very well positioned as a company to distribute festival films. There are a lot of films out there that are not receiving the proper distribution. If, for example, a film doesn't create much heat initially, a larger company, with a glut of product, just moves on, while a smaller company may run out of money for marketing." Paseornek says CFP believes in giving films a chance; if the market is soft initially, they will give it a second or third push. He adds that Cinepix offers producers and sales agents expertise in the marketplace, honest accounting, and a complete North American release.

Rogers says CFP also has a lot to offer production companies in terms of setting up distribution or getting broader distribution than they otherwise would. "We can organize the video and cable as well as theatrical distribution." In addition, Cinepix can help build the ancillary value of a lower-budget film by arranging theatrical distribution in 10 or 20 markets and then making a video or cable deal.

CFP also intends both to produce and coproduce a number of films in the future. Seven movies are slated for the coming year, including one, *Goalie*, in coproduction with Barwood, Barbra Streisand's production company, which is about the first women in the NHL. Some of the productions, such as *Goalie*, are slated for theatrical release, while others are designed and destined for cable or home video. In addition, CFP has completed two coproductions starring Michael Caine with Showtime and a British production company. CFP is projecting the release of six to eight copro-

The U.S. feature *Fun*, by Rafael Zelinsky, is one of several films the Canadian company CFP has recently picked up for distribution in North America.

Courtesy CFP



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ductions in 1995. Since the company also plans to distribute an additional seven projects, the U.S.-based staff is, as Rogers puts it, "continuously looking to acquire from wherever it can."

Contact: Cinepix Film Properties, 900 Broadway, ste. 800, New York, NY 10003; (212) 995-9662.

PATRICK RENGGER

Patrick Rengger is a Calgary-based freelance writer who writes for the Globe and Mail and other newspapers across Canada. In addition, he hosts the film and video segment of a bi-weekly series on CBC Radio.

IN BRIEF

NYSCA's \$2-7 Million Budget Cut Looms Ahead

New York state Governor George Pataki has proposed a substantial budget cut to the New York State Council for the Arts (NYSCA) for FY1996, which begins April 1. If approved, the \$37-plus million FY95 budget will be slashed by more than \$6 million to \$29 million. That figure, which factors in funds received from the National Endowment for the Arts, includes \$5 million already earmarked for matching programs. The new budget represents a 50-percent reduction in total funding from a high of nearly \$60 million in 1989-90. Moreover, the council has been ordered to cut its staff to 38 from 45, and 16 other positions, underwritten by the NEA, are vulnerable to future Federal cuts.

"If the governor's budget goes through," says Debra Silverfine, media program officer at NYSCA, "we will have staff cuts, and the dollars available for ongoing established grants funding will be cut by 30 to 40 percent." She adds that, in most program areas, NYSCA is keeping commitments to people who already received grants through "Challenge NYC."

A spokesman for the governor has defended the cuts as a "serious commitment" to the arts in light of an overall state budget gap estimated at \$5 billion. But Senator Roy Goodman, Republican chair of the Senate committee on the arts, has said he does not expect the proposed cuts to stand in the face of strong sentiment in the Legislature to restore the arts budget. Goodman is seeking to restore \$5 million of the proposed \$7 million cuts.

Shortly after the proposed budget was announced, Mary Hayes, NYSCA's executive director, resigned, and deputy director Barbara Haspiel took an early retirement package. Hayes had served as director since 1980, while Haspiel joined the council in 1965. Although a NYSCA spokesperson says both women had voiced dismay over the proposed cuts, the reasons for their

departures were largely personal.

In a related matter, **Bruce Feinberg**, the deputy commissioner of New York state's film and television development who had been with the office since 1986, was let go in February. **Patti Swinney Kaufman**, former director of the state's Division for Women, will take over. She is the wife of Lloyd Kaufman, president of Troma Films, a NY-based company specializing in low-budget exploitation films such as *Nuke 'Em High* and *The Toxic Avenger*. According to the *Hollywood Reporter*, Patti Kaufman and Governor Pataki's wife are good friends.

NEA Update

In February, the Clinton administration showed support for the arts by submitting a budget request for FY96 that includes a slight increase in the National Endowment for the Arts' current \$172.4 million budget. Yet Congressional leaders quickly denounced the budget plan as unrealistic.

Shortly after the FY96 budget presentation, House Republicans began meeting for rescission hearings, to discuss possible cuts to the NEA's existing FY95 budget. The House Appropriations Committee, chaired by representative Robert Livingston (R-LA), agreed in March to a \$17 billion package that includes a \$5 million reduction for both the NEA and the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH). If approved, the NEA will lose \$1 million from its administration budget and \$4 million from unobligated program funds. The agency would be directed to eliminate funding, to the maximum extent possible, for individual fellowships, with the exception of Heritage Award fellowships to folk artists. At press time, the House was expected to debate the proposed cuts in late March.

On the Record

"Independents must realize that some of their productions appeal to only a very small audience. Even when I broadcast them, I can't force viewers to watch them. If I did this too much, I might not have any audience at all."

—Nancy Hoene, programmer, WDSE-TV, Minnesota. From on-line discussion about public TV and public access, America Online, February 1995

* The Independent is soliciting quotes by and about the media arts for "On the Record". If you come across a brilliant, funny, stupid, or enlightening quotes, send it to Michele Shapiro (see masthead for mail/fax info; no calls, please). Include name & date of publication in which quote first appeared. If your quote is used, you'll receive a free one-year individual membership to AIVE.

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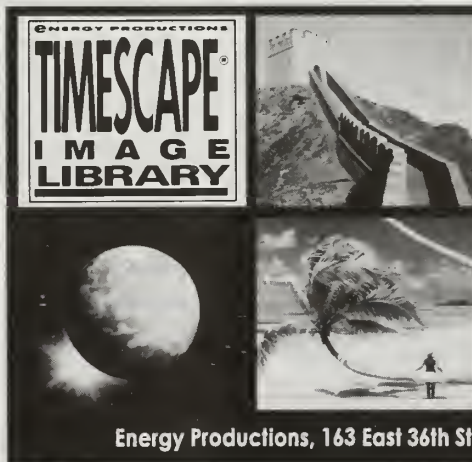
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▼
DANNY SCHECHTER
director

COUNTDOWN TO FREEDOM

BY VERONICA
MIXON

WHEN DANNY SCHECHTER recalls the telephone call from the African National Congress (ANC) inviting him to document the historic 1994 election in South Africa, a feeling of awe pervades his voice. "It was an honor to have a South African believe in my work, to let me film," says the network journalist-turned-filmmaker of his chronicle of the election that led to Nelson Mandela's presidency one year ago. This extraordinary feature-length documentary, *Countdown to Freedom: Ten Days that Changed South Africa*, is a powerful, exuberant statement about the tenacious drive for freedom by disenfranchised South Africans.

With one camera and an initial budget of \$20,000, Schechter and his crew traveled with Mandela and various ANC officials, conducting interviews and observing behind-the-scenes preparation at polling stations and strategy meetings. "It is very rare for a filmmaker to see a story he's been fighting to cover...come to a victory," says Schechter. "We had been there when no one was there. It's kind of rare for a white boy from the Bronx to enjoy this kind of access."

Schechter had been following the political upheavals in South Africa for three years, as executive producer of the series *South Africa Now*. Schechter first attracted the ANC's attention with this weekly series, which aired in Zambia, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, and Angola, as well as

on public television stations in the United States from 1989 to 1991.

South Africa Now grew out of Schechter's frustrations working inside network news—both with the media restrictions set by the South African government and with the nature of U.S. news coverage. "The story wasn't getting out in America," Schechter recalls, "partly because the networks went along with the censorship. They could have covered it, but they didn't. As the human rights violations increased, the coverage decreased."

Schechter left ABC in 1988 and cofounded his own production company with Rory O'Connor,

But in recent years, says Schechter, "The marketplace for our work, rather than expanding, seems to be constricting." Globalvision's latest series, *Right and Wrongs*, which looks at human rights issues around the world, has had a tougher time getting broadcast slots. Schechter and on-air host Charlayne Hunter-Gault have clashed openly with PBS about its resistance at a national level to independently produced documentary series, forcing producers to sell their work station by station. "The financial basis is not there to make it economically viable to produce for public television," Schechter states. Nonetheless, Globalvision

(with support from ITVS) has managed to put together a third 26-week season, which began in April and cleared 25 of the top 35 public television markets. This year the series is moving away from its news magazine format and towards thematic programs (e.g., women's rights, children's rights, tolerance). Globalvision is now actively soliciting human-rights related work by independent producers for the revamped series.

It's no easier pitching a political feature-length documentary than a weekly series, however. The filmmaker easily convinced James Earl Jones and Alfre Woodard to do *Countdown to Freedom's* narration for free, and Peter Gabriel contributed the music. But despite



Courtesy Globalvision, Inc.

Globalvision, which created *South Africa Now* on a budget of \$200 a week. "We became network refugees in search of more editorial freedom and a chance to tackle issues that we considered to be trivialized, ignored, or suppressed by network news operations."

The program ran for 156 weeks over the next three years. "We covered the South African perspective from the inside out, working with other South Africans," says Schechter. "I think it was that work that impressed the ANC, because we were the ones letting various people speak in their own voices. That was our idea, and that was different from the way the networks covered it."

the enthusiastic support of many people, financing the film was difficult. It sold to M-Net, South African public television, and Cinemax/HBO, which has a 12-month contract for domestic TV rights, so they will be cablecasting the film throughout 1995. Despite these sales, however, Schechter and Anant Singh, the top black producer in South Africa, still haven't recouped their \$100,000 production costs.

Shot on video and bumped up to 16mm, Schechter is still hoping for theatrical distribution. But it has proven a tough sell. "We found that even among the independent distributors, there is an apolitical culture where ideas tend to get

excluded. There are very few screens...," he says sadly, on this cold, brisk February afternoon, while flipping through *Variety* in his midtown office. "What is it about a culture that values O.J. and doesn't value Nelson Mandela? Or value him enough?" Then he immediately launches into a passionate tirade. "Here's Nelson Mandela, a man who is one of the great heroes of the world. He filled Yankee Stadium; he filled the Detroit Stadium and the Los Angeles Coliseum with millions of people," he continues. "The *New York Times* put him on page one; all the networks scramble over themselves to document and cover [the election]. On CD-ROMs and encyclopedias in computers, the first thing they show is a picture of Nelson Mandela. And yet, [in the film world] we find a kind of ho-hum attitude."

In a few hours, Schechter will be boarding a plane to Cape Town. He plans to accompany Mandela on his visit to Robin Island, where the political leader was imprisoned for over two decades. Though a long way from home, Schechter remains close to the concerns with which he was raised.

"I come from a working class family," says this 52-year-old native New Yorker, who attended public school and Cornell University. "My grandfather was a garment worker, and his values came out of the Labor Movement. My father was in the sit-in movement [and] worked in Mississippi." Schechter grew up politically during the Civil Rights Movement. When he went to the London School of Economics, he met South Africans for the first time. During a visit to that country in 1967, he happened to attend the funeral of Chief La Toulle, a former leader of the ANC and Nobel Peace Prize winner. Upon his return to the U.S., he began to cover the news coverage of South Africa for WCBN commercial radio, where he was known as Danny Schechter the News Dissector. "For example, during the sixties, the *New York Times* referred to Soweto as a 'suburb of Johannesburg,'" he dryly notes. In 1968, he made his first film, *Student Power*, about the student protests at the London School of Economics. However, the realities of independent filmmaking proved very difficult for the young Schechter, who became a journalist in print, radio, and television before returning to film about 10 years ago.

In *Countdown to Freedom*, Schechter confides, "We did a kind of no-no for documentary filmmakers. We used narration. But it was clear to me that the people who thought they knew a lot about South Africa didn't know anything. We had to explain and set up, contextualize, and offer information, [and give] the whole emotion of narrative storytelling, which is all the rage." For Schechter, the pay-off is worth it. "We in America can't afford not to look at [South Africa], as everything here is going backwards," he says. "We have more to learn from South Africa than they have to

learn from us—about race relations, political struggle, and change. That's really the hope I have in making this film—that people will take some lessons and learn from it."

Countdown to Freedom: Globalvision, 1600 Broadway Ste. 700, New York, NY 10019; (212) 246-0202; fax: 2677.

Veronica Mixon is a film critic for Carib News based in New York City.

ELLEN KURAS cinematographer

BY CYLENA
SIMONDS



Courtesy cinematographer

WOMEN ARE BECOMING increasingly visible in key below-the-line positions in independent film. Cinematography, once a strictly male club, now has a female member who is gaining a remarkably high profile. Ellen Kuras took the prize for cinematography on Rebecca Miller's dramatic feature, *Angela*, at this year's Sundance Film Festival. This was Kuras' second time in the winners' circle; in 1992, she won the same award for her work as director of photography on Tom Kalin's *Swoon*. These official prizes merely reflect the respect and acknowledgment she has received among independent feature and documentary makers for her unique vision and technical skills, honed over 14 years.

Chance plays a large role in independent film, and Kuras' development as a DP is no exception. Disenchanted with her studies in Egyptology at

Brown University, she enrolled in a photography course at the Rhode Island School of Design. Photography, she found, opened "a new way of exploring different kinds of emotions, different kinds of sensibilities, and the interplay of light."

Her introduction to film came after she finished college in 1981, but it wasn't initially on camera. She first helped a friend who needed a sound editor, then a woman who needed an assistant producer for a documentary about Cuban refugees. "I really wanted to work on camera, but I didn't know how to get there, because at that point there weren't that many women working in the field. Very very few," she recalls.

Kuras then applied for jobs as assistant cameraperson or gaffer on dramatic features. Meanwhile, in order to get her hands on a camera, she began shooting industrials on video and short films for new directors. Her first job as DP was on

the documentary *Samsara* (1990), Ellen Bruno's film about the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia after the Pol Pot regime. Her most recent documentary work is *Unzipped*, Douglas Kieve's film on fashion designer Isaac Mizrahi, and Jill Godmilow's *Roy Cohn/Jack*

Smith, a documentation of Ron Vawter's one-man show at the Kitchen. Kuras' other documentary credits include *Romance de Valencia/Only the Brave*, about a young Spanish bullfighter; *Family of Women*, on the history of women in the 20th century; *Mutual Aid*, a documentary on madness in a Belgian village; and *Final Betrayal*, a look at Vietnam refugees in Hong Kong detention centers.

Documentary work was more in line with her early interest in ethnographic studies, so the transition to dramatic production was challenging. After shooting *Coffee and Cigarettes*, a short directed by Jim Jarmusch, her first feature opportunity was *Swoon*. She then moved on to *Postcards from America*, a fictional narrative based on the life of artist David Wojnarowicz, directed by Steve McLean.

Kuras continues to strike a balance between shooting fiction and nonfiction and finds that her experience with documentaries has led to more

creative ways of approaching dramatic work. "In documentaries, you really have to work fast to react to situations on the spot. Nobody is going to wait for you; you just have to go and get it," she says. "So working on dramatic films, I'm much more aware of what's happening around me and am ready to jump on something. Which is why, when I'm shooting dramatic stuff, even now, I steal a lot of shots."

Kuras' most recent project, *Angela*, intrigued her because of the visual possibilities presented by its examination of an imaginative child's mind. Set in an economically depressed town in upstate New York, the film tells the story of two sisters who attempt to cure their mother's manic depression through bizarre, sometimes religiously inspired rituals. "[Director] Rebecca Miller and I talked for a long time about what she wanted. We looked at a lot of photographs. We looked at different films. We talked about the point of view of the kids and how to impart that child's sensibility without doing all the camera angles from two feet above the ground," Kuras says.

Kuras' next project is something completely different: a documentary she will direct as well as shoot. Called *Distinct Ground*, it chronicles the effect of the Vietnam war on a Laotian family, and is something she's had in the works for years, netting a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities back in 1984. Thanks to a recent grant from the National Asian American Telecommunications Association, Kuras can finally focus her attention on its completion.

Kuras is very dedicated to the projects she works on—and very protective of the crews. She strongly objects to their mistreatment and under-compensation in relation to their work on a film. Kuras speaks from experience. Early on, when working on the Cuban refugee documentary, "I worked my butt off for this woman, and she never paid me. It wasn't even that much money; it was \$700," she says. "But it made an indelible print on my mind about how people who are doing documentaries—and not just documentaries—can say they're doing it for the good of these people and to get the word out and talk about social change, then they screw the people who are working for them. It doesn't happen all the time. But it's a thing that I come across again and again." She is now very selective, working only with directors and producers whose priorities include the welfare of the crew.

Kuras is also sensitive to role of women on set. "Whenever I come across new crews—like when I was in France or working with new crews in different parts of the country—there's always this sort of unspoken understanding that I have to prove myself because I'm a woman, which really irritates me." But she doesn't let this intimidate her, and advises young women starting out in the field to trust themselves. "Don't be afraid to ask questions

and make mistakes," she says.

Things are slowly changing. On *Angela*, the camera crew was all female, as was the production staff. "The second electric was a woman, my third electric was a woman, my third grip was a woman...but that's also because I make it a real point to provide opportunities for women to learn and to get their hands on equipment and to provide whatever bit of training I can." Those opportunities are likely to grow as Ellen Kuras becomes one of the most sought-after DPs in independent film.

Cylena Simonds is a writer and Curatorial Fellow in the Whitney Museum's Independent Study Program.

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MICHAEL O'REILLY video artist

BY JERRY WHITE



Photo: Jerry White

HAS THE MONEY CORRUPTED you?," Michael O'Reilly was asked. That's not a common question for experimental videomakers, but it was all but inevitable with O'Reilly, a recent recipient of a prestigious Pew Fellowship. The \$50,000 award is designed to give artists enough money to "be artists" for a year or two. "Well, no," he replied. "I haven't gotten any yet."

Nonetheless, O'Reilly, 31, has big plans. An artist of great versatility, he's making the switch from video art to feature filmmaking, and he also wants to work on a novel and musical projects. His feature film is his priority though, and this marks a significant change from what he's been doing up

to now.

O'Reilly made a name for himself with his experimental videos *Glass Jaw* and *Orion Climbs*, both of which made extensive use of Fisher Price's Pixelvision camera. Now discontinued, the camera was designed as a children's toy. It records on both sides of a standard audiotape and makes blocky, low resolution, black and white images that play at only 15 frames per second.

While *Glass Jaw* (1992) and *Orion Climbs* (1994) are a far cry from the narrative feature he's currently planning in terms of length, style, and format, there are common threads. His style has always combined the imagination of a poet with the clear-headedness of an essayist, and he plans to adopt a similar "whatever works" practicality in his choice of styles for his feature. Similarly, the longer piece will integrate documentary-style footage into its narrative form, hopefully creating another work of dream-like remembrance.

O'Reilly's first major video, the 17-minute *Glass Jaw*, was made after he was assaulted on a Philadelphia street and left with massive head injuries, which required his jaw to be wired shut for an extended period. The video shows his experiences in dark, grainy Pixelvision—everything from mealtime with a straw, to the forms he needed to fill out to get his hospital bills paid. The images effectively convey his claustrophobia and isolation and nicely complement his musings on the nature of health care.

O'Reilly's next major piece was the 30-minute *Orion Climbs*, which also has a rather melancholy subject: the death of his grandfather. O'Reilly combines personal reflections with NASA footage, Pixelvision interviews, and foreign language instructional records to create a lovely, enigmatic meditation on remembrance.

While O'Reilly's work is extremely visual, the videomaker pays considerable attention to the soundtrack. Too often in film and video, he believes, sound finds itself "traveling second class to light's first class." He adds, "I feel bad about that." *Glass Jaw* and *Orion Climbs* have extremely layered soundtracks, constructed with great attention to detail. Even so, O'Reilly composes all his soundtrack music using modest consumer-grade technology. "I got the Casio sampling keyboard for 50 bucks," he says. "You can get an amazing sound

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out of that." He makes music out of "basically anything I can get my hands on." Whether or not he knows how to use the equipment "correctly" is secondary. "My mom got me a Russian-made zither for Christmas," he says. "I don't know how to play it, but it sounds great!"

O'Reilly's feature film is far more ambitious in scope than his other work to date. Tentatively titled either *Dad's Going to Jail* or *A Year and a Day*, it is about his recently deceased father's stint in prison for fraud. "My dad was incarcerated in Allanwood federal prison camp," the director explains, "the same place where G. Gordon Liddy was, and some of the Watergate people." Before being incarcerated, his father wore a wire for three months for the FBI, and O'Reilly has access to the transcripts. He also has tape recordings of his father's phone calls from prison. He plans to shoot in the now vacant Eastern State Penitentiary (where Terry Gilliam just finished shooting his upcoming feature, *12 Monkeys*). "The decay is so amazing," he says animatedly of the long abandoned prison. "You could never fabricate it. It would take a hundred years."

O'Reilly first made use of the low-cost Pixelvision camera for economic reasons. "I didn't have any money, I only had this camera, and it did some amazing stuff," he recalls. But his commitment to Pixelvision is pragmatic and subject to change when the content demands it. "The strengths of Pixelvision served *Glass Jaw* well," he notes. "They didn't necessarily serve *Orion Climbs*," so O'Reilly combined Pixelvision with a variety of other camera formats. He ran up against the limitations of the Fisher Price camera when shooting videos for local rock bands. The video for the band Mothra "was all Pixelvision, and I don't think it works," he admits. He thinks Pixelvision is best used for close ups, where the graininess of the image is somewhat offset by its relative size. The Pixelvision camera may be one of O'Reilly's favorite visual tools, but no carpenter would try to cut a piece of metal with his favorite saw.

A Philadelphia resident for almost all his life, O'Reilly has only to complete his thesis before earning an MFA in Film Production at Temple University. He hopes he'll be able to give the Philadelphia independent scene more visibility in media circles. The city's marginalization has bothered him for years. "I would watch television as a kid and think 'Philadelphia's the fourth largest city, so how come there are no cop shows set here?'" he joked. The childlike way that O'Reilly initially discusses these kinds of issues is indicative of his work as a whole. The wide-eyed enthusiasm is still there, but it's honed and focused in a way that produces extremely resonant pieces of art.

O'Reilly's works are available through Video Data Bank, 37 So. Wabash St., Chicago IL 60603.

Jerry White is on program staff at the Philadelphia Festival of World Cinema and the Neighborhood Film/Video Project.

DANNY LYON filmmaker & photographer

BY PAUL ROTH

Danny and Nancy Lyon, courtesy Bleak Beauty



TWO BOYS ROLL A PUMPKIN INTO POSITION IN A vegetable patch. In an offhand manner, a bearded man addresses the camera, saying he wants this to be a film "all about America...about the good Americans." With that, he and the boys smash the extremely ripe pumpkin.

The man is photographer Danny Lyon, and the film is *Media Man*, his latest documentary. The boys are his sons; wife and collaborator Nancy Lyon operates the camera in this scene. The pumpkin...well, the pumpkin may mean nothing, or it may be a stand-in for the mainstream news media, the catalyst for this film.

Lyon was driven to work on this long-term project, shot between 1989 and 1993, by his anger over the way information is distributed through mass media.

"When I first saw 'news' on television, it was five minutes long," Lyon recalls. "Then it was extended to 15 minutes, which was a big deal; that was in the early fifties. Now the news is omnipresent and omnipotent. It is everywhere all the time in a true Orwellian nightmare, and almost by definition, nothing on it is truthful. Corporations battle it out; our only job is to keep shopping." The media, says Lyon, reinforce the social ills they report by leaving important stories untold and simplifying and distorting accounts to maintain the status quo. With *Media Man* Lyon begins to fill the gap, showing scenes we can't oth-

erwise find on TV.

Loosely structured and with little narration, *Media Man* ambles its way through Mississippi, New Mexico, and New York, showing real people doing real things, enjoying themselves, making their own meaning out of life. We see children playing on carousels, a demolition derby, a tattoo contest, a dog roaming a snowy backyard, crime reporters investigating a murder, and many, many scenes of fishing.

Lyon occasionally appears on-camera, talking to people or bantering with his wife, with whom he

trades camera and sound duties. His presence in the film and his refusal to explain the activities we see are a deliberate effort to make a personal document at odds with television news, with no pretense to "ob-

jectivity."

Lyon's filmmaking style developed completely apart from the burgeoning genre of "personal documentary", with which he has had little contact. While *Media Man* is anchored in family images, Lyon uses no first-person narration. Perhaps owing to his photography background, he chooses instead to tell his stories solely in pictures.

Lyon's influences are an eclectic lot. Robert Flaherty, Jean-Luc Godard, and Kenneth Anger first stirred his interest in filmmaking in the sixties. As he began making films, Lyon assisted legendary photographer and underground filmmaker Robert Frank, handling sound duties for *Liferaft Earth* (1969) and *About Me: A Musical* (1971).

In 1969, Lyon made his hilarious first film, *Social Sciences 127*, about a philosophical Houston tattoo artist. Later projects include *El Mojado* (1974) and *El Otro Lado* (1978), which document illegal aliens in New Mexico and Arizona, and *Born to Film* (1983), a meditation on his son's childhood.

"I was very affected by the writings of James Agee, which I read in the mid-sixties," he explains. "I thought of all cameras and tape recorders as powerful instruments of a new realism, where art could be made directly from life.... I thought, why bother with actors? You can just go out and shoot the real thing. That to me was always more interesting and powerful anyway."

Lyon first started shooting "the real thing" with a still camera. After graduating from the University in Chicago in 1963, he followed his commitment to social justice to Mississippi, where he became staff photographer for the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee during the most trying and dangerous years of the civil rights movement. His now-legendary images were distributed to the press and used in books and on posters to publicize the cause.

Lyon's subsequent photo projects were each the result of his immersion, for years at a time, in subcultures mysterious to most Americans. Two years traveling with a motorcycle gang resulted in the book *The Bikeriders*, and countless trips to Texas prisons culminated in the classic photographic essay *Conversations with the Dead*.

In filmmaking, as in his photography, Lyon's interest is in freedom—and the taking away of freedom. He has consistently turned his camera on people who live in opposition to mainstream society. *Los Niños Abandonados* (1975) is an extraordinary journey through the interdependent, self-contained world of street orphans in Santa Marta, Columbia.

Willie (1985) explores the troubled life of a young friend, Willie Jaramillo, who is imprisoned for a series of minor, anti-social crimes and cannot find a place inside society or rehabilitation outside. Tragically, Willie died in jail in 1993 after his requests for medical attention went unheeded for 10 days. Danny and Nancy Lyon purchased his tombstone.

Lyon continues to work on photographic essays and books, which helps support his filmmaking. A recent traveling retrospective of his work demonstrates that his style has evolved beyond the social documentary work for which he is known. His new color photographic collages are among the most compelling work of his career.

Lyon's films have received minimal distribution through the years. Musician/filmmaker Michael Stipe, comparing notes with Lyon, referred to his own distribution methods jokingly as "sort of like throwing it off the porch." Lyon counts his own efforts as slightly more sophisticated. His works are mostly screened in conjunction with exhibitions of his photographs or at educational institutions or museums with him present as a lecturer. "When I briefly taught courses in nonfiction film, I learned that the earliest films were shown this way, with the filmmakers traveling around and projecting them. That made me feel better," he says.

His idealism unabated over the years, Lyon remains enthusiastic about his intuitive approach to filmmaking. "Media Man was made out of nothing, in a way," he remembers. "It is nice when you have an idea to see it realized through editing—as if some truths emerge from the film itself."

Lyon's work is available from Bleak Beauty

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Paul Roth is a photographer and curator who lives in Washington, D.C.

NIURKA PEREZ

video director

BY KAREN SHAW

"I am a *videoaste en formación*," is the way Cuban director Niurka Perez modestly describes herself. "I am a *videoaste en formación*," is the way Cuban director Niurka Perez modestly describes herself.

Translated, the term implies a video artist who is being groomed, nurtured, given opportunities to bring a big talent into fruition. Although only 32, Perez has compiled a substantial videography of nine works that have received 28 awards in Cuban competitions. The promise of her work is clear.

Trained as an art historian, Perez came to media indirectly. "I never studied film. But, from my childhood, I loved images and their portrayals. I dreamed of finding a place where I could produce the expression of images. After university, I knocked on all the doors of the official institutions and joined Estudios Granma in 1988, as an assistant production designer." At Estudios Granma, an official news and documentary agency, Perez learned production techniques and directorial skills in her daily work with reporters, editors, and television producers.

As a videomaker, Perez specializes in fine arts and history. *Zaida*, one of her most honored works, celebrates Zaida del Rio, a fine contemporary Cuban painter. "Zaida is a very talented artist. I wanted to capture her themes, the energy of her creativity, her palette, her fantasies—to visualize what it is to be an artist like her." The video does that: primary colors, golden light, abrupt shifts in editing, and long close-ups of del Rio's huge, complicated, frequently erotic paintings accompany glimpses of the artist and her athletic style of working. An earlier Perez work, *Sobre la Tela del Viento*, has won four awards, including one from Cuba's National Union of Artists and Writers. This documentary explores the links between the poetry of Cuban patriots José Martí and several Cuban artists inspired by his verse.

Human relationships are also among Perez's major interests. *Juan and Pepilla*, a short documentary, grew from her contemplation of marriage. "I wanted to understand what a couple is, what the

word meant, to universalize couple-ness," she says of this work. The video explores the decades-long marriage of Juan Marinello and his wife, Pepilla, two Cuban intellectuals whose mutual respect cemented their union. In *Desvelo*, an experimental film, the correspondence between then-exiled Martí and his mother illustrates the suffering such separation causes—a poignant reality for thousands of Cuban families. Currently Perez is editing

have to have talent to begin with."

Perez has encountered other barriers though. Her generation of video- and filmmakers, although partisans of the revolution, has not yet broken into the top ranks of the industries where many key positions are held by figures from the fifties and sixties. Perez and many of her peers, struggling for outlets and greater artistic expression, joined the Asociación Hermanos Saiz, formed in 1988.

Artists in the association produce their own videoworks, independent of official institutions. New technologies, experimental techniques, and attention to current realities in Cuba identify their productions.

"Estudios Granma's approach is to do patriotic, historical works in a conventional style," Perez acknowledges. "But new artists want a freer form—more creative, aesthetic, poetic. We can criticize. We can equalize our work with older producers." These artists have been helped by the Cuban film institute, ICAIC, which recognized the relevance of the productions and the significance of freer approaches to content and styles, important in the constant debate on the roles of art in Cuba's revolutionary society.

This debate stimu-

lates other Cuban organizations working with video and film. Perez, for example, is a leader in the National Video Movement, created in the eighties by 83 production teams in official institutions. The movement promotes video as an artistic form and encourages producers to creatively confront pertinent topics. Perez was selected Jury President of the movement's 1994 Video Festival. Should Cuba's economic crisis ease, film, now a costly medium, will be Perez' next challenge: "I want to learn how to use film, to use it in the most lyrical way, use colors as an impressionist painter would have."

Estudios Granma produces historical and educational works. For many of her projects, Perez presents an idea to the company's production committee. If approved, she develops a script, then directs the production. "I always dreamed of being a director," she says. "The institution provides the funds and the equipment, so that's not a problem. And I don't think women directors have too much trouble in Cuba. Many are successful directors in television, video, and film, but they



Courtesy Estudios Granma, Havana

Karen Shaw is associate director of Videoteca del Sur.



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February 15, 1995

Dear folks back home,

Robert Redford was a no-show today in Berlin. He was supposed to be here to promote the European premiere of *Quiz Show*, which apparently received its prime, midweek screening slot in exchange for Buena Vista's promise to deliver the Sundance Kid. Earlier in the week, Redford's distributor had set the stage for his arrival by plastering every vacant wall and pillar in the once-divided city with images of John Turturro and Ralph Fiennes. Yet, the star director claims he informed the folks at parent company Disney five weeks ago that he wouldn't be able to make it.... Maybe the fest could enlist Charles Van Doren as an arbitrator.

Truthfully, I'm glad Redford stayed behind. The *Quiz Show* press conference was canceled, so I was able to catch Tom DiCillo's *Living in Oblivion*, which won the Screenwriting Award at Sundance. Despite the German subtitles, DiCillo's hilarious comedy about the making of a low-budget independent film was as much a crowd pleaser here as in Utah. The audience, a mix of Berlin locals and international critics, laughed at all the right moments and, once the film ended, stood and cheered like fans at a rock concert.

It's taken me a while to plot a course of action for this year's festival, which began on February 9 and runs through the 20th. With more than 400 films showing at 16 venues around West and East Berlin and an additional 400 or so screenings taking place at the European Film Market, 12 days hardly seems enough.

Many of the U.S.-based filmmakers at a pre-Valentine's bash sponsored by American Independents and Features Abroad (AIFA, a project of the New York Foundation for the Arts) were dazed and confused by the fest's seemingly infinite choice of films. Doug Lindeman, producer of the very Californian lesbian love tale *Bar Girls*, was unclear about which films he could attend with his pass. Lindeman added that he was having a tough time deciphering the festival program, rife with information on the 27 films competing for the fest's top prize, the Golden Bear, as well as the many fests-within-the-fest: the Forum of Young Cinema, the Panorama, the Children's Film

POSTCARDS TO AMERICA

At the 45th Berlin International Film Festival, plot twists and high drama weren't only found on the screen. For The Independent's **Michele Shapiro**, there was plenty to write home about.

MIT LUFTPOST
PAR AVION



Director Wayne Wang had two films at Berlin, *Smoke* and *Blue In the Face* (pictured, with Harvey Keitel and Jim Jarmusch). The latter film—part documentary, part fictional narrative—stemmed from improvisations that occurred during rehearsals for *Smoke*. Courtesy Miramax

Festival, New German Cinema, and the Retrospective, this year featuring French star Alain Delon and numerous Buster Keaton films.

The most intriguing section so far has been the Forum, which includes a mix of 92 international features and documentaries that defy categorization. Run by one of the festival's founders, Ulrich Gregor, this section has long been written off as a haven for rejects from the cutting-edge Panorama. While Gregor says Forum's role is "to stimulate perception, stimulate debate, and not just offer entertainment," it is serving up some lighter fare, such as DiCillo's *Living in Oblivion* and Chinese Canadian Mina Shum's *Double Happiness*, which has been billed as a heterosexual *Wedding Banquet*.

But the section's cornerstone is still monumental documentaries, such as Claude Lanzmann's five-hour *Tsahal*, on the Israeli army, and Marcel Ophuls' two-part *The Troubles We've Seen*, about media coverage of the Bosnian conflict. There are nine U.S. films featured in this year's Forum,

including Deborah Hoffman's first-person account of her mother's decline from Alzheimers,

Complaints of a Dutiful Daughter. Hoffman just received news of her Academy Award nomination while here in Berlin (—as much a shock for her as it was to me that *Hoop Dreams* was overlooked in the Best Doc category). Perhaps the greatest treasure Gregor's team managed to unearth among 670 entries this year was one from Azerbaijan: Salayev Ayaz's *The Bat*, an eccentric tale of love and death. So far the films seeking the Golden Bear award in the main Competition (including five offerings from the States) pale by comparison.

More later, Michele

February 16

Dear compadres,

Forget Redford. Today's *director du jour* is Wayne Wang. After the back-to-back screenings of his two latest, *Smoke* (in Competition) and *Blue in the Face* (out-of-Competition), Wang *did* make an appearance at a press conference, as did the film's

actors Harvey Keitel and William Hurt and Wang's co-screenwriter Paul Auster.

Smoke, about the manager of a Brooklyn cigar shop (Keitel) who befriends a down-on-his-luck novelist (Hurt) whose wife was recently killed in a hit-and-run accident, has a traditional narrative structure that serves to showcase the talents of its actors. *Blue in the Face*, meanwhile, grew out of improvised dialogues that occurred during the rehearsals for *Smoke* and therefore has a far more spontaneous feel. It's also a lot more fun. A senti-

European premieres I've seen—first-time British director Michael Winterbottom's *Butterfly Kiss* and Canadian Patricia Rozema's *When Night Is Falling*—both fell short of my expectations. *Butterfly Kiss*, a *Thelma and Louise*-type road movie with Amanda Plummer as a mentally unstable transient in search of an old flame, proved unpalatable. (Plummer, a body-piercing advocate, douses herself with gasoline, wraps herself in chains, and murders for sport.) The plot, like Plummer's character, wanders aimlessly. *When*

umentary *SIDA, Une Histoire qui n'a pas de fin* (*AIDS: The Story that Knows No End*).

Not everyone who has seen the films, however, offered praise. One of the festival's more dramatic moments occurred after the screening of three hour-long, AIDS-related films produced by the Red Hot Organization: Idrissa Ouedraogo's *Afrique, mon Afrique* (France); Alfonso Ungria's *Lazos* (Spain); and Paul Ruvens' *Paradise Framed* (the Netherlands). At a Q&A session, an angry individual took offense to Ruvens' futuristic vision of a multimedia artist who creates a hermetic utopia. With his voice shaking, the audience member identified himself as HIV-positive and attacked the Red Hot Organization for funding a film that does not deal directly with AIDS. Marten Rabarts, the Amsterdam-based producer of the films, spent the remainder of the session defending Ruvens' script. He said the Netherlands has been AIDS-savvy for years, so the director didn't have to preach prevention, as Ouedraogo does in *Afrique, mon Afrique*, the first film dealing with the subject to be shown in Africa. Yet Ouedraogo's view of the disease is oversimplified (A prostitute coughs in one scene and is carried out dead on a stretcher in the next), perhaps due to the limiting one-hour format.

Ruven's vision is far more sophisticated because, in addition to being the only one of the three to include a homosexual relationship, he also challenges media and pop culture by infusing the film with provocative and unsettling images, which range from the hands of a woman being raped repeatedly in a Bosnian prison to an overweight black man belting out the *DreamGirls* tune, "There Ain't No Way I'm Livin' Without You." Says Speck of the project, "*Paradise Framed* has served its purpose simply because of the debate its screenings have incited."

Yours in celluloid, M.

February 18

To anyone who's listening,

Has the Berlin festival lost its edge? Once known for its political bent, the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 has left the festival searching for a new soul. With few productions coming out of former Eastern Bloc countries, festival director Moritz De Hadeln has turned to the U.S. and Asia for films to fill his Competition quota. But Robert Benton's *Nobody's Fool* and Richard Linklater's *Before Sunrise* can't exactly be billed as hard-hitting, controversial fare. Also, a freeze in the festival budget for the last two years has caused the fest to go commercial, opening a store beside the market's Cine Center that sells t-shirts, posters, and fest catalogs.

Two events earlier in the week, however,



<Paul Ruven's *Paradise Framed*, one of three AIDS-themed films to screen under the Red Hot Organization's banner in Berlin, was attacked by some audience members who felt it didn't deal directly with the disease.

Courtesy filmmaker

>Locals who viewed Matthew Harrison's \$11,000 feature *Rhythm Thief* in Berlin were intrigued by its gritty view of Manhattan and its hip-hop 'track.

Photo: Andreas Rentsch, courtesy filmmaker

mental homage to the Dodgers' former home, *Blue* blends documentary footage of Brooklyn residents with dramatic vignettes in which Keitel's character offers friendly advice to a host of cameo-performing celebs, including those with one name (Roseanne, Madonna) and those with two (Jim Jarmusch, Lily Tomlin). The two films complement each other like coffee and cigarettes (a Jarmusch favorite), yet Miramax, domestic distributor for both, plans to release *Smoke* in June and *Blue* in the fall.

Many of the 2,800 international journalists here seemed more taken with *Blue in the Face* than *Smoke*, although only the latter was in competition. When asked why, Wang said he didn't want to compete against himself. Time will tell if he made the right decision.

Will keep you posted, M.

February 17

Friends, Romans, and countrypeople,

Lesbian films are all the rage this year, but the two

Night Is Falling, about a professor who leaves her provincial fiancée for a woman, is simply a bore.

The more interesting gay and lesbian works belong to the Panorama section, including Antonia Bird's *Priest*, Wally White's coming-of-age-in Provincetown adventure *Lie Down with Dogs*, and Marita Giovanni's *Bar Girls*. The Panorama has long prided itself on screening a mix of gay and lesbian films, work from Eastern Bloc countries, and gritty low-budget independents. This year it's screening 53 features and 28 shorts, nine of which hail from the States. "Our success is not just what's happening here now," Panorama director Wieland Speck has said, "but nine months later, when I check the programs of art houses in Europe to see if I find our titles there."

This year, the section's tenth, is dedicated to Manfred Salzgeber, its founder and longtime director, who died last year of AIDS. In his honor, Speck selected a number of AIDS-themed films, including Canadian Cynthia Roberts' *The Last Supper*, about euthanasia; Marlon T. Riggs' last work, *Black Is.... Black Ain't*; and the French doc-

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offered a peek into the days of yore: A demonstration protesting the Mexican military took place prior to a Competition screening of Jorge Fons' *El Callejon de los Milagros* at the lavish, newly renovated Zoo Palast theater. The same week, a series of bomb threats prior to the screening of several Israeli films in a Panorama sidebar also caused fest directors to hold their breath. To the relief of all, none of the threats were carried out. Still, the festival took precautions by checking all bags prior to the press screening of Shmuel Hasfari's *Sh'chur*, the one Israeli film in Competition.

Cheers, M.

February 19

Dear colleagues,

This has been a very strong year for American independents. Quite a few U.S.-based indies—including Heather MacDonald (*Ballot Measure 9*), Ada Gay Griffin and Michelle Parkerson (*A Litany for Survival: The Life and Work of Audre Lorde*), Matthew Harrison (*Rhythm Thief*), Tom DiCillo (*Living in Oblivion*), and Terry Zwigoff (*Crumb*)—were accepted both to Sundance and Berlin. For those who secured domestic distribution deals following their films' U.S. premieres, Berlin provided an opportunity to explore foreign sales possibilities



The Film Palast, a plush Art Deco theater on Berlin's bustling Ku'Damm, played host to several Panorama screenings. Photo: Michele Shapiro

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the bear market

Remember the 1950s, when college fraternities stuffed as many brothers as possible into a single phone booth? Well this year's European Film Market, which ran concurrently with the Berlin International Film Festival (February 9-20), likewise packed dozens of sales companies into West Berlin's airtight Cine Center. With a record 76 stands from 41 countries and more than 400 films

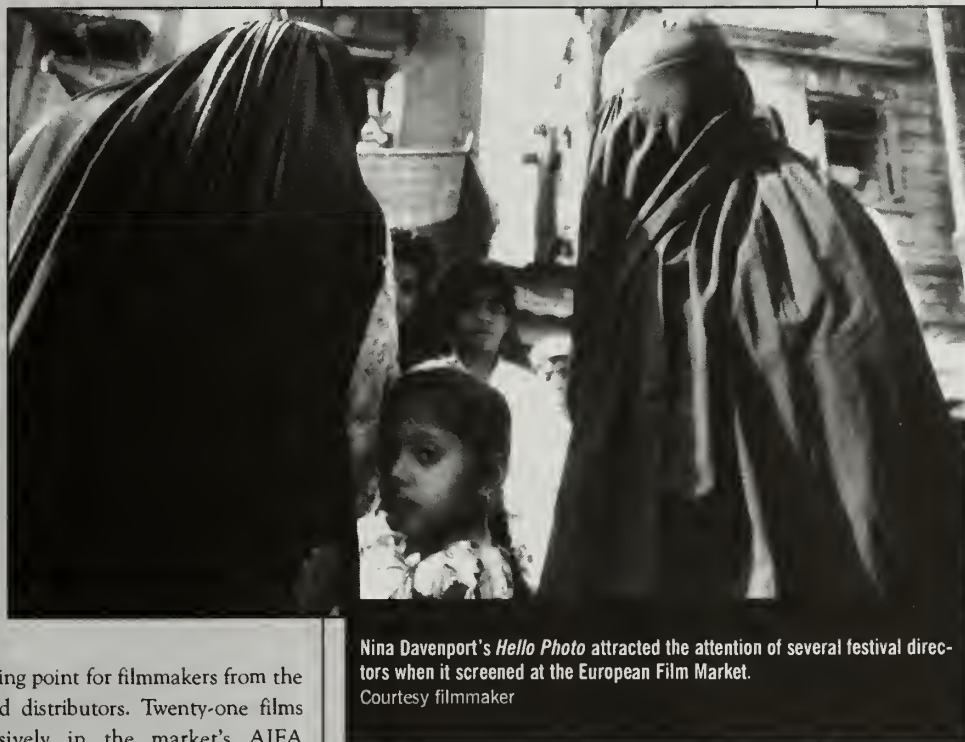
screened throughout the 12-day period, the three-story building was filled to capacity. Yet by all accounts, the first-floor AIFA (American Independents and Features Abroad) booth is where the action was.

For the ninth year running, the AIFA booth served as a meeting point for filmmakers from the U.S., buyers, and distributors. Twenty-one films screened exclusively in the market's AIFA Showcase, and many of the makers whose works were selected to screen in one of the festival's sections opted to shell out the \$150-per-hour rate for additional screenings at the market. "I was told that a lot of buyers never leave this building when they're in town," said Heather MacDonald, whose film about the fight for gay rights in Oregon, *Ballot Measure 9*, also screened in the festival's Panorama section. Following the film's successful premiere at Sundance, MacDonald closed a distribution deal with Zeitgeist in Berlin.

Even those who didn't strike up sales at the market had positive things to say about the experience. "The makers that I've spoken with felt their time and money were well spent," said Lynda A. Hansen, AIFA's director, upon her return from Berlin. "They went into it to broaden their contacts and exposure, and came away having gotten their films started on the festival circuit."

Paul Duran's *Flesh Suitcase*, a neo-noir story of two drug runners holed up in a bizarre L.A. boarding house, was one of the more successful AIFA screenings. Ivan Victor, the film's producer and editor, said his team concentrated more on

attracting festival directors and press to its two screenings than buyers because they're planning to close some foreign sales deals at Cannes. About AIFA he said: "It's great to be associated with the same organization that brought films such as *Go Fish* and *Red Rock West* to Berlin. The booth was great, too. We could meet other independents, leave messages, and dump press kits. AIFA gives



Nina Davenport's *Hello Photo* attracted the attention of several festival directors when it screened at the European Film Market. Courtesy filmmaker

the makers a lot of credibility."

Nina Davenport decided on the spur of the moment to screen her first project, *Hello Photo*, a documentary shot in India, at the Berlin market. In late January, Davenport had attended the Rotterdam International Film Festival, where her film had its European premiere, and she decided to take advantage of her proximity to Berlin by hopping a train there. Although she was assigned an early week screening slot and didn't have much time for advance promotion, Davenport found the experience worthwhile. "I met people from several festivals who were interested in *Hello Photo*," she said.

Experimental maker Jennifer Montgomery, whose first feature, *Art for Teachers of Children*, is based on her adolescent affair with a married photographer who was later investigated for child pornography, was also looking to drum up interest from foreign festivals. "Ironically," she said after returning to New York, "I had to go to Berlin to get a U.S. distribution deal." Like MacDonald, Montgomery signed with Zeitgeist, and the dis-

tributor plans a May release for the film. *Art for Teachers* also grabbed the attention of fest directors from New Zealand, Australia, London, and Locarno, but Montgomery says she wasted over \$1,000 on promotional materials that got lost in the flood of flyers and posters at the Cine Center. "I feel the people who were really interested in my film would have found it whether or not I handed them a press kit."

Samuel Goldwyn acquired international rights to Arnold Schwartzman's WWII documentary *Liberation*, which screened in Panorama, and Deborah Hoffman's doc, *Complaints of a Dutiful Daughter*, sold to Denmark 1, a European public broadcaster. In addition, reps from foreign territories including Germany, Australia, and New Zealand jumped at Marita Giovanni's comedy, *Bar Girls*, although the film's producers are talking to sales agents before closing any deals.

For the first time this year, AIFA had competition from another U.S. sales entity, International Media Resources. Spearheaded by Sandy Mandleberger, IMR had previously serviced independent producers at the Cannes and Mifed markets. Projects repped by IMR in Berlin included no-to-low budget indies such as Craig Schlattman's *At Ground Zero* and J.D. Kiggins' *The Longest Day of the Century*. Kiggins, who paid \$1,500 to screen and promote his film through IMR, was also looking for festival invites. Although he'd spent his graduate school tuition money, approximately \$150,000, to produce his first feature, Kiggins seemed uninterested in generating either domestic or foreign sales deals.

Market director Beki Probst said this year differed from others because "contrary to the last couple of years, when market interest has concentrated on a few titles, this year several films have attracted buyers." Yet *Variety* reported that several major buyers left Berlin without closing deals, which may in part attributable to the trend towards pre-festival sales.

Foreign sales agent Jane Balfour says Berlin is one of the few markets that showcases documentaries, which with shorts comprise 15 percent of works screened. "You can forget documentaries at Cannes," she said. "It's completely fiction-oriented." Marcie Bloom of Sony Picture Classics agrees. "I think it's easier to position a film here than at Cannes," she said.

—Michele Shapiro

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and to secure funding for future projects. Harrison closed a deal with Britain's Film Four, while DiCillo, who already has a U.S. distributor (Sony Picture Classics), said the positive buzz *Oblivion* garnered in Berlin would help the



Mitch Marcus'
A Boy Called Hate won the
C.I.C.A.E. prize
in Berlin.

Courtesy
filmmaker

film's foreign rep,
Summit, generate more sales.

At her fourth time in Berlin was veteran documentary Nina Rosenblum, who found a German backer for her work-in-progress, *Slave Ship: The Testimony of the Henrietta Marie*. She was invited to Berlin for a Panorama screening of *Lock Up: The Prisoners of Rikers Island*, for which she and Electric Films' Jon Alpert received unprecedented access to men's and women's cells—and even a facility for gay prisoners—at Rikers Island. But since HBO holds all rights to *Lock Up*, Rosenblum could do little in the way of foreign sales, which clearly frustrated her.

During a midweek press conference for American documentary makers, a question about the future of the NEA quickly brought discussion on funding to a head. "What Congress is doing is a direct attack against the cultural and political work that we do," said Ada Gay Griffin of Third World Newsreel, while Jill Godmilow, whose *Roy Cohn/Jack Smith* screened in the Forum, called the seriousness of the potential budget cuts "a call to arms."

Rather than spending much of the week on

shuttle buses to the press screenings at the oyster-shaped Kongresshalle, I'm watching films at a variety of venues, ranging from the plush, art deco Film Palast to the Colosseum in East Berlin, which resembles a high school auditorium. While the international press has, for the most part, been unimpressed with this year's festival, Berlin's locals are as passionate as ever. Following a screening of *Rhythm Thief*, they couldn't ask director Matthew Harrison enough questions about how he managed to complete the film in 11 days for \$11,000, and if New York was really as dangerous as it appeared in the filmmaker's gritty, black-and-white rendition. Harrison, whose low-key manner encouraged questions, told the crowd he thinks the film will be better received overseas than in the States. Judging from the audience's enthusiasm, he may be right.

Bear hugs, M.

February 20

Dear unrelated others:

Talk about a surprise ending. This year's Golden Bear went to French director Bertrand Tavernier's *L'Appat*, a low-buzz film about teens who murder for money, which didn't even have its first screening until yesterday. While the American contingent was rooting for *Smoke*, the Europeans were equally dismayed that Richard Linklater won a Silver Bear for Best Director. (The European premiere of *Before Sunrise* received only a lukewarm response here.) Among the Americans, Wang received a Special

Jury Prize for *Smoke* and Paul Newman was awarded Best Actor for *Nobody's Fool*. Mitch Marcus' *A Boy Called Hate*, about a twisted sexual relationship, snagged the C.I.C.A.E. Prize for Panorama from the International Confederation of Art Cinemas, and Steve McLean's *Postcards from America* won for the Forum. Hoffman's *Complaints of a Dutiful Daughter* shared the Caligari Film Prize with the Cuban film, *Madagascar*. But Heather MacDonald's honor, the Siegfried Award from the gay press, was far sweeter: she received a marzipan cake in the shape of the Kongresshalle.

This card will reach you long after my return to New York; I'm now on my 11-hour flight home. Two seats away, filmmaker Tom DiCillo is in oblivion, staring blankly at the world map projected on the screen before him. Images of the past week must fill his head as they do in mine. Perhaps he will capture them on film, as he did so brilliantly with *Living in Oblivion*. Filmmakers like him, able to transcend cultural barriers with their films, were the real stars of this year's Berlinale.

Until next year, auf wiedersehen, Berlin! M.

Michele Shapiro is managing editor of The Independent.



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Going Dutch

THE ROTTERDAM CINEMART

BY BETTE GORDON

Picture this: You're walking down a long hallway at the Hilton Hotel in Holland. You approach a room; the door is unlocked. You walk in, but nobody is there. You sit on the edge of the bed, then move to a nearby chair, because you think it's more appropriate. You're supposed to meet someone you've never met before in your life. It's a very suggestive situation. Your mind starts fantasizing a romantic encounter with this perfect stranger. But you're not here for sex; you're here for a meeting.

This is all part of the process at Cinemart, an international film market that has been an adjunct to the Rotterdam International Film Festival in Holland every January for the past 11 years. The Rotterdam Film Festival is one of the most prestigious, yet intimate, film events in the world. Within this setting, Cinemart was established to help directors and producers find buyers and financial investors for their projects. No other major film market is set up quite like this. Here, meetings have been pre-arranged between filmmakers looking for financing and those who have money to invest. Unlike the Berlin Film Festival's market, Cinemart does not include screenings; the event is purely meeting-driven.

This year 46 projects from all over the world were selected to participate in Cinemart. Nine were by American independents, including my *History of Luminous Motion*, based on the eponymous book I optioned. (Americans apply to Cinemart through the Independent Feature Project, which collects project descriptions and submissions and sends them on to the organizers of Cinemart, who make the selections.) There is no fee for participants in Cinemart; in fact, Cinemart covers participating airfare and hotel for five days.

Two weeks before the market began, Cinemart sent out a 20-page list of all the buyers and investors signed up to attend. This amounted to 450 producers, distributors, and financiers from France, the U.K., Germany, Holland, Sweden, Switzerland, Japan, Israel, and elsewhere. For someone not hooked into the international scene and all its players, this list can be very intimidating. Where to begin? I'm no stranger to the foreign



Temple of the Seventh Art: The Luxor Theater, one of the Rotterdam Festival's prime spots for viewing its cinematic offerings.

Photo: Bette Gordon

festival circuit, having travelled extensively with my film *Variety* (1984) after premiering in the Director's Fortnight at Cannes. Ten years later, I still know some of the players, but many are new names.

Fortunately, Good Machine, the New York production company, is serving as executive producer of *History of Luminous Motion* and could help navigate the way, based on its experience producing or representing films like *The Wedding Banquet*, *Simple Men*, *Amateur*, and *The Brothers McMullen*. Out of the list of 450, we selected 20 companies and sent faxes ahead of time, so they knew we would like to meet with them.

All the potential investors, in the meantime, had received an elaborate catalogue produced by Cinemart, which detailed every project, including a description, a director's statement, a budget plan, and a list of participants already involved. Cinemart then asked the companies and financial investors to sign up for meetings with projects that interested them.

One week before leaving for Rotterdam, I received a list from Cinemart of my meetings—who, where, date, and time. There were 17 formal meetings arranged, including tête-a-têtes with Aska Film (Canada), Prokino (Germany), Cine

Saison (Japan), Connexion (Germany), and Haut et Court (France), to name a few. From the list of 20 companies we faxed, eight meetings came through. The rest were companies requesting sessions

with us.

Wouter Barendrecht, one of Cinemart's organizers, compared the market to marriage brokers "who may not be able to contribute a huge dowry, but can at least host the wedding party." In setting up meetings between filmmakers and financiers, he said they try to match partners

who are right for each other, looking for a balance between high- and low-budget productions, U.S. and other products, maintaining a limited number of projects so each one could be as visible as possible.

All the meetings took place in the Hilton's hotel suites and were scheduled for half an hour—a comfortable amount of time. The responses I got to my project varied. Usually questions ran along the lines of: "How can I get involved?" "I loved the project description; can I read the script?" "How much are you looking for?" "Can you tell me more about your project?" "What actors are attached?"

In addition to the meetings scheduled in advance, I set up four more once I got to Rotterdam. Cinemart ran an information and message desk on the second floor, which helped filmmakers find other people with whom to meet. There were also several casual conversations that

made people aware of my project. These could happen anywhere. The Hilton was effectively taken over by festival and Cinemart people: downstairs were several bars and comfortable tables and chairs. Upstairs were more tables, a coffee bar, a huge "Jardin" room used for the seminars, lunches, and conferences. The tables were always full of people drinking coffee and talking.

While there were over 100 festival films showing every day, I didn't spend much time in the movies. I felt I was there to network and hopefully "meet the money" for my film. So I stayed around the Hilton in between meetings. Breaking in on a table of animated conversation sometimes proved awkward for us filmmakers, however. We only go to these events every few years, usually when we have a finished film we're trying to sell. But buyers, publicists, and representatives of financing companies attend regularly and develop continuing relationships with each other. As a result, hanging out in the Hilton was like being in a roomful of people who all seem to know each other—except you. I tried to look relaxed and comfortable (despite more cups of coffee than I can remember), but didn't exactly feel it.

Having missed most of the festival screenings, I occasionally found time to duck into the video library, set up for both festival and market participants, where there were private monitors with headsets. I did manage to catch a festival screening of an amazing Indian film that has been banned in India called *Bandit Queen*. Shekhar Kapur's film was about the legendary and most feared woman outlaw in India, who was imprisoned for years for crimes against the state. I also saw one episode of a French television series on teenagers and their music, directed by a number of French feature filmmakers. *US Go Home* was Claire Denis' (*Chocolat*) episode, a provocative story of two teenage girls living in a new suburb of Paris in 1965, near a U.S. Army base.

Meeting with people from so many different countries during Cinemart was like a trip around the world in five days. Like many filmmakers, I couldn't possibly afford to travel to Germany, France, England, Holland, and Japan to meet with prospective financiers. But the directors and staff of Cinemart made it possible in a supportive and friendly atmosphere. Nobody writes a check on the spot, but these meetings open the door to future negotiations and possible financial relationships. In today's competitive marketplace, there is not an overabundance of resources for independent filmmakers. The opportunity provided in Rotterdam is a unique and increasingly necessary step toward raising money for independent productions.

Bette Gordon is a film director and a professor at Columbia University's Graduate Film Division in New York City.

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NO GUTS, NO GLORY:

THE PA

The 2nd AC and camera PA tending off the smell of ammonia cleaner while guarding the equipment for *Wander Bread*, a short by Edward Berger.

Photo: Aliko Knutsen, courtesy filmmaker

OR, HOW TO BREAK INTO THE FILM PRODUCTION BUSINESS

BY ANTHONY BREGMAN AND
MARY JANE SKALSKI

How does a person get his or her first job in the film business? When folks in the industry talk about having to "pay your dues," most often they're referring to the job of production assistant. The lowly PA may have to stand for hours in the freezing rain guarding the back of a locked equipment truck, upkeep hygiene and design by rearranging apple cubes and M&M dishes on a craft services table, or zealously guard curbside parking spots on a lonely street in a seedy neighborhood throughout the night, armed with nothing more than a bunch of stolen Con Ed parking cones. And yet, the PA position, when performed with the right mix of seriousness, humor, energy, humility, helpfulness, and ambition, can be a truly

rewarding place to start out in film. It's ideal for getting an overview of various departments of film production, and it's a perfect place to start building a name for yourself. "Don't be afraid to work for as many departments as possible," advises producer/production manager Ann Ruark, whose first PA gig was tending craft services table. "Working as a PA is an investment in figuring out what you want to do with yourself."

What is a PA?

Coarsely put, PAs are the grunts of the film business, apprentices responsible for carrying out the mundane chores so that the higher-ups in the hierarchy—the supervisors, technicians, and craftsmen—can work efficiently and happily. The existential predicament of PAs can be frustrating: PAs will find themselves carrying equipment, but not setting anything up; conveying information, but not making decisions; sent on missions that are seemingly without purpose and quite often without explanation. Many a PA sent to sit in the cab of a parked truck for three hours in subzero weather is left wondering, "Why?" But as thankless as PA jobs may sometimes feel, PAs are the arms and legs of every department of every film production. And in being so central to the mechanics of a production, the PA begins to absorb, through habit and osmosis, the pace, rhythm, and method of specific departments and film production as a whole.

Three Species of PAs

Although the "PA" is a catch-all concept for nearly all starting positions in the film business (besides production PAs, there are postproduction assistants and PAs in delivery, distribution, and development), most PAs

find work during the preproduction, shoot, and wrap periods of a film's production, and it is these we'll be dealing with here.

Every production has a unique mix of key personnel and production requirements. These in turn require a certain number of PAs and organization of duties. While it's impossible to supply a list of how PA chores break down on an "average" film, one can divide the different types of production PAs into three categories: Office PAs, Art PAs, and Set PAs.

Office PAs: The production office PA may end up with the kind of thankless chores common in any small office—faxing, xeroxing, list-making, filing, answering the phone—and indeed may spend an entire production without ever visiting the set. But the office PA is also in the enviable position of planning and tracing a film production from the very beginning to the end. "Working in the production office may not seem like the most glamorous thing to do on a film," says production manager Victoria McGarry, "but the office PA probably comes closer than any other type of PA to experiencing what it's like to produce a movie."

An office PA may be one of the first people hired and usually stays on until the bitter end of the production. During this period, the office PA will have the rare perspective of walking into an empty office, then helping with the gradual accumulation and organization of props, sets, locations, equipment, supplies, and personnel. These PAs participate in the intensity of the actual shoot period (although from the office's perspective), and then will help "wrap" the production (i.e. return all equipment, store the film's elements, settle all bills, and tie together the loose ends) after most other members of the crew have gone on to their next jobs. An attentive and smart office PA will come out of the experience knowing how a production is constructed from scratch.

An office PA is typically under the direct supervision of the production office coordinator (POC) and the assistant production office coordinator (APOC). On smaller shoots the office PA may serve as the APOC. Needless to say, detail-oriented and organizationally-inclined PAs flourish in this position.

Art Department PAs: The art department, headed by the production designer, does much of its preparation before shooting begins. As a result, art PAs may also get hired early in preproduction. During the initial design stage, the production designer consults with the director on the look of the film and with the producer to see how much money is allocated to achieve that look. During this stage, the art PA duties include normal office tasks (filing, xeroxing, phone calls), but may also involve creating picture paste-ups, doing research at the library (especially for period pieces or for stories taking place in foreign or odd locations), running around town to pick up color chips and fabric swatches, and possibly scouting and photographing some locations.

Another PA position at this early stage of preproduction is the *product placement* PA, who is especially invaluable on smaller, more financially constrained productions. This PA will spend the preproduction period contacting various corporations and offering them the possibility of having their products appear in the film (say, Budweiser beer or M&M candies) in exchange for free "samples" of those products (30 cases of Bud, a thousand packs of M&Ms), which the production is sure to make good use of later on (see craft service PAs below).

As preproduction gears up, the art department is divided into several sub-departments: set construction, set dressing, wardrobe, props, and hair/make-up. Although all these are under the supervision of the pro-

duction designer, it is the individual department heads who usually hire and supervise the PAs. The level of skills required and amount of hands needed will vary, depending upon the individual production. *Set Construction* PAs will be painting, shipping, hauling lumber (if the production is building "flats" or movable walls), and doing general schlepping. *Set Dressing* PAs are responsible for arriving at the location prior to the shooting day, one step ahead of the rest of the crew, and "dressing" the set with vases, lamps, flowers, empty glasses, fake snow, the alarm

clock set to go off, etc. *Prop Assistants* help the propmaster buy, rent, or create the objects that the actors will touch or use. *Costume Assistants* will typically keep track of which costumes are supposed to show up which day on which set. Even more specialized jobs can grow out of the specific demands of a shoot: On *The Wedding Banquet*, for example, a PA was assigned to be the "Jewelry Wrangler," responsible for keeping a close eye on all the expensive, borrowed jewelry

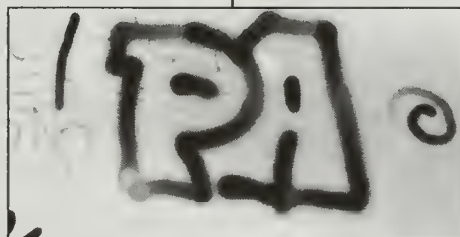
used in the ceremony scenes, and for ensuring that all the necklaces and rings made it safely into their storage cases at the end of each shot.

Set PAs: The set PAs are responsible for ensuring the smooth and efficient execution of the shoot itself. They endure bitter cold or the scorching sun armed (usually) with a walkie talkie and a fanny pack of PA survival gear: pads, pencils, sharpies, pen knives, gloves. The set PAs' responsibilities are extensive: They set up the locations at the start of the day and break them down (and sweep up the mess) at the end. During shooting, they ensure that crowds of onlookers and bystanders are held at bay, away from the camera's view and sound mixer's range. They protect production equipment and personal belongings from the roaming bandits who specialize in film shoot theft. They ensure that the cast and crew are well fed, well informed, and well accounted for. They escort actors and extras from the holding areas over to the set when scenes begin rehearsing or shooting, and then shuffle the actors and extras back when the scenes are completed. They jump in front of cars that threaten to cruise down locked-off streets, and stand in the doorways of noisy elevators that interfere with sound takes in a nearby apartment set. They drive over to the production office in the late afternoon to pick up the following day's call sheets. They messenger the exposed film to the lab and the sound tapes over to the editing room at the end of the day.

Two set PA positions with more focused duties—craft service PAs and parking PAs—are found on shoots of all sizes. *Craft Service* PAs take care of the omnipresent tables of snacks and drinks that are set up at every location and can often make all the difference between a positive atmosphere on a shoot and a crabby crew. The craft service PA will usually show up a half-hour before anyone else arrives on set in order to prepare breakfast and hot coffee. He or she will then try to maintain a fresh, attractive looking snack table throughout the day. At each day's wrap, the craft service PA pulls out cases of beer (which, if the product placement PA has been doing her job, is plentiful and free).

Parking PAs will spend nights on end standing in parking spots and fending off cars, so the spaces are available the next morning for production trucks and/or street scenes. This is generally a miserable job with not much to redeem it, other than a paycheck at the end of the day (yes, a paycheck, even on the most no-budget films). However, if a desperate production coordinator calls you up at nine at night to beg you to show up immediately in a warm coat at a random corner in Queens and you actually accept, you will be remembered.

On most smaller and mid-sized shoots, the set PAs are under the



Can you spot the PA in this photo? (He's the one who can spare a second to face away from the action, cable in hand). Photos courtesy David Lee

Eat, Drink, PA: the crew at the trough on the set of Ang Lee's *Eat Drink Man Woman*. A well-fed crew is a happy one, so Craft Services PAs fill a vital role.

Culture shock: the crew's cups, labelled and neatly arranged. Think of this image next time you visit a styrofoam-littered North American set.



supervision of the assistant director and the unit production manager. But on larger productions, set PAs may join specific departments for more focused work. *Electric and Grip PAs* generally lug around, set up, and break down the lighting and other heavy equipment, all the while familiarizing themselves with the different types of lights, stands, gels, dollies, tracks, and scaffolding. The job requires heavy lifting, loading, some carpentry, and acute attention to detail; mistakes around grip and electric equipment can be deadly. *Camera PAs* will also lug around equipment, such as boxes containing camera bodies, lenses, tripods, film stock, and other paraphernalia. They may also help load film into the mags and in other ways back up the second or first camera assistants. *Sound PAs*, rare though they may be, help wire the actors for radio mikes, throw sound blankets over potential noise sources, fetch tape for the location sound mixer, and maybe on a slow day (or an extremely busy one) hold the boom.

Getting a PA Job and Holding On to It

Possibly one of the most difficult hurdles facing a PA is getting hired. Production crews often travel from one shoot to the next in large, tight groups that can be difficult to break into. Inevitably, though, existing PAs gain enough experience and credits to move up in rank, opening their PA positions. When this happens, the best advice is this: Grab it quick.

The secret of getting hired as a PA is simple: take everything and anything you hear about and try to be as informed as possible. Keep your eyes open. Offer yourself for free. Go to parties and ask everybody about upcoming shoots. Spread the word that you're looking for work. Meet everyone. Read the papers and trades to see which productions are coming to your neighborhood. *Weekly Variety* prints periodic lists of upcoming productions and films in development. The *Ross Report* lists TV shoots. In New York, the Mayor's Office of Film, Theater and Broadcasting publishes a list, usually with contact information, every Friday evening of all productions shooting in the city the following week. Call the productions up, visit the office, make yourself known to the people in charge. They're probably looking for the same qualities of forthrightness and energy that made you show up in the first place. And never, ever turn anything down; a beginning PA can gain from nearly every possible job.

When you are hired, continue with the same forthrightness and energy. A successful PA is constantly active, finding things to do even when nothing is asked: there are always garbage cans to empty, chairs to fold, papers to straighten up. The qualities that are most treasured in a PA are thoroughness, cheerfulness, inventiveness, attention to detail, and follow-through. Prove that you're a person that gets things done, and people will entrust you with more and more responsibility.

"I'm really impressed by people who do a thankless job and manage to shine at it," says production designer Steve Rosenzweig. "When I work with a PA who does whatever it takes to excel in the job, I inevitably tell

it to the DP, the producer, the AD. Of course, if they suck, I'm also going to tell everybody on earth." Word gets around—about the great PAs and about ones who'll never get hired again.

Anthony Bregman is head of production at Good Machine, a New York-based production company. As a PA, he's caught frostbite, been electrocuted by stepping into a live puddle, been shaken down by Brighton Beach's Russian mafia, and narrowly missed catching hepatitis from a craft service table. Mary Jane Skalski is head of International Sales at Good Machine. As a PA she made sandwiches, coffee, xeroxes, and many, many mistakes, but managed to cover them all up.



"We don't fund films, we
fund projects in the
humanities"

The stately Old Post Office Building, just down a ways from the White House and home of NEH: here the proposals are pored over, the consultations begun, the grants issued or denied.

Courtesy NEH

Independents and the NEH

BY BARBARA ABRASH

WHEN MEDIAMAKERS CONJURE UP IMAGES OF FEDERAL FUNDING AGENCIES, it's the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) that first pops into mind. As a funder of the arts, it's flashier, brasher, and more prone to public controversy than its sister agency, the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), which seems, by contrast, quiet, studious, and anonymous.

Looking at the bottom line, however, one finds it's the NEH that packs the biggest punch. Last year, its Media Program granted \$10.1 million to a total of 47 film and video projects. By contrast, the NEA's Media Program awarded \$633,000 in direct support to individual artists for film/video production in 1994. The NEH is the third largest funder of public broadcast programming, after PBS and CPB. Approximately two-thirds of its grants typically go to independent producers, one-third to PBS stations. In recent years, NEH has had sufficient resources to provide full funding of \$500,000 to \$600,000 for one-hour documentaries. Since 1992, when a Series Initiative was introduced, NEH has earmarked \$2.5 million for full funding of a three-part series or for completion of a five to 10-part series. NEH offers both outright and matching grants, and accepts shared funding arrangements with NEA, the National Science Foundation, other foundations, and corporations.

So why aren't more mediamakers lining up at NEH's door? Or, in recent months, why haven't they been talking about its possible demise under Republican leadership with the same level of anxiety that pervades discussion of the NEA's and CPB's potential fate? The short answer is, the

NEH is not for everyone; its application process is a far tougher row to hoe, so fewer mediamakers have had direct experience with the agency. This article looks at who precisely the NEH funds and what successful grant applicants have gone through to reap their hard-earned rewards.

What Is a "Humanities Project"?

Since 1972, when NEH began funding media, the agency has been a steady source of support for independents. Program officer Holly Tank comments, "NEH has kept a lot of documentarians in the documentary business. And we fund small independents who will get larger," she says, citing *Civil War* producer Ken Burns as someone the NEH funded "before anyone knew who he was." Notably, it is one of the rare sources able to provide full funding for a film, and once past the scripting phase, the producer has complete creative control and ownership of the project (with a few constraints, noted below).

Nonetheless, NEH and independent producers do not always make a perfect fit. The application process can be daunting, and some producers complain that NEH has "no feel for media," that it is too focused on written scholarship and dampens creative filmmaking. To which NEH replies that its mandate is to disseminate learning in the humanities, rather than support art for its own sake, including film and video. But they are quick to add that they have nonetheless fostered some pretty terrific work, including Barbara Kopple's Academy Award-winning *American Dream*, Frederick Wiseman's *Near Death*, three programs in Blackside's recent seven-part *War on Poverty* series, and most famously, *The Civil War*.

Filmmakers sometimes feel stymied by that NEH mantra, "We don't

Judge E.C. Winchell strikes a pose circa 1888. From *The American Experience's* "The Way West" (airing on PBS May 8 and 9), which was funded by the Missouri, South Dakota, Arizona, and Colorado state humanities councils—all of which receive NEH money.

Photo: Bancroft Library, courtesy WGBH-TV

Bancroft Library



fund films, we fund projects in the humanities," and from the built-in requirement that filmmakers work collaboratively with scholars.

So what is a project in the humanities? Technically, the term "humanities" includes, but is not limited to, the fields of history, ethics, anthropology, philosophy, literature, linguistics, comparative religion, and art criticism. It does not include hard sciences or quantitative social sciences. Practically speaking, films with historical context and cultural analysis fall generally within NEH guidelines, provided that they represent the best and most current scholarship and incorporate various perspectives. The endowment has special interest in American biographies, children's programming, and documentaries in history and culture. Under Chairman Sheldon Hackney, appointed by President Clinton in 1993, American pluralism and identity has become a featured theme.

Collaboration with scholars is a key requirement. These individuals are not just window dressing; an applicant's board of advisors will be an inextricable part of the project. If you decide to apply to NEH, you should probably plan on including at least three scholars among your advisors. A full roster of advisors ranges from five to more than 20, depending on the scope of the series and the amount of expertise that is called for. Advisors may also include directors, writers, and others who you may want to call upon at various stages of work.

The collaborative relationship tends to be an improvisation, taking shape on a case-by-case basis. One model of productive collaboration is that between producer Andrea Simon and key advisor historian John Kuo Wei Tchen on *Histories Properly Told*, a one-hour documentary about ethnic diversity in the United States, which will be distributed as part of the NEH's agency-wide initiative, the National Conversation on American Pluralism and Identity. While Simon acknowledges that filmmakers and scholars operate in totally different time frames ("an impossible divide that must be dealt with"), she works closely with carefully chosen scholars, many of whom are experienced in gearing presentations to public

audiences. They collaborate from the start, developing the interpretive frameworks and overarching themes that NEH requires, and continue a process of "intellectual give and take that develops a basic level of trust." Simon depends on her advisors for the breadth of their perspectives, for interpretation, and for "what you can't get out of a book."

Obviously, NEH is not right for everybody. In addition to having a humanities project, a taste for scholarship, and for working with scholars, you must also have a production team with a track-record in producing quality work suitable for primetime PBS broadcast that will interest a general public audience. Program officer Barbara Sirota advises, "If you have never produced, don't apply." But, she adds, if you have written an outstanding script or proposal, and if you put together a good team that provides the skills you lack, it is possible to get a grant.

How to Apply

Before preparing a full application and at least six weeks before the application deadline, you must submit a two-page description of the proposed project to NEH. A staff member will determine whether the project is eligible and is likely to offer suggestions for strengthening the proposal. NEH staff plays a critical role in the success of a project. The Media Program is directed by James J. Dougherty. Staff members include Holly Tank, Barbara Sirota, Toby Quitslund, Bob Herring, and Karen Fuglie Miles. Grants Administrator Jerri Shepherd handles budget and financial matters. Staff members, though overworked, are extremely responsive to filmmakers and will spend long hours

helping to develop a promising proposal. Their input can make a significant difference in the quality and competitiveness of a proposal. Experienced independent producers stress how important it is to find a staff member early on with whom you can communicate well, and maintain a working relationship.

NEH application guidelines are detailed and should be read carefully. They describe three funding categories: planning, research and scripting, and production (which may extend to completion and promotion). In 1994, there were 13 planning grants awarded (totaling \$280,000), 11 scripting grants (\$900,000), 18 production grants (\$8 million), and five completion and promotion grants (\$800,000).

Planning grants, which generally run about \$20,000, provide seed money to enable you to sharpen the conceptual focus, do research, and assemble scholar/advisors in preparation for writing a competitive proposal. Scripting grants, according to filmmaker Pat Ferrero, require virtually as much work as production grants. "You have to be incredibly far along to get script money, because the treatment needs to be so detailed," says Ferrero, whose NEH-funded film *Hearts and Hands* is a social history of nineteenth century women and quilting. "If you haven't done substantial research and careful conceptual thinking, and if you don't have your scholars on board, don't do it," Ferrero advises.

Many producers fault NEH for requiring a detailed treatment as part of the application for scripting funds. For production funding, you must present a detailed outline treatment or script. Connie Field, producer of *Rosie the Riveter* and *Freedom on My Mind*, both of which received NEH support, had high praise for the way NEH supports and enhances independent work in general. But she speaks for many when she says of the script requirements, "This is a creative waste.... [The NEH] should be able to get the information from a good detailed outline treatment."

Almost across the board, independents say that the detailed script is

the one NEH requirement that doesn't contribute to improving the project. These scripts, which generally run 45 to 60 pages for a one-hour documentary, are widely regarded as inappropriate to documentary filmmaking, serving only to take precious time away from the real work that needs to be done. Endowment staff members, on the other hand, insist that detailed scripts and treatments are necessary blueprints if NEH is to have enough information to make major financial commitments.

Budget items. NEH budget guidelines are very detailed and should be given careful attention. There are two particular items that should be noted. First, wages and salaries performed on NEH projects are subject to the Department of Labor wage standards. Scriptwriters, performers, directors, and supporting personnel must be compensated at not less than guild or union rates. (Scholars commonly receive honoraria of \$300 to \$350.)

Another matter of great concern is the fact that NEH does not allow independent producers to rent their own equipment to the project at fair market rates. According to Holly Tank, this is a federal regulation. A lower rate based on depreciation schedules is permissible, but the formula is sufficiently complicated to require consultation with NEH staff or with your accountant. In rare cases, if you can demonstrate that renting equipment, such as a flatbed or camera, for the life of the project would cost more than purchase, you may buy equipment with the prior approval of NEH.

Should You Apply to NEH?

An NEH grant is a major undertaking, which demands research, writing, and organizational skills as well as financial resources. But for some producers, NEH is simply an

essential and unparalleled source of support. Filmmaker Richard Gordon, who, with Carma Hinton, is currently producing *The Gate of Heavenly Peace*, a three-part series on the democracy movement in China, says, "There is no comparable source of funding for long, complex works that deal with serious issues.... Without NEH our films would be shadows of what they are."

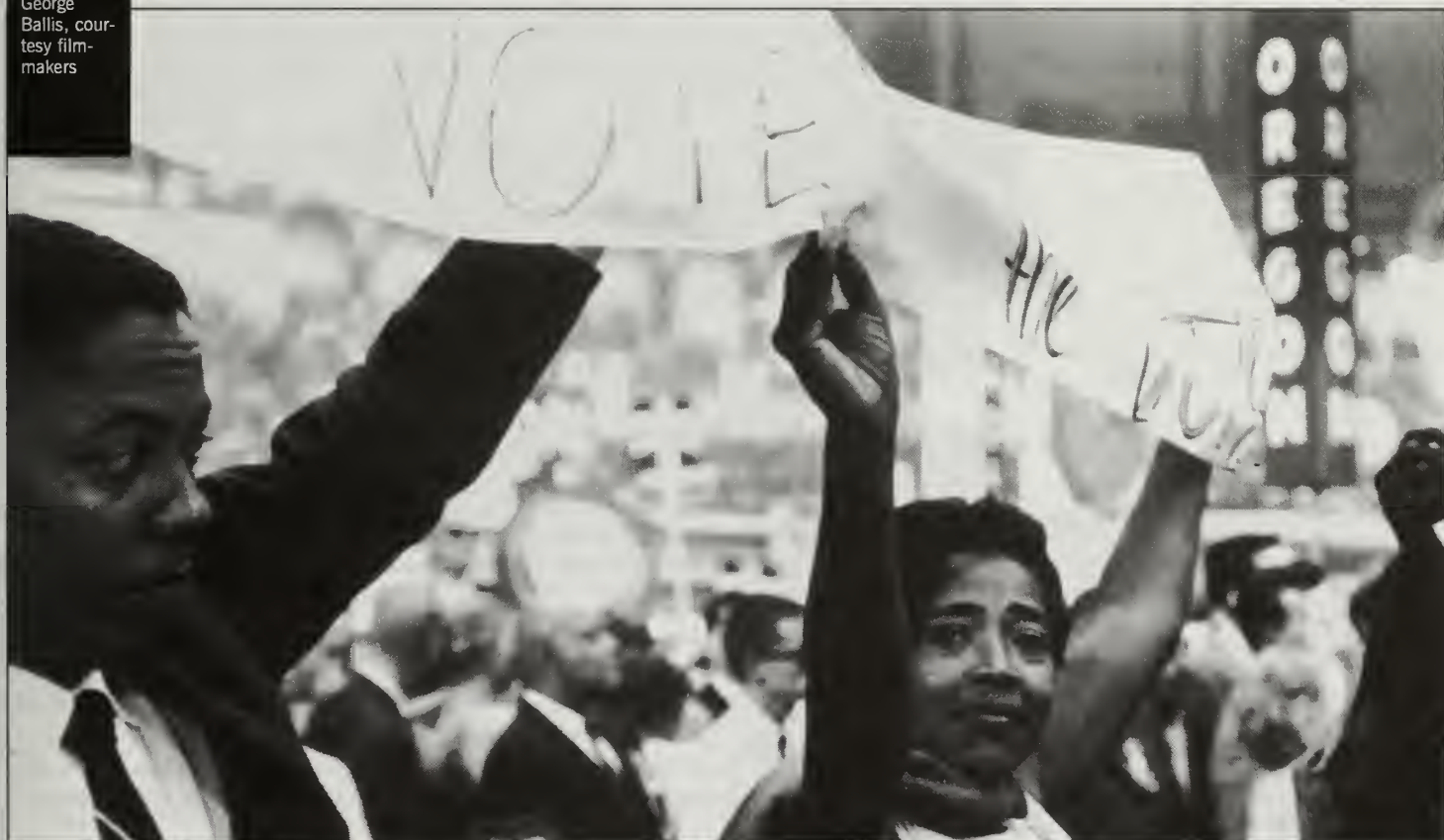
Independent producer and AIVF board member Loni Ding says she has "undergone an enormous education as a result of applying over a period of many years." Ding feels that her most recent production, *Ancestors in America*, a multi-part series about the experiences of Asians in America constructed from the point of view of immigrants and their descendants, has benefited immeasurably from the level of conceptual work and scholarly depth required by NEH. Few funders, says Ding, respect and demand serious content. She welcomes the input of scholars who raise every possible critical question. "It may not make filmmaking easier," she says, "but it gives you a grounding no one else would require of you."

The downside is the sheer expense and effort of applying. An NEH application, which typically takes at least two to three months to prepare, includes a 10- to 25-page narrative essay, a board of scholarly advisors, letters of commitment, budget, resumes, detailed work plan, a time line, and a detailed script or treatment. The essay sets out the conceptual framework of the project, the scholarship that it represents, themes and issues to be engaged, and a description of how the proposal will be implemented.

Preparing a competitive proposal commonly requires not only a large investment of time, but also a support staff, travel, research and office costs, and other out-of-pocket expenditures. It is not unusual for a writer to be hired (one hears of fees ranging from \$1,000 to \$3,000) to prepare an essay couched in the academic language thought to be congenial to NEH readers. In fact, NEH staff members say, "If you are not a good

Connie Field and Marilyn Mulford's *Freedom On My Mind* received NEH support. Field praises the agency but calls the script requirements a "creative waste".

Photo: George Ballis, courtesy filmmakers



writer, hire one."

NEH points out that it prizes clear, pithy proposals and claims that any independent with sufficient time and talent should be able to produce a successful proposal without major financial outlay. But many independents agree with veteran filmmaker William Greaves, who says that you need to develop a substantial infrastructure to meet the demands of NEH. Not only is seed money necessary, but few independents, says Greaves, would be willing "to put up with the pain and suffering of coping with requirements on such a level."

Financial Responsibilities

The requirements escalate once you receive funding. According to Greaves, "You virtually need a corporate body behind you, with accountants, legal advice, and access to scholars. You need to become the Rolls Royce or General Motors of the documentary industry." Richard Gordon agrees: "The financial requirements and logistical problems can be formidable. It can cost thousands of dollars to set yourself up to satisfy the financial requirements of NEH."

In addition to general budget oversight, NEH has the right to approve in advance how all monies are spent, including funds from sources other than NEH, until the project is completed. A project cannot accept funding from foundations or other sources without NEH approval, particularly if such funding involves distribution and other rights. While NEH staff members are, by and large, regarded as allies and advocates, approvals can take 10 weeks or more to thread through the bureaucratic maze.

Before applying, you should be aware of other binding relationships you may find yourself obliged to continue with NEH. It is true that once funded for production, you have full creative control and copyright ownership of the project, and you may keep net profits up to \$50,000. But profits over \$50,000 must be shared with NEH up to the full amount of the grant, according to a formula based on the proportion of funding provided by the NEH. According to some filmmakers, this diminution of financial returns reduces the incentive to continue active promotion and distribution. A few producers who rely on active self-distribution doubt that NEH has primary interest in long-term distribution of funded work, even though distribution plans are built into the proposal process.

The Review Process

Once an application is submitted, staff members step back from direct

involvement. Proposals are prepared for review, and in some cases an outside subject specialist is asked to do an evaluation. All proposals then go to panel review. In each funding cycle, five peer panels—each composed of four scholars and three filmmakers—are assembled at NEH. The panelists are a mix in terms of geographical and subject diversity and usually include two veterans of the panel process. (Separate panels consider



Andrea Simon with advisors: Presbyterian minister Antonio Medina (L) and museum curator Vicente Martinez (R). Simon, producer of an NEH-funded documentary on ethnic diversity and shared American values, has found the producer-advisor interaction fruitful. Courtesy filmmaker

planning grants, which tend to get lost when mixed in with proposals for scripting and production.)

The deliberations of panel sessions are reviewed by NEH staff, which "assesses the assessments" and makes final funding recommendations. These are presented to the National Council on the Humanities, a 26-member board appointed by the President and approved by the Senate.

Their determinations, which do not always entirely coincide with staff recommendations, then go to the Chairman, who has sole power to make final decisions. Since the appointment of Sheldon Hackney, there has been no indication of the kind of political interventions that have occurred under previous chairs.

Independents who have worked with NEH over a period of many years speak with great respect and appreciation about staff members who have provided professionalism and continuity through periods of political upheaval. There is also general agreement that applicants, successful or not, receive detailed and important feedback on the review process. A rejection by NEH is a common enough occurrence, but many producers regard it as just a beginning.

It is not unusual to find a successful project that began with a rejection. A program officer provides a written summary of the reasons a project has been turned down and will give clear readings on whether to resubmit. You may request more detailed reviews, which often provide important guidance in rewriting a proposal. If you decide to reapply, it is very helpful to consult closely with your program officer and to take direction and advice seriously.

Common Complaints

One of the most persistent criticisms heard from independents is that NEH does not understand the process of filmmaking. To producers, NEH assumptions, goals, and practices are closer to the world of academia than to practicalities of production. This is true not only in terms of what's required in writing a competitive proposal, but it also extends to the NEH's attitude towards innovative formats. Many producers believe that formal innovations are either misunderstood or discouraged at NEH, victims of a stodgy reliance on conventional documentary approaches.

NEH staff, in turn, point to their acceptance of cinema verité, dramatic reenactment, and historical drama, and are proud of their support of Wiseman's challenging 350-minute verité film, *Near Death*. If they resist formal innovations, they say, it's because they are wary of confusing and misleading viewers or compromising intellectual integrity. At the same time, NEH staff members have set about upgrading their knowledge of media production and even commercial media, attending workshops and conferences and expanding their range of contacts. They are seeking new ways of making humanities films.

Another long-standing criticism of NEH practices is articulated by

Alabama-based Wade Black, who believes that concentrations of NEH funding in urban centers on the East and West Coasts have undercut regional filmmakers and muffled regional voices and perspectives.* "A film about Texas made by a New York filmmaker is not the same film that would be made by a Texan," he says. To Black, this mirrors other forms of centralization that are undermining regional culture.

Black also objects to the fact that NEH-approved scholars tend to be based in a relative handful of major academic institutions, to the detriment of independent scholars and academics at less prestigious local colleges and universities who may also have important contributions to make. Finally, Black claims that NEH funding policies have tended to serve small groups of producers and academics, rather than the larger public, and that by failing to build regional audiences, NEH has been left with a very narrow base of support.

What's Next?

NEH funding for media production over the past five years has ranged between \$9.27 million and \$11.48 million. As of this writing, it is fighting for a budget of \$8 million, its very existence in jeopardy as it faces reauthorization by a hostile Congress.** It is ironic that this agency, which is so grounded in the written word and the world of scholarship, and which so specifically announces that its primary mission does not include funding films *per se*, has been so significant and unique a supporter of independent media. NEH funding has been crucial to the production of films and videos that privilege the visions of their makers over commercial imperatives. It has provided often otherwise unattainable resources for filmmakers who wish to express complex and serious ideas to public audiences. Let us all wish NEH a long life—long enough both to improve what it is doing and how it is doing it, but also to continue to foster and engage independent work.



Dr. Ralph J. Bunche, former Undersecretary General of the United Nations, winner of the 1950 Nobel Peace Prize, and subject of William Greaves' latest film, the NEH-funded *Ralph Bunche: An American Odyssey*. Photo: United Nations, courtesy filmmaker

Barbara Abrash is an independent producer and associate director of the Center for Media, Culture and History at New York University, where she teaches in the Public History program. She has been applying to NEH, successfully and unsuccessfully, since 1975. In addition to being a media panelist, she has served as an advisor on several NEH-funded film projects.

* In 1994, NEH media grants were distributed as follows: New York 19; Massachusetts 6; California 5; District of Columbia 5; Maryland 2; and 1 each to South Carolina, Hawaii, Illinois; Kentucky, Louisiana, New Hampshire, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia.

** For up-to-date information on the status of legislation affecting the NEH, contact the American Arts Alliance: (202) 737-1727.

NEH HAS ANNOUNCED A CHANGE IN FUNDING CYCLES, STARTING THIS FALL. THERE WILL BE ONLY 1 DEADLINE FOR PRODUCTION. IT FALLS ON OCTOBER 1, ALONG WITH RESEARCH AND SCRIPTING, AND PLANNING GRANTS. THE MARCH 1996 DEADLINE IS FOR PLANNING, RESEARCH, AND SCRIPTING GRANTS ONLY. THESE NEW RULES DO NOT APPLY TO PROJECTS IN PROGRESS. FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, CONTACT: NEH, DIVISION OF MEDIA PROGRAMS, ROOM 426, 1100 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE, N.W., WASHINGTON, DC 20506; (202) 606-8278.



TRASH THOSE GRANT APPLICATIONS!

A Dozen Creative Ways to Finance Your Next Project

BY BARBARA BLISS
OSBORN

Editor's note: This is the first in a series of articles on funding and financing alternatives for media artists, which will run periodically in The Independent. With traditional funding entities such as the NEA and the NEH in jeopardy, film and video artists must now put their creative energies to the test off-camera in scraping together money for the projects closest to their hearts. In the following overview, contributing editor Barbara Bliss Osborn takes a humorous look at how makers have funded projects without much, if any, assistance from federal, state, or local arts agencies. In future issues, the Alternative Funding series will focus on non-traditional funding venues for specific genres, from narrative features to personal and social-issue documentary to animated work and experimental media. If you have a creative funding story you wish to share with The Independent, please fax or e-mail it to Michele Shapiro, managing editor, at (212) 677-8732; aivf.fivf@aol.com. (No phone calls, please.)

HAVE YOU EVER PROMISED YOURSELF YOU'D NEVER submit another grant proposal? Kick the habit once and for all; Republicans in Congress may soon help limit the possibilities for frustrated grant applicants by eliminating funding for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), the Independent Television Service (ITVS), the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), and the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH).

This turn of events will send mediamakers searching for their latent entrepreneurial potential if not their inheritance. Fortunately, the way has already been pioneered, proving that independent producers don't need grants as long as they solicit donations via the Internet, sell their sperm/eggs, or, more traditionally, run up credit cards.

Below are nearly a dozen unorthodox strategies, running the gamut from draconian to decadent. They have helped mediamakers get their first projects off the ground *without* the benefit of public funding or foundation grants. Their M.O.s are limited only by imagination and willingness to grovel.

1. **Do the Hustle.** Lauran Hoffman, executive



Bar-stool by bar-stool, wallet by wallet, the makers of *Bar Girls* procured funds for the film (featuring Nancy Allison Wolfe [L] and Liza D'Agostino). Photo: Yael Swerdelow, courtesy Orion Classics

producer of the lesbian romance *Bar Girls* (which Orion will release this month), went barstool by barstool to potential investors in L.A.'s girl bars. She raised the first \$50,000 selling shares at \$1,000 a pop. Anyone who bought five shares got his or her name on the film credits.

"I tried not to appear desperate, but I was," says Hoffman. "It's best to make it appear like it's hard to get in on this great idea. The more I raised, the better I got at it." Eventually, Hoffman got so good that people started to hoard shares. Meanwhile, back in the preproduction office she was assuring the cast and crew that money was in place for the five-week shoot.

Doug Lindeman, a producer on the film, also went panhandling among prospective investors. "You have to find light-hearted people who are loose about their money," he says. "I keep track of people who spend money on drugs and restaurants. They need something good to spend their money on. Rather than put it up your nose, put it on the screen."

One technique Lindeman uses is chatting people up in first class. He's raised \$150,000 flying to and from film festivals, using frequent flyer miles

to get himself an upgrade. "People who aren't in the entertainment business want to be told about it," he says, "and investing gives them an opportunity to participate at a low level."

2. **Throw a Wide Net.** Any day, any time, you can find Greg Tallent raising money at admin@makingmovies.com. The London-based Tallent Productions Ltd. is the first production company raising money on-line. The offer is simple. Send them \$50 (by check or credit card), and they'll keep you up-to-date on the production of three adult thrillers. According to the company's February 6, 1995 press release, on-line investors will have an opportunity to review the screenplay, storyboards, and notes on key production personnel. "We want this to be as interactive as possible," the release states, "and welcome your comments and suggestions."

3. **Pretend You're Making an Industrial.** Jonathan Schell hit up his boss to pay for *Picasso Would Have Made A Glorious Waiter*, a 35-minute \$55,000 film. Schell works for Glorious Food, a large New York City company that caters hoi-polloi socialite and art parties. Underneath their

somber black and whites, the waiters are actors, dancers, and filmmakers, and Schell wanted to make a film about them. Prepared to sell out big time, Schell pitched his project to GF's owner Sean Driscoll. "How could it be anything but promotional?" Schell asked his boss.

Despite financial investments in other films, Driscoll didn't want anything to do with Schell's shilling. "Go away and come back with something artistic," Schell recalls Driscoll saying. Undaunted, Schell came back with a new pitch and Driscoll gave him the go-ahead. At that meeting Driscoll said he expected the budget to double and Schell didn't disappoint him, bringing in the budget at better than twice his original estimate.

4. Who Says You Have To Have Cash? John Young, executive producer and director of *Parallel Sons*, a dramatic feature about a young man living in a small town, didn't start out with a lot of sup-

port from friends and family.

"You know how filmmakers thank people after their screenings?" he asks. "Well, I thank my good friends Mr. Visa and Mr. Mastercard." The proud owner of 14 credit cards, Young says, "Once I got on the credit card mill, I started to get an offer a week." He tucked them away in a special wallet and didn't touch them. Eventually, he got so many he started turning them down.

Today he's mired in tens of thousands of dollars of debt which he's paying off at the minimum rate of \$2,300 a month. Making the decision to put it all on plastic feels a little like "jumping off a cliff," Young says. "It puts an extra burden on your psyche that I'm not sure a filmmaker should have." The upside is that today, Young says, he feels like "a real filmmaker."

5. Make Your Work Your Life. Experimental filmmaker Craig Baldwin calls his work *cinema*

povera. When he started making films 10 years ago, he didn't qualify for credit cards. He simply had to find ways to cut costs. He got a job at the Art Theater in downtown San Francisco and eventually moved in, sleeping in the projection booth. As a found-footage filmmaker, Baldwin found the place to be a goldmine, turning up odd bits of film that could be recycled in his movies. Baldwin's film *RocketKitKongoKit* was made while working there. "Be ingenious," Baldwin says. "Beg, borrow, steal. There's no depth I wouldn't stoop to."

6. Sell Real Estate. When New York filmmaker Camille Billops was raising money for her first film, *Suzanne Suzanne*, she decided to "sell real estate." She offered an Angel Credit on the film for \$100. It's a technique she still uses, only now she charges \$200.

Billops has also held raffles and auctions to finance her movies. A former ceramics teacher at Rutgers, Billops has raffled off her pots and raised thousands of dollars. She warns that raffles aren't always totally legal, so check out local laws in advance.

Waxing philosophic, Billops says you have to work fundraising into workable sizes. "If you eat meat, you don't say, 'I ate a whole cow.' You say you had ground round and ribs and steak. I go around and get all the little pieces and after awhile I've got the whole cow."

7. Bodily Harm. In the mid-1980s, Bay Area filmmaker Jon Moritsugu worked for a delivery company. One day his arm was sucked into a machine and nearly torn from his body. His first feature, *My Degeneration*, was made in 1989 with \$5,000 that came from his Worker's Compensation settlement. Although it's helped him pay for his films, Moritsugu says he doesn't recommend industrial accidents as a fundraising strategy.

8. Direct Mail. Tom DiMaria, a professional fundraiser, brought his expertise to task in raising money for his 9-minute short *Tom's Flesh*, which won Special Recognition in the Short Filmmaking Documentary category at Sundance this year. DiMaria, who co-directed and

Tomoe Takahashi and Philip Kan Gotanda in Gotanda's *The Kiss*. The director was funded the classical way: patronage. Courtesy NAATA

> Camille Billops (pictured here with husband James Hatch) has doubled the price of the contribution required to earn an "angel credit" on her projects. Photo: Jon Oh, Courtesy filmmakers



> Military men in Craig Baldwin's *RocketKitKongoKit*. Baldwin bivoacked at the theater where he worked and salvaged film trims to construct his own projects. Courtesy NAATA

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co-produced the film with Jane Wagner, raised some of his production money by sending out a direct mail appeal. He promised any contributor of more than \$25 that their name would be on the film. About 40 people came through, including one person who sent a check for \$250. "When you don't have a dollar," DiMaria says, "that's a lot."

9. Sugar Daddies. Bay Area playwright and filmmaker Philip Kan Gotanda found a sugar daddy to finance his \$25,000, 15-minute black-and-white short *The Kiss*. Before forking over the dough, the anonymous patron, who previously had supported Gotanda's work as a playwright, asked for a prospectus. The financial brief, says producer James Yee, was not designed to convince him that the project would make money but simply to demonstrate that it wasn't completely "pie in the sky."

10. Convince Cast and Crew that They Should Pay For The Film. Tom DiCillo jokes that if you put in money, you got a part in his new feature *Living in Oblivion*, which opens theatrically in July. About 20 people associated with the film, including most of the cast, helped finance it. "I don't mean to sound crude," says producer Marcus Viscidi, "but a lot of the actors we picked were willing to put up some money." There was no *quid pro quo*, he says, and not everyone involved in the film contributed money, although everyone in the cast agreed to work for deferred wages.

11. Sex-Wear Promotion. L.A. filmmaker Melissa Jenkins raised eyebrows at Sundance this year with her rooster G-strings. Jenkins is the co-writer and director of *The Rooster Ranch*, currently in preproduction. The film is a turn-the-tables comedy about a first-ever brothel where women are the customers and men aim to please. Jenkins brought 60 custom-made male G-strings to Sundance and passed them out to prospective investors. Attached to the front pouch, each black thong sported a red-feathered cock measuring an impressive 11 inches from claws to cockscomb. Inside the pouch, Jenkins discretely stapled a business card.

12. Get Into Retail. To finance his documentary *Forbidden City*, about 1940's Chinese-American nightclub performers, Arthur Dong designed packets of 8x10 glossies and T-shirts. He sold the T-shirts at three times cost. "I used to work retail," Dong says, "so I didn't feel too bad about the mark-ups." He felt less good about the hawking, however. "It's hard for independent filmmakers to see ourselves this way," he says. "I really had to say 'This is not about you, Arthur. This is about getting your film made.'"

Barbara Bliss Osborn still struggles with a grant habit.
She is a journalist and educator in Los Angeles.

FOREIGN EXCHANGE

A Conversation with Tapestry International's Nancy Walzog

BY SUSAN HORNIK

Business
Pages

WHAT SETS AMERICAN INDEPENDENT MEDIAMAKERS apart from their international counterparts is an unbridled passion and a willingness to take risks. Nancy Walzog, president of Tapestry International, the New York-based production and international distribution company, finds that U.S. independents producers are "very much coveted and appreciated by international audiences, [but] that doesn't necessarily mean the buyers are going to buy their product any faster."

"Certain broadcasters may be looking for only 12 documentaries per year," she explains. "The reality is that the product is coming from a number of worldwide sources. The odds are simply not favorable for an independent producer to crack all those markets."

That's where companies like Tapestry come in. Founded in 1987, Tapestry represents all genres to the worldwide market, including documentaries, drama, music, arts, children's and family programming. Under Walzog, the company has built relationships with a wide range of producers. These include independents with one-off programs, such as David Van Taylor (*Dream Deceivers*); Gail Bolgin and Vicente Franco (*Cuba Va*); Katharina Otto (*The Need for Speed* and *The Second Greatest Story Ever Told*); and John Valadez and Peter Miller (*Passin' It On*). Tapestry also represents major PBS series like *Nova*, *The American Experience*, *Mr. Roger's Neighborhood*, numerous *Great Performances* specials, and has nurtured relationships with WGBH, WNET, WQED, Oregon Public Broadcasting, and other production entities.

In her nine years running Tapestry, Walzog has learned a thing or two about what foreign TV buyers are looking for and what independents can do to better position their work for overseas sales. As a start, Walzog advises producers "to think in terms of limited series, tell personal stories, and be savvy enough to know the market for your program." So how can independents get this kind of information? She offers simple words of wisdom: For the domestic market, watch a lot of television. "Do you know how well your show would fit on Discovery's schedule? Have you watched the channel lately? Knowing how a broadcaster sched-

The merchant has no country: Tapestry prez Nancy Walzog is an old hand at navigating the foreign-distribution currents. Courtesy Tapestry International



ules programming, the types of shows they buy, seeing what product they acquire and what they coproduce themselves—these are all key factors. You need to have a thorough knowledge of the marketplace or get affiliated with a company such as Tapestry, whose job it is to do just that."

Producers should also know what types of programs travel well. "Documentaries, how-to, the youth market, and anything that provides information but also has entertainment value are all hot genres right now," she says. Producers can pick up a sense of the international market by going to as many film markets and festivals as possible, she adds.

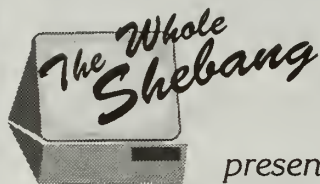
For its part, Tapestry reps go to Sundance, the Independent Feature Film Market, and Berlin,

among other festivals and markets, to look for potential projects to represent. A filmmaker attending such events should aim for maximum exposure in order to catch the attention of companies like Tapestry, which is best done by generating a lot of press. "Distributors leaf through the entertainment trades, receive promotional flyers, read reviews, and so on. This is how we sometimes first hear about films."

Though most projects come in through the grapevine, Tapestry does consider pitches from "off the street." "We talk to everyone within reason," Walzog says. Through "a friend of a friend," Tapestry first came in contact with independent producer

Lisa Goldman, who was producing and writing a children's series called *Winging It*. "Lisa had a nice presentation already made up, complete with sample scripts and well-drawn and well-defined characters," recalls Walzog. "What she brought to the table was a wonderful concept, some leads from the domestic side, and no international leads." Tapestry signed on and began developing a demo tape for the global marketplace to convey the project's innovative animation concepts to possible coproduction partners and financiers.

Walgog looks at projects long-term, developing properties in their various components—broadcast, video, educational, merchandising—and putting all the pieces into place. "We are also asking people to get in touch at an even earlier stage



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Tapestry's individual threads range from small independent films like John Valadez and Peter Miller's *Passin' It On* (below) and Katharina Otto's *The Second Greatest Story Ever Told* to PBS' *Nova* series.

Courtesy filmmakers; *Nova* photo: Art Wolfe, courtesy PBS

of the game," says Walzog, "with projects that are works-in-progress or even on paper. This trend in the marketplace is indicative of companies going earlier to broadcasters for coproduction possibilities as well as acquisitions. The proliferation of new channels offer more opportunities for niche programming.

"However, you must have a real reason why a foreign broadcaster should get involved in a project as a coproducer," she emphasizes. "It can't just be because you have a budget shortfall. For the most part, projects have to have a connection with the broadcaster and be able to tap into the interests of that country's audience.

"Once we decide to go with a film or project," she continues, "we put a proposal on the table for the producer. In looking at what we can do for them, we also point out the realities of the marketplace. If they are still happy and like what they hear despite that, we will make a formal proposal." Tapestry's distribution contract typically includes a fee that ranges from 30 to 35 percent of the gross sales, well within industry standards, says Walzog. Often independent producers ask for an advance against international TV sales. "It's rare that distributors would do such a thing," cautions Walzog, "given the high risk in the market and the labor intensiveness of launching a one-off program. Occasionally distributors will give advances for series, but it's very rare for single documentaries and short fiction work."

Most of the selling is done at the various TV and film markets, such as Monte Carlo (February), Cannes' MIP-TV (April) and MIPCOM (October), and MIP-Asia (December in Hong Kong). Tapestry supplements those markets with visits to the broadcasters' home offices. Preparation for the TV markets typically begins one to two months in advance, during which Tapestry prepares advertising, artwork, press releases, and related sales materials. "Usually we

prepare a film for its first show by doing a special pre-market fax, which tells buyers about the new programming that is available." The two largest markets, MIP or MIPCOM, typically attract over 8,000 executives. "This is quite a frantic environment to work in. There are about 5,000 sellers chasing 3,000 buyers. However, it is essential for us to attend and successfully sell our programs.

"Throughout the week of the market, we meet with approximately 200 buyers from all over the world," she continues. "Most of these meetings are scheduled in advance." Walzog and her colleagues assess the buyer's needs, then present a sampling of work they believe is suitable. "This is a browsing mission for them—they walk around and see what is out there, pick up leaflets, and do a bit of video prescreening. However, most of the actual work takes place once we've all gone back to our offices: we send them follow-up tapes and then hound them to watch them." A typical buyer receives hundreds of tapes after a market. "Our job is to get the tape off the desk, into a machine, and get a decision from them as soon as possible."

"This is a long-term process; foreign sales do not happen overnight. A lot of work goes into making a sale. It takes a good year or two to get through the cycle of the TV markets, start receiving monies, and really see how things are going."

What can producers do to help companies like Tapestry pitch their projects abroad? A lot, according to Walzog. First the producer needs to provide their distributors with as much background material on the making of the project as possible. "Filmmakers who spend a long time fundraising and getting their project produced are very close to the subject matter. We can then use the background to pitch the project to the client. Buyers often want to know, 'Who is this filmmaker and how did this project come about?' For independent productions, we're not only selling the film; we're selling the maker as well. We're offering

more than a cookie-cutter TV documentary."

Walzog stresses the importance of making an international version of the project while still in the editing process, meaning a version without any text, i.e., subtitles or IDs of people in the film. For the audio, you need the complete mix on one channel and separate music and effects tracks on another channel, in order for broadcasters to renarrate or dub the film into other languages. "Certain countries like to dub, and certain countries like to subtitle, depending on custom." Producers should also provide a complete English transcription referenced to time code or running time, and a list of credits as they appear in the film, so that "if they are reconstructing the credit roll in French, they have something to translate and work from."

Walzog shares a common complaint among distributors and reps about the quality—or even existence—of promotional stills supplied by filmmakers. What makes a good image? "One that illustrates an emotion, characterizing what the film is about in that one photo," she responds. "Too often, filmmakers forget to do this at the shoot. We get photos of the director standing behind the camera, which doesn't usually work. It definitely pays to get someone to shoot 35mm stills of the actual scene, as if it were a film or video still."

Photographs taken off a video monitor are not acceptable. Because of the TV's raster lines, "They just don't have the quality for blow-ups, unless we do a lot of retouching." Similarly, prints taken directly from 16mm film are not up to par. "They are still a little on the grainy side," she says. "Shooting 35mm still photos and color slides would definitely be the way to go from the outset."

While following such tips can help a project move more smoothly into the distribution stream, what ultimately makes the most difference is the conceptual strength of the project and whether the buyer considers it an appropriate match.

Walzog's last words? "Don't mortgage your house." More to the point: "Don't count on the proceeds of your film to mortgage it back, either. Part of the beauty of independent filmmaking in America is that people have that passion and really go to the ends of the earth to make their vision a reality. That's something that really doesn't occur anywhere else. Then again, that too can lead to frustration and disappointment. Independent producers should have a very clear understanding of what the market is all about—all the negatives and possible pitfalls they might encounter. This way, you can be smart about your production marketing plan and do your best to help your film find an audience."

Susan Hornik is a freelance journalist who covers TV and film in the domestic and international arenas. She is editor of The Daily Express, a convention daily at NEPTE, and East Coast editor of Soap Opera Now.

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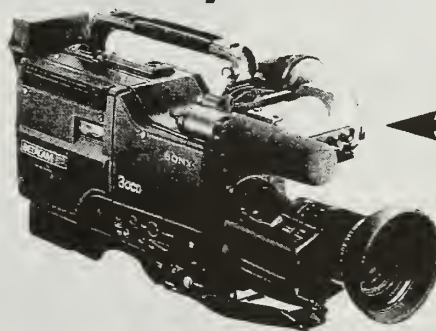
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BY MITCH ALBERT

Fresh from Sundance, where it won the Playboy Freedom of Expression Award, David Simpson and Billy Golfus' biting documentary *When Billy Broke His Head...* (58 min., video) will be aired May 23 on PBS. There is a paucity of adequate support services and civil rights accorded to the disabled community. Golfus, who had a brain injury, caustically illustrates this fact with scenes like one in which he confronts a social worker to discuss how much earned money should be deducted from his benefits: what might make a good satirical sketch is all too real. Golfus peppers the film with ripostes like: "Part of the fun of being brain damaged is you're constantly having to argue that there is, in fact, something wrong," and "I was studying things like Japanese to try to bring back my mind, and Voc Rehab wanted me to... polish lenses for four dollars an hour." The work is an angry, insightful revelation of the overwhelming barriers thrown in the paths of disabled people as they try to get on with their lives within or despite the dominant (read: non-disabled) culture. *When Billy Broke His Head...*, In-Beat, Inc., 513 Ontario St. SE, Minneapolis, MN 55414; (612) 331-1130; fax: (612) 379-2760.

What's the afterlife like for a 100,000-ton steel structure? Tim Wright pursues the reincarnation of the inanimate in *Conservation of Matter: The Fall and Rise of Boston's Elevated Subway* (30 min., video). From Boston to Osaka, back again to California, and ultimately to Arizona's Apache country, Wright emphasizes "the extraordinary labor, thoughts, and feelings of ordinary citizens on two continents." *Conservation*

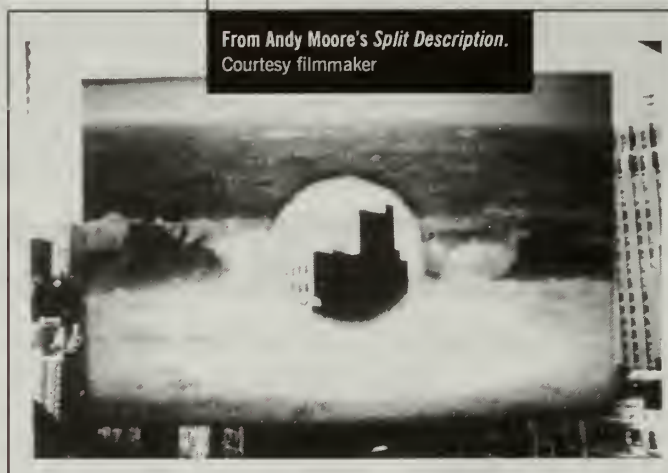


Mira Sorvino (standing) and Rose Gregorio star in Helen De Michiel's *Tarantella*.

Photo: Jim Calabrese, courtesy filmmaker

of Matter: The Fall and Rise of Boston's Elevated Subway, Jamaica Plain Newsreel, 53 Peter Parley Rd., Boston, MA 02130-2913; (617) 524-5076 (ph./fax).

A group of young Italian-American toughs gets some guns and then gets mixed up with the mob, see, and then.... "Media and literature are habitu-



From Andy Moore's *Split Description*. Courtesy filmmaker

ally fascinated by ethnic images of urban Mafiosi or brutal, working-class punks on nowhere paths to self-destruction," writes director Helen De Michiel, presenting her new feature, *Tarantella*

(90 min., 16mm), as what might be called the anti-Scorsese. The ever busy Mira Sorvino plays Diana, a photographer in her thirties who rediscovers her ethnic identity upon returning to the old neighborhood when her mother dies. Diana finds the dead woman's "libro della casa," a house book of recipes, journal entries, and a long story at the end written in Italian. Pina, an elderly neighbor to whom Diana draws nearer, helps translate the story in small episodic vignettes. Revealed is a dark, operatic tale (presented as a traditional puppet drama) of an Italian woman driven to poison an abusive husband and escape with her small child to America. *Tarantella*, LaVoo Productions, 691 Tenth Ave., #18, NY, NY 10036; (212) 757-2778 (ph./fax).

When a blind, nine-year-old girl named Desiree develops bodily marks resembling the crucifixion wounds of Christ, her Muslim father, agnostic mother, and Baptist grandmother are naturally at odds over the situation. Add to the mix a Catholic priest who comes to study the case, and you have a free-for-all with an innocent girl as top prize. Kyle Bergersen wrote, directed, and edited *The Stigmata* (feature-length, 16mm B&W) with a little financial push from the American Film Institute and the Seattle Arts Commission. *The Stigmata*, Bergersen Film, 4002 Second Ave. NE, Seattle, WA 98105; (206) 547-4775.

Producer Barbara Steel and director Bret Stern knew when to hold 'em, fold 'em, and walk away: casino comps and crap-table luck provided the budget for *Starcrossed* (72 min., 16mm/35mm), the story of "a mystical road trip during which two young adults find their place in the world." *Starcrossed*, Intermittent Pictures, 516 Villa Ave., Fairfield, CT 06432; (203) 366-4061 (ph./fax).

More indications that the Civil War wasn't comes via the fact-based *Pharaoh's Army* (90 min., 35mm), a film by Kentuckyan Robby Henson. The tale stars Kris Kristofferson as a grizzled Union army captain who leads his troops to a remote farm to steal enemy livestock. The enemy is a lone woman whose absent husband is slogging away for the Confederates. Far from the great battlefields, a very private war erupts. The film will be

Continued on p. 44

CUE & A

Cue & A with Mitch McCabe, 23 year-old director/producer, *Playing the Part*

Q: So how did your parents react to the film?

A: Well, more to the point, how did they react to my telling them I'm gay... they didn't talk to me for awhile. Not until just recently, actually. As far as the film is concerned, they haven't seen it yet. It's taking a lot more time than I thought it would, but then again I've been thinking about it for so long that I forget they've only just found out.

When I told them, the film wasn't an issue at all: they just cut me off. The next time around, my dad figured out that the title must have something to do with [the issue of coming out]. It's alarming to them that I don't care if people know I'm gay, like every audience after every screening.

Q: Which was it: did you not tell them directly

ing up to parental expectations while at the same time trying to live your own life honestly and happily.

Q: What kind of film did your parents think you were making?

A: They knew basically what the film was about, everything except for the gayness: questions about what my future was going to be like, whether I was going to have a family like theirs. My dad knew, anyway. My mom has a problem with film and photography in general—she doesn't like the camera too close up to her face, that sort of thing.

Q: Did you have to rework the film at all to come to that conclusion?

A: Yes, especially when I got to the rough cut. I considered including an ending where I did tell my parents, but that implies a three-act structure, with a clean resolution, and that's misleading. So many people go on for a decade, for two decades, with these issues unresolved.

Q: Do you still find yourself 'playing the part'?

A: Everyone 'plays the part'. One thing I touch on is the question of identity. Whether you're a crossdresser or an average person, you're always playing some part. I was a dutiful society daughter on one hand, and a filmmaker on the other, and a member of the lesbian community, whatever

that means. We all have various identities.

Q: Any other films in the works?

A: I'm working on a screenplay called *Working It*, and looking for funds. It's about three characters who lead double lives, which all come together in the end.

Q: So you're mining the same theme?

A: It's not really the same theme, but there is still the issue of secrecy, of dealing with 'real life'. But there's no coming out here; I've done that.

—Mitch Albert



Mitch McCabe, director/producer of *Playing the Part*. Courtesy filmmaker

so that you could make the film, or did you make the film because you couldn't bring yourself to tell them directly?

A: The film really came out of a totally different project, about childhood memories and the fear of losing my family. But in going over it with my advisor [autobiographical documentary apothecosis Ross McElwee], it became clear that telling them about my sexuality was the real issue. I considered filming their reactions as I told them and putting in voiceover, but ethically, that was a line I didn't want to cross. In the end, I designed the film so anyone can see it and come to grips with any kind of problem... I depicted the difficulties of interfamily relationships, of liv-

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shown on PBS and released theatrically. *Pharaoh's Army*, Cicada Film Productions, 8 Weehawken St., NY, NY 10014; (212) 645-7386.

Mitch McCabe on Mitch McCabe in her autobiographical film *Playing the Part* (38 min., 16mm): "With a father who reconstructs breasts and a mother who coordinates fine china, McCabe creates an angst-ridden but humorous essay about the obstacles of telling her parents she is a lesbian. From hidden cameras and society balls to her obsession with quasi-crossdressing, she tries to spill the beans—but repeatedly runs back to the security of Boston and safety of subterfuge." *Playing the Part*, M & M Productions, 161 Beacon St., #2, Somerville, MA 02143; (617) 496-9466/661-7588; fax: (617) 495-8197.

Freedom of the press belongs to those who own one—and manufacture outlandish, savage pap to feed an insanely lucrative weekly-tabloid market. Desmond Smith and Fred Langan prowl the soft, wet, pungent underbelly of the industry in *Tabloid Frenzy* (45 min., video), a Canadian documentary that takes as its starting point the origins of super-market tabloid mania as a scheme hatched in Montreal in the 1950s. The film delves into the heart of the trade in Boca Raton, Florida, where British expatriates formerly of Fleet Street run a miniature fiefdom built upon the rewards of scandal, and meets up with the most notorious of paparazzi and star-trackers. The film premiered on Canadian television last October. *Tabloid Frenzy*, Catherine Johnsen, Janson Associates, Plaza West, Harrington Park, NJ 07640; (201) 784-8488; fax: (201) 784-3993.

Can't draw it, can't write it, it's pure cinema: Andy Moore's *Split Description* (8 min., 16mm color/B&W) is one such work. Moore goes to work on the frame like a sculptor, using a concentric split-screen technique to present a kaleidoscopic moving montage of three diverse locales (in California, Massachusetts, and New York.) Moore has tried to "eschew blatant political/academic posturing in favor of universal concerns of perception and visual delight... The film is a magic viewing box designed to cut the viewer free from narrative expectation and instead serve as a tool for reflection on space/time/sound." *Split Description*, Canyon Cinema, 2325 Third St., #338, San Francisco, CA 94107; (415) 626-2255.

Let's get together and be one love: Michael Sacca's *A World Citizen in Rio* (28 min., video) profiles the patron saint of the peaceloving global government, Garry Davis. Davis, who has been agitating for the dissolution of borders and states since 1948 (when he interrupted a UN General Assembly meeting in Paris), traveled to Rio for the Earth Summit in 1992, with only a "World Passport" to identify himself. This documentary combines a look at that historically ineffectual event with Davis' passionate striving for another way. *A World Citizen in Rio*, World Citizen Foundation, 113 Church St., Burlington, VT 05401; (802) 660-8998; fax: (802) 864-6878.

BY KATHRYN BOWSER

THIS MONTH'S FESTIVALS HAVE BEEN COMPILED BY KATHRYN BOWSER. LISTINGS DO NOT CONSTITUTE AN ENDORSEMENT. SINCE SOME FESTIVAL DETAILS MAY CHANGE AFTER THE MAGAZINE GOES TO PRESS, WE RECOMMEND THAT YOU CONTACT THE FESTIVAL FOR FURTHER INFORMATION BEFORE SENDING PREVIEW CASSETTES. TO IMPROVE OUR RELIABILITY & MAKE THIS COLUMN MORE BENEFICIAL TO INDEPENDENTS, WE ENCOURAGE ALL FILM- & VIDEO MAKERS TO CONTACT FIVE W/ CHANGES, CRITICISMS, OR PRAISE FOR FESTIVALS LISTED IN THIS COLUMN.

DOMESTIC

AMERICAN FILM INSTITUTE LOS ANGELES INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL (AFI FEST), Oct. 19-Nov. 2, CA. Held at theatres in Santa Monica & on Sunset strip, fest will celebrate the 100th anniversary of the movies w/ new & old films from around world, incl. *Window on International Cinema*, *British Film Showcase*, retro will evaluate films made since end of WWII, series titled *The Artist & the Machine*, spotlighting changing relationships between technology & creativity, & youth-oriented program *Notes from the Digital Underground*. The AFI National Video Festival will also be presented in conjunction w/ film fest for the first time, scheduled for Oct. 12-15. Video fest showcases new video & TV work produced in range of experimental styles, incl. interactive & other outstanding electronic cinema produced w/ desktop computer technologies. Deadline: July 30. Contact: Gary McVey, exec. director, Los Angeles Int'l Film Fest, American Film Institute, 2021 N. Western Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90027; (213) 856-7707; fax: (213) 462-4049.

CENTRAL FLORIDA FILM FESTIVAL, Sept. 22-Oct. 1, FL. Now in 13th yr., competitive fest is dedicated "to the discovery of new & emerging artists from across country." Last yr more than 70 works showcased. Cash awards & prizes given to winners in each cat, as well as audience & best of fest awards. Cats incl. animation, doc, experimental, narrative & music video. Features & shorts accepted. Program also incl. Florida Filmmakers Showcase. Screenings held at Orlando Museum of Art & other venues. Entry fees: \$15-\$35. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, preview on 1/2". Deadline: June 24; late deadline w/ add'l \$20 fee is July 15. Contact: Central Florida Film & Video Fest, c/o Brenda Joyner, 15 1/2 N. Eola Dr., #5, Orlando, FL 32801; (407) 839-6045.

CHICAGO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, October, IL. Now in 31st yr., event is 1 of largest US int'l competitive fests, programming films & videos produced in preceding 2 yrs. Cats: feature (Midwest premieres); doc (arts/humanities, social/political, history/biography); short subject (drama, humor/satire, films for children, experimental); student (comedy, drama, experimental, nonfiction, animation); ind. video (short, educational, animation, feature, experimental); ind. video doc (arts/humanities, social/political, history/biography); mixed film/video (short, doc, educational (performing/visual arts, natural sciences/math, social sciences, humani-

ties, recreation/sports); animation; TV prod.; TV commercial. Awards: Gold Hugo (Grand Prix); Silver Hugo; Gold & Silver Plaques; Certificates of Merit; Getz World Peace Award. Each yr. features over 125 films, tributes, retros & special programs. Entry fees: \$25-\$225. Deadline: June 16. Contact: Chicago Int'l Film Festival, 415 N. Dearborn St., Chicago, IL 60610-9990; (312) 644-3400; fax: (312) 644-0784.

CHICAGO INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 6-15, IL. Annual competitive film fest presented by Facets Multimedia, non-profit media arts org. dedicated to programming & distributing int'l film, video & theatre. Now in 12th yr., this is largest fest of children's film in US; in 1994 it presented 180 films & videos from over 30 countries. Showcases new prods that "represent best in non-violent, non-sexist, humanistic programming for children." All entries must be suitable for children under 12. Fest open to both live-action & animated films & videos. Eligible entries are feature-length (over 60 mins); short films (under 60 mins); feature & short videos; completed since 1993. Purely educational or instructional films not eligible. Awards: Adult Jury Prize (live-action feature film/video, animated feature film, animated feature film/video, short live action film/video (under 10 mins, 10-30 mins, over 30 mins); Children's Jury Award (live-action feature film/video, animated feature film/video, short live-action (15 mins or under, over 15 mins); Most Popular Film and Video of Fest (audience vote); Rights of the Child Award (selected by special USC/UNICEF panel); Liv Ullman Peace Prize. Deadline: June 1. Contact: Chicago Int'l Children's Film Festival, Facets Multimedia, Inc., 1517 W. Fullerton Ave., Chicago, IL 60614; (312) 281-9075; fax: (312) 929-5437.

CHICAGO UNDERGROUND FILM FESTIVAL, July 21-23, IL. Competitive fest organized to encourage low-budget film/video makers & to provide venue for underground, ind. & experimental film/video; works "outside the entertainment mainstream." Both first-time directors & professionals welcome. Entries must be made for \$1,000 or less per min. of screen time; owned by filmmaker/producer. Prizes awarded to best short & feature in cats: narrative & non narrative (short & feature), doc. Fest also provides dealer's spaces for filmmakers to sell videotapes. Entry fee: \$30 (under 40 mins.); \$40 (features). Formats: 16mm, S-8, VHS, S-VHS, Beta, 3/4", Hi8 (entries shot in pixelvision must be transferred to one of these formats); preview on 1/2". Deadline: May 15. Contact: Chicago Underground Film Fest, 2524 N. Lincoln Ave., ste. 198, Chicago, IL 60614; (312) 866-8660; email: clark@interaccess.com.

CINE LATINO FESTIVAL, Sept., CA. Festival (Cine Latino) seeks film & video works that "reflect dignity & diversity of Latino, Latin American & Caribbean communities." All films/videos by & about Latinos in US & works originating in Latin America & the Caribbean considered. This yr. fest is especially interested in works that treat subjects of migration/immigration, youth issues, Latin American cultural & ethnic diversity, Latino contributions to US culture & history & Latin American responses to imperialism. All lengths, genres; entries must be completed after Jan. '93. Best of fest awards given to top film & video. Fest encourages multimedia/interactive artists to participate; contact fest prior to submission.



Entry fee: \$10 (Cine Acción members); \$35 non-members, incl. 1-yr. membership). Faxed entry forms not accepted. Deadline: June 12. Contact: Charles Hutchins, Cine Acción, 346 Ninth St., 2nd fl., San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 553-8135; fax: (415) 863-7428.

CINEQUEST VI, Nov. 8-12, CA. "Intimate & personal" fest accepts submissions of ind. feature & short films of artistic, social or stylistic merit under annual theme of "Maverick Filmmaking," w/ mix of ind. films, seminars, & tributes. Special sections incl: *Kids Films*, *Latino Films*, *Midnight Films*, & *Film Feasts* (thematic events of film, food & entertainment). Deadline: Aug. 7. Contact: Mike Rabehl, programming, Cinequest VI, PO Box 720040, San Jose, CA 95172-0040; (408) 995-6305; fax: (408) 277-3867.

HAWAII INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, November, HI. Founded 15 yrs. ago, HIFF under permanent theme, "When Strangers Meet", aims to promote cross-cultural understanding among peoples of Asia, N. America & Pacific through presentation of films, discussions, workshops, symposia, special awards & media events. Fest has grown into one of premiere cultural attractions in Hawaii w/ int'l impact & foremost showcase for new Asian film prod.. Entries of any length in all genres, incl. experimental, short, doc & features; interested in US & world premieres. Entry fee: \$25. Deadline: June 30. Contact: Film Selection Coordinator, Hawaii Int'l Film Fest, 700 Bishop St., Ste. 400, Honolulu, HI 96813; (800) 752-8193; in US: (808) 528-3456; fax: (808) 528-1410.

INDEPENDENT FEATURE FILM MARKET, Sept. 17-24, NY. Now in its 17th yr., this is only market devoted to new, emerging American ind. film. Held at NYC's Angelika Film Center, market is attended by over 2,500 filmmakers, distributors, television & home video buyers, agents, development execs & fest programmers from US & abroad. Submissions accepted in cats of features (over 75 min.), shorts (under 60 min.), works-in-progress (edited scenes, trailers, intended for features), script (copyrighted, for feature). Deadlines: June 9 (early deadline); June 30 (final deadline). Contact: Rachael Shapiro, Market Director, Independent Feature Project, 104 W. 29th St., 12th fl., NY, NY 10011; (212) 465-8200; fax: (212) 465-8525.

LLANO ESTACADO VIDEO FESTIVAL, October, TX. Open competition for works in VHS format, 15 mins & under. Deadline: June 30. Contact: Art History Association, Dept. of Art, Texas Tech University, PO Box 40281, Lubbock, TX 79409-2081; (806) 742-3825; fax: (806) 742-1971.

NEW YORK FILM FESTIVAL, September, NY. As major int'l fest & uniquely NY film event, 33-yr-old prestigious noncompetitive programs approx. 25 film programs from around world, primarily narrative features but also docs & experimental films of all lengths. Shots programmed w/ features. Audiences usually sell out in advance & incl. major NY film critics & distributors. Press conferences after each screening w/ directors, producers & actors. Must be NY premieres. Presented by Film Society of Lincoln Center & held at Alice Tully Hall at Lincoln Center. Fest also programs 4th edition of week-long New York Video Festival during fest at Film Society's Walter Reade Theatre at Lincoln Center. All lengths considered; will consider works-in-progress if they will be completed by late Sept. Will also consider original work made for CD-ROM. No entry fee; film & video-makers responsible for round-trip shipping fees for preview. Deadlines: July 15 (film fest); June 30 (video fest). When requesting appl., specify film or video fest. Contact: New York Film Fest, 70 Lincoln Center Plaza, NY, NY 10023-6595; (212) 875-5610; fax: (212) 875-5636.

NEW YORK INTERNATIONAL VIDEO FESTIVAL, June 15-18, NY. 2nd annual edition of fest accepts experimental, animation, narrative, music, video art & doc entries. Works may be shown on NY public access television. Formats: 1/2", 3/4", Hi8, video 8, QuickTime, Beta. Deadline: May 15. Contact: Alexander Karinsky, New York Int'l Video Fest, PO Box 20203, NY, NY 10001-9992; (212) 780-9087; fax: (212) 780-9088; email: 72632.2375@compuserve.com.

NOMAD VIDEO FESTIVAL, November, WA. Fest "encourages 'no budget' medi makers from all artistic persuasions, backgrounds & technologies from camcorder video vigilantes to art school graduates to professionals who have not lost their edge" to apply for West Coast touring program of documentaries, shorts (15 min. max) & features (75 min. max). Tour covers San Francisco, Portland, Seattle & more. No themes, prizes or entry fees. Formats: VHS, S-VHS, Hi8. Deadline: Sept. 1. Contact: Nomad Video Fest, Box 161, Port Townsend, WA 98368, attn: Camille; (206) 781-5691 (voicemail).

NORTHAMPTON FILM FESTIVAL, Nov. 3-5, MA. Film & video prods by established & emerging northeast artists are focus of noncompetitive fest. Awards presented for film/tapes selected for screening. Participants invited to be on panels for discussion of their work, w/established filmmakers, scholars & critics as panel moderators. Cats: animation, experimental, narrative & doc (traditional & experimental). No commercial, industrial, or promotional works. Entry fee: \$20. Deadline: June 15. Contact: Howard Polonsky, Northampton Film Associates, Northampton Center for the Arts, 17 New South St., Northampton, MA 01060; (413) 584-7327; fax: (413) 582-9014.

NORTHWEST FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, Nov. 3-12, OR. Now in its 22nd yr., fest is oldest of its kind in region. The annual survey of new moving image art is open to residents of OR, WA, ID, MT, AK & British Columbia. All lengths, genres & formats encouraged. In 1994, more than 200 entries were submitted & selected works shared over \$6,000 in cash & prizes. Nat'l touring program follows fest. Formats: 1/2" VHS or 3/4" NTSC for preview.

Selected works shown in original format. Entry form must accompany each appl. Deadline: Aug. 1. Also, as part of fest Young People's Film & Video Festival showcases works by elementary and high school medi makers. Contact: Bill Foster, director, or Steven Wymor, fest coordinator, Northwest Film & Video Festival, Portland Art Museum/Northwest Film Center, 1219 S.W. Park Ave., Portland, OR 97205; (503) 221-1156; fax: 226-4842.

REEL AFFIRMATIONS 5: DC's FIFTH ANNUAL CELEBRATION OF GAY & LESBIAN FILMS, Oct. 12-22, DC. Fourth largest gay & lesbian film fest in US, in terms of audience size & number of films screened. Films & videos must be by &/or about lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgender people. Features, shorts, docs, experimental & animated works accepted; works from women & people of color encouraged. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 1/2", 3/4". Deadline: June 16. Contact: Reel Affirmations, One in Ten, 1555 Connecticut Ave. NW, ste. 200, Washington, DC 20036; (202) 986-1119; fax: (202) 462-9043.

ROBERT FLAHERTY SEMINAR FOR INDEPENDENT VIDEO & CINEMA, Aug. 5-10, NY. Various described as a think tank, seminar, retreat & novel experience, this week-long seminar offers opportunity for film/video makers, scholars, curators, distributors, critics, students & media aficionados to gather & immerse themselves in film criticism & discussion. Held annually at Wells College in upstate Aurora, NY, Flaherty presents selections of guest curators; this year Marlina Gonzalez-Tamrong & Bruce Jenkins of Walker Art Center in Minneapolis will present program "The Camera Reframed: Technology & Interpretation." Registration fee for 6 days is \$650, which incl. all screenings, room & board; special 3 day wk.end pkg. incl. 8 screenings/events for \$400. Contact: Michelle Materre, executive director, Int'l Film Seminars, Inc., 305 W. 21st St., NY, NY 10011-3001; (212) 727-7262; fax: (212) 772-7276.

THIS PLACE: CONTEMPORARY BORDER PERSPECTIVES, Sept. 21-24, NM. Presented by Mesilla Film Society, this fest programs films/videos w/ themes relevant to the border, "a region with a unique culture & history that is at once a boundary, a barrier, a bridge, & an arbitrary line dividing the US & Mexico." Fest incl. film screenings & guest speakers on themes incl. *The Southwest & Hollywood*; *Cultural Icons in Film*; *Regional History*; *New Visions*. Cash prizes & certificates of merit awarded. All genres by ind. producers & students accepted. Entry fee: \$5 plus return postage. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 1/2", 3/4", Beta SP; preview on 1/2". Deadline: June 15. Contact: Carol McCall, Mesilla Valley Film Society, PO Box 1139, Mesilla, NM 88046; (505) 524-8287.

TROUBADOURS CHRISTIAN FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, Sept. 13-17, CA. Fest was organized "to provide a forum to showcase & network ind. film & video by Christian artists of all backgrounds, traditions & persuasions & to encourage & support internal self-evaluation & critique of Christian media." All genres welcomed; projects by women & people of color especially encouraged. Fest "celebrates the diverse, alternative, unconventional, experimental, investigative & avant garde sides of Christian life." Entry fee: \$20. Formats: 16mm, S-8, 1/2". Deadline: June 30. Contact: Bret Lutz, curator, Troubadours 95, Cathedral Prods, PO Box 192845, San Francisco, CA

94119; (415) 863-5201.

VIRGINIA FESTIVAL OF AMERICAN FILM, Oct. 26-29, VA. Now in its 8th annual edition, fest, hosted by University of Virginia, focuses on American ind. film, bringing scholars, filmmakers & writers together for serious discussion. Roster incl. new docs, short subjects, studio premieres & annual selection of classic films accompanied by multidisciplinary discussions w/ faculty. Fest accepts all genres & lengths: narrative, experimental, doc, shorts, features. Entries must be American prods, completed after August 1994. Works-in-progress w/ projected completion dates before 9/1/95 accepted by deadline date. 1995 fest theme is *US and Them: The Cross-Cultural Politics of American Film*, exploring how Americans' relationships w/ foreign citizens & immigrants have been depicted in films & how crosscultural encounters between American & foreign filmmakers have stimulated both US & int'l film prod. Submission topics under theme incl. travels abroad, exile & emigration, immigrants, war, hybrid ethnicities, tourist, diasporas, int'l spies, transnational business & politics, anti-immigration movements, border crossings, ethnography, interplanetary aliens. Entry fee: \$30. Formats: 35mm, 16mm; preview on 1/2". Deadline: June 1. Contact: Virginia Fest of American Film, University of Virginia, Box 3697, 104 Midmont Lane, Charlottesville, VA 22903; (804) 982-5277; fax: (804) 982-5297; email: FILMFEST@Virginia.edu.

FOREIGN

BARCELONA INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION OF GAY & LESBIAN FILMS, Oct. 23-29, Spain. First edition of noncompetitive fest organized "to raise general awareness of homosexuality." Sections: Pink & Purple (current features); Homage (prizewinning films from int'l fests); Special Screening (Centenary of Birth of Cinema, showing first gay & lesbian images) & Stonewall (new queer cinema). All lengths considered. Formats: 35mm, 16mm; preview on VHS. Deadline: Aug. 30. Contact: Xavier Daniel, director, la Mostra Internacional de Cinema Gai i Lesbic, Casal Lambda, Carrer Ample 5, 08001 Barcelona, Spain; tel: 011 34 3 412 74 76.

EUROPEAN MEDIA ART FESTIVAL, Sept. 6-10, Germany. Annual event of innovative/experimental works in film/video, accompanied by exhibition of video installations & computer-aided & interactive prods, projects on CD-ROM & w/ Internet, as well as workshops, seminars, performances & television actions. presented in art gallery Dominkanerkirche (a deconsecrated church). Fest is open to "experiments, to the extraordinary, to all those working methods which, using the most diverse media, create intelligent, radical or ironic worlds of symbols & signs in today's digital age." Deadline: July 30. Contact: Alfred Rotert, European Media Art Fest, Postfach 1861, D-49008 Osnabrück, Germany; tel: 011 49 5 41 2 16 58; fax: 011 49 5 41 2 83 27; email: EMAF@BIONIC.ZER.DE.

FESTIVAL OF NATIONS, June 25-July 2, Austria. Int'l short film fest for ind. filmmakers, no budget prods, students & art in film & video. All themes & cats accepted. Awards: Gold, Silver & Bronze *Ebensee Bär*, Austrian Science & Art Minister Prize of AS10,000, Special Awards. Contact: Fest der

Nationen, Erich Riess, Gaumbergstrasse 82, A-4060 Linz, Austria; tel/fax: 011 43 0732 673 693.

FILM + ARC.GRAZ INTERNATIONAL BIENNALE OF FILM & ARCHITECTURE, Nov. 22-26, Austria. Competitive fest for films/videos on topics relating to architecture, city, landscape architecture, art in public space or design. Fest hopes to focus on innovative ways of dealing w/ topics, the demonstration of new tendencies & value in the creative as well as informational aspects of the work. Int'l competition open to all cats: fiction, doc, animation, experimental. Awards: Grand Prix: ATS100,000; 3 Main Prizes ATS60,000 each; 1 Main Prize for best work on the topic of the city; Special Prizes. Fest program also will present selection of works on subject of *Architecture & Electronic Media & Dance & Architecture*; retro *Exposed City II* examining condition of contemporary urban spaces & interdisciplinary symposium reflecting on the town as an urban form of life asking about the significance of the real; installations & projections. Entries must have been completed after Jan. 1. Entry fee: ATS500. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, S-8, VHS, S-VHS, Hi8, 3/4", Beta. Deadline: July 31. Contact: Film + Arc.Graz, Rechbauerstrasse 38, A-8010 Graz, Austria; tel: 011 43 316 84 24 87; fax: 011 43 316 82 95 11.

FLANDERS INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL IN GHENT, Oct. 10-21, Belgium. 22nd edition of competitive fest w/ main theme "The Impact of Music on Film"; shows about 150 works to audiences of over 60,000. Sections: Official Section incl. Competition (Impact of Music on Film) which awards Best Film & Best Application of Music (Georges Delerue Award) & Out of Competition, Country Focus, Film Spectrum (int'l films receiving Belgian premieres); tribute to important filmmaker. Cash prizes worth 6,000,000BF (\$180,000) awarded. Main prize (Gilded Spur) incl. prod. grant of 3,500,000 & distribution grant of 500,000BF. Competing films must be at least 60 mins. No entry fee. Formats: 35mm, 16mm; preview on 1/2". Deadline: mid-Aug.. Contact: Jacques Dubrulle, secretary general, Flanders Film Fest, 1104 Kortrijksesteenweg, B-9051 Ghent, Belgium; tel: 011 32 9 221 8946; fax: 011 32 9 221 9074.

LOCARNO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Aug. 3-15, Switzerland (Revised listing). Now in its 48th yr., competitive fest has been described as "one of world's top half-dozen fests" w/ reputation for innovative programming & support of alternative visions from ind. directors. Unique open-air screenings in Piazza Grande, which holds 7,000. 1994 attendance was over 140,000. Special sections & out-of-competition screenings. Competition accepts 1st, 2nd & 3rd fiction features, art films, low-budget films, ind. & cinema d'auteur. Must be over 60 mins. European premieres only, completed w/in previous yr. Educational, advertising & scientific films ineligible. Prizes: Golden Leopard (Grand Prix) & City of Locarno Grand Prize (30,000SF); Silver Leopard (Grand Prix du Jury) & 3rd Prize of City of Locarno (5,000SF); Special Jury Award (10,000SF). Films should be subtitled in French. Fest provides 5-day hospitality to director plus 1 rep of films in competition. More than 100 buyers chosen from biggest US, European & Japanese distributors & TV. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Deadline: June 15. Contact: (East Coast) Norman Wang & Sophie Gluck (212) 758-

8535; fax: (212) 888-2830; (West Coast) Bill Krohn (213) 969-9074; fax: (213) 969-0446.

LONDON FILM MARKET, October, UK. Formerly known as Raindance, market accepts features, shorts & works-in-progress. Over 300 buyers from UK, US, Europe & Japan attend; some past participants have incl. Polygram, Feature Film Company, Artificial Eye, Metro Tartan, British Screen, BFI & Lumiere. Seminars & special events are set up for filmmakers to meet w/ buyers & discuss projects. Entry fees: \$300 features, \$150 works-in-progress, \$75 shorts (under 15 min., \$5 each add'l min.), no entry fee for showcase screenings (by invitation only). Deadline: Sept. 15. Contact: In Pictures, 13-17 Laight St., ste. 6-1, NY, NY 10013; (212) 925-0404; fax: (212) 925-5656.

MANNHEIM-HEIDELBERG INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 13-21, Germany. Competition for new ind. dramatic & doc features & shorts. Awards: International Independent Award of Mannheim-Heidelberg (DM 30,000) for Best Feature; Most Promising Newcomer (DM 10,000); Best Documentary (DM 10,000) for docs over 30 mins.; support for German distributor of Grand Prize (DM 20,000); Special Prize of Mannheim-Heidelberg in Memoriam Rainer Werner Fassbinder (DM 10,000) for best feature w/ most unique narrative structure (minimum 60 min.); International Short Film Prize of Mannheim-Heidelberg (DM 5,000) (under 30 min.); South German Broadcasting Corporation SDR Documentary Prize (DM 10,000 & purchasing of broadcast rights); People's Choice Prize of Mannheim-Heidelberg (all genres, lengths); Fipresci, Internfilm & Jury for Catholic Film Work prizes w/ cash awards. Entries must be German premieres & must not have taken part in the official programs of certain other European film fests; completed w/ in 12 months preceding fest. Formats: 35mm, 16mm; preview on cassette. Deadline: Aug. 1. Contact: Internationales Filmfestival Mannheim-Heidelberg, Collini-Center Galerie, D-68161 Mannheim, Germany; tel: 011 49 0 621 102 943; fax: 011 49 0 621 291 564.

QUEBEC INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF SCIENTIFIC FILMS, Sept. 21-Oct. 1, Canada. One of largest int'l scientific film fests, this fest in 1994 received 206 films from 20 countries, selecting 60 for int'l program & 23 for competition. Competition offers awards in 9 cats: film for young people; science/nature (wildlife resources); environment; film of scientific research; Québec film or video; scientific popularization; excellence in film or television, scientific excellence, Northern Telecom Grand Prize. Fest also offers public screenings in Québec City & Montréal, special evenings w/ internationally acclaimed lecturers, programming for young people & fest on tour, as well as video library of scientific films. Entries must have been produced after Jan. 1, 1993. Entry fee: \$50Cdn. Formats: 16mm, 3/4". Deadline: May 15. Contact: Hervé Fischer, executive director, Festival International du Film Scientifique du Québec, 15, de la Commune Ouest, Montréal, Québec, Canada H2Y 2C6, Canada; (514) 849-1612; fax: (514) 982-0064.

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COE FILM ASSOCIATES, INC. is screening for new channels covering docs on all subjects, comedy, children, animation & short dramas. 3/4" & 1/2". All material screened & returned w/in 3 wks. Send to: Beverly Freeman, Acquisitions, CFA, 65 E. 96th St., NY, NY 10128.

ECLECTIC ENTERTAINMENT CO., worldwide distribution for your "cutting-edge" art house or mainstream feature films. Send tapes to: 8033 Sunset Blvd., ste. 474, Los Angeles, CA 90046; (213) 466-0801; fax: 466-5980.

ESTABLISHED EUROPEAN PARTNERSHIP attending Int'l Program Market, Cannes seeks quality prods/series, all genres, for exclusive distrib. West Six Media Ltd., 8 Poplar Grove, London W6 7RE; 011 44 71 603 7435; fax: (71) 602 0402.

FANLIGHT PRODUCTIONS, distributor of award-winning film & video on disabilities, health care, mental health, family/social issues, etc. seeks new work for distribution to educational markets. Karen McMillen, Fanlight Productions, 47 Halifax St., Boston, MA 02130; (800) 937-4113.

VARIED DIRECTIONS INT'L, distributors of socially important, award-winning programs on child abuse, health & women's issues, seeks select films & videos. Call Joyce at (800) 888-5236 or write: 69 Elm St., Camden, ME 04843; fax: (207) 236-4512.

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ACTOR/SPOKESMAN: "lead" type, 30, w/ creative characters for features. Also, spokesman for docs, educational, PSAs. Credits: Nissan, US Olympic Fest, Webster U. Call for headshot, video/voice demos. Scott Bussen (314) 832-7279.

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BUSINESS SUPPORT SERVICES: Budgets, financial management, staffing, personnel, admin. Start-up & on-going support avail. Consult someone w/ 15 yrs. professional. exp. incl. PBS/ITVS. Kate Lehmann (612) 822-1240; e-mail: KATEL3317@aol.com.

CAMERAMAN: Years of experience in broadcast video prods. Avail. to help produce any size project, multilingual passport & no attitude. Betacam Hi8 avail. Claudio (718) 398-2436.

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COMPOSER/MIDI SPECIALIST w/ studio: Major film/TV credits. Any style (pro session keyboardist) or sound imaginable (12 synths/samplers), highly responsive to visuals, fast & easy to work with. Demo avail. Axel Belohoubek (212) 582-8800/(201) 447-4626.

COMPOSING TEAM seeks film project. Has credits, newly released CD, own recording facility. Styles incl. contemp. classical; Afro-Cuban, Brazilian; jazz; urban, New Age. Small budgets welcome for right proj. Call Maurice at (914) 769-5216.

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY: Experienced. Credits incl.: 35mm feature, music videos, docs & shorts. Owner of Aaton 16mm/S-16 pkg., lighting pkg., Beta SP also avail. Call Kyle (718) 797-9051.

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY w/ awards, talent & experience. Credits incl. features, commercials, industrials, docs, shorts & music videos. Owner of Aaton 16mm/S-16 pkg. 35mm pkg also avail. Call for my reel. Bob (212) 741-2189.

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EDITOR: Offline, 3/4", Hi8, S-VHS, VHS, Amiga titling. Very experienced, has been working in doc., news, video art, community projects, human rights subjects, etc. Very good references. Flexible hrs. (212)

879-2966.

ENTERTAINMENT ATTORNEY: Frequent contributor to "Legal Brief" columns in *The Independent* & other magazines, offers legal services to film & video community on projects from development through distribution. Reasonable rates. Contact: Robert L. Seigel, Esq. (212) 307-7533.

ENTERTAINMENT LAWYER: Former AIVF exec. director & founding chair of ITVS has returned to legal practice. Have your project represented by lawyer w/ in-depth understanding of ind. prod., financing, distribution & public TV. Reasonable rates. Call Lawrence Sapadin (718) 768-4142.

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LOCATION SOUNDMAN: 20 yrs. experience w/ Nagra/quality mics, etc. will consider projects anywhere, anytime. Reasonable rates for low-budget prods & inds w/ interesting scripts. Contact: Harvey Edwards (518) 677-5720, fax: (518) 677-3047.

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RIGHTS CLEARANCE SERVICES: Don't want to clear the rights on your film? I'll do it for you. Music, audio, archival footage, artwork, stills, the works. MB Clearances (212) 243-1067; fax: 0627.

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SU-CITY PICTURES PRESENTS: The Screenplay Doctor & Movie Mechanic. Story editors/postprod. specialists will analyze your screenplay/treatment/synopsis & evaluate your film-in-progress. Multimedia, advanced tech & interactive consultations. Studio & ind. background. Reasonable. Call (212) 219-9224.

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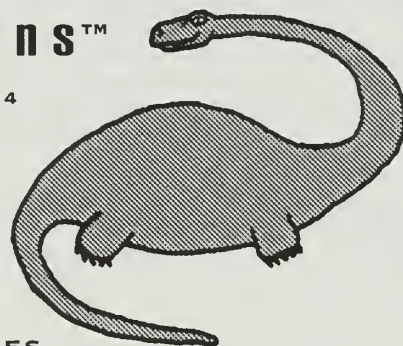
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COA, INC., freelance camera group, seeks very strong hand-held cinema verite doc cameraman w/ excellent lighting skills to shoot network news magazine-style shows. Chris Caris (212) 505-1911.

CREW NEEDED: Cinematographer/cameraperson, camera assistant, gaffer, key grip, sound recordist & prod. assistants needed to work w/ award-winning director for feature-length film shooting end of May/beginning of June. Call (212) 774-4162.

FORTY ACRES AND A MULE Filmworks, Inc., is accepting WGA-registered, feature-length screenplays. Please send script & script-sized SASE to: Forty Acres and a Mule Development, 8 St. Felix St., Brooklyn, NY 11217; (718) 858-9620.

IF YOU HAVE A VIDEO DIARY in hand or in mind, send 2-3 paragraph description &/or 1/2" reel to: ECU, *Extreme Closeup*, attn: Lia, c/o POV, 220 W. 19th St., 11th fl., NY, NY 10011; (212) 989-8121.

PROFESSIONAL FUNDRAISER WANTED: Doc on integration of baseball in postprod. searching for sponsorship, underwriting, grants. Aaron, Feller, O'Neil, Joe Carter involved. If interested, call Rick Morris, Kimshi Productions (610) 354-0863.

SCREENPLAYS WANTED by estab. director w/ large studio & 35mm camera equipment. Short stories, treatments & features for serious prod. consider-

ation in 1995 (1996 fests). Send copyrighted script/SASE to: Pulse Pictures, PO Box 22415, Robbinsdale, MN 55422-0415.

SCRIPTS WANTED: Illusion Films Unlimited is accepting original feature-length screenplays to produce in Boston area. Send scripts & SASE to: Nick Eskesen, Illusion Films Unlimited, 45 Beach Bluff Ave., Swampscott, MA 01907; (617) 595-3739.

POSTPRODUCTION

\$10/hr VIDEO VHS EDIT SUITE: \$20-3/4", \$15-interf., incl. titles, Amiga & SEG. Also avail.: A&B; dubs; computer; photo; Slides; audio; mixed media; prod./postprod.; total S-8 sound film svcs; editor/training. The Media Loft, 727 6th Ave. (23rd); (212) 924-4893.

16MM CUTTING ROOMS: 8-plate & 6-plate fully equipped rooms, sound-transfer facilities, 24-hr. access. Downtown, near all subways & Canal St. Reasonable rates. (212) 925-1500.

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16MM & 35MM OPTICAL SOUND TRACKS! If you want "High Quality" sound for your film, you need a "High Quality" sound negative. Contact Mike Holloway, Optical Sound/Chicago Inc., 24 W. Erie, Chicago, IL 60610; (312) 943-1771 or (708) 541-8488.

3/4" NONLINEAR EDITING at \$15/hr. (incl. operator) w/ D/Vision Pro 2.2 & Sony 9850. 9GB hard drive. Reads SMPTE time code. Produces EDL. 6 channels audio mix. S-VHS/VHS/Hi8 editing w/o TC or EDL. Weekly/monthly rates. (212) 254-4361.

3/4" SONY OFFLINE SYSTEM delivered to you & installed: 5850, 5800, RM 440, 2 monitors \$500/wk., \$1,600/mo. Delivery & installation incl. Equipment clean & professionally maintained. Thomas (212) 929-2439; (201) 667-9894.

A-RAY DELIVERS: Beta SP component online edit pkg. \$1,500/wk. Sony 3/4" offline \$500/wk. Do it yourself or w/ our award-winning network editors. (203) 544-8114; fax: 8334.

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CONFERENCES • SEMINARS

AMERICAN UNIVERSITY, WASHINGTON, D.C. has weekend grad program for adults who want career in film/video prod. MA program is designed for working professionals interested in becoming producers, business managers, or distributors in film, video, TV, cable, multimedia, etc. For more info, call the Advising Center (202) 885-2500.

NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL MEDIA NETWORK's ninth annual media market & conference will be held May 24-28 at Oakland Convention Center. Panels/workshops will cover topics incl. new prod.; communication & delivery technologies; budgeting for promotional campaigns. Keynote panel: "Future Watch: What's Ahead for Educational Media?" For info, call Artemis Samei (510) 465-6885.

PHILADELPHIA MULTIMEDIA TECHNOLOGY SEMINARS: Sealworks, specialists in multimedia integration & development, will show how to combine text, graphics, animation, sound & video to produce interactive apps. Power Mac desktop video prod.; multimedia authoring with Macromedia Director & cross-platform development tools; session on Internet, Mosaic & World Wide Web. Admission free. Philadelphia Apple Market Center May 17 & June 21. To register, call (800) 967-6628 x100; (215) 579-9072 w/ questions.

POST MODERN SISTERS (PMS): supporters of short, experimental form, offer exhibitors choice of programs, containing 7-8 works, & help provide publicity materials. Programs rent for \$200/screening (negotiable for struggling venues) & incl. program notes, publicity stills, posters. VHS preview is free. Call Lisa Austin (415) 648-3810 or Susanne Fairfax (312) 486-5167. PMS, 728 Treat St., San Francisco, CA 94110. E-mail: pmslaustin@aol.com; or sfairf@artic.edu.

FILMS • TAPES WANTED

90's CHANNEL, embracing controversy & searching for programming that offers fresh approaches to TV, welcomes tapes for submission. Topics that have run on 90's Channel incl.: Racism, (*Framing the Panthers in Black & White*); Jewish/Palestinian issues (*We Dare to Speak*); sexuality issues & programs on reproductive rights. Send 3/4" tapes to: The 90's Channel, 2010 14th St., #209; Boulder, CO 80302; (303) 442-8445.

ART IN GENERAL seeks video works & guest-curated video programs for new monthly screening

series. All kinds of work welcome, from experimental film & video to home videos; doc & activist to public access works. Send VHS tape (cued), résumé &/or brief statement & SASE. For more info, call Joanna Spitzner (212) 219-0473.

ART ON FILM DATABASE wants to know: Have you produced film, video or video disc on visual arts? Send info on prod. to Program for Art on Film Database, computer index to over 19,000 prods on visual arts. Interested in prods on all visual arts topics, & welcomes info on prods about artists of color & multicultural art projects. Send info to: Art on Film at Columbia University, 2875 Broadway, 2nd fl., NY, NY 10025; (212) 854-9570; fax: (212) 854-9577.

AUSTIN-BASED PRODUCER offering cable access venue for ind. films/videos. All genres, subjects accepted. Shorts & music videos linked by moderator discussing info pertinent to makers. Films/videos exceeding 40 min. may be aired on 2 consecutive shows. Formats: 1/2", 3/4" preferred; all formats reviewed. No payment. Submit to: James Shelton, Tex-Cinema Prods., PO Box 3633, Austin, TX 78764-3633; (512) 867-9901.

BLACK ENTERTAINMENT TELEVISION seeks films & videos by black ind. makers, directors, or producers for "Black Vision" portion of Screen Scene, weekly 1/2-hr. show that previews TV lineup & latest theatrical releases. For more info, contact: Screen Scene, BET, 1899 Ninth St. NE, Washington, DC 20018; (202) 608-2800.

BLACK VIDEO PERSPECTIVE, new community TV prod. in Atlanta area, seeks works for/by/about African Americans. For more info, contact: Karen L. Forest (404) 231-4846.

CHARISMATIC MASSES is seeking work for possible screening on local TV show exploring alternative media art. Videos, film, animation & performances in all genres accepted. Students encouraged to submit. Send work on 3/4", Hi8, 1/2" video, résumé, artist statement, SASE, SAS mailer for tape return. Fee: \$5/tape to: Charismatic Masses, Justine Wood or Cary Peppermint c/o Syracuse University, Art Media Studies, 102 Shaffer Art Bldg., Syracuse, NY 13244; (315) 443-1294.

CINCINNATI ARTISTS' GROUP EFFORT seeks proposals for exhibitions, performances & audio/video/film works to show in their galleries. Experimental, traditional & collaborative projects encouraged. Contact: CAGE, 1416 Main St., Cincinnati, OH 45210; (513) 381-2437.

CINEMA VIDEO, monthly showcase of works by ind. video- & filmmakers, seeks S-VHS or VHS submissions of any style, content, or length. Utilizing high-end projector, selected videos are projected onto 10.5' x 14' screen. Monthly shows are collections of several artists' videos, but occasionally features are shown as special events when work merits it. Cinema Video is prod. of Velvet Elvis Arts Lounge Theater in Seattle, WA, non-profit fringe theater. Send submissions to: Kevin Picolet, 2207 E. Republican, Seattle, WA 98112, or call Kevin for info at (206) 323-3307.

CINEQUEST, weekly, half-hour TV series profiling best of ind. cinema & video from US & around world, looking for films/videos less than 20 min. to air on 30 min. cable show. Work over 20 min. will air on monthly special in Orlando, FL market during prime-



time. Seeking all genres. Concept of show is to stretch perceptions of conventional TV & expose viewers to scope & talent of inds. Submit on 1/2" or 3/4" video. Submissions need not be recent. No submission limit or deadline. Will acknowledge receipt in 10 days. Send pre-paid mailer if need work returned. Contact: Michael D. McGowan, producer, Cinequest Prods, 2550 Alafayia Trail, Apt. 8100, Orlando, FL 32826; (407) 658-4865.

CINETECA DE CINE ACCION seeks film & video submissions by & about Latinos for regular screening series. Fees paid. Will hold preview tape for 3-4 mos. Formats: 16mm, 3/4", 1/2" video. Contact: Cine Acción, 346 9th St., San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 553-8135.

CITY TV, progressive municipal cable access channel in Santa Monica, seeks work on seniors, disabled, children, Spanish-language & video art; any length. Broadcast exchanged for equip. access at state-of-the-art facility. Contact: Lisa Bernard, cable TV manager, City TV, 1685 Main St., Santa Monica, CA 90401; (310) 458-8590.

CONNECT TV, new series on ind. videomakers, seeks work for 1/2-hr. show. Progressive, social issue docs, art, humor. Will air on Cablevision of CT. Metro Video (203) 866-1090.

DATABASE & DIRECTORY OF LATIN AMERICAN FILM & VIDEO organized by Int'l Media Resources Exchange seeks works by Latin American & US Latino ind. producers. To incl. work in this resource or for info, contact: Karen Ranucci, IMRE, 124 Washington Place, NY, NY 10014; (212) 463-0108.

DUTV-CABLE 54, nonprofit educational access channel operated by Drexel University in Philadelphia, is looking for works by ind. producers for broadcast. All genres & lengths considered. No payment; will return tapes. VHS, SVHS & 3/4" accepted. Contact: George McCollough or Maria Elena Mongelli, DUTV-Cable 54, 33rd & Chestnut Sts., Philadelphia, PA 19104.

EASTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY seeks ind. prods for nonprofit cable channel in Spokane, Washington. No payment. Any genre or length. S-VHS, VHS, or 3/4". Tapes will be returned. Submit release form/letter & tapes to: Radio-Television Department - MS#104, Eastern Washington University, 526 5th St., Cheney, WA 99004-2431.

EN CAMINO, KRCB, seeks works of 30-60 min. in Spanish & English concerning Latino community. Formats: 3/4", 16mm. Contact: Luis Nong, Box 2638,

Ronher Park, CA 94928.

FILMBABIES COLLECTIVE, co-op of NY-based writers & directors, seeks new members w/ short films for screening series (16mm, under 15 min.). Filmmakers must reside in NY area. For more info, contact: PO Box 2100, NY, NY 10025 (incl. SASE); (212) 875-7537.

FLIP seeks VHS copy of animation 3 min. or under &/or Xerox copy or original flip book for exhibition planned for May/June in NY. Send brief bio & SASE for return of materials by May 1 to: Flip, 163 Third Ave., #297, NY, NY 10003; (212) 254-2812.

FOOTAGE SOUGHT from 1989 women's march on Washington, or any pro-choice or women's lib protests from 1960-1993 for ind. doc on abortion rights. Hi8, home movies; low-budget look is fine. Some pay possible. Kate (312) 935-5261.

GREAT LAKES FILM & VIDEO seeks 16mm & videos for ongoing exhibition of gay/lesbian, Jewish, & women's work. Experimental & animation are sought, as well as work fitting into program on aesthetic/anti-aesthetic. Contact: Matt Frost or Michael Walsh, Great Lakes Video & Film, PO Box 413, Milwaukee, WI 53201.

HALCYON DAYS PRODUCTIONS seeks video segments (1-5 min.) by 15- to 25-year-olds for video compilation show. If piece is selected, you may have chance to be video correspondent for show. Work may be editorial, real-life coverage, political satire, slapstick—you decide. Just personalize. Submit VHS or Hi8 (returnable w/ SASE) to: Mai Kim Holley, Halcyon Days Prod., c/o Hi8, 12 W. End Ave., 5th fl., NY, NY 10023; (212) 397-7754.

HANDI-CAPABLE IN THE MEDIA, INC., nonprofit organization, seeks video prods on people w/ disabilities to air on Atlanta's Public Access TV. No fees. Submit VHS or 3/4" tape to: Handi-Capable in the Media, Inc., 2625 Piedmont Rd., ste. 56-137, Atlanta, GA 30324.

IN VISIBLE COLOURS FILM & VIDEO SOCIETY seeks videos by women of color for library collection. Work will be accessible to members, producers, multicultural groups & educational institutions. For more info, contact: Claire Thomas, In Visible Colours, 119 W. Pender, ste. 115, Vancouver, B.C. V6B 1S5; (604) 682-1116.

IND. FILM & VIDEO SHOWCASE, cable access show, seeks student & ind. films & videos to give artists exposure. Send films or video in 3/4" format w/ paragraph about artist & his/her work. Send to: Box #1626, 4202 E. Fowler Ave., Tampa, Florida 33620.

LATINO COLLABORATIVE, bimonthly screening series, seeks works by Latino film/videomakers. Honoraria paid. Send VHS preview tapes to: Latino Collaborative Bimonthly Screening Series, Vanessa Codorniu, 280 Broadway, ste. 412, NY, NY 10007; (212) 732-1121.

LA PLAZA, weekly half-hour doc series produced at WGBH Boston for & about Latino community, is interested in acquiring original works by ind. film- & videomakers that deal w/ social & cultural issues concerning Latinos. Works between 25 & 28 min. encouraged. Please send tapes in Beta, 3/4" or VHS format to: La Plaza/Acquisitions, WGBH, 125 Western Ave., Boston, MA 02134.

LAUREL CABLE NETWORK, nonprofit in Maryland, seeks variety of works of all lengths & genres for regular access airing in 3/4", SVHS, or VHS. No payment & tapes cannot be returned. Submit tape & release form/letter to: Laurel Cable Network, 8103 Sandy Spring Rd., Laurel, MD 20707, Attn.: Bob Neuman.

METRO SHORTS, program of Metropolitan Film Society, seeks 35mm prints, 15 min. or less, for regular screenings. Subject matter needs to suit audience that would view film w/ R rating. VHS/S-VHS preview tape would be helpful. Two-way UPS ground shipping costs provided. Contact: Michelle Forren, exec. dir., Metropolitan Film Society, 3928 River Walk Dr., Duluth, GA 30136-6113.

NERVOUS IMPULSE, national screening series focusing on science, seeks films/videos. Open to experimental, non-narrative & animated works that address scientific representation, scientific knowledge, or interplay between science & culture. Send preview VHS & SASE to: Nervous Impulse, Times Square Station, PO Box 2578, NY, NY 10036-2578.

NEW AMERICAN MAKERS, nationally recognized venue for new works by emerging & under-recognized videomakers at Center for Arts in SF, seeks works that challenge boundaries of creative video/TV. Videomakers receive honorarium of \$2/min. for tapes. Send VHS tape, \$15 entry fee & SASE to: New American Makers, PO Box 460490, San Francisco, CA 94146.

NEW CITY PRODUCTIONS seeks doc works-in-progress on all subjects for monthly screenings. Committed to promoting ind. community by establishing docu-club, forum of new voices. Have professional large screen video. Send cassettes to: New City Prods, 635 Madison Ave., ste. 1101, NY, NY 10022; (212) 753-1326.

NEWTON TELEVISION FOUNDATION seeks proposals on ongoing basis from ind. producers. NTF is nonprofit foundation collaborating w/ ind. producers on docs concerning contemporary issues. Past works have been broadcast on local & national public TV, won numerous awards & most are currently in distribution in educational market. Contact NTF for details: 1608 Beacon St., Waban, MA 02168; (617) 965-8477; ntf@tmn.com; walshtntf@aol.com

NYU TV, channel 51 in NYC, is offering opportunities for inds to showcase finished films & videos. Submit materials to: Linda Noble, 26 Washington Place, 1st fl., NY, NY 10003.

NYTEX PRODUCTIONS seeks video interviews from across US. Looking for political, entertainment, & PSAs in S-VHS or VHS. Send to: NyTex Prods, PO Box 303, NY, NY 10101-0303, Attn.: Don Cevaro.

OFFLINE, hour-long, biweekly, national public-access show, seeks ind. & creative works. Submissions should be 3/4", S-VHS or VHS & should not exceed 20 min. (longer works will be considered for serialization). For more info, contact: Greg Bowman, 203 Pine Tree Rd., Ithaca, NY 14850; (607) 272-2613. e-mail: 72137.3352@compuserve.com.

ORGONE CINEMA, non-funded monthly film/video series, looking for handmade, nature, silent, random, noisy, sex, science, home, paranoid &

perverse movies. All formats. Prefer VHS for preview. Deadline: Ongoing. Send to: Orgone Cinema & Archive, 2238 Murray Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15217.

PLANET CENTRAL TELEVISION seeks broadcast-quality films, videos & animation censored by US TV as too controversial or political. Bonus considerations for submissions that are smart, funny, sexy & exhibit irreverent attitude. Send tape to: Jay Levin, director of program acquisitions, Planet Central Television, 309 Santa Monica Blvd., ste. 322, Santa Monica, CA 90401; (310) 458-4588.

REBIS GALLERIES seeks works by artists working in video/film & computers. All subjects considered. Formats should be in VHS/Beta, 8mm, S-8, 16mm. For computers 3.5 disks in PC or low density Amiga files. Contracts to be negotiated. Contact: Rebis Galleries, 1930 S. Broadway, Denver, CO 80210; (303) 698-1841.

REEL TIME AT PS. 122, ongoing quarterly screening series, is accepting submissions of recent ind. film & video works for 1995 season. Exhibition formats include S-8, 16mm, 3/4" & VHS. Send VHS submission tapes, written promotion & return postage to: Curator, Reel Time, PS. 122, 150 1st Ave., NY, NY 10009; (212) 477-5829 (x327).

RIGHTS & WRONGS, weekly, nonprofit human rights global TV magazine series seeks story ideas & footage. Last yr. 34 programs covering issues from China to Guatemala were produced. Contact: Danny Schechter or Rory O'Connor, exec. producers, The Global Center, 1600 Broadway, ste. 700, NY, NY 10019; (212) 246-0202; fax: 2677.

REGISTERED seeks experimental and non-narrative videos about consumerism and/or modern ritual for nationally touring screening. Send VHS for preview w/ SASE & short description to: Registered, Attn.: Joe Sola, PO Box 1960, Peter Stuyvesant Station, 432 E. 14th St., NY, NY 10009.

SHORT FILM & VIDEO: All genres, any medium, 1 min. to 1 hr. Unconventional, signature work in VHS or 3/4" for nat'l broadcast! Submit to: EDGE TV, 7805 Sunset Blvd., ste. 203, Los Angeles, CA 90046.

SCULPTURE CENTER GALLERY invites video artists to submit installation concepts for new video program. Emerging & mid-career artists w/o affiliation should submit resumé, narrative description, documentation of previous work on VHS tape, slides or photos. (incl. SASE) to: Sculpture Center, 167 E. 69th St., NY, NY 10021.

STATEN ISLAND COMMUNITY TELEVISION PRODUCER seeks experimental works, all subjects, by ind. video & film artists. The more explicit, the better; film & video on 3/4" preferred, but 1/2" &/or 8mm acceptable. Send tapes to: Matteo Masiello, 140 Redwood Loop, Staten Island, NY 10309.

THE INDEPENDENT FILM CHANNEL 34 seeks shorts, experimental films, docs, animation for TV broadcast & CD-ROM titles. Send 1/2" or 3/4" tapes to: Maureen World, Precis Entertainment Inc. 1 Irving Pl, ste. P20F, NY, NY 10003; (212) 529-9687.

THE NEW MUSEUM & the Educational Video Center are seeking recent videos produced by high school-aged youth for major exhibition on Youth, Media & Culture. Looking for tapes in various genres

THE ASSOCIATION OF INDEPENDENT VIDEO & FILMMAKERS

Diverse, committed, opinionated, and fiercely independent—these are the video and filmmakers who make up the national membership of AIVF.

Documentary and features filmmakers, animators, experimentalists, distributors, educators, students, curators—all concerned that their work make a difference—find the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers, the national service organization for independent media producers, vital to their professional lives. Whether it's our magazine, *The Independent Film & Video Monthly*, or the organization raising its collective voice to advocate for important issues, AIVF preserves your independence while letting you know you're not alone.

AIVF helps you save time and money as well. You'll find you can spend more of your time (and less of your money) on what you do best—getting your work made and seen. To succeed as an independent today, you need a wealth of resources, strong connections, and the best information available. So join with more than 5,000 other independents who rely on AIVF to help them succeed. **JOIN AIVF TODAY!**

Here's what AIVF membership offers:

THE INDEPENDENT FILM & VIDEO MONTHLY

Membership provides you with a

year's subscription to *The Independent*. Thought-provoking features, news, and regular columns on business, technical, and legal matters. Plus festival listings, funding deadlines, exhibition venues, and announcements of member activities and new programs and services. Special issues highlight regional activity and focus on subjects including media education and the new technologies.

FESTIVAL SERVICES

AIVF arranges screenings for festival representatives, handles customs and group shipping of members' materials to foreign festivals, and publishes the AIVF Guide to International Film and Video Festivals—considered the definitive resource in the field. We also host periodic evenings with festival consultants for members to receive personalized counseling on strategy and placement.

ACCESS

Membership allows you to join fellow AIVF members at intimate events featuring festival directors, producers, distributors, and funders.

COMMUNITY

We are initiating monthly member get-togethers in cities across the country; call the office for the one nearest you. Plus members are carrying on active dialogue online—creating a “virtual community” for independents to share information, resources, and ideas.

ADVOCACY

Members receive periodic advocacy

alerts, with updates on important legislative issues affecting the independent field and mobilization for collective action.

INSURANCE

Members are eligible to purchase discounted personal and production insurance plans through AIVF suppliers. A wide range of health insurance options are available, as well as special liability, E&O, and production plans tailored for the needs of low-budget mediamakers.

TRADE DISCOUNTS

A growing list of businesses across the country offer AIVF members discounts on equipment and auto rentals, film processing, transfers, editing, and other production necessities.

WORKSHOPS, PANELS, AND SEMINARS

Members get discounts on events covering the whole spectrum of current issues and concerns affecting the field, ranging from business and aesthetic to technical and political topics.

INFORMATION

We distribute a series of books on financing, funding, distribution, and production; members receive discounts on selected titles. AIVF's staff also can provide information about distributors, festivals, and general information pertinent to your needs. Our library houses information on everything from distributors to sample contracts to budgets.

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

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(memoirs/testimonial; narrative; doc; experimental; PSAs) representing diverse youth perspectives on themes such as community, cultural identity, relationships, sexuality, health, youth with disabilities, family, immigration, school, the environment, violence, etc. Works or excerpts no longer than 15 min., produced by youth independently or working in collaboration w/ artists, teachers &/or social service orgs. will be considered. Deadline: June 15 (postmarked). Also seeking interactive computer projects. PC or Mac-based addressing same themes as above. For computer projects, send project description &/or demo disk. For video projects, send VHS, S-VHS or 3/4" tapes w/ SASE to: Brian Goldfarb, The New Museum of Contemporary Art, 583 Broadway, NY, NY 10012.

TOXIC TELEVISION seeks broadcast-quality, creative video shorts (under 10 min.) for alternative TV experience. Looking for works in animation, puppetry, experimental, computers, etc. Send VHS or 3/4" tape, SASE & résumé to: Tom Lenz, 12412 Belfran St., Hudson, FL 34669.

UNQUOTE TELEVISION, 1/2-hr program dedicated to exposing new, innovative film & video artists, seeks ind. doc, narrative, experimental, performance works under 28 min. Reaches 10 million homes via program exchange nationwide. 1/2" & 3/4" dubs accepted. Submit to: Unquote TV, c/o DUTV, 33rd & Chestnut St., Philadelphia, PA 19104; (215) 895-2927.

URBAN INSTITUTE FOR CONTEMPORARY ARTS is accepting video & 16mm film in all genres for next season of programming. Fee paid if accepted. Send VHS tape w/ SASE to: Film Committee, UTICA, 88 Monroe Ave. NW, Grand Rapids, MI 49503.

VIEWPOINTS, KQED's showcase of ind. point-of-view works, seeks films & videos expressing "strong statements on important subjects." Submit VHS or 3/4" tapes (1 1/2 hr. length preferred) to: Greg Swartz, Manager of Broadcast Projects & Acquisitions, KQED, 2601 Mariposa St., San Francisco, CA 94110; (415) 553-2269.

VISION FOOD, weekly public access show in LA & NYC, seeks visually exciting pieces in all genres (art, music & film on video). Under 20 min., 1/2", 3/4" dubs. No payment, videos credited. Send letter of permission to air material & video to: Jack Holland, 5432 Edgewood Pl., Los Angeles, CA 90019.

WEIRD TV, satellite TV show airing weekly on Telstar 302, specializes in alternative viewing. Will consider works of 3 min. max., animation or shorts. Submit work to: Weird TV, 1818 W. Victory, Glendale, CA 91201; (818) 637-2820.

WORLD AFRICAN NETWORK (WAN), first premium cable network for people of African descent worldwide, is accepting submissions for 1995 launch. Featuring films, docs, shorts, news & info, children's programs, sports, concerts, drama series & sitcoms. Send to: Eleven Piedmont Center, ste. 620, Atlanta, GA 30305; (404) 365-8850; fax: 365-8350.

WNYC-TV seeks films/videos for new prime-time series on NY inds. Doc. or experimental (incl. video art); under one hour; completed; all rights cleared. Pays \$35/min. Send VHS, 3/4" or Betacam preview tape, to: NY Independents, c/o WNYC-TV, One

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WOMEN OF COLOR in Media Arts Database seeks submissions of films & videos for database that incl. video filmographies, bibliographical info & data. Contact: Dorothy Thigpen, Women Make Movies, 462 Broadway, 5th fl., NY, NY 10013.

WYOU-TV, cable-access station in Madison, WI, seeks music-related videos for weekly alternative music show. Send 1/2" or 3/4" tapes. No payment; videos credited. Contact: WYOU-TV, 140 W. Gilman St., Madison, WI 53703.

XTV, new, ind. cable TV channel, seeks student & ind. works from around country. For more info, call: Otto Khera (602) 948-0381.

OPPORTUNITIES • GIGS

ASSISTANT/ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR position in Video beginning Fall 1995. Applicants should have Ph.D. or Masters w/ at least 3 years professional experience. Appls should incl. vitae & three references. Send to: Dr. Ted Schwalbe, chair, Dept. of Communications, McEwan Hall, room 326, SUNY College at Fredonia, Fredonia, NY 14063. EOE/AA.

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER will help inds find outlets for product. Finished works only incl. films, docs, TV pilots & other quality product. Please send work on VHS to: John Gabriel Matonti, executive producer; c/o Matonti Enterprises, Inc., 26 Lake Shore Dr., Montville, NJ 07045.

FILM/VIDEO ARTS has internships avail. in NYC. Minimum 6-mo. commitment. In exchange for at least 16 hrs./wk. of work, interns receive free media courses, access to equipment & postprod. facilities at nonprofit media arts center. Appls. must have plan for ind. project. Film/video knowledge helpful. Deadline: Ongoing. Contact: Intern Program, Film/Video Arts, 817 Broadway, 2nd fl., NY, NY 10003; (212) 673-9361.

VIDEO CAMERAWOMEN needed to work as stringers covering local events throughout US for Dyke TV, weekly NYC cable TV show. For info, call (212) 343-9335; fax: 9337.

PUBLICATIONS

AFRICAN AMERICAN FILM STATISTICS & MARKETING STRATEGIES is thorough volume of data of value to any African American filmmaker trying to raise funds. Incl. are stats on profits of black-directed films since 1970 & numbers for theatrical releases & home video. Send \$29.95 to: Greener Grass Prods, 1041 W. 98th St., Chicago, IL 60643; (312) 779-8717.

CAMCORDER GUIDE by James Carrasco incl. 12 easy ways to shoot video like pros. Limited number avail. for free. Send \$1 S&H to: *Camcorder Guide*, c/o James Carrasco, PO Box 1231, Madera, CA 93639; (209) 252-4633.

CHICAGO FILMLETTER, magazine for those into film/TV prod., covers both ind. & Hollywood on-location prod. in Chicago. Also contains listing of job opportunities, film classes & day-by-day calendar of film-related events. For more info, contact: Al Cohn, Chicago Filmletter, 1532 N. Milwaukee Ave.,

Chicago, IL; (312) 235-3456.

CONCERNS, publication of Women's Caucus for the Modern Languages, invites manuscripts on feminist involvement in development of film studies an academic discipline. Suggested issues of interest incl.: What has feminist contribution been to the discipline? How might it be characterized? What's women's influence been on the research and teaching interests (& practices) of the discipline? What's status of women in the profession? Anticipated date of publication is late '95, early '96. Send submissions to: Harriet Margolis, Theater & Film, Victoria University, Wellington, New Zealand: e-mail: harriet.margolis@vuw.ac.nz; fax: 00 64 4 495 5090.

IFFCON '95, 2ND ANNUAL INT'L FILM FINANCING CONFERENCE transcripts are avail. Topics discussed by int'l financiers, commissioning editors & producers during 3-day event incl.: Foreign TV Opportunities, Collaborating with Producers Abroad, Rallying US Dollars & Navigating European Film Funds. For further details, call 24-hour info line (415) 281-9777.

LIVING ARCHIVES, INC. annual report may be viewed at its offices during business hrs. DA Pennebacker & Diane Brown, directors. Address: 262 W. 91st St., NY, NY 10024; (212) 496-9195.

NE FOUNDATION FOR THE HUMANITIES offers paperback transcript of '93 nat'l conference, "Telling the Story: The Media, The Public & American History." Historians, filmmakers, public programming pros explore ways in which Americans learn about history. Send \$12.50 (MA residents add 5% sales tax) to: NEFH, 46 Temple Pl., 4th fl., Boston, MA 02111.

NEH OVERVIEW OF ENDOWMENT PROGRAMS incl. more info than ever about grant opportunities. Has appl. deadlines through 1995, how to get appl. forms, addresses & phone numbers of state humanities councils, and whom to contact for help. *NEH Overview*, rm. 402, 1100 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W. Washington, D.C. 20506; (202) 606-8400; NEH Bulletin Board (202) 606-8688, or E-mail (Bitnet) at NEHOPA&GWUVM.GWU.EDU

RESOURCES • FUNDS

CHICAGO RESOURCE CENTER awards grants to nonprofits who serve gay & lesbian community. For more info, contact: Chicago Resource Center, 104 S. Michigan Ave., ste. 1220, Chicago, IL 60603; (312) 759-8700.

CREATIVE SCREENWRITERS GROUP, nat'l organization dedicated to advancement of writing, is launching free service for everyone interested in improving their writing skills. CSG will provide assistance to anyone interested in joining writers' group in his/her community. CSG also provides info on how to form new groups. Send name, address & phone w/ description of writing interests & SASE to: Creative Screenwriters Group, 518 9th St. NE, ste. 308, Washington, DC 20002.

DCTV ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE is now accepting appls. for \$500 worth of equipment access on ongoing basis w/in one year. When 1 funded project is complete, DCTV will review appls. on file & select next project. Preference given to projects already under-

way. For appl., send SASE to: AIR, c/o DCTV, 87 Lafayette St., NY, NY 10013-4435.

HUMANITIES PROJECTS IN MEDIA administered by NEH, has deadline of Sept. 1995 (specific day not yet avail.) for projects beginning after April 1, 1996. 20 copies of appl. required on or before deadline. For appl., guidelines, write: National Endowment for the Humanities, Division of Public Programs, Humanities Projects in Media, rm. 420, 1100 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20506; (202) 606-8278.

ILLINOIS ARTS COUNCIL (IAC) SPECIAL ASSISTANCE ARTS PROGRAM: Matching grants of up to \$1,500 avail. to Illinois artists for specific projects. Activities that may be funded are: registration fees & travel to attend conferences, seminars, or workshops; consultant fees for resolution of specific artistic problem; exhibits, performances, publications, screenings; materials, supplies, or services. Funds awarded based on quality of work submitted & impact of proposed project on artist's professional development. Appls must be received at least 8 weeks prior to project starting date. Degree students are not eligible to apply. Call (312) 814-6750.

JAPAN FOUNDATION is providing film prod. support to experienced ind. or corp. for prod. of films, TV programs, or other a/v materials that further understanding of Japan & Japanese culture abroad. Contact: Japan Foundation, 152 W. 57th St., 39th fl., NY, NY 10019; (212) 489-0299.

LEDIG HOUSE WRITER'S COLONY offers published writers & translators quiet workplace, meals, lodging, & meetings w/ other writers at Ledig House in Columbia County, NY. 2-month sessions 3 times/yr. For appl. info contact: Ledig House, ART/OMI, 55 5th Ave., 15th fl., NY, NY 10003; (212) 206-6060.

LOUISIANA CENTER FOR CULTURAL MEDIA makes professional camera pkgs. & cut-only editing systems avail. free to indivs who agree to produce arts & heritage programming regularly & exclusively for Cultural Cable Channel of New Orleans. To qualify, parties must be members of Cultural Communications (\$35/yr.) & will have to produce minimum of 6 shows & complete 1 program/mo. For info, contact: Mark J. Sindler, exec. dir., Cultural Cable Channel (504) 529-3366.

LYN BLUMENTHAL MEMORIAL FUND FOR IND. VIDEO: Grants go to individuals & collectives for video prod. Fund seeks work which aims to do any or all of following: test limits of technology; extend language of personal expression; question aesthetic convention; explore complex issues of gender, sexuality & cultural identity; challenge prevailing social system. Prod. grants \$1,000-\$3,000. Fund encourages projects that make inventive use of newly evolving/small-format media technologies w/ low budgets (\$6,000 or less). Deadline: Sept. 15. Potential applicants are asked to write for appl. form & funding guidelines. No phone calls accepted. Write to: Lyn Blumenthal Memorial Fund for Ind. Video, PO Box 3514, Church St. Station, NY, NY 10007.

MEDIA ALLIANCE assists NYC artists & nonprofit organizations in using state-of-art equipment, postprod. & prod. facilities at reduced rates. Contact: Media Alliance, c/o WNET, 356 W. 58th St., NY, NY

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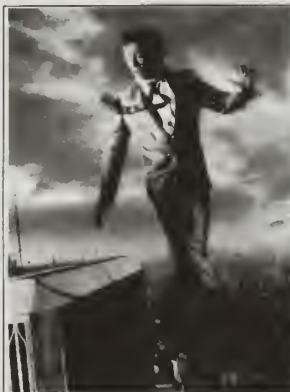
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NY FOUNDATION FOR THE ARTS awards Artists' Fellowships to individual NY artists. Applicants must be 18 year & older, resident of NY for at least 2 yrs. Cannot be grad or undergrad student, NYFA recipient of last 3 yrs, or employee or board member of foundation. For more info, call NYFA at (212) 366-6900.

PIFVA SUBSIDY PROGRAM: Facilitates completion of ind., non-commercial film, video, or audio works produced by PIFVA members. Grants also considered towards works in earlier stages. 2 hrs of on-line editing time on Media 100 avail. Grants, paid directly to facilities, average \$500; max. \$1,000 Administered in 4 rounds throughout yr. Next deadline: June 1. Can review apps w/ staff before submitting. Call for forms & guidelines. (215) 895-6594; fax: (215) 895-6562.

POLLOCK-KRASNER FOUNDATION gives financial assistance to artists of recognizable merit & financial need working as mixed-media or installation artists. Grants awarded throughout yr., \$1,000-\$30,000. For guidelines, write: Pollock-Krasner Foundation, 725 Park Ave., NY, NY 10021.

PRINCESS GRACE FOUNDATION-USA makes awards to thesis film students enrolled in accredited film programs. Please write to determine if your school/university is eligible to apply. Jennifer Reis, Director of Grants Programs, Princess Grace Foundation, 725 Park Ave., NY, NY 10021.

ROY W. DEAN FILM GRANT, awarded by Studio Film & Tape in LA, will go to filmmaker w/ "unique project that makes contribution to society." Recipient is entitled to: \$5,000 of Fuji film; \$5,000 feet of film processing from Foto-Kem Labs; \$5,000 in camera rental from Otto Nemenz Int'l; \$2,500 in titles & opticals from T&T Optical; camera filters from Tiffen Filters; 25% discount off stage rental from Hollywood Stage. 5 finalists will receive \$500 in Fuji film; all applicants receive 5% off Fuji film. Must submit: appl. form; 200-plus word story treatment; résumé; 1/2" VHS copy of most recent work; self-addressed Jiffy bag for cassette return. Deadline: June 1. Send apps to: Studio Film & Tape, Roy W. Dean Grant, 6674 Santa Monica Blvd., Hollywood, CA 90038; (212) 466-8101.

SCREENPLAY COMPETITION, sponsored by Austin Heart of Film Festival, awards prizes in 3 cats: features w/ adult/mature themes (\$3,000 plus airfare, accommodations at fest, Oct. 5-8); features w/ family/children themes (\$3,000 plus airfare, accommodations); student short (under 30 min.—\$750 prize). Deadline: June 15. Also, fest has added "Best Produced Screenplay" awards for: guerilla films (under \$50,000; films w/ prod. costs between \$50,000 & \$1 million; & films w/ budgets exceeding \$1 million. All winners receive airfare, accommodations at fest. Deadline: Aug. 15. For more info, call (800) 310-FEST or mail SASE to: 707 Rio Grande, ste. 101, Austin, TX 78701.

TRAVEL GRANTS FUND FOR ARTISTS makes grants to US artists to enhance their professional growth through short-term int'l experiences that enable them to collaborate w/ colleagues. Indiv. media artists should contact Arts International for 1995 apps. & guidelines at: Arts Int'l, 809 United

Nations Plaza, NY, NY 10017; (212) 984-5370.

VISUAL STUDIES WORKSHOP MEDIA CENTER in Rochester, NY, accepts proposals on ongoing basis for its Media Access program. Artists, ind. producers & nonprofits awarded access at reduced rates, prod. & postprod. equipment for work on noncommercial projects. For appl., tour, or more info, call (716) 442-8676.

WRITERS WORKSHOP NATIONAL SCRIPTWRITING CONTEST is accepting scripts from throughout US. 5 to 6 winners will be chosen to receive \$500 cash award. Winners also receive free tuition for critical evaluation of scripts before panel of motion picture agents, producers, writers, & directors. This program continues throughout byear. For submission info, send legal size SASE w/ 60¢ postage to: Willard Rogers, Writers Workshop National Contest, PO Box 69799, Los Angeles, CA 90069; (213) 933-9232.

MISCELLANEOUS

SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATIONS OF UNIVERSITY OF COAHUILA AT SALTILLO, MEXICO seeks donations of used video equipment (8mm, VHS, Hi8, S-VHS & 3/4" Umatic in good working order. Contact: Carlos Recio, director 011-5284-17-00-63, AIVF member Mark R. Day, 2434 Alta Vista Dr. Vista, CA 92084; (619) 630-7201.

UNIVERSITY PROFESSORS:

The Independent is a respected teaching tool for both film/video production and film theory classes.

Each issue contains articles that follow **trends** (ie., women directors; Native American media artists) and offer practical advice (ie., how to break in to the film biz; where to find funding for media projects) as well as **profiles** of up-and-coming and established mediamakers, festival directors, and distributors.

The Independent also offers advice by professionals on **business and legal issues**, as well as updates on the latest **technological advances**. In addition, our **listings** are second-to-none in providing details on upcoming film festivals, job opportunities, and grant/fellowship deadlines.

If you are interested in obtaining **FREE** back issues of *The Independent* for classroom use, please call Michele Shapiro at (212) 473-3400.



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The Foundation for Independent Video and Film (FIVF), the foundation affiliate of the Association for Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF), supports a variety of programs and services for the independent media community, including publication of *The Independent*, operation of the Festival Bureau, seminars and workshops, and an information clearing house. None of this work would be possible without the generous support of the AIVF membership and the following organizations:

The Center for Arts Criticism, Consolidated Edison Company of New York, Funding Exchange, John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts, National Video Resources, The New York Community Trust, New York State Council on the Arts, The Rockefeller Foundation, and The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc.

We also wish to thank the following individuals and organizational members:

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BY MARTHA WALLNER

East Meets West

In February, AIVF program director Pamela Calvert headed West and presented an advocacy update to Portland-area independents at the Northwest Film Center. Attendees were urged to contact key Congressional members from Oregon, including moderate Republican Senator Mark Hatfield, chair of the Appropriations Committee, and Republican Senator Bob Packwood, chair of the subcommittee that oversees telecommunications legislation and reauthorization for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB).

Taking It to the Airwaves

In late February, *Counterspin*, a radio program produced by FAIR and syndicated to nearly 100 public and community radio stations across the country, featured a segment with yours truly, the advocacy coordinator of AIVF. *Counterspin* features a weekly critique of the mainstream media and public television and reports on media policy, including attacks on CPB. I explained the important role of the Independent Television Service (ITVS) and the five Minority Broadcasting Consortia in supporting the work of independent producers (the organizations disbursed over \$10 million to independents in FY94) and emphasized the fact that

these programs, which depend on CPB funding, are in danger. Listeners were asked to call AIVF if they wanted to get involved in advocacy.

New York City Members Plot Advocacy Strategy

Media Alliance and AIVF cosponsored an advocacy meeting at Film/Video Arts on Feb. 28. The 60 people who came received an update on cuts and legislative developments at both the state and national levels. We distributed dozens of sample letters and postcards to legislators in support of CPB, the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) and telecommunications policy. Some participants volunteered to set up advocacy information tables in front of popular New York cinemas in early spring.

The Hill Is Alive!

Executive director Ruby Lerner and AIVF member Brad Lichtenstein headed to Washington, D.C. along with hundreds of arts supporters for Arts Advocacy Day on March 14. In an effort to lobby for the arts, advocates visited the offices of New York representatives, key committee members, and their staffs. Stops along the way included the offices of Senators Alfonse D'Amato (R-NY), Patrick Moynihan (D-NY), and Larry Pressler (R-SD), as well as Congressional repre-



sentatives Jack Fields (R-TX), Thomas J. Bliley (D-NY), Edolphus Towns (D-NY), and Carolyn B. Maloney (D-NY).

Three's a Crowd

At press time, the Los Angeles representatives of AIVF, the IDA (International Documentary Association), and FAF (Film Arts Foundation) were planning a meeting to bring together members of the three groups on March 24. Organizers are interested in facilitating the creation of professional and advocacy networks in the Los Angeles area. For more information contact: Lee Lew-Lee (213) 661-1380.

Martha Wallner is advocacy coordinator of AIVF. For more information on the above, call (212) 473-3400.

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Call the organizations listed above for specific information.



BY PAMELA CALVERT

UPCOMING EVENTS

MEET & GREETs

These are opportunities for members to meet producers, distributors, funders, programmers, and others to exchange information in an informal atmosphere at the AIVF offices. Free; open to AIVF members only. Limited to 20 participants. RSVP required.

CAROLINE KAPLAN

Director, Program Development
Bravo Network - The Independent Film Channel
New cable channel showcasing independent media.
When: Thursday, May 11, 6:30 pm

20TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION: FIERCELY INDEPENDENT

The Donnell Library hosts a series of AIVF-sponsored conversations: two makers each evening will show their work and talk about the thrills, chills, challenges, and triumphs of the independent life. Each program pairs an emerging young maker with one in mid-career to compare notes and see how the field has developed in the last two decades.

May 18: Isaac Julien (*Looking for Langston*); ~~cancelled~~ ^{Erin} Ainouz (*Scams*); Moderator: Wellington Love

June 8: Barbara Hammer (*Nitrate Kisses*) & Cheryl Dunye (*Greetings from Africa*); Moderator: Robin Vachal

All programs at Donnell Library Center, 20 West 53rd St., at 6 pm. Admission free and open to the public. No reservation necessary, but seating is limited. Cosponsored by the New York Lesbian & Gay Film Festival.

INDEPENDENT CD-ROM PRODUCTION

The American Museum of the Moving Image will host a panel and demonstration of the creative and pioneering work being done by independents in the emerging multimedia technologies. Four independent interactive media producers/designers will discuss do-it-yourself CD-ROM production in today's wide-open marketplace, and will demonstrate their current work. "Start-up" information on training and equipment access will also be distributed. Panelists include Rodney Allen Greenblatt (*Dazzleoids*), Tony Grossman and Sondra Desmond (*Duelin' Firemen*), and others.

When: Sunday, May 21, 2-5 pm

Where: American Museum of the Moving Image,

35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria, NY
Cost: \$7 AIVF and AMMI members, \$10 others
Limited seating; advance purchase suggested. To charge by phone and for transit information: (718) 784-4520.

"MANY TO MANY" MONTHLY MEMBER SALONS

This is a monthly opportunity for members to discuss work, meet other independents, share war stories, and connect with the AIVF community across the country. Note: since our copy deadline is two months before the meetings listed below, be sure to call the local organizers to confirm that there have been no last-minute changes.

Albany, NY:

When: May 3, June 7, 6 pm

Where: Mother Earth's Cafe, Quail St.

Contact: Mike Camoin (518) 895-5269

Austin, TX:

When: May 29, June 26, 6:30 pm

Where: Ruta Maya Coffee House, 218 W. 4th St.

Contact: Amie Petronis (512) 474-0842

Boston:

When: May 9, June 7, 7 pm

Where: May - Newton Television Foundation, 1608

Beacon St., Newton; call for June location

Contact: Susan Walsh (617) 965-8477

Dallas:

Meetings not set at press time.

Contact: Bart Weiss (214) 948-7300

Los Angeles:

When: May 2, June 6, 7 pm

Where: Call to confirm location

Contact: Pat Branch (310) 289-8612

New York:

When: May 16, June 20, 6-8 pm

Where: Call to confirm location.

Contact: Jennifer Lytton (212) 473-3400

Portland, OR

Meetings not set at press time.

Contact: Grace Lee-Park (503) 284-5085

Washington, DC:

When: May 15, June 15

Where: Call to confirm location

Contact: Sowande Tichawonna (202) 232-0353

MOVING FORWARD...

Members are organizing AIVF salons all over the country! For contact information, or to talk to us about starting something in your area, call Pam Calvert (212) 473-3400.

MAILING LIST DISCOUNT

In the interest of keeping independents connected and increasing our membership benefits package, we now are making the AIVF mailing list available to members at a discount. The list has about 5,000 names (it's growing every month), and can be sorted geographically. About half the names are in the NY Metro area, and the rest are distributed pretty evenly across the country, with concentrations where you'd expect (Los Angeles, San Francisco, Boston, Chicago, etc.). You may get the names on peel-off or cheshire labels, or on diskette; however, no matter what the format, rentals are for a one-time use only.

The minimum charge for running a list is \$35 to members (nonmembers \$50); the NY Metro list is \$125 and the whole list is \$250 (nonmembers price:

\$150/\$300). We reserve the right to review your mailing and refuse rental at our discretion. For more information, call Judah Friedlander (212) 473-3400.

Reminder: if you do not wish to have your name included on lists that go out as rentals, let us know.

TRADE DISCOUNT UPDATES

More new discounts! To make it easier for out-of-town members to take advantage of our New York programs and services, we have negotiated discounts with two hotels:

Budget/Funky: The Carlton Arms, 160 E. 25th St., (212) 679-0680. Rates from \$40-\$74 (reg. \$44-\$78), further discounts for 7-day stay.

Moderate: Gramercy Park Hotel, 2 Lexington Ave., (212) 475-4320; Contact: Tom O'Brien, Sales Manager. \$95 dbl/\$125 twin (reg. \$125/\$140) on a space-available basis; you must call the Sales Manager to get the discounted rate.

There are also two new vendors offering trade discounts: In Los Angeles, Rick Caine Productions offers members a 15-percent discount on Sony Betacam and SP equipment and crew rentals as well as duplication and off-line editing. Rick Caine Productions, 856 1/2 N. Occidental Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90026; Contact: Rick Caine or Debbie Melnyk (213) 413-3222 tel/fax; (818) 801-3684 pager.

In New York, Post Digital offers a whopping 40-percent discount on non-linear, off-line editing, duplication, and animation production. Post Digital, 236 W. 27th St., 3rd fl., NY, NY 10001; contact: Michael Helman, (212) 366-5353.

LIBRARY USER ALERT

We have a small budget to begin upgrading our resource library and we want to be sure we're getting the books and periodicals that you need the most.

If you have been using the library and have noticed books, magazines, or other materials that need to be purchased or updated, write down your wish list and send it to us, attn: Pam Calvert. It can be specific (title, author, publisher), or general ("books on grant writing"). If you include your name and address, we'll let you know when we've added your request to the library.

Also: look for "new in the library" announcements in *The Independent* starting this summer.

P.O.V. ON-LINE

Boldly going where no public television series had gone before, The American Documentary, Inc.—producer of the groundbreaking PBS series *P.O.V.*—struck out into cyberspace in the summer of 1994, launching "P.O.V. Online," an unprecedented experiment in using computer networking technology to enable viewer discussion of broadcast material.

FIVF is now distributing *The P.O.V. Online Experiment*, a report of their experiences in the new communications media. As independents look for new ways to reach and interact with their audiences, in-depth reports such as this will be increasingly valuable in seeing what works, what doesn't, and how to take up where the P.O.V. experiment left off.

Reports are \$5 (incl. postage and handling), and may be ordered from FIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th Fl., NYC 10012.

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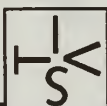
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PUBLIC TELEVISION FOR A CHANGE



JUMPIN' JUPITER

To the editor:

I'm sure your article about HBO/Cinemax's new completion fund ["Taking It to the (Cine) Max," April 1995] pricked up the ears of every maker of feature-length documentaries, but it omitted the most exciting and newsworthy aspect of the story for producers—that it signals an increasingly synergetic relationship between a pay cable telecast and theatrical distribution.

Cinemax approached filmmaker Michel Negroponte and me to premiere *Jupiter's Wife* as the first documentary on their *Vanguard Cinema* series at a time when our focus was fixed on getting the film out theatrically. We had spent enormous energy and expense making a transfer from S-VHS video to 35mm film because of our utter conviction in *Jupiter's Wife's* potential as a movie (a faith rewarded by subsequent major festival prizes at Sundance and Santa Barbara). We wanted it seen on the big screen.

Cinemax noted that its total audience is relatively small and that the success of films like *Red Rock West*, *The Last Seduction*, and *Hearts of Darkness* has proven that a short pay cable window does not significantly damage the theatrical possibilities for a quality independent film. Moreover, for documentaries, which tend to be handled by smaller and more financially-strapped distributors, the publicity and reviews generated by the broadcast could give a potent launch to any theatrical release. Cinemax offered a healthy licensing fee in return for a six-week broadcast window, after which we would be free to do any theatrical bookings.

The idea that *Jupiter's Wife*, which was produced so unconventionally, could have an equally unconventional distribution was immensely appealing (as was the notion of paying off the remaining bills), and we made the deal. The challenge now is to continue to position *Jupiter's Wife* as a theatrical film and not allow it to be pigeonholed as a television documentary (particularly since it originated on video). Happily, the folks at HBO and Cinemax genuinely love the film and understand that a strong theatrical showing reflects well on them and lends great prestige to the series. They know other documentary producers they may wish to lure to *Vanguard Cinema* will surely be looking to see how well their premiere presentation (and guinea pig) ultimately fares.

Jupiter's Wife will have its broadcast premiere on Cinemax on June 21 and will be distributed theatrically by Artistic License Films beginning six weeks later. Time will tell if we can all have our cake and eat it, too, but HBO and Cinemax deserve real credit regardless for providing an all-too rare opportunity for documentary filmmakers.

Doug Block, coproducer
Jupiter's Wife

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Experimental media's inroads in the home video market are few and far between, especially relative to the hopes and hype that flourished in the early eighties. But inroads have been made.

George Fifi looks at the successes to date, as well as the obstacles to distribution in video stores.



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COVER: Part griot, part riot grrrl, singer Mónica NdegéOcello is one of the musicians featured in the *Moments: Red Hot + Cool*, the fifth CD/video project of the Red Hot Organization. In this issue, Catherine Saalfeld looks at recent queer videos on AIDS that have penetrated the mainstream television. Photo: Dana Lixenberg; courtesy Red Hot Organization

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The picture from you can actually see the



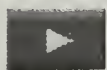
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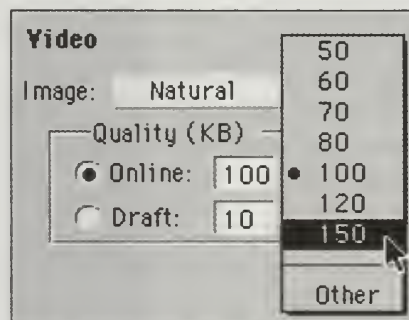
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EDITED BY MICHELE SHAPIRO

FRAMING THE FUTURE

F

rameline, the country's largest gay and lesbian media organization, has suspended acquisitions and, for now, will focus on exhibition.

The general attitude of cultural belt-tightening has made it a tough year for independent media artists. But circumstances—some more foreseeable than others—made it an even

tougher one for Frameline, the San Francisco-based distribution company that hosts the world's largest and oldest lesbian and gay film festival.

Last June, the 19-year-old San Francisco International Lesbian and Gay Film Festival drew a record number of attendees—more than 55,000 tickets were sold, up from 51,600 in 1993. Despite its success, however, this year the fest is scaling back both in titles and venues. Yet the greatest changes—those in the structure of its parent organization—won't be visible at the festival itself.

In December 1994, financial constraints caused the nonprofit organization to lay off three employees: Nancy Fishman, distribution director; Jenni Olson, archive and resource center director/festival codirector (she stepped down from the latter position voluntarily last year); and Vic De La Rosa, sponsorship manager. In addition, Frameline's resource center was shut down and new acquisitions were cut off indefinitely (although distribution of its current titles will continue). The measures were taken to save what Frameline's board of directors considers the essential mission of the organization: to exhibit lesbian and gay videos and films through its festival.

The festival's four-person, full-time staff will remain intact, as will the organization's Completion Fund—postproduction money that Frameline awards to gay and lesbian filmmakers. The internal restructuring was designed to counteract what executive director Tess Martin refers to as "an emergency situation" caused by expanding the organization without receiving adequate funds to match the expansion.

In 1993, Frameline had moved into spacious

Fest traffic outside San Francisco's landmark Castro Theater. The Frameline-organized International Lesbian and Gay Film Festival is drawing record numbers, but Frameline has had to scale back its growth spurt. Courtesy Frameline



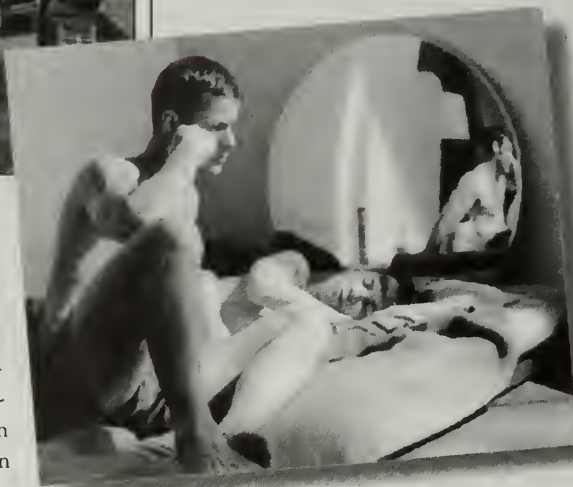
new digs at the Film Arts Foundation building, where NAATA and Cine Acción are housed, and expanded its space in May 1994. From the larger space, Frameline ran a festival organization and a year-round film/video distribution company as well as an archive and resource center. Then Martin came on board. "I was everybody's reality check," she says. Martin had left the post of director of production and training programs at the American Film Institute to become Frameline's executive director on November 1. She took over for former director Jill Jacobs, who left in late 1993. Peter Fowler stepped down from Frameline's board to direct the organization in the

interim, then returned to the board when Martin was hired.

It was Martin's second day on the job when, as she tells it, someone from the distribution department placed a stack of filmmakers' royalties exceeding \$25,000 on her desk. The organization had far less in the bank, Martin recalls. Soon after, Frameline's board of directors had an emergency meeting to discuss downsizing. Then, she recalls, "The dreadful day came."

On January 14, the organization was dealt its most severe blow when Mark Finch, the well-loved, internationally respected, 33-year-old artistic director of both Frameline and its festival, took his life by jumping from the Golden Gate Bridge. On February 5, Finch's body was recovered seven miles off the California coast. He had worked at Frameline, on and off, since 1990—first as distribution manager and later, after a brief period as head of distribution for the British Film Institute, as artistic director and the force behind Frameline's new Gay and Lesbian Film Market.

The market, designed to create a place for filmmakers to hook up with financial backers, distributors, and other industry people, was to



Todd Verow's *Frisk*, based on the Dennis Cooper novel, will receive its world premiere this month on the closing night of the 19th annual SFILGF this month.

Courtesy Frameline

be held in conjunction with the 1995 festival, but was put on hold after Finch's death. "The market

was Mark's creation, and only he could have made it the success we all hoped it would be," Martin told the community in a press release.

Despite the tragedy, Frameline has managed to generate some excitement around this year's festival, which will be held June 9 through 18 and dedicated to Finch. Exhibition screenings—handled by new programming director Boone Nguyen—will include the premiere of Mel Chionglo's *Midnight Dancers*, which was smuggled out of the Philippines for its U.S. premiere, an opening night showing of Maria Maggenti's *The Incredible Adventures of Two Girls in Love*, and a program including more lesbian feature films than in past years.

"It's a fragile time for Frameline," says filmmaker and AIVF board member Barbara Hammer, who has exhibited work at the festival for all of its 19 years. Besides Finch's tragic death, Hammer has personal reasons for concern about the organization's current state. Frameline now distributes her film *Nitrate Kisses*, which until recently was handled by Strand Releasing. In addition, two compilations of her video work are on Frameline's rental list.

Martin saw to it that filmmakers, including Hammer, were contacted about money owed them. They were told they would receive royalty payments after the festival. But the event—usually a money-maker for the organization—is having problems of its own.

Last year, Frameline's festival drew record crowds, but fell short of expectations financially. "While we had a higher attendance, we also had more programs, more empty seats, and less revenue," Martin explains. Many attribute the loss in dollars to the anniversary celebration of the Stonewall riots, held in New York City, which drew gay and lesbian entertainment resources away from film. Wellington Love, director of the New Festival, a lesbian/gay film event held in New York, agrees. "Sponsorship budgets, advertising budgets, and people's personal budgets were over-committed," he observes.

While other companies distribute gay and lesbian titles, including the New York-based Women Make Movies and First Run Features, no one else has the community support or the history of Frameline, due in no small part to the organization's ongoing support of exhibition through its annual festival. As Debra Zimmerman, executive director of Women Make Movies and AIVF board member, says, "[Frameline's future] is of great concern, because it is a critically important organization." Clearly, exhibition is one feature that Frameline can't afford to give up. But, as Martin points out, the NEA provides no funding for exhibition, and fundraising is increasingly difficult.

At a time when arts advocates have come out in droves to show their support for the National Endowments and public broadcasting, Hammer

suggests that the community band together in support of the organization that has provided them with an ongoing distribution and exhibition vehicle over the years. "I think filmmakers, video artists, and the larger gay, lesbian, and transgender communities should rally behind Frameline," she says. "If there is a problem—how big is it? What can we do to help? The most important thing is that Frameline trusts it can talk to the community."

SUSAN GERHARD

Susan Gerhard is a staff writer/film critic for the San Francisco Bay Guardian.

PBS Restructures, Lawson Resigns

When PBS named Jennifer Lawson as its programming "czarina" in 1989, for the first time in history public television's major program decisions and most of its programming money landed in the hands of a single person. But in January 1995, when a corporate reorganization effectively demoted Lawson from the position of chief programming executive to executive vice president of the National Program Service (NPS), she promptly resigned. By March 10, her Alexandria, Virginia-based office was empty.

Until PBS announced the corporate restructuring that reduced Lawson's power and created a management layer above her, she made the final decisions about most of PBS' national programming funding and schedule.

Reaction to Lawson's departure was mixed among independent producers. Her tenure received low grades from documentarian and AIVF board member Robert Richter. "The interest at PBS in independently produced programs that deal with contemporary issues has been minimized and diminished to such a significant degree that one wonders how people who do this kind of thing can survive," he told *The Independent*. "I hope her successor will have a more enlightened view regarding the importance of independent productions as a part of public television."

Marc Weiss, co-executive producer of the PBS documentary series, *P.O.V.*, conversely praised Lawson. "It's important for independent producers to know that although there were many differences, Jennifer was solid in her support of *P.O.V.* in the face of tremendous attacks from both outside and inside the system," he said. Weiss added that Lawson's job was thankless, and that her successor is likely to be less sympathetic to independent programming on the PBS national schedule than Lawson, a former independent producer. "Jennifer is a consummate politician, but there were certain principles she tried to hold to," he observed.

Lawson was popular among public TV station managers and programmers, and her sudden departure has accelerated worry about the direc-

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Jennifer Lawson, former PBS programming head. Lawson resigned in January amid attempts by the reorganized corporation to reduce her powers.

Photo: Chad Wyatt, courtesy PBS

tion in which PBS' programming is headed. Lawson has been credited with helping usher in such successes as *The Civil War*. But other programs, like the quiz show *Think Twice* and Steven Banks' aborted comedy series, failed to find audience or critical support. The public broadcasting trade newspaper *Current* reported that PBS president Ervin Duggan told station programmers shortly after the reorganization he would like to see more programs with "nostalgia, romance, and melody," and that PBS should build "partnerships" with Lincoln Center and other arts institutions. Weiss said station programmers have joked about PBS becoming PVS—the Plain Vanilla Service. "What's up for grabs now is what's been the traditional mission of public TV as a place where new and potentially controversial ideas can find a home," he commented.

At press time, PBS spokesman Rob Deigh said PBS has made no decisions about hiring an executive to lead the restructured program services, nor about replacing Lawson.

PBS chief operating officer Bob Ottenhoff will head the programming division until PBS hires a full-time programmer. Kathy Quatrone is serving as acting head of the National Program Service. The top three programming positions at PBS are therefore without full-time staffers, as Lawson's top aide John Grant quit over the reorganization as well.

The program service's major in-house overhaul comes at a time when Duggan is consolidating control over the politically besieged organization. Duggan's restructuring organizes all PBS activities

under three new divisions—program services, learning services, and system services.

The programming services division will include a pared down PBS National Program Service and a new syndication department designed for programs less popular among public TV station programmers.

Duggan has also created a new umbrella division for educational programming and services, called PBS Learning Ventures. Former FCC attorney John Hollar will head the division responsible for K-12 and adult learning programs, PBS On-line, and Horizons Cable Network activities. The division also will oversee marketing and distribution of videos and interactive media.

As for what the restructuring could mean to independents,

the creation of a tighter national schedule and two new syndication services will likely make it even more difficult to get work on the national PBS feed.

Internal changes at PBS may have little impact on the service if the Republican Congress has its way and eventually eliminates government funding for public television. In March, the House of Representatives approved a \$17.2 billion rescission bill that would reduce Corporation for Public Broadcasting funding, currently \$285.6 million, by 15 and 30 percent in fiscal years 1996 and 1997, respectively—two steps toward a plan that many House Republicans hope will eliminate federal funding for public broadcasting by FY1998. In late March, the Senate Appropriations Committee restored a total of \$84 million to the FY96 and FY97 CPB budgets that had previously been cut by the House. The committee recommended that CPB's budget be frozen for the next two years at the FY95 level of \$285 million. CPB had previously received an appropriation of \$312 million for FY96 and \$315 million for FY97. In early April, the full Senate voted to approve the Appropriations Committee's recommendation. At press time, a conference committee composed of House and Senate members had yet to meet to mull over the rescission package, which will include cuts to a number of programs, including public broadcasting. CPB funds both public television and radio stations, and public broadcasting officials have yet to decide whether the funding cuts will be made uniformly in all activities or whether some projects will be eliminated.

But public broadcasters hold out the hope that they can forestall elimination of federal funding. At press time, America's Public Television Stations (APTS), the public station lobbying group, intended to submit a plan to the House and Senate on April 30 calling for a five-year transition process that would culminate in drastically reduced but still surviving federal support.

Both the House and Senate are under pressure to deliver government spending cuts promised during last fall's congressional campaign, and House Speaker Newt Gingrich and Senator Larry Pressler (R-SD), who oversees CPB's authorization committee, have said they intend to proceed with plans to eliminate funding and privatize public broadcasting's institutions.

JACK ROBERTIELLO

Jack Robertiello is a freelance journalist who has covered public broadcasting for *Current*.

A Schilling Experience: Vienna's Film Financing Fund

The story goes something like this: An emerging independent filmmaker is in Vienna for the screening of his second feature film at the Viennale Film Festival. While overseas, he hears of a new organization, the Vienna Film Financing Fund (WFF), that funds films shot in Vienna. Turns out the filmmaker has a European-locale script that he's been shopping around Germany to no avail. Also turns out that the head of the WFF is co-director of the Viennale and a fan of American independent filmmakers. After much discussion and some serious sightseeing, the filmmaker rewrites his script, this time using Vienna as its setting. Fast forward a couple of years to January 1995. Richard Linklater's *Before Sunrise* opens the Sundance Film Festival and shows up in competition at the Berlin Film Festival—without a Berlin locale. On hand to toast the film's success is Wolfgang Ainberger, film commissioner of WFF, which provided 12 percent of the film's \$4-million budget.

WFF was born in 1992, when the newly fashionable countries of Eastern Europe were attracting international production, due in no small measure to their relatively cheap prices. Next door, in the Austrian capital of Vienna, plans were underway to reopen the old, modernized Rosenhugal Studios, and the city of Vienna was looking for ways to ensure the revitalization of the local film industry and attract quality foreign films. For several years, a modest fund for film production had been distributing three million Austrian schillings (about \$300,000) annually. With a huge leap of faith, the city established the WFF. Three years, \$20 million, and 35 films later, WFF is reaping the dividends of its investment.

Ainberger, fresh off the plane from the

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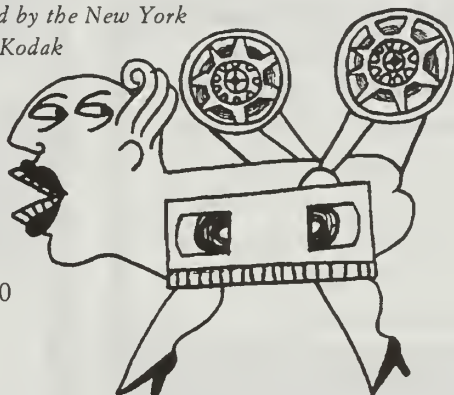


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Sundance and Berlin Festivals, spoke with *The Independent*, explaining how the WFF works. WFF subsidizes films with conditionally repayable loans; if and when the film becomes profitable, it repays WFF, and the money is recycled into other films. To be funded by the WFF, a film must meet three criteria: an experienced Viennese producer or co-producer, the "Vienna effect," and the "Vienna reference." The first is self-explanatory; the other two require some elaboration.

The "Vienna effect" is purely an economic matter, defined as "the total expenditure in Vienna during the course of a film production." That total cost must equal at least 150 percent of the funds given by WFF. In most cases however, the "Vienna effect" is closer to 300 or 400 percent. The exact amount is spelled out in the filmmaker's contract with WFF. The filmmaker receives WFF funds only after the agreed-upon percentage of money has already been spent in Vienna and its studios. WFF's contribution to the film's budget is generally limited to a maximum of 20 percent. In other words, the filmmaker needs to arrive in Vienna with money (and perhaps a line of credit) already in place.

The "Vienna reference," an amorphous and not completely binding point, applies to the film's Viennese cultural, social, and tourist aspects, such as the film's recognizable use of Vienna. Both *Before Sunrise* and *Mesmer*, a WFF-sponsored film about the Viennese doctor who was a precursor of psychiatry, are prime examples of the "Vienna reference" on film. Other WFF-approved projects such as *Catherine the Great* and *The Three Musketeers* used Vienna and its environs as a substitute for other locations—the Russian Steppes and Paris. However, the international importance of these films and the large sums of money they

Spontaneously combusted lovers Jesse and Céline (Ethan Hawke and Julie Delpy) in Richard Linklater's *Before Sunrise*. Linklater went locale-shopping in Germany before being enticed by Vienna's Film Financing Fund, which supports films shot in that city. Courtesy Castle Rock Entertainment



a lot of good productions—is that sometimes they have less money than their subsidized European counterparts. (Some of them get lazy.) I like the struggle of the independents for their productions, for everything,” he says.

Not all of WFF's experiences have been as serendipitous as *Before Sunrise*. While working on his latest film, *Albrecht's Wing*, Jon Jost suddenly stopped production and left Vienna for Portugal. Ainberger views the situation with equanimity. “We're working hard to bring him back, but he didn't feel like going on, and you know he's very, very independent. So we have to wait... I think with independents, you have to give them time when there are problems, and with directors, also, you have to help them.”

Before hopeful directors with outstretched palms book the next charter flight to Vienna, they should obtain WFF's information booklet available by contacting them at Stiftgasse 6, A-1070 Vienna, Austria; tel.: 011-43-1-526-5088. fax: 011-43-1-526-5088-20.

CATHY MEILS

Cathy Meils writes about arts and culture in Central and Eastern Europe.

ON THE RECORD

“IT'S SUCH AN INSULT FOR AMATEURS TO TELL FILMMAKERS WHAT TO DO. THEY DON'T KNOW A THING. THEY KNOW A LITTLE BIT ABOUT THE MARKETING, THE BACKBITING.... THEY KNOW SOME AGENTS IN TOWN, THEY KNOW SOME ACTORS, THEY KNOW SOME EXECUTIVES—AND THEY DELUDE THEMSELVES THAT THAT'S SOME KIND OF EQUATION FOR UNDERSTANDING FILMMAKING.”

—Mike Figgis, director (*Stormy Monday*, *Leaving Las Vegas*) on working within the Hollywood studio system, *Sight and Sound*, March 1995.

Congratulations to Roberto Quezada Dardon, editor of *Indie: The Independent Filmmaker's Electronic Newsletter*, who submitted this month's quote. He will receive a one-year individual membership to AIVE if you come across a brilliant, funny, insightful, or enlightening quote, send it to Michele Shapiro (see masthead for address/fax/e-mail; no calls please). Include name of person quoted, publication & date.



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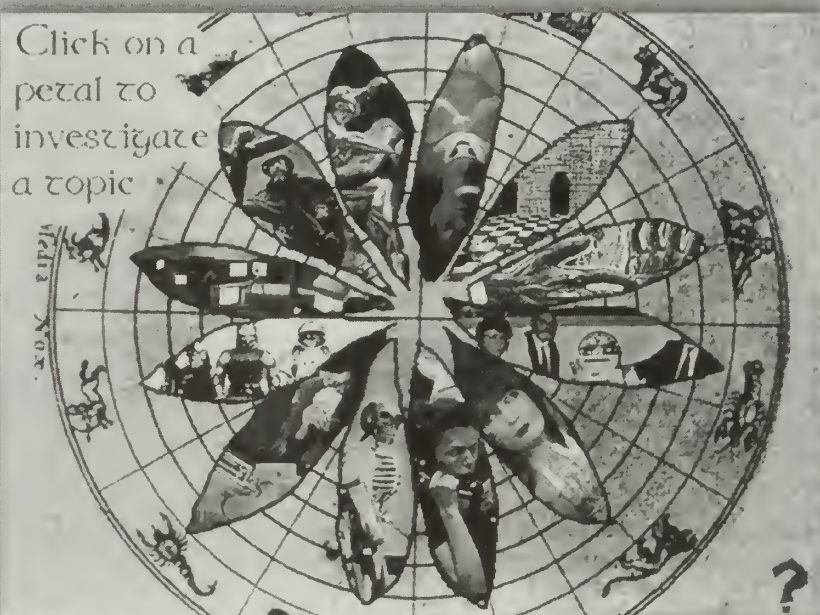
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DAISY, DAISY

Christine Tamblyn's "She Loves It, She Loves It Not:
Women and Technology"

PULL MY DAISY: Each petal has a different topic—Memory, Control, Representation, Violence, The Other, etc.—and leads to a "performance loop" where everything from movie clips to robot guides can be found. Courtesy Christine Tamblyn



Dear Reader:

Quenching thirst is probably the most primal human need. Initially it is fulfilled at the mother's breast. When I was about five, my mother began sending me to the corner of the street we lived on to buy milk from a square machine painted to resemble a giant milk carton. This is how I learned that machines could substitute for mothers.

Regards, Christine

Dimming the lights and slipping *She Loves It, She Loves It Not: Women and Technology* into the CD-ROM drive, you sit back comfortably in your chair. A virtual version of the CD-ROM's author, Christine Tamblyn, appears on your computer screen. An assistant professor in the Art Department of Florida International University, Tamblyn is direct and to the point about what she wants—to interact with you. The topic is women's relation to technology. And the computer interface, appropriately, is one based on "female learning proclivities and female culture," according to

Tamblyn, rather than the hierarchical model derived from military uses of the computer.

You enter Tamblyn's interactive world by choosing one of 12 petals on a virtual daisy which serves as the program's main menu. Each petal has a different topic—Memory, Control, Representation, Violence, The Other, etc.—and leads to a "performance loop" where there are theoretical ruminations, Quicktime movie clips, "found" images from comic books and magazine ads, personal letters to the reader, and factoids uttered by a robot guide.

The visual aesthetic is deliberately handmade, and the circular interface is user-friendly. This structure, the number 12, and the recurrent zodiac imagery are reference to the natural cycles. "I was influenced by feminist thinkers like Donna Haraway, who posit the organization of time as regenerative—returning to the center—as opposed to a more violent and apocalyptic way of thinking," explains Tamblyn.

"I think of this medium as an expanded form of

writing, [which] can be augmented with images and sounds," she says. "There is not the same form of censorship that goes along with academic writing... Because this is self-published, I can include a personal voice, autobiographical and essay writing, and theory."

At the most personal end are Tamblyn's *Dear Reader* letters, which appear in her own handwriting on virtual stationary. "I like the irony involved in the personal letters," she observes. Each letter "appears authentic, but isn't because it's digitized." In addition, "I like the intimacy of the CD-ROM format, as opposed to the movie theater. It's as though I'm making personal contact with the reader," says Tamblyn.

And she does get intimate. She lets you know about her own fears of technology—how, for instance, as a student in art school she "learned to compensate by devising elaborate methods for bypassing technical skills." Or why she has always found being a cyborg more appealing than being a goddess. ("I've never felt particularly connected to either the earth or my own body," she writes.)

Eventually Tamblyn overcame her fear of technology and encourages others to do the same. "It is important to encourage independent producers to make their own CD-ROMs," Tamblyn asserts. "It is not as expensive as people might think." *She Loves It, She Loves It Not*, programmed using MacroMedia Director, cost \$1,200 for the first 200 copies. Tamblyn also hired two assistants (Marjorie Franklin and Paul Tompkins) during the year the CD-ROM was in production.

"We are at an important turning point regarding access to the media for independent producers," Tamblyn insists. "It's a political issue, like access to the tools for video producers or the independent press."

In Tamblyn's view, it is important that women become technologically fluent. In the Power loop, she asserts that "One of the reasons women are in an economically powerless position is because they possess a fraction of the world's technological expertise." So what's the solution? "Developing more material that is more familiar to the way girls learn; redesigning the interface on computers; and through advocacy and education."

Tamblyn, 43, came to the interactive medium

from a background in video and performance art. Even at this early stage of her work in interactive media, Tamblin has attracted a far larger audience for her CD-ROM than her videos. Part of her success comes from winning a prize from Voyager, and a threefold distribution strategy targeting museums and galleries, educational institutions, and individual CD-ROM users.

"What I like about the interactive CD-ROM medium is its potential for breaking down the hierarchical role that traditional art forms create," says Tamblin, who became disillusioned with the "authoritarian power that comes with being an artist." But the CD-ROM format is just a way-station to her ideal art medium—one that is more than interactive and has yet to be invented. "This hypothetical technology would be a sort of time-delayed ESP, one that is more interactive, allowing me to plant my own visions in other people's heads."

But, until that technology becomes available, Tamblin can be found working on her next CD-ROM, *Mistaken Identities*, which merges the fact and fiction around the lives of 12 women who are icons of feminism, including Marie Curie, Catherine the Great, and Frida Kahlo.

She Loves It is available from: Christine Tamblin, Visual Arts Dept., DM 382, Florida International University, University Park Campus, Miami, FL 33199; ctamblin@mercury.fsu.edu.

JULIA MELTZER

Julia Meltzer is actively pursuing learning about interactive media. She also teaches, makes videos, and occasionally writes for The Independent.

Going SXSW

In the opening scene of *Slacker*, a young man (director Richard Linklater) observes aloud from the back of a taxi cab that, at the very moment he entered the cab and committed to an action, simultaneous possibilities existed and equally valid choices could have been made. Linklater sees a Zen absence of desire in the face of infinite possibility in the college-town ennui of Austin. Or perhaps he was on his way to the second annual South by Southwest (SXSW) Multimedia Festival. With a slacker's sense of direction and a Texan passion to party, the nine-year-old SXSW Music Festival and Conference has wandered into the fields of film and multimedia to explore some simultaneous possibilities.

Long a technical center, Austin has a rapidly growing reputation for its multimedia production companies aided by the Governor's Office of Music, Film, Television and Multimedia. This year 800 people signed up for the three-day Multimedia Festival, held from March 14 to 16 at the Hyatt Regency. The event offered a

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P.O.V. On-Line

Boldly going where no public television series had gone before, The American Documentary, Inc.—producer of the groundbreaking PBS series *P.O.V.*—struck out into cyberspace in the summer of 1994, launching “*P.O.V. Online*,” an unprecedented experiment in using computer networking technology to enable viewer discussion of broadcast material.

FIVF is now distributing *The P.O.V. Online Experiment*, a report of their experiences in the new communications media. As independents look for new ways to reach and interact with their audiences, in-depth reports such as this will be increasingly valuable in seeing what works, what doesn't, and how to take up where the *P.O.V.* experiment left off.

Reports are \$5 (incl. postage & handling) and may be ordered from FIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th Fl., NYC 10012.

“Multimedia Playroom” (exhibition hall), a tour of local multimedia production houses, mentoring sessions, plus panels and speakers on such topics as marketing and financing strategies, game development, production tips and updates, music, virtual reality, and the Internet.

Much of the audience at this event was into games; many seemed to come from the computer field and graphic design; most were male. The women present were more prevalent on panels dealing with educational applications of multimedia or in the Playroom demonstrating projects.

paradigms, he wondered aloud about how many books he had bought last year because they contained some blank pages to write on? This was viewed by panelists as just another technical bug to work out, and it left me wondering who might seriously be working on conceptual problems in this field. (One local, University of Texas assistant professor Sandy Stone, was regrettably absent from the event. Stone is a leading scholar who has thoughtfully investigated concepts of identity and gender in cyberspace.)

The keynote addresses were given by Richard

Garriott, vice president of the Austin-based game and interactive film company Origin Systems, and musician Todd Rundgren. Rundgren survived the sixties in full command of his mind and, as it turns out, has been working on a musical analog to interactivity. His “No World Order” project, currently in production, is a user-alterable CD-ROM. When discussing music and technology, Rundgren warned of getting too distracted by the tools on your way to creating a work.

Rundgren's admission that he had always been interested in computers but got into

playing guitar in order to attract girls contrasted with Garriott's personal tale of a driven adolescent in pursuit of cyberknowledge. There was a frisson in the room as Garriott, who still has all his drawings and notes from childhood, related pixel by pixel his trajectory from compulsive prodigy to wealthy, successful game czar. The two men defined paths of art and technology that weren't quite meeting at this conference.

Back in 1970, in the days media theorist Gene Youngblood called the “Paleocybernetic Age,” he saw in the confluence of art and technology the potential for an “expanded cinema,” a multisensory, interactive cinema that would be the “beginning of creative living for all mankind.” This cosmic consciousness hasn't come to pass exactly as Youngblood predicted; as “*Harvester*” indicates, we don't seem headed for the higher plane.

And despite marketing platitudes about viewer choice, much of today's interactive media is rigidly pre-programmed. Origin Systems' elaborate branching structure, for instance, offers an illusion of player choice in the plot line, but actually delivers a highly controlled experience. The narrative path is pre-determined to the Nth degree (go down any corridor you wish; we know exactly where you are).

A few people at SXSW were exploring different



Independent producer Andrew Dillon turned his documentary film footage into an interactive educational CD-ROM *Learning Journey: China*. Children ages 8-15 can wander streets, visit temples, and engage the local populace.

The subject matter of the sophisticated interactive games often featured graphic mayhem, such as arms being ripped off and used to club the amputee, or a *Twin Peaks*-ish game “*Harvester*” with a bloody, glistening spinal cord attached to a mutilated head. Adam Foshco, a film and video producer for Origin Systems and SXSW panelist, said his company's target audience is 14 to 26-year-old males, which he suggested needed to change in order to capture a larger market. I believe this would require a major shift in the fantasies of the current producers or an influx of new producers with radically different visions.

There was an influx, or at least a trickle, of screenwriters, sci fi writers, and other artists and entrepreneurs venturing into this world from outside or from the concurrent SXSW festivals. (About 50 people bought “Platinum Passes,” which permitted access to all three prongs—film, music, and multimedia.) Like many of the writers there, I was most interested in the questions about the future of narrative in the age of interactivity. During the panels, some writers questioned the inevitability of interactive narrative as it's now conceived. Even Chipp Walters, president and CEO of the Austin-based company Human Code, asked what kind of interactivity we want. During a panel on future trends and

possibilities. Marcos Novak, who directs the Advanced Design Research program in the Architecture Department of the University of Texas, Austin, envisions a "habitable cinema," a seamless virtual world that responds to the individual's presence. By way of illustration, he told me of the "Intelligent Room" at M.I.T.'s Media Lab, where you can interact with a virtual dog, the space itself reacting to your presence. Novak, who proposes "liquid architecture, disembodied dance, and navigatable music," showed some startling excerpts from his *Dancing with the Virtual Dervish: Worlds in Progress*, a CD-ROM that allows the "navigator" to explore impossible worlds.

Andrew Dillon, now a graduate student in the University of Texas' Radio/Television/Film department, is a self-taught multimedia producer. He had initially intended to make a video documentary of his journey from the Middle East through eastern Europe and China. Now he's using video footage in his own CD-ROM, *Learning Journey: China*. Combining the footage with animation, Dillon is shaping the most thoughtful and intriguing educational CD-ROM I saw at the festival. I met him at his booth in the Playroom, where he hoped to meet a publisher for his work. According to Dillon, there is really little hope for independents to distribute this sort of work on their own. CD-ROM catalogs charge a lot to list titles, and publishers are looking for writers, videographers, and filmmakers to work on company projects. They aren't hunting for product.

Nonetheless, numerous panelists offered tips about getting started in the multimedia business. On hardware: Get the biggest and best units you can afford, keeping in mind that in 36 months you can set your hardware on the curb and no one will stoop to cart it off. On cross platform authoring: Work with both Mac and PC from the start to avoid a buggy mess down the road. And on the future: It won't be anything like any of us can now imagine.

For information about SXSW '96, contact: Jo Rae Di Menno, SXSW, Box 4999, Austin, TX 78765; (512) 467-7979; fax: 451-0754; e-mail: 72662.2465@compuserve.com.; SXSW Forum on Compuserve = GO SXSW.

Nancy Bless is a writer, photographer, and curator. She is the Gallery Director of Women & Their Work in Austin, Texas.

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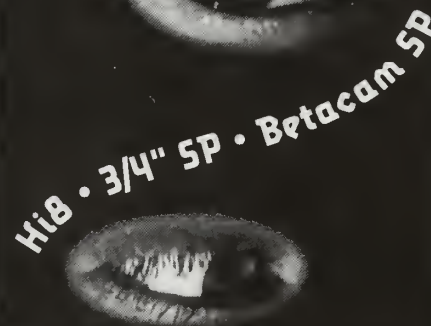
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THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOME

MEDIA ART IN VIDEO STORES

BY GEORGE
FIFIELD

Somehow in the last 18 years, experimental film and video art missed out on one of the great social revolutions of American culture: home video.

In 1977, George Atkinson opened the first video rental store, Video Station, in Santa Monica, California. He reasoned that people who had bought consumer VCRs might be

reluctant to purchase a huge videotape collection and would rather rent tapes. The creation of the first video rental stores and the subsequent explosion of video titles has become the model of how many of us experience media, outside of television and movie theaters.

Yet there has been a glaring absence in video stores of the experimental media arts. Foreign films from Méliès to Fassbinder, American independents, Japanese animation, and cheesy 'B' movies have all thrived as stores needed tapes and the public looked for stranger and more exotic fare. But video art, except for a handful of titles, never made it in front of this receptive audience.

Broadcast and cable TV still need to attract relatively large audiences to make a program economically viable. This is very hard to accomplish for experimental work, which is often without narrative or characters. But in a rental setting, an experimental piece can be seen by many more people over a period of time than will ever experience it in festivals, college courses, or even a single late-night broadcast.

A few art titles have made it into this awesome arena because commercial video distributors were willing to include some experimental work among other, more accessible titles offered to rental stores. Mystic Fire Video, based in Manhattan, has been very successful distributing a broad range of New Age tapes with a spiritual and healing focus. In the process, they have made thousands of people aware of the work of Maya Deren, Kenneth Anger's "Magick Lantern Cycle" films, and Stan Brakhage's major experimental work *Dog Star Man* through their "Classics of American Avant Garde Film" series.

Sheldon Rochlin, founder and president of Mystic Fire, explains, "We started carrying these titles in 1986 because I'm an underground filmmaker myself, and I know how important they are." Some titles, like Harry Smith's abstract films, were chosen because Rochlin knew the filmmaker personally. But when Mystic Fire started to carry the successful Joseph Campbell/Bill Moyers tapes *The Power of Myth*, "It took up most of our time," Rochlin recalls. As a result, the experimental film section has remained unchanged for years. Today, however, they are exploring increasing the number of art titles in their catalog. "We are looking at a compilation of video art and more classics of experimental film," Rochlin says.

Another commercial distributor, the Voyager Company in New York City, launched their Criterion collection of videos in 1984. Voyager now sells high quality laserdiscs and CD-ROMs to

the home market, but still has a number of titles available on VHS in video stores. In many stores throughout the eighties, the only certifiable works by a video artist were Voyager's Bill Viola tapes, *I Do Not Know What I Am Like* and a compilation of other pieces, *Selected Works*. Voyager also sold an excellent three-volume collection, *Persistence of Vision*, which included work by video artists Ilene Segalove, William Wegman, and the Ant Farm group, among others. Now Voyager is concentrating on laserdiscs, selling directly to collectors, and are not expanding their VHS offerings. They are, however, adding more experimental work to the laserdisc series with three volumes of the work



of contemporary video artist Gary Hill.

But commercial distributors like Mystic Fire and Voyager are the exception to the rule. Most experimental film and video art is distributed by nonprofit organizations, and these days most nonprofit independent media distributors are not even looking at the video rental market. Kate Horsfield, director of the Video Data Bank in Chicago, says, "I don't think anybody is really concentrating on it right now. What everybody's looking at is, how do we go to the next level of technology, how do we get digitized? Maybe we need to be working together to fight to get some kind of independent channel within the new technologies." Video Data Bank is also working to expand their collection into libraries and K-12 schools.

Some distributors regarded video stores with

outright hostility. Jennifer Bender, assistant director of Art Com in San Francisco, says, "Video stores are the last people we send catalogs. It's because they aren't willing to pay a fair price. They want them for \$29.95 with a discount. They are going to make a lot of money on tapes. They should buy them for a hundred dollars."

But others are more interested. Stephen Vitiello, distribution director of Electronic Arts Intermix (EAI) in New York, says, "It comes up theoretically at almost every conference: Wouldn't it be great, instead of selling one Nam June Paik tape at two hundred dollars, to sell a hundred copies at twenty dollars?" But for EAI, a nonprofit organization with a full-time staff of three, it simply can't be done. "It would require an ability to duplicate a

large number [of tapes] and really actively be on the phone talking to whatever video chain and explaining why [they should acquire] a Nam June Paik tape," Vitiello explains. "But here we only have one dubbing set-up, and we're paying an editor an hourly fee, to the extent that making each copy costs us twenty bucks."

Milos Stehlik, director of Facets Video in Chicago, argues for helping some video stores. "[Mass media] is a very scary prospect. Increasingly, you face this mainstream, enormous, consumer driven, largely corporate-controlled means of delivery, whether it's via TV, video on demand, or satellite dish. Whatever it is, independent video art and experimental art is pretty much excluded...So I think it's an important time for us to realize that [nonprofit distributors] have to go back and try to help those who are helping us, basically those video store owners who do take a chance."

Facets Video has been the leader in offering experimental media to rental stores. A nonprofit arts organization, Facets Multimedia has a theater and performance space, as well as its own large and very complete video store. It is a



major distributor of foreign, silent, documentary, and experimental film

and video for the home market. Their video catalog is encyclopedic, containing over 20,000 titles. Its section on Avant Garde Cinema and Video Art alone includes almost 200 titles. The Facets Video label puts out two Woody Vasulka tapes, six tapes of James Broughton, and four tapes of Barbara Hammer, all important media artists, all of which are selling well.

Facets understands the need to educate video store owners. "Our approach has been to work with video stores by trying to bring them along, and nurture and educate them, which is a long-term process," says Stehlik. Kathy Tauber, co-owner of Vidiots, an alternative video store in Santa Monica, acknowledges, "They've made it a lot easier for us." Facets regularly produces flyers on different subjects, like "The Best Foreign Films under \$30" or "Japanese Animation." These bimonthly circulars have helped guide owners into genres they might have otherwise avoided for fear of making mistakes.

Horsfield says, "I'm not unhappy with the idea of working with people like Facets. They perform a kind of linkage role. They've become sort of expert in terms of dealing with the stores... They sold a lot of Video Against AIDS for us." But she adds, "The problem is they buy from you, so you don't have any reports; you have no idea who's buying from them."

Another interesting story of media art and video stores comes from National Video Resources. NVR is a nonprofit agency created by the Rockefeller Foundation to address some of these problems. They have funded studies

and programs to increase the public's awareness of independently produced media. An early NVR-funded program was the "Home Screenings" video rental project at the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis. Bruce Jenkins, media arts curator at the Walker, described it as "a very interesting and useful experiment." In 1991, the Walker bought about 250 tapes, ranging from European art film to video art compilations, and made them available for home rental to museum members. From July to November in 1991, the program had 1,000 rentals.

The program lasted two years. It ended, Jenkins said, "when we realized how unlike a video store we were. We were not the most convenient video shop. Eventually we wore down our best customers, to the extent that they rented through all the things that they wanted to see, and we weren't in the position to upgrade our collection." Tanya Blinich, associate director of NVR, adds that at first the Walker "thought it was a success, but then their rentals dropped off, much to their disappointment but to my great glee, because in fact, the video stores in their neighborhood had picked up most of the titles." The program educated the local stores, including a local Blockbuster Video, about what alternative titles people might rent. It phased out when it became a victim of its own success.

What the experiences of Facets and the Walker Art Center show is the need to educate rental stores. Video stores don't know what constitutes the exceptional and the accessible or which titles will appeal to their customers. But clearly many would like to learn.

From the independent producer's perspective, the stumbling block is the retail outlet. But that's not always the case. For a variety of reasons, independent media distributors and the artists themselves have often thrown up obstacles in their own paths. Those stores that have tried to develop a video art collection have run into an availability problem. Much important work is not available because of unresolved conflicts between the distributors and artists about selling media art to rental stores.

In 1992, I was asked to curate an experimental film and video section for one of the Videosmith stores, which is one of New England's larger video rental chains. For me, this was a dream come true. I planned to bring in the work of about 100 national and local experimental film and videos artists. For Videosmith, it helped present the image of the store as the place where intelligent film and video cognoscenti would go. (In a subsequent

Anything good on the shelf? There is at Boston's Videosmith (left), Vidiots in Santa Monica; Northampton's Pleasant St. Theater; and Kim's in New York (right), where experimental film and video art have found a home. Photos courtesy outlets; Kim's photo by Patricia Thomson

Fire sale: Avant-garde classics from Mystic Fire Video's catalog include Maya Deren's *Choreography for Camera* (top), and *Inauguration of the Pleasure Dome*, featuring Anaïs Nin as the goddess Astarte (center), by Kenneth Anger (left). Courtesy Mystic Fire Video



Boston Globe article, actress Liv Ullman mentioned, "One of the things I love about Boston is Videosmith. I love to roam about the video store.")

But the results were not what I had hoped for. Videosmith was not able to purchase any tapes by video art pioneers like Nam June Paik, William Wegman, Bill Seaman, Peter Campos, and many others, because their works were not available from their distributors for sale to video rental stores. They could only be purchased by institutions for hundreds of dollars per tape or less expensively by collectors for home use.

The few tapes from Voyager and Mystic Fire were easily available. Video Data Bank had two video series available for sale to rental stores: the excellent collection of video art with a feminist perspective, "What Does She Want", and their "Video Against AIDS" series. But they had not gotten contractual permission from any of their other artists to sell to the home rental market. Drift Distribution in New York was able to sell Videosmith a number of excellent titles, including Tony Cokes and Donald Trammel's

Fade to Black and Steve Fagin's *The Machine that Kills Bad People*. But these came with plain black jackets and hence had no appeal to browsers. Many of the best tapes in the collection finally came directly from New England media artists themselves, like Joan Braderman's *Joan Sees Stars* and Saul Levine's experimental films.

VIDEO STORES CAN BE DIVIDED INTO THREE groups. The biggest category is the Middle American large chain store. Leading the pack is Blockbuster Video with 2,800 outlets. The next largest, West Coast Video, boasts 520 stores. Most big chains have between 30 and 70 stores. These chains represent the "hit driven" market. They are dependent on getting every penny out of every square foot and rent mostly new releases. They sell only the most accessible titles.

More open to experimental video and film are the other two categories: the medium-size regional chains and the individual alternative stores. Although the regional chains may have up to 20 outlets, one or two of their stores will be known as a "destination store," one with a

huge collection known by discriminating customers as the place to browse for obscure titles, like the Videosmith store in Brookline, Massachusetts, or Kim's Video on St. Marks Place in Manhattan (one of three Kim's stores). These are most likely to be found in urban areas with well-educated populations.

Single stores owned by committed friends of the experimental scene are scattered over the country in most urban and college centers. Vidiots is a well known alternative store, founded by Kathy Tauber and Pat Polinger in 1985. Other excellent independent stores include Pleasant Street Video in Northampton, Massachusetts, Alphaville Video in Albuquerque, New Mexico, and Movies Worth Seeing in Atlanta.

A number of store owners and distributors have estimated that there are probably as many as 500 individually owned and 'destination' stores where experimental film and video art might be accepted as rentals or for sale. Unfortunately there is no list or association of smaller alternative stores. "We wish there were one," says Tauber of Vidiots. "We really don't

get to talk to anyone else."

The needs of these stores are different from the large chains. Rosemary Ruley Atkins, executive vice president of Videosmith, explains, "Video art doesn't provide revenue, and it takes up real estate, but it is important to have in ways that revenue doesn't justify. It says to people, 'You can get your movies on these shelves.'"

For artists, the issue of revenue is probably the least understood part of all of this. Ruley Atkins explains that a store might buy 15 to 20 copies of a huge, well advertised movie like *The Mask* or *Forrest Gump* at \$65 per cassette. Each tape is expected to rent five times a week. At three dollars per rental, these tapes can pay for themselves in four and a half weeks. For an art film or older title, on the other hand, the retailer might buy just one copy at \$29.95. That tape will be rented on average twice a month, taking five months just to pay for itself. Video art and experimental film titles are even slower. Some titles never go out. "The average for independents is once a month, maybe 15 times a year," Tauber says.

"It's unrealistic to think they are going to pay a hundred dollars for some unknown independent experimental video art piece, for which they're going to have a hard time getting their money back," says Facet's Stehlik. "On the other hand, you can look at it in a positive way. Home video...reaches people. If a tape has sold 300 copies and 30 people rented it in each place, that's a population of nearly 10,000 people that have been exposed. That's a lot more than would have happened at three different festivals with an audience of 50 people each."

Certainly, the way in which video art is made creates some of its problems. As video artist Nam June Paik points out, "The problem is with copyright infringement. In *Global Groove* I used music I don't own the copyright to... It can be rented only to museums and colleges, and even then we sometimes get in trouble."

Many distributors, like Electronic Arts Intermix (EAI) and Video Data Bank, had not originally thought to ask for video store resale rights in their contracts with artists. When the subject came up later, the nonprofits had to go back and renegotiate individually with each artist. The artists were often reluctant to assign these rights, not knowing what the worth of the rights were. And the distributors were leery of undercutting institutional rentals. As Horsfield says, "If every title in Video Data Bank was \$29.95, we would go out of business."

In addition, many contracts with alternative distributors were ambiguous. Video artist Dara

Birnbaum recalls, "[Contracts] came from not-for-profits for whom resources were minimal; they had few lawyers. [By contrast,] PBS contracts went on for many pages." Subsequently when activities occurred that were not clearly spelled out, like resale to catalog or rental stores, troubles arose. Birnbaum tells how she assumed Art Metropole would limit their video art series sales to institutions, schools, and individuals. Then she found out, "Art Metropole was selling my tapes to Art Com, [which then resold them in their catalog]. I was amazed at [both of them] and expressed myself strongly."

Even if distributors directly ask for home video rights, many artists balk. They are concerned about unauthorized duplication and worry that rental will hurt their chance at other known income venues, especially rental (at much higher prices) by schools and art institutions for one-time showings. A videotape is sold to a rental store only once, so no more money is forthcoming, no matter how many times it goes out. EAI's Vitiello explains, "There's this fear always in people's minds that if it is available in video stores, every teacher in town will go there instead of renting it from us." But as he also points out, "Every artist I know who teaches already has their own pirated collection from television or from [institutional] rentals." And Rochlin says, "Chances are that a filmmaker will make a lot more money letting [their titles] go out then restricting them." Stehlik adds, "How do you expect somebody to buy your tape unless they have rental access to it, so they know what it is?"

And what about the artists? How do they feel about marketing to video stores? Nam June Paik, the grandfather of American video art, says, "The reason I'm reluctant is because of Electronic Arts Intermix. I want to give them an exclusive. They are like my office. We have been talking, but they are nonprofit. They have no person who can do mass marketing. If they can't, I can't. It's a chicken and egg thing." He continues, "I don't expect much money from these things. Video art is interesting, but to recoup cost [we need] more creative ideas. I say to young artists that the one who can come up with a way to recoup costs is the important one."

Birnbaum, whose *Damnation of Faust* trilogy has been exhibited all over the world, says she still has a lot of questions about the home video market, but feels that "No one is really making money. I'd rather see [the distribution], I think. The intent is getting the work out, and I'd

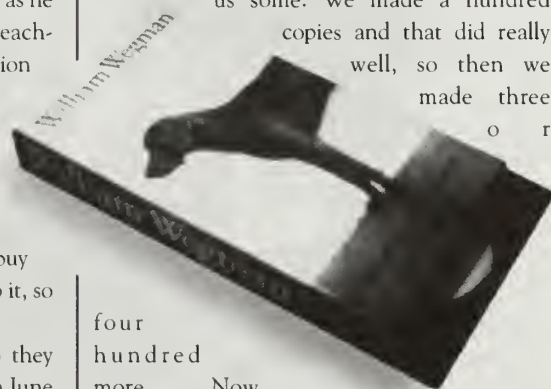
rather see people taking the risk." And George Kuchar, the wildly original, low-budget, experimental filmmaker, goes even further: "As long as the picture gets out. A lot of it is not commercial. When I used to get my movies transferred in the lab, I found out that the people there would make copies and take it home. I was so flattered when I found out they thought enough of the piece to take it home and share it with their friends."

William Wegman has gone further than most. Wegman is best known for his humorous large Polaroid photographs of Weimaraner dogs, but his early video shorts are hysterically funny and inventive. Christine Burgin of the William Wegman Studios explains that EAI and Art Metropole weren't doing enough. "They were really great, but it was hard for people to find the tapes through them." So last year Wegman put together a company called Picture Ray and made a 25-minute compilation tape of early work from the seventies and a 1986 piece called *Dog Baseball*. Burgin says, "It cost us a little money to start, but we've basically broken even."

We had the cover designed and that cost us some. We made a hundred copies and that did really well, so then we made three
four hundred more. Now Signals [the WGBH-TV mail order catalogue] just ordered a thousand." Wegman's sister in Maine, Pam Wegman, is taking the orders and doing the shipping.

No artist is going to get rich selling experimental film or video art to video stores either for rental or resale. Though hopefully they will cover the cost of tape dupes, cover design, and mailings, only a few will recoup more than a small percentage of their production costs. But if the purpose is to get the work seen, no venue besides broadcast can offer more visibility over the long haul. And the video stores? "They need to be supported. They've got to be helped along. We should have been doing this years ago," says Milos Stehlik.

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Weimaraners? Wei not? Dog-obsessed artist William Wegman's early short videos (above right) are available on VHS in a successful compilation/distribution effort he orchestrated last year. Courtesy Picture Ray

AIDS

Media in the Mainstream

BY CATHERINE SAALFIELD



Inspired by Janice Jirau (far L with niece) and other HIV+ women in *Heart of the Matter*, Wilma Montanez (inset L) said to *P.O.V.*, "I want to tell you that my parents watched the program and were extremely touched." Photo of Jirau Judy Linn, all photos courtesy P.O.V.

After seeing *Silverlake Life* (above) on *P.O.V.*, Kaylee Davis (inset L) sent a video letter stating that parents should "take our children by the hands.. and watch *Silverlake Life*—and then have the conviction to discuss what they need to know to protect themselves [from AIDS]."

Initially abrupt and piercing, HIV has established itself for the long term. What many recognized before as a health care crisis is now being addressed as a chronic but manageable disease, as integral to our existence as food, death, and lifestyle magazines.

AIDS media has simultaneously matured, through constant challenge and endurance as HIV/AIDS takes its toll, year after year. Today's diverse work heralds the adulthood of AIDS media production in its profound articulations, its passionate—and useful—representations, and its resourceful approaches to distribution, especially through broadcast television.

By now, the sub-genre of AIDS media is saturated with biographical,

instructional, and experimental work. Independent producers have created short and long documentaries, dramatic narratives, conventional training tapes, autobiographical ruminations, activist camcorder propaganda, video art, and every combination of the above. Hundreds of tapes about HIV/AIDS overflow the shelves in churches and schools, are played repeatedly in hospitals and community-based organizations, and get tangled up in VCRs in support group meetings and correctional facilities.

Today's prevention and inspirational HIV/AIDS materials

have to be carefully wrought and brilliantly packaged to cut through the apathy of a public inundated with disease-of-the-month tragedies, a public wearing a Teflon coating of familiarity and denial. The result has been twofold: First, medi makers are employing more personal and culturally-based forms to reach people with their messages of survival and hope. Some of the more exciting recent work is *Fast Trip, Long Drop* (1994) by Gregg Bordowitz; *Heart of the Matter* (1993) by Gini Reticker and Amber Hollibaugh; *Non, Je Ne Regrette Rien* (1992) by Marlon Riggs; and *Silverlake Life: The View From Here* (1993) by Peter Friedman. Other recent important work that breaks with AIDS media conventions of the last decade includes *Zero Patience* (John Greyson, 1993); *One Foot on a Banana Peel, the Other Foot in the Grave* (Juan Botas, 1993); and *Living Proof* (Kermit Cole, 1993).

Second, medi makers are using ever more innovative distribution initiatives, both grassroots and mainstream. The endurance of the AIDS cri-

sis has primed potential audiences, particularly those who have yet to be reached by accurate and culturally appropriate materials. Furthermore, new audiences and outlets have created distinct content demands on productions about HIV/AIDS. Ultimately, however, the real issue is getting work out to viewers. Commercial and public TV, although clearly the most promising venues of all in terms of their reach, have been the least receptive to independent productions. This makes them truly nontraditional, unexpected, and poignant outlets. But inroads have been made over the past several years. In fact, one of the main features distinguishing independently produced AIDS media in the nineties is its visibility on TV, coupled with concerted efforts to mobilize viewers to tune in.

On public television, the documentary series *P.O.V.* started its run of programs addressing community-based HIV issues in 1988 with Tina DiFelicianantonio's *Living with AIDS*, followed in 1991 with Peter Adair's *Absolutely Positive*, *Silverlake Life* in 1993, and most recently, *Heart of the Matter* in 1994. The Red Hot Organization, which creates innovative, music-based AIDS awareness media like *Red Hot + Blue* (1990) and *Stolen Moments: Red Hot + Cool* (1994), has fought for and obtained airtime on MTV, ABC, and public television. Over the years, independent anthology series on local public television stations have programmed many works, including *Her Giveaway* (Mona Smith, 1988), *AIDS in the Barrio* (Frances Negron and Peter Biella, 1989), and *DHPG Mon Amour* (Carl Michael George, 1989). The ITVS-funded *Positive: Life with HIV*, a four-hour series which was completed last winter, is aiming for an airdate on public television in December 1995.

P

ERHAPS THE MOST WIDELY SEEN INDEPENDENT PRODUCTION about AIDS was *P.O.V.*'s broadcast of *Silverlake Life: The View from Here*. When experimental filmmaker Tom Joslin learned that he and his lover of 22 years, Mark Massi, were both infected with HIV, Joslin decided to document the progress of the disease with a camcorder. Joslin's former student, documentarian Peter Friedman, completed the work after Joslin

and Massi both died. Personal, loving, angry, and at times confrontational, this devastatingly real chronicle encourages a more immediate understanding of AIDS. The mundaneness of everyday life captured with a camcorder is reframed in the face of imminent death, where separation from society only magnifies the pain. Neither voyeuristic nor cathartic, this vivid portrait offers a profound opportunity to witness life with AIDS, the horror of death, and the tender love these two men share.

After Kaylee Davis viewed *Silverlake Life* on *P.O.V.*, she mailed in a video response letter (as requested during *P.O.V.*'s credit sequence). Standing against the picturesque outskirts of Salt Lake City, she told the public television audience, "Thanks to Tom, we were allowed to peer into the windows of his home and his soul. Because of [Tom and Mark], we are able to be educated in our homes. I think the best way we can do that is to take our children by the hands to the living room and sit down with them and watch *Silverlake Life*—and then have the conviction to discuss with our children what they need to know to protect themselves." Due to the stigma of AIDS, people are more comfortable viewing related media in their homes. In this case, television allowed people—in private—to absorb information through someone's very candid expression and to open themselves to the shock of the unspoken, the unbelievable, the nearly unbearable.

A written response to *P.O.V.* from "S.A." reads, "I'm 14 years old... At first when I saw the listing in *TV Guide* I thought, 'Two gay guys dying

from AIDS. I'm not going to watch that!' But I decided to give it a try. It really opened my eyes. Before, I thought people with AIDS caused their own fate, that you were stupid and just getting what you deserved, but I was insensitive and ignorant. Now, I know *no one* should have to suffer that terribly. Another thing was Mark's great love for Tom, that was the most touching thing I've ever seen. Just seeing this movie has changed my views of AIDS and homosexuals."

Viewers are compelled by the legitimization of television, the authority it demands for itself. As Ellen Schneider, co-executive producer of *P.O.V.*, says, "How you hear and where you hear [information] is very important." Sitting in your own living room, bedroom, or kitchen and receiving information about AIDS literally brings it home. Schneider adds, "It's something to pay attention to. It becomes all of our responsibility."

Another effective AIDS documentary that aired on *P.O.V.* to an overwhelmingly positive response is *Heart of the Matter*, which presents an intimate look at the life of African American AIDS activist Janice Jirau through her many compelling public appearances, her personal and spiritual development, her support groups, her determination and her contagious appetite for life. Intercut with several other women from diverse backgrounds infected with HIV, the tape explores the traps women face as they confront gender-based double standards, racial myths and racism, and the prevalent desire to please others. And *Heart of the Matter* is the only film to date that deals realistically with the response to the AIDS crisis of the African American church, one of the most important social institutions in the black community.

"What works about *Heart of the Matter* is skillful craft, incredible 'casting,' and a relationship between the subjects of the film and the filmmakers," says Schneider. "There's a vigilance on the part of the filmmakers to uncover the personal stakes and implications behind these women telling their story so publicly." Co-director Amber Hollibaugh has been an AIDS activist for years. She produced *The Second Epidemic* (1987) when working at the NYC Human Rights Commission and currently directs the Lesbian AIDS Project at Gay Men's Health Crisis. When they started out, she and co-director Gini Reticker set about challenging misconceptions about women with HIV by situating themselves in the trenches.

Again, viewers were moved to respond. Wilma Montanez, for instance, wrote from New York City about her HIV-positive sister: "I want to tell you that my parents watched the program and were extremely touched. They were amazed how parallel their daughter's life was to this person on TV. When media clicks into people's real lives, that's the stuff that we all wait for and rejoice at." Schneider notes that, "By seeing and hearing someone not unlike oneself talking about their feelings and needs, it becomes okay for anyone to feel those things."

P.O.V. has used this revelation to develop aggressive outreach campaigns to public television programmers and viewers alike, such as that for *Heart of the Matter* spearheaded by Belinda Rochelle, a Boston-based AIDS educator. Distinct from the networks' use of *TV Guide* and on-air promotion, *P.O.V.* gets scrappy behind the scenes beforehand. National advisors and regional coordinators arrange pre-screenings and panel discussions, create media attention, spark debate and generally mobilize communities around the particular concerns of a given program. Melanie Piersol, audience development coordinator for *P.O.V.*, recognizes that facilitated group discussions of a pre-screening allow viewers to "talk about things for the first time" in a comfortable and safe environment. And then, of course, they can spread the word about the broadcast to their colleagues and families.

P.O.V. was recently awarded Ford Foundation funding to assess the

impact of their outreach strategies. For now, the influence of these shows can be measured by individual video/letter responses as well as organizational reactions. For example, in St. Louis, following a public pre-broadcast screening of *Heart of the Matter* and a panel discussion organized by the regional coordinator, attendees founded a Women and AIDS Task Force on the spot. The program was a catalyst for people to make connections, build coalitions, and engage policy makers.

"Primetime TV is very precious," says Schneider. "We've recognized that in our seven years on the air. So when we have something that clearly has a kind of potential, we want to make it available to those [grass-roots] networks and structures that need good media about their issues. This can become one component in existing education campaigns and efforts—one of many, but a far reaching one."

Not only do the uninitiated sit up and take notice of what television brings them after work, but those affected by HIV take comfort in being represented. As Piersol says, "The fact that it's going to be on television is an incredible hook for [affected viewers] who realize, 'This is our issue and it's going to be on TV so everyone can watch.'"

Community organizers and affected individuals want to get accurate information to their families, co-workers, and friends; they need good media on their issues and a venue viewers trust. Public television offers this by mainstreaming independent work—though stingily on a system-wide level. Through their outreach efforts, *P.O.V.* has fostered a kind of give and take among HIV communities, producers, and programmers. Schneider points out that it's unnecessary for *P.O.V.* to "create a new infrastructure, but rather it should fit into one of the many that already exist." Building on the traditional uses of AIDS media in education, counseling, outreach, and organizing, *P.O.V.* has offered accurate and inspiring programs to communities nationwide with promising results. "We placed in their hands a vehicle, and they had the key," muses Schneider.

WITHOUT A REGULAR TIME SLOT OR EVEN A REGULAR NETWORK, THE RED Hot Organization has managed to make significant inroads into broadcast television using music-oriented programs to carry AIDS information. In 1989, John Carlin and Leigh Black founded the Red Hot Organization to raise AIDS funds and awareness. Originally they wanted to work with the

THESE BANDS TOGETHER. THEY'VE MADE GREAT MUSIC. YOU'VE SPENT SOME HARD-EARNED CASH, A SIGNIFICANT PERCENTAGE OF WHICH WILL GO TOWARD FIGHTING AIDS THROUGH PRIMARY CARE AND PREVENTION EDUCATION. NOW YOU HAVE TO THINK ABOUT YOUR SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY AND YOUR ROLE IN THE FACE OF AN UNPRECEDENTED HEALTH CRISIS THAT, WHETHER YOU KNOW IT OR NOT, HAS CHANGED THE WAY WE ALL LIVE OUR LIVES. PERHAPS THE MOST CRITICAL THING TO REMEMBER ABOUT THIS MYSTERIOUS AND MISERABLE DISEASE IS THAT THERE ARE A FEW SIMPLE THINGS YOU CAN DO TO PREVENT YOURSELF FROM GETTING INFECTED (OR INFECTING OTHERS): PRACTICE SAFER SEX AND DON'T SHARE NEEDLES. WHAT IS SAFER SEX? THE MOST BASIC THING TO REMEMBER IS THAT WEARING A NEW LATEX CONDOM EVERY TIME YOU HAVE VAGINAL OR ANAL INTERCOURSE IS

Wording the spread: the "hard part" from the *No Alternative* CD jacket. Courtesy Red Hot Organization

music of Cole Porter and "to romance with intelligence." That, Carlin says, "is the catch phrase for the Age of AIDS. Romantic sophistication is appropriate for people struggling with that threat." Subsequently they moved into country, alternative rock, hip hop, and other musical genres, tailoring their message to each subgroup.

"All entertainment has a message. All of it is ideological... but ours is consciously crafted to be positive," says Carlin, executive director of the Red Hot Organization. "Pop music is about selling sex to teenagers. We do the corrective. Red Hot is about trying to encourage people to continue to enjoy sex and love and romance and not be [discouraged] by the shadow of HIV but to be intelligent about it. And that's why [Red Hot's] a benign form of propaganda."

The formation of Red Hot occurred after Carlin realized at the end of the eighties that, "The idea of a live concert benefit [i.e. Live AID] was tired out." Recognizing that AIDS awareness must take a form "that gets absorbed into mass culture," he thought of creating a CD recording/TV show package to disseminate AIDS prevention education. The CDs would serve as the money-making component, and the video would provide the awareness.

The organization's first project, *Red Hot + Blue* (1990), paired up musicians with filmmakers to generate the video equivalent of many performers appearing together in one evening. U2, for example, signed onto

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 TO DEAL WITH IT, RESPONSIBLY, HONESTLY AND
 COMPASSIONATELY. THAT'S THE HARD PART
 AND THERE'S NO ALTERNATIVE. -JOHN CARLIN

Carlin confirms. "I'm not saying this as marketing person, but I make projects whose creativity comes out of a particular culture and is directed back into that culture in terms of audience and donations." Red Hot addresses AIDS in a sociological way, raising money and awareness within the same targeted communities. Carlin calls this the Trojan Horse approach—to "create something that sneaks into the culture," presumably without being recognized for what it is.

A Trojan Horse was clearly needed in the case of *Red Hot + Country* (1994). "The most grown-up of all our shows," says Carlin, *Country* looks like a classic concert film. It also has the dubious distinction of being the only Red Hot show that includes a red ribbon among its images. Symbolically, the ribbon is "too soft and easy" for Carlin's taste, but in the country music community, he claims, "It's a very volatile thing, very political." Although wearing the lapel accessory has become an entertainment industry standard, the Country Music Association Awards show has still not made it an integral part of their ceremony, although they adopted the environmentally conscious green

the project because of the prospect of working with Wim Wenders, and k.d. lang teamed up with Percy Adlon. Singers like Annie Lennox, the Neville Brothers, David Byrne, and Sinéad O'Connor worked with directors like Jonathan Demme, Neil Jordan, and Jim Jarmusch. Since then, the Red Hot Organization has targeted other demographics, namely club kids, rappers, and the country music world. In 1992 they created *Red Hot + Dance*, geared to a younger audience and featuring the likes of Madonna and George Michael. *No Alternative* (1993), a coproduction with MTV, drew together new alternative rock bands. *Stolen Moments: Red Hot + Cool* (1994), funded in part by the Independent Television Service (ITVS), is a hip-hoppy jazz compilation which aired on public TV last November. In addition to concert footage, *Stolen Moments* features hip-hop and jazz artists, scholar Cornel West, and people with HIV/AIDS from communities of color talking about their concerns and experiences. Homophobia, the role of the church in the black community, drug addiction as a response to oppression, and the politics of AIDS care are among the topics addressed.

All of Red Hot's projects are made specifically for TV (and home video), in contrast to other independent AIDS films and videos, for which broadcast is highly improbable, albeit desirable. But like all effective AIDS media, Red Hot aims at particular target audiences. These, in turn, determine the content and style of the projects. "Audience is key,"

ribbons in 1992. In the country music world, red ribbons mean something different than the diamond-studded New York-Los Angeles milieu, and as a producer, Carlin tries to be sensitive to those differences.

In order to achieve such culturally sensitive community standards, Carlin turns Red Hot's projects over to filmmakers who represent the various markets. The filmmakers and musicians devise their own codes of seduction that will best address complex issues like teen sexual behavior within their respective communities. "We don't tell them what to say," Carlin explains. "It's organic; they're reflecting their own audience. It's different from the 'responsible TV model' where you go out and research."

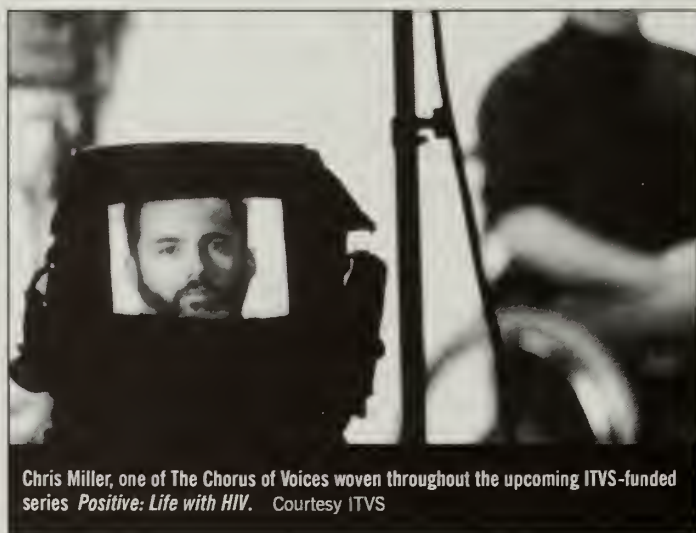
Using popular culture, Red Hot strives to talk about the sensitive and taboo issue of safer sex "in a way that normalizes it, so a discussion of it isn't embarrassing." Although Carlin recognizes the difficulty of such a task, he identifies that as "the motivating factor that keeps us going." The Red Hot folks want their work to inform and provoke, "not just sell soap."

The fact that Red Hot shows have been seen in 40 countries around the world and have aired on several networks and local stations, including TNN (The Nashville Network), bodes well for HIV education. Surely, the Red Hot Organization can boast of getting more culturally-appropriate information into the nation's homes, hearts, and minds than

Red Hot and Ubiquitous: Four of the Red Hot Organization's "benign propaganda" CD/video projects. Courtesy Red Hot Organization



the U.S. government. But as Carlin recognizes, the impact of AIDS media can be evaluated in terms of the working relationships producers have with the communities represented in their work. As he implores, "Let's [all] move from saturating venues to saturating communities."



Chris Miller, one of The Chorus of Voices woven throughout the upcoming ITVS-funded series *Positive: Life with HIV*. Courtesy ITVS

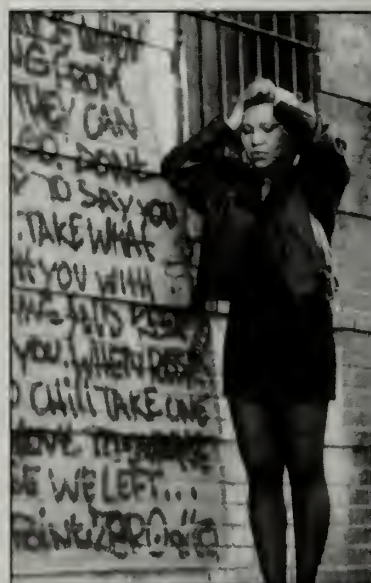
The AIDS crisis is much worse now than five years ago, at the peak of its public visibility. Much of the early leadership has died or burned out. But as AIDS activists and educators keep reminding us, this disease, now the leading cause of death for Americans between the ages of 25 and 45, is preventable. With their consistent, insightful, and entertaining work, the Red Hot Organization has offered this society more than individual hope, they've brought together a creative community eager to contribute in the fight against AIDS. Having recorded over 80 tracks and worked with over 200 artists in four years, Carlin glows, "My love for and faith in musicians has grown through this process. In some ways now, artists have become the moral voice of our society, where no one trusts businessmen or politicians; artists have become role models."

IN 1993, THE INDEPENDENT TELEVISION SERVICE (ITVS) helped boost the effort when they fund-

ed the four-hour series *Positive: Life with HIV* (of which this writer was senior associate producer/segment producer). Scheduled for broadcast in December 1995, this unique programming was made by, for, and about the HIV community and is coupled with a grassroots outreach campaign this year. Produced by AIDS Films, *Positive* addresses myriad issues of treatment, care, planning, death and dying, activism and advocacy, disclosure and identity, drug use, community, and sexuality. The eight to 10 segments that make up each show range from mini-documentary to cynical animation, from interpretive dance to musical comedy, with a chorus of voices woven throughout. Enlisting the input of producers from around the country as well as an impressive advisory board of advocates, health care providers, and HIV positive people, the series brings together an incredible diversity of individuals, communities, and concerns.

Like the other tapes and films discussed here, *Positive: Life with HIV* shows everyday people living regular lives. Not necessarily solution driven, all of these works present realistic images that are still too rarely viewed on television or anywhere else. With new venues, new audiences, and new makers coming onto the scene, short and long documentaries and every other type of AIDS media will continue to proliferate until the end of the crisis. Whether broadcasters will air the most effective work remains to be seen. What is certain is that the best pieces will always emerge from the represented communities, and that they will reflect an element of hope.

Catherine Saalfeld is currently directing a production workshop for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered youth at the Hetrick-Martin Institute in New York City.



Marina Alvarez performing the video poem "I Have Survived," by Irina de la Cruz. From *Positive: Life with HIV*.

Photo LeRoy Chen, courtesy ITVS

BRINGING QUEER FILMS TO A THEATRE NEAR YOU A Who's Who of Distributors



BY ERIN BLACKWELL

A

s every gay and lesbian knows, movies—like life—have homoerotic content. Subversive readings of “straight” films are a time-honored pastime in a community that understands the economics behind Hollywood’s hypocritical homophobia.

The new queer cinema was assumed to have changed all that. When *Swoon*, *The Living End*, and *The Hours and Times* premiered at Sundance in the early ninties, movies appeared to have finally broken down the closet door. Then came “lesbian chic” and the widespread distribution of *Claire of the Moon* and *Go Fish*. Like Columbus “discovering” America, larger companies like Goldwyn, Miramax, Fine Line, and Orion Classics discovered audiences for alternative-lifestyle films.

The following are profiles of the smaller independent distributors, early pioneers and recent converts, who demonstrate a marked commitment toward queer film in an increasingly competitive marketplace.

ARTISTIC LICENSE

470 Park Ave South, 9th fl, NY, NY 10016; (212) 251-8718

Sande Zeig declared herself president of the new Artistic License last year, after three years as a freelance booker of such films as *Forbidden Love*, *Thank God I'm A Lesbian*, *Together Alone* and *The Hours and Times*. “Gay and lesbian film has basically been my life,” says Zeig, an ex-programmer of the New York Lesbian and Gay Film Festival, ex-employee of First Run Features, and sometime filmmaker. “I’ve probably distributed more lesbian and gay films than any other single individual.”

Dealing exclusively with theatrical releases, Artistic License has a minimal prints and advertising (p&a) budget. “I’m probably the lowest of the lowest-budget distributors. I depend on grassroots marketing and go into calendar houses like the Film Forum.” Zeig buys exclusive rights for only two years, feeling there’s no point hanging onto films once the initial booking period is over. Recent acquisitions include Ann Turner’s *Dallas Doll*; Michel Negroponte’s *Jupiter’s Wife*; Mark Rappaport’s *Rock Hudson’s Home Movies*; Jenni Olson’s *Homo Promos* and *Neo-Homo Promos*; Alice Stone’s *She Lives To Ride*; and Zeig’s own *Central Park*.

Optimistic about the mainstreaming of queer film, Zeig reasons, “We don’t want to stay marginalized. We want to cross over to bigger distributors. We want to get larger audiences. It’s what we’ve been laying the groundwork for. So we’re successful. We have to figure out a way to maintain our own success



Sande Zeig, head of the new distribution company Artistic License Films.
Photo: Dixie Sheridan, courtesy Artistic License

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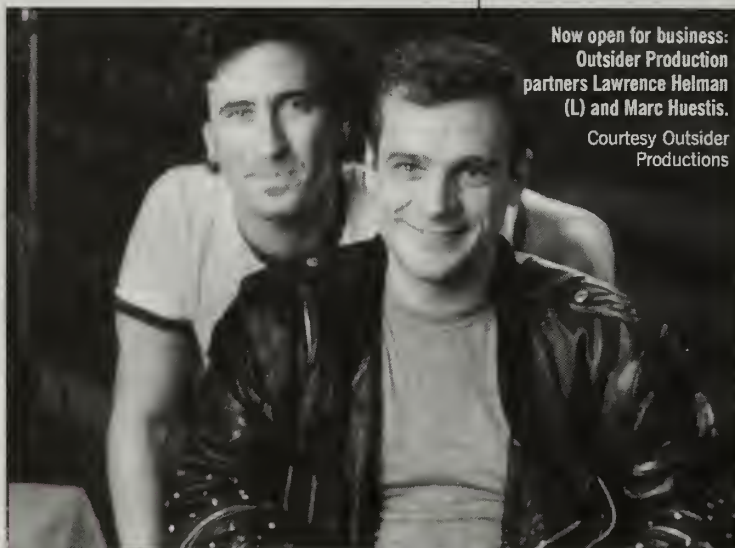
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within it. I'm happy. When Maria Maggenti gets Fine Line Features to pick up her film [*The Incredible Adventures of Two Girls in Love*], it means

153 Waverly Pl., New York, New York 10014; (212) 243-0600

"Some independent filmmakers who were having a hard time getting their films picked up by distributors formed a cooperative and hired someone to book their films around the country," says vice president Marc Mauceri, explaining First Run Features' formation in 1979. "The spirit is still here today, though we've become a more normal company. Our filmmakers have a lot of input on the marketing



somebody else can, too—hopefully."

DRIFT DISTRIBUTION

611 Broadway #742, NY, NY 10012; (212) 254-4118

"Some of the best work is gay and lesbian, and I've acquired it based on that criterion more than anything else," says Chris Hoover, director of Drift Distribution, the nonprofit agency he formed in 1990 with executive director Brian Goldberg. A staff of three handles 250 titles, of which 40 percent are gay and lesbian. About 20 titles are added annually. Most are shorts, with an increasing number of features. (Last year Hoover and Goldberg launched Drift Releasing along with partners David Barker and Toby Vann, a for-profit operation that handles feature films in the theatrical marketplace. To date, Drift Releasing has not picked up any gay titles.)

With universities and festivals comprising its main market, Drift Distribution buys mostly nonexclusive rights, doesn't pay advances, and has "wildly varying" p&a budgets. Recent releases include Gregg Bordowitz's *Fast Trip*, *Long Drop* and Isaac Julien's *The Darker Side of Black*.

Hoover sees a danger in the recent mainstreaming of independent productions: "The level of interest can create false expectations. Some small, independent films are reluctant to go with a bigger name distributor because they're waiting for a greater validity through mere name association—even though the film may get almost no attention. Big companies can devour films. And sometimes films get lost."

and release of their films."

With 150 titles evenly split between documentaries and features, First Run Features annually acquires 10 to 15 "high-quality independent films, whether it's gay and lesbian, bizarre animation, or Ingmar Bergman." They buy exclusive rights, give advances, and key their p&a budget to the film's potential box office. In 1987, First Run Features was joined by Icarus Films, creating First Run/Icarus, which currently boasts 350 nontheatrical, educational documentaries and makes 30 to 40 acquisitions a year.

A quarter of all First Run Features' titles and 60 percent of the upcoming schedule is gay and lesbian. One of the company's early releases was Lizzie Borden's *Born in Flames*. Current releases include the Australian *Only the Brave*, Britain's *Heaven's a Drag*, the Philippines' *Midnight Dancers*, Argentina's *I, the Worst of All* and Germany's *Paul Bowles' Half Moon*.

Mauceri is wryly enthusiastic about the changing marketplace: "This kind of alternative cinema has been appropriated, or taken over, or *discovered*—that's a good word—by larger companies with more money and more screens at their disposal. Ultimately that's great, because it brings more gay and lesbian cinema out to the public. Competition is always healthy."

FRAMELINE

346 Ninth Street, San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 703-8650

The sole person working in distribution after recent middle management cuts, sometime filmmaker Desi del Valle says Frameline distribution is now in "maintenance mode." The exclusively les-

FIRST RUN FEATURES

bian and gay catalogue boasts some 160 films, of which 25 are features, 30 experimental, and the rest split between documentaries and short narratives. Nine-tenths of Frameline's business is within the educational market. After having sold VHS dubs informally for years, Frameline's Lesbian and Gay Cinema Collection, targeted to the home video market, was officially launched last winter with 20 start-up titles.

No acquisitions are planned by Frameline this year, which makes Barbara Hammer's *Nitrate Kisses*, *Bête Noire*, an Australian short featuring a controversial lesbian rape scene, KWOI's *Dark Sun*, *Bright Shade*, and Graciela Sanchez' *Not Because Fidel Castro Says So* the last new additions for the foreseeable future.

Regretting the new Republican Congress' cuts in arts and education funding, Del Valle says, "We've always been small and grassroots. We never had to compete with the big people, because no one was doing gay and lesbian work when we first started [in 1980]. Now everyone's doing it." Which is a measure of success. "Frameline's goal was to promote visibility for gay and lesbian work, and I think that we achieved that. We don't want to suddenly change in order to compete in the marketplace."

OUTSIDER PRODUCTIONS

2940 16th St., Suite 200-1, San Francisco 94103; (415) 863-0611

Having "done everything from selling popcorn to pushing videos in video stores, to filmmaking, to producing, to distribution, to publicity," as he puts it, Marc Heustis started Outsider Productions with his partner and co-producer, Lawrence Helman, when their 1993 Berlin Audience Award-winning *Sex Is... left distributors cold*. Under their care, the film went on to be "the fifth highest grossing doc of 1993, according to *Variety*," says Heustis.

Outsider's first acquisition was Don Campbell's *Young at Heart*, a nonfiction feature "about these old Jewish women who sit and play cards and kibitz and kvetch and discuss life and death." Besides booking *Highway of Heartache*, Gregory Wild's country-western drag musical

comedy, they're currently executive producing Keith Froelich's *Toilers and Wayfarers*, about gay teens who run away to the big city. Heustis is currently filming *Life begins at 40?*, a documentary on gay and straight morality inspired by his decade-long experiences as an HIV-positive man.

While he's "absolutely committed to gay film," Heustis is wary of the current vogue. "Most of the people with these corporate, straight kind of distributors don't even know what the gay market is. And they're all clamoring for this stuff. And I can tell you, some of the stuff that was on the screen [in Berlin] is not going to go over well with our market." The inevitable result will be "a whole reactionary phase, when these distributors figure out that these films are not making it. They're going to say that lesbian and gay product is no longer hot, the trend's over, and they're not going to touch it—without taking into consideration the film itself."

STRAND RELEASING

225 Santa Monica Blvd, Ste 810, Santa Monica, CA 90401; (310) 395-5002

"I know what I am," laughs Marcus Hu, "and I know what I like, so I'm probably going to have that kind of perspective, but what I'm looking for is just good film. Our company doesn't categorize it, like 'Oh, this is a gay film, let's go for that.'" Nonetheless, Hu started Strand in 1989 with partner Jon Gerrans when "Lino Brocka's film [*Macho Dancer*] fell in my lap." Subsequent films include Greg Araki's early work as well as his *Totally F**ked Up*, Nicole Conn's *Claire of the Moon*, and

The Strand crew (from left, Dennis O'Connor; Monica Bider; Jon Gerrans; Marcus Hu; and Mike Thomas).
Courtesy Strand Releasing



Roeland Kereesch's *For a Lost Soldier*.

Strand is three-parts production and seven-parts acquisition. The company now has about 50 features and 20 shorts in its roster. Theatrical accounts for 70 percent of their market and educa-



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Women move movies: Executive Director Debra Zimmerman of Women Make Movies (inset). Aerlyn Weissman and Lynne Fernie's *Forbidden Love* was WMM's first theatrical and home video release.

Photo: Patricia Thomson; courtesy Women Make Movies

VIDEO DATA BANK

The School of the Art Institute of Chicago, 37 S. Wabash Ave., Chicago, IL 60603; (312) 345-3550

"We had not even heard of Sadie Benning," recalls Ayanna Udongo, development director at Video Data Bank, "but somebody saw her work at a festival, and we immediately got a hold of her in Wisconsin and acquired all her work. Since then, she's in demand at festivals and has become a role model for gay teens."

Affiliated with the Chicago Art Institute since 1976, Video Data Bank has a staff of 10 and a collection of 2,600 titles, primarily video art and artists' profiles, a few hundred of which are gay or lesbian-focused. VDB acquires 20 to 30 titles per year. Their collection covers a broad range of

issues, and it also runs deep; representing approximately 230 independent videomakers, VDB develops an ongoing relationship with many of its artists, acquiring their entire oeuvre over time. With few theatrical titles, distribution is mainly geared to universities, museums, alternative art spaces, and community centers, with a small home-video market. Artists include Cheryl Dunye, Richard Fung, Suzie Silver, Ellen Spiro, Marlon Riggs, Gay Men's Health Crisis, Tom Kalin, and Gran Fury.

WOLFE VIDEO

PO Box 64, New Almaden, CA 95042; 1-800-GET-WOLFE

Discussing the making of *The Making of 'Bar Girls'*, L.J. Waldinger explained, "People can't wait for [Marita Giovanni's lesbian feature *Bar Girls*] to come out on home video. They want something they can get a hold of as soon as possible. So we created an item that they can have for a reasonable price, relatively quickly."

This kind of market didn't exist back in the early eighties, when Kathy Wolfe, looking for meaning in her life, started making videos for grassroots political groups. Discovering there was no distributor for such products, she founded Wolfe Video in 1985. Vice president Maria Lynn says Wolfe was just in time for the revolution in home video, and calls her a "pioneer in bringing

women's work and words to the mainstream."

For the past two years, the company's growth has been in distribution, which is now nine-tenths of the business; the rest is production. Eight full-time staff members service a fluctuating inventory of about 100 videos, adding about 10 new titles a year, while a search service accesses hundreds more. Recent acquisitions include the public access series *Dyke TV* and their collectively produced *Gay Games IV From A to O*; Percy Adlon's *Salmonberries*; John Scagliotti's *Stonewall 25*; Ellen Seidler's *Et L'Amour*; Dorothy Fadiman's *When Abortion Was Illegal*; and Pam Walton's *Gay Youth*. The production arm creates promotional videos for Olivia Cruises, a women-only charter vacation company, and the National Women's Music Festival.

Wolfe's niche market is "woman-identified and includes lesbian and gay culture." The unique challenge is to "create products for individuals who don't want to be found"—because lesbians and gays are often closeted and one of the more mobile populations, she says. Given the niche's narrowness, Wolfe "works every possible market, wholesale and retail: broadcast, rentals, rental outlets, rental departments in women's bookstores, supplying other catalogs, and our own mailing list."

WOMEN MAKE MOVIES

462 Broadway, Suite 500C, NY, NY 10013; (212) 925-0606

Women Make Movies was founded in 1972 to give women access to production training. Within a few years, the organization started filling another gap by distributing women's media. Today, distribution is three-fourths of the business, while one quarter deals with production and includes workshops, a fiscal sponsorship program, and a resource center.

Having grown from one part-time volunteer to 10 full-time staff members, Women Make Movies owns 400 titles, about half of which are by or about lesbians. Of the 50 films purchased last year, 13 are about and at least 5 are by lesbians. Their collection favors documentaries, with plenty of experimental and short films.

Women Make Movies' primary market is educational. The nonprofit group's first major theatrical release was Aerlyn Weissman and Lynne Fernie's *Forbidden Love*, which opened in 75 cities in 1993, with *Dream Girls* following in 1994. *Forbidden Love* was also their first home video release. The distributor buys exclusive rights, with a variable p&a budget and the rare advance.

1995 releases include Deborah Hoffman's *Complaints of a Dutiful Daughter*; Lucy Massie Phenix' *Cancer in Two Voices*; Frances Negron's

tional 30 percent. "[We] take exclusive rights and decide what we want to keep," says vice president Dennis O'Connor, meaning they may

sell off the video and/or cable rights, although Strand handles some video distribution in-house. Advances and p&a are decided film-to-film.

As producers, Strand is currently working on Jennie Livingston's new feature *You're the Top*, Alison McLean's remake of *Bedlam* (in association with RKO Pictures), and developing a Bruce La Bruce project. They just completed Todd Verow's film of Dennis Cooper's novel, *Frisk*, selected to close the 1995 San Francisco International Lesbian and Gay Film Festival in June.

Marcus Hu eyes any increase in competition with self-satisfied serenity. "We seem to get everything we want: *Wild Reeds*, *Eclipse*, *World and Time Enough*, and *Postcards from America*. If we can get the films I really love, that's all that's important."

lesbian experimental featurette *Brincando El Charco*; Baby Maniac's shorts *Sex Bowl* and *Sex Fish*; Cheryl Dunye's *Greetings from Africa*; and Alisa Lebow's *Outlaw*, about female-to-male Leslie Feinberg.

WMM executive director (and AIVF board of directors member) Debra Zimmerman is pleased that "commercial distributors have finally realized what we've always known: there's an audience for lesbian films and videos. Conventional lesbian features like *Desert Hearts* and *Claire of the Moon* have demonstrated and developed the interest in lesbian material, which only reinforces what we've been doing."

ZEITGEIST

247 Centre Street, 2nd fl., NY, NY 10013; (212) 274-1989

"We were originally really interested in [queer films] because they were the most interesting films out there. As long as they stay interesting and the filmmakers stay original and innovative and provoking, we'll be interested in them. But the subject matter per se is just like every other subject matter. It just depends on how it's treated," said Nancy Gerstman, co-owner with Emily Russo of Zeitgeist, when asked about their commitment to gay and lesbian film.

The distributor of Todd Haynes' *Poison* and Derek Jarman's *Wittgenstein*, Zeitgeist was founded in 1988 to market interesting films nobody else would distribute. The one-time company of two has doubled its staff and acquires half a dozen films yearly. Their catalog of 50 titles—mostly dramatic features, with some feature-length documentaries—"is an eclectic bunch, with something interesting to say, by filmmakers who have an original vision," says Gerstman. While their primary market is theatrical, they will take on films for all markets, including nontheatrical, TV, and video. They buy exclusive rights, hesitate to raise hopes about advances, and tailor their p&a budget project-by-project.

Recent acquisitions include Arthur Dong's *Coming Out Under Fire*, Patrick Keiller's *London*, and this year's prize-winner at Sundance, *Ballot Measure Nine* by Heather MacDonald. Despite these elegant buys, Gerstman made no bones about competition from the bigger companies. "I think small distributors are really struggling to find projects that are going to be interesting to them and are also going to make some money."

Erin Blackwell is arts editor at Dykespeak, a San Francisco-based monthly.

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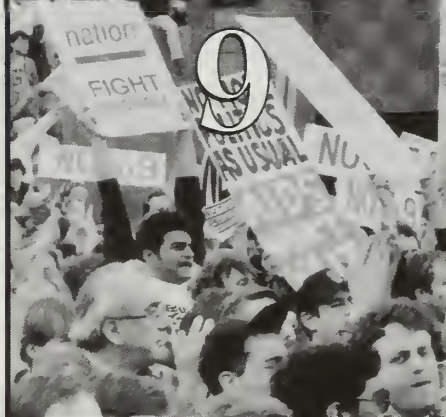
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BY HOWARD FEINSTEIN

GAY AND GAY-FRIENDLY FILMMAKERS ALL OVER THE WORLD, IN VARIOUS ECONOMIC and cultural ways, are fighting an uphill battle. As they struggle to find ways to represent the gay experience, they also must contend with another issue of visibility—that of their own films.

For years, gay and lesbian film festivals have been their primary outlet. These serve an audience for whom mainstream-palatable studio pictures and trendy, arty imports with crossover potential ring false—refusing to show physical affection or address head-on such gay-relevant issues as AIDS, age of consent, bashing, or harassment. “Film festivals, along with parades and publishing, are perhaps the central places where gay and lesbian identities are developed, displayed, framed, and promoted,” says Yale sociologist Joshua Gamson. “They are homes or warehouses for collective identity.”

But the more talented directors often leave home, moving into the welcoming arms of larger, non-gay festivals or even the open maw of The Industry itself—working in Hollywood or getting picked up by mini-majors like Miramax, Sony Classics, Fine Line, October, Goldwyn, and other Johnny-

“I don’t want to specify at the beginning which character is gay,” says Tsai. “In both *Rebels of the Neon God* and *Vive l’Amour*, it comes down to a question of realism. We don’t identify people we see on the streets as gay or straight. It’s pretty repressed in Taiwan; a gay film creates a sensation. I want people to like the characters not because they are gay, but because they are people. You discover the boy is gay as the film goes along. He’s a likable character.”

But maybe not quite as likable to gays in the West. According to Thomas Waugh in his essay “The Third Body: Patterns in the Construction of the Subject in Gay Male Narrative Film” (reprinted in the anthology *Queer Looks*), the “ephebe”—the adolescent youth—was the most popular body type in the Victorian gay imagination, with the ephebe in drag “an important subcategory.” The “he-man” was less popular. Tastes have shifted, at least here in the U.S. “The predominant icon of the modern gay erotic imaginary,” writes Waugh, “the he-man (in his postwar incarnations as ‘trade,’ ‘clone,’ and bodybuilder) has gradually supplanted the ephebe...The ephebe is now relegated to stigmatized specialty tastes within gay culture.”

The homosexual element is even more covert in Sato Toshiki’s slick Japanese “pink” or soft core porno film, *Tandem*, shown at this year’s

Tricks and Treats: Eight

and-Jenny-come-latelys. Some of these distributors are committed to disseminating narratives of the gay experience; others are simply cashing in on a trend.

The minis and majors that constitute what I call the “out-for-profit” sector have over the last couple of years put on the market many—perhaps too many—gay and lesbian English-language films in order to fill the gay niche and straight crossover market that *Philadelphia* tapped into (to my mind, an isolated case). An increasing number of English-language gay and lesbian narrative features seem to be getting picked up for distribution, with aesthetic considerations often taking a back seat to content or political correctness. Meanwhile, a whole host of interesting gay and lesbian foreign films languish on the sidelines. Blame homophobia perhaps, or our insular culture and its aversion to subtitles, not to mention the rules of genre and distribution that, in the name of profit guarantees, discourage commercial risk and truly imaginative marketing into uncharted territory.

Here are a few recent films that you will probably never see in commercial theaters near you. Some “work”, others don’t; but all are of some kind of interest—aesthetic, ideological, or formal—to gay and lesbian viewers,

LITTLE HAPPENS IN TAIWANESE DIRECTOR TSAI MING-LIANG’S LEISURELY, FUNNY, and Tati-esque *Vive l’Amour*, which shared the Golden Lion at the 1994 Venice Film Festival and was just shown in New Directors/New Films in New York City. Three young people inadvertently share a large, modern, utterly charmless apartment in Taipei that mirrors the city’s new and crass materialism: May (Yang Kuei-mei), the pretty young woman who is the real estate agent for the unit; Ah-jung (Chen Chao-jung), a tough, macho street vendor of women’s clothes whom May picks up for sex; and the young Hsiao-kang (Lee Kang-sheng), a wispy salesman of Buddhist cremation niches who, like Ah-jung, secretly crashes in the flat. When Hsiao-kang tries on Ah-jung’s feminine merchandise midway through the film, his sexuality becomes suspect; his gayness is validated by the time he masturbates with painful longing for the shmatte dealer.

Rotterdam film festival. It follows the adventures of two men who have each abused their girlfriends and meet by chance in a cafe. Kazuma (Shimizu Daikei) is a nerdy, middle-aged, aphysical car salesman; Shinichi (Kino Makoto) is a tough, self-assured, macho ne’er-do-well. Pressed together on a single motorcycle seat, they embark upon a nocturnal journey. The extended encounter smacks of same-sex desire, but what should, by the film’s own logic, become an affirmation of attraction instead becomes Shinichi’s brutal attack on Kazuma in a public restroom. The cowardly narrative displacement is enhanced by a coda, in which each of the fellows picks up and makes passionate love to the other’s girlfriend.

The superstylized, over-the-top Mercedes is set against a 30-year backdrop of Egyptian political turmoil, from the 1956 Suez crisis through the rise of militant Islamic fundamentalism and the Gulf War. Director Yousry Nasrallah creates an ironic, campy, and complex yarn. Social critic Noubi (Zaki Abdel Wahab) is the strangely albino-looking prodigy of Warda (Egyptian star and sex symbol Yousra) and an African diplomat with whom she had a one-night stand. Noubi is protective of his out-spoken gay half-brother, Gamal (Magdi Kamel), who cruises the aisles and toilets of a porno cinema and openly takes a male lover. Ultimately, Noubi begins an Oedipal affair with the prostitute Afifa (Yousra again), a carbon copy of mama. Meanwhile, mercenary relatives and religious fanatics threaten this unusual family’s tenuous existence.

“What you call campy and fun melodrama is perceived in Egypt as quite shocking,” Nasrallah gently chides me. “What I did in *Mercedes* is to be provocative. The film violated every taboo in Egyptian society. What happens between the characters is more important than the political context. Gamal likes boys. It’s just like that. There’s no moral judgement. Being different is, in itself, no reason to be excluded.

“Individuals are hardly ever represented in Egyptian cinema,” he elaborates. “We’ve been raised on notions of battle collectively—we don’t use the first person singular. These are dictatorship slogans.” Instead, what Egyptian movie-goers see is “usually stereotypes. Family values, like virginity, dominate,” says Nasrallah. “The gay relationship is something the censors don’t like. They used loose formulas: ‘Scene 14 should be shot according to the laws

of good taste and not bump into our traditions.' What's worse is that filmmakers cope with this mentality—like yours with the Moral Majority—by toning themselves down. It's another form of censorship."

Chinese director He Jianjun also beat the censor in *The Postman*; He smuggled the negative into Holland, where he completed postproduction. In this daring, non-judgmental, neatly composed film—which swept the prizes at the 1995 Rotterdam International Film Festival and was screened in New Directors—Xiao Dou (Feng Yuanzheng) is a mail carrier who becomes so obsessed with the more marginalized people on his route (a prostitute, a depressive) that he begins reading their mail and getting personally involved with them. One is a gay junkie with AIDS, who receives letters from his male lover.

"There are gays all over Beijing, of course," says He, "and a specialized new gay magazine comes out every week or two. I became familiar with [one of them] and used it as a reference. The government knows about it, so it's not forbidden. It's non-pornographic. It's called *Homosexual News*." Catchy.

A couple of aesthetically-disastrous gayish male films are fascinating in the ways they don't come together. Take *Der Bewegte Mann*

Sickle unwittingly questions the roots of desire: Is it a function of genitalia, cultural conditioning, or memory?

"In Stalin's era, nothing was spoken directly about sex, of homo- or heterosexual variants," writes Andrei Plakhov in his 1991 essay "No Sex in the USSR" (also reprinted in *Queer Looks*). "The ideals of destroying bourgeois morals, celebrations of free love, and pursuing group relations, which many first-generation Bolsheviks had professed, have long since been drowned in the atmosphere of a totalitarian society."

"However," he continues, "it does have its sex symbols. The handsome, sporty man of the people, who today builds and plows in sweaty labor, but who tomorrow will arise armed, a soldier, is one of these images. 'Healthy spirit in a healthy body'—a euphemistic formula of an exaggerated sexuality, captured in a multitude of posters and in the paintings and sculptures of Socialist realism. The overblown play of muscles, the surging vitality of youth, the erotic self-sufficiency of these images, which are remarkably reminiscent of Tom of Finland's earlier drawings, leave no doubt about their concealed homosexual nature." Probably not coming to a theater near you.

Picks of FOREIGN FLICKS

Lee Kang-sheng in *Vive l'Amour*. "I don't want to specify at the beginning which character is gay." Taiwanese director Tsai Ming-liang. "We don't identify people on the streets as gay or straight."

(*The Moving Man*), Soenke Wortmann's silly German comedy that castrates the popular gay comic strip from which it is adapted. Shifting the lead character's sexual orientation from bi to hetero contributed to the film's becoming Germany's biggest home-grown box-office success last year. (The title implies movement between the gay and straight worlds.) In the movie, the pretty young man, Axel (Til Schweiger), is the object of desire for Norbert (Joachim Krol), a raving stereotype of a part-time drag queen. The movie's "humor" derives from the fact that Axel's girlfriend, Doro (Katja Riemann), suspects her unfaithful Mann of homosexual impulses. Bewigged faggots do not a credible *Bewegte Mann* make—nor does pedestrian direction, hordes of clichés, and save for Doro, poor acting. Unfortunately, producer Bernd Eichinger and director Wortmann are, according to *Variety*, plotting an American remake.

If it weren't so ridiculous in its story line and Euro-trashy in its fake, overwrought sets, Sergei Livnev's Russian feature *Hammer and Sickle* would be a camp classic. It is not gay in the democratic, Western sense, but it toys bizarrely with issues of sexual orientation, gender identification, and homoerotic representation. According to the director, Stalin in the thirties assigned a group of scientists to experiment with the transformation of women into men in a botched attempt to increase the size of the Soviet military. Stalin eventually exterminated the researchers, but not before they turned village maid Vevikia Kuzentsova into Yevdokim Kumestov, a muscular blond archetype of Socialist Realism: strong, durable, virile. (A shot of a wrinkly penis moving across the screen on a conveyor belt is probably a first.) The transplant is hardly complete before Yevdokim nearly rapes his female nurse. A few years later, Yevdokim, a married father (the government has set him up with the "ideal" young woman), drunkenly encounters the soldier he had been engaged to as a rural lass, and another rapid switcheroo ensues.

"The hammer is the vagina; the sickle the penis," Livnev is quoted as saying in the 1994 Toronto International Film Festival catalog. *Hammer and*

IN HER 1992 BOOK, *VAMPIRES AND VIOLETS: LESBIANS IN FILM*, Andrea Weiss wrote, "Lesbian images in the cinema have been and continue to be virtually invisible. Hollywood cinema, especially, needs to repress lesbianism in order to give free rein to its endless variations on heterosexual romance. Each lesbian image that has managed to surface—the lesbian vampire, the sadistic or neurotic repressed woman, the pre-Oedipal 'mother-daughter' lesbian relationship, the lesbian as sexual challenge or titillation to men—has helped determine the boundaries of possible representation and has insured the invisibility of many other kinds of lesbian images." With the minor commercial success of *Claire of the Moon* and *Go Fish*, more lesbian films are being made, and the iconography, which some adventurous directors had already begun to explode, seems to be expanding in more diverse, even credible directions.

Belgian-born Chantal Akerman recounts a painful incident from her own sexual awakening in the beautifully unembellished *Portrait of a Young Girl at the End of the 1960s in Brussels*, part of the French TV-produced series *All the Young Boys and Girls in Their Time*. Klutzy 15-year-old Michelle (Circe), obsessed with beautiful school chum Danielle (Joelle Marlier), spends most of the film walking through Brussels with shy Paul (Julien Rassam), a deserter whom she picks up in the cinema. The camera tracks Michelle and Paul as they discuss literature and adolescent concerns (think of a more imaginative and mature *Before Sunrise*.) They stop so that Michelle can let Paul take her virginity. "Sex is the most important thing in the world," Paul says to Michelle, who responds, "Then the world is more hopeless than I thought." She plans to have Paul stud for Danielle, on whom she has a powerful first crush.

Portrait is Akerman's most explicitly lesbianic film to date. She has always made films with a strong feminist impulse (*Jeanne Dielman*) and highly personal cinematic diaries (*Je, Tu, Il, Elle; d'Est*), but she never speaks explicitly about her own sexuality. Her comments in an interview with Pierre Murat





A bombshell of taboo-turning tableaux in Egypt, Yousry Nasrallah's *Mercedes* brews gay sex, prostitution, adultery, Oedipal urges, the Suez crisis, Islamic fundamentalism, and the Gulf War.

upon the release of *Les Rendezvous d'Anna* (1978) are, however, revealing.

"Women have always been raised with the desire to please. They have been totally crushed and regulated. And what has been happening over the past 20 years? They've been told, 'Liberate yourself, explode in pleasure—mandatory orgasm!' For a while, this may have given women some sense of hope. But gradually, some realized that, once again, they were being fooled. They realized that liberation didn't have to do with having an orgasm at any cost and that sexuality was not the most important thing. This is what Anna tries to explain to Heinrich [in *Les Rendezvous d'Anna*] when she dismisses him: 'I don't like myself.'"

The brilliant *Fun*, directed by Rafal Zielinski, a young Russian who emigrated to the U.S. through Europe, is the story of two 15-year-old California girls, laid back Hillary (Renee Humphrey) and hyper Bonnie (Alicia Witt), who form an intense and heady bond over their murder of an old woman. Why the murder? "Because it's fun," one girl answers. Zielinski, who adapted James Bosley's eponymous play, cuts back-and-forth frenetically between the girls' separate grainy-black-and-white prison sessions (one with her psychiatrist, the other with a hack journalist) and pastel flashbacks to the single day they met, forged a tight friendship, and committed homicide. "They're in love with each other," the journalist tells the psychiatrist. "They're not allowed to be in love with each other," the woman responds. Once they are placed in separate prisons, Bonnie commits



Soenke Wortmann's *Der Bewegte Mann* is Germany's biggest home-grown box office success last year.

BERND EICHINGER
ZEIGT
TIL SCHWIEGER
KATJA RIEMANN
JOACHIM KRÖL

DER BEWEGTE MANN

NACH DEN COMICS
"DER BEWEGTE MANN"
UND "PRETTY BABY"
VON
RALF KÖNIG
EIN FILM VON
SOENKE WORTMANN

suicide.

Fun earned best actress nods for its two leads at the 1994 Sundance Film Festival. Although it played New York's Film Forum for two weeks in April, the film never acquired an American distributor—perhaps because, according to the buzz, sales were mishandled. On top of that, the similarly-plotted *Heavenly Creatures*, which Miramax hyped last fall, stole its thunder.

It's not just that foreign films are at a disadvantage. Despite indiscriminating distributor interest, it is still extremely difficult for gay and gay-friendly filmmakers to successfully reach both gays and the general audience with

English language movies. Go *Fish*, for instance, pretty much failed to cross-over beyond a lesbian crowd, despite expectations. Maria Maggenti's crowd-pleasing and formulaic *The Incredible Adventures of Two Girls in Love* will be the next test case. (Compare with receptiveness of the French to gay fare: Andre Techine's masterful coming out story, *Wild Reeds*, just swept the French Cesars, as did the late Cyril Collard's misconceived AIDS drama *Savage Nights* two years back.) "The problem we've found with most gay films is that the word 'gay' alone frightens people away," says Jon Gerrans of L.A.-based Strand Releasing, a small but growing distributor of mostly gay and lesbian titles. The recipe for success involves a two-pronged marketing campaign.



Strange and dubious, Sergei Livnev's *Monstrous and Sick* is a gender-convoluted tale of sin, charges and desire. Photos p. 33-33 courtesy of Livnev

"We have a dual problem as a gay and lesbian community," openly-gay congressman Barney Frank of Massachusetts tells an interviewer in the upcoming ITVS-Channel Four documentary *The Question of Equality*. "Not only have we been subjected to legal discrimination, but we have also been culturally pulverized. We're trying to find ourselves, find the cultural self-expression from which we have been prohibited." And venues to share it.

Howard Feinstein is a New York-based film critic who writes regularly for the *Guardian* (U.K.) and *Out*.

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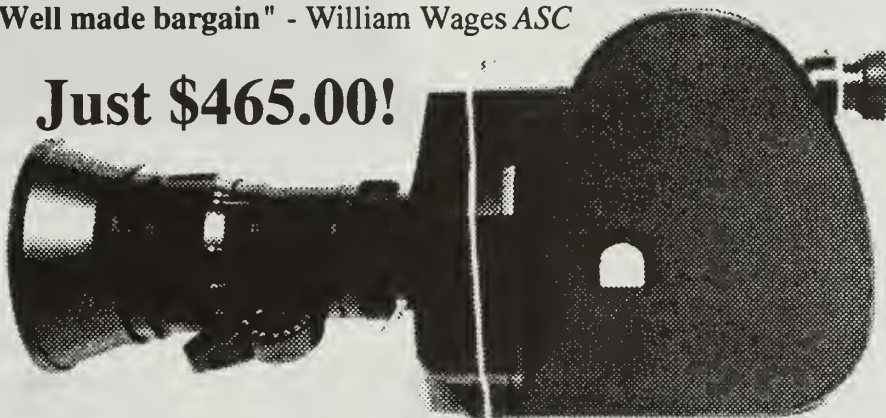
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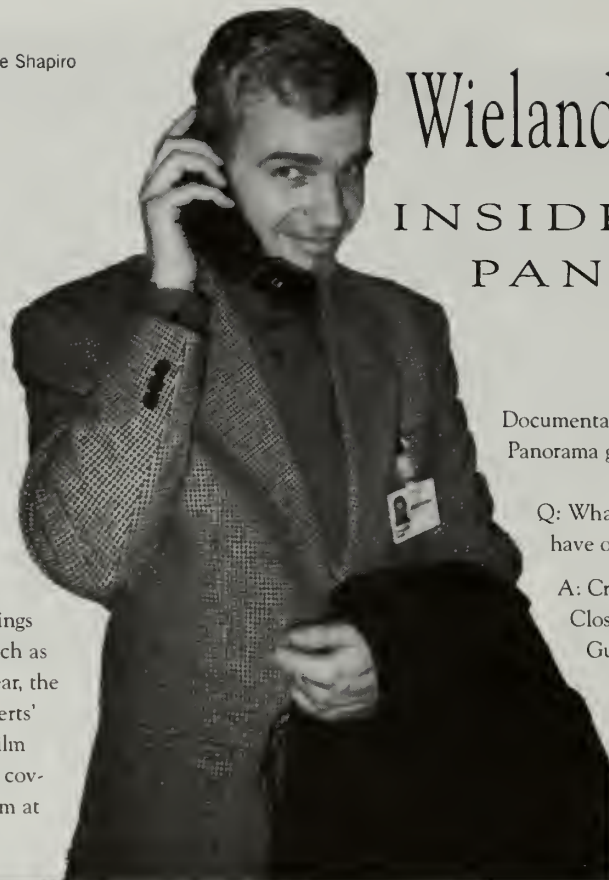
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INSIDE BERLIN'S PANORAMA

BY GERALD PEARY

The Berlin International Film Festival's Panorama section is where gay and lesbian filmmakers from every country feel at home. Each February during the festival it's where the excitement is: those wonderful midnight screenings especially, where irreverent queer filmmakers such as Gregg Araki or Rose Troche hold court. This year, the Panorama was where Torontonians Cynthia Roberts' *The Last Supper*, rejected by the 1994 Toronto Film Festival, finally found an audience, winning the coveted Teddy '95 for the Best Gay and Lesbian Film at Berlin.

The Panorama doesn't only show gay and lesbian films. The general call is for innovative, low-budget, definitely left-of-center, and/or anarchic cinema, and there are probably more leather-jacketed American independent filmmakers of all orientations attending than at any major European festival. But the passionate commitment to gay and lesbian cinema is where the Panorama has made its special mark and its splendid international reputation.

The Panorama is also, of course, a place of tragic loss, for so many of its prominent directors have succumbed to AIDS, including most recently Derek Jarman and Marlon T. Riggs. And last August, AIDS also took the Panorama's legendary, deeply loved founding director, Manfred Salzgeber. This year's 10th-anniversary Panorama was dedicated to his memory.

During the festival, *The Independent* caught up with Salzgeber's long-time assistant director, Wieland Speck, who became the new director of the Panorama in 1995. We talked, too briefly for all parties, in the Panorama's crammed office before Speck headed off to one of a thousand urgencies.

Q: Go back to the early days. What was the Panorama like when it was a smaller sidebar?

A: When Manfred started it in 1980, he did it alone. Moritz de Hadeln, the Berlinale's new director, hired Manfred, knowing his curiosity and vast film experience, and what he stood for in gay politics. Manfred was always a very political person in his own cinemas, a father of a new kind of issue-oriented arthouse in Berlin in the 1960s and 1970s.

I started in 1982 as Manfred's assistant. I was looking for a job, and, fortunately, he picked me from a list. He'd seen a short film of mine, *David, Montgomery, and I*, which I shot in San Francisco at the Art Institute as a student of George Kuchar. It was about David Bowie and Montgomery Clift, and I included myself in a schema about paranoia, desire, and eroticism. Anyway, Manfred proved such a terrific person that I stayed on.

In the early days, there were very few films that dealt with gay issues. In 1984, when we were showing *The Times of Harvey Milk*, the Oscar nominations came out during the fest. *Harvey Milk* was nominated for Best

Documentary, so it was very exciting. In 1986, the Panorama got its name.

Q: What are some other special memories you have of gay cinema at the Panorama?

A: Critic Vito Russo doing "The Celluloid Closet," a lecture with lots of great film clips.

Gus Van Sant appearing in Berlin with his first film, *Mala Noche*, and later becoming famous! Such discoveries are wonderful—to have someone here whom nobody knows, and we become friends with them and their producers, and we go on working together for years, and then

they become famous. Like Almodovar. That was a riot when he was here. Nobody knew about him at all, but he was the hit of the whole program! He was a thunderball, he and his people. So, over the years, the Panorama has developed its program along with the development of gay and lesbian filmmaking.

Q: Who are some of these filmmakers who have emerged at the Panorama?

A: Derek Jarman, of course. The Berlin Fest has premiered 80 percent of Jarman's films, in all sections. Isaac Julien, John Greyson, Lucy Massie Phenix, Veronica Selver, Marlon T. Riggs, Robert Epstein, Gregg Araki, Greta Schiller, Todd Haynes, Jennie Livingston, Andrea Weiss, Rose Troche, and many others.

Q: What has always impressed me about the Panorama is that showing films during the festival is only part of your gay and lesbian agenda.

A: That's true. We have "night cafés" at the Prinz Eisenherz Bookstore, one of the best gay bookstores in Europe, and we show gay and lesbian works-in-progress and have informal discussions with the filmmakers. When Robert Epstein showed his film *Common Threads: Stories from the Quilt*, we brought the AIDS memorial quilt over during the festival and, with the help of the mayor's wife, Anne Momper, we hung it in the Berlin City Hall, in collaboration with the Names Project.

Q: Also, Manfred worked to keep important gay and lesbian film in circulation after the festival ended.

A: Our Panorama focus always has been to locate films that have a chance in European arthouses. But sometimes Manfred would present terrific films no distributor would pick up. He was most furious when *Buddies*, by Arthur J. Brasson, Jr., didn't get distribution, as it was the first film about AIDS from New York. That's how he started his distribution company, Edition Manfred Salzgeber, which grew to 200 titles. The object was to intervene if a more potent distributor didn't pick up the films, otherwise they'd disappear from

German-speaking countries. *Mala Noche* is a film distributed this way, Marc Heustis and Lawrence Helman's *Sex Is...* is another. And the distribution continues, as I take over at the Panorama.

Q: Let's talk about the Teddy Award for Best Gay or Lesbian Film at the Berlin Festival.

A: In 1987, I created the award together with the then Gay and Lesbian Film Fest Association, now called Projections, which Manfred had founded. We decided to have a jury of directors of gay and lesbian fests. They came in large numbers each year to Berlin, so we could use that potential for a prize. In the first year, *Law of Desire* by Pedro Almodovar shared a prize with two shorts by Gus Van Sant, though there was no awarding ceremony.

The next year, I suggested to Berlin's gay and lesbian community, "Why don't you do something?" So they started having a party. The first three

years it was organized by Tuntun ("Queens"), who are Act-Up activists, and held at Schwuz, the Gay Center. They did a party, a show, a ceremony, and the award: a teddy bear! The bear is the official animal of Berlin, and the Golden Bear is the main prize of the Berlin Festival. So we looked at the bear family to find something we liked. It's a teddy bear from a store, a little bit decorated, but there's no prize money yet that goes with it, a scandal for me. As a rule, sponsors don't give money for gay things in Germany.

Since 1991, when the winners were *Poison* for Best Feature Film and *Paris Is Burning* for Best Documentary, the Teddy has been an official prize of the

many more of them than lesbian films?

A: That's the way the patriarchal ladder is, with lesbians coming behind gay men. We have had discussions with many lesbian programmers whether to create special lesbian prizes. They've started to discuss the Tigress, but it hasn't been awarded yet. It's a potential award. In 1988, Tilda Swinton, who was on the festival's Official Jury, strongly supported a demonstration at the festival against the discriminatory Clause 28 in Great Britain. She was given a special award for her action from the Teddy jury.

Q: Weren't there protests from Berlin's lesbian community about the seeming inequity of the awards?

A: For a time, there was an "enemysip" of lesbians toward men. They didn't participate in the festival. They complained without doing anything themselves. The new generation of lesbians is in a different mode, fortunate-

ly, realizing that the "homo" aspect of their identity is equally important to the lesbian aspect.

We decided for next year to change the jury, for the enhancement of lesbian representation and lesbian cinema. Every gay and lesbian festival can send two people to be on the Teddy jury, a male and a female, or two females, or one male, or one female. The only possibility that is not allowed: two males.

Another problem is that there are about 20 people on the jury, a huge jury. We might have to change that! I created all these things as an assistant director of the Panorama, while Manfred was the head. It's all much more difficult now, when I have so many other things to do.

Q: What were the highlights of this year's Panorama?

A: We are showing the gay and lesbian films which we hope will be distributed theatrically, including the first film from Africa for Africa about AIDS, *Africa, My Africa*, by Idrissa Ouedraogo, and the first film about AIDS from Spain, *Lazos*, by Alfonso Ungria. We also showed *Glitterbug*, the last film of Derek Jarman, and *Black Is...Black Ain't*, the last film of Marlon Riggs. Finally, finally, of course, that tremendous film from Canada, *The Last Supper*, which, like *Silverlake Life: The View From Here*, is an AIDS film that reaches out to death, life, and dignity, thanks to gay people affected by AIDS who participated in it.

Gerald Peary teaches film at Boston University and Suffolk University in Boston.

Always a supporter of gay and lesbian cinema, the Panorama section this year included such works from the U.S. as (clockwise from right) *A Litany for Survival: The Life and Work of Audre Lorde*, by Michelle Parkerson and Ada Gay Griffin (photo courtesy Dagmar Schultz); Wally White's *Lie Down with Dogs*, which sends up Provincetown's gay culture; and Marlon T. Riggs' last work, *Black Is... Black Ain't*.



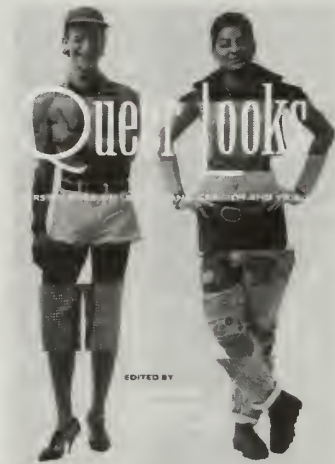
Berlin Festival, and mentioned in all press releases.

Q: Aren't the awards weighed heavily toward gay films, since there are so

books in brief

GAY & LESBIAN MEDIA STUDIES

BY MAI KIANG



Queer media studies are multi-disciplinary and organically shifting, intertwining discussions of the cultural constructions of class, race, gender, and sexuality. Since Vito Russo's and Richard Dyer's pioneering works on queer images first appeared in 1981 and 1991 respectively, we have witnessed the institutionalization of our field in academia and are now beginning to see an outpouring of new publications on the subject from a variety of disciplines.

In an attempt to sort out some directions in this evolving field, *The Independent* talked with several media studies professors from around the country. As we found out, activism and aesthetics, theories of desire, rethinking mass culture, and exploring identity boundaries are some of the consistent sites of struggle, which the following books expertly address.

All interviewees recommended *Queer Looks: Perspectives on Lesbian and Gay Film and Video*, edited by Martha Gever, John Greyson, and Pratibha Parmar (Routledge, 1993), as a dynamic collection of writings by artists and theorists which documents and explores some of the most recent aesthetic trends and political strategies in queer media culture. Chris Holmlund (associate professor of Romance and Asian Languages at the University of Tennessee and coeditor of the forthcoming *Between the Sheets, in the Streets: Queer/Lesbian/Gay Documentaries*, University of Minnesota Press) describes *Queer Looks* as a "useful and informative companion" for teaching independent media. "Not many books are dedicated entirely to independent works," she notes, adding that "the articles in the volume represent a sample of active and diverse voices of our field today." For Gabriel Gomez (faculty in video at the Art Institute of Chicago, who is writing *Provoke Queers: Emerging Homoerotic Imagery in Contemporary Film and Video*), the variety of approaches and timely social-political issues covered are what make the book "unique and valuable."

Chris Straayer (assistant professor of Cinema Studies at New York University; author of the forthcoming *Deviant Eyes/Deviant Bodies: Sexual Reorientations in Film/Video*, Columbia University Press) comments on the need for book-length discussions of some of the issues raised by *Queer Looks*. "A wealth of works has been arriving, especially in the area of lesbian sexualities," she notes. For instance, Straayer recommends *The Practice of Love: Lesbian Sexuality and Perverse Desire*, by Teresa de Lauretis (Indiana University Press, 1994). De Lauretis theorizes the narratives of lesbian sex and characters "at the intersections of queer theory and feminist thinking, operating within a Lacanian psychoanalytic framework and revamping its traditional model of formation," says Straayer. De Lauretis formulates speculations on the dynamics of lesbian lust as she analyzes classic lesbian films from both Hollywood and the independent world.

In *Fatal Women: Lesbian Sexuality and the Mark of Aggression* (Princeton University Press, 1994), author Lynda Hart discusses portrayals of

violent women from Victorian novels to today's popular culture and links them, according to Straayer, to the "absent but essentially transgressive presence of lesbianism."

For Hart, who integrates discourses on sexology, criminology, and psychoanalysis in her discussion, the underlying fear and loathing of lesbian sex has often led to the construction of overly sexualized and deviant female characters in mainstream film, television, and other formats. Straayer further relates that, "Challenging the concept of muted lesbian desires, [Hart] unveils the intricate issues of power and lesbianphobia in the realm of representations."

Making Things Perfectly Queer: Interpreting Mass Culture, by Alexander Doty (University of Minnesota Press, 1993), is an ingenious study of popular texts and queer pleasure. Both Holmlund and Straayer recommended it highly for its groundbreaking analysis. "Well written and witty, Doty argues for a new thesis that queer positionings and pleasures in popular media are not exclusive to active queer readers, but are available to all audiences," Holmlund remarks. Furthermore, she maintains that "it opens up an important debate on essentialism as it relates to new visions on spectatorship and queer text." Doty also has an anthology coming out soon, co-edited with Corey Creekmur, called *Out in Culture* (Duke University Press), which will include essays on pornography and underground films.

Judith Butler's *Bodies that Matter: On the Discursive Limits of Sex* (Routledge, 1993) extends her controversial arguments initiated in her previous book, *Gender Trouble*. "Combining discourse theory and psychoanalysis, the work investigates subject formation as a product of gender constructions and heterosexual materialization of bodies," says Straayer. Butler also delves into the seldom-addressed subject of race and gender-passing. "Butler brings out fascinating issues appropriate for dealing with the complexities of constructions and identities," Gomez states. He also subscribes to this book's relevance to queer media studies, particularly recommending the section on *Puris Is Burning*.

Chon Noriega's upcoming anthology *Ethnic Eyes: Latino Media Art* (Minnesota University Press) contains a large number of articles on Latino queer media. The first of its kind in dealing with a diverse group of Latino media artists, the book attempts to theorize their works through close textual readings. Noriega includes a variety of subjects in his book: artistic visions, cultural politics, language, exile, and sexuality. Uncertain about the reactions the book will receive from the "conservative parts of the Latino communities," Noriega, an assistant professor at UCLA Film and Video Critical Studies department, stresses the book's efforts to integrate multiple voices in the discussions on the issues of identities and repression. "It will be an exciting and much needed addition to scholarship on independent media" says Holmlund.

Thomas Allen Harris (assistant professor at the Visual Arts Department, University of California at San Diego) believes there is still a lack of publications on queers of color in the media field, even though these artists have produced some of the most exciting and profound works in the history of alternative media. "Many scholars of color became involved in ethnic/culture studies, and there are areas yet to be explored," says Harris. But as Noriega and Straayer point out, a number of gay and lesbian doctoral candidates in media studies are now finishing their dissertations and their perspectives as queers of color will emerge on reading lists soon.

Essential Readings

Directed by Dorothy Arzner, by Judith Mayne (Indiana University Press, 1994)

Vampires and Violets: Lesbians in Film, by Andrea Weiss (Penguin, 1992)

How Do I Look? Queer Film and Video, edited by Bad Object Choice (Bay Press, 1991)

Now You See It: Studies on Lesbian and Gay Film, by Richard Dyer (Routledge, 1991)

Inside/Out, edited by Diana Fuss (Routledge, 1991)

The Celluloid Closet: Homosexuality in the Movies, by Vito Russo, (Perennial Library, 1981)

Other New Books:

Immortal Invisible: Lesbians and the Moving Image, ed. Tasmin Wilton (Routledge, 1995), inquires upon pleasures and complications of lesbian viewership in films such as *Aliens* and *She Must Be Seeing Things*. Richard Dyer was quoted as saying, "[The book] illuminates not just the lesbian representations of recent years, but the centrality of lesbianism to all film images."

Hard to Image: Gay Male Eroticism in Photography and Film, from their Beginnings to Stonewall, by Thomas Waugh (Columbia University Press, 1995). Looks at aesthetics of erotic representations of gay male in a historical context.

A Queer Romance: Lesbians, Gay Men and Popular Culture, ed. Paul Burston & Colin Richardson (Routledge 1995). Collected essays on topics such as gay gaze in MTV, black lesbian spectatorship, and studies of works by Monika Treut.

Cultures of Resistance: Black Women Film and Video Artists, ed. Jacqueline Bobo (Indiana University Press, 1996). Includes Yvonne Welton's article on the first wave of out Black Lesbian artists.

Queer Works, Queer Images: Communication and the Construction of Homosexuality, ed. Jeffrey Ringer (New York University Press, 1994). Has discussions on the portrayal of AIDS issues, as well as representations of gays and lesbians on television.

Negotiating Lesbian & Gay Subjects, ed. Monica Dorenkamp & Richard Heake (Routledge, 1995) comprises selected papers presented at the 1992 Queer Studies Conference at Rutgers University.

Unmarked: The Politics of Performance, by Phelan Peggy (Routledge, 1993) questions the assumptions and limitations of "visibility politics".

Hollywood Lesbians, by Boze Hadleigh (Barricade books, 1994). Contains interviews with 10 Hollywood sapphic women who discuss their lives, careers, and other lesbians/bisexuals from Garbo and Dietrich to Bankhead and Crawford.

Images in the Dark: An Encyclopedia of Gay and Lesbian Film and Video, by Raymond Murray (TLA Publications, 1994). This is a comprehensive reference book on lesbians, gays, and their works in the entertainment industry, including 3,000 reviews and 200 biographies.

Mai Kiang is a Taiwanese-American cultural activist, currently freelancing in New York.

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BY KATHRYN BOWSER

LISTINGS DO NOT CONSTITUTE AN ENDORSEMENT. SINCE SOME FESTIVAL DETAILS MAY CHANGE AFTER THE MAGAZINE GOES TO PRESS, WE RECOMMEND THAT YOU CONTACT THE FESTIVAL BEFORE SENDING PREVIEW CASSETTES. DEADLINE FOR INCLUDING A CALL FOR ENTRIES IN THE FESTIVAL COLUMN IS THE 1ST OF THE MONTH TWO MONTHS PRIOR TO THE COVER DATE (E.G.: AUGUST 1 FOR THE OCTOBER ISSUE). ALL BLURBS SHOULD INCLUDE: FESTIVAL DATES, CATEGORIES, PRIZES, ENTRY FEES, DEADLINES FOR SUBMISSIONS, FORMATS, AND CONTACT INFO. TO IMPROVE OUR RELIABILITY AND MAKE THIS COLUMN MORE BENEFICIAL, WE ENCOURAGE ALL PRODUCERS TO CONTACT FIVE WITH CHANGES, CRITICISM, OR PRAISE FOR FESTIVALS PROFILED IN THIS COLUMN.

DOMESTIC

ALFRED I. DUPONT-COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY AWARDS, November, NY. Awards are presented annually for outstanding work in news & public affairs. Cats include network, local & cable TV, as well as ind. prods. & radio. Local TV station entries are judged according to market size. Programs must have originally aired between July 1, 1994 & June 30, 1995. Formats: 1/2". Entry fee: \$40-100. Deadline: July 15. Contact: Jonnet Abeles, Alfred I. duPont-Columbia University Awards, Alfred I. duPont Center for Broadcast Journalism, 701 Journalism, Columbia University, NY, NY 10027; (212) 854-5047; fax: 7837.

ASPEN FILMFEST, Sept. 27-Oct. 1, CO. Fest celebrates "diverse & exciting" ind. films, incl. newest in feature, foreign, doc & short films. Entries selected on "concept & execution, originality & creativity, style & technical excellence." Features & shorts (under 10 min.) completed after June 1, 1995 eligible. Entry fee: \$25. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Deadline: July 10. Contact: Aspen Filmfest, PO Box 8910, Aspen, CO 81612; (303) 925-6882; fax: (303) 925-1967.

AUSTIN GAY AND LESBIAN INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Sept. 1-14, TX. Fest, largest of its kind in southwest, is now in 8th annual edition & features regional showcase of works by artists living & working in TX, AR, OK, CO, NM & AZ. Awards & cash prizes in several cats. Works should be by &/or about lesbians, gays & bisexuals; any length & genre. Deadline: July 15. Contact: Austin Gay & Lesbian

Int'l Film Festl, PO Box K, Austin, TX 78713; (512) 472-3279; fax: 3240; email: ausgayfilm@aol.com.

AUSTIN HEART OF FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 5-8, TX. 2nd annual fest celebrates writer's contribution to film & TV industry. Cats: adult/mature themes (feature-length): \$3,000 plus airfare & housing; children/family (feature-length): \$3,000 plus airfare & housing; student short (under 30 min.): \$750. Deadline for scripts: June 15. Best Screenplay in following cats: guerrilla films produced for under \$50,000: bronze award, airfare & housing; prod. costs between \$50,000-\$1,000,000: bronze award, airfare & housing; prod. costs over \$1 million: bronze award, airfare & housing. Deadline: Aug. 15. Contact: Marsha Milam, Austin Heart of Film Festival, 707 Rio Grande, ste. 101, Austin, TX 78701; (512) 473-2783; fax: (512) 478-6205.

BRECKENRIDGE FESTIVAL OF FILM, Sept. 14-17, CO. Fest presents over 50 programs, incl. film classics, premieres, ind. & doc programs. Fest "emphasizes relaxed informal atmosphere in which guests are readily accessible to filmgoers." Writers, directors & artists attend to discuss work w/ audiences. Audiences of about 2,000. Entries must have been completed or have primary release or telecast between Jan. 1, 1993 & June 30, 1995. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2". Entry fee: \$35. Deadline: June 30. Contact: Kelly Sanders, exec. dir., Breckenridge Festival of Film, PO Box 718, Breckenridge, CO 80424; (303) 453-6200; fax: (303) 453-2692.

31ST CHICAGO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 12-29, IL. Fest is 1 of oldest & most respected competitive int'l film events in N. America. Filmmakers from over 40 countries compete for Gold Hugo award & other prizes. Cats: feature; doc; shorts; experimental; animation; student. TV prod. cats: doc; public access; educational; commercials, etc. Entry fees: \$35-\$100 (film); \$50-\$200 (TV). Deadline: July 7. Contact: Entry coordinator, Cinema/Chicago, 415 N. Dearborn, Chicago, IL 60610-4697; (312) 644-3400; fax: 0784; e-mail: filmfest@wwa.com.

COLUMBUS INTERNATIONAL FILM AND VIDEO FESTIVAL, Oct. 24-25 OH. Competitive nontheatrical fest now in 43rd annual edition offers Chris Awards in 12 divisions w/ about 97 cats total, as well as Bronze plaques, Certificate of Honorable Mention, President's Award, Edgar Dale Award, Benjamin Franklin Award, Christopher Columbus Award & Narrative Screenwriting Award. Entries should have been completed in previous 3 yrs. Cat. winners can qualify for Academy Award in short doc. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4". Entry fees: \$40-\$125. Deadline: July 15. Contact: Joyce K. Long, awards administrator, Columbus Int'l Film & Video Festival, 5701 North High St., ste. 204, Worthington, OH 43085; (614) 841-1666; fax: 1666.

DENVER INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 11-20, CO. Invitational & noncompetitive fest, now in 17th yr, presents best of new world cinema, documentaries, tributes, children's program, human rights (Watchfest), environment, critics' selections, animation, tributes to major film artists, shorts & 1995 special commemoration of 100 Years at the Movies. More than 120 films representing over 30 countries shown & over 50 filmmakers participate.

John Cassavetes Award for achievement in American ind. filmmaking & People's Choice Award (best feature fiction & doc). Annual audiences of 20-25,000. Entries must have been completed in last 18 months & be Colorado premiere. Entry fee: \$25. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", Beta. Deadline: July 15. Contact: Ron Henderson, Denver Int'l Film Festival, 999 18th St., ste. 1820, Denver, CO 80202; (303) 298-8223; fax: (303) 298-0209.

FESTIVAL CINE LATINO, Sept. 21-24, CA. One of 3 fests in US to focus on Latino media arts. Seeks film/video that "reflect the dignity & diversity of the Latino, Latin American & Caribbean communities & experiences." Will focus on works that treat subjects of migration/immigration, youth issues, Latin American cultural & ethnic diversity & Latin American responses to oppression & justice. Fest open to all genres/lengths of work produced after Jan. 1993. Entry fee: \$10 members, \$35 non-members. Deadline: June 12. Contact: Julia Jaurigui, admin. dir., Festival Cine Latino, 346 Ninth St., San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 553-8135; fax: (415) 863-7428.

HEARTLAND FILM FESTIVAL, Nov. 9-12, IN. 4-day fest in Indianapolis w/ ind. screenings, premieres, workshops & special events. Fest's mission is "to recognize & honor filmmakers whose work explores the human journey by artistically expressing hope & respect for the positive values of life." Crystal Heart & \$100,000 total cash prize awarded to films in no specific cats. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Deadline: June 15. Contact: Jeffrey Sparks, artistic dir., Heartland Film Festival, 613 N. East St., Indianapolis, IN 46202; (317) 464-9405; fax: (317) 635-4201.

MESILLA VALLEY FILM SOCIETY presents "This Place: Contemporary Border Perspectives," Sept. 21-24, NM. Fest w/ themes centering around region that both bridges & unites US & Mexico. Fest themes explore SW & Hollywood; Cultural Icons in Film; Regional History & New Visions, presentation of contemporary border issues. Open to recently completed films/videos of all genres by ind. producers & students. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 1/2", 3/4", Beta-Sp. Preview on 1/2". Deadline: June 15. Entry fee: \$5 & return postage. Cash prizes & certificates of merit awarded. Contact: Mesilla Valley Film Society, Box 1139, Mesilla, NM 88046; (505) 524-8287.

METROLAND INTERNATIONAL SHORT FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 12-15, NY. 2nd edition of fest focusing on short works by ind. film & video-makers, w/ exhibitions in Albany, Saratoga, NYC, Bennington & Manchester, VT. Last yr, 36 films were screened over 2 days at Palace Theatre in Albany & 6 selected by audience ballot were exhibited at Anthology Film Archives in NYC for "Best Of" showcase. Entries must be less than 60 min. Entry fee: \$25. Deadline: June 16. Contact: Michael Ellenbogen, Passport Cinemas, 542 Yates St., Albany, NY 12208; (518) 453-1000; fax: 1350.

MILL VALLEY FILM FESTIVAL & VIDEOFEST, Oct. 6-16, CA. Now in 19th yr., fest screens narrative, doc, animated, short, & experimental films & videos. Emphasis is on new work not widely seen, esp. Northern CA premieres. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", Beta SP. Entry fee: \$20. Deadline: June 30. Contact: Zoe Elton, Mill Valley Film Festival & Videofest, 38 Miller Ave., ste. 6, Mill Valley, CA 94941; (415) 383-5256; fax: (415) 383-8606.

NORTHERN LIGHTS INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Aug. 1-6, Alaska. Deadline for submissions has been extended to July 1. See March issue for more details about fest.

OLLIE AWARDS, November, IL. Honors best children's programs. Entries should be geared to children 2-18, not intended for instructional use; US-produced or coproduced; aired originally (local, regional, or nat'l, cable or broadcast) between July 1, 1993 & June 30, 1995. Awards: Fran Allison Award for career contribution to children's TV; may inaugurate Burr Tillstrom Award for young producer of children's programming. Entry fee: approx. \$175. Deadline: June 30. Contact: David Kleeman, director, Ollie Awards, 1400 East Touhy, ste. 260, Des Plaines, IL 60018; (708) 390-6499; fax: 9435; email: dkleeman@linknet.com.

REELING: 15th CHICAGO LESBIAN AND GAY INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, November 3-12, IL. 2nd oldest fest of its kind in the world, fest screens variety of int'l lesbian & gay films. Will take place at Music Box Theater & at Kino-Eye Cinema, Chicago Filmmakers' 200-seat theater. Chicago Filmmakers, 21-yr.-old media arts center, organizes & sponsors event. Deadline: July 15. All formats, genres, lengths accepted. Entry fee: \$20. Contact: CGLFF, Chicago Filmmakers, 1543 W. Division, Chicago, IL 60622; fax: (312) 384-5532; e-mail: chifilm@teecat.com. World Wide Web page: <http://www.videos.com/gandl/>.

SANTA BARBARA LESBIAN AND GAY FILM FESTIVAL, December, CA. Works by/or about lesbian & gay film & videomakers accepted in all cats. Each yr. fest showcases 15 films & 10-15 videos. Entry fee: \$10 & SASE. Deadline: July 15. Contact: Kim Summerfield, Santa Barbara Lesbian & Gay Film Festival, PO Box 21653, Santa Barbara, CA 93121; (805) 963-3636; fax: 9086.

FOREIGN

\$100 FILM FESTIVAL, Sept. 19-23, Canada. Sponsored by Calgary Society of Ind. Filmmakers, this fest accepts low-budget 16mm & super 8 films (max. of 10 min.). Deadline: July 31. Contact: Donna Burwood, CSIF \$100 Film Festival Committee, PO Box 30089 Station B, Calgary, AB, Canada T2M 4N7; (403) 277-1741; fax: 8033.

CORK FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 1-8, Ireland. Celebrating 40th yr. as major noncompetitive showcase for world cinema & Irish film art, fest is particularly interested in art of short film & social, cultural & political docs. Entries accepted in cats of feature films for cinema; feature films & programs for TV; docs; shorts; & contemporary b/w films (competitive section only). Program also incl. "Focus On" devoted to young filmmakers, seminars, exhibitions, schools' program & fest club. Entries must be recent prods not previously screened/broadcast in Ireland & completed in previous 2 yrs. No entry fee, but enclose 10 stamped Int'l Reply Coupons for return of preview cassette. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Deadline: July 1. Contact: Michael Hannigan, Cork Film Festival, Hatfield House, Tobin St., Cork, Ireland; tel: 011 353 21 271711; fax: 011 353 21 275945.

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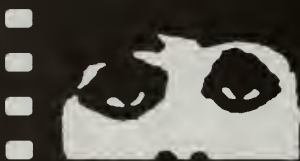
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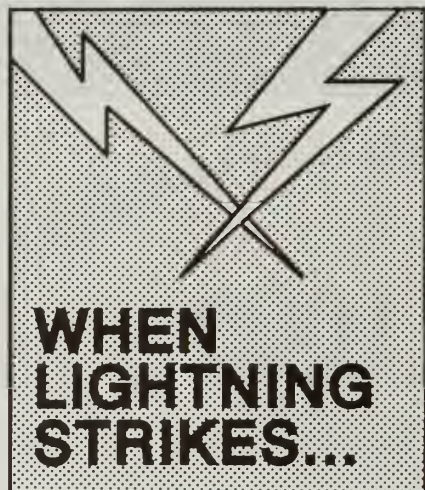
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FESTIVAL, Aug. 31-Sept. 10, Portugal. Now in 24th yr, fest presents, in official selection, competitive (fiction, doc, shorts, films for children & video) & in special programs (homages to directors & nat'l cinematographies) films that show "expressive & aesthetic values." Jury selected from audience at fest. Awards: Large Palmares (trophies & cash); Grand Prix for both fiction & doc; Short Film prize; 3 Silver Prizes (best directing, script, image, acting, sound track, music); Environment Prize, Women's Prize; City of Figueira da Foz Prize (best 1st or 2nd film); Jury Prize. Many ind. filmmakers from throughout world attend & have been awarded prizes in past). Deadline: July 15. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Contact: Jose Vieira Marques, fest dir., Festival Internacional de Cinema da Figueira da Foz, Apartado dos Correios 50407, 1709 Lisboa Codex, Portugal; tel: 011 351 1 812 62 31; fax: 011 351 1 812 62 28.

LONDON INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, November 2-19, UK. This is 1 of Europe's largest forums for US ind. production. Fest, now in 39th yr, is invitational, noncompetitive & particularly interested in children's films for program prior to fest. Sections: Electronic Image; Art & Experiment; Animation (all of which may incl. US inds); British, French & Italian Panoramas; Africa, Asia & Latin America & children's films. Screening venues incl. Nat'l Film Theatre, Odeon Leicester Square, Odeon West End & Empire. Attended by large audiences, over 700 buyers & British/int'l media. Entries must be UK premieres, completed since Nov. '93. Fiction & docs of all lengths, genres accepted. Fest formats: 70mm, 35mm, 16mm, super 8, 3/4", preview on cassette (pref. VHS) only. Deadline: July 1. Send written info only; viewing tapes will be invited. Contact: London Int'l Film Festival, South Bank, London SE1 8XT, UK; tel: 011 44 71 815-1322/1323; fax: 011 44 71 633-0786.

MONTREAL WORLD FILM FESTIVAL, Aug. 24-Sept. 4, Canada. Now in 19th yr, this FIAPF-recognized fest boasts annual audiences of nearly 300,000 & programming of over 300 films, held in 14 theatres. Over 250 features, 150 shorts from 60 countries screened annually; 2,500 film industry professionals accredited. Sections: Official Competition (feature films & shorts); Hors Concours (noncompetitive official selections); Cinema of Today; Reflections of Our Time; Cinema of Tomorrow; New Trends; Panorama Canada; TV films. Also Int'l Films, TV & Video Market, Tributes. Awards: Grand Prix of the Americas to best film in competitive feature-length section; Special Grand Prix of the Jury, as well as prizes for Best Director, Best Actor/Actress, Best Screenplay, Best Artistic Contribution; Air Canada Prize for most popular feature; Public Prize for Best Canadian Feature; Ecumenical Prize; Prize of Federation Internationale de la Presse Cinematographique (FIPRESCI) & Prix de Montreal awarded for best first film. 2 prizes awarded for shorts. Formats: 70mm, 35mm, 16mm, 3/4". Deadline: July 7. Contact: Serge Losique or Daniele Cauchard, Montreal World Film Festival, 1455 Blvd. de Maisonneuve W., Montreal, Quebec H3G 1M8, Canada; tel: (514) 848-3883; fax: (514) 848-3886.

OKOMEDIA INTERNATIONAL ECOLOGICAL FILM FESTIVAL, Nov. 8-12, Germany. Annual fest offers overview of current film activities relating to environmental topics. Over 300 films from more than 30 countries shown annually. Screenings also focus on topics of special interest such as envi-

ronmental films for children & young people, nature films, environmental television programs, as well as spotlights which change annually, e.g. environmental films from Eastern Europe, Third World, USA, etc. Int'l jury awards 7 prizes. Organizers of newly emerging environmental film fests in Japan, US, Spain, Sweden, Canada Russia & elsewhere have consulted w/ Okomedia. Entries must have been completed after Jan. 1994. Entry fee: \$50 (DM80). Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta. Deadline: June 15. Contact: Heidi Knott, dir., Okomedia International Ecological Film Festival, Habsburgerstrasse 9a, D-79104 Freiburg, Germany; tel: 011 49 761 52024; fax: 011 49 761 555 724.

RIMINICINEMA INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Sept. 26-Oct. 1, Italy. Fest focuses on relationships & exchanges between different cultures & languages. Program includes int'l competition open to feature films never screened in Italy; int'l competition open to short films made by film students; Federico Fellini Award of 20 million lire to young or emerging film director; retros; monographs; 1-person shows; debates; meetings w/ filmmakers; previews. Other awards: Golden "R" plus 15 million lire; Silver "R" plus 5 million lire; Agis-Fice Award plus 2 million lire. Annual audiences of 10,000. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Deadline: June 30. Contact: Gianfranco Miro Gori, Riminicinema Mostra Internazionale, Via Gamballunga 27, 47037 Rimini, Italy; tel: 011 39 541 26399; fax: 011 39 541 24227.

SAINT-HILAIRE DU TOUVET INTERNATIONAL HANG GLIDING FILM FESTIVAL, Sept. 14-17, France. Films related to parasailing, hand-gliding, free-falling, parachuting, hot-air & gas balloons, muscular flying, sailplane, elastic jump, Base jump, kites, all forms of non-motorized flying plus ultralight motorized hang-gliders & parasails accepted. A minimum of 20,000FF will be awarded to winners. Awards: Grand Prix for all cats; prizes for best script, artistic film, doc or news film, humorous film; Special Jury Prize, prize for first film. Formats: 35mm, super 8, 3/4", 1/2", Beta. Deadline: July 15. Contact: Festival Int'l du Film de Vol Libre, Office du tourisme, 38660 Saint-Hilaire du Touvet, France; tel: 011 33 76 08 33 99; fax: 011 33 76 97 20 56.

SAN SEBASTIAN INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Sept. 14-23, Spain. Now in 43rd yr, fest has several sections, incl. Competition (18 features); Zabaltegi (Open Zone, showing 30-40 features); section showing picks from other fests; first films; films by jury member; 4 retros (Spanish cinema, silent films, Gregory La Cava & contemporary filmmakers); Fipresci selection; children's films; Spanish-language film section. Fest accepts features only; narrative, experimental, or exp./documentary shown. Entries must be complete after Oct. 1, 1994 (Aug. '94 for Zabaltegi), not theatrically released in Spain, broadcast on Spanish TV, or shown in competition at other Euro fests. Films shown in original version w/ Spanish subtitles; subtitling is responsibility of filmmaker (check w/ fest for exceptions). Cash prizes: \$350,000 for 1st or 2nd film. Invited directors given round-trip expenses & min. 5 nights hotel. No appl. fee. Formats: 35mm, 16mm; preview on 1/2" only. Deadline: asap. Send VHS cassettes plus relevant info to: Berenice Reynaud, California Institute of the Arts, School of Film & Video, 24700 McBean Pkwy, Valencia, CA 91355; (805) 253-7825; fax: (213) 665-4138; or to: Joyce Pierpoline, 228 W. 15th St., NY, NY 10011; fax: (212) 929-3730.

TOKYO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Sept. 22-Oct. 1, Japan. FIAPF recognized annual fest which annually screens over 150 films, w/ participants & audiences of over 100,000. Int'l Competition accepts feature films completed after June 1, 1994, which are Japanese premieres. Awards: Tokyo Grand Prix, Special Jury Prize, Best Director, Best Actress/Actor, Best Artistic Contribution. Young Cinema Competitive Section was established to encourage young directors. Entrants must have been born after Jan. 1, 1960 & must have directed no more than 3 commercially released films or be making their film debut with this entry. Films must have been completed after March 1, 1994, unreleased commercially in Japan & not have been in any competitive section of other int'l competitive fests. Doc & shorts. (under 60 min.) not eligible. Awards: Tokyo Gold Prize (¥20 million); Tokyo Silver Prize (¥10 million); Tokyo Bronze Prize (¥5 million). Format: 35mm. Deadline: June 15. Contact: Tokyo Int'l Film Festival, c/o Nippon Cine Arts Co., Ltd. 2-5 Honmura-cho, Ichigaya, Shunjuku-ku, Tokyo 162, Japan; tel: 011 81 3 3268 5204/7; fax: 011 81 3 3268-5236.

TORONTO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Sept. 7-16, Canada. Fest celebrates best in recent Canadian & int'l cinema w/ more than 250 films from more than 40 countries presented in various programs, incl Perspective Canada Program, largest annual showcase of contemporary Canadian cinema. Other programs include Galas, Special Presentations, First Cinema, Contemporary World Cinema, The Edge, Asian Horizons, Latin American Panorama, Midnight Madness, Directors' Spotlight, Nat'l Cinema & a recent section devoted to films from Africa & the African diaspora. Sales & Industry Office facilitates meetings between buyers & sellers attending fest; 3-day business of film symposium provides delegates w/ access to influential people in film & television industry. Fest is known for innovative & discovery-oriented programming & annually attracts thousands of industry reps, media & filmgoers. Entries must be completed after Sept. 1, 1994. Short films must be by Canadian producers. No entry fee. Formats: 70mm, 35mm, 16mm. Deadline: June 30. Contact: Piers Handling, Toronto Int'l Film Festival, 72 Carlton St., ste. 1600, Toronto, Ontario M5B 1J3, Canada; tel: (416) 967-7371; fax: (416) 967-9477.

VALLADOLID INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, October, Spain. Main objective of fest is "to show & promote films of artistic quality which contribute to the knowledge of worldwide cinematography." Sections: Official for features & shorts; current int'l cinema; "Meeting Point" for noncompetitive screenings of films from past & present "worthy of special attention"; "Time of History"-competitive doc section. Different film school featured each yr, & several sidebars are dedicated to directors, genres, styles & a view of recent Spanish prods specially for overseas guests. Awards: Golden Spike & Silver Spike to 2 best features & 2 best shorts; best new director, best actress/actor, best director of photography, best doc (cash award of 1 million pesetas). Formats: 35mm, 16mm. No entry fee. Deadline: June 30. Contact: Denise O'Keeffe, coordinator, Semana Internacional de Cine de Valladolid, PO Box 646, c/Angustias 1-2nd fl., 47003 Valladolid, Spain; tel: 011 34 83 305700; fax: 011 34 83 309835.

VANCOUVER INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Sept. 29-Oct. 15, Canada. Founded in 1982, fest is one of N. America's larger int'l film events.

Only features (70 min. & over) that have not been screened commercially or broadcast in British Columbia eligible. About 115,000 people attend more than 350 screenings. Sections: Canadian Images; Dragons & Tigers; The Cinemas of East Asia; The Best of Britain; Cinema of Our Time; Nonfiction Features; Archival Series; Walk on the Wild Side.. About 200 films representing 40 countries shown. Awards: Air Canada for Most Popular Film, decided by audience ballot, Nat'l Film Board of Canada Awards (cash prizes). Overlapping events include annual trade forum, the screenwriter's art, int'l section & special showcase events. Formats: 35mm, 16mm; preview on cassette. No entry fee. Deadline: July 14. Contact: Alan Francy, Vancouver Int'l Film Festival, 1008 Homer St., ste. 410, Vancouver, B.C., Canada V6B 2M1; tel: (604) 685-0260; fax: (604) 688-8221.

VENICE FILM FESTIVAL, Aug. 30-Sept. 9, Italy. Major int'l fest for new work. Venezia LII section presents "feature films considered to be the most interesting & significant at the current time" of all styles & genres. No more than two films daily are screened in competition, & each country may only have 3 films in competition. Int'l jury awards Golden Lion, Special Jury Award, Volpi Cup to best actress & to best actor; jury may also award maximum of 3 Oselle d'Oro awards for three technical/artistic contributions; a Golden Medal of the Italian Senate for film that best underlines civil progress & solidarity & Volpi Cup for best supporting actress or actor. Other sections include Venetian Nights, a selection of "spectacular mainstream films that feature originality & an independence of expressions, investigation into unusual cinematic language forms or that focus on current trends in youth culture"; Italian Panorama; Overtaking Lane, a selection of films by young or well known directors whose work features quality, original subject matter or support for particular nat'l identity; Window on Images, films & audiovisual material "featuring investigation into the language of cinema, the stages & methods involved in story telling w/ images & experimentation including the use of new technologies. Section has following programs: features involving investigation & films d'auteur; short- & medium-length films, docs & animation; special interest material, fragments, screen tests & director's cuts. Accepts 35mm, 16mm & Betacam. All entries must be Italian premieres & not released outside their countries or presented in competition at other int'l film fests. Deadline: June 30. Contact: Dario Ventimiglia, managing dir, Mostra Internazionale d'Arte Cinematografica-Venezia, Los Angeles Biennale di Venezia, Ca'Giustinian, 1364/A-San Marco 30124, Venice, Italy; tel: 011 39 41 5230852; fax: 011 39 41 5204163.

VIPER INTERNATIONAL FILM AND VIDEO FESTIVAL, Oct. 25-29, Switzerland. Strictly invitational fest which presents & discusses developments & new tendencies in int'l experimental & artistic media prods. Int'l program selects about 50 new films & videos from about 15 countries; entries must be of an experimental & noncommercial, innovative & visual based character. 4 awards totalling 20,000 Sw. Fr. awarded. Deadline: July 1. Contact: Dr. Ch. Settele, Int'l Film & Video Festival Lucerne VIPER, PO Box 4929, CH-6002 Lucerne, Switzerland; tel: 011 41 1 271 72 27; fax: 011 41 1 271 72 27.

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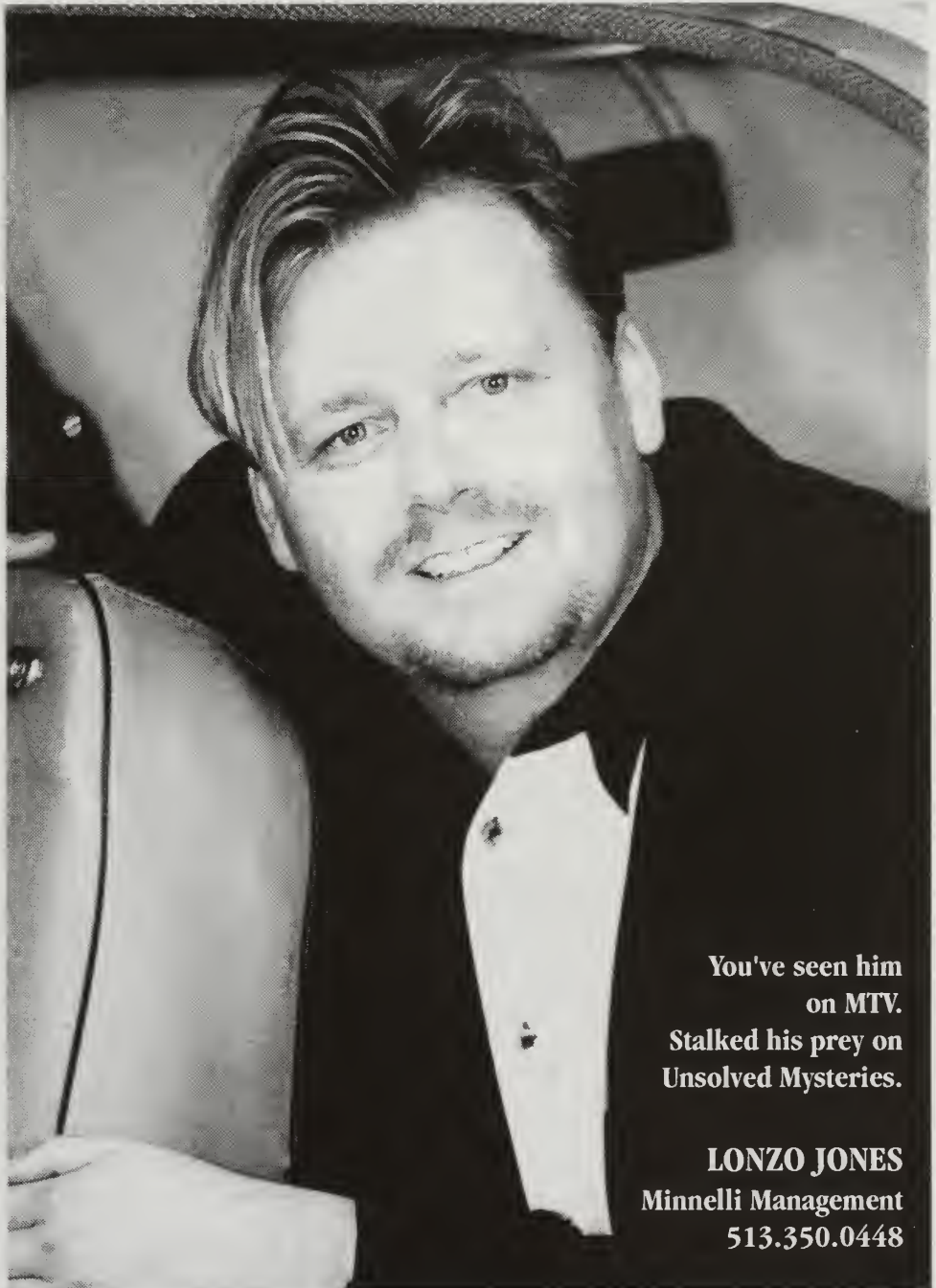
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AUSTIN, TEXAS IND. PRODUCER offering cable access venue to showcase independent films & videos. All genres & subject matter accepted. Shorts & music videos linked by moderator discussing information pertinent to independent filmmakers. Films/Videos running longer than 40 min. may be aired in series of 2 consecutive shows. Please send release & info about film/filmmaker. Formats 1/4" & 3/4" preferable. No payment, but credit & great exposure in valuable filmmaking community. Submit work to: James Shelton, Lee Productions, PO Box 3633, Austin, TX 78764-3633; (512) 440-8902.

ART IN GENERAL seeks video works & guest-curated video programs for new monthly screening series. All kinds of work welcome, from experimental film & video to home videos; doc & activist to public access works. Send VHS tape (cued), résumé &/or brief statement & SASE. For more info, call Joanna Spitzner (212) 219-0473.

ART ON FILM DATABASE wants to know: Have you produced film, video or video disc on visual arts? Send info on prod. to Program for Art on Film Database, computer index to over 19,000 prods on visual arts. Interested in prods on all visual arts topics, & welcomes info on prods about artists of color & multicultural art projects. Send info to: Art on Film

at Columbia University, 2875 Broadway, 2nd fl., NY, NY 10025; (212) 854-9570; fax: -9577.

BLACK ENTERTAINMENT TELEVISION seeks films & videos by black ind. makers, directors, or producers for "Black Vision" portion of Screen Scene, weekly 1/2-hr. show that previews TV lineup & latest theatrical releases. For more info, contact: Screen Scene, BET, 1899 9th St. NE, Washington, DC 20018; (202) 608-2800

CHARISMATIC MASSES is seeking work for possible screening on local TV show exploring alternative media art. Videos, film, animation & performances in all genres accepted. Students encouraged to submit. Send work on 3/4", Hi8, 1/2" video, résumé, artist statement, SASE, SAS mailer for tape return. Fee: \$5/tape to: Charismatic Masses, Justine Wood or Cary Peppermint, c/o Syracuse University, Art Media Studies, 102 Shaffer Art Bldg., Syracuse, NY 13244; (315) 443-1294.

CINEMA VIDEO, monthly showcase of works by ind. video- & filmmakers, seeks S-VHS or VHS submissions of any style, content, or length. Utilizing high-end projector, selected videos are projected onto 10.5' x 14' screen. Monthly shows are collections of several artists' videos, but occasionally features are shown as special events when work merits it. Cinema Video is prod. of Velvet Elvis Arts Lounge Theater in Seattle, WA, non-profit fringe theater. Send submissions to: Kevin Picolet, 2207 E. Republican, Seattle, WA 98112, or call Kevin for info at (206) 323-3307.

CINEQUEST, weekly, half-hour TV series profiling best of ind. cinema & video from US & around world, looking for films/videos less than 20 min. to air on 30 min. cable show. Work over 20 min. will air on monthly special in Orlando, FL market during primetime. Seeking all genres. Concept of show is to stretch perceptions of conventional TV & expose viewers to scope & talent of inds. Submit on 1/2" or 3/4" video. Submissions need not be recent. No submission limit or deadline. Will acknowledge receipt in 10 days. Send pre-paid mailer if need work returned. Contact: Michael D. McGowan, producer, Cinequest Prods, 2550 Alafayia Trail, Apt. 8100, Orlando, FL 32826; (407) 658-4865.

CINETECA DE CINE ACCION seeks film & video submissions by & about Latinos for regular screening series. Fees paid. Will hold preview tape for 3-4 mos. Formats: 16mm, 3/4", 1/2" video. Contact: Cine Acción, 346 9th St., San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 553-8135.

DATABASE & DIRECTORY OF LATIN AMERICAN FILM & VIDEO organized by Int'l Media Resources Exchange seeks works by Latin American & US Latino ind. producers. To incl. work in this resource or for info, contact: Karen Ranucci, IMRE, 124 Washington Place, NY, NY 10014; (212) 463-0108.

DUTV-CABLE 54, nonprofit educational access channel operated by Drexel University in Philadelphia, is looking for works by ind. producers for broadcast. All genres & lengths considered. No payment; will return tapes. VHS, S-VHS & 3/4" accepted. Contact: George McCollough or Maria Elena Mongelli, DUTV-Cable 54, 33rd & Chestnut Sts., Philadelphia, PA 19104.

EASTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY seeks

ind. prods for nonprofit cable channel in Spokane, Washington. No payment. Any genre or length. S-VHS, VHS, or 3/4". Tapes will be returned. Submit release form/letter & tapes to: Radio-Television Department - MS#104, Eastern Washington University, 526 5th St., Cheney, WA 99004-2431.

FILMBABIES COLLECTIVE, co-op of NY-based writers & directors, seeks new members w/ short films for screening series (16mm, under 15 min.). Filmmakers must reside in NY area. For more info, contact: PO Box 2100, NY, NY 10025 (incl. SASE); (212) 875-7537.

FLIP seeks VHS copy of animation 3 min. or under &/or photocopy or original flip book for exhibition planned for May/June in NY. Send brief bio & SASE for return of materials by May 1 to: Flip, 163 3rd Ave., #297, NY, NY 10003; (212) 254-2812.

FOOTAGE SOUGHT from 1989 women's march on Washington, or any pro-choice or women's lib protests from 1960-1993 for ind. doc on abortion rights. Hi8, home movies; low-budget look is fine. Some pay possible. Kate (312) 935-5261.

GREAT LAKES FILM & VIDEO seeks 16mm & videos for ongoing exhibition of gay/lesbian, Jewish, & women's work. Experimental & animation are sought, as well as work fitting into program on aesthetic/anti-aesthetic. Contact: Matt Frost or Michael Walsh, Great Lakes Video & Film, PO Box 413, Milwaukee, WI 53201.

HALCYON DAYS PRODUCTIONS seeks video segments (1-5 min.) by 15- to 25-year-olds for video compilation show. If piece is selected, you may have chance to be video correspondent for show. Work may be editorial, real-life coverage, political satire, slapstick—you decide. Just personalize. Submit VHS or Hi8 (returnable w/ SASE) to: Mai Kim Holley, Halcyon Days Prod., c/o Hi8, 12 W. End Ave., 5th fl., NY, NY 10023; (212) 397-7754.

HANDI-CAPABLE IN THE MEDIA, INC., nonprofit organization, seeks video prods on people w/ disabilities to air on Atlanta's Public Access TV. No fees. Submit VHS or 3/4" tape to: Handi-Capable in the Media, Inc., 2625 Piedmont Rd., ste. 56-137, Atlanta, GA 30324; (404) 279-1159.

INDEPENDENT FILMMAKERS' PROGRAM, organization of producers, accepting appls from writers/directors who want to work on ind. film to be produced later this yr. Deadline: July 15. For appl & info, send SASE to: Ind. Filmmakers' Program, 6855 Santa Monica Blvd., ste. 207, Los Angeles, CA 90038; (213) 856-9136.

INDEPENDENTS NIGHT!, monthly screening series presented by the Independent Feature Project & the Film Society of Lincoln Center at NY's Walter Reade Theater, seeks features, docs, shorts & almost-completed works-in-progress, which don't have distribution. Have screened Edward Burns' *The Brothers McMullen*, Shu Lea Cheang's *Fresh Kill*, Kelly Reichardt's *River of Grass* & Tom Noonan's *...What Happened Was*, among others. For submission guidelines, send SASE to: IFR, 104 W. 29th St., 12th fl., NY, NY 10001; (212) 465-8200; fax: 8525.

IN VISIBLE COLOURS FILM & VIDEO SOCIETY seeks videos by women of color for library collection. Work will be accessible to members, produc-

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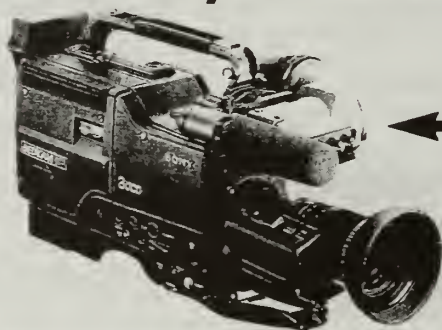
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LATINO COLLABORATIVE, bimonthly screening series, seeks works by Latino film/videomakers. Honoraria paid. Send VHS preview tapes to: Latino Collaborative Bimonthly Screening Series, Vanessa Codorniu, 280 Broadway, ste. 412, NY, NY 10007; (212) 732-1121.

LA PLAZA, weekly half-hour doc series produced at WGBH Boston for & about Latino community, is interested in acquiring original works by ind. film- & videomakers that deal w/ social & cultural issues concerning Latinos. Works between 25 & 28 min. encouraged. Please send tapes in Beta, 3/4" or VHS format to: La Plaza Acquisitions, WGBH, 125 Western Ave., Boston, MA 02134.

METRO SHORTS, program of Metropolitan Film Society, seeks 35mm prints, 15 min. or less, for regular screenings. Subject matter needs to suit audience that would view film w/ R rating. VHS/S-VHS preview tape would be helpful. Two-way UPS ground shipping costs provided. Contact: Michelle Forren, exec. dir., Metropolitan Film Society, 3928 River Walk Dr., Duluth, GA 30136-6113.

NERVOUS IMPULSE, national screening series focusing on science, seeks films/videos. Open to experimental, non-narrative & animated works that address scientific representation, scientific knowledge, or interplay between science & culture. Send preview VHS & SASE to: Nervous Impulse, Times Square Station, PO Box 2578, NY, NY 10036-2578.

NEW CITY PRODUCTIONS seeks doc. works-in-progress on all subjects for monthly screenings. Committed to promoting ind. community by establishing a doc. club, a forum of new voices. Have professional large screen video. Send cassettes to: New City Prods, 635 Madison Ave., ste. 1101, NY, NY 10022; (212) 753-1326.

NEW MUSEUM & the Educational Video Center are seeking recent videos produced by high school-aged youth for major exhibition on Youth, Media & Culture. Looking for tapes in various genres (memoirs/testimonial; narrative; doc; experimental; PSAs) representing diverse youth perspectives on themes such as community, cultural identity, relationships, sexuality, health, youth with disabilities, family, immigration, school, the environment, violence, etc. Works or excerpts no longer than 15 min., produced by youth independently or working in collaboration w/ artists, teachers &/or social service orgs. will be considered. Deadline: June 15 (postmarked). Also seeking interactive computer projects. PC or Mac-based addressing same themes as above. For computer projects, send project description &/or demo disk. For video projects, send VHS, S-VHS or 3/4" tapes w/ SASE to: Brian Goldfarb, The New Museum of Contemporary Art, 583 Broadway, NY, NY 10012.

NEWTON TELEVISION FOUNDATION seeks proposals on ongoing basis from ind. producers. NTF is nonprofit foundation collaborating w/ ind. producers on docs concerning contemporary issues. Past works have been broadcast on local & national public TV, won numerous awards & most are currently in distribution in educational market. Contact NTF for

details: 1608 Beacon St., Waban, MA 02168; (617) 965-8477; ntf@tmn.com; walshtnf@aol.com

NYU TV, channel 51 in NYC, is offering opportunities for inds to showcase finished films & videos. Submit materials to: Linda Noble, 26 Washington Place, 1st fl., NY, NY 10003.

OFFLINE, hour-long, biweekly, national public-access show, seeks ind. & creative works. Submissions should be 3/4", S-VHS or VHS & should not exceed 20 min. (longer works will be considered for serialization). For more info, contact: Greg Bowman, 203 Pine Tree Rd., Ithaca, NY 14850; (607) 272-2613. e-mail: 72137.3352@compuserve.com.

PLANET CENTRAL TELEVISION seeks broadcast-quality films, videos & animation censored by US TV as too controversial or political. Bonus considerations for submissions that are smart, funny, sexy & exhibit irreverent attitude. Send tape to: Jay Levin, director of program acquisitions, Planet Central Television, 309 Santa Monica Blvd., ste. 322, Santa Monica, CA 90401; (310) 458-4588.

REEL TIME AT P.S. 122, ongoing quarterly screening series, is accepting submissions of recent ind. film & video works for 1995 season. Exhibition formats include S-8, 16mm, 3/4" & VHS. Send VHS submission tapes, written promotion & return postage to: Curator, Reel Time, P.S. #122, 150 1st Ave., NY, NY 10009; (212) 477-5829 (x327).

RIGHTS & WRONGS, weekly, nonprofit human rights global TV magazine series scheduled to resume broadcast in February seeks story ideas & footage for upcoming season. Last yr. 34 programs covering issues from China to Guatemala were produced. Contact: Danny Schechter or Rory O'Connor, exec. producers, The Global Center, 1600 Broadway, ste. 700, NY, NY 10019; (212) 246-0202; fax: 2677.

REBIS GALLERIES seeks works by artists working in video/film & computers. All subjects considered. Formats should be in VHS/Beta, 8mm, S-8, 16mm. For computers 3.5 disks in PC or low density Amiga files. Contracts to be negotiated. Contact: Rebis Galleries, 1930 S. Broadway, Denver, CO 80210; (303) 698-1841.

REGISTERED seeks experimental & non-narrative videos about consumerism &/or modern ritual for nationally touring screening. Send VHS for preview w/ SASE & short description to: Registered, Attn.: Joe Sola, PO Box 1960, Peter Stuyvesant Station, 432 E. 14th St., NY, NY 10009.

SHORT FILM & VIDEO: All genres, any medium, 1 min. to 1 hr. Unconventional, signature work in VHS or 3/4" for nat'l broadcast! Submit to: EDGE TV, 7805 Sunset Blvd., ste. 203, Los Angeles, CA 90046.

SCULPTURE CENTER GALLERY invites video artists to submit installation concepts for new video program. Emerging & mid-career artists w/o affiliation should submit résumé, narrative description, documentation of previous work on VHS tape, slides or photos. (incl. SASE) to: Sculpture Center, 167 E. 69th St., NY, NY 10021.

STATEN ISLAND COMMUNITY TELEVISION PRODUCER seeks experimental works, all subjects, by ind. video & film artists. The more explicit, the better; film & video on 3/4" preferred, but 1/2" &/or

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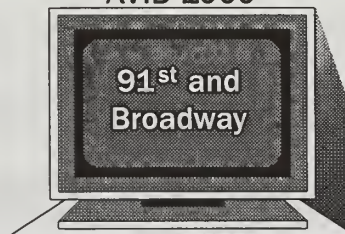
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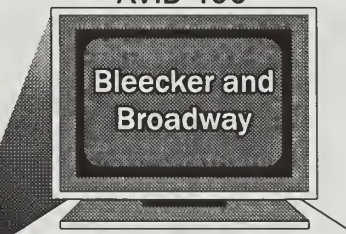
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THE INDEPENDENT FILM CHANNEL 34 seeks shorts, experimental films, docs, animation for TV broadcast & CD-ROM titles. Send 1/2" or 3/4" tapes to: Maureen World, Precis Entertainment Inc. 1 Irving Pl, ste. P20F, NY, NY 10003; (212) 529-9687.

TOXIC TELEVISION seeks broadcast-quality, creative video shorts (under 10 min.) for alternative TV experience. Looking for works in animation, puppetry, experimental, computers, etc. Send VHS or 3/4" tape, SASE & résumé to: Tom Lenz, 12412 Belfran St., Hudson, FL 34669.

UNQUOTE TELEVISION, 1/2-hr program dedicated to exposing new, innovative film & video artists, seeks ind. doc, narrative, experimental, performance works under 28 min. Reaches 10 million homes via program exchange nationwide. 1/2" & 3/4" dubs accepted. Submit to: Unquote TV, c/o DUTV, 33rd & Chestnut St., Philadelphia, PA 19104; (215) 895-2927.

URBAN INSTITUTE FOR CONTEMPORARY ARTS is accepting video & 16mm film in all genres for next season of programming. Fee paid if accepted. Send VHS tape w/ SASE to: Film Committee, UTICA, 88 Monroe Ave. NW, Grand Rapids, MI 49503.

VIEWPOINTS, KQED's showcase of ind. point-of-view works, seeks films & videos expressing "strong statements on important subjects." Submit VHS or 3/4" tapes (1 1/2 hr. length preferred) to: Greg Swartz, Manager of Broadcast Projects & Acquisitions, KQED, 2601 Mariposa St., San Francisco, CA 94110; (415) 553-2269.

WEIRD TV, satellite TV show airing weekly on Telstar 302, specializes in alternative viewing. Will consider works of 3 min. max., animation or shorts. Submit work to: Weird TV, 1818 W. Victory, Glendale, CA 91201; (818) 637-2820.

WORLD AFRICAN NETWORK (WAN), first premium cable network for people of African descent worldwide, is accepting submissions for 1995 launch. Featuring films, docs, shorts, news & info, children's programs, sports, concerts, drama series & sitcoms. Send to: Eleven Piedmont Center, ste. 620, Atlanta, GA 30305; (404) 365-8850; fax: 8350.

WOMEN OF COLOR in Media Arts Database seeks submissions of films & videos for database that incl. video filmographies, bibliographical info & data. Contact: Dorothy Thigpen, Women Make Movies, 462 Broadway, 5th fl., NY, NY 10013.

WYOU-TV, cable-access station in Madison, WI, seeks music-related videos for weekly alternative music show. Send 1/2" or 3/4" tapes. No payment; videos credited. Contact: WYOU-TV, 140 W. Gilman St., Madison, WI 53703.

XTV, new, ind. cable TV channel, seeks student & ind. works from around country. For more info, call: Otto Khera (602) 948-0381.

YOUNG BLACK CINEMA III, November 1995 at the Public Theatre, NYC. Highly publicized & successful ongoing series of short works by African-American filmmakers is seeking entrants for this year's program. 16mm, 35mm films up to 40 min.



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AFTERIMAGE, publication of the Visual Studies Workshop, seeks new editor. Applicants must have strong commitment to contemporary media & visual arts, established editorial & writing skills & experience working in nonprofit environment. Requires editorial & administrative duties, incl. development & fundraising. Job also incl. adjunct teaching position at the State University of NY at Brockport. Send résumé, letter, writing samples & statement describing vision for future of *Afterimage* to: Nathan Lyons, director, Visual Studies Workshop, 31 Prince St., Rochester, NY 14607.

ASSISTANT/ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR position in Video beginning Fall 1995. Applicants should have Ph.D. or Masters w/ at least 3 yrs professional experience. Appls should incl. vitae & 3 references. Send to: Dr. Ted Schwalbe, chair, Dept. of Communications, McEwan Hall Room 326, SUNY College at Fredonia, Fredonia, NY 14063. EOE/AA.

DIRECTOR/WRITER: Manhattan educational publishing company producing training videotapes on variety of subjects seeks freelance directors for future projects. Prior experience need not incl. educational work, but must show ability to convey info in structured, entertaining way. Send background info, résumé & VHS demo reel to: HSSC, PO box 466, Bowling Green Station, NY, NY 10027.

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER will help inds find outlets for product. Finished works only incl. films, docs, TV pilots & other quality product. Please send work on VHS to: John Gabriel Matonti, executive producer; c/o Matonti Enterprises, Inc., 26 Lake Shore Dr., Montville, NJ 07045.

FILM/VIDEO ARTS has internships avail. in NYC. Minimum 6-mo. commitment. In exchange for at least 16 hrs/wk. of work, interns receive free media courses, access to equipment & postprod. facilities at nonprofit media arts center. Appls. must have plan for ind. project. Film/video knowledge helpful. Deadline: Ongoing. Contact: Intern Program, Film/Video Arts, 817 Broadway, 2nd fl., NY, NY 10003; (212) 673-9361.

HERE is looking for technical assistant for upcoming The American Living Room fest. Must be able to run 8mm, 16mm & 3-tube video projectors. Fest takes place every Thurs. evening through July & Aug. Send résumé to: HERE, 145 Ave. of the Americas, Frnt. 1, NY, NY 10013.

NORTH CAROLINA SCHOOL FOR THE ARTS is looking for professional filmmakers for the faculty of the School of Filmmaking. Individuals w/ professional experience in screenwriting, directing, prod. design, cinematography, nonlinear film editing, postprod., physical prod. & screen acting should apply. Please send letter of interest, résumé, & 3 references to: Search Committee, School of Filmmaking, North Carolina School of the Arts, PO Box 12189, Winston-Salem, NC 27117-2189; (910) 770-1330; fax: 1339.

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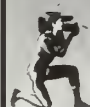
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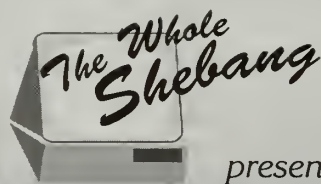
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HUMANITIES PROJECTS IN MEDIA administered by NEH has deadline of Sept. 1996 (specific day not yet avail.) for projects beginning after April 1, 1995. 20 copies of appl. required on or before deadline. For appl., guidelines, write: National Endowment for the Humanities, Division of Public Programs, Humanities Projects in Media, rm. 420, 1100 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20506; (202) 606-8278.

ILLINOIS ARTS COUNCIL (IAC) SPECIAL ASSISTANCE ARTS PROGRAM: Matching grants of up to \$1,500 avail. to Illinois artists for specific projects. Activities that may be funded are: registration fees & travel to attend conferences, seminars, or workshops; consultant fees for resolution of specific artistic problem;; exhibits, performances, publications, screenings; materials, supplies, or services. Funds awarded based on quality of work submitted & impact of proposed project on artist's professional development. Appl. must be received at least 8 wks. prior to project starting date. Degree students are not eligible to apply. Call (312) 814-6750.

JAPAN FOUNDATION is providing film prod. support to experienced ind. or corp. for prod. of films, TV programs, or other a/v materials that further understanding of Japan & Japanese culture abroad. Contact: Japan Foundation, 152 W. 57th St., 39th fl., NY, NY 10019; (212) 489-0299.

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MEDIA ALLIANCE assists NYC artists & nonprofit organizations in using state-of-art equipment, post-prod. & prod. facilities at reduced rates. Contact: Media Alliance, c/o WNET, 356 W. 58th St., NY, NY 10019; (212) 560-2919.

NY FOUNDATION FOR THE ARTS awards Artists' Fellowships to individual NY artists. Applicants must be 18 year & older, resident of NY for at least 2 yrs. Cannot be grad or undergrad student, NYFA recipient of last 3 yrs, or employee or board member of foundation. For more info, call NYFA at (212) 366-6900.

PIFVA SUBSIDY PROGRAM: Facilitates completion of ind., non-commercial film, video or audio works produced by PIFVA members. Program supports completion of work, w/ services obtained at below commercial rates, although grants will be considered towards works in earlier stages. 2 hrs of on-line editing time on Media 100 also avail. Grants, paid directly to facilities, average \$500; max. \$1,000 Administered in 4 rounds throughout yr. Next deadline: June 1. Can review appls w/ staff before submitting. Call for forms & guidelines. (215) 895-6594; fax: 6562.

POLLOCK-KRASNER FOUNDATION gives financial assistance to artists of recognizable merit & financial need working as mixed-media or installation artists. Grants awarded throughout yr., \$1,000-\$30,000. For guidelines, write: Pollock-Krasner Foundation, 725 Park Ave., NY, NY 10021.

PRINCESS GRACE FOUNDATION-USA makes awards to thesis film students enrolled in accredited film programs. Please write to determine if your school/university is eligible to apply. Jennifer Reis, director of Grants Programs, Princess Grace Foundation, 725 Park Ave., NY, NY 10021.

THE RESIDENCY PROGRAM at the Experimental Television Center is accepting applications. Program offers artists opportunity to study the techniques of video image in intensive 5-day residency program. Artists work on variety of cutting-edge and hi-tech equipment. Program is open to all experienced video artists. Appls must incl. résumé & project description, as well as a videotape of recent work (if you are a first time applicant), either 3/4" or VHS formats w/ SASE if you wish work returned. For more info write: ETC Ltd., 109 Lower Fairfield Rd., Newark Valley, NY 13811; (607) 687-4341.

VISUAL STUDIES WORKSHOP MEDIA CENTER in Rochester, NY, accepts proposals on ongoing

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WRITERS WORKSHOP NATIONAL SCRIPT-WRITING CONTEST is accepting scripts from throughout US. 5 to 6 winners will be chosen to receive \$500 cash award. Winners also receive free tuition for critical evaluation of scripts before panel of motion picture agents, producers, writers, & directors. This program continues throughout year. For submission info, send legal size SASE w/ 60¢ postage to: Willard Rogers, Writers Workshop National Contest, PO Box 69799, Los Angeles, CA 90069; (213) 933-9232.

YADDO invites appls. from film/video artists for residencies of 2 wks to 2 months at multi-disciplinary artists' community in Saratoga Springs, NY. Deadlines: Aug. 1 (Oct. -May) & Jan. 15 (May-Feb.). Artistic merit is the standard for judgement. For more information, write The Admissions Committee, PO Box 395, Saratoga Springs, NY, 12866; or call (518) 584-0746

ERRATA

A notice about the *New Television* series that ran in the March 1995 issue of *The Independent* included misinformation regarding the station producer, telephone, fee-per-minute & call for programming. *New Television* is not seeking tapes at this time. The 1995 season has been completed & will be distributed to public television stations via the American Program Service. The release date is July 1. Call your local station to ask for a broadcast schedule. For further info, call Susan Dowling, exec. producer, at (617) 492-8455. *The Independent* apologizes for this error.

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BY MARTHA
WALLNER

Rocky Mountain Outreach

Colorado-based members have been parleying regional activity over the past few months. At press time, they planned to meet with Senator Ben Nighthorse Campbell (D-CO) during the April Congressional recess to discuss their concerns for the future of federal support for CPB and ITVS. If you live in Colorado and would like to find out more about these efforts, contact board member Diane Markrow at (303) 449-7125.

Menage a Trois

The March networking meeting that brought together members of Film Arts Foundation, the Independent Documentary Association, and AIVF in Los Angeles was so successful that another meeting was scheduled for late April. At the March meeting a phone-tree was created, which will be activated before key legislative votes. Attendees were encouraged to contact their reps in support of continued federal funding of the NEA, CPB, and ITVS. They were also asked to contact CPB officials in support of ITVS, which is funded through the CPB budget. There was some discussion of organizing a press conference with well known Hollywood types in support of reauthorization of CPB and ITVS. For more information contact Lew Lee at (213) 661-1380.

The Mother of All Mailing Lists

Radical right organizations like the Christian Coalition are infamous for the size of their mailing lists and their ability to mobilize constituents on a dime against the programs and policies that we support. AIVF and a number of arts organizations, including the National Campaign for Freedom of Expression, the National Association of Artist's Organizations and NAMAC are joining together to form one big mailing list to be used specifically for advocacy purposes. The list, which cross references each address with the appropriate Congressional district and representatives has

60,000 names so far. To add to this list contact: National Campaign for Freedom of Expression at (202) 393-2787.

Spot News

The Chicago Arts Strikeforce has produced a 30-second video spot which denounces the NEA's cancellation of the regional regrant programs and urges viewers to get involved with local arts advocacy in Chicago. The spot is being shown at various venues including training workshops at the Center for New Television and festivals such as Women in the Directors Chair. For more information contact: Nalani McClendon, Center for New Television at (312) 951-6868.

Is Lobbying Enough?

Concerned with the relatively marginal political clout of independent producers and the crisis mode of most advocacy for the field, some New York-area members called a meeting in mid-April to discuss the development of a longer-term advocacy strategy. The meeting's convenors discussed coalition building, the articulation of a broad vision for media policy, and promotion of independent work. Contact the AIVF office for ongoing activities.

ERRATA

The advocacy flyer "Cry 'Foul' Now," reproduced in the April 1995 issue of *The Independent*, was created by the Chicago Arts Strikeforce, a coalition of arts advocacy groups, with the cooperation of Kartemquin Films. Credit to the Chicago Arts Strikeforce was omitted. We regret the oversight.

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ON CULTURE AND POWER

BY RUBY LERNER

Editor's note: The following is excerpted from AIVF executive director Ruby Lerner's presentation at the public forum "New York City and the Contract on America," a speak-out on the proposed governmental budget cuts held on March 22 at New York University.

I was pleased to be asked to be part of today's event, because quite often the arts function in isolation from concerns about cuts to education, health care, and welfare, when they are, in fact, very much a part of the same assault on tolerance and economic and political equity.

I want to talk a little about why the arts have been such a lightning rod, since in actual dollar terms what is at stake is a relatively small portion of the local, state, and federal governments' budgets.

Taken as a whole, the picture is quite grim for the arts in America right now. Not surprisingly, it is most grim for individual artists and small arts organizations. What that means, in practice, is that we are experiencing nothing less than a wholesale assault on the voices of women, low income artists, artists of color, gay and lesbian artists, and artists representing aesthetic or political points of view that are not acceptable to those in power.

Why the attacks on the arts, and why the ferocious attacks on individual artists? Why are little ole artists so terrifying to big ole politicians? First, it is critical to understand that this debate is *not about money*. It is about shutting down access to the means of production and shutting down the distribution venues that provide access to a diversity of artistic visions and voices. The arts are threatening because they, like the academy, foster critical thinking; they challenge the status quo. So naturally they present problems to those with a vested interest in preserving their power.

And actually, they are right. There is a strong relationship between culture and power. I think Pat Buchanan actually understands this better than many of our arts supporters. If you accept that women's voices, the voices of people of color, of low income or gay and lesbian artists are as aesthetically and culturally valid as the voices of what we call the dominant culture, then eventually you must also begin to accept as valid the sharing of economic and political power as well. In many respects, the deeply entrenched power structure in this country is in a life and death fight for survival with supremacy. That's why this battle is so impor-

tant to them.

In May 1989 Pat Buchanan, now a Presidential hopeful, wrote in the *Washington Times*, "While the Right has been busy winning primaries and elections, cutting taxes and funding anti-communist guerrillas abroad, the Left has been quietly seizing all the commanding heights of American art and culture." Quoting James Cooper, editor of the *American Arts Quarterly*, he goes on to say, "American churches, business corporations, and government and educational institutions have...meekly embraced without protest a nihilistic, existential relativist, secular humanist culture they profess to abhor.... Conservatives and the religious community that comprise the vast middle American population should actively support those artists that advocate the same values and ideas as they do. They should also choose to withdraw support and funding from the modernist culture they profess to despise. In short, they should do what the liberals did long ago...capture the culture."

Although Buchanan wrote that article in 1989, the seeds were planted long before that, at least at the beginning of the Reagan years in the early eighties by right-wing thinktanks like the Heritage Foundation. So the stage was set at least 15 years ago for what is happening now. In the view of the Heritage Foundation, the only appropriate role for a federal agency is to support what they refer to as our "national treasures." Of course, they mean buildings, not people, and in most cases, they mean the arts organizations that exhibit or perform work by artists long dead. The only good artist to them is a dead one, and it helps if they are also from some other country.

They would probably agree that it is important for everyone to have access to the cultural products of these kinds of institutions. There are a lot of assumptions about how exposure to opera, ballet, symphony, and so on should be part of the civilized life, and that no one should be denied access based on income or race. This is a reasonable goal, as far as it goes.

But what they cannot and will not tolerate is the companion ideal of cultural equity, which asserts that the cultural productions of a diversity of cultures and viewpoints are equally worthy of being promoted and shared throughout the broader culture.

The "culture wars," as they have been dubbed, are always fought on the margins, around work that may be uncomfortable, work that many of us may have difficulty standing up for and defending as being worthy of public support. But we must mount vigorous defenses, or we will allow a climate of general intolerance to grow and spread.

In this climate, as reported in *People* for the American Way's latest *Artsave* publication, a cellist in California demanded that the local orches-

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tra cancel its production of *Peter and the Wolf* because she claimed it portrays wolves in a negative light; a parent in Flushing requested cancellation of a production of *Annie, Get Your Gun*, claiming the word "gun" in the title promotes violence; and the county commissioners in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, suspended funds to the production of the respected children's piece *A Thousand Cranes*, about post-war Japan, claiming the play was anti-American and anti-veteran.

The art critic for *The Nation*, Arthur Danto, wrote in 1989, "It is healthy for art to vacate the position of pure aestheticism in which conservative critics seek to imprison it and to try to affect the way viewers respond to the most meaningful matters of their lives."

Responding to the idea that the taxpayer shouldn't be forced to support "uncomfortable" or "offensive" work, he went on to say, "It is very much in the interest of every taxpayer that freedom be supported, even—or especially—in its most extreme expression.... However divided individuals are on matters of taste, freedom is in the interest of every citizen."

I want to end with a message that Czech playwright and politician Vaclav Havel sent to Arts Advocacy Day in 1990:

To Our Fellow Artists:

We know first-hand how essential is a fierce, independent, creative artistic spirit to the attainment of freedom. Through a long night of repression and control, the artistic community in our land helped keep alive the unquenchable flame of freedom. And artists played a central role in helping organize our final transformation to a new democratic state.

There are those around the world, indeed even in those democracies with the longest tradition of free speech and expression, who would attempt to limit the artist to what is acceptable, conventional, and comfortable. They are unwilling to take the risks that real creativity entails. But an artist must challenge, must controvert the established order. To limit that creative spirit in the name of public sensibility is to deny to society one of its most significant resources.

Ruby Lerner is executive director of AIVF and publisher of The Independent.

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THE ECONOMIC ARGUMENT

Editor's note: Filmmaking is perhaps one of the most capital intensive forms of art. Even low-budget films put a significant number of dollars back into a local economy. This was filmmaker Camille Billops' point when she drew up the following list of expenditures for her latest documentary, *The KKK Boutique Ain't Just Rednecks*. The film received \$18,000 from the NEA and \$2,500 from NYSCA. This public support helped leverage six times its amount in foundation and private support. Further, virtually the entire \$204,879 budget was spent on goods, services, and income-tax-paying crew in New York. Which is why Billops sent this list to NYSCA, Governor Pataki, and her elected representatives in Albany along with the message, "Why art and film are good for business."

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camera persons	4,600.00	
sound persons	6,407.55	
car, taxi, air travel	3,213.05	Sears Rental, Avis, Hertz
postage & shipping	783.05	U.S. Postal service, Federal Express
videotape	120.99	Rafik, Studio Film & Tape
utilities	235.73	Con Edison
transcription	412.50	
food	497.47	super markets, delis
film	12,646.27	Kodak
lawyers	1,746.78	
parking	4.00	
copyright search	100.00	
music	450.00	Christa Victoria
stills	524.70	Duggal Color Lab
fees	50.00	
<u>develop/workprint</u>	<u>15,674.59</u>	<u>Du Art Film Lab</u>
	\$91,973.19	



Poor Butterfly, from *The KKK Boutique Ain't Just Rednecks* Courtesy Camille Billops

Postproduction

sound editor	\$5,720.00	
assistant editor	13,320.00	
editor	18,925.00	
equipment rental	7,826.75	M.P.E. & the Editing Machine
stills	4,164.63	Duggal Color
edge numbering	830.11	Code 16, Sound One, Magno Sound
video transfers	5,560.80	DuArt
phone	481.89	
room rent	4,373.77	Cinergy, Deborah Shaffer
supplies	227.38	
insurance	235.60	Republic Insurance
transcription	608.00	
transportation	1,268.19	Hertz, American Airlines
postage	895.00	
petty cash	655.23	
sound to mag	952.77	Sound One, Magno Sound
music	2,470.00	George Brooker
opticals	3,504.93	Camera Research Center
mix & remix	7,385.00	Sound One

add'l camera	500.00	
production assistant	500.00	
negative cutter	3,375.00	Match-Cut
optical tracks	1,355.00	Sound One
end titles	3,071.47	DuArt, Camera Research Center
answer prints (A&B)	11,013.56	DuArt
inter-positive	6,138.64	DuArt
inter-negative	2,975.00	DuArt
inter-neg answer print	1,041.25	DuArt
film stock	432.77	Kodak
promotion	2,479.41	Tri Lon Litho, copy shops
<u>videotape stock</u>	<u>618.90</u>	<u>Studio Film & Tape</u>
Postproduction	\$112,906.05	
Production	91,973.19	
<u>total film cost</u>	<u>\$204,879.24</u>	

funding:

NEA	\$18,000	Postproduction
NYSCA	2,500	Distribution
Rockefeller	35,000	Production
FIVF/Edeleman	5,000	Production
Private Funding	144,379	



MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF) and the Foundation for Independent Video and Film (FIVF) is to increase the creative and professional opportunities for independent video- and filmmakers and to enhance the growth of independent media by providing services, advocacy, and information. AIVF/FIVF recognizes the seminal importance of the expanding fields of media and technology, and advocates the vital role of independents in promoting diversity of vision in artistic, cultural, and social consciousness in the larger society.

UPCOMING EVENTS



20TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION: FIERCELY INDEPENDENT

The Donnell Library hosts a series of conversations: two makers each evening will show their work and talk

about the thrills, chills, challenges and triumphs of the independent life. Each program pairs an emerging young maker with one in mid-career to compare notes and see how the field has developed these past two decades.

June 8: **Barbara Hammer** (*Nitrate Kisses*) and **Cheryl Dunye** (*Greetings from Africa*); Moderator - **Robin Vachal**

All programs at the Donnell Library Center, 20 West 53rd Street, at 6 pm. Admission free and open to the public. No reservation necessary, but seating is limited. Co-sponsored by the New York Lesbian & Gay Film Festival.

MEET & GREETES

These are opportunities for members to meet producers, distributors, funders, programmers, and others to exchange information in an informal atmosphere at the AIVF offices. Free; open to AIVF members only. Limited to 20 participants. RSVP required.

MARCO MUELLER

Director, Locarno Film Festival
Monday, June 19, 6:45 pm

"MANY TO MANY" MONTHLY MEMBER SALONS

This is a monthly opportunity for members to discuss work, meet other independents, share war stories, and connect with the AIVF community across the country. Note: our copy deadline is two months before

the meetings listed below, so be sure to call the local organizers to confirm that there have been no last-minute changes.

Albany, NY:

When: June 7, July 5, 6:00 pm
Where: Mother Earth's Cafe, Quail Street
Contact: Mike Camoin, (518) 895-5269

Austin, TX:

When: June 26, July 31, 6:30 pm
Where: Ruta Maya Coffee House, 218 W. 4th Street
Contact: Amie Petronis, (512) 474-0842

Boston:

When: June 7, 7 pm; July date TBA
Where: Call to confirm.
Contact: Susan Walsh (617) 965-8477

Dallas:

Meetings not set at press time.
Contact: Bart Weiss, (214) 948-7300

Los Angeles:

When: June 6, July 11, 7 pm
Where: Swing Cafe, 8543 Santa Monica Blvd.
Contact: Pat Branch, (310) 289-8612

New York:

When: June 20, July 18, 6-8 pm
Where: HERE, 145 Ave. of the Americas (at Spring).
Contact: Jennifer Lytton (212) 473-3400

Norwalk, CT:

When: June 29, 6 pm
Where: Cablevision, 28 Cross St.
Contact: Guy Perrotta (203) 831-8205

Washington, DC:

When: June 15, 7 pm; July dates tba
Where: Call to confirm location
Contact: Sowande Tichawonna (202) 232-0353

MOVING FORWARD ...

Members are organizing AIVF salons all over the country! For contact information, or to talk to us about starting something in your area, call Pam Calvert (212) 473-3400.

AIVF PARTY IN THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS

Next month *The Independent* will feature its fourth regional spotlight, this time focusing on the Rocky Mountain states. AIVF and Denver Center Media, a division of the Denver Center for the Performing Arts, will cosponsor a party during the week of July 10 celebrating the accomplishments of independent producers and artists in the Rocky Mountains. Ruby Lerner, AIVF's executive director, will attend. Look for details in the July issue or call Diane Markrow at (303) 449-7125.



MEMBERABILIA

There were many AIVF members vying for little gold statues at this year's Academy Awards ceremony.

BY PAMELA CALVERT

Among them were longtime AIVF member and board president **Robert Richter**, whose *School of Assassins* was nominated for Best Documentary Short. **Connie Field** and **Marilyn Mulford's** *Freedom on my Mind*, winner of the Sundance Jury Award for Best Documentary and the International Documentary Association's Best Documentary Award, was nominated for Best Documentary Feature. In addition, **Deborah Hoffman's** story of her mother's struggle with Alzheimer's *Complaints of a Dutiful Daughter* was nominated for an Academy Award in the same category. The film will be shown later this year on PBS. *Hoop Dreams*, the **Kartemquin Films** entry, received only an editing nomination, but was featured prominently on Awards host David Letterman's wickedly pointed Top Ten List, implying that its omission from the Best Documentary category was a gross oversight. Congratulations to the *Dream* team for all their success with the film.

The Independent Television Service (ITVS) has announced funding recipients for its latest round of Open Calls, ITV '94. Those who received production funds include **Christina Craton** and **Timothy Schwab** (Aberdeen, SD) for *The Burning Barrel*; **Xiong Vang**, **Roger Schmitz**, and **Alberto Justiniano** (Minneapolis, MN) for *Portraits of the Cloth*; **Beth Harrington** (Boston, MA) for *The Blinking Madonna and Other Miracles*; **Lisa Lewenz** (Baltimore, MD) for *A Letter without Words*; **Heather Lyons** (Lexington, KY) for *M&M Smith: For Prosperity's Sake*; **Don Howard** (Austin, TX) for *Letter From Waco*; **Avon Kirkland** (Berkeley, CA) for *Street Soldiers*; **Paris Poirier** (Venice, CA) for *Pride Divide*; **Rick Tejada-Flores** and **Ray Telles** (San Francisco, CA) for *The Fight in the Fields: Cesar Chavez and the Farm Workers*; **Jessica Yu** (Glendale, CA) for *Men of Renaction*; **Peter Friedman** (NY, NY) for *Death by Design*; **Su Friedrich** (NY, NY) for *Bedtime Stories*.

AIVF members **Lexy Lovell & Michael Uys** were the recent recipients of major grants from various regional foundations such as the Pennsylvania Humanities Council, the Ohio Humanities Council, the Maryland Council for the Humanities, the Wyoming Council for the Humanities, and the Minnesota Humanities Commission for their documentary, *Riding the Rails: Children of the Great Depression*.

Among the achievers for the 10th annual Distinguished Documentary Achievement Awards presented by The International Documentary Association are **Connie Field** and **Marilyn Mulford**; **Frederick Marx**, **Steve James**, and **Peter Gilbert**; **Alan** and **Susan Raymond**; and **Michael Apted**. In the short category, winners include **Ahrin Mishan** and **Nick Rothenberg**. The IDA's Preservation and Scholarship Award went to **John E. Allen**.

The Rockefeller Foundation has announced the award winners of grants from the US-Mexico Fund for Culture. They include members **Vicky Funari** and **Renee Tajima**.

AIVF member **Laurie Block** has been awarded a visiting fellowship from the American Antiquarian Society (AAS).

The American Film Institute's Robert M. Benet Awards nationally recognize the outstanding achievements in local television programming within the cat-

egories of documentary, drama, and limited budget. The award went to **Jonathan Lee** of NY this year. Finalist recognition went to **Lee Beckerman** in the drama category, **Susan Mogul** and **Lisa De Lucia** in the documentary category.

The first Heinz Award in Arts & Humanities went to documentary filmmaker **Henry Hampton**, founder of Blackside Inc.

Marcy Hedy Lynn, AIVF member, recently won a 1994 CINE Eagle award for her film *Murder Too Sweet*.

Among the recipients of the 1995 John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowships are **Patricia Aufderheide**, **Emily Breer**, **Tony Cokes**, **David Isay**, **Beryl Korot**, **Christopher Munch**, **James Naremore**, **Lourdes Portillo**, and **Abraham Ravett**. All AIVF members, congrats!

Yvonne Rainer was chosen to receive the 1995 Wexner Prize which honors the work of an artist who has been consistently original, influential, and challenging to convention.

Jane C. Wagner's film *Tom's Flesh* was recently honored with the 1994 Sundance Special Recognition in Short Filmmaking Award, the Jury's Choice Award from the Black Maria Film Festival, the Silver Award from the New York Expo, and the Best Experimental Film from the Washington D.C. Lesbian & Gay Film Festival.

Among the recipients of the 1994 Independent Production Fund (IPF) Awards are **Robert Christoffersen**, **Mitchell Geller**, **Jennifer Hoffecker**, **Don Howard**, **Van McElwee**, and **Mark Sawyer**.

Nina Davenport received the September Productions Outstanding Independent Film Award at the 1995 New England Film and Video Festival for her collage of unusual sights in India, *Hello Photo*.

Chief Wilma P. Mankiller: Woman of Power was broadcast on PBS as part of the *Women's Lives* series in celebration of Women's History Month. **Mary Scott** directed and produced the half-hour video on the first female Cherokee chief.

New Day Films has elected new members to its distribution collective. The new members and their films are **Laurel Chiton**, *Twitch and Shout*, **David Goldsmith**, *The Times of a Sign*, and **Jane Gilooly**, for *Leona's Sister Gerri*.

Marcus Hu will be the recipient of the 1995 Frameline Award at the International Lesbian and Gay Film Festival in San Francisco. The award recognizes significant achievement in lesbian and gay media arts.

Boston University College of Communication students **Anaye Milligan**, **William Roth**, **Erik Lee**, and **Amy Rosenberg** received a regional filmmaking prize from the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences. The award was part of its 16th Annual College Television Arts. The students won for their drama *Downtown with the Cat*. **Lynn Hershman-Leeson**, a San Francisco Artist and U.C. professor is to receive the Siemens/ZKM Media Arts Award in Karlsruhe, Germany this May. **Les Blank** will be saluted with a special tribute to his career at the 1995 San Francisco International Film Festival. **Barbara Sykes-Dietz** won a Certificate of Merit in the Religion and Ethics category at Intercom '94, part of the Chicago International Film Festival, for her videotape entitled *Shiva Darsan*. **Danny Plotnick's** super-8 films were screened at Limbo in New York last March.

KRISTEN WILCHA AND ANGELO FABARA

The Foundation for Independent Video and Film (FIVF), the educational affiliate of the Association for Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF), supports a variety of programs and services for the independent media community, including publication of *The Independent*, operation of the Festival Bureau, seminars and workshops, and an information clearinghouse. None of this work would be possible without the generous support of the AIVF membership and the following organizations:

The Center for Arts Criticism, Consolidated Edison Company of New York, John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts, National Video Resources, New York Community Trust, New York State Council on the Arts, The Rockefeller Foundation, and The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc.

We also wish to thank the following individuals and organizational members:

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ACS Network Productions, Washington, DC; Alternate Current, New York, NY; American Civil Liberties Union, New York, NY; American Film Institute, Los Angeles, CA; Ann Arbor Community Access TV, Ann Arbor, MI; Ann Arbor Film Festival, Ann Arbor, MI; Appalshop, Whitesburg, KY; John Armstrong, Brooklyn, NY; The Asia Society, New York, NY; Assemblage, New York, NY; Athens Center for Film & Video, Athens, OH; AVFN International, Inc., Anchorage, AK; Bennu Productions, Yonkers, NY; Benton Foundation, Washington, DC; Black Planet Productions, New York, NY; Blackside, Inc., Boston, MA; Breckenridge Festival of Film, Breckenridge, CO; Carnegie Institute, Pittsburgh, PA; Carved Image Productions, New York, NY; Center for Investigative Reporting, San Francisco, CA; Center for New Media, New York, NY; Chicago Access Corp., Chicago, IL; Chicago Video Project, Chicago, IL; Citirna LTDA Film and Video Productions, Bogota, Columbia; Coe Film Associates, New York, NY; Colelli Productions, Columbus, OH; Columbia College, Chicago, IL; Columbus Community Cable Access, Columbus, OH; Command Communications, Rye Brook, NY; Common Voice Films, New York, NY; MHCC Communication Arts, Gresham, OR; Community Television Network, Chicago, IL; Denver International Film Society, Denver, CO; State University of New York-Buffalo, Buffalo, NY; Duke University, Durham, NC; Dyke TV, New York, NY; Eclipse Communications, Springfield, MA; Edison-Black Maria Film Festival, Jersey City, NJ; Educational Video Center, New York, NY; Edwards Films, Eagle Bridge, NY; Eximus Company, Fort Lauderdale, FL; Fallout Shelter Productions, Mansfield, OH; The Film Crew, Woodland Hills, CA; Fox Chapel High School, Pittsburgh, PA; Gay Men's Health Crisis, New York, NY; Great Lakes Film and Video, Milwaukee, WI; Idaho State University, Pocatello, ID; Image Film Video Center, Atlanta, GA; International Cultural Programming, New York, NY; International Audiochrome, Rye, NY; International Film Seminars, New York, NY; ITVS, St. Paul, MN; The Jewish Museum, New York, NY; Komplex Studio Merdeka, Selangor, Malaysia; Little City Foundation/Media Arts, Palatine, IL; Long Beach Museum of Art, Long Beach, CA; Manhattan Neighborhood Network, New York, NY; Media Resource Centre, Adelaide, Australia; Mesilla Valley Film Society, Mesilla, NM; Milestone Entertainment, Irving, TX; Miranda Smith Productions, Boulder, CO; Missoula Community Access, Missoula, MT; NAATA, San Francisco, CA; NAMAC, Oakland, CA; National Latino Community Center/KCET, Los Angeles, CA; National Center for Film & Video Preservation, Los Angeles, CA; National Video Resources, New York, NY; Neighborhood Film/Video Project, Philadelphia, PA; Neon, Inc., New York, NY; New Image Productions, Las Vegas, NV; New Liberty Productions, Philadelphia, PA; New York Institute of Technology, Old Westbury, NY; 911 Media Arts Center, Seattle, WA; Ohio Arts Council, Columbus, OH; One Eighty One Productions, New York, NY; Outside in July, New York, NY; Paul Robeson Fund/Funding Exchange, New York, NY; Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA; Pittsburgh Filmmakers, Pittsburgh, PA; Pro Videographers, Morton Grove, IL; Promontory Point Films, Albany, NY; Rainy States Film Festival, Seattle, WA; Merlina Rich, New York, NY; Ross-Gafney, New York, NY; San Francisco Art Institute, San Francisco, CA; School of the Art Institute, Chicago, IL; Scribe Video Center, Philadelphia, PA; Southwest Alternate Media Project, Houston, TX; Squeaky Wheel, Buffalo, NY; Strato Films, Hollywood, CA; Sundance Institute, Los Angeles, CA; SUNY/Buffalo-Dept. Media Studies, Buffalo, NY; Swiss Institute, New York, NY; Terrace Films, Brooklyn, NY; Tucson Community Cable Corp., Tucson, AZ; UCLA Film and Television Archive, Los Angeles, CA; University of Southern Florida, Tampa, FL; University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ; University of Hawaii, Honolulu, HI; UMAB/School of Social Work Media Center, Baltimore, MD; University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Lincoln, NE; University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, WI; Vancouver Film School, Vancouver, British Columbia; Veritas International, Elsau, IL; Video Data Bank, Chicago, IL; Video Pool, Winnipeg, Manitoba; View Video, New York, NY; Virginia Festival of American Film, Charlottesville, VA; West Hollywood Public Access, West Hollywood, CA; Women Make Movies, New York, NY; Yann Beauvais, Paris; York University Libraries, North York, Ontario; Zeitgeist Film, NY, NY.

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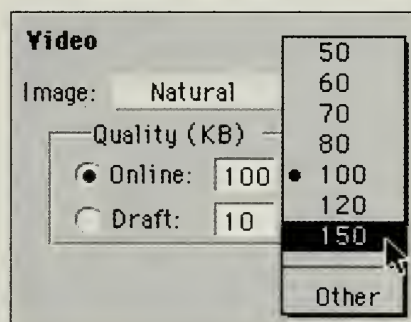
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FILM & VIDEO

#INDEPENDENT
M O N T H L Y

July 1994

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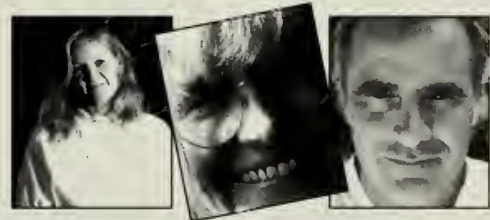
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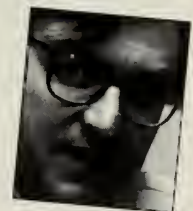
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RIGHTING WRONGS



To the editor:

I am grateful for Veronica Mixon's kind profile ["Danny Schechter, director: *Countdown to Freedom*," May 1995], but some errors crept in, probably because of my rapid-fire speaking style.

Globalvision's *Rights & Wrongs* series is actually seen in over 100 cities on national cable and throughout the world—on many more stations than carried *South Africa Now*. The support of ITVS, public television stations (especially WNET in New York), and enthusiastic viewers made this possible.

Countdown to Freedom was showcased in South Africa on Freedom Day, April 27 on MNET, a commercial station, not a public broadcaster. The music was not done by Peter Gabriel but instead included some of the songs from Little Steven's *Sun City* anti-apartheid music project, which I helped produce, and to which Peter contributed. Other South African music is also used. On a personal note, I am the civil rights movement alum-
nus, not my dad, who was out there with me in spirit.

These are all minor quibbles with an article

that was more than fair in presenting our views. Now, we hope that *The Independent's* readers will help us get our work seen and see it themselves.

Danny Schechter
Globalvision executive producer
New York, NY

WINDY CITY SOLD ON INDIES

To the editor,

I recently read Michael Fox's article "In the Program Director's Chair" [March 1995], which piqued my interest and prompted me to share with you what WTTW/Chicago is doing to support our independent community.

We currently air three programs featuring the work of independent film- and videomakers: *Image Union*, *WindowWorks*, and *Viewpoint*.

Image Union is the longest-running weekly independent producer showcase on public television. It has aired approximately 500 programs over its 15 years, bringing exposure to more than 1,000 independent producers and is financed entirely by WTTW. This series features something different every Saturday night, from documentaries to abstract computer art.

WindowWorks is WTTW's monthly showcase of the best long-form films and videos by independents from Chicago and elsewhere. It features

works that are longer than 30 minutes and that range from documentaries to performance art to drama.

Viewpoint generally airs on Sunday nights and recognizes creative works by independent producers. It presents controversial issues and alternative points of view not often seen on television.

In addition to our programming, we work directly with the independent community in a variety of ways. For example, every other month we co-host a screening at the Center for New Television, a nonprofit media resource center for the independent community. These screenings are generally followed by panel discussions. We also host screenings at the station and manage monthly mailings on upcoming independent programs.

WTTW, like many public stations, supports independent efforts and achievements by airing quality independent programming. We feel these programs stand out as examples of what is working in the Chicago market to serve the independent community.

Thanks again for the article. It is helpful to know that other stations are dealing with similar issues regarding important relationships between public television stations and independents.

Cindy O'Connor
Coordinator, WTTW corporate communications
Chicago, IL

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Documentarians' 10-Year Legal Battle Against USIA Ends In Victory

IT'S DIFFICULT TO IMAGINE A LEGAL BATTLE OUTLASTING the current O.J. Simpson brouhaha. But back in 1985, when the Juice was still bounding through airports in search of rental cars, a group of filmmakers and distributors filed suit against the United States Information Agency (USIA) on the grounds that the agency's method of selecting films to receive the educational status required for duty-free passage overseas is unconstitutional. Ten years later, the prolonged struggle has ended, and independent filmmakers, whose controversial subject matter makes them likely targets of censorship, are pleased yet cautious about the outcome.

"It's a small victory on a much larger issue," says Charles Light of Massachusetts-based Green Mountain Films, one of the many production and distribution companies instrumental in bringing the suit against the USIA. "But I'm glad the agency was forced to back down and admit our films weren't just propaganda."

Earlier this year, Federal District Court Judge A. Wallace Tashima ordered the agency to grant Certificates of International Educational Character to five disputed films: *Ecocide: A Strategy of War*; *Peace: A Conscious Choice*; *In Our Own Backyards: Uranium Mining in the United States*; *Save the Planet*; and *From the Ashes... Nicaragua Today*. Back in 1983, the USIA had denied the documentaries the certificates, which determine whether an educational film is eligible for exemption from export duties. Between 1973 and 1987, the USIA granted 64,148 certificates and turned down only 471. Since non-exempt films cost more to send across the border, the agency's action all but prohibited foreign distribution of the films.

Unwilling to forfeit sales to the overseas market, in 1985 *Backyards'* coproducer Susanna Styron initiated an action together with 15 producers and distributors of films denied certificates, including Bullfrog Films, Green Mountain Post

Films, the International Women's Film Project, and the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVE). The suit filed against USIA's then-director Charles Wick and chief attestation officer John Mendenhall challenged the constitutionality of the agency's criteria in grantmaking certificates. In what was the first legal challenge to the program in its history, they argued that the agency was using its role as a propaganda machine to block shipment and effectively censor films that didn't meet the agency's ideological bent or criticized the U.S. in any way.

Throughout the 10 years of litigation, the agency denied its decisions were based on any political puppeteering. During the proceedings, the USIA twice wrote new rules for awarding the certificates that were twice rejected by Judge Tashima.

A division of the State Department, the USIA's purpose is to give other nations positive information on the U.S. Subsequently, even old textbooks describe the agency as torn between journalism and propaganda. A sampling of the USIA's reasons for denying certificates—which were created by the 1948 Beirut Agreement to free educational materials of duty taxes—read more like U.S. marketing memos:

- On *In Our Own Backyards: Uranium Mining in the United States*: "Both the beginning and end emphasize the evils of uranium mining... and imply that the [uranium] industry is callous to the public..."

- On *Ecocide: A Strategy of War*: "The film attacks the U.S., specifically U.S. policy in Vietnam."



Not in the USIA's backyard: Filmmakers Pamela Jones (L) and Susanna Styron of *In Our Own Backyards: Uranium Mining in the United States*. The film was one of several independent projects to be denied an education certificate—crucial for overseas distribution—by the USIA back in 1983.

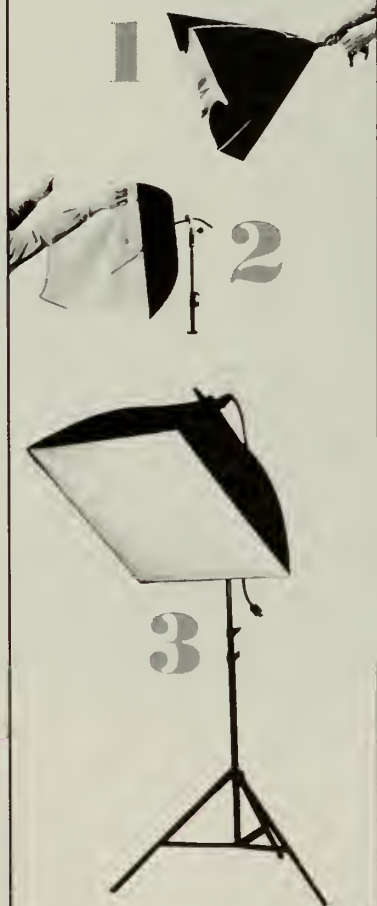
Courtesy Eleventh Hour Films.

Judge Tashima decided the USIA has no authority to deny a documentary film an education certificate because of any ideological standard within the agency or a supposed (or real) bias by the filmmakers. The judge ruled that the USIA must find "widespread and gross misstatements of fact" to deny tax-free status. By early February, the USIA agreed to grant certificates to the films and to use "a constitutional set of regulations," according to attorney David Cole, a Georgetown University law professor who had initiated the case for the Center for Constitutional Rights. Cole says the agency didn't really agree—it was "compelled."

Although the USIA had called upon outside

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experts to determine the accuracy and objectivity of the films, many of them actually worked for government institutions scrutinized in the films themselves. "The basic problem was that the USIA was probably the wrong entity to be doing this job," says Cole. "Their principle is to disseminate propaganda. They took [handing out educational certificates to films] as part of a larger program and would deny a film if it criticized this country. . . They were applying a propaganda or litmus test to these films."

John Hoskyns-Abrahall of Bullfrog Films criticized the USIA's seemingly arbitrary decisions. "They were denying certificates on films like ours and giving them to films with names like *Radiation*. . . *Naturally!*" he says. Bullfrog had distributed two of the rejected documentaries: *Backyards* and *Peace: A Conscious Choice*, a three-minute film that included a Russian soldier saying he didn't want to fight and a quote from Gandhi. Hoskyns-Abrahall says *Peace* was rejected because "the USIA claimed it wasn't educational."

The agency has recently been targeted for severe cuts and is currently being restructured. "Lots of people have been fired," one employee says. It took at least five calls to the USIA before *The Independent* reached someone who had any information on the information agency.

A sample conversation:

"Can you tell me in your words what the mission of the USIA is?"

"Let me transfer you."

Answering machine picks up.

CHRISTOPHER BORRELLI

Christopher Borrelli covers media for The Toledo Blade.

Public Servants Square Off Against Public TV in Europe, Too

While public television in the U.S. faces the threat of severed government funding, public broadcasting across Europe grapples with government intimidation and priorities that ultimately might prove even more dangerous. Although the disputes take other forms and arise from quite different situations, the end result in Europe, as in America, is likely to be less funding and fewer outlets for independent voices and non-mainstream cultural output on public television.

The difference in the European situation arises from the position and funding of public television there. Public television truly is a public entity; the primary source of its funding comes from televi-

sion user fees paid by everyone who owns a television. So, unlike America, virtually everyone tuning in to public television has a financial stake in it. The viewers also have a say in what is seen on public television, at least indirectly, since the elected government appoints the management of the stations. Most important is the central position public television holds in Europe, where private, commercial television is a relatively recent arrival—it hit Western Europe only a decade ago, while to the East its future is still a subject of hot debate. A look at three countries in the heart of Europe provides a sample of how tangled the issue of public television has become.

Germany supports two public television entities, ZDF and ARD. The latter is comprised of a series of smaller stations located throughout Germany's provinces. ARD was at the center of a mid-winter debate that challenged the future of public television in Germany. The row arose from a satirical comedy sketch of vintage *Saturday Night Live* quality. In it, German Chancellor Helmut Kohl calls his old "sauna buddy," Russia's Boris Yeltsin, to discuss the problems of the war in Chechnya, or as he puts it, "Tadjikistan, or whatever you call it." The Chancellor failed to see the humor in the sketch and the next day fired off a letter to the director of the offending station, objecting to "the low point in tastelessness" and presenting a veiled threat to the continued existence of ARD. The confrontation soon evolved into a dispute between Kohl and the Independent Fee Commission over raising TV user fees. With Kohl firmly opposed to increased fees and more advertising, public television there looks destined to be downsizing.

South of the border, in Austria, Gerhard Zeiler,



The Kohl War: Germany's Chancellor recently took issue with a comedy sketch depicting him as less than perfect, and suddenly German public TV is looking at lean times.

Courtesy German Information Center.

On The Record

"I know it's good business for corporate America to be involved in cultural America. I credit my personal growth and my business success almost entirely to the awakening I experienced through an education which opened me to the worlds of art, music, history, and literature—to the treasures of culture. . . . In a world in which many countries support the arts and humanities far more significantly than we do, the withdrawal of government participation would signal that the people of this country have a diminished sense of culture and an impoverished view of our national identity."

—Richard Franke, chairman of the John Nuveen Company, from his testimony before the House Appropriations Subcommittee, February 1995

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the former Director of Germany's popular private TV network RTL, has been appointed to a four-year term as Director of Austria's public television, ORF. No doubt his successful appeal to mass audiences with populist and culturally undemanding programming was paramount to his appointment. "Zeiler was brought in to make Austrian television more like German commercial television," opined a local media watcher. Still holding on to a monopoly position, the two-channel ORF is currently the only game in town. But with private television licenses expected in about four years, the public broadcaster is trying to shore up its audiences and advertising revenues in advance of looming competition.

In one public discussion this spring, ORF was criticized for eliminating live opera and theater performances from its schedule. Responding in what sounded eerily like a Republican Congressman's statement, Zeiler argued that public television should be for the masses, rather than

carry elitist programs of limited appeal. ORF funds independent feature films as a means of securing TV rights (Jon Jost's current Viennese coproduction being one example); now the future for independent productions without mass appeal looks doubtful. Even more ominously, ORF management has its own "damage control" efforts firmly in place. Employees are loathe to speak out on the company policy, either, it seems, for the fear of losing their jobs or as was intended, because they've been warned not to. This "watch your back" attitude extends to the news coverage and editorial comment as well. "Sure they criticize the government," observed one insider, "but they know when to stop."

Thirty-five miles and light years away from the Austrian capital of Vienna lies Bratislava, the capital of the two-year-old republic of Slovakia. A glance at the events over the past year puts a broader perspective on the question of government control of media. Since his late 1994 return to the post of Prime Minister, the Slovak nationalist and not-too-reformed ex-Communist Vladimir Meciar has exercised almost dictatorial powers over the media. Among his actions were the dismissal of the entire board of Slovak Television, demotion of a reporter accused of anti-government bias, and the cancellation of a program featuring the leader of the opposition party and former Prime Minister—a pro-government spokesman appeared instead. Even entertainers felt the wrath of the leader of their country. One popular satire program that pricked powerful egos too well was cancelled entirely by Meciar. Sounds like material for a satirical telephone exchange between Mr. Kohl and Mr. Meciar. But will anyone dare to air it now?

CATHY MEILS

Cathy Meils lives in Austria and writes frequently for Variety and other publications.

Intermedia Arts Finds New Home, New Mission

After more than 20 years as a fixture in the Twin Cities film and video community, Intermedia Arts Minnesota is about to enter a new era, with a new home and a new mission. In a strengthened sense of partnership, Intermedia Arts will let other media centers offer training and production equipment, while it focuses on providing postproduction and exhibition facilities for independents.

The move is the latest in a series of transformations Intermedia Arts has undergone throughout its history. Created as University Community Video in the early seventies, the organization concentrated on providing affordable video equipment rental until the mid-eighties, when public



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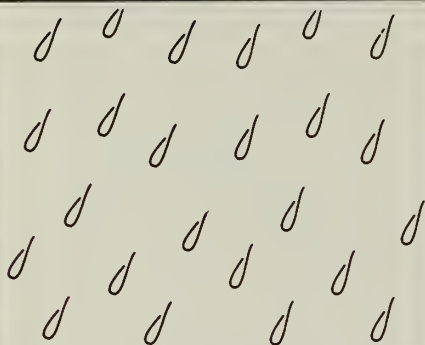
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access television began to fill the same niche. By the time the organization had adopted Intermedia Arts as a new name in 1987, its primary responsibility had shifted to offering University of Minnesota extension courses. Recently, however, budget cuts prompted the university art department to discontinue its video education program. The move severed all school ties, leaving Intermedia Arts with a collection of well worn equipment and no home.

In June 1994, Intermedia Arts took its first steps toward the future with the purchase of a former auto repair garage in south Minneapolis. Faced with the opportunity to design a facility specifically suited to its purposes, the organization had to first figure out just what those purposes were. "This is what sort of prompted us to say, well, let's completely rethink our strategy for providing media artists with technical resources," says Tom Borup, Intermedia Arts executive director. The organization hired producer/director Helen De Michiel (*Tarantella*, *Turn Here Sweet Corn*) to assess the local film and video community's needs and address the question of how Intermedia Arts could best fulfill them. De Michiel solicited input from various media and performing artists, and from other Twin Cities media centers, particularly the Midwest Media Artists Access Center (MMAAC; formerly Film in the Cities) and the Minneapolis Telecommunications Network (MTN).

Surprisingly clear answers surfaced. "Whenever you get two or more people in a room to talk about the future of media technology, you get as many opinions as you have people in the room, and often times, you just end up more confused than when you started," says Borup. "In this case, that didn't happen at all. There was rapid consensus among such diverse people immediately as to what roles Intermedia Arts, MMAAC, and MTN can and should play in the service of media artists."

Discussions determined that public access entity MTN was best suited to train beginners, MMAAC was most able to develop a supply of cameras, lights, and other production equipment, and Intermedia Arts should direct resources toward "artistic output," defined to include post-production and exhibition facilities.

To move in its newfound direction, Intermedia Arts will renovate its building to accommodate screening facilities for multiple video and film formats, including 35 millimeter. Also planned are edit suites that range from cuts-only S-VHS systems to computer-based Beta nonlinear systems and extensive dubbing facilities to help artists bump footage back and forth between formats.

"Filmmakers are increasingly putting their material on video and then digitizing it and cutting it on nonlinear systems," says De Michiel.

"And that opens up exhibition possibilities. Output can mean various things in various ways. There's broadcast, there's exhibition, there's Internet—it can go in lots of different places, whether you started it off on video or film."

Intermedia Arts expects to get its current 3/4" and S-VHS edit systems reconditioned and running in the new building by early 1996. In addition, \$200,000 of a \$1.4 million fundraising goal is earmarked for new equipment, but most purchases are not likely for at least a year. Still, in the interim, Intermedia Arts should be able to offer new opportunities for Twin Cities independents. "We're not useless as we are," says Borup. "We're equipped now. There won't be 400 students competing with the artists for equipment. It will just be available primarily to the artists, in better condition, with more attention to their needs."

SCOTT BRIGGS

Scott Briggs is a Minneapolis-based writer who covers the local arts scene regularly for The Independent.

PEG Fights for Life While Hometown Fest Flourishes

The Alliance for Community Media's 1995 Hometown Video Festival, now in its 18th year, is nearly as old as public access itself. This year the festival, which honors the work of local cable access producers, attracted 1,751 entries from the U.S. and Canada—down slightly from the number received in 1994. Awards in each of 36 categories, including educational, municipal, religious, and videos by children, will be announced July 6 at the Alliance for Community Media's annual conference in Boston. A three-hour package of festival winners will subsequently be bicycled to access centers across the country.

But just because the Hometown Festival is going strong doesn't mean PEG access is, says Alliance for Community Media's executive director Barry Forbes of the public, educational, and government access stations that make up the Alliance's membership. The biggest threat to PEG right now, he says, is video dialtone. If the phone companies are permitted to offer video services, this may cut cable revenues by half, which is likely to reduce fees to access centers by an equivalent amount if not more. Currently, many municipalities request channels and franchise fees (up to five percent of gross cable TV revenues) from cable TV operators who lay cable through local public rights of way. Many towns and counties use the funds to provide facilities, equipment, training, and programming for their citizens. But the new transmission technologies, such as video dialtone and Direct Broadcast Satellite (DBS), bypass local

franchise authorities.

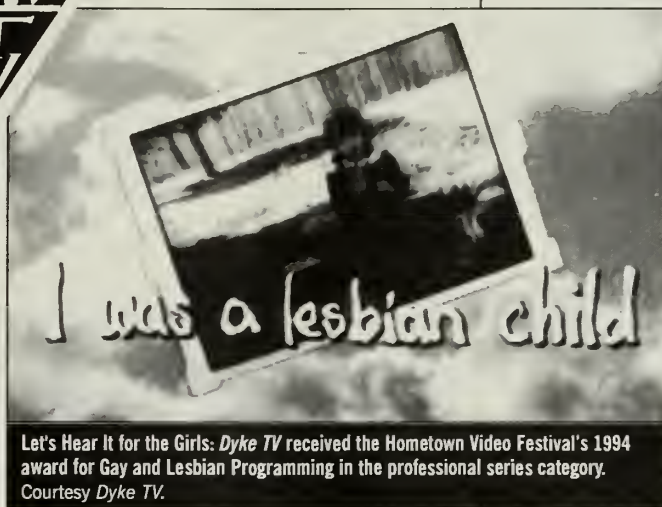
Forbes warns that if phone companies can offer video services without paying a franchise fee, cable companies will challenge the policy in court on grounds of unfair competition. "It's a one-two punch that will be deadly for cable access," Forbes says.

At press time, the U.S. Congress is developing legislation that will impact all forms of electronic media networks. In early May, the Senate Commerce committee passed S. 652, the Telecommunications Deregulation and Competition Act of 1995, which includes amendments that grant PEG access centers reduced rates for video dialtone services and allow some states to impose a "competitive neutrality" fee that would be equal to that paid by local TV operators. The full Senate is expected to vote on the bill in mid-June.

Since the Hometown Video Festival's future is dependent on the outcome of such legislation, Forbes says he hopes to expand awareness of PEG by launching a DBS channel. The Alliance is submitting an application to the Telecommunications and Information Infrastructure Assistance Program (TIIAP) this year to use the Hometown Video Festival as a basis for a DBS channel to be launched in partnership with Fairfax Cable Access Corporation in northern Virginia.

In the past, media arts organizations have entertained the idea of launching their own chan-

nels but programming requirements have proven overwhelming.



The Alliance doesn't have that problem. It holds two-year rights to all programs submitted to the festival. With 1,800 entries a year, Forbes estimates that the Alliance is sitting on a library of 2,000 hours of programming. Forbes predicts that once the channel is promoted, the Alliance will have access to even more programs.

Meanwhile back at Hometown Video Festival headquarters in Sacramento, manager Randy Vari

Dalsen is sanguine about this year's competition. Overall entries have remained fairly steady over the last few years, dipping only slightly this year. Van Dalsen notes entries in the professional category have dropped consistently since 1992, when the festival received 1,065 entries. This year, the festival received only 790. The professional category includes tapes usually produced by access center staff producers. Van Dalsen conjectures that the decline may have to do with budgets cuts within access centers, but Barry Forbes disputes that hypothesis. It's more likely, he says, that professional producers are submitting to the ACE Awards instead.

Contacts: Randy Van Dalsen, Hometown Video Festival, 3001 "J" St., ste. 201, Sacramento, CA 95816; (916) 441-6277. Alliance for Community Media: 666 11th St., NW, ste. 806, Washington, DC 20001-4542; (202) 393-2650.

BARBARA BLISS OSBORN

Barbara Bliss Osborn is a contributing editor for The Independent.

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BY ROBERT L. SEIGEL

E&O Made Easy

A Talk with Entertainment Insurance Broker Dennis Reiff

You've been offered a distribution deal. The distributor asks whether "the rights have cleared" and wants to know if you have "E&O" insurance, noting that the failure to obtain such coverage could kill your deal. You have one question: "What is 'E&O' insurance?"

Simply stated, Errors & Omissions (E&O) insurance allows a producer to indemnify or reimburse a distributor or licensee if that company has to defend against a lawsuit over copyright or trademark infringement or defamation.

Insurance policies are rarely simply stated, however. Dennis Reiff of D.R. Reiff & Associates, an entertainment insurance broker, has helped countless independents sort through the intricacies of this form of coverage. In the following interview, Reiff gets down to the essentials of E&O insurance and other legal life-rafts.

THE INDEPENDENT: When should filmmakers approach an insurance broker?

DENNIS REIFF: When they finally get their budgets together or when they're going into preproduction. They should call around to several brokers and see what they say. Usually insurance is an afterthought to a lot of young filmmakers, since they're thinking about getting the movie done before they're thinking about getting the insurance.

E&O can be a problem if a producer doesn't clear certain rights, such as music rights, or if a story is based on an underlying work, or it's a fictional story based on actual facts. We advise all of our clients that anything under E&O should be

Insurance maven D.R. Reiff. Photo: Patricia Thomson



cleared, though not necessarily purchased, as soon as possible, so that if any problems do come out, it happens during the incipient stage as opposed to when you're trying to close a [distribution] deal. Filmmakers have to fill out an application and there are certain warranties and representations made on the application. The insurance underwriters send the application to their clearing counsel, who will call the production attorney and try to clear such problems at that point.

IND: What is the best way for a filmmaker to handle a project that may be factually based?

DR: Docudrama is one of the most problematic areas for underwriters, since they want to know what the story was based on and how true the story and the characters are to the facts. Certain people may be identifiable who are private citizens, and lawsuits can be substantial. Even if the people bringing the lawsuit don't win, the legal costs can be very high—and that's why you're buying an E&O policy in the first place.

A good entertainment attorney can help avoid a lot of minefields. We had an incident where a writer first said that a script was fictional, and as the process went further along, the story was really based on friends he knew in high school. The writer never got the clearances; he just changed the characters' names. It was a big problem. We had to work out a special deal with the insurance company. There were certain situations in the

script which had to be addressed and changed. We had to work with the writer, the producer, the film's attorney, and the insurance company's attorney. We had a litigation attorney look at the script. It required a lot of legal work, and the policy was written with a higher deductible

than normal.

Insurance companies will often tackle a problem either by increasing the premium, increasing the deductible, or excluding the problem from the policy's coverage. In other cases, a policy will have a normal deductible except for the problem area, which will have a higher deductible.

IND: Should producers and their attorneys review a script during development or preproduction prior to contacting an insurance broker?

DR: The attorney should sit down and have a heart to heart talk with the writer to find out if the story is totally fictional or not. If the story isn't totally or even partially fictional, they should dig in and determine what is or isn't fictional.

We had a script involving a divorce proceeding where there were two famous people. The producer got the clearance from the wife but not the husband. The producer had to hire an attorney to go down to Florida and review court transcripts, so the producer and writer could pluck actual dialogue from the divorce proceedings and use it in the movie. It was expensive to do that.

IND: A filmmaker may not be able to get the appropriate rights or releases from all of the individuals involved in a project's story. What should a filmmaker do at that point?

DR: The story and its characters have to deviate enough from the real-life characters so a situation

involving a potential lawsuit can be minimized, and that's often a subjective judgment on the part of the filmmaker, the filmmaker's attorney, and the insurance company—all of whom have to come to some sort of agreement regarding what is and isn't underwritable.

IND: What are some of the problems concerning coverage for documentaries?

DR: The most common problems we run into is when the filmmakers don't get releases, the use of film clips, and the unauthorized use of music. Some states will recognize a verbal release given on camera and other states will recognize only a written release. Certain filmmakers use film clips under the guise of the "fair use" doctrine, and that's always a debatable point. Filmmakers often use film clips whether for six seconds or six minutes from a famous movie such as *The Wizard of Oz*, and the owners of the film would take exception to such use and could enjoin filmmakers from using the clip unless paid—and documentary filmmakers often don't have the money to pay for the film rights.

IND: Some filmmakers believe that it's acceptable to use a few seconds from a song. How do you address this belief?

DR: With an exclusion, a higher deductible, or a higher premium. This is especially true for songs copyrighted prior to January 1, 1978.

Music is a problem when filmmakers take bits and pieces that may be heard in the background of a shot and never get clearances. We did a political documentary about the Clinton campaign. Throughout the campaign, wherever Clinton or Gore appeared, there was a band that played music. Although the music was in the background, clearances were never obtained. In one case, the filmmakers tried to obtain the clearances for a noted rock musician's song, but he wouldn't give them the clearance. The song wound up being used in the film since it was considered part of the process of making a campaign documentary.

IND: How do you deal with a film that was based on a newspaper or magazine article?

DR: If the filmmaker just takes the facts, there is sufficient case law to protect him or her. It's when you embellish on the facts, such as with docudramas, that you'll run into trouble—not with the principals but with the peripheral people. We had a client who produced a documentary about drunk driving, and the filmmakers were less concerned with the subject than the subject's husband, the neighbors, and the subject's sons and daughters, who could be depicted in a bad light.

IND: If a filmmaker wants to produce a documentary about a famous person such as Mick Jagger, what problems would you anticipate?

DR: Probably not many. A filmmaker could purchase enough archival footage and public domain or licensed film to make a documentary. We do a lot of the *Biography* series on A&E, and the most common problem is that someone is using a film clip that he or she didn't have authorization to use. It all boils down to having to pay for the use sooner or later, and it's usually cheaper paying for it sooner.

IND: If someone wants to produce a short film that will probably just be seen on the festival circuit, should the filmmaker get E&O insurance?

DR: It depends. If the filmmaker has no money, no one is usually going to sue him or her. I don't want to sound cynical, but if there's a "deep pocket," someone is going to reach into it.

WHAT IT COSTS

IND: How much does E&O insurance generally cost, and how much does it cover?

DR: Feature film producers typically have to be able to get \$1 million for any one claim with a \$3 million aggregate [of claims], and a \$10,000 deductible as a starting point. Premiums can run anywhere from \$8,500 to \$12,000, depending on the insurance carrier, with an average of \$9,000 to \$9,500 now (for a three-year policy term).

With documentaries, it depends on the media outlet. We have a special insurance company for public television, which is fairly inexpensive compared to the commercial marketplace. Their policy runs for the term of the PBS license, which is usually three to three-and-a-half years, so it's less expensive for producers than insurance coverage for cable or theatrically released films.

If a documentary is for a cable outlet, the coverage is less expensive than for a theatrical release. The rates run from \$6,000 to \$9,000 on the low end of the scale for a three-year policy term.

Once a PBS E&O policy is in effect, then we can add commercial coverage and it's not much more expensive, about \$750 more or a percentage of the premium, depending upon the licensing contract and its term. If a producer came to us with the basic cable deal without first obtaining PBS E&O coverage, that first run would be considered commercial use. A commercial policy would be required, and it would cost more than the PBS coverage.

IND: Many producers believe that the cost of E&O coverage will get picked up by a distributor once a deal is made.

DR: It's quite a common misconception. The distributor gets E&O coverage to protect the distributor and not to cover the film producer. If you look at some of the typical contracts that producers sign with distributors, producers offer war-



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ranties that hold the distributor harmless from claims, and that makes the producers responsible for their own material. If the producer and the distributor are sued and it's the distributor's policy, the distributor could be covered but not the producer.

IND: The producer would not be an added insured party?

DR: The producer can be an added insured party, but the policy generally covers the activities of the distributor and not the producer. A distributor may buy the insurance but the policy also has to be in the producer's name to get the best coverage.

If the producer has breached a representation and the distributor is covered against such a claim, the distributor could still turn around and bring an action against the producer for the payment of the distributor's deductible or withhold such monies from the royalties and proceeds to which a producer may be entitled.

IND: Many filmmakers want to protect a project's title, which is not subject to copyright protection; however, E&O coverage is available.

DR: Filmmakers have to get a title search report from such companies as Thompson & Thompson or an attorney named Dennis Angel in Scarsdale, New York. They can issue a "neutral" report, which lists every time a title was used, such as in magazines as well as published and unpublished reports, or an "opinion" report in which the service will tell you whether a title is available for a motion picture. If the title is free to be used, the insurance company will insure it. If not, the producers have to change the title or take their chances. These title reports range from \$300 to \$350.

IND: After the initial E&O policy period expires, does the producer usually purchase additional coverage?

DR: That depends on the contractual obligation between a producer and a distributor. I always ask filmmakers what the distribution contract says concerning the term of a producer's coverage. We've seen contracts that state producers must carry the insurance forever, or five years, or two years. We advise the filmmaker to go back to the distributor and see if a three-year term (or less) can be negotiated, since if a film is claim-free for three years, it will probably remain claim-free.

IND: Some distributors will assume the cost of

coverage after the three year term.

DR: Yes.

IND: Does E&O coverage apply only in the United States or throughout the world?

DR: Throughout the world, except for a few of the old communist countries, such as Cambodia and North Korea, and Iran and Iraq. We generally cover Western Europe, South America, and the other major media markets.

IND: How should filmmakers deal with products in the background of their films or videos?

DR: That issue deals with copyright and trademark under E&O. The filmmaker would be

responsible for getting permission from the product manufacturer concerning placement. For example, we had a music video in which a locomotive was used from a very famous railroad company. The railroad company didn't like how it was depicted and withdrew the permission; the producers couldn't use the locomotive.

I'm not an attorney, but it's my opinion that if the product is used innocently in the background, then there shouldn't be a problem, but if the product is used in a manner which degrades the product or puts it in a bad light, then there will be a problem.

IND: What if there is a poster in the background of a film or video?

DR: The filmmaker should first try to get permission to use the poster, and if not, the poster should not be used in a derogatory manner but in an innocent manner.

IND: One of the most common claims must be when someone claims to have written a story or a script used in a film or television project. How do you deal with it?

DR: The more successful the project, the more common it is. We had a TV movie in which, six months after it was aired, somebody claimed that the script was based on a story that party submitted to the movie studio. There was a lawsuit and a settlement but, when it was all said and done, it cost in excess of \$75,000. Except for the \$10,000 deductible, the policy covered the costs.

People will claim the script was theirs, but the lead was a man and not a woman and not at sea but in the desert. It can be preposterous, but you still have to go through the process, whether it involves a one-minute commercial, a music video,

a one hour documentary, or a feature film. The legal paperwork (and fees) can be substantial.

COMPREHENSIVE COVERAGE

IND: What does "comprehensive coverage" generally entail?

DR: Filmmakers have to insure their product—which is the negative film, its processing, and the equipment. They also want to insure their cast, autos, worker's compensation, disability benefits, general liabilities and special situations, such as the use of boats, helicopters, or stunt work. They also have to get E&O insurance for the distributors and exhibitors of the film.

We have a laundry list we give producers and work with them so that the policy can be geared to their budgets and needs.

IND: How do you work with the micro-budget filmmaker who has managed to raise only \$20,000 or \$75,000?

DR: We can offer short-term coverage if it's a small project that can be produced quickly. We have coverage for 30 to 90 days, which is relatively inexpensive compared to an annual policy.

IND: How much does that generally cost?

DR: Liability premiums—which include the negligence coverage that New York City requires before it'll issue you a permit—can run \$1,250 to \$1,350. Protecting the negative is in the vicinity of \$1,500 to \$2,000, depending on the size of the film and use of the equipment. All together, the coverage can run \$2,000 to \$5,000.

IND: As a rule of thumb, what percentage of a film's budget should be allocated to insurance?

DR: The rule of thumb is about two percent, but the lower the budget, the more skewed that figure is. If it's a \$1 million project, it's about two to two-and-a-quarter percent or less, depending on the size of the production and the location. The higher the budget, the less you're going to spend on insurance [proportionally].

IND: What do filmmakers generally fail to address when they approach you for insurance?

DR: Thinking more artistically, filmmakers often don't realize the different aspects of insurance. You have to explain what "negligence" is for the use of non-owned vehicles, such as trucks and vans; also cast insurance, negative insurance, and third-party property damage. Everyone understands equipment insurance, since it's needed to get equipment.

IND: With a comprehensive insurance policy, if a camera falls on a crew member's foot, worker's compensation will cover the foot and equipment insurance will cover the camera if it's damaged.

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What happens when a camera is dropped on a third party, such as a spectator?

DR: The spectator would probably wind up suing for negligence, and that would be covered by general liability coverage and equipment coverage if the equipment is damaged. They are two separate policies, but they're generally acquired at the same time since one covers a [personal] negligence claim and the other covers property damage.

IND: What type of coverage is there to protect the film stock?

DR: You want to insure that the negative is covered so that if anything happens to it, you have the funds to reshoot. The amount for negative insurance is pegged to the film's budget. The most common claims are for faulty cameras, film stock that is no good, the lab screwing up the film, or somebody losing a can of film containing scenes that are the most expensive to reshoot when it's shipped on a plane.

IND: Does a deductible apply to each incident of claim?

DR: A lot of first-time filmmakers don't understand deductibles, which apply towards each and every occurrence. This is especially true when filmmakers return equipment to rental houses, where there is something called "missing and damaged elements." After a 10-week shoot, the equipment houses almost always find something missing or damaged. Since it's difficult to pinpoint the exact date when the equipment was damaged or lost, the filmmaker usually has to pay at one time for all of the missing or damaged equipment. But the deductible applies to each date of claim.

IND: Is the general comprehensive insurance coverage worldwide?

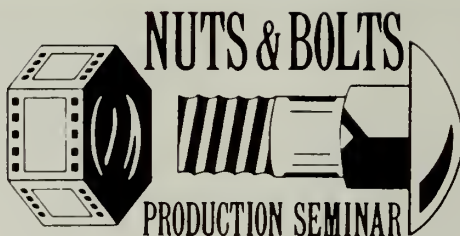
DR: Negative insurance and other general property coverage, such as equipment, is generally worldwide. General personal liability coverage is exclusive to the United States and Canada. If producers shoot beyond the borders, they have to get foreign general liability coverage, which we can arrange.

IND: What happens if a producer takes out a worker's compensation policy in New York and the film is shot in North Carolina? Will the policy cover that situation?

DR: Worker's compensation is something young filmmakers don't fully understand. Worker's compensation is for injuries on the job. If you have a New York-based production company and you go anywhere in the country, except for six monopolistic states, your policy covers you.

Most filmmakers with a substantial budget will hire a payroll company, which becomes the employer of record and gets the worker's compen-

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sation policy for the producer on behalf of the employees. We then put in a contingent worker's compensation policy for those not covered by the payroll company. If the producer doesn't want to use a payroll company, we take out the policy with premiums based on the payrolls and the job categories of the crews.

For those monopolistic states—which are Nevada, North Dakota, Ohio, Washington, West Virginia, and Wyoming—a producer must take out a policy issued by *that state* where for crews hired in these states. The producer can bring cast and crew into these states; you just can't hire residents of those states without a state insurance policy.

A lot of filmmakers think that they are hiring "independent contractors" so that they don't have to get worker's compensation. Wrong. If a producer pays them, they're employees. If a producer issues 1099s, they're still employees unless a producer hires a company of which someone is an employee. You hire Joe Blow Enterprises rather than Joe Blow himself, then you don't have to pay worker's compensation for him; Joe Blow's company should be paying worker's compensation. It's a very gray area of the law. People tend to confuse how the IRS defines an "independent contractor" from how a state's worker's compensation board defines the term. Generally, there is no such thing as independent contractors unless they have their own insurance and their own worker's compensation. Ninety-nine times out of a hundred, nothing may happen, but the producer is on the hook when something happens to someone on the set.

IND: What do insurance companies look for when issuing a policy?

DR: Insurance underwriters look at three basic numbers for rating purposes: product budget; cost of hire on vehicle use; and payrolls. They also look at length of photography, types of location, stunts or any hazardous activities, time to construct sets, value of equipment, experience of director, line producer/production manager, and so forth. Most are common sense questions about film. We like to meet the filmmaker and go over all the information.

IND: And when faced with a claim?

DR: Filmmakers call us and say that the film has been destroyed somehow in the camera or at the lab. When they ask us what to do, we tell them to act as if they didn't have insurance and, as prudent producers, ask themselves how they would get around the problem. They think about it, and you would be surprised how resourceful filmmakers are when they have to be. After that, the insurance will take care of a good part of the problem.

Robert L. Seigel is a NYC entertainment attorney and a principal in the Cinema Film Consulting firm.

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Mountain Film

By Niki Hayden

in studios anymore. Technology has changed all that." ☉ Another Colorado independent producer, Amy Knox, agrees. She is a partner with two Los Angeles producers. "You really can live anywhere you want to. Hop a plane from Denver, and you can be on the East or West Coast in a few hours—and be home for dinner." ☉ Most independent filmmakers will tell you the same thing: they didn't move to the Rocky Mountain region because of film. But they persevered despite the lack of support, the lack of funding, and the distance from more established film centers. They don't mind the isolation. In fact, they've grown to like it. ☉ But everyone's story will be different. When asked why he left Hollywood, independent producer Jim Phelan will answer simply, "I didn't like it." Knox will say that she chose to raise her family in the West. Experimental video artist Luis Valdovino will tell you he was enticed by a university position. ☉ Like the landscape, the view changes according to the perspective. ☉ Even with the mushrooming cable industry in Denver, don't expect filmmakers to flock to the West. The deals continue to be signed in Los Angeles and New York, not in the Rockies. ☉ But as filmmakers are scattering throughout the country, the coastal centers are loosening their grip. The Rocky Mountain region is one of the areas some choose to call home. ☉ For independent producer Diane Markrow, who has a television background, the decision was to stay in Colorado, rather than leave for greener pastures: "I was already here. I came out a long time ago and enjoyed the openness and weather. I found the cities to be livable." ☉ By serving on the board of the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers, she's trying to raise the profile of independents in the Rocky Mountain region and cultivate networks that might draw disparate groups together. It sounds almost like, well, a New York salon. Can it be that we're ready for such serious endeavors? ☉ Maybe. We'll never be like the East and West coasts, with their big cities and entrenched film industries. And we will always keep the proverbial streak of Western independence. We speak with different voices and see different visions. Take a look in this issue to find out how multi-faceted and multi-talented independents are here in the Rocky Mountain States—Colorado, Utah, Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming. It's like no place else. That's why we're here. ☉ Niki Hayden, guest editor, Rocky Mountain spotlight



Fire on the MOUNTAIN

EXPERIMENTAL
FILM IN THE
ROCKIES

Robert Gibbons and Sheryl Benko contemplate a cloudy future in experimentalist Jim Arthur's *Fetch Me This!*
Courtesy filmmaker

BY WILLIAM L. ANNETT

THE DEATH OF EXPERIMENTAL CINEMA HAS BEEN PRONOUNCED FOR decades. But like Armageddon (or the end of Hollywood), it never seems to arrive. In fact, experimental or personal filmmaking has never before engaged so wide a spectrum of filmmakers, even during its supposed zenith in the sixties. Often working with minimal resources and almost no recognition, these filmmakers doggedly persist.

To understand why the form still captivates so many artists, it is helpful to look at one of its primal spawning grounds, the Rocky Mountains, particularly Colorado. At the University of Colorado in Boulder, artists like Stan Brakhage, Phil Solomon, and Patti Bruck continue to work, teach, and encourage an eager new generation of filmmakers. From a creative genesis reaching back to the mid-fifties, an international legacy has emerged, one that continues to evolve and spread across the Rockies.

"I've been hearing experimental film is dead for 20 years," says Phil Solomon, creator of *Remains to Be Seen*, an emotional and personal chronicle about the passage from life to death that uses optical printing techniques to create a sense of decaying or dissolving space. (It was named by Stan Brakhage as one of the top 10 films of all time.) "Well, if this is the end, then let's party!" Solomon revels in the irony, savoring the living fruit of a movement born in Colorado over three decades ago. Not only is the experimental form not dead, it continues to resurface and even is incorporated into popular cinema. From *Natural Born Killers* to *Pulp Fiction*, commercial filmmakers owe a debt to avant-garde pioneers. And the pioneers have often found a welcoming home in the Rockies.

Yet the Rockies offer some harsh terrain for mediamakers, too, both economically and culturally. Why would any serious artist choose to stay? Lack of resources, local indifference, and relative isolation make this a tough region to take root. But like some determined form of lichen, these filmmakers make slow, inexorable progress across bare stone.

It is, perhaps, as Stan Brakhage observes, that the region's pressures "have forced people into a very pure corner. They aren't subject to the temptations of fame or money. They're obviously very purely dedicated to film."

Brakhage, now a professor at the University of Colorado in Boulder, has been instrumental in the success of personal and independent cinema in the region. With exhibition venues like Brakhage's First Person Cinema, the Rocky Mountain Film Center, Brock McDaniel's Eye for an I Cinema (all affiliated with the University of Colorado), and more recently, The Bug in Denver, Colorado continues to be enriched.

The fiercely visionary film scene thriving in the Rockies today is rooted in the intellectual culture that blossomed in Boulder after the Second World War. Oddly, by the hands of chance and mystery, Colorado incubated some of the world's foremost experimental artists. Three of the most recognized filmmakers of the sixties, Stan Brakhage, Larry Jordan, and Paul Sharits, all attended South Denver High School.

In the early fifties, Forrest Williams and Jim Sandoz, both University of Colorado professors, created the International Film Series. It was the region's first forum for international films and an instant success, which continues to thrive today. For many in the insular mountain community, it was the first taste of a cinema created outside of Hollywood. The possibilities excited a lot of creative energy.

In 1957, avant-garde filmmaker Bruce Conner founded the Experimental Cinema Group (ECG), a student organization in Boulder dedicated to the advancement of a new cinema. Conner, the group's first alumnus, soon created the seminal collage film *A Movie*. Around this time, Stan Brakhage, already gaining a national reputation, returned to Denver from New York and began making *Anticipation of the Night*. Hungry for a film community, he soon discovered the ECG. It was the beginning of an association that has lasted a lifetime. Brakhage invigorated the group with his cutting edge aesthetics and encyclopedic knowledge of alternative film. Inevitably, the ECG became a magnet for aspiring filmmakers.

The ECG, now known as First Person Cinema, was institutionalized in the late sixties by Virgil Grillo, who also launched the Rocky Mountain Film Center. Administered by Don Yannacito since 1975, the center holds film

Here's lookin' at you, kid: Four frames in Brakhage's classic *Dog Star Man*. Courtesy Robert Haller.

classes, administers an exhibition series of foreign and U.S. independent features called the International Film Series, and sponsors the work of visiting film artists every week at First Person Cinema, where Brakhage often shows rarities from his voluminous collection.

Yannacito, a graduate of the university, sees a promising future for the Rocky Mountain Film Center. Because of increasing grants and generous donations from private benefactors, he anticipates a visiting filmmaker-in-residence series, in which a distinguished filmmaker will work at the center each year and collaborate on projects with students and local artists.

The university's small but vibrant film department already includes the talents of Phil Solomon, Lee Bridgers, and Jerry Aronson. From this enriched soil many filmmakers have sprouted.

Although he did not attend CU, award-winning filmmaker Joel Haertling benefited from resources available at the film center and says his mere proximity to Stan Brakhage and the films he exhibited opened a new world. Founder of the Architect's Office, an experimental music group, Haertling thrives despite icy reception from official endowment organizations. Though he has received critical acclaim during European tours, he labors in near obscurity at his Boulder home. Working part-time in a library media center, Haertling funds projects by showing his films at rave parties. This lucrative venue allows him to continue working on personal projects and enter occasional collaborations with Brakhage. Haertling's films include *Ecstacyde*, an anti-drug statement that chronicles the perceptual and emotional distortions caused by the drug Ecstasy, and *Motion Diary*, a surreal journal culled from the "mundaneness of ordinary life." If anything, Haertling believes, the Rockies' distance from

California's corrupting "glamour mills" and New York's frowning critics and stale aesthetic is "liberating for filmmakers."

Liberating or not, the region's rarefied mountain air might be too thin for many artists. Patti Bruck, an independent who teaches film at CU, has seen many filmmakers move on to less pristine, albeit more lucrative coastal meccas. She observes that the Rockies are "not a very nurturing place for self starters." For Bruck, though, it is the region's sparseness that fuels her drive.

"One of the nice things about being in Colorado is there's a lot of opportunity to create what we want to happen," she says. "The lack of infrastructure pushes me. I'm more passive in a place like New York. There's so much going on that I tend to watch instead of doing."

So while the amenities are minimal, so are the distractions. Stacy Steers, an alternative animator from Boulder, says living and working among a community of filmmakers has a certain allure, but thinks that, ultimately, she would find it confining creatively.

"I'm pretty solitary and need to be connected to a natural environment," Steers notes. And while the few filmmakers she knows share camaraderie and mutual support, they highly value the freedom of their isolation.

For many artists, mountain communities, despite their grandeur, will never replace the vibrant pulse of New York. Still, the lure of collaboration has



Below: *The Old Man of the Mountains*, experimental film pioneer Stan Brakhage. Photo: Robert Haller

brought more than one filmmaker across the continent. Molly Davies, a New York-based filmmaker who meshes performance pieces with film, spends

part of the year in Boulder working with dance choreographer Polly Motley. Appreciative of the tradition started by Brakhage and continued by Yannacito, Davies feels the Rockies



have yet to obtain the "critical mass" necessary for a living, interacting community of media artists. She also thinks that academia, in spite of good intentions, may stifle younger voices.

"Experimental cinema never used to be precious. Andy Warhol made five films in one week. He didn't hang onto stuff, he just did it." Davies

suggests academia emphasizes film's materiality, praising its unique qualities at the expense of emerging media. This, she says, can discourage younger filmmakers. "Those breaking into film need someone to demythologize it for them. We really had that in the seventies at Walker [Arts Center] in Minneapolis. I don't know that the Rockies have that yet."

Phil Solomon, who moved to Boulder from Boston in 1991 to work and collaborate with Brakhage, empathizes with the frustrations of area filmmakers. He wryly ponders whether a true film community is possible in a place where it's hard to get a decent bagel.

"Films are prohibitively costly to make. You need some kind of support. And the academy likes old princes!" Solomon observes. "But there's a new generation of filmmakers out here. Many of them passed through this [CU] program, and they want to stay here."

Solomon appreciates the passion and commitment of the young media artists trying to take root here. Though dubious about the future, he gruffly acknowledges that the bagels, at least, are improving. Anything may be possible.

Eye for an I Cinema might be the most visible sign of the new generation's dedication. Founded in 1993 by actor-writer-filmmaker Brock McDaniel and a handful of Boulder film- and videomakers, the project has expanded from a one-time exhibition into a financially successful public venue. Organizing quarterly screenings, Eye for an I showcases Colorado filmmakers. McDaniel and partners offer moviegoers and the press a chance to see a more diverse array of talent and ideas than the Holly-happenings at the local cineplex.

These disparate artists demonstrate unique personal visions with films ranging from slick narrative to the avant-garde. Jim Arthurs, one of the more imaginative locals from Colorado Springs, blends elements of surrealism in off-beat postmodern narratives in films like the *Artist and the Artisan* and *Fetch Me This!!*



Stellar Beats Allen Ginsberg and William S. Burroughs huddle in front of Boulder's Naropa Institute with filmmaker Jerry Aronson in the latter's *The Life and Times of Allen Ginsberg*. Courtesy filmmaker

While film is still by far the favored medium among Colorado artists, video is making inroads as a flexible and economic alternative. Kim Murton's *The Wandering Uterus* synthesizes film footage with video. Collaborating with Boulder musician Dave Willey, Murton creates a fluid and elastic aural-visual space. The result is a compelling exploration of women's relationships with their own bodies. Lee Bridgers, best known for personal video documentaries like *Angel*, does not hesitate to switch mediums when aesthetically appropriate. His spontaneous experimental film *A Portrait in Grief* was made within hours after

the death of a close friend. So area film- and videomakers, rather than sitting in polarized, antagonistic camps, capitalize on the unique properties of each medium. The relationship among artists here is collaborative, not divisive.

McDaniel claims a profound debt to personal filmmaking. "A lot of filmmakers grew up with images that are experimentally sophisticated. And more substantially, people have become less rigid about the ways films can be made." The widespread availability of rental videos and the proliferation of cheap technology, says McDaniel, make the moment ripe for independents.

Working alone or in small groups, Colorado filmmakers struggle to obtain scarce grants and loans, and often work out of pocket. Yet their efforts and cohesion seem to be paying off. Some works have won CINE Golden Eagle Awards, others the Student Oscar, and others screened at Eye for an I have been broadcast on local and national television.

"We are at a unique moment in history," says McDaniel. "We can be moviemakers on an individual basis. Not since the advent of cinema has this been possible. The stage of technology coincides with Hollywood's creative collapse."

Seasoned veterans like Jerry Aronson are not so optimistic. Aronson, a documentarian who teaches film production at CU, created the critically acclaimed *Life and Times of Allen Ginsberg*. Not expecting

Hollywood to wither anytime soon, he skeptically watches the arrival of cable giants like TCI. "Denver will be the center of the cable industry. With that comes talk of Denver being the new Hollywood—a Hollywood for alternatives—but I've heard that before. Hollywood has passed us by too many times," he observes.

Although Aronson acknowledged that TCI could be a fertile employment ground for his students, he doesn't expect corporate support of regional filmmakers any time soon. "Whatever feeds the public's need for narrative fictional film [cable companies] will support," he says. "As the technology dramatically expands the number of available channels, this will increase cable's appetite for films."

Brakhage's *Loud Visual Noises* on prime time? Not likely while commercial forces continue catering to the lowest common denominator. It is more probable those channels will fill with reruns of *Laverne and Shirley* before considering even the finest works from the fringe.

Further north in the Rockies, independents scatter thin beneath the Big Sky. And experimental filmmakers are about as common as prairie dogs in Manhattan. Still, there are local draws where exotic beasts come to lap the cultural waters. Les Benedict, who runs the Montana Film Festival from the Myrna Loy Center in

Helena, recalls that in 1986 when the festival began, many of the entries were little more sophisticated than home movies.

"Birthday parties, backyard picnics, that kind of thing," he sighs. In recent years, however, things have improved. Drawing on entries from Montana, Wyoming, and the Canadian provinces of Vancouver and Calgary, the festival has become a regional showcase. Although commercial documentaries catering to the state's booming timber and agricultural industries still dominate the entries, student and independent films have gained larger shares. Benedict attributes this to increased output from Montana's universities. Canada, though, with generous arts subsidies, often commands the personal cinema at the festival.

Progress has been slow but encouraging, and Benedict envisions creating a grassroots production center that would be incorporated into the Helena Film Society, a mildly successful venture housed in a renovated county jail. "Our dream is to let local artists learn film and visual arts." But for now, Benedict admits, it is just a dream.

Across the great salt plains, Utah's eccentric film culture grows in relative obscurity. Like Colorado, the film arts have developed from a university program. Dale Angell teaches film production at the University of

Utah in Salt Lake City. The program, which emerged piecemeal beneath the pillars of the Architecture Department, has slowly gained an identity. In fact, Angell now sees this department as a hub for film development in the region. (Another important film training center in Utah, Robert Redford's Sundance Institute, attracts largely out-of-towners to its various workshops, which focus on writing, directing, and producing dramatic features.) Apart from a few local outlets like the Tower Theater, the university may be the only base of operation for the avant garde. Graduates continually return to the school and use its resources, making the department a kind of de facto community film center. Angell is pleased with this arrangement and believes it is mutually beneficial for students and graduates alike.

Closely affiliated with the university's theater and arts program, the department's scope has traditionally leaned toward narrative. But there are notable exceptions. Jan Andrews, whose experimental *Geography of the Imagination* received worldwide viewing, retains close ties to the film program.

Still, Angell admits, outside of narrative film, personal documentaries are popular among local filmmakers. "Suddenly, a lot of people are working in this vein. It's a trend that's taking off." Angell believes this is a reaction to National Geographic slickness; the kind of films that are well crafted, but don't have much soul. "People are hungry for films that are personal and honest."

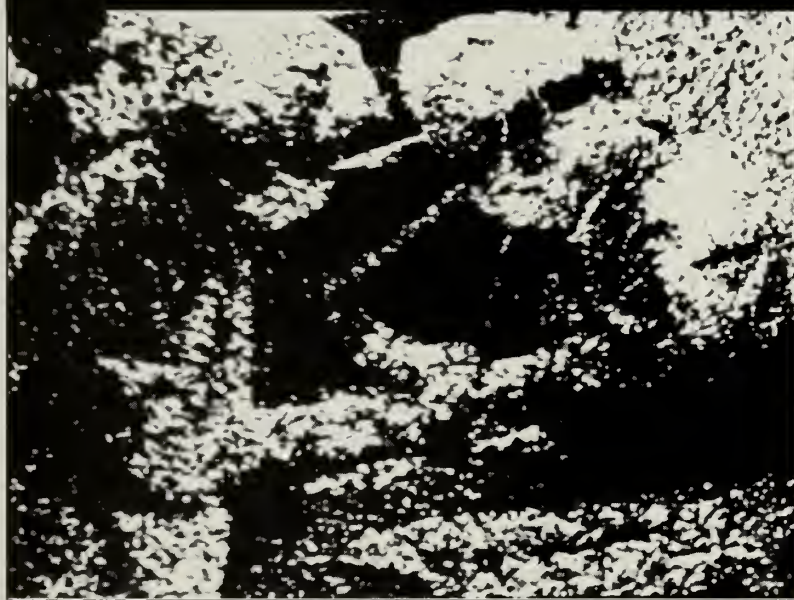
Jerry Aronson concurs. "Documentary is exploding, partly because there have been so many good documentaries in recent years. People are realizing they're not the boring educational films you saw in high school." Aronson stresses the fluidity of documentary, observing how it contours to any number of film forms. His highly abstract *Something Is*, for example, metaphorically documents a state of mind.

While alternative filmmakers are gaining a foothold in even the most distant reaches of the Rockies, it is in Colorado that the next incarnation of the avant garde is ready to go on-line.

Housed in an unassuming old industrial building, Boulder's new Watts Dairy Center for the Performing Arts brings the region's rebellious experimental tradition down the on-ramp to the information superhighway. It houses the Interactive Cafe, an on-line forum that will allow video and performance artists to perform together, though they may be located in separate cities. The I-Cafe had an experimental showing last May, linking performers in Santa Monica, Austin, Boulder, and New York. Although hailed with much media fanfare, it may be quite some time before the Cafe is fully operative.

"For now, it's a one-time shot," says Margie Ness, director of the Dairy. The I-Cafe won't be a regular feature until considerable building restora-

From Phil Solomon's *Remains to be Seen*. "There's a new generation of filmmakers out here," says Solomon, who teaches at the University of Colorado. "Many of them passed through this program, and they want to stay here." Courtesy filmmaker



tion is complete. Meantime, the Center is home to six arts groups, including FUSE, a visual arts consortium run by Bill Maxwell. The group is planning a number of avant-garde events to promote the Dairy, including one for which a bird feeder housing a projector will display films on the building's outer walls.

Venues of this sort drew independents like Niles Southern to the region. Though he speaks in long, thoughtful sentences, he can barely contain his visionary zeal. In the Rockies, he sees a nearly metaphysical confluence of people and creative forces gathered in a unique time and place. "Things in the West have a natural tendency to come together," Southern says. "This place brings people and artistic projects together."

Southern, who has worked with film legends Jonas Mekas and D.A. Pennebaker, formally abandoned film a few years ago to pursue a "cinema of information." Tiring of urban claustrophobia in London, Southern headed west to enjoy open spaces and contemplative isolation. A self-declared "cyber-artist," Southern is an electronic visionary excited by the potential of interactive media.



Experimental young Turk and *Eye for an I* founder Brock McDaniel, here acting in *Traveller*.
Courtesy Brock McDaniel.

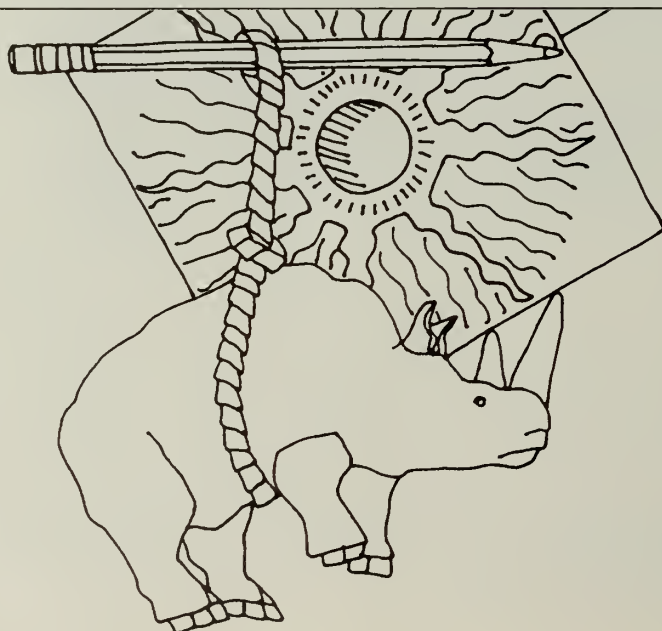
Filmmakers traditionally require teams of laborers to bring their visions to the screen. But cyber-artists, according to Southern, will draw from a vast wealth of digitally stored information. Culling their creations from electronic cultural debris, videos, and newspapers, it will be the cyber-artists' mission to shock and disorient.

"We want to wake people up from the

sleep of robotism," says Southern, "and make them aware of the enormous manipulative power of commercial media." Beyond that, the cyber-artists want to make it possible for people to create their own personal mythologies and use their minds to reclaim their humanity. These new modes of expression, Southern contends, will open unanticipated creative possibilities.

Perhaps it is true that in the course of a generation things come full circle. Southern's electro-romanticism echoes the psychedelic world morphing of the avant-garde nearly 30 years ago. "They came out of an era where people had to speak strong and loud to be heard at all," says Yannacito of that Aquarian generation. And it just may be that in an economic climate where few have the freedom to embrace extreme positions, those who do will have to speak louder than ever before.

William Annett is a freelance writer in Boulder. He writes a film column for the Boulder Weekly.



Animator Stacy Steers, perhaps like this lone rhino of her creation, says she is "pretty solitary and need[s] to be connected to a natural environment."

Courtesy filmmaker

DORIS LOESER

documentarian

I'LL RIDE THAT HORSE!

BY KAREN MITCHELL

A

fter the premiere screening of her documentary *I'll ride that horse! Montana Women Bronco Riders*, members of a visiting Swedish radio crew, searching for the myth of the American West, interviewed Bozeman filmmaker Doris Loeser about the rodeo stars in her film. "Are those real cowgirls?" they wanted to know. Real, but nearly forgotten. *I'll ride that horse!* highlights a generation of cowgirls, a rare breed of saddle-bronc rodeo stars whose heyday spanned the first half of the century. For them, riding wild horses was as much a part of girlhood as the grasses that blew across the Montana ranches where they were raised.

Weaving contemporary interviews, archival action footage and still shots, *I'll ride that horse!* features such cowgirls of yesteryear as Alice Greenough who rode horses in Madison Square Garden and bulls in Spain, and sister act Marg and Vi Brander, who ran their own guest ranch and all-female rodeo during the 1930s.

"We decided what we should do in life was not do women's work, 'cuz women's work wasn't paid nothin'," Marg says, in a retrospective explanation of her career choice. In her late eighties when interviewed, she died one month after attending a screening of the film, a coproduction of public TV stations KUSM-Montana and KBYU Provo/Salt Lake City.

"These were remarkable women who recognized their full potential; they didn't censor themselves at all in terms of what they were capable of doing," says Loeser, who came to Bozeman in 1988 to teach at Montana State University and who used six advisers for the film, including historians whose expertise is Western women. One of them, Western writer Teresa Jordan, advised her to be less scholarly in her approach. "Go to these women and let them tell their stories," she told Loeser.

Loeser bagged her historical script and is glad she did. "These women are the genuine item," she says. "They are extremely self-confident, extremely honest, and they don't mince words; they're polite but direct. There's no veneer. That's something to be cherished," she says. "There's a sense of history out here that's unlike the European cultures, because it isn't as long. Families remember their first settling days; history here is raw and accessible with a great deal of wonderful stories that need to be told."

Loeser credits an "Air Force kid" upbringing for her ability to appreciate regional cultures and her affinity for the past. "We crossed the country a lot by station wagon," she explains. "My dad was a history buff. We have photos of us hanging off various historical sites such as Plymouth Rock." Her pre-Montana, lyrical short, *Last Call for Union Station*, with its dramatically recreated voices of 1939, is inspired by her family's reverence for history. The evocative film about the Los Angeles train station won a CINE Eagle.

Loeser first became attracted to filmmaking in Berkeley, where she studied Scandinavian folklore in the mid-seventies. "I started going to the Pacific Film Archives and saw a lot of shorter films by women," she says. "I realized that normal people could make films."

After taking film classes in San Francisco and doing an apprenticeship

with Swedish experimental filmmaker Gunvor Nelson, Loeser decided to go the University of Southern California, where she got an MFA in film production in 1982. "It was intense," she recalls. "I did a couple of short, very personal films. One was about a premature baby in the hospital. It was technically crude, but I got a good response from my class. They applauded and I was blown away. I realized I could affect an audience."

Loeser recently completed work on the

dance film *Ferries*, a lyrical fantasy that captures the romance of summer evenings on the decks of Puget Sound ferries. The film was chosen as part of the Best of the Northwest screening at the 20th Seattle International Film Festival. Another recently completed Loeser film, *The Inner Vision of Russell Chatham*, documents the contemporary, well-known Paradise Valley, Montana, painter. Another Montana-based film, *Pamelia: From History into Art*, portrays the story of "Gold Rush widow" Pamela Fergus, who crossed the plains in an ox-drawn wagon in 1864.

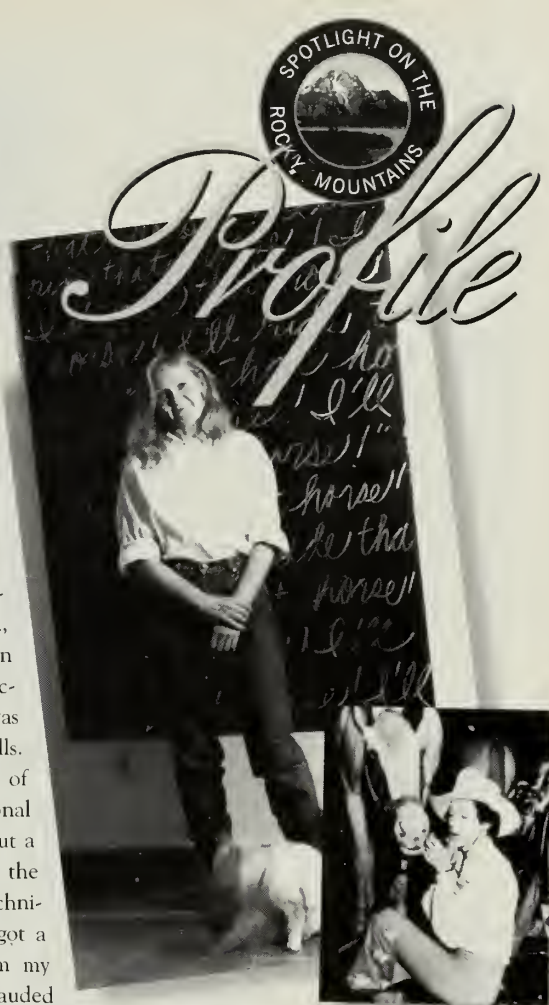
"To me, a documentary is very much a dramatic film," Loeser says. "The truth, and making truth into a dramatic portrayal, is many times more interesting than fiction. I haven't been brought up here, but I feel a strong identification with the women of the West; I'm a Western filmmaker. These are stories common to all of us."

Loeser is leaving her faculty position at Montana State to pursue independent projects, one of which is a follow-up to *I'll ride that horse!*, about women and horses in the West, but with a more lyrical approach, she says.

"[Experimental filmmaker of the 1940s] Maya Deren wrote that each film provides a door into the next," Loeser says. "One of the last shots in *I'll ride that horse!* shows [cowgirl] Bobby Kramer catching a wild horse. That shot is my door."

Ratatosk Film, 213 West Cottonwood St., Bozeman, MT 59715; (406) 586-2858.

Karen Mitchell is a feature writer and humor columnist for the Boulder Daily Camera.



Cowgirl of the Western world: (inset) from Doris Loeser's *I'll ride that horse!* Courtesy filmmaker



CALL *of* THE WILD

BY LISA FINNEGAN



ENVIRONMENTAL, NATURE, AND SPORTS FILMS

IR

ROBERT FULTON IS STANDING IN THE MIDDLE OF NOWHERE, SHIVERING IN THE March chill and shifting his camera position every three minutes. The Aspen filmmaker has been at it for about a week, getting deeper in debt by the day.

Well known in the Rocky Mountain area for his documentaries of Western landscapes, Fulton has been struggling to find outlets for his work, which he often shoots while piloting his own airplane. He is currently in Four Corners, Utah, expanding an eight-minute film that combines aerial shots of Arizona, New Mexico, Utah, and Colorado with time-lapse photography to portray "a sacred landscape and our relationship to it." "It's really getting tough to be an independent filmmaker," says Fulton, who has been at it for 30 years. "I'm getting deeper and deeper in debt, but I keep going. This is the last frontier—I've got a vision, and I just can't let it go."

Fulton has done films for National Geographic, ABC, PBS, the Sierra Club, and TBS, but he says the formats change so fast it's getting difficult to keep up. "Those of us who started in film and moved into television are having a very tough transition," he says. "Every time you blink the format changes. It's like a musician playing an instrument and they change your instrument in the middle of a solo. It happens so fast you hardly know what you're playing anymore." There are dozens of environmental, wildlife, and adventure filmmakers like Fulton tucked into small corners of the Rocky Mountains. Most live here for the same reasons they film their subjects—they love the outdoors. Tack on the six or even seven blue sky days a week, and they say it's hard to come closer to paradise.

But environmentalists are having a hard time financing films on controversial subjects. Increased competition, coupled with a diminishing wildlife population, is also making it difficult for the nature filmmakers to earn a living. In contrast, those making sports films—including extreme skiing, mountain biking, and snowboarding—say they are the hot commodity now; the "Just do it" nineties has created a boom in their arena.

While producing *Western Ranching: Culture in Crisis*, a documentary on ranchers struggling against development, Summit Films received everything from \$5 donations from poor farmers to a calf—but the production company, a family operation based in Gypsum, on Colorado's western slope, couldn't find a major commercial or nonprofit supporter. The Colorado Council on the Arts provides a few grants for media artists, but overall there is very little support for filmmakers struggling to finish a straightforward documentary. Rocky Mountain mediamakers also lost a valuable source of funding when the Western States'

"I've been able to get grants, but it's difficult to find distribution," says Gary Emrich, whose video *Great Western Water Trick* (left) is a study of water and transformation. Good sports: Those looking for work in the great outdoors, such as the father/son team of Robert and Nicolas Brown, are finding a goldmine in sports-related projects. Courtesy medi makers

Media Arts Fellowships, one of the National Endowment for the Art's regrant programs, became a victim of NEA cutbacks last year. "There's not a lot of support in the area," says Daniel Salazar, associate director for the Colorado Arts Council. "The loss of the Western Fellowships was a big blow to independent filmmakers around here. It's just one less place to go to get funding."

Western Ranching was eventually distributed by Pacific Mountain Network, picked up by over 160 public television stations, and won viewer's choice for the Best Documentary at the Breckenridge Film Festival in Colorado and an Emmy award for cinematography in 1994.

"Environmental issues are always difficult," says Nicholas Brown, who works with his father. "It's a tough battle with PBS—it's become a byzantine network on the national level. They don't want you to take any money from anyone involved in any way in the film. But you can't get big companies to give to anything controversial. General Electric would rather give money to Ken Burns to do *The Civil War*, because it's safe, and nobody's going to boycott them for it."

Brown says Summit's environmental films focus on the human aspect of an issue. In *Western Ranching*, for example, Summit dealt with the issue of development encroaching on the open spaces of the West by looking at the individual ranchers affected by that growth. To complete projects that are important to them, Summit now bids for commercial jobs that will bring them close to the subject they want to film. They also try to retain stock rights on sponsored films in order to use footage in documentaries close to their hearts. Summit recently completed a film for the Oregon Forest Research Council in order to get footage for a documentary called *The Forest Wars*. "We're limping along on funding," says Robert Brown about the documentary. "We really should have been done six months ago, but we just can't seem to get enough money to finish."

"Once we get the films made, they're easy to distribute," Brown notes. They've produced *Rivers of the Maya*, on kayaking, for ESPN's *Expedition Earth*; *Tsunami Rangers*, about daredevil kayakers, for National Geographic's *Explorer* series; and won an award for *Ski the Summit* at the International Sports Film Festival in Palermo, Italy. "The problem we have is scraping together the money to finish them."

For Gary Emrich, a Denver video artist, neither funding nor distribution are easy. He believes Colorado is indicative of the field as a whole—less money is being pursued by more people. "I've been able to get grants from

the Western States Media Arts Fellowship and the [Colorado] arts council, but it's difficult to find distribution—that's my biggest problem." Emrich's latest short, *The Great Western Water Trick*, is a 17-minute piece that first appears to be a commentary on water use in a dry climate, but, on closer inspection, becomes a personal statement about change and transformation of the nuclear family. To survive, "I do a lot of commercial work and am able to get a lot of in-kind help for my independent works from that," he says. "It's kind of dry out here; independent filmmakers are kind of isolated."



God of the ancient Southwest or quixotic roadrunner-chaser, a wily coyote stands tall. From Franz Camenzind's *American Trickster: Coyote*. Courtesy WNET-TV

THE ROCKIES HAVE ATTRACTED A number of documentary makers who specialize in filming the wildlife. More than the environmentalists, whose funding is increasingly precarious, these filmmakers are often able to patch together a living through their shoots, but they face hazardous turf of a different kind. Jim Dutcher is an Idaho filmmaker who recently won an Emmy and a Genesis award for his documentary *Wolf, Return of the Legend*, produced for ABC's *World of Discovery*. In 1992, Dutcher won a Genesis award for *Cougar: Ghost of the Rockies*. He believes the only way to get shots of the wildlife these days is to live with the animals he's filming.

Dutcher picks animals that are rarely seen in the wild, like cougars and mountain lions. His trick is to use animals that have been in captivity and are thus familiar with humans, and track them for years, shooting them doing things that normally aren't seen on film. "Wolves and cougars are very frightened of people," he says. "My technique allows me to film them." For a film on beavers a few years ago, Dutcher built a beaver dam in his cabin and raised the critters. He was able to get shots of them giving birth—something never seen on film before.

Dutcher believes that if he hadn't started 30 years ago, he might not be able to make a living in the cut-throat business today. Despite the dozens or more channels opening up on television, there isn't that much more room for outdoor films. "There are a lot more people out there trying to make the films," he says. "They are getting better, the equipment is getting better, and the wildlife is getting scarce."

Franz Camenzind, a wildlife filmmaker in Jackson Hole, Wyoming, would agree. "I'm not convinced that all the growth in television has opened things up for us," he says. A biologist by trade, he is currently working in Alaska on a film about wolves; a previous film, *Wolves*, won a CINE Golden Eagle award and was shown on PBS and TBS. Like Dutcher, Camenzind has gotten support from a number of commercial and public television outlets: Last year he

produced a documentary on the black rhino for ABC; *Grizzly and Man: An Uneasy Truce* was on PBS and TBS; and *American Trickster: Coyote* was shown on PBS's *Nature* series. While this relatively steady stream of work might make his chosen path seem like easy street to many documentarians, Camenzind knows better. "Budgets are getting tighter and stations are running more reruns," he notes. "There's a constant demand to create better films, get more spectacular shots, and find more exciting subjects. I think we're running out of ideas—I mean there's only so much you can do without repeating yourself."

But Wolfgang Bayer, a filmmaker from Jackson Hole, Wyoming, who has created programs on bears and rhinos for PBS, ABC, TBS, and National Geographic, believes the shift to high definition television is going to open up the industry. "I think the future is going to be great," he says. "All the film that has been done on 16mm is not good enough for high definition. It's a brand new source of money for filmmakers. We have covered just about all the important animals and don't have that much more to do. But basically we're going to have the chance to start all over again and do it with the new media."

JOHN-SANDY SANTUCCI WORRIES MORE ABOUT losing one of his crew to a mountain than raising

money or switching formats. "We work under very difficult and extreme production situations," says Santucci, president of the Denver-based JSP, which produces adventure films, short commercial pieces, plus work for ESPN, Pepsi, Coca-Cola, and other corporations. "It's really dangerous and people have gotten hurt and even killed doing this kind of thing. For the World Extreme Skiing Championships in Valdez, Alaska, we're airlifted to remote peaks and dropped down. We rope in, mountain climb to get into position, secure ourselves, and lean over for the shot."

Santucci is a former professional freestyle skier, and most of his staff are excellent skiers, kayakers, climbers, and general all-around athletes. "We do a lot of different things to keep us going, but we're doing very well," says Santucci, who adds that adventure films have taken off in the past few years. "We've expanded into biking, kayaking, and we do a lot of work for companies who want short videos. We're busy, but the market is getting saturated with people doing what we do."

One of the most well-known companies in the ski film industry is Warren Miller Entertainment. The company's films, with titles like *Vertical Reality* and *Black Diamond Rush*, follow skiers down hair-raising slopes that look as steep as a wall. The company now has its own magazine, a television program, a CD-ROM disc, and a coffee

table book.

Started in 1949 by Miller, the company flourished for years in California but recently moved its headquarters to Boulder, Colorado. Peter Speek, co-owner of the company, says they made the move to be closer to the slopes. "We were in Los Angeles for years because that's where we had to be to make the films," he says. "We needed the production labs and the on-line production facilities. But now we've got everything we need here in Denver. Things have changed in the past 20 years."

"I think adventure filmmaking is very hot right now," Speek continues. "We try to include wildlife in our films. We always tell our film crews, 'If you're under the big sky, shoot a moose if you see one.' We love it out here, Colorado is a wonderful state—a great place for skiers."

Speek also thinks the industry will be hearing more from Rocky Mountain filmmakers. "The film industry here is growing," he says. "I think the state has become a very critical center for television, and a lot of the future distribution in television is going to be based here. We've got the technology, we've got the talent, and now we've got the distribution."

Lisa Finnegan is a freelance writer living in Boulder, Colorado, who has contributed to the *Denver Post*, the *Boulder Weekly*, *Flatirons* magazine, and

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LUIS VALDOVINO

video artist

BY SHELLY SCHLENDER

W

hen Luis Valdovino was 14, he bicycled past a building called "La Esquilita," which means "Little School." It stood near a military garrison in his hometown of Bahia Blanca, Argentina. This was the 1970s, when 20,000 Argentines were "disappeared" under the regime of a military dictatorship. "Soldiers would come to my home with M-16s," he recalls in a voice richly accented by his Latino upbringing.

Years later, Valdovino would learn that the building, which symbolized normalcy for him, had been used by the military for torture. Now a handsome, fine-featured man with flecks of grey in his black hair, Valdovino realizes that newspaper reports from the seventies, headlined "Terrorists Killed in Shoot-Out on Local Road," actually described torture victims who had been secretly dumped. "Maybe they called it La Esquilita because if you don't speak, they give you torture, and that's your lesson," he says.

Such experiences helped Valdovino, now a professor in the fine arts department at the University of Colorado in Boulder, develop a keen eye for paradox. His experimental videos, which have been presented at hundreds of festivals around the world, on PBS, and Deep Dish Television, reveal the rich and often conflicting interpretations of how people view the world. To watch a Valdovino video is to enter a world of restless dreams, child's play, and satire.

His work echoes the late Spanish filmmaker Luis Buñuel, whom he admires, although Valdovino's films have more compassion and humor. "There's always a funny side to something, even if there is a horror," he observes.

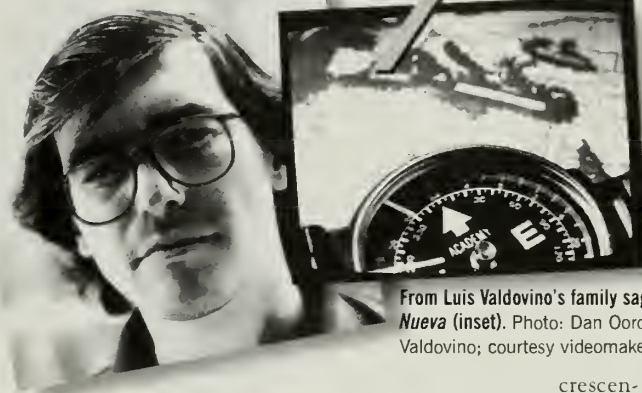
Work in Progress (1990), his best known piece, begins with kitschy dioramas of figurines on a journey. B-movies of alien flying saucers cut to illegal migrant workers who have been sprayed with pesticides. While a young Frank Sinatra sings "What Is America to Me?," we see migrant hovels and race riots in Alabama.

In *Another World of Dance* (1994), Valdovino subtly spoofs Jane Fonda work-out tapes and the Kerrigan-Harding ice skating fiasco through a mock instructional description of ballet. Though this minimalist, deadpan piece is popular in Europe and has played at the Museum of Modern Art, "They wouldn't show it at the New York Dance Festival," Valdovino says. "I think they were offended."

Tierra Nueva (1991) portrays an Argentine family that moves to Oklahoma, only to fall victim to con artists and return to Argentina. Valdovino chose this plot after an American colleague described parallels between the two regions, including Indian massacres and government scandals. (In Oklahoma one year, every county commissioner except one was arrested for taking bribes.) Valdovino uses live recordings of a car radio to imply all the little dramas that occupy a road trip. In one scene, the radio plays a "stormy sea" symphony while the auto enters a car wash. As the music



Profile



From Luis Valdovino's family saga *Tierra Nueva* (inset). Photo: Dan Oord/Luis Valdovino; courtesy videomaker

dos, the suds descend. "The washing of the car becomes a metaphoric wash," Valdovino says. "After that, we learn the Argentine family will get scammed."

Valdovino, who won an NEA fellowship in 1994, prefers experimental structures that layer cultural, psychological, historical, and economic ideas with metaphoric bridges. "Like a dream, things float," he says. "They connect themselves."

He came to this country because, he says, the United States has better schools for photography. Landing first at a high school in Ohio as an exchange student, he later attended the University of Ohio. He then moved on to the University of Colorado because of its strong art and photography department, which continues to provide him with access to new ideas and collaborations. Because his art is highly personal, Valdovino avoids making commercial videos, which means he must support himself through research grants and teaching video and photography.

His latest project, *Patagonia*, partially funded by the American Film Institute's Independent Film and Videomaker Program (which the National Endowment for the Arts eliminated, along with other NEA regrant programs, late last year), will follow the trip Charles Darwin took through the Patagonian region of Argentina and the American Southwest. Valdovino will use the journey to search for Argentine identity, aptly described by a Brazilian journalist: "The Argentines are a bunch of Italians speaking Spanish who wish they were British and act like they're French." In the video, Valdovino says, "First you don't know what an Argentine is. Then you go to a place where you're a foreigner. So you're wandering around in a cultural shock."

Like *Tierra Nueva*, *Patagonia* will explore parallels between distant regions. Both Argentina and the American Southwest were populated by immigrants who killed off most of the natives. Subtle ironies abound. In the Patagonia region, the town of Choele Choele harks back to native culture, while the nearby town of Darwin symbolizes Western values. In the Southwest, streets named Arapaho and Sioux mark where Indians are gone.

"History haunts you," says the man who should know. "I'm not interested in answers, but commentaries on historical paradox, painted by personal observation."

Valdovino's works are available through Video Data Bank (312) 345-3550 & Third World Newsreel (212) 947-9277 or Luis Valdovino c/o Fine Arts Dept., Univ. of Colorado, Boulder, CO 80309; (303) 492-5482.

Shelley Schlander is a freelancer living in Boulder who has written for the *Christian Science Monitor*, *Omni*, and the PBS series *Newton's Apple*, and recently co-authored *The Insider's Guide to Boulder*.

Native Tongues Untied

BY CATHI BECHTOLD

NATIVE AMERICANS HAVE become politically chic. Witness the recent documentaries about Indians on HBO, public television, and Ted Turner's WTBS. But the absence of working Native American film producers, directors, and writers continues to be a problem.

"It's like we're still only used as props," says Ava Hamilton, an Arapaho film producer. "But we're way beyond being consultants." Hamilton should know. As president of the Boulder, Colorado-based Native American Producers Alliance (NAPA), established in 1991, Hamilton is tapped into a national network of Native American producers and has been working to create an international source of networking and information for recognized tribal filmmakers.

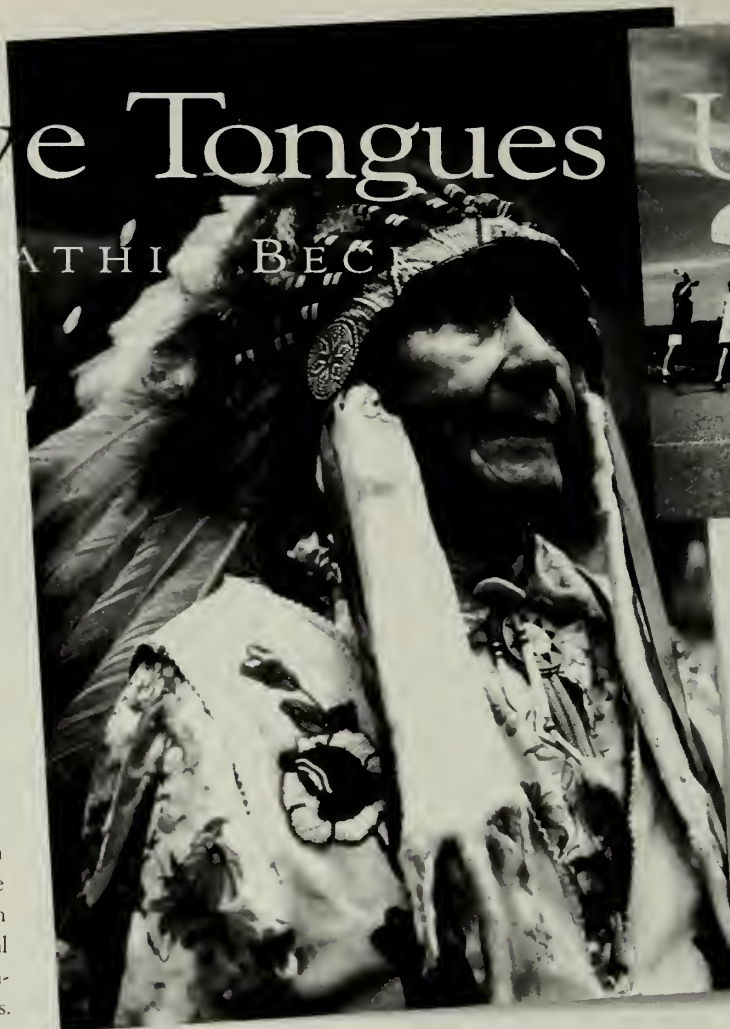
"[NAPA] is an advocacy organization for Native American film producers who can represent their histories," she explains. With the help of tools like NAPA's newsletter, support within the Indian mediamaking community is growing. "We have active producers, directors, and writers from all over the U.S.," she notes. "Two are from Alaska, one is from New York, and most are from the West."

The Rocky Mountain region is a rich source of native production. Much of the work is documentary, an effort to retell and legitimize Native American history. NAPA member Rubie Sooktis, for instance, is a Northern Cheyenne filmmaker from Lame Deer, Montana, who has spent the last six years writing a feature on Chief Morningstar, a 19th century Northern Cheyenne who was also known as Dull Knife. Presently in production, the process Sooktis employs stands as testament to the venture's integrity.

"The thing that's unique about this story," says Sooktis, "is that a lot of it is based on the oral accounts of the family's three storytellers, Chief Dull Knife's children. This is where we Native American people, specifically Ava [Hamilton] and [Hopi videomaker] Victor Masayesva and myself, begin to depart from other film producers.

"We remain very close to the source of the story. By that, I mean we are working very closely with the descendants of Dull Knife. That is a very critical and very specific rule. For instance, we just came out of a meeting that lasted for a few days with 22 of Dull Knife's descendants. Their support is very important and the language is also very important. We feel that it's their story."

Roy Bigcrane is a Salish Indian and film producer at Salish Kootenai



Left: The eponymous subject of *Thomas Yellowtail: A Sundance Chief*, a short portrait by Joe Fisher and Frederica Lefthand. Photo: James K. Hutchens. Below right: From Roy Bigcrane's *Place of the Falling Waters*, a history of the volatile relationship between the Salish and Kootenai tribes and Montana's Kerr Dam.

Above right: A Native Voices Workshop crew on location filming an AIDS-awareness PSA. Photo: James K. Hutchens; all photos courtesy of NAPA.

College in Pablo, Montana, and also a NAPA member. He echoes Sooktis' sentiments about their ultimate mission: authenticity. "If Indian filmmakers come from a place with some traditional upbringing," Bigcrane says, "they know how to approach certain people in a certain way. They know how to go into a village and ask for their time and be respectful, instead of barging in there with their light meters and cameras and being too flamboyant." Bigcrane's award-winning, 90-minute film *The Place of the Falling Waters* is a history of the volatile relationship between the Salish and Kootenai tribes and those constructing the Kerr hydroelectric dam in the 1930s on the Flathead reservation in western Montana. Combining compelling interviews with tribal elders, engrossing newsreel footage of the Flathead reservation, aerial footage of the region, plus rare 19th century photographs, Bigcrane recounts the tale from the powerful point of view of his people.

"As far as Hollywood goes, I have a tendency to believe that they're not very interested in telling our true story," says Bigcrane. "I think we're overlooked for the most part. There is some effort by certain people to include Native American scriptwriting or camera technical work and acting, but I think America as a whole feels we're not qualified to tell our own story. That's been one of the big issues of our people."

Making sure Native American filmmakers are qualified and capable of generating and producing programs of their own is a task taken on by



Professor Dan Hart and Montana State University. The Native Voices Workshop—a collaboration of Montana State's film school (the largest film school in the American Northwest) and local public television KUSM—trains Native Americans to produce, direct, and write film. Unlike any other film school in the nation, Native Voices is designed specifically to train Native Americans in an effort to assist them in expressing their own ideas—and producing their own work—about Native American culture and history.

"Non-Indian people should not be coming into Indian communities and making films," says workshop executive director and founder Hart. "Historically, that has been a source of damaging misrepresentation. We've gotten lots of requests by non-Indians for support in various film projects, but that's not how we work."

"If a Native American proposes a project about Pakistani taxi drivers, for example, we would support that. But if a white filmmaker wanted to do a project about Cheyenne Indians, that's not a project we would support. Further-

more, in our own thinking, if they were doing something really publicly obnoxious, we would oppose that project."

Since its inception in 1987, the program has produced eight films. Its latest releases include *White Shamans and Plastic Medicine Men*, a half-hour group production that explores the misuse and commercial appropriation of Native American spiritual traditions by New Age non-Indian practitioners; *Thomas Yellowtail: A Sundance Chief*, a short portrait by Joe Fisher and Frederica Lefthand that combines archival footage, live action scenes, and interviews with Thomas during the last years of his life; and *Reservations: Some Notes about Racism in Montana*, a documentary that looks at different aspects of white/Indian racism through short segments by Shane Ross, Lance Dreamer, Chris Burnside, Sonia Whitier, and Dave Wheelock.

"Something that's unique about us," says Hart,

"is that we've produced so many films in only six years, all Native-American-produced works. A nice thing about this system is that we're able to produce a lot more quickly than those working strictly independently. The public television system here takes its responsibility seriously to support the educational means, the diversity of the state, and those who are traditionally underrepresented."

"Six years ago, there were a lot of Native Americans in filmmaking needing the practical training. Native American people come to the program with backgrounds in history, language, politics, and sociology and often have some kind of initial contacts with media. The program was started up to provide the real training. By the time a person goes through our program, they've been involved in a half-dozen productions."

Even for fully trained and experienced producers, however, funding is a chronic problem. Those who hold the purse strings remain skeptical about Native Americans' abilities and experiences in filmmaking. "We still haven't gotten anywhere with the people investing major dollars," says Hamilton. "It's very difficult to get funding—they all ask for creative control. There's an unwritten requirement that says we use their style."

Sooktis agrees. "I'm not sure the Ted Turners take Native American producers seriously," she says. "I think they take Native American actors seriously; they do acknowledge it by having some Native American producers and co-producers, but I'm not sure of the extent of their decision-making roles."

It may be that the effects of organizations like NAPA, coupled with the resources of Montana State's Native Voices Workshop, will help increase public awareness of native skills and perspectives, and allow them to carve out a niche as respected and sophisticated American filmmakers. As Native American production evolves under the watchful eyes of "veterans" like Hamilton, Bigcrane, Sooktis, and Masayesva, it also becomes less likely that Indian culture will be caricatured in mainstream film.

"It has, perhaps, gotten better in the past 10 years, slightly better," says Bigcrane. "And I guess it's better than it was 20 years ago. But it's not as good as it should be. I think our people are qualified to tell their own story."

NAPA: Ava Hamilton, president, 2120 Canyon Blvd., Ste 100, Boulder, CO 80302; (303) 473-0421; fax: 473-0431.

Native Visions Workshop: Dan Hart, Montana State Univ., Visual Communications Bldg 172, Bozeman, MT 59717; (406) 994-0211.

Cathie Beck writes features for the Boulder Daily Camera and teaches English and Journalism. She is also a published fiction writer and resides in Boulder.

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FESTIVAL S



Photo: Patricia Thomson

SNEAK PEAKS

THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN FESTIVAL CIRCUIT



More than any university or performing arts center, film festivals have brought independent filmmakers, videographers, and tourists to the Rocky Mountain region. Generally, festivals take place in late summer and early fall when the weather is predictable and summer-time visitors look for destinations. Also, many ski towns support summer festivals to fill in the dearth of tourists during the warm season. A few adventurous festival directors are stretching those limited months, and the Sundance Film Festival always takes place in January. Here's a wrap-up.

ASPEN FILM FESTIVAL, Box 8910, Aspen, CO 81612; (970) 925-6882. Sept. 27-Oct. 1. Festival director: Ellen Kohner Hunt. Shows feature films, documentaries, and student films, sometimes shorts, all completed after December 1994. The festival has a high proportion of independent producers and directors. Known as eclectic and fun, Aspen makes a special effort to showcase local productions. Submission deadline: July 10.

ASPEN SHORT FESTIVAL, Feb. 22-25, 1996. This smaller festival grew out of the Aspen Film Festival (and is run by the same people). Formed as a separate event in 1992 because of the popularity of the shorts at the Aspen Film Festival, this four-day event focuses on shorts (30 min. and under). The grand prize winner can be considered for the Academy Awards. Deadline: Dec. 15.

BRECKENRIDGE FESTIVAL, P.O. Box 718, Breckenridge, CO 80424; (303) 453-6200. Sept. 14-17. Festival director: Kelly Sanders. Films in four non-competitive categories are shown: drama, comedy, documentary, and alternative. A strong independent film program. Special events include stunt men, celebrity forum, and independent filmmakers' forum. It's a blue jeans and T-shirt environment in the mountains 90 miles west of Denver, with the festival held in area theaters. Deadline: June 31.

DENVER INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, 999 18th St., Ste. 1820, Denver CO 80202; (303) 298-8223. Oct. 11-20. Festival director: Ron Henderson. The largest film festival in the region, Denver introduces many foreign, arthouse, and U.S. independent films to the local community. Directors and actors are often in attendance. The theme this year is "100 Years of Film" to commemorate the anniversary of

filmmaking. This is also the first year that video entries are being solicited. Deadline: July 14.

DOMINQUE DUNNE MEMORIAL VIDEO COMPETITION & FESTIVAL, Fountain Valley School of Colorado, Colorado Springs, CO 80911; (719) 390-7035. May 1996. Festival coordinator: David Manley. Open to high school students & college freshman whose video was produced w/in preceding 12 months. Categories: dramatic/narrative, experimental; recommended lengths: 9 to 24 min. Cash prizes. Deadline: April 1996.

INTERNATIONAL WILDLIFE FILM FESTIVAL, 802 East Front St., Missoula, MT; (406) 728-9380; fax: 2881. March 30 - April 7, 1996. Coordinator: Amy Hetzler. The workshops cost between \$5-\$20. The entire registration is \$180. Or each film admission is \$6. The genres include: TV specials (National Geographic), agency films, independents, training and educational films, hunting and fishing, PSA and news. Peer competition comes first, then all categories compete for awards. Deadline: Feb. 12, 1996.

JACKSON HOLE WILDLIFE FILM FESTIVAL, P.O. AD, Jackson Hole, WY 83001; (307) 733-7016. Sept. 18-23 in Grand Teton National Park for broadcasters, filmmakers, and producers; Sept. 25-30 for general public, at the national wildlife art museum in Jackson Hole. Festival director: Kent Noble. This festival is oriented toward independent producers and broadcasters of wildlife, natural history, conservation, and environmental films. Includes series of in-depth discussions, seminars, hands-on workshops, and "Anatomy of a Production" forums. It's supported by various broadcasters, cable stations, and groups such as National Geographic, which are looking for wildlife programs. Deadline: August 1.

MONTANA FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, Myrna Loy Film Center, 15 N. Ewing, Helena, MT 59601; (406) 443-0287. January 1997. Festival director: Les Benedict. For the past few years, this High Plains regional fest has been alternating with the Young Audiences Media Festival (below). Commercial (doc, dramatic narrative & animation) & noncomm (doc, dramatic narrative, animation, experimental) cats. Juried competition open to producers from MT & bordering states & Canadian provinces (ND, SD, WY, ID, British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan). Deadline: Dec. 1996.

MOUNTAIN FILM FESTIVAL, P.O. Box 1988, Telluride, CO 81435; (970) 728-4123. May 26-29 1995. Festival director: Rick Silverman. The 1995 theme is environmental, but each year it changes, with outdoor sports the predominating theme. Films are a

mixture of features, shorts, and documentaries from around the world. Also shows video on large-screen projection. The festival will be held next year over Memorial Day weekend. Deadline: April 1, 1996.

ROCKY MOUNTAIN WOMEN'S FILM FESTIVAL, Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center, contact: Susan Martz, chair, 48 Woodbridge Dr., COS, CO 80906; (719) 576-7862; fax: 7346. Nov. 3-4. 8th annual fest promotes & supports film/video projects by & about women & women's issues. A group of four to five producers/directors participate in Producer's Forum. Fiction & nonfiction; video, 16mm & 35mm exhibited. Deadline: June 16.

TELLURIDE FILM FESTIVAL, 53 South Main St., Ste. 212, Box B1156, Hanover, NH 03755; (603) 643-1255. Sept. 1-4. Festival manager: Stella Pence. Twenty-seven programs, including premieres and retrospectives, are shown over four days at this high profile fest in the resort town of Telluride, CO. None of the films are announced until the festival begins. Like Sundance, emphasizes premieres and draws an influential crowd of programmers, press, and directors. Known for a filmmaker-friendly atmosphere. Deadline: July 31.

SUNDANCE FILM FESTIVAL, Sundance Institute, Box 16450, Salt Lake City, UT 84116; (801) 328-FILM. Jan. 18-28, 1996. Festival director: Geoffrey Gilmore. Now the country's most important film festival for independents, Sundance is primarily an industry event, dominated by filmmakers, distributors, agents, and national press, with some attendance by local audiences. Definitely a national event, more than a regional fest. Deadline: early October.

UTAH SHORT FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, Utah Film & Video Center, 20 S. West Temple, Salt Lake City, UT 84101; (801) 534-1158. June 1996. Festival director: Kent Maxwell. Fest, entering 17th year, accepts works on various formats; length: under 30 min. Categories: narrative, doc, experimental, animation, young media artists (18 and under). Prizes in all cats in both film & video. Deadline: June 1, 1996

YOUNG AUDIENCES MEDIA FESTIVAL, Myrna Loy Film Center, 15 N. Ewing, Helena, MT 59601; (406) 443-0287. January 1996. Festival director: Les Benedict. Educational forum designed to introduce children & teens to film, video, and CD-ROM technology. Open to young mediamakers aged 8 to 18. Various formats, limited to 15:00 length. Includes visiting media artists & opportunities for participants to create their own films & videos. Deadline: Dec. 1.

NIKI HAYDEN

LYNNE MERRICK

media educator

BY KAREN MITCHELL

A

fter living in Los Angeles for eight years, independent filmmaker and media educator Lynne Merrick escaped by van, bound for Montana where she had never lived but had family roots. Merrick's great-grandparents had settled in and around Lewistown and Great Falls, Montana, and left a legacy of family stories—about a sheep ranch where turn-of-the-century Western artist Charles Russell once worked, and about the silent-film audiences who enjoyed the accompanying strains of an organ played by Merrick's grandfather but left the theater

when assaulted by the noise of the new sound movies.

After receiving an MFA in filmmaking from UCLA in 1976, Merrick made her move to Montana to set up a visual literacy program and teach film and video at Bozeman Junior and Senior High Schools. She taught in the public schools for seven years, winning the State of Montana Inspirational Teacher Award in 1985.

"I focused a lot on film theory and criticism in the senior high school," she says. "My course was art-based, not tech-based. To watch the process of kids gaining an understanding about media, to watch their interest grow, was powerful. From 1977 through 1979 we had a huge outside grant to create a video studio and film production facilities. The kids were making super 8 films and 3/4" videotapes. It was a high point of my life."

Currently Merrick is seminar leader for the Montana Committee for the Humanities Weekend Institutes, presenting workshops to teachers in rural areas. Unlike many media educators, Merrick doesn't just focus on analyzing mainstream news and advertising, but brings in a variety of independent media, including cutting edge forms.

"My workshops take the humanities approach," she says. "It's important to get away from the idea that being media literate is just about pushing buttons. I bring experimental films like *Ellis Island* by Meredith Monk and examples of the beginnings of video art from the early 1970s, such as short pieces by Peter Campus.

"I'm working with teachers who are desperate for some kind of idea about what to do in the classroom with independent films and the stuff from network TV," she continues. Merrick, who has been an adjunct instructor at Montana State University, says her passion has always been structural-materialist films, those that strip down the content to the formal properties of the medium, rather than the broader genre of experimental film.

"I see an emotion in formalism, in the concerns of these structural-materialist films, with the formal elements of film and the production and reception of meaning," she says.

Merrick is herself a mediamaker. Her 16mm film, *A Stack of Black Cats* (1990), is lyrical portrait centered on 72-year-old Lima, a mother of 16 who refuses to give up her rugged Montana mountain farm. The 40-minute film traces her day-to-day rituals that reveal the quiet, steady rhythms of the cycle of life.



Profile



The determined, elderly Lima in Lynne Merrick's *A Stack of Black Cats* (right).
Courtesy filmmaker

"The film is about the continuity of life, not just the continuum of things gotten done. . . a view which I believe removes us from our humanity," Merrick says. "What drives me are real-time moments, putting them into another context."

Montana, the filmmaker says, is "hot" right now thanks to Hollywood. "There's grant money for Montana content," says Merrick, who received funding from the Montana Cultural and Aesthetic Projects and a Western States Regional Media Arts Fellowship for *A Stack of Black Cats*. "My film has been shown more than I thought it would be; it was in distribution when Montana was getting hot." The film has been seen on Montana public TV and on the rural network of low-powered stations throughout the state. It's also been screened at the the Montana Film and Video Festival, the Denver International Film Festival, the Atlanta Film and Video Festival, and at Pacific Film Archive in San Francisco.

Merrick, who rents an old farmhouse against the mountains in Belgrade, some 20 miles outside of Bozeman, says she sometimes has a desire to get back into the thick of it, perhaps by getting a doctorate in film at New York University.

"But I can't leave," she adds. "I've talked to several filmmakers and writers in L.A. Sometimes I call people up because I feel a lack of connection in terms of filmmaking, but when I do, I find they feel the same way."

"And I've met the most inspired teachers in the Montana schools, like Sheila Kemmer in Power—a small town of only several hundred—and Clara Pincus in Corvallis. They're doing wonderful work with kids and video.

"We're separated by distance, but in Montana we have a connection through being isolated," says Merrick, who is also the videomaker for the Caravan Project, a group of artists traveling around rural Montana this summer.

"I'm a person who needs to spend about 90 percent of my life by myself," she says. "I feel I'm so lucky. I live on the last 300 undeveloped acres of the Gallatin Valley. Montana for me is being able to watch the light on the hills—I don't get very much done because of this obsession."

Lynne Merrick, 11248 Gee Norman Rd, Belgrade, MT 59714; (303) 473-1327.

ReadyWilling&C

Opportunities in the Cable Capital

BY NIKI HAYDEN

DENVER IS A SMALL CITY THAT THINKS BIG. IN THE PAST YEAR, DOWNTOWN Denver got a new baseball stadium, Coors Field, for its new baseball team, the Rockies, as well as a new amusement park, spurring redevelopment in a section of the city that had fallen on hard times. Plus, it's home to a new international airport and a new postmodern library designed by architect Michael Graves, which is being heralded as one of the great buildings of Denver.

And now Denver can boast that it is the cable television capital of the world. Here's why: The largest cable conglomerate in the United States, Telecommunications, Inc. (TCI), is based there. The second largest company, Time-Warner, is located in Connecticut, but has an affiliate, Warner Entertainment, in Denver. And some smaller cable companies, such as Jones Intercable, the seventh largest cable TV company, are also there.

So if Denver is the cable capital of the country, what does this mean for local independents? Is there any advantage—any interchange, cross-pollination, or other benefit—to living a stone's throw from the cable conglomerate headquarters?

The short answer is that there are opportunities for independents, but, at this point in time, they are mainly work-for-hire and postproduction gigs. Living in Denver doesn't particularly make it easier to sell a finished production or a project idea to cable's creative personnel and programmers, who are often located in other parts of the country. But this situation may be changing, as cable operators become increasingly involved in production in conjunction with the increased channel capacity that fiber optics promises. Denver cable executives and independent producers alike paint rosy scenarios about future production opportunities. Making their speculations more concrete is the construction of a massive facility, Colorado Studios, which will make Denver home to one of the largest film production studios between the coasts.

Jim Berger is an executive for the TCI-owned Liberty Media, which is an equity owner of the movie channel Encore, BET (Black Entertainment TV), the Home Shopping Network, Turner Broadcasting System, and the Discovery Channel. According to Berger, all the programming deals for these channels take place in L.A. or New York.

But to give a snapshot of cable's future in Denver, he says, "Cable is at a point of allocating millions of dollars to programming. Turner and A&E are putting a lot of energy into production. Showtime and HBO are demanding original programming. All those guys are commissioning movies. Denver is for distribution, not programming, but in five years, the programming will be in high gear."

There are already some signs of this kind of activity.

Until now Jones Intercable has mostly been known for its Mind Extension University, a college credit channel famous (or infamous) for Newt Gingrich's

college history course. But it is beginning to make forays into feature film production, recently financing John Sayles' newest film, *The Secret of Roan Inish*. Flushed with success from the project, Jones wants to reach out again to independent filmmakers.

Another example is a project with which Liberty's Berger was involved as an executive producer: *How the West Was Lost*, an award-winning documentary series that traces Native American tribes throughout their history. Berger once worked for Denver broadcast station KUSA, the local ABC affiliate, where he collaborated with two colleagues on *How the West Was Lost*. Mid-project, Berger left broadcast for Liberty Cable. All along, he had wanted

to find another station to collaborate with, sharing expenses and airtime—not an uncommon arrangement in this part of the country. He approached Discovery, which loved the idea and worked with KUSA to complete the program. The series ran on both KUSA and the Discovery channel, a precedent-setting collaboration.

Berger's leap from broadcast to cable is typical of many Denver-area executives. They've come from PBS or broadcast stations, and they remain friends with their old colleagues. But as broadcast stations downsize and PBS gets leaner, producers are also leaving to set up independent production companies, joining the

ranks of big city "refugees" who are fleeing New York or California.

If the cable giants don't acquire or subsidize local independent programming in any significant way, they do provide some degree of employment for local freelance film- and videomakers. Independents looking to the cable industry mostly discover that the TV work is in post production. "Our activity is limited in our products," says Elisabeth Flynn Glass, a vice president of acquisitions for Encore. "Right now we do work with local talent, for voice-overs, for example. As we get more involved, that activity will grow."

"I know that a lot is going to happen here," says independent producer Amy Knox, who once worked for NBC in New York and later produced documentaries for the Metropolitan Museum. She formed Wildwolf Productions to pursue some of the ideas for art and entertainment films that she had started at the museum. Knox works with two friends, Deanna Douglas (married to actor Michael Douglas) and Tom Ness—both based in Los Angeles. "People were shocked that I would leave Manhattan. But I never shot in Manhattan anyway," she says. Knox moved to Denver in 1990 with her husband and three small children after life became increasingly difficult in New York, especially with kids.

Knox has found she can live in Denver, work in L.A., and travel anywhere to do location shooting. She recently returned from Nashville where she worked on *The Roots of Country*, a six-hour documentary series on the history of country-western music for Turner Broadcasting Systems. As seems typical for Denver producers, Knox's contact with local cable personnel was negligible. It was her partners in Los Angeles who handled most of the nego-



Denver, the Cable Capital
Courtesy Denver Metro Convention and Visitors Bureau.

able

tations with TBS for *The Roots of Country*.

Nonetheless, Knox believes she'll eventually work with local production companies that are pitching to cable, such as Denver Center Media. High on her list of reasons why Denver is a hot place to be right now is that Colorado is centrally located, with high quality personnel and facilities. People of good reputation have left the coasts and moved to Denver, partly because it's less expensive than working in New York or L.A. And some cable affiliates are starting to do their own production here.

"I feel optimistic about what's going on in cable, especially in Colorado," says Dirk Olson, who produces films for the Denver Center Media, the film and video arm of the Denver Center for the Performing Arts, which is an umbrella group of city and nonprofit groups that includes theater, dance, and symphony. "[Denver's] been called the 'Cable Capital' and lives up to it, both from a hardware and a programming standpoint."

Olson, whose associates at the Denver Center Media produced *Land of Little Rain* for *American Playhouse* and *Top of the World* for *Encore*, says the stigma of Denver productions being less professional than products from the coasts has faded. Local independents are taken more seriously by cable executives, "especially in the last two years," he says. But there are caveats to all these observations.

Old-timer Jim Phelan remains more cautious. "I don't share total optimism," he admits. Phelan has worked in Denver for 20 years, leaving Hollywood he says, because he "just didn't like it." After winning numerous awards for his commercials, he is currently trying to develop independent features, pitching ideas to cable executives and PBS sources. However, cable is generally not interested in funding "that one shot," he says. Series or docudramas have a greater appeal to cable executives.

For those producers who get the green-light, the arrangement is usually one of independent contractor. "Most people go into cable as technicians. [For creative product], cable would like outside producers to come to them. [Cable] will supply the facilities, which is good news for independents," Phelan says.

Denver has no shortage of facilities, and it will soon be home to one of the largest

The 90s Channel's Challenge

John Schwartz, president of the 90s Channel, wonders if there's any room on cable television for liberal public affairs programming.

The 90s Channel, based in Boulder, Colorado, is scheduled to be axed by Denver-based Telecommunications Inc. (TCI), the country's largest cable TV company, in October 1995. At that time, the 90s Channel's contract is up, and TCI gives every indication that it will not be renewed.

Started up in 1989, the channel carries left-of-center programs such as *Dyke TV*, a lesbian news and entertainment magazine, and *Political Playhouse*, which pokes fun at conservative and status quo politics. Other well-known independent series include *Deep Dish T.V.*, *America's Defense Monitor*, and *Rights and Wrongs*. The 90s Channel is carried on eight of TCI's 1,000-plus channels across the country and on six public access and educational channels. (Though they started out as one, The 90s Channel is now separate from *The 90s* series, which is based in Chicago and carried on public television.)

Originally, Schwartz signed a contract with United Cable in Denver, which eventually was bought out by TCI. When TCI tried to drop The 90s Channel from its lineup in 1992, Schwartz took the telecommunications giant to court, which secured the channel continued coverage until October.

Progressive voices are under-represented on cable, Schwartz says, whereas TCI has recently added a number of conservative programs through its carriage of two new pay channels, *American Conservative Network* and *National Empowerment Television*. NET telecasts conservative House Speaker Newt Gingrich's college course, "Renewing American Civilization," plus Gingrich's call-in talk show, *Progress Report*. TCI also carries Pat Robertson's *Family Channel*.

"Conservative programming is mushrooming and readily available," says La Rae Schlichting, a corporate media relations specialist for TCI. "If liberal programmers are out there and have programming, we haven't heard from them," says Schlichting. "We're more than happy to provide that point of view."

Producers who wish to take Schlichting up on her offer should contact TCI at (303) 267-5500.

"We're the only liberal channel. The progressive community has to be forceful," asserts Schwartz, who hopes to organize liberal groups to petition and pressure TCI to consider a more balanced liberal/conservative programming agenda on their channels. The 90s' audience includes individuals and groups concerned with environ-



mental, women's, gay rights, defense industry, and racial issues. "Our quarrel is not with National Empowerment Television, but let's not warp the national discourse. In the political arena, if a single entity [like TCI] determines every channel, that's dangerous," says Schwartz.

Schwartz also questions the implications of government officials being encouraged to dominate political programming. Could this lead to a cushy relationship between media and government when traditional journalism, which has usually fielded tough questions to politicians, is pushed aside by politicians acting as their own program hosts? "We're looking into that. It's under study," says Schlichting.

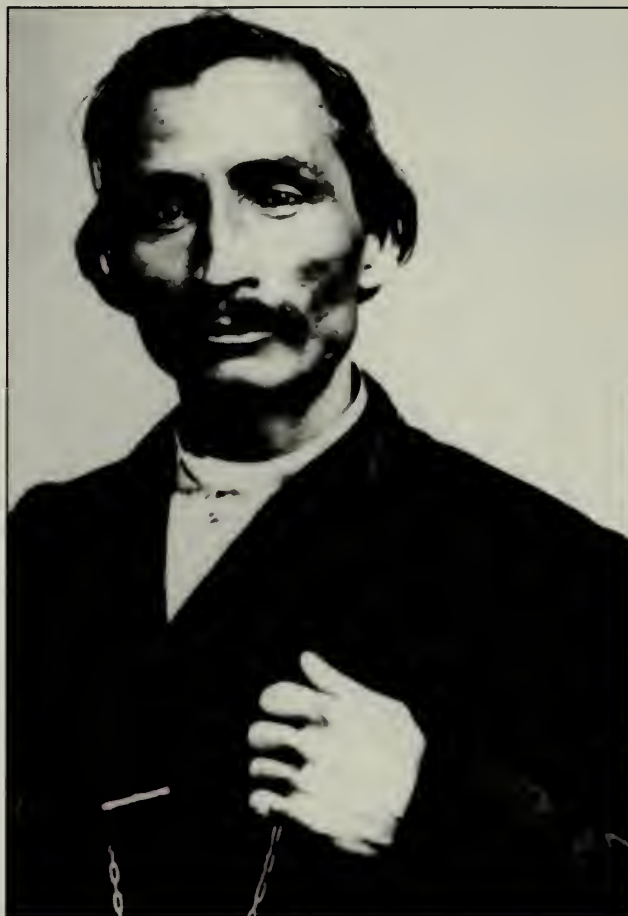
So why would TCI drop The 90s Channel when they are reputedly trying to increase their public policy programming? "The problem that TCI runs into is that The 90s carries a limited amount of programming, less than five hours," says Schlichting. "It doesn't make sense to dedicate an entire channel to The 90s Channel. We're not trying to banish liberal programming. We have customers who are progressive and conservative. We want to provide for both. We have nothing available for the liberal. We're stuck in this void." Schlichting says that with the advent of digital compression, when as many as 500 channels may be available to subscribers, The 90s Channel would make more sense.

"We won't be shut down with the loss of TCI," says Schwartz. "We can't let our future hang on TCI. We're fighting, but if we lose this round we're not going away." Schwartz would consider looking to PBS, cable access, and local cable stations for carriage.

Meanwhile, Schwartz is recruiting public access channels to carry Free Speech TV, a programming service designed to expand distribution of The 90s Channel. Schwartz dubs Free Speech TV the "antidote to the growing conservative voice." Viewers will be able to respond to a hotline, and selected responses will be aired. Schwartz plans to forge ahead with Free Speech T.V. whether or not TCI pulls the plug on The 90s Channel.

Independents interested in Free Speech TV can contact The 90s Channel at 2010 14th St., Suite 209, Boulder, CO 80302; (303) 442-8445.

NIKI HAYDEN



***How the West Was Lost*, a 13-part history of Native populations, was a precedent-setting collaboration between Denver cable and broadcast stations.**

Courtesy Discovery Channel

production/post studio between the coasts. Colorado Studios, now under construction, is a \$20 million film production studio in Denver, similar to the Walt Disney Co. studios in Orlando, that aims to open in 1997. It's the brainchild of Phil Garvin, president of NORAC Inc., a major video and postproduction company whose clients include the *MacNeil/Lehrer NewsHour*, for which it handles all the shooting and editing outside of New York and Washington D.C. To build the facility, NORAC has teamed up with Comsat Corp., owner of Denver's basketball team, the Nuggets, and the TCI-owned Prime Sports. Not surprisingly, Colorado Studios is oriented more toward sports and information than movies, but Garvin's hopes are riding high. "This is the time, this is the decade, when Colorado is a popular place to be. This is our chance at making Colorado a film and TV production center. To really green this industry, we have to invest in facilities and people to attract the industries," he says with fervor.

"There's all kinds of work out there to be had by local producers," says Frank Matson, one of the principals of the Colorado Production Group, another major production and postproduction house based in Denver. He paints the big picture as he sees it for cable and independents: Programming, promotion, commercials—all are needed by cable channels. Encore, for example has seven channels. "Even though they have a large staff, the programming needs are mind-blowing," says Matson.

Garvin agrees. "Cable is definitely growing. The demand for programming is coming. It's not here yet; they have to get off the ground. But there will be a shake-out when the 200 to 500 channels appear," he predicts.

Some cable industry watchers believe the proliferation of channels will be similar to the early days of radio, when dozens of tiny radio stations competed fiercely for spectrum space and audiences. But many wonder if cable can keep up with this proliferation, asking where will the money for the increased programming come from? Will it become so splintered that production values plummet? "Will we see such small audiences that any one segment is not large enough to produce [for]?" asks Matson, who believes you can't produce

a quality half-hour show for only \$12,000.

Well, a few independents believe they can do just that—produce programs cheaply and still offer quality. "There's really quite a lot you can do for

\$12,000," says Chris Sarson, an independent who once worked for Granada TV in the U.K. and public station WGBH in Boston. Sarson mentions a friend who takes videos when he goes traveling and sells that to travel cable shows; in such a case, a producer can do a lot for \$12,000. For his part, Sarson has settled in Boulder, where he is working on children's series for Fox Broadcasting and has completed work for cable. "Most of my life has been in public television—we were the alternative service. I started *Masterpiece Theater* [in America] and that's on A&E now. I did a special with Dudley Moore for A&E, and that was more commercial. It doesn't matter what the delivery service may be, they're going to need lively interesting thoughts," he says.

Cable's downside is that it rarely funds programs that provoke political questions, that may be gutsy or controversial [see sidebar p. 35]. To subsidize the cable industry's expansion, money matters. And commercially viable movies fill that bill. Says Encore's Glass, "We're looking for wholesome, story-driven films that are not driven by gratuitous sex." Likewise, Jones Intercable is looking for character-based films or family entertainment.

Berger of Liberty Media knows better than most what cable is looking for. "We need producers who can conceptualize—not just direct their own personal films. In general, people need more business acumen. Cable is a long way away from producing for PBS. The difference is that cable is less bureaucratic, [but] you have to subordinate your personal goals." Independents used to final cut and copyright ownership may well chaff at cable's idea of a team-player. But regardless of their sentiments, "Cable has moved up the food chain. . . to being a top player," Berger observes. "This is the Wild West; it's entrepreneurial."

Niki Hayden is an arts and entertainment writer and an independent documentary television producer.



TRENT HARRIS

cult film director

PLAN 10 FROM OUTER SPACE

BY DAVID METZLER

“J

It's Fellini on an Ed Wood budget," says Trent Harris, the 40-year-old writer and director of *Plan 10 from Outer Space* (1995). But while Wood and Harris worked under similar financial constraints, the similarities end when it comes to the quality of their work.

Plan 10 from Outer Space (the title blatantly alludes to the Ed Wood classic *Plan Nine from Outer Space*) is a cult film that conjoins Mormon history and low-tech sci-fi. It's also an intelligently crafted, beautifully shot piece of social satire that doesn't take itself or its subject matter too seriously. It is the type of movie that respects the intelligence of its

audience and the type of film big Hollywood studios are afraid to make. It is the reason Trent Harris is outside the mainstream and happy to be there.

"The great thing is that I've accomplished my ultimate goal as a filmmaker," says Harris. "I can live in a place like Salt Lake City and make films."

Though Harris did his time in Tinseltown and had some success, selling four scripts, he found the politics and inability to work on his own terms stifling. "It's like a continual carrot being dangled in front of you for years and years," he says, describing the Hollywood studio system. "I still have friends out there saying, 'I've got a project coming through.'"

So Harris turned to making films independently as a means of expressing his often offbeat ideas. His previous film, *Rubin and Ed* (1993), established Harris as one of America's premiere cult filmmakers and earned him a fervent following in Utah. *Rubin and Ed* was hailed as everything from "more psychedelic fun than a barrelful of monkeys on mushrooms," by *Details* magazine's James Ryan, to one of the year's 10 worst by the *Boston Globe's* Jay Carr.

Plan 10 from Outer Space promises to incite more praise and much more controversy. The premise of the film is that aliens were involved in the founding of the Mormon church, and it deals with the contradictions between Mormon philosophies like abstaining from alcohol while allowing polygamy. Though it explores its subject matter comically and is never mean spirited, it has stirred up controversy in Harris' hometown of Salt Lake City, which doesn't bother him.

"Joseph Smith, the founder of the Mormon church, offended people, and George Washington certainly offended the British," Harris says in his defense. "Anytime something is said, someone is offended. [*Plan 10*] is a specialty film. No, it is not for everyone, but I'm tired of these McMovies made for everyone. Over 100 billion served, but they still taste bad."

Plan 10 was made for \$100,000 but looks like \$3 million thanks to the talent involved in its production. Walter Hart, a special effects expert whose work includes *Star Trek*, *The Next Generation*, produced the film and is responsible for the surprisingly realistic space craft sequences. Stefene Russell makes her film debut as Lucinda Hall, who finds her identity while discovering the secrets of the Mormon church. Karen Black (*Five Easy Pieces*), a friend of Trent's from the *Rubin and Ed* shoot, added her talents to the project for free when a local actress afraid of repercussions from the Mormon

church dropped out. Black plays Nehor, from the planet Kolob (the planet where God lives, according to Mormon doctrine), who is the vengeful wife of a polygamist. The cast and crew worked for deferred wages, with borrowed equipment

and lunches provided by

Harris' mother. "You develop relationships with people interested in your work, and they will donate their time or money to the project," says Harris.

"This film was really fun to make," he continues. "*Rubin and Ed* was hard. This was hard, but a lot of fun. I love this movie, I really do like it."

Plan 10 recently made its debut at the Sundance Film Festival in the midnight movies sidebar. And while Harris was pleased with the exposure his film received, such festivals fail to impress him. "Sundance is like a stamp of approval by the current art police, the people who dictate taste."

More to the point, local audiences are thus far enjoying Harris' labor of love. Despite the controversy—or because of it—it grossed \$40,000 during four weeks on one screen in Salt Lake City, and Harris is just getting started. He'll next try to book it into selected theaters elsewhere, hoping to acquire some favorable press clippings and good word of mouth prior to an appearance at the Independent Feature Film Market this fall and a more concerted effort to find domestic distribution and foreign buyers.

"You can't stop them," Harris says of independent filmmakers, himself included. "You're never going to do it. You can't do it. They are going to make films no matter what."

Plan 10 Productions, 262 East 100 South, Salt Lake City, UT 84111; tel/fax: (801) 322-1652.

David Metzler is an aspiring filmmaker and freelance writer for the Boulder Weekly.



"This is the place," declares ruddy-cheeked actor Pat Colinz, arriving at a sacred place in Trent Harris' decidedly un-sacred *Plan 10 From Outer Space*. Courtesy filmmaker

ONE JUMP'IN JOINT

..... The Five Points Media Center

BY LISA FINNEGAN

IT'S NOT OFTEN COMPETING STATIONS VOLUNTEER TO WORK TOGETHER ON A project. But in Denver, virtually all of the city's major broadcast, cable, and radio stations have come together to create a media center designed to train women and people of color.

The Five Points Media Center, which officially opened its doors one year ago this month, is home to two television and one radio station—the cable access Denver Community Television (DCTV), public television station KBDI (Channel 12), and public radio jazz-format station KUVU-89.3 FM. All three participate in an internship and training program run by the center. The city's three network affiliates are also involved in the Five Points program, as is TCI and TBS, as financial contributors, board members, and potential beneficiaries of the trained interns.

"The need is so great within the television industry to educate and train people of color and women that the mission sells itself," says Jean Galloway, vice president of community affairs at ABC affiliate KUSA. "We were one of the first commercial broadcasters to jump on board. Everyone in Denver realizes the great need to better reflect the population in our industry—this helps us all."

Five Points offers classes on all aspects of television and radio production—from videotape master controls to camera operation and on-air presentation. It also offers two types of internships to women and people of color interested in television or radio: The Academic Track Internship Program is for students who receive college credit, and the Skills Enhancement Training Program provides vocational certification in specific areas for participants not enrolled in college. Though the independent stations retain their individual identities and don't share equipment or paid staff, center interns rotate through the different stations to learn all aspects of the business.

Significantly, the internships are paid positions.

"We realize our constituents can't afford to work and not get paid, so we got some money together for internships," says Jeff Hirota, the center's director. "Most are working one or two jobs already. What we want to do is train them, so they can leave here and get a job in the industry."

The Five Points Media Center is located in a renovated building in one of the most crime-ridden neighborhoods in Denver, deliberately chosen to give more access to the people the center is trying to reach. The center takes its name from the Five Points neighborhood it chose as home. Formerly a jazz

mecca, the area took shape as a black business center during its peak years—1920 through 1940. Jazz greats like Ella Fitzgerald and Duke Ellington frequently played in the area, drawing racially mixed crowds to Five Points.

After the state passed the Colorado Fair Housing Law in 1954, urban renewal pushed out many of the older residents and businesses. The mass exodus left a shell of empty burned-out buildings, high crime, and poverty. The Five Points Media Center is designed to be the first step in the revitalization of this once strong community.

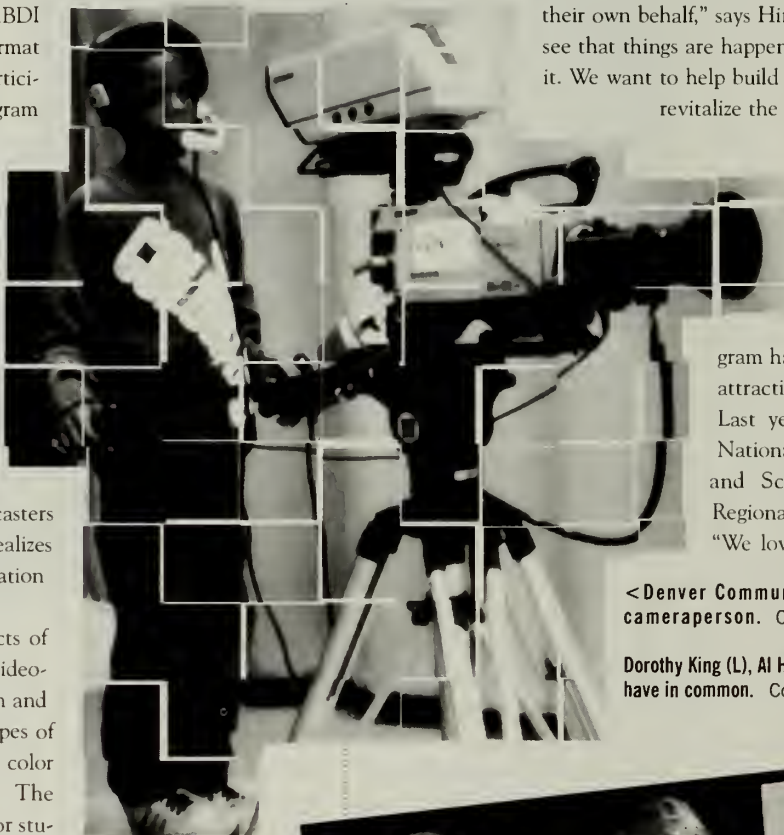
"We want to give people of color a chance to speak on their own behalf," says Hirota. "We want people here to see that things are happening, and they can be a part of it. We want to help build confidence that will hopefully revitalize the area."

The media center corporation was established in 1992 as a nonprofit organization and opened its doors July 1, 1994. Interns came on board last September, and the program has already had some success in attracting women and people of color. Last year it was recognized by the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences with the Heartland Regional Emmy.

"We love it down here," says Nelson

<Denver Community TV's youngest cameraperson. Courtesy Denver Community TV.

Dorothy King (L), Al Heaney, and the Betacam they have in common. Courtesy Denver Community TV.



BETH HARRISON
producer
Denver Center Media

BY CATHIE BECK



Profile

B

eth Harrison became a film producer in an unusual, two-step process: First, she majored in biology at Denison University in Ohio. Second, she made herself indispensable while interning at WNET-New York during production of the \$8 million public television series *The Brain*.

"It was fate and luck," Harrison says. "We had a producer who quit in the middle of production. I was the only person who knew where the files were."

How Harrison wound up her eight-year relationship with WNET in 1990 and came to be a producer at Denver Center Media—a full-service teleproduction facility for the Denver Center for the Performing Arts—is equally unconventional.

"I'd interviewed to do live football with NBC Sports—and had accepted the position," she says. "At the same time, Denver Center Media called. There was a production manager position open, so I came out to Denver and liked what I heard. My dad thought I was nuts, but I let go of the NBC position and decided to come to Denver. What can I say? The roads diverged, and I took the one less traveled and came to Denver to learn how to work a feature film."

Top of the World is Harrison's first Wild-West-influenced feature film, produced in 1993 through Denver Center Media and directed by Cort Tramontin with Brockman Seawell executive producing. It tells the tale of old friends and lovers working through relationships and life while on a Thanksgiving holiday in the Rockies. Shot entirely on location in Colorado, *Top of the World* taught Harrison the business of filmmaking. "*Top of the World* enlightened me about the marketing and distribution of independent film," she says. "Generally speaking, you don't have stars driving your films. Your distributor has to be very passionate about the film, or you have to give the press something to write about, something particular about the project."

Some of Harrison's East Coast achievements include *Innovation*, an Emmy-award winning science series; *The Eleventh Hour*, a nightly news and social issues program; and one-hour projects like *A Meeting with Mandela* and *Alvin Ailey: Going Home*, all ventures originating from PBS affiliate WNET, where Harrison was production manager.

Today Harrison's subject matter reflects her new geography as she assumes the commitment of generating original programming about the West. *O'Cowgirls!* is a documentary Harrison is currently coproducing with writer and filmmaker Jarrett Engle which debunks the cowgirl myth. Their project description reads, "A cowgirl was no more than a costume: fringed skirt, a little vest, and a hat with a string under her chin. A serious grown woman would not dress up that way." But in reality, many women did ride and rope—and did so with considerable skill. As Harrison notes, "In the 1920s, many ranching families couldn't afford a lot of help. When rodeo evolved, these women could ride as well as the men. *O'Cowgirls!* tells the stories of women, real women."

Launching regional works from Denver Center Media adds up geographi-



The cast chills out on top of the Rockies in Beth Harrison's *Top of the World*. Courtesy filmmaker

cally and ideologically to Harrison. "It makes sense for the Denver Center to get involved in *O'Cowgirls!*," she says. "There aren't many independents living west of the Mississippi that do original programming for a national audience. The subject matter should have something to do with the

region... The cowgirl is a Western thing, and it makes sense for us [at the Denver Center] to be involved in it."

Living west of the Mississippi has also inspired Harrison to take on a region a little further east of the Wild West: America's heartland. Unofficially titled *Scenes of the Prairie*, the piece will examine a part of the United States forgotten by some, completely ignored by others. "To many," she says, "the prairie is a monotonous place, yet to some it represents an abundance of things and is truly the heart of our American souls."

"This is the region that the pioneers first encountered when they headed west," continues Harrison, who has immersed herself in the literature, poetry, and other writings of prairie residents. "It really was an unusual landscape for a European; they'd never seen anything like it. For all its starkness and openness, it was a very difficult place for a human being to live. They had to tame it, basically. Native American people were hip to how to best live on that land, that you couldn't put down roots, you had to migrate. You depended on the buffalo, who depended on the grass."

"This will be a film of issues, of how the land affects the human spirit, how it has influenced our culture, and the art that's come out of it. Most Americans either fly over or drive through this region as fast as they can. But if you really look beyond the surface, there's a lot going on here."

Harrison proves that at least one New Jersey suburbanite can manage the mountains, the Midwest, and even Mandela with equal aplomb. "New York is conceived as the center of the universe," she says. "I was amazed and pleasantly surprised to learn that there's a lot going on here. There's tons of possibilities," she says. "Tons of possibilities."

Beth Harrison, Denver Center Media, Denver Center for the Performing Arts, 1245 Champa St., Denver, CO 80204; (303) 893-4000; fax: 3206.

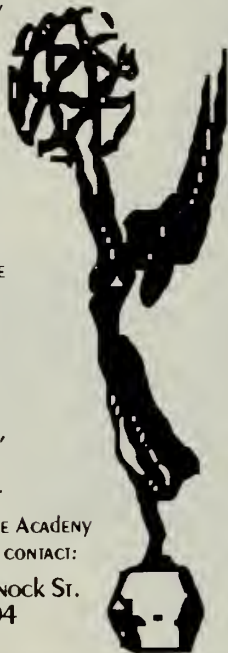
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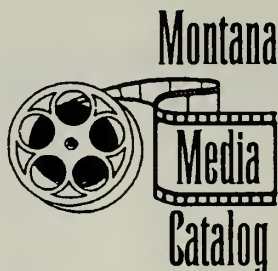
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462 Broadway, Suite 500, New York, NY 10013; (212) 925-0606

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specific information.

Conner, production manager at DCTV. "We've been getting more people coming in and using the facilities and taking the classes offered. We had a class this week, and 30 people showed up. It's been a much more diverse group of people, which is great."

One positive result of the synergy at Five Points is that more alternative programs have started appearing on the local public television station. "It's given us a broader-base to work with," says KBDI general manager Ted Krichel. "We run a gay and lesbian show that originated at DCTV, a political talk show, and a meditation and movement program. There have also been a lot more people coming in to see what we're about. We're definitely getting a more diverse group [from the community]."

"The goal is always focused on education," says KUSA's Galloway, who serves on the 20-member board of directors, which consists of commercial network and radio executives, educators, and community representatives. "There are so many jobs [at KUSA] that we can't fill with people of color or women because we can't find enough who are trained to do the job. There are going to be a lot of technical positions opening up in the industry, and we're all hoping to draw from the Five Points pool."

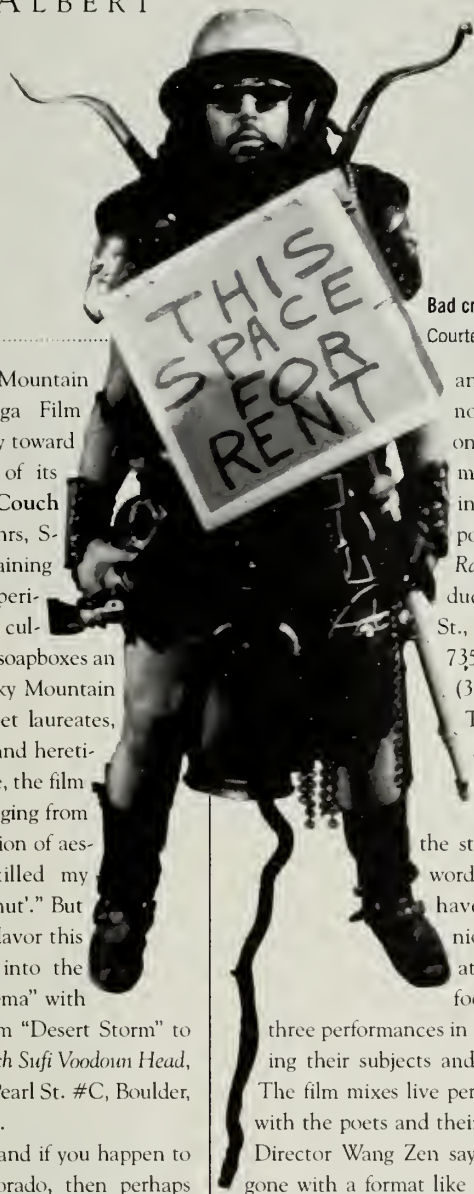
To help, Hirota says the media center is working on creating a job line that can be used by anyone in the community. "We're looking at the issues in our neighborhood as a catalyst," says Hirota. "Fifty percent are below the poverty level, 80 percent are people of color, and we have the third highest crime rate in Denver. This program is too new to say we've gotten jobs for people, but with training I really believe it will happen. We've got a Catch-22: [the stations] would like to hire women and minorities, but there are not enough candidates. We're flipping this around."

Hirota is currently trying to develop funding for a summer media camp to pique local children's interest in media early. "We'll bring them in here, teach them how to use the equipment, give them lunch, and get them interested in what we're doing," he says. "We want them to think of this [resource] as theirs. Maybe at the end of the camp we'll have them produce something that will go on the air."

"Really, if you think about it, this is a dream come true," he says. "It's amazing that all these competing stations have come together to support something like this. It's going to really open up the medium."

Five Points Media Center: 2900 Welton St., ste. 310, Denver, CO 80205; (303) 295-1357.

Lisa Finnegan is a freelance writer living in Boulder, Colorado, who has contributed to the Denver Post, the Boulder Weekly, Flatirons magazine, and other publications.



Bad craziness from *Couch Sufi Voodoo Head*.

Courtesy, filmmakers.

It must be all that Rocky Mountain fresh air: Boulder's Dziga Film Syndicate is working its way toward the 18th and final hour of its "super infinity montage," *Couch Sufi Voodoo Head* (18 hrs, S-8). "A complex and entertaining collage of interviews, experimental films, and satirical cultural analysis, [the project] soapboxes an eclectic assemblage of Rocky Mountain eccentrics, disembodied poet laureates, esoteric art jazz explorers, and heretical philosophers." Of course, the film will comment on topics ranging from "circumcision to a 'diminution of aesthetics' to 'Hollywood killed my mind' to 'workin' the butt hut.'" But that's not all! The Dzigas flavor this stew of "shamanic forays into the netherbelly of Super 8 cinema" with *news spoofs*: everything from "Desert Storm" to Waco to O.J. Simpson. *Couch Sufi Voodoo Head*, Dziga Film Syndicate, 842 Pearl St. #C, Boulder, CO 80302; (303) 786-7673.

You are where you live, and if you happen to live in Wasteminster, Colorado, then perhaps you have come to realize that you mirror the apathy upon which the utilitarian design of the 300 square miles of strip malls filling your surroundings is based. Ash, the "pensive protagonist" of Michael T. Lepper's *The Insufferable Landscape* (appr. 40 min., 16mm), feels the effects of living in a monotonous wasteland built according to "American consumerism's influence on architecture"—what he terms "the infrastructure of greed." The film, currently in postproduction, was shot on location in Wasteminster. *The Insufferable Landscape*, Existenzminimum Filmkunst, PO Box 4246, Boulder, CO 80306-4246; (303) 473-9170 or 494-6825; email: mtlepper@csn.org.

Hardly anyone plays Joplin's music anymore, right? Wrong, and we're talking Scott, not Janis, besides. Vicki Rottman's *Ragtime Live* (video) tracks some of the top performers of "America's first original music" and in turn attempts to flip

any preconceived notions about ragtime on their heads. Rottman is seeking finishing funds to complete posting by autumn '95. *Ragtime Live*, VR Productions, 900 Lincoln St., #34, PO Box 300-735, Denver, CO 80203; (303) 831-8661.

The makers of *Spoken War* (70 min., S-VHS, Hi8, 16mm), which tells the stories of five "spoken word" artists in Denver, have devised an ingenious method of generating both funds and footage: they staged three performances in local theaters, featuring their subjects and charging admission. The film mixes live performance, interviews with the poets and their families, and verité. Director Wang Zen says he "wouldn't have gone with a format like Beta for this project. The mix [of formats] gives the film a grungy feel that complements the subject matter." The final release print will be 35mm. *Spoken War*, Spoken War Productions, 16457 East 13th Pl., Aurora, CO 80011; (303) 364-3159.

First came *The Front Page*, then *The Paper*, and now *Out of Context*, (60 min., 3/4" SP video) a cinéma-verité look at the nuts and bolts of producing a small independent weekly in Montana. Paul B. Harte's documentary unfolds over seven days in the life of the *Missoula Independent*, beginning with the first editorial meeting and wrapping as the first sheets roll off the press. In between, Harte "examines the processes and people who write and edit" and reveals the pressures that go along with the bargain. *Out of Context*, Paul B. Harte, 2409 Acadie Dr. #1, Missoula, MT 59803; (406) 251-4258; email: Harteman@aol.com.

A well-received veteran of the fest roundup,

Dan Mirvish and Dana Altman's *Omaha* (85 min., 35mm) recently played Nebraska before setting sights on a national release. Offbeat and humorous, the film tells the story of a man just back from Nepal who must face not only the strange crew he calls family and friends, but also a pair of Colombian jewel thieves who pursue him across the plains of Nebraska. Mirvish, a founder of the Sundance-challenging Utah fest Slamdance, teamed with Dana Altman, Robert's grandson, for this project. *Omaha*, Bugeater Films, 10144 Tabor St. #203, Los Angeles, CA 90034; (310) 559-7581 or (402) 597-9600.

A walk down Mammary Lane: North American society's obsession with images of protuberant, milk-producing sacs of fatty tissue gets scoped in *Unbound* (30 min., VHS), along with 15 women discussing their breasts. Claudia Morgado's film, "a series of colorful, lushly detailed scenes" inspired by historical, breast-featuring paintings by the likes of Velázquez and Caravaggio, aims at "breaking through the censorship of [women's] bodies. Images of women's bodies permeate our lives whether we are aware of it or not," Morgado says. "We have always separated the real woman from the woman's image, so I wanted to make a film about what it was like to be in that image." *Unbound*, Ojos de Luna Productions, 4448 John St., Vancouver, BC V5V 3X1; (604) 876-2942; fax: 875-6637.

Since 1950, the Chinese occupation of Tibet has resulted in widespread torture, genocide, and the systematic decimation of the Tibetan culture, including the destruction of 6,000 monasteries and temples and mass exile. About 1,000 Tibetans live in the US; Rachel Lyon's *Shadows Over Tibet: Stories In Exile* (57 min., Beta) profiles one Norbu Samphel, who fled over the Himalayas to India at the age of six and now resides in Chicago. Norbu's personal odyssey is set against the very public efforts of the Dalai Lama (interviewed here as well) to resist the invasion, and framed within a look at recent, hope-defying developments in Tibet. The film is narrated by Richard Gere. *Shadows Over Tibet: Stories In Exile*, Lioness Films, 1535 West Estes, 3rd fl., Chicago, IL 60626.

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FILM & VIDEO
M O N T H L Y



*Missoula
Independents
John Webb and Eric
Cushman proof the
layout in Out of
Context.
Courtesy filmmaker.*

What better setting these days for neo-noir than the chaos, both moral and otherwise, that is Eastern Europe? Estonia's answer to that is Ilkka Jarvilaturi's *City Unplugged* (formerly *Darkness in Tallinn*, 99 min., 35mm). The film is actually a New York indie production helmed by an "Americanized Finn," with copious inspiration drawn from the French gangster films of the 1960s and the artful, frenzied Hong Kong superaction flicks of the last few years. The meat, however, is straight outta Estonia. The producers obtained the plot from a newspaper article about Estonia's prewar gold stash, boned up on their knowledge (heretofore nil) of that tiny nation, and headed east to achieve "high production values on a low budget." A poor electrician is hired by the mob to blackout the city of Tallinn so they can pull off a major heist in the dark. A rapid pace, ingenious twists, steady body count, and thrills define the rest of the film. After premiering to favorable reviews at Cannes and other fests in 1993, the film is finally being released in the U.S., beginning in New York at the Quad on June 23. *City Unplugged*, Upstream Pictures, 185 W. Houston St. #2K, NY, NY 10014; (212) 366-1936; fax: 1942.

Before Armstrong and the moon there was Charles Lindbergh and his hop across the pond. In 1927, the 25-year-old Lindbergh touched down in Paris and pushed the U.S. ahead of aero-rival France, altering forever our notions of the limitations of time, space, and travel and accruing a \$25,000 prize. "*Are There Any Mechanics Here?*" (88 min., video), a film by Cameron Richardson, concentrates exclusively on that transatlantic flight and Lindbergh's life during that period. The film consists entirely of "vintage motion picture and sound archival material" and contains pristine newsreel outtakes never before

viewed. Aired on Discovery Channel last May as *Lindbergh's Great Race*, the film has also garnered such laurels as a Gold Medal at the Houston Worldfest and a Cine Eagle. "*Are There Any Mechanics Here?*", Cameron Richardson, 50 Sutton Place So., New York, NY 10022; (212) 688-5859.

Billed as a cross between *Slacker* and *My Dinner with André*, Loch Phillipp's and Lee Skaife's *Use Your Head* (appr. 120 min., S-16) has a plotline that sounds like the unholy mating of Cheech and Chong with MTV's *The Real World*. A fortyish hippie, slow-witted communications student, rebel rocker, and business major are thrown together for 10 days by a government research team investigating the effects of consuming—in combination—marijuana and alcohol. "It's a meandering series of conversations glued together by a certain unity of thought." The film is currently in postproduction and in search of finishing funds. *Use Your Head*, Off Ramp Films, 505 Court St. #8B, Brooklyn, NY 11231; (718) 722-7730.

Beautiful Dreamer: Victoria Woodhull ran for president in the '72 campaign, and no one ever speaks of it. Of course, people's memories are short, and the year was 1872, when women lacked the vote. Hence Victoria Weston's *The Naked Truth: The Victoria Woodhull Story* (60 min., video). The candidate's platform included "free love" and "equal rights for women." The woman herself climbed from poverty to success as a clairvoyant, stockbroker, "muckraking" publisher, and English aristocrat. The documentary chronicles the life and times of this remarkable woman who turned tables, exposed hypocrisy, and stared down futility. *The Naked Truth: The Victoria Woodhull Story*, Zoie Films, 2865 Lenox Rd., ste. 211, Atlanta, GA 30324; (404) 816-0602; fax: 0603.

LISTINGS DO NOT CONSTITUTE AN ENDORSEMENT. SINCE SOME FESTIVAL DETAILS MAY CHANGE AFTER THE MAGAZINE GOES TO PRESS, WE RECOMMEND THAT YOU CONTACT THE FESTIVAL FOR FURTHER INFORMATION BEFORE SENDING PREVIEW CASSETTES. DEADLINE FOR INCLUDING A CALL FOR ENTRIES IN THE FESTIVAL COLUMN IS THE 1ST OF THE MONTH TWO MONTHS PRIOR TO THE COVER DATE (IE: AUGUST 1 FOR THE OCTOBER ISSUE). ALL BLURBS SHOULD INCLUDE: FESTIVAL DATES, CATEGORIES, PRIZES, ENTRY FEES, DEADLINES FOR SUBMISSIONS, FORMATS, AND CONTACT INFO. TO IMPROVE OUR RELIABILITY AND MAKE THIS COLUMN MORE BENEFICIAL TO INDEPENDENTS, WE ENCOURAGE ALL FILM- AND VIDEO-MAKERS TO CONTACT FIV WITH CHANGES, CRITICISM, OR PRAISE FOR FESTIVALS PROFILED IN THIS COLUMN.

DOMESTIC

AMERICAN INDIAN FILM FESTIVAL & VIDEO EXPOSITION, Nov., CA. Estab. in 1975, competitive fest, produced by Native Americans, "presents contemporary films that dispel popular myths & advance contemporary appreciation of Native American societal & artistic contributions. . . It seeks to overcome the limited distribution of films by & about American Indians by promoting interest in new works." Awards presented at American Indian Motion Picture Awards Ceremony at Palace of Fine Arts; 12-16 awards presented w/ live entertainment. Entry fee: \$50. Deadline: Aug. 1. Contact: Michael Smith, American Indian Film Fest & Video Exposition, 333 Valencia St., ste. 322, San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 554-0525; fax: 0542.

AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL FILM AND VIDEO FESTIVAL, Sept., CA. Sponsored by American Motion Picture Society, competitive fest is now in 66th consecutive yr. Competition cats: films/videos made w/out commercial or financial objective w/ no prior sales or rental agreement; student films; ind. films/videos; commercial films/videos. Each cat judged separately. Winning entries screened at Society's annual convention & other venues. Cash, trophies & certificates awarded. Entry fee: \$5. Formats: 16mm, S8, 8mm, Hi8, 1/2". Deadline: Aug 1. Contact: George W. Cushman, American Int'l Film/Video Festival, Box 4034, Long Beach, CA 90804; (310) 498-1634.

CENTRAL FLORIDA FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, Sept. 22 - Oct. 1, FL. The festival listing in the May *Independent* omitted some significant details. This festival accepts film and video, both shorts and features. All entrants will receive score sheets & written critiques on each work entered. Entry fees range from \$15 to \$35; \$20 extra for late entries. Deadline: June 24; late deadline: July 15. Central Florida Film & Video Fest, c/o Brenda Joyner, 15-1/2 N. Eola Dr. #5, Orlando, FL 32801; (407) 839-6045.

CHICAGO LESBIAN & GAY INTERNATIONAL FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, November, IL. Second oldest lesbian & gay fest in US is now in 15th yr. About \$3,000 in cash prizes (size depends on # of

entries). Held at 750-seat Music Box Theater & 200-seat Kino-Eye Cinema. Sponsored by Chicago Filmmakers. Entry fee: \$20. Deadline: July 15. Contact: Brenda Webb, Chicago Lesbian & Gay Int'l Film Festival, 1543 W. Division, Chicago, IL; (312) 384-5533; fax: 5532; e-mail: chifilm@tezcat.com.

CINE ANNUAL GOLDEN EAGLE FILM & VIDEO COMPETITION, Aug., DC. Entry fees: \$45-\$75 (amateur); \$100+ (professional). Non-theatrical films & videos (w/ exception of TV ads & spot announcements) eligible for Golden Eagle awards in following cats: amateur, agriculture, economic development, animation/children's films, arts, business/industry, documentary, education, entertainment, shorts, environment, history, medicine, feature (made for TV) & music, motivational, news, people, public affairs, public health, science, sports, travel. Entries must be US prods. CINE enters award winners in foreign fests. Winners also eligible for Academy Award nominations. Now in 37th yr. In 1994, over 1,100 entries received. Formats: all original formats; submit on 1/2". Deadline: Aug. 1. Contact: Joy Parisi, competition dir., Cine Annual Golden Eagle Film & Video Competition, CINE, 1001 Connecticut Ave., NW, #638, Washington, DC 20036; (202) 785-1136; fax: 4114.

DALLAS VIDEO FESTIVAL, Nov., TX. Presented by Video Assoc. of Dallas & Dallas Museum of Art, noncompetitive fest is in 9th yr. of showcasing new works by ind. artists. Features Texas Show, juried program of new work by TX artists; Interactive Zone, for interactive works; Kidvid, for works by & for children & teens. Entries must be produced or postproduced on video or shot on film & transferred to video. Audiences of 5,000-7,000. Entry fee: \$15. Deadline: Aug. 1. Contact: Barton Weiss, dir., Dallas Video Festival, Video Association of Dallas, 215A Henry St., Dallas, TX 75208; (214) 651-8888; fax: 8896; e-mail: bart@onramp.net; web: <http://synapsegroup.com/vfest>.

FILM ARTS FESTIVAL, Nov., CA. One of Bay Area's premiere showcases of locally produced ind. media work, thematically organized celebration & exploration of recent & historical media work by Northern CA makers. Ind. films & videos of any length & genre by makers residing (or made while residing) in Northern California (Monterey to Oregon border) eligible. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, S8, 3/4"; preview on 1/2". Entry fee: \$5; honoraria paid for works shown. Deadline: July 29. Contact: Lissa Gibbs, Film Arts Foundation, 346 9th St., 2nd fl., San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 552-8760.

HOYT FULLER FILM FESTIVAL, Oct., GA. Annual invitational, noncompetitive fest for works from throughout African diaspora. Named for late Hoyt W. Fuller, founder & publisher of *First World Magazine* & editor of *Black World*. Premieres work that celebrates Black aesthetic, honoring media producers who bring "appreciation of art, culture & creativity of Black world." Founded in 1985. No entry fee. Formats: 16mm, 1/2". Contact: Hoyt Fuller Film Festival, c/o Atlanta African Film Society, PO Box 50319, Atlanta, GA 30302; (404) 525-1136.



NEW YORK EXPOSITION OF SHORT FILM & VIDEO, Nov., NY. 30th annual competitive fest for ind. short film/video. 3-day fest w/ sidebar screenings & panel discussions. Award certificates presented in fiction, doc, animation & experimental, plus Eastman Kodak cash prize. Selected films will be screened for NY-area distributors & exhibitors. Accepting Canadian & int'l entries. Held in association w/ New School for Social Research & NY Film/Video Council. Formats: 16mm, 3/4"; preview on 1/2". Deadline: July 31. Contact: Robert Withers, NY Expo, Box 330, 532 LaGuardia Pl., NY, NY 10012; (212) 505-7742.

NEW YORK FESTIVALS: INTERNATIONAL NON-BROADCAST COMPETITION, Jan., NY. 38th annual competition for industrial prods, education & information, home video, short films, multi-image, business theatre. Last yr's competition had nearly 1,300 entries from 36 countries. Fest awards Grand Award "Best of Fest" trophy in each main category group & gold, silver & bronze WorldMedals in each cat. Several cats under information/educational prods; industrial film & video prods. Entries must have been produced since Aug. 3, 1994. Entry fees: \$110-\$180, depending on length. Formats: 3/4", 1/2". Deadline: Aug. 3. Contact: Bilha Goldberg, v.p., The New York Festivals, 780 King St., Chappaqua, NY 10514; (914) 238-4481; fax: 5040.

NEW ORLEANS FILM AND VIDEO FESTIVAL, Oct. 13-19, LA. Now in 7th yr., fest features local premieres of major int'l releases & brings in industry guests to present film-related seminars. "Cinema 16" division hosts ind. film competition & shows works in all cats. Night of music videos also programmed. Last yr fest showed 108 films in "Cinema 16" & 33 in "The Big House" (for 35mm, larger budget, feature-length distributed films.) Annual audiences of 6,000. Formats: 16mm, S8, 3/4", 1/2". Entry fee: \$25. Deadline: Aug. 1. Contact: Tom Ellis, managing dir., New Orleans Film and Video Festival, 821 Gravier St., ste. 600, New Orleans, LA 70112; (504) 523-3818; fax: (504) 529-2430.

NORTHWEST FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, Nov. 3-12, OR. Founded in 1972. annual juried survey of new moving image art produced by film- & video-makers living in OR, WA, ID, MT, AK & British Columbia. \$6,000-\$10,000 in prizes; Best of Fest Awards & honorable mentions. No subject cats; fest is open to "everything ind." Fest draws 250+ entries each yr, 35-40 of which are selected for public presentation as single programs or in context of group/thematic programs. Usually 7-10 programs of features, docs, shorts. Entries must have been produced in previous 2 yrs. Program tours Northwest

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cities. Deadline: Aug. 15. Contact: Bill Foster, dir., Northwest Film & Video Festival, Northwest Film Center, 1219 S.W. Park Avenue, Portland, OR 97205; (503) 221-1156; fax: (503) 226-4842.

PXL THIS FIVE, Nov., CA. Founded in 1991, fest accepts entries shot w/ PXL 2000 camera (but not exclusively) & entered on VHS. Public screenings in LA in Nov. & Feb. Two-hr. program features entries from N. America incl. many genres: doc, poetry, experimental, drama, comedy & music. No entry fee. Deadline: Aug. 22. Contact: Gerry Fialka, Clap Off The Glass Productions, 2427 1/2 Glyndon Ave., Venice, CA 90291; (310) 306-7330.

SHORT ATTENTION SPAN FILM AND VIDEO FESTIVAL, Sept., CA. Noncommercial entries of 2 min. or shorter accepted in showcase for short works, founded in 1991. Screens at least 1 piece from each artist who submits work. No cats, censors, or judges. Selected entries also air on Viacom Ch. 25 in SF on Artists' Television Access weekly program & broadcast in conjunction w/ SASFVF on *Weird TV* across N. America. Works may originate on any medium but must be submitted on VHS. Entry fee: \$5. Deadline: Aug. 15. Contact: SASFVF/Elizabeth Hall, PO Box 460316, San Francisco, CA 94146; (415) 282-4316; e-mail: SASFVF@aol.com.

TAMPA INTERNATIONAL LESBIAN AND GAY PRIDE FILM AND VIDEO FESTIVAL, October, FL. Fest considers all genres of any length by, about & of interest to lesbians & gay men & is "committed to presenting culturally inclusive & diverse programs of video & film." No entry fee, enclose SASE for return of preview cassette. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2"; preview on VHS only. Deadline: July 28. Contact: Dorothy Abbott, Pride Film Festival, 5506 N. Branch Ave., Tampa, FL 33604; tel/fax: (813) 237-0239.

TELLURIDE FILM FESTIVAL, Sept. 1-4, CO. Selective fest, now in 22nd yr, held Labor Day wknd, programs new US & foreign features & docs & attracts serious cross-section of media & professional community. Open to professional & non-professional filmmakers; docs, shorts, animation, experimental, etc. Works of all lengths, genres accepted. Works must be new & unseen by public until fest. Shorts play either w/ features or as part of 2 specially selected programs of "Filmmakers of Tomorrow," featuring works by emerging film artists. Entry fee: \$35 under 30 min., \$55 over 30 min. Deadline: July 31. Contact: Bill Pence/Stella Pence, Telluride Film Festival, National Film Preserve, 53 South Main St., ste. 212, Box B1156, Hanover, NH 03755; (603) 643-1255; fax: 5938.

FOREIGN

BAHIA FILM FESTIVAL, Sept. 14-20, Brazil. Held under motto "For a More Humanistic World," fest, now in 22nd edition, is open to Ibero-American prods; this yr there will be special cat opened to non-Ibero-American prods w/ Latin American subjects. Concurrent int'l film/video market "aims at strengthening trade relationships regarding distribution, purchasing, or coprods among ind. producers & potential media buyers." Deadline: July 31 (competition); Aug. 15 (market). Contact: Guido Araujo, dir./Diana

Gurgel, co-dir., Jornada Internacional de Cinema da Bahia, Av. Araujo Pinho, 32, Salvador, Bahia, Brazil CEP: 40.170-000; tel: 011 55 71 235-4392; fax: 011 55 71 336-9299.

BREST SHORT FILM FESTIVAL, Nov., France. Competitive section of fest for shorts is open only to European Union countries, but noncompetitive programs can be int'l. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Deadline: Aug. 31. Contact: Gilbert Le Traon, artistic dir., Festival du Film Court de Brest, 40 bis, rue de Los Angeles Republique, BP 173, 29269 Brest Cedex, France; tel: 011 33 98 44 03 94; fax: 011 33 98 80 25 24.

BUENOS AIRES INTERNATIONAL VIDEO FESTIVAL, Nov. 22-26, Argentina. First edition of fest for video works. Int'l competitive section for video works & artistic CD-ROMs. Special prizes for best works w/ subjects of AIDS & ecology. Deadline: Aug. 31. Contact: Carlos Trilnick, fest dir., 1er Festival Internacional da Video de Buenos Aires, Guardia Vieja 3360 (1192), Buenos Aires, Argentina; tel: 011 541 862-0683; fax: 011 541 866-1337.

COPENHAGEN GAY & LESBIAN FILM FESTIVAL, Sept. 15-21, Denmark. Part of Copenhagen Film Festival, noncompetitive fest focuses on "films which never get to the Danish distributors because of their gay/lesbian content." Shows 20-25 films each yr. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 1/2". Deadline: Aug. 1. Contact: Jill Byrui, dir., Copenhagen Gay & Lesbian Film Festival, c/o FSC, Bülowsvej 50A, 1870 Frederiksberg C. Denmark; tel: 011 45 3537 2507; fax: 011 45 3135 5758.

HAIFA INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 9-13, Israel. Annual meeting of professionals associated w/ film industry, incl. directors, critics, producers, actors, distributors & theater owners. Fest screens new features; holds promotional screenings of films soon to be distributed open to critics & theater owners; premieres Israeli films made during past yr; shows Israeli & foreign shorts & programs retro, doc & animation sections. Emphasis on Mediterranean & Arabic pictures; fest also has int'l panorama. Deadline: July 15. Contact: Pnina Blayer, artistic dir., Haifa International Film Festival, 142 Hanassi Ave., 34633 Haifa, Israel; tel: 011 972 383424; fax: 011 972 438 4327.

IGUALADA INTERNATIONAL AMATEUR FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 28, Spain. Competitive biannual fest for nonprofessional & student prods, founded in 1979. Grand Award "Ciutat d'Igualada" to best film of event (200,000 pesetas & gold medal). Annually showcases 150 films. Deadline: mid-Aug. Contact: Miquel Segura I Carreras, Certamen Internacional de Cine Amateur "Ciutat d'Igualada", c/Industria, 1, 08700 Igualada (Barcelona), Spain; tel: 011 34 93 80469907; fax: 011 34 93 8044362.

LONDON INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Nov. 2-19, UK. One of Europe's largest forums for US ind. prod. Fest, now in 39th yr, is invitational, non-competitive & particularly interested in children's films for program prior to fest. Sections: Electronic Image; Art & Experiment; Animation (all of which may incl. US inds); British, French & Italian Panoramas; Africa, Asia & Latin America & children's films. Screening venues incl. National Film Theatre, Odeon Leicester Square, Odeon West End & Empire. Attended by large audiences, over 700

buyers & British/int'l media. Entries must be UK premieres. Fiction & docs of all lengths, genres accepted. Submit written materials prior to submitting tapes. Fest formats: 70mm, 35mm, 16mm, super 8, 3/4", preview on cassette (pref. VHS) only. Deadline: Aug. 1. Contact: London International Film Festival, South Bank, London SE1 8XT, UK; tel: 011 44 71 815-1322/1323; fax: 011 44 71 633-0786.

TURIN INTERNATIONAL YOUTH FILM FESTIVAL/FESTIVAL CINEMA GIOVANI, Nov., Italy. Celebrating its 13th edition this yr, this fest is competitive showcase for new, young ind. directors. Held in Torino in northern Italy's Piedmont region. Sections incl. Int'l Competition for Feature Films (35mm & 16mm Italian premieres by young filmmakers, completed after Sept. 1, 1994); Short Film Competition (up to 30 min.); Noncompetitive Section (features & docs); important premieres & works by jury members. Italian Space Competition (35mm, 16mm & videos) accepts work by Italian directors never released in Italy. Turin Space accepts films & video by directors born or living in Piedmont region. Fest also features Retro section, which this yr. will showcase Brazilian "cinema novo" of the sixties. Special events incl. short retros, screening of up & coming directors' works & reviews of significant moments in ind. filmmaking. Award: Best feature (lire 30,000,000), 3 prizes for short films (lire 2,000,000-4,000,000). Additional awards may incl. special jury awards & special mentions. Local & foreign audiences approach 45,000, w/ 25 nations represented & over 250 journalists accredited to fest. Entry fee: \$15 (payable to Cross Productions). Formats: 35mm, 16mm (no video); preview on 3/4" or 1/2". Deadline: July 31. Contact US rep: Michael Solomon, Cross Productions, 625 Broadway, 12th fl., New York, NY 10012; (212) 777-0557; fax: -0738.

UPPSALA FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 25-29, Sweden. Fest programs int'l shorts (around 100) & children's & youth films. Fest seeks new, unconventional, young cinema. Competition cats incl. short fiction (max. 20 min.; 20-60 min.), animation (max 60 min.), doc & experimental (max 60 min.), & children & young people's films (max. 60 min.); films on all subjects welcomed. 6 films awarded w/ Uppsala Filmkaja. Program also incl. retros, exhibits & seminars. Entries must have been completed in previous 2 yrs & have had no commercial or TV screenings in Sweden. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Deadline: Aug. 1. Contact: Åsa Forsman, fest dir., Uppsala Film Festival, PO Box 1746, 751 47 Uppsala, Sweden; tel: 011 46 18 120025; fax: 011 46 18 121350.

VIENNALE-VIENNA INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 12-22, Austria. Founded in 1962, Viennale is non-competitive fest of fests for films "in praise of ind. politics & visions," w/ emphasis on "films off the beaten track." Screens approx. 150-200 films each yr. Sections: Twilight Zone (Midnight Movies); Lost & Found (restored films, recently discovered or very rare films); 2 directors' tributes. Large retro concentrates on such subjects as emigration of Austrian filmmakers to Hollywood or rise of New Hollywood. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Deadline: Aug. 15. Contact: Alexander Horwath, dir., Viennale, Stiftgasse 6, A-1070 Vienna, Austria; tel: 011 43 1 526 5947; fax: 011 43 1 523 4172

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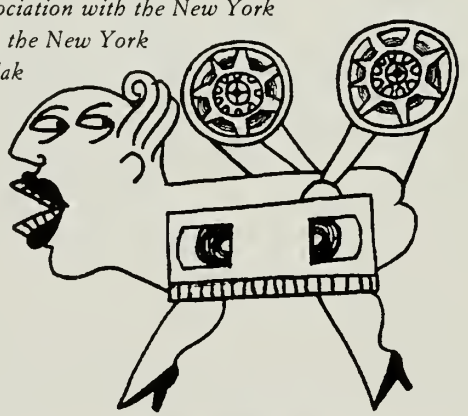



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PRODUCER seeks feature-length screenplays. Any genre; mainstream or niche appeal. Send WGA-registered script, 1-page synopsis & script-sized SASE to: Marquee Pictures, 1701 Nichols Canyon Rd., ste. 103, Los Angeles, CA 90046.

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We distribute a series of publications on financing, funding, distribution,

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Members get discounts on events covering the whole spectrum of current issues and concerns affecting the field, ranging from business and aesthetic to technical and political topics. Plus: members-only evenings with festival directors, producers, distributors, cable programmers, and funders.

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BOSTON FILM/VIDEO FOUNDATION offers ongoing workshops & seminars in film & video production, education, fundraising, screenwriting, distribution, industry business & master classes. Contact: BF/VF, 1126 Boylston St., Boston, MA 02215; (617) 536-1540; fax: 3576.

DCTV offers technical workshops, incl.: Basic TV prod., camera seminar, S-VHS & 3/4" editing, Amiga titling & graphics, intro. to doc. Register: DCTV, 87 Lafayette St., NY, NY 10013-4435; (212) 966-4510.

FILM ARTS FOUNDATION offers ongoing workshops & seminars, from 8-S & 16mm film & video prod. to fundraising, distribution, screenwriting, special effects & guest lectures. Technical workshops taught by professionals. Contact: FAF, 346 9th St., 2nd fl., San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 552-8760; fax: 0882.

FILM/VIDEO ARTS' education dept. provides quality, hands-on instruction in film/video prod. at reasonable rates & offers year-round schedule of courses. For info, contact FVA's education dept. at (212) 673-9361.

HARVESTWORKS in Manhattan offers ongoing classes in subjects ranging from audio/video synchronization to multimedia prod. & audio preprod. All classes (1-2 days) held at 596 Broadway, NY, NY. To register, call: Annie Ferguson (212) 431-1130.

INTERNATIONAL DOCUMENTARY CONGRESS, Oct. 25-28, CA. Convened by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences & International Documentary Association, congress will be organized around theme "In & Out of the Cold: 1945-1995: 50 Years of Changing Documentaries from WWII to Today." For info, contact: IDA, 8949 Wilshire Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA 90211; (310) 247-3000.

PHILADELPHIA MULTIMEDIA TECHNOLOGY SEMINARS FOR IND. PRODUCERS, July 25, Aug. 16, PA. Sealworks, specialists in multimedia integration & development, will show how to com-

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THE NATIONAL MEDIA LITERACY CONFERENCE, Sept. 22-24, NC. Held at Broyhill Center, Appalachian State University, conference will provide interdisciplinary approach to impact of mass media on school, society, students & citizens. Contact: David Considine, conference chair (704) 262-2270.

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AUSTIN, TEXAS INDEPENDENT PRODUCER offering cable access venue to showcase ind. films & videos. All genres & subject matter accepted. Shorts & music videos linked by moderator discussing information pertinent to independent filmmakers. Films & videos running longer than 40 min. may be aired in series of 2 consecutive shows. Please send release & info about film/filmmaker. Formats 1/4" & 3/4" are preferable. No payment, but credit & great exposure in valuable filmmaking community. Submit work to: James Shelton, Lee Productions, PO Box 3633, Austin, TX 78764-3633; (512) 440-8902.

90's CHANNEL, embracing controversy & searching for programming that offers fresh approaches to TV. Welcomes tapes for submission. Topics that have run on 90's Channel incl.: Racism, (*Framing the Panthers in Black & White*); Jewish/Palestinian issues (*We Dare to Speak*); sexuality issues & programs on reproductive rights. Send 3/4" tapes to: The 90's Channel, 2010 14th St., #209, Boulder, CO 80302; (303) 442-8445.

ART IN GENERAL seeks video works & guest-curved video programs for new monthly screening series. All kinds of work welcome, from experimental film & video to home videos; doc & activist to public access works. Send VHS tape (cued), résumé &/or brief statement & SASE. For more info, call Joanna Spitzner (212) 219-0473.

ART ON FILM DATABASE wants to know: Have you produced film, video or video disc on visual arts? Send info on prod. to Program for Art on Film Database, computer index to over 19,000 prods on visual arts. Interested in prods on all visual arts topics, & welcomes info on prods about artists of color & multicultural art projects. Send info to: Art on Film at Columbia University, 2875 Broadway, 2nd fl., NY, NY 10025; (212) 854-9570; fax: 9577.

BLACK ENTERTAINMENT TELEVISION seeks films & videos by black ind. makers, directors, or producers for "Black Vision" portion of *Screen Scene*, weekly 1/2-hr. show that previews TV lineup & latest theatrical releases. For more info, contact: *Screen Scene*, BET, 1899 9th St. NE, Washington, DC 20018; (202) 608-2800

BLACK VIDEO PERSPECTIVE, a new community TV prod. in Atlanta area, seeks works for/about



African Americans. For more info, contact: Karen L. Forest (404) 231-4846.

CASTILLO SHORT VIDEO FESTIVAL, a summer-long weekly screening of short videos (10 min. or less), invites submission of doc, animation, fiction, art, experimental videos on all subjects. Selected works will be exhibited to audiences & peers. Submit VHS, Hi8, 3/4" to: Barry Z. Levine, Castillo Video, 500 Greenwich St., New York, NY 10013; (212) 941-5800.

CHARISMATIC MASSES is seeking work for possible screening on local TV show exploring alternative media art. Videos, film, animation & performances in all genres accepted. Students encouraged to submit. Send work on 3/4", Hi8, 1/2" video, résumé, artist statement, SASE, SAS mailer for tape return. Fee: \$5/tape to: Charismatic Masses, Justine Wood or Cary Peppermint, c/o Syracuse University, Art Media Studies, 102 Shaffer Art Bldg., Syracuse, NY 13244; (315) 443-1294.

CINCINNATI ARTISTS' GROUP EFFORT seeks proposals for exhibitions, performances & audio/video/film works to show in their galleries. Experimental, traditional & collaborative projects encouraged. Contact: CAGE, 1416 Main St., Cincinnati, OH 45210; (513) 381-2437.

CINEMA VIDEO, monthly showcase of works by ind. video- & filmmakers, seeks S-VHS or VHS submissions of any style, content, or length. Utilizing high-end projector, selected videos are projected onto 10.5' x 14' screen. Monthly shows are collections of several artists' videos, but occasionally features are shown as special events when work merits it. Cinema Video is prod. of Velvet Elvis Arts Lounge Theater in Seattle, WA, a nonprofit fringe theater. Send submissions to: Kevin Picolet, 2207 E. Republican, Seattle, WA 98112, or call Kevin for info at (206) 323-3307.

CINEQUEST, a weekly half-hour TV series profiling best of ind. cinema & video from US & around world, looking for films/videos less than 20 min. to air on 30 min. cable show. Work over 20 min. will air on monthly special in Orlando, FL market during prime-time. Seeking all genres. Concept of show is to stretch perceptions of conventional TV & expose viewers to scope & talent of inds. Submit on 1/2" or 3/4" video. Submissions need not be recent. No submission limit or deadline. Will acknowledge receipt in 10 days. Send pre-paid mailer if need work returned. Contact: Michael D. McGowan, producer, Cinequest Productions, 2550 Alafayia Trail, Apt. 8100, Orlando, FL 32826; (407) 658-4865.

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CITY TV, a progressive municipal cable access channel in Santa Monica, seeks work on seniors, disabled, children, Spanish-language & video art; any length. Broadcast exchanged for equip. access at state-of-the-art facility. Contact: Lisa Bernard, cable TV manager, City TV, 1685 Main St., Santa Monica, CA 90401; (310) 458-8590.

CONNECT TV, a new series on ind. videomakers, seeks work for 1/2-hr. show. Progressive, social issue docs, art, humor. Will air on Cablevision of CT. Metro Video (203) 866-1090.

DATABASE & DIRECTORY OF LATIN AMERICAN FILM & VIDEO organized by Int'l Media Resources Exchange seeks works by Latin American & US Latino ind. producers. To incl. work in this resource or for info, contact: Karen Ranucci, IMRE, 124 Washington Place, NY, NY 10014; (212) 463-0108.

DUTV-CABLE 54, a nonprofit educational access channel operated by Drexel University in Philadelphia, is looking for works by ind. producers for broadcast. All genres & lengths considered. No payment; will return tapes. VHS, S-VHS & 3/4" accepted. Contact: George McCollough or Maria Elena Mongelli, DUTV-Cable 54, 33rd & Chestnut Sts., Philadelphia, PA 19104.

EASTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY seeks ind. prods for nonprofit cable channel in Spokane, Washington. No payment. Any genre or length. S-VHS, VHS, or 3/4". Tapes will be returned. Submit release form/letter & tapes to: Radio-Television Department - MS#104, Eastern Washington University, 526 5th St., Cheney, WA 99004-2431.

EN CAMINO, KRCB seeks works of 30-60 min. in Spanish & English concerning Latino community. Formats: 3/4", 16mm. Contact: Luis Nong, Box 2638, Rohnert Park, CA 94928.

FILMBABIES COLLECTIVE, a co-op of NY-based writers & directors, seek new members w/ short films for screening series (16mm, under 15 min.). Filmmakers must reside in NY area. For more info, contact: PO Box 2100, NY, NY 10025 (incl. SASE); (212) 875-7537.

GREAT LAKES FILM & VIDEO seeks 16mm & videos for ongoing exhibition of gay/lesbian, Jewish, & women's work. Experimental & animation are sought, as well as work fitting into program on aesthetic/anti-aesthetic. Contact: Matt Frost or Michael Walsh, Great Lakes Video & Film, PO Box 413, Milwaukee, WI 53201.

HALCYON DAYS PRODUCTIONS seeks video segments (1-5 min.) by 18 to 25-year-olds for video compilation show. If piece is selected, you may have chance to be video correspondent for show. Work may be editorial, real-life coverage, political satire, slapstick—you decide. Just personalize. Submit VHS or Hi8 (returnable w/ SASE) to: Mai Kim Holley, Halcyon Days Prod., c/o Hi8, 12 W. End Ave., 5th fl., NY, NY 10023; (212) 397-7754.

HANDI-CAPABLE IN THE MEDIA, INC., nonprofit organization, seeks video prods on people w/ disabilities to air on Atlanta's Public Access TV. No fees. Submit VHS or 3/4" tape to: Handi-Capable in the Media, Inc., 2625 Piedmont Rd., ste. 56-137,

Atlanta, GA 30324; (404) 279-1159.

HOME VIDEO FESTIVAL, San Francisco Home Video Festival producers seek VHS or 8mm copies of your home videos (under 20 mins.) for festival consideration. Any genre welcome. Strange, irreverent, precious & bizarre. Redeeming social value not required. Send tapes to S.F. Home Video Festival c/o Kim Teevan, 682-7th Ave., San Francisco CA, 94118. (415) 387-1148.

IN VISIBLE COLOURS FILM & VIDEO SOCIETY seeks videos by women of color for library collection. Work will be accessible to members, producers, multicultural groups & educational institutions. For more info, contact: Claire Thomas, In Visible Colours, 119 W. Pender, ste. 115, Vancouver, B.C. V6B 1S5; (604) 682-1116.

IND. FILM & VIDEO SHOWCASE, cable access show; seeks student & ind. films & videos to give artists exposure. Send films or video in 3/4" format w/ paragraph about artist & his/her work. Send to: Box #1626, 4202 E. Fowler Ave., Tampa, Florida 33620.

JACK MACKEREL VIDEO MAGAZINE, quarterly video compilation on VHS videocassette, is accepting submissions of short films, music videos, docs, interviews w/ artists, erotica, computer-generated imagery & animation & video/film whatnot. Send contributions (VHS format) to Jack Mackerel Video Magazine, PO Box 80024, Minneapolis, MN 55408-8024; attn.: Greg Bachar. (Send \$5 cash for sample volume.)

LATINO COLLABORATIVE, bimonthly screening series; seeks works by Latino film/videomakers. Honoraria paid. Send VHS preview tapes to: Latino Collaborative Bimonthly Screening Series, Vanessa Codorniu, 280 Broadway, ste. 412, NY, NY 10007; (212) 732-1121.

LA PLAZA, weekly half-hour doc series produced at WGBH Boston for & about Latino community, is interested in acquiring original works by ind. film- & videomakers that deal w/ social & cultural issues concerning Latinos. Works between 25 & 28 min. encouraged. Please send tapes in Beta, 3/4" or VHS format to: La Plaza Acquisitions, WGBH, 125 Western Ave., Boston, MA 02134.

LAUREL CABLE NETWORK, nonprofit in Maryland, seeks variety of works of all lengths & genres for regular access airing in 3/4", S-VHS, or VHS. No payment & tapes cannot be returned. Submit tape & release form/letter to: Laurel Cable Network, 8103 Sandy Spring Rd., Laurel, MD 20707, Attn.: Bob Neuman.

METRO SHORTS, program of Metropolitan Film Society; seeks 35mm prints, 15 min. or less, for regular screenings. Subject matter needs to suit audience that would view film w/ R rating. VHS/S-VHS preview tape would be helpful. Two-way UPS ground shipping costs provided. Contact: Michelle Forren, exec. dir., Metropolitan Film Society, 3928 River Walk Dr., Duluth, GA 30136-6113.

NERVOUS IMPULSE, nat'l screening series focusing on science, seeks films/videos. Open to experimental, non-narrative & animated works that address scientific representation, scientific knowledge, or interplay between science & culture. Send

preview VHS & SASE to: Nervous Impulse, Times Square Station, PO Box 2578, NY, NY 10036-2578.

NEWTON TELEVISION FOUNDATION seeks proposals on ongoing basis from ind. producers. NTF is nonprofit foundation collaborating w/ ind. producers on docs concerning contemporary issues. Past works have been broadcast on local & national public TV, won numerous awards & most are currently in distribution in educational market. Contact NTF for details: 1608 Beacon St., Waban, MA 02168; (617) 965-8477; ntf@tmn.com; walshntf@aol.com.

NYU TV, channel 51 in NYC, is offering opportunities for inds to showcase finished films & videos. Submit materials to: Linda Noble, 26 Washington Place, 1st fl., NY, NY 10003.

OCULAR ARCADE: New on ACTV in Columbus, OH, *Ocular Arcade* showcases ind. video (art, docs, experimental). Send Hi-8, VHS, or 3/4" dub to: Ocular Arcade, D. Master, 731 Kerr St., Columbus, OH 43215.

OFFLINE, hour-long, weekly, regional & national public-access show, seeks ind. & experimental, creative works. Submissions should be 3/4", S-VHS or VHS & should not exceed 20 min. (longer works will be considered for serialization). For more info, contact: Greg Bowman, 203 Pine Tree Rd., Ithaca, NY 14850; (607) 272-2613; e-mail: 72137.3352@compuserve.com.

ORGONE CINEMA, non-funded monthly film/video series, looking for handmade, nature, silent, random, noisy, sex, science, home, paranoid & perverse movies. All formats. Prefer VHS for preview. Deadline: Ongoing. Send to: Orgone Cinema & Archive, 2238 Murray Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15217.

THE OTHER SIDE FILM SHOW: Looking for entries in all cats: narrative, doc, experimental, animation, etc. for TV series of ind. films/videos. Submissions should be under 30 mins. 3/4" video preferred, but VHS acceptable. For return shipping, incl. SASE. Send to: U. of South Florida, Art Dept., 4202 E. Fowler Ave., Tampa, FL 33620-7350, attn: *The Other Side*.

REEL TIME AT P.S. 122, an ongoing quarterly screening series, is now accepting submissions of recent ind. film & video works for 1995 season. Exhibition formats include S-8, 16mm, 3/4" & VHS. Send VHS submission tapes, written promotion & return postage to: Curator, Reel Time, P.S. #122, 150 1st Ave., NY, NY 10009; (212) 477-5829 (x327).

RIGHTS & WRONGS, weekly, nonprofit human rights global TV magazine series scheduled to resume broadcast in February seeks story ideas & footage for upcoming season. Last yr 34 programs covering issues from China to Guatemala were produced. Contact: Danny Schechter or Rory O'Connor, exec. producers, The Global Center, 1600 Broadway, ste. 700, NY, NY 10019; (212) 246-0202; fax: 2677.

REBIS GALLERIES seeks works by artists working in video/film & computers. All subjects considered. Formats should be in VHS/Beta, 8mm, S-8, 16mm. For computers 3.5 disks in PC or low density Amiga files. Contracts to be negotiated. Contact: Rebis Galleries, Ken Debacker, 1930 S. Broadway, Denver, CO 80210; (303) 698-1841.

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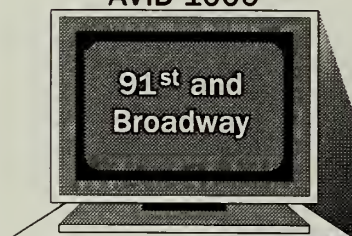
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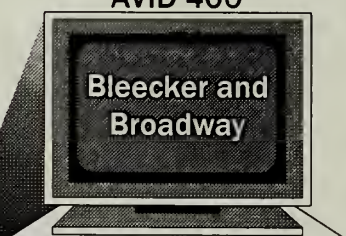
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REGISTERED seeks experimental & non-narrative videos about consumerism &/or modern ritual for nationally touring screening. Send VHS for preview w/ SASE & short description to: *Registered*, Attn.: Joe Sola, PO Box 1960, Peter Stuyvesant Station, 432 E. 14th St., NY, NY 10009.

SHORT FILM & VIDEO: All genres, any medium, 1 min. to 1 hr. Unconventional, signature work in VHS or 3/4" for nat'l broadcast! Submit to: *EDGE TV*, 7805 Sunset Blvd., ste. 203, Los Angeles, CA 90046.

SCULPTURE CENTER GALLERY invites video artists to submit installation concepts for new video program. Emerging & mid-career artists w/o affiliation should submit résumé, narrative description, documentation of previous work on VHS tape, slides or photos. (incl. SASE) to: Sculpture Center, 167 E. 69th St., NY, NY 10021.

STATEN ISLAND COMMUNITY TELEVISION PRODUCER seeks experimental works, all subjects, by ind. video & film artists. The more explicit, the better; film & video on 3/4" preferred, but 1/2" &/or 8mm acceptable. Send tapes to: Matteo Masiello, 140 Redwood Loop, Staten Island, NY 10309.

THE INDEPENDENT FILM CHANNEL 34 seeks shorts, experimental films, docs, animation for TV broadcast & CD-ROM titles. Send 1/2" or 3/4" tapes to: Maureen Wolff, *Precis Entertainment Inc.*, 1 Irving Pl., ste. P20F, NY, NY 10003; (212) 529-9687.

TOXIC TELEVISION seeks broadcast-quality, creative video shorts (under 10 min.) for alternative TV experience. Looking for works in animation, puppetry, experimental, computers, etc. Send VHS or 3/4" tape, SASE & résumé to: Tom Lenz, 12412 Belfran St., Hudson, FL 34669.

UNQUOTE TELEVISION, 1/2-hr program dedicated to exposing new, innovative film & video artists, seeks ind. doc, narrative, experimental, performance works under 28 min. Reaches 10 million homes via program exchange nationwide. 1/2" & 3/4" dubs accepted. Submit to: *Unquote TV*, c/o DUTV, 33rd & Chestnut St., Philadelphia, PA 19104; (215) 895-2927.

URBAN INSTITUTE FOR CONTEMPORARY ARTS is accepting video & 16mm film in all genres for next season of programming. Fee paid if accepted. Send VHS tape w/ SASE to: Film Committee, *UTICA*, 88 Monroe Ave. NW, Grand Rapids, MI 49503.

VIDEO ALTARS is seeking short (minimum 30 sec.; max. 6 min.) film/video works for compilation celebrating *El Dia de los Muertos* (Day of the Dead). Program invites broad range of work from all cultural traditions dealing with issues of remembrance, reunion & death & dying. Deadline: July 15. Send VHS tape, SASE & short statement to: *Altars/S.* Thomas-Zon, 2682-P Middlefield Rd., Redwood City, CA 94063; 415-324-8189.

VIDEO DATA BANK is seeking experimental, doc & narrative tapes on women's conflicted relationships with food & eating. Tapes: produced after 1990; length: max. 30 min. Please submit preview tapes in 3/4" or VHS format (returnable w/ SASE) & brief statement about producer's relationship to subject

matter. Deadline: Sept. 15. Contact: Video Data Bank, Unacceptable Appetites Program, 112 S. Michigan Ave., Chicago, IL 60603.

VIDEO ICON, new TV program focusing on innovative video/ film art & animation, is currently reviewing work. Send VHS or SVHS copy & SASE. Floating Image Productions, PO Box 66365, Los Angeles, CA 90066; (310) 313-6935.

VIDEOSPACE AT DECORDOVA MEDIA ARTS ARCHIVE: DeCordova Museum & Sculpture Park seeks VHS copies of video art & documentation of performance, installation art & new genres from New England artists for inclusion in new media arts archive. Send for info & guidelines: Videospace at DeCordova, DeCordova Museum, 51 Sandy Pond Road, Lincoln, MA 01773-2600.

VIEWPOINTS, KQED's showcase of ind. point-of-view works, seeks films & videos expressing "strong statements on important subjects." Tapes are reviewed from October through January 1 for 1996 season. Submit VHS or 3/4" tapes (30 min. & 60 min. programs preferred) w/ self-addressed, stamped mailer to: Greg Swartz, manager of Broadcast Projects & Acquisitions, KQED, 2601 Mariposa St., San Francisco, CA 94110; (415) 553-2269.

WEIRD TV, satellite TV show airing weekly on Telstar 302, specializes in alternative viewing. Will consider works of 3 min. max., animation or shorts. Submit work to: *Weird TV*, 1818 W. Victory, Glendale, CA 91201; (818) 637-2820.

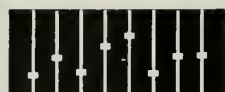
WORLD AFRICAN NETWORK (WAN), first premium cable network for people of African descent worldwide, is accepting submissions for 1995 launch. Featuring films, docs, shorts, news & info, children's programs, sports, concerts, drama series & sitcoms. Send to: Eleven Piedmont Center, ste. 620, Atlanta, GA 30305; (404) 365-8850; fax: 8350.

WNYC-TV seeks films/videos for new primetime series on NY inds. Doc. or experimental (incl. video art); under 1 hr.; completed; all rights cleared. Pays \$35/min. Send VHS, 3/4" or Betacam preview tape, to: NY Independents, c/o WNYC-TV, One Centre St., rm. 1450, NY, NY 10007. No phone calls, please.

WOMEN OF COLOR in Media Arts Database seeks submissions of films & videos for database that incl. video filmographies, bibliographical info & data. Contact: Dorothy Thigpen, Women Make Movies, 462 Broadway, 5th fl., NY, NY 10013.

WYOU-TV, cable-access station in Madison, WI, seeks music-related videos for weekly alternative music show. Send 1/2" or 3/4" tapes. No payment; videos credited. Contact: WYOU-TV, 140 W. Gilman St., Madison, WI 53703.

YOUNG BLACK CINEMA III November 1995 at the Public Theatre, NYC. This highly publicized & successful ongoing series of short works by African-American filmmakers is seeking entrants for this year's program. 16mm, 35mm films up to 40 min.. should be submitted on VHS cassette w/ \$60 entry fee. Contact: Cobra Communications, PO Box 106, Hoboken, NJ, 07030; (201) 216-1550.



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COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT LIBRARY (CDL) is nonprofit organization interested in buying, selling &/or exchanging video docs & is also looking for buyers or distributors for its video prods & joint venture partners for video/film prods. It provides technical support & does commissioned work. Contact: CDL House no-39, Road no. 14/A, Dhanmondi, Dhaka, Bangladesh. Phone: (880-2) 813769, (880-2) 810495; fax: 380 2 810254.

DIRECTOR/WRITER: Manhattan-based educational publishing co. producing training videotapes on variety of subjects seeks freelance directors for future projects. Prior experience need not include educational work, but must show ability to convey information in structured, entertaining way. Send background info, résumé & VHS demo reel to: HSSC, PO Box 466, Bowling Green Station, NY, NY 10274.

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER position avail. at Dyke TV, only weekly nat'l TV program created & produced by/for lesbians. Responsibilities incl. assisting in developing programming committee; assisting board of directors in board development; financial planning; supervising outreach & development; directing paid staff & volunteers. Should have bkgnd. in nonprofit media arts &/or community arts management; willing to commit for 2 yrs. Salary: mid-20s. Mail letter of intent, résumé, 3 references to: Dyke TV Search Committee, PO Box 55, Prince St. Station, NY, NY 10012; (212) 343-9335; e-mail: dyke-tvhq@aol.com.

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER will help inds find outlets for product. Finished works only incl. films, docs, TV pilots & other quality product. Please send work on VHS to: John Gabriel Matonti, executive producer; c/o Matonti Enterprises, Inc., 26 Lake Shore Dr., Montville, NJ 07045.

FILM/VIDEO ARTS has internships avail. in NYC. Minimum 6-mo. commitment. In exchange for at least 16 hrs/wk. of work, interns receive free media courses, access to equipment & postprod. facilities at nonprofit media arts center. Appls. must have plan for ind. project. Film/video knowledge helpful. Deadline: Ongoing. Contact: Intern Program, Film/Video Arts, 817 Broadway, 2nd fl., NY, NY 10003; (212) 673-9361.

NORTH CAROLINA SCHOOL FOR THE ARTS is looking for professional filmmakers for faculty of its School of Filmmaking. Individuals w/ professional experience in screenwriting, directing, prod. design, cinematography, non-linear film editing, postprod., physical prod. & screen acting are encouraged to apply. Please send letter of interest, résumé & 3 references to: Search Committee, School of Filmmaking, NC School of the Arts, PO Box 12189, Winston-Salem, NC 27117-2189; (910) 770-1330; fax: -1339.

OPEN SEARCH for occasional teaching in computer animation (Amiga) &/or animation drawing. Masters & college teaching experience preferred. Send résumé w/ tape or reel to: University of the Arts, Media Arts dept., 333 S. Broad St., Philadelphia, PA 19102.

VIDEO CAMERAWOMEN needed to work as stringers covering local events throughout US for Dyke TV, weekly NYC cable TV show. For info, call (212) 343-9335; fax: 9337.

VISITING ARTIST in FILM/VIDEO: Sarah Lawrence College invites appls. from media artists for 2-year, half-time contract position (non-tenure track) in Film & Video in Department of Visual Art, 1996-97. Teach intro & upper level courses in film/video prod. MFA & teaching experience preferred. Appl. deadline: Sept. 15. Women & minorities encouraged to apply. Send letter of appl., vitae, 3 reference letters & 2 sample course syllabi (for an intro course utilizing S-8, & video, & for an upper-level course in your area of interest) to: Janet Held, Film/Video Search Committee, Sarah Lawrence College, 1 Mead Way, Bronxville, NY 10708-5999.

PUBLICATIONS

AFRICAN AMERICAN FILM STATISTICS & MARKETING STRATEGIES is a thorough volume of valuable data for any African American filmmaker trying to raise funds. Incl. are stats on profits of black-directed films since 1970 & numbers for theatrical releases & home video. Send \$29.95 to: Greener Grass Prods, 1041 W. 98th St., Chicago, IL 60643; (312) 779-8717.

CAMCORDER GUIDE by James Carrasco incl. 12 easy ways to shoot video like pros. Limited number avail. for free. Send \$1 S&H to: *Camcorder Guide*, c/o James Carrasco, PO Box 1231, Madera, CA 93639; (209) 252-4633.

CHICAGO FILMLETTER covers ind. & Hollywood on-location prod. in Chicago. Also contains listing of job opportunities, film classes & day-by-day calendar of film-related events. For more info, contact: Al Cohn, Chicago Filmletter, 1532 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, IL; (312) 235-3456.

CONCERNS, publication of Women's Caucus for the Modern Languages, invites manuscripts on feminist involvement in development of film studies as academic discipline. Suggested issues of interest incl.: What has feminist contribution been to the discipline? How might it be characterized? What is women's influence been on the research & teaching interests (& practices) of the discipline? What is the status of women in the profession? Anticipated date of publication is late '95, early '96. Send submissions to: Harriet Margolis, Theater & Film, Victoria University, Wellington, New Zealand; e-mail: harriet.margolis@vuw.ac.nz; fax: 00 64 4 495 5090.

CRITICAL CONDITIONS: ARTS CRITICISM IN MINNESOTA IN THE NINETIES is comprehensive 92-page report & assessment of outlook for arts coverage in state. Edited by Patrice Clark Koelsch & compiled & written by Roy M. Close, it is culmination of two-year survey of trends in arts coverage in state's daily & weekly newspapers, magazines, electronic media & elsewhere. To order, send



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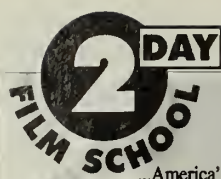
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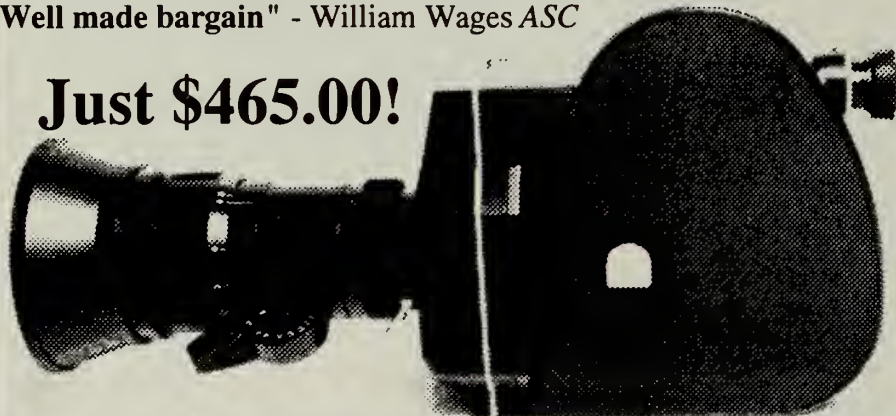
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INDEX ON CENSORSHIP, magazine for free speech, is produced 6 times/yr. Avail. by subscription. 1 yr. for \$48. Send check or credit card info (Visa, MC, Amex) to: Index on Censorship, Lancaster House, 33 Islington High St., London N1 9LH. Fax subscription inquiries to: 011 44 71 278-1878.

MONEY FOR FILM & VIDEO ARTISTS, publication listing more than 190 sources of support for ind. film- & videomakers, is avail. for \$14.95 + S&H. Contact: Doug Rose, ACA Books, dept. 25, 1285 Ave. of the Americas, 3rd fl., area M, NY, NY 10019.

NATIONAL VIDEO RESOURCES' Strategic Plan, 24-page booklet on NVR's strategic planning process & results. For free copy, write or call: National Video Resources, Inc., 73 Spring St., ste. 606, NY, NY 10012; (212) 274-8080.

NE FOUNDATION FOR THE HUMANITIES offers paperback transcript of '93 nat'l conference, "Telling the Story: The Media, The Public & American History." Historians, filmmakers, public programming pros explore ways in which Americans learn about history. Send \$12.50 (MA residents add 5% sales tax) to: NEFH, 46 Temple Pl., 4th fl., Boston, MA 02111.

NEH OVERVIEW OF ENDOWMENT PROGRAMS incl. more info than ever about grant opportunities. Has appl. deadlines through 1995, how to get appl. forms, addresses & phone numbers of state humanities councils & whom to contact for help. *NEH Overview*, rm. 402, 1100 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W. Washington, D.C. 20506; (202) 606-8400; NEH Bulletin Board (202) 606-8688; e-mail (Bitnet): NEHOPA&GWUVM.GWU.EDU.

PROTECTING ARTISTS & THEIR WORK, publication of *People for the American Way*, answers questions regarding artists' rights as well as federal & state law. To request copy, call *People for the American Way* (202) 467-4999.

SIX ROUTES TO FILM FINANCING, free tip sheet published by Hollywood Film Institute, breaks down 6 basic ways producers can finance films. For free copy, contact: Hollywood Film Institute, PO Box 481252, Dept. 1, Los Angeles, CA 90048; (213) 933-3456.

TAKING IT TO THE THEATERS, brief guide to theatrical & video self-distribution of issue-oriented films & videos, written by the Empowerment Project in association with National Video Resources. Copies avail. from NVR. Also check out December issue of *NVR Reports* (1994) w/ report on closed captioning. Issue gives practical info on hows & whys of captioning, w/ specific resource & contact info. Contact: National Video Resources, 73 Spring St., ste. 606, NY, NY, 10012; (212) 274-8080.

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CHICAGO RESOURCE CENTER awards grants to nonprofits who serve gay & lesbian community. Deadline: Sept. 29. For more info, contact: Chicago Resource Center, 104 S. Michigan Ave., ste. 1220, Chicago, IL 60603; (312) 759-8700.

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HUMANITIES PROJECTS IN MEDIA administered by NEH has deadline of Sept. 1996 (specific day not yet avail.) for projects beginning after April 1, 1995. 20 copies of appl. required on or before deadline. For appl., guidelines, write: National Endowment for the Humanities, Division of Public Programs, Humanities Projects in Media, rm. 420, 1100 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20506; (202) 606-8278.

ILLINOIS ARTS COUNCIL (IAC) SPECIAL ASSISTANCE ARTS PROGRAM: Matching grants of up to \$1,500 avail. to Illinois artists for specific projects. Activities that may be funded are: registration fees & travel to attend conferences, seminars, or workshops; consultant fees for resolution of specific artistic problem; exhibits, performances, publications, screenings; materials, supplies, or services. Funds awarded based on quality of work submitted & impact of proposed project on artist's professional development. Appl's must be received at least 8 wks prior to project starting date. Degree students are not eligible to apply. Call (312) 814-6750.

JAPAN FOUNDATION is providing film prod. support to experienced ind. or corp. for prod. of films, TV programs, or other a/v materials that further understanding of Japan & Japanese culture abroad. Contact: Japan Foundation, 152 W. 57th St., 39th fl., NY, NY 10019; (212) 489-0299.

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MEDIA ALLIANCE assists NYC artists & nonprofit organizations in using state-of-art equipment, postprod. & prod. facilities at reduced rates. Contact: Media Alliance, c/o WNET, 356 W. 58th St., NY, NY 10019; (212) 560-2919.

NY FOUNDATION FOR THE ARTS awards Artists' Fellowships to individual NY artists. Applicants must be 18 yrs & older, resident of NY for at least 2 yrs. Cannot be grad or undergrad student, NYFA recipient of last 3 yrs, or employee or board member of foundation. For more info, call NYFA at (212) 366-6900.

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niques of video image in intensive 5-day residency program. Artists work on variety of cutting edge & hi-tech equipment. Program open to experienced video artists. Appls must incl. résumé, & project description, as well as videotape of recent work (if you are a first time applicant), either 3/4" or VHS formats, w/ SASE for return. Write: ETC Ltd., 109 Lower Fairfield Rd., Newark Valley, NY 13811; (607) 687-4341.

TRAVEL GRANTS FUND FOR ARTISTS makes grants to US artists to enhance their professional growth through short-term int'l experiences that enable them to collaborate w/ colleagues. Individual media artists should contact Arts International for 1995 appls. & guidelines at: Arts Int'l, 809 United Nations Plaza, NY, NY 10017; (212) 984-5370.

VISUAL STUDIES WORKSHOP MEDIA CENTER in Rochester, NY, accepts proposals on ongoing basis for its Media Access program. Artists, ind. producers & nonprofits awarded access at reduced rates, prod. & postprod. equipment for work on noncommercial projects. For appl., tour, or more info, call (716) 442-8676.

WRITERS WORKSHOP NATIONAL SCRIPT-WRITING CONTEST is accepting scripts from throughout US. 5 to 6 winners will be chosen to receive \$500 cash award. Winners also receive free tuition for critical evaluation of scripts before panel of motion picture agents, producers, writers, & directors. This program continues throughout year. For submission info, send legal size SASE w/ 60¢ postage to: Willard Rogers, Writers Workshop National Contest, PO Box 69799, Los Angeles, CA 90069; (213) 933-9232.

YADDO invites appls. from film/video artists for residencies of 2 wks to 2 mos. at multi-disciplinary artists' community in Saratoga Springs, NY. Deadlines: Aug. 1 (Oct.-May) & Jan. 15 (May-Feb.). Artistic merit is the standard for judgment. For more information, write: Admissions Committee, PO Box 395, Saratoga Springs, NY, 12866; or call (518) 584-0746

MISCELLANEOUS

MARJORIE KELLER ENDOWMENT IN FILM STUDIES has been estab. in memory of the scholar & filmmaker who taught at the University of Rhode Island until her untimely death last year. Fund in film studies at URI library is earmarked for purchases of books & journals devoted to ind. cinema, or for purchases of videos/films by ind. artists. Send contributions to: The Marjorie Keller Endowment in Film Studies, c/o David Maslyn, interim dir., University Library, U. of Rhode Island, Kingston, RI 02881. Make checks payable to "The University Library." Call Paul Arthur w/ questions at (914) 762-8223.

SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATIONS OF UNIVERSITY OF COAHUILA AT SALTILLO, MEXICO seeks donations of used video equipment—8mm, VHS, Hi8, S-VHS, & 3/4" Umatic in good working order. Contact: Carlos Recio, director 011-5284-17-00-63, AIVF member Mark R. Day, 2434 Alta Vista Dr. Vista, CA 92084; (619) 630-7201.

The Foundation for Independent Video and Film (FIVE), the educational affiliate of the Association for Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF), supports a variety of programs and services for the independent media community, including publication of *The Independent*, operation of the Festival Bureau, seminars and workshops, and an information clearing house. None of this work would be possible without the generous support of the AIVF membership and the following organizations:

The Center for Arts Criticism, Consolidated Edison Company of New York, John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts, National Video Resources, New York Community Trust, New York State Council on the Arts, The Rockefeller Foundation, and The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc.

We also wish to thank the following individuals and organizational members:

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ACS Network Productions, Washington, DC; Alternate Current, New York, NY; American Civil Liberties Union, New York, NY; American Film Institute, Los Angeles, CA; Ann Arbor Community Access TV, Ann Arbor, MI; Ann Arbor Film Festival, Ann Arbor, MI; Appalshop, Whitesburg, KY; John Armstrong, Brooklyn, NY; The Asia Society, New York, NY; Assemblage, New York, NY; Athens Center for Film & Video, Athens, OH; AVFN International, Inc., Anchorage, AK; Bennu Productions, Yonkers, NY; Benton Foundation, Washington, DC; Black Planet Productions, New York, NY; Blackside, Inc., Boston, MA; Breckenridge Festival of Film, Breckenridge, CO; Carnegie Institute, Pittsburgh, PA; Carved Image Productions, New York, NY; Center for Investigative Reporting, San Francisco, CA; Center for New Media, New York, NY; Chicago Access Corp., Chicago, IL; Chicago Video Project, Chicago, IL; Citurna LTDA Film and Video Productions, Bogota, Columbia; Coe Film Associates, New York, NY; Colelli Productions, Columbus, OH; Columbia College, Chicago, IL; Columbus Community Cable Access, Columbus, OH; Command Communications, Rye Brook, NY; Common Voice Films, New York, NY; MHCC Communication Arts, Gresham, OR; Community Television Network, Chicago, IL; Denver International Film Society, Denver, CO; State University of New York-Buffalo, Buffalo, NY; Duke University, Durham, NC; Dyke TV, New York, NY; Eclipse Communications, Springfield, MA; Edison-Black Maria Film Festival, Jersey City, NJ; Educational Video Center, New York, NY; Edwards Films, Eagle Bridge, NY; Eximus Company, Fort Lauderdale, FL; Fallout Shelter Productions, Mansfield, OH; The Film Crew, Woodland Hills, CA; Fox Chapel High School, Pittsburgh, PA; Gay Men's Health Crisis, New York, NY; Great Lakes Film and Video, Milwaukee, WI; Idaho State University, Pocatello, ID; Image Film Video Center, Atlanta, GA; International Cultural Programming, New York, NY; International Audiochrome, Rye, NY; International Film Seminars, New York, NY; ITVS, St. Paul, MN; The Jewish Museum, New York, NY; Komplex Studio Merdeka, Selangor, Malaysia; Little City Foundation/Media Arts, Palatine, IL; Long Beach Museum of Art, Long Beach, CA; Manhattan Neighborhood Network, New York, NY; Media Resource Centre, Adelaide, Australia; Mesilla Valley Film Society, Mesilla, NM; Milestone Entertainment, Irving, TX; Miranda Smith Productions, Boulder, CO; Missoula Community Access, Missoula MT; NAATA, San Francisco, CA; NAMAC, Oakland, CA; National Latino Community Center/KCET, Los Angeles, CA; National Center for Film & Video Preservation, Los Angeles, CA; National Video Resources, New York, NY; Neighborhood Film/Video Project, Philadelphia, PA; Neon, Inc., New York, NY; New Image Productions, Las Vegas, NV; New Liberty Productions, Philadelphia, PA; New York Institute of Technology, Old Westbury, NY; 911 Media Arts Center, Seattle, WA; Ohio Arts Council, Columbus, OH; One Eighty One Productions, New York, NY; Outside in July, New York, NY; Paul Robeson Fund/Funding Exchange, New York, NY; Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA; Pittsburgh Filmmakers, Pittsburgh, PA; Pro Videographers, Morton Grove, IL; Promontory Point Films, Albany, NY; Rainy States Film Festival, Seattle, WA; Merlina Rich, New York, NY; Ross-Gafney, New York, NY; San Francisco Art Institute, San Francisco, CA; School of the Art Institute, Chicago, IL; Scribe Video Center, Philadelphia, PA; Southwest Alternate Media Project, Houston, TX; Squeaky Wheel, Buffalo, NY; Strato Films, Hollywood, CA; Sundance Institute, Los Angeles, CA; SUNY/Buffalo-Dept. Media Studies, Buffalo, NY; Swiss Institute, New York, NY; Terrace Films, Brooklyn, NY; Tucson Community Cable Corp., Tucson, AZ; UCLA Film and Television Archive, Los Angeles, CA; University of Southern Florida, Tampa, FL; University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ; University of Hawaii, Honolulu, HI; UMAB/School of Social Work Media Center, Baltimore, MD; University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Lincoln, NE; University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, WI; Vancouver Film School, Vancouver, British Columbia; Ventas International, Elmhurst, IL; Video Data Bank, Chicago, IL; Video Pool, Winnipeg, Manitoba; View Video, New York, NY; Virginia Festival of American Film, Charlottesville, VA; West Hollywood Public Access, West Hollywood, CA; Women Make Movies, New York, NY; Yann Beauvais, Paris; York University Libraries, North York, Ontario; Zeitgeist Film, NY, NY.

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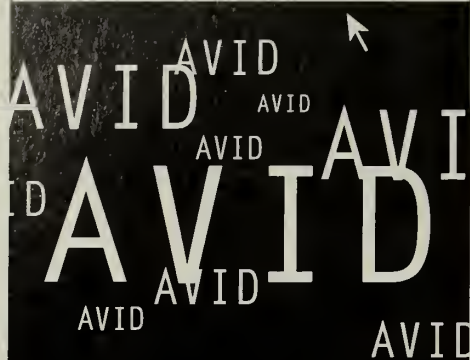
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Inside the PBS Loop

Independents who feel PBS is completely impervious to feedback from the field should take some comfort in the fact that AIVF executive director and *The Independent's* publisher Ruby Lerner is representing their concerns on the National Program Policy Committee. This PBS committee, which meets three times a year, was created to provide an annual evaluation of the National Program Service, which determines PBS's core schedule. Also representing independents and CPB's minority consortia are: Janet Cole (National Coalition of Independent Public Broadcasting Producers), Mable Haddock (National Black Programming Consortium), Michael Pack (independent producer), and Jose Luis Ruiz (National Latino Communications Center). The 1994 evaluation will be available to the public by early summer. Contact: National Program Service publications, (703) 739-5449; fax: 8440.

A Video On-Ramp in Every Home?

As a member of the Access For All coalition, AIVF will cosponsor a series of three public events on new technologies and community media this fall. Community-based organizations from three boroughs will cohost the events in New York City, and will encourage local mediamakers, residents, and policymakers to participate. The project, still in the early planning stages at press time, has received partial funding from the New York City-based North Star Fund. Access For All, a network of community television and radio producers, media art centers, public computer networks, and public library advocates, was formed in 1994 to advocate telecommunications policies that will insure a truly interactive and accessible information superhighway. For more information about the series, contact: Mona Jimenez, Media Alliance (212) 560-2919.

BY MARTHA WALLNER

LA Advocates Launch Campaign

In a second meeting of media activists that took place in late April, some L.A.-based members of AIVF, the International Documentary Association (IDA), and Film Arts Foundation (FAF) decided to launch the Save American Culture campaign in response to Congressional threats on arts and public television funding. Prior to Congressional consideration of CPB reauthorization, campaign members plan to organize press conferences in L.A. and Washington, D.C., which will feature celebrities and people working in the communications industry speaking in support of public funding for the arts and public broadcasting. For more information about the ad-hoc coalition's future activities, contact Lew Lee at (213) 661-1380.

Fighting for Democracy in Chicago

The Chicago-based Coalition for Democracy in Public Broadcasting, which is made up of independent producers and several community groups, organized a visit with the staff of Congressman John Porter (R-IL) in late April. Porter chairs the House subcommittee which oversees appropriations to CPB. The group discussed its concerns regarding the structure and funding of public broadcasting on the local and national levels.

Before its visit, the coalition, which initially had emerged out of dissatisfaction with Channel 11's exclusionary programming policies, researched the extent to which the local public radio and television affiliates operate in an open and democratic fashion. Rather than protesting the station's programming decisions one by one, the group has decided to focus on changing the station's overall decision-making structure. They have developed a questionnaire that can help others gauge how democratic their local affiliates are. For a copy of the questionnaire, call Scott Sanders, Coalition for Democracy in Public Broadcasting at (708) 673-7915.

Martha Wallner is advocacy coordinator of AIVF. For more information on the above, call (212) 473-3400.

Filming in NY?

AIVF gets calls all the time from talented individuals seeking work both behind and in front of the camera. If you plan to shoot in or near Manhattan, fax a brief description of the project and a list of production/postproduction positions you are looking to fill to (212) 677-8732, attn: John McNair.

MEMBERABILIA

As tough as it is to find money for projects these days, AIVF members are snagging grants and fellowships. Amy Harrison, director/producer, has been awarded funding by the NEA International Program for her documentary on old-growth forests in Canada. She also received a fellowship from Art Matters. Andrea E. Leland has been granted funds from the Illinois Arts Council for a trailer on her documentary about the Garifuna, an indigenous tribe of Belize.

Congratulations to Tamara Jenkins & Lodge Kerrigan, who both received Guggenheim Fellowship Awards in Film and Video for 1995.

Tod Solomon Lending and Daniel Alpert of Chicago's Nomadic Pictures have been awarded an additional \$800,000 from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting for their series *No Time To Be a Child*.

The American Film Institute received \$1,175,000 from the NEA to support the Center for Advanced Film and Television Studies, Production Training, National Exhibition Programs, and Advanced Technology Programs.

On the festival front, when the 20th New England Film and Video Festival announced its award winners recently, Benjamin Goldman was the recipient of the Technicolor Best of Festival Award for *730 Grove Street*. Laurel Chiten (*Twitch and Shout*) and David Sutherland (*Out of Sight*) were awarded the Rule Broadcast Systems Outstanding Independent Video Award for their emotionally absorbing documentaries. Mitch McCabe claimed the DuArt Outstanding Student Film Award as co-recipient for *Playing the Part*. Buddy Squires received a Judges' Special Merit for directing *Listening to Children: A Moral Journey with Robert Coles*. Jane Gillooly was the Videomsmith Social Issue Documentary Award winner for her wrenching *Leona's Sister Gerri*. Robin Hessman was co-recipient of the DuArt Outstanding Student Film Award for *Portrait of Boy with Dog*. Lynne Sachs was awarded this year's Grand Jury Prize for *Which Way East* at the Atlanta Film & Video Fest. Independent producer and AIVF member Elaine Zinn recently received her third CINE Golden Eagle Award from the Council on Non-Theatrical Events in Washington, D.C., for her work on hurricanes in Hawaii.

We hope Chicago members were able to catch Cary Stauffacher's documentary portrait of a family struggling with Alzheimer's disease, *Something Should Be Done About Grandma Ruthie*, when it aired on WTTW on April 18. Margot Starr Kernan's *Starry Night Videos* screened on Maryland Public Television's *The Independent Eye* series in May as well as at Video Bedroom in Baltimore. Meanwhile director Demetria Royal's video wall installation, *Inventing Herself*, which examines the historical images of African American women using computer and laser technology, was screened in Brooklyn's Majestic Theater lobby in May. AIVF member Lisa Wood Shapiro premiered her film, *Another Story*, during the 1995 Los Angeles Independent Film Festival on April 8th.

Member Frank Chindamo was one of several New Yawkers to participate in The Best of the NY Underground Comedy Filmmakers Night at Caroline's Comedy Club in Manhattan in June. Three of his *Fun Little Movies*, made for HBO, Showtime, and Comedy Central, were screened.

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AIVF IS MOVING!

This summer we will move out of our old digs and into a spacious new home in the heart of "Silicon Alley," at 304 Hudson St. (between Spring and Vandam). At press time, we did not yet have an exact date, but we anticipate relocation by the middle of August. Watch your mail and next month's issue for details.

UPCOMING EVENTS

SEATTLE SCHMOOZE



Come meet *The Independent* editor Patricia Thomson, who will be the guest at an informal schmooze/membership meeting cosponsored by Seattle media arts center 911 and its newest festival, the Rainy States Film Festival. Come meet fellow film- and videomakers from the area, and hear about what AIVF, 911, and the Rainy States fest are planning for the upcoming year. This is also your chance to give *The Independent* your two cents' worth on article ideas and topics of interest.

When: Tuesday, July 18, 7 to 9 pm

Where: 911, 117 Yale Ave. N., Seattle, WA 98109; (206) 682-6552.

AIVF PARTY IN THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS

In honor of *The Independent's* fourth Regional Spotlight issue, AIVF and Denver Center Media, a division of the Denver Center for the Performing Arts, will cosponsor a party celebrating the accomplishments of independent producers and artists in the Rocky Mountains. Ruby Lerner, AIVF's executive director, will attend. If you're in the area, come on by! RSVP before July 10 to Diane Markrow: (303) 449-7125.

When: Wednesday, July 12, 6 pm

Where: Denver Center for the Performing Arts, 1245 Champa St., Denver

"MANY TO MANY" MONTHLY MEMBER SALONS

This is a monthly opportunity for members to discuss work, meet other independents, share war stories, and connect with the AIVF community across the country. *Note:* since our copy deadline is two months before the meetings listed below, be sure to call the local organizers to confirm that there have been no last-minute changes.

Must have been the
Rolls raffle: the last
AIVF annual meet-
ing played to a
packed house at
Anthology Film
Archives in
Manhattan.
Photo: Pat
Thomson



It's official! The New York City salon has a great new location: **HERE** (145 Ave. of the Americas at Spring St), an arts space/café near our new offices. Same time, new place—come check it out!

Austin, TX:

When: July 31, Aug 28, 7:30 pm

Where: call for location

Contact: July: Gray Miller, (512) 474-8017; Aug: Amie Petronis, (512) 495-4868

Boston:

Meetings not set at press time.

Contact: Susan Walsh (617) 965-8477

Dallas:

Meetings not set at press time.

Contact: Bart Weiss, (214) 948-7300

Los Angeles:

When: July 11, Aug 1, 7 pm

Where: Swing Café, 8543 Santa Monica Blvd.

Contact: Pat Branch, (310) 289-8612

New York:

When: July 18, Aug 15, 6-8 pm

Where: HERE, 145 Ave. of the Americas (at Spring)

Contact: Jennifer Lytton (212) 473-3400

Norwalk, CT:

Meetings not set at press time.

Contact: Guy Perrotta (203) 831-8205

Schenectady, NY:

When: July 5, Aug 2, 6:00 pm

Where: Media Play, Mohawk Mall

Contact: Mike Camoin, (518) 895-5269

Washington, DC:

Meetings not set at press time.

Contact: Sowande Tichawonna (202) 232-0353

MOVING FORWARD...

Members are organizing AIVF salons all over the country! For contact information, or to talk to us about starting something in your area, call Pam Calvert (212) 473-3400.

VOTE!

AIVF's board of directors is made up of volunteer members who have been nominated and elected by you. The board sets policy, evaluates all the organization's activities, and ensures that we remain responsive to the needs and interests of the membership. Members will receive their ballots this month, and

we urge you to exercise your right to vote.

In the wider interests of enfranchising our community, we have also obtained a supply of New York State voter registration forms which we have available in the office. As times get tougher for the public funders and broadcasters who provide so much basic support to independent media, it is critical that we not be silenced on Election Day. If you are a NYS resident and not yet registered to vote, come by and pick up a form or ask us to mail one to you.

NEW IN THE LIBRARY

As we announced in the May issue, we have begun to update and upgrade the library, with a program of monthly acquisitions. The first titles have arrived!

Film into Video: A Guide to Merging the Technologies by Richard H. Kallenberger and George D. Cvjetnic

All the tools of the trade, as well as the operational, business, and creative sides of film to video transfer. Special section includes four sample scenarios as seen through the eyes of a telecine operator: transferring a feature on a limited budget, an "A" feature transfer, a TV series dailies transfer & a music video transfer.

Lighting by Design: A Technical Guide by Brian Fitt and Joe Thornley

A comprehensive guide for all lighting professionals in film, television, theater, and still photography.

Professional Cameraman's Handbook by Sylvia Carlson and Verne Carlson

Components and step-by-step use of over forty of the most widely used film cameras. Includes basic film camera procedures and troubleshooting techniques, components, accessories (including lenses), and support systems.

Watch each month for new arrivals, and let us know if there are titles or subjects we should know about.

Continued on p. 63

TRADE DISCOUNTS FOR AIVF MEMBERS

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Rick Caine Productions

856 1/2 N. Occidental Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90026; (213) 413-3222/ Contact: Rick Caine or Debbie Melnyk

15% discount on Sony Betacam SP equipment, crew rentals, duplication and offline editing.

Mill Valley Film Group

104 Eucalyptus Knoll, Mill Valley, CA 94941; (415) 461-8334/ Contact: Will Parrinello
35% discounts on Beta SP production packages, production personnel and VHS off-line editing facilities. Rates further negotiable for selected projects.

Studio Film and Tape

6674 Santa Monica Blvd., Hollywood, CA 90038; (213) 466-8101/ Contact: Carole Dean
5% discount on Kodak short-ends and recams;
10% discount on new Fuji film (20% to students w/ i.d.).

COLORADO

MovieMaker

4730 Table Mesa Dr., Suite B-100, Boulder, CO 80303; (303) 499-6300 / Contact: Susan Lyle Kinney
15% discount on video production services including shooting, editing, script consultation.

FLORIDA

DHA Production

2375 No. Tamiami Trail, Naples 33940; (813) 263-3939/ Contact: George Steinhoff
Discounted hourly rate of \$325 for their edit suite, a Beta SP Component Digital Sony Series 6000, including use of Abekas A-65, Sony DME-500 and Chyron Max.

Film Friends

4019 No. Meridian Ave., Miami Beach 33140; (305) 532-6966 or (800) 235-2713/ Contact: Mik Cribben
30% discount on extensive range of equipment rentals - camera, lighting, sound, grip, editing.

ILLINOIS

Brella Productions

1840 Oak Ave., Evanston 60201; (708) 866-1884 Contact: Bernadette Burke
35% off non-linear editing and 3D animation work.

EditMasters

17 W. 755 Butterfield Rd., Oakbrook Terrace, IL 60181; (708) 515-4340/ Contact:

Michael Sorenson

30-50% discount on digital nonlinear post-production services.

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460 West 34th Street, 4th Fl., NY 10001; (212) 268-8800/ Contact: Michael Rose
10-15% discount on all used video equipment.

Best Shot Video

81 Pondfield Rd., Bronxville, NY 10708; (914) 664-1943/ Contact: Adam Shanker
10% discount on video editing, duplication and production services.

Bill Creston

727 Ave. of the Americas (23rd St.), NYC 10010; (212) 924-4893/ Contact: Barbara Rosenthal
5% discounts on all Super-8 film and sound production services; including editing, sound transfers, VHS to VHS dubs. Also: low-cost services on Amiga computer and still photography.

Cinema Film Consulting

333 West 52nd Street, Ste. 1008, NY 10019; (212) 307-7533/ Contact: Robert Seigel, Paul Rosenthal
Discounts on legal and consulting services

DuArt Film and Video

245 West 55th Street, NY 10019; (212) 757-4580 x 637/ Contact: David Fisher
Negotiable discounts on color negative developing, workprinting, blow-ups from 16mm and S16mm to 35mm, and titles

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16 East 17th St., NY 10003; (212) 620-0084/ Contact: Mike Gallagher
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Mercer Street Sound

133 Mercer St., NYC 10012; (212) 966-6794/ Contact: Bill Seery
50% discount off corporate book rate for audio postproduction

Metrovision Production Services

138 East 26th Street, NYC 10010; (212) 689-7900/ Contact: John Brown
Discount on video and film equipment packages

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48 West 25th Street, 11th Fl., NYC 10010; (212) 741-8011 x 229/ Contact: Steve Cohen
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Picture This Music

50 West 34th Street, Suite 9C9, NYC 10001; (212) 947-6107/ Contact: Paul D. Goldman
10-30% off digital audio postproduction: music, voice-over, sound design, SFX, audio mixing (ProTools work stations).

Post Digital

236 West 27th Street, 3rd Fl., NYC 10001; (212) 366-5353/ Contact: Michael Helman
40% discount off non-linear offline editing facilities; duplication; animation production

PrimaLux Video

30 West 26th St., NYC 10010; (212) 206-1402/ Contact: Matt Clarke
10% or more discounts (non-profits encouraged) on services including: studio production facilities, remote production packages, and postproduction.

Rafik

814 Broadway, NYC 10003; (212) 475-7884/ Contact: Charles Kephart
25% discounts on used cassettes over \$100, 10% on single invoices over \$100 for video services, editing, duplication, viewing, film-to-tape transfers.

Sound Dimensions Editorial

321 West 44th Street, #602, NYC 10036; (212) 757-5147/ Contact: Brian Langman
15% discount on transfers, effects, and sound studio services: Foley, ADR, narration, mixing.

Studio Film and Tape

630 9th Avenue, NYC 10036; (212) 977-9330/ Contact: John Troyan
5% discount on Kodak short-ends and recams;
10% discount on new Fuji film (20% to students w/ i.d.).

Suite 2410

330 West 42nd St., Ste. 2410, NYC 10036; (212) 947-1417/ Contact: Madeleine Solano
10% discount on all editing services and facilities: 16 mm; 3/4" to 3/4"; Betacam to Betacam; AVID; Betacam SP to Betacam SP - A/B Roll, Chyron, Digital Effects.

Technicolor Inc., East Coast Division

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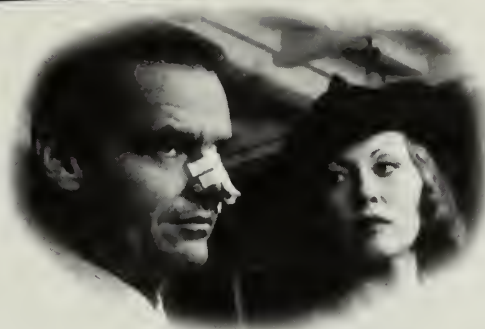
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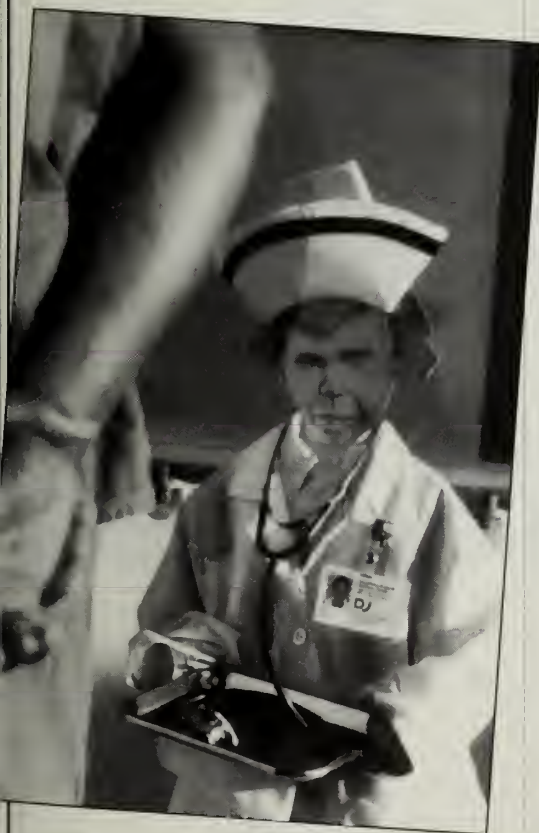
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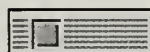
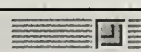
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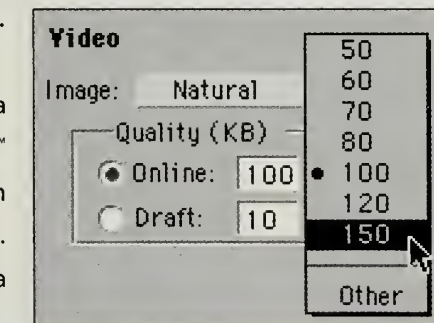
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Arrested Development

Milwaukee media community bears the brunt of outdated city ordinances.

Just when memories had faded of Milwaukee police officers arresting comedian George Carlin for spouting the "seven deadlies" on stage at Summerfest '72, a new artistic tension has arisen in the city. This time, however, the city's energetic and well-organized arts community is working to solve the problem with help from an enlightened City Hall administration.

On the evening of February 25, officers from the Second Precinct raided a South Side warehouse, the suspected site of an illegal "rave" party. In actuality, the space was being used at the time for a film screening hosted by University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (UWM) graduates Michael Walsh and Bill Rolou. Forty people, including students from UWM's film school and their parents, members of the UWM faculty, and visiting Austrian experimental filmmaker Martin Arnold, were at the studio to screen nearly a dozen 16mm works by student and local filmmakers.

The raid occurred after two undercover policeman dressed in grunge-style clothing departed the scene briefly and returned with uniformed officers, who proceeded to check I.D.s and take down names. When projectionist and local media artist Donovan Bauer, who had been videotaping the event prior to and after the raid, refused to turn over his tape to the police, he was arrested and booked for obstruction and withholding of evidence. Rolou and Walsh, along with two other warehouse tenants, were each fined \$1,200 for a number of outdated municipal ordinances, including failure to obtain a dance hall permit, an instrumental music license, and a cabaret license.

Two months later, on April 20, a benefit film screening to help pay for the legal defense of Walsh, Rolou, et al., was scheduled to be held at a South Side dance hall. The event's organizer—Great Lakes Film & Video, a local media arts organization and festival sponsor—notified the Second Precinct in advance of the screening, but the precinct police stopped the screening from taking place because the hall was without a cabaret license required for film presentations.

"In the age of accountability, when someone calls the police, [the police feel] they had better do something. So they *did* do something," says UWM Film Department head Dick Blau. By



Tintinnabula, a film by UWM film chief Dick Blau and Dawn Edelman, was never screened last February thanks to a raid by Milwaukee's Finest, out protecting the citizenry from dancin' teens. Courtesy filmmakers.

incorrectly sizing up both situations, the police showed a lack of discrimination as they attempted to enforce city license laws, Blau explains. Nevertheless, Blau is not unduly concerned about the puzzling police actions.

In May, the case of Donovan Bauer was resolved when a judge fined him \$150 for the videotape incident. (The video remains in police possession.) Admittedly disappointed by the decision, at press time Blau had higher hopes for the separate municipal court case involving Walsh, Rolou, et al., which was scheduled for July 5. In the days leading up to the hearing, Blue was predicting that the \$4,800 worth of fines levied against the four warehouse studio tenants would be dropped.

Blau, who has been in regular contact with the Mayor's office about the whole string of mishaps, reports that the office is sympathetic to the situation and is aware not only of the need to modernize the license ordinances, but to make allowances for alternative performance and

screening spaces for small arts groups and independent media artists.

Ironically, co-defendant

Michael Walsh had been in the midst of discussions with the Department of City Development for public film screenings on behalf of Great Lakes Film & Video at the time of the February 25 police raid.

The UWM filmmakers weren't the first to be hampered by the city's outdated ordinances in recent months. In late January, the Milwaukee Police Department also prevented a theater group called the Inertia Ensemble from performing the John Patrick Shanley play *Savage in Limbo* at two local cafés because the spaces did not have dance hall and tavern licenses required for the staging of theatrical performances. The Ensemble later learned that this peculiar requirement originally was designed to regulate nude dancing in the city and was written before lawmakers could conceive of poetry readings and similar artistic events taking place at bars and other non-theatrical venues.

"The gears are in motion to remedy the legal and emotional problems that [these instances]

have exposed," says attorney Peter D. Goldberg of the City's Public Defender's office. Goldberg, who sits on the Milwaukee Arts Board, an organization that seeks ways to financially assist small arts groups, says he views the police actions as a strange series of coincidences rather than a deliberate effort to stymie local cultural activities. Existing cabaret license laws lack definition about what constitutes a public space, explains Goldberg, and amendments to these laws are a virtual certainty. According to Goldberg, the state statutes used to prosecute the film screening defendants may be ruled unconstitutional.

Although the defendants have hired their own attorneys, Goldberg has served as a legal liaison between them and the City of Milwaukee to help the Mayor's office facilitate changes in the awkward city ordinances. Through Goldberg's efforts, the Milwaukee Arts Board invited local media and performing artists to its June meeting at which recommendations for ordinance reforms were solicited. Both Blau and Goldberg are confident that these proposals will be given serious consideration by City Hall.

While the American Civil Liberties Union of Wisconsin is not presently representing the Milwaukee film screening defendants, legal director Peter Koneazny says that the ACLU has discussed its concerns it has about the vagueness of the ordinances with Goldberg. "This is a case of the resources of the police department being over-directed," Koneazny concludes.

MAX J. ALVAREZ

Max J. Alvarez is a Milwaukee writer and independent filmmaker.

TV News, *Variety* Style

The Industry News and Marketplace, a new half-hour program broadcast to the Southern California market via KDOC-TV in Orange County, does not feature blond anchorwomen telling you about Madonna's latest boy toy or Arnold Schwarzenegger's favorite bicep exercise. Instead, the nightly show presents information about the entertainment industry to people in the business—a *Variety* of the airwaves, so to speak. "We designed the show with the principal audience in mind being the [independent film] community," says executive director Joel Parker.

A 15-minute segment, *The Industry News*, which covers movies, video, music, and technology ("There's no Bosnia or O.J.," says Parker) is followed by *The Industry Marketplace*, which provides viewers with a look at electronic press kits, sales reels, promotional and industrial videos, film previews, and clips from films seeking distribution. The segment also showcases businesses that are marketing products related to the film industry, such as a multimedia production agency that

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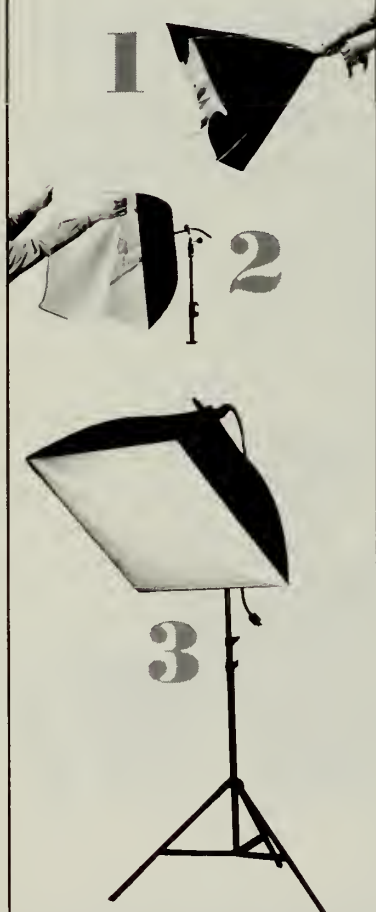
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The Industry Marketplace, a cross between an infomercial and a news magazine show, may be of most interest to independent makers because it provides a window for them to showcase their work to festival directors, distributors, and

THE INDUSTRY NEWS AND MARKETPLACE

whomever else may be tuned in to the broadcast. Doug Lindeman and John Bishop, co-directors of the *Marketplace* segment, are both independent producers themselves and therefore are sensitive to the needs of low-budget filmmakers. Lindeman sees the show as a venue for filmmakers wanting to present a clip from either a completed project or a work-in-progress. They also can have a chance to explain the idea behind their project. The clips are usually up to 4-1/2 minutes long.

The Industry News and Marketplace premiered in April and, because it is still new, the industry and the independent film community need to be informed that the show exists. So far, almost all of the films featured in *The Industry Marketplace* segment have been studio releases. "We called around, and, simply put, the information was flowing from the big studios. We want to put on more independents as they become available to us," Parker says.

To get a film or video clip on the air, one must call and speak to one of the producers. The show does not accept blind submissions, and no nudity, profanity, or inappropriate violence can be aired.

One further caveat—there is a price for getting your film or business represented. The cost is approximately \$2,500 to \$5,000 depending on the length of the spot. Lindeman suggests that media artists include time purchased on *The Industry News* in the distribution portion of their budgets.

Contact: *The Industry News and Marketplace* at 11500 West Olympic Blvd., ste. 400, Los Angeles, CA 90064; (310) 312-4562.

JULIA MELTZER

Julia Meltzer is an independent videomaker who lives in Hollywood.

Niche Video Outlets Offer African American Titles

Your video store is bound to have a worn copy of *Shaft* filed somewhere between *Shadows* and *Sharkey's Machine*. There are probably also a few titles from Spike, Singleton, and maybe even a Carl Franklin or two, along with 76 copies of *House Party*.

Beverly DeBase knows this, too. DeBase, the owner of Alternative Visions, a Dallas, Texas-based video store that stocks only titles by and about African Americans, also knows firsthand that for every video store shelf stocked with two-dozen *Forrest Gump*s, there could be room for a rare find like *Chameleon Street* by Wendell B. Harris, Jr. Since DeBase lives in Dallas, the headquarters of

Blockbuster Video and a city where "truly there is a Blockbuster on every corner," she decided to open Alternative Visions in the south end of the city in 1989 and has stocked the place with over 3,000 titles.

A self-described movie fan (not a filmmaker, critic, or sometime author), DeBase says she started collecting Black films, such as the rare adaptation of African American novelist Sam Greenlee's *The Spook Who Sat by the Door* before she realized there were probably a number of others who shared her interest in such titles. "Besides, I had these videos

At least 30 directors will be given their own sections, including Gordon Parks, director of *Shaft*. "Hopefully if they pick up *Shaft*, they'll also pick up *The Vision Tree* or *Leadbelly*," says Haddock.

all over my house, so I needed somewhere to put them," she jokes. "All I'm really doing is providing a place for this niche [so people can find the films] without having to pour through all the mainstream titles at a typical video store." DeBase adds that most video stores do not

stock the breadth of vintage 1930s and forties Black films, jazz concerts, children's videos, independent, and even mainstream titles that she does.

But soon Dallas won't be the only city in which one can find such titles.

At press time, the Columbus, Ohio-based National Black Programming Consortium (NBPC)—a nonprofit media arts organization that promotes and distributes television and film programs by and about African Americans—was scheduled to open a multimedia video center in late June. DeBase was instrumental in helping the consortium find and select titles to be sold and rented at its facility, the Heritage Video and Learning Center. Eventually, the center will offer tapes via mail order, though for now locals will be the ones to benefit from its eclectic offerings. The consortium's deputy director Jackie Tshaka says the center will not focus on mainstream filmmakers, but on documentaries such as *Malcolm X: Make It Plain* by Orlando Bagwell and *Midnight Ramble* by Pamela Thomas as well as vintage films.

A blueprint of the the Heritage Video and Learning Center's layout has one area designated for computer workstations. "We want people to know [the center] goes beyond a store," says Mable Haddock, executive director of NBPC. "It's also a place for learning where young people can come in and explore the new technologies available to them." At press time, plans were in the works for the NBPC to have its own World Wide Web page by summer. The center's remaining space will resemble a regular video outlet, except that the titles will be classified by genre, subgenre, decade, topic, and filmmaker. At least 30 directors will be given their own sections, including Gordon Parks, director of *Shaft*. "Hopefully if they pick up *Shaft*, they'll also pick up *The Vision Tree* or *Leadbelly*," says Haddock.

A local outreach committee came up with the idea for the center as a moneymaker for the consortium, which receives much of its funding from the highly vulnerable Corporation for Public Broadcasting. The NBPC received a grant from the Ohio Arts Council to get the center up and running. "What we make will go back into supporting our basic mission," says Haddock. "The center is a concrete way of connecting with the community. The bottom line isn't revenue so much as it is demystifying Black independents." The center is housed at the Old Lincoln Theater, which served as a center of cultural life for African Americans prior to integration and was frequented by jazz greats such as Duke Ellington.

Previous efforts to start similar niche video stores have not always proven successful. As

DeBase points out, ventures similar to hers in Georgia and Illinois both folded. She also finds it frustrating that some of the hottest rentals in her collection are Blaxploitation films such as *Cleopatra Jones*. "The truth is [those films] get us through slower periods," she admits. "But I guess there's social commentary in any kind of cinema."

Haddock also plans on carrying Blaxploitation films and new releases to serve as a financial backbone for the center. But she views them as tools for teaching Black history, and hopes others will as well. "I even want to [stock] Amos and Andy. You can package the stuff in a way that leads people to other types of films. Once someone rents Spike Lee's *Malcolm X*, for instance, they may be compelled to rent some excellent but little-seen documentaries on Malcolm X."

Contact: Heritage Video and Learning Center, 777 E. Long St., Columbus, OH; (614) 224-6902; store hours: Wednesday through Sunday, 1 pm to 8 pm; NBPC: (614) 299-5355; Alternative Videos (214) 823-6030.

CHRISTOPHER BORELLI

Christopher Borelli covers media for The Toledo Blade.

ON THE RECORD

"*Pulp Fiction* has made our jobs easier. I see more of an openness from distribution companies to get involved in that business."

—Scott Einbinder, independent coproducer of *Black Day Blue Night*

"*Pulp Fiction* has caused a problem. There's an overflow of independent producers and material trying to attract name actors for less money."

—An unnamed agent at this year's Cannes International Film Festival

Both quotes are from *The Hollywood Reporter*, May 16, 1995.

If you come across a brilliant, funny, insightful, or enlightening quote, send it to Michele Shapiro (see masthead for address/fax/email; no calls please). Include name of person quoted, publication & date. If your quote is published, you'll receive a one-year individual membership to AIVE.



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Who Built America? Encounters Roadblocks

Pop in the CD-ROM disc *Who Built America? From the Centennial Celebration of 1876 to the Great War of 1914*. Select "Male-Male Intimacy in the West." Click on "The Lost Pardner," cowboy poet Badger Clark's turn-of-the-century lament for his dead lover. See a picture of two men in a waterhole and the accompanying verse:

*We loved each other in the way men do
And never spoke about it, Al and me
But we both knowed, and knowin' it so true
Was more than any woman's kiss could be...*

*The range is empty and the trails are blind
And I don't seem but half myself today
I wait to hear him ridin' up behind
And feel his knee rub mine the good old way.*

This poem was among a handful of topics that caused Apple Computer, Inc., to balk at distributing *Who Built America?*, a CD-ROM created by a New York City curriculum development team

called the American Social History Project (ASHP).

The award-winning CD-ROM, released in 1993, grew out of two social studies textbooks for college students published in 1990 and 1991 and a supplemental series of half-hour video documentaries. The project was initiated in 1981 by the late historian Herbert Gutman and by Steve Brier, now director of ASHP and the Center for Media and Learning at Hunter College of the City University of New York. Gutman and his followers championed a "new" social history incorporating the experiences of the working class and those outside the white male power structure. *Who Built America?* looks at history through a wide lens that refuses to gloss over the class, racial, ethnic, and religious conflicts of the past.

Voyager Company, the cutting-edge Soho software group, suggested and supported the development of a CD-ROM adaptation of *Who Built*

America? Voyager seeks material that is "edgy" and "challenging," says Voyager president Bob Stein who, at a recent "Publishing Unbound" panel discussion at the American Museum of the Moving Image, described *Who Built America?* as a "good, solid, left-of-center popular history of the United States."

The CD-ROM version was authored by Roy Rosenzweig, a professor of history at George Mason University, ASHP media director Josh Brown, and Brier. Drawing from primary and secondary sources, the CD-ROM incorporates 5,000 screens of text, 700 pictures, 60 graphs and charts, 4-1/2 hours of audio, and 45 minutes of film, including *The Great Train Robbery* (1903) in its entirety. Two hundred excursions or exploratory sidetrips from the text are possible. The end result is a captivating mix of pop and high culture, archival materials, and interactive puzzles and games. But it should not be



Lament for "The Lost Pardner"



GO TO ▲

Although absent from Hollywood portrayals of the old West, homosexuality was surely a feature of life on the frontier. "The West," observe John D'Emilio and Estelle Freedman in their history of sexuality, "provided extensive opportunities for male-male intimacy. Some men were drawn to the frontier because of their attractions to men." A study by Don Rickey, Jr., cites the case of "Mrs. Nash," who worked as a laundress in the Seventh Cavalry in the 1870s and married a series of soldier husbands. When "she" died, it emerged that "Mrs. Nash" was a man. (The practice of women "passing" as men was considerably more common.)

Page 1 of 3

One of the scenes that made Apple turn green, from *Who Built America?*
Courtesy Voyager

confused with "edu-tainment," says ASHP producer Pennee Bender. "Critical viewing of images is no easier than critical reading."

The vision of ASHP is clear: to help teachers provide a more honest and multicultural view of U.S. history and to rekindle students' dimming interest in the past. "We really don't get how little history people know," says Brown.

Apple, having invested seed money in the project, jumped on board and offered to include the Macintosh-compatible *Who Built America?* disc in a complimentary packet of CD-ROMs provided to K-12 educators purchasing Macs.

But in January, not long after the agreement was reached, Apple turned a bit yellow. "Some Fundamentalist asshole," as Stein puts it, alerted Apple that certain material was inappropriate for students: a section on the crude methods of pre-legalized abortion and birth control, an account of a Tammany Hall female politician who successfully masqueraded as a man until her death, and a look at homosexuality in the Old West.

Initially Apple asked Voyager to cut these sections, then suggested they produce a second, edited version of the disc. Voyager refused both requests. "Absolutely, we'd never change anything on it," says Voyager marketing representative Braden Michaels. The company not only stood its ground, but publicly criticized Apple in a press release. In addition, ASHP went on-line with the incident and encouraged consumers to remind the otherwise open-minded Apple of the perils of censorship.

"Refusing to [let anyone] censor or regulate us in any way I felt was a great stand," Brown says. He worries about hyper-involved publishers and distributors making content decisions and considers Apple's attempted intervention problematic primarily because it attacked the integrity of the scholarship behind *Who Built America?* Ultimately Apple accepted the disc as is but decided to stop distribution of *Who Built America?* to kindergarten through sixth-grade. Michaels says Voyager is satisfied, since they never intended the sophisticated title to be a children's product. And while Voyager marketing director Susan Griffin is "saddened" by the decision, she is also "thrilled" with the exposure. Overall sales of *Who Built America?* have increased from 5,000 units sold during the year-and-a-half from the release of the CD-ROM in August 1993 to Apple's bundling of the disc in December 1994, to the approximately 1,700 sold from January to March of this year alone. A 1994 price drop, from \$99.95 to \$49.95, is another reason sales have improved, Griffin says. In addition, 50,000 units were distributed to schools by Apple between January 1994 and March 1995.

Voyager currently is exploring ways to distribute the CD-ROM, possibly via Apple, to higher-

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education institutions. Meanwhile ASHP, with a \$75,000 development grant from the Rockefeller Foundation, has submitted a proposal to the National Endowment for the Humanities for a follow-up CD, *Who Built America? Depression, War, and Industrial Conflict, 1914-1946*. Taking advantage of recent technical advances and incorporating suggestions made by consumers of the first disc, *Who Built America II?* would feature more color, more opportunities to use a magnifying glass tool on detailed graphics, more interactive tables and charts, and more maps with animated time sequences. The CD-ROM would be produced for both Macintosh and Windows.

ASHP is also developing *Landscapes in Time*, a four-part CD-ROM that would allow the viewer-as-time-traveler to visit four historical periods: the Pennsylvania coal fields in the 1860s to 1870s, when the Irish-American coal miners were allegedly terrorizing the mines; the Salem witch trials in 1692; the rise of populism and secret societies during conflicts between Mexican farmers and cattle ranchers in the Southwest during the late 1880s; and the racial and ethnic division of the industrial work force in Chicago in 1919.

CD-ROM technology obviously has its drawbacks: limited interaction, small screen size, relatively poor resolution, and an inability for archivists to effectively duplicate the appearance of original documents. But with interactive CDs, history can be explored from multiple viewpoints. Historians must not claim "this is the story," says Brown. "What history is a big gray area."

Who Built America? is available through Voyager, 578 Broadway, ste. 406, NY, NY 10012; (212) 431-5199.

JENNIFER ESSEN

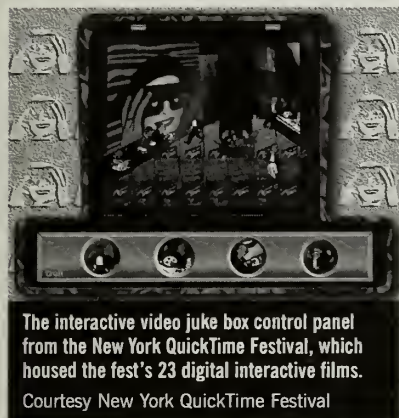
Jennifer Essen is a communications associate who promotes film/video exhibitions at the Whitney Museum of American Art.

The Next Wave: Multimedia Fests

In the past, when media artist Mark O'Connell submitted his work to festivals, he loaded his QuickTime productions onto videotape and entered them as experimental videos. Nowadays, he's finding a better option, as increasing numbers of film and video festivals are creating multimedia sidebars that allow him to showcase his work on the computer platform for which it was intended. This year O'Connell's four-minute QuickTime movie *Peep Show* reaped the benefit of these new venues, winning the grand prize at the New York QuickTime Festival, held in March at the Pratt Institute's Manhattan branch and the New York Underground Film Festival's Interactive Festival.

Given the hype surrounding multimedia these days, it's a wonder that more festivals haven't jumped on the bandwagon. Maybe the word "interactive" still scares them off, along with traditional narrative film- and videomakers. As Ginnie Waters, organizer of Mill Valley Film Festival's multimedia sidebar, observes, "What I got from filmmakers at last year's festival was a little bit of a fear and a little bit of understanding," she says.

Mill Valley has joined the ranks of festivals that are plunging headfirst into the multimedia



waters, along with those in Berlin, Hamburg, San Francisco, New York, Dallas, and elsewhere. This year Mill Valley's multimedia sidebar will include workstations with finished multimedia projects and premieres of interactive movies like John Sanborn's *Psychic Detective*. It will host a series of seminars to show that "interactive and new media is a lot more than point and click," says Waters. The festival will also demonstrate how to send film clips in real time over the Internet. People will see how "film clips are sent between New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles," says Waters, when the work absolutely, positively has to be there sooner than overnight.

News on this form of transmission isn't just about the future; it's fast becoming a routine mode of submission. Andrew Giannelli, who organized the New York QuickTime Festival, says many submissions came via the Internet. Giannelli also used the Net to post calls for entries on the festival's World Wide Web site, Usenet newsgroups, and the major commercial services.

New Voices, New Visions is a competition sponsored by Voyager, *Wired* magazine, and the Interval Research Corporation, which piggybacks on the New York Video Festival in September. Winners each are awarded \$5,000 and showcased at the video festival. The competition requires that entries be viewable as intended on a computer. Submissions come on

a variety of data formats, including floppy disks, CD-ROMs, Syquest cartridges, magneto optical cartridges, and DAT tapes.

So far, very few multimedia festivals or sidebars have aspired to cover the full gamut of work being produced. One exception is the Interactive Media Festival, the first devoted exclusively to showcasing multimedia projects, both big-budget and small. Rather than being affiliated with a film festival, the IMF runs in conjunction with the annual Digital World Conference, held in Los Angeles. Twenty-two projects were chosen for this year's festival and showcased in the Arc Gallery as workstation installations. The projects ranged from Amnesty International's multimedia history of human rights on CD-ROM to Sony Imagesoft's *Johnny Mnemonic* game. There was also digital dance training equipment developed for Bill Forsythe's *Frankfurt Ballet* and David Blair's *Waxweb 2.0*, an interactive version of his *Wax*, or the *Discovery of Television Among the Bees* designed for the World Wide Web.

Another exception is the Dallas Video Festival, which has been running a multimedia program for the past six years. Last year it featured over 50 titles ranging from CD-ROMs to CD-I, laserdisc, and HDTV. Most were shown on 14 different computers, with a new title per workstation every day. "Very few events are curatorial in terms of multimedia at the moment," says Dallas programmer Bart Weiss, an AIVF board member. "There's no place for people to experience multimedia without trying to be sold something. If you go to a store, you have a salesperson. If you go to a trade show, a company rep is trying to sell you something. No one's trying to sell you anything at a festival." Weiss says the Dallas Video Festival is experimenting with different forms of exhibition. "Hands-on experience is more or less essential," he says, "but it's also important to have people demo the full contents of a release." As a result, volunteers work the room and answer questions.

Greg Roach's Seattle-based Hyperbole Studios has been a leading player on the multimedia scene, developing groundbreaking interactive stories on CD-ROMs like *Quantum Gate* and *Vortex*, which impressed both film audiences at Mill Valley and multimedia folks at conferences like the National Publishing and New Media Market. Roach is currently working together with the Digital Media Alliance, a consortium for the promotion of digital media production in Washington State, to create the Lumière International Interactive Film Festival, devoted exclusively for interactive story or film projects. Currently slated for late 1996, Roach says of Lumière: "Interactive film is establishing itself as a legitimate category. It is worthy of its own forum to achieve its full artistic potential. With Lumière, we hope to provide a forum."



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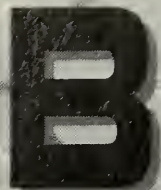
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While the essence of multimedia festivals still remains as nebulous as multimedia itself, producers can count on finding a few things at these events if they decide to take the plunge: 1) exposure to CD-ROMs, Web sites, and the like on demonstration workstations; 2) seminars and panels exploring the confusing and ever-changing developments in multimedia; and 3) networking receptions in which people can exchange ideas, so that hopefully one day there will be some rules here. Among the multimedia festivals to watch:

• DALLAS VIDEO FESTIVAL, Texas, November. Contact: Barton Weiss (214) 561-8888; fax: (214) 651-8896.

• HAMBURG INTERNATIONAL SHORT FILM FESTIVAL, Digital Video sidebar, Germany, June. Contact: H.C. Holthusen (49 40) 430-7570; fax: (49 40) 430-2703.

• INTERACTIVE MEDIA FESTIVAL, Los Angeles, W June. (415) 357-0100; fax: (415) 357-2170.

• LUMIÈRE INTERNATIONAL INTERACTIVE FILM FESTIVAL, Seattle, November. Contact: John Locher (206) 441-8334; fax: (206) 441-9134.

• MILIA NEW TALENT PAVILLION, Cannes, D February. Contact: Laurine Gaurade, (33 1) 44-34-44-44; fax: (33-1) 44-34-44-00 or Diana Butler (212) 689-4220; fax: (212) 689-4348.

• MILL VALLEY FILM FESTIVAL, California, B October. Contact: Ginnie Waters (415) 383-5256; fax: (415) 383-8606.

• NEW YORK QUICKTIME FESTIVAL, New York, U September & March. Contact: Andrew Giannelli, NYQTFEST@aol.com or <http://www.interport.net/~adavi/NYQTFEST.HTML>.

• NEW VOICES, NEW VISIONS, New York, D September. Contact: Sally Rosenthal (415) 585-0780; fax: (415) 855-0788.

• SXSW MULTIMEDIA FESTIVAL, Austin, E Texas, March. Contact: Jo Rae Di Menno (512) 467-7979; fax: 451-0754; e-mail: 72662.2465@compuserve.com.; SXSW Forum on Compuserve = GO SXSW.

• VIDEOFEST, Berlin; Germany, February. (49 30) 262-8714; fax: (49 30) 262-8713.

TOM SAMILJAN

Tom Samiljan (100331,2517@compuserve.com)
writes about music and film for Interview and Film Threat.

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Lodge Kerrigan &
Larry Meistrich Talk Shop

In March 1990, Larry Meistrich and partner Bob Gosse founded the Shooting Gallery, a Manhattan-based production company that assists low-budget independents in need of a soundstage, a crew, or, most important, the cash to complete their productions. The Shooting Gallery's rule-bending features, such as Nick Gomez's *Laws of Gravity*, convinced investors there is profit to be made far from Hollywood. The Shooting Gallery recently relocated to SoHo and continues both to produce its own films and act as a producer-for-hire. Among its many projects in various stages of completion are Peter Cohn's *Drunks*, with Richard Lewis and Dianne Wiest; Gavin O'Connor's *Comfortably Numb*, with Dana Ashbrook and Harry O'Reilly; and Billy Bob Thornton's *Sling Blade*, with Dwight Yoakam and John Ritter. Nick Gomez also has a new feature in the works, *Wrecking Crew*, and co-founder Gosse's *The Last Home Run* is now in postproduction. With its anti-establishment reputation still intact (despite work on more commercial projects such as the Danielle Steele mini-series *Zoya*), the Shooting Gallery has become a favored stop for straight-outta-film-school indies in search of candid advice and financial backing.

Producer/director Lodge Kerrigan (Clean, Shaven) recently spoke with Meistrich about the Gallery's financing strategies: What's it take to get financing for a first film? Can a producer entice potential investors without the backing of an entity such as the Shooting Gallery? And how does one get the heavy hitters such as Miramax, Fine Line, and Goldwyn interested in funding a project?

KERRIGAN: I'm not really interested in discussing how you get money from your great-aunt or from the grant world. If you're a first time director, you don't have a track record, and you are interested in making a feature film for under \$200,000, how would you attract a producer with an established record?

MEISTRICH: To be very honest, I think it's very difficult without having [produced] a short film that people have responded to positively. You actually need to see this filmmaker's work in some way, or to have an unbelievably good script—so different that you know a producer with a track record, such as us, would want to come aboard.



It's in the can: producer & budget-meister Larry Meistrich.

Photo: Hélène Caux

We're actually in this exact situation right now with a filmmaker named Danny Leiner, who made a short film three years ago called *Time Expired*. One of my partners, Bob Gosse, acted in it, and it was a \$5,000-to-\$6,000 short. Danny's somebody who said, 'I can come up with \$200,000 myself. Will the Shooting Gallery produce it with your name and your resources?' Seeing how good his short film was, absolutely; we even threw a little money in.

K: Is it important for the short film to be seen in

the independent community through festivals such as Sundance or the New York Film Festival?

M: It's helpful, sure. *Time Expired* actually won a lot of film festival [awards]. It had incredible critical success. It played at Film Forum. But for us to get involved, no. You could just have made a film that we can see is good.

K: But if someone didn't already have \$200,000 in place, would festival exposure be an important factor or not?

M: Yes. It would be helpful because you always need a hook to take to a [potential] investor. Leiner not only made a film, but [*New York Times*' film reviewer] Vincent Canby said it's good. And Sundance accepted it, and all the people who have invested in it have made money. It's very hard to go in cold with just a script if you're only a guy with a lot of enthusiasm and a desire to make a film. Investors want to know how a treatment will turn into a piece of celluloid, so they

can evaluate whether they're going to make their money back.

If you can say, "Here's my script, here's film work that I've done, here are other filmmakers who've been in the same situation, here's what they've done," and have it all in the form of a business plan, that's smart. I can't tell you how many incorrect business plans I've seen. As soon as I open it and see "sex, lies and videotape made \$20,000,000," I already know this person didn't do his or her homework.

A lot of people don't like to hear this and get angry when I say it, but film is a business. There's a very distinct line between art and money. To create art in the film industry, you need money. To get money, you need to attract people, and you need to have your business done correctly. To me, you're not a filmmaker until the first day of principal photography. Before that you need to be a businessman. Or you need to find a partner who is exclusively a businessman and understands what to tell investors, how to get money out of them, how to check that your legal work is done correctly and that your business plan is right, because if you show people something that's wrong, they know it's not true.

K: So those are the two major elements for attracting investors—the script and the short?

M: Yeah. I would say out of the 15 or 20 films we've made, I can't think of anybody who hadn't done a short. And we're probably one of the companies that is most supportive of first-time feature directors. Probably 13 of the films we've produced are from first-time feature directors.

K: So you would want to see a schedule, a budget, and a potential cast list?

M: Me, yes. My company, no. Let me give you an example. A guy came to us, he said he had the money—\$250,000—for a film. He also said he had the locations and the cast [in place]. We tend not to believe people when they say that, because most of the time it's not true. The guy came with storyboards and budgets. In sitting down with him it felt like he had an idea of how to be a filmmaker. He'd done a lot of music videos, and it was obvious that he'd been on a film set before. And he came with his homework done. He had a ton to learn about being a filmmaker, and he had no idea how to be a producer, but he had at least sat down and spent time trying to figure it out.

We will pay attention to anybody who comes and sits down with us. But as soon as we feel like you're full of shit, I'm gonna be polite, but it's sorta like "Deal's off." We called this guy's bluff. He had the money, and we made the movie.

K: Let's say somebody doesn't have the expertise or the money to prepare a budget, but has a good enough script and a short film that you find impressive. . .

M: To be honest, we'll rebudget and break it down anyway. So for us, it's immaterial. They should be firm and assertive about what they want, but be realistic. Because for a \$200,000 film, a \$50,000 salary is not realistic.

K: Let's say there's a scenario in which a first-time director has an investor lined up. How should the maker protect him- or herself?

M: I would recommend setting up a legal document, whether it be a limited liability corporation [LLC], a limited partnership, or a joint venture that very clearly and specifically states what everybody's duties are. Get the unpleasant stuff done on day one. 'Here's what happens if we don't agree, here's what happens if something goes wrong, here's what happens if we go over budget, this is what I need out of it to make my vision.' As a first-time filmmaker coming to an established producer, the filmmaker has a lot more to lose.

Danny Leiner, for instance, has a lot more to lose than I do in making his film well. This is his chance at becoming a feature director. I'm going to continue to make movies whether *Laying Low* is successful or not. I don't want to lose money, and I don't want to put my name on something bad, but if it doesn't turn out to be as good as we had hoped, I'm fine.

K: Do you recommend legal representation from day one?

M: I don't recommend lawyers who want to be your producers. To me that's a conflict of interest.

K: Do you think it's possible for a director—either with or without an established producer on board—to get legal representation on a deferred or a percentage basis?

M: Yeah. We can recommend lawyers who would do that. There are plenty of lawyers who have been at big firms and are going out on their own. These are the kind of people who will take on a client who's a first-time filmmaker and do it on a percentage basis.

Before you go asking for money, be sure you have a lawyer who's watching your back, whom you trust, and make sure you know exactly what you want out of the deal as a filmmaker.

Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts can help some people find lawyers. I know two or three law firms that know the difference between someone who can afford ten grand for an LLC and someone who can't.

I recommend that people get a lawyer first thing. We made a lots of mistakes not doing it that way. We got into a lot of trouble with that shit, because people can't just give you money. The government has set it up in such a way that it's a lot more complicated. If one person's giving you all the money and you know them really well, that's one thing. But if you're going with \$500 here, \$1,500 there, trying to piece together a film, which we did, there are all these tax ramifications and all these laws we had no idea about that we're still dealing with, frankly.

K: Let me jump to financing options that you would explore for a \$200,000 film. How would the Shooting Gallery go about it?

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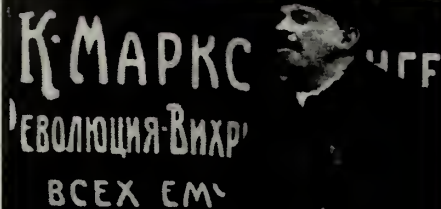
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M: Well, we sold stock in our company. So we have the ability to just cut a check. We'll put up one-third out of our stock offering and then we'll do a Limited Liability Corporation and raise the other two-thirds through our sources.

K: Would you be interested in presales, or would you go specifically to professional financiers who've invested in film before?

M: Well, our financiers basically have nothing to do with the film industry. They're money people. 'I put \$5 in, I want \$15 out.' So, we explain that to our filmmakers: On the one side you're getting much more creative freedom than you'll probably ever get for the rest of your life, anywhere else, if you make a movie with the Shooting Gallery. And you will have a fair deal: If it makes money, you'll be a participant in it. But on the other hand, the people who are going to get most rich off of it are the people who put up the money. And that's our investors. We put ourselves in the same place as the filmmaker. Whatever your points are, our points are. If you don't take any money up front, we don't take any money up front.

K: But you're part of the group of investors, because you're investing one-third. . .

M: Right. If you make a bad film and lose the \$200,000, you didn't lose the money, our people did.

K: Let's say you're a first-time filmmaker who is more interested in producing a film yourself. How would you go about getting information about presales, putting together limited partnerships, finding investors? And is that realistic for a filmmaker who is just starting out?

M: It's semi-realistic. There's the conventional way, which is talking to producers, reps, going the agency route, trying to get them to represent your film and make introductions for you, going to all the markets, trying to schmooze your way into talking to people. But it's definitely the long, long road. It's very much a Catch-22.

K: Could you explain why?

M: Because nobody's gonna talk to you for the most part, excluding companies such as the Shooting Gallery. We went through it when we were trying to make Nick [Gomez]'s first film [*Animals*] for \$2 million. You know, 'Who are you? Don't call us back. Not interested.' The only way we could get noticed, and get people to talk to us, was to make it ourselves. We made a smaller film, *Laws of Gravity*, for \$38,000, and that was that. In a sense it was easier to raise the \$38,000 than to

get our foot in the door with the film community. We raised the money, then wrote the script.

K: How did you raise the \$38,000 without a script?

M: Just went to friends and contacts from college. It's not like one person gave us the whole \$30,000. It was \$500 here, \$1,500 there.

You've got to approach people for their Atlantic City money or their baseball pool money. If you go ask someone for \$10,000, people [consult] their accountants and their lawyers and everybody advises them not to invest in a movie. But, it's like 'Hey, we've known each other for a while, can you throw in \$500, \$1,500?' It takes longer, but people tend not to

take just one unit. If you make the minimum \$500 unit, people feel kind of stupid only putting in \$500.

K: There are certain producers who have direct contacts with wealthy financiers, who understand and invest in the film business. How do you meet those people and convince them to invest in your project?

M: I met a lot of the ones I know playing football in college. Through being in a fraternity, you meet the older people who are established, and those people lead you to new ones. I can't think of anyone I've met through the film business who invested with us early on in a project. But in all fairness, we don't look for people who are part of the film industry, because they tend to want some strings attached.

K: How would you approach those people?

M: I would approach them with some kind of investment agreement, and very plainly say, "I'm willing to change this if you want, but this is what other people I know have done: Your money plus 30 percent back." Have those answers. It makes people more comfortable. If somebody at a party says, "I'm rich, I want to invest in a movie," hit him up the next day. Be prepared to call his bluff because so many people will tell you they'll invest in your movie, yet only two percent do. But they'll string you along for six months because people like to hang around filmmakers.

K: How can you protect yourself in the event that you don't complete the film?

M: Part of your agreement will be that you'll have no obligation to actually finish. In these limited liability deals, you have to state [that the project] is very risky, that there's a chance it'll

"To me, you're not a filmmaker until the first day of principal photography. Before that you need to be a businessman."

never be done, and that no one will ever buy it. But you could still get sued.

K: How damaging would it be to your reputation as a filmmaker if you didn't finish your project?

M: Well, if you're a first-time filmmaker, you have no reputation. It's certainly not good, but you can rebound. You'll probably never get money from the people who gave it to you again. But until you have something to lose, there's nothing to lose.

K: To target possible financiers, I know that there are markets like the Rotterdam Cinemart where you can meet people who have invested in films before. Can you think of other methods for finding potential investors?

M: To be very honest, I don't know anyone who's gone to those things and walked away with a deal, or any investor who goes looking for the random project to invest in with no names, no track record, and no anchor to weight the investment on. I can only speak for the business type of investor. Most people look for an anchor. "What in this project is going to guarantee me at least some form of return?" A \$200,000 film with first-time anybody's is a 100-percent gamble. So most investors don't go looking for that.

With film industry people, the best way to get your foot in the door is a good short film. Every distribution company and creative executive goes to every festival, and they're looking for people. Most filmmakers who've emerged out of the independent scene emerged out of a good five, 10, 20 minute piece of work.

K: Okay, how would a filmmaker looking for financing on their own get started? Where would they look?

M: I would read all the trade publications, so I would understand the market I'm targeting. For example, a film like *Laws of Gravity* or *Living in Oblivion* is geared to very specific market. They're definitely arthouse films. It's not for Joe Shmoe in a mall in Indiana because Bruce Willis isn't in it. You could go to the library and get on-line and do the research, or there are old newspapers on microfiche in every library in the country: Who's marketed these films? How much have they grossed? What have Goldwyn and New Line and Miramax used to attract the public to this type of project? Know that, absorb that, learn from that, and put together a package the same way. Then approach producers, distribution companies, and financing entities with something that they've usually gone for. Don't go to Goldwyn with a horror movie. It's a waste of everybody's time. Go to Goldwyn with something that they usually make, and go to them in such a way that they come to you.

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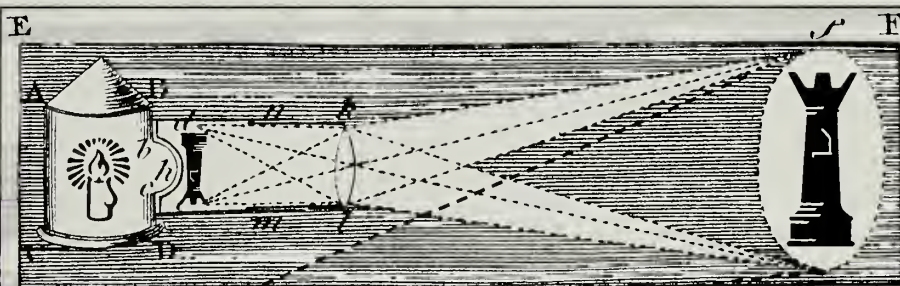
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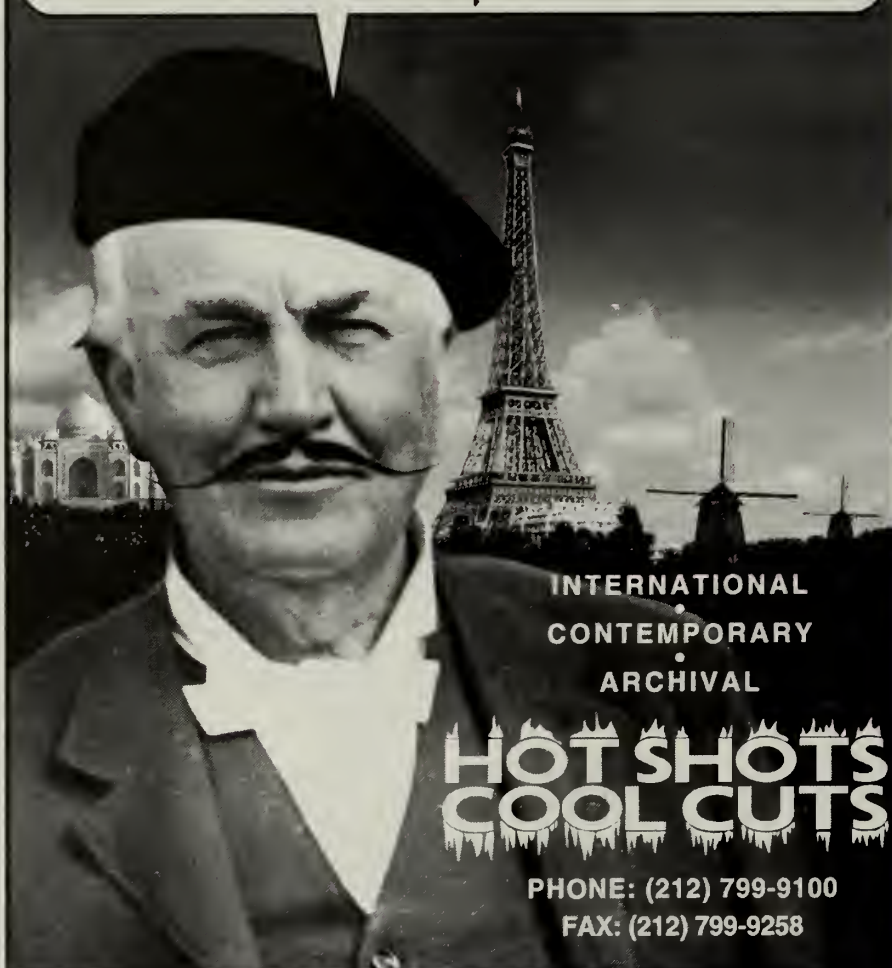
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K: How realistic is it that any of them will get involved with such projects?

M: It's not so unrealistic. It's like everything else. It's one out of 100 people who desire to make a film who will make it. One out of 1,000 will get distribution when he's done. So there's no clean answer.

Don't make *Die Hard* for \$200,000. There's a reason they spent \$60 million on *Die Hard* and there's a reason people go—to see the stunts and effects. That's what you're paying for. So many people are trying to make a studio movie on \$200,000. You can't compete.

K: Okay, so let's move on to the world of pre-sales. Where do you start?

M: You can get a list of all the foreign sales and distribution companies. It's going to be very difficult, if not impossible, to presell [a project] without any name [talent]. I don't know of a first-time filmmaker who's gotten money with no movie stars, or at least a name person. Unless it's a genre film, like an erotic thriller or a horror movie, it's just too hard.

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K: Let me touch upon one issue I find ironic and funny, because there seems to be a contradiction in raising money. Producers always advise you to be absolutely honest with potential investors. They say you should tell people up front that film is something really risky, you'll never get your money back, that investing in a film is crazy. But at the same time you go to film markets where people are raising money and it's very different in practice; everyone involved in a project says, "This film is going to make money; it definitely has an audience." I've seen this basic contradiction so many times.

M: There are a lot of liars in the movie business. And the reason it's set up that way is because of the lawyers, and the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) requirements in a limited partnership or limited liability corporation.

There's two types of investors in the world: those who are known as accredited, which basically means they have over \$1 million in assets, and those who are non-accredited. Accredited people are considered by the SEC to know enough about what to do with their money that you, the filmmaker, don't have to disclose these things to them. That's meant to protect the people like your Aunt Helen, who's kind of senile down in Florida. In these types of agreements, you can't *not* disclose anything, like if you have a debilitating disease as a director that could cause you to not finish the movie; you have to put that in because that is what leaves you open to lawsuits.

But on the other side, you'll never be able to raise any money if you say, "Movies lose their

money nine times out of 10, so can I have money?" There has to be an element of salesmanship in it, and that's why people do business plans and the investment agreement. The business plan is basically your pitch on why you feel that this is going to be a good investment, then the investor is going to read the document that says the facts are x, y, and z.

K: Where can filmmakers find examples of business plans?

M: The bigger companies are all public. With any public company, you can just call up and ask for their offerings. As for personal business plans, I wouldn't give one out to somebody who just called me on the phone, and I don't think too many people would, but if you want a copy of an LCC, you could go to the law library and just xerox it out of the book.

K: In your opinion, what is the best plan of action for a director with a good script who wants to make a film for \$200,000?

M: I recommend trying to do it yourself. Trying to scrape together what you can, because New York is a place where there are enough really dedicated crew people who will work on good films for no money. If people believe in the filmmaker and the project, you can pull it off for \$38,000, \$50,000, \$100,000—whatever you can scrape together. And in doing it yourself, think about what you really have. 'My friend has a van. I know my friend has a bar. . . .' That's how *Laws of Gravity* happened. We knew we had everything before we started the movie, so the only thing we paid for was the lights, film stock, and food.

K: So you think employing people on a deferred basis is okay?

M: Yeah. No one takes deferments seriously, but people will always offer deferment. It'll take a lot less time to do it yourself then going through, you know, the Shooting Gallery. After a certain amount of knocking on doors, you get frustrated and wind up doing it yourself.

K: If you don't have a short film, do you recommend doing one first?

M: Yes, I recommend that. Make as many as you can until you feel you have something. Nick made three before *Laws of Gravity*, Hal [Hartley] made a ton. It's just a good way to learn to be a filmmaker. It's a lot different than going to film school. To me, the \$100,000 you spend at NYU could be used to make a feature.

Lodge Kerrigan wrote, directed, and produced Clean, Shaven, which was made for \$60,000 and has theatrical distribution worldwide. He is currently preparing his second feature with producer Jim Stark.

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BY ANDREW O. THOMPSON



DEEP IN THE HEART OF HOLLYWOOD

The First Los Angeles Independent Film Festival

AT FIRST BLUSH, THE THOUGHT OF AN INDEPENDENT film showcase in the heart of Hollywood seems about as likely a combination as Penzance and purified water. But the auspicious debut of the Los Angeles Independent Film Festival (LAIFF), held from April 6 to April 10, left one with the sense that there's more to the City of Angels' cinematic cachet than what's being produced by the grinding wheels of the major studios.

According to LAIFF founder/director Robert Faust, "Intimacy is the key aspect of the festival." The LAIFF was budgeted at "way under \$100,000" and co-presented by the Filmmakers Foundation and Bravo's Independent Film Channel, which premiered in Southern California the week prior to the festival. Only the opening and closing night galas—featuring *The Addiction*, Abel Ferrara's street-vampire flick, and Nick Gomez' *New Jersey Drive*—were swank affairs conducted in the posh Sunset Boulevard headquarters of the Director's Guild of America (DGA). All other films screened in the 150-seat Chaplin Theater on the Melrose Avenue lot of Raleigh Studios. These cozy quarters led to a preponderance of quickly sold-out evening shows, which boosted the spirits of struggling directors.

"For the first year you want to do something that's very manageable not only from a logistics standpoint and an economic standpoint, but for the audiences as well, to keep them kind of close. What we really wanted to create was a sense of community," says Faust, an effusive 28-year-old who served as associate producer for the Independent Spirit Awards in 1993 and '94.

Along those communal lines he opted to forego prizes of any sort for the festival's 12 features, 19 shorts, and two feature-length documentaries. (All films were required to fall under a \$1-million budget.) The festival also offered two seminars on financing and distribution, plus informal Q&A roundtable discussions with the filmmakers, held in a quaint café adjacent to the Raleigh. These events were well-attended, especially in the evenings. The only set-back: If you were trying to make back-to-back screenings, the 15-minute break between films precluded your participation.



Fest founder Robert Faust with *Another Story*-teller Lisa Wood Shapiro. Photo: Peter Steinberg

To further the sense of amity among L.A.'s often fractured independent film community, Faust solicited assistance from eight nonprofit organizations. Curators from the Black Filmmaker Foundation, the National Latino Communications Center, Out on the Screen, and the Coalition of Asian Pacifics in Entertainment, among others, added recommendations to the 300-plus entries Faust sifted through last winter with his 25-year-old programming director, Shainee Gabel, who served the same capacity for the Independent Feature Project/West.

For this initial edition, the festival's selection process was very much door-to-door. One hundred-some submissions were solicited by Faust from acquaintances through the Independent Feature Project/West. Others were found through EDI, an entertainment database of indie releases in preproduction; *Filmmaker* magazine's production report; and calls for entry sent to film schools worldwide via fax and Internet postings. The programming team/advisory board also included completion financier John Pierson and Sundance programmers John Cooper and Robert Hawk, who recommended a number of films that missed the cut for Sundance, such as *Another Story*, Lisa

Wood Shapiro's allegorical short about a

Holocaust survivor warning against racism through a Brothers Grimm fairy tale. The short, which recently won the Gold Apple at the National Media Market, was included in the program sponsored by the Black Filmmaker Foundation. Only two, Tom DeCerio's short revenge fantasy against gay-bashers, *Nunzio's Second Cousin*, and Tom Gilroy's *Touch Base*, had been shown at the Utah festival three months earlier.

To accommodate the aesthetics of L.A., the festival organizers agreed there should be "a little bit of glitz, a little bit of splash to give the festival the attention it deserved," says Faust. Glitz was in full swing as a small gauntlet of press and paparazzi stood at the DGA theater entrance, poised to cull sound-bites from the likes of Christopher Walken, Leslie Ann Warren, advisory board member Bill Duke, and even Madonna. Although the material girl had other plans during the closing ceremonies, a few cast members from *New Jersey Drive* mingled with Jennifer Beals, Kim Cattrall, and Ike Turner.

Many filmmakers more accustomed to guerilla-style production were not averse to being doted on Angeleno style. Lisa Raven, director of the dark comedy *Low*, relished the opportunity to chat with Martha Coolidge during a Sunday morning brunch sponsored by the DGA at the Château Marmont Hotel.

"To go somewhere and have somebody say, 'Oh, here let's show your film, and we'll do all the publicity; just show up,' and here's this classy party—it's really nice. It's not going to spoil me," Raven jokes. "You don't have to serve stale hot-dogs and cheap beer to perpetuate independent film."

The LAIFF featured seven world premieres, a few of which left a buzz. There was *The Low Life* by George Hickenlooper (*Hearts of Darkness*), a wry look at a twentysomething Yale graduate grappling with the disappointing reality of mindless temp jobs. Another was Eric Bross' *Nothing to Lose*, a Scorsese-like coming of age story set in New Jersey, which boasted the look of a slick production, and *Not Bad for a Girl*, Lisa Rose Apramian's thorough documentary on female rock icons and riot grrls. The remaining evening



LAIFF screenings included the young, intense tough guys populating fest favorite Eric Bross' *Nothing To Lose*. Courtesy filmmaker

premieres tended to be darker, youth-oriented fare, such as Neil Abramson's *Without Air*, and Ash's *The Big Bang Theory*.

On the wholesome end were a number of period pieces: the interracial Civil Rights-era character study *Heading Home* by Maria Heritier, her first feature some 15 years after graduating from New York University film school; *Pharaoh's Army*, a Civil War drama by Robby Henson; and Severo Pérez's look at migrant farm workers in the thirties *...and the Earth Did Not Swallow Him*, recently picked up for distribution by Kino Pictures. Frieda Lee Mock's documentary *Maya Lin: A Strong Clear Vision*, on the young woman who won the contest to design the Vietnam Memorial in Washington, was awarded an Oscar for Best Documentary just days before its screening at LAIFF.

The shorts programmed Saturday and Sunday morning and preceding each feature were as varied in tone as their longer counterparts. Highlights included Robert Miller's *Mail Bonding*, the first straight to digital production; Mark Christopher's *Alkali, Iowa*; Adisa's *Notes in A Minor Key*; *La Novicia* by Judith Hecht Dumontet; Juan Uribe's *The Ballad of Tina Juarez*; Courtney Hunt's *Althea Fought*; and the premiere of Julie Delpy's *Blah, Blah, Blah*.

Although word on the festival was spread through local press and *The Hollywood Reporter* and *Variety*, the presence of distributors wasn't all that it could have been. Given that the festival was in their own backyard, it's especially telling of where their interests lie.

"For the distributors it's a new thing, so they sent their assistants," counters Faust. "And that's why we had so much aftermath, so to speak—all the calls afterwards to get prints and meetings,

because the higher ups were pushing their people to do the legwork."

Bross's *Nothing to Lose* was part of the "aftermath" due to a somewhat glowing review in *Variety*, which caught the eye of studio executives. He and his producer, H.M. Coakley, remained in L.A. for close to a month after the festival to shuttle their one print to several major independent studios who had declined to attend LAIFF.

"There seemed to be a bit of apathy about it on the part of the distributors and the industry itself, and that's a shame," says Bross, who was dismayed there weren't more distributors at the festival. "A lot of them got back to me and regretted not attending because they would've loved to have seen the film in that particular venue [with a full audience]. Hopefully that'll change next year." (At press time Bross was still in the process of soliciting distribution offers, but he had signed with CAA after being courted by a few major agencies.)

Overall, Bross and many other filmmakers, from festival neophytes to seasoned skeptics, all seem to have enjoyed LAIFF, a well-organized event that many foresaw as having a major presence in the future.

"You felt the presence of the industry, but you also had this cool independent spirit thriving within, and that contrast worked really well. It's exciting," says Bross. Didn't someone make that same remark 10 years ago about Sundance?

Andrew O. Thompson is a freelance journalist currently enrolled in the Master's program in Critical Studies at UCLA's Graduate School of Film and Television.

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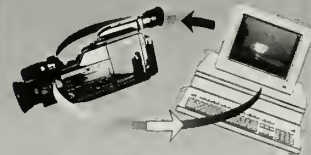
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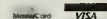
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BY BÉRÉNICE REYNAUD

Beyond Chop Socky

The Hong Kong International Film Festival

FOUNDED IN 1976, THE HONG KONG International Film Festival (HKIFF) started to attract the attention of Western audiences on April 12, 1985, when the 2,000-odd spectators of a sold-out movie from mainland China stayed past midnight to attend the Q&A session with the director and his cinematographer. People only drifted away when the "Star Ferry" (which crosses Victoria Harbor to link the "Hong Kong side" with the more populous "Kowloon side," on the mainland) was about to close for the night. The film that generated such enthusiasm had been very close to being banned, or at least ignored, in its own country, while the Hong Kong screening consecrated the emergence of a "new wave" of Chinese filmmaking: with *Yellow Earth* (1984), directed by Chen Kaige and shot by Zhang Yimou, the "Fifth Generation" was born, and without the HKIFF many people would never have heard of it.

Since then, Western film professionals have come to see the HKIFF as a treasure trove of resources and discoveries about films made in Hong Kong, Taiwan, mainland China, and a loosely defined "Asia" (including Korea, Japan, Vietnam, Mongolia, the Indian sub-continent, Iran, and Turkey). Even though A-category Western film festivals such as the Rotterdam fest, Berlin, and Cannes "steal" as premieres some of the most exciting Asian fare, programmers and scouts from Locarno, Nantes, San Sebastian, Hawaii, the Berlin Panorama, and various other Asian venues still discover films for their programs in Hong Kong.

In the case of Hong Kong cinema, this year's revelation was Lawrence Ah Mon's *One and a Half* (1995), a sensitive, intimate film shot in the industrial cityscape of Shanghai, in which a man tries to restore his lost dignity by weaving an imaginary father-son relationship with a little boy he has kidnapped. The film's production company, the Media Asia Group, which specializes in



A soldier formerly of Japan's Imperial Army comes clean about wartime atrocities in *In the Name of the Emperor*, by Christine Choy and Nancy Tong. Photo: Nancy Tong

coproductions with mainland China, was also inviting foreign curators to look at its other products, as did Etko Films Ltd., a company contracted by the CMPC, Taipei's main film studio, to publicize Taiwanese cinema. So in more ways than one, the HKIFF plays a role as a clearing-house of information between East and West.

Yet the festival's Asian section was almost born as an afterthought, and the programmers didn't start showing Chinese movies until 1981. "It became a question of cultural relevance," says Wong Ain-ling, the section's current programmer, herself a passionate discoverer of Chinese independent films and videos. When Paul Wong founded the HKIFF almost 20 years ago, he was mostly motivated by a desire to bring to Hong Kong foreign "auteur" movies ignored by local distributors, and the international showcase still constitutes the heart of the festival. Not having to bother with commercial considerations (the HKIFF has neither competition nor market), International Cinema program coordinator Li Sheuk-to (recently nominated president of the Hong Kong Film Critics Association) is free to show quality films he loves (even though the festival is known for shying away from purely exper-

imental fare).

As a result, US independents are prominently present: This year Hal Hartley's *Amateur* and John Dahl's *The Last Seduction*, shown in the "Global Images" section, were hot tickets. International films are also shown in the Gala presentations (including Atom Egoyan's *Exotica*, Peter Jackson's *Heavenly Creatures*, Wes Craven's *New Nightmare*, and Nikita Mikhalkov's *Burnt by the Sun*), as well as in three new sections created since 1992 to accommodate a larger variety of styles and approaches: "Debuts," launched this year to show films by first-time directors (Kevin's Smith's *Clerks* and Boaz Yakin's *Fresh*, for example); "The Zone" for more "daring" fares (such as Lodge Kerrigan's *Clean, Shaven*); and "Truth or Dare: Documentaries East or West," a noteworthy initiative at a time when most

film festivals bypass documentaries. *Father and Son: The Holy War* (1994), Anand Patwardhan's third installment of his impassioned trilogy on the mechanisms of religious and political fanaticism in India, was one of the most fascinating entries. Recording, guerrilla-style, riots between Hindus and Muslims, revival of the ritual *suttee* (the practice of burning a widow on her husband's funeral pyre), and testimonies of victims of violence, Patwardhan expands his analysis to sexual politics and assigns machismo and hurt male pride as the source of fundamentalism, with disturbing implications for Western societies as well.

Japanese director Kazuo Hara's *A Dedicated Life* (1994) follows, in cinema-verité style, the complicated life (and the no less complicated lies) of Inoue Mitsuharu, pop novelist/agitator/female impersonator/womanizer/self-proclaimed guru/illegitimate child (maybe) and eventually, victim of cancer. Interrupted by Mitsuharu's death, the film continues through fictional restaging of the many versions he had given of his childhood, his vocation, and his sexual awakening. Still from Japan, but via London,

Toichi Nakata's *Osaka Story: A Documentary* (1994) follows in the steps of Ross McElwee by documenting the filmmaker's return to his native Osaka. Here he must face a complex family situation dominated by ethnic difference (his mother is Japanese, his father Korean), troubled power relationships (the father's aloof egoism and its effect on his wife and children), and mangled sexual politics (the father is a womanizer, the brother a shy and doting husband, and the filmmaker must find the courage to tell his mother he's gay). Contrary to McElwee's solo act, Nakata brought a (non-Japanese speaking) cameraman with him, allowing him to be in the shots when involved in intimate situations with his parents or siblings.

Three U.S. indies were also shown: Jyl Johnstone's *Martha and Ethel*, Steve James, Frederick

yearly retrospectives, coordinated by film critic Law Kar, are the highlight of the festival, and their thick catalogues (edited in English by Hong Kong film historian Stephen Teo) are an indispensable tool to study Chinese cinema. Starting with the first images of China shot by Western cameramen (including footage from the Asia Film Company, the Albert Kahn collection, the Citroën expedition and Edison's short films), the program went on to explore documentaries produced by the pioneers of Chinese cinema (such as the Minxin Film Company), as well as patriotic features made during the war with Japan (Ying Yunwei's *The Eight Hundred Heroes*), and *The Four Hundred Million* directed by Joris Ivens to publicize the Chinese war efforts against the Japanese invasion. The section then expanded to present early genre movies shot either in Hong Kong or China, from melo-



A sign of troubled times in India, as seen in *Father and Son: The Holy War*, Anand Patwardhan's intense study of machismo and religious warfare. Courtesy filmmaker

Marx, and Peter Gilbert's *Hoop Dreams* and Terry Zwigoff's *Crumb*. A guest of the festival, Zwigoff was disappointed by the cool reception his film received, attributing it to the lack of subtitles—only films that have been bought by local distributors are subtitled in Chinese. Yet, English is the official language of the Crown Colony, and film festival patrons are usually bilingual. Maybe *Crumb*, with its “alternative” slang and the artist's pointed, picaresque take on America, was too “culturally-specific” to cross over to audiences in Hong Kong—where, moreover, none of the cartoonist's work has been available.

Christine Choy and Nancy Tong's *In the Name of the Emperor* (1995) was shown in the retrospective section devoted to “Early Images of Hong Kong & China.” For the habitués, these

dramas to musicals, and from ghost stories to revolutionary features, including a beautiful surprise: Bu Wancang's *Love and Duty* (1931), starring Ruan Lingyu, the most famous Chinese star of the silent era. Lost for years, a nitrate print of the film was found a few years ago in Bogota and restored by the Taipei Film Archives.

It is in this context that *In the Name of the Emperor* was shown, which proved a mixed blessing. Only 52 minutes long, the film was shown with two shorts produced by the Minxin (*A Page in History*, 1924-27 and *The Battle of Shanghai*, 1937), and consequently listed as part of a program titled “From Revolution to War,” so, as Tong reports, “nobody knew [it] was in the festival.” Part archival footage and part interviews, the film deals with the 1937 “Rape of Nanking” and the efforts by the Japanese to either remember and atone for, or forget and deny, the atrocities committed by the Emperor's army against the Chinese populations.

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As such, it elicited "very emotional response" on the part of Asian spectators, both Chinese and Japanese (the critic Tadao Sato, director of the Fukuoka Film Festival in Japan invited the film after its screening).

The HKIFF can only afford a limited number of plane tickets and hotel nights, so Tong, a native of Hong Kong, flew on her frequent flyer mileage and stayed with relatives most of the time—a solution not available to every independent filmmaker. The HKIFF presents a divided bureaucratic structure: while the programmers are film professionals, they are contractually the employees of Hong Kong's governing body, the Urban Council. With 1997 looming on the horizon, British counsellors are being replaced by Chinese ones, but a colonial mentality still prevails (the international press receives free passes, while the local press has to apply for individual tickets.) and the counsellors are less and less inclined to take political risks. In the last few years, mainland China has tried to influence the programming, and, following a serious conflict last year, refused to contribute prints from the Beijing Film Archives to the retrospective and contributed to the withdrawal of Wen Pulin and Wen Puqing's *Karmapa Mkhayen* (1994), a documentary on Buddhist monks in Tibet.

For Tong, while the programmers are "very friendly," some of the inertia she complains about was due to the Urban Council, in charge of organization and publicity: there is no hospitality suite, no meetings organized for the filmmakers, and the local press doesn't always get the information it needs. She had already sold the film to television stations in Hong Kong and Taiwan, so what she was looking for at the HKIFF was publicity "to give a good momentum to the film at the beginning of its career." Knowing Hong Kong quite well, she contacted the press herself, but acknowledges that some foreign filmmakers were "quite lost."

"Filmmakers who show their work at the HKIFF should be prepared to do a lot of publicity work themselves," she says. "They should talk to filmmakers who have been there, get the names of press contacts and carefully organize their trip."

Let's not forget the fascinating rhythm of the city, the beauty of the tall buildings reflected in the sea, the dense networks of small streets and back alleys, the cuisine, the proverbial Chinese hospitality, and a challenging program of films. For those who do their homework, the HKIFF might be the trip of a lifetime!

Bérénice Reynaud, a correspondent for Cahiers du cinéma, the Créteil Film Festival, and the San Sebastian Film Festival, writes regularly on Chinese cinema and teaches at the California Institute of the Arts.

What a Character!

Writing the Character-Driven Screenplay

BY JAMES RYAN

"THE CLASSICAL HOLLYWOOD NARRATIVE IS A VERY SPECIFIC PLOT-DRIVEN, CAUSE-AND-EFFECT-ORGANIZED narrative centering on a central protagonist with a successful ('happy') resolution, a pattern that has not changed since 1917 for most Hollywood films," writes Andrew Horton in his new book, *Writing the Character-Centered Screenplay*.

But is the "character-centered screenplay" really so different from the "Hollywood narrative"? Or have most Hollywood narratives just been failed character films? When can you recall a great film that has not had great characters? *Citizen Kane*, *Godfather II*, *Silence of the Lambs*. Charles Foster Kane, Michael Corleone, Hannibal Lecter—these characters, rather than the plot or spectacle, are the first thing we recall.

"Every great literary work grew from character, even if the author planned the action first," says Lajos Egri in *The Art of Dramatic Writing*. "As soon as his characters were created they took precedence, and the action had to be reshaped to suit them." He continues, "Aristotle was mistaken in his time, and our scholars are mistaken today when they accept his ruling concerning character. Aristotle denied the importance of character, and his influence persists today."

Every great screenplay is character-centered. Even Syd Field, who addresses character with his typically simplistic prescriptions in the *Screenwriter's Workbook*, admits "good character is the heart and soul and nervous system of your screenplay."

The "character-centered screenplay" is, more precisely, an alternative to formulaic, out-of-touch, predictable, bad Hollywood films. Yet it is very much in the tradition of the "American" narrative film; it wants to tell a story. It seeks, as Horton suggests, to "destroy clichés in character, story, and structure." It is more than an attempt to place character at the center of a screenplay's concerns.

A character-centered screenplay is one that wants to risk, push the envelope of genre, tip the apple cart. It asks only that characters be engaging, not necessarily sympathetic. For instance, can one truly sympathize with Hannibal Lecter?

The character-centered screenplay strives for complication. Characters are faced with morally contradictory choices, endings are often bittersweet or open-ended rather than successfully resolved. Characters have many layers and are made up of, as Horton suggests, "many voices."

James Joyce talked about three ways of viewing an object or image. The first is to want to possess it. This is the impulse behind, say, pornography. The second way is to control it. This is the impulse behind enacting dogmas, analyzing and labeling, making formulas, teaching lessons. It is the impulse of most bad films. People and events are clearly mapped and there's no room for doubt. The third way is to behold it, and in so doing, experience the radiance from behind the object; to just *be* with it, fully present, and by virtue of that, open to its transcendent qualities. This is the impulse behind the character-centered screenplay.

The character-centered screenplay embraces mystery, and celebrates a lot in the world that is beyond our acuity. The question is, in practical terms, how do you do this?

The Impulse

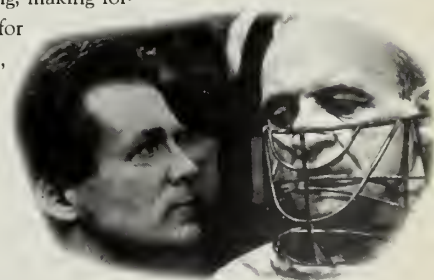
A writer is like a carpenter who builds a house in the hope that it becomes haunted. — Emily Dickinson

The creation of the character-centered screenplay is dynamic—not a mad race to cram a story into plot points, the "first 10 pages", and so on. The character-centered screenwriter seeks to shape stories that can take their own course and characters that will walk away from their creator and live.

Begin with what haunts you. It may be a person you know very well, a story in the newspaper, a tale told by a friend, an image, a line you heard someone shout while running to catch a plane. You don't have to know why it haunts you. In fact, that's why you must write about it—you want to give it meaning.

During the rehearsal of a play of mine, for instance, an actor mentioned to me that he thought the theme of my piece was very similar to the Dennis Sweeney-Allard Lowenstein story. I knew nothing about them, so the actor gave me an article written by Theresa Carpenter about this protégé and mentor, their journey from the Civil Rights Movement to the Dump Johnson Movement, and the subsequent events that led Sweeney to walk into Lowenstein's office and assassinate him, shooting five times.

I was haunted by this story. I read everything I could about it. I traveled to Washington, Baltimore, San Francisco, and



Portland to track down people who knew Sweeney or Lowenstein—former girlfriends, political allies, enemies, mothers, brothers, and students. Several years later, after much research and then throwing it all away, trusting that my imagination would be informed by all the delving and scrutiny, it became a screenplay.

Why did these things haunt me? I saw heroism, loyalty, love, and injustice in this story. It filled me with a sense of outrage. It was about characters and situations that were fertile ground for contradictory choices and complications.

The Campfire

How do I know what I think until I see what I say? — E. M. Forster

The next step is to shape your impulses into a story. “Every movie has a beginning, middle, and an end, but not necessarily in that order,” said Jean Luc-Godard. You may want to tell the story in a non-traditional way, but you still have to tell a story.

Imagine you are sitting around a campfire late at night. Ask yourself, who is your audience? Is it a 10-year-old Japanese boy who cannot speak English? Two 24-years-olds, very much in love? A group of grandparents with their grandchildren?

Your story is very much affected by the audience to whom you choose to tell it. Just imagine telling the story of *Fatal Attraction* to a group of college students, then to a group of eight-year-olds with their parents. Try this as an exercise to see how much the point of view, details, and theme change in the telling of the tale.

Knowing your audience does not mean pandering to them. It simply means you really know what storytelling is all about. After many years of creating workshops featuring storytellers at the Lincoln Center Institute, I have learned the importance of audience. “Storytelling, to be complete, requires the audience member to add—to fill in everything that’s not there,” says David Gonzalez, a very accomplished storyteller. “It’s a delicate line between providing too much imagery or not enough. All the different styles of storytelling sit, in one way or another, on that fence of giving more or less information—graphic, or emotional information, or whatever.”

After you practice telling the story to yourself—out loud, so you can hear it—then tell it to anyone you can. Find real audiences: cab drivers, the doorman, friends. Tell the story in four to seven minutes. Include your central characters and their idiosyncrasies, their internal journeys, a point of view, and an ending. Make sure your listener has a concrete idea of who your major characters are by giving them one or two broad strokes. Add some dialogue. For instance, Tommy Lee Jones’ line in *The Fugitive*: “I always get my man.” Or Dustin Hoffman in *Midnight Cowboy*: “There are two essentials to life, sunshine and coconuts. In Florida, they got ’em both.”

Consider point of view. Through whose eyes do you want people to see and hear this story? Will it be the “objective,” observing camera eye? Will it be through a number of witnesses, as in *Reds*, who told their views of John Reed? Will it be framed, as in *A River Runs Through It*, when an old man looks back on his life with his brother? Or will it be freewheeling, mix and match, multiple viewpoints?

To explore point of view, imagine again that you are around the campfire, now in the audience. Think of the storytellers—who they are and how they see the world. How does it affect the story? Suppose it’s told by five dancers who see great significance in every movement and have a tremendous body vocabulary. Suppose it’s told by a nun who spent all her life cloistered. Suppose it’s Woody Allen. Suppose it’s you. Again, as you get specific about who is telling the story, the tale takes another shape. Refine and revise. Play with your structure. Start your story in the middle, go to the end, then to the beginning. Perhaps it would be best if the tale were circular or a Mobius-strip, twisted and turned in on itself like the structure of *Before the Rain*. Fiddle with

the connections and see what happens. Often you won’t know the structure until you arrive at it.

Play with the world of the story. Some worlds offer more fertile soil for complex choices than others—for instance, the world of war (*Before the Rain*, *Killing Fields*, *Casablanca*) or gangs (*Boyz n the Hood*, *Godfather II*). Play with your characters. Suppose they are from a different culture or country than the one in which they must operate. Look for complications. Suppose a sworn pacifist must consider killing an attacker to save his child. Or a well-read man who loves ideas must adopt the dogma of a party in order to win an election. Locate the contradictory cores of your characters, the epicenters of internal struggle, the source of their complication.

Consider moving some of your background characters to the foreground, especially if they show considerable promise and life. You may discover that they are whom the story is really about. You should respect this and oblige the tale.

The pitch is a manageable way to litmus-test major adjustments. Since, in a sense, you have only a cursory understanding of your story at this point and haven’t committed fully to it, you will have the appropriate distance with which to accurately assess choices.

If you can’t pitch your movie in under seven minutes and keep everyone’s attention, you don’t have a film. Even if you strive to “be obscure clearly” (E.B. White)—to create a film filled with small moments, subtext, images that evoke and resonate—you still have to have a spine.

Character

Once you’ve honed the pitch, create a character checklist. You can find a checklist in almost every book on writing screenplays. It is simply a list of questions you ask about your characters to find out more about them. For instance, what are their socio-economic backgrounds, their education? Who are their parents, their siblings? What are their secrets? What makes them guilty? What is their favorite clothing? What do they think when they are naked and look at themselves in the mirror? What are their religious and political beliefs? What are their psychological wounds? Who are their friends? What do they say to people at work, at home, at school, in the locker room? Make up your own list with at least a hundred questions; don’t rely on someone else to do it. You will learn as much by the questions you ask as the answers you provide.

Once you’ve completed your list, go back to your pitch and review it, informed by this exploration. You may not change anything, or you may change everything. It is amazing to watch students revisit their stories after they’ve gotten to know their characters. Many times the pitch needs to be trashed or tailored because it violates the truth about a character. Once you’ve discovered your characters’ deepest needs, you should abide by them and let them shape your story.

Premise

You’re at the point where you should develop a premise. This is a thesis, a controlling idea, as to what your story is about. Again, this may change as you create and revise. But you need something with which to begin.

Lajos Egri talks about premise as having three parts: character, action, and an ending. For instance, the premise of *King Lear* might be “Blind trust leads to destruction.” “Blind trust” implies a character, “leads to” implies an action, “destruction” gives an end. You don’t have to be as rigid as Egri suggests, but you should have a statement that is succinct, specific, and sums up your story. If your premise honestly makes sense to you, trust that. Other people may hear your story and extract a different premise. That’s fine. But it should have all three parts Egri mentions, otherwise it will not be a complete proposition.

A great story can provide many premises and be about many things. Take *Orpheus*, the classic Greek tale about a man who loses his beloved and trav-

els to Hades to bring her back. Homer refers to it in the *Odyssey* in the 9th century B.C.; dramas were created by Euripides, Tennessee Williams, Oyama, and Craig Lucas, among others; films include versions by Jean Cocteau (*Testament to Orpheus* and *Orpheus*) and Marcel Camus (*Black Orpheus*). The same story, yet all the versions were different because each author had a different premise.

Outline

The next step is to begin your outline. This is a detailed summary of the story, 15 to 30 pages single-spaced, which breaks it down into acts and scenes. The outline is to structure and story what the character checklist is to character. The outline really tests to see if your story has staying power and allows you to focus on the orchestration of scenes. The outline asks you to show your story, not just tell it.

The best outlines read like a short story. They explore the consciousness, the inner workings of your characters as well as their external behavior. Use the outline to focus on a character arc—the internal journey a character must travel over the course of the entire story. For instance, Oskar Schindler in *Schindler's List* must change from being a Nazi war profiteer who exploits Jewish workers to someone who is driven to save their lives. What is the internal landscape that he travels in order to make such a change? You will probably never use much of this information directly, but it will inform all behavior, every scene in the execution of your screenplay.

The outline is the hardest thing to do. It can take quite some time and will have to be revised often. If you get stuck and can't budge, that's a good sign. It means you are really working at coming up with something new. Take breaks and do something mindless. Weed the garden, walk in the woods, shovel snow—answers will come to you. Remind yourself that learning is continuous but performance isn't.

Execution

Executing a screenplay is like leading an expedition through uncharted sections of the Amazon rainforest. The pitch is a satellite map. The outline is an aerial view. The execution is when you must walk among the thick vegetation and find your way. If you haven't done your preparation thoroughly, you will get lost in no time.

You may wonder—how is it that someone like Paul Schrader was able to write *Taxi Driver* in a week or two while living in his car after his marriage broke up? Bertolt Brecht wrote *Life of Galileo*, his best play, in three weeks! How much preparation did they do?

Many times we have been preparing to write a story for years and are not aware of it. Brecht carried the idea of *Galileo* around for a long time and got through a good deal of preliminary reading before he ever sat down with his brandy and executed his opus.

When you finally sit down to write a draft, you should move swiftly and impulsively. Trust your preparation by letting it all go. By now you know your main characters and their needs very well, so, when they're called upon to act out, you will know their choices instinctively. You should be constantly surprised by what is coming out of your typewriter or computer.

The Scene

When creating your scenes, always ask if your choices are strong enough. "Use hack advice," Kurt Vonnegut suggests. "Always ask yourself: What is the worst thing that could happen? For instance, there is a man who is put into jail. What is the worst thing that could happen? He is put on the chain gang. What is the worst thing that could happen? He is made to clear road in his hometown and will be humiliated if recognized. What is the worst thing that could happen? His dog that he left behind runs across a field, barking and wagging its tail wildly, singling him out. This is the structure of a famous southern short story." Vonnegut is saying that you should always

look for a way to raise the stakes. When the stakes are high, a character's lid will pop off and he or she will be revealed.

In order to advance your narrative, you need to give exposition. In order to reveal your characters, they must take an action—make a choice and go after something. The best way to give exposition and reveal character is to motivate through conflict. Conflict arises when a character wants something or has an objective. There must be an obstacle to this objective and the character must take an action (an active verb—seduce, pursue, plead, humiliate, etc.) to achieve their objective.

Always examine your scenes for these factors. If the stakes are low and the characters inactive, rewrite. A scene does not necessarily have to have conflict, but it should certainly have tension. In *Schindler's List*, for instance, the commandant of a camp stands on his balcony and, for target practice, aims his telescopic rifle at innocent prisoners and slaughters them. There is no conflict per se in these scenes, nor does he have an obstacle to his objective, but there is enormous tension.

Yes, constantly raising the stakes can lead to mere melodrama. All of this is a matter of art and orchestration. But it is always better to err in the direction of too much conflict and high stakes than the other way around; it is much easier to fix.

Dialogue

People do not speak in a literary way. They are often confused or inarticulate; they reverse themselves and reveal many layers in their attempts to use language to hide. "Everything is perfect except for a few details," wrote Preston Sturges.

When writing dialogue, challenge yourself to let your characters speak for themselves, in any way they must. Find ways to free yourself up. Leave the computer and scratch their words on paper using different pens for different characters—like Solzhenitsyn does—the elegant fountain pen for one character, the chewed Bic for another. After you've given your characters a chance to empty themselves, cut and trim, combine, or pick a line or two that says it all. Often what people really mean is not what they say. Look for that tension. And remember, what people don't say is often far more powerful than what they do say.

Subtext and Layers

Subtext is the implicit or metaphorical meaning of what someone says or does. Often students will make the mistake of playing the subtext, making explicit what is implicit. They undercut themselves, the audience, and their characters. In the execution, when you allow your characters to spew forth, you will often be surprised to discover what is really going on deep down, and that their dialogue and actions reveal implicit needs and wants. Just let that be. You don't have to announce your discovery. Allow the audience to figure that out for itself. Trust them; they are smart enough.

Finally, no matter how heinous your characters' actions, avoid judging them, otherwise you rob them of their humanity. The evil man never thinks he is evil. He always has the most positive reason in the world to do his evil. You must allow him to have those reasons. Create your characters from a place of unconditional love. This allows you and your audience to accept the flaws as well the strengths of a character, embracing the whole mess of being human.

Once you've finished your first draft, let it breathe. Give copies to friends you trust, professionals, colleagues. Listen very carefully to everything they have to say. Don't defend yourself. Open up and absorb. Once you've heard it all, throw everything away that violates your voice inside and go back and revise. A screenplay is never written; it is only re-written.

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To Oblivion & Back

BY MICHELE SHAPIRO

Writer/Director Tom DiCillo Steps into the Winners Circle

Tom DiCillo's second feature, *Living in Oblivion* (1995), a comedy about the making of a low-budget independent film, won accolades earlier this year at the Berlin International Film Festival and at the Sundance Film Festival, where it received the Waldo Salt Screenwriting Award for Best Screenplay. The film was also selected to kick off the New Directors/New Films series at MoMA earlier this year.

DiCillo, 42, who first gained recognition as the cinematographer for Jim Jarmusch's *Stranger than Paradise*, wanted nothing more than to write and direct his own films. But after his first feature, *Johnny Suede* (1992), opened and closed in three weeks, DiCillo spent a few years in oblivion before mustering the confidence to draft another screenplay.

At a recent interview near the Upper West Side apartment he shares with his wife, Jane Gil, DiCillo—an avid reader and former fiction writer—discusses the symbiosis between screenwriting and directing. In the process, he traces the evolution of his work, from his film school thesis project to *Oblivion*, his yet-to-be-filmed second screenplay, *Box of Moonlight*, and his latest project, *The Real Blonde*.

In the Beginning. ...

THE INDEPENDENT: First, I'd like to know a little about your background.

DICILLO: I have a B.A. in Creative Writing—the most useless degree you can get—from a very small college in Norfolk, Virginia, called Old Dominion University. I'd been turned on to writing and reading very early in life because my father refused to let us have a television in the house. It was fascinating for me to go to college and read James Joyce. I read *Ulysses* and it blew my mind—just the very care and beauty with which Joyce used words. I then took a film class, and the first film they showed was *La Strada*, which equally blew my mind. The class forced me to look at the idea of writing for film and making film.

I then went to grad school at NYU from 1976 to 1979 and had an extremely tumultuous time. My degree was in writing and directing. I made six shorts there. My last one was a half-hour film—an absolute unmitigated disaster.

IND: What was the film about?

D: I was living on Leonard Street at the time and a month before a woman had been arbitrarily slain on the street. The complete randomness of the act

struck me as an idea for a film. Unfortunately, I left any sense of drama out of the script. It took me about five years to recover from that film. I didn't care what the faculty said; most of the time they disagreed with me anyway. But in my heart I knew it didn't work.



"With *Living in Oblivion*, the real creative stuff happened almost instantly. I wrote the first half-hour in three days with practically no rewrites; the second section was written in three weeks. With the third, again I finished in three weeks." Photo: Michele Shapiro

IND: What was the problem?

D: It was the most basic thing. You hear this in every writing class you take, but without conflict there's no drama. Even in films that are oper-

ating on the premise that nothing is happening, there's still a sense of tension in some way.

IND: And after film school?

D: As soon as I got out of school, I realized immediately that I had been in an absolute void there. This is the most catastrophic thing most people going to film school don't realize: What you're paying for is to play in a little sandbox of directing in an unreal world. I actually thought I'd get a job directing when I got out. It was quite an awakening to realize that [wasn't the case].

I studied acting with Frank Corsaro, who is now head of the Actor's Studio, for eight years. The acting had a big effect on the way I write and direct films. As soon as I ask an actor to do something in my film, I know right away whether it works or not and what is required for the actor to be excited.

Coincidentally, while I was in film school, Jim Jarmusch was a good friend of mine, and as a lark I shot two films for him: *Permanent Vacation* and *Stranger than Paradise*. I never studied cinematography and he said 'Hey, you want to shoot [my film]?' In a way that's why I did it; because I didn't have any preconceived notions as to what cinematography was.

The little bit of success I felt from *Stranger than Paradise* prompted me to keep shooting, although I really felt that it was taking me down a road I would eventually have to separate from because I had never wanted to do it.

I decided it was time to get out of cinematography because it was pigeonholing me. At that point I had written *Johnny Suede* as a one-man show based upon scenes I'd brought into my acting class. I performed it at the Home for Contemporary Theater when it was on Walker Street.

IND: What did you like about *Johnny Suede* that made you want to turn it into a film script?

D: I felt I had stumbled upon something truthful about human behavior. I was interested in the male psyche in a way that hadn't been explored on film before. Usually when men are lampooned or exposed, they're either nerds or they're like Andrew Dice Clay. I said, 'What if you have a guy who looks like a hero but really isn't one?' On a certain level he's sensitive, courageous, he has a sense of integrity, and his physical appearance goes a long way towards getting him attention and success. It's the opposite of Woody Allen, who plays the nerd who thinks he's a hero.

IND: Everyone has their own process for writing a screenplay. What is yours?

D: In the case of *Johnny Suede*, once I wrote the monologue I knew the basic shape of the piece. I knew there were cornerstone scenes that would serve as building blocks for the screenplay. I actually knew how I wanted it to end. I wanted this guy to be destroyed, but destroyed in a way that there was the potential for him to find out something new about himself. The biggest difficulty I had was that the monologue was verbally driven. It took me two drafts of screenplay before I realized that there was a camera there. Starting with something that originated as words was really a stumbling block for me.

With my second script, *Box of Moonlight*, I only thought in terms of visuals. Every screenplay I've written

since *Johnny Suede* has begun with a filmic idea, not a book or a stage work. With *The Real Blonde*, which I finished three months ago, I got an idea when editing *Oblivion*. There's a big board hung over the editing table and on 3-by-5 inch notecards you put a one-word description of each scene. Many times we'd look at the board and say "I wonder what would happen if the card was moved from here to there." For *The Real Blonde*, I took a big board, divided the film into three sections, and started filling in scenes. It was very helpful.

IND: *Johnny Suede* was your first feature. You got it made; you got it distributed. That's pretty impressive. What do you think went wrong?

D: A number of things. There's no doubt in my mind that *Johnny Suede* is no better or worse than films that have come out since then that have had very successful releases. So something went wrong.

Johnny Suede's idea was to take the image of what's cool and spoof it. For some reason people went to it thinking the thing it was spoofing was real. They were disappointed to see Brad Pitt looking like a buffoon.

Bad Hair Day: DiCillo characters Johnny Suede (played by Brad Pitt) and his girlfriend, Darlette.

Courtesy Miramax

If anything, I take blame for the film's slow pace. If I learned one lesson it's that even the most deliberate

and significant emotional moments need to move.

IND: Are you bitter about the fact that audiences—even the film's distributor—missed the point of *Johnny Suede*?

D: You can't be bitter. You just have to concentrate on making another film. With *Johnny Suede*, five years work evaporated in three weeks. It made it almost impossible for me to make another film.



Thriving in Oblivion

D: *Living in Oblivion* was a very different experience. Although I busted my ass on it, most of the real creative stuff happened almost instantly. I wrote the first half-hour in three days with practically no rewrites; the second section was written in three weeks. The third—it took me a little longer to conceive of the idea, but again I finished in three weeks.

IND: It's interesting that you think of it as parts one, two, and three.

D: I'm so pleased that you say that. The whole film was initially conceived as the first half-hour: a day on the set that is a nightmare and Nick, the director, wakes up. We shot [the short] on 16mm in five days; nobody got paid. I literally had to resort to pre-film school techniques to get this film made.

The short got rejected by Cannes. That was the most depressing thing. I thought, 'Here's the most joyous piece of filmmaking I've ever done, and no one's going to see it.' Finally, I asked myself if I was willing to accept that the film would sink, and I forced myself to think about it as a feature.

IND: How did you decide what to change and what to keep the same when you expanded the script?

D: I thought it was absolutely mandatory that the first half-hour was included because we didn't have any money; I couldn't go back and reshoot it. The characters were written, but any actor who put up money got a part. All these arbitrary givens affected how I wrote the second part.

Based on what happened in part one—just watching Nick, played by Steve Buscemi, and Nicole, played by Catherine Keener, on the set together—prompted me to have them fall in love in the next part. The middle section was almost like a divertimento; it's the most slapstick.

There's only one thing I knew part three would have to have: a moment when Buscemi would give up because there's no way he could go through these days and not think 'Hey, what's the point?'

I was talking to my wife, who's a horticulturist, and I told her I was stuck. She said, 'Well let's see, part one is a dream and part two is a dream, why don't you have part three be real and they'll be filming a dream sequence?' Instantly the first thought I had was a smoke machine that blows up and a dwarf who yells at the director for putting him in the dream sequence.

IND: How far apart were the three parts written?

D: The first part was written about a year earlier. A month and a half separated parts two and three.

IND: Were you afraid that the three parts would work on their own but not as a whole?

D: That was my greatest fear. I thought people would see part one and the film would come to a halt before stumbling into parts two and three.

IND: Was there a lot of rewriting in *Oblivion*?

D: Not at all. There were two instances, but they were incredibly momentous. One was a scene that everyone laughed at on paper; the scene in which James LeGros walks back onto the set and the gaffer approaches him and tries to give him the script. When we shot the scene as scripted, it just didn't work. The next day I walked in and said 'Let's try something.' I gave each of the three actors a direction. Otherwise the



Motley Crew: Scenes from *Living in Oblivion*.

Courtesy Sony Pictures Classics

scene was completely improvised. I don't take credit for what they did. In my mind, the scene was conceived to be that way. It was a joy to let go of the script at that point.

The second rewrite was a real nightmare. I had written a long, detailed dialogue scene between Cora, who comes in as Nick's mother, and Catherine [Keener] in the wedding dress. As soon as we started rehearsing, I had a horrible sense of doom and knew it wasn't working. The actresses began to forget their lines. . . The crew one by one disappeared. . . It was just me rehearsing the scene over and over, knowing in my heart it was absolutely horrific. Driven by our schedule, I shot the scene. I was really depressed when I got home, so I stayed up for three more hours and sketched the scene out.

The next day I walked onto the set and freaked everybody out. I said, 'I'm sorry, but we have to reshoot the scene.' And we got it just the way it is in the film now.

IND: From what you say about your experiences on the set of *Oblivion*, it sounds as if you advocate improvisation rather than having actors adhere to the script.

D: I'm very proud of the dialogue I write. I have a good ear for hearing people. I very carefully wrote the dialogue for *Johnny Suede* and one of the things I had to do for Brad Pitt was to get him to say the lines as written. The words suddenly became meaningless when he would add things

like 'Oh fuck,' 'Oh shit,' or 'You know what I mean?'

If you talk to the actors in *Oblivion*, they'll say they just said the words that were on the page. Most of the time they did. I will say that if the actors are in tune with what you're intending, improv can be exhilarating. The script is merely the blueprint for the film. Once you write the script and agonize over every word, the moment you're on the set with the actors, you have to be ready to throw it out the window.

IND: Whatever happened to your second script?

D: It looks as if we'll make *Box of Moonlight* this summer.

IND: Why wasn't that the second film you made?

D: No one would give me money for it. I wrote it right after *Johnny Suede*. People ask me how I avoided my sophomore jinx [with *Oblivion*] and I tell them it's because I never made my second film.

IND: What's *Moonlight* about?

D: It's a crazy, archetypal film about a young father who in the course of five days suffers an earth-shattering identity crisis; any respect he had for himself is gone, and he decides to take a trip on his own to find out who he is.

IND: How does the crisis come about?

D: He's out of town on a job. His wife and young son are 7,000 miles away. He's supervising a construction job in the middle of the woods. Every evening at 8 p.m. he returns to his hotel and—it's just the kind of guy the character Al is—he calls his wife with a daily report.

The next day as Al goes to the site, he learns the job's been cancelled and that he has received a large amount of cash. Everyone goes home except Al. Instead he calls his wife and tells her he'll be home in five days. He's frightened of the free time. He's never had it before, and he takes this journey. He ends up with a young kid who is dressed in a really dirty, greasy Davy Crockett outfit. He lives in the woods in a trailer, one side of which is completely open. In certain shots it's like a proscenium.

The Screenwriting Process

IND: How much do you keep the budget in mind when you're writing a screenplay?

D: A lot. You have to because, let's face it, the only way you're going to make a film with lots of car chases or crazy effects is if you make it with Kevin Costner or Sylvester Stallone. If you're thinking about doing a \$2- or \$3-million film, you have to write it in such a way that you can make it if you only get \$800,000.

Johnny Suede's budget was \$300,000. That was the original budget. If you look at the film, it's essentially a number of interiors and a couple street scenes. It came in just over \$1 million.

IND: Do you sometimes omit things you'd like to put in, or do you figure you'll write it now and cut later?

D: I've done both. If a scene calls for an airplane shot over the L.A. Freeway and you have to hire a stunt double and a pilot, how are you going to do it? Personally, I like to keep things simple anyway. Especially with *Living in Oblivion*, working on one set with one location was the most liberating thing. We didn't have to worry about moving. We had more time to do what we had to do.

For low-budget makers, the best luxury you have is time. I've shot films by first-time directors who were trying to make gigantic things, and they didn't even have the money to do one-third of [what they wanted],

so they end up barely skimming the surface of the material. No scene gets the attention that it needs.

IND: Do you prefer writing to directing?

D: I like them both. They're inseparable; when I'm writing something, it's a certain shorthand I use knowing I'm going to direct. When I'm sitting in my room writing, there's a tremendous sense of peace. It's just you and the word.

Filmmaking is so dependent upon other people. All you want to do is go from here to there, but you can't because you've got 50 people and a camera and one guy says, 'I don't think we should go from here to there.' You have to find a way to get there without alienating anyone. The most precious commodity on any film endeavor is ideas. You need to encourage everyone to contribute ideas.

IND: How much do you do that with your films?

D: A lot, but usually it gets very fucked up because when you say to someone, "Thanks for the idea, but I don't want it," it takes a very well-developed person to say "Okay, fine," and later give you another idea. The whole creative process can come grinding to a halt simply by the way you say "No, thank you" to somebody.

IND: Do you show the script to a lot of people during the writing process?

D: When it's done I give it to certain people whose opinions I really respect. One of them is my wife, who is amazingly objective. She was the one person who told me the scene in *Oblivion* between the mother and Katherine at the end didn't work. Catherine Keener was the first one I showed Part One [of *Oblivion*]. I wrote it to make her giggle, and hearing her actually laugh was a real high. It encouraged me to actually make it.

IND: How important are characters' names to you?

D: I love naming them. It's another element you can use to help people get your point. My biggest thrill was coming up with Chad Palomino for the actor. Brad [Pitt] was going to play the part for a while and his hair was long and blonde at the time. I thought it was like a mane and it helped me conceive of the name Palomino.

IND: You also have some of the most eloquently written stage directions in your scripts. That's why I wasn't surprised when you said you had a fiction writing background.

D: That comes from every writer's greatest anxiety: You're in the mind of someone reading the script who will eventually green-light the film. For that to happen, you have to write in a way this person will see it. If the stage directions have any bearing on the meaning of a scene, I try to make them as clear and dramatic as possible.

IND: Are you interested in writing screenplays for others to direct?

D: Not really.

IND: What's your newest script, *The Real Blonde*, about?

D: The film takes its metaphor from the title. *The Real Blonde* is the feminized version of blonde. I feel today all of our energy is hooked on that which is fake. That's epitomized to me by this incredible infatuation with models. Today, at a time when we need truth more than ever, the people who are screaming the loudest are screaming things based in idiocy. This film is a cross between *Husbands and Wives* and *Short Cuts*. It's funny, but has some darker rises and falls than *Oblivion*. Interest in *The Real Blonde* is so intense, I may skip my second film all together.

Michele Shapiro is managing editor of *The Independent*.

Pleased To Meet Me

JAN OXENBERG

on lessons learned from writing **Thank You and Goodnight!**

"M

"MY GRANDMOTHER DIED A COUPLE OF years ago, and I find myself still looking for her. I keep thinking I see her purse or her dress or her shoes . . ." The camera, which has been panning a row of feet waiting for a bus, stops at a pair of "grandma shoes" and tilts up hopefully. The owner of the shoes, a punked-out orange-haired teenaged girl, takes the last drag from her cigarette and gets on the bus. A cardboard cutout with a sad face, a yellow rain slicker, and a little umbrella watches.

That's the way I began my 1991 film *Thank You and Goodnight!*, although, truth be told, it had been not "a couple," but 12 years since Grandma died. In those years (the script was completed in 1982; tack on seven years for fundraising) the personal documentary, nonfiction feature, first-person narra-

tive—whatever you'd like to call it—had begun to make its mark on the indie cinema scene. Now personal documentaries are about to have their own series on public television with the development of *E.C.U.*

I saw the roots of what I was doing then in the personal essay or "new journalism": Norman Mailer's ego-filled odysseys through the Pentagon demonstration, the moon shot, the Republican Convention, his saying here's my take on the real events unfolding around me. Woody Allen did it in a narrative context with his great *Annie Hall*: here's the story of my relationship with Annie, its beginning, middle, and end—and here I am trying to figure it all out through memory, fantasy, conversation with the audience. This was the sensibility I borrowed from shamelessly when I began *Thank You and Goodnight!*

Actually that's not quite correct, because I had no idea what I was doing when I began the film. I hadn't planned to do it, I hadn't raised any money to do it, the last thing I thought I'd want to do was make a movie about my grandmother. I stumbled into it emotionally and artistically, and felt my way through it intuitively—but perhaps looking back, I've gleaned some lessons I can pass along.

THANK YOU AND GOODNIGHT! IS A QUEST STORY, LIKE *ROGER & ME* OR *Sherman's March*, to take two well-known examples. The filmmaker/protagonist/first-person narrator takes you on a journey (ostensibly) to find

something (Michael Moore looks for GM chairman Roger Smith in *Roger & Me*; Ross McElwee wants to find a girlfriend in *Sherman's March*). In my movie the quest is for answers to the "unanswerable questions" that my grandmother's death raises for me: "Was her life really rotten or did she make herself miserable?"; "Why didn't Grandma teach my mother how to cook?"; "Why do people have to die, anyway?" The quest is to find out how to say goodbye.

Because there's a quest, a goal, there's really a traditional story structure, even in these nontraditional films. Not only was I telling a documentary story with a beginning, middle, and end (my grandmother got sick, she died, the family mourned, packed up her apartment, divided up her things, went on with life), I created a character whose journey through these events has its own beginning, middle, and end. Those two elements—story



structure and seeing yourself as a character in a movie—are, I believe, key to

making a personal documentary work.

In my case I literally created a character to represent me in the film: a cardboard cutout of a scowling five-year-old (called "Scowling Jan" in

the script). When I wrote the script, the concept of the “child within” hadn’t been popularized, but Scowling Jan is the embodiment of the (rotten) child within. Especially when facing death and loss. She’s the angry, demanding kid, wishing for the impossible. The part of us that won’t accept that someone we love is leaving forever, the part of us that, in a sense, never does accept it. I wanted to give a literal voice and body to that part of me that regressed to kid state as my grandma lay dying, and to make it funny as well as sad. My cutout persona could visit the afterlife, be buried in a grave, get run over by cars, tempt and transcend death, and pop up good as new like the Roadrunner cartoon. She’s the wish come true—she doesn’t die.

I began the writing process by transcribing the documentary footage I’d shot of my grandmother, her friends, and our family. I edited the documentary scenes on paper so they read like scenes in a narrative screenplay. Then I started writing scenes

For example, my mother wanted to learn her mother’s recipe for gefilte fish. We set up a table next to Grandma’s bed, and she gave a cooking lesson complete with wistful comments on the pathetic cooking skills of those of us who would be carrying on her legacy. But during the course of the “lesson” she got weaker—we had to stop; she was in pain—she told us not to cry, but rather, to laugh. There it all was: my mother learning from her mother skills she doesn’t really want, resenting her, loving her, crying for her, and my grandmother calling for her own mother.

This scene inspired a memory/fantasy cutout scene. “I looked into the past, in memories. Most of them had something to do with food,” I say in the narration. In a scene in an old Brooklyn kitchen with Scowling Jan and Grandma cutouts and a real actor in a cameo as “Grandpa,” Scowling Jan remembers the special foods Grandma cooked which she loved—

except for the carrots, which seemed to pop up in every dish. Grandma presents the foods steaming. By the end of the scene there’s so much steam the whole room becomes distorted; the scene is really about the rosiness of memory and the distortions it hides. Was Grandma really such a good cook, my mother challenges? Or was her food actually much too greasy?

The idea for the cutout as narrator came from one early scene I wrote, when I was still noodling around, writing disconnected fragments. In that scene I remember Grandma taking me to a movie palace to see *The Pajama Game*. “She was a huge presence in my life back then,” I say in the script, and we see the theater auditorium filled with Grandmas. As little Jan sees it, Grandma is in every seat; she’s the ticket taker, the usher, the candy-counter person; even the cherub on the ornate ceiling has her face. “I felt like she was all around me.” The scene introduces the theme of the movie: “When I found out she was dying, I had to figure out how to say goodbye.”

We shot this single scene for an NEA sample reel. Paula DeKoenigberg created cutout figures of Grandma that filled the theater—and a cutout of little Scowling Jan looking up at her. The figures Paula created were so evocative I saw the Scowling Jan could be the character who takes us on this journey. I was then able to complete the script in a focused way.

Though I used a cardboard cutout, most personal documentary makers just put themselves in the movie. But that doesn’t mean they’re not “in character.” The Michael

Moore who takes us on a search for Roger may or may not correspond to the real guy; it doesn’t matter. He created a consistent character through whose ironic eyes we enjoy seeing the world. I think the discipline of seeing yourself as a “character,” separate from yourself as the filmmaker, is vital. You need that distance to be as ruthless (or as kind) to that character as you would to any other in the movie. And, there’s no other way to say it, if you’re going to ask an audience to watch real events mediated through your perceptions, you’d better be entertaining! If your topic is much more engaging than you are, the audience will resent your intrusions.



Adoring tyke, concerned doctor, accepting mourner: The Scowling Jan cutouts in *Thank You and Goodnight!*, Oxenberg's deeply moving film about (not) letting go.

Artwork & photos: Paula DeKoenigberg, courtesy filmmaker

randomly, inspired by the documentary footage and by the experience itself. Even while I was shooting documentary footage (and I didn’t shoot much, mostly due to lack of resources), I took a “dramatic” approach at times: setting up a “dra-

matic” situation and filming the real people being themselves within that situation.



I do appear on camera in documentary scenes and in several scripted scenes, in addition to being the voice of the cutout. In the editing room I found it helped if we all referred to that woman-on-the-Steenbeck-who-looked-like-me in the third person or by name. Personal pronouns were banned.

After my grandmother died, making the film became a metaphor for the common experience of not being able to let go, of regret. Why didn't I tell her this, why didn't I film that? I offered to pack up Grandma's apartment, but actually spent the time filming every object she had owned, zooming in and zooming out, panning left and panning right, for three full months before I could let that apartment go. I slept in her bed. I tried on her clothes. Thankfully, 98 percent of that documentary footage is not in the film. But I wrote a scene that reflects those emotions. As real family members move Grandma's furniture out, Scowling Jan moves it right back in—to her own "Grandma apartment" which she is creating. By the end she has an exact "replica" of the apartment we've spent much time in through the documentary footage. "I wouldn't move her things out," Scowling Jan says. "I'd keep one place on Earth that was just the way Grandma made it. And I could go there and visit Grandma forever. . . But if I made my own apartment, which Grandma would I put in it?"

EVERYONE MAKING A PERSONAL DOCUMENTARY HAS TO WRESTLE WITH ethical questions related to their subjects. These questions are present in traditional documentaries, but they're magnified tenfold when you're nakedly "using" your subjects as raw material for your own reflections. When those subjects are your family members—as they often are in these films—well, let's just say you have to live with the consequences of your choices on an ongoing basis.

My brother, Ricky, in particular, has a natural tendency to passionately philosophize in a kind of poignantly absurd, over-intellectualized way. When I wrote the script, I wanted to "enhance" the documentary footage with several scenes written "in his style" in which he specifically comments on topics in the story. He refused to say my lines. He did, however, speak in his own way on the subjects I asked him to—and the result is one of the strongest and funniest aspects of the movie. Some of the laughs are, undeniably, at his expense. At the same time, I tried to present him as a full human being. We see him being vulnerable, speaking

from his heart and, in my view, he has the last word in the film when his "philosophizing" suddenly seems wrenching and real and moving.

When the movie premiered at Sundance he and my mother were there. In response to a question from the audience, he said he thought the movie was great but—he turned to me—"Why did the cutout have to shoot herself while I was talking?" I wouldn't change the movie; I did what I thought was best and in my mind tried to be fair—but I know I hurt him to some degree.

For my grandmother, who had never heard her voice on tape before, who was an ordinary woman, who had no anecdotes about meeting Albert Einstein or personally surviving the Holocaust, who lived a statistically normal lifespan, who had no reason to assume she'd ever be remembered except in the usual way, by the generations she begat who were already forgetting her birthday—well, for her being filmed was, I think, a tiny little link to immortality. And she took pleasure in that. (The night before she died, she told me on film that she's leaving, and if I ever get to where she's going I should "bring the cameras, bring the film, bring everything.") This makes the moral questions of invasion and exploitation complex indeed. I'm at peace with it.

So, I wrote the script in which I combined documentary scenes edited on paper, fantasy scenes, memory scenes, unanswerable questions, trips into outer space and into the afterlife. When the script was finished it looked and read like a conventional narrative screenplay. I used the script to get financing in two ways: by sending it to people in the normal way, and by using it to create a "faux rough cut". Following the script, I cut together everything I had managed to shoot—the documentary scenes and a bunch of scripted sample scenes. Where a scene was missing, I put in black leader and read from the script the scene that was meant to be there. The thing actually played—and created a desire on the part of *American Playhouse* and P.O.V. to provide money to fill in the blanks.

In the editing room, though everything didn't work exactly as planned on paper, it was invaluable to have a script. Since many of the scenes used voiceover, I was able to adjust and rewrite fairly easily.

And so, only 12 years after I started, I was able to complete my film. In the original script Scowling Jan never does say goodbye, though the people in "real" life go on with their lives. After 12 years "not being able to let go" was an issue—and not just in relation to my grandmother. As the film neared completion, I changed the ending. A second unit crew loaded up the cutout and took her to the entrance to the Lincoln Tunnel. ("Going through the tunnel" had been talked about and the tunnel used as a metaphor in scenes in the film.) My production manager convinced the woman running the toll booth to keep one section closed for another 45 minutes. Cars whizzed by in the other lanes while we filmed the last image of the movie: Scowling Jan, standing at the entrance to the tunnel, in front of the big Stay In Lane sign, waving goodbye.

Jan Oxenberg has recently completed scripts for MGM, HBO, and American Playhouse, one of which she hopes will be going into production before another 12 years goes by. Thank You and Goodnight! was released theatrically in 1992 by Aries Film Releasing and broadcast on American Playhouse in 1993. It is currently available on home video (Fox/Lorber) and in nontheatrical release through the Samuel Goldwyn Company.

The X-Files:

An Experimental Script Sampler

BY PATRICIA ZIMMERMAN

Screen Writings

edited by Scott MacDonald

University of California Press, 1995

"Make a travelogue of an imaginary country," writes Yoko Ono in *Film Script #3* (1968), published in *Screen Writings*, Scott MacDonald's innovative and mind-bending anthology of scripts and texts by North American independent filmmakers. *Screen Writings* improvises on Yoko Ono's directives: It takes readers on a trip through the imaginary country that surfaces in the screenplays of experimental filmmakers.

Transnational media conglomerates churn out book-form screenplays for *Jurassic Park* and *Pulp Fiction* as movie tie-ins. University presses publish script collections of media artists like Laura Kipnis. *Screen Writings* is so imaginative and so visually beautiful that it reduces these others books to the equivalent of traffic court transcripts.

MacDonald envisages screenwriting in two intertwining ways: as a critique of the "narrow range of commercial forms" and as a visual text, an exploration of the intellectual differences between "reading a text in a book and in a movie theater."

MacDonald, the editor and author of *A Critical Cinema*, *A Critical Cinema II*, and *Avant Garde Film*, has a literature professor's eye for verbal invention (Peter Rose), linguistic frolic (Michael Snow), poignant writing (Su Friedrich and Ann Marie Fleming), poetry (Trinh T. Minh-ha), conceptual wordplays (Yoko Ono), and political mediations (William Greaves, Laura Mulvey/Peter Wollen, Yvonne Rainer).

In MacDonald's deft curatorial hands, 36 scripts from 13 filmmakers spanning the years 1964 to 1990 travel into tributaries of wonderful poetic language and scale steep, stunning trails of conceptual interrogation. MacDonald's insightful introductions to each of the filmmakers link the scripts to other works in the collection and map the historical trajectory of the film texts. He points out how words always impacted on the visual, from intertitles in silent films to the hand-scratched titles of Stan Brakhage to the title sequence in *Psycho*.

An ardent ambassador for experimental film, MacDonald stresses scripts do not replace viewing films. His careful layout and graphic design imply cin-

ema is not simply in the realm of the senses. At the same time, *Screen Writings* contemplates cinematic texts as imagery. Each filmmaker is distinguished by a unique graphic style, portraying different characters, verbal strategies, or visual texts. Laura Mulvey and Peter Wollen's landmark feminist classic on working women, child care, and the gaze, *Riddles of the Sphinx* (1977), uses italics to show shot duration. Yvonne Rainer's pathbreaking film about menopause, *Privilege* (1990), employs different fonts for each kind of information, such as screen directions.

Hollis Frampton's *Poetic Justice* (1972), a pun on melodramatic narrative that films the printed words of a story, is reproduced in capitals, forcing the reader to read vertically in two columns. Canadian Michael Snow's *So Is This* (1982), a film also composed exclusively of filmed words, is printed in four columns on the page. Large, white words like HOW, DO, YOU, KNOW, THIS, ISN'T, LYING—frame enlargements from the film—nestle in a black field on the right-hand corner of each page. Peter Rose's script for *Secondary Currents* (1983), a film imploding the gap between foreign film subtitles and spoken language, is printed like a double-spaced incantation. Trinh T. Minh-ha's feminist intervention into the anthropological, racialized gaze in *Reassemblage* (1982) is rendered here as a poem that can stand on its own.

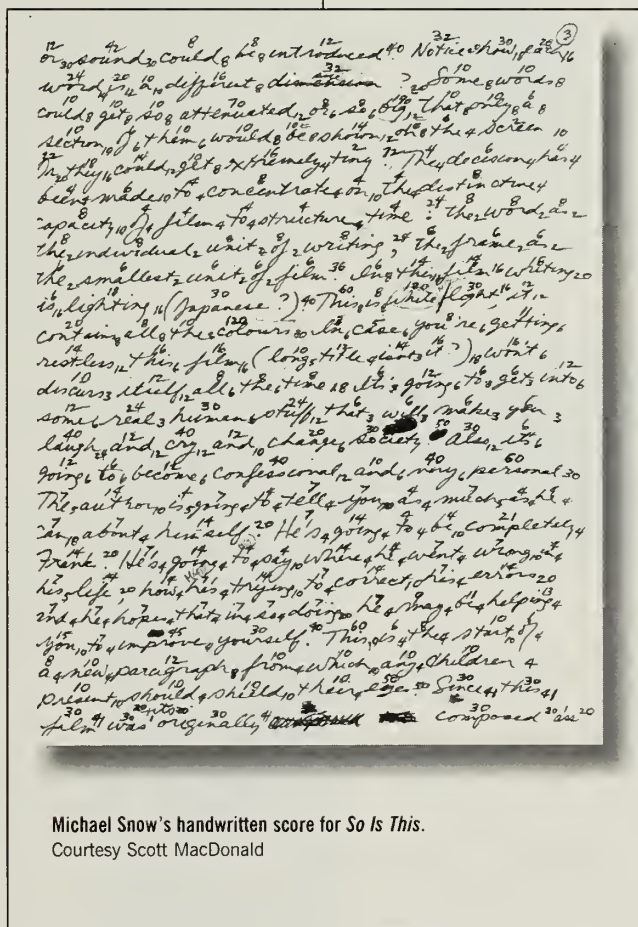
Surprisingly, exquisitely written stories are laced into these experimental films. Su Friedrich's powerful feminist psychic exorcism of her father, *Sink or Swim* (1990) and Ann Marie Fleming's *You Take Care Now* (1989), an astonishingly frank story of her rape, show how visually dense films use stories as one of their layers.

In selecting filmmakers and scripts, *Screen Writings* makes a daring historiographic claim. It suggests that structural filmmakers—exemplified in this collection by Hollis Frampton, Michael Snow, James Benning, Morgan Fisher, and Peter Rose—be relocated in a continuum with feminist filmmakers whose central issue is as much about film structure as about interrogations of gender and race. *Screen Writings* demonstrates not only their shared lineage, but underscores their formal and conceptual resonances.

The pieces in this anthology crack apart and question conventional narrative film. Reading *Screen Writings* is like being in the middle of a Su Friedrich film. The book reorders our sense of what components make up a screenplay. *Screen Writings* performs a series of switchbacks: screenwriting as writing; writing as a visual text; screenplays as poetry, as directions, or as visual icons; scripts as anti-narratives about gender and race.

After a journey through the scripts, texts, visual displays, narrations, transcripts, dialogues, and wordplays in *Screen Writings*, your concept of screenwriting will be forever altered, expanded to a realm of infinite possibility in an imaginary country.

Patricia Zimmerman is professor of cinema at Ithaca College and author of *Reel Families: A Social History of Amateur Film*.



Michael Snow's handwritten score for *So Is This*.
Courtesy Scott MacDonald

Hey, You Never Know!

How Screenplay Contests Pay Off

BY JOHNNY MCNAIR

FADE IN:

INT. APARTMENT - LATE NIGHT

We focus in on a SCREENWRITER who sits in a very cramped position in front of a COMPUTER. The camera moves in closer to the monitor to reveal a concluding paragraph, followed by the words FADE OUT. The screenwriter now takes a much deserved breath of accomplishment and begins to print out the completed screenplay.

This is a moment shared by all screenwriters, whether it is their first script or their twentieth. But what happens next is where the paths diverge.

The new screenwriter will usually try to get an agent and hope to sell what may become the next *Pulp Fiction*. But unless you have an uncle in the business or a letter of recommendation from Joe Eszterhas, this task is easier said than done. Most agents, especially the big shots, only deal with established writers or new ones who come highly recommended from a trusted source.

A writer can send a query letter out to every literary agency in town, but this usually results in no more than a generic company response that basically says, "Thanks, but no thanks."

So what does a screenwriter do now? Personally knock on the doors of every production company, waving his or her script? Sell the house, car, and all personal belongings to finance it? Give up the dream and get a government job? There is another option.

Screenplay competitions are popping up everywhere and have become a new way for fresh writers to market their screenplays and get noticed. Screenplay contests function in a way parallel to film festivals: as an entry point into the film business. They allow writers to have their work read by professionals, can result in either cash prizes or fellowships, and provide opportunities to get agent representation.

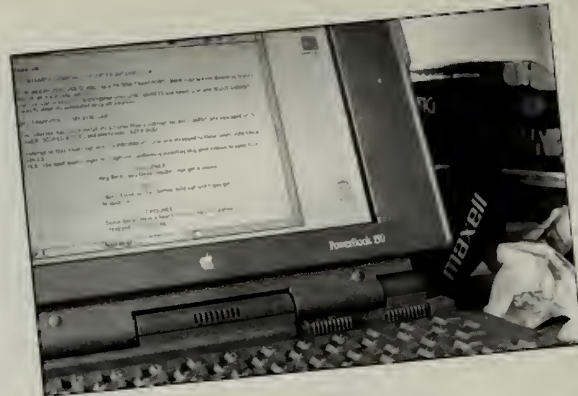
The following are major competitions not restricted by geography and open to all writers who have not optioned their work (unless otherwise noted).

AMERICA'S BEST WRITING CONTEST

This contest offers categories for aspiring screenplay and television writers, as well as poets, short story writers, romance novelists, and other mainstream literati. The prize for the best screenplay is \$20,000, and up to five screenwriters and television writers can win. The deadline is late June, and the entry fee is \$40 for a screenplay (other fees vary depending on the category). Contact: The Writer's Foundation, 3936 South Semoran Blvd. #368, Orlando, FL 32822; (407) 894-9001.

AUSTIN HEART OF FILM FESTIVAL

Held in Austin, Texas, during the first week of October, this event features a panel of industry professionals who discuss the process of screenwriting and how to break into the motion picture biz. The week-long festival offers workshops, critique classes, readings, and screenings. The contest categories are Children/Family (90-130 pp.) and Adult/Mature (90-130 pp.) narratives. Students may also enter with short narratives under 30 minutes, but must



From screen to screen, the screenplay's the thing.
Photo: Patricia Thomson

provide a copy of their student I.D. The contest is open to all writers who have not earned money writing for television or film. Two winners will receive \$3,000 each and possible agency reviews. The student prize is \$750. The contest deadline for 1995 was June 15, with an entry fee of \$30. Contact: Austin Heart of Film Festival, 707 Rio Grande, ste 101, Austin, TX 78701; (512) 473-2783.

CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS DISCOVERY PROGRAM

This contest is sponsored by two best-selling authors, Carlos de Abreu and Janice Pennington de Abreu. It is unique because it takes place in monthly cycles. Its two main categories are the Monthly Discovery Award and the Discovery of the Year Award. Winners have their scripts read by professionals who provide helpful notes for rewrites. The rewrites are then read by Hollywood players who might offer up to \$10,000 in option money for the screenplay. Among the judges for 1995 are director Ted Kocheff (*First Blood*), producer Ed Feldman (*Witness*), and producer Moctesuma Esparza (*Milagro Beanfield War*). Submissions are accepted monthly, with a \$45 application fee. Contact: Christopher Discovery Awards, 433 North Camden Dr., ste. 600, Beverly Hills, CA 90210; (310) 288-1988.

DISNEY STUDIOS FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

Instead of a cash award, this screenplay competition offers writers the opportunity to work for Disney for a year while developing their writing skills and earning a salary of \$30,000. It also provides the 10 winners a chance to rub shoulders with Disney big shots in the Magic Kingdom. The contest is open to all writers, both film and television, including those in the Writer's Guild. The yearly filing dates are from March 13 to April 7 (check for changes). There is no entry fee and proper screenplay format is a must. Contact: Brenda Vangness, Program Administrator, Walt Disney Studios, 500 South Buena Vista St., Burbank, CA 91521-0880; (818) 560-6894.

THE FIFTH NIGHT AT THE NUYORICAN POETS CAFE

See article on page 43.

HBO NEW WRITERS PROJECT

The purpose of this contest is to find new writing talent and develop their skills. Writing samples can be no longer than 60 pages. One-act plays, short works, and original half-hour teleplays are the central focus. This contest does not accept feature-length screenplays. Up to 25 writers are chosen to participate in a writer's workshop sponsored by HBO. Ten of these writers will have the opportunity to have their work staged. No material entered can be currently optioned. The deadline is February 1 and there is no processing fee. Contact: Wavy Line Productions, HBO Writing Competition, 2049 Century Park East, ste. 4200, Los Angeles, CA 90067; (310) 201-9351.

NICHOLL FELLOWSHIPS IN SCREENWRITING

This is the contest that every writer dreams of winning because it focuses the most attention on new talent. Sponsored by the Motion Picture Academy of America (MPAA), this annual contest offers five winners a prize of \$25,000 each, to be paid in five installments of \$5,000 over one year. This competi-

tion is the most competitive, but winning can push you over the top, as well as giving you the best chance of landing an A-list Hollywood agent. No writer who has received money for the sale of a screenplay or teleplay (unless it's under \$1,000) can enter. Nor are any collaborative works eligible. The deadline is May 1, with a fee of \$30. Contact: The Academy Foundation, Nicholl Fellowships in Screenwriting, 8949 Wilshire Blvd. Beverly Hills, CA 90211-1972; (310) 247-3000.

SUNDANCE SCREENWRITERS' LAB

Part of the Sundance Institute's various filmmaking workshops, the Screenwriters' Lab is extremely competitive to enter. It doesn't offer a grand cash prize, but does provide writers the opportunity to have their work read and performed by high-caliber actors and critiqued by name writers during a week-long workshop. The competition is split into two cycles, with sessions in June and January, each admitting 10 to 15 writers. The deadline is June 28 for the January program, and November 15 for the June program. The fee is \$25. Contact: Sundance Institute, 225 Santa Monica Blvd., 8th fl., Santa Monica, CA 90401; (310) 394-4662.

WRITER'S DIGEST WRITING COMPETITION

This is a small but notable contest, sponsored by *Writer's Digest* magazine, which offers a variety of writing categories, including poetry and essays, as well as television and screenplays. Open to all writers, the competition offers five cash prizes: \$500 for first place, \$250 for second, \$100 for third, \$50 for fourth, and \$25 for fifth. The Grand Prize is a Macintosh PowerBook, plus the opportunity to meet editors and agents on an all-expenses-paid trip to the Big Apple. The deadline for entering is May 31 with an entry fee of \$7 per manuscript. Contact: *Writer's Digest* Writing Competition, 1507 Dana Avenue, Cincinnati, OH 45207; (513) 531-2222.

WRITERS' NETWORK SCREENPLAY AND FICTION COMPETITION

This competition is sponsored by WGA signatory literary agencies in L.A. and N.Y. and was created to find new talent. In addition to \$1,000, winners of this competition receive agency representation for two projects during the course of the year. The categories include screenplay, teleplay, fiction, and play, with up to 10 winners chosen in each category. The deadline is May 15 with a \$35 entry fee. Contact: The Writer's Network, 289 S. Robertson Blvd., ste 465, Beverly Hills, CA 90211; (310) 843-9839.

WRITERS WORKSHOP NATIONAL SCREENWRITING CONTEST

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Tracy Clark, *The New York Screenwriter*

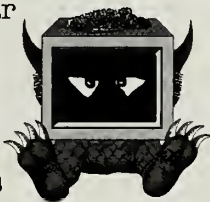
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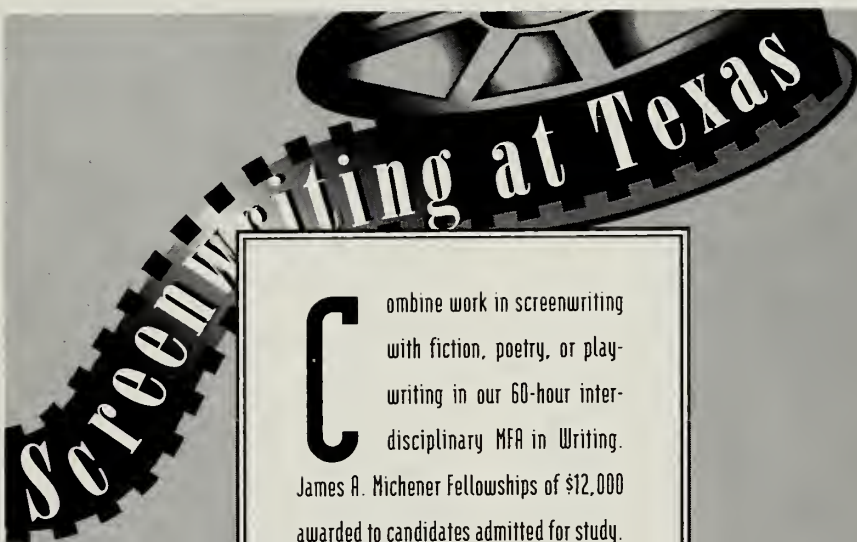
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tored by industry professionals, as well as have staged readings of their work by actors. Writers also have the opportunity to have their work looked at by agents and Hollywood studio representatives. The program selects up to six winners, who have the opportunity to receive a \$500 cash award. The entry date rotates throughout the year, so writers are advised to contact the workshop for further details. The processing fee is \$65. A minority screenwriting contest is also available. Contact: Writer's Workshop, Box 69799, Los Angeles, CA 90069; (213) 933-9232.

Other Competitions

The following is a list of writing contests that have more specific entry guidelines, such as residency, film locations, or student status.

Film Arts Foundation Festival Short Screenplay Showcase

This competition, sponsored by the Film Arts Foundation, is specifically for Northern California-based writers who have short (under 30 min.) dramatic screenplays. The winning screenplay will receive a live reading and performance by professional actors as part of the annual Film Arts Festival. The deadline is July 28th. No entry fee. For more info contact: FAF, 346 9th St., 2nd fl., San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 552-8760.

Florida State Screenwriters' Competition

Open to all Florida residents who have written material located in the state. Five winners awarded; submission deadline is June 1st. No entry fee required. Contact: Florida Screenwriter's Competition, School of Communications, P.O. Box 25000, University of Central Florida, Orlando FL 32816-1344; (407) 823-2000.

Image Southeastern Screenwriting Competition

Open to all residents of FL, VA, KY, SC, GA, NC, LA, and DC. Offers workshops for writers and staged readings of their work by actors. Submission deadline is July 12th with an entry fee of \$60. Contact: IMAGE Film/Video Center, 75 Bennett Street, ste. #M-1, Atlanta, GA 30309; (404) 352-4225.

Nevada State Contest

Open to all writers who have a script using 60 percent Nevada locations. Up to three winners will have their scripts read by industry professionals. Submission deadline is April 29th with an entry fee of \$25 for non-Nevada residents and \$10 for Nevada residents. Contact: Nevada Motion Picture Division, 555 E. Washington Ave, Las Vegas, NV 89101; (702) 486-2711.

Praxis Film Development Workshop

Only Canadian citizens are eligible. The program offers writers the opportunity to have their work

read and tailored by professionals. The deadline to enter is June 18th for the fall session and November 5th for the spring session. The entry fee is \$30. Contact: Praxis Film Development Workshop, 200-1140 Homer Street, Vancouver, BC V6B 2X6; (604) 682-3100.

Set in Philadelphia Screenwriting Competition

A contest designed to highlight filmmaking in Philadelphia. Any writer with a story based in the City of Brotherly Love can enter. The grand prize is \$3,000. The submission deadline is January 20th and the entry fee is \$20. Contact: Set in Philadelphia/PFWC International House, 3701 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104; (215) 895-6593

U.C.L.A. Extension/Diane Thomas Awards

Eligible only to screenwriting students who have developed a script in a writers' program at UCLA. Three writers can win cash prizes. The deadline is in the fall and no entry fee is required. Contact: Writers Program UCLA Extension, 10995 Le Conte Ave #313, Los Angeles, CA 90024-2883; (310) 825-4321.

Johnny McNair is a writer/director who recently completed a short action film and is currently finishing his eleventh feature-length screenplay. He is also AIVF's information services associate.



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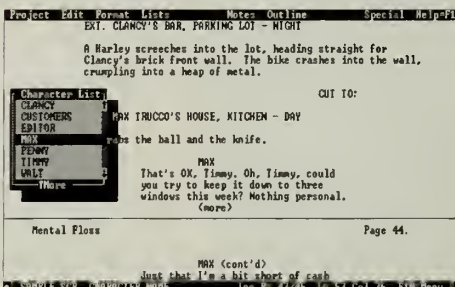
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What's My Line?

Fifth Night at the
Nuyorican Poets Café

BY LYNNE PALAZZI

Gwen and I arrive at the Nuyorican Poets Café's Fifth Night series on time—but too late to get good seats. As we "skyyuze me" our way through the East Village café, past dark clothes, natural fibers, and wire-rimmed glasses, I notice that everyone appears to know each other, even if it's a vague, "Didn't I meet you at...?" "Are all these people actors?" Gwen asks. "Is that why everyone is so beautiful?"

Well, that's what I'm here to find out. Since its start in January 1994, Fifth Night has presented 58 scripts as unstaged readings before mostly packed, paying audiences. Selected by a committee from 500 or so applicants over the past three seasons, the screenplays that make the cut are read by actors wired with Madonna mics and lined up on a bare-bones stage. Some high-caliber talent has read (Hal Hartley regular Martin Donovan, for instance, and Claire Danes, star of *My So-Called Life*) and been read (Adrienne Shelly, Steve Buscemi, and Peter Coyote). A few writers already have one film under their belt. Mostly, however, the scribes are unknown names, looking for a lucky break.

So, is the Fifth Night a weekly gathering of powerful agents and producers with wide-open checkbooks? Or has it become the general public's cool alternative to seeing a movie? As it turns out, it's somewhere in between.

It still takes years from title page to premiere party, but having your script read at the Fifth Night adds more than a few links to the film development chain. You might get an agent, a manager, a lawyer, actors committed to the project, or development money as a result of a reading. You *might*. But what's guaranteed is something less tangible: as a script goes from private to public for the first time, it falls on fresh ears. All Fifth Night writers agree it's a terrifying proposition—one writer calmed herself on the night of her reading with the help of Xanax—but an audience of real people (i.e. not your mom) offers both the perspective and the inspiration to fuel one or more strong rewrites. "I felt validated as a writer," says Lois Johnson, whose script *Karen's Kid Sister* was read last fall. "I had felt like I was working in a vacuum."

Lisa Wolf, a first-time screenwriter whose urban comedy *Slut* was read in early May, says Fifth Night's cache helped her grasp the holy grail—returned phone calls. And Maria Escobedo, whose semi-autobiographical script



Rum & Coke is floating among the layers of New Line as a result of a spring reading, says she understood only after reactions from friends what it meant to have her work

chosen for Fifth Night. Had she known, she says, she might not have had the courage to enter. Writer-actor Hugh Palmer's piece *Chasing Arlene* was "in the loop" before his reading, he says, but Fifth Night "helped widen the loop." Since his January 10 reading, Palmer's screenplay was optioned and rewrite funds secured. From Fifth Night's first season, two films are now in progress: Eric Shaeffer (*My Life's in Turnaround*) is filming his script *If Lucy Fell*, and another film, *Habit*, by Larry Fessenden, is in the editing phase. "We can't take all the credit," says Amy Henry, co-director of the project with Roland Legiardi-Laura. "But everyone who has a reading gets something out of it."

Wonsuk Chin is one of Fifth Night's prouder moments. His script *Too Tired to Die* was read in January, and in six weeks he and his lawyer—who came to him as a result of the reading—had secured \$300,000 in development money from Sunflower Productions. Lois Johnson, who develops projects for HBO Showcase, secured ICM agent Wendy Chasman after her reading and is working on a rewrite. Eve Pomerance's April 25th reading helped her get a William Morris agent, and she is currently fielding budget bids for her script *The Secret Trials of Effie Gray*, an epic period piece about Victorian art critic John Ruskin's marriage to a 14-year-old girl.

During its 18 months of exposure, Fifth Night has garnered space in the *New York Times*, *Variety*, *Manhattan File*, and *New York*, among other publications. This has brought some new and unexpected audience members. "In the beginning it was principally people from the industry and friends and family of the writers," Legiardi-Laura says. "Now we get a regular core of people who have little or nothing to do with the industry—they just love the form. There's a group of Belgian chemists who show up almost every week."

Making Fifth Night happen each week takes a ton of work, so Henry and Legiardi-Laura never have an entire season of readings planned ahead of time. Instead, they fax the industry each Wednesday with the following Tuesday's lineup. Those who can't make it often send an assistant to brave the grit and scattered car parts of New York's alphabet city. More maddening, though, is

Cont'd on p. 60



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DOMESTIC

ATLANTA INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Oct., GA. Annual, noncompetitive invitation-only fest founded in 1994 is "dedicated to films & filmmakers that are driven by personal vision." Fest incl. tribute to film personality, filmmaker retros, panel discussions, family/children's program & several Atlanta premieres of domestic & foreign features. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", S-8, Beta, 8mm. Deadline: late Sept. Contact: Michelle Forren, exec. dir., Atlanta Int'l Film Festival, Metropolitan Film Society, 2180 Pleasant Hill Rd., ste. A-5221, Duluth, GA 30136; (404) 729-8487; fax: (404) 263-0652.

BLACK INDEPENDENT FILM AND VIDEO COMPETITION/BLACK FILMWORKS FESTIVAL, April, CA. Fest showcases broad & diverse expanse of Black experience as interpreted by Black filmmakers. Works of developing filmmakers from the Americas, Africa, the Caribbean & Europe screened. Awards: Overall winners: 1st Prize \$1,500, 2nd Prize \$750, 3rd Prize \$500; category winners receive certificates. Entry fee: \$25. Formats: 16mm, 3/4", 1/2". Deadline: Oct. 6. Contact: Dr. Beverly J. Robinson, exec. dir., Black Independent Film and Video Competition, 405 14 St., ste. 515, Oakland, CA 94604-8055; (510) 465-0804; fax: 839-9858.

DANCE ON CAMERA FESTIVAL, Oct., NY. Competitive fest, now in 24th yr, for films/videos on all types of dance. Certificates awarded: Best of Show, Gold, Silver, Honorable Mentions. Fests in

past have incl. panel discussions & screenings at USIA Foreign Press Center, American Museum of Natural History, Donnell Library, Anthology Film Archives. Entry fees: \$15-50, discount to DFA members. Formats: 16mm, 3/4", 1/2". Deadline: Sept. 1. Contact: Victor Lipari, exec. dir., Dance on Camera Festival, Dance Films Assoc., Inc., 31 W. 21st St., NY, NY 10010; (212) 727-0764; fax: 675-9657.

FESTIVAL OF ILLINOIS FILM AND VIDEO ARTISTS, Sept., IL. Entrants must be residents of IL; works completed within past 2 yrs & not over 30 min. accepted. Cash prizes totalling \$2,500 & Certificates of Merit awarded: Best of Fest, Jury's Special Selection, Special Achievement, Honorable Mention. Entry fee: \$15; \$10 students. Deadline: Aug. 11. Contact: Lisa Formosa, fest dir., Festival of Illinois Film & Video Artists, Columbia College, Dept. of Film & Video, 600 S. Michigan Ave., Chicago, IL 60605-1996.

FORT LAUDERDALE INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Nov. 1-19, FL. Now celebrating 10th anniversary, this annual, competitive fest showcases ind. films & is "dedicated to emphasizing film as a means of cultural awareness as well as for entertainment." Over 100 films screened. Awards: (features only) Best Director, Actor/Actress, Golden Palm Award; Special Jury Prize, Audience Award. Fest also sponsors breakfast roundtables w/ directors, writers & actors. Nat'l student film competition w/ over \$6,000 in prize money, \$5,000 in Eastman Product Grants, sponsored by Kodak & daily seminars. Fest continues in Boca Raton for 9-day minifest. Entry fee: \$25. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", Beta, 8mm. Deadline: Sept. 1. Contact: Andrea Blakesberg, PR mgr., Ft. Lauderdale Int'l Film Festival, 2633 East Sunrise Blvd., Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33304; (305) 563-0500; fax: 564-1206.

HAMPTONS INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 18-22, NY. New fest, founded in 1993, programs about 60 films, 30 shorts annually. Fest was "created to provide a forum for filmmakers around the world who express an ind. vision." Fest offers premieres by estab. filmmakers, breakthrough films by new directors & panel discussions w/ industry guests. Film preservation & restoration is also fest focus through presentation of newly restored works & funding of restoration projects. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Entry fees: \$50 feature, \$15 shorts. Deadline: Sept. 1. Contact: Darryl MacDonald, fest dir., Hamptons Int'l Film Festival, 3 Newtown Mews, East Hampton, NY 11937; fax: (516) 324-5116.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT MEDIA FESTIVAL, Dec., MD. Fest recognizes original student work, K-College. Entries must be under 7 min., & incl. documentation on how students created prod. Animation, computer graphics, live action, news, doc, promotional, music video, PSA, sports accepted. Submit entries on VHS. Entry fee: \$10. Submit entries to regional event chairpersons; obtain general info from Mike Maszczenski, database administrator, AACUPS, 2644 Riva Rd., Annapolis, MD 21401; (410) 222-5000; fax: -5605.

LOUISVILLE FILM AND VIDEO FESTIVAL, Nov. 2-5, KY. Now in 5th yr, competitive fest features various types of film & video, experimental & non-experimental & uses venues in Louisville area. Cash awards for best entry in each cat. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", 8mm, S-8, Beta. Entry fees: \$10-30. Deadline: Sept. 15. Contact: Andy Perry, exec. dir., Louisville Film and Video Festival, Artswatch, 2337 Frankfort Ave., Louisville, KY 40206; phone/fax: (502) 893-9661; e-mail: JAP40@aol.com.

MOBIUS ADVERTISING AWARDS, Feb., IL. TV commercials, print advertising, radio commercials, & package designs are eligible for this competition. Cats incl. automotive, children's products, clothing, food, beverages, etc. Formats: 3/4", audiocassettes. Commercials must be under 5 min. Entry fees: \$25-100. Deadline: Oct. 1. Contact: J.W. Anderson, Mobius Advertising Awards, 841 N. Addison Ave., Elmhurst, IL 60126-1291; (708) 834-7773; fax: -5565.

NEW YORK EMMY AWARDS, April, NY. Now in 39th yr of offering annual TV awards. Programming must have had initial broadcast or cablecast in NY State or northern NJ between Sept. 1, 1994 & Aug. 31, 1995 (Programming avail. to more than 50% of nat'l viewing audience during that time ineligible.); Individuals may enter without company or station affiliation. Awards go to producers & other skill areas; non-English programming eligible in original language; corporate, educational/industrial programming eligible if seen through broadcast/cable window in NYS or northern NJ. Entries must incl. 2/3 original content. Over 60 cats. Entry fees: \$75 Academy member's 1st entry, \$150 all others; additional recipients \$15/name. Format: 3/4". Deadline: Oct. 7. Contact: Debbie Feldstein, exec. dir., NY Emmy Awards, 1560 Broadway, ste. 503, NY, NY 10036; (212) 768-7050; fax: 764-5427.

NOMAD VIDEO FESTIVAL, Oct., WA. Fest, West Coast touring venue (Port Townsend, Seattle, Portland, San Francisco), accepts "works of highly personal or original vision that use video or film in unexpected ways." No entry fee. Formats: 1/2", 8mm, Hi8. Deadline: Sept. 1. Contact: Camille Hildebrandt, curator, Nomad Video Festival, P.O. Box 161, Port Townsend, WA 98368; (206) 781-5691.

NORTHWEST YOUNG PEOPLE'S FILM AND VIDEO FESTIVAL, Nov., OR. Annual juried survey of outstanding work by grade- & high-school students in Northwest (OR, WA, ID, MT, AK), held since 1975. 3-person jury reviews entries & assembles program for public presentation. Entries must have been completed in last yr. Formats: 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", S-8, 8mm, Beta. Deadline: early Sept. Contact: Ellen Thomas, Young People's Film and Video Festival, Northwest Film Center, 1219 SW Park Ave., Portland, OR 97205; (503) 221-1156; fax: 226-4842.

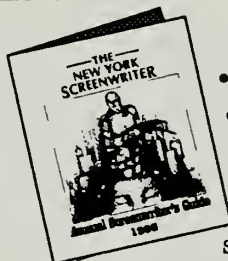
PAN AFRICAN FILM FESTIVAL, Oct., CA. Films created by or about people of African descent are eligible for this fest, founded in 1992, which presents over 60 of the yr's best features, shorts & docs from Africa, the Caribbean, Latin America, Europe, South Pacific Canada & US. Films "cover a wide range of themes—love, politics, adventure, mystery, comedy & drama—all showcasing the complexity & diversity of African peoples." Sections incl. children's fest & student fest. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, S-8, 3/4", 1/2". Deadline: Sept. 1. Contact: Ayuko Babu, exec. dir., Pan African Film Festival, P.O. Box 2418, Beverly Hills, CA 90213; (213) 295-1206; fax: -1952.

PXL THIS FIVE, Nov., CA. Founded in 1991, fest accepts entries shot w/ PXL 2000 camera (but not exclusively) & entered on VHS. Public screenings in LA in Nov. & Feb. 2 hr. program features entries from throughout N. America incl. many genres: doc, poetry, experimental, drama, comedy & music. No entry fee. Deadline: Aug. 22. Contact: Gerry Fialka, Clap Off They Glass Productions, 2427 1/2 Glyndon Ave., Venice, CA 90291; (310) 306-7330.

SUNDANCE FILM FESTIVAL, Jan., UT. Sundance is country's premiere showcase for new ind. films & major meeting place for film industry. Fest incl. competition of new American ind. feature films, non-competitive programs of foreign features & short films. Awards: Grand Prize (jury ballot), Cinematography Award (jury ballot), Audience Award (popular ballot), Filmmakers' Trophy (filmmakers' ballot). Dramatic & doc entries must have significant US financing & be completed no earlier than Oct. 15, 1994. Running time for all dramatic film entries must be no less than 70 min. & for doc films no less than 50 min. Entries may not open theatrically before Feb. 1, 1996, in more than 3 N. American markets or be broadcast nationally or play in more than one domestic fest prior to Sundance. Short films not eligible for competition, but may be submitted for fest screenings. Dramatic shorts must be less than 70 min. & doc shorts less than 50 min. One rep of each film in competition invited to attend as fest's guest. Deadline: Oct. 20 (Oct. 6 for shorts). Entry fee: \$50 feature, \$20 short. Formats: 35mm, 16mm; preview on cassette. Contact: Geoffrey Gilmore, programming dir./John Cooper, Christian Gaines, programmers, Sundance Film Festival, 225 Santa Monica Blvd., 8th fl., Santa Monica, CA 90401;

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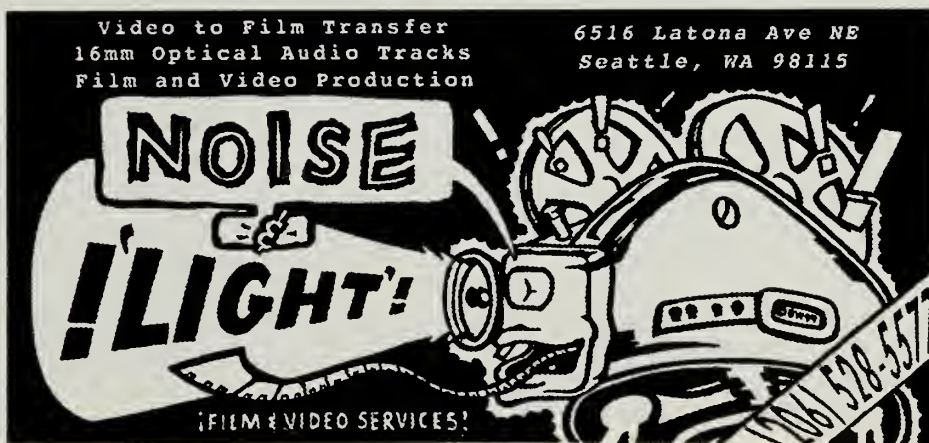
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WOMEN IN THE DIRECTOR'S CHAIR, March, IL. One of largest, longest running women's film/video fest in the US. Seeks to exhibit & promote women who represent new & emerging artists & alternative voices to those found in mainstream. All genres accepted, except training. 100 films & videos shown. Special focus each yr.; past fests have focused on youth-produced work & work by Asian women, Latinas. Entry fee: \$25 non-members, \$15 members. Formats: 16mm, 3/4", 1/2". Deadline: Sept. 29. Contact: Wendy Quinn, Women in the Director's Chair, 3435 N. Sheffield, #202, Chicago, IL 60657; (312) 281-4988; fax: -4999.

FOREIGN

ABITIBI-TEMSCAMINQUE INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Oct., Canada. Held in Rouyn-Noranda (Quebec), fest shows more than 80 short, medium & feature-length films. Fiction, doc & animation are presented, w/ close to 20 countries represented. Entries must have been produced after Jan. 1, 1993 & must not have been shown commercially in Canada. Awards: Grand Prix Hydro-Quebec by public to full-length feature in competition; Prix Telebec (best short- or medium-length feature); Prix Animé (most appreciated animated film). No entry fee. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Deadline: Sept. 1. Contact: Jacques Matte, director, Festival du cinéma international en Abitibi-Témiscaminque, 215, avenue Mercier, Rouyn-Noranda (Quebec), Canada J9X 5W8; (819) 762-6212; fax: (819) 762-6762.

AMIENS INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Nov. 3-12, France. Founded in 1980 as fest dedicated to anti-racism & understanding among peoples, fest continues to present selections of films about identity & ethnic minorities. About 120 films screened to audiences of about 35,000. Each yr fest pays tribute to 1 director & country. For competition, entries must have been completed since Sept. 1994 & not screened in France. Awards: Feature: Grand Prix, Jury Award, "Ville d'Amiens" Award; Short: Grand Prix; Doc: Grand Prix. Extensive media coverage. No entry fee. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", Beta. Deadline: Sept. 4. Contact: Jean-Pierre Garcia, Festival International du Film d'Amiens, 36 rue de Noyon, 80000 Amiens, France; tel: 011 33 22 91 01 44; fax: 011 33 22 92 53 04.

AMSTERDAM INTERNATIONAL DOCUMENTARY FILM FESTIVAL, Dec. 6-16, The Netherlands. Fest annually shows about 150 docs. Sections incl. Competition, selection of approx. 25 films that compete for Joris Ivens Award (Hfl. 10,000); Reflecting Images, which stimulates discussion on new doc trends; Top 10, selection of 10 favorite docs picked by well-known filmmaker; Highlights of the Lowlands; Retro & thematic programs; video program, workshop, seminars & debates; Forum for int'l doc co-financing. Entries must have been completed after Aug. 1, 1994 & not screened or broadcast in the Netherlands. Formats: 35mm, 16mm (competition); video program accepts all formats. The 1994 fest received 36,000 visitors,

900 foreign guests & 205 journalists. Deadline: Sept. 1. Contact: Jake Witteveen, office manager, Int'l Doc Film Fest Amsterdam (IDFA), Kleine-Gartmanplantsoen 10, 1017 RR Amsterdam, The Netherlands; tel: 011 31 20 627 3329; fax: 011 31 20 6385388.

AUTRANS INTERNATIONAL MOUNTAIN AND ADVENTURE FILM FESTIVAL, Dec. 6-10, France. Now in 12th yr, competitive fest accepts works that "contribute positively to knowledge of snow & ice world & to developing & exalting human resources in adventure." Fiction & doc competitions & professional market. Awards: Grand Prix, Best Sporting or Sports Teaching Film, Best Social Life/Ethnology Film, Best Adventure/Exploration Film, Best Expedition Doc, Best Snow & Ice Film, Best Young Director. Entries must have been completed in previous 4 yrs. No entry fee. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", Beta. Deadline: Sept. 15. Contact: Chiocca Mireille, general secretary, Festival International du Film d'Autrans-Montagne Aventure, 38880 Autrans (Vercors), France; 011 33 76 95 30 70; fax: 011 33 76 95 38 63.

BANFF FESTIVAL OF MOUNTAIN FILMS, Nov. 3-5, Canada. Int'l competition showcasing best films on mountain theme. Competition cats incl. Grand Prize, Best Films on Climbing/ Mountain Sports/Mountain Environment/Mountain Culture, People's Choice Award, Bill Roberts Award for Young Filmmakers. Entry fee: \$50Cdn. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Betacam Sp-NTSC, 3/4". Deadline: Sept. 8. Contact: Deb Smythe, fest coordinator, Banff Festival of Mountain Films, The Banff Centre, Box 1020, Station 38, Banff, Alberta, Canada T0L 0M0; (403) 762-6125; fax: (403) 762-6277; email: MFF@BanffCentre.ab.ca.

BARCELONA FESTIVAL OF INDEPENDENT VIDEO, Jan. 23-27, Spain. Int'l selection of video art, ind. docs, alternative TV channels, video combat, video performance were featured at last edition of noncompetitive fest, which programs 300 tapes. Rental fee of approx. 8000 ptas (\$65) paid for works selected. Deadline: Sept. 22. Contact: Nuria Canal/Joan Leandre, Toni Serra, Mostra de Video Independent, Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona, Casa de Caritat Montalegre, 5 08001, Barcelona; 011 93 41 20781; fax: 011 93 41 20520.

BOMBAY INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE, Nov. 14-23, India. Held this yr at Hyderabad, this competitive biennial fest focuses on "good films for children & young people from all over the world." Fest highlights incl. int'l competitive section; Asian Panorama; Nostalgia Section, which this yr. incl. special program "100 Years of Cinema"; section exhibiting latest Indian films for children; market section; retros; animation workshop; special tributes. Fest has "A" cat recognition by CIFEJ (Int'l Centre of Films for Children & Young People). Fest plans to add video section. No entry fee. Deadline: Aug. 15. Contact: Sunil Doshi, exec. dir., Int'l Film Festival for Children & Young People, National Centre of Films for Children & Young People, Films Division

Complex, 24, Dr. G. Deshmukh Marg, Bombay 400026, India; tel: 011 91 22 3870875; fax: 011 91 22 387561.

BRNO SIXTEEN, Oct. 20-22, Czech Republic. Fest focuses on film & video prods that have not been produced commercially or for commercial use. Amateurs, freelance artists & film school students eligible. Entries must have been produced in previous 3 yrs. Awards: Best Film (10,000 CZK), presented by Director of Brno Culture & Information Center; gold, silver, bronze medals; special awards for individual creative components; material, art prizes. Entry fee: \$12 (payable after acceptance). Formats: 35mm, 16mm, S-8, 3/4", 1/2". Deadline: Sept. 1. Contact: Sarka Tryhukova, Brnenska Sestnacka, Kulturni a informacni centrum mesta Brna, Radnicka 4, 658 78 Brno, Czech Republic; tel: 011 42 05 4221 6139 42; fax: 011 42 05 4221 4625.

BRUSSELS INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF SUPER 8 FILM AND VIDEO, Nov. 7-12, Belgium. Annual competitive fest shows work from over 60 countries, representing all genres, each yr. Motto: "Priority to Creation." Founded in 1978, fest annually shows 250-300 films, spotlighting new country each yr. Special programs incl. retros, computer animation, video dance, short films/videos directed by deaf people. Welcomes different disciplines: painting exhibitions, photos, sculpture & performances by artists, workshops on new tech. Fest screens films/videos that have never been broadcast, either in world premiere or avant-premiere. This yr's fest will host 4th European meeting on "Deaf People & Video" as well as the NETPAC-ECC meeting & meeting on collaborations between youth of Asia & Europe. Formats: S-8, 3/4", 1/2". Deadline: Sept. 29. Contact: Robert Malengreau, fest dir., 5e Mondial de la Video, rue PE. Janson, 12, 1050 Brussels, Belgium; tel: 011 32 2 649 33 40; fax: 011 32 2 649 33 40.

CAIRO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Nov. 27-Dec. 10, Egypt. Now in its 19th yr, this competitive fest accepts prods in & out of competition. Sections incl. Fest of Fests, Information, Retro, Tributes & Film Market. Entries must have been completed in previous yr & not participated in competition in other int'l fests. Int'l jury awards: Best Film, Special Jury Prize, Best Actor, Best Direction, Best Script. 2nd jury awards Naguib Mahfouz prize for 1st work of director calling for human values. 200 films shown yearly (20 in competition). w/ large line-up of American films. Market is for features & TV prods. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Deadline: Sept. 15. Contact: Saad Eldin Wahba, Cairo Int'l Film Fest, 17 Kasr El-Nil St., Cairo, Egypt; tel: 011 20 2 392 3962; fax: 011 20 2 393 8979.

FESTIVAL DEI POPOLI INTERNATIONAL REVIEW OF SOCIAL DOCUMENTARY FILM, Nov., Italy. Now in 37th yr, this all doc fest accepts works on social, political & anthropological issues, as well as entries dealing with arts (art, cinema, theatre, dance, music, architecture). Awards: Best Doc (20,000,000 lire); Best Research Film (5,000,000 lire), Best

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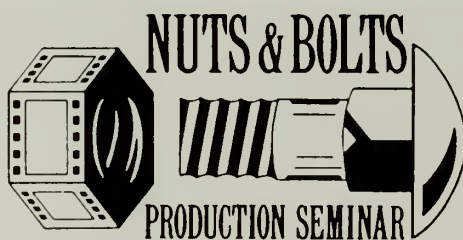
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Ethnographic Doc (Giampaolo Paoli silver plaque), Best Doc, nominated by Student Jury. Entries must have been completed after Sept. 1, 1994. No entry fee. Formats: 35mm, 16mm; preview on 1/2". Deadline: Sept. 15. Contact: Mario Simondi, secretary general, Festival dei Popoli, Via de Castellani 8, 50122 Florence, Italy; 011 39 55 294353; fax; 011 39 55 213698.

GOLDEN KNIGHT INTERNATIONAL AMATEUR FILM AND VIDEO FESTIVAL, Nov., Malta. Fest for non-professional prods, now in 34th yr., is divided into 3 cats: Class A for pure amateur; Class B for sponsored entries; Class C for short semi-professional entries. Awards: Golden/Silver/Bronze Knights, trophies. Entry fees: \$15-\$51. Deadline: Sept 15. Contact: Alfred Stagno Navarra, fest. secretary, Golden Knight Int'l Amateur Film and Video Festival, Malta Amateur Cine Circle, P.O. Box 450, Valletta CMRO1, Malta; tel: 011 356 222345; fax: 011 356 236173.

LEIPZIG INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF DOCUMENTARY AND ANIMATED FILMS, Oct. 31-Nov. 5, Germany. Under theme "Films of the World-For Human Dignity," fest is one of older int'l events focusing on doc & animated films. Fest consist of Int'l Competition, special programs, video workshop & retro. Awards: Golden Dove, Silver Dove & cash prizes in several cats. Entries must not have been shown in public prior to June 1, 1994. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, Beta. Deadline: Sept. 5. Contact: Fred Gehler, dir., Internationales Leipziger Festival für Dokumenton-und Animations film, P.O. Box 940, 04009 Leipzig, Germany; tel: 011 347 980 39 27; fax: 011 347 9 8048 28.

MEDIOPOLIS VIDEOFEST, Feb. 15-25, Germany. Now in 9th edition, Mediopolis (formerly Medienoperative) will present int'l video fest in association w/ Berlin International Film Festival. 1996 edition will intensify its look at TV & multimedia. Fest open to tapes of all genres & computer animation, TV works, films w/ digital parts & multimedia projects produced in 1994 or 1995. Tapes considered for selection should deal w/ political, social, cultural, or individual topics in critical way, display innovative aspects, or further the medium of video. No entry fee. Formats: 3/4", 1/2", CD-ROM, CD-I, Internet projects. Deadline: Oct. 13. Contact: Micky Kwella, fest director, Videofest 96, Mediopolis Berlin, e.V., Potsdamerstrasse 96, D-10785, Berlin, Germany; 011 49 30 2628714; fax: 011 49 30 2628713; e-mail: VI-info@contrib.de.

MONTREAL INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF FILMS AND VIDEOS ON ART, March, Canada. Now in 14th yr, this annual competitive fest accepts prods related to the arts: painting, sculpture, architecture, design, crafts, fashion, decorative arts, museology, restoration, photography, cinema (profiles of directors & actors, film shoots, special effects), literature, dance, music, theatre. Features & shorts accepted. Sections: Creative Crossroads (films/videos in competition); Trajectories (panorama of recent films & videos); Focus (tribute to noted producer, filmmaker, or distributor); Reflections (films/videos

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A growing list of businesses across the country offer AIVF members discounts on equipment and auto rentals, film processing, transfers, editing, and other production necessities. Plus long-distance and overnight courier services are available at special rates for AIVF members from national companies. In New York, members receive discounted rates at two hotels to make attendance at our programs and other important events more convenient.

CONFERENCE/SCREENING ROOM

AIVF's new office has a low-cost facility for members to hold meetings and small private screenings of work for friends, distributors, programmers, funders, and producers.

INFORMATION

We distribute a series of publications on financing, funding, distribution,

and production; members receive discounts on selected titles. AIVF's staff also can provide information about distributors, festivals, and general information pertinent to your needs. Our library houses information on everything from distributors to sample contracts to budgets.

WORKSHOPS, PANELS, AND SEMINARS

Members get discounts on events covering the whole spectrum of current issues and concerns affecting the field, ranging from business and aesthetic to technical and political topics. Plus: members-only evenings with festival directors, producers, distributors, cable programmers, and funders.

ADVOCACY

Members receive periodic advocacy alerts, with updates on important legislative issues affecting the independent field and mobilization for collective action.

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AIVF sponsors monthly member get-togethers in cities across the country; call the office for the one nearest you. Plus members are carrying on active dialogue online—creating a "virtual community" for independents to share information, resources, and ideas. Another way to reach fellow independents to let them know about your screenings, business services, and other announcements is by renting our mailing list, available at a discount to members.

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by artists); Artificial Paradise (films/videos related to cinema as art); Time Recaptures (archival films, late artists). Competition entries must have been completed in previous 3 yrs. Awards: Grand Prize, Jury Prize, Best Portrait, Best Film on Creation of Work, Best Media Work, Best Adaptation, etc. Entry fee: \$35. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4"; preview on VHS. Deadline: Oct. 10. Contact: René Rozon, director, Festival Int'l du Film sur l'Art (FIFA), 640 St. Paul St. West, ste. 406, Montreal, Quebec H3C 1L9, Canada; tel: (514) 874-1637; fax: (514) 874-9929.

PANDÆMONIUM: LONDON FESTIVAL OF MOVING IMAGES, Feb., UK. New int'l fest that plans to "celebrate the vibrant & diverse in the ever transmuting art of the moving image" will be major forum for latest & most exciting work by artists from around world working in video, computer & Internet technology, CD-ROM & film. All entries should have been completed since Feb. 1994 & unscreened in London. Deadline: Sept. 1. Contact: Pandæmonium, c/o London Electronic Arts, London NW1 8NJ; tel: 011 1 71 424 0411; fax: 011 1 71 267 6078; email: submit @pandaem.demon.co.uk.

SAN JUAN CINEMAFEST, Oct. 19-29, Puerto Rico. Founded in 1988, emphasis of fest is on new, innovative films. Program features Caribbean Competition, which accepts both film & video & awards Pitirre Prize in cats of fiction, doc, animation & Best Film by a non-Caribbean on Caribbean subject & World Cinema Section for int'l works. Films/videos must be less than 2 yrs old. About 80 features & shorts showcased each yr. Deadline: Aug. 31. Contact: Jose Artemio Torres, exec. dir., San Juan Cinemafest, Apartado 4543, San Juan, Puerto Rico 00902; tel: (809) 721-6125; fax: (809) 723-6412.

SÃO PAULO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 20-Nov. 3, Brazil. Founded in 1977, FIAPF-recognized fest presents 2 sections: Int'l Perspective & New Filmmakers Competition (up to 3rd film by director). Audience makes pre-selection of 10 films for jury. Awards: Bandeira Paulista Trophy, Critics Prize, Audience Prize. Entries must have been produced in preceding 2 yrs & be Brazilian premieres. No entry fee. Deadline: Sept. 10. Contact: Leon Cakoff, dir./Renata de Almeida, Mostra Internacional de Cinema em São Paulo, Al. Lorena, 937, CJ 303, 01424-001, São Paulo-SR, Brazil; tel: 011 55 11 883 5137; fax: 01 55 11 853 7936.

TOULON INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF MARITIME AND EXPLORATION FILMS, Nov., France. Fest, now in 27th yr, accepts films about the sea or exploration (oceanology, archaeology, history, underwater exploration, ethnography, sport, environment, fiction, etc.). Features & shorts accepted; entries must have been completed in previous 3 yrs. Awards: Golden/Silver/Bronze Anchor, French Navy Prize, Rolex Prize, World Confederation of Underwater Activities Prize, Young Filmmakers Prize, Francois de Roubaix Prize for music. Entry fee: 500FF. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, S-8, 3/4", Beta. Deadline: Sept. 9. Contact: Jacques-Henri Baixe, Festival Int'l du Film Maritime et d'Explor-

ation, 14, rue Peirese, 83000 Toulon, France: 011 33 94 92 99 22; fax: 011 33 94 91 35 65.

VIDEO DANSE GRAND PRIX INTERNATIONAL, Dec., France. All styles of dance on film/video are eligible for this competition judged by 5-member jury of dance & video specialists. Fest goals are stimulation of choreographic creation using latest audiovisual techniques, encouragement of communication between choreographers, video producers & TV station reps & development of high-quality video programs. Awards: Grand Prix Int'l Video Danse (FF20,000); Video Dance Creation; Stage Recording; Reporting & Doc; Dance Traditions of the World; Music; Shorts.

Entries must have been completed in previous 2 yrs. Formats: 3/4", 1/2" PAL. Entry fee: 700FF. Deadline: early Sept. Contact: Jacques Mener, Secretariat General, Video Danse Grand Prix Int'l, 30 Boulevard Gambetta, B.P. 143, 06130 Grasse, France; tel: 011 33 93 40 19 50; fax: 011 33 93 36 55 84.

YOUTH AND VIDEO, Oct., Germany. Video-makers up to 25 yrs. may submit works completed in past 2 yrs. Awards totalling 16,000 German marks given. Format: 1/2". Deadline: Aug. 31. Contact: Jan Schmolling, Jugend und Video, Kueppelstein 34, D-42857 Remscheid, Germany; tel: 011 49 21 91 794238; fax: 011 49 21 91 794230.

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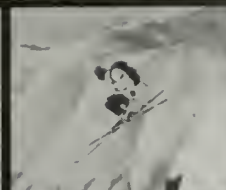
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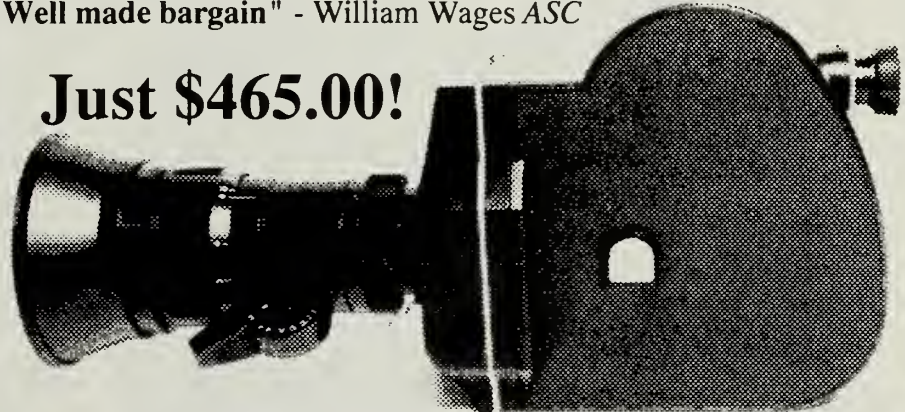
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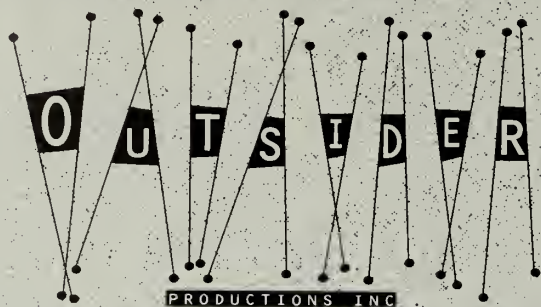
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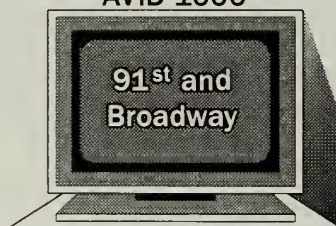
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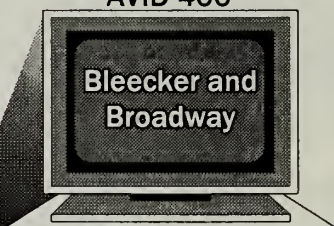
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EASTERN STAR RISING: We can find or shoot any image in the former Soviet Union or Eastern Europe. Archival or your latest vision. Tape or film. No prod. or research costs to you. Don't call Moscow, call DC. Eastern Star Images (202) 232-3605.

FORTY ACRES AND A MULE Filmworks, Inc., is accepting WGA-registered, feature-length screenplays. Send script & script-sized SASE to: Forty Acres and a Mule Development, 8 St. Felix St., Brooklyn, NY 11217; (718) 858-9620.

PRODUCER seeks feature-length screenplays. Any genre; mainstream or niche appeal. Send WGA-registered script, 1-page synopsis & script-sized SASE to: Marquee Pictures, 1701 Nichols Canyon Rd., ste. 103, Los Angeles, CA 90046.

RUSSIA, CIS & E. EUROPE: Stretch your budget! US company in Moscow w/ contacts everywhere provides location scouting & prod. services. Fax: 011-7-095-216-8162 or moscine-ma@glas.apc.org. Member AIVF & IDA.

SCRIPTS/SCREENPLAYS WANTED: Ind. development company seeks all types of creative material for TV & film. Call/write for more info. Stoneguard Development Co., PO Box 9760, Marina Del Rey, CA 90295; (310) 226-7076.

POSTPRODUCTION

\$10/hr VIDEO VHS EDIT SUITE: \$20-3/4", \$15-interf., incl. titles, Amiga & SEG. Also avail.: A&B; dubs; computer; photo; slides; audio; mixed media; prod./postprod.; total S-8 sound film svcs; editor/training. The Media Loft, 727 6th Ave. (@ 23rd); (212) 924-4893.

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A-RAY DELIVERS: Beta SP component online edit pkg. \$1,500/wk. Sony 3/4" offline \$500/wk. Do it yourself or w/ our award-winning network editors. (203) 544-8114; fax: 8334.

AVID 8000 EDITING: Midtown, 24-hr. full editing facility offers film/video, offline/online, w/ or w/out experienced editor. Training classes avail. Midtown location. (212) 362-0500.

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AVID SYSTEM AVAIL.: \$1,500/wk in peaceful office w/ view, or rent for use in your facility. 20" monitors, 9 gigs storage space, resolution AVR 3, tech support, 8 tracks audio editing, 4 tracks audio, 2-3/4", 1-VHS & Pal VHS deck. Call (212) 736-9606.

BRODSKY & TREADWAY: Film-to-tape masters. Reversal only. Regular 8mm, S-8, or archival 16mm to 1" or Betacam-SP. We love early B&W & Kodachrome. Scene-by-scene only. Correct frame rates. For app't, call (508) 948-7985.

COMPLETE 35MM EDITING PKG.: 8-plate KEM w/ 2 pic & 2 sound, 2 splicers, gang sync, 2 bins, shelves, bench w/ rewinds, more \$1,350/mo. LA area. Can't beat it. Nick (310) 398-7171.

F/VA PROD./POSTPROD. FACILITIES: low-cost prod. equipment rentals, editing facilities & training. On-line suites: AVID 1000 \$1,500/wk., Beta SP \$50/hr. & 3/4" SP \$25/hr. for experienced editors. Call for free brochures (212) 673-9361.

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INT'L VIDEO TRANSFERS: From US to PAL, PAL-M, PAL N, Secam; From PAL, PAL-M, PAL N to US. All video formats: VHS, S-VHS, Hi-8, 3/4", Betacam. Fast, professional, affordable. Call Barry (212) 941-5800.

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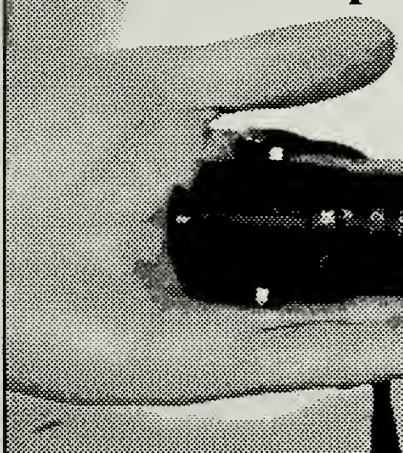
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CONFERENCES • SEMINARS

BOSTON FILM/VIDEO FOUNDATION offers ongoing workshops & seminars in film & video prod., education, fundraising, screenwriting, distribution, industry business, & master classes. Contact: BFVF, 1126 Boylston St., Boston, MA 02215; (617) 536-1540; fax: 3576.

DCTV offers technical workshops, incl.: Basic TV prod., camera seminar, S-VHS & 3/4" editing, Amiga titling & graphics, intro. to doc. Register: DCTV, 87 Lafayette St., NY, NY 10013-4435; (212) 966-4510.

FILM ARTS FOUNDATION offers ongoing workshops & seminars, from S-8 & 16mm film & video prod. to fundraising, distribution, screenwriting & special effects. Technical workshops taught by professionals. Contact: FAF, 346 9th St., San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 552-8760; fax: 0882.

FILM/VIDEO ARTS education dept. provides quality, hands-on instruction in film/video prod. at reasonable rates & offers beginning, intermediate & advanced courses. For info, contact FVA's education dept. at (212) 673-9361.

HARVESTWORKS of Manhattan offers ongoing classes in subjects ranging from audio/video synchronization to multimedia prod. & audio preprod. All classes (1-2 days) held at 596 Broadway, NY, NY. To register, call: Annie Fergerson (212) 431-1130.

INTERNATIONAL DOCUMENTARY CONGRESS, Oct. 25-28, CA. Convened by Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences & International Documentary Association. Congress organized around theme "In & Out of the Cold: 1945-1995: 50 Years of Changing Documentaries from WWII to Today." For info, contact: IDA, 8949 Wilshire Blvd.,

Beverly Hills, CA 90211; (310) 247-3000.

PHILADELPHIA MULTIMEDIA TECHNOLOGY SEMINARS FOR IND. PRODUCERS, Aug. 16, PA. Sealworks, specialists in multimedia integration & development, will show how to combine text, graphics, animation, sound & video to produce interactive apps. Power Mac desktop video prod. w/ products like Radius' Vision Studio & Telecast boards, Adobe Premiere & CoSA After Effects; multimedia authoring w/ MacroMedia Director & cross-platform development tools; session on Internet, Mosiac & WWW. Admission free. Philadelphia Apple Market Center. To register, call (800) 967-6628 x100; (215) 579-9072 w/ questions.

NATIONAL MEDIA LITERACY CONFERENCE, Sept. 22-24, NC. Held at Broyhill Center, Appalachian State Univ., conference provides interdisciplinary approach to impact of mass media on school, society, students & citizens. Contact: Dr. David Considine, chair, at (704) 262-2270.

ORAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION MEETING '96, Holiday Inn-Center City, Philadelphia, PA (Oct. 10-13, 1996) seeking proposals for papers and presentations that relate oral history to popular and professional notions of history; construction of local memories; relationship between vernacular, covert, or suppressed histories & official history; importance of locale in shaping community identity; nature & role of nostalgia in local memories & uses of memory in heritage-based tourism. Deadline: Dec. 15. Contact: Howard Green, NJ Historical Commission, CN 305, Trenton, NJ 08625; (609) 984-3460; fax: 633-8168; e-mail: hlgreen@pilot.njin.net.

THEATRICAL PREMIERE of Michel Negroponte's *Jupiter's Wife* to benefit the Legal Action Center for the Homeless in Manhattan. Location & date (either Aug. 15 or 16) tba. For info, call Lisa Dagaard, Legal Action Center for the Homeless (212) 229-2080.

FILMS • TAPES WANTED

ART IN GENERAL seeks video works & guest-curated video programs for new monthly screening series. All kinds of work welcome, from experimental film & video to home videos; doc & activist to public access works. Send VHS tape (cued), résumé &/or brief statement & SASE. For more info, call Joanna Spitzner (212) 219-0473.

AUSTIN, TEXAS INDEPENDENT PRODUCER offering cable access venue to showcase ind. films & videos. All genres & subject matter accepted. Shorts & music videos linked by moderator discussing information pertinent to independent filmmakers. Films/videos running longer than 40 min. may be aired in a series of 2 consecutive shows. Please send release & info about film/filmmaker. Formats 1/4" & 3/4" are preferable. No payment, but credit & great exposure in valuable filmmaking community. Submit work to: James Shelton, Tex-Cinema Productions, PO Box 3633, Austin, TX 78764-3633; (512) 867-9901.

BLACK ENTERTAINMENT TELEVISION seeks films & videos by black ind. makers, directors, or producers for "Black Vision" portion of *Screen Scene*, weekly 1/2-hr. show that previews TV lineup

& latest theatrical releases. For more info, contact: *Screen Scene*, BET, 1899 9th St. NE, Washington, DC 20018; (202) 608-2800

BLACK VIDEO PERSPECTIVE, a new community TV prod. in Atlanta area, seeks works for/by/about African Americans. For more info, contact: Karen L. Forest (404) 231-4846.

CASTILLO SHORT VIDEO FESTIVAL, a summer-long weekly screening of short videos (10 min. or less) invites submission of doc, animation, fiction, art, experimental videos on all subjects. Selected works will be exhibited to audiences & peers. Submit VHS, Hi8, 3/4" to: Barry Z. Levine, Castillo Video, 500 Greenwich St., NY, NY 10013; (212) 941-5800.

CHARISMATIC MASSES is seeking work for possible screening on local TV show exploring alternative media art. Videos, film, animation & performances in all genres accepted. Students encouraged to submit. Send work on 3/4", Hi8, 1/2" video, résumé, artist statement, SASE, SAS mailer for tape return. Fee: \$5/tape to: Charismatic Masses, Justine Wood or Cary Peppermint, c/o Syracuse University, Art Media Studies, 102 Shaffer Art Bldg., Syracuse, NY 13244; (315) 443-1294.

CINCINNATI ARTISTS' GROUP EFFORT seeks proposals for exhibitions, performances & audio/video/film works to show in their galleries. Experimental, traditional & collaborative projects encouraged. Contact: CAGE, 1416 Main St., Cincinnati, OH 45210; (513) 381-2437.

CITY TV, a progressive municipal cable access channel in Santa Monica, seeks work on seniors, disabled, children, Spanish-language & video art; any length. Broadcast exchanged for equip. access at state-of-the-art facility. Contact: Lisa Bernard, cable TV manager, City TV, 1685 Main St., Santa Monica, CA 90401; (310) 458-8590.

CONNECT TV, new series on ind. videomakers, seeks work for 1/2-hr. show. Progressive, social issue docs, art, humor. Will air on Cablevision of CT. Metro Video (203) 866-1090.

DATABASE & DIRECTORY OF LATIN AMERICAN FILM & VIDEO organized by Int'l Media Resources Exchange seeks works by Latin American & US Latino ind. producers. To incl. work in this resource or for info, contact: Karen Ranucci, IMRE, 124 Washington Place, NY, NY 10014; (212) 463-0108.

DUTV-CABLE 54, a nonprofit educational access channel operated by Drexel University in Philadelphia, is looking for works by ind. producers for broadcast. All genres & lengths considered. No payment; will return tapes. VHS, S-VHS & 3/4" accepted. Contact: George McCollough or Maria Elena Mongelli, DUTV-Cable 54, 33rd & Chestnut Sts., Philadelphia, PA 19104.

EASTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY seeks ind. prods for nonprofit cable channel in Spokane, Washington. No payment. Any genre or length. S-VHS, VHS, or 3/4". Tapes will be returned. Submit release form/letter & tapes to: Radio-Television Department, MS#104, Eastern

Washington University, 526 5th St., Cheney, WA 99004-2431.

GREAT LAKES FILM & VIDEO seeks 16mm & videos for ongoing exhibition of gay/lesbian, Jewish & women's work. Experimental & animation are sought, as well as work fitting into program on aesthetic/anti-aesthetic. Contact: Matt Frost or Michael Walsh, Great Lakes Video & Film, PO Box 413, Milwaukee, WI 53201.

IND. FILM & VIDEO SHOWCASE, cable access show; seeks student & ind. films & videos to give artists exposure. Send films or video in 3/4" format w/ paragraph about artist & his/her work. Send to: Box #1626, 4202 E. Fowler Ave., Tampa, Florida 33620.

LATINO COLLABORATIVE, bimonthly screening series seeks works by Latino film/video-makers. Honoraria paid. Send VHS preview tapes to: Latino Collaborative Bimonthly Screening Series, Vanessa Codorniu, 280 Broadway, ste. 412, NY, NY 10007; (212) 732-1121.

LA PLAZA, weekly half-hour doc series produced at WGBH Boston for & about Latino community, is interested in acquiring original works by ind. film- & videomakers that deal w/ social & cultural issues concerning Latinos. Works between 25 & 28 min. encouraged. Please send tapes in Beta, 3/4" or VHS format to: La Plaza Acquisitions, WGBH, 125 Western Ave., Boston, MA 02134.

1996 NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL MEDIA NETWORK COMPETITION has call for entries of film, video & multimedia programs completed between Jan. 1, 1994 & Dec. 1, 1995. Eligible programs incl. docs, live-action programs, dramatic shorts, animation, children's programming, classroom programs, medical/health programs, training/instructional tapes, special interest videos, broadcast & cable programs, PSAs & student-made features/shorts. Deadline: Dec. 1. Contact: Rebecca Overmyer-Velazquez, competition director (510) 465-6885.

NERVOUS IMPULSE, nat'l screening series focusing on science, seeks films/videos. Open to experimental, non-narrative & animated works that address scientific representation, scientific knowledge, or interplay between science & culture. Send preview VHS & SASE to: Nervous Impulse, Times Square Station, Box 2578, NY, NY 10036-2578.

OCULAR ARCADE: New on ACTV in Columbus, OH, *Ocular Arcade* showcases ind. video (art, docs, experimental). Send Hi-8, VHS, or 3/4" dub to: Ocular Arcade, D. Master, 731 Kerr St., Columbus, OH 43215.

OFFLINE, hour-long, weekly, regional & national public-access show, seeks ind. & experimental, creative works. Submissions should be 3/4", S-VHS or VHS & should not exceed 20 min. (longer works will be considered for serialization). For more info, contact: Greg Bowman, 203 Pine Tree Rd., Ithaca, NY 14850; (607) 272-2613; e-mail: 72137.3352@compuserve.com.

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film/video series, looking for handmade, nature, silent, random, noisy, sex, science, home, paranoid & perverse movies. All formats. Prefer VHS for preview. Deadline: Ongoing. Send to: Orgone Cinema & Archive, 2238 Murray Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15217.

THE OTHER SIDE FILM SHOW is looking for entries in all cats: narrative, doc, experimental, animation, etc. for TV series of ind. films/videos. Submissions should be under 30 min. 3/4" video preferred, but VHS acceptable. Send to U. of South Florida, art dept., 4202 E. Fowler Ave., Tampa, FL 33620-7350, attn: *The Other Side*. For return shipping, incl. SASE.

OVERWINE PRODUCTIONS, weekly intimate theatre & public access program, seeks contemporary film/video in any format to be showcased in & around Detroit area. Contact: Patrick Dennis, 2660 Riverside Dr., Trenton, Michigan, 48183-2807; (313) 676-3876.

REEL TIME AT P.S. 122, an ongoing quarterly screening series, is now accepting submissions of recent ind. film & video works for 1995 season. Exhibition formats include S-8, 16mm, 3/4" & VHS. Send VHS submission tapes, written promotion & return postage to: Curator, Reel Time, P.S. #122, 150 1st Ave., NY, NY 10009; (212) 477-5829 (x327).

REBIS GALLERIES seeks works by artists working in video/film & computers. All subjects considered. Formats should be in VHS/Beta, 8mm, S-8, 16mm. For computers 3.5 disks in PC or low density Amiga files. Contracts to be negotiated. Contact: Rebis Galleries, Ken Debacker, 1930 S. Broadway, Denver, CO 80210; (303) 698-1841.

REGISTERED seeks experimental & non-narrative videos about consumerism &/or modern ritual for nationally touring screening. Send VHS for preview w/ SASE & short description to: *Registered*, Attn.: Joe Sola, PO Box 1960, Peter Stuyvesant Station, 432 E. 14th St., NY, NY 10009.

SHORT FILM & VIDEO: All genres, any medium, 1 min. to 1 hr. Unconventional, signature work in VHS or 3/4" for nat'l broadcast! Submit to: EDGE TV, 7805 Sunset Blvd., ste. 203, Los Angeles, CA 90046.

SCULPTURE CENTER GALLERY invites video artists to submit installation concepts for new video program. Emerging & mid-career artists w/o affiliation should submit résumé, narrative description, documentation of previous work on VHS tape, slides or photos. (incl. SASE) to: Sculpture Center, 167 E. 69th St., NY, NY 10021.

STATEN ISLAND COMMUNITY TELEVISION PRODUCER seeks experimental works, all subjects, by ind. video & film artists. The more explicit, the better; film & video on 3/4" preferred, but 1/2" &/or 8mm acceptable. Send tapes to: Matteo Masiello, 140 Redwood Loop, Staten Island, NY 10309.

URBAN INSTITUTE FOR CONTEMPORARY ARTS is accepting video & 16mm film in all genres for next season of programming. Fee paid if accepted. Send VHS tape w/ SASE to: Film Committee, UTICA, 88 Monroe Ave. NW, Grand Rapids, MI 49503.

VIDEO ALTARS is seeking short (minimum 30

sec.; max. 6 min.) film/video works for compilation celebrating El Dia De Los Muertos (Day of the Dead). Program invites broad range of work from all cultural traditions dealing w/ issues of remembrance, reunion & death & dying. Deadline: July 15. Send VHS tape, SASE & short statement to: Altars/S. Thomas-Zon, 2682-P Middlefield Rd., Redwood City, CA 94063; 415-324-8189.

VIDEO DATA BANK is seeking experimental, doc & narrative tapes on women's conflicted relationships w/ food & eating. Tapes: produced after 1990; length: max. 30 min. Please submit preview tapes in 3/4" or VHS format (returnable w/ SASE) & brief statement about producer's relationship to subject matter. Deadline: Sept. 15. Contact: Video Data Bank, Unacceptable Appetites Program, 112 S. Michigan Ave., Chicago, IL 60603.

VIDEO ICON, new TV program focusing on innovative video/ film art & animation, is currently reviewing work. Send VHS or SVHS copy & SASE. Floating Image Productions, PO Box 66365, Los Angeles, CA 90066; (310) 313-6935.

VIDEOSPACE AT DECORDOVA MEDIA ARTS ARCHIVE: DeCordova Museum & Sculpture Park seeks VHS copies of video art, & documentation of performance, installation art & new genres from New England artists for inclusion in new media arts archive. Send for info & guidelines: Videospace at DeCordova, DeCordova Museum, 51 Sandy Pond Rd., Lincoln, MA 01773-2600.

VIEWPOINTS, KQED's showcase of ind. point-of-view works, seeks films & videos expressing "strong statements on important subjects." Tapes are reviewed from October through January 1 for 1996 season. Submit VHS or 3/4" tapes (30 min. & 60 min. programs preferred) w/ self-addressed, stamped mailer to: Greg Swartz, manager of Broadcast Projects & Acquisitions, KQED, 2601 Mariposa St., San Francisco, CA 94110; (415) 553-2269.

WOMEN OF COLOR in Media Arts Database seeks submissions of films & videos for database that incl. video filmographies, bibliographical info & data. Contact: Dorothy Thigpen, Women Make Movies, 462 Broadway, 5th fl., NY, NY 10013.

YOUNG BLACK CINEMA III, Nov. at the Public Theatre, NYC. This highly publicized & successful ongoing series of short works by African American filmmakers is seeking entrants for this year's program. 16mm, 35mm films up to 40 min. Should be submitted on VHS cassette w/ \$60 fee. Contact: Cobra Communications, PO Box 106, Hoboken, NJ 07030; (201) 216-1550.

OPPORTUNITIES • GIGS

OPEN SEARCH for occasional teaching in computer animation (Amiga) &/or animation drawing. Masters & college teaching experience preferred. Send résumé w/ tape or reel to: University of the Arts, Media Arts dept., 333 S. Broad St., Philadelphia, PA 19102.

VISITING ARTIST in FILM/VIDEO: Sarah

Lawrence College invites appls. from media artists for 2-year, half-time contract position (non-tenure track) in Film & Video in Department of Visual Art, 1996-97. Teach intro & upper level courses in film/video prod. MFA & teaching experience preferred. Appl. deadline: Sept. 15. Women & minorities encouraged to apply. Send letter of appl., vitae, 3 reference letters & 2 sample course syllabi (for an intro course utilizing S-8, & video, & for an upper-level course in your area of interest) to: Janet Held, Film/Video Search Committee, Sarah Lawrence College, 1 Mead Way, Bronxville, NY 10708-5999.

PUBLICATIONS

AFRICAN AMERICAN FILM STATISTICS & MARKETING STRATEGIES is a thorough volume of valuable data for any African American filmmaker trying to raise funds. Incl. are stats on profits of black-directed films since 1970 & numbers for theatrical releases & home video. Send \$29.95 to: Greener Grass Prods, 1041 W. 98th St., Chicago, IL 60643; (312) 779-8717.

CAMCORDER GUIDE by James Carrasco incl. 12 easy ways to shoot video like pros. Limited number avail. for free. Send \$1 S&H to: *Camcorder Guide*, c/o James Carrasco, PO Box 1231, Madera, CA 93639; (209) 252-4633.

DEALMAKING IN THE FILM & TELEVISION INDUSTRY provides layman's guide to hazards of dealmaking in Hollywood & "self-defense" tactics for filmmakers. Author Mark Litwak is entertainment attorney & advocate for ind. filmmakers. Book available in stores.

FUNDING SOURCES FOR COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: GUIDE TO CURRENT SOURCES FOR LOCAL PROGRAMS & PROJECTS, comprehensive directory of grants, will make it easy & affordable for individuals & community-based organizations to locate grants that support projects at local level. 752 pages for \$47.50 (plus 10% S&H). To order, contact: The Oryx Press, 4041 N. Central Ave., ste. 700, Phoenix, AZ, 85012-3397; 800-279-6799; fax (toll free): 800-279-4663. Outside US: (602) 265-2651; fax: 6250.

RESOURCES • FUNDS

CHICAGO RESOURCE CENTER awards grants to nonprofits who serve gay & lesbian community. Deadline: Sept. 29. For more info, contact: Chicago Resource Center, 104 S. Michigan Ave., ste. 1220, Chicago, IL 60603; (312) 759-8700.

CRESCENT FILMS announces 1995 Lone Star Screenplay Competition open to screenwriters worldwide who submit original feature-length screenplay. In addition to 6 cash awards, winning authors are eligible to sign development option w/ Crescent Films. Deadline: Dec. 31. For submission info., send SASE to: Lone Star Screenplay Competition, 1920 Abrams Pkwy., No. 419, Dallas, TX 75214-3915; (214) 606-3041; e-mail: lonestar@pic.net.



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HUMANITIES PROJECTS IN MEDIA administered by NEH has deadline of Sept. 1996 (specific day not yet avail.) for projects beginning after April 1, 1995. 20 copies of appl. required on or before deadline. For appl., guidelines, write: National Endowment for the Humanities, Division of Public Programs, Humanities Projects in Media, rm. 420, 1100 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20506; (202) 606-8278.

ILLINOIS ARTS COUNCIL (IAC) SPECIAL ASSISTANCE ARTS PROGRAM: Matching grants of up to \$1,500 avail. to Illinois artists for specific projects. Activities that may be funded are: registration fees & travel to attend conferences, seminars, or workshops; consultant fees for resolution of specific artistic problem; exhibits, performances, publications, screenings; materials, supplies, or services. Funds awarded based on quality of work submitted & impact of proposed project on artist's professional development. Appls must be received at least 8 wks. prior to project starting date. Degree students are not eligible to apply. Call (312) 814-6750.

JAPAN FOUNDATION is providing film prod. support to experienced ind. or corp. for prod. of films, TV programs, or other a/v materials that further understanding of Japanese culture abroad. Contact: Japan Foundation, 152 W. 57th St., 39th fl., NY, NY 10019; (212) 489-0299.

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The Center for Arts Criticism, Consolidated Edison Company of New York, John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts, National Video Resources, New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, New York Community Trust, New York State Council on the Arts, Rockefeller Foundation, and Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc.

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MEDIA ALLIANCE assists NYC artists & nonprofit organizations in using state-of-art equipment, postprod. & prod. facilities at reduced rates. Contact: Media Alliance, c/o WNET, 356 W. 58th St., NY, NY 10019; (212) 560-2919.

NY FOUNDATION FOR THE ARTS awards Artists' Fellowships to individual NY artists. Applicants must be 18 yrs. & older, resident of NY for at least 2 yrs. Cannot be grad or undergrad student, NYFA recipient of last 3 yrs, or employee or board member of foundation. For more info, call NYFA at (212) 366-6900.

POLLOCK-KRASNER FOUNDATION gives financial assistance to artists of recognizable merit & financial need working as mixed-media or installation artists. Grants awarded throughout yr., \$1,000-\$30,000. For guidelines, write: Pollock-Krasner Foundation, 725 Park Ave., NY, NY 10021.

THE MARJORIE KELLER ENDOWMENT IN FILM STUDIES estab. in memory of scholar & filmmaker who taught at Univ. of Rhode Island until her death last yr. Fund in film studies at URI library earmarked for purchases of books & journals devoted to ind. cinema, or for purchases of videos/films by ind.

artists. Send contributions to: Marjorie Keller Endowment in Film Studies, c/o David Maslyn, interim dir., University Library, URI, Kingston, RI 02881; (914) 762-8223.

THE RESIDENCY PROGRAM at the Experimental Television Center (ETC) is now accepting appls. Program offers opportunity to study the techniques of video image in intensive 5-day residency program. Artists work on variety of cutting edge & hi-tech equipment. Program open to experienced video artists. Appl. must incl. résumé, & project description, as well as videotape of recent work (if you are a first time applicant), either 3/4" or VHS formats, w/ SASE for return. Write: ETC Ltd., 109 Lower Fairfield Rd., Newark Valley, NY 13811; (607) 687-4341.

VISUAL STUDIES WORKSHOP MEDIA CENTER in Rochester, NY, accepts proposals on ongoing basis for its Media Access program. Artists, ind. producers & nonprofits awarded access at reduced rates, prod. & postprod. equipment for work on noncommercial projects. For appl., tour, or more info, call (716) 442-8676.

YADDO invites appls. from film/video artists for residencies of 2 wks to 2 mos. at multidisciplinary artists' community in Saratoga Springs, NY. Deadline: Aug. 1 (Oct.-May). Artistic merit is standard for judgment. For more info, write: Admissions Committee, PO Box 395, Saratoga Springs, NY, 12866; or call (518) 584-0746.

Fifth Night cont'd from p. 43

when powerful people reserve and don't show. "It's a shame the industry doesn't take better advantage of it," says Wolf, who chalks big wig absence up to "laziness. . . and too much time spent under fluorescent lights."

Absent agents can still request a copy of the screenplay or a video of the reading, but neither of those options begins to suggest the mood created every Tuesday night within the skinny, tall, exposed brick walls of the Nuyorican, which other nights hosts poetry slams and other performance events in a bar setting. "The actors put a lot more into a performance in front of an audience than they would at a table reading in someone's loft," Legiardi-Laura says. And being in the audience forces you to call upon your imagination—no costumes or props to distract from the written word. Or, as Legiardi-Laura says each week as he warms up the crowd: "Every Tuesday you get to make a movie in your brain for seven bucks."

For information and application forms, contact: Fifth Night, Box 20328, Tompkins Square Station, New York, NY 10009; (212) 529-9329; fax: 3555.

Lynne Palazzi is a freelance writer based in New York, who has contributed articles to New York Newsday, I.D., and Seventeen.

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BY MARTHA WALLNER

PUBLISHER'S NOTE

Since Martha Wallner joined AIVF as advocacy director in October 1993, the organization has maintained a leading role in advocating for the media arts—and, believe me, there's been plenty to advocate for: two key government agencies for media artists—the National Endowments for the Arts and Humanities—may be phased out in coming years; the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and its offshoot, the Independent Television Service (ITVS), an entity mandated by Congress to fund and promote independent productions, are both in jeopardy; and telecommunications legislation introduced to date has been less than friendly to independent voices.

In the last year, Martha sent out several mailings to members that helped decipher the legislation and instructed individuals as to what they could do at the state and local levels to rally in support of independent media. In addition, she initiated this column so readers of *The Independent* could know what they could do to affect change in the areas of most interest to them.

Sadly, this is the last column that will carry Martha's byline. She left AIVF in June to work on her own independent video project. As an AIVF member, Martha plans to remain active in building the organization's grassroots infrastructure. We wish her every happiness, and are pleased to announce the arrival of the organization's new advocacy director, Stephen Butler, who brings with him a strong background in both theater and media arts.

Stephen has worked as director of programs for the Alliance of Resident Theatres and as director of Public Affairs for the Alliance of New York State Arts Councils. He is also a special projects consultant for the New York City Arts Coalition and has served on the advisory board of the New York State Arts and Cultural Coalition. We welcome Stephen to the staff

and hope you'll give him a call at (212) 473-3400 to introduce yourself and find out how you can help keep AIVF's advocacy efforts strong at a time when every bit helps.

RUBY LERNER, PUBLISHER

WNET Makes Room for Indies

There have been several meetings between the staff of Manhattan-based public television affiliate WNET-TV and representatives from the Coalition of Independent Producers and Public Television Audiences, which was formed in early 1994 to increase independent programming on the station. Various types of programming, including festivals and ongoing series, have been discussed and WNET has verbally committed to expanding its relationship with independent producers. To date, the station has taken several actions to illustrate this commitment. For starters, it has rescheduled a slot for independent programming from Monday nights at midnight to Friday nights at midnight. Upcoming plans for the slot include airing shows from series such as *Alive TV* and *New TV* as well as stand-alone programs. The station is also developing a program opener or banner that will precede independent work and will identify it as such beginning this summer.

For more information on the coalition's work, call Terry Lawler at Women Make Movies (212) 935-0606.

AIVF: On the Road Again

AIVF's director of programming, Pamela Calvert, presented an advocacy update to a lunch-time audience at the National Educational Media Market and Festival on May 26, 1995, in Oakland, CA. She described current Congressional efforts to phase-out funding of the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), and gave an overview of advocacy efforts. Calvert urged independents to get involved in advocacy whether or not they have received government grants because all of us have been profoundly moved by or have benefited from works that did receive such support.

A Time to Sow?

At press time, it was clear that programs which support independent film and video work would likely suffer deep cuts or be phased out completely by Congress as well as by state and local governments. But it's not over 'til it's over, so it is still very important for AIVF members to express their opposition to these attacks. Call your elected representatives, talk to your friends, your family, your

Continued on p. 62



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Advocacy, cont'd from p. 61

neighbors. Call talk shows. Make PSAs. Use your incredible imaginations!

Remember that although independent production has never been easy, a growing number of people have had the opportunity to produce and view independent work over the past two decades. This growth is owed in part to a network of people, organizations, and projects that have all at one time or another, either directly or indirectly, received government support. Times are going to get tougher. The need for solidarity and creative problem-solving has never been greater. Don't despair. Get together, get involved, get organized!

Below is a list of phone numbers you may want to clip and pass along to your friends, relatives, and anyone else you know who cares about supporting independent media.

- For information on AIVF members' advocacy efforts, contact Stephen Butler, advocacy director, AIVF, at (212) 473-3400.
- To support the Independent Television Service (ITVS), call Suzanne Stenson (612) 225-9035.
- To fight censorship, contact the National Campaign for Freedom of Expression (206) 340-9301.
- To support public access cable, call the Alliance for Community Media (202) 393-2650.
- To send a pro-arts funding message to your representatives, call (900) 370-9000. (\$1.99 per minute; averages \$7 per call.)

Hey, y'all. . .

If you're an independent producer based or filming in the Lone Star State, *The Independent* wants to hear from you for a special "In & Out of Production" column in the November 1995 issue, for our

Regional Spotlight on Texas.

Please send a short blurb that includes completion dates, format, length of project and contact information.

Production stills are welcome. Send descriptions no later than **August 20** to In & Out of Production, Regional Spotlight-Texas, *The Independent*, Box 652, Village Station, NY, NY 10014; fax: (212) 677-8732; e-mail: aivffivf@aol.com.

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bureau will be a multifaceted department in which the database complements *The AIVF/FIVF to Guide to International Film & Video Festivals* by offering more subjective information. Lerner requested the festival task force submit a written report that can be reviewed for further discussion.

Burch reported on behalf of the Professional Issues Task Force, likewise created at the September meeting to address issues of professional accountability and business disputes concerning independents. As an advocate for specific complaints made by independents, the committee believed that intervention could only be made based on a case-by-case evaluation. The committee recommended that either a standing group of three people should be established or individuals could be appointed based on issue. Second, priority should be given to issues that affect the community as a whole. Third, decisions must take into consideration AIVF's liability. The board discussed a consumer database for members and requested that the Festival Bureau Task Force create a distributors' report card analogous to the festival report card.

Weiss initiated a discussion about AIVF's video archive. Lerner noted that it is not within AIVF's abilities to manage and maintain an archive and asked board members to consider whether they believe it important for AIVF to maintain an archive.

With regard to new editions of the FIVF publications *The Distributors Guide* and *The Next Step*, Lerner reported on an application to the Funding Exchange for a loan to cover editorial and production costs. Lerner recommended that the book program be reconfigured to make use of new technologies to continually update and disseminate information. Weiss moved to approve the loan application. Moss seconded, expressing concerns about board insurance. The motion was unanimously passed with the recommendation that insurance and board liability in the case of default be researched.

Director of Programs and Services Pamela Calvert recommended instituting a new membership category that would allow two people at the same address to buy a single membership. The two would receive only one magazine, but would enjoy all other benefits of two individual memberships for \$75 total. Weiss moved to create a \$75 supporting membership category. The category was adopted by unanimous vote.

The Executive Committee proposed a slate of officers for the coming year: Beni Matias, chair; Debra Zimmerman, president; Bart Weiss and Loni Ding, vice presidents; Robert Richter, treasurer; Robb Moss, secretary. The board discussed nominations for the coming summer's election, with consensus that full and fair representation be sought in genre, age, race, gender and geography.

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BY PAMELA CALVERT

VOTE!

AIVF's board of directors is made up of volunteer members who have been nominated and elected by you. The board sets policy, evaluates all the organization's activities, and ensures that we remain responsive to the needs and interests of the membership. The following members are running for three-year terms: John Allen, Jonathan Berman, Carroll Blue, Cristina Kotz Cornejo, Glenn Francis Frontera, Barbara Hammer, Lee Lew-Lee, Peter Lewnes, Cherie Martin, Beni Matias, Robb Moss, Jack Walsh, and Susan Wittenberg. Members were sent ballots in July and must return them no later than 6 pm, Thursday Aug. 24, in order for them to be counted.

In the wider interest of enfranchising our community, we also have obtained a supply of New York State voter registration forms, which are available in the office. As times get tougher for public funders and broadcasters who provide so much basic support to independent media, it's critical that we not be silenced on Election Day. If you are a NYS resident and not yet registered, come by and pick up a form or ask us to mail one to you.

TRADE DISCOUNT UPDATE

Three new vendors, including our first in Colorado, Boulder's **MovieMaker**, now offer members 15% off production services, including shooting, editing, and script consultation. **MovieMaker**, 4730 Table Mesa Dr., Suite B-100, Boulder, CO 80303; Contact: Susan Lyle Kinney, (303) 499-6300.

In New York, **Metrovision Production Services** discounts its film and video production packages to AIVF members. **Metrovision Production Services**, 138 East 26th St., NYC 10010; Contact: John Brown, (212) 689-7900.

Also in New York, members receive 10 - 30% off digital audio postproduction from **Picture This Music**: music, voiceover, sound design, SFX, audio mixing (ProTools work stations). **Picture This Music**, 50 West 34th St., ste. 9C9, NYC 10001; Contact: Paul Goldman, (212) 947-6107.

UPCOMING EVENTS

"MANY TO MANY" MONTHLY MEMBER SALONS

This is a monthly opportunity for members to discuss work, meet other independents, share war stories, and connect with the AIVF community across the country. *Note:* since our copy deadline is two months before the meetings listed below, be sure to call the local organizers to confirm that there have been no last-minute changes.

It's official! The New York City salon has a great new location: **HERE**, an arts space/cafe near our new offices. If you're coming to New York for the IFFM — come check it out!

Austin, TX:

When: Aug 28, Sept 25, Oct 30, 7:30 pm

Where: call for location

Contact: July: Gray Miller (512) 474-8017;

August: Amie Petronis (512) 495-4868

Boston:

Meetings not set at press time.

Contact: Susan Walsh (617) 965-8477

Dallas:

Meetings not set at press time.

Contact: Bart Weiss, (214) 948-7300

Los Angeles:

When: Aug 1, Sept 5, Oct 3, 7 pm

Where: Swing Cafe, 8543 Santa Monica Blvd.

Contact: Pat Branch, (310) 289-8612

New York:

When: Aug 15, Sept 19, Oct 17, 6-8 pm

Where: HERE, 145 Ave. of the Americas (at Spring)

Contact: AIVF office (212) 473-3400.

Norwalk, CT:

Meetings not set at press time.

Contact: Guy Perrotta (203) 831-8205

Schenectady, NY:

When: Aug 2, Sept 6, Oct 4, 6:00 pm

Where: Media Play, Mohawk Mall

Contact: Mike Camoin, (518) 895-5269

Washington, DC:

Meetings not set at press time.

Contact: Sowande Tichawonna (202) 232-0353

MOVING FORWARD ...

Members are organizing AIVF salons all over the country! For contact information, or to talk to us about starting something in your area, call Pam Calvert (212) 473-3400.

E.C.U. TRANSCRIPT AVAILABLE

E.C.U./Extreme Close-Up is a video diary series currently in development at P.O.V./The American Documentary, Inc. The *E.C.U.* producers have traveled across the country, initiating dialogues between experienced and emerging video diarists,

editors, dramaturgs, writers, Hi8 specialists, and others who share an interest in a new first person television format.

AIVF/FIVF is distributing an edited transcript of *The E.C.U. Seminar at The New School*, *E.C.U.*'s most recent gathering. If you weren't able to attend the seminar, this is an opportunity to hear first-hand the discussions and debates that are shaping how video diary will be produced and distributed in the future.

Transcripts are \$5 (incl. postage and handling) and may be ordered from FIVF, 304 Hudson Street, 6th fl., NYC 10013.

MINUTES FROM THE AIVF/FIVF BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING (1/18/95)

The board of directors of the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF) and the Foundation for Independent Video and Film (FIVF) met in New York on January 18, 1995. Attending were Robert Richter, Robb Moss, Bart Weiss, Diane Markrow, Melissa Burch, Barbara Hammer, Ruby Lerner, and Debra Zimmerman (by telephone). Absent were Joe Berlinger, Loni Ding, James Klein, Beni Matias, James Schamus, and Norman Wang.

On behalf of the Festival Bureau Task Force, created at the September board meeting, Weiss recommended creating a festival report card for members, which they could fill out after having contact with a festival; the information would be databased, updated, and available to members for reference. The task force recommended a three year goal for setting up the database. The festival

Cont'd on p. 63

AIVF IS MOVING!

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FILM & VIDEO THE INDEPENDENT

October 1995

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BY MARC MAUCERI

Don't just go with the first takers and let them make all the decisions. First Run Features' Mark Mauceri reviews the questions you need to consider when assessing distribution deals and sequencing options.

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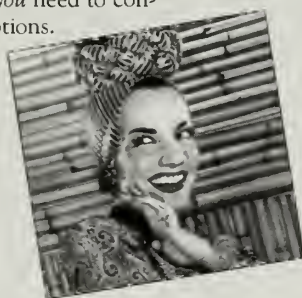
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Cover: It's showtime, folks—but where? When? And what's the best way to sequence your release? These questions loom large for anyone with a finished work to peddle. Marc Mauceri's feature on page 36 offers pointers on how to think about the distribution sequence that's ideal for you. Cover illustration by Johanna Goodman.



Weekend TV Blows into Windy City

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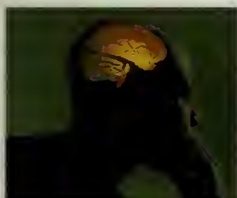
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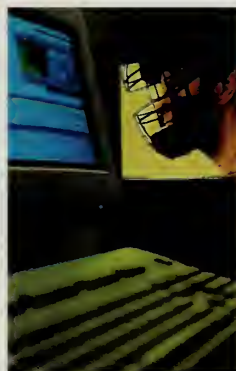
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Letters

NO MAN IS AN ISLAND

To the editor,

While I deeply appreciate having been included in the Rocky Mountain Media issue of *The Independent* [July 1995], there is a major problem with Shelley Schlender's profile of me. Unfortunately, the article gives the mistaken impression that I work by myself without the influence of others. The article makes no mention of the contributions of my collaborators. *Another World of Dance* was co-directed with Dan Boord, Laura Hill, and Marilyn Marloff. *Tierra Nueva* was co-directed with Dan Boord.

For both practical and philosophical reasons, I choose to work collaboratively. This process is, in some sense, a challenge to "auteur" criticism, which would seem appropriate to most independent media. The production of these works is not the result of one individual's artistic inspiration, but of collective imagination.

Luis Valdovino
Boulder, Colorado

CHICAGO BLARNEY & BLUES

To the editor,

In reference to Cindy O'Connor's letter pumping up WTTW (Chicago's PBS station) as being a huge supporter of the independent film community [July 1995], I want to add something. Yes, *Image Union* is a wonderful independent showcase. They've shown 11 of my films over the years, yet they rejected my most recent one, *Beyond the Door*, because (according to Jay Shevsky), "It might offend Catholic viewers." If only I could generate such a response. *Beyond the Door* is a Monty-Pythonesque comedy about a priest suffering immense guilt. So, in fact, WTTW supports some independent films—those that WTTW deems inoffensive. I wonder how many independent films, besides mine, they've rejected for fear they might offend someone? This is self-censorship, the sad outcome of Republican pressure and Democratic passivity.

Dan Dinello, acting co-chair, Film & Video
Department, Columbia College
Chicago, Illinois

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PBS'S SECONDARY STATIONS: A Dying Breed?

Sale of Manhattan's WNYC Set to Go

THE SALE OF WNYC-TV, LONG A SIGNIFICANT television outlet for independent productions in New York, is virtually a done deal. As this issue goes to press, ITT and Dow Jones have agreed to pay the city \$207 million to acquire the public television station—one of the last owned by a major municipality. The price is two to three times what Rudolph Giuliani,

mayor of the cash-strapped city, anticipated when he announced plans in March

to put the television station on the market and also sell the city's two radio stations to the nonprofit WNYC Foundation. The demise of WNYC-TV will be an immediate loss for independents in the New York City area; what will take longer to determine is the sale's long-term impact on public TV station managers' attitude towards the viability of the system's secondary stations, particularly as Congress pressures PBS to streamline and consolidate its outlets.

In contrast to WNET, the nation's largest public television station, which also serves the New York City market, WNYC offered more public affairs and arts programs and many hours of independently produced pieces on such series as *New York Independents* and *First Exposure*. The station also aired an unusual mix of foreign language leased-time programming, first and second-tier PBS programs, and British sitcoms, as well as local productions targeting the city's racial and ethnic minorities, teens, and homosexuals.

Two series the station coproduced—*In the Life*, a quarterly gay issues program, and *In the Mix*, geared to teens—are expected to continue production with new co-producers. At press-time, sources told *The Independent* that deals were in the works with other local public broadcasting affiliates.

ITT and Dow Jones are expected to turn WNYC into a superstation, much like WTBS in Atlanta and WGN in Chicago. WNYC's unique program mix will likely be replaced with professional sports events as well as economic and business news, which Dow Jones would provide.

Filmmaker Jonathan Berman, whose documentary *The Shvitz* was recently broadcast on WNYC's *New York Independents* series, called the city's decision to sell the station "short-sighted" and said that "WNYC had a real grassroots feel. You didn't get the runaround there. The station never abandoned its original mandate as a real public broadcaster." Berman added that the sale means there will be "one less channel for people to show offbeat projects as well as one less venue for creative student works."

Doron Bevenisti, who had his experimental film *Untitled* shown on the student film series *First Exposure* in 1991, agrees. "It's really sad to hear about the loss of *First Exposure*. Everyone I know who finished a film in their second or third year [of film school] had it screened on the series. It's great for your confidence as a beginning filmmaker."

The television station is being sacrificed as part of a compromise deal between the Giuliani administration and the WNYC Foundation that allows the radio stations, which will be purchased by the nonprofit foundation for \$20 million, to stay on the air. WNYC spokesman John Platt said the Foundation agreed to the deal partly because the radio stations were a "more mature franchise" for audience and fundraising, and added that the sale of the station was the "most elegant" resolution of a situation in which the city might have shed all three stations.

"Mayor Giuliani's announcement that the city was getting out of the broadcasting business by selling the FM radio station was a wake-up call for the Foundation," said Platt. While the Foundation wanted to keep all three stations, it was priced out of the competition when city officials realized late last year the potential value of the television station. The Foundation will have six years to pay off the radio stations.

Although WNYC's location on the UHF band initially suggested low levels of commercial inter-

est when the city announced the sale, the possible deregulation of the industry's ownership and programming rules and WNYC's location on New York cable systems created a bidding frenzy. *Electronic Media* reported in mid-July that likely bidders included some of the country's most powerful broadcasting companies, such as ABC, CBS, Chris-Craft Industries, Cox Communications, Disney, NBC, Paramount, and Tribune Broadcasting. More than 25 firms entered bids during the initial phase in April, and about a dozen others submitted offers by the July 24 deadline.

City officials declined to comment on the sale or speculate about when it might be finalized. The ITT-Dow Jones purchase requires approval of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), which legal observers said is considered routine.

WNYC claimed 1.3 million viewers weekly in the metropolitan New York area. But with signals from many public stations available in the area—including WNET, WLIE, New Jersey Public Television, NYC Board of Education-owned WYNE, and others—the looming sale of WNYC generated little viewer complaint. And pressure within public broadcasting to reduce the number of public stations competing in the same market dulled any response from the field, already beleaguered by political and fiscal pressure in Washington.

Depending on whether any challenges emerge, a final sale could be approved within six months of any agreement between the city and a buyer. WNYC is expected to continue airing leased-time programs and already purchased programs. No new productions are in the works, and independent filmmakers, feeling shunted aside once again, will need to find new venues for their work. "There's nothing else to replace [WNYC]," Benvenisti concludes. "There's Bravo's Independent Film Channel, but nothing local or more adventurous."

JACK ROBERTIELLO

WITH ADDITIONAL REPORTING BY MITCH ALBERT AND
MICHELE SHAPIRO

Jack Robertiello is a freelance journalist who has covered public broadcasting for Current.

WNET's *CITY ARTS* PROVIDES OUTLET FOR INDIE FARE

When WNET cancelled the independent acquisitions series *Independent Focus* a few years ago, the media arts community lost one of its major broadcasting venues. Although the sta-



City Arts, WNET-13's new offering, conducts an ongoing exploration of New York's cultural and artistic treasures. One episode featured a Brooklyn workshop for young jazz musicians under the aegis of the great Betty Carter.

Photo: Kate Kunz, courtesy WNET.

tion tried to explain away the erasure of its independent programming arm as a cost-cutting measure, local producers took the news very personally. And they did not take it sitting down. Instead, in 1994 they formed the Coalition of Independent Producers and Public Television Audiences, which has met several times with WNET's staff to discuss the need for independent programming on the station.

Early this year, WNET introduced the weekly series *City Arts*, an upbeat and unusual guide to arts events in the five boroughs. Glenn DuBose, vice president of Arts and Entertainment at Channel 13, and Jack Venza, head of Arts and Culture at the station, championed the idea for a series that spotlights the vitality of the arts in New York City, and programming director Ward Chamberlain pushed for a slot on WNET's schedule.

The premiere season of *City Arts*, which consisted of eight half-hour episodes that aired Mondays at 9 p.m. (and were repeated Fridays at 1 a.m. and Sundays at 11 p.m.), provided a grab bag of only-in-New York exhibitions, interviews, opera, theater, museum tours, and concerts—all of which were shot on Hi8 video in an up-close style that allows viewers to venture inside basement apartments for poetry readings and onstage in dark cafés.

Almost half of last season's segments—which included an artist convincing passersby to create lipstick kisses on panes of glass, a visit to the Noguchi Museum in Queens, and a

backstage tour of Carnegie Hall with violinist Isaac Stern—were pitched to WNET by independent producers, and Channel 13 hired a total of 20 to shoot segments for the series. "The heart of the series is the independent community. We want to tap into the wealth of talent in New York," says Folmsbee. "The show relies on finding articulate voices out there."

Harvey Wang, a still photographer and independent producer who shot the video footage of Brooklynites for Wayne Wang and Paul Auster's *Blue in the Face*, produced five segments for the program, four of which, including the kiss-artist, aired. Wang (no relation to Wayne) found the series one of the most fulfilling he has worked on. "It has a real downtown sensibility, with room for involvement and respect given to producers," he observes. "I don't know anyone else who is

accepting offbeat Hi8 stuff like this."

The good news for those handy with a camcorder is that *City Arts* has been given the go-ahead for a second season, to begin October 19. "The 15 new half-hours will run through January," says Jeff Folmsbee, the series' producer. WNET will air *City Arts* on Thursdays at 10 p.m. and repeat on Fridays at 12:30 a.m. and Sundays at 7 p.m.

In its second season, *City Arts* is looking for media artists who can deliver pieces that inspire people to go out and take advantage of the rich artistic community in New York. Ideas must, however, fit the show's mandate: every subject must involve something to do or see in the arts at the time of the show's airing. (This month, for instance, Folmsbee is looking for events taking place in January.) Because the program covers all five boroughs of the city, he is especially interested in stories from the outer boroughs.

This season, the series' producers may also consider completed short video works no longer than seven minutes. "We would really like to acquire completed work," says du Bose. "It should be within the context of celebrating the arts and tie in with people being able to go out and do it."

Two possible new sections—"All Selects" section of non-commissioned shorts and "Choice of the Week," which will highlight filmmakers whose work is being shown in New York at the time—could afford even more opportunities for die-hard independents. At press time, the producers had not yet committed to soliciting completed shorts.



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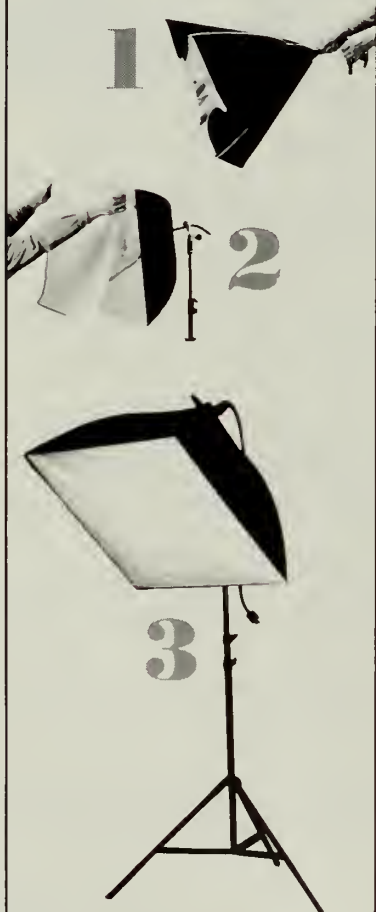
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INGALISA SCHROBSDORFF

Ingalisa Schrobsdorff is a graduate student at New York University's Film Studies Program.

WEEKEND TV BLOWS INTO WINDY CITY

"We're not on a trip by ourselves," remarks Tom Weinberg, executive producer of *The 90's*, an irreverent documentary series that aired on PBS from June 1989 to November 1992. "We're making one with a lot of people." The "trip" to which Weinberg refers is *Weekend TV*, a new television venture created with his partner, *The 90's* producer Joel Cohen. Their fellow travelers will include independent mediamakers, alternative funders, and, hopefully, an interested audience.



In development since June 1994, *Weekend TV* is a three-hour block of programming curated by Weinberg and Cohen. While *The 90's* aired excerpts from longer works, *Weekend TV* will show completed works, ranging in length from a few seconds to an hour. Weinberg describes the kinds of work he is looking to include in the series as "humane, invigorating stories about real people in real situations."

Public broadcaster WYCC in Chicago has played one-hour blocks weekly since early summer. Some of the stories aired have included an investigation into the murder of a 14-year-old girl—allegedly by an 11-year-old boy who was later murdered as well—in a Chicago housing project; a tour of the Mall of America with a Dead Head truck driver; and a visit to the Fifteenth Annual Pipe Smokers' Contest.

This month, the first *Weekend TV*, a pilot block, will be sent via satellite to PBS stations, with *Weekend TV* absorbing the cost of the feed. In January 1996, the producers will begin weekly satellite feeds. By the end of the first year, Weinberg and Cohen want *Weekend TV* to air in

most U.S. markets. In five years, they hope for a *Weekend TV* channel.

Weinberg and Cohen have already received encouraging responses from public broadcasters familiar with the project. Ironically, the ongoing CPB/PBS funding cuts may work in *Weekend TV's* favor. PBS affiliates, short of funds to purchase three separate hour-long programs, could take a less expensive block of programming that would fill their Saturday night and possibly even their Sunday night schedules.

Both the Fund for Innovative TV in Chicago and the Minneapolis-based Independent Television Service (ITVS) have provided development funds for the venture. David Liu, director of production and programming at ITVS, calls *Weekend TV's* format "intriguing and fresh" and says he knows it will involve independents from all over the country. "I believe in the work of the producers," he adds.

In the future, the producers hope financial support will come from viewers as well as the stations airing the program blocks. Corporate sponsorship is also an option, Weinberg admits, since certain companies are looking to reach an audience different from those that tune in to the more traditional broadcast and cable outlets—exactly what Weinberg and Cohen want to build with *Weekend TV*.

"It's not really a TV show," Cohen explains. "It will look more like a channel." The channel it most resembles is MTV, on which a "veejay" introduces and contextualizes work or converses with a guest. A *Weekend TV* host will play a similar role, but with nonfiction work in the place of music videos. As the series evolves, so will the format. Cohen calls the process "on-air incubation." Initially, Weinberg and Cohen will assign and coordinate the stories for each show. Later, there may be guest curators.

So far, the producers have used an extensive database of producers from *The 90's* to solicit work. They have not, however, placed any calls for entries. "We simply don't have the resources, in terms of humans and dollars, to deal with a deluge of videotape," Cohen says. If one wishes to submit ideas, *Weekend TV* prefers a written proposal or treatment rather than a tape.

The producers are also hiring independents on occasion to produce segments. Weinberg sees *Weekend TV* as a logical step after *The 90's*. "We know we make good TV. Now we have to expand the audience for the kind of sensibility behind the work." The trip is set, and many of the travelers are ready to go. Weinberg and Cohen now are ready to take the last traveler—the audience—on the *Weekend TV* trip with them.

Contact: Tom Weinberg or Joel Cohen, *Weekend TV*, 400 N. Michigan Ave., #1608, Chicago, IL 60611; (312) 321-9321; FITV@aol.com.

H.D. MOTYL

H.D. Motyl is a film/videomaker living in Chicago who produces the children's video series Show & Tell.

Columbia Inaugurates Documentary Center

"The documentary strives to give us—in sight and sound—true knowledge of the world, to set the record straight as to who we are and what our history is," says filmmaker Albert Maysles (*Gimme Shelter*, *Grey Gardens*). "A noble endeavor, we need a documentary center to assist us with this difficult task."

In the fall of 1994, New York City's Columbia University heeded the call of filmmakers like Maysles when it opened the doors of its newly established Documentary Center. According to Center director and independent filmmaker John Friedman, it "will be both a resource and a teaching facility."

Friedman expects the Center to be a vital source of information on documentaries. A database of documentary productions, an electronic bulletin board of films, and other documentary information are expected to be in place by year's end. The Center also plans to serve as an advocate for documentary filmmakers by one day acting as a fundraiser, providing technical facilities, and providing a forum for exploring how documentaries reflect and influence the human condition.

In addition, Friedman says, "We want to be the leading educator in teaching documentary history, criticism, and hands-on training in the production of documentary films."

Some plans for the educational aspect of the Center include conferences, workshops, screenings, seminars, and research, which will open to the general public. In addition, the Center will evaluate new media technologies and create a laboratory for new methods of production.

Friedman and Larry Engel, a professor in the

Film Division at Columbia University and deputy director of the Center, are the masterminds behind it. The pair conceived the idea about two years ago, and with a grant from the J. Paul Getty Trust to the Program for Art on Film (with which the Center shares office space) as well as private donations, the Center eventually became a reality. Fundraising efforts are still underway.

The Center is a part of Columbia University and is under the auspices of the Columbia School of the Arts and the Graduate School of Journalism. But, Friedman says, it functions largely as a separate entity.

The Center also works closely with the Program for Art on Film, which recently became affiliated with the Columbia libraries, and works to explore new ways of looking at and analyzing the visual arts and moving image media. The Program's Art on Screen Database, which includes 25,000 productions on the visual arts from all over the world, will provide a foundation for the Documentary Center's information services.

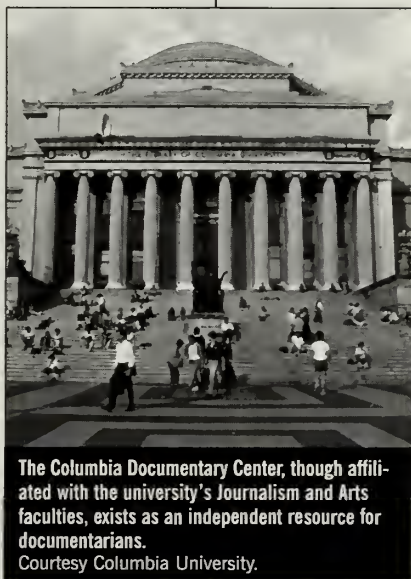
The Center will screen a number of documentaries covering a variety of subjects. Recent screenings have included Jonathan Demme's *Courage and Pain*, a piece on human rights violations in Haiti, and *The Bishop, The Warrior, and Rebellion in Chiapas*, a documentary-in-progress by Haskel Wexler, Saul Landau, and Meredith Burch on the Zapatista rebellion in Mexico. Friedman says fall screenings will include a documentary on Robert

Coles by Buddy Squires (*The Moral Life of Children*), an evening of films on Hiroshima in conjunction with the International Center of Photography, and a six-evening series, funded in part by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, which will cover 40 years of Academy Award-winning and nominated documentary films.

Contact: The Documentary Center at Columbia University, 2875 Broadway, 2nd fl., NY, NY 10025; (212) 854-9578.

KRISTIN WILCHA

Kristin Wilcha is an undergraduate in the Gallatin School of Individualized Study at New York University and a former editorial intern for The Independent.



The Columbia Documentary Center, though affiliated with the university's Journalism and Arts faculties, exists as an independent resource for documentarians.
Courtesy Columbia University.

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NEW MEXICO DRAWING CARD PULLS INTERNATIONAL TALENT

Perhaps it's appropriate that the University of New Mexico's six-year-old International Cinema Lecture Series focuses on films and filmmakers that traditionally have been ignored in this country. After all, visits to New Mexico by the geographically impaired still elicit questions about the drinkability of the local water and whether passports are required for one to cross the border.

Despite ignorance about this state and its status as one of the lower 48, the lecture series has finally put itself on the map, says Ira Jaffe, director of the Media Arts program at the University of New Mexico (UNM).

"I think we're definitely recognized," Jaffe says. "When we call [funders] to ask for money, they know who we are. And for that matter, when we call around the country to invite [filmmakers], they know who we are."

And they have come. Guest directors who have appeared in the last two years include Australian avant-garde filmmaker Tracey Moffatt, Mexico's Arturo Ripstein, Russian director Artur Aristakisyan, Maria Luisa Bemberg of Argentina, and U.S. video artist Erik Saks. Other speakers have included African film scholar Frank Ukadike, Maya Deren biographer Ve 'Ve' Clark, Indian cinema expert Sumita Chakravarty of the New York School for Social Research, Scott McDonald of Utica College, and Robert Stam, professor of Cinema Studies at New York University.

Jaffe started the series in 1989 with grants from the National Endowment for the Arts and the Ovenwest Corporation of New Mexico. The funding was supplemented with money from the university, the Urban Enhancement Trust Fund of the City of Albuquerque, and private donations.

From the beginning, the series reflected Jaffe's interest in both Third World cinema and minority cinema from more industrialized nations. "What's involved is the attempt to bring new and major work to UNM... work that is kind of outside the mainstream and yet has received major recognition in some way, [either by] screening in important festivals, winning awards, or being written about in new, major scholarly books," Jaffe explains.

Jaffe's series also has spawned a collaboration with the school's Arts of the Americas program, which promotes cultural exchange with Latin America. Each year for the last four years, the Media Arts program has organized a film and video festival and classes in conjunction with Arts

of the Americas. In previous years, the film festivals have highlighted work from Brazil, Venezuela, and Mexico. This summer's program focused on work by Native American and Chicano filmmakers. It was headlined by Hopi filmmaker Victor Masayesva, Navajo director Arlene Bowman, and Aboriginal Frances Peters. "The money for funding was in Latin American and Third World work," Jaffe says of the festival's origins. "But it's also in keeping with the philosophical direction of the Media Arts program, which is to [provide] a view of the whole world, not just the United States, or Western mainstream."

"I think as soon as we look at cinema and video that has been in some sense marginalized and suppressed, even though its quality is high,



Host with the Most: U. New Mex has received filmmakers like Nagisa Oshima; Arturo Ripstein (above, with spouse and screenwriter Paz Alicia Garcíadiego); and Pablo Perleman.

Courtesy University of New Mexico.

we enter into questions of taste and even of justice, because so often work that has been marginalized is about the experience of being marginalized. It isn't the ideal escapist entertainment, but it's terrifically stimulating."

Jaffe typically brings in two to three speakers per semester but is flexible about last minute additions to the series. Arturo Ripstein, for example, was added to last spring's roster just a few weeks in advance. Jaffe booked him even though it put the program in the red. "He's so prominent, we felt he was worth it," Jaffe says. Ripstein's lecture, and the screening of his film *The Beginning and the End*, a three-hour ensemble piece that plays out the tropes of Mexican melodrama, drew an enthusiastic audience of about 140 to the Student Union Building Theater. "The film was terrific," Jaffe recalls. "But the best thing was the discussion following with Ripstein and his wife, Paz Alicia Garcíadiego, who wrote the script. The best we've had, maybe ever, for that series. He really went into a lot of detail about camera work and art direction, writing, directing actors, and so on."

The lectures are not just for movie buffs and

film students. The various cultures represented in the series draw audiences from the university, the community at large, even from as far away as Santa Fe, 55 miles north of Albuquerque. "I think we see a variety of people who have a love of film, but whose primary interest is not film," Jaffe observes. "They have a real appetite for exposure to other cultural interests."

Although the lecture series has proven popular, drawing 200 patrons some nights, it is not a moneymaker because admission has always been free.

Jaffe's department is hard at work finding grant money to keep the program alive. There was some concern in the spring that a lack of funding might doom the series, but the department had enough cash on hand to keep the program going through the fall.

For information about this fall's lecture series, call UNM's Media Arts Program at (505) 277-6262.

TONY DELLAFLORA

Tony DellaFlora is an arts writer for the Albuquerque Journal.

THIRD WORLD SCREENING DAYS

Child brothels in Thailand, young girls slaving in Nepal's carpet factories, and child murders in the streets of Brazil are just some subjects of the films shown last June at the 1995 New York Third World Screening Days. Organized by the Third World Television Exchange, the event's theme was Children's Survival in Developing Countries. It included about 25 recent documentaries and feature films, many of which have won international awards and had never before been screened in the U.S.

According to word of mouth during and after this year's screenings, one standout was *The Silence of Neto*, Guatemalan Luis Argueta's first feature, about a young boy's coming of age in the political turmoil of 1954 Guatemala.

The event's founder and organizer, Claus Mueller, says the goal of the screenings is "to better inform the American opinion-making public about conditions in the developing world through the dissemination of issue-oriented productions from and about developing countries." The three-day event included panel discussions on funding, distribution, and production of Third World product. Many buyers, programmers, filmmakers, and distributors showed up to screen the works on offer. While in previous years the event had been held at WNET's offices in Manhattan, this year both the screenings and panel discussions—which hit upon subjects including distribution of foreign material and new media development initiatives—were held at Goethe House on Fifth

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Murdered Brazilian street children, from *The Birdcatcher of Rio*, one of many films shown at last June at the 1995 New York Third World Screening Days.

Photo: Frode Pederson, courtesy filmmaker.

Avenue.

Ten years ago, Mueller, currently a media research professor at Hunter College, ran public education events at the National Television Academy. He grew tired of standard topics and decided to focus a program on television in developing countries. To his surprise, there was virtually no film and video material from developing countries available in the United States. In 1987, he founded the Third World Television Exchange, which received funding to create a yearly screening program of Third World productions. At first called Third World Perspectives, the annual screenings have become a major venue for Third World filmmakers and television producers to screen work for a variety of viewers and buyers.

"Although we're a nonprofit organization, operated on a shoestring budget," Mueller acknowledges, "we're very successful. About 25 percent of the works screened here are eventually sold, leased, or granted." Most of the funding for the screening series is from UNICEF, and additional support is provided by the New York Office of the European Communities, the Friedrich Ebert Foundation, and Global Communications for Conservation.

Attendees at this year's event agree that the screenings fill an important niche by showcasing Third World productions. "It's a lonely pioneer in a field of distribution which is sorely neglected, constantly patronized, and in which practically nothing happens," says Milos Stelik, director of Facets Multimedia in Chicago, an independent film distributor. "The future of African Cinema, Latin American Cinema, and Asian Cinema—with some notable exceptions—is in a really pathetic state in this country, especially in terms of television production and documentaries," he adds. "There are virtually no avenues for bringing this work across." Stelik acquired the Haitian film *Krik! Tales of a Nightmare* for video distribution after this year's event.

Caroline Kaplan, director of program development for the Independent Film Channel, was also on hand to scout out product and participate on

the distribution panel. "I think it's important that there's an opportunity for American buyers to see the type of work being made outside of our country, that they normally don't have access to," she says.

An important prerequisite for the films screened is that they are directed or produced by or in collaboration with filmmakers from the Third World. "If the filmmaker is [from the U.S., but] has employed local crew or coproduced the project with a local agency, then we consider it," says Mueller. "But we normally do not use any films done strictly by American makers, because there's tons of material by Third World filmmakers. There's a philosophical issue involved here."

Next year's theme will be "Development: Arab and Islamic Perspectives." For more information on participating in the screenings, contact Claus Mueller, Third World Television Exchange, Inc.: (212) 935-6419.

FRANCES HIDALGO

Frances Hidalgo, a freelance writer, filmmaker, and new mother, wrote about the Canadian Women's Television Network (WTN) for the April issue of The Independent.

Errata

An article on *Videoforum: A Videography for Librarians* ["NVR Offers Libraries Alternative Videos at a Discount," April 1995] contained some errors. As stated in the article, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation Library Video Project offers public libraries alternatives at a discount. *Videoforum* is a joint project of the MacArthur Foundation Library Video Project and National Video Resources, a Rockefeller initiative. NVR publishes the *Videoforum* catalogues, which to date include one on Native American videos and one on Latino titles.

The Library Video Project—not the MacArthur Foundation as stated in the article—facilitates the sale of the videos to libraries. The MacArthur Foundation Library Video Project has created a discount consortium for public libraries to acquire independent videos.

Mary Keelan was misidentified. Her correct title is senior consultant for the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation Library Video Project.

Lastly, local libraries wishing to learn more about the *Videoforum* consortium should contact Mary Kirby, director of the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation's Library Video Project (800) 847-3671. *The Independent* apologizes for any confusion these errors may have caused.

▼
JANE GILLOOLY
documentarian

LEONA'S SISTER GERRI

BY GEORGE FIFIELD

THE PHOTOGRAPH is well known. It has been published in pamphlets

an article, seen by millions, in *Ms.* magazine. It was surrounded by the words, "Never Again."

So it was a shocking moment for Cambridge, Massachusetts-based filmmaker and media artist Jane Gillooly when her friend Toni Elka confided that the famous photograph was of her aunt, Gerri Santoro, who had died in 1964 when Elka was 12. Gillooly says, "Once I knew that this was Toni's aunt and the horrible story behind the whole thing, the picture just meant so much more."

That was in the early eighties. Last fall, Gillooly finished her video documentary on Gerri Santoro, the photo, and those who knew her. *Leona's Sister Gerri* will air this November 3 as a special P.O.V. presentation, followed two weeks later by a viewer response program.

The video is a striking combination of a loving



discovers she is pregnant by a coworker and that her husband is arriving from the West Coast, in desperation she undergoes an abortion at the hands of her boyfriend, which kills her.

The image entered the pro-choice movement



Director Jane Gillooly brings to light the moving story behind one of the most famous and wrenching photographs in the pro-choice movement in *Leona's Sister Gerri*. Inset: Leona Gordon with her sister in happier days. Courtesy filmmaker & P.O.V.

and magazines and carried on placards at a hundred rallies. It's of a naked woman's dead body, hunching face-down in a pool of blood—the victim of an illegal abortion. Early in the pro-choice movement, this photograph became an icon illustrating the idea that saving women's lives was a central issue in the abortion debate. In April 1973 it was the featured illustration for

portrait of a young mother as told by her grown daughters, her sister Leona Gordon, and her best friend, and also as a gripping tale of suspense, building with fatal determination toward a tragedy constructed of fear, ignorance, and secrets.

In 1964, Gerri Santoro was the mother of two children, separated from her abusive husband and living with her parents in Connecticut. When she

as an anonymous crime picture obtained from the files of a medical examiner. When Gordon saw the photo in *Ms. Magazine*, she was horrified. Joannie Griffin, Santoro's youngest daughter, says in the video, "How dare they flaunt this, how dare take my beautiful, beautiful mother and put this in front of the public eye? And who gave them permission?" Other family members felt differently, and the complicated crosscurrents of media

ethics, personal healing, and political protest form one of the video's compelling subthemes.

The project was conceived in 1992, when Gillooly and Elka attended a huge pro-choice rally in Washington, D.C., where they saw a group of people carrying signs bearing the picture from Ms. "It seemed like there were thousands of them," Gillooly recalls. At this point, no one except the family knew the identity of the woman.

On Mother's Day that year, Gillooly went to meet Leona and asked if she would be willing to tell the story behind the photo. Leona's daughters were there, helping with the gardening. They all talked, and Leona finally agreed to work with Gillooly. In June they spent a weekend together.

"That was the weekend she told me she had the purse," Gillooly recalls. Gerri Santoro's purse turned out to be key both in the video proper—Gillooly uses it as a visual correlative connecting Gerri's life to the present—and in definitively identifying the dead body in the photo. Police had given Leona the purse 28 years ago after the investigation. She loaned it to Gillooly, who went through it over and over to try to connect with the dead woman's life. "Everything in the purse was so intimate. Everyone [in Gerri's life] is represented in that purse."

Though Gillooly had been told by the family that the picture was of Gerri, she didn't have positive proof until two months before she started cutting. "I was doing my last interview with Patricia Carbine [co-founder of Ms. Magazine]," Gillooly recalls. "She showed me a really old National Abortion Rights Action League flyer. Until that time I had only been seeing cropped photos. It was a square large-format photo with the purse in the shot. I almost fainted."

One of the video's most climatic moments occurs after a montage of images from pro-choice marches. The camera pauses on one of the numerous placards with Santoro's photo, which bears the words, "This Is My Sister." It zooms out to reveal not a metaphoric sister, but Leona Gordon herself, holding the sign with determined gravity.

"She'd never been to a demonstration before," Gillooly says. Before the rally, Leona asked the videomaker about enlarging the picture. "That's when she told me she wanted to make a poster...This was a really big deal." Leona's action—her public embrace of the photo after two decades of family silence and ambivalence—plays as a profound and moving act of courage.

At the rally lots of people came up and talked to Leona. Some wanted her to get up on the podium and speak. But Gillooly says, "She was explaining to everyone that I was making a documentary and that after my documentary was finished, then she would talk about it. She was protecting the story."

Contact: P.O.V., 220 W. 19th St., 11th fl. New

York, NY 10011; (212) 989-8121.

George Fifiield (gwf@tiac.net) is a video artist, adjunct media arts curator at the DeCordova Museum and Sculpture Park, and director of VideoSpace, an alternative media arts organization in Boston.



GEORGE STONEY & JUDITH HELFAND *documentary* *activists*

THE UPRISING OF 1934

BY GRAHAM LEGGAT



History and memory are supposed to be public spaces, like parks or lakes. Too often, though, they are claimed by private interests whose tendency is to treat them

as plantations, industrial zones, private beaches—in short, as theme parks for power. George Stoney, a venerable social issues filmmaker and educator, has devoted his life to being a sort of socio-environmentalist, reclaiming communal and historical spaces. Now, in collaboration with coproducer Judith Helfand and editor Susanne Rostock, he has completed a new work that surveys a pivotal moment in Southern labor history and returns it to the working communities to whom it belongs.

Stoney, now 70 years old, has a long and storied history as an independent social-issues documentarian and activist. He is the maker of more than 50 films, television series, and videos, including *How the Myth Was Made*, a critique of Robert Flaherty's *Man of Aran*; *Southern Voices*; and the Emmy-award winning *We Shall Overcome*, a feature narrative about the Civil Rights anthem. Stoney served as Southeast Regional Information director for the Farm Security Administration in the early forties. In 1968 he took over the groundbreaking Challenge for Change program at the

National Film Board in Montreal, which pioneered collaborative, community-based production. From there he went on to co-found the Alternate Media Center at New York University, which initiated the concept of public access television as we now know it.

Judith Helfand was a student of Stoney's at NYU in the eighties. After graduating, she worked on Nina Rosenblum's documentary *Through the Wire* and the *Frontline* program *Broken Minds*. Helfand was involved in every aspect of *The Uprising of 1934*: interviewing, producing, and, her forté, tracking down primary source materials.

The Uprising of 1934, a 90-minute video which screened on P.O.V. in late July, tells the story of cotton mill workers in Alabama, Georgia, Tennessee, and the Carolinas during the 1934 General Textile Strike. Part of a nationwide walkout involving 500,000 people, the southern strike lasted three weeks and had severe consequences, including the murder of seven workers and the forced internment of more than 100. In addition, employers reneged on promises to rehire workers, blacklisting tens of thousands. The bad faith, the lasting threats of violence, and the bitter taste of defeat all helped break the back of organized labor in the South.

On the community level the strike was agonizing and traumatic. It divided towns and set neighbor against neighbor, engendering betrayals that some still have not forgiven. Before Helfand and Stoney visited the mill towns, memories of the strike had been suppressed for generations. "We had newsreel footage and we knew what happened, but we had a very hard time finding people who would talk," says Helfand. "It was a painful memory. It was a dirty secret. A lot of people were afraid, even 60 years later, of reprisals."

It took five years to break through this reluctance, construct a nuanced story, and drum up the numerous modest sources of funding. Helfand assembled a wealth of archival material: union documents, newsreel footage, newspaper clippings, photographs, and letters. She and Stoney painstakingly rooted out and interviewed labor organizers, mill workers, mill owners, and their descendants. The result is a moving and bracing picture of Depression-era working life. The interviews with surviving mill workers—in their eighties and nineties with lilting voices, lined and lively faces, and stories of all they have lived through—are truly wonderful.

"The primary purpose of our work," said Stoney, "is to help divided communities come together and talk." To that end, as much thought and energy has been directed towards

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Labor Day once meant more than a long weekend. Above: George Stoney and former student-turned collaborator Judith Helfand, directors of *The Uprising of 1934*. "The primary purpose of our work is to help divided communities come together." Courtesy filmmakers.

organizing local screenings of the work as towards the production itself.

The Uprising of 1934 is organized into three 30-minute sections, in part so that each can be used individually for educational purposes by grassroots organizations. The first section, "From the Mountains to the Mill Villages," makes artful use of footage by itinerant filmmaker H. Lee Waters to reveal the everyday life of the workers. The second section, "A Revolution of Hope," sketches the political conditions that informed the strike as well as the workers' subsequent lessons in *realpolitik*. The third section, "The Consequences," roughs out the heritage of the strike, noting how it contributed to the creation of the National Labor Relations Act, on the one hand, and to a heritage of pain and silence in working communities throughout the South, on the other.

It is the latter that *The Uprising of 1934* addresses most directly and that motivated the screenings in peoples' homes, community centers, schools, museums, teachers' conferences, and union halls throughout the South. By the end of the summer, *The Uprising of 1934* will have had more than 50 public screenings, many of which featured impassioned discussion and personal testimony, often by participants in the strike or their descendants.

While Helfand and Stoney are pleased with the P.O.V. broadcast and their distribution deal with First Run Icarus, they are much more concerned with the grassroots distribution. The

producers have established links with numerous organizing groups, particularly in the Carolinas, as well as international and local unions. In addition, they are coordinating the Labor-to-Neighbor project, whereby individuals armed with a discussion guide invite neighbors into their homes to watch and discuss the broadcast. "P.O.V. is a legitimizing gesture," says Stoney, "but it doesn't have much effect when people see the tape alone, late at night, on television." Even worse, Stoney notes, at press-time South Carolina public television was not planning to show it at all, and North Carolina stations have it programmed for 11 p.m. on a Saturday night.

These programming decisions are indicative of a persistent anti-union sentiment in the South, one that runs as high now as it did in the thirties, possibly higher. "The South is a Third World country," says Stoney, a Winston-Salem native, "dominated by industries moving in with the promise that there will be no unions."

Even so, *The Uprising of 1934* has had a considerable effect on the communities in which it has been shown. A memorial for the seven workers killed in Honea Path, South Carolina, was dedicated on May 29—the first public monument to labor in state history. People in mill towns are talking about what happened 60 years ago—in group meetings, on radio talk shows, and in newspaper articles (including one by the grandson of the man who organized the Honea Path gunmen). Teachers are reconsidering their social studies curricula. And union folk are finally getting out from

underneath the burden of blame they have carried for three generations. Finally, through a laborious and sometimes painful act of reclamation, the local history and collective memory of these working communities has been made public again, to everyone's benefit.

For information on *The Uprising of 1934*, contact: Hard Times Productions, 200 Park Avenue South, ste. 519, New York, NY 10003; (212) 529-3328; fax: 2933.

Graham Leggat is a New York-based writer and film programmer and the editor of *The Journal of Temporary Art*.

HELENA SOLBERG director

**CARMEN MIRANDA:
BANANAS IS MY BUSINESS**

BY CATHERINE
BENAMOU



or the Brazilian-born Helena Solberg, filmmaking is not worthwhile unless one is willing to take risks. Her film career began as part of the Brazilian Cinema Novo movement in the sixties, but she is

best known for the path breaking documentaries she directed after coming to the United States, especially *Nicaragua Today: From the Ashes* (1982). This depiction of a lower-middle-class family's adjustment to changes brought by the Sandinista revolution won an Emmy following its PBS broadcast and ruffled the conservative feathers of Reagan-appointed National Endowment for the Humanities chair William Bennett, sparking a national debate over the political criteria governing independents' access to public television funding.

Solberg has raised the ante of her cinema *engagé* with her first feature film, *Carmen Miranda: Bananas Is My Business*, co-produced and edited by David Meyer and slated for broadcast on P.O.V. on October 6. The film sketches a sobering account of Miranda's life—her humble Portuguese origins, her bittersweet departure from the Brazilian cultural scene for the lights of Broadway, her ensnarement in the pitfalls of Hollywood stardom (à la Monroe), and, finally, her immortaliza-

tion as an ubiquitous icon of *tropicalidad*.

At the heart of this portrayal is an ample harvest of archival film clips, personal photographs, and candid interviews. But unlike many archival-based film biographies, *Carmen Miranda* relies equally on fictional re-enactments. These are stylized to resemble everything from home movies to forties newsreels to film noir. In part, the device helped the producers circumvent the dearth of unposed shots of the singer—an effect of the industry's obsessive control over Miranda's public image. But Solberg, a feminist at heart, also wished to avoid the re-fetishization a more seamless biopic might have indulged in: "They liked one image [of Miranda]," says the filmmaker. "They wanted to freeze that, and in doing that, they also froze the human being."

Solberg renders Carmen as a composite, shifting "self." We see the coquettish teenage ingenue played by Letícia Monte in hand-held, black-and-white footage; whereas the tutti-frutti "Latin bombshell" is parodied by Erick Barreto, a male Carmen Miranda impersonator, in American publicity shots and stage reenactments. The casting of Barreto, who for years has studied Miranda down to the last eye-wink, strategically introduces ambiguity into identity: "Is what you see what is there?" Solberg queries. "Erick was very good in this sense; the fact that there is a gender confusion helps create the mask."

Solberg thus uses this fictional "masquerade" to foreground both Miranda's acquired style and her existential dilemma as a dislocated, neocolonial female subject. Solberg has always demonstrated particular skill in analyzing major social and international events through the lens of individual experience. In *Bananas* she shows that beyond the personal story, there was a powerful narrative of shifting U.S.-Brazilian relations under Roosevelt's Good Neighbor Policy. Miranda helped both governments foster a benign, cooperative image of the Americas to the south by serving as Brazil's "good will ambassador" during World War II.

By unveiling less publicized aspects of Miranda, Solberg resists simply portraying her as a pawn. Miranda's savvy at securing her stardom in a North American, male-dominated apparatus; her close ties to black performers; her alleged betrayal of her Brazilian roots; and her excessive loyalty to an abusive Hollywood husband all raise complex questions. Woven into this kaleidoscopic portrait are the narratives of other women, such as Carmen's sister, Aurora; Puerto Rican actress Rita Moreno; and Solberg herself, as the film's first-person narrator. Solberg's own participation was the genuine outgrowth of her own mixed feelings of antipathy and identification: both she and Miranda were educated by French nuns in Rio; both

launched their film careers at pivotal national conjunctures (World War II, the 1964 military coup); and both faced professional hardships, as well as triumphs, upon venturing Northward. "I have lived away from my country and have experienced this being a foreigner and the process of having to translate oneself, it's a very painful process," Solberg says. "I think in that sense, I was very close to Carmen."

Solberg's critical distance is rooted in class and political experience. Miranda's modest origins brought her nearer to Rio's cradle of samba and a vast, poor audience who never ceased adoring her. Solberg came from a metropolitan elite that rejected Miranda's kitschy caricatures and is only now reconciling itself with her importance to understanding the convolutions of Brazilian cultural identity. Like a little girl who tapes together her broken doll, the film takes Miranda as a metaphor for this fractured identity and pieces her together so that she can finally be carried "home."

Catherine Benamou is an independent producer and film historian who is completing her Ph.D. at the Department of Cinema Studies, NYU.

Below: Deconstruction is her business: Director Helena Solberg. Inset: Carmen Miranda, at the height of her career as "the ultimate symbol of tropicalidad."

Courtesy P.O.V.



▼
ROBERT WITHERS
festival director
NEW YORK EXPO
OF SHORT FILM & VIDEO

BY DANA HARRIS

W

hen the popularity of filmmaking reaches crisis proportions and the festival circuit threatens to overheat, you need a guy like Robert Withers. As the director of the New York Expo of Short Film and Video, he's the steady hand behind one of America's longest-running short film festivals.

Withers is familiar with both sides of the filmmaking fence. His own shorts have made the festival rounds, he's a New York Film and Video Council board member, and he makes his living teaching film production and film studies as well as doing freelance writing and editing. Being the Expo's director isn't a full-time job, yet the energy he brings to the position makes it seem as if he were fueled by a six-figure income.

The Expo, which runs November 16 to 18, may be best known for having presented the early work of George Lucas (*THX 1138*) and Spike Lee (*Joe's Bed-Stuy Barbershop: We Cut Heads*), but Withers doesn't see the star-of-tomorrow factor as the Expo's major draw. "The Expo is distinctive in its openness," says Withers. "It's not looking at just the New York underground art film, or exclusively commercial or noncommercial works. It could be personal films that were being done in Colorado or Nebraska. And in the New York community, the Expo represents a place people come together. One of the most rewarding things I see happening is the involvement of people who have a love for the art of short films."

Nick Manning, the festival's founder, was passionate about short filmmaking, but he had no plan for the festival to become a quarter-century tradition. In fact, he wasn't planning any-

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thing. In 1967, the Expo was a traveling festival by default; a one-man operation, it went where Nick did. Locales included Michigan State and Washington State University, where Manning also set up film departments. "It reflected the whole excitement of independent and underground filmmaking," says Withers.

In 1972, the festival moved to Brooklyn, first at Brooklyn College, then the Brooklyn Academy of Music, and from 1976 to 1987 it was housed under the Brooklyn Arts and Culture Association. In 1988, it moved to its present locale at the New School for Social Research in Manhattan. This year a satellite screening will also take place at the Staten Island Institute of the Arts in December. Despite the flurry of sites, the Expo has always been a competitive, juried festival. Last year it received 530 entries; as many are expected this year. "There's a constant infusion of new blood," says Withers.

A few years ago, some festival entrants complained of a clotted infusion. In 1993, there were some problems in the transition of power from former director Tom Newman to Withers, with reports of lost entries and tapes that weren't returned. Two years later, Withers is still conscientious about making up for any offense.

"One of the things I did

Withers puts most of his energies toward what he does best: growing the Expo. In addition to showing the finalists in the documentary, experimental, and narrative categories, this year's program will include films from the Oberhausen Festival, the leading European festival of shorts. Two panel discussions will also be featured: "The Festival Circuit: Showcase or Ghetto?" and one on the changing face of film technology.

For many competitors, one of the festival's most important functions is tied neither to panels nor juries, but to its capacity to bring films before buyers. The Expo has close ties to several distributors interested in short films, including Tapestry and Chicago's Picture Start. "I've seen a number of Expo films go into distribution," says Withers. "We get calls from distributors about finalists, and people from Kodak [sponsor of the First Look program], Bravo, and the Comedy Channel attend jury screenings as well as the festival."

The mix of jury members also helps ensure that films of all types have the opportunity to be seen by the "right" people. "We try to bring 'added value' to the entrants in who we have on the jury," says Withers. "Last year, one of the judges of the experimental category was the manager of Filmmakers' Co-Op, and she loved



Robert Withers, helmer of the NY Expo of Short Film & Video.

Courtesy R. Withers

when I came in was try to make contact with as many filmmakers as possible who had administrative snafus in that year and explain to them that we were back on track," says Withers, who has since created a computer database that tracks the films and their makers. "We want anybody who had an unfortunate experience that year to contact us."

Secure in having put that glitch to rest,

the first-place winner, *Boy Frankenstein*, so now it's going to get shown."

When the competition is over, Expo finalists may have another opportunity to be seen. "The Expo in the past has done a little bit of touring as a show, and I'm trying to get that procedure rolling again," says Withers. "We did one sort of

trial screening last year at the North Carolina School of the Arts, which they were very happy with, and I'm working on setting up more of those tour stops for the coming season."

While Withers' commitment to the Expo helps prevent short films from receiving short shrift, he knows the real credit belongs to the dogged short filmmaker. "People just keep doing it," he laughs. "The financial support comes and goes, but the short film form refuses to die."

Deadline for 1996: July 15, 1996. For more information, call (212) 505-7742.

Dana Harris is a filmmaker and freelance film writer living in Norwalk, Connecticut.

JOHN COLUMBUS festival director

BLACK MARIA FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL

BY VERONICA MIXON

When I was 13 years old, I had to have a movie camera. I begged my parents, who were not wealthy, for a Kodak Brownie camera. I think it cost about \$39," recalls John Columbus, founder and director of the Black Maria Film and Video Festival. "I remember Christmas Eve in my bed thinking, 'Why do I want this thing? It's not a bicycle or a toy.' I couldn't figure out why I wanted it so much. Anyway, I got it, and I went crazy taking home movies."

It was a family outing to the Thomas Edison National Historic Site, located near Columbus' home in West Orange, New Jersey that first sparked his interest in motion pictures. Here

Columbus saw a replica of Edison's primitive film studio, dubbed "the Black Maria," in which some of the first moving pictures were shot—of acrobats, vaudevilian performers, dancers, and boxers. Years later, Columbus paid homage to this corner of film history by naming his festival after the inventor's studio.

"I was a little bit frustrated as a filmmaker, entering festivals with categories that would pigeonhole a filmmaker's style—documentary, narrative, or experimental. Our idea—if we can make a connection with Edison—was to 'be inventive,' not to have categories," Columbus explains. "It would be a totally open festival that would cross genres and might be a combination of documentaries and animation and docudrama. [It would have] a tilt toward more experimental work, but be open to general work." When Columbus presented his idea to the Thomas Edison National Historic Site, they liked his approach and led him to possible funding sources. (To this day, they contribute a small donation.)

Started in 1981 with \$3,000 and 100 entries, the festival, housed at Jersey State College in Jersey City, has steadily grown. Now it receives 10 times the number of entries and has an operating budget of \$90,000. Every year after its January premiere, the festival travels for five months to 60-some venues around the country—from Maine to Florida to Calgary, Canada. "It's like the circus coming to town. We're from the New York City area, and that has a certain cachet," says Columbus, who accompanies the road show. Unlike most traveling festivals, each presentation is individually curated from the selection of 50 works, allowing sites to tailor their package appropriately. For instance, animation may be emphasized at a school that excels in this area, or a venue might request works emphasizing women or Latino productions.

This year the festival included such works as *Passage à l'acte*, by Austrian structuralist filmmaker Martin Arnold; feminist pieces like *Le Poisson D'Amour* by Paula Gauthier of San Diego; *Tom's Flesh*, a gay man's ruminations on his abused childhood and ample body, by Jane Wagner and Tom Di Maria; plus forty-some others films and videos by both first-time and veteran producers (Roddy Bogawa, Joe Gibbons, Scott Stark, George Stoney, and Peggy Ahwesh and Margie Strosser, among others).

Since the beginning of the festival, Columbus has seen an increase in submissions by women and people of color. But the new trend is the growing number of white male participants. "Instead of [being] angry white men, some white men are

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coming back in a sense, in a more sensitive, personal human way, rather than buying into the usual Hollywood formula," he says. "There is a sort of cross-feeding, cross-stimulation. I think that's very healthy."

Columbus is himself a documentary filmmaker with an experimental orientation. Born in 1944 in Augusta, Georgia, the son of a Methodist preacher, Columbus was encouraged by his parents to pursue his interest in filmmaking, well after the gift of the movie camera.

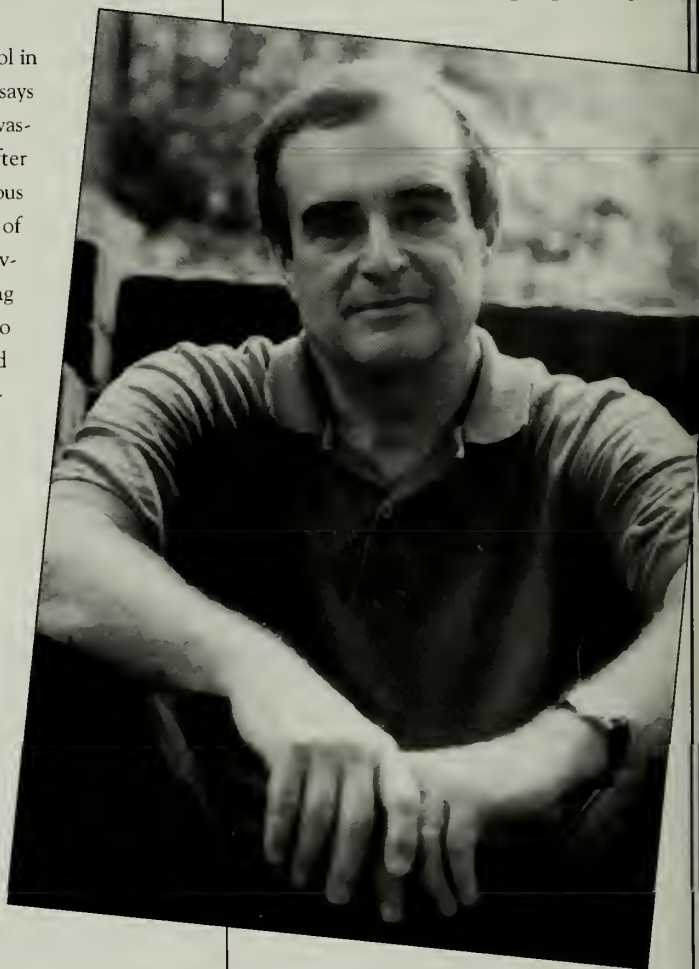
"I tried to go to art school in New York City," Columbus says of his early days, "[but] it wasn't what I thought." After bouncing around to various schools, he got a Bachelor of Fine Arts from the University of Hartford. "During my last year, I made two 16mm films—one animated and one an epic documentary. I never wanted to make traditional narrative story films."

In graduate school at Columbia University, he says, "I studied the Russian film school sensibility and documentary with Erik Barnouw, who wrote the classic text on documentaries." "Stefan Sharf was another one of my teachers; he studied with Eisenstein. So I had some of that grounding." After joining UR, an independent filmmakers cooperative, he connected with the American avant-garde scene, where he met underground filmmaker Jack Smith, among others. Between 1969 and 1972, Columbus made a number of experimental films, including *Jersey 3*, *Hagion Cycle*, *Good Morning*, and *Sweetwater*, which focused on the Pequannock watershed in rural New Jersey.

Since 1982, while serving as director of the Black Maria Festival, Columbus has also taught part-time at the Philadelphia College of Art (now called University of Arts). He collaborated as associate director on the documentary *Barnegat* in 1986 and completed another, *Olive's Farm*, in 1988. During the past four years, he's been work-

ing on a film about growing up in New Jersey in the shadow of Manhattan. Like most of his previous work, this film is autobiographical and personal, and reflects his choice of the Garden State as his creative base and home. He says, "I've always thought of myself as a fringe player."

Perhaps, but for the past 14 years, the Black Maria Festival has played a major role in exposing audiences in small towns and far-flung cities to cutting-edge indepen-



Hello, Columbus: Fest captain John Columbus.
Courtesy Black Maria Film/Video Festival

dent work. "I like to think of us as out in the trenches," says Columbus. "Our premise was creative vision, personal vision, inventiveness, and openness." They've lived up to it.

Black Maria Film Festival, c/o Media Arts, Jersey City State College, 203 West Side Ave., Jersey City, NJ 07305; (201) 200-2043; fax: 3490. Deadline: November 18.

Veronica Mixon is a film writer for *The Philadelphia Tribune* and *Carib News*.

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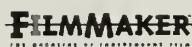
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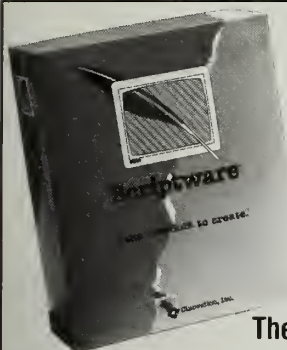
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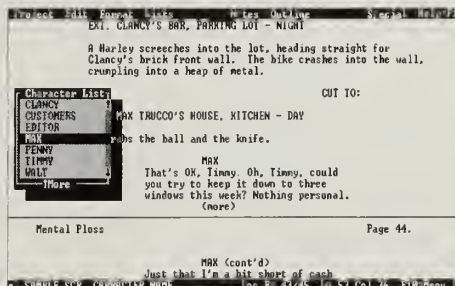
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Cannes '95

A Riviera Runs Through It

BY BARBARA SCHARRES

WHEN THE MIRAMAX LOGO was greeted by a chorus of hisses at the only press screening of Larry Clark's *Kids*, presented in competition at the Cannes International Film Festival (May 17 to 28), and when, despite a scratching, pushing, killer crush at the door, there remained empty seats, perhaps it dawned on Miramax execs that the carefully orchestrated campaign to make *Kids* the hottest thing at Cannes had gone awry. The press conference featured a grizzled and irritable Clark in dark glasses repeating his mantra, "I always set out to make an R-rated, 90-minute movie," while the 20-year-old screenwriter Harmony Korine, looking slender and childish at a table full of grown men, gave a first impression of being intellectually out of his depth. The cellular phone of moderator Henri Behar rang periodically in the course of the discussion, adding a surreal dimension to a predictably testy discourse that revolved around the subjects of drugs, condoms, and the ages of the film's actors. After a Dutch journalist earnestly intoned the question, "Why did you choose not to show the black guy's dick?," it was Korine who demonstrated quick thinking and the only sense of humor in evidence, slyly quipping,



(top) Taiwanese director Steve Wang's *The Daughter-In-Law* was one of a string of films by young-Turk Asian directors trained in the US and successful at home. Photos courtesy The Film Center

(left) *Kids* director Larry Clark on the set in New York. Despite Miramax's efforts to stir up a media sensation, *Kids* barely created a ripple on the Riviera.

It was cloudy with a chance of showers for Gus Van Sant's *To Die For*; audiences at Cannes were profoundly unmoved.

"It was too big for the screen."

With the exception of the fleeting and con-

trived hoopla around *Kids*, American films caused scarcely a ripple at Cannes this year. Gus van Sant's much-hyped *To Die For*, starring Nicole Kidman as a woman obsessed with becoming a TV news anchor, screened at midnight out of competition. It passed without the faintest buzz, although the D.D.A. press agency deemed the director too hot a property for this magazine to be granted an interview. The closest thing to enthusiastic word-of-mouth circulating about an American independent was for Hal Salwen's *Denise Calls Up* in the Semaine de la

Critique (French Critics' Week). The frenetically paced comedy about the nature of relationships in the age of electronic communications and artificial insemination had the advantage of striking a more than familiar chord, as the minor comedy of Henri Behar's telephone could only affirm.

Each festival has its own character, and, like some newly animated hybrid beast, lurches in its own direction, sometimes to the chagrin of its many handlers. Those who today rule the Croisette—the festival's glittering seafront main drag—may well be gone next year. The rumored sight of the once mighty Cannon's Menahem Golan passing out little handbills for an exploitation film stirred reminiscences by many a festival veteran that began, "Remember the year Cannon bought all the billboards along the Croisette..." with some adding dark speculations about Miramax's fate.

Underneath the contrivance and the spectacle of showmanship at its most expensive, Cannes really does offer the chance to detect not only trends, but genuine strengths and weaknesses in filmmaking worldwide. It's a place to sense the new heat of an emerging national cinema, or to watch opportunity being grasped. Within the past five years, American independents have quietly but steadily positioned themselves to fill gaps in the thinning market at Cannes, generating excitement and sales that don't necessarily have to do with prizes and mainstream publicity. This year that halo of festival energy didn't surround the Americans, although independents now hold an entrenched place in the market. Two national cinemas, Taiwanese and Iranian, were undeniably the locus of attention through a mysterious combination of critical mass and careful planning.

A dazzling panoramic view of the Mediterranean couldn't lift the mood in the airy apartment shared by Taiwanese director Hou Hsiao-hsien and his colleagues the last afternoon of the festival as they began to realize that an official phone call advising them to be present at that evening's awards ceremony was not going to come. But calls did come from members of the Taiwanese press corps, who phoned to prod and taunt with rumors. One of the producers of Hou's *Good Men, Good Women* chain-smoked and paced the floor, but Hou himself fixated on the roaring cars of the televised Grand Prix and exuded a philosophical calm.

Prize or no prize, Taiwanese cinema made an impressive showing at Cannes, with *Good Men, Good Women* in competition, Hsu Hsiao-ming's *Heartbreak Island* in the Quinzaine des Réalisateurs (Directors Fortnight), Steve Wang's *The Daughter-in-Law* in the Critics' Week, and a pack of recent films in the market, including

Sylvia Chang's *Siao Yu* and Fu Lee's *Angel Heart*. More than a matter of numbers, it has become increasingly clear that in slightly more than a decade a "new" national cinema has developed in Taiwan from the pioneering work of directors including Hou and Edward Yang. There is already a next generation of younger directors, including Hsu Hsiao-ming, Tsai Ming-liang, and Steve Wang.

At the age of only 48, Hou, previously winner of the Golden Lion at Venice for *A City of Sadness*, and of the Jury Prize at Cannes in 1993 for *The Puppetmaster*, justly bears the mantle of the grand master. With a story that turns inside out, stylistically divided in radical ways, *Good Men, Good Women* demands great leaps of faith on the part of the viewer on the way to a deeply stirring ending in which Hou once again succeeds in conveying in very individual, human terms the bewilderment and complexity of Taiwan's search for a national identity. Hsu's *Heartbreak Island*, influenced by Hou in the contemplative camera work and a similar concern for identity, for all its nuance seems a rougher piece of work, but with a provocative quality that indicates that its young director may soon move out of the shadow of his mentor.

It is the diversity of influence, as well as the proliferation of young directors and the strength and quality of the work, that makes Taiwan currently one of world cinema's hot spots. Steve Wang's first feature, *The Daughter-in-Law*, a colorfully lurid tale, with supernatural overtones, of a ménage à trois involving an old man, his adoptive son, and his daughter-in-law, has storytelling savvy and some of the flamboyance of Hong Kong cinema.

Wang, a graduate of New York University's film school, recalls that he spent seven years in New York looking back at Taiwan and asking himself, "Who am I?" He came close to settling in the U.S., where he worked as an editor on independent productions, until family relationships pulled him home. He now represents a wave of young Asian directors with American training who return to their native countries with sophisticated production skills and well-honed ambition. Wang speaks knowledgeably of pre-sales and co-productions, of marketing plans and audience feedback. He relates that in a crisis of indecision over whether to return home, his aunt had said, "There are thousands and thousands of people like you in the U.S.—they need you in Taiwan." One suspects that only now Taiwanese cinema has the confidence as well as the breadth and depth to accommodate both the heirs of Ang Lee as well as Hou Hsiao-hsien.

Yet another Asian cinema success story at Cannes stems from the well-laid plans of Ali Shoja Noori, a screen actor who heads the International Affairs Department at Iran's Farabi

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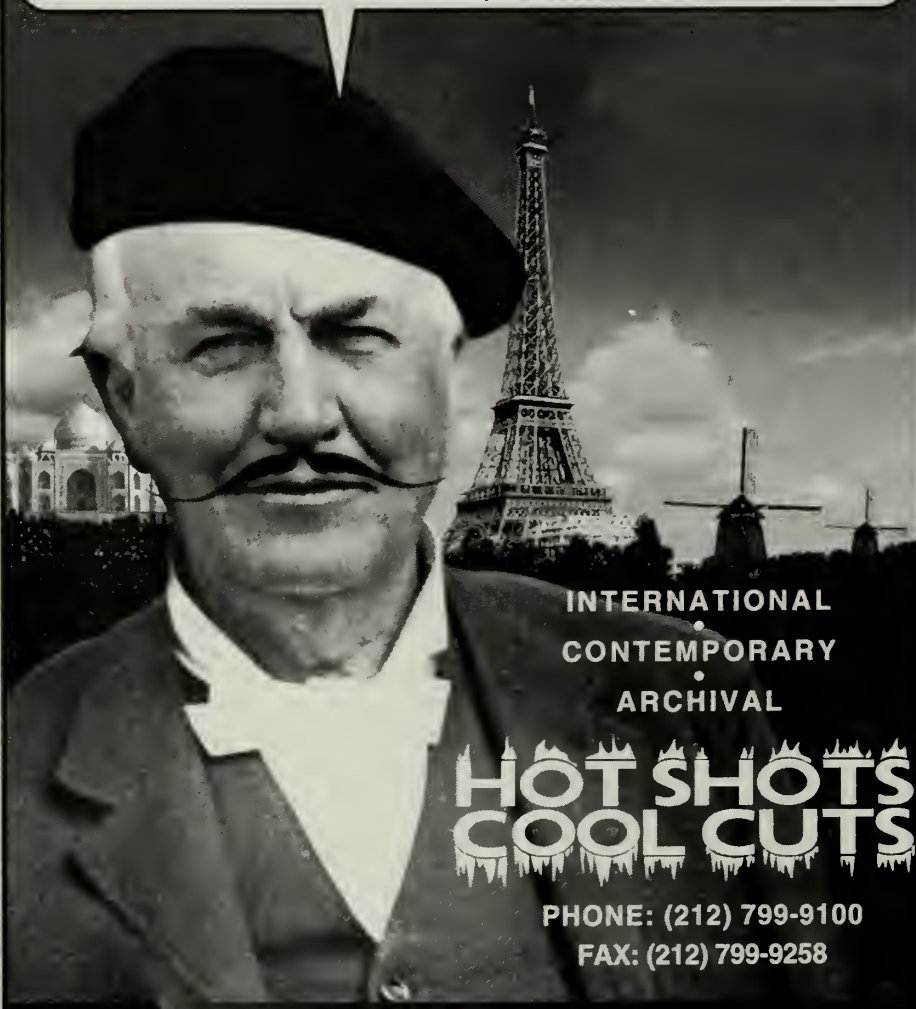
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Cinema Foundation. His efforts to put the spotlight on Iranian cinema came to fruition when Jafar Panahi's first feature, *The White Balloon*, screening in the Directors Fortnight, won the Caméra d'Or. A deceptively simple story of a little girl experiencing the good and bad side of the big world when she loses her money on the way to buy a goldfish, *The White Balloon* became one of this year's most talked-about films. At the close of the market, with more than one U.S. company vying for the rights, it would appear that the film will soon be in theatrical distribution in North America.

While Iran's political relationship to the West remains as problematic as ever, it has not escaped programmers, critics, or audiences that Iran's films seem to bear conspicuous messages of human dignity and individuality, with strong and defiant women not unknown. Five years ago at Cannes, Shoja Noori manned a small Iranian market stand and dreamed of the day when Iranian films might regularly be invited to the official sections of the festival. He had a plan, he confided over coffee that year, that before long Iranian films might even screen in competition at Cannes, as well as every other section of the festival. Careful but aggressive marketing and lobbying, plus the publication of detailed guides to current production, have since given the work of Iranian directors considerable prominence in official events and the market. Abbas Kiarostami started grabbing attention with *Life Goes On* in 1992 and *Under the Olive Trees* in 1994. This year Mohsen Makhmalbaf's *A Time of Love* and *Salaam Cinema*, his endearingly goofy hundredth birthday tribute to the cinema, screened in the Un Certain Regard section of the festival.

At the Cannes awards ceremony, renowned for its homemade look and its casual approach to pomp, half the show tends to be the unchoreographed highs and lows of human emotion on display. This year's low, Theo Angelopoulos's churlish acceptance of a lesser prize than the Palme d'Or he hoped to win for his *Ulysses' Gaze* (ultimately given to Bosnian director Emir Kusturica for *Underground*), was balanced by the raw jubilation on the face of Ali Shoja Noori when the Caméra d'Or was announced for *The White Balloon*. Ostensibly serving as translator for the director, he leapt from his seat and made a dash for the stage worthy of the Olympics, with Panahi following yards behind, a gesture that said much about the power of Cannes to fire dreams.

Barbara Scharres is director of the Film Center at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and a freelance writer.

OZ the Great and Filmable:

THE SCENE DOWN UNDER

BY DEIRDRE BOYLE

AUSTRALIANS AFFECTIONATELY REFER TO THEIR homeland as Oz, one way of acknowledging its otherworldly character and affinity for movie-made fantasies. Where else could a cinematic troupe of transvestites conquer the desert and the hearts of crossover audiences worldwide? Directors like Jane Campion, Gillian Armstrong, Baz Luhrmann, and Jocelyn Moorhouse, to name a few, have propelled Australian cinema out of the arthouse and into the multiplex, producing an astonishing number of recent box-office hits. Their success prompts a host of questions: What accounts for the "sudden" prominence of Australian feature films on the world scene? Why has Australia, a nation noted for its Anglo-Irish machismo, produced so many tal-

ented women directors? What do Australians think about the mass marketing of their "quirky" identity to the world? And what ever happened to video?! In search of answers to these and other questions, I traveled to the land down under in June to attend the Melbourne and Sydney film festivals and meet with members of the Australian film and video community.

Shuttling between Sydney, with its laid-back, beachfront professionalism that prompts analogies to Los Angeles, and Melbourne, with its wintry grey weather and indoor culture that easily conjures New York, I fell in love with Australia's film scene. Although each festival has its own stamp molded by its director's and audience's tastes, to an outside observer they are more similar than different, sharing a significant portion of the programming and a common Australian appetite for

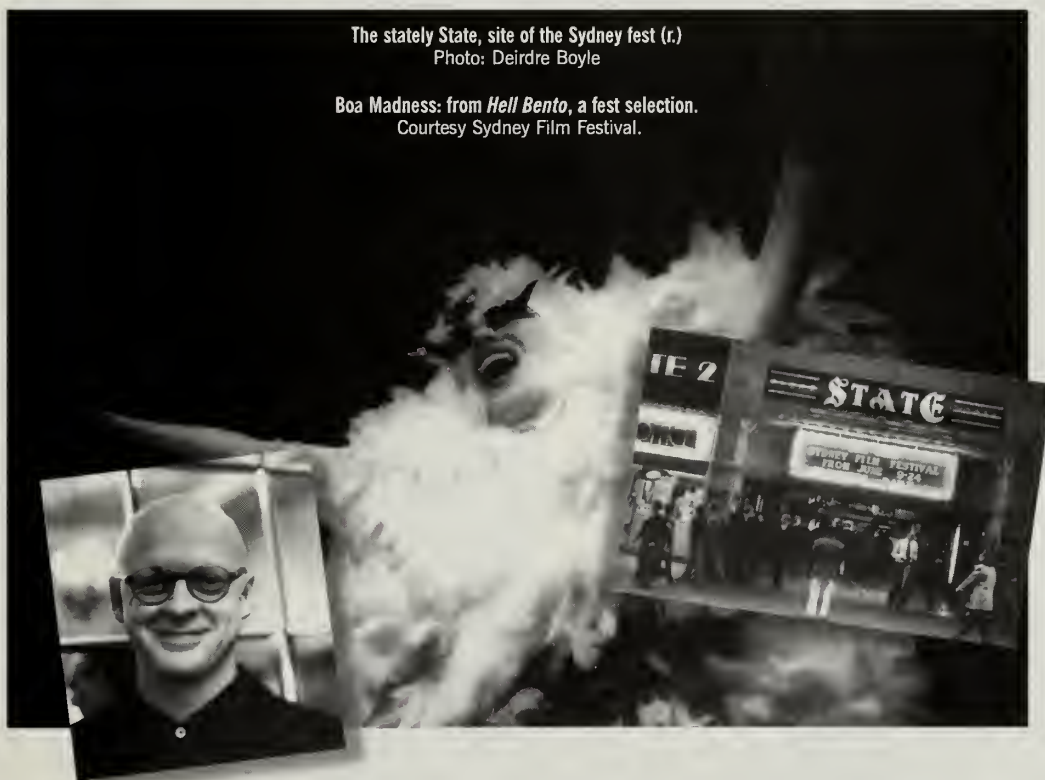
world cinema. Festival audiences in Sydney—from grey-haired retirees to the pierced and punctured—camp out in the palatial State Theater from morning 'til night armed with picnic baskets and cups of cappuccino, chatting enthusiastically about the last film from Iran or Indonesia or the United States. In Melbourne, where the festival is scattered in various theaters around town, audiences are more fugitive but no less eager. I spoke with one contributor at a fundraising dinner in Melbourne, who confided he took his two weeks' vacation each year at the festival so that he could attend every screening: he was a prison guard who confessed he'd "kill to be a critic."

Expecting to be wowed by the newest Australian features, I was disappointed by a batch of lesser works vainly imitating recent successes; one featured both cross-dressing musicians and a

Not in Kansas anymore: Sydney fest director Paul Byrnes (l.)
Photo: Deirdre Boyle

The stately State, site of the Sydney fest (r.)
Photo: Deirdre Boyle

Boa Madness: from *Hell Bento*, a fest selection.
Courtesy Sydney Film Festival.



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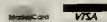
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piano as deus ex machina. Was it just an off year or had Australian film already begun to lose its originality and lustre?

Australia, I quickly learned, is at a transformative moment in its history, about to sever its historic ties to the British empire by voting out a federal parliamentary system in favor of a republic. It is consciously redefining its identity as a South Pacific nation, vigorously announcing itself as one of the 21st century. The popular Labor government of Prime Minister Paul Keating has taken an aggressive role in championing the arts in general and cinema in particular, astutely recognizing how critical the arts are in projecting a vital national presence worldwide and in cultivating lucrative business opportunities at home. With recent hits like *The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert*, and *Muriel's Wedding*, Australia's narrative film industry has been attracting foreign interest from Hollywood, the UK, and Europe. The imminent arrival of Fox studios in Australia and the presence of resident offshore talent scouts suggest Australia is becoming Hollywood's latest, cheapest, and most talented backlot, and film Australia's most successful cottage industry.

Film is only part of the transformative media mix. Last year Keating issued his "Creative Nation" cultural policy, which has allocated \$84 million in the current fiscal year alone to ensure Australia's presence in the multimedia future. Following the money and the cultural imperative, video access centers of the seventies have been retooling to become nodes for multimedia production and distribution in the nineties. The relatively recent development of the cable industry has attracted foreign-owned pay TV systems that are about to reconfigure Australia's television landscape, altering the careful balance of Aussie-made programming in favor of significantly more foreign (i.e., U.S.) productions. Not everything reported here is cause for celebration, since much of this change heralds mixed blessings for Australia's cultural integrity and economy. Nevertheless, the optimism and expansiveness that pervades Australia's media community on the brink of such change is intoxicating.

For American indies reeling from the latest cuts in U.S. government funding of the arts and renewed attacks on public television, news of Australia's exemplary support for its media arts may inspire flashbacks to the seventies or fantasies of migratory escape. But before strapping your Steenbeck onto a raft or trading your NTSC equipment for PAL, a word of caution. Cathy Robinson, director of the Australian Film Commission (AFC), advises that although Australia can lend American independents plenty of moral support, it has no financial sup-

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port to spare. Better than dollars, however, may be the models Australia offers for rethinking our own embattled relationship between government and the arts.

There is nothing sudden about the success of Australian film. "Twenty-five years of deliberate government intervention is not an insignificant factor in the training and career development of Australian filmmakers," Robinson asserts. Given the size of Australia's population (roughly 17 million, compared to 252 million in the United States), the domestic market could not sustain a film industry without governmental support, which explains why Australia's commercial film industry really has more in common with the U.S. independent scene than with Hollywood. According to Greg Smith, director of the New South Wales Film and Television Office, the vision thing got lost during the eighties as extravagant tax breaks designed to pump corporate money into the film industry led to formulaic period dramas (to qualify under the Australian content requirements) and the brokering of deals that could have as easily been for used cars as for films.

Today, government interest in film is even higher than a decade ago because politicians react to good news, to photo opportunities, and to positive economic analysis, according to Smith. What has changed has been the rationale for government investment: formerly the argument made was cultural, to use media to define a national identity for Australians and the larger world. But in the last five or six years an economic argument has overtaken the cultural one, as benefits that accrue from government's priming of the film and television industries become evident: job creation, multiplier effects in terms of economic activity, stimulation of local and regional economies, and so on. With average budgets at \$4 million Australian dollars (or \$3 million U.S.), a feature film produced in Australia costs less than a made-for-cable TV movie in the United States, which gives Australian filmmakers a competitive advantage when seeking distribution outlets. U.S. distributors are currently engaged in a feeding frenzy, recognizing that these low-budget English-language features, with their pleasing cost-to-revenue ratios, are a very good investment.

Australian government support for film and video differs significantly from the U.S. model. Film projects must be able to demonstrate market attachment if they are to trigger government support. Offshore distribution companies in the United States, United Kingdom, France, Italy, Germany, and Canada provide the presale and distribution guarantees that can trigger the governmental Film Finance Corporation to invest up to 50 percent of the budget for a feature,

which can be supplemented by further contributions by state agencies like Film Victoria and New South Wales Film and Television. Government support comes not in the form of grants but as "non-recourse" loans—those that are paid back if the film makes a profit, and written off if it fails. Once a film goes into production, the federal or state government is entitled to be repaid with an interest factor, retaining a very small percentage of net profits after normal expenses. "Insofar as production investment is concerned...we retain an equity share and an interest in copyright," says Greg Smith.

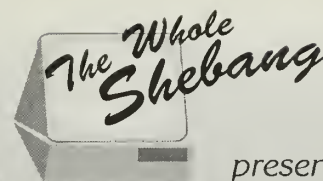
The Australian Film Commission negotiates coproduction treaties on behalf of the government, which permit films to benefit from existing tax incentives in respective countries as well as access to available government investment opportunities. Australia has such treaties with Canada, New Zealand, and the UK, and it has others in development with Japan, Russia, and Germany. The United States does not permit treaty coproductions, but does allow co-financing arrangements, the most recent example being for *Cosi*, a feature by Mark Joffe now in postproduction with money from both the Film Finance Corporation and Miramax.

Whether increasing involvement in production by foreign distributors will erode the peculiar charm and independent spirit of Australian filmmaking remains to be seen. Any fear that U.S. interest in Australian talents will somehow co-opt or derail Australian film culture is outweighed by a sense of advantage and a can-do Aussie ability to deal with anything. For years Australian directors who leaped the ditch to Hollywood have cleverly protected their independence by insisting on doing their postproduction back home. The costs are lower, they get to work with their own creative team (and reinvest in an admirable technical infrastructure for quality filmmaking), and—most importantly—they remain insulated from unwelcome studio interference when it really counts. Australians have learned how to turn their apparent isolation into an advantage and remain confident they can continue to be one step ahead of the game. Rupert Murdoch, king of global media, is an Australian, after all.

Note: New Yorkers curious to know more about Australian film may want to attend "Strictly Oz: A History of Australian Film," the first comprehensive retrospective in the U.S. of Australian cinema, organized by Larry Kardish at the Museum of Modern Art from October 27, 1995 until January 16, 1996.

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Deirdre Boyle is a critic, curator, and teacher of independent film and video, and the author of Guerrilla Television Revisited (Oxford, 1996).



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READIN' RITIN' ROLL 'EM

What's educational about a pair of sneakers? Quite a lot, as it turns out. Media educators Newman and Mara show how a class of fifth graders who were considered "low achievers" tackled history and math, as well as research, writing, and production, when creating the video magazine *Sneaker Mania*.

IN THE PAST DECADE EDUCATORS HAVE BEGUN TO SEE THE VALUE IN THEMATIC TEACHING—tying together diverse curriculum areas through the study of one topic, like sneakers, or earthquakes, or horses, or just about anything. Because it places knowledge within a context, the across-the-curriculum approach adds a sense of relatedness to schoolwork and helps students see a purpose for learning. At its best, across-the-curriculum study helps to transform learning from a passive act in which information is received and digested, into a cooperative process of inquiry and discovery. This active approach to learning lends itself very well to a class video project.

A VIDEO MAGAZINE

Even a large class can be fully involved in making an across-the-curriculum video, working in small groups to study a common topic as it relates to different curriculum areas. Each group creates a segment of the video, and all the segments are unified by the theme of the program. We call it a video magazine because it does not have a beginning, middle, and end. Watching it is something like turning the pages of a magazine, which might contain fiction, non-fiction, a crossword puzzle, a photo essay, and so forth. Like a magazine, an across-the-curriculum video is made up of short pieces on a single theme.

MAKING SNEAKER MANIA

We began working on *Sneaker Mania* as we often do, by holding a discussion with the class. Having decided with their teacher to do a magazine-style project, we wanted to find out from the students the things that they really liked, so that we could establish a theme for the video. As they enumerated their favorite things we wrote them on the board: pizza, skateboards, video games, ice cream, bicycles, vacations, comic books, candy, Christmas, music, and many more. The board was full of words when we finished.

NARROW IT DOWN

It was our honest feeling that any of the things they mentioned would have made a good topic for our video, especially because they were all of great interest to the students. But of course, as we explained to the class, we had to choose one topic to work on. We took a preliminary vote, narrowing it down to a much shorter list. Then we discussed our short list with the class in terms of the universal appeal of each topic, because we needed to pick something that everybody liked. When we looked around the room and saw that everyone was wearing sneakers, we decided that would be the topic of our tape.

Production meeting. (Note the absence of cellular phones and beepers.)



How you arrive at a theme for a video magazine project is up to you. The important thing is that the topic be compelling to the students so that they will take ownership of the project. That way they will be motivated to do the research and writing necessary to make a good video magazine.

WHAT DO WE KNOW? MAKING WEBS

Once you and the students have decided on the theme for the tape, the discussion moves on to the next phase—establishing what the class already knows about the theme, about TV, and about research. We have found that the best way to do this is to make a series of webs on the blackboard. A web is a diagram shaped a little like a spider web, a sort of loose, circular, branching outline. At its center is the main topic, while the aspects of the topic which the students mention in their discussion make up the branches. Making a web is a good way to graphically organize a group discussion because it is non-hierarchical and not in any particular order—branches are added to the web as they are called out by the students so that the growth

of the web reflects the progress of the discussion.

Web #1: Sneakers

To make our first web, we put the word “sneakers” in a circle in the middle of the board and asked the students to name all the things they could think of about sneakers and how they related to one another. The sneakers web showed the class that they already knew a lot about sneakers, and that there were areas requiring more research. Leaving that web on the board, we moved on to talk about



television.

Web #2: TV Programs

This time we put TV in a circle on the board and asked the students to mention all the different kinds of television programs they could think of. We wanted them to get a sense of the possible ways they could present their information, what kind of “show” each group would make. We explained that we would like each group to use a different method of presentation, to add variety to the tape and make it more like a magazine.

Web #3: Research Methods

Next, we brought up research methods—how would they figure out what information they needed, and where they would get that information? We made another web, asking them what they knew about where to get information.

This discussion brought us to the end of our first brainstorming session. We were careful to have someone copy the webs off the board before they got erased, and we made a copy of them for each child.

CREATING THE GROUPS: PREPRODUCTION

The next time we met with the class, we began by passing out copies of the webs and reviewing our discussion of the previous session. We let the students choose which aspect of sneakers each found most intriguing, and we formed groups around their choices. These were the groups they created: sneakers in sports; peer pressure; history of rubber; different styles/who wears what; commercials (3 groups); and a visit to a store. At this point, the class of 35 students was broken up into eight groups of roughly four or five per group. The curriculum areas involved included science and history (rubber); social studies (peer pressure); math (styles/who wears what); and language arts (commercials). We asked the students to sit in their groups, and, to help them get organized, we gave each person a handout on making a “video magazine” and asking them to think about their topic, type of show, what information they need, where to get it, and what to do with it.

These are the decisions they made:

- **Sneakers in sports:** They wanted to present their information in the style of a report, with some live segments showing people wearing the sneakers and some pictures of their favorite athletes. They decided they needed to find out how sneakers are different for the individual sports, and that they would get their information by writing letters to sneaker companies and by reading books and magazines. Then they would write their report and make a poster showing the various kinds of sneakers and who wears them.

- **Peer pressure:** This group decided to write a skit about sneakers and peer pressure, focusing on how kids treat other kids. They realized they would not have to do much research because they already knew a lot about the topic, but they decided to read some newspapers and magazines to find out more if they could. Their major emphasis was on writing their script. They also wanted to make some signs to let the audience know when and where the action was taking place.

- **History of rubber:** They decided to present their information as a puppet show, using simple puppets made out of paper. Since they knew nothing about the history of rubber, they realized they had to go to the library to look in encyclopedias and find some books on the subject. Then they had to write a script and make the puppets and some pictures for the backgrounds.

- **Different styles:** This group wanted to find out information about kids and sneakers, so they decided to conduct a survey of their fellow students. Rather than doing preliminary research, they had to write their survey questions and set up sheets on which to record their data. Then they had to complete the survey, analyze the data, make sense of it, and create graphs and charts to show what they had found.

- **Commercials and brands:** These students, three groups in all, wanted to create their own commercials for their favorite brands of sneakers. They decided to watch commercials and tape them off the TV in order to analyze how the sneaker companies made their commercials. Then they would write their scripts and make drawings or graphics as needed.

- **Visit to a store:** This was to be a documentary segment which would not need much book research, but would require the students to go into their community and find a sneaker store with someone willing to be interviewed. Then they would have to write their interview questions and practice interviewing each other.

GOING INTO PRODUCTION

We spent the next few sessions helping the students research and write their segments for the video and make things as needed. They worked in their groups and we moved around the classroom, making suggestions and helping them organize their ideas. During one session we took the entire class to the public library for research purposes. The students who did not have a lot of research to do for their own segments were assigned to help other groups. In general, the students were focused and working enthusiastically toward the

day they could start shooting.

As the groups became ready, we began to shoot. Some required more preparation than others, so not everyone was ready to shoot at the same time. Since we could only shoot one group at a time anyway, this worked out well; some groups could continue with preproduction while others started shooting. When one group finished shooting, they became available to help others, by making things, being on the crew, or watching and critiquing the segments as they were shot.

Because each segment was unique in both content and presentation, they all had different requirements for shooting. This is how the groups wrote and designed their segments, and how they were shot:

Sneakers in Sports: This group got quite a few letters from the manufacturers they wrote, including brochures and other printed matter with pictures. They used the information in the letters to help write their report; with the visual materials, as well as some pictures from magazines, they made a big poster about sneakers in basketball, baseball, football, and tennis. They designed one student as the reporter and others to act out the sports.

On the day of their shoot, members of the group brought sports uniforms and sneakers to school. The reporter began the segment speaking on-camera, pointing to the poster to support what he was saying. When he talked about a specific sport, the camera panned to the student acting out that sport. So the report was a combination of an on-camera speaker, a poster, and live action. By using all three of these elements instead of just one, the students added a lot of visual interest to their segment.

Peer Pressure: Since there was no need to do much research on this topic, they began by discussing ideas for their script—each student wrote down an idea for a story, and the group picked the one they liked best.

We encouraged all the groups, but this one in particular, to keep their segments short so that the tape would move along at a good pace. No one segment in a video magazine should be too long, and often students conceive of very complicated skits when it is possible to say what needs to be said in a much more succinct way. With this in mind, we instructed the peer pressure group to write their skit in three scenes and to use the “4Ws” method (defining where, when, who, and what). This is the scenario they wrote:

Scene 1: where The dining room in a family home.
 when Breakfast, before school.
 who Mother, Father, and three daughters.
 what The girls are complaining because they don't have name-brand sneakers. The parents explain that they don't have enough money for expensive sneakers. The girls say they are being teased at school, and their parents tell them to stand up for themselves.

Scene 2: where The schoolyard.
 when Later that day, at recess.
 who The three girls and two of their classmates.
 what The classmates tease the girls about their sneakers, but the girls talk back to them and don't let the teasing bother them.

Scene 3: where The family's dining room, same as Scene 1.
 when Dinner, the same day.
 who Mother, Father, three daughters.
 what The family is eating dinner. The girls tell their parents about what happened at school. The parents praise them and tell them that if they don't need expensive sneakers, there will be enough money for some new clothes.

After constructing the scenario, the group wrote dialogue for their scenes, assigned parts, and spent several sessions rehearsing the skit. They also made cards which introduced each scene with the time it was taking place: Breakfast Time, Recess, Dinner Time. On the day of their shoot, they brought props—a tablecloth, dishes, etc.—and costumes from home. The skit was easy to shoot because it was only three scenes, two of which took place in the same location, the dining room, which was set up in a corner of the classroom, using several desks as the table.

History of Rubber: This group conducted their research by looking up the subject in books and encyclopedias. They found out that Charles



Goodyear accidentally discovered a process, which he called Vulcanization, to keep rubber pliable but not sticky. They also wrote a script in three short scenes, describing Goodyear's important discovery, and they drew pictures to illustrate these scenes.

In Scene One, Goodyear is in the jungle, getting rubber from a tree. In Scene Two he is in his laboratory, where a box of sulfur accidentally falls into a vat of rubber, causing it to lose its stickiness. Scene Three takes place in a Goodyear Tire Store, where some boys are buying rubber tires for their bikes. The three scenes trace the history of rubber from the mid-nineteenth century to the present and describe a process directly related to sneakers.

The students told the story in voice-over, with the camera closely focused on the drawings they had made which depicted the different setting for the three scenes. The characters were also drawn on paper, cut out, and attached to a thread so they could move around. This is a very simple and effective way to do a puppet show for video. The background drawings do not have to be big—an 8 1/2 x 11 piece of paper is just the right size—and the drawings of the characters can be very simple, or they can be made with jointed limbs for greater movement. Either way, when seen in close-up on the TV screen, the students' artwork looks great and the puppets have a delightful animated quality.

Different Styles/Who Wears What: Their first task was to figure out exactly what they wanted to know and to write the questions that would elicit the information they needed from their survey subjects. They devised the following questions:

1. Do you wear high-tops or low-tops?
2. Where do you buy your sneakers? at a sneaker store? a department store? a flea market? somewhere else?
3. Do you wear skips (off-brand sneakers)?
4. What color sneakers do you like best?

The students created tally sheets which helped them keep track of the answers to their questions. With the sheets attached to a clipboard, they spent about a week surveying as many of the other fifth graders in the school as they could. They operated mainly at lunch time, although they did get permission to go into some classes to ask their questions. When the survey was completed, they tallied their results, adding up all the answers, determining percentages, and creating graphs. Since the class was studying graphs and percentages, the sneaker survey was a practical application of their math curriculum.



(left to right) Mall vérité? Shooting interviews for *Sneaker Mania*.

All photos courtesy Betsy Newman

The rubber industry's Einstein, Charles Goodyear, in his lab: illustration for the research component of *Sneaker Mania*.

Where the rubber things are: documenting the playground.

The group designed colorful displays of their survey results—pie charts, bar graphs and a graph shaped like a sneaker. They shot their segment in a very simple way. Each member of the group explained one of the graphs on-camera. As they spoke, the camera zoomed in for a close-up of the graph, and the person explaining pointed to the numbers as they were mentioned. Because the data was about sneakers and other fifth-graders, it was interesting in itself and did not require a complicated presentation.

Commercials: We gave each of the three groups working on commercials a handout for writing commercials and PSA's and reminded them to keep their segments short and simple. One group treated Adidas as an acronym for the statement, "All Day I Dream About Sneakers," and wrote a short rap song based on that line. Another wrote a commercial for a brand of sneakers called Lifesavers—a skit in which a girl wearing her Lifesavers comes to the rescue of a classmate who has fallen down the stairs. The third commercial was designed as one simple shot of the sneakers themselves, with a voice-over describing them. Each of these was easy to shoot because the groups had storyboarded them using the commercials handout we had given them.

Visit to a Store: This group had spent some time thinking of questions to ask the manager of the sneaker store they were planning to visit. They had

also practiced by conducting interviews with each other, and had made an appointment to visit the store. When the day came to shoot, everyone in the class wanted to go, so we all took a trip to the commercial strip near the school.

When we got to the store, most of the class stayed outside, while the group in charge of the segment went in and interviewed the manager. He was a talkative young man who enjoyed answering the students' questions and gave them quite a bit of information about his merchandise, his customers and the sneaker retail business. They learned how many sneakers he sold in a week, which ones were most popular and most expensive, where they were made and who bought them. As we left the store and walked back to school, we took shots of people wearing sneakers and more sneakers in other shop windows.

EDITING THE TAPE

All the segments of *Sneaker Mania* were arranged and edited together after they were shot. This allowed us the luxury of deciding on the sequence of events after the fact, rather than shooting in sequence. But a tape of this sort could easily be edited in-camera simply by deciding the order of the segments before beginning to shoot. The important thing to keep in mind when making a video magazine, whether editing in-camera or after-the-fact, is to vary the order, so that similar segments are not right next to one another. A documentary segment, like the trip to the store, should be followed by the puppet show, or a commercial, rather than a segment it resembles more closely, like the survey. If you keep this in mind, the finished tape will move along more quickly and appear to have more variety.

OTHER MAGAZINES

There is no end to the topics available for making a video magazine with a class of students—just about anything the students are interested in can become a subject for further investigation and the basis for a video project. And certainly the approach which we took with *Sneaker Mania* is only one way to go about it. Another would be to begin with a broad area of study, like the environment, and have each group design a segment on one environmental concern.

We did an environmental video magazine with two fifth grade classes at P.S. 144 in Queens. Their segments included "The Orangutan News," in which famous scientists gave updates on the condition of orangutans; a series of interviews with people in the neighborhoods about their gardens; a demonstration of soil erosion; a puppet show in which fish discuss how water pollution is affecting them; and so forth. Because both classes were studying the environment, a group from one class surveyed the other class about the effects of lack of water in the Southwest.

Like *Sneaker Mania*, the environmental tape was created in short segments which were researched, written, and shot by small groups. The classes were large—over 30 children each—but the students worked diligently to do the work necessary to create their segments. They were motivated by the notion of shooting a video to undertake an active inquiry into an area of study, and to make it into something of their very own.

Betsy Newman is a recent recipient of a New York Foundation for the Arts fellowship in video. Her most recent works are Rebel Hearts, a mixed-form documentary about abolitionists Sarah and Angelina Grimke, and Crossing Brooklyn Bridge, a video installation based on the Walt Whitman poem. Joseph Mara is an educational video consultant and director of the Teachers Media Center.

This essay is reprinted from the book *Reading, Writing and TV: A Video Handbook for Teachers*, Betsy Newman and Joseph Mara (1995, Highsmith Press; Fort Atkinson, WI).

WHEN DISTRIBUTORS COME A COURTIN'

Don't just go with the first taker. First Run Features' **Marc Mauceri** details the questions you need to consider when assessing distribution deals and sequencing options.

WHEN ANDREW YOUNG AND SUSAN TODD WON THE BEST DOCUMENTARY Award at the 1993 Sundance Film Festival for their searing documentary *Children of Fate*, they were flush with the kind of excitement that only a major award can bring. When the film was hailed in the press as "breathhtakingly poetic" and "an extraordinary, powerful work," Young and Todd were suddenly confronted with an intriguing thought: if people loved *Children of Fate* this much, maybe it shouldn't go on public television right away. Maybe it should have a theatrical release.

Another situation faced John Valadez and Peter Miller, the director and producer of *Passin' It On*. Their stirring documentary about the rise, fall, and resurrection of a Black Panther leader had garnered praise and had people talking. Now they and their distributor were thinking that perhaps a significant consumer market for a home video of *Passin' It On* existed. A nationwide public television broadcast was imminent, and some decisions had to be made quickly: how should they coordinate the home video release with the broadcast? And how could they try to protect the potentially lucrative educational market from the much cheaper home video price?

These decisions have to do with something called "sequencing," which is simply determining the order in which a film is sold or offered to various markets. Before we jump into what constitutes the "normal" sequence and some of the possible permutations, it is important to understand not only what the potential markets are, but why you must think about a possible sequence before you jump into bed with a distributor.

Markets & Avenues of Distribution

There are several markets and avenues of distribution for independent film: the festival circuit, theatrical, semi-theatrical, nontheatrical/educational, international, free television, basic cable, premium cable, rental-priced home video, sell-through-priced home video, and laser disc. The first thing you must do as a filmmaker is know these markets and decide which are most appropriate for your film. I will briefly go over them:

The *festival circuit* includes all festivals, large and small, in the U.S. and abroad, that exhibit new films. Some are more important than others, some are difficult to get into, and some simply require that you pay an entry fee. If you are trying to find a distributor, then those that attract large numbers of buyers are the best: Berlin, Toronto, Cannes, and Sundance are the ones most companies attend.

The *theatrical market* encompasses movie theaters, or, in legalese, locations designed primarily for the commercial viewing of motion picture entertainment that are open to general admission. Whether it is a 16-

plex, a calendared art house, or your local single-screen movie palace, they all fall under this designation.

Semi-theatrical sounds a bit odd, and the way I usually describe it is by saying what it is not. I include in semi-theatrical any place that rents films but is not a commercial movie theater or an educational, classroom situation. Practically speaking, this usually means film societies, museum film series, university film clubs, art centers, community organizations, and anyplace else that is nonprofit but open to the public. Contractually, semi-theatrical is almost always a part of nontheatrical; however, many distributors have separate sales people to handle semi-theatrical sales.

Nontheatrical/educational can more easily be defined: films and videos that are sold or rented to institutions for classroom or instructional use.

International, or foreign sales, is of course to any place outside of the U.S. Most countries where agents and distributors sell have approximately the same set of markets that are listed here. Some U.S. companies acquire (or try to acquire) not only domestic rights but also North American rights, which includes Canada.

Free television covers the networks, the wanna-be networks, local affiliates, and any public television entities. Within this market, independent films are rarely sold to any place other than public television.

Basic cable comprises those cable networks that do not have a premium charge attached to them for viewers. It includes Bravo, A&E, the Sci-Fi Channel, MTV, and Lifetime, among others.

Premium cable encompasses those cable networks that do have a premium, like HBO, Cinemax, the Movie Channel, and Showtime.

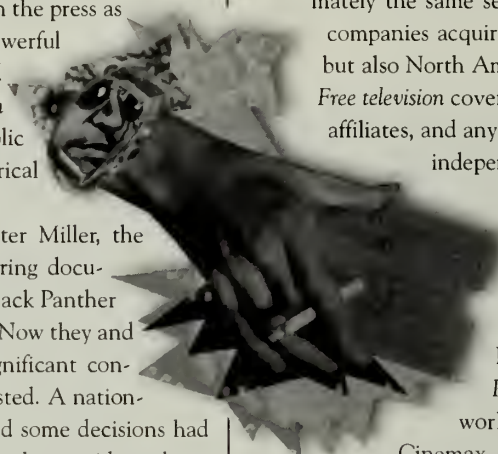
The *home video* market is considered by many distributors to be the most lucrative for their titles. There are two possible phases in home video, *rental* and *sell-through*. Rental means that the video is intended to be sold primarily to stores that rent out the video. Prices range anywhere from about \$59.95 to \$99.95. Sell-through means that the video is being offered at a lower price to entice consumers to purchase it. The sell-through price will range from around \$9.95 to \$29.95. Normally, a video is offered at a rental price first and then dropped to sell-through after at least six months. Since each phase has its own set of potential buyers, rental and sell-through are sometimes regarded as separate markets, with separate contractual terms.

Laser disc is usually treated as a variant of the home video market. Generally, the holder of the home video rights will try to sell the laser disc rights to a specialized distributor of laser discs. Sometimes a producer who knows the laser disc market will retain the laser rights and try to make that sale himself.

Why Think about Sequences?

It is easy to say, "Well, I'll let my distributor worry about which markets and sequence are best for my film. After all, they're the experts." But the producer who says this is making a mistake and may be endangering the successful exploitation of his or her film.

The truth is, some distributors are better in certain markets than others. If you can figure what the most exploitable markets are for your film, then you can find the distributor (or distributors) who best handles those markets. An obvious mistake would be to give an educational documen-



tary to a company that does not have a strong educational division, or to give a fiction feature to a company with no theatrical or home video division. A more subtle mistake might be in giving a film with strong catalogue potential to a distributor who does not like to drop the home video to sell-through (thereby eliminating most catalogue and consumer interest in the film; consumers do not like to buy, nor do catalogues like to list, home videos that cost \$70 or \$80).

If you have decided to split up the rights to your film among more than one company, then it is even more important to think about the possible sequence your film will have. Because each of the companies will have its own interest at heart, it will be up to you to coordinate when each offers the film to its particular market. You would not want your theatrical distributor, for instance, to delay the release of the film so that it ran into the television airdate. Similarly, you do not want your TV/cable distributor to commit the film to an airdate that does not leave time for a theatrical release. Or, in a more nuanced scenario, if your TV airdate is with a broadcast or cable company that makes lucrative sell-through home video sales through a card at the end of the broadcast, you want to make sure your home video is available at a sell-through price when that broadcast airs.

Once you have intelligently chosen a distributor, then it is time to sit down with them and determine—for real, this time—to which markets and in what sequence your film will be offered. It will probably come as a surprise to some producers that the distributor, once they have a signed contract, will then assume that the producer's participation in the distribution of the film has ended. It is up to you to make sure this does not happen. As a distributor, I have found that when a producer works closely with me on the distribution of the film, usually it is to the benefit of the film.

Determining the Sequence

There are some obvious—and not-so-obvious—factors that go into determining the distribution sequence that your film will follow. The most obvious factor is the “kind” of film you've made.

Different kinds of films do better in certain markets than others. A 45-minute documentary about the tribal conflict in Rwanda may appeal to educational and public television buyers, while a sexy, Generation X comedy will appeal to theatrical, home video, and cable buyers. The appeal of your film to the various markets will largely determine the sequential arc of your film.

Another fairly obvious factor is the “success” of your film. If your Generation X comedy finds no theatrical buyer, then it will be tougher to sell it to the home video and cable companies. Or if your Rwandan documentary wins some awards and rave reviews and is selected to appear in the New York Film Festival, then perhaps it may find a semi-theatrical or even a limited theatrical life. Success opens the doors to other markets; this is why a successful theatrical release is deemed so important for most fiction features, and why many companies are willing to take a loss in the theatrical marketplace trying to ensure success.

Another factor in determining the release sequence is who funded

“I am always saddened when a filmmaker says, ‘So-and-so picked up my film, but they didn't even pursue a (fill in the blank) release.’ I usually ask, ‘Did you talk about this before you signed a contract? Did you agree on the distribution strategy?’”

shown on cable may make its way into theaters, as Dahl's film did, or the superb documentary *Hearts of Darkness*, by George Hickenlooper. Another example is direct-to-video release, which is often funded by a home video distributor who may deem a theatrical release unnecessary. The bottom line: if the company that provided your budget is itself a player in any of the markets, then there is a chance your film will not be following the normal sequence.

And there is one more factor we should not forget: distributor preference. Distributors do not always like to do things the normal way. Some do not believe in wasting time with educational sales. Others do not believe in endangering educational sales with a home video release. Some do not want to “cheaper” their home video by dropping its retail price to sell-through. Still others pursue TV and cable sales at the cost of a potential theatrical release. I am always saddened when a filmmaker says to me, “So-and-so picked up my film, but they didn't even pursue a (fill in the blank) release.” I usually ask, “Did you talk about this before you signed a contract? Did you agree on the distribution strategy?”

The Normal Sequence

Let us consider the normal sequence of feature fiction films or high-profile documentaries.

The first step in sequencing is usually taken at least in part by the producer: the *festival circuit*. Once you have finished your film (and hopefully gone to the Caribbean for a couple weeks), the first order of business is to find a distributor. One way to do this is to enter your film in film festivals and markets. With luck (or simply because you have made a great film) you will soon find a distributor. That distributor may continue to have the film play the festival circuit, because it's good for publicity. A smart producer or distributor will work to withhold any local reviews—you do not want to be told six months from now on the eve of your theatrical release that a major newspaper will not re-review or re-print your festival review.

The next step is the most expensive, the most risky, and the most important: the *theatrical release*. Starting with exclusive runs in the major cities, your distributor will turn years' worth of blood, sweat, and tears into a product that can be seen by consumers for a small fee, usually about seven or eight bucks. Your initial opening weekend is the foundation for this vital market: strong numbers will lead to more weeks, which will lead to more cities, and to more theaters. You are not only selling a product, you are creating an awareness. This awareness will benefit every other market you approach.

Now consider those theatrical documentaries that can also be seen as educational: with a little coordination and common sense, the educational buyers and programmers can be approached from the outset of a

your film. If it was funded in large part by a public television entity, then your funders are going to want to see the film on public television sooner rather than later. They may or may not allow a theatrical window. Or perhaps you were involved with a made-for-television/cable film, like John Dahl's hugely successful *The Last Seduction*. Once in a blue moon, a film that was originally

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film's distribution. The distributor should not allow any sales or rentals that might interfere with a theatrical opening—those angry calls from theater owners who have discovered their neighboring university just had a big symposium featuring the film he is about to open are quite unpleasant.

The same applies to *semi-theatrical* rentals. Since some cities have few or no theaters that cater to independent film, your work will often have to open in a semi-theatrical location if it is going to play at all. In this sense you want to treat these customers the same as any other theatrical venue: approach them from the beginning and try to set up playdates that follow the openings in any nearby larger cities. Just be careful again not to step on anybody's toes.

Once you have finished your major theatrical runs—which can take anywhere from a few months to more than a year—your distributor will set a release date for the *home video*. Usually the video will be offered at the rental price first, and targeted at chains, stores, and the sub-distributors who handle both. About six to nine months after the video release date your distributor may choose to pursue the consumer home video market. If they do, they will drop the price to sell-through (which will have its own release, or availability date) and target the chains, stores, and sub-distributors for the second time around, as well as now pursuing the catalogue market. They may even take out advertisements in magazines or newspapers to sell to consumers directly.

In the meantime, your TV or cable date should be coming up soon. It is more common for the initial home video release to precede any cable or TV broadcasts than for those air-dates to precede the home video. After all, why is the person who wants to see your film going to rent it for three dollars if it has already been on television for free? But many exceptions exist to this rule, especially for smaller independent films: the TV/cable entity may need it for a certain slot; they may offer more money, or exert more pressure, to premiere it before any home video date; or your home video release may have been delayed or is not happening at all.

What about free TV versus the different levels of cable? Hollywood films and a very few high-profile independent films will usually play first on premium cable and then be sold to free TV and basic cable. The typical independent film is more or less offered to everyone at once, and whoever comes up with the most money

gets it. Unless you have made a particularly successful or relevant film, you will not have too many subsequent sales.

Your *international* distributor or sales agent will probably try to start selling your film as soon as you have signed the contract. This will have little effect on anything happening domestically. Often a film's success in the U.S. makes it easier to sell to foreign markets. Unfortunately the reverse is not always true.

The final piece of the puzzle—*laser disc*—is usually sold and released well after the home video date. Laser disc distributors can afford to be choosy: there are a lot more films than the existing companies can handle. So do not be heartbroken if no offers are made. I suspect that if the laser disc catches on with more consumers, more companies will form and a broader range of titles will be purchased for the laser disc market.

It is important to understand that sometimes all of these markets are approached from the outset. A distributor who has laid out a serious advance will often start the legwork leading to a successful cable or home video sale before the contract is even signed. This will not necessarily change the sequence of distribution, but it might allow the company president to sleep at night. And sometimes the opposite is true: a distributor will wait for theatrical success before approaching anyone; after all, a hit is easier to sell than a film no one has heard of.

Educational Films

Educational films and videos appeal to fewer markets than features, and these markets are less dependent on being in a particular sequence. Universities, schools, libraries, and other institutions should be approached over the life of the contract. A new class whose subject is the same as your film may begin anytime. When a new Department of Asian Studies is created by a school, they may want to acquire a dozen of the best films about Asia that have been made in the last 10 years. If your film is good, it may not matter if it is a few years old.

Television or cable sales of educational films or videos are welcome at any point. While a broadcast may have a slight negative effect on higher-priced sales, the awareness that is created by the broadcast may lead to other sales.

A serious issue for documentaries that straddle the line between education and entertainment is home video. Many distribu-

tors believe that a cheaply priced home video will undercut nontheatrical sales of the same title. Since the nontheatrical price for a video can be as much as \$500, there is usually a big price difference. Educational buyers looking to stretch their purchasing dollars may be tempted to buy the cheaper tape, even though nontheatrical rights do not come with a home video (which is intended solely for home use). This issue leads to some documentaries never being offered to the home video market, because the educational market is deemed more lucrative.

Summing Up

So, what happened to *Children of Fate* and *Passin' It On*?

The directors and producers of *Children of Fate*, along with their distributor, decided to forgo the early public television date. The film opened up theatrically in calendared art houses in the major cities. Despite mostly favorable reviews, the film did not draw in large enough audiences to make it a hit. A sale was made to HBO for approximately the same amount as the PBS sale, due in large part to the quality of the film and also to the fact that it had a theatrical release and received good press. Home video was avoided for fear the sales would not be strong enough to justify jeopardizing the educational market.

For *Passin' It On*, the distributor went into high gear and released the home video at a sell-though price (\$29.95) a couple of weeks before the airdate. A card offering the home video was placed at the tail end of the broadcast. All in all, for a serious documentary with no theatrical exposure, it sold well in home video, grossing almost \$15,000 in its first year of release. The distributor tried to minimize the harm done to the nontheatrical market by being flexible with the nontheatrical pricing, at times offering as much as 25 to 50 percent off the \$390 list price.

Sequencing is something that is rarely thought about by anyone other than distributors. But in this brave new world of media, with its myriad market options and the labyrinth in which they co-exist, it is time for the producer to think about sequencing as well. After all, you've worked hard to make your film. Don't you want it to have the best release possible?

Marc Mauceri heads the theatrical division of First Run Features, a New York-based distribution company. This essay appears in the book *The Next Step: Distributing Independent Films and Video*, Morrie Warshawski, ed., due out this fall from FIVE.

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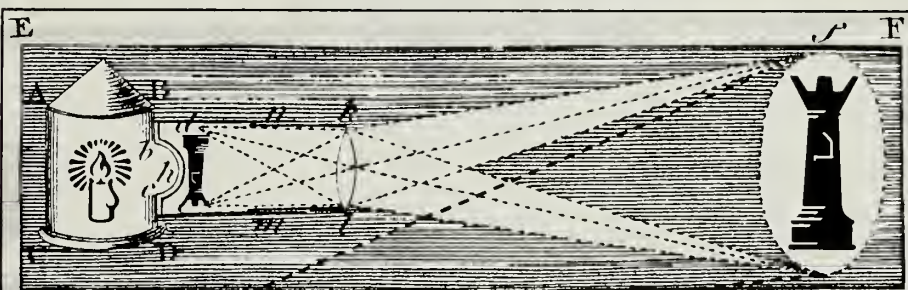
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The Wisdom of the Ancients

Film Editing Nutz & Boltz

by Tom Bullock (aka Film Guy)

Metro International, Inc., 1994; 200+ pp.; \$40

BY ALAN BERLINER

Whenever I teach workshop classes in film editing, one of the first questions I ask the students is why, in this age of nonlinear digital-access editing systems, are they interested in learning a technology that is antiquated, if not primitive, by comparison? Inevitably, it occurs to one of them to ask me (if only rhetorically) why I still choose to teach in "the ancient tradition."

We all have the right to question why suddenly there's a new book on the market, *Film Editing Nutz & Boltz*, offering "a complete guide to 16mm and 35mm film postproduction." What is left to be said at this stage of the game? As with any discussion of editing, the answer lies not in what you say, but in the way you say it.

Despite being a technical book, *Film Editing Nutz & Boltz* has lots of personality. Written in a California user-friendly style by Tom Bullock (aka "Film Guy"), it mixes a sincere love of film with a kind of benevolent street wisdom, what the author describes as "basic working truths" derived "after much painful and costly trial and error" during his career as a film editor.

Nutz & Boltz is actually two books in one. Flip it over and upside down and *Film Editing Nutz & Boltz* becomes *Sound Editing Nutz & Boltz*. There's even a third smaller section on the basics of video editing. Like most how-to books, it does not attempt to cover the aesthetic issues of editing; it simply teaches the basics in a step-by-step manner, occasionally digressing about the creative potentials of particular approaches and procedures.

There are myriad forms and charts—budgets, schedules, dailies, edit and select logs, optical and negative count sheets, cue sheets, foley sheets, and ADR sheets, among others—all of which you are encouraged to copy and use for your own projects. Although it is sprinkled with silly computer



graphic illustrations and references to a somewhat sophomoric hypothetical film titled *Zitz in Bondage*, one easily excuses these excesses in light of the amiable spirit that permeates the book. Even the extensive glossary, purposely placed at the front of the book, is filled with helpful and comforting first-person annotations.

So why this book now? One way or another, all of the newfangled nonlinear editing systems are designed to mimic the mechanical and aesthetic processes of film editing. Even the universally appropriated words common to all editing systems—splice, cut, trim, and extend, for example—are based on the tactile hands-on activities of the film editor. In video editing, one punches buttons to create "edit events"; in digital editing one waits for the computer to "render" transition effects; in both cases, one is instructing a machine to conjugate editing ideas. In film, one simply does it oneself. Or undoes it. Or redoes it. It's messy, cumbersome, inefficient by comparison, and it takes more time. But there's nothing like it.

Am I being too sentimental? Probably. I realize, as does Film Guy, that eventually everyone will be using nonlinear editing systems, particularly when they become more affordable. What, then, of the role of film?

By way of comparison: I suppose it's possible to learn the rules of baseball by playing video games, but when it comes right down to fully appreciating the sport, there's no better teacher than the actual feel of wood against ball, the thud of ball into mitt, and the dust storm following a reckless head-first slide into second base.

And so, my students are correct in thinking

that if they can understand how the vocabulary for "editing" was originally derived—if they can learn what it is to physically manipulate the "old fashioned" ribbons of cellulose acetate and experience what Tarkovsky called "sculpting time"—they will become better filmmakers and editors in whatever editing media the future brings. In *Film Editing Nutz & Boltz*, I think we've found a good new textbook to guide them.

Alan Berliner is an independent filmmaker and media artist living in New York City. His Intimate Stranger and Family Album have been exhibited in festivals, universities, museums, and broadcast worldwide.

On the Money

Film and Video Budgets, 2nd. ed.

by Michael Wiese & Deke Simon

Michael Wiese Productions, 1995; 463 pp.; \$26.95

BY PETER MILLER

The second edition of *Film and Video Budgets* is a thorough piece of work which could serve as a helpful reference guide for many film- and videomakers. It's the latest offering from Michael Wiese Productions, a publishing company specializing in how-to books for film and video producers with stirring titles like *The Digital Videomakers' Guide*.

Nearly twice as thick as the popular first edition, originally published in 1984, the revised *Film and Video Budgets* is also organized somewhat more sensibly. Sections on creating a production entity and doing preproduction come before daunting lists of potential line items and sample budget forms. The reader is thus encouraged to hire a good lawyer and negotiate all prices before she even thinks about creating a budget.

But most people will probably start by looking at the pictures, which in this case are detailed sample budgets. The samples range from a \$5 million feature to a 30-minute video documentary, a music video, and a bare-bones student film.

I get the sense that Wiese's heart is in the larger commercial projects. Narrative sections about each line item (explaining why you might budget for a sound mix, an animal trainer, or a key grip, for example) cover topics that are gen-

erally irrelevant to most of the documentaries I've worked on. There are paragraphs on studio cameras, 16 and 35mm film cameras, and camera trucks, but only passing mention of a basic Betacam SP or Hi-8 field production package—the kind of production equipment most independent documentarians are using these days.

Wiese and Simon have a whole slew of "desperate measures" listed, included paying talent and crew with free lunch—good advice we all have to follow at times. But less desperate measures—plugging into the existing network of service organizations created to help independents—aren't mentioned. Low budget film- and videomakers should be alerted to the resources available at their local media arts center or community television station.

An appendix lists trade associations, magazines, and technical journals, but doesn't mention such obvious friends of independent video and filmmakers as the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF), Film Arts Foundation, and the Independent Television Service (ITVS). And why do the authors insist on breaking down even the smallest budget into above- and below-the-line categories? These are terms that don't mean anything to most independent film- and videomakers.

Finally, many of us make budgets as parts of fundraising packages for potential donors. A two-page essay by grants guru Morrie Warshawski is helpful, but feels like an afterthought. Strategic budgeting as part of the grant-seeking process deserves more attention. It might be helpful to show a budget with an "income" page, listing the real and potential sources of support for a proposed project.

While *Film and Video Budgets* offers sound wisdom that can be interpreted for most productions, perhaps the next revised edition could speak more to the challenges facing independent producers. That said, Wiese and Simon have done something rare and generous by sharing information based on their many decades of experience. This kind of sharing happens too rarely in this unnecessarily competitive field, and it should be encouraged. Independent film- and videomakers at all levels of experience would do well to buy a copy of this very helpful book, while continuing to talk among ourselves about budgeting, fundraising, and money-saving strategies we've developed over the years.

Peter Miller was coproducer of the labor history documentary The Uprising of '34 and is currently a producer on Ken Burns' Jazz series.

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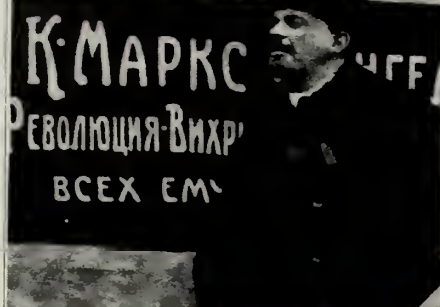


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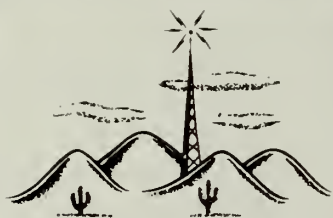
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Clause and Effect

Contracts for the Film & Television Industry
by Mark Litwak
Silman-James Press, 1994; \$29.95

BY ROBERT L. SEIGEL

In his last book, *Dealmaking in the Motion Picture & Television Industry*, attorney and author Mark Litwak provided a comprehensive guide to the fundamentals of entertainment law. Although that book included 20 basic agreements and releases covering such areas as employment contracts, location agreements, and licenses, his latest book, *Contracts for the Film & Television Industry*, includes approximately twice as many samples in quite extensive detail.

In the preface to *Contracts*, Litwak notes it should be regarded as a companion volume to *Dealmaking*, although both books can be read independently. The newer book contains some commentary at the beginning of each section explaining the provisions found in many contracts, including "boilerplate" clauses (e.g., notices to parties, the right to assign agreements to third parties, remedies for violations of agreements, etc.) But the bulk of the book comprises lengthy samples of those agreements commonly encountered in the entertainment industry: employment agreements (for actors, writers, directors, producers, crew, composers, and casting directors); rights releases (life story rights, photo and depiction releases, music clearances, and location agreements); financing and production contracts (joint ventures, co-productions and limited partnerships); and distribution agreements (for theatrical acquisition and release, licensing agreements in the television and home video markets, merchandising, and product placement).

(At this point I must confess in the interest of full disclosure that I submitted one or two agreements for this book at Litwak's request and am writing a book for Silman-James.)

Litwak helpfully provides agreements that address such complex concepts as "net profit" definitions, "gross receipts after breakeven" and pre-sales. However, some readers may be slightly disappointed that the private placement memorandum and the limited partnership agreement are for a low-budget equity waiver play and not for a film. But as Litwak explains, many of the terms are similar in both offering materials and financing agreements are similar, even though such sections as "Risk Factors" and "Industry Information" may differ. (For this reason, Litwak advises producers to hire an attorney with experience in both securities and entertainment law who can navigate the complex thicket of state and federal securities regulations.)

Overall, Litwak has succeeded in providing a

full range of agreements and introductions with a maximum of clarity and a minimum of confusing legal jargon.

Still, the issue must be raised whether readers should simply use the contracts in this book and forego the services of an attorney. The answer is no. This book can offer readers a better understanding of entertainment law and business, but there remains no substitute for the proper application of legal concepts and agreements to a particular producer's circumstances.

For the independent producer, writer, director, actor or composer, the agreements found in this book provide a checklist of key "deal points" found in agreements which an attorney may negotiate or, at least, review on behalf of a client. I am certain Litwak would agree that his books are meant as a source of information and not as a substitute for legal counsel, and provide a means by which producers and their attorneys can work together with a better understanding of the realities and complexities of the entertainment industry. One can only hope the information contained in this book may lessen or even eliminate the frequently stereotypical paradigm of the "money-grubbing" lawyer and the "free-loading" client so both parties may form stronger, more productive relationships.

Robert L. Seigel is a NYC entertainment attorney and a principal in the Cinema Film Consulting firm.

Encyclopedia Filmanica

A Political Companion to American Film
edited by Gary Crowdus
Lakeview Press, 1994; 523 pp.; \$50

BY KRISTIN WILCHA

"All films are political," states Gary Crowdus, founder of *Cineaste* magazine and editor of *A Political Companion to American Film*. The book is designed as a collection of critical essays on American genre films that puts them into social and political perspective. Crowdus points out in his preface that this book is not a reference guide, but rather a collection of essays meant to be a gateway to more extensive reading and research on film history and politics. Despite its claims, however, it reads much like an encyclopedia, with bibliographies at the end of each essay.

The essays cover virtually every aspect of mainstream cinema: preeminent directors, actors, studios, genres, and writers. Entries on filmmakers run approximately two to four pages; they are slightly longer when discussing genres or theory. There's a great deal of political and stylistic analysis of some of America's finest

directors, both past and present. In particular, Leonard Quart's look at the film works of Woody Allen and Martin Scorsese is thorough and informative.

A *Political Companion* does not, however, contain much insight or history on independent film. But a few essays do focus on formerly independent filmmakers who have gone mainstream but maintained their "indie edge." Two very good pieces in this vein are Thomas Doherty's bio of Spike Lee and Rob Edelman's brief but informative piece on influential African American filmmaker Melvin Van Peebles, who according to the author, "spawned an entire cinematic genre—feature films produced specifically for an African American audience." In addition, Quart's essay on John Sayles illustrates how one can straddle both the studio and independent worlds over the course of a career.

Crowdus includes a few entries on the documentary tradition in the United States. The "father of documentary film," Robert Flaherty, gets his due in an essay by Nancy Steffen-Fluhr, as does the short-lived but influential Film and Photo League in a detailed account by Dan Georgakas. Other documentary essays highlight Emil de Antonio and Paul Strand.

The volume touches briefly on modern film theory. Although dense and academic in spots, Robert Stam's overview of the major schools of thought—including feminism, social semiotics, reflexivity, and auteurism—is quite helpful in explaining basic theory to novices. His extensive bibliography includes such canonical texts as Andrew Sarris's book on auteurism, *The American Cinema: Directors and Directions*, and Mary Anne Doane's *Femme Fatales: Feminism, Film Theory, and Psychoanalysis*. Stam also has a separate piece devoted solely to auteurism, which further details this influential theory.

A *Political Companion to American Film* provides a thought provoking and informative starting point for individuals interested in investigating American film, particularly mainstream Hollywood. On the whole, the writing is accessible and doesn't succumb to overly technical or academic language. The book provides film stills when discussing genres and subgenres. (If only there were a CD-ROM companion to A *Political Companion*, with the complete texts of all the bibliographical references, plus QuickTime film clips.) In the meantime, the book can serve as a solid reference for those who want a basic introduction to film history and theory. But for those interested in a similar treatment of independent film, this probably isn't the book for you.

Kristin Wilcha attends the Gallatin School of Individualized Study at New York University and is a former editorial intern at The Independent.



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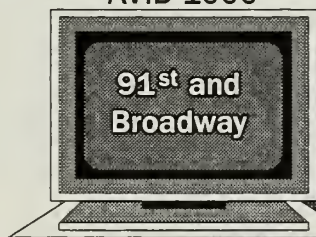
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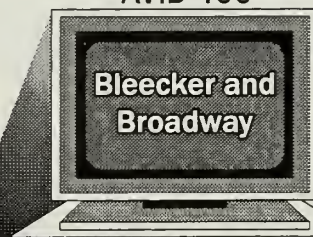
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New York naïf Ed does his best to woo a sophisticated but down-on-her-luck-with-men singer in John Walsh's debut feature, *Ed's Next Move*.

Bluehawk Films, John Walsh (914) 693-8601 or Sally Roy (212) 505-7641.

A verbal adoption agreement between Camille, a New York gallery owner, and Grace, her neighbor and a civil servant, means young Christopher will unknowingly grow up as the third vertex of a silent triangle. The triangle flexes when the boy, at 17, becomes HIV-positive. **The Love Lesson** (87 min., 35mm), director Sharon Greytak's latest film, is set against New York's art world: Camille's home is the site of regular meetings and readings by poets and writers. "The poets' voices echoing across a common courtyard become the bridge between Camille and Christopher's lives, as she steps into a role in his life she never wanted nor imagined." *The Love Lesson*, Sharon Greytak, 85 Eighth Ave., #2K, New York, NY 10011; (212) 243-1228.

Thirty-two-year-old Adam Isidore was just six when his father, who worked for Young & Rubicam at the time, helped to create television advertisements for the famed "Give a Damn" public service campaign of **DATE TK**. Amid the riots in Watts, Cleveland, and Washington, D.C., New York Mayor John Lindsay initiated the campaign to raise awareness and money to help alleviate the growing urban unrest. One memorable campaign spot featured 16 young students from Harlem's P.S. 197 answering the question, "What would you like to be when you grow up?" Isidore decided nine years ago to track down the children to see what had become of them. The search resulted in his first documentary, **Give a Damn Again** (16mm, 90 min., see "Cue & A"). A sale to Danish TV helped finance the project, which is still up for grabs in the U.S. *Give a Damn Again*, Red Barn Films, 149 Fifth Avenue, NY, NY 10010; (212) 982-6900.

"Surely the most fantastical locale ever to be taken completely for granted by its habitués," the crumbling, labyrinthine infrastructure of the New York underground is the topic of **No Accident** (28 min., b&w, Hi8), a new short by Michel

BY MITCH ALBERT

(*Jupiter's Wife*) Negroponte. The Virgil of this infernal tour—though Lucifer or some ranking demon might be better analogous—is John Giorno, the legendary, rant-ready, avant-sane poet and "semi-divine personification of the subway.... In a brutal landscape of stone and steel, [Giorno] reacts, watches, and lurks while delivering a recurring speech-song that seems to have been co-authored by the train and its passengers." *No Accident*, Michel Negroponte,

462 Broadway, ste. 520, New York, NY 10013; (212) 226-0034; fax: -1361.

The realm of the real often provides more drama than anything one can dream up. Fran Victor and Bill Harder's **Video for Youth Living Centers** (13 min., Beta SP) opens with a montage of actual TV news stories of child abuse in its various forms that segues into interviews with both an 18-year-old boy who spent his childhood in foster care and a mother who forfeited custody of her children once convicted of child abuse. Both these people received therapy and guidance from Youth Living Centers, a Michigan-based nonprofit center counseling individuals who perpetrate and/or are affected by child abuse. "We wanted the viewer to realize that these children are more than just news stories," Victor says. "Often the only way we can understand the damage done is to meet the children and families firsthand. The video supplies that dramatic exposure." *Video for Youth Living Centers*, Victor/Harder Productions, Inc., 6400 Farmington Rd., ste. 215, W. Bloomfield, MI 48322; (810) 661-6730; fax: 4117.

Ahh, life. The inspiration for writer/coproducer Peter Koper's script for **Headless Body in Topless Bar** (101 min., 35mm) came from the notorious 1983 *New York Post* headline, of course; but what transpired in the first place to earn that macabre announcement? Check out the subhead: "Gunman forces woman to decapitate tavern owner...." Koper and director James Bruce take off from there: An ex-con takes over a strip club and lays bare each hostage's deepest secrets. "As the situation deteriorates, issues surface that involve gender, institutionalization, and the deadly dance between victims and predators." Koper is, natch, a veteran of the Fox TV crimesploitation smash *America's Most Wanted*, while Bruce has done considerable work with Louis Malle. *Headless Body in Topless Bar*, Green Tea Productions, Inc., 55 Prince St., NY, NY 10012; (212) 925-6611.

CUE & A

Adam Isidore *Give a Damn Again*

Q: How did your father, Tony Isidore, become involved with the "Give a Damn" campaign that so many New Yorkers remember from the late sixties?

A: He was working as a creative director for Young & Rubicam at the time, and Mayor Lindsay turned to them to develop a campaign that included TV and radio spots and billboards. The campaign got a tremendous amount of free airtime. What motivated the campaign was fear.

Q: What interested you about the 16 public elementary schoolchildren featured in the PSA spot that made you want to track them down?

A: There was a striking difference in our upbringings. I was raised in suburban Westchester, and was always sensitive to the fact that, although we were similar in age, our situations were quite different. I was also motivated by the idea of family legacy.

Q: How did you get the money for the project?

A: I started filming nine years ago, which was also a conservative time. I received a grant from the American Film Institute, which they were hesitant to give me because I wasn't a Black filmmaker.

Q: What was the most difficult part of getting started?

A: Locating the 16 former students. The Board of Ed wouldn't release records, so I basically put up posters with lists of the students' names around Harlem. Between 1986 and 1990. I shot between 16- and 18,000 feet of film. In 1990, I was tired of trying to raise money and I stopped filming. For years the footage was literally hanging over my head in my loft space, but I didn't have the money to do more.

Q: What prompted you to complete the project?

A: In 1990 the L.A. riots took place. I got pissed off and found myself as guilty as anyone else of ignoring racial issues. I tried to interest the broadcast networks in the project, and I got close a few times, but one network blew up a truck so it never panned out. I saw a lot of my friends making films with no money and was inspired by them to go the grassroots route. I asked the crew to work deferred, which I hadn't done earlier.



Q: I heard you did some creative fundraising to complete the film.

A: I held a Bowlathon, and raised \$10,000 in one night. One friend raised \$900 going door to door and soliciting sponsors. We also went to commercial production houses and asked for short ends. They gave us 35mm, which we traded in for 16. I learned that the Goddess of Documentaries is out there. If you're serious enough about completing a project, the universe backs you up. Don't be scared to ask for favors.

Q: What's the film's budget?

A: It's about \$250,000 to \$350,000 in goods and services.

Q: Was it a conscious decision to include yourself in the documentary?

A: At first I didn't want myself in the film. I wasn't even miked the first four years. Then I decided it could accomplish a couple things: It could serve as a narrative thread, and could enable white viewers to identify. It also helped to personalize the film, and to show that each generation has to embrace the issues.

Change happens on two levels: First, on a personal level. Even small acts of kindness are important. Second, things change when there's a group consensus. Nowadays, however, the group consensus is one of mean-spiritedness. We love to throw around the term "family values," but we don't care in the same way.

Q: Since this was your first film, what did you do to prepare?

A: It's a strange coincidence, but the Maysles

brothers, Joe Berlinger, Andy Young, and I all went to the same high school, so I picked their brains about what festivals to apply to. We've screened *Give a Damn Again* both at the USA Film Festival and Worldfest Houston.

Q: What did you learn about the state of racial affairs in the U.S. by making the documentary?

A: I learned that there's a much more established Black middle class now. I, like most people, envisioned Harlem as poor. But many people in the film grew up with a sense of financial security.

Q: What's your next project?

A: I have the first draft for a feature, a comedy about a second-generation Russian who returns to his country. It's *Local Hero* meets *Married to the Mob*.

—MICHELE SHAPIRO

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DOMESTIC

BLACK MARIA FILM AND VIDEO FESTIVAL, Jan. through May, NJ. Fest seeks to "identify, exhibit & reward compelling new ind. media, to reach audiences in a wide variety of settings nationwide & to advocate exceptional achievement that expands the expressive terrain of film & video." Fest was founded in 1980 in honor of Thomas A. Edison, who developed motion picture medium & whose film studio, the Black Maria in West Orange, NJ, was the world's first. No cat-related restrictions; each work judged on own merit. Fest is looking for any combination of inventive, incisive, responsive & provocative work of any style or genre. Featured works are screened at over 50 venues throughout US & Canada, incl. Hirshhorn Museum; Donnell Library & Millennium, NYC; IMAGE, Atlanta; Visual Studies Workshop; School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; Chicago Art Institute; Virginia Museum of Fine Arts; Baltimore Film Forum & Rutgers Film Co-op. Program also cablecast to 250 subscribers. Awards: Jurors' Choice Works (share \$2,500); Jurors' Citation Works (share \$2,000); Directors Choice Works (share \$1,000); plus \$5,000 or more in exhibition honoraria based on length of work & number of times screened. Entries must have been completed w/ in previous 3-1/2 yrs & may be up to 100 min. long. Entry fee: \$35-\$45, depending on length. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", S-8. Deadline: mid Nov. Contact: John Columbus, fest dir., Black Maria Film & Video Festival, Dept. of Media Arts, Jersey City State College, 203 West End Ave., Jersey City, NJ 07305; (201) 200-2043; fax: 3490.

BOSTON ASIAN AMERICAN FILM AND VIDEO FESTIVAL, Nov., MA. This fest is cosponsored by Asian American Resource Center & Museum of Fine Arts. Portion of programming comes from Asian CineVisions's traveling int'l film fest; rest is curated by Boston programmers. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4". No entry fee. Deadline: early March. Contact: Bo Smith, Boston Asian American Film and Video Festival, Museum of Fine Arts, 465 Huntington Ave., Boston, MA 02115; (617) 267-9300.

CINE ESTUDIANTIL, Nov., CA. Cine Estudiantil, founded in 1994, is only fest in US solely dedicated to student films/videos depicting Chicano/Latino/Native American experience. Sponsored by Centro Cultural de la Raza, fest looks for submissions made by, about, or for these communities by students enrolled in educational institutions during time of prod. Entries must have been completed w/ in previous 2 years. Fest incl. screenings throughout San Diego & Tijuana community, discussions w/ filmmakers & catalog of all screened works. Centro Cultural de la Raza is multidisciplinary cultural arts center that preserves, promotes & stimulates Chicano, Mexican & Native American art & culture through workshops, performing, literary & media arts presentations. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2"; preview on cassette. Entry fee: \$5. Deadline: early March. Contact: Ethan van Thillo, Cine Estudiantil, Centro Cultural de la Raza, 2125 Park Blvd., San Diego, CA 92101; (619) 235-6135 x17.

FILM ARTS FESTIVAL, Late June/early July, CA. Noncompetitive regional showcase is for ind. works of any length on any subject by Northern CA film & video artists. Founded in 1984, it is sponsored by the media arts center Film Arts Foundation. Programming is thematic, with the themes evolving from the works submitted. Honoraria (\$3/min.) is paid for all works shown other than those that have received FAF grants. Fest strongly advocates & promotes works to other fests, programmers, broadcasters & some distributors. Formats accepted: 35mm, 16mm, S-8, 3/4"; preview on 1/2". Entry fee: \$5 (early); \$10 (final). Deadline: early Nov. Contact: Lissa Gibbs, fest director, Film Arts Festival, FAF, 346 Ninth St., 2nd fl., SF, CA 94103; (415) 552-8760.

I-MAGIC FESTIVAL, Feb., NY. Sponsored by PR firm Select Media, first annual media fest & attendant awards contest for interactive media. Founded to "reward & encourage high quality interactive programming." Will insure that both mainstream & ind. prods. are invited to participate. Fest seeks entries in cats of home, office, school, health center & entertainment mall. Formats: CD-ROMs, games, Web sites. Entries judged by interactive industry professionals in rigorous 2-round competition, yielding finalists, award-winning entries & Best of Fest awards. Entry fee: varies (approx. \$145, call for specifics). Deadline: Oct. 9. Contact: Bonnie Halper, fest dir., c/o Select Media, 225 Lafayette St., ste. 1102, NY, NY 10012.

MIAMI INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Feb., FL. Sponsored by the Film Society of Miami,

this noncompetitive fest, founded in 1984, presents premieres of some of the newest films from US, Europe, Asia & Latin America; it has become known as gateway for Spanish language films into US. Features, docs, shorts, experimental & animation accepted. Emphasis given to personal appearances by both filmmakers & performers. There are several educational events with 2,000 attendees, incl. workshops on producing, directing, cinematography, writing, editing & other film prod. elements; special events are also held with actors/directors. 25 or more feature films shown during event. Entries should not be in theatrical release in US, even though they may have US distributors & must be completed after 1986. Short films must be 2-10 min. & features no shorter than 80 min. No entry fee. Formats accepted: 35mm. Deadline: early Feb. Contact: Nat Chediak, fest director, Miami International Film Festival, Rivergate Plaza Bldg., 444 Brickell Ave., Ste. 229, Miami, FL 33131; (305) 377-3456; fax: 577-9768.

NORTEL PALM SPRINGS INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Jan., CA. 17-day film fest, founded in 1990, presents opening & closing major films, galas honoring film industry legends, retros, shorts, PSIFF Awards & industry & consulate receptions. Audience awards are also offered. About 150 films from over 25 countries participate. Entries must have been completed within previous year; fest prefers premieres, but this is not a requirement. Formats accepted: 35mm, 16mm. Entry fee: \$60 feature/\$35 short. Formats accepted: 35mm, 16mm. Deadline: early Nov. Contact: Craig Prater, exec. dir., Nortel Palm Springs Int'l Film Festival, P.O. Box 2230, Palm Springs, CA 92263; (619) 322-2930; fax: 4087.

POETRY FILM & VIDEOPOEM FESTIVAL, Nov., CA. Ongoing since 1975 & established by the Poetry Film Workshop, fest showcases the latest cutting-edge poetry-films & videos from US & abroad. Entries should combine literature (usually poetry), music & dynamic visual imagery to carry powerful poetic statement, often in brief, compact form under 10 min. No filmed poetry readings accepted. \$800 in cash & prizes presented, as well as nationwide tour for award winning works (which incl. TV & multimedia access venues). 1995 fest will focus on democracy, emerging technologies & arts under theme "The Psychological Frontier", utilizing accessible media outlets such as videoconferencing, the Internet & cable TV to explore dissemination of poetry & cinema into interactive electronic multimedia world. 1995 fest will also be presented at Charles University in Prague. Winners chosen from combination of audience ballots & from judges made up of leaders in literary & visual arts community in area. Fest appls can be downloaded from the CoSA Library located on AOL, Keyword: Videosig. Deadline: early Nov. Entry fee: \$15. Formats accepted: 16mm, 1/2". Contact: George Aguilar, curator, Poetry Workshop, Fort Mason Cultural Center, Building, SF, CA, 94123; (415) 776-6602; fax: 3206; e-mail: GAMuse@aol.com.

PORTCHESTER FILM FESTIVAL, Nov. 11, NY. First yr. for noncompetitive open screening that will present works not usually seen. All genres. Works entered are all screened. Formats: S-8, 16mm, VHS, 3/4", Hi8; preview on 1/2". Works under 60 min. preferred. Entry fee: \$5. Deadline: Oct. 15. Contact: S. DeBlasio, 630 Gramatan Ave., Mount Vernon, NY 10552.

PORTLAND JEWISH FILM FESTIVAL, Jan., OR. First annual edition of fest was held in early 1995, premiering an int'l selection of films exploring Jewish history, culture & identity as expressed in dramatic features & challenging docs that celebrate diversity of Jewish life. All films are followed by post-film discussion; screenings held at the Portland Art Museum. Formats accepted: 35mm, 16mm. No entry fee. Deadline: mid-Nov. Contact: Dan Eichler, Portland Jewish Film Festival, Northwest Film Center, 1219 S.W. Park Ave., Portland, OR 97205; (503) 221-1156; fax: 226-4842

PORTLAND REEL MUSIC FESTIVAL, Jan., OR. Reel Music celebrates intersection of film/video & music. Each year's program is eclectic blend of new & vintage works that document, interpret & celebrate great artists in jazz, rock, blues, country, reggae, third world, classical, opera & new music. Docs, shorts, animation, musicals, bio-pics, concerts, etc. welcomed. Special programs incl. live film/music performances & concerts. Formats accepted: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", S-8, Beta, 8mm. No entry fee. Deadline: mid-Nov. Contact: Bill Foster, dir., Portland Reel Music Festival, Northwest Film Center, 1219 S.W. Park Ave., Portland, OR 97205; (503) 221-1156; fax: 226-4842.

RAINY STATES FILM FESTIVAL, Feb., WA. Rainy States Film Fest is annual showcase of ind. & low-budget films produced in the Pacific Northwest. Founded in 1994, fest programs about 6 features & 20 shorts. Formats accepted: 35mm, 16mm. Entry fee: \$15-\$20. Deadline: Nov. 15. Contact: Chip Phillips, exec. dir., Rainy States Film Festival, 1202 East Pike, Ste. 1240, Seattle, WA 98122-3934; (206) 322-3572; e-mail: chip@halcyn.com

SAN ANTONIO CINEFESTIVAL, Feb., TX. This yr CineFestival celebrates 18th edition as country's longest running int'l Latino film & video exhibition. It provides forum for viewing representative sampling of works produced by & about Latinos & int'l Latino experience & also fosters discussion of relevant topics affecting media arts. Fest is comprised of exhibitions of programmed entries at the Guadalupe Theater & other venues, public forums/discussions & media arts workshops. CineFestival's Premio Mesquite & Honorable Mentions are awarded by jury composed of media arts & humanities professions & Guadalupe Theater constituents, in cats of fiction (short/feature/made for TV), doc (short/feature/made for TV), animation, experimental, & emerging artists/first work. Special jury award presented non-categorically to entry which best exemplifies the spirit of CineFestival. Any agency, organization or individual producing films &/or videos of direct relevance to the Latino commu-

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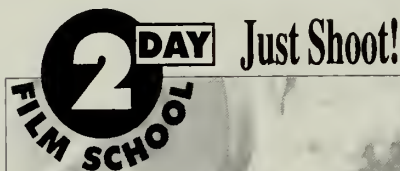
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nity is eligible. Work must have been completed with-
in previous 2 yrs. PSAs, industrials & promotional
works not eligible. Formats accepted: 35mm, 16mm,
S-8, 3/4", 1/2". Deadline: mid-Nov. Contact: San
Antonio CineFestival, Guadalupe Cultural Arts
Center, 1300 Guadalupe St., San Antonio TX 78207;
(210) 271-3151; fax: 3480.

SAN FRANCISCO INTERNATIONAL ASIAN
AMERICAN FILM FESTIVAL, March, CA.
Founded in 1982, this noncompetitive fest is one of
larger & more prominent showcases for latest & best
works from Asian Americans & Asia, offering mix of
about 100-120 works, incl. small number of features
(20-30) w/ strong ind. & experimental representa-
tion. Focus is on contemporary films & videos; pro-
gram incl. special panels & other events. Entry fee:
\$10. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2". Deadline:
mid-Oct. Contact: Paul Yi, fest dir., SF Int'l Asian
American Film Festival, 346 Ninth St., 2nd fl., San
Francisco, CA 94621; (415) 863-0814; fax: 7428.

SLAMDANCE: ANARCHY IN UTAH—ANNU-
AL GUERRILLA INTERNATIONAL FILM FES-
TIVAL, Feb., UT. Organized by 3 young filmmakers,
fest was estab. to give low-budget, first-time filmmak-
ers chance to screen work. Held in Salt Lake City &
Park City, UT as ind. alternative & complement to
the Sundance Film Festival. Several entries in 1st edi-
tion (1995) were world premieres. Shorts program-
med before features. 1996 edition will offer expanded
program of more feature films & shorts, continuing to
focus on low-budget films by first-time directors &
adding film market. Market will utilize computer
technology, incl. several Web sites, as add'l access to
the films, works in progress & screenplays. Through
use of cutting edge Internet program, filmmakers
have own trailers, prod. information, artwork, credits,
synopsis & contact information laid out on screen.
Info stays on Net for period after end of fest. Works in
progress & promo trailers accepted for market.
Market participation is \$75. No official cats, but there
may be for future fests. Entry fee: \$30 (\$40 for late
deadline in Nov.). Formats accepted: 35mm, 16mm,
3/4", 1/2". Deadline: late Oct. Contact: Slamdance:
Anarchy in Utah—Annual Guerrilla Int'l Film
Festival, 2419 Oak Str.-A, Santa Monica CA 90405;
(310) 399-5521; Features: Jon Fitzgerald (310)
399-5521; Shorts: Shane Kuhn (310) 393-4154;
Shelagh Conley, programming dir. (713) 486-7831;
Peter Baxter, artistic director (310) 822-6661.

**ERRATA: SUNDANCE FILM FESTI-
VAL, Jan., UT.** The phone & fax numbers in the
Aug./Sept. fest column were incorrect. The cor-
rect numbers are: (310) 394-4662; (310) 394-
8353.

UNIVERSITY OF OREGON QUEER FILM FES-
TIVAL, Feb., OR. Fest, founded in 1993, incl. open
competition of queer film & video shorts & 2 nights
of programmed features & shorts. Emphasis of fest is
on queer topics & work by queer artists. Each fest
incl. special guest speaker/artist, as well as presenta-
tion by students in film studies. Entries are limited to
works of 45 min. or less. Awards: \$200 Jury's Choice,
\$100 & \$50 in doc, drama & experimental cats.
Formats accepted: 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", S-8, Beta, 8mm.
No entry fee. Deadline: early Nov. Contact: Debby
Martin, fest coordinator, University of Oregon Queer

Film Festival, Student Activities Resource Office,
Erb Memorial Union, ste. 2, University of Oregon,
Eugene OR 97403; (503) 346-4000; fax: 4400; e-
mail: debby_martin@ccmail.uoregon.edu

FOREIGN

BERLIN INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTI-
VAL, Feb., Germany. The Berlin International
Film Festival is one of world's top int'l fests, with
9,000 guests attending fest & European Film
Market each year. 1995 marked 45th edition of
fest, which offers ind. filmmakers hospitable
atmosphere. Supported by all levels of German
government, fest is divided into 7 sections, each
with own character & organization. Int'l
Competition: newly released & unreleased 70mm
& 35mm features programmed by invitation of
fest director. 2 sections known for strong program-
ming of US ind. films are: Int'l Forum of New
Cinema & Panorama (noncompetitive section of
official program). Both screen narrative, doc &
experimental works. Forum specializes in avant-
garde intellectual & political films (60 min. & up,
16mm & 35mm) & also shows more commercial
films. Panorama presents wide range of work from
low-budget to more commercial ventures, incl.
studio films (features & shorts under 15 min.,
70mm, 35mm, 16mm). Other sections:
Kinderfilmfest, 35mm & 16mm films over 59 min.,
produced for children; New German Films;
Retros. The European Film Market: important
meeting place for screenings & sales, with reps
from over 40 countries. All entries must be pro-
duced in 12 mos preceding fest & not released
theatrically or on video in Germany. American
Independents & Features Abroad (AIFA) show-
case w/ market booth, organized by New York
Foundation for the Arts (NYFA) along w/ consor-
tium of 100 ind. media organizations, is center of
activity for US indies. AIFA distributes catalog,
arranges screenings, organizes press conferences &
other functions. Along w/ films selected by fest,
AIFA represents about 20 theatrical features &
docs w/ theatrical possibilities in European Film
Market. For info on AIFA, contact: NYFA, 155
Avenue of the Americas, NY, NY 10013-1507;
(212) 366-6900; fax: 1778, after mid-Sept.
Entrants may also contact US Forum rep Gordon
Hitchens, 214 West 85th St., #3W, NY, NY
10024-3914; tel/fax: (212) 877-6856. Deadline:
late Nov. Formats accepted: 35mm, 16mm; pre-
view on cassette. No entry fee. Fest address: Berlin
International Film Festival, Budapeststrasse 50,
10787 Berlin, Germany; tel: 011 49 30 25 48 90 or
21 36 039; fax: 011 49 30 25 48 92 49.

BRUSSELS INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL
OF CARTOONS & ANIMATED FILMS, Feb.,
Belgium. Since 1982 fest has been showcase for
new, interesting works in animation, providing
opportunity for films to be seen by Belgian film &
TV distributors. Fest has the support of Belgian
Television (RTBF) & Pay TV Canal Plus Belgique;
this yr. Canal Plus Belgique broadcasts entire day
of animation linked to fest. While non-competi-
tive event, it is 1 of top 8 European animation
fests involved in nominating films that eventually
compete for Cartoon d'Or. Close to 34,000 spec-

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tators attend the hundreds of film premieres & retros, numerous exhibitions & special guests. Computer animation (including Pixel 1na prizewinners from Imagina), children's programs, & short ind. animation are some fest highlights. Formats accepted: 35mm, 16mm, Beta. No entry fee. Deadline: mid-Nov. Contact: Philippe Moins, dir., Brussels Int'l Festival of Cartoons & Animated Films, Folioscope a.s.b.l., Rue de la Rhetorique 19, 1060 Brussels, Belgium; tel: 011 322 534 4125; fax: 011 322 534 2279.

BRUSSELS INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Jan., Belgium. Founded in 1974, fest is competitive fest for general interest films, annually showing about 100 features & 120 shorts. European films & Belgian shorts are eligible to compete for the Golden Iris Award. Sections incl. Official Selection, Trouvailles, Special Events, Tributes, the National Short Film Competition, Belgian Focus, & Eurimages. Feature entries should be over 60 min., & shorts should be under 20 min. Formats accepted: 35mm. No entry fee. Deadline: late Oct. Contact: Christian Thomas, delegate general, Brussels Int'l Film Festival, Palais des Congres, Chausse de Louvain 30, 1033 Brussels, Belgium; tel: 011 322 218 1055; fax: 011 322 534 2279.

CINEMA DU REEL, March, France. As one of the major int'l fests devoted to ethnological & sociological doc cinema, Cinema du Réel, founded in 1979, is prestigious showcase, held at the George Pompidou Centre in Paris. It is followed by Overview of Ethnographic Films, held at the Muse de l'Homme. Feature, short, Betacam, Hi8 & high band videos produced between Jan. 1 & Dec. 31 of preceding year, not released theatrically in France or aired on French TV channel & unawarded at other French int'l film fests eligible. Fest sections: International Competition, French Panorama, Non-Competitive Program, & Special Screenings. Awards, decided by int'l jury incl Grand Prix (50,000FF), short film prize (15,000FF), Joris Ivens Prize to young filmmaker (15,000FF) & Multimedia Author's Society (SCAM) Prize (30,000FF). Jury of librarians & professionals award the Libraries Prize (30,000FF for films w/ French version or French subtitles) w/in int'l competitive section or French Panorama & Foreign Affairs Ministry awards Louis Marcorelles Prize. Detailed info (synopsis, technical details, etc.) must be sent to fest by deadline; no cassettes should be sent until requested, & entry forms are only forwarded on receipt of preliminary instructions. Special programs may incl. retro of docs from different specific geographic area or country. Formats accepted: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4" 1/2", Beta. No entry fee. Deadline: early Nov. Contact: Suzette Glenadel, deleguee generale, Cinéma du Réel, Festival Int'l de Films Ethnographiques et Sociologiques, Bibliotheque Publique d'Information-Centre Georges Pompidou, 19, rue Beaubourg, 75197 Paris Cedex 04, France; tel: 011 33 1 44 78 44 21; fax: 011 33 1 44 78 12 24.

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CRETEIL INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF FILMS BY WOMEN, April, France. One of world's oldest fests of films by women, this fest, held in Paris suburb of Creteil, celebrates 18th anniversary in '96. It attracts audiences of over 35,000, incl. filmmakers, journalists, distributors & buyers. Controversial & critical discussions traditionally part of proceedings. Sections incl. Competition, Retro of a modern woman director, Self Portrait of an Actress, Tribute to a pioneer of women's film, Young Cinema & Int'l program. Special events for 1996 incl. various themes (fantastic, eroticism, art, humor, thriller) treated by famous women directors worldwide; women's films from Balkans; exhibits, publications, symposium & round table about place of female filmmakers in cinema. Competitive section selects 13 narrative features, 13 feature docs & 30 shorts. All films shown 3 times. Awards incl. cash & equipment prizes: FF25,000 Prix du Public in each category; FF25,000 Grand Jury Prize, & six other prizes totalling FF50,000. Entries must have been directed or co-directed by women, completed since March 1 of preceding two yrs, not theatrically released in France, broadcast on French TV or shown at other French fests. All subjects, genres & styles considered. Student prods ineligible. Fest pays for accommodation for 3 days for filmmakers & round trip shipping for selected films. Entries need dialogue transcriptions, synopses, publicity & biographical material. Formats accepted: 35mm, 16mm; preview on 1/2" only. Entry fee: \$15, payable to Bernice Reynaud. Deadline: Nov. 15. For appl., send SASE to: Bernice Reynaud, California Institute of the Arts—School of Film/Video, 24700 McBean Parkway, Valencia, CA 91355; (805) 255-1050, x2421; fax: (213) 665-4138

FIPA INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF AUDIOVISUAL PROGRAMS, Jan., France. FIPA was created in 1987 in response to the need for a large-scale ind. event that recognized the range of audiovisual language & to recognize & reward exceptional audiovisual prods. 6 competition cats: Fiction (made for TV films in 1 or 2 parts); Series & Serials; Creative & Experimental Docs; Coverage of Social Events & Journalist Features; Music & Live Performance; Short Features (under 30 min.). Entries must have been completed within previous 12 mos., not previously entered in any int'l competition or int'l audiovisual fest & not distributed in France (w/exception of actuality programs in cat. Coverage of Social Events & Journalistic Features & of French programs broadcast after 10:00 pm for all other cats.) Prods created for initial theatrical distribution may not be entered. There are 6 juries, 1 for each cat. Special audiovisual memory cat will pay tribute to the prods of one or more int'l scriptwriters, directors, or other outstanding personalities who have contributed to the exceptional development of audiovisual arts. Non-competitive info section, Situations of French Creativity is devoted to nat'l prod. Awards: Grand Prix FIPA d'Or Cannes award for the best prod. in each of the divisions; Grand Prix FIPA d'Or Cannes award for best actress/actor. In addition, juries may award Prix Special FIPA d'Argent Cannes award for one prod. in each cat. Juries of cat Fiction & Series & Serials will be able to give special mention to the original music of competitive program. FIPA will present the Grand Prix Euro FIPA Duhonneur Cannes awards to outstanding personalities selected in Audiovisual Memory cat. Each year fest organizes conference around a theme chosen by Author's Associations & Telarama magazine, as well as numerous events to facilitate meetings among professionals & a press service for international promotional coverage. Formats accepted: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", B Festival International de Programmes Audiovisuels, 215, rue du Faubourg-Saint-Honore, 75008 Paris, France; tel: 011 33 1 45 61 01 66; fax: 011 33 1 40 74 07 96.

GRENOBLE FESTIVAL OF NATURE & ENVIRONMENT FILMS, Feb., France. This competitive fest, founded in 1977, is presented every 2 yrs, with its biennial audiences estimated at 14,000. Competition is open to narrative films & docs made after Jan. 1 of the preceding 2 yrs. Films should focus on nature, ecology, animals (whales, dolphins, etc.). Fest will provide food & lodging & participate in travel expenses for invited directors of selected films. Awards total 20,000FF, to be divided among winners. Formats accepted: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", Beta. No entry fee. Deadline: late Oct. Contact: M. Blanc, head officer, Festival Int'l du Film Nature & Environnement, Federation Rhone-Alpes de Protection de la Nature (FRAPNA), 5, Place Bir Hakeim, 38000 Grenoble, France; tel: 011 33 76 42 64 08; fax: 011 33 76 44 63 36.

INTERFILM, April, Germany. Founded in 1982, Interfilm is dedicated to ind., innovative & offbeat films & videos from throughout world. The theme of the 1996 fest is Myth & Magic. Fest accepts films & videos in all formats & there are no

restrictions on year of prod. or length. Formats accepted: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", S—8, Beta, 8mm. No entry fee. Deadline: late Nov. Contact: Herve Hermanns, Interfilm, Urbanstrasse 45, 10967 Berlin, Germany; tel: 011 49 30 6 93 29 59; Fax: 011 49 30 6 93 29 59.

JACA INTERNATIONAL SPORTS FILM FESTIVAL, Dec., Spain. Film & video prods about sports that help the diffusion of sports as cultural development are accepted into this competitive fest. All entries must have sports as central theme, not have been produced before Jan. 1 of the preceding 3 years, & have a max. duration of 45 min. Official Section has following parts: short films (up to 15 min.), feature films (up to 45 min.), didactic films (prods whose aim is to teach any kind of sport). Official prizes: Grand Prize City of Jaca Gold Deer & 500,000 ptas; Silver Deer & 100,000 ptas for best short; Silver Deer & 100,000 ptas for best feature; Silver Deer & 100,000 ptas for best didactic prod.; Bronze Deer & 50,000 ptas awarded at Jury's disposition; People's Prize; & Special Prizes. Formats accepted: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4" (PAL), Betacam. No entry fee. Deadline: late Oct. Contact: Joaquin Liendo, fest director, Festival Internacional de Cine Deportivo Ciudad de Jaca Palacio de Congresos, Avdenida Juan XXIII, 17, Apartado 33, 22700, Jaca (Huesca), Spain; tel: 011 34 974 35 60 02; fax: 011 34 974 35 56 63.

MALMO CHILDREN & YOUTH FILM FESTIVAL (BUFF), Jan., Sweden. Established in 1984, BUFF is largest Scandinavian fest for children & young people, with audiences drawn from schools in Malmo & surrounding area. Fest is noncompetitive. About 150-160 titles are shown to audiences estimated at 14,000 over 3 day event. Features, shorts, documentaries, experimental & animated works accepted. Program incl seminar for teachers & others who use film in their work, & there is a different theme each year. Beginning in 1996, BUFF will be co-produced with the Swedish Film Institute. Formats accepted: 35mm, 16mm. No entry fee. Deadline: early Nov. Contact: Ola Tedin, fest director, BUFF (Barn-Och Unjdousfilmfestivalen), Box 179, S-201, 21 Malmo, Sweden; tel: 011 46 40 30 78 22; fax: 011 46 40 30 53 22.

OPORTO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL-FANTASPORTO, Feb., Portugal. 1996 marks the 15th edition of Fantasporto, which debuted in 1981 as a non-competitive fest founded by editors of the film magazine Cinema Novo & has evolved into competitive fest for features which focus on mystery, fantasy & science fiction. Fantasporto has 4 sections: Official Section, a competition for fantasy films; New Directors Week, competition for 1st & 2nd films (no thematic strings); Out of Competition for Films of the World, information section & retro section. Awards: Best Film, Best Direction, Best Actor/Actress, Best Screenplay, Best Special Effects, Best Short Film; Special Award of the Jury. Fest runs in 3 theaters w/ 1,500 seats altogether & screens nearly 150 features. Press coverage is extensive & covers all major newspapers, radio stations & TV networks. Entries must have been completed in the previous 2 yrs. Format accepted: 35mm. No entry fee. Deadline: late November. Contact: Mario Dorminsky, dir, Fantasporto—Festival Internacional de Cinema do Porto, Cinema Novo Multimedia Centre, Rua da

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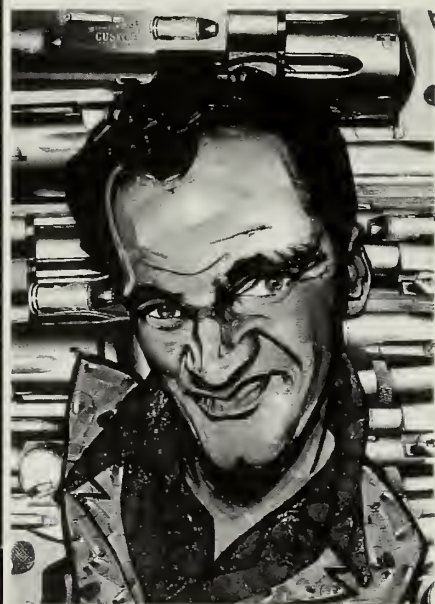


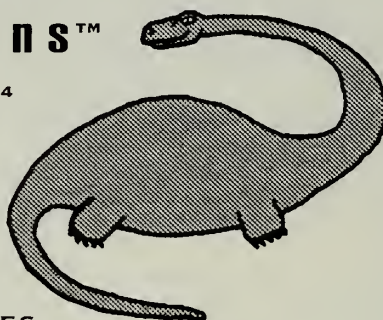
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ROTTERDAM INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Jan., The Netherlands. Rotterdam, 25 years old in 1996, is largest film fest in Netherlands & has rep for programming innovative, experimental new works alongside more commercial prods. In '95 more than 100 features had their world, int'l or European premiere here; more than 60,000 visitors put in over 250,000 attendances. Fest on par w/ Berlin & Sundance; describes itself as having eye for uncompromising individualism & political & social aspects of film. More than a showcase, it supports prod. & distribution of work. Main program consists of Tiger section, world & int'l premieres, selection from previous yr's int'l fests, sidebars, retros, Dutch Perspective, new Dutch films & Filmfree, a program that aims for a quick & effective response to cases of repression. Fest cats incl ind. features/short, doc & experimental. Noncompetitive fest offers a few awards. In 1995, it established 3 Tiger Awards, sponsored by Polygram, accompanied by \$10,000, to encourage promising new filmmakers; winners chosen from ranks of filmmakers premiering 1st or 2nd feature at fest. Other awards include Fipresci Award, presented by int'l organization of film journalists; Netpac Award, awarded by Network for Promotion of Asian Cinema; & Dutch Critics' Award. Fest also hosts Cinemart, important co-prod. market & meeting place for producers, distributors & financiers; about 50 film projects represented. Additionally, Hubert Bals Foundation offers financial support (deadlines: June 1 & Nov. 1) in cats of script & project development, prod. & postprod. funding, & distribution & sales. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2". No entry fee. Deadline: early Nov. Contact: Emile Fallaux, Stichting Film Festival Rotterdam, Box 21696, 3001 AR Rotterdam, The Netherlands; tel: 011 31 10 411 8080; fax: 011 31 10 413 5132; <http://www.fbku.nl/FFR>.

VOX ART VIDEO FESTIVAL OF SEA ART, December, Croatia. This fest, founded in 1994, began at video cinema Golden Doors in Split & is sponsored by Croatian & some int'l sponsors. Fest is dedicated to programming videos on all kinds of art in sea surrounding. Best works from fest showcased on local TV in Croatia & Europe & producers get special payments if some TV stations buy their work. Entries must be longer than 5 mins & less than 30 min. & completed w/ in preceding 3 years. Awards: first place in each cat awards summer full-paid 14-day vacation on the Croatian Adriatic coast; second place in all categories awards art of Croatian painters; third place awards special art presents. Formats accepted: 1/2" (PAL). Entry fee: \$35-\$50. Deadline: late Oct. Contact: Pero Vidakovic, dir., Vox Art Video Festival, Morske Umetnosti, Pero Vidakovic, Karamana 4, 58000 Split Croatia; tel 011 385 21 45384; fax: 011 385 21 343-45.

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COE FILM ASSOCIATES, INC. is screening for new channels covering docs on all subjects: comedy, children, animation & short dramas. 3/4" & 1/2". All material screened & returned w/in 3 wks. Send to: Beverly Freeman, Acquisitions, CFA, 65 E. 96th St., NY, NY 10128.

ECLECTIC ENTERTAINMENT CO., worldwide distribution for your "cutting-edge" art house or mainstream feature films. Send tapes to: 8033 Sunset Blvd., ste. 474, Los Angeles, CA 90046; (213) 930-2888; fax: 931-8836.

FANLIGHT PRODUCTIONS, distributor of award-winning film & video on disabilities, health care, mental health, family/social issues, etc. seeks new work for distribution to educational markets. Karen McMillen, Fanlight Productions, 47 Halifax St., Boston, MA 02130; (800) 937-4113.



MILLENIUM FILMS INC.: Unique opportunity. Distribution company actively seeking films, all types & lengths for worldwide distribution. Send VHS to: Millenium Films, Helen Hayes Theater, 240 W. 44th St., NY, NY 10036.

TAPESTRY INTERNATIONAL, LTD: Experienced worldwide TV & home video distributor of quality docs, drama, music, children's & cultural programming is actively seeking new acquisitions. VHS to: Attn: Anthony LaTorella, 920 Broadway, 15 fl., NY, NY 10010.

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FREELANCERS

16MM PROD. PKG. w/ cinematographer from \$200/day. Complete pkg. incl. camera, Nagra, mikes, Mole/Lowell lights, dolly, etc. 16mm post avail.: editing, sound xfers to 16 mag (.055/ft.) edgecoding (.01/ft.) sound mix (\$70/hr.). Tom: (201) 641-5532.

CINEMATOGRAPHER w/ interesting credits owns 35mm & Super 16/16mm Aaton pkg. for your feature film, short or music video. Call Brendan Flint for info & reel at (212) 226-8417 (tel/fax).

WORKING DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY, clients incl. TBS, Oscar Mayer & ind. features. Great lighting & complete 16mm sync camera or Beta. Mole lighting. Arri HMI, nonlinear editing just a call away. (203) 366-4061, bsterndp@aol.com. Bring the donuts, I'll do the rest.

AVID EDITOR, proficient, creative w/ PBS, HBO, MTV credits & access to inexpensive Avid system seeks work on narrative features & feature-length docs. No calls for short-term projects or freebies, please. Doug (212) 472-4766.

AVID 1000: Avid editing taught by experienced editors. Small master classes w/ 1-on-1 labs. Editors & system also avail. for ind. projects at negotiable rates. (212) 465-3153.

BETA SP cameraman w/ Sony 3-chip BVP-70/BVV-5SP, avail. for your project. Equip. pkg, DP kit, Sennheiser mics., 5-passenger van. Audio engineer avail. 3/4" Sony offline editing system. Thomas (212) 929-2439; (201) 667-9894.

BUSINESS SUPPORT SERVICES: Budgets, financial management, staffing, personnel, admin. Start-up & on-going support. Consult someone w/ 15 yrs. professional exp. incl. PBS/ITVS. Kate Lehmann

(612) 822-1240; e-mail: KATEL3317@aol.com.

CAMERAMAN: Aaton 16 & S-16mm, Beta SP, EVW 300 Pro Hi8, & Underwater 16mm prod. pkgs. avail, incl. lighting & car. The usual awards & experience in music video, commercials, features, PBS docs., industrials etc. Flexible rates for interesting ind. projects. David (212) 254-4566.

CAMERAMAN: Award-winning, sensitive, efficient. 10 yrs experience in docs & industrials, overseas projects. Complete broadcast-quality Sony BVW-300A Beta SP pkg. Rates tailored to project & budget. Can speak Japanese. Scott, Public Eye Prods. (212) 627-1244.

CAMERAMAN: Owner Sony 3-chip EVW-300 professional Hi-8 pkg. NYC-based, very flexible rates. Will travel. Conversational French & Italian. Comprehensive bkgd in photography & sculpture. More info, contact John Anderson (212) 875-9731.

CAMERAWOMAN: Professionally & creatively pushes the limits of Hi8, Beta SP & low-budget 16mm. Hi8 pkg: Canon 1-1, lenses, filters, mikes, tripod. 16mm: k-3 & accessories. Beta pkg. also avail. Eileen (718) 963-2158.

CINEMATOGRAPHER will photograph ind. features & short films. Reel upon request. Vincent (718) 729-7481.

CINEMATOGRAPHER: Owner Aaton ltr 16/S-16 avail. for challenging projects at very low rates. Experimental, doc, narrative film experience. Kevin Svorak (212) 229-8357.

COMPUTER GRAPHIC ANIMATIONS: Can do computer animations, from technical to scenic to visualizations to artistic. Have MS degree w/ specialty in graphics. Own all equipment (SGI Indigo-2, video equip, etc.) Alfred Juras (708) 265-8811.

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY: Experienced. Credits incl.: 35mm feature, music videos, docs & shorts. Owner of Aaton 16mm/S-16 pkg, lighting pkg, Beta SP also avail. Call Kyle (718) 797-9051.

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY w/ awards, talent & experience. Credits incl. features, commercials, industrials, docs, shorts & music videos. Owner of Aaton 16mm/S-16 pkg. 35mm pkg. also avail. Call for my reel. Bob (212) 741-2189.

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY: Experienced. Credits incl.: 35mm features, music videos, docs & shorts. Owner of Aaton 16mm/S-16 pkg, lighting pkg., Beta SP also avail. Call Kyle (718) 797-9051.

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY looking for interesting features, shorts, ind. projects, etc. Credits include features, commercials, industrials, short films, music videos. Aaton 16/S-16 pkg. avail. Call Abe (914) 783-3159.

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY: Talented & experienced (features, shorts, doc, video), with strong sense of color and aesthetics, looking for interesting projects. Call for reel. Doron Benvenisti (212) 362-3713. 16mm Aaton pkg. may be avail.

DP W/ IKEGAMI digital camera, BVW 50 or BVV5, full field Beta SP pkg. (Arri lights, Vinten tripod, top-quality audio, transportation.) Network/int'l credits, competitive rates. Fluency in Spanish. Hal (212) 319-0745; (201) 461-5132.

ENTERTAINMENT ATTORNEY: Frequent contributor to "Legal Briefs" columns in *The Independent* & other magazines, offers legal services to film & video community on projects from development through distribution. Reasonable rates. Contact: Robert L. Seigel, Esq. (212) 307-7533.

EXPERIENCED DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY w/ Arri 16 SR & Aaton S-16 pkgs., plus Mole Richardson lighting pkg., seeks interesting film projects in feature or short-subject form. Very reasonable rates for new directors & screenwriters. (212) 737-6815; fax: 423-1125.

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MARK LITWAK, attorney & producer's rep, author of *Reel Power & Dealmaking in the Film & Television Industry*, is avail. to represent films & arrange for their distribution. Free initial consultation. Call (310) 859-9595.

MUSIC BY COMPOSER who has scored over 7 award-winning films. Owns & operates complete music prod. facility w/ multitrack recording & works well w/ directors & editors. "The music speaks for itself." Phil. Express (212) 727-3705.

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PREPRODUCTION • DEVELOPMENT

FILM CREW TRAINEES NEEDED Ground floor opportunity. Atlanta-area prod. assistants &/or knowledgeable persons send résumé or call PC Jenkins for interview. Mecca Motion Pictures Corp., 2625 Piedmont Rd., ste. 56-117, Atlanta, GA 30324, (404) 808-7139.

FORTY ACRES AND A MULE Filmworks, Inc., is accepting WGA-registered, feature-length screenplays. Please send script & script-sized SASE to: Forty

Acres and a Mule Development, 8 St. Felix St., Brooklyn, NY 11217; (718) 858-9620.

FRONTIER FILMS, ind. prod. company, accepting feature-length copyrighted screenplays. Seeking visceral, raw, powerful material w/ New York energy. Send to Frontier Films, 341 E. 85th St., #18, NY, NY 10028. Enclose script-sized SASE.

PRODUCER-DIRECTOR TEAM seeks compelling screenplays for development. Send WGA-registered script, 1-pg. synopsis, & script-sized SASE. Any genre, low/medium budget. Send to Poor Boy Productions, 355 Riverside Dr., Penthouse East, NY, NY 10025.

RAISE PROD. FUNDS via the nonprofit route. Frontier Films, tax-exempt nonprofit offers fiscal sponsorship agreements. Open up the following channels for \$\$\$: Gov't agencies, foundations, corps., private individuals. Call (212) 988-0254.

RUSSIA, CIS & E. EUROPE: Stretch your budget! US company in Moscow w/ contacts everywhere provides location scouting & prod. services. Fax: 011-7-095-216-8162 or moscinema@glas.apc.org. Member AIVF & IDA.

SEEKING CREW for ind. short. DP; sound persons (w/ equipment); gaffer; grip; props; PAs & prod. mgr. to work on low-budget comedy in late Oct. Partially deferred pay. Send reels &/or résumés to: Talking Drum Pictures, 163 Amsterdam Ave., ste. 356, NY, NY 10023-5001.

POSTPRODUCTION

\$10/hr VIDEO VHS EDIT SUITE: \$20-3/4", \$15-interf., incl. titles, Amiga & SEG. Also avail.: A&B; dubs; computer; photo; slides; audio; mixed media; prod./postprod.; total S-8 sound film svcs; editor/training. The Media Loft, 727 6th Ave. (23rd); (212) 924-4893.

\$10/HR 3/4" EDITING: Sony 5850/5800 w RM 440; \$25/hr w/ experienced editor. Convenient downtown location. Daily and weekly rates avail. Jed (212) 865-4867

16MM CUTTING ROOMS: 8-plate & 6-plate fully equipped rooms, sound-transfer facilities, 24-hr. access. Downtown, near all subways & Canal St. Reasonable rates. (212) 925-1500.

16MM FULLY EQUIPPED CUTTING ROOM: \$6/HR. 16 mag transfers also avail. on premises. Avid 1000 & film composer w/ off-line/online capabilities also avail. for reasonable rates. 24-hr access. Chelsea area. (212) 595-5002; (718) 885-0955.

16MM EDITING & SYNCING: Experienced editors on high-speed 6-plate in fully equipped Brooklyn facility. Doc, narrative & experimental subjects welcome. Reasonable rates for quality projects. Call Lisa or Peter at (718) 522-1230.

16MM & 35MM OPTICAL SOUND TRACKS! If you want "High Quality" sound for your film, you need a "High Quality" sound negative. Contact Mike Holloway, Optical Sound/Chicago Inc., 24 W. Erie, Chicago, IL 60610; (312) 943-1771 or (708) 541-8488.

16MM SOUND MIX only \$70/hr! Fully equipped mix studio for features, shorts, docs. Bring in your

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3/4" SONY OFFLINE SYSTEM delivered to you & installed: 5850, 5800, RM 440, 2 monitors \$500/wk., \$1,600/mo. Delivery & install. incl. Equipment clean & professionally maintained. Thomas (212) 929-2439; (201) 667-9894.

A-RAY DELIVERS: Beta SP component online edit pkg. \$1,500/wk. Sony 3/4" offline \$500/wk. Do it yourself or w/ our award-winning network editors. (203) 544-8114; fax: 8334.

ATLANTA: Film/video postprod. Serving the no-budget, low-budget filmmaker. Nonlinear digital picture editing. Digital audio editing w/ picture lockup. \$20/hr w/ editor. Contact Cliff Lyttle @ Mecca Digital Postworks (404) 808-7139.

AVID OFFLINE EDITING: Media composer 400S for rent. 27GB storage. 60MB RAM. Beta SP deck. Tascam M108 mixer. NTSC & PAL. 24 hr. access. w/ or w/out editor. Reasonable rates. Motion Pixels (212) 505-1092.

BETA-SP ONLINE SUITE: \$75/hr. w/ experienced editor. Slo-mo, Effects, Titles, ect. Broadcast quality. Looking for interesting projects. John (212) 726-8589.

BRODSKY & TREADWAY: Film-to-tape masters. Reversal only. Regular 8mm, S-8, or archival 16mm to 1" or Betacam- SP. We love early B&W & Kodachrome. Scene-by-scene only. Correct frame rates. For appt, call (508) 948-7985.

INTERFORMAT OFFLINE SUITE (3/4", Hi-8, VHS). Sony system in clean, spacious uptown location. VO9850/9800 w/ RM450, 2 13" monitors, Hi-8 & VHS. Rates: \$12/hr., \$85/day, \$380/wk. Editor \$15/hr. Dubs in 3/4", VHS, Hi-8. (212) 316-3764.

INT'L VIDEO TRANSFERS: From US to PAL, PAL-M, PAL N, Secam; From PAL, PAL-M, PAL N to US. All video formats: VHS, S-VHS, Hi-8, 3/4", Betacam. Fast, professional, affordable. Call Barry (212) 941-5800.

LOW COST EQUIPMENT & EDITING: Film/Video Arts: Hi8 & 16mm rentals. On-line suites: AVID 1000 as low as \$25/hr. for long term booking. Beta SP \$50/hr. & 3/4" SP \$25/hr. w/ out editor. Free brochures (212) 673-9361.

S-8 FILM-TO-VIDEO TRANSFER: To 1" Beta, Hi8, 3/4", VHS. Slo-mo; freeze; Toaster FX. Standard 8; slides; 16mm. Broadcast quality. Low rates. Personal service. S-8 rental, sales & music cinematography. Landvision (718) 768-5257.

SONY 3/4" SP OFFLINE SYSTEM: 9850 deck (w/ time code generator & reader), 9800 deck (w/ time code reader), RM450 controller & 2 13" monitors. Negotiable, low rates. Call (718) 284-2645.

SOUND EDITOR/MIXER & COMPOSER: Excellent work, affordable, guaranteed. Pro tools III DAW. Sweetening, FX, etc. Talented, efficient editor/mixer & composer avail. for all film/video projects. Quality assured. References. Elliot (212) 353-1138.

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CONFERENCES • SEMINARS

INTERNATIONAL DOCUMENTARY CONGRESS, Oct. 25-28, CA. Convened by Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences & International Documentary Association. Congress will be organized around theme, "In & Out of the Cold: 1945-1995—50 Years of Changing Documentaries from WWII to Today." Contact: IDA, 8949 Wilshire Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA 90211; (310) 247-3000.

IFFCON '96: INTERNATIONAL FILM FINANCING CONFERENCE: 3-day intensive event (Jan. 12-14, 1996) in San Francisco linking ind. filmmakers searching for financing w/ int'l financiers, buyers & co-producers. Incl. roundtables, private meetings & receptions. Limited to 60 participants, chosen through a selection process. Deadline: Oct. 24. Late deadline: Nov. 7. Fees vary. For information/application, call (415) 281-9777.

PHILADELPHIA MULTIMEDIA TECHNOLOGY SEMINARS for ind. producers, Oct. 19, Nov. 15 & Dec. 6, PA. Sealworks, specialists in multimedia integration & development, will show how to combine text, graphics, animation, sound & video to produce interactive apps. Power Mac desktop video prod. w/ products like Radius' Vision Studio & Telecast boards, Adobe Premiere & CoSA After Effects; multimedia authoring w/ MacroMedia Director & cross-platform development tools; session on Internet, Mosiac & WWW. Admission free. Philadelphia Apple Market Center. To register, call (800) 967-6628 x100; (215) 579-9072 w/ questions.

FILMS • TAPES WANTED

AUSTIN, TEXAS INDEPENDENT PRODUCER offering cable access venue to showcase ind. films & videos. All genres & subject matter accepted.

Shorts & music videos linked by discussions on ind. films. Films/videos running longer than 40 min. may be aired in series of 2 consecutive shows. Send release & info about film/filmmaker. Formats 1/4" & 3/4" are preferable. No payment, but credit & exposure. James Shelton, Tex-Cinema Productions, PO Box 3633, Austin, TX 78764-3633; (512) 867-9901.

BLACK VIDEO PERSPECTIVE, new community TV prod. in Atlanta area, seeks works for/by/about African Americans. Contact: Karen L. Forest (404) 231-4846.

CINCINNATI ARTISTS' GROUP EFFORT seeks proposals for exhibitions, performances & audio/video/film works to show in their galleries. Experimental, traditional & collaborative projects encouraged. Contact: CAGE, 1416 Main St., Cincinnati, OH 45210; (513) 381-2437.

CINEMA VIDEO, monthly showcase of works by ind. video- & filmmakers, seeks S-VHS or VHS submissions of any style, content, or length. Utilizing high-end projector, selected videos are projected onto 10.5' x 14' screen. Monthly shows are collections of several artists' videos, but occasionally features are shown as special events when work merits it. Cinema Video is prod. of Velvet Elvis Arts Lounge Theater in Seattle, WA, a non-profit fringe theater. Send submissions to: Kevin Picolet, 2207 E. Republican, Seattle, WA 98112; (206) 323-3307.

CINEQUEST, weekly half-hour TV series profiling best of ind. cinema & video from US & around world, looking for films/videos less than 20 min. to air on 30 min. cable show. Work over 20 min. will air on monthly special in Orlando, FL market during primetime. Seeking all genres. Concept of show is to stretch perceptions of conventional TV & expose viewers to scope & talent of inds. Submit on 1/2" or 3/4" video. Submissions need not be recent. No submission limit or deadline. Will acknowledge receipt in 10 days. Send pre-paid mailer if need work returned. Contact: Michael D. McGowan, producer, Cinequest Productions, 2550 Alafayia Trail, Apt. 8100, Orlando, FL 32826; (407) 658-4865.

CITY TV, an Emmy Award-winning, progressive municipal cable channel in Santa Monica, seeks programming of any length, esp. works about seniors, disabled, children, Spanish-lang. & video art. Our budget is limited, but we offer opp. for producers to showcase work. Cablecast rights may be exchanged for equip. access. Contact: Lisa Bernard, programming specialist, City TV, 1685 Main St., Santa Monica, CA 90401; (310) 458-8913.

CONNECT TV, a new series on ind. videomakers, seeks work for 1/2-hr. show. Progressive, social issue docs, art, humor. Will air on Cablevision of CT. Metro Video (203) 866-1090.

DANCE ON VIDEO wanted for the Spirit of Dance, a live, 1 hr. monthly program covering all types & aspects of dance. Under 5 mins or excerpts from longer works. S-VHS preferred. Produced at Cape Cod Community Television, South Yarmouth, MA. Call the producers at (508) 430-1321 or fax: 398-4520.

DATABASE & DIRECTORY OF LATIN AMERICAN FILM & VIDEO organized by Int'l Media Resources Exchange seeks works by Latin

American & US Latino ind. producers. To incl. work in this resource or for info, contact: Karen Ranucci, IMRE, 124 Washington Place, NY, NY 10014; (212) 463-0108.

HALCYON DAYS PRODUCTIONS seeks video segments (1-5 min.) by 15- to 25-year-olds for video compilation show. If piece is selected, you may have chance to be video correspondent for show. Work may be editorial, real-life coverage, political satire, slapstick—you decide. Just personalize. Submit VHS or Hi8 (returnable w/ SASE) to: Mai Kim Holley, Halcyon Days Prod., c/o Hi8, 12 W. End Ave., 5th fl., NY, NY 10023; (212) 397-7754.

IN THE MIX, nat'l PBS series, seeks short (2-8") videos produced by teens or young adults. Any format. Contact Matt Kells at (212) 669-7800 or write to: In the Mix, WNYC, 1 Centre St., NY, NY 10007.

IN VISIBLE COLOURS FILM & VIDEO SOCIETY seeks videos by women of color for library collection. Work will be accessible to members, producers, multicultural groups & educational institutions. For more info, contact: Claire Thomas, In Visible Colours, 119 W. Pender, ste. 115, Vancouver, B.C. V6B 1S5; (604) 682-1116.

IND. FILM & VIDEO SHOWCASE, cable access show; seeks student & ind. films & videos to give artists exposure. Send films or video in 3/4" format w/ paragraph about artist & his/her work. Send to: Independent Film & Video Showcase, 2820 S. Sepulveda Blvd. #7, Los Angeles, CA 90064, Attn: Jerry Salata.

NEW MUSEUM and Educational Video Center seeking recent videos, interactive computer projects & zines for major exhibition on Youth Culture and Media. Looking for tapes & projects in various genres (memoirs/testimonials, narrative, doc, experimental, PSAs) representing youth perspectives on themes such as community, cultural identity, relationships, sexuality, family, environment, violence, etc. Will accept works produced by youth independently or in collaboration w/ artists, teachers &/or social services orgs. Format: VHS or 3/4"; submit computer projects on PC or Mac demo discs &/or as written description. Deadline: Jan. 1, 1996. SASE to: Brian Goldfarb, The New Museum, 583 Broadway, NY, NY 10012; (212) 219-1222.

NERVOUS IMPULSE, nat'l screening series focusing on science, seeks films/videos. Open to experimental, non-narrative & animated works that address scientific representation, scientific knowledge, or interplay between science & culture. Send preview VHS & SASE to: Nervous Impulse, Times Square Station, PO Box 2578, NY, NY 10036-2578.

NEWTON TELEVISION FOUNDATION seeks proposals on ongoing basis from ind. producers. NTF is nonprofit foundation collaborating w/ ind. producers on docs concerning contemporary issues. Past works have been broadcast on local & national public TV, won numerous awards & most are currently in distribution in educational market. Contact NTF for details: 1608 Beacon St., Waban,

MA 02168; (617) 965-8477; email: ntf@tmn.com; walshntf@aol.com.

THE OTHER SIDE FILM SHOW is looking for entries in all cats: narrative, doc, experimental, animation, etc. for TV series of ind. films/videos. Submissions should be under 30 min. 3/4" video preferred, but VHS acceptable. Send to U. of South Florida, art dept., 4202 E. Fowler Ave., Tampa, FL 33620-7350, attn: The Other Side. For return shipping incl. SASE.

OVERWINE PRODUCTIONS, weekly intimate theatre & public access program, seeks contemporary film/video in any format to be showcased in & around Detroit area. Contact: Patrick Dennis, 2660 Riverside Dr., Trenton, Michigan, 48183-2807; (313) 676-3876.

PLANET CENTRAL, new LA-based cable station focusing on the environment, global economy, & holistic health, is looking for stories ideas & video footage for new fall program Not in the News, alternative weekly news program. Send info to: Planet Central, c/o World TV, 6611 Santa Monica Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90038: (213) 871-9153; fax: 469-2193.

REEL TIME AT P.S. 122, an ongoing quarterly screening series, is now accepting submissions of recent ind. film & video works for 1995 season. Exhibition formats include S-8, 16mm, 3/4" & VHS. Send VHS submission tapes, written promotion & return postage to: Curator, Reel Time, P.S. #122, 150 1st Ave., NY, NY 10009; (212) 477-5829 (x327).

RIGHTS & WRONGS, weekly, nonprofit human rights global TV magazine series scheduled to resume broadcast in February seeks story ideas & footage for upcoming season. Last yr. 34 programs covering issues from China to Guatemala were produced. Contact: Danny Schechter or Rory O'Connor, exec. producers, The Global Center, 1600 Broadway, ste. 700, NY, NY 10019; (212) 246-0202; fax: 2677.

REGISTERED seeks experimental & non-narrative videos about consumerism &/or modern ritual for nationally touring screening. Send VHS for preview w/ SASE & short description to: Registered, Attn.: Joe Sola, PO Box 1960, Peter Stuyvesant Station, 432 E. 14th St., NY, NY 10009.

SHORT FILM & VIDEO: All genres, any medium, 1 min. to 1 hr. Unconventional, signature work in VHS or 3/4" for nat'l broadcast! Submit to: EDGE TV, 7805 Sunset Blvd., ste. 203, Los Angeles, CA 90046.

STATEN ISLAND COMMUNITY TELEVISION PRODUCER seeks experimental works, all subjects, by ind. video & film artists. The more explicit, the better, film & video on 3/4" preferred, but 1/2" &/or 8mm acceptable. Send tapes to: Matteo Masiello, 140 Redwood Loop, Staten Island, NY 10309.

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URBAN INSTITUTE FOR CONTEMPORARY ARTS is accepting video & 16mm film in all genres for next season of programming. Fee paid if accepted. Send VHS tape w/ SASE to: Film Committee, UTICA, 88 Monroe Ave. NW, Grand Rapids, MI 49503.

VIDEO ALTARS is seeking short (minimum 30 sec.; max. 6 min.) film/video works for compilation celebrating El Dia De Los Muertos (Day of the Dead). Program invites broad range of work from all cultural traditions dealing w/ issues of remembrance, reunion & death & dying. Deadline: July 15. Send VHS tape, SASE & short statement to: Altars/S. Thomas-Zon, 2682-P Middlefield Rd., Redwood City, CA 94063; 415-324-8189.

VIDEO DATA BANK is seeking experimental, doc & narrative tapes on women's conflicted relationships w/ food & eating. Tapes: produced after 1990; length: max. 30 min. Please submit preview tapes in 3/4" or VHS format (returnable w/ SASE) & brief statement about producer's relationship to subject matter. Deadline: Sept. 15. Contact: Video Data Bank, Unacceptable Appetites Program, 112 S. Michigan Ave., Chicago, IL 60603.

VIDEO ICON, new TV program focusing on innovative video/film art & animation, is currently reviewing work. Send VHS or S-VHS copy & SASE. Floating Image Productions, PO Box 66365, Los Angeles, CA 90066; (310) 313-6935.

VIDEOSPACE AT DECORDOVA MEDIA ARTS ARCHIVE: DeCordova Museum & Sculpture Park seeks VHS copies of video art, & documentation of performance, installation art & new genres from New England artists for inclusion in new media arts archive. Send for info & guidelines: Videospace at DeCordova, DeCordova Museum, 51 Sandy Pond Rd., Lincoln, MA 01773-2600.

WEIRD TV, satellite TV show airing weekly on Telstar 302, specializes in alternative viewing. Will consider works of 3 min. max., animation or shorts. Submit work to: Weird TV, 1818 W. Victory, Glendale, CA 91201; (818) 637-2820.

WORLD AFRICAN NETWORK (WAN), first premium cable network for people of African descent worldwide, is accepting submissions for 1995 launch. Featuring films, docs, shorts, news & info, children's programs, sports, concerts, drama series & sitcoms. Send to: Eleven Piedmont Center, ste. 620, Atlanta, GA 30305; (404) 365-8850; fax: 8350.

WNYC-TV seeks films/videos for new primetime series on NY inds. Doc. or experimental (incl. video art); under 1 hr.; completed; all rights cleared. Pays \$35/min. Send VHS, 3/4" or Betacam preview tape, to: NY Independents, c/o WNYC-TV, One Centre St., rm. 1450, NY, NY 10007. No phone calls, please.

YOUNG BLACK CINEMA III, Nov. at the Public Theatre, NYC. This highly publicized & successful ongoing series of short works by African American filmmakers is seeking entrants for this year's program. 16mm, 35mm films up to 40 min. Should be submitted on VHS cassette w/ \$60 entry fee. Contact: Cobra Communications, PO Box 106, Hoboken, NJ 07030; (201) 216-1550.

OPPORTUNITIES • GIGS

BOSTON FILM/VIDEO FOUNDATION has internships avail. at the 21st annual New England Film & Video Festival. Positions in marketing/press and general administration. 1 position avail. in fall, 4 positions in spring (fest is in May 1996). Must be avail. to work 6-12 hrs. a wk. Contact: Shayna Casey, BF/VE, 1126 Boylston St., Boston, MA 02215; (617) 536-1540; fax: 3540; e-mail: bfvf@aol.com.

CITY-TV of Santa Monica, an Emmy Award-winning, progressive municipal cable channel, seeks producers for equipment grant projects. Will provide state-of-the-art equipment for program completion in exchange for air rights. Proposals accepted for prod. & postprod. grants. Interested in hi-quality, progressive programming of all types, esp. videos geared toward the disabled, seniors, children, youth & multicultural themes. Also offering many opportunities for volunteers to enhance experience in camerawork, lighting, audio, & editing. Contact CITY-TV, 1685 Main St., Santa Monica, CA 90401; (310) 458-8590.

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DIRECTOR/WRITER: Manhattan-based educational publishing co. producing training videotapes on variety of subjects seeks freelance directors for future projects. Prior experience need not include educational work, but must show ability to convey information in structured, entertaining way. Send background info, résumé & VHS demo reel to: HSSC, PO Box 466, Bowling Green Station, NY, NY 10274.

DOC SCRIPT WRITER sought by Bay Area producer for feature-length TV doc on US-Cuba conflict. Candidates must be experienced in historical docs & knowledgeable about Cuba & US-Cuban relations. Send cover letter, résumé & refs to: David L. Brown Prods., 247 Santa Clara St., Brisbane, CA 94005.

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TAOS TALKING PICTURES—media arts organization, film fest. & media literacy conference—is looking for director of development. Prefer candidate w/ MBA or extensive nonprofit arts management/fundraising experience. Deadline: Ongoing. Send letter of interest, résumé, & three refs to: Taos Talking Pictures, 216M North Pueblo Rd. #216, Taos, NM 87571.

RESOURCES • FUNDS

BOSTON FILM/VIDEO FOUNDATION seeks proposals for fiscal sponsorship from ind. producers. No deadline or genre restrictions. Reviewed on an ongoing basis. Contact BF/VE for brochure: Cherie Martin, 1126 Boylston St., Boston, MA 02215. Ph: 617-536-1540; fax: 3540; e-mail: bfvf@aol.com.

CREATIVE PROJECT GRANTS: During this fiscal yr., 8 artists will receive grants for 30 hrs. of subsidized use of The Media Loft video/computer suite at rate of \$7.50/hr., in blocks of at least 5-hr. segments. Grants awarded on ongoing basis to artists doing creative, experimental, narrative, language-based, visual, or conceptual video &/or Amiga computer work. Political, promotional, doc & commercial projects are not w/in framework of the grant. To apply, send project description, résumé, approximate dates of proposed use & statement of level of video &/or computer experience to: The Media Loft, 727 Ave. of the Americas, NY, NY 10010; (212) 924-4893.

DCTV Artist-in-Residence is now accepting appls. for \$500 worth of equipment access on ongoing basis w/in one year. When 1 funded project is complete, DCTV will review appls. on file & select next project. Pref given to projects already underway. For appl., send SASE to: AIR, c/o DCTV, 87 Lafayette St., NY, NY 10013-4435.

Looking to hire?

Beginning with in January, the "Opportunities • Gigs" category that currently runs under Notices will be moved to Classifieds. There will be a charge of \$25/ad for AIVF members and \$35 for nonmembers. If you have a position open at a museum, university, media center, or with a production, "Opportunities • Gigs" is the place to spread the word.

HUMANITIES PROJECTS IN MEDIA administered by NEH has deadline of Sept. 1996 (specific day not yet avail.) for projects beginning after April 1, 1995. 20 copies of appl. required on or before deadline. For appl., guidelines, write: National Endowment for the Humanities, Division of Public Programs, Humanities Projects in Media, rm. 420, 1100 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20506; (202) 606-8278.

ILLINOIS ARTS COUNCIL (IAC) SPECIAL ASSISTANCE ARTS PROGRAM: Matching grants of up to \$1,500 avail. to IL artists for specific projects. Activities that may be funded are: registration fees & travel to attend conferences, seminars, or workshops; consultant fees for resolution of specific artistic problem; exhibits, performances, publications, screenings; materials, supplies, or services. Funds awarded based on quality of work submitted & impact of proposed project on artist's professional development. Appls must be received at least 8 wks prior to project starting date. Degree students are not eligible to apply. Call (312) 814-6750.

MEDIA ALLIANCE assists NYC artists & non-profit organizations in using state-of-art equipment, postprod. & prod. facilities at reduced rates. Contact: Media Alliance, c/o WNET, 356 W. 58th St., NY, NY 10019; (212) 560-2919.

NY FOUNDATION FOR THE ARTS awards Artists' Fellowships to NY artists. Applicants must be 18+ yrs, resident of NY for at least 2 yrs. Cannot be grad or undergrad student, NYFA recipient of last 3 yrs, or employee or board member of foundation. Deadline for 1996: Oct. 18. For more info, call NYFA at (212) 366-6900.

POLLOCK-KRASNER FOUNDATION gives financial assistance to artists of recognizable merit & financial need working as mixed-media or installation artists. Grants awarded throughout yr., \$1,000-\$30,000. For guidelines, write: Pollock-Krasner Foundation, 725 Park Ave., NY, NY 10021.

THE PENNSYLVANIA HISTORICAL & MUSEUM COMMISSION invites applicants for 1996-97 Scholars in Residence Program. The program provides support for full-time research & study at any Commission facility. Residencies are avail. for 4-12 consecutive wks. between May 1, 1996 & April 30, 1997, at \$1,200 per month. Program open to all conducting research on Penn. history. Deadline: Jan. 12, 1996. For more info & appl. materials, contact: Division of History, Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, Box 1026, Harrisburg, PA 17108; (717) 787-3034.

THE RESIDENCY PROGRAM at the Experimental Television Center (ETC) is accepting appls. Program offers opportunity to study the techniques of video image in intensive 5-day residency program. Artists work on variety of cutting edge & hi-tech equipment. Program open to experienced video artists. Appls must incl. résumé, & project description, as well as videotape of recent work (if you are a first time applicant), either 3/4" or VHS formats, w/ SASE for return. Write: ETC Ltd., 109 Lower Fairfield Rd.,



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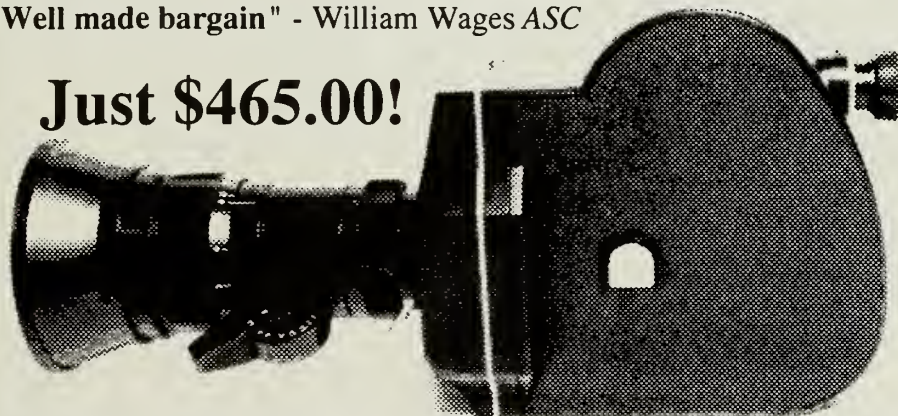
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F/T faculty working within the Film/Video and Critical Studies to teach film history, current cinema, feminist film, Third World Cinema, critical writing, and to advise production & writing students on work in progress. Extensive publication record, including Third World Cinema; some teaching and curatorial experience; mastery of one foreign language preferred.

Professional experience and/or demonstrated ability in teaching, at college level. Candidates should submit application to:

Search Committee c/o Hartmut Bitomsky, Dean
School of Film/Video
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VISUAL STUDIES WORKSHOP MEDIA CENTER in Rochester, NY, accepts proposals on ongoing basis for its Media Access program. Artists, ind. producers & nonprofits awarded access at reduced rates, prod. & postprod. equipment for work on noncommercial projects. For appl., tour, or more info, call (716) 442-8676.

YADDO invites appls. from film/video artists for residencies of 2 wks to 2 mos. at multi-disciplinary artists' community in Saratoga Springs, NY. Deadline: Jan. 15 (May-Feb.). Artistic merit is the standard for judgment. For more info, write: Admissions Committee, Box 395, Saratoga Springs, NY, 12866; or call (518) 584-0746

COMPETITIONS

1996 NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL MEDIA NETWORK COMPETITION has call for film, video & multimedia completed between Jan. 1, 1994 and Dec. 1, 1995. Eligible programs incl. docs, live-action programs, dramatic shorts, animation, children's programming, classroom programs, medical/health programs, training/instructional tapes, special interest videos, broadcast & cable programs, PSAs & student-made features & shorts. Deadline: Dec. 1. Contact: Rebecca Overmyer-Velazquez, (510) 465-6885.

CRESCENT FILMS announces 1995 Lone Star Screenplay Competition open to screenwriters worldwide w/ original feature-length screenplays. In addition to 6 cash awards, winning authors eligible to sign development option w/ Crescent Films. Deadline: Dec. 31. For info, send SASE to: Lone Star Screenplay Competition, 1920 Abrams Pkwy., No. 419, Dallas, TX 75214-3915; (214) 606-3041; e-mail: lonestar@pic.net.

MONTEREY COUNTY FILM COMMISSION SCREENWRITING CONTEST for writers who haven't earned money writing for TV/film. All genres. \$1500 top prize. \$35 entry fee. Deadline: Jan. 31. For rules, send SASE to: MCFC, PO Box 111, Monterey, CA 93942.

WRITERS WORKSHOP NAT'L SCRIPT-WRITING CONTEST accepting scripts. 5 to 6 winners will be chosen to receive \$500. Winners also receive free tuition for critical evaluation of scripts before panel of motion picture agents, producers, writers, & directors. Deadline: Ongoing. For submission info, send legal size SASE w/ 60¢ postage to: Willard Rogers, Writers Workshop National Contest, PO Box 69799, Los Angeles, CA 90069; (213) 933-9232.

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THE NEA: TO NIX OR NOT TO NIX

If House Republicans have their way, the National Endowment for the Arts will lose all Federal funding within two years, which is a year earlier than the House initially had planned and five years ahead of the Senate's schedule.

On July 13, the House, led by a mutiny of G.O.P. freshmen, spent the day debating a bill that would appropriate \$11.96 billion for the Interior Department in 1996. (The NEA is part of the Department, as are the National Endowment for the Humanities [NEH] and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting [CPB].) Although House members did not reach a similar agreement to cut off federal funding to the NEH, two amendments likely to be approved in the House will fix the 1997 cut-off for both the arts and humanities agencies.

The appropriations bill for the Interior Department would cut financing for the endowments by 40 percent over their current budgets, leaving arts and humanities each with \$99.5 million for 1996.

In the past conservatives have criticized the NEA for financing controversial projects and have maintained that the NEH has favored liberal causes by awarding money to media projects, museums, and historical organizations.

On July 28, the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee, chaired by Senator Mark Hatfield (R-WA), held its markup of the Interior Appropriations bill. The committee agreed with the subcommittee's recommendations, which allotted \$99.494 million to the NEA, \$114.494 million for the NEH, and \$21 million for the Institute of Museum Services (IMS).

On August 9, the Senate by voice vote approved an amendment to fund the NEA and NEH at \$110 million each and the IMS at \$21 million. These funding levels represent a \$10 million increase for the NEA, while the NEH was cut \$5 million from the Appropriations Committee recommendation. As a compromise to garner needed votes, language submitted by none other than Senator Jesse Helms (R-NC) was added prohibiting the NEA from "promoting, disseminating, sponsoring, or producing materials or performances that depict or describe...sexual or excretory activities or organs" as well as materials or performances "which denigrate the objects or beliefs of the adherents of a particular religion." NEA supporters in the Senate reluctantly agreed to the compromise because of their commitment to continue funding the NEA and because it will likely be dropped during a House-Senate conference. At press time, the conference, which will attempt to iron out differences between both versions of the bill, is expected to meet in September.

Currently an NEA and NEH reauthorization bill (S.856) drafted by Senator Jim Jeffords (R-VT) is winding its way through the Senate. While arts groups find it far from perfect, the bill does leave both of the agencies standing. NEA funding cuts are a modest two percent each year for the next five years, leaving the agency with a budget of \$146.4 million in the year 2000.

Program funds would be redistributed: 40 percent to organizations of demonstrated and substantial artistic and cultural importance; 40 per-

cent to state, local, and regional partnerships (with an emphasis on arts education, rural, and underserved populations, though 70 percent of these funds would go directly to the states); 20 percent for direct grants to groups or individuals. However, possible amendments to the bill include further funding reductions, privatization of the agencies, the elimination of the fellowships program, and an increase in the funding amounts given directly to the states.

For more information on the status of bills regarding NEA and NEH funding, contact the American Arts Alliance at (202) 737-1727.

Under the Gun: CPB & ITVS

Another conservative dartboard, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), is also in line for a phase-out of government financing. An appropriations subcommittee has approved a \$240 million subsidy for 1996, a reduction of \$20 million (or 7.7 percent) from 1995. The cutback is smaller than had initially been threatened, but the subcommittee has included CPB on its hit list, along with the arts and humanities endowments.

The Appropriations Committee also passed report language that says CPB is no longer required to fund the Independent Television Service (ITVS). ITVS executive director James Yee argues that the Appropriations Committee amendment is misplaced because the original ITVS mandate appeared in CPB authorization legislation. To date, CPB has verbally assured ITVS that it is committed to funding the service through 1997. ITVS was formed seven years ago when Congress, during a Republican administration, responded to pressure from the independent media field and general public for greater diversity and innovation in programming. With the Telecommunications Act of 1988, ITVS was created; it began operations in 1990.

Even after a final Appropriations package is approved by both the House and the Senate, nothing is assured, because continued government funding of CPB (and ITVS) is contingent on their continued Congressional authorization. CPB is authorized through FY1996. At press time, House authorization hearings have not yet been scheduled, but are planned for the fall.

For more information on CPB/ITVS funding, contact ITVS (612) 225-9035; fax: (612) 225-9102; e-mail: itvs@maroon.tc.umn.edu.

—MICHELE SHAPIRO, WITH REPORTING BY
STEPHEN BUTLER

CHRISTIAN ACTION NETWORK STAGES "OBSCENE ART" SHOW

Art for art's sake.

In the eighties, the National Endowment of the Arts grant recipient Andres Serrano used urine as a creative tool in his mixed-media piece *Piss Christ*.

No art, for God's sake.

This year, the Christian Action Network (CAN) and its conservative peers have gone the artist one better, using their powerful mingled streams—sanitized, or course, for family-value viewers—to rinse America clean of the NEA.

CAN led this season's squat session in Wash-

ington, D.C., last June with the social event of the summer, treating Capitol Hill staffers to an "obscene art" show of NEA-funded artists. Dozens of congressional staffers milled about an exhibit, labelled "Warning: Explicit Material, over 18 only," that featured NEA-funded works, including photographs and film clips, by Bruce Nauman, Bob Flanagan, Diane Rosenblum, and Joel-Peter Witkin and films by the 18th Street Arts Complex and San Francisco-based makers Marc Huestis and Lawrence Helman (*Sex Is...*). No few among the scrutinizing crowd smirked at the display, which spotlighted a handful of extreme works and of course left out the vast majority of NEA-funded educational and cultural programs.

Staffers made hungry by the unfamiliar exercise of art criticism meanwhile surrounded a grazing table laden with tiny quiches, finger sandwiches, slices of lean meat carved thin on the spot, and cans of (no alcohol, of course). And listened, watched, and chewed along to an intellectual and ideological "debate" between conservative columnist Cal Thomas and democratic strategist Paul Begala.

"The NEA is like the blob that ate Tokyo and took on a life its own," declared a hawkish Thomas to his dark-suited, stripe-tied audience. "We must hunt it down, cut its head off, and kill it. We can't just reduce; we must kill it." dark-suited, striped-tied set.

"We must kill these things totally or else they are going to come back to life in another administration. It's like a virus, and you must take all of the medication to kill it."

Begala countered gamely: "When the Challenger crashed, we didn't get rid of NASA. When the cops beat Rodney King, we didn't abolish law enforcement.... Don't throw out the baby with the bath water." Surrounded by the sea of Republicans, he sounded rather sheepish, even when he went on to warn, "If you kill the NEA, you are killing 14,000 art teachers. What joins us together is an idea and a common basic expression. The NEA is one of the few ties that bind."

Certainly, he would have had to try hard to equal the ringing confidence of Christian Action Network president Martin Mawyer, exhorting, "The time has come to get the government out of the arts business and to finally shut the doors on the National Endowment of the Arts."

Stuff the NEA in a jar of urine and watch it flounder as it waits for someone, anyone, to throw it a life preserver.

ANDREA SACHS

Andrea Sachs lives in Washington, D.C., and works as a correspondent for Advertising Age.



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The Foundation for Independent Video and Film (FIVF), the educational affiliate of the Association for Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF), supports a variety of programs and services for the independent media community, including publication of *The Independent*, operation of the Festival Bureau, seminars and workshops, and an information clearing house. None of this work would be possible without the generous support of the AIVF membership and the following organizations:

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Portland, OR

When/Where: October 18, 7 pm; call for additional dates and location.

Contact: Grace Lee Park, (503) 284-5085

Schenectady, NY:

When: 1st Wednesday of each month, 6 pm

Where: Media Play, Mohawk Mall

Contact: Mike Camoin, (518) 895-5269

St. Louis, MO:

When: 3rd Wednesday of each month, 7 pm

Where: Midtown Arts, 3207 Washington St.

Contact: Tom Booth, (314) 776-6270

Washington, DC:

When: October 19, November 15, 7 pm

Where: Washington Performing Arts, 400 7th St. NW (at D St.)

Contact: Sowande Tichawonna (202) 232-0353

MOVING FORWARD ...

Members are organizing AIVF salons all over the country! For contact information, or to talk to us about starting something in your area, call Leslie Fields (212) 807-1400.

NEW MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY

To make it easier for working partners to join AIVF together, we are offering new "supporting" memberships. For \$75, two people at one address will receive all the benefits of two individual memberships—from eligibility for health insurance to admission at our popular "meet and greet" events—but just one copy of the magazine. (See the membership coupon in this issue for specific information on benefits.) Keep this option in mind when you join or renew!



TRADE DISCOUNT UPDATE

It's been a busy summer. We have five new discounts to announce this month, including our first offer in cyberspace!

AIVF members now receive a 30-percent discount from the LA-based online bulletin board **The Independent Filmmaker's Forum**. The Forum offers filmmaking information, e-mail, newsgroups, and various online filmmaking periodicals. The discounted rates are \$3.78-\$11.19 per month (reg. \$5.41-\$15.99); be sure to enter AIVF at the "From Where" prompt when you subscribe to receive the discounted rate. *The Independent Filmmaker's Forum*, modem: (310) 425-0012; tel: (310) 541-1418.

New York's **Downtown Community TV Center (DCTV)** now provides AIVF members with a 10- to 20-percent discount on DCTV video workshops and seminars, as well as 10- to 30-percent discounts on all editing services and equipment packages for nonprofit projects; AVID non-linear editing, CMX editing, off-line editing, Beta SP and EVW300 Hi8 camera package rental. *Downtown Community TV Center*, 87 Lafayette St., NYC 10013-4435; (212) 966-4510, (800) VIDEO-NY; fax: (212) 219-0248. Contact: Hye Jung Park or

Paul Putman.

We are also pleased to announce that **Media Loft** offers members a five-percent discount on 3/4" VHS and interformat editing, titling, dubbing, special effects, Hi8, Amiga computer, still photography, slides and photos to tape, and S-8. *Media Loft*, 727 Avenue of the Americas, NYC 10010; (212) 924-4893. Contact: Barbara Rosenthal.

Star Tech offers members a low price on a tri-state numeric pager, and discounts on other paging equipment and services, as well as 10% off Audio Limited wireless mics and accessories. *Star Technical Services*, 152 W. 72nd St., #2FE, NYC 10023; (212) 362-5338. Contact: John Hampton.

Entertainment attorney **Stephen Mark Goldstein** offers members a 15% discount on his legal services. Goldstein specializes in independent film financing, production, and distribution. *Stephen Mark Goldstein*, 677 West End Ave., NYC 10025; (212) 932-2623.

MINUTES FROM THE AIVF/FIVE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

The board of directors of the Ass. of Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF) and Foundation for Independent Video and Film (FIVF) met in New York on April 8 and 9, 1995. In attendance were Beni Matias (chair), Debra Zimmerman (president), Loni Ding (vice president), Bart Weiss (vice president), Robert Richter (treasurer), Robb Moss (secretary), James Klein, Diane Markrow, and Ruby Lerner (ex officio). Absent were Joe Berlinger, Melissa Burch, Barbara Hammer, James Schamus, and Norman Wang.

Executive Director Ruby Lerner reported that FIVF was one of four media organizations awarded a Challenge grant from the National Endowment for the Arts to support an ambitious plan to expand the range and depth of the organization's information services program. She also updated the board on the status of the move to new offices on Hudson Street.

Michele Shapiro, managing editor of *The Independent*, announced plans to transfer production of the magazine to a new printer who will offer enhanced services at significant savings because of the use of web press technology. The magazine will also attempt to enhance distribution efforts through closer working relationships with distributors.

Advocacy coordinator Martha Wallner announced that she is leaving AIVF in June; the department will be restructured to accommodate two positions, a director and an assistant. This change is intended to improve the effectiveness of the department by focusing the director's time on substantive issues. Lerner also noted the larger advocacy role carried out by other programs of the organization: the national network of salons, editorial coverage in the magazine, and her own representation of the media community at events throughout the year.

Moss reported on behalf of the Members Programs and Services Committee that committee members will focus on outreach and recruitment, particularly within the academic community (faculty, students, and libraries). The board discussed additional avenues to promote membership, including targeted marketing of the magazine, and a presence on the Internet and World Wide Web. The board also recognized the need to adapt to the changing media field by recruiting members in multi-media and graphics design.

On behalf of the Professional Ethics Task Force, Ding advanced the recommendation that a committee of three be created to review membership complaints of unethical practices in the field and make recommendations of appropriate action to Lerner. The necessity of establishing a standing committee was questioned on the basis of the demand it would make on already limited staff time. As an alternative, Lerner suggested naming a board member to be contacted for advice in specific instances as need arises. Ding moved that she could act as such a liaison on a case-by-case basis for a trial period of six months. Richter seconded; motion passed unanimously.

The board reviewed a new set of personnel policies. Moss moved to accept. Richter seconded; motion passed unanimously.

Lerner reported that AIVF had received correspondence from the National Coalition of Independent Public Broadcasting Producers (NCIPBP), the organization which nominates candidates for the ITVS board of directors, inviting AIVF to become one of four organizations assisting this process. There was serious concern expressed with regard to the cultural and geographic diversity of the four organizations named. Klein moved that AIVF should accept the invitation, while communicating these concerns in writing. Moss seconded, recommending that AIVF make only a single year's commitment with the condition that our continued participation be contingent on whether these issues were addressed. Motion passed. Ding was designated the representative to the Coalition.

MEMBERABILIA

AIVF member Lisa Wood Shapiro is the winner of the Gold Apple Award in the National Educational Media Network Competition for her film *Another Story*. Peter Sillen received funding from the Jerome Foundation to produce *Bernstein*, a portrait of Steven (Jesse) Bernstein, deceased and celebrated Seattle poet. Tony Pemberton also received a production grant for his project, *Youngstown*, a narrative film about a young girl coming of age in a rural coal mining town.

Terrence Grace has been awarded a Special Jury Prize at the San Francisco International Film Festival Golden Gate Awards as well as Best Narrative Film at the Atlanta Film and Video Festival for his film *Mr. Ahmed*. Slawomir Grunberg was the recipient of the Reporting Film Award at the International Festival of Environmental Films in Paris and Best of the Environment Award at the Vermont International Film Festival for his hour-long documentary, *Chelyabinsk: The Most Contaminated Spot on the Planet*, which explores the lives of people in a region which has received 20 times the radiation of the Chernobyl region.

Ada Gay Griffin has won the 1995 Golden Gate Award for Best Category, the Starbucks Audience Award for Best Documentary, and the Prix du Public for Best Doc. for her film *A Litany for Survival: The Life and Work of Audre Lorde*. Jonathan Mednick received a National Media Owl Award from the Retirement Research Foundation for *The Way We Die: Listening to the Terminally Ill*, a vivid look at the lives of the terminally ill and those who care for them.

Member Lynn Hershman has been quite busy as of late. She recently received the Cyberstar Award for Video in Koln, Germany. In addition, Hershman has



COME TO THE NEW OFFICE!

We're mighty excited about our move (now that it's over) and want you to come visit the new office on Hudson Street soon and often! You can of course use the library during our regular hours of Mon-Fri 11-6 p.m., but we have also planned two special events to celebrate our arrival in "Silicon Alley":

AIVF OFFICE TOUR + NYC SALON

Come tour our swanky new offices, especially the large library/common area for events and our separate conference/screening room. After that, we will retire *en masse* to HERE for further conversation and camaraderie! RSVP (212) 807-1400.

When: Tuesday, October 17

Office Tour: 5 pm, 304 Hudson St. (at Spring), 6th floor

Salon: 6 pm, HERE, 145 Avenue of the Americas (at Spring)

SAVE THAT DATE - NEW OFFICE WARMING & HOLIDAY PARTY

To start the holiday season right, we're welcoming you to our new office with a BIG PARTY. Come eat, drink, and celebrate making it through the (first) Year of the Newt. RSVP (212) 807-1400.

When: Monday, December 11, 7-9 pm

Transit information to the new office: We are at 304 Hudson St., on the east side of the street between Spring and Vandam, four blocks south of Houston. (Hudson St. is the equivalent of 8th Avenue, on the west side of lower Manhattan.) The nearest subways are: **C** or **E** to **Spring Street**, walk 2 blocks west to Hudson; **1** or **9** to **Houston Street**, walk 1 block west to Hudson and 4 blocks south to Spring.

WELCOME NEW STAFF

The Independent bids a fond farewell to departing managing editor **Michele Shapiro**, whose name should go on every filmmaker's rolodex as the new film editor of *Time Out-New York*, an alternative weekly that's taking Manhattan by storm.

How do you say goodbye in Burmese? **Mitch Albert**, our priceless editorial assistant, is taking his leave to ply the back roads of Burma. Our editorial intern, **Kristin Wilcha**, is sticking closer to home, where she will be finishing her degree in the Gallatin School of Individualized Study at NYU. *Buona fortuna* and *aufwiedersehen* to all!

The new faces on the block are **Sue Young Wilson**, *The Independent's* new managing editor, and **Adam Knee**, our new editorial assistant. Sue

has previously worked as an editor and writer for such highly acclaimed publications as *Lingua Franca* and *The American Lawyer*. Adam, who is winding up his Ph.D. from New York University's Cinema Studies Department, can field any and all questions about 1950s science fiction films and American culture.

Remember this name: **Leslie Fields** joined the AIVF/FIVF staff in August in the new position of membership coordinator. With a background encompassing media production, administration, and theory, Leslie comes well-equipped to respond to the full range of members' needs and interests. She most recently served as administrative coordinator at our New York State colleague organization Media Alliance, and this spring received a Master's degree in Cinema Studies at New York University, where she is production assistant at NYU-TV.

Leslie will take on the day-to-day management of the services program so that AIVF/FIVF's director of programs and services Pamela Calvert can devote full attention to getting our ambitious project "Information Services for the 21st Century" off the ground. With the support of the National Endowment for the Arts' Challenge Grant program, we are designing comprehensive systems that will completely transform how we collect, organize, and disseminate information to the field. You'll read more about it—and notice the difference—in the coming year. Stay tuned.

Finally, we take this occasion to say a belated good-bye to program associate **Jennifer Lytton**, who departed AIVF this summer to explore new horizons and a myriad of projects. We'll miss her infectious laugh, brilliant hostessing of the New York member salons, and omniscience in all things technical. We wish her the very best of luck.

FALL EVENTS

MEET AND GREETs

These are opportunities for members to meet producers, distributors, funders, programmers, and others to exchange information in an informal atmosphere at the AIVF offices. *Free; open to AIVF members only. Limited to 20. RSVP required.*

JONATHAN MOSS

Director, Documentary Programming, HBO-Cinemax: *Major cable producer of nonfiction programming, including documentary features. [See "Taking It to the (Cine) Max," April 1995].*

When: Wednesday, October 18, 7 pm

JANIS STROUT

Program Officer, Paul Robeson Fund for Independent Media, The Funding Exchange: *Funder of activist and progressive film, video, and radio projects; annual deadline for applications December 1.*

When: Thursday, November 2, 6:30 pm

RICHARD PEÑA

Director of Programming, Film Society of Lincoln Center: *Curator for New Directors/New Films and the New York Film Festival.*

When: Monday, December 4, 6:30 pm



Diane Markow, AIVF board member, addresses the crowd at a party for *The Independent's* Rocky Mountain issue, held at Denver Center Media.

Courtesy Denver Center Media

NEW YORK VIDEO FESTIVAL DISCOUNT

We are happy to announce that the Film Society of Lincoln Center is offering AIVF members discounted tickets to this year's New York Video Festival, to be held at Lincoln Center's Walter Reade Theater October 6-14. Bring your valid AIVF membership card to the box office to purchase tickets at the special \$5 rate. Call (212) 875-5600 for the festival schedule.

"MANY TO MANY" MONTHLY MEMBER SALONS

This is a monthly opportunity for members to discuss work, meet other independents, share war stories, and connect with the AIVF community across the country. *Note:* since our copy deadline is two months prior to the meetings listed below, be sure to call the local organizers to confirm that there have been no last-minute changes.

Austin, TX:

Call for dates and locations

Contact: Amie Petronis, (512) 495-4868

Boston, MA:

Call for dates and locations

Contact: Susan Walsh (617) 965-8477

Dallas, TX:

When: 3rd Wednesday of each month, 7 pm

Where: Call for locations.

Contact: Bart Weiss, (214) 948-7300

Kansas City, MO:

Call for dates and locations

Contact: Rossana Jeran, (816) 363-2249

Los Angeles, CA:

When: 1st Wednesday of each month, 7 pm

Where: Swing Cafe, 8543 Santa Monica Blvd.

Contact: Pat Branch, (310) 289-8612

New York City:

When: 3rd Tues of each month, 6-8 pm

Where: HERE, 145 Ave. of Americas (at Spring)

Contact: AIVF office (212) 807-1400

Come tour our new office before the salon on October 17! See item above for more information.

Norwalk, CT:

Call for dates and locations

Contact: Guy Perrotta (203) 831-8205

Continued on p. 63

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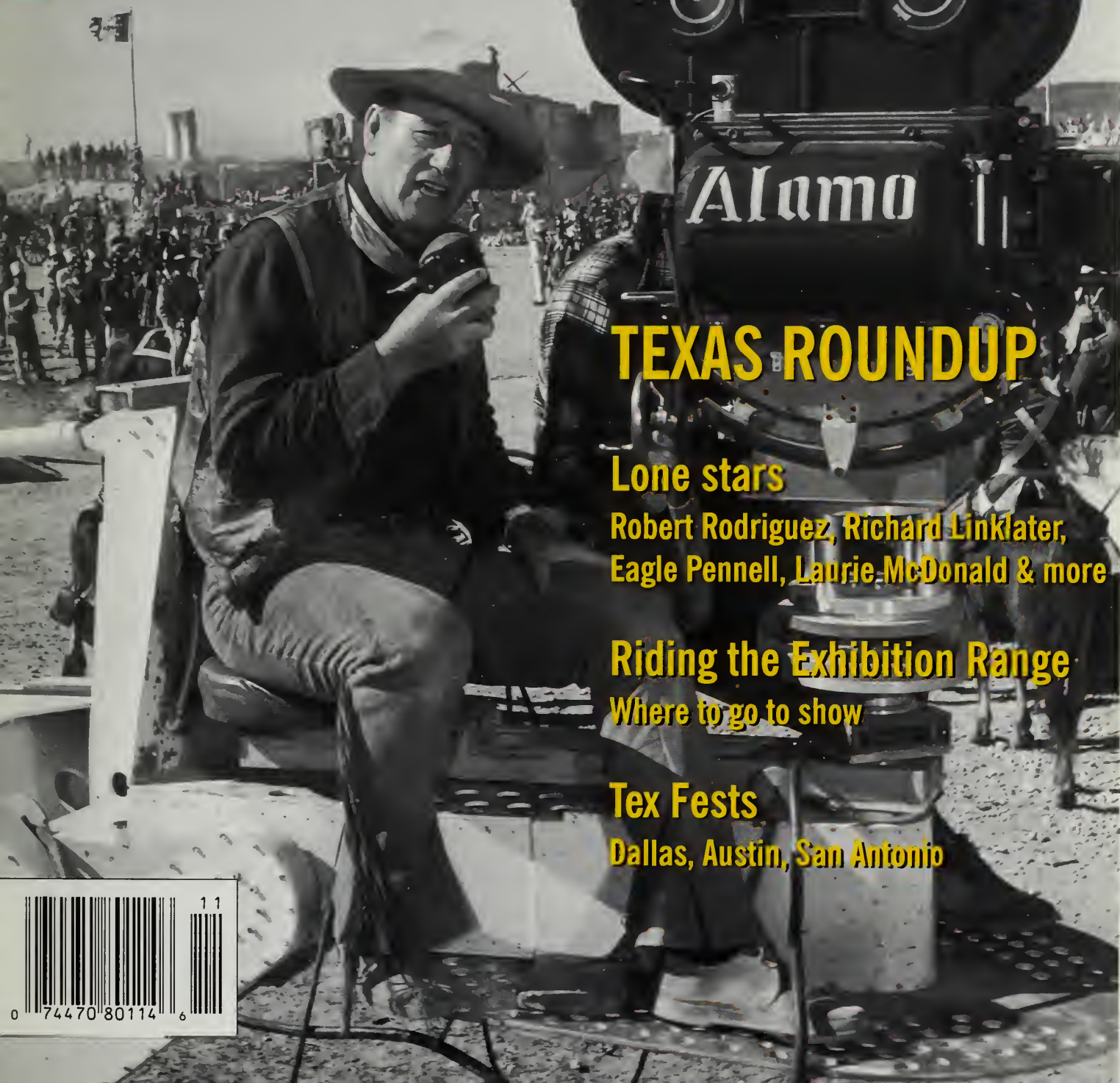
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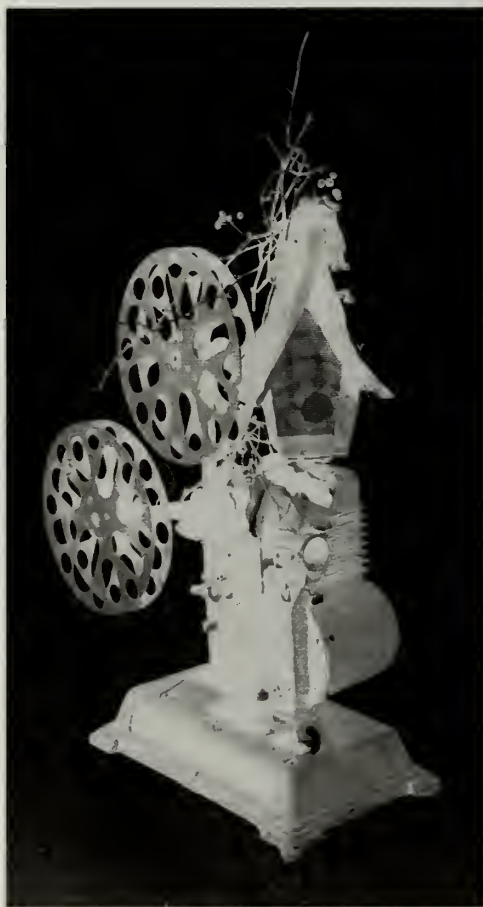
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THE INDEPENDENT
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SPOTLIGHT ON TEXAS



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COVER: The Duke's obsessive battle to make *The Alamo* is the subject of a documentary by Brian Huberman, whose body of work revolves around Texas's colorful history. Photo courtesy filmmaker.

"Paradise" photo: Ave Bonar.



Quik Fix for Doc Picks

Will New Oscar Rules Affect What's Nominated?

IN THE LAST FEW YEARS, CONTROVERSY HAS SURROUNDED the rules that the Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences has used for nominating documentary films for Academy Awards. Some of the most outstanding documentaries of recent years, including *Thin Blue Line*, *Paris Is Burning*, *Brother's Keeper*, *Hoop Dreams*, and *Crumb*, failed to be recognized with a nomination, let alone an award, and critics, the makers of the films, and other documentarians responded with outrage. Now the Academy has announced procedural changes that will affect which films are eligible, how they will be evaluated, and who will sit in judgment of them. The big question: Will the best documentaries have a better shot at nomination under the new rules?

The Academy's most significant change is adding a New York-based nominating committee. Until now, a single committee based in Los Angeles screened the submissions. Henceforth there will be two committees, one in each city, that will each screen half of the films.

According to John Pavlik, the Academy's director of communication, the films submitted will probably be distributed to the two committees at random. Each committee will select either five or 10 of the films—the exact number has not yet been set—for a “first cut” that will then be swapped for another round of evaluation. A combination of scores from the two committees will determine which films are nominated.

Most of the changes will affect 1996 nominations, but one significant one will not go into effect until the following year. As of 1997, films will not be eligible if they have not had a seven-consecutive-day screening in a theater in Los Angeles or New York. Festival exhibition will no longer qualify a film. In the past, films made for television were submitted to festivals simply to make them eligible for Academy Awards. The new procedure will make that impossible. “We want to be the Academy of Motion Pictures,” Pavlik says. The Los Angeles-based International Documentary Association, which does not consider this a helpful change, is making preliminary plans to establish a program that will help more documentarians secure a seven-day theatrical

Slam-dunk docs: Steve James, Peter Gilbert, and Fred Marx's *Hoop Dreams* won critics' raves but no Oscar nomination, continuing a dubious Academy tradition that new rules are supposed to right.

Photo: M.B. Cregier, courtesy Fine Line Features



screening.

Other, less dramatic changes have also been made. Under the old rules, Academy members could stop screening a film when half of the committee members signaled by waving flashlights. Now they must screen films in their entirety. Academy members also formerly met after all the screenings and lobbied for individual films. That meeting will no longer take place. The scoring system has also been changed. The old 4-to-10 point scoring system will be replaced with a 6-to-10 point system, in order, according to Pavlik, to prevent a film from being hurt by a few very low scores.

Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers board member Robert Richter, a critic of the old system and a four-time Academy nominee, welcomes the changes, calling them “a step in the right direction.”

Others are less impressed. Gordon Quinn, executive producer of *Hoop Dreams*, says the attempted fixes are at best “cosmetic” and that the Academy members “clearly gave [the matter] very little thought. They made a few surface changes that don't conceal the fact they don't really care about documentaries.” He finds the new requirement for theatrical release especially pernicious: “Most documentaries are not made

for theatrical release,” he notes, “so some of the best aren't even going to have a chance at nomination now. In this changing world, where the lines between what's made for television or video or theatrical release and in what order are getting more and more blurred, that's actually a step backwards by the Academy.”

Much of the impact of the changes will presumably depend on the New York committee—who makes it up, how many they are, and how they vote. As was true of the former, L.A.-based committee, any Academy members in the city may sit on the new one, provided they do not have a conflict of interest, whether they are documentarians or not. “The Academy deserves to be complimented” on the changes, *Hoop Dreams* coproducer and director Steve James told *Entertainment Weekly*, “[but d]ocumentary filmmaking should be regarded as a craft, and our peers should [make] these judgments.”

New York members in general are thought to be less tethered economically and aesthetically to Hollywood than their L.A. counterparts, and it has been suggested that they will vote less conservatively whether they are documentarians or not. But no one is certain whether this will prove true.

Several Academy members themselves pre-

dict that the net change will be modest. Mitchell Block, president of Direct Cinema, which has distributed half a dozen Academy Award nominees in the last four years, believes that only, say, one of the five nominees might change. (He himself insists that films that are not nominated "do not necessarily deserve to be.")

The new rules also heighten the drudge factor of serving on a committee. After it announced the new procedures, the Academy sent a letter to its members inviting them to join the screening committees. One hundred and fifty New York-based members expressed interest. How many of them actually prove willing to sacrifice the many unpaid nights required remains to be seen. Since Pavlik predicts that committee members will be asked to watch 30 features in their entirety, plus the five to 10 first-cut selections of the other committee, the enthusiasm of even the biggest documentary fan could suffer. Under the new regulations, the committees might simply dwindle—a result which, presumably, no one wants.

BARBARA BLISS OSBORN

Barbara Bliss Osborn is a contributing editor to The Independent. She writes from Los Angeles.

Public TV Pixelates, Cherry Picks ITVS Series

Everyone knows by now that the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities are threatened with extinction—not in order to balance the federal budget, but because freedom of artistic expression has become unbearable to certain Republican congressmen. Worse yet, recent incidents involving work funded by the Independent Television Service (ITVS) suggest that some executives in cultural institutions are already losing their nerve, accommodating a worst-case scenario even before threatened cuts have been made.

For a March 21st broadcast, public television station WNYC took it upon itself to alter certain images contained in the third segment of *Animated Women*, a series of four profiles of women animators produced by Side-Kicks Productions. Singled out for the unauthorized alterations was a half-hour program featuring animator Ruth Peyser discussing her short films (three of which—*Another Great Day*, *Covered in Fleas*, and *Go To Hell*—were shown in their entirety.)

Peyser's work, which involves labor-intensive painting techniques, is an expressionistic, existentialist take on our mass-mediatized, misogynist culture and the misuse of religious dogma as

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a means of social control. Equal parts ennui, irony, and angst, the films constitute one unapologetic urban-woman's-eye-view of a hostile environment.

For the broadcast, which took place at 9:30 p.m., WNYC subjected the program to pixelation of images and erasure of words from the soundtrack. One image, for example, that originally showed the cartoon's protagonist, a blonde woman with a ratlike snout, urinating out her window onto a man who is urinating into her doorway, was pixelated so that the woman's urine stream and part of her backside were covered.

WNYC program director Neal Hecker claims he had not seen all four programs before scheduling them during prime-time, and that, closer to air date, the station became concerned about some of the images because it was thought the program's animated content "would attract a younger audience."

Hecker goes on to say that it was a production assistant who failed to contact Side-Kicks for the necessary authorization to pixelate—permission that would have been denied, according to series director Sybil Del Gaudio.

WNYC had recently been "raked over the coals" on WABC talk radio, in Hecker's words, for airing the last episode of another ITVS series, *TV Families*. (The offending program, Jon Moritsugu's *Terminal U.S.A.*, was, he says, "ironically, about censorship.") At the time of the *Animated Women* broadcast, the station's future was up for grabs, as the City of New York was known to be considering selling it. (Unbeknownst to its program director at the time, the station had in fact already been sold off to Dow Jones and ITT, for \$200 million.) Hecker admits that the unauthorized changes to the Peyser segment were partly an attempt to avoid becoming "a public spectacle" or "generating any unfavorable publicity."

ITVS has since obtained WNYC's promise to rebroadcast the unaltered Peyser program some time in October, at a later hour in the evening. Peyser, however, still expresses dismay that what she considers "the left"—public television—can't "stick to its guns" with the temerity of the right wing.

Independent filmmaker Arthur Dong, meanwhile, had been under the impression since last year that his award-winning, hour-long documentary *Coming Out Under Fire*, which had been funded in part by ITVS, would be given a so-called "hard feed" by PBS during Gay Pride month this

June. Of the pool of programs PBS makes available to public television stations, the hard feeds have a specific broadcast date and time in PBS's prestigious national program. Individual stations are free to deviate from the recommended schedule, but have to do so actively—and defend the

Meieran and Isaac Julian. The service indicated it was willing to take two of the programs, Arthur Dong's *Out Rage*, '69 and Robyn Hutt's *Hollow Liberty*; but, dissatisfied with the offer, ITVS decided to sell the series intact on a station-by-station basis for broadcast in October.

San Francisco's public television station KQED took the initiative in mid-August of airing all four segments as a pledge-getter.

Notably, the two segments PBS did want have a relatively safe feel to them. A number of pertinent players and important developments, including analysis of the ongoing war for equal rights, are missing from Hutt's segment on homophobia in the military. And while Dong's history of gay rights from Stonewall to Anita Bryant is informative and inspiring, it is, as they say, history.

The physical and legal gay-bashing portrayed in Tina Di Felicianantonio and Jane C. Wagner's *Culture Wars*, on the other hand, is the stuff of today's headlines—and it is on the rise. Covering events from the brutal murder in Queens, New York, of "fag" Julio Rivera to the defeat of Oregon's anti-homosexual Ballot Measure 9, the emotion-packed video magazine eloquently argues the accelerating need for gay rights advocacy.

The other rejected program, Robert Byrd's *Generation Q*, while less rigorous in its editing and political analysis, is arguably equally threatening to the fundamentalist agenda: It shows lesbians and gays of high school age happy with who they are—except to the extent they are discriminated against.

So the question arises: Was PBS's decision based on segment quality, as its executives claim, or on something more political? ITVS executive director James Yee believes the latter. "Every decision is political," he says. PBS's Kathy Quattrone declines much comment, saying that although the service "operates in a fishbowl," its decision-making process is confidential. "I would decline to go into a lot of detail" about the decision, she says, "because I don't want to get into a kind of condemnation



A real pisser: the anti-heroine of *Go to Hell*, pixelated by PBS while peeing. Inset: filmmaker Ruth Peyser. Inset photo: Macioce, courtesy ITVS

action if viewers complain.

In April, Dong learned that his portrait of World War II veterans victimized by the U.S. military's homophobic policies had been downgraded to a "soft feed" for June—available in the PBS pool but not part of the national program. Acting director of programming for PBS Kathy Quattrone asserts that this was done because there was not "room" in the June line-up for the program and that PBS had never made a commitment to offer a June hard feed. PBS, she says, did offer later dates for a hard feed of the program. But ITVS had already sent out 2,500 press kits with the June date and had little choice but to go with the soft feed. Ultimately, only about 60 of the country's 350 public television stations aired the program. (These, predictably, were the major markets—where reliable information about lesbian and gays is typically already available. Where *Coming Out* was not aired was in places most in need of such information.)

PBS's decision was especially ironic, Dong asserts, because the subjects of *Coming Out* are individuals who attempted to serve their country by joining the national military but, dishonorably discharged, were stripped of benefits and forever stigmatized—for no reason besides their homosexuality. "Of all the programs not to treat with respect," Dong says.

In July, PBS declined to feature two segments of *The Question of Equality*, a four-part ITVS series on lesbian and gay rights produced by David

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of one approach or another that a producer took." What she is willing to say: "Our judgment was that the two [segments approved] were appropriate in terms of quality and style and format and, certainly, subject matter and that sort of thing for our distribution, and those are the two we were willing to accept."

Of the evolving cultural climate at PBS and elsewhere, Yee ultimately has this to say: "Everyone's just, shall we say, becoming increasingly cautious." Worse, "in that caution you do go through a self-edit, and that's just the ugliest side of this whole thing."

Trying to get potentially controversial programs aired in this climate, he says, is becoming not "a matter of being courageous. It's a matter of being both smart and courageous. The hardest part of this whole thing is going for the long haul."

ERIN BLACKWELL

Erin Blackwell is the arts editor of Icon, a San Francisco-based monthly.

SAG Accommodates Lowest-Budget Indies

To encourage very-low-budget producers throughout the country to employ more of its members, the Screen Actors Guild (SAG) recently lowered the terms of its low-budget agreements still further for the least expensive movies.

The SAG Modified Low Budget Agreement, in effect since October 1, applies to feature length motion pictures filmed entirely in the United States at a total production cost of less than \$300,000. The original, less accommodating Low Budget Agreement still governs films that cost more than \$300,000 but less than \$1.75 million; the Affirmative Action Low Budget Agreements covers films that cost more than \$1.75 million but less than \$2.5 million. (The term "production cost" here includes both above and below the line costs.)

To qualify under the modified agreement, producers must also film locally where they are based and work with the SAG office there. The modification excludes producers based in the greater Los Angeles area.

The modified agreement cuts approximately in half the rates that producers must pay SAG members. It reduces the previously required day and weekly rates of \$448 and \$1,671 respectively to \$248 and \$864. Provisions for overtime, premium pay, security deposits, and penalties and rehearsals payments remain the same.

The modification, like the original low-budget agreements but unlike the SAG Limited Exhibition Agreement (LEA) [see "Navigating The SAG Limited Exhibition Agreement,"

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January/February 1995], stipulates that producers must use only SAG performers in the cast, not combine SAG members and non-members. However, as the original low-budget agreement provided, producers may get special permission from SAG to do so if they believe the non-union thespian is best for a role because of special talent or physical appearance. (If a non-SAG performer is hired, he or she must be paid the same amount and work under the same terms as the guild performers.)

Also unlike the SAG LEA, which restricts the distribution and exhibition of a film to "showcase" theaters, public television, and self distributed videocassettes, the Modified Low Budget Agreement requires that producers intend their films to receive initial theatrical releases—that is, release in at least one theater for a period of not less than two weeks. They need not pay residuals to performers in connection with theatrical release. But the modification doubles the required residuals for free and pay television, stating that producers must pay 7.2% of the film's worldwide distributor's gross receipts to the performers in connection with television release. It also doubles residuals for a film's release on videocassettes, so that producers must pay performers 9% on the first \$1,000,000 of worldwide distributor's gross receipts and 10.8% of the worldwide distribu-

tor's gross receipts in excess of \$1,000,000. (Such residuals are paid on a deferred basis as the film's distributors take in the receipts.)

According to SAG/East executive administrator for theatrical and television contracts Sallie Weaver, it remains an open question whether the Modified Low Budget Agreement will in fact encourage producers of very low budget films to use guild members for local productions. Weaver notes that the modified agreement is an experiment and currently only temporary, scheduled to expire in January of 1996. (When the guild evaluates the success of the new agreement, it should also question whether it has provided sufficient information about it to the independent film community.)

According to Weaver, SAG will continue to develop other arrangements in which its need to protect its members can be balanced with the changing dynamics of an independent film marketplace that has encouraged the success and release of extremely low budget films that often feature the guild's members. One can only encourage SAG's commitment and efforts to provide flexible or revised arrangements with "no budget" and very low budget filmmakers.

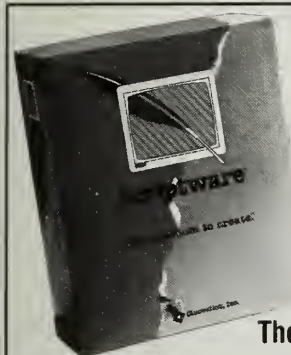
ROBERT L. SEIGEL

Robert L. Seigel is a New York City-based entertainment attorney and a principal of Cinema Film Consulting.

On the Record

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— U.S. Senator James Exon (D-NE) reads from a prayer composed by the Senate chaplain to open the June 14 debate on his Communications Decency Act, which censors "indecent" speech on the Internet and on-line services. The Senate voted 84-16 to pass the bill.



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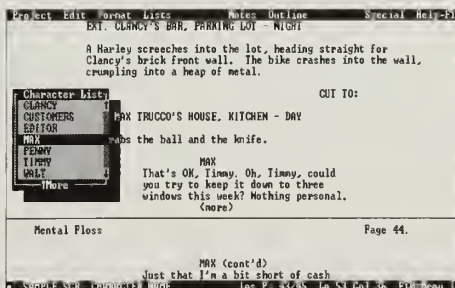
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BY ILENE S. GOLDMAN

The Kids Are Alright

Student Film Festivals

IN 1975 *FIELD OF HONOR* WON THE STUDENT Academy Award for Best Narrative Film. Twenty years later, its director accepted another Academy Award, this time for Best Director for *Forrest Gump*. Winning the Student Award did not guarantee Bob Zemeckis success in his chosen field, but it probably didn't hurt.

The MPAA's Student Academy Awards and other student film festivals throughout the United States and around the world provide student filmmakers with screening venues, audiences, awards, and recognition of their hard work. Such exposure may lead to important contacts, internships, representation, and funding for independent films. Several options exist: Students may participate in festivals created uniquely for student filmmakers—from the small campus festival held by nearly every university film department to regional competitions to large national and international festivals, such as the University Film and Video Association (UFVA) Festival and University of Utah's Filmfront. Additionally, many of the nation's larger film festivals, such as the Chicago International Film Festival, host student divisions. Others encourage student participation with special awards or student entry fees. The Big Muddy, held annually at Southern Illinois University, for instance, advertises its dedication to independent and student filmmakers.

Celebrating its third year, the UFVA Festival has quickly grown to be the largest student fest in the country. In 1994 UFVA had over 400 entries from 15 countries. The festival's success reflects its commitment to reaching out to film schools throughout the world, using a toll-free phone number and the Internet to publicize the festival. Moreover, the UFVA Festival is the only student festival that tours, providing its participants with an audience potential unsurpassed by other screening venues for student work. During its 1994 touring season, the UFVA Festival was seen in 10 cities with a total audience of 2,000. Winning a competition certainly has rewards, but this exposure exceeds any award or plaque. Mark Osborne, whose film *Greener* won first prize for animation in 1994, has recently been picked up by an agent who saw his work at the festival last

summer. After the Los Angeles screening of *Greener*, Osborne received many phone calls expressing interest in his work, including a call from the Cartoon Network about broadcasting *Greener* as part of a new initiative to showcase short films.

Lower profile and less competitive student festivals give students an outlet for their finished work. The Filmfront Festival, sponsored by Filmfront, a student organization at the University of Utah, was established specifically as a place to show finished student films. The festival began 10 years ago as the Western United States Student Film and Video Festival, attracting students and audiences from University of Colorado, Brigham Young University, and other Western schools.

In 1988 the festival had only 30 entries for all categories. By 1992, the most recent fest, Filmfront received 200 entries, including international films. Co-founder and former festival director Sean McBride sees the festival's growth as reflecting Filmfront's concerted effort to contact film schools worldwide. Awards vary from year to year, depending on donations. However, every entry is screened publicly. "Pre-screening basically assures that the film is physically projectable. We've only ever rejected two films—they were nothing more than pornography, and we felt they were not appropriate," says McBride.



Filmfront gives awards in nine categories: Animation, Narrative, Documentary, Experimental, Best Graduate Work, Best Undergraduate Work, Best Video or Film, Audience Choice, and Best Local Film. Unlike some other fests, Filmfront accepts work finished on film or video. The week-long fest, scheduled to resume this fall, culminates with a daytime screening of audience favorites and an evening screening of fest winners.

The Chicago International Film Festival, a prestigious 31-year-old institution, hosts special awards for student filmmakers. Michael Kutza, the festival's founder, was himself a student filmmaker and thus found it natural to include student films in the festival from the beginning. Since 1964 the Chicago International Film Festival has awarded student films in several categories—Narrative, Experimental, Animation, Documentary, and Educational. Kutza finds that “the student categories are always the most creative.” Prizes in Chicago include statues and plaques and the prestige of film reviews in major newspapers.

While most fests accept a broad range of genres, there are some interesting specialized festivals. Student filmmakers who have focused on the Latino/Chicano or Native American experience might consider submitting their work to Cine Estudiantil in San Diego. For documentarists there are the David L. Wolper Documentary Student Achievement Awards. And each year the Anti-Defamation League presents the Dore Shary Awards for films with human rights themes. Many other special interest festivals and competitions promote student participation.

The following are excerpts from the UFVA International Festival Directory for Students, a comprehensive listing of student film and video festivals, festivals that include student categories and/or awards, and festivals that encourage student entries. Compiled by David Kluff, director of the UFVA Festival, the complete directory includes descriptions of competition categories, fees, deadlines, and contacts. Entry fees vary and deadlines change, so call or write the festival for this year's details. The complete UFVA list is available from: UFVA Student Festival, Dept. of Radio/TV/Film, Temple Univ., Philadelphia, PA 19122; (800) 499-UFVA or (215) 923-3532; fax: (215) 204-5280 or 923-4832; email: dkluff@astro.ocis.temple.edu.

Ilene S. Goldman teaches film studies in the Chicago area and has written for Jump Cut and the Journal of Film and Video.

ON THE SHORT LIST

ACADEMY OF MOTION PICTURE ARTS & SCIENCES STUDENT ACADEMY AWARDS

8949 Wilshire Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA 90211-1972; (310) 247-3000, x130; fax: 859-9619.

Contact: Rich Miller. Deadline: April. No entry fee.

Open annually to students enrolled in film courses in colleges, universities, art and film schools throughout U.S. Four categories: Animation, Documentary, Alternative & Dramatic. Cash awards given in all categories.

ACADEMY OF TELEVISION ARTS AND SCIENCES COLLEGE TELEVISION AWARDS

5220 Lankershim Blvd., North Hollywood, CA 91601-3109; (818) 754-2800

No entry fee

Recognizes excellence in college student film/video productions. Several categories. Cash prizes.

AECT INTERNATIONAL STUDENT MEDIA FESTIVAL

Association for Educational Communications & Technology, 2644 Riva Rd., Annapolis, MD 21401; (708) 692-8233; fax: 825-0677.

Contact: Mike Maszczenski. Deadline: October. Entry fee: \$10.

Accepts student work in various formats. Several age and genre categories.

ALAMO AMERICAN FILM COMPETITION FOR STUDENTS

PO Box 22776, Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33335; (305) 527-6542; fax: 468-2184.

Deadline: April. Entry fee: \$25

National student festival sponsored by Alamo Rent A Car. Various categories and prizes.

CINE ESTUDIANTIL

c/o Centro Cultural de la Raza, 2125 Park Blvd., San Diego, CA 92101; (619) 235-6135 x17

Contact: Ethan van Thillo. Deadline: November. Entry fee: \$5.

Only fest in the U.S. dedicated solely to student work depicting Chicano/Latino/Native American experience.

COLLEGE FILM AND VIDEO FESTIVAL

Univ. of Cincinnati Film Society, ML #136, Tangeman University Center, Cincinnati, OH 45221; (513) 556-FILM.

Contact: Film Society President. Deadline: early spring. Entry fee: \$5

Student & independent festival. Filmmaker must be over 18. Cash prizes. Animation, Live Action, Documentary categories.

Oatmeal, Relah Eckstein's surreal fantasy inspired by George Melies, was screened at the NY Expo of Short Film. Courtesy New York Expo



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- student-produced docs & narratives
- training/instructional programs
- medical/health programs
- tv programs
- psa's

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FX: 510.465.2835

E-MAIL: NEMN@aol.com

DAVID L. WOLPER DOCUMENTARY STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

1551 South Robertson Blvd., Suite 201, Los Angeles, CA 90035; (310) 284-8422; fax: 785-9334; email: idf@netcom.com.

Presented annually by the International Documentary Association to recognize exceptional creative achievement in nonfiction film and video production at the university level. \$1,000 top prize.

DORE SCHARY AWARDS

Anti-Defamation League, 823 United Nations Plaza, New York, NY 10017; (212) 490-2525

Deadline: August. No entry fee.

Open to all students majoring in film &/or television. Accepts narratives, documentaries & animation dealing with human relations themes. Cash prizes for film & video.

FESTIVAL INTERNATIONAL DU COURT METRAGE D'EVREUX ET DE L'EURE

4 rue David, 27000 Evreux, France; 32-24-04-43.

Contact: Jacques Baptiste. Deadline: August. No entry fee.

FESTIVAL UNIVERSITAIRE DU FILM UNDERGROUND

Faculte de Lettres, 23 BD, Albert Ier, 54000 Nancy, France.

Contact: Sylvie Audia.

FILM FESTIVAL OF INTERNATIONAL CINEMA STUDENTS

c/o Tokyu Agency, Inc., 4-8-18, Akasaka, Minato-ku, Tokyo, Japan; 03-3475-3855; fax: 03-5411-0382.

Contact: Mr. Haruki Iwasaki. Deadline: July. No entry fee.

Open to filmmakers attending educational institutions related to the art of filmmaking throughout the world; films must be nominated by the student's school.

FILMFRONT NATIONAL STUDENT FILM AND VIDEO FESTIVAL

206 P.A.B., University of Utah, Salt Lake City, UT 84112; (801) 328-2428.

Deadline: October. Entry fee: \$30.

Several awards for graduates & undergraduates.

FILMS & INSTITUTIONS FORUM

UFTS, BP 25, 113 rue Antoine Fabre, 63270 Vic-le-

PO Box 52, Haymarket, NSW 2000, Australia; 612-251-4960. email: flicker@tmx.mhs.oz.au

Contact: Craig Kirkwood. Deadline: June. Entry fee: \$25.



Graham Justice, winner of the 1993 Student Academy Award for *A Children's Story*. Photo: Long Photography, Inc.

Right: from Robin Hessman's *Portrait of a Boy with Dog*. Photos p. 14-17 courtesy UFVA.

Comte, France; 73 69 16 06; fax: 73-69-19-56.

Contact: Jean Cugnet. Deadline: November.

International student film & video festival with emphasis on documentary.

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FORT LAUDERDALE INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL STUDENT COMPETITION

2633 East Sunrise Blvd, Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33304; (305) 563-0500; fax: 564-1206.

Deadline: October. Entry fee: \$25

Accepts student work in several categories.

HENRI LANGLOIS INTERNATIONAL FILM ENCOUNTER

1, place de la cathédrale, 86 000 Poitiers, France;
(33) 49 41 80 00; fax: 33-49-41-7601

Contact: Didier Loineau. Deadline: September. No entry fee.

Accepts graduate student films. Cash prizes, tour screenings, and other prizes.

INTERNATIONAL FILM AND STUDENT DIRECTORS FESTIVAL

FIFREC, B.P. 7144, 30913 Nîmes Cedex, France; 66 84 47 40; fax: 72-02-20-36.

Entries may be nominated by school or sent individually. Awards in 12 categories.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT FILM FESTIVAL

Universiade Film Festival Committee, c/o National Film Theatre, Citadel Theatre, 9828-101A Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta T5J 2L6, Canada.

Deadline: April.



MUNICH INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF FILM SCHOOLS

Kaiserstrasse 39, D-80807, München, Germany; 49 89 3819 040; fax: 49-89-3819-0426.

Accepts entries only from invited film schools. Individual schools select participating films.

NATIONAL STUDENT MEDIA ARTS EXHIBITION

Visual Studies Workshop, 31 Prince St., Rochester, NY 14607-1499; (716) 442-8676; fax: 442-1992.

Contact: Pia Cseri-Briones. Deadline: January. No entry fee.

A series of current film, video & computer animation from across U.S. and Canada. Accepts work from graduate, undergraduate, high school, and younger students.

NEW JERSEY YOUNG FILM AND VIDEO-MAKERS' FESTIVAL

c/o JCSC Dept. of Media Arts, 203 West Side Ave., Jersey City, NJ 07305; tel/fax: (201) 200-2043

Contact: Frances John. Deadline: Late March. Entry fee: \$15.

Accepts work from New Jersey residents and those attending school in New Jersey.

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UFVA STUDENT FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL

Dept. of Radio-TV-Film, Temple University, Philadelphia, PA 19122; 1-800-499-UFVA or (215) 923-3532; fax: 204-5280; email: dkluft@astro.ocis.temple.edu

Contact: Dave Kluft, Victoria Plummer. Deadline: May 31. Entry fees: \$10 & \$15.

The only aggressively international & independent student film festival in the United States. Cash prizes, national tour of selected work. Categories: Animation, Documentary, Experimental, Narrative.



Among the student works shown at the UFVA festival were *Arn Chorn Pond* (above) and *Next Time Everything Will Be Better*, by Rick Minnich (pictured center with crew members Axel Schnepf (l) and Klaus-Peter Schmitt.

FESTIVALS WITH STUDENT CATEGORIES

ACCESS AWARDS, CALIFORNIA

AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, CALIFORNIA

ANNECY INTERNATIONAL ANIMATED FILM FESTIVAL, FRANCE

ATLANTA FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, GEORGIA

AUSTIN HEART OF FILM FESTIVAL, TEXAS

BLACK FILMWORKS, CALIFORNIA

BRITISH SHORT FILM FESTIVAL, ENGLAND

CANADIAN INTERNATIONAL ANNUAL FILM FESTIVAL, CANADA

CERTAMEN INTERNACIONAL DE CINE AMATEUR "CIUTAT D'IGUALADA", SPAIN

CHARLOTTE FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, NORTH CAROLINA

CHICAGO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, ILLINOIS

CINDY COMPETITION, CALIFORNIA

CINE GOLDEN EAGLE FILM & VIDEO COMPETITION, WASHINGTON D.C.

CLEVELAND INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, OHIO
 COLUMBUS INTERNATIONAL FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, OHIO
 CONFRONTATION CINEMATOGRAPHIQUE PERPIGNAN, FRANCE
 DAYS OF INDEPENDENT FILM, GERMANY
 EUROPEAN MEDIA ART FESTIVAL, GERMANY
 FESTIVAL INTERNATIONAL DU COURT METRAGE DE MONS, BELGIUM
 FLORIDA FILM FESTIVAL, FLORIDA
 GOLDEN KNIGHT INTERNATIONAL AMATEUR FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, MALTA
 HAMPTONS INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, NEW YORK
 HUMBOLDT INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, CALIFORNIA
 INTERNATIONAL ART FILM FESTIVAL, SLOVAK REPUBLIC
 INTERNATIONAL FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, ENGLAND
 INTERNATIONAL SURVEY OF AUDIOVISUAL TEACHING MATERIAL, ITALY
 JOEY AWARDS, CALIFORNIA
 MARIN COUNTY NATIONAL FILM COMPETITION, CALIFORNIA
 MELBOURNE INTERNATIONAL FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, AUSTRALIA
 MOOMBA INTERNATIONAL AMATEUR FILM FESTIVAL, AUSTRALIA
 MOVIES TO GO- IOWA FILM AWARDS, IOWA
 NAAEE ANNUAL ENVIRONMENTAL FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, OHIO
 NATIONAL EDUCATION FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, CALIFORNIA
 NATIONAL FINE ARTS VIDEO COMPETITION, MISSOURI
 NEW ENGLAND FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, MASSACHUSETTS
 PHILAFILM, THE PHILADELPHIA INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, PENNSYLVANIA
 PREMIERS PLANS/EUROPEAN FIRST FILM FESTIVAL, FRANCE
 PRIZED PIECES INTERNATIONAL FILM & VIDEO COMPETITION, OHIO
 RECONTRES DU CINEMA INDEPENDENT, FRANCE
 REELS IN COLOR FILM FESTIVAL, GEORGIA
 SINKING CREEK FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, TENNESSEE
 VIDEO TUSCULUM, TENNESSEE
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WHERE THE SIDEWALK ENDS

Scouting the Uncharted Paths of Digital Technology

BY LUKE HONES

THE INDEPENDENT PRODUCTION COMMUNITY, AND the industry as a whole, is quickly approaching the technological edge of town. What lies beyond is anyone's guess. One can glimpse pathways into this uncharted territory every spring at the National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) convention, where manufacturers unveil their latest products. At the same time, new technology is, generally speaking, not replacing older technology, just layering on top of it. Despite what anyone says, the video industry will not be tapeless in the coming five years, or even the next 10.

To get a grasp on the hodge-podge of technology we will be working with soon, let's look at the technologies underlying the new video and multimedia equipment shown at NAB '95 and see how independents will relate to the coming changes.

Digital Technology

If you work at a production facility, there are two remarks you hear every day: "I'm going to transfer all of my stuff to digital, and then it will last forever, right?" and "If it's digital, I can clone it, right?"

Upon hearing this, your immediate thought is: Does the speaker mean digital tape, or CD-ROM, or the Internet, or Avid, or what? The word "digital" alone is meaningless in those questions and does not suggest longevity, improved signal processing, or quality. Digital equipment has been in the video editing suite since the late seventies. TBCs (time base correctors) are digital devices, and many TBCs have evolved to include digital effects, like still frame and posterization. The TBC has led the way for other digital devices, such as DVEs (digital video effects), DDRs (digital disk recorders), and eventually digital tape recorders.

The quality of a piece of digital equipment is measured by the level of detail it processes. While some may talk of detail in bits and kilohertz, a more practical way of describing it is: How good does it look or sound? For instance, some Quicktime equipment digitizes video, but at only

15 frames a second (rather than the standard 30 frames). Some digital sound equipment makes your recording sound like it was done over the telephone. Even in the best equipment there is a lot of detail that is left out (not even film gets down to the subatomic). The specifications of the equipment—the level of expectations engineers designed it for—will determine the quality (and probably the cost) of the product.

That means the digital video signal from a CD-

multiple generations...as long as the picture content remains unchanged (non-process mode dubbing)." In other words, run your signal through a DVE or a switcher, and your signal loses a little quality.

What is happening, however, is that all the exciting developments in videotape recording (preread, 4-channel audio, switchable 16:9 aspect ratio, error detection, etc.) are being designed into digital, not analog, systems. We

The bottom line is that independent producers are more likely than any other market to push the technology to the limits, because they have more time than money. Our challenge is to get new technology into the hands of as many independents as possible. If the independent community is interested in more than bleacher seats in the coming years of technology change-over, the strong hand is to support local media arts centers.

ROM may not please us any more than the analog signal from a VHS player. While a very expensive digital recorder, such as D-1, will give you a signal that is better than broadcast quality, analog HDTV is pretty exciting too. D-1's quality probably has less to do with it being digital and more to do with the fact that the designers ignored the constraints of NTSC video and opted to build a deck that could deliver a much richer and broader range of colors and detail.

Digital tape format manufacturers make much out of "cloning", or duplication without generation loss, but there are a few caveats for producers. First, and this may seem obvious, cloning does not mean your VHS copies will look exactly like your D-2 copy. Cloning can be done between two digital decks that have a digital signal path between them. In other words, if you are using the right decks and cables, you can clone your tape. Even so, in reading Sony's literature about Digital Betacam, they make it clear that "First-generation picture quality is maintained throughout

should not forget that the high fidelity digital formats are also tape formats and bring with them all of the failings of tape. Will your digital tape be any easier to play back 20 years from now than your half-inch open-reel tape is today? Probably not.

LANs (Local Area Networks)

Production facilities in the near future will probably be networked computer workstations and peripherals (video decks and other input/output devices). If we follow the lead of high-end workstation networks, these facilities will be a far cry from Mac or Windows desktop publishing service bureaus, where computers are networked to share a printer or a drive. Workstation networks designed by SGI, Sun Microsystems, IBM, and Hewlett-Packard are designed to make full, simultaneous use of all of the computers in the network for a given job.

For example, creating video or film effects on a computer is known as rendering. Rendering time can be instantaneous, or it can take several days. Because Mac and Windows networks are designed for peripheral sharing (printer and drive), all the rendering done on these machines is primarily done by one machine. With a workstation-level network, you can have several computers rendering an effect at once. By having one workstation take control of the processors of other computers, you end up with something more than a series of single processor computers: one big, powerful multi-processor computer.

SGI reports that Seattle and Hawaii have television stations that are now completely designed around a workstation network. SGI, Sony, Avid, Quantel, and others are racing to develop networked solutions for broadcast stations. Avid and Ikegami have even developed a disk-based camera for news acquisition. More on that later.

WANs (Wide Area Networks)

The most famous WAN is the Internet. The current popular interface on the Internet is the World Wide Web, a hypertext-based Internet navigation system that has both a text and graphical interface, depending on the power of your computer. Like most of the technology today, the World Wide Web demonstrates the possibilities more than it realizes them. Despite its promise of including audio and moving video, the Web's functionality is dependent on the computer hardware you have. If you are at a university, you are probably having a ball on the Web. If you are at a nonprofit media arts center (like me), the Web is just another expensive option.

Two networks of note, specifically designed for video and film work, have emerged in the last year: Pacific Bell's Media Park and Reuters/SGI/Sprint's DRUMS. The promise of these networks is tantalizing. DRUMS, for instance, has a huge media database of Reuters' archive of film and video. Over the network, clients can search the database and look at the footage available on any topic. Both networks are heading towards developing a virtual production house, similar to what has already happened in the audio industry. Media Park, for instance, allows a client in San Francisco to oversee and approve a final edit taking place in Los Angeles. While these projects are still in the testing stage, a number of production facilities are serving as beta sites.

Compression

Because video signals take up so much space on a hard disk and require so much time to transport over a network, manufacturers and industry groups are developing and incorporating compression schemes into digital equipment. Compression, by its nature, involves one of two processes. The first throws away data that has been predetermined by the product developers to be redundant or expendable. The second replaces data with a less complex place holder (if we were compressing a word processing file, for instance, all of the occurrences of "the" would be replaced with "^", saving 2 characters per occurrence). To use this data, it must be decompressed. The first process costs you data, the second costs you time.

As compression schemes have been refined, the quality of the video produced has become better and better, and there are some cable channels that are now cablecasting using MPEG 2 (a playback compression format). Digital Betacam, a component digital format that is becoming a video production standard, uses DCT compression.

Disk-based Systems

Disk-based systems are editing systems or field production cameras that use hard disks for storage, rather than videotape. They offer two important advantages and many disadvantages. Disk-based systems, like the Avid and Premiere, are nonlinear, potentially increasing your efficiency and creative control. Because they are also most often computer-based, disk-based systems also have the potential of giving you greater cataloguing capabilities.

On the down side, hard disks are a lot more expensive than videotape (30 minute Betacam SP: \$25; 30 minute hard disk: \$3,000), they use compression that may not be acceptable for your final product (camera pans are not fluid, detail is blocky), manufacturers make claims that may not be based in reality (unless perhaps virtual reality), they crash, and probably because they are so new, the equipment has an accelerated rate of obsolescence.

As mentioned above, where disk-based systems may have found a home is in broadcast news departments. At this year's NAB, Ikegami and Avid showed a disk-based camcorder that can record 20 minutes of material onto a 2.4 gigabyte removable drive. A docking station for the removable drive will be available for Avid workstations that are being marketed to TV news stations. The literature I've read on this system is unequivocal: This camera is designed for ENG (Electronic News Gathering). If you are a documentary maker, it will probably be few years before you carry around disks instead of tapes. However, you may

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not be carrying Hi-8 much longer either.

Tape-based Systems

Just when you were getting excited about Hi-8 (or S-VHS), a Japanese consortium has developed a consumer component digital format called DVCPRO (at least, that is Panasonic's name for it). It is a 6mm tape, employs a compression scheme, and there was a working studio deck at NAB. It is a format that is being supported by most of the major manufacturers, including Sony, and the equipment should be on sale within the year.

What can we expect from this new format? It sounds wonderful, and for the most part it will be wonderful, but we should not forget all of the lessons we learned with Hi-8 (a lot of Sony Hi-8 technology went into DVCPRO). Will the manufacturers deliver completed equipment (time code in and out, frame accurate, etc.)? Will the first model be quickly followed by a revised model (remember the EVO-9800 and EVO 9800A)? Will the deck be like the EVO-9850, where everything seems perfect except picture playback? And how about drop out?

The pain felt by those of us who have used tape for years is only equaled by the pain felt by those of us who have used computers for years. It is Hobson's Choice, and the only steps we can take is to prepare intelligently for the technology rain that will continue to come down.

Whither the Independent Producer?

Where is the independent producer in all of this? Nowhere, right now. These products are being developed for much larger markets (mainstream broadcast and film) by companies that may not be familiar with, or care about, independent production.

Shouldn't independent producers have a voice in where this technology is going? Sure, but how is that going to happen? To date, companies have approached individuals they know of (Academy Award winners, famous video artists, media personalities) who are given a chance to try out the technology. This "mascot" approach is probably fine for manufacturers and a very small number of established producers, but it does not help the independent community as a whole.

The bottom line is that independent producers are more likely to push the technology to the limits than any other market, because they have more time than money. Our challenge is to get new technology into the hands of as many independents as possible. A relationship with manufacturers that will allow this must be symbiotic: both sides must perceive a potential for positive results from the collaboration.

How can this relationship best be developed? If the independent community is interested in more than bleacher seats in the coming years of technology change-over, the strong hand is to support local media arts centers. Because media arts centers work with a community of video- and filmmakers, manufacturers will receive feedback on their products from a larger number of people. Some manufacturers in the video industry are looking for objective organizations for "benchmarking" and establishing standards for the new equipment that is coming out. The video industry does not have the benchmarking infrastructure that has been developed in the computer industry. For that reason some manufacturers believe the term "broadcast quality" has become a sales pitch, and the methodology for determining "broadcast quality" has been obscured.

Finally, because most media arts centers have workshop programs, manufacturers have a built-in "next step" for people who buy their systems. ("Need training or trained personnel? Film/Video Arts has classes.") This is media arts' secret weapon, for while offering training adds substantial value to their equipment, most manufacturers have their hands full taking care of sales, customer service, shipping, installation, etc.

For media arts centers, collaborating with manufacturers will provide earned income during a time when income in media arts is particularly hard to come by. This type of support will also keep media arts centers current with the marketplace. BAVC is an authorized Avid training center, an authorized Quantel Editbox trainer, and also trains the community on Radius Telecast, Adobe Premiere, Macromind Director and Authorware. By this fall, we hope to have a training program for the Silicon Graphics platforms. While all this equipment is used in our workshop program, it is also available to non-commercial independent producers in our access facility. Speaking for an organization that has followed this strategy, I can say that it takes a long time to build trust and credibility, but these relationships can be developed and nurtured.

And this is the perfect time for these collaborations. For while we're testing these new technologies out there beyond the sidewalk's end, we go without much of our traditional funding. And it won't be a day's hike. Examples from history show that lengthy excursions into the wilderness end up one of several ways: The founding of a new society, discovery of gold, death, or cannibalism. Whither the independent?

Lukes Hones (videonet@aol.com) researches, writes, and speaks about community use of old and new technology. He is director of research and development at the Bay Area Video Coalition.

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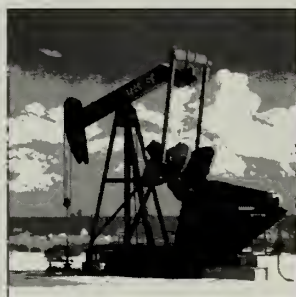
Europe, this is the only American state that was once an independent Republic. If it split off from the U.S., it would have the world’s eleventh biggest economy and one of its most diverse cultures.

From the French-flavored Cajun country on the swampy edge of Louisiana to the sere Mexican border mountains near El Paso del Norte, Texas—and its film scene—offers unsurpassed richness and diversity.

This Regional Spotlight provides a sampling of Texas’s media smorgasbord—from feature directors like Richard Linklater and Eagle Pennell who still call Texas home, to top-notch media education and public access programs, to the Lone Star State’s extensive festival circuit. Come ’n’ get it.

W H E R E T H E I N D I E S R O A M :

The Texas Exhibition Scene



Desperado: Texas native Robert Rodriguez takes steady aim on the set of his most recent feature.

Photo: Rico Torres, courtesy Columbia Pictures. Above: photos courtesy Texas Film Commission

BY JOANNE HARRISON

TEXAS. Richard Linklater.
Robert Rodriguez.
By now, the legendary making
of *Slacker* and *El Mariachi*
come under the heading of
“If these stories ain’t true, they
oughta be.”

They are the indie dream, set deep in flyover country: Young and budgetless filmmakers bankrolled only by faith, hope, and the unpaid services of family and friends triumph over all obstacles and land in the Hollywood gravy.

Of course they did. They’re from Texas, where people—even independent filmmakers—still think they can triumph, that all stories have Horatio Alger potential.

In the mythic version of the Richard Linklater story, our hero was just a local Houston kid working scut jobs on an offshore oil rig. In the mid-eighties he sat in on a couple of film classes at the University of Texas in Austin, but decided it wasn’t for him. He did love film, though, and hung around the Southwest Alternate Media Project (SWAMP), the state’s only major nonprofit media arts center and a hotbed of media activity in Houston. He decided to make a feature film using only his savings from the rig, credit, and loans from family and friends. The result, made on a budget of \$23,000, was *Slacker*.

In the fairy-tale version of the Robert Rodriguez story, our hero, one of 10 children in a San Antonio family, was turned down for admission to the University of Texas (UT) film program. Three years later his trilogy of short films, *Austin Story*, which starred a number of his siblings, beat every film by UT students to take first place in the National Third Coast Film and Video Festival. When UT invited him into their film program after that, Rodriguez turned them down and went on to shoot *El Mariachi* for \$7,000, using wheelchairs for dollies and micro-burst takes so his amateur actors couldn’t screw up. Hollywood deemed this a hot new style and showered (okay, sprinkled) him with money. (Columbia Pictures coughed up \$6 million for *El Mariachi*’s stand-alone sequel, *Desperado*.)

The real stories are, of course, a lot more complicated. They also give a pretty good picture of the Texas independent scene and the media arts infrastructure that exists to help struggling filmmakers make their work, then get it into public view.

There are a number of important Texas organizations that encourage and support (emotionally if not financially) independent mediamakers. Linklater, Rodriguez, and countless others have benefited by plugging into this media arts network. SWAMP is involved in exhibition, education, facilities and equipment rental, and programming. There’s also the Rice University Media Center, which has a repertory film series and is the site for Rice’s film/video/photo department; the Museum of Fine Arts’ film and video program in Houston; and the Austin Film Society [see story page 28]. Among the state’s numerous festivals are the up-and-coming South by Southwest Festival in the state capital, which

highlights film, music, and multimedia; the Dallas Video Festival, one of the country’s only festivals dedicated solely to video [see story page 42]; the independent-friendly USA Film Festival in Dallas; and the U.S.’s pre-eminent Latino film showcase, CineFestival in San Antonio [see story page 40]. Texas also boasts having the longest-running public television showcase of film and video art in America, *The Territory*. On the air for 20 years, *The Territory* features cutting-edge international work by independent mediamakers. It’s also notable as a good and fairly unique example of collaborative synergy between local public TV stations, the museum world, and media arts centers. The curatorial team consists of Judith Sims, film and video curator at the Austin Museum of Art at Laguna Gloria; Tom Schott, author and professor at UT; Celia Lightfoot, acting director of SWAMP; Ed Hugetz, founding director of SWAMP and professor at University of Houston/Clear Lake; and Marian Luntz, curator of film and video at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. Coproducing with SWAMP and the two museums are public television stations KUHT in Houston and KLRU in Austin.

In some ways the world of independent film and video in Texas is like a small town party line. Everybody knows everybody and everybody else’s business. If your work isn’t right for one venue, they’ll pass you along to someone your work might suit better—and wish you luck along the way. The secret is getting into the network. That’s what Richard Linklater did.

In 1984 Linklater moved to Austin and became something of a slacker himself, hanging around the University of Texas and working for other people on their student films. One of them was *Late Air* by Lee Daniel, who was later to become Linklater’s director of photography.

“Lee’s film was included in a series called TEXPO that SWAMP used to do and was screened at the Rice University Media Center,” says Luntz, long one of the major players in the Texas independent scene, who was then director of exhibitions at SWAMP, where she worked for seven years.

“Lee [Daniel] and Rick [Linklater] drove in from Austin for the screening, and we repaired to a local bar,” she recalls. “They were talking about founding an Austin Film Society, because they were really big fans of showing film, not just of making it. I was pleased to work with people who shared this passion.”

“We kept in touch,” Luntz continues. “Pretty soon SWAMP was showing some of Rick’s own super-8 short films.” At that time, SWAMP was Southwest administrator for the National Endowment for the Arts’ Regional Fellowship Program for media artists, which awarded production funds to the tune of \$40,000 annually. “He kept submitting [grant applications] for independent production funds for a feature film project, but the hallowed peer panel review turned him down,” says Luntz. “Eventually, he submitted *Slacker* as a work-in-progress and received \$4,000 for postproduction.” (Future Linklaters will have to look elsewhere. In 1994 the NEA killed all the regional regrant programs, including SWAMP’s.)

“Robert Rodriguez didn’t get any SWAMP funding as such,” says Lightfoot, “but *Bedhead*, one of his early shorts, appeared on *The Territory*.” This means that close to one million Texas viewers were exposed to Rodriguez’s work before anyone ever heard of *El Mariachi*. “And before the studio option on *Slacker* took over,” says Lightfoot, “we showed it on campus at Sam Houston State University in Huntsville, Texas, as part of our Independent Images Tour.”

Independent Images, which is only one of SWAMP’s numerous programs, was first a media conference, then a touring package of productions drawn from SWAMP’s network of contacts. The package, which is

often custom-curated for each outlet, tours museums, galleries, colleges, and cultural organizations around the state. It has inspired other Texas film organizations, such as the Austin Museum of Art at Laguna Gloria, to encourage and exhibit independent work. The

Austin Museum has presented thematic series, such as Mexican Women Directors, and occasionally run programs of local independent film.

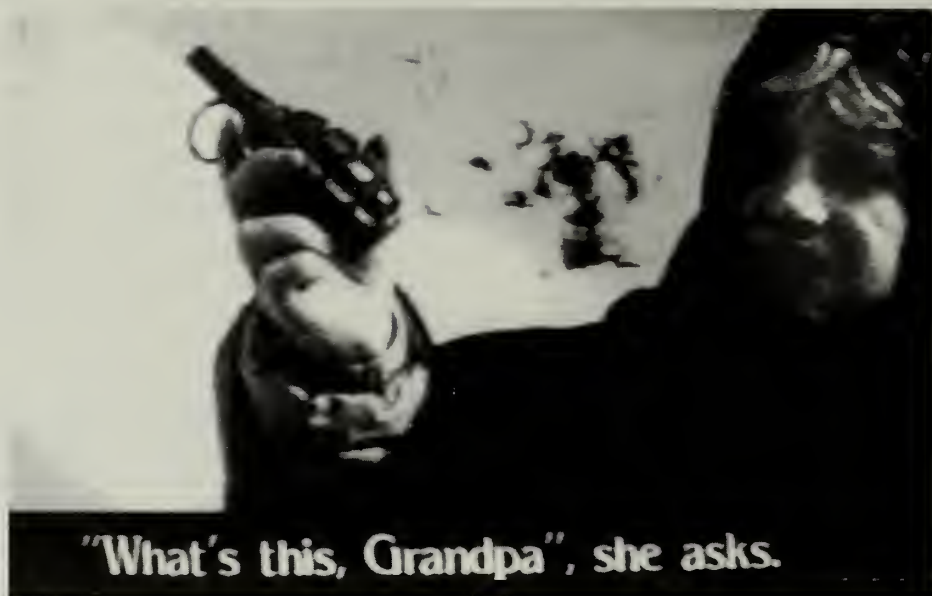
Linklater and Daniel's baby, the Austin Film Society, which has no permanent screen but offices and space paid for by the profits from *Slacker*, is now one of the premiere venues for independent films of all sorts.

"The Society is very sympathetic to independent work," affirms Luntz, "and they do quite well attracting audiences. The programmers are actively looking for work and making the rounds of the fests, as well as accepting submissions." She adds, "They apparently are also engaged in a heated rivalry with the University of Texas's CinemaTexas, [which] screens at the Texas Union on campus. Both programs have the capacity for large-screen video as well."

The Dallas Video Festival, one of the few video-only festivals in the country, screens some 250 works each year. The works are shown under optimum conditions, with the very best in video-projection equipment. It considers anyone who answers the call for entries, but actively seeks submissions on the cutting edge technologically. "In 1988 we were showing virtual reality," says fest founder and director Bart Weiss, who is also on the board of directors of the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers. "That was back when nobody'd really heard of it. Seven years ago we did CD-ROM, laser-disc, and interactive. We look for that intersection of art and technology, but what we really want is that special independent mind and spirit using new technological tools."

On its closing night, Dallas Video sponsors a big favorite among locals, "The Texas Show," a juried sidebar of short works in all genres by Texas videomakers. The videos are then packaged into a compilation tape, boxed real fancy, and sent all over the U.S. "It's been shown in a lot of places," says Weiss. "It's a great way for Texas artists to get their work seen."

Texas and other video artists and filmmakers can also get their work seen at the Rice University Media Center in Houston, where film program director Christine Gardner welcomes submissions year-round. "Because this is a campus-based program," she explains, "the film lineup depends on what's been scheduled by some of the classes, but we consistently show independent works, sometimes in whole series or sometimes scattered throughout the schedule. It's a semester by semester thing."



From *Tryptych*, by Daniel DeLoach, aired on *The Territory*, one of public television's oldest independent showcases, with an audience of a million. Courtesy SWAMP

The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, like the Rice Media Center, has a long track record of supporting independents. Works can be submitted for consideration at any time of the year. Also in Houston, DiverseWorks, an artist-run space with

its own 100-seat theater, looks for cutting-edge short films and videos. There, too, submission is ongoing. New on the Houston scene is Ancestral Films, founded by Mohammed Kamara, a local filmmaker, which is actively seeking films dealing with social issues and cultural understanding. Although it doesn't have its own venue, it matches works with locations in churches, community centers, and cultural institutions.

At the other end of the spectrum are the larger and, in some cases, more commercially oriented festivals, such as South by Southwest, USA Festival, CineFestival, and WorldFest. All offer open competitions, and each has its own personality.

South by Southwest, entering its tenth year, has grown into an important stop for many of the independent film business's top movers and shakers. This year the festival attracted such players as Sara Eaton of Fine Line Features; John Pierson, author of *Spike*, *Mike*, *Slackers* and *Dykes*; and hip indie entertainment lawyer John Sloss.

Approaching its twenty-sixth year, the USA Film Festival is the oldest film festival in Texas. It boasts an national board of directors that includes people like Roger Ebert. The board biggies and a number of name filmmakers show up every year to the festival, and access to them is remarkable. The fest is one of the few to award cash prizes in all of its sections, including video, shorts, and documentaries.

CineFestival in San Antonio is one of the enduring fests by and about Latino film. Led by Jim Mendiola and held on the heavily Hispanic west side of Alamo City at the Guadeloupe Cultural Arts Center, this event has a great track record for finding and screening important films by Latinos. Rodriguez's *Bedhead* and *El Mariachi* were among the finds.

WorldFest in Houston has literally thousands of entries, but it also offers a greater number of categories than other fests. It has a well-deserved reputation for discovering new talent (Steven Spielberg won a student film award) and rediscovering some neglected gems.

Bart Weiss of the Dallas Video Fest gives the bottom line: "The important thing is for an artist's work to get seen." In Texas, there are a lot of folks who help make that happen.

Joanne Harrison is a Houston journalist who made movies in Latin while in college and thus got filmmaking out of her system.



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NO SLACKERS HERE Richard Linklater and the austin film SOCIETY



Richard Linklater
awake and *Before Sunrise*. A
benefit screening featuring
star Ethan Hawke
helped fund the Austin
Film Society's 10-year
retrospective this fall.

Photo: Gabriela
Brandenstein, cour-
tesy Castle Rock
Entertainment

BY LOUIS
BLACK

Director Richard Linklater calls to ask if I've heard from Robert Rodriguez, who is a mutual friend. Linklater doesn't want to talk about the new film Rodriguez is shooting, and he isn't calling to discuss promotion, stars, or our friends' spate of new movies. The real purpose of his call is to see if I know if a sneak preview of *Desperado* is scheduled; Linklater is hoping to score a benefit screening of it for the Austin Film Society.

Half a decade after becoming a cult independent film director with *Slacker*, his reputation now firmly established with *Dazed and Confused* and *Before Sunrise*, Linklater's concern this afternoon is still the Austin Film Society, an organization he founded years ago to show classic, independent, European, and Hollywood films.

The activity at Linklater's headquarters, Detour Productions, a former office building sitting on the access road by traffic-congested Interstate 35, is like a grown-up, professional Austin Film Society. Everyone wears the same clothes they did when they were semi-employed and spending all their time at the movies. Now, one group in the building is working for Linklater's company, preparing the next film or working on music videos. Until recently, Mike Judge of MTV's "Beavis and Butthead" fame had studio space there. Often an independent film is in some stage of production, borrowing space and equipment. But as much as this building is about moviemaking, it is still about film history and exhibition as well. Linklater is still the artistic director of the Austin Film Society, much of the planning for the society goes on here,



Her husband's ghost in the shape of a dog—a figure out of Texas legend—helps the heroine of director Ken Harrison's *Hannah and the Dog Ghost* find her kidnapped daughter. The Austin Film Society showcases talent ranging from the local (like Harrison) to the international.

Left: Austin director Terrence Malick's *Days of Heaven*, screened by the Film Society, awes with its gorgeous scenes of the Panhandle and its Texas-sized financial failure.

Photos courtesy Austin Film Society

people at parties talking about movies. People talked about movies and a little about making movies; the subject was always movies.

At some point, Linklater got in two years of college. Subsequently, he worked—for two years on oil rigs—and then he came to Austin to become a slacker. In 1984, at a Super 8mm filmmaking club, he met Lee Daniel, and in 1985 the two became roommates. Others joined the two, among them Austin Community College film professors George Morris and Charles Nafus, filmmaker Dee Montgomery, and, as another roommate, Brecht Andersch.

In September 1985, working with these friends, Linklater started the Austin Film Society. Its first screening was a program entitled *Sexuality and*

and on the walls hang prints from Linklater's extensive film poster collection.

A decade earlier, Linklater was a classic renegade drifter. I met him in a tumbling time of movies and people and parties and



Blasphemy in the Avant Garde, featuring works by Salvador Dali, Kenneth Anger, Barbara Hammer, George Griffin, and Curt McDowell. It was a success. In its early days the society regularly screened experimental, animated, and any kind of film they found lying around or that someone they knew had made. Over the past 10 years (when it was headed for a period by filmmaker Katie Cokinos and now by Jerry Johnson and Elizabeth Peters), the society has scheduled more than 50 series. Ozu, Bresson, and Fassbinder are a few of the directors who have been honored. Ford, Peckinpah, Aldrich, Fuller, Anthony Mann, Jean-Luc Godard, Budd Boetticher, and Robert Frank are others.

Long before Linklater became famous, his ability to charm people to get what the film society needed was legendary. During the time Linklater has run the society, I have been editor of *The Austin Chronicle*. Many of my first experiences with Rick involved him showing up at the paper and persuading us to give him an ad or increase the size of an ad he bought for a screening that he got together only at the last minute. Over the years we have always donated space, and the Film Society has paid when it can afford to.

One day Linklater called



and asked if I would be in a film he and his colleagues were making. At that point I had already appeared in several films, and the tedium of being an extra had long surpassed the little thrill of being a "star." If I didn't show up, moreover, I was told, one of the production assistants could do the role. My sense was that the project was more of a non-student student production than an independent film.

At the last minute, however, I decided to go. It was the easiest time I ever had working on a

film. I showed up at a restaurant, outside of which was a beat-up old van filled with movie-making equipment. Cinematographer Lee Daniel and the crew had set up track that ran down along the small, narrow restaurant's counter. I went in, sat at a table under a sign that read "Plate o' Shrimp," and muttered "stop following me" like a psychotic twice, while Frank Orrall from the band Poi Dog Pondering sat down in front looking confused. At the counter, a woman talked repetitiously about sexual obsession.

It seemed an odd film they were making, but I expected that. It was the subsequent success of *Slacker*, both critically and as an influence on independent filmmakers, that was extraordinary. Suddenly, this eccentric group of insistently independent film programmers were nationally known. It was 1991, and Richard Linklater was a star.

The next time I visited Linklater and his crew on the set, they were making *Dazed and Confused*, with a Hollywood budget—a small Hollywood budget, but still a Hollywood budget. Visiting a night shoot, I first came upon row after row of parked cars, then trucks, cast, crew, and extras. People and vehicles were everywhere. In the middle were Rick and Lee, dressed much as they always had, and despite everything, they were working on their movie—the right movie, which became *Dazed and Confused* as this Hollywood production flowed around them. Since that time, Linklater has made *Before Sunrise*, firmly establishing his reputation as a director.

But now, as we start the annual South by Southwest Film Conference for independent and regional filmmaking, Linklater still offers his time and ideas for both programming and panels. The Austin Film Society works with SXSW and many other independent filmmakers and programmers in Austin.

Recently I called Linklater. We didn't talk about his next movie, a period piece called *The Newton Boys*. Instead, we talked about the free, 42-program, 10-year Austin Film Society retrospective that will be showing every Tuesday on the UT campus this fall. The series was funded by two benefit screenings that Linklater set up, one for *Pulp Fiction* that featured Quentin Tarantino and one for *Before Sunrise* with Linklater and Ethan Hawke in attendance. Linklater was excited, exuberant as he has been for a decade not just about making films but showing them as well.

Linklater plans to go into production on *The Newton Boys* at the beginning of next year, and he is hoping the next Film Society benefit does well. Then, next year, a new Linklater film and the Austin Film Society can bring even more movies to town.

Louis Black is editor in chief of The Austin Chronicle and writes about film.

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Jurassic Park, move over. Dallas animators stage their own Rex terror scene in a hands-on video animation workshop organized by Media Analysis and Practice (MAP) for the Dallas Video Festival.

Courtesy MAP

TRAINING THE *Young • uns* *media ed take* *root in tExas*

BY TIM CARMAN

Media literacy in Texas begins not in the hallowed halls of the Texas Education Agency (TEA), where bureaucrats, keenly aware of the need to help kids disarm the assault of media images that confront them daily, work diligently to mandate such programs into Lone Star State schools.

No, media literacy begins in the more modest hallways of Houston's Milby High School, where teachers like Gwen Miraglia-Lindsay take it upon themselves to give students the tools to go mano-a-mano with this behemoth called mass media. Miraglia-Lindsay, like dozens of other teachers across Texas, is introducing media literacy into her school's curriculum as a fundamental part of the educational process.

On a sweltering day in Houston, Miraglia-Lindsay is one of a handful of educators, artists and nonprofit workers enrolled in the Media Literacy Institute at Rice University. This week-long workshop, created by media

education trailblazers Kathleen Tyner and Deborah Leveranz, is designed to provide participants with both analytical and production skills so they can spread the gospel of media literacy.

It's about as grassroots as you can get. But in Texas, that's how media literacy spreads—one classroom, one school district at a time. Two recent actions have contributed to the current state of media literacy in Texas, which, when compared to other states, is a rather supportive environment that has the potential to flourish even more. The first action was the legislature's decision to shift the balance of power from the state to site-based management; the second was TEA's decision to allow video into the classroom.

What's more, about a year ago, TEA added a simple line into the Language Arts Core Curriculum, which is something of an operating manual for language arts teachers. The line was basically taken from the Aspen Institute, a communications thinktank, which developed a definition of media literacy: students will have "the ability to access, analyze, evaluate, and produce information through a variety of mass media

forms and technologies."

It's far short of a state mandate for media literacy, something New Mexico already has (not to mention most other industrialized nations), but it's enough of a window for teachers to introduce a smidgen of media literacy into the pre-existing curriculum.

But teacher education is needed. That's where Leveranz and Tyner come in. Each summer, Leveranz, the founder of the Dallas-based Media Analysis and Practice (MAP), and Tyner, founding director of the San Francisco-based Strategies for Media Literacy, hold these institutes in three major Texas cities each year. People like Miraglia-Lindsay, a speech department teacher who understands the importance of media literacy, take it upon themselves to enroll in the institute and re-circulate their knowledge back through their classrooms.

Miraglia-Lindsay, for example, has introduced media literacy into three classes this fall at Milby High School. The school's administration, looking to expand elective classes, approached its speech department about ideas. Miraglia-Lindsay and others in the department suggested that media literacy could be introduced into Visual Literacy, Intro to Radio and TV, and Broadcast Journalism. The teacher sees it as an opportunity for students not only to

way it is all around the United States, except in New Mexico," which remains the most advanced state in terms of media education (in 1986, the New Mexico Department of Education began officially requiring that communications be incorporated into the core curriculum of all the state's high schools).

While most of these pioneering educators are working within an existing curriculum and/or school structure, there are others who are pushing the media literacy envelope beyond those boundaries. In Lubbock, for instance, Alice French, a Cox Cable educational access station manager and the video technology coordinator for the Lubbock independent school district, created a partnership between the district and cable channel that allows high school students to have direct access to a full range of production facilities at the cable channel. In the two-year old program, funded completely by the school district, students begin with introductory courses on TV and video and gradually work up to producing their own newscasts, tackling all aspects from directing to reporting the news.

What's more, Lubbock's Cavazos Junior High School has launched a pilot media literacy program for seventh, eighth, and ninth graders. The program focuses on TV and video production, but those efforts, by extension, force the kids to analyze and interpret others' works. "As they learn by doing," French says, "they are by necessity forced to think about what others do."

In Houston, Lauryn Axelrod launched her own Media Arts Department about two years ago at the private Episcopal High School, and in that short period of time, the program has doubled in size.

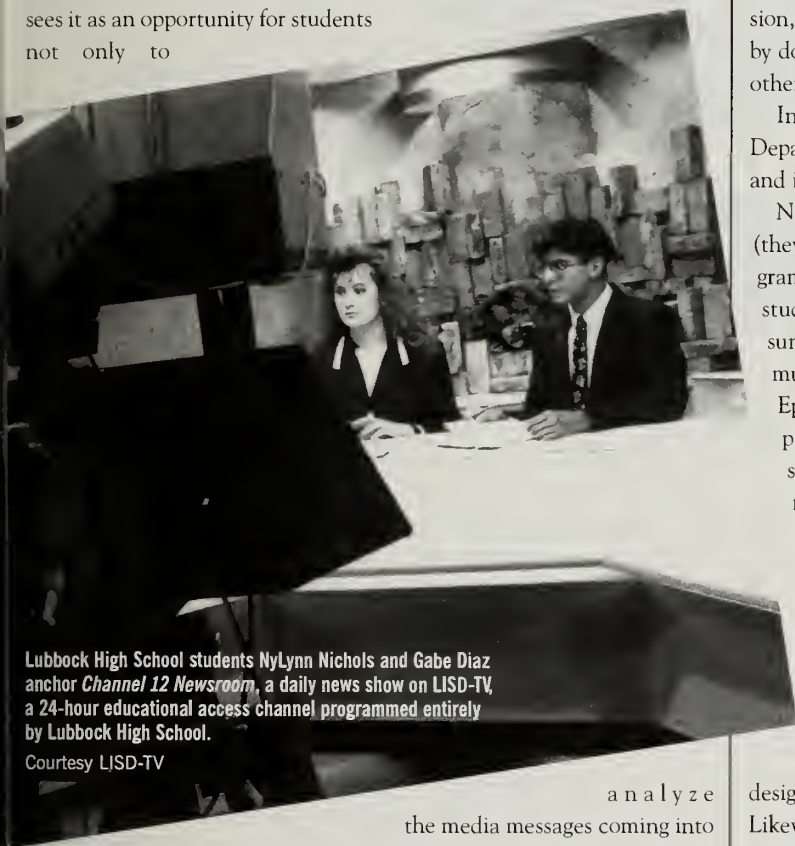
Nearly 200 students, trained in both media analysis and production (they choose either a video or print track), have taken to Episcopal's program enthusiastically. The fruits of their labor are already showing: the students copped some awards at a recent video competition, and this summer Houston's KHTV aired the students' one-hour compilation of music videos, documentaries, and animation shorts.

Episcopal's program is the model that other schools, particularly some private schools in Houston, want to emulate, Axelrod says. But these schools don't realize the massive start-up costs—from equipment to full-time teachers—of developing such a curriculum, she explains. Episcopal's Media Arts Department, a lean and cost-conscious entity to begin with, virtually pays for itself. Students are hired out to videotape weddings, parties, anything to raise cash for the department. The school provides only a modest budget of less than \$1,000.

Of course, media education is not limited to Texas classrooms and the young people who populate them. The Dallas Video Festival annually hosts KidVid, a series of workshops and seminars designed to teach both students and adults about media arts and literacy. Likewise, Houston-based Southwest Alternate Media Project (SWAMP), a longtime friend of media education, sponsors Leveranz and Tyner's summer training institutes as well as some artist-in-residency programs.

Leveranz's MAP organization also works to bring media literacy into church groups, civic organizations, nonprofit groups, and anywhere else a need may arise. After all, as information and the systems designed to carry it become more complicated and expansive, the need for media literacy will only increase—for everyone, adults and kids. "Media literacy is a lifelong learning process," Leveranz says.

Tim Carman is a Houston freelance writer who was a film critic and entertainment writer at The Houston Post for eight years.



Lubbock High School students NyLynn Nichols and Gabe Diaz anchor *Channel 12 Newsroom*, a daily news show on LISD-TV, a 24-hour educational access channel programmed entirely by Lubbock High School.

Courtesy LISD-TV

analyze the media messages coming into their lives, but also to produce their own, perhaps more socially responsible, messages.

Production is important, the teacher notes. It will place the students on a more even playing field; they won't feel it's such an us versus them—a consumers versus producers—thing. Or as Tyner says, "Being cynical [about the media] is not helpful by itself. You need production skills to effect a change."

All across Texas, other teachers are introducing media education into existing classes. Many are simply doing it on their own, without direction from others, without training, and without a set of standards to follow, Leveranz says. "There are teachers who are developing their own programs and incorporating media education," she says. "And that's the

PUBLIC ACCESS Systems of Texas

BY SAM HO

IN AUSTIN, ONE CAN TURN ON THE TELEVISION AND watch programs put together entirely by gays and lesbians. In Dallas, channel surfers can ride the electronic waves in Spanish, Chinese, Farsi, or Hindi. In Houston, the faithful and unfaithful alike can worship on the same frequency with Christians, Muslims, and neo-Nazis. And in San Antonio, insomniacs can tune in to learn how to make a bomb.

Public access television is thriving in Texas, where people from all walks of life are taking advantage of the uninhibited free speech offered by the federal provision that cable operators set aside channels for citizen use. Austin Community Television (ACTV) is highly regarded as a leading center in the field. Formed in 1973 by a small group of video activists who operated with their own equipment, ACTV now cablecasts one of the longest-running access programs in the nation. Houston and Dallas also boast strong systems, offering readily available equipment and training to users to produce programs that reach households numbering more than 700,000 in each market.

Despite its vitality, public access in Texas faces constant threats: protests from offended citizens; antagonistic cable companies; and city governments increasingly seeing things the cabling way. But these pressures aren't unique to Texas. What's happening here is reflective of the broader struggles now facing public access across the nation.

Here as elsewhere, public access systems come in vastly different shapes. In terms of management, they run the gamut from nonprofit organizations (Austin, Dallas, and Houston), to cable companies (San Antonio, Wichita Falls), to city governments (Fort Worth, El Paso), to school districts (Lubbock). In some cities, anyone can rent or borrow cameras and use editing facilities after taking an introductory course at the access center. In others, citizens can only submit broadcast-ready programs and must find a way to put their shows together on their own.

Fees are now generally required of the services. They are levied for annual memberships, production services, classes, equipment rental, facilities and studio use, or a combination of the above. With mounting pressures on management to increase revenues, the fees have been going up, sometimes at an alarming rate. Access Houston, for example, started charging for services and rentals after a 1994 reorganization that slashed about one-third of its budget. It then went through a series of rate hikes, the latest in the form of dues for series producers that run \$40 per quarter. That's in addition to an annual \$60 membership. For Houston citizens who used to put on regularly scheduled shows before 1993, preproduction costs alone had gone from zero to \$220 per year.



Gopal Krishna and Raj Chugh take their *New Vision* on the road to Houston's Asian neighborhood. The show runs weekly on Access Houston.

Courtesy medi makers

Such practice prompts complaints of economic censorship. One producer who asked not to be identified charges, "These [fee] increases discourage people from getting involved. Even when it was free, we had to pay for tapes and other things. Now, things are adding up." Vince Hamilton, acting general manager of Access Houston, defends the measures as necessary to cope with ever-rising expenses. He also points out that all the fees can be waived for any producer who claims hard luck. IRS forms are usually asked of the exemptions, but are not required. Most nonprofit access centers have similar provisions.

One justification cited by Houston officials for the 1994 restructuring was the controversy over sex and other sensitive issues. Free speech often inspires outrage. The liberty enjoyed by public access since its beginning in the early seventies has periodically triggered protests from the communities it serves. Texas is no exception. Access viewers can find nudity, extreme political views, offensive humor, doctrines from the lunatic fringe, sexual content. You name it, Texas has it. And it has the attendant controversies that result from clashing political and cultural views.

One such case involved *Infosex*, a gay program in Austin that in 1993 aired a graphic depiction of safer-sex procedures. Despite repeated audience advisories from the on-air host, the X-rated clip, which ran for three minutes at 2 a.m., aroused anger. Although the show originated from Austin, the most liberal city in Texas, the producers were eventually convicted of obscenity charges in nearby Williamson County, a community with considerably more conservative standards. Both cities had cable franchises with Austin Cablevision.

Uproars such as this only give city governments more ammunition to sabotage access operations. From the very beginning of the franchising process, Texas municipalities were under intense lobbying by media activists on one side and cable companies on the other. In big cities, activists in the know usually won the first round, forcing governments to reach community-friendly agreements with cabling, who were eager to obtain contracts that are de facto monopolies. But once franchises were in place, operators would try everything to reduce, if not abandon, their obligations.

Meanwhile, city officials, always mindful of powerful interests and deep-pocketed donors, are only too willing to capitalize on the outcries to curb the freedom enjoyed by public access. In Houston, Warner Cable refused in 1993 to run an episode of an art program, *Life Threats*, containing collages of nude figures. The cable company then submitted the

tape to Mayor Bob Lanier, who promptly and publicly called it pornographic. (Lanier, who spearheaded a move the previous year to approve Warner's request for a rate hike, later played a key role in the firing of Access Houston's first director, Tom Cantrell, who had sued Warner for not fulfilling its access obligations. In 1994, the mayor was also instrumental in pushing the previously mentioned reorganization of and budget cut for Access Houston.)

In Austin, the safer-sex ruckus is the continuation of a political fight between the Austin Community Television board and City Council, parties that had been feuding since 1991, when another sexually explicit video provoked the establishment of restrictions such as having to schedule controversial shows during late hours and suspending "offensive" producers. One argument used by officials in the power struggle is that, under Texas law, city governments are subject to criminal prosecution for obscenity on cable channels. The 1993 incident has now fueled fear that public access will be dropped entirely when Austin Cablevision's 15-year contract expires in 1996.

Protests over content have risen from the other end of the ideological spectrum as well. Although the concept of public access was born of sixties ideals—specifically, to democratize the media and give voice to the disenfranchised—right-wing extremists such as the Ku Klux Klan have benefited greatly. They have not only placed shows all over the state but also used them to generate publicity. Jan Sanders, former Access Manager of Dallas, says that in the system's early days in the mid-eighties, hate groups with national connections wanted to put on shows with racist messages and hoped to incite attention by getting them banned. Familiar with problems in other cities, Sanders decided not to interfere and extended them their right to free speech. The Klan's tactics met with success in Corpus Christi and Houston, where they managed to create a lasting stir. But in Austin, Jewish and African-American groups that complained to ACTV in 1984 were encouraged to counter with their own shows. The result was several long-running series.

Among other cable flash points were *The Worst Show* and *The Mayor's Forum*, both of San Antonio. The former demonstrated in the wee hours of the morning the making of a bomb and ran a skit on teenage suicide. The latter was accused of political cronyism because its host, T. J. Connolly, is not only a cable administrator, but also happened to be the campaign manager of a candidate, who, according to opponents, received favorable coverage on the series during last May's election. Another stink centered around a cable operator, Houston's Warner Cable, which in 1991 refused to air a tape criticizing the company. They were forced to cablecast it after the City Attorney charged the cabler with violating federal statutes and franchise contracts.

Despite the heated emotions and rhetoric surrounding public access, both pro and con, most access programs are lame imitations of network television. The occasional good shows have very little chance of winning big audiences because of cable company apathy and a lack of outreach. A former Access Houston manager claims that Warner and Storer, which share the Houston market, were not committed to promoting public access within the community, leaving it to live and die on its own. She believes another devastating force is frequent channel realignments, which "automatically erase viewer identity."

Worse yet, cable companies can be downright subversive. Sanders of Dallas maintains that some franchises, such as Sammons Cable in Fort Worth, deliberately hired inexperienced staff "with the intent of wanting it to fail." As Sanders explains, "Access is how you won the contract and then you get rid of it." Carlos Calbillo, Access Houston's first pro-

gram manager, remembers that "Warner and Storer basically looked at us as hassles... They would play our tapes on the oldest machines, which are susceptible to technical problems." And whenever sensitive issues came up, they would all too eagerly "refer all the troubles to Access [Houston]."

Another threat on the horizon is video dialtone, which allows phone companies to carry video programs, thus cutting into the cable market. Laws currently being hammered out do not include comparable mandates for public use. Not only does this cut out Jane and John Doe from distributing their programs via video dialtone, but the uneven playing field feeds into the cable industry's arguments to abolish access requirements. Situations like this only make access centers more dependent on the cable sector, the well-being of which decides their survival. Coupled with internal problems such as inadequate staff and sometimes poor management, the access industry is an endangered species.

Yet, public access is going well in Texas, at least for now. Austin's ACTV, established in 1973, a full decade ahead of most Texas cities, is considered a top system in the nation. John Downing, radio-television-film professor at the University of Texas and a former ACTV board member, credits the center's success to a favorable contract negotiated early on, a group of dedicated producers who laid down the groundwork during formative years, and programming that reflects the eclectic lifestyle of the city. Although periodic controversies such as the safer-sex series triggered the ire of intolerant viewers and local officials, they also consolidated ACTV's reputation as a leader in the access movement. Now broadcasting around the clock on three channels, its lineup boasts of both variety and longevity. "Alternative Views," a progressive news magazine cable-casting since 1978, is one of the longest-running programs in America.

Other centers are also doing their job. Cable Access of Dallas has been enjoying steady growth since its 1987 inception and is now operating on six channels. Access Houston, despite the cutbacks, still offers 19 hours of programming every day. In smaller cities like El Paso, Wichita Falls, and Laredo, systems operated by cable companies or city governments are providing openings to citizens determined to appear on the tube. All across Texas, widely divergent views are now allowed on air, especially those of minorities, whose voices have historically been muffled, sometimes even denied.

New Vision, for example, is a weekly program for the Asian community produced in Houston by two Indian-American engineers who started the show by investing in a couple of cameras and an editing system driven by their home computers. After one short year, their popular program is expanding to Dallas and California's Bay Area. Their goal is to go nationwide within two years.

All things considered, public access television in Texas can be said to have fulfilled its mission. Thanks to federal mandates, ordinary citizens can now share a piece, albeit a tiny piece, of TV action. But the future is not at all rosy. In this increasingly technological and pro-business environment, public access is an endangered species. If it becomes extinct, the gay producers of Austin, ethnic surfers of Dallas, faithful worshippers of Houston, and insomniacs of San Antonio may end up with no place to go.

Sam Ho surfs the channels in Houston, where he also writes in English and Chinese and contributes to publications in North America and Asia.

PRO



FILE

BRIAN HUBERMAN *documentarian*

BY SAM HO

L

ONG BEFORE COMING TO HOUSTON FROM his native England 20 years ago, Brian Huberman was fascinated with Texas, especially the stories and legends of the Alamo. So much so that after graduating from the National Film School of England, he made a film about 200 Texans who lost their lives fighting against a Mexican army of 4,000. But he

and start messing with the real Texas.

Huberman wouldn't have stayed for 20 years if he didn't like it here. In Texas, he says, "I got to make my own myth." An early opportunity to do so in Texas was "a reconstruction documentary," as he calls it, about Sam Houston, the first president of the Republic of Texas. Shot in super 8 in 1976 (and later transferred to video and broadcast on local PBS in 1981) during the Watergate aftermath, Huberman found "revolutionary Texas as duplicitous as Nixon's Washington." He discovered through his research that Houston was not as heroic as legend made him out to be—he was an alco-

holic, an opium user, and a womanizer, and he might have been responsible for the fall of the Alamo.

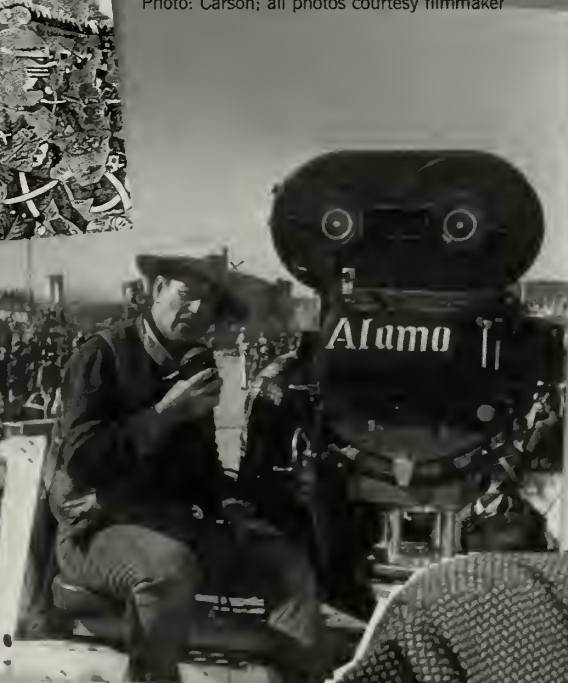
When Huberman started putting his research on film, he ran into resistance when the reenactment groups he worked with refused to recreate the general's retreats. "They were very supportive when they had to fire their guns," he remembers. "But they

didn't want to be involved in holding back."

Some threatened to jump ship. "I began to have the same experience making the film as Sam Houston, who

What do the Duke, Davey Crockett, and Brian Huberman have in common? (It starts with an "A")

Photo: Carson; all photos courtesy filmmaker



couldn't afford to travel to Texas, so he did the next best thing: recreate the event in London using miniatures and toy soldiers. He erected a detailed replica of the Alamo and built what he thought was a Texas landscape around it, dumping tons of sand onto the set and creating what he now calls "my own Zen garden." He then got an artist friend to fabricate about 180 toy American and 1,800 Mexican soldiers and set about making his own version of Texas history. "That was insanity," he now admits.

It's fitting that Huberman is currently pursuing his documentary career in the state that captured his youthful imagination. When a position in film studies opened up in 1975 at Houston's Rice University, he jumped at it, knowing it would allow him to get his hands on equipment

was constantly losing his army," he laughs. "That army had a real falling out with Houston during

the retreat." It took a grand speech and "some fancy footwork" by Huberman to keep the disgruntled crew together.

That experience had a profound impact on him. "How naive I was in 1976. To me, the study of Texas history was a benign exercise. But here, this stuff is real; it still packs power. Myths used in an unthinking way can be hurtful. You have to understand the more human and weaker side of history and explore the meaning of history to our life today." He now dedicates his filmmaking to "exploring the testimonial power of history."

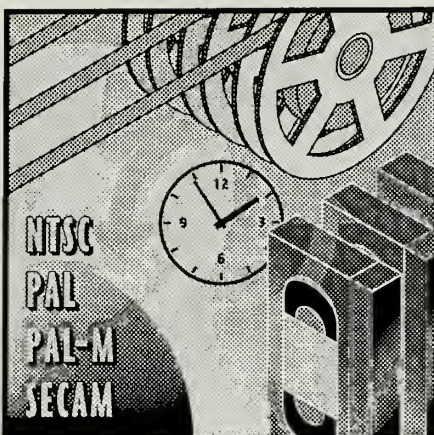
Throughout the years, Huberman continued to pursue his obsession with history and "folk cultures" of this part of the world. He considers himself lucky to have a job that "helps pay the rent and gives me access to equipment." He also tries to make the most of his university connection by offering facilities at Rice to selected filmmakers who have proven track records but were having difficulties paying for equipment.

Texas's colorful past and present have provided rich fodder for his work over the years. In 1983 he served as cinematographer for a black-and-white feature by now-noted, Houston-based director Eagle Pennell [see story page 38]. He lobbied to work on the film, a drama about the vanishing lifestyle in red-neck bars. Perhaps it's no coincidence the film's title is *Last Night at the Alamo*.

He also made *The Last Days of Charles Kathryn*, a 1992 documentary about a successful Houston businessman who, after years as a high-profile transvestite in socialite circles, finally takes to the knife to become a "new woman." "It's another Western to me," he says. "Kathryn has real balls. Here's someone born and raised in Corpus Christi, [who] worked in road gangs and owned a construction company. She was a real macho guy."

But his greatest claim to fame is *John Wayne's Alamo*, a 40-minute account of the actor's obsessive battle to make the movie *The Alamo*. The project took Huberman 15 years to make. In much the same way as Wayne persisted in persuading Hollywood to make the epic, Huberman finally struck a deal in 1992 with MGM to distribute his film on video and include it in *The Alamo's* laser-disc release. "In the end," he concludes, "I just wanted to make it so badly."

His latest project is *The Death of Davy Crockett*, about the way Crockett's image evolved through time, a process that captures "the changing ideologies of the nation." And that's what fascinates him about history. "It does change and it affects us," insists Huberman. "It's still dangerous."



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PRO



FILE

▼
LAURIE McDONALD
video artist

BY SAM HO



VIDEO IS AN ECLECTIC MEDIUM," SAYS Houston-based video artist Laurie McDonald. "Working in it, you incorporate aesthetic concerns traditionally relegated to the canvas or the musical score or the theater." It is that ability to blend the essence of many disciplines into one medium that distinguishes McDonald, a videomaker for over 20 years, as an artist.

Born and raised in Fort Worth, she went east to the Rhode Island School of Design to train in film and video. Her work has been shown all over the world, including such prestigious venues as the Smithsonian, the Museum of Modern Art, The Kitchen, the Tokyo Video Festival, and the World-Wide Festival in Amsterdam.

She has a richly varied background in painting, photography, sculpture, music, and dance (at one point she performed professionally with the Rhode Island Ballet). In her art, one can detect frequent references to the visual arts, a fondness for installation pieces, and the importance of sound and movement in both thematic and formal concerns.

In early projects, such as *The Dying Swan* (1975) and *Deux Pieds* (1976), she often applies forms and movements of dance to video, producing something unique to either medium. Throughout her oeuvre she frequently employs the TV screen as a graphic surface, painting images with an electronic "brush." In *Moog Synthesizer Images I* (1973), for example, oscillators are plugged into a television, rendering the vertical and horizontal frequencies of the monitor to create images from sound. In the 1992 installation *Beyond the Shadow*, she simulates the experience of a free fall in space by making use of projection television, poetry, NASA footage, satellite views of the earth, radio transmissions from airports, and the physical attributes of a museum space.

Arriving on the scene during the second wave of video art, McDonald was intrigued by its potential. "There was a sense of freedom with the medium from the very beginning," she says. "A spirit of inquiry and experimentation that pushes science and technology to the limit of what is possible." In her quest to inquire and experiment, she has stead-

fastly refused to establish a signature style, opting instead to let each project dictate its own shape. "Style is a thing that I resist," she declares.

She also resists what she calls "the tyranny of broadcast television." In *Filling the Boxes of Joseph Cornell* (1985), a work that explores the connection between artists and the artistic process, she reveals the trickery used in many commercials, like putting Alka-Seltzer in beer to make it fizzier or applying oil to meat to make it look juicier. In an unforgettable scene, she puts herself in front of the camera, applies green, brown, and yellow paint to her face, turns to stare directly at us, and switches the color off. It's a demonstration of how, in the days of black-and-white television, the "telegenic face" was created.

Commercial television is not the only target of McDonald's biting wit. In *Generic Video Art* (1982), produced in collaboration with Tom Sims,

she pokes fun at video art itself, dividing the piece into segments alluding to common genres of the medium: conceptual, experimental, punk, pet art (in reference to William Wegman's work with his dog Man Ray), and state-of-the-art (suggestive of artists like Jon Sanborn, whose works are based on technologies of the



moment). Combining elements of high art and popular culture, the work parodies the practice of packaging art in definable categories. Rarely have Dante, Abbott and Costello, opera, and coin-op laudromats been used together in such effective and hilarious measure.

The self-mockery of *Generic Video Art* and the frontal address in *Joseph Cornell* also represent a desire to establish personal contact with the audience. Although McDonald's work is too complex and analytic to be catalogued as video diaries, she has never shied away from revealing herself. Confessions and personal struggles are

for herself on the East Coast with more than 20 titles under her belt, McDonald was initially apprehensive about the move to Texas. "The decision to remove myself from the nurturing environment of a culturally rich area wasn't easy," she recalls. "I remembered a conversation I overheard in Fort Worth on whether photography is an art form. Wasn't that issue decided a long time ago?"

Her uneasiness was quickly put to rest. "In a true frontier spirit," she observes, "Texas encourages the new, the experimental, the untried." It is that spirit, she says, that allowed her to carve out a delicate balance between working as an artist

and making a living as a videomaker for hire.

"I try to be as inventive in commercial projects, and I try to stay away from projects that I oppose politically or those with no redeeming qualities," she says. "I also try to take jobs in the artist community that may not be as lucrative but are more

***In the days of
black & white television
the "TELEGENIC FACE"
was enhanced by ...***

routinely dispensed in narrations, and milestones such as her pregnancy and the growth of her daughter are diligently documented. In such works as *Dreamtime* (1988), a lyrical chronicle of the daughter's dream life, McDonald even shares with her a "With Elaine Ball"

credit. But there's also rougher stuff. In *The Sweetwater Rattlesnake Roundup* (1980), an almost surreal documentary on the annual West Texas event, she casually relates in voice-over that she was close to being gang-raped while shooting the video.

Roundup was made the year McDonald moved to Houston from Rhode Island to work for Southwest Alternate Media Project, where she stayed until striking out as a freelance producer/writer in 1983. Having established a name



Laurie McDonald's telegenic face, from *Filling the Boxes of Joseph Cornell*.

Courtesy videomaker

interesting."

But it is primarily the way her art is received, she says, that keeps her in the Lone Star State: "Art audiences here are open to unconventional forms of creative expression. Texas can be cutting edge in that regard. Perhaps that's why I have stayed here so long."

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INDEPENDENT AND LIKING IT

The first generation of Texas independent filmmakers

BY MICHAEL BERGERON



THE CLIMATE OF FILMMAKING NOWADAYS seems to favor maverick directors whose bare-bones budgets and methods of production attract as much attention as a great script or meaty performance. But

today's generation of high profile Texas-bred directors, the Linklaters and the Rodriguezes, is not the first to make its mark. One has only to turn back the clock to the late seventies and the eighties to find another cadre of talented independents identified with Texas: Eagle Pennell, Ken Harrison, and Andy Anderson.

By the late seventies, as Hollywood producers began to shoot on location more often, a plethora of films and TV series—everything from *Dallas* to *Honeysuckle Rose* to *Middle Age Crazy*—were being shot in Texas. These California-produced projects gave jobs to dozens of actors and technicians, all of whom gained skills that would prove valuable as many of them later embarked on film projects of their own. But it was with movies like Pennell's *Last Night at the Alamo* (1982), Harrison's *On Valentine's Day* (1985), and Anderson's *Positive I.D.* (1988) that Texas film began to acquire a distinctive voice.

Pennell, 43, is the youngest of the trinity, but he can be credited with starting the ball rolling at age 26 with 1978's *The Whole Shootin' Match*, a modest black-and-white comedy that follows the misadventures of two hapless good ol' boys who never quite get around to accomplishing their dreams. Pennell took the same theme a step further with *Last Night at the Alamo*, in which drunken denizens of a dilapidated bar, the Alamo, try to prevent its closure. *Last Night* received a rave review from Vincent Canby and gave Pennell headroom at the Rotterdam film festival. Notes his colleague Anderson, "You can take Eagle's films out of Texas, and yet they are Texan."

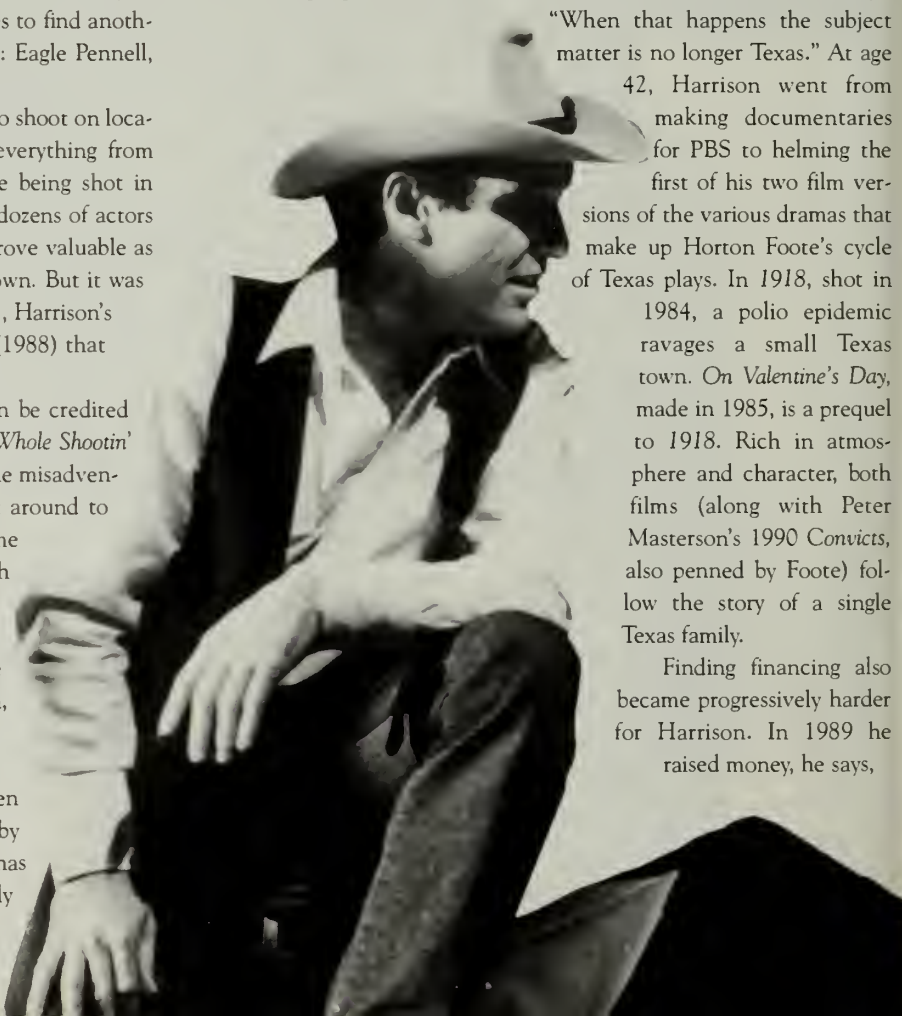
Pennell's is also the most idiosyncratic voice, even though, after the success of *Shootin' Match*, release by release his films have received less critical support. He has consistently made his films for under \$100,000, mostly

with grant money. (Although today, he says ruefully, "The NEA is a dry well.") *The Whole Shootin' Match* cost \$28,000 to shoot, *Last Night at the Alamo*, \$39,000, and his latest film, *Doc's Full Service* (1994), just under \$100,000, including the 35mm blow-up.

Texas was also at the heart and soul of Ken Harrison's first features; he says there was no question of his shooting anywhere but his home state. "Obviously people can move to L.A. and make a Texas film," he says.

"When that happens the subject matter is no longer Texas." At age 42, Harrison went from making documentaries for PBS to helping the first of his two film versions of the various dramas that make up Horton Foote's cycle of Texas plays. In 1918, shot in 1984, a polio epidemic ravages a small Texas town. *On Valentine's Day*, made in 1985, is a prequel to 1918. Rich in atmosphere and character, both films (along with Peter Masterson's 1990 *Convicts*, also penned by Foote) follow the story of a single Texas family.

Finding financing also became progressively harder for Harrison. In 1989 he raised money, he says,



"by the skin of my teeth, in small amounts from people" for his next feature, *Ninth Life* (also titled *The Chill in the Air*).

Harrison's current project is the family-oriented PBS series *Wishbone*, scheduled to start in October and run for the season. "It's as close to [producing] a television series that you can get without living in L.A.," he says. Harrison plans to continue to direct films and television shows that explore the niche he's carved out in Texas.

"Even if you make them out of spit and dirt, you'll make films," is the cowboyish philosophy of Andy Anderson, who says Pennell's *Last Night at the Alamo* was an inspiration for him. In the late seventies, Anderson wowed moviegoers with his tough view of a housewife's erotic, dark side in the short *Ritual*. He directed an ultra-low-budget thriller called *Interface* in 1984 and then left his teaching job to make the 1987 sex thriller *Positive I.D.*, set and shot in Dallas-Fort Worth.

The story of a woman who assumes a new identity after being raped and brutalized, *Positive I.D.* opened doors for Anderson in Hollywood like a magic wand. Distributed by Universal, it had the widest release of any of the Texas filmmakers' works, appearing on 1,200 screens. Anderson admits that was a fluke. "It was supposed to be a platform release, starting in 10 major cities," he says. "[But] two other Universal films had trouble at the box office—*Hail Hail Rock and Roll* and *Cry Freedom*—and the wizards plugged us into their theaters, all 1,200 of them." Anderson was then able to sell two scripts in Hollywood: *Eddie Nine Lives*, written for Eddie Murphy Productions, and *Honeymoon in Moscow*.

But living in script-option hell, he says, eventually made him feel he was losing his voice as a director. "It had to be rethought with the collapse of the Soviet Union," he says of *Honeymoon*. "It was rewritten and rewritten, and the last time I heard, it may be *Honeymoon in Havana*. I wrote it and have no idea what happened to it, and every so often a

check comes in the mail."

As an antidote of sorts, Anderson, 49, has just completed *Drive by Shooting*, a continuous running art installation that uses shots of Fort Worth crime scenes to examine crime in our society. The installation premiered on German television earlier this year. He has also gone back to

teaching and is an art professor and writer-in-residence at the University of Texas at Arlington. He returns to the movie set—and his home state as location—with his original story *Detention*, set for production in July 1996. "If I have my way, it'll be a low-budget, independently produced piece, done in North Texas," he says. Another film he has written, *Tender*, also has a Texas setting.

But the face of independent filmmaking is changing to look more like the Hollywood Anderson once knew. The laid-back, regional sensibilities of the characters in a *Last Night at the Alamo* don't strike the same chord



Left: from *On Valentine's Day*, Texas playwright Horton Foote's love story about his own eloping parents, directed by Ken Harrison. Right: The main character of Andy Anderson's *Positive I.D.* stumbles through a chicken recipe while drugged by painkillers and sleeping pills.

L: Courtesy Angelika Films; R: Photo Dick Lane, courtesy Universal Pictures/MCA

in the national conscience as they once did. The turf of Texas idiosyncratic behavior reveals some weighty subjects, but production funds are more elusive than ever.

Pennell takes some of his inspiration from Florida filmmaker Victor Nunez, who "has had his shot at Hollywood, as I have," Pennell says, "and chosen for whatever reasons to stay on his own turf." But Pennell goes on to quote Nunez's comment about his 1993 *Ruby in Paradise*: "It was not American enough, it was not hot enough, it was not cool enough, or urban enough. These were the buzz words at the time I was trying to get it distributed." Pennell expresses the same frustration with distributors over his feature from last year, *Doc's Full Service*.

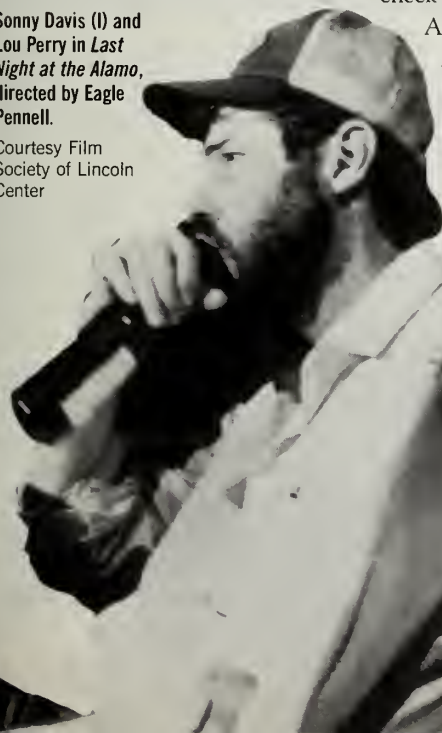
"The English and Australians make films recognizable as English and Australian films. High quality, interesting stories, on a modest budget, always indigenous material. I've felt that as Texas artists we could do that. It's just tough to educate money people about making films," he laments.

Presently working on his next script without clear prospect of funding, Pennell concedes he's "caught in a no-man's land" in that he "has no urge to go into the mainstream." Chuckling, he says, "The mainstream wouldn't take me anyway."

If one of the most eminent of Texas filmmakers is now too, well, Texan, maybe others among the Lone Star State's independents ought to come out shootin'.

Sonny Davis (l) and Lou Perry in *Last Night at the Alamo*, directed by Eagle Pennell.

Courtesy Film Society of Lincoln Center





fest

SAN ANTONIO

MOVING TO A LATIN BEAT: SAN ANTONIO'S CINEFESTIVAL

BY RAY
SANTISTEBAN

EVERY YEAR FOR THE PAST 18 YEARS, LATINO filmmakers from all over the United States—and increasingly Latin America—converge on San Antonio for the nation's oldest and largest showcase for U.S. Latino films: the CineFestival.

It is fitting that San Antonio would have the preeminent U.S. Latino festival. The city is known as a haven for Mexican-American culture—from its food to its yearly Conjunto festival to its politics (remember embroiled HUD secretary Henry Cisneros?). The country's tenth-largest city, San Antonio is 57 percent Mexican-American, making it one of the few major urban areas where Mexican Americans are the majority. It is known as "Alamo City"; many of the Mexican Americans there like to point out that the name comes from a battle *their* ancestors won.

The five-day festival, a project of San Antonio's renowned arts institution the Guadeloupe Cultural Arts Center, was originally called the Chicano Film Festival when founded in 1977. It became known as the CineFestival in 1981 in order to be more inclusive of works by the nation's diverse Latino communities. Today CineFestival includes works by Mexicanos, Puertoriquenos, Cubanos, and all other groups that make up the U.S. Latino population, which

now numbers some 25 million.

According to veteran producer Lourdes Portillo, "[This] was the first festival that reinforced the idea that we were making something important." It continues to draw filmmakers, she adds, because "it's a rare opportunity for all of us to see our work together. Generally Latino films go off to different festivals, and we're never together sharing the journey that we've undertaken."

Though it remains a consistent forum for filmmakers, CineFestival has not had a smooth journey. As just one of many high-profile activities put on by the Guadeloupe Cultural Center, CineFestival has had to compete with the center's numerous other programs for limited resources and personnel. Several years ago the job of festival director was reduced from a full-time to a part-time position, despite the fact that, as CineFestival continues to grow, the demands on its director have steadily increased. Recent CineFestival directors have found themselves with only five months to put together the entire program, and many believe this change has adversely affected the festival.

Nonetheless, for many the annual trek to San Antonio almost amounts to a pilgrimage. This year a veritable who's who of Latino film came to the event, held February 1 to 5. Edward James Olmos screened his feature *Roosters*, Lourdes Portillo came with her documentary *El Diablo Nunca Duerme* (*The Devil Never Sleeps*), and last minute addition Gregory Nava (*El Norte*) brought *Mi Familia* (*My Family*) days after its Sundance world premiere. Also on hand were Severo Perez and Paul Espinosa with *...and the Earth Did Not Swallow Him*, Mexican filmmaker Maria Navarro (*Danzón*) with her newest work, *El Jardín de Eden* (*Garden of Eden*), and Austin independent Hector Galan with his Tejano music documentary *Songs of the Homeland*.

Among the 80 works showcased this year, Texas talent was strongly represented (award winners Hector Galan and Severo Perez are Texas

natives). Other Texas talent included 16mm shorts by Alejandro Hinojosa (*Los Carnales*), Alicia Gamez (*flashcards*), and Susan Jasso (*La Llorona* and *El Diablo*). Video productions included Cristina Ibarra's *Una Limpieza*, Sandra



Selections from the
Tejano Top Forty, in
Hector Galan's documentary
Songs of the Homeland
Courtesy Galan
Productions

Guardardo's *The Reunion*, Rick Leal's *Squadron 201*, and Laura Varela's *Tecihztzin*. Linda Cuellar, executive producer of the San Antonio-based PBS series *Heritage*, presented six video shorts, four of which were from Texas-based directors.

CineFestival also presents works about the Latino experience by non-Latinos. One of this year's prize-winning films was the short *El Ciudad* (*The City*), a sensitive portrayal of a homeless father and his child by David Riker, a New York-based filmmaker. Riker found CineFestival a welcome relief from the usual festival circuit. "As a filmmaker committed to community filmmaking who has been to many festivals, CineFestival was like rain after a drought, a place to come for nourishment," he said. "I've never before been to a film festival where the seats come up and we dance after an evening of

films. In many ways, it's a metaphor for the festival."

It's true, CineFestival often feels more like a family reunion than a standard power outing. Although the friendly atmosphere is appreciated by many, some filmmakers bemoan the lack of a large business or press presence. "I think that it's nice that it's friendly and familiar and homey," says Portillo, "but we need to really approach the business end of this more aggressively. We have to invite people who will be interested in buying the films, because the bottom line is that it's a very expensive medium and it's an economic undertaking that should

the interest in this seminar might have been due to the previous evening's announcement that three of top six prizes at the festival went to recipients of NLCC funds (Portillo, Galan, and Perez).

One of the distinguishing traits of CineFestival is its ability to welcome and incorporate spontaneity. At a local watering hole early in the festival, members of L.A.-based Culture Clash took to the stage with the resident band and improvised a rap song that incorporated many titles of festival films.

Another surprise was the addition of a Hi-8 comedy short by Hispanics for Wilson, a Los Angeles-based Chicano parody group. Their *Walk Softly Pedro*, a spoof on anti-immigrant Proposition 187 and California Governor Pete Wilson, was a festival highlight. It was completed by the filmmakers days before the festival. A sidebar facility was quickly arranged and flyers were distributed minutes before show time. The film eventually screened to a standing-room-only audience as the filmmakers enthusiastically poured malt liquor from 40 oz. bottles with the gentle encouragement, "Beer makes it better."

For his debut as festival director, Mendiola was interested in emphasizing diversity in CineFestival's programming. "I'm into expanding the definition of Chicano and Latino identity, so all the films I invited somehow tie in with that goal," he says. In an effort to present different perspectives, Mendiola asked several filmmakers to curate sidebars. Former CineFestival director Gustavo Vasquez put together a program on experimental works from Mexico. San Francisco independent filmmaker Jennifer Maytorena Taylor

presented "The Pan-American Dykeaspora: Latinas, Lesbians, and Cultural Displacement." The Austin Chicano/Latino Film Forum hosted the program "From Deep in the Heart of Texas," which featured work by the growing number of independent Tejano (Texas Mexican-American) filmmakers—one of many CineFestival efforts to highlight local talent.

San Antonio-based independent Fernando Cano was glad to see the festival's continuing commitment to Texas independents. "Jim wanted to bring attention to what is happening here in Texas, and I think that's important, because a lot of people still seem to think that the only place where there's Chicano filmmakers is in East Los Angeles, and that's not true anymore."

Cano was on hand to screen a trailer for an independent feature he is producing called

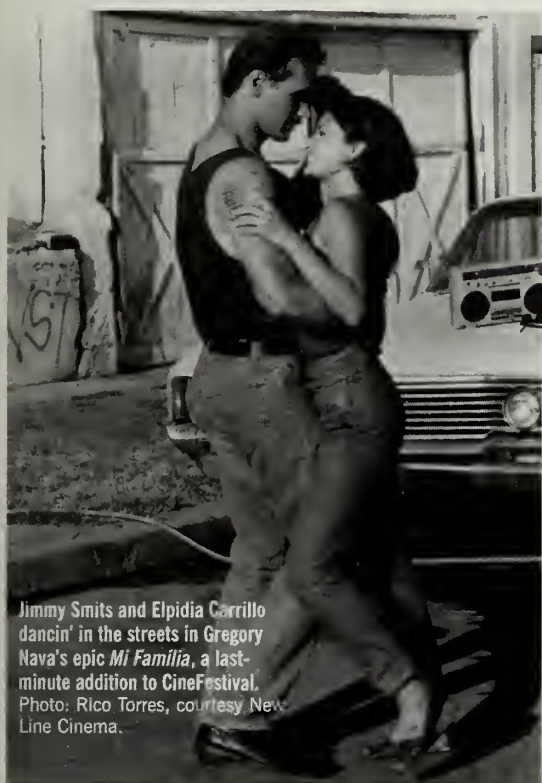
Painflower. The project is being financed by money raised from the Mexican-American community—and as such is part of what many Tejano filmmakers are calling "La Nueva Onda" (The New Wave), a loose collective of writers, producers, directors, and actors dedicated to producing Chicano/Latino films without outside money or influence. One of the driving forces in La Nueva Onda is veteran actor Jesse Borego (*I Like It Like That*; *Tecumseh: The Last Warrior*) who has committed himself to starring in La Nueva Onda productions for little or no money.

La Nueva Onda grew in Texas largely because local talent was either being neglected or squeezed into already established industry norms. CineFestival grew out of similar neglect. Today the festival provides a critical forum for Latino filmmakers to meet and discuss ideas such as La Nueva Onda, distribution alternatives, and technical innovations in the industry. Far from the media capitals of New York and Los Angeles, CineFestival has been able to grow slowly but steadily, surviving long after other glitzier Latino festivals have gone under.

In addition to providing a temporary think tank for industry ideas, CineFestival provides a place for mentoring. Veterans of Latino film traditionally take a special interest in encouraging the latest generation here. This is perhaps its most important function, and it's what keeps CineFestival from being measured in standard festival terms.

"When I began it was very difficult," recalls Portillo, "but because of all the previous filmmakers, all the pioneers...things were made easier for me. Now it's us who can make it somewhat easier for the younger generation. There are more kids with dreams, and it's our job to help them attain them."

Ray Santisteban is a New York-based filmmaker currently directing The Young Lords, a documentary on the Puerto Rican activist movement.



Jimmy Smits and Elpidia Carrillo dancin' in the streets in Gregory Nava's epic *Mi Familia*, a last-minute addition to CineFestival. Photo: Rico Torres, courtesy New Line Cinema.



No wonder *The Devil Never Sleeps*. From Lourdes Portillo's documentary about her uncle's mysterious death.

Courtesy Xochiti Films

have some remuneration for the filmmaker."

Jim Mendiola, a San Antonio native and San Francisco resident who took over as CineFestival director this year, says he invited many distributors and press, but few came. He believes that's indicative of the industry's lack of support as a whole. "Industry types have never come to this festival," he says. "My feeling is that although they say otherwise, they are not necessarily in search of new Latino talent specifically."

Latinos are clearly searching for production funds, however. One of the festival's best-attended events was the seminar presented by the National Latino Communications Center (NLCC) on public television and the current political pressures on this important source of production funding and distribution. Much of



fest

DALLAS

DOING THE DALLAS VIDEO FESTIVAL

BY MATT ZOLLER SEITZ

EVERY NOVEMBER, AS THE DALLAS VIDEO Festival's opening night draws nearer, the hair of its beleaguered artistic director, Bart Weiss, gets progressively taller and wilder, increasing in thickness and altitude until the man begins to resemble the Heat Miser from the old holiday-themed puppetoon "Rudolph's Frosty New Year." There's a physiological basis for this yearly event: Weiss personally shoulders most of the burden of watching hundreds of submissions from all over the United States and beyond. With a handful of helpers, he chooses and inventively arranges a schedule of one to two hundred titles to be screened over four days at the Dallas Museum of Art.

The payoff of Weiss's devotion is an eclectic and fascinating festival. It started in 1986, when Weiss, who'd been working as a video programmer at a couple of local bars, put together a two-evening symposium with performance artist John Held. Titled "Video as a Creative Medium," and located in the Gateway Gallery, an educational area of the museum, the successful event showed local videos one night and national videos the following night and interspersed screenings with discussions of the art form's history and potential.



Soaking up some (cathode) rays at the Dallas Video Festival.
Courtesy Dallas Video Festival

A year later, Weiss assembled a four-day event with funds from the museum, the USA Film Festival, and a now-defunct watering hole called the Starck Club. Its slogan: "Rewinding into the Future." A variety of individual titles and anthologies were screened at various locations around the city, including the downtown Neiman-Marcus, the central library, the

University of Texas at Dallas, the Starck Club, and other locations. In a *Dallas Morning News* article, Weiss described video as "the technology of the future."

The Jetsonish description makes him cringe a bit today, but at the time it was a necessary concession to local skepticism. Video had long been accepted as an art form on the two coasts, but

Dallasites were more inclined to think of it as an entertainment and news source—as the stuff that ran between the commercials. Accordingly, the first schedule brought viewers cautiously into the fold, mediating concentrated doses of history (including “Kovacs,” an opening night program of the dadaist TV comic’s work, introduced by his wife and longtime collaborator, Edie Adams) with excursions into provincial oddity (*The Eternal Frame*, a recreation of the Kennedy assassination by the California artists’ collective AntFarm); eye-popping avant-garde material (particularly the regional premiere of Jean-Luc Godard’s *Grandeur et Decadence*, a feature-length work originally produced for French TV); and educational forums (“Video Discourse: Mediated Narratives,” a look at storytelling on video hosted by AntFarm member Chip Lord). Weiss also assembled an appreciation of Pee-Wee’s *Playhouse* a good two years before the mainstream media canonized Pee-Wee Herman (and four years before the actor’s squeaky-clean image imploded in an adult movie theater). The festival also brought in plenty of work by New York artists Weiss had long admired, including that of Woody and Steina Vasulka, founders of the video/performance space The Kitchen, and *Paper Tiger Television*, a long-running media critique series on cable access.

Subsequent Dallas Video Festivals also cast a wide net, juxtaposing high art and high camp, instructional films and video diary entries, archival footage and computer animation, experimental cinema and handsomely-funded PBS and BBC miniseries. Perhaps the only consistent aspects of the event, in fact, have been its ragged-edged diversity and its evangelical determination to transform even the most casual viewers into goggle-eyed tube hounds.

From the beginning, Weiss says, he wanted the festival to be as “democratic” as possible. He defines video rather freely as anything that people will primarily experience on television. And he claims—as he is reportedly fond of doing—that he personally has never liked festivals that focus exclusively on a cappuccino-and-Luckies crowd and favor art over entertainment: the sort of event that he says seem aimed primarily at college professors, newspaper writers, and pals of the videomakers. He prefers a mix of moods and styles—the more contradictory the better.

In 1988, for example, *Dallas Observer* critic Tom Sime had cause to note that the “[f]estival embraces every incarnation of the medium, from highbrow to low.” That’s *Black Entertainment*, a documentary detailing movies that had been produced for segregated cinemas during the first

half of the century, assembled by Southern Methodist University professor G. William Jones, a cofounder of the USA Film Festival, rubbed shoulders with *Arena Brains*, a satire on New York desperation by painter-turned-video-director Robert Longo and actor/performance artist Eric Bogosian.

The festival has since served as a home for Clio Awards shows; public access cable IDs; rap videos; Monty Python skits; works by the late, gay African-American video polemicist Marlon Riggs; nonsensical screeds by William S. Burroughs and Henry Rollins; compilations of wartime propaganda; an Andy Kaufman tribute; sometimes controversial art installations mixing television and video imagery with painting, sculpture, theater, and dance; and documentaries about the homeless, the disabled, left- and right-wing activists, political correctness, beat poetry, urban families, cannibalism, and computers. Special attention was paid early on to progenitors of video art like Nam June Paik and Andy Warhol, who were charting the new waters in the 1960s; other exhibitions have gone further back still, introducing visitors to the works of experimental filmmakers of the World War II generation, including Stan Brakhage, Maya Deren, Bruce Baillie, and Kenneth Anger.

Response has been enthusiastic. Last year’s festival drew around 20,000 visitors, a twenty-fold increase since 1986.

In staging the event (which this year has been moved from November to January 4 to 7), Weiss clearly wants to actively engage viewers by confronting them with more choices than they could possibly experience simultaneously. At any given time, anywhere from four to six tapes run in different rooms of the museum. The structure of the schedule contributes to this feeling of information overload; as some titles are played and replayed throughout the schedule, others show once for five minutes and then vanish, and still others play endlessly on wall-mounted television sets and inside sculptural installations. During the event, the normally tomblike museum looks more like a commuter train station at rush hour, with crowds surging back and forth or loitering cross-legged on the floor in front of giant TV screens.

Unlike most film and video festivals, Dallas does not sell tickets to individual events; instead, it sells all-day or all-festival passes, which encourages visitors to experience as many entries as possible. It’s video as all-you-can-eat buffet.

A one-time film critic for the weekly Dallas Observer and a 1994 finalist for the Pulitzer Prize in criticism, Matt Zoller Seitz now writes a weekly column about popular culture for the New Jersey Star-Ledger.

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A U S T I N

Vogue: A young man mocks a friend by implying he looks like a model in a gay magazine in *No Ordinary Love*, shown at the Austin Gay and Lesbian International Film Festival.

Courtesy No Ordinary Limited Partnership



AUSTIN-TATIONOUSLY QUEER: THE AUSTIN GAY AND LESBIAN INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

BY MARJORIE
BAUMGARTEN

FILM PROGRAMMING IN AUSTIN HAS ALWAYS catered to the eclectic and nontraditional interests of the city's population. From the one-time-only film festivals hosted by various academic departments of the University of Texas to special-interest programming by various arts, cultural, and political organizations, Austin has time and again proven itself to be filled with an avid audience for untried and unconventional films.

The Austin Gay and Lesbian International Film Festival is the city's grande dame of annual alternative festivals. This year marks its eighth continuous year of operation at the 250-seat Dobie Theatre. In the last couple of years, this two-week festival, held in September, has grown from a one-man operation into a nonprofit organization, and from a local lovefest into the premiere gay and lesbian film festival of the Southwest. Movies that have premiered there include *Sister, My Sister*; *Jeffrey*; *Totally F**ked Up*; and *No Skin Off My Ass*. Filmmakers Gregg Araki, Bruce LaBruce, and V.S. Brodie have visit-

ed the city in conjunction with the fest, as have other speakers like Quentin Crisp, Judith Halberstam, B. Ruby Rich, and Barry Walters.

Scott Dinger, owner and programmer of the Dobie Theatre, was the sole managerial force behind the festival during its first six years. His initiative and creative programming nurtured the festival as it grew into a major Austin cultural event with an ever-increasing national profile. Dinger expanded the festival over the years from its initial four-film offering to more than 90 shorts and features this year. By the festival's third year, its length was increased to the current two weeks because of continuous growth in attendance. Last year, more than 8,000 people came, many of them from other regions in the state. In fact, by 1993 Dinger and the festival had reached a point of saturation, at least in terms of what one person could accomplish.

The solution? Turn it over to a committee. The festival was revamped as a nonprofit organization. For the last two years, it has been governed by a board of directors, which convenes regularly throughout the year to plan and screen entries.

"I did this to open the festival up," says Dinger, "because there was so much more I knew we could do, but I didn't have the manpower or energy. And I really couldn't just go out and say to people, 'Hey, would you volunteer to help me make more money?' [We've tried] basically to expand it into a better and larger festival and to get more organizations and businesses involved." The latter range from lesbian and gay lobbying groups to Informe-Side, an Hispanic AIDS information center. They help promote the festivals, and their representatives occupy booths there and speak before screenings.

"This festival is in a unique position," asserts Dinger, "since the Dobie Theatre started this. These festivals are [usually] started by a gay and lesbian group or pride committee. [They]'ve got to go out and rent a theater or a rec hall or something," he explains. "They don't [usually] have experience putting something like this together, so maybe they do it one year and not the next. We

have the advantage of having the Dobie Theatre and my experience with programming."

One major innovation, as gay and lesbian festivals go, is the Regional Showcase, in which film- and videomakers from Southwestern states are invited to submit works to a juried film competition that awards cash prizes. The long-term goal of the Regional Showcase is to fund production of gay and lesbian media projects and help expose participants to national channels by assisting with postproduction, marketing, and distribution know-how. According to Dinger, this focused assistance will help "define the region and allow Austin to become a clearinghouse and a real strong center for gay and lesbian filmmaking in this area."

Clearly, the festival plans to expand its impact beyond Austin city limits. As the oldest and largest gay and lesbian film festival operating in the Southwest region (defined as Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, Arkansas, Oklahoma, and Colorado), the Austin fest wishes to extend its regional leadership by becoming not only a festival, but also a source of regional funding and information resource.

Ironically, as gay and lesbian filmmaking moves into the mainstream, festivals such as Austin's are becoming increasingly difficult to book. As larger distributors like Sony Picture Classics and Fine Line Features increasingly snatch up commercially viable projects that can sustain national bookings, the likelihood of their circulating from city to city on the gay and lesbian festival circuit is commensurably lessened. One might well ask whether at this rate the success of gay and lesbian films might be the undoing of their festivals. But Dinger is optimistic, asserting, "There are more distributors, but there are also many more [gay and lesbian] films and shorts . . . to choose from."

Marjorie Baumgarten is a film reviewer and senior editor for The Austin Chronicle.

TEXAS LISTINGS

THE LONE STAR STATE FESTIVAL CIRCUIT

BY LOUIS B. PARKS

There are many reasons for the number and diversity of film and video festivals in Texas: the state's high number of major urban and university centers; its cultural diversity, particularly a large Hispanic population; growing film industry activity (it ranked third in activity in the United States last year, according to a recent study by the California Film Commission); and the great physical distance between the various regions of the state—the country's second largest.

Austin Gay & Lesbian International Film Festival, P.O. Box K, Austin, TX 78713. Contact: Scott Dinger; (512) 472-3240; <http://www.hyperweb.com/dobie/dobie.html>. Festival held in September; applications and video entries due in mid-July, prints in mid-August. The 1996 festival will be the ninth edition. Categories include features, shorts, documentaries, and regional showcase. There are overall awards and regional prizes. Held at a downtown commercial theater near the University of Texas.

Austin Heart of Film Festival, 707 Rio Grande, #101, Austin, TX 78701. Contact: Barbara Morgan; (512) 478-4795 or (800) 310-FEST. Held in October, entries due mid-June (screenplays) and mid-August (films). Emphasis on screenplays. The festival's first year, 1994, was very successful, attracting many Hollywood players to attend and speak. At least seven entrants got options. The 1995 festival amassed 1,630 entries and guests included writers of *Apollo 13*, *Nell*, *Legends of the Fall*. There are awards and cash prizes.

CineFestival, Guadeloupe Cultural Arts Center, 1300 Guadeloupe St., San Antonio, TX 78210. Contact: Jim Mendiola; (210) 271-3151. Festival held January 31–February 4, 1996. Entries due mid-November. Foremost Latino film and video fest in

the U.S. The 1996 festival is 19th edition. Prizes awarded.

CineSol Latino Film Festival, P.O. Box 532382, Harlingen, TX 78553. Contact: Evy Ledema, director; (210) 421-4654. Fourth edition of festival will be held in September or October 1996. The first weekend, on South Padre Island, has panel discussions and a children's program. Over the following two weeks, fest goes on the road in the Rio Grande Valley area. Content of films should deal with Latino subjects or interests. There is no entry fee, and event is not juried. There is one award.

Dallas Video Festival, 2917 Swiss Ave., Dallas, TX 75204. Contact: Barton Weiss, director; (214) 823-8909; vbart@aol.com. Held January 4–7; entries due October 2. Fest held at the Dallas Museum of Art. Open to all kinds of video and new technologies. Also has children's section ("KidVid") & media education events. No prizes in this curated show, but producers are paid \$35 for accepted videos.

ITVA (International TV Association) Video Festival, 6311 N. O'Connor Rd., Suite 230, Irving, TX 75039. Contact: Marilyn Cervenka, director; (214) 869-1112. Entries due mid-November; preliminary judging in December or January, finals in April. Irving is national headquarters for this festival, now in its 27th year, which consists of regional judging (700 people involved) throughout the country. It is among the largest festivals honoring video for corporate and organizational clients. The 1996 fest, the 28th, will be held June 11–15 in Philadelphia. There are nine video categories and awards.

Houston Pan-Cultural Film Festival, P.O. Box 20222, Houston, TX, 77225-0222. Contact: Mohammed Kamara; (713) 527-9548. Held in February and organized in conjunction with Rice University Media Center, the Museum of Fine Arts, and other organizations, fest brings together filmmakers from different cultural and geographic backgrounds to discuss how and why they make films. The second Pan-Cultural Festival is set for Feb. 19–25. One award for student script development.

KidFilm Festival, 2917 Swiss Ave., Dallas, TX 75204. Contact: Alonso Duralde; (214) 821-NEWS or 821-6300; fax: (214) 821-6364. Held in January, entries due early November. The 12th edition will be held Jan. 20–21. KidFilm celebrates "excellence in children's film and video arts from around the world." Prizes awarded.

Llano Estacado Video Festival, Texas Tech University, P.O. Box 42081, Lubbock, TX 79409-2081. Contact: Glen Brown; (806) 742-3825. Held in the fall; entries due in spring. Sponsored by the Art History Association of Texas Tech University. First edition was held October 1995. Open to all categories on VHS, 15 min. or shorter and produced on video or computer.

The Other America Film Festival, 922 San Pedro, San Antonio, TX 78212. Contact: Graciela Sanchez, festival coordinator; (210) 228-0201. Third annual



festival held April 4–13; entries due Dec. 15. Sponsored by Esperanza Center; seeks films from Western Hemisphere giving voice to people not generally or adequately represented by American movies, including people of color, social activists, and women. No prizes awarded.

Out at the Movies, P.O. Box 15705, San Antonio, TX 78212. Contact: Dennis Poplin, festival coordinator; (210) 641-8123. Fifth annual edition of this gay and lesbian fest held Sept. 25–28; entries due mid-May. Sponsored by Lesbian and Gay Media Project. Films must have gay or lesbian theme. No prizes awarded in past.

SXSW (South by Southwest) Film Conference and Festival, P.O. Box 4999, Austin, TX 78765. Contact: Nancy Schafer; (512) 467-7979. Third annual festival will be held March 8–17; entries due January 5. Film fest overlaps with music and multimedia fests. Increasingly important festival seeks regional independent works. Awards but no prizes given.

Texas Film Festival, Box J-1, Memorial Student Center, College Station, TX 77844. Contact: Penny Ditton, program advisor; (409) 845-1515. Third festival will be held Feb. 21–25; entries due late November. Sponsored by Film Society of Texas A&M University, fest seeks independent films, with a special but not exclusive interest in minority films. Films shown in conjunction with appearance by producer and/or director. Spike Lee was first year's speaker.

USA Film Festival, 2917 Swiss Ave., Dallas, TX 75204. Contact: Alonso Duralde; (214) 821-NEWS or 821-6300. This Dallas festival has run since 1971. The 26th edition will be held April 18–25; entries due in March. Fest seeks indie films from around world, including shorts, features, and documentaries. A national short film and video competition runs concurrently with festival, with prizes awarded.

WorldFest Houston, 2700 Post Oak, Suite 1798, Houston, TX 77056. Contact: J. Hunter Todd, director/founder; (713) 965-9955 or (800) 501-0111; e-mail: worldfest@aol.com. Held April 12–21; entries due late February. This large festival, held annually for 29 years, has had several locations and names. For the last 17 years it has based itself in Houston. Many award categories for commercial and indie films, in conjunction with 10 days of widely publicized screenings of Hollywood and indie features and student shorts, presented at a major commercial theater.

Louis B. Parks is a film and feature reporter for The Houston Chronicle.

The \$134,000 feature: *The Man with the Perfect Swing*

BY MICHAEL BERGERON

The Man with the Perfect Swing: Babe Lombardo (James Black) breaks a practice pin with a perfect shot.

Right: Michael Hovis directs *The Man with the Perfect Swing*.
Courtesy filmmaker

RAISING AND BUDGETING THE MONEY—OFTEN THE realities that bring a filmmaker's dream to grief—were not much of a problem for Houston's Michael Hovis, who recently completed his debut feature, *The Man with the Perfect Swing*, for the modest sum of \$134,000.

"Most independent filmmakers have a dream to produce their own feature film. I certainly did," says Hovis, who wrote and directed *The Man with the Perfect Swing*, with his wife Angela Sembera Hovis producing. He previously had spent years producing educational and corporate films and filming TV spots and documentaries.

His idea for the movie came from a chance meeting in Houston's Memorial Park. Looking for a way to improve his golf game, Hovis was intrigued by a fellow golfer's demonstration of a swing that he claimed was guaranteed to improve one's handicap. The tee-side lesson turned into a proposal for an instructional video; then, into the germ for a fictional script.

The final version follows one Anthony Joseph "Babe" Lombardo as he goes through his latest mid-life crisis. He is constantly trying to peddle his latest golf invention—a special swing that can be repeated hole after hole. Babe's

wife is at her wits' end over mounting bills but steadfastly supports her spouse's scheme.

To bring the story to the screen, the Hovises carefully planned for a ballpark figure of \$100,000. Hovis started by selling his interest in an Austin barbecue

restaurant chain. He then convinced two business associates to invest \$27,500 each in the production. The

terms of the deal: if the movie doesn't make money, Hovis must pay the investors back, with inter-

shot in the Texas area.

The Hovises cut a deal with the principal photography crew for partial payment with deferrals. In all, they printed 32,000 feet of film, eventually cutting the film's two-and-a-half-hour

rough cut to a manageable 95 minutes.

On production, the film came in under budget. Without paying themselves salaries, the Hovises shot *The Man with the Perfect Swing* for \$83,000, with \$22,000 spent above-the-line on a Screen Actors Guild (SAG) bond and professional actors.

In postproduction, Hovis used the rest of his cash reserves for the titles, score, and 35mm blow-up from super 16. The release print was completed two days before the South by Southwest festival screening.

With the movie now booked for a week in L.A. (in October) and Austin (in November), Hovis's next goal is finding a theatrical distributor. And that may make production look like the easy part.

Even with so many independently produced films popping up every year, Hovis believes, strong actors can put a movie ahead of the pack. So far, his decision to use SAG actors has paid off—the film's limited number of screenings have garnered good reviews that have singled out the acting. The performances earned particular praise after screenings at the SXSW festival in



est. "I didn't seek pure investment funds," he explains.

Hovis cast James Black, known for his work with Houston's Alley Theater, as Babe, and Suzanne Savoy as Babe's wife, Susan. Both actors have years of experience playing bit parts for Hollywood film and television companies that have

Austin and at the Museum of Fine Arts in Houston, where *The Man with the Perfect Swing* played four times during a month-long retrospective of Houston-lensed features. *The Houston Chronicle* called the movie "a near perfect example of how to make a low-budget film not look like one."

The Hovises plan another test screening of *The Man with the Perfect Swing*, perhaps four-walling it in a college town with the aim of attracting distributors. Their last option is to go straight to video. "We've had five different offers for a video release," Hovis says. "By December, if we don't get into theaters, we will look at our video offers." But for now, the Hovises believe the positive audience response justifies holding out for more test screenings and a theatrical sale.

"All the radio talk shows and golf columns in the major newspapers love talking about anything that had to do with golf," Sembera Hovis says. "We feel that's a big plus in the distribution of this film. There's a definite way to get the word out."

The Man with the Perfect Swing

Production Budget

Accounting	\$132.80
Art dept.	\$3,397.00
Camera dept.	\$13,164.44
Film processing	\$4,904.77
Insurance	\$800.00
Raw film stock	\$5,160.25
Craft service	\$5,800.14
Gaffer/grip dept.	\$12,074.49
Legal	\$250.00
Location	\$1,532.72
Office/phone	\$2721.12
Prop dept.	\$2,059.49
Script supervision	\$1,655.81
Shipping	\$1,411.32
Sound dept.	\$4,663.73
Talent	\$21,550.51
Wardrobe	\$2,154.43
Subtotal:	\$83,432.00

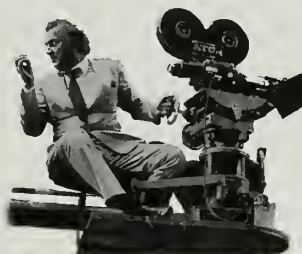
Postproduction Budget

Editing supplies	\$1,237.16
Music score, mix	\$9,186.02
Negative cutter	\$6,640.35
Office/phone	\$1,303.74
35mm optical blow-up	\$15,326.74
Publicity/travel	\$4,363.80
Shipping	\$233.86
Titles	\$2,534.68
Video dailies	\$5,977.61
Video transfer/dubs	\$3,724.63
Subtotal:	\$50,528.89
Total:	\$133,961.77

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Making Pop Love on \$22,000

BY TIM CARMAN

Pop Love director Kyle Henry.

Inset: A woman revisits her mother's suicide in *Pop Love*.
Photos courtesy filmmaker

LOW-BUDGET, INDEPENDENT FILMMAKERS LIKE Houston's Kyle Henry typically walk away from their debut projects muttering a two-word mantra: Never again.

Who can blame them? At this bare-bones level, filmmaking has all the allure of a condo in Sarajevo. Henry, a 1994 Rice University graduate, spent the final year of his five-year BFA degree working on his lone "course," a 60-minute dark romance titled *Pop Love*. In his pursuit of a degree, not to mention a degree of recognition within the film industry, Henry juggled duties as writer, director, sound man, producer, co-editor, and financier; he even bartered for cheap eats for his crew.

Henry was nothing if not prepared for this adventure in cinema. He did research, prepared a budget (which he came close to meeting), and called in favors like he was running for office. He tackled every conceivable angle, from financing (credit cards and student loans) to catering (thanks, Mom and Sis).

Henry is a wiser and poorer man for the experience, with war stories to tell (almost literally: a 500-pound light grid nearly collapsed on his lead actress, missing her by inches) and guidance to offer others foolish enough to undertake similar projects.

He figures he did eight months of planning before ever wrapping his hands around a 16mm Arri SR2 camera. Much of that time was spent coordinating schedules, finding shooting dates that were convenient for his entire crew. He also spent weeks rewriting his script (already a rewrite of a one-act play that was produced by the Rice Players) after learning certain locations wouldn't be available to him. What's more, he spent most of the spring and summer applying for grants, none of which he got. Ultimately, he figured how much he could spend and how he could make a movie out of that amount. Going into the 18-day shoot, filmed in and around Houston in December 1993, Henry calculated his production budget at \$12,000.

He had lots of help maintaining such a tight bottom line, the kind of help that comes from years of networking. Henry credits his alma mater, Rice University, with being one of the major reasons his production figures were so low. The school allowed him free use of the Rice Media

Center's 16mm camera, which saved him "thousands" in rental fees. Rice also donated lights and sound equipment for Henry's use, plus access to both the drama department's costumes and props and the Shepherd School of Music's symphonic catalog, all of which saved him thousands more.

Those perks did not occur by accident. Henry understood, even when he was just an undergraduate, that politics plays into filmmaking. When an undergrad, he would do odd jobs for the drama department, knowing he might call in those favors later. He also struck up a friendship with Gary Marshall, who works in the public relations office at Rice. Marshall proved to be instrumental in securing the Shepherd School's music, as well as campus shooting locations.

Then there was the crew, all of whom worked for free. Each of the principals, from the executive producer to the key grip, were experienced filmmakers who were nonetheless undertaking tasks they had never done before. Director of photography Tom Taylor, for instance, had worked as a camera operator on feature films like *The Mission*, but had never assumed a DP position.

"It was almost like an educational process for everyone on the film, which is kind of scary," says Henry, who had worked with many of these people on a Houston-produced film, *The Trust*, the story of the life and death of Rice founder William Marsh Rice.

Henry's crew saved him an estimated \$20,000; that's why his "food and craft services" budget was one of the largest expenses. (That would have been an even larger figure if his mother and sister hadn't produced 90 percent of the food.) "I didn't pay any of the crew, so the least I could do was feed them well," says Henry, who occasionally traded a thank-you credit at the end of the film for cheap eats from Houston fast-food restaurants, including Blimpie's and Domino's.

Perhaps Henry's most imaginative—and most headache-inducing—tricks came when his sound man suddenly informed him he couldn't work on *Pop Love*. That unexpected departure forced Henry to handle sound himself, no easy maneuver

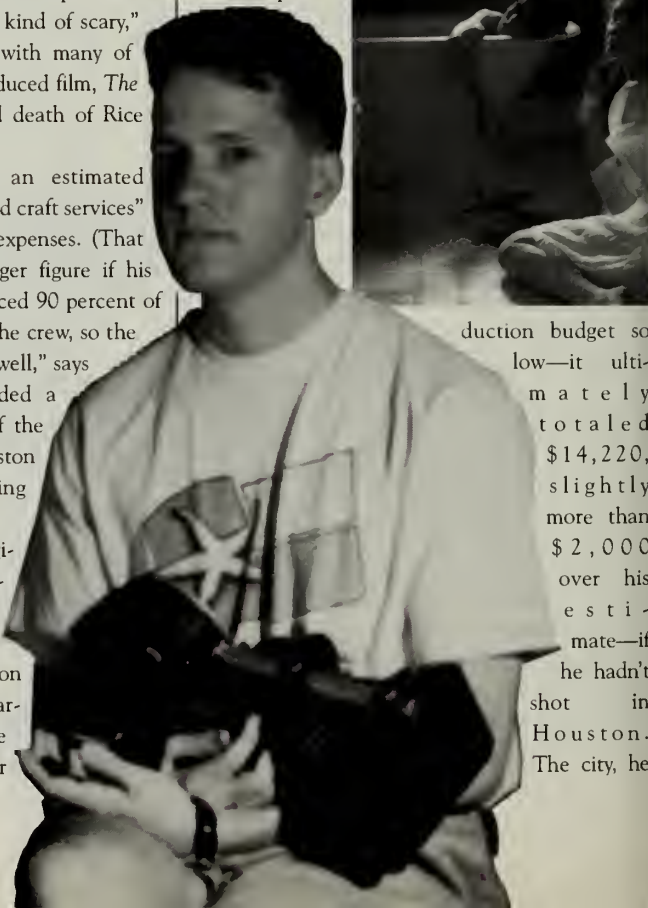
considering he was directing as well. He was forced to find creative ways to keep the sound equipment, typically tucked far away from the set, within sight of the shoot. Henry would stuff the sound equipment under a nearby table, out of camera range. "I was directing by listening," he says. "It was a good thing I had everything storyboarded, so I knew what the camera movements would be."

Henry's raw film stock budget, at \$1,449, was relatively low for several reasons. First, he chose to film in black and white; second, he estimates he filmed an eighth or more of *Pop Love* on super 8. The latter decision was based on both aesthetic and financial considerations. All super 8 footage was used for flashback sequences, which Henry purposely wanted grainy and dreamy, and not for the main narrative.

The filmmaker admits he couldn't have kept his pro-



duction budget so low—it ultimately totaled \$14,220, slightly more than \$2,000 over his estimate—if he hadn't shot in Houston. The city, he



says, opens its arms to filmmaking: he didn't pay any permit fees for locations, which wouldn't have been the case in more film-saturated areas like New York or Los Angeles. Of course, it helped that he could shoot at friends' houses and businesses.

Postproduction costs totaled a bit more than \$7,500, a figure that would have been substantially higher if Rice University hadn't allowed Henry to hole out, gratis, in one of the Rice Media Center's editing suites. Henry and co-editor Tom Dornbusch (who also served as art director) worked for six months on the Center's antiquated-but-efficient flatbed editing deck.

In all, Henry's budget was a little more than \$21,700. He covered his expenses with the same sort of creativity that went into streamlining those costs, using a \$1,000 loan from his sister; \$6,000 in scholarship and student loan money ("I'm still not sure about the ethics of that"); and paying the rest with credit cards. He's recouped all but \$2,000, mostly from odd jobs he has held since wrapping up production. But he's also earned about \$3,000 from screenings at Rice University and Houston's Museum of Fine Arts, and Henry is proud to say *Pop Love* won second place at Chicago's Underground Film Festival.

Henry is philosophical about the whole first-time filmmaking adventure; he calls it a great educational experience. But that two-word mantra is never far from his lips. "I hope the next thing I make will be big enough that I won't have to do everything myself."

Pop Love Production Budget:


Art department	\$101
Camera department	\$80
Director's department	\$407
Film processing	\$6,436
Raw stock film	\$1,449
Food and craft services	\$1,274
Grip department	\$1,764
Makeup/hair	\$420
Properties department	\$100
Shipping charges	\$400
Sound department	\$799
Talent	\$990
TOTAL	\$14,220

Postproduction budget:

Editing supplies/rental	\$273
Film print	\$2,313
Negative cutter	\$1,362
Publicity	\$300
Sound mix/optical print	\$3,080
Video transfer	\$235
SUBTOTAL	\$7,563
Total:	\$21,783

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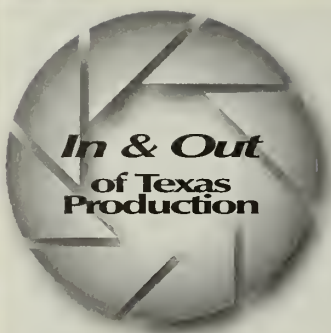
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BY ADAM KNEE & MITCH ALBERT

GOING WELL BEYOND COWBOYS AND CACTI, TEXAS independent production explores numerous and varied realms of existence in this iconographically loaded state. In their 1980 film *Beauty in the Bricks*, Cynthia Salzman Mondell and Allen Mondell documented the lives of four African-American teenage girls growing up in a West Dallas housing project known as "the Bricks." The Dallas-based filmmakers have now revisited these young women to learn where their lives have gone and to explore the lasting impact, both positive and negative, of their experiences in the projects. The results can be seen in their new documentary *Beauty Leaves the Bricks* (46 min., video), which intercuts 16mm footage from the original film with present-day video footage of the women with their families. *Beauty Leaves the Bricks*, Media Projects, Inc., 5215 Homer St., Dallas, TX 75206; (214) 826-3863; fax: 826-3919.

Another Dallas-based project which interweaves disparate but quirkily and complexly related stories is Rusty Martin and Susan Kirr's feature film *Only in America* (95 min., 35mm). While a film-within-the-film, entitled "Just Say No to Satan," takes a satirical look at Dallas televangelism and national drug policy, *Only in America* also follows the postproduction woes of the filmmakers and, in a third storyline, the efforts of Drug Enforcement Administration agents to spy upon the filmmakers—while also collaborating with the crew of a reality-based television show. Kirr and Martin, who met while working for New York's Troma Pictures, felt Dallas was the perfect setting for a film about "bureaucratic conspiracies and the information society." *Only in America*, Susan Kirr, Conspiracy Films, Inc., 6001 Skillman #243, Dallas, TX 75231-7741; (214) 739-1432.

Meanwhile, over in El Paso, film- and videomaker Willie Varela has just completed a year of Hi8 introspection. Varela, the subject of a 1994 retrospective at the Whitney Museum in New York, is now embarking upon the daunting task of editing his *One Year Diary* down to about 90 minutes and is also scripting a fictional/autobiographical feature tentatively entitled *Death and Divorce*. Varela's most recently completed piece



is *The Bad Girl* (23 min., video), an experimental work featured in the 1995 Whitney Biennial and slated for distribution by Electronic Arts Intermix, 536 Broadway, 9th floor, New York, NY 10012; (212) 966-4605.

"Kid, move to New York," was the advice of a Hollywood player to Daniel DeLoach after viewing the latter's short film *Triptych* (10 min., video). "No one in this town will understand you." The town in question was Hollywood itself, though DeLoach is a Ft. Worth native and the film, based upon a dark form of Soviet poetry known as "sadistkye kupleti", was shot in Eules, Ft. Worth, and Colorado. *Triptych*, 9/10ths Spatula Productions, 5408 Boca Bay Dr. #1524, Ft. Worth, TX 76112; (817) 457-3974.

Only the lonely know how this feels, though standup comedians, tattoo artists, and friends and roommates might relate as well to the comedy of manners *Seeking the Café Bob* (103 min., 16mm). Written and directed by Jeff Stolhand, this Austin feature (which premiered at the Independent Feature Film Market in New York in the fall) tells of Tom, a cuckolded husband who suffers anxiety attacks from fears of being alone,

The drug wars meet televangelism in *Only in America*.

Courtesy filmmakers

and more so when his newfound paramour resists commitment in favor of sexual freedom; Aaron, who's only just met the intense, tattooed Roseanna through the personals and now plans marriage; and Roger, whose career as a comic is fizzling and who resents his old college buddies' romantic pursuits—especially since they decided recently to all move in together as a reliving of the 'good old days.' *Seeking the Café Bob*, Calico Dog Productions, 1300 Guadalupe, ste. LL-10, Austin, TX 78701; (512) 469-7675.

Only in Austin: Tara Veneruso's *Janis Joplin Slept Here* (120 min., video) came about after the filmmaker tried out for an assistant position on Clint Eastwood's *A Perfect World*. Clint turned her away, and Veneruso looked for something to do, fast. She began to compile stories about Austin's venerated music scene, which soon swelled into a feature-length exploration of the history of music in that city, with 74 interviews and a budget derived from her waitress'

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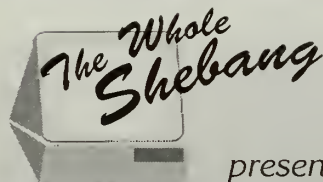
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wages. "Did Janis Joplin ever live in your apartment?" is the question Veneruso—whose looks and vocal rasp eerily resemble Joplin's—puts to her subjects, riffing on the strange local phenomenon of many people claiming their digs once hosted the lady (or her ghost). From there unfolds a non-stop series of recollections about



A brighter day in the Dallas projects from *Beauty Leaves the Bricks*.
Courtesy filmmakers

Austin, music, and Austin music. *Janis Joplin Slept Here*, Flaming Angel Films, PO Box 401, Austin, TX 78767-0401; Tel: (512) 445-2483.

While the Austin Film Society has had a great deal of success under the guidance of Richard Linklater, Veneruso also sings the praises of another Austin media organization, a local collective called *in*situ*. The group sponsors informal weekly gatherings for viewing and discussing films and videos of all stripes and is also active in promoting and distributing works by local film and video artists. For more information, contact Jon Ausbrooks at (512) 707-9865.

For a sampling of what's emerging from a somewhat lesser known music scene—that of Denton—you might take a look at Christopher Allen's experimental narrative *The Movie Man* (85 min., video), which has a soundtrack featuring songs from no less than nine local bands. Allen, a recent graduate of the University of North Texas's Department of Radio, Television, and Film, produced the film as an independent study project during his senior year, with an all-volunteer crew and a reported budget of under \$100. Allen appears in the video as "a hitman-in-training who uses cinematic indoctrination techniques in an attempt to discover a sense of himself," while in other storylines, would-be filmmakers consider such issues as the fate of the cast of *A Family Affair* and the identity of the video's mysterious, movie-reviewing titular character. *The Movie Man*, Christopher Allen, Filterless Productions, 403 Byran St. #203, Denton, TX 76201; (817) 591-0358.

Lest one be misled by some of the foregoing accounts of Texas filmmaking, it should be noted that the state's media production encompasses cutting-edge hi-tech work as well as the unremittingly low-tech. For example, the Dallas-produced

film *Cyberstalker* (96 min., 35mm) was described by the notorious Texas film critic Joe Bob Briggs as "Basic Instinct meets *Tron*." *Cyberstalker*, which concerns murder on the information superhighway, was largely filmed in an Irving, Texas facility and had its screen premiere at Dallas's USA Film Festival in

April. The film's distribution contact is Tom Moore of Reel Movies International, (214) 363-4400, and it has its own home page: <http://www.iadfw.net/cyberstalker/>.

Hi-tech in other ways are the form and subject matter of Jayne Loader's new CD-ROM *Public Shelter*, a multimedia follow-up to the now-classic independent feature *The Atomic Cafe*, which Loader codirected. *Public Shelter* includes 30 minutes of video—much of it unseen since the 1950s—along with numerous photographs, audio tracks, and text files pertaining to atomic weapons and energy. The production features many documents recently declassified by the U.S. government, as well as examples of apocalyptic science fiction by several authors. A Windows version of the CD-ROM is currently available for preview by distributors and the press. *Public Shelter*, EJI Productions, 906 W. Main St., Waxahachie, TX 75165; e-mail: ejl@netcom.com.

And now for something completely different: Texas filmmaker Gary Watson has recently completed a documentary about the prewar years of the legendary British M.G. Car Company. *Inside the Octagon, M.G.: 1921-1945* (96 min., 16mm) features interviews with people who experienced the heyday of M.G. production, as well as archival photographs and rare newsreel footage which had existed only on nitrate. The film was clearly a labor of love for Watson, himself a longtime M.G. enthusiast and former president of the Houston M.G. Car Club. *Inside the Octagon, M.G.: 1921-1945*, Gary Watson, Roadster Productions, Inc., P.O. Box 272268, Houston, TX 77277-2268; (713) 667-3456; fax: 661-1812; e-mail: GARYCINE@aol.com.

Meanwhile, back in Texas: Those interested

in a taste of local meteorological phenomena can take a look at veteran stomchaser Martin Lisius's latest documentary **The Chasers of Tornado Alley** (est. 35 min., video). A sequel to the award-winning program *Chasing the Wind*, this documentary includes footage of violent tornados which occurred in Pampa and Hoover, Texas in June of 1995, as well as unusual footage from inside a powerful "microburst" with 100 mph winds. *The Chasers of Tornado Alley*, Prairie Pictures, P.O. Box 122020, Arlington, TX 76012; (817) 276-9500.

Also in production:

- AIVF member Arthur Dong has been in preproduction on a film covering the rise in murders of gay men. He spent August taping the Tyler, Texas court proceedings over the killing of Nicholas West, a 20-year old gay man gunned down in a park. Contact: DeepFocus Productions (213) 254-7773.

- Dallas-based PB Productions (214/827-6877) recently completed principal photography on *GayTV: The Movie*, a romantic comedy about a brother and sister team who take over a bankrupt B cable channel to launch their own television network, "GayTV: All Gay, All Day."

- Austin videomaker K. Bradford (512/416-7802) is currently editing an hour-long documentary entitled *Nix*, which concerns post-apartheid race and power relations in Nambia. She shot the piece on Hi8 in the spring of 1994, just before the elections in South Africa.

- Among other independent feature films currently in production in Texas are *Five Wives*, *Three Secretaries*, and *a Maid* (Asset Pictures, 212/255-6187), Tessa Blake's film about an 85-year-old Texas oil man and serial monogamist; David Karabinas's *Big Backyard*, which revolves around a close-knit group of Austin friends who realize they hate one another (Brenda Pisciotta at Big Face Productions, 512/323-0744); Robert Byington's *Olympia*, the story of a javelin-throwing Mexican soap opera star who dreams of joining the U.S. Olympic team (King Tomato Productions, 512/478-9359); and *Hunting Humans*, Jason Hammond's film about a serial killer stalking Dallas (Linda Wood at Wallcloud Pictures, 817/467-3095).

- Other recently completed Texas projects include *Shooting for Excellence*, an hour-long documentary about the national champion wheelchair basketball team from the University of Texas at Arlington (UTA University Media Center, 817/273-3201); and *Scared by Love*, a made-for-television movie (to air on NBC) about sexual harrassment in a small-town high school (Granite House, 512/445-7200).

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DOMESTIC

ACADEMY AWARDS—SHORT FILM AWARDS, June, CA. Short Film Awards given for best achievement in each of 2 classifications: animated & live action films; doc short subjects not accepted in either category. Entries may not be more than 40 min. Entries must fulfill (within 2 yrs of film's completion date) one of the following criteria btwn Dec. 1 of preceding year & Nov. 30 of current year: a) film must have been publicly exhibited for paid admission in commercial motion picture theater in Los Angeles County for run of at least 3 consecutive days (no fewer than two screenings/day); student films cannot qualify in this manner; or b) film must have participated in "recognized" competitive film fest & must have won best in cat award (fest list may be obtained from Academy). Student films may qualify under (b) above or by winning Gold Medal Award in Academy's Annual Student Academy Awards competition (excluding doc category), provided it meets length requirement. Only 1 entry in each classification will be accepted from each producer or identical producing team & no film may be submitted more than once. Academy retains every print chosen as nomination for final balloting in each cat of Short Films Awards for archives. Films that receive first public exhib on broadcast/cable TV ineligible. TV exhib does not disqualify film, provided exhibition occurs after Los Angeles theatrical release, or after fest exhib in those cats which permit such exhibition as means of qualifying. Formats: 70mm, 35mm, 16mm. No entry fee. Deadline: Nov 30. Contact: AMPAS Director, Academy Awards/Short Film Awards, Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences, 8949 Wilshire Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA

90211-1972; (310) 247-3000; fax: (310) 859-9351.

ASPEN SHORTSFEST, February, CO. This 4-day competitive fest celebrates art of short subject filmmaking & grew out of Aspen FilmFest due to popularity of its short film showcase. \$5,000 in cash awards presented annually. Entries must have been completed within previous yr. About 30 prods showcased annually, before audiences estimated at 3,000. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2". Entry fee: \$25. Deadline: mid-December. Contact: Ellen Hunt, director, Aspen ShortFest, P.O. Box 8910, 110 East Hallam, Aspen, CO 81611; (303) 925-6882, fax: (303) 925-1967.

ATLANTA FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, June, GA. Presented by media arts center IMAGE, this competitive fest, founded in 1976, is dedicated to innovative, entertaining productions. \$7,000 in cash, services & equipment awarded in several cats; film & video awarded separately. Film: Grand Jury Award, Best Doc, Best Informative Doc, Best Experimental, Best Narrative, Best Animation, Best Student (experimental, narrative, experimental narrative, doc, technical achievement, emerging vision). Video: Juror's Award for Achievement, Best Doc, Best Experimental Doc, Best Doc by an Emerging Maker, Best Performance Art Doc, Best Experimental, Best Experimental Children's Program, Best Narrative, Best Student, Best Narrative Comedy, Best Use of Animation, Best Media Criticism, Best Dramatic Criticism. Some 50 artists, showcased, about 10 may attend. Audiences estimated at 3,000. Screenings held at High Museum of Art, IMAGE & local theaters. Extensive local press coverage has been developed over the yrs. All work must be independent & must have been completed since Jan. 1 of preceding 2 years. Sponsored works (industrials, commercials, etc.) ineligible. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", super 8, 8mm. Entry fee: \$40 (individual/nonprofit); \$50 (distributor/for profit); add \$5 for foreign. Deadline: Mid-December/early January. Contact: Anne Hubbell, fest director, Atlanta Film & Video Festival, IMAGE Film/Video Center, 75 Bennett St., Ste N1, Atlanta, GA 30307, (404) 352-4254; fax: (404) 352-0653.

BLACK FILMWORKS FESTIVAL OF FILM & VIDEO, April, CA. Founded in 1973, fest showcases broad & diverse expanse of Black experience as interpreted by Black filmmakers. Works of developing filmmakers from Americas, Africa, Caribbean & Europe screened during fest. Black Filmworks not only celebrates newcomers, but is opportunity to present works by established filmmakers. Black Filmmakers Hall of Fame International Black Independent Film & Video Competition is held to determine works that will play in fest. Film & video cats incl. feature, doc, community video/cable access, TV (movie of week & miniseries, episodic, special, news magazine), PSAs/commercials, comedy, cross cultural perspectives, foreign, biography, short film/video (under 30 min.), animation, experimental, music video, health, education, student (film/video, TV). Entries must have been produced within previous 4 yrs; must have Black person in key creative position of producer, writer or director; should provide insight

into Black experience & related subject matter should either be enhancement of Black experience or have positive impact on Black community. Awards: Best Film/Video (\$1,500), Second Prize (\$750), Third Prize (\$500); honorable mention & category winners receive certificates & recognition at competition awards ceremony & opening night of Black Filmworks. Black Filmmakers Hall of Fame was established in 1974 in Oakland to "acknowledge often overlooked presence of Blacks in cinema, honoring their significant contributions & participation in American & world cinema & to empower future generations to excel in film, video & TV." Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2". Entry fee: \$25. Deadline: Dec. 15 (late entry in late December). Contact: Dr. Beverly Robinson, exec. dir., Black Filmworks Festival of Film & Video, Black Filmmakers Hall of Fame, 405 14th St., Ste 515, Oakland, CA 94604-8055; (510) 465-0804; fax: (510) 839-9858.

CLEVELAND INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Late March/early April, OH. This is one of Ohio's premiere film events, celebrating its 20th anniversary in 1996. It presents about 60 new features & documentaries from around the world in various categories & almost 100 short films in collected programs. Film forums follow selected films, giving audiences a chance to discuss the films with the filmmakers, critics & other panelists. Many guests appear during the 11-day event & many films sell out. Audiences estimated at 23,000. Entries must have been completed within the previous two years, not previously submitted & submitted on VHS for preview. Awards: Best Ohio Short, Best Student Short, Best Doc Short, Best Women's Short, People's Choice Feature. \$2,500 in prize money annually awarded. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Entry fee: \$25 shorts, \$50 features. Deadline: Dec. 15. Contact: David Wittkowsky, exec. dir., Cleveland Int'l Film Festival, 1621 Euclid Avenue, Suite 428, Cleveland, OH 44115; (216) 623-0400; fax: (216) 623-0103.

HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH FILM FESTIVAL, June, NY. This fest was created "to enhance public awareness of domestic & international human rights issues & specific human rights abuses, drawing on the power of film to communicate across borders, both physical & ideological." Entries should address such human rights issues as political prisoners, abuses of the person (torture, arbitrary detention, extrajudicial killings, disappearances), freedom of expression, oppressed minorities & indigenous populations, racial discrimination, gender discrimination, refugees/immigration policy. Entries may be any length & are selected on basis of artistic merit & "sophistication with which they confront human rights issues." In 1992 fest estab Nestor Almendros Prize of \$5,000 for filmmaker in recognition of distinguished contribution to human rights & in 1995 estab. Irene Diamond Lifetime Achievement Award. 1995 was 1st year fest collaborated w/ Film Society of Lincoln Center; it also collaborated w/ African Film Festival & Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture. The High School Project, affiliated with fest, is dedicated to bringing

global awareness of universal human rights into classroom via film; fest staff works w/ social studies teachers in NY area & FilmFree in Netherlands, formed to protect rights of filmmakers. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4". Entry fee: None. Deadline: Late December. Contact: Bruni Burres, festival director, Human Rights Watch Film Festival, Human Rights Watch, 485 Fifth Ave., 3rd fl, New York, NY 10017; (212) 972-8400, fax: (212) 972-0905; e-mail: hrwnyc@hrw.org.

METROPOLITAN FILM FESTIVAL, January, MI. Non-competitive showcase for ind film/video makers. Fest looking for "spirited independent work by visionary filmmakers" & jurying criteria "relies heavily on subject matter, style & filmmakers vision; budget & production are always secondary considerations." Fest sponsored by Independent Film Channel & Detroit Filmmakers Coalition. Estab in '91, it has grown into int'l event, w/ 4 venues. Shorts, docs & features accepted & about 50 works shown each yr. Extensive local press coverage. Entries should be under 60 min. & not previously shown or submitted to fest. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", super 8, Beta, 8mm. Entry fee: \$25. Deadline: Early December. Contact: Gus Calandrino, festival director, Metropolitan Film Festival, 11249 Roxbury, Detroit, MI 48224; (810) 779-0707.

NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL MEDIA NETWORK COMPETITION, Late Jan./early March. Formerly the National Educational Film & Video Festival, this fest celebrated its 26th season in 1995 & is recognized as a foremost U.S. competition for educational media. It serves as conduit for high-quality films, videos & multimedia programs to schools & universities, libraries, broadcast outlets, institutional & consumer markets worldwide. Eligible programs incl. docs, live action programs, dramatic features & shorts, animation, children's programming, classroom programs, medical/health programs, training/instructional tapes, special interest videos, interactive titles, broadcast & cable programs, public service announcements & student-made features & shorts. Several cats, which each incl. several sub-cats, incl. Arts (language arts, media arts, performing arts, visual arts); Business & Nonprofits; Careers; Health (health crises: general audiences, health: general audiences, health: professionals); History & Political Science; Human Relations; Multimedia Competition; Science & Technology; Society; Sports, Leisure & Travel; Student Competition; Teaching & Education; Television & Cable Broadcast. In 1995, the competition received 1,500 entries. All entries viewed each yr by panel of over 600 volunteer jurors, including cat-specific professionals & educators. Films, videos & multimedia programs must have been completed since Jan 1 of preceding 2 yrs. National Educational Media Award winners of Gold, Silver & Bronze Apple Awards recognized at gala awards ceremony held during National Educational Media Marker & Conference in Oakland & San Francisco. Fest also awards Special Awards to innovative works which demonstrate exceptional artistic creativity & Student Cash Awards, up to \$1,500 in cash for innovative works in Elementary, Junior High School, Senior High School & College cats.



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PORTLAND INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Mid February/early March. Annual invitational survey of new contemporary world cinema; approx 55 features & 15 shorts from over 25 countries shown in about 120 screenings. No special cats; features, docs & shorts accepted. Founded in 1977, fest attracts audiences of 26,000. Special programs: Pacific Rim Showcase, Children's Family Series & (in 1996) Special Focus on Spanish/Spanish Language Films. Awards: Audience Best of Festival Awards. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4". Entry fee: None. Deadline: Dec. 1. Contact: Bill Foster, dir., Portland Int'l Film Festival, Northwest Film Center, 1219 S.W. Park Ave., Portland, OR 97205; (503) 221-1156, fax: (503) 226-4842.

SAN FRANCISCO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Apr. 18-May 5. Founded in 1957, this is oldest fest of its kind in western hemisphere, presented each spring by San Francisco Film Society. It showcases approx. 150 new feature films, docs & shorts; fest dedicated to highlighting current trends in int'l film, video & moving-image production, w/ emphasis on work w/out U.S. distribution. Fest sections: invitational, noncompetitive section for recent narrative features, archival presentations, retros & special awards & Golden Gate Awards competition for docs, TV production, animation, short & experimental works. Over 30 entry cats in Golden Gate Awards in divisions of Film & Video; New Visions; Television; Bay Area Film & Video. Golden Gate Awards incl. Best of Category trophies & \$500 cash honoraria in each cat; Special Jury trophies & Certificates of Merit may also be awarded at discretion of juries. Awards in noncompetitive section incl. Akira Kurosawa Award, to filmmaker for lifetime achievement; Satyajit Ray Award, to filmmaker of exceptional promise; Peter Owens Award, to film actor for outstanding achievement; Mel Novikoff Award, to individual or institution whose work has enhanced filmgoing public's knowledge & appreciation of world cinema. Also audience awards for Best Feature Film & Best Doc Film.. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4"; pre-

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SANTA BARBARA INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Mar. 8-17, CA. Fest founded in 1986 & committed to diverse programming; designed to discover U.S. independent films, docs, shorts & videos & is attended by industry professionals, press, celebrity guests & audiences estimated at 24,000. Comprising approx. 125 films, fest includes works from over 22 countries, w/ entries including live action shorts to docs to animation. Also features world premieres, seminars, workshops, tributes, retros, gala parties & specials. Awards: Best Director, Best Doc, Best Short, Popular Choice, Best Live Action, Best Santa Barbara Filmmakers, Best Foreign Film. Jury of film related professionals selects winners & awards presented at closing night ceremony. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2". Entry fee: \$35. Deadline: Dec. 15. Contact: Diane Durst, director, Santa Barbara International Film Festival, 1216 State St., Ste 710, Santa Barbara, CA 93101; (805) 963-0023, fax: (805) 962-2524.

SOUTH BEACH FILM FESTIVAL, April, FL. This competitive fest founded in 1993 "to celebrate breadth & diversity of independent filmmaking." Event provides screening opportunity for film-

& video makers in South Beach venue. Screenings held at historic Colony Theater in Miami Beach. Cats incl. experimental, fiction, non-fiction & animation. About 45-55 films showcased each yr, before audiences of about 3,000. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 1/2". Entry fee: \$30. Deadline: Dec. 15. Contact: Rob Mills, president/dir., South Beach Film Festival, 20161 NE 16th Place, North Miami Beach, FL 33179; (305) 448-9133, fax: (305) 882-1970.

FOREIGN

ANNONAY INTERNATIONAL FIRST FILM FESTIVAL, February, France. Founded in 1984, this fest is springboard for young cinema & "discovery of unknown cinematographers." Only first features accepted (no shorts). Awards: Grand Prize (22,000FF) offered for distribution; Special Prize (8,000FF) & Public Prize (20,000FF) to director. Entries should be unreleased in France. About 30 films shown. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. No entry fee. Deadline: Early December. Contact: Jean-Louis Vey, director, Festival International du Premier Film d'Annonay, Ave. Jean Jaurès, 07100 Annonay, France; tel: 011 33 75 33 11 77; fax: 011 33 75 67 64 63.

CRÉTEIL INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF FILMS BY WOMEN, March, France. One of world's oldest fests of films by women (founded in 1979) & important showcase for new women's

work, this fest, held in Paris suburb of Créteil, is celebrating 18th anniv. in 1996. Attracts annual audiences of over 35,000, incl. filmmakers, journalists, distributors & buyers. Controversial & critical discussions traditionally part of proceedings. Sections incl competition, retro of modern woman director, self portrait of an actress, tribute to a pioneer of women's film, young cinema & int'l program. Special events for '96 incl. various themes (fantastic, eroticism, art, humor, thriller) treated by famous women directors worldwide, women's films from Balkans; exhibits, publications, symposia & roundtable discussions concerning place of women filmmakers in cinema. Competitive section selects 13 narrative features, 13 feature docs & 30 shorts. All films shown 3 times. Awards incl cash & equipment prizes: FF25,000 Prix du Public in each cat; FF25,000 Grand Jury Prize & six other prizes totaling FF50,000. Entries must have been directed or co-directed by women, completed since Mar 1 of preceding 2 yrs, not theatrically released in France, broadcast on French TV or shown at other French fests. All subjects, genres & styles considered. Student productions ineligible. Fest pays for accommodation for 3 days for filmmakers & round-trip shipping for selected films. Entries need dialogue transcripts, synopses, publicity & biographical material. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Entry fee: \$15 US. Deadline: Early November. Contact: U.S. rep Bérénice Reynaud, California Institute of the Arts, School of Film & Video, 24700 McBean Pkwy, Valencia, CA 91355; fax: (805) 254-2088.

DREAMSPEAKERS FESTIVAL, June, Canada. Founded in 1991, this is an int'l aboriginal, cultural,

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artistic & competitive film fest. Film & video entries must be aboriginal productions (or co-productions) &/or on aboriginal theme. About 20 productions showcased each yr. Fest awards Alanis Obomsawin Award for Film Excellence, along w/ several other awards. Formats: 16mm, 3/4," 1/2". Entry fee: \$75. Deadline: Mid December. Contact: Sharon Shirt, executive director, Dreamspeakers Festival, 9914-76 Ave., Edmonton, Alberta, Canada T6E 1K7; tel: (403) 439-3456, fax: (403) 439-2066.

GÖTEBORG FILM FESTIVAL, February, Sweden. Göteborg is an FIAPF-recognized, non-competitive 10 day fest which celebrates its 19th edition in 1996; it is the oldest & largest festival in Scandinavia, each year attracting filmmakers, distributors & press from several countries. It showcases about 350 films in 5 flagship theaters, selling about 95,000 tickets. Entries should be Swedish premieres & films of all lengths, formats & genres that "are consciousness expanding & promote understanding of people & issues" accepted. Aims of fest are to "give the public an opportunity to see films reflecting current state of world cinema outside conventional distribution forms, to give distributors in Scandinavian countries chance to discover & buy films from smaller production & distribution companies & widen cinema repertoire & to promote films not only as entertainment but also as comment on social & cultural life & encourage audience to draw conclusions & discover connections in their viewing of films." Several films have found distribution through the fest. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. No entry fee. Deadline: Early December. Contact: Gunnar Carlsson, festival director. Göteborg Film Festival, P.O. Box 7079, S-40232 Göteborg, Sweden; tel: 011 46 31 41 05 46; fax: 011 46 31 41 00 63.

LOCAL HEROES INTERNATIONAL SCREEN FESTIVAL, March, Canada. This fest has several components: morning industry workshops; declaration of independents; global heroes; drama prize premieres; NHTV premieres; public outreach. Workshops present case studies of current issues facing Canadian filmmakers. Declarations of Independents, an afternoon series, is selection of films from across Canada selected to reflect a national perspective from emerging filmmakers. Local Heroes brings independent films from around the world to fest. Drama Prize is 16 month professional development program, aimed at developing the skills of emerging filmmakers; for each of five teams selected nationally, it offers cash & services production incentive to make short dramatic film, partnering each team w/ established filmmaker from their region as mentor. Local Exposure is Alberta's only home video competition. Fest launched in 1986. Formats: 1/2". No entry fee. Deadline: Mid December. Contact: Jan Miller, exec. dir., Local Heroes Int'l Screen Festival, 10022 - 103rd Street, 3rd Floor, Edmonton, AB, Canada T5J 0X2; (403) 421-4084; fax: (403) 425-8098.

LONDON INTERNATIONAL LESBIAN & GAY FILM FESTIVAL, March, United Kingdom. Founded in 1987, this 12 day showcase, sponsored by British Film Institute, presents over 100 films & videos from throughout world with thematic retros,

rare screenings & lineup of special events. Fest aims to present new work by lesbian & gay producers "alongside other films & videos of particular interest for lesbian/gay content or for imaginative way in which they address themes of sexuality & gender." Also incl program of short films, as well as Panorama of new features. After fest, package of films tours UK to over 16 cities & town. Audiences estimated at 15,000 & about 150 productions shown each yr. One audience award given out. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4," super 8, 8mm. No entry fee. Deadline: Mid December. Contact: Jane Ivey, administrator, London International Lesbian & Gay Film Festival, National Film Theatre, South Bank, Waterloo, London SE1 8XT, United Kingdom; tel: 011 44 1 71 815 1322; fax: 011 44 1 71 633 0786; e-mail: jane.ivey@bfi.org.uk.

MEDIAWAVE INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF VISUAL ARTS: ANOTHER CONNECTION, Late April/early May, Hungary. This fest, founded in 1991, accepts films & videos in 3 cats: general, for films/videos, image/sound experimental works, musical works presented in any form or system, produced w/in previous 5 yrs; minority, for productions (film/video), performed pieces (archaic folk music & rituals or their modern creative interpretations) or any works that reflect ethnic, religious, musical, sexual & other aspects of small communities, ethnic groups, spiritual & other communities; music/dance, for any production (film/video) or performance that was inspired by music &/or dance (not recorded versions of dance performances). Supplementary festival programs are photographic & fine arts exhibitions & lectures; contemporary, improvised & folk concerts, debates & discussions; meetings of Eastern European doc & minority filmmakers. International jury awards Main Prize & several cat & special prizes. 1994 Mediawave received 748 entries, with 72 selected for main program & 145 entries selected in general & minority cats; several info programs also mounted. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4," 1/2," Beta. Entry fee: \$20. Deadline: Late December. Contact: Karoly Lazar, int'l relations/Jeno Hartyadi, festival director, Mediawave Fényírók Fesztiválja, Soproni utca 45, H-9028 Gyor, Hungary; tel: 011 36 96 443 444; fax: 011 36 96 415 285.

MONTREAL INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF SHORT FILM, March, Canada. Formerly Montreal Young Cinema Festival, fest is dedicated to short films w/ mission of promoting & supporting production & release of short films in Canada & abroad. Fest has 9 sections. Competitive sections incl Int'l Competition (fiction, doc, experimental), Int'l Animation Competition, Quebec Univ. Competition & Quebec College Competition. Non-competitive sections incl Quebec Panorama, Tribute to a Filmmaker, *The Great's Shorts*, *The Long Night of the Short & School Matinees*. Awards (Int'l Competition): Grand Prize (\$2,000), Société Radio-Canada Prize (purchase of broadcasting rights of Grand Prize), Best Screenplay, Youth Prize, Public Prize, C/FP Prize (theatrical release of Quebec short film before feature film. Animation Competition: Grand Prize (\$1,000), TV5 Kaleidoscope Prize (purchase of broadcasting rights), Public Prize. Quebec

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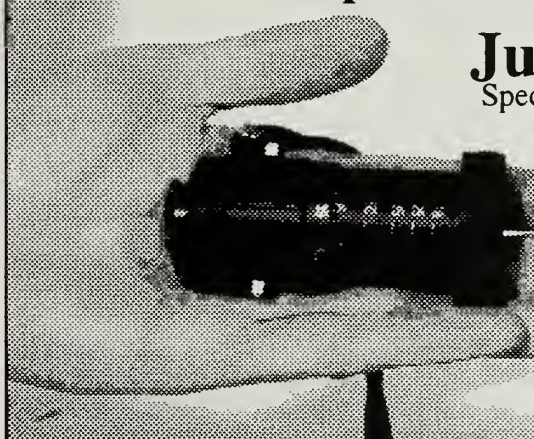
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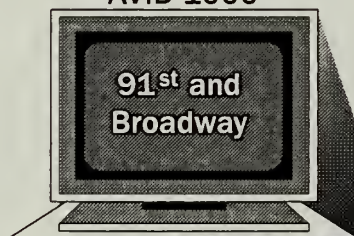
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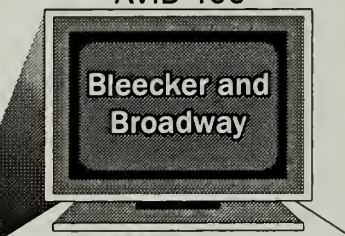
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PARIS ETHNOGRAPHIC FILM PANORAMA, March, France. Aim of this fest, estab in 1982, is "to show the most novel tendencies" in visual anthropology. Screenings are followed by discussions w/ director or specialists in areas covered. Awards: Prix Bartok-Société Française d'Ethnomusicologie (10,000FF); Prix du Court Metrage-Canal + (purchase & broadcast of winner's film); Prix Kodak for first work (10,000FF in Kodak film); Prix Mario Ruspoli-Direction du Livre et de la Lecture, Ministère de la Cultura del a Communication (10,000FF); Prix de la Mission du Patrimoine Ethnologique-Ministère de la Culture de la Communication for best film about France (6,000FF); Prix Nanook; Prix Planete Cable (10,000FF). Formats: 35mm, 16mm, super 8. No entry fee. Deadline: Mid December. Contact: Francoise Foucault, responsable, Bilan du Film Ethnographique, Comité du Film Ethnographique, Musée de l'Homme, Place du Trocadéro, 75116 Paris, France; tel: 011 33 1 47 04 38 20; fax: 011 33 1 45 53 57 82.

STUTTGART INTERNATIONAL ANIMATED FILM FESTIVAL, Late March/early April. Founded in 1982, this biennial fest of animation's stated purpose is to create focus on latest developments & tendencies in artistic animated production & to create audiences for animated film. Program features int'l competition, a "Panorama International," young int'l animated film & special programs incl retros, installations, workshops, performances, animated music & lectures. Awards: State of Baden-Wuerttemberg Award (DM15,000); State Capital Stuttgart Award (DM15,000); Sueddeutscher Rundfunk Award (DM10,000); Award of the TC Group for the Film- & Media market (DM8,000); Landeskreditbank Baden-Wuerttemberg Audience Award (DM5,000); Landesgirokasse Stuttgart Award for Best Student Film (DM3,000); Hellthaler International GmbH Award for most humorous film (DM2,000); Jury Award (DM1,000); International Mercedes-Benz Sponsorship Award for Animated Film (DM35,000 plus one year scholarship to Baden-Wuerttemberg Filmakademie & making of free production). Entries must not exceed 35 min. & must have been produced after Dec 31 of preceding 2 yrs. Audiences estimated at about 35,000 & approx 350 films showcased. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. No entry fee. Deadline: Early December (biennial). Contact: Prof. Albrecht Ade, director/Ulrich Wegenast, organizer, Internationales TrickFilm Festival Stuttgart, Kulturpark Berg, Teckstrasse 56, D-70190 Stuttgart, Germany; tel: 011 49 711 262 2699; fax: 011 49 711 161 4980.

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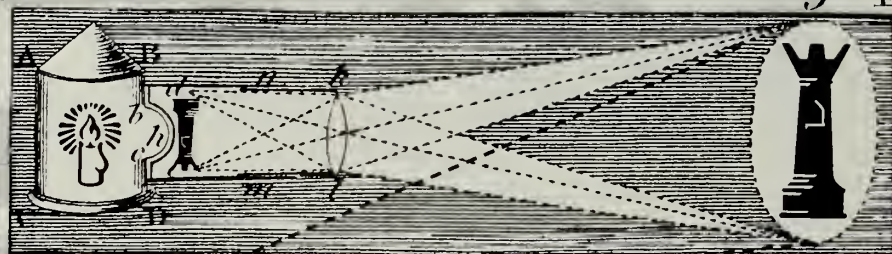
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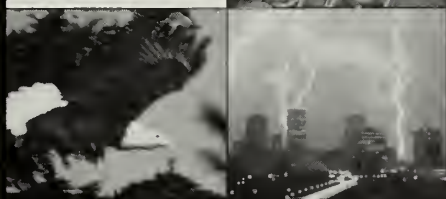
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COMPETITIONS

1996 NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL MEDIA NETWORK COMPETITION invites entries of film, video & multimedia programs completed between Jan. 1, 1994 and Dec. 1, 1995. Eligible programs incl. docs, live-action programs, dramatic shorts, animation, children's programming, classroom programs, medical/health programs, training/instructional tapes, special interest videos, broadcast & cable programs, PSAs & student-made features & shorts. Deadline: Dec. 1. Contact: Rebecca Overmyer-Velazquez, competition dir. (510) 465-6885.

CRESCENT FILMS announces 1995 Lone Star Screenplay Competition open to screenwriters worldwide who submit original feature-length screenplay. In addition to 6 cash awards, winning authors eligible to sign development option w/ Crescent Films. Deadline: Dec. 31. For info, send SASE to: Lone Star Screenplay Competition, 1920 Abrams Pkwy., No. 419, Dallas, TX 75214-3915; (214) 606-3041; e-mail: lonestar@pic.net.

GREAT AMERICAN SCRIPT SEARCH COMPETITION invites entries. Prizes: \$1,500 grand prize to \$250 awards in most categories. Drama, comedy, action/adventure, horror/science fiction, experimental, college student (\$150 award) & children's script (\$1,000 award). Deadline: Dec. 1. Awards announced Feb. 15. For rules, entry forms & info send SASE to: The Great American Script Search Competition, P.O. Box 1122, Redlands, CA 92373. (909) 798-3778; fax: 887-0379.

MONTEREY COUNTY FILM COMMISSION SCREENWRITING CONTEST for writers who haven't earned money writing for TV/film. All gen-

res. \$1500 top prize. \$35 entry fee. Deadline: Jan. 31. For rules, send SASE to: MCFC, PO Box 111, Monterey, CA 93942.

PHILADELPHIA STORIES: 4th annual Set in Philadelphia Screenwriting Competition accepting submissions nationally for original feature-length screenplays set primarily in greater Philadelphia metro. area. All genres. Awards: \$5,000, passes to Philadelphia Festival of World Cinema, story notes. Postmark deadline: Jan. 10. \$20 entry fee. For info, send SASE to: PFWC/Screenwriting Competition, International House, 3701 Chestnut St., Philadelphia, PA 19104.

WRITERS WORKSHOP NATIONAL SCRIPT-WRITING CONTEST is accepting scripts from throughout US. 5 to 6 winners chosen to receive \$500 cash award. Winners also receive free tuition for critical evaluation of scripts before panel of motion picture agents, producers, writers & directors. Deadline: ongoing. For submission info, send legal size SASE w/ 60¢ postage to: Willard Rogers, Writers Workshop National Contest, PO Box 69799, Los Angeles, CA 90069; (213) 933-9232.

CONFERENCES • SEMINARS

IFFCON '96: INTERNATIONAL FILM FINANCING CONFERENCE: 3-day intensive event (Jan. 12-14, 1996) in San Francisco linking ind. filmmakers searching for financing w/ int'l financiers, buyers & co-producers. Incl. roundtables, private meetings & receptions. Limited to 60 participants, chosen through a selection process. Late deadline: Nov. 7. Fees vary. Also, Jan. 12 is Open Day, w/ open registration for panels w/ key international financiers and buyers on Foreign TV Opportunities, Navigating European Film Funds, Rallying US Dollar. \$115 fee. For info./appl. for both, call (415) 281-9777.

PHILADELPHIA MULTIMEDIA TECHNOLOGY SEMINARS for ind. producers, Nov. 15 & Dec. 6, PA. Sealworks, specialists in multimedia integration & development, will show how to combine text, graphics, animation, sound & video to produce interactive apps. Power Mac desktop video prod. w/ products like Radius' Vision Studio & Telecast boards, Adobe Premiere & CoSA After Effects; multimedia authoring w/ MacroMedia Director & cross-platform development tools; session on Internet, Mosaic & World Wide Web. Admission free. Philadelphia Apple Market Center. To register, call (800) 967-6628 x100; (215) 579-9072 w/ questions.

FILMS • TAPES WANTED

ART IN GENERAL seeks video works & guest-curated video programs for new monthly screening series. All kinds of work welcome, from experimental film & video to home videos; doc & activist to public access works. Send VHS tape (cued), résumé &/or brief statement & SASE. For more info, call Joanna Spitzner (212) 219-0473.

AUSTIN, TEXAS INDEPENDENT PRODUCER offering cable access venue to showcase ind. films & videos. All genres & subject matter accepted. Shorts & music videos linked by discussions on ind.

films. Films/videos running longer than 40 min. may be aired in series of 2 consecutive shows. Send release & info about film/filmmaker. Formats 1/4" & 3/4" are preferable. No payment, but credit & exposure. James Shelton, Tex-Cinema Productions, PO Box 3633, Austin, TX 78764-3633; (512) 867-9901.

BLACK ENTERTAINMENT TELEVISION seeks films & videos by black ind. makers, directors, or producers for "Black Vision" portion of Screen Scene, weekly 1/2-hr. show that previews TV lineup & latest theatrical releases. Contact: Screen Scene, BET, 1899 9th St. NE, Washington, DC 20018; (202) 608-2800.

BLACK VIDEO PERSPECTIVE, new community TV prod. in Atlanta area, seeks works for/by/about African Americans. Contact: Karen L. Forest (404) 231-4846.

CHILDREN'S MEDIA PROJECT seeks tax-deductible donations of film & video equipment. Needs monitors, cameras, decks, etc. 71 Wappingers Falls, New York, NY 12590; (914) 227-1838.

CINCINNATI ARTISTS' GROUP EFFORT seeks proposals for exhibitions, performances & audio/video/film works to show in their galleries. Experimental, traditional & collaborative projects encouraged. Contact: CAGE, 1416 Main St., Cincinnati, OH 45210; (513) 381-2437.

CINE CLUB seeks VHS submissions of ind. shorts for future programs. Send SASE and brief resume to: Cine Club c/o Sophie Fenwick, 335 Court St., 82, Brooklyn, NY 11231. Also welcomes proposals from ind. curators and others.

CINEMA VIDEO, monthly showcase of works by ind. video- & filmmakers, seeks S-VHS or VHS submissions of any style, content, or length. Utilizing high-end projector, selected videos are projected onto 10.5' x 14' screen. Monthly shows are collections of several artists' videos, but occasionally features are shown as special events when work merits it. Cinema Video is prod. of Velvet Elvis Arts Lounge Theater in Seattle, WA, a non-profit fringe theater. Send submissions to: Kevin Picolet, 2207 E. Republican, Seattle, WA 98112; (206) 323-3307.

CINEQUEST, weekly half-hour TV series profiling best of ind. cinema & video from US & around world, looking for films/videos less than 20 min. to air on 30 min. cable show. Work over 20 min. will air on monthly special in Orlando, FL market during primetime. Seeking all genres. Concept of show is to stretch perceptions of conventional TV & expose viewers to scope & talent of inds. Submit on 1/2" or 3/4" video. Submissions need not be recent. No submission limit or deadline. Will acknowledge receipt in 10 days. Send pre-paid mailer if need work returned. Contact: Michael D. McGowan, producer, Cinequest Productions, 2550 Alafayia Trail, Apt. 8100, Orlando, FL 32826; (407) 658-4865.

CITY TV, an Emmy Award-winning, progressive municipal cable channel in Santa Monica, seeks programming of any length, esp. works about seniors, disabled, children, Spanish-lang. & video

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AIVF helps you save time and money as well. You'll find you can spend more of your time (and less of your money) on what you do best—getting your work made and seen. To succeed as an independent today, you need a wealth of resources, strong connections, and the best information available. So join with more than 5,000 other independents who rely on AIVF to help them succeed.

JOIN AIVF TODAY!

Here's what membership offers:

THE INDEPENDENT FILM & VIDEO MONTHLY

Membership provides you with a year's subscription to *The Independent*. Thought-provoking features, news,

and regular columns on business, technical, and legal matters. Plus festival listings, funding deadlines, exhibition venues, and announcements of member activities and new programs and services. Special issues highlight regional activity and focus on subjects including media education and the new technologies.

INSURANCE

Members are eligible to purchase discounted personal and production insurance plans through AIVF suppliers. A wide range of health insurance options are available, as well as special liability, E&O, and production plans tailored for the needs of low-budget mediamakers.

TRADE DISCOUNTS

A growing list of businesses across the country offer AIVF members discounts on equipment and auto rentals, film processing, transfers, editing, and other production necessities. Plus long-distance and overnight courier services are available at special rates for AIVF members from national companies. In New York, members receive discounted rates at two hotels to make attendance at our programs and other important events more convenient.

CONFERENCE/SCREENING ROOM

AIVF's new office has a low-cost facility for members to hold meetings and small private screenings of work for friends, distributors, programmers, funders, and producers.

INFORMATION

We distribute a series of publications on financing, funding, distribution, and production; members receive discounts on selected titles. AIVF's staff also can provide information about distributors, festivals, and general information pertinent to your needs. Our library houses information on everything from distributors to sample contracts to budgets.

WORKSHOPS, PANELS, AND SEMINARS

Members get discounts on events covering the whole spectrum of current issues and concerns affecting the field, ranging from business and aesthetic to technical and political topics. Plus: members-only evenings with festival directors, producers, distributors, cable programmers, and funders.

ADVOCACY

Members receive periodic advocacy alerts, with updates on important legislative issues affecting the independent field and mobilization for collective action.

• COMMUNITY

AIVF sponsors monthly member get-togethers in cities across the country; call the office for the one nearest you. Plus members are carrying on active dialogue online—creating a "virtual community" for independents to share information, resources, and ideas. Another way to reach fellow independents to let them know about your screenings, business services, and other announcements is by renting our mailing list, available at a discount to members.

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art. Our budget is limited, but we offer opp. for producers to showcase work. Cablecast rights may be exchanged for equip. access. Contact: Lisa Bernard, programming specialist, City TV, 1685 Main St., Santa Monica, CA 90401; (310) 458-8913.

CONNECT TV, a new series on ind. videomakers, seeks work for 1/2-hr. show. Progressive, social issue docs, art, humor. Will air on Cablevision of CT. Metro Video (203) 866-1090.

CUCARACHA THEATRE seeks 16mm films for Tuesday night series in Jan. & Feb. Send 2 tapes to: Chris Oldcom/Janet Paparazzo, c/o Cucaracha, 500 Greenwich St., NY NY 10013.

DANCE ON VIDEO wanted for the Spirit of Dance, a live, 1 hr. monthly program covering all types & aspects of dance. Under 5 mins or excerpts from longer works. S-VHS preferred. Produced at Cape Cod Community Television, South Yarmouth, MA. (508) 430-1321; fax: (508) 398-4520.

DATABASE & DIRECTORY OF LATIN AMERICAN FILM & VIDEO organized by Int'l Media Resources Exchange seeks works by Latin American & US Latino ind. producers. To incl. work in this resource or for info, contact: Karen Ranucci, IMRE, 124 Washington Place, NY, NY 10014; (212) 463-0108.

EVENTWORKS '96 is accepting proposals for its annual fest of experimental media arts in April. Film, video, Internet events, sound, spoken word, performance, etc. Deadline: Dec. 1. Submit to: Eventworks, 621 Huntington Ave., Boston, MA 02115; (617) 731-2136; eventworks@mecn.mass.edu; <http://www.tiac.net/users/zone/eventworks>.

FILM PRODUCER SEEKS original or adapted comedic screenplays/synopses suited to \$300,000-\$750,000 budgets. Will option; points/production position possible. Submissions w/ SASE for return to: Infinity Pictures, 21 Kent St., Brookline, MA 02146.

HALCYON DAYS PRODUCTIONS seeks video segments (1-5 min.) by 15- to 25-year-olds for video compilation show. If piece is selected, you may have chance to be video correspondent for show. Work may be editorial, real-life coverage, political satire, slapstick—you decide. Just personalize. Submit VHS or Hi8 (returnable w/ SASE) to: Mai Kim Holley, Halcyon Days Prod., c/o Hi8, 12 W. End Ave., 5th fl., NY, NY 10023; (212) 397-7754.

HERE, a not-for-profit arts organization seeks submissions of films and videos for 1995 to '96 season. 16mm, 8mm, 3/4". All genres and lengths. Installation proposals also welcome. Send VHS, resume & description of work to: HERE, 145 Ave. of the Americas, frnt. 1, New York NY 10013, attn: film/video. Enclose SASE for more info. about upcoming season.

IN VISIBLE COLOURS FILM & VIDEO SOCIETY seeks videos by women of color for library collection. Work will be accessible to members, producers, multicultural groups & educational institutions. For more info, contact: Claire Thomas, In Visible Colours, 119 W. Pender, ste. 115, Vancouver, B.C. V6B 1S5; (604) 682-1116.

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IND. FILM & VIDEO SHOWCASE, cable access show; seeks student & ind. films & videos to give artists exposure. Send films or video in 3/4" format w/ paragraph about artist & his/her work. Send to: The Independent Film & Video Showcase, 2820 S. Sepulveda Blvd. #7, Los Angeles, CA 90064, Attn: Jerry Salata.

LATINO COLLABORATIVE, bimonthly screening series seeks works by Latino film/video-makers. Honoraria paid. Send VHS preview tapes to: Latino Collaborative Bimonthly Screening Series, Vanessa Codorniu, 280 Broadway, ste. 412, NY, NY 10007; (212) 732-1121.

NERVOUS IMPULSE, nat'l screening series focusing on science, seeks films/videos. Open to experimental, non-narrative & animated works that address scientific representation or knowledge or interplay between science & culture. Send preview VHS & SASE to: Nervous Impulse, Times Square Station, PO Box 2578, NY, NY 10036-2578.

NEW MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART and the Educational Video Center seek recent work that explores youth perspectives on cultural identity, relationship, sexuality, health, disabilities, family, school, immigration, violence, etc., in genres incl. memoir, testimonial, narrative, doc, experimental & public service announcement. Selected works will be incl. in fall '96 exhibit at museum. Formats: VHS, S-VHS, or 3/4". Length: no more than 15 mins. For interactive computer projects: disk or written proposal for PC or MAC. Deadline: Jan. 1. Enclose SASE w/ submission to: Brian Goldfarb, Curator of Education, The New Museum of Contemporary Art, 583 Broadway, NY, NY 10012.

NEWTON TELEVISION FOUNDATION seeks proposals on ongoing basis from ind. producers. NTF is nonprofit foundation collaborating w/ ind. producers on docs concerning contemporary issues. Past works have been broadcast on local & national public TV, won numerous awards & most are currently in distribution in educational market. Contact NTF for details: 1608 Beacon St., Waban, MA 02168; (617) 965-8477; email: ntf@tmn.com; walshntf@aol.com.

THE OTHER SIDE FILM SHOW is looking for entries in all cats: narrative, doc, experimental, animation, etc. for TV series of ind. films/videos. Submissions should be under 30 min. 3/4" video preferred, but VHS acceptable. Send to U. of South Florida, art dept., 4202 E. Fowler Ave., Tampa, FL 33620-7350, attn: The Other Side. For return shipping incl. SASE.

OVERWINE PRODUCTIONS, weekly intimate theatre & public access program, seeks contemporary film/video in any format to be showcased in & around Detroit area. Contact: Patrick Dennis, 2660 Riverside Dr., Trenton, Michigan, 48183-2807; (313) 676-3876.

PLANET CENTRAL, new LA-based cable station focusing on the environment, global economy, & holistic health, is looking for stories, ideas & video footage for new fall program Not in the News, alternative weekly news show. Send info to:

Planet Central, c/o World TV, 6611 Santa Monica Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90038: (213) 871-9153; fax: 469-2193.

REEL TIME AT P.S. 122, an ongoing quarterly screening series, is now accepting submissions of recent ind. film & video works for 1995 season. Exhibition formats include S-8, 16mm, 3/4" & VHS. Send VHS submission tapes, written promotion & return postage to: Curator, Reel Time, P.S. #122, 150 1st Ave., NY, NY 10009; (212) 477-5829 (x327).

RIGHTS & WRONGS, weekly, nonprofit human rights global TV magazine series scheduled to resume broadcast in February seeks story ideas & footage for upcoming season. Last yr. 34 programs covering issues from China to Guatemala were produced. Contact: Danny Schechter or Rory O'Connor, exec. producers, The Global Center, 1600 Broadway, ste. 700, NY, NY 10019; (212) 246-0202; fax: 2677.

REGISTERED seeks experimental & non-narrative videos about consumerism &/or modern ritual for nationally touring screening. Send VHS for preview w/ SASE & short description to: Registered, Attn.: Joe Sola, PO Box 1960, Peter Stuyvesant Station, 432 E. 14th St., NY, NY 10009.

SHORT FILM & VIDEO: All genres, any medium, 1 min. to 1 hr. Unconventional, signature work in VHS or 3/4" for nat'l broadcast! Submit to: EDGE TV, 7805 Sunset Blvd., ste. 203, Los Angeles, CA 90046.

STATEN ISLAND COMMUNITY TELEVISION PRODUCER seeks experimental works, all subjects, by ind. video & film artists. The more explicit, the better; film & video on 3/4" preferred, but 1/2" &/or 8mm acceptable. Send tapes to: Matteo Masiello, 140 Redwood Loop, Staten Island, NY 10309.

THE SPIRIT OF DANCE, live, 1-hr. monthly program covering all aspects of dance, seeks excerpts from longer works under 5 min. S-VHS preferred. Produced at Cape Cod Community Television, South Yarmouth, MA. Call producers at (508) 430-1321, (508) 759-7005; fax: (508) 398-4520. Contact: Ken Glazebrook, 656 Depot St., Harwich, MA 02645.

TOXIC TELEVISION seeks broadcast-quality, creative video shorts (under 10 min.) for alternative TV experience. Looking for works in animation, puppetry, experimental, computers, etc. Send VHS or 3/4" tape, SASE & résumé to: Tom Lenz, 12412 Belfran St., Hudson, FL 34669.

UNQUOTE TELEVISION, 1/2 hr program dedicated to exposing new, innovative film & video artists, seeks ind. doc, narrative, experimental, performance works under 28 mins. Reaches 10 million homes via program exchange nationwide. 1/2" & 3/4" dubs accepted. Submit to: Unquote TV, c/o DUTV, 33rd & Chestnut St., Philadelphia, PA 19104; (215) 895-2927.

URBAN INSTITUTE FOR CONTEMPORARY ARTS is accepting video & 16mm film in all genres for next season of programming. Fee paid if accepted. Send VHS tape w/ SASE to: Film

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Committee, UTICA, 88 Monroe Ave. NW, Grand Rapids, MI 49503.

VIDEO ALTARS is seeking short (minimum 30 sec.; max. 6 min.) film/video works for compilation celebrating El Dia de los Muertos (Day of the Dead). Program invites broad range of work from all cultural traditions dealing w/ issues of remembrance, reunion & death & dying. Deadline: July 15. Send VHS tape, SASE & short statement to: Altars/S. Thomas-Zon, 2682-P Middlefield Rd., Redwood City, CA 94063; 415-324-8189.

VIDEO DATA BANK is seeking experimental, doc & narrative tapes on women's conflicted relationships w/ food & eating. Tapes: produced after 1990; length: max. 30 min. Please submit preview tapes in 3/4" or VHS format (returnable w/ SASE) & brief statement about producer's relationship to subject matter. Deadline: Sept. 15. Contact: Video Data Bank, Unacceptable Appetites Program, 112 S. Michigan Ave., Chicago, IL 60603.

VIDEO ICON, new TV program focusing on innovative video/ film art & animation, is currently reviewing work. Send VHS or S-VHS copy & SASE. Floating Image Productions, PO Box 66365, Los Angeles, CA 90066; (310) 313-6935.

VIDEOSPACE AT DECORDOVA MEDIA ARTS ARCHIVE: DeCordova Museum & Sculpture Park seeks VHS copies of video art & documentation of performance, installation art & new genres from New England artists for inclusion in new media arts archive. Send for info & guidelines: Videospace at DeCordova, DeCordova Museum, 51 Sandy Pond Rd., Lincoln, MA 01773-2600.

WEIRD TV, satellite TV show airing weekly on Telstar 302, specializes in alternative viewing. Will consider works of 3 min. max., animation or shorts. Submit work to: Weird TV, 1818 W. Victory, Glendale, CA 91201; (818) 637-2820.

OPPORTUNITIES • GIGS

ASSISTANT DIRECTORS TRAINING PROGRAM now accepting appls for '96. Program is joint venture of Directors Guild of America & Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers. On satisfactory completion, trainees placed on Southern California Area Qualification list as Second Assistant Directors & eligible for guild membership. Applicants must be 21 yrs old & have legal right to work in US & bachelor's or associate's degree in any field or 2 yrs' full-time, paid, on-set employment in movie or TV prod. Deadline: Nov. 15. For appls write: Assistant Directors Training Program, 15503 Ventura Blvd., Encino, CA 91436-3140; <http://dga.org/trainingprogram/>.

BOSTON FILM/VIDEO FOUNDATION has internships avail. at the 21st annual New England Film & Video Festival. Positions in marketing/press and general administration. 1 position avail. in fall, 4 positions in spring (fest is in May 1996). Must be avail. to work 6-12 hrs. a wk. Contact: Shayna Casey, BF/VE, 1126 Boylston St., Boston, MA 02215; (617) 536-1540; fax: 3540; e-mail: bfvf@aol.com.

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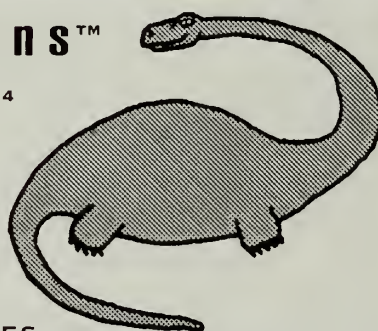
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COMPUTER ARTIST, UC SAN DIEGO:

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DIRECTOR sought by production company for 13-part PBS series. Distribution secured, funding underway. Nat'l TV and doc experience essential. Send resume and project list ASAP to: Pancor Productions, 5850 Pebble Oak, St. Louis, MO 63128-1412.

DIRECTOR/WRITER: Manhattan-based educational publishing co. producing training videotapes on variety of subjects seeks freelance directors for future projects. Prior experience need not include educational work, but must show ability to convey information in structured, entertaining way. Send background info, résumé & VHS demo reel to: HSSC, PO Box 466, Bowling Green Station, NY, NY 10274.

EDITOR'S ASST. sought by CT-based prize-winning editor for work on doc project concerning economic conversion in former USSR. Will teach D Vision nonlinear editing in exchange for pro-Bono assistance. Lots of room for ideas and creative freedom. Final prod. designed for public TV. Studio in Riverside, CT. Call Dick Roberts (203) 637-0445; fax: -0463.

OPEN SEARCH for occasional teaching in computer animation (Amiga) &/or animation drawing. Masters & college teaching experience preferred. Send résumé w/ tape or reel to: University of the Arts, Media Arts dept., 333 S. Broad St., Philadelphia, PA 19102.

TAOS TALKING PICTURES—media arts organization, film fest. & media literacy conference—is looking for director of development. Prefer candidate w/ MBA or extensive nonprofit arts management/ fundraising experience. Deadline: Ongoing.

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VIDEOS FOR A CHANGING WORLD is a new catalog of multicultural & social issue video docs produced & distributed by Turning Tide Productions. All videos relate to themes of building bridges across cultures and working for grassroots social change. Topics include: indigenous peoples, Central America, environmental issues, cross-cultural music & theater, oral history, youth & the military & labor, peace & anti-nuclear movements. Free. Contact: Turning Tide Productions, P.O. Box 864, Wendell, MA 01379. (800) 577-6414 or (508) 544-8313. Fax: (508) 544-7989.

RESOURCES • FUNDS

BOSTON FILM/VIDEO FOUNDATION seeks proposals for fiscal sponsorship from ind. producers. No deadline or genre restrictions. Reviewed on an ongoing basis. Contact BF/VF for brochure: Cherie Martin, 1126 Boylston St., Boston, MA 02215. Ph: (617)-536-1540; fax: 3540; e-mail: bfvf@aol.com.

CREATIVE PROJECT GRANTS: During this fiscal yr, 8 artists will receive grants for 30 hrs. of subsidized use of The Media Loft video/computer suite at rate of \$7.50/hr, in blocks of at least 5-hr. segments. Grants awarded on ongoing basis to artists doing creative, experimental, narrative, language-based, visual, or conceptual video &/or Amiga computer work. Political, promotional, doc & commercial projects are not w/in framework of the grant. To apply, send project description, résumé, approximate dates of proposed use & statement of level of video &/or computer experience to: The Media Loft, 727 Ave. of the Americas, NY, NY 10010: (212) 924-4893.

DCTV Artist-in-Residence is now accepting appls for \$500 worth of equipment access on ongoing basis w/in one year. When I funded project is complete, DCTV will review appls on file & select next project. Pref given to projects already underway. For appl., send SASE to: AIR, c/o DCTV, 87 Lafayette St., NY, NY 10013-4435.

HUMANITIES PROJECTS IN MEDIA administered by NEH has deadline of Sept. 1996 (specific day not yet avail.) for projects beginning after April 1, 1995. 20 copies of appl. required on or before deadline. For appl., guidelines, write: National Endowment for the Humanities, Division of Public Programs, Humanities Projects in Media, rm. 420, 1100 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20506; (202) 606-8278.

ILLINOIS ARTS COUNCIL (IAC) SPECIAL ASSISTANCE ARTS PROGRAM: Matching grants of up to \$1,500 avail. to IL artists for specific projects. Activities that may be funded are: registration fees & travel to attend conferences, seminars, or workshops; consultant fees for resolution of specific artistic problem; exhibits, performances, publications, screenings; materials, supplies, or ser-

vices. Funds awarded based on quality of work submitted & impact of proposed project on artist's professional development. Appls must be received at least 8 wks prior to project starting date. Degree students are ineligible. Call (312) 814-6750.

MEDIA ALLIANCE assists NYC artists & non-profit organizations in using state-of-art equipment, postprod. & prod. facilities at reduced rates. Contact: Media Alliance, c/o WNET, 356 W. 58th St., NY, NY 10019; (212) 560-2919.

PAUL ROBESON FUND FOR INDEPENDENT MEDIA supports "media artists whose work reflects & comments on the ills of our society while emphasizing the struggles to overcome them." Grants generally range \$3K-\$8K; max. award is \$15K. Deadline: Dec. 1. For appl. & guidelines, contact: Paul Robeson Fund, Funding Exchange, 666 Broadway, #500, NY, NY 10012; attn: Janis Strout.

POLLOCK-KRASNER FOUNDATION gives financial assistance to artists of recognizable merit & financial need working as mixed-media or installation artists. Grants awarded throughout yr., \$1,000-\$30,000. For guidelines, write: Pollock-Krasner Foundation, 725 Park Ave., NY, NY 10021.

THE PENNSYLVANIA HISTORICAL & MUSEUM COMMISSION invites applicants for 1996-97 Scholars in Residence Program. Provides support for full-time research & study at any Commission facility. Residencies are avail. for 4-12 consecutive wks. between May 1, 1996 & April 30, 1997, at \$1,200 per month. Program open to all conducting research on Penn. history. Deadline: Jan. 12, 1996. For more info & appl. materials, contact: Division of History, Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, Box 1026, Harrisburg, PA 17108; (717) 787-3034.

RESIDENCY PROGRAM at the Experimental Television Center (ETC) is accepting appls. Program offers opportunity to study the techniques of video image in intensive 5-day residency program. Artists work on variety of cutting edge & hi-tech equipment. Program open to experienced video artists. Appls must incl. résumé & project description, as well as videotape of recent work (if you are a first time applicant), either 3/4" or VHS formats, w/ SASE for return. Write: ETC Ltd., 109 Lower Fairfield Rd., Newark Valley, NY 13811; (607) 687-4341.

VISUAL STUDIES WORKSHOP MEDIA CENTER in Rochester, NY, accepts proposals on ongoing basis for its Media Access program. Artists, ind. producers & nonprofits awarded access at reduced rates, prod. & postprod. equipment for work on noncommercial projects. For appl., tour, or more info, call (716) 442-8676.

YADDO invites appls from film/video artists for residencies of 2 wks to 2 mos at multi-disciplinary artists' community in Saratoga Springs, NY. Deadline: Jan. 15 (for May-Feb.). Judgment based on artistic merit. For info write: The Admissions Committee, PO Box 395, Saratoga Springs, NY, 12866; (518) 584-0746.

The Foundation for Independent Video and Film (FIVE), the educational affiliate of the Association for Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF), supports a variety of programs and services for the independent media community, including publication of *The Independent*, operation of the Festival Bureau, seminars and workshops, and an information clearing house. None of this work would be possible without the generous support of the AIVF membership and the following organizations:

The Center for Arts Criticism, Consolidated Edison Company of New York, John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts, National Video Resources, New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, New York Community Trust, New York State Council on the Arts, Rockefeller Foundation, and Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc.

We also wish to thank the following individuals and organizational members:

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Access Media Art Center, New Haven, CT; ACS Network Productions, Washington, DC; Alternate Current, New York, NY; American Civil Liberties Union, New York, NY; Ann Arbor Community Access TV, Ann Arbor, MI; Ann Arbor Film Festival, Ann Arbor, MI; Appalshop, Whitesburg, KY; John Armstrong, Brooklyn, NY; The Asia Society, New York, NY; Assemblage, New York, NY; Athens Center for Film & Video, Athens, OH; AVFN International, Inc., Anchorage, AK; Bennu Productions, Yonkers, NY; Benton Foundation, Washington, DC; Black Planet Productions, New York, NY; Blackside, Inc., Boston, MA; Carnegie Institute, Pittsburgh, PA; Carved Image Productions, New York, NY; Center for Investigative Reporting, San Francisco, CA; Center for New Media, New York, NY; Chicago Video Project, Chicago, IL; Cituma LTDA Film and Video Productions, Bogota, Columbia; CNC, Washington, DC; Coe Film Associates, New York, NY; Colelli Productions, Columbus, OH; Columbia College, Chicago, IL; Command Communications, Rye Brook, NY; Common Voice Films, New York, NY; Community Television Network, Chicago, IL; Denver Film Society, Denver, CO; Duke University, Durham, NC; Dyke TV, New York, NY; Eclipse Communications, Springfield, MA; Edison-Black Maria Film Festival, Jersey City, NJ; Edwards Films, Eagle Bridge, NY; Eximus Company, Fort Lauderdale, FL; Fallout Shelter Productions, Mansfield, OH; The Film Crew, Woodland Hills, CA; Fox Chapel High School, Pittsburgh, PA; Great Lakes Film and Video, Milwaukee, WI; Idaho State University, Pocatello, ID; Image Film Video Center, Atlanta, GA; International Audiochrome, Rye, NY; International Film Seminars, New York, NY; ITVS, St. Paul, MN; The Jewish Museum, New York, NY; Komplex Studio Merdeka, Selangor, Malaysia; KPBS, San Diego, CA; Little City Foundation/Media Arts, Palatine, IL; Manhattan Neighborhood Network, New York, NY; Media Resource Centre, Adelaide, Australia; Mesilla Valley Film Society, Mesilla, NM; MHCC Communication Arts, Gresham, OR; Milestone Entertainment, Irving, TX; Miranda Smith Productions, Boulder, CO; Missoula Community Access, Missoula, MT; NAATA, San Francisco, CA; NAMAC, Oakland, CA; National Center for Film & Video Preservation, Los Angeles, CA; National Latino Community Center/KCET, Los Angeles, CA; National Video Resources, New York, NY; Neighborhood Film/Video Project, Philadelphia, PA; Neon, Inc., New York, NY; New Image Productions, Las Vegas, NV; New Liberty Productions, Philadelphia, PA; New York Institute of Technology, Old Westbury, NY; 911 Media Arts Center, Seattle, WA; Ohio Arts Council, Columbus, OH; One Eighty One Productions, New York, NY; Outside in July, New York, NY; Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA; Pittsburgh Filmmakers, Pittsburgh, PA; Post Modern Prod., Inc., Elsau, IL; Pro Videographers, Morton Grove, IL; Promontory Point Films, Albany, NY; Rainy States Film Festival, Seattle, WA; Merlina Rich, New York, NY; Paul Robeson Fund/Funding Exchange, New York, NY; Ross-Gafney, New York, NY; San Francisco Art Institute, San Francisco, CA; School of the Art Institute, Chicago, IL; Scribe Video Center, Philadelphia, PA; Southwest Alternate Media Project, Houston, TX; Squeaky Wheel, Buffalo, NY; State University of New York, Buffalo, NY; Strato Films, Hollywood, CA; Sundance Institute, Los Angeles, CA; SUNY/Buffalo-Dept. Media Studies, Buffalo, NY; Swiss Institute, New York, NY; Trinity Square Video, Toronto, Ontario; Tucson Community Cable Corp., Tucson, AZ; UCLA Film and Television Archive, Los Angeles, CA; University of Southern Florida, Tampa, FL; University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ; University of Hawaii, Honolulu, HI; UMAB/School of Social Work Media Center, Baltimore, MD; University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Lincoln, NE; University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, WI; Vancouver Film School, Vancouver, British Columbia; Veritas International, Elsau, IL; Video Data Bank, Chicago, IL; Video Pool, Winnipeg, Manitoba; View Video, New York, NY; West Hollywood Public Access, West Hollywood, CA; Wexner Center, Columbus, OH; Women Make Movies, New York, NY; WTTW/Chicago, Chicago, IL; York University Libraries, North York, Ontario.



BY PAMELA CALVERT

WELCOME NEW AIVF BOARD MEMBERS

The results of this summer's election are in, and we welcome new board member **Susan Wittenberg**, joining **Barbara Hammer** and **Robb Moss** who were re-elected, all for three-year terms. The proposed by-law change also passed, so our mail balloting system is now formalized.

FALL EVENTS

AIVF PARTIES IN TEXAS

In honor of *The Independent's* fifth Regional Spotlight issue, AIVF will be co-sponsoring events celebrating the accomplishments of independent producers and artists in Texas. Ruby Lerner, AIVF's executive director, will attend. If you're in the area, come on by! Events are planned for Dallas, Houston and Austin the week of November 6. Texas members will receive a mailing, or you can call the following contacts for more information:

Austin: Amie Petronis, (512) 495-4868

Dallas: Bart Weiss, (214) 948-7300

Houston: SWAMP, (713) 522-8592

WORKSHOP: SHAKING THE MONEY TREE: HOW TO GET GRANTS AND DONATIONS FOR FILM AND VIDEO

We're thrilled to announce a workshop on the all-important subject of fundraising led by **Morrie Warshawski**, author of the best-selling *Shaking the Money Tree* and editor of our all-new edition of *The Next Step: Distributing Independent Film and Video*. Topics include: how to design your film/video project from the onset to attract funders; the kind of mind-set a mediamaker must adopt in dealing with funding sources; cultivating and approaching funders up-front through telephone inquiries, letters and personal contacts; the importance of research; how to get money from individual donors through direct mail, parties,



and in-person requests; the elements of a perfect proposal package. This seminar is a must for any independent mediamaker preparing to enter the highly competitive field of public and private grantsmanship. Call (212) 807-1400 to register.

When: Tuesday, December 12, 6-10 pm

Where: AIVF Office

Price: \$50 members; \$60 others.

Limited enrollment; 50% advance deposit required.

MEET AND GREETs

These are opportunities for members to meet producers, distributors, funders, programmers, and others to exchange information in an informal atmosphere at the AIVF offices. Free; open to AIVF members only. Limited to 20 participants. RSVP required.

JANIS STROUT

Program Officer, Paul Robeson Fund for Independent Media, The Funding Exchange
Funder of activist and progressive film, video, and radio; annual deadline for applications December 1.

Thursday, November 2, 6:30 pm

RICHARD PEÑA

Director of Programming, Film Society of Lincoln Center

Curator for New Directors/New Films and the New York Film Festival

When: Monday, December 4, 6:30 pm

NEW OFFICE WARMING & HOLIDAY PARTY

To start the holiday season right, we're welcoming you to our new office with a BIG PARTY. Come eat, drink, and celebrate making it through the (first) Year of the Newt. RSVP (212) 807-1400

When: Monday,

Dec. 11, 7-9 pm

Transit information to the new office: We are at 304 Hudson Street, on the east side of the street between Spring and Vandam, four blocks south of Houston. (Hudson Street is the equivalent of 8th Avenue, on the west side of lower Manhattan.) The nearest subways are as follows: **C** or **E** to **Spring Street**, walk 2 blocks west to Hudson; **1** or **9** to **Houston Street**, walk 1 block west to Hudson and 4 blocks south to Spring.

"MANY TO MANY" MONTHLY MEMBER SALONS

This is a monthly opportunity for members to discuss work, meet other independents, share war stories, and connect with the AIVF community across the country. *Note:* since our copy deadline is two months before the meetings listed below, be sure to call the local organizers to confirm that there have been no last-minute changes.

Austin, TX:

Contact: Amie Petronis, (512) 495-4868

Boston, MA:

Contact: Susan Walsh (617) 965-8477

Dallas, TX:

When: 3rd Wednesday of each month, 7:00 pm

Where: Call for locations.

Contact: Bart Weiss, (214) 948-7300

Kansas City, MO:

Contact: Rossana Jeran, (816) 363-2249

Los Angeles, CA:

When: 1st Weds of each month, 7 pm

Where: Swing Cafe, 8543 Santa Monica Blvd.

Contact: Pat Branch, (310) 289-8612

Norwalk, CT:

Contact: Guy Perrotta (203) 831-8205

Portland, OR:

Contact: Grace Lee-Park, (503) 284-5085

Schenectady, NY:

When: 1st Weds of each month, 6:00 pm

Where: Media Play, Mohawk Mall

Contact: Mike Camoin, (518) 895-5269

St. Louis, MO:

When: 3rd Weds of each month, 7:00 pm

Where: Midtown Arts, 3207 Washington St.

Contact: Tom Booth, (314) 776-6270

Washington, DC:

When: November 15, 7:00 pm

Where: Washington Performing Arts, 400 7th St. NW (at D St.)

Contact: Sowande Tichawonna (202) 232-0353

MOVING FORWARD ...

Members are organizing AIVF salons all over the country! For contact information, or to talk to us about starting something in your area, call Leslie Fields at AIVF, (212) 807-1400.

MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD

AIVF's Director of Programs and Services Pamela Calvert has been invited to join the planning committee for the 1996 National Educational Media Network market and festival in Oakland. This is an extremely important venue for makers to show their work and do business, and we welcome the opportunity to represent the interests of our members in its planning stages.

If you have attended NEMN in the past (until last year it was known as the National Educational Film and Video Festival), please let Pam know your thoughts about your experience, what's being done right, where improvements can be made. All comments will be passed along to the market organizers, although we will preserve your anonymity if you request it.

Send all comments in writing to Pamela Calvert, AIVF, 304 Hudson St., 6th fl., New York, NY 10013.



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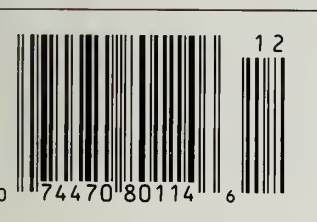
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Collage has been around since the beginning of this century, but the fair use provision in the U.S. Copyright law makes no special provision for this form of artistic expression and cultural critique. Craig Baldwin, a media artist who works with found footage, confronts the issue headlong in his new documentary *Sonic Outlaws*. In this issue, he and attorney Alan Korn discuss the limits of fair use.

BY MICHAEL FOX



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The Making of *The Gringo in Mañanaland*

Archival assemblage documentaries have their own special set of challenges, from racing time to locate intact nitrate films, to creating order from the chaos of thousands of film clips. In this feature, filmmaker DeeDee Halleck and archival researchers Penee Bender and Bob Summers talk about the making of *The Gringo in Mañanaland*, which took 12 years and a painstaking search through 7,000 archival films.

BY DEIRDRE BOYLE



COVER: U2's record company sued the band Negativland (pictured with their attorney) after the group released an album with an audio remix mocking U2. The case is examined in the film *Sonic Outlaws*, by Craig Baldwin, who's also a pirate of cultural detritus and found footage. Photo courtesy filmmaker.

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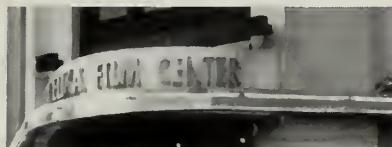
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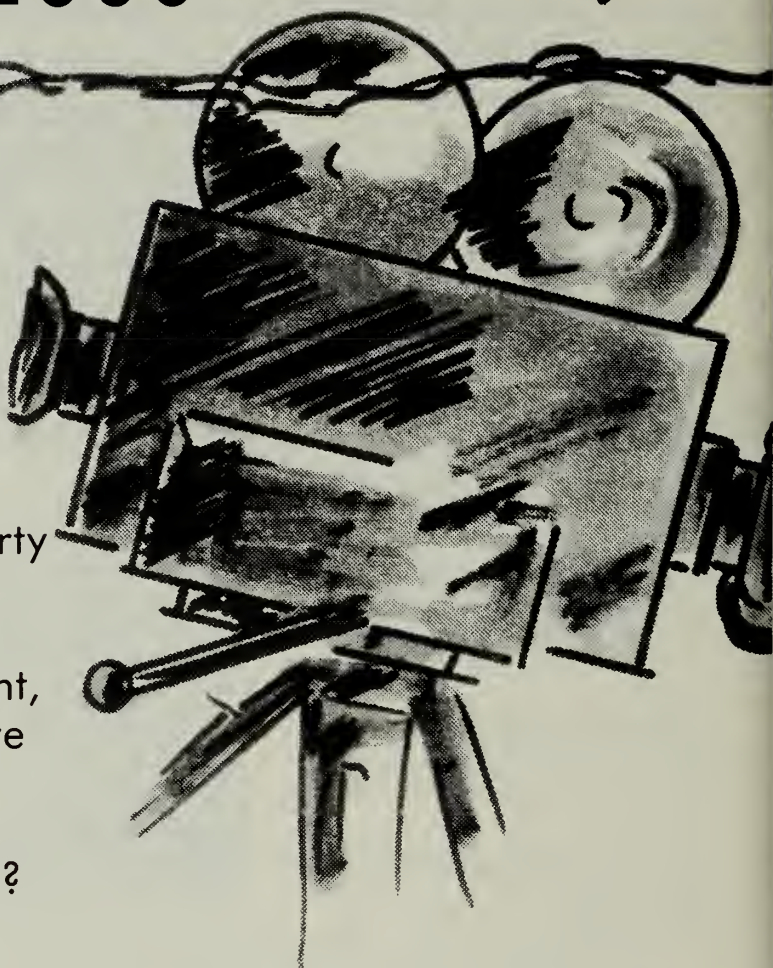
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Letters

I IS FOR INDEPENDENT

To the editor,

William L. Annett's thoughtful piece on Rocky Mountain moviemakers [Fire on the Mountain: Experimental Film in the Rockies, July 1995] was a delight from start to finish, but there is one correction I must make: Eye for an I Cinema is not, as the article states, affiliated with the Univeristy of Colorado at Boulder. Though our screenings are occasionally held at the school (a collaboration for which we've been most grateful), Eye for an I is an independent organization.

Having said that, Mr. Annett is to be commended for capturing the creative spirit which burns bright here in the Rockies. There's a fire on the mountain, indeed, and the flames are growing hotter and higher by the day.

Brock McDaniel
Producer, Eye for an I Cinema
Boulder, Colorado

ERRATUM:

The caption on p. 8 of the August/September *Independent* misidentifies *Tintinnabula* film maker Dawn Wiedemann.

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EDITED BY SUE YOUNG WILSON

No Sex Please

Congress and the Courts Threaten Censorship of Cable Access, Internet

ONE OF THE VICTIMS OF TODAY'S NEOCON POLITICAL climate promises to be freedom of speech, particularly as it applies to newish information technology like cable and the Internet. As this issue goes to press, fans of free speech are waiting with bated breath for word from Washington, where Congress is mulling over sweeping legislation for censorship of cable TV, the Internet, and commercial online services—and the Supreme Court is deciding whether it will hear an appeal to overturn a lower court ruling that allows cable operators to censor programs they think are indecent or might promote “unlawful conduct.”

Tucked away in the Senate's version (S. 652) of a massive telecommunications bill that recently passed both houses of Congress, is a variation on Senator James Exon (D-NE) and Slade Gorton (R-WA)'s 1995 Communication Decency Act, which the Senate passed in June. A TV *Guide*-style synopsis might run, “Watch as Congress makes constitutionally protected speech criminal when it's squeezed through a computer modem or a fiber-optic link. Parental discretion now unnecessary.”

As summarized by MeDIA Consortium, a D.C.-based watchdog group of which AIVF is a founding member, the bill would punish anyone who “knowingly makes, creates, or solicits” any obscene “comment, request, proposal, image, or other communication” by means of a “telecommunications device”—or *permits* such a communication. (This last would presumably apply to on-line services like CompuServe and to e-mail.) The bill would also make it illegal to knowingly transmit indecent material to a minor or “knowingly permit any telecommunications facility under such a person's control” to be so used. According to Andrew Blau, director of the communications policy project at the D.C.-based Benton Foundation, the legislation shows a “fundamental lack of understanding of how the Internet works” and would be unenforceable—which is not to say Congress won't enact it.

Meanwhile—on decency wars' living-room front—the Senate bill requires cable TV operators to scramble programs “unsuitable for chil-



Nothing to smile about: Senator James Exon (D-NE) wants to ban “indecent” communication via the Internet and online services.

Courtesy office of Senator Exon

dren” at a subscriber's request, and requires scrambling of adult-pay-per-view programs *unless* a subscriber requests it. Cable operators are given the right to block public, educational, government, and leased access programs that include obscenity or “indecentcy.” The bill also requires that a so-called “V-chip” be included in TV sets to allow parents to block out programs rated as violent. It would force cable programmers and broadcasters to establish such ratings; if they did not, a five-person “Television Rating Committee” created by the President would do so.

The House of Representatives version of the bill does offer a certain balancing sanity. It too includes a “V-chip” requirement for TV sets; but its provisions for censorship of the Internet and other on-line services are much lighter. In fact, an Internet Freedom and Family Empowerment amendment, offered by Reps. Christopher Cox (R-CA) and Ron Wyden (D-OR) and passed by the House in August by a vote of 421 to 4, recog-

nizes the uniqueness of on-line information traffic and would prohibit the FCC from regulating it. It would also absolve system operators and services from liability if they take good faith measures to screen obscene or harassing speech or provide parental screening software. (However, the House version does contain penalties for system operators who knowingly transmit indecent material to minors.)

Congress has yet to name the date when it will try to reconcile the two versions of the telecommunications bill, but anyone concerned with freedom of speech should be watching to see how draconian the final language turns out.

That will set the stakes for when Congress votes whether or not to make the bill law.

MEANWHILE, A D.C. COURT HAS RULED THAT A section of the 1992 Cable Act allowing cable operators to censor public access programs that contain “obscene or sexually explicit” material, or any that “solicit[s] or promot[es] unlawful conduct,” does *not* violate the First Amendment.

A little background is necessary on this one. Congress passed the Cable Act primarily as an attempt to slow the industry's rate increases, which had outpaced inflation by threefold since its 1984 deregulation. Senator Jesse Helms (R-NC) introduced the censorship amendment at the last minute, and it was enacted without any legislative hearing and only a brief discussion of “lewd” access programming based entirely on anecdotal hearsay from a handful of letters from Senate constituents. (These anecdotes, in fact, referred to shows on leased access and not public access at all.)

A three-judge panel of the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals initially found that the act

violated the First Amendment; but then the full court overturned that decision and ruled that cable operators *could* decide to censor.

According to Barry Forbes, executive director of the Alliance for Community Media, the court's decision is "an unmitigated disaster to Americans who believe they have a right to discuss our laws . . . [if] mere discussion of public policy may be interpreted by the cable operators as 'promoting unlawful activity.'" Several media watchdog groups, including the Alliance for Community Media and the Alliance for Communications Democracy, have asked the Supreme Court to review the case. The court is expected to announce by the end of October (after press time) whether it will do so.

DIRK KONING

WITH ADDITIONAL REPORTING BY SUE YOUNG WILSON

Dirk Koning chairs the editorial board of the newsletter Community Media Review. He directs the Community Media Center in Grand Rapids, Michigan and is a founding board member of the Alliance for Communications Democracy. He speaks internationally on media democracy, access, and literacy issues.

New Alternative Networks Hungry for Content

As the number and variety of cable channels continue to grow, so do opportunities for independent filmmakers. Two new, innovative cable networks have recently begun broadcasting from the West Coast, and both are looking for original work and story ideas.

The Student Film Network (SFN), launched in the greater Los Angeles area in February on two cable networks, showcases work under 30 minutes in length from emerging filmmakers. Its producers are working on national distribution and 24-hour programming, which they hope to secure in the next six months.

The network got its start in early 1993, when the Directors Guild of America, which was suffering from a reputation for stuffiness, began looking for ways to woo younger filmmakers. Gilbert Cates, twice president of the guild and currently dean of the University of California-Los Angeles School of Theater, Film, and Television, met with one Jonathan Traynham, a young almost-filmmaker (he was wait-listed at UCLA) who, along with some other L.A.-based, twentysomething entrepreneurs, believed that TV audiences were starting to crave more cutting-edge, independent content, and that the time was ripe to create a national network featuring new work by young filmmakers. Cates threw in his support and assur-

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STUDENT FILM NETWORK

This ain't no Seven-Eleven: *Clerks* star Brian O'Halloran hosts the LA-based Student Film Network, which, along with Planet Central Television, gives a new TV outlet to young filmmakers.

Courtesy SFN and Planet Central

ance of a steady supply of student work from UCLA.

The group got financial backing from a handful of investors, whom it declines to name, as well as advertising and equipment from companies such as Eastman Kodak, Sony, and Panavision that market to filmmakers.

Traynham, now president and executive producer of SFN, hopes the network will help redress the lack of visibility of work, especially shorts, by new and avant-garde filmmakers. "[SFN] is like an MTV for movies," he says. "You can tune in anytime, and since the programs are short, you only have to watch five or ten minutes to be able to see a complete work." He asserts that it might even revolutionize the way film careers are made, with agents and other industry heavies tuning in to view and take their pick. "It could change the way people become directors," he says. "Filmmakers won't have to do the festival circuit, or even necessarily go to film school."

Hosted by Brian O'Halloran, star of last year's indie hit *Clerks*, the program opens with a series of clips from student films. It also features interviews taped during various indie-relevant award shows like the Independent Spirit Awards and the Student Academy Awards, with industry heavies like producers Stephen Tisch and Duncan Kenworthy and actors Milton Berle, Sid Caesar, Anthony Hopkins, and Shirley MacLaine.

So far, the majority of SFN's archives have come from film schools in the L.A. area. Now that the producers hope to broadcast nationally, they are actively expanding their film acquisitions.

Traynham says that they are looking for variety in subject matter, and films do not have to be recent or premiere on the network. Interested makers of short films should send a copy on VHS tape (videos cannot be returned), with a biography and a \$10 submission fee, to the attention of the Advisory Committee, Student Film Network, 12140 Olympic Boulevard #22, Los Angeles, CA, 90064; (310) 207-1667; fax: (310) 207-9650. All films are reviewed. No payment for films aired.

PLANET CENTRAL, THE OTHER NEW LOS Angeles-based cable network, offers news, entertainment, and educational programming with an alternative spin. Broadcasting since May and currently reaching seven million viewers on TCI's tv! Network, Planet Central airs two hours a week and features weekly programs like *World Youth News*, a global report for and by young people on international environmental, social, cultural, and political issues. The network plans to increase air time to six to 12 hours a day by 1997 and hopes to be a 24-hour service by 1998.

Planet Central was the brainchild of Jay Levin, previously the founder, in 1978, of the alternative newspaper the *L.A. Weekly*. Levin envisioned a new cable network that would report on issues neglected or spun only conventionally by the Big Three networks. In 1991, he brought together a group of progressive filmmakers and media people—including indie filmmakers Sam Bauman and DeeDee Halleck and Gavin MacFadyen, lead producer of *World in Action*, the U.K.'s version of *60 Minutes*—to form a steering committee. Ad sales

got Planet Central, which has regular commercial breaks, into orbit and are keeping it aloft.

According to Levin, the network is geared to all ages and cuts across a "large demographic and geographic slice." The programs, however, seem clearly designed to appeal to twentysomethings and younger. Colorful graphics, young hosts, and a heavy educational element add to the feeling that Planet Central could be aired in high schools around the country. It's MTV crossed with *Sesame Street* for the teens of the nineties: professional-quality programs slickly highlighting topics in entertainment, computers, sports, and news.

A recent segment called *Electric Coffee* featured hip but obscure bands, like female fiddler Lill Haydn and her Irish-influenced backup rockers, and young artists and poets from the goatee-sporting mold. An Ethan Hawke look-alike hosted interviews with youthful activists, including a pair of Internet-cruising environmentalists dubbed Earth Spirit On-line. In a moralizing interlude, a leather-clad tough guy named Thrasher advised the audience that it's cool to respect the law and stay out of trouble.

The three teenaged anchors of *World Youth News* among them muster two females, an African American, and a Japanese American. Their young international correspondents report on the environmental situation in Kenya, the rap scene and its role in organizing and defusing youth in Cape Town, unemployment among teens and young adults in London, and the new sport of sky surfing, or maneuvering during free-fall from a plane on a kind of aerial snowboard.

Levin says programs with names like *Eco Sports* (fly fishing without hooks, the environmental benefits of hang gliding) are not intended to relentlessly pound their audience with "issues." Rather, he wants to present "a whole different value system. This kind of coverage should be a normative environment. People should watch these programs and ask why other networks aren't covering things this way."

Planet Central is looking for ideas and stories for its newest program, *Not in the News*, a weekly feature on global economic and political developments, human rights, the environment, labor and social issues, women's issues, and new ideas in science, technology, and education. Story ideas and video footage should be sent to Planet Central, c/o World TV, 6611 Santa Monica Blvd., Los Angeles, CA. 90038; (213) 871-9153; fax: 469-2193. Videomakers are paid for segments aired.

INGALISA SCHROBSDORFF

Ingelisa Schrobsdorff is a freelance writer pursuing an M.A. in cinema studies at New York University.

Makeover for Chicago's Center for New TV

The starvation diet that Congress plans for publicly funded art in America will be especially hard on nonprofit media arts centers, which may offer new and struggling artists their only affordable access to equipment, training, and interaction with their peers. But at least one center is responding with more than a resigned belt-tightening. The former Center for New Television (CNTV) in Chicago, known for 15 years as an energizing force in the city's media scene, is stirring itself from a recent slump in its reputation and programming to face the coming famine with a new name, a reaffirmation of its mission, and some creative plans for new sources of support.

The Editing Center, as it was originally called (the name was changed to the Center for New Television in 1980), was founded in 1978 by a group of Chicago independent videomakers (among them Tom Weinberg, producer of the recent PBS documentary series *The 90's*) to provide other local artists with low-cost access to equipment. Soon the center had added how-to classes and seminars on aesthetics, regular screenings by local videomakers like Annette Barbier and Miroslav Regala and national ones like Pierre Marton and Janice Tanaka, and had become widely known. In 1985 it received one of AIVE's first Indie awards. For a dozen years, it remained a stable and acclaimed resource for Chicago indie video.

In the early nineties, however, interest in the center waned. Technology was evolving—and prices rising—at such a rate that the center was unable to keep up with the state of the art. Local universities and colleges were providing more and better equipment within their media programs. Chicago cable providers began to offer free production classes and a broadcast venue for new work. The center's own founding videomakers moved on. For four years the key position of program director was filled only by part-timers.

But the recent talk in Washington of the possible axing of the National Endowment for the Arts and other crucial sources of funding, as well as the sense of ennui at the center itself, have spurred its board of directors into action. They have announced that they plan to revitalize the center's original mission of serving local independent videomakers, but in greater numbers and new ways adapted to a difficult time ahead.

To herald the changes, this past fall CNTV's name was changed to the Center for Communication Resources. According to executive director Nalani McClendon, who was hired last year to spearhead the plans, "No one knew

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Hip-hop choreographer Rennie Harris recently appeared at Chicago's newly-rechristened Center for Communication Resources.

Courtesy DanceAfrica/Chicago

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what [the old name] meant anymore. The community couldn't relate to it, and [it] did not reflect what the organization is presently doing or what it plans to do."

A full-time program director, Jeanne Kracher, former executive director of the national, annual Women in the Director's Chair Festival, has also been hired to coordinate classes and revive screenings and discussions. She plans a new focus, she says, on "new technologies and the presentation of the work produced by those technologies." While continuing to offer off-line editing access, the center will teach and perhaps acquire newer technologies like nonlinear editing and QuickTime movies. (A seldom-used 3/4" SP on-line suite was recently dismantled and sold.) Topics of the new classes, advertised in a redesigned version of the center's newsletter, range from 1/2" video editing to CD-ROMs to a workshop for nonprofits on using the Internet. Enrollment is up.

Kracher says she also plans more discussion-oriented video screenings that promote interaction between audience and makers and focus on content as much as form. Recent screenings have included a preview of the documentary Arthur Dong's *Outrage '69* and, as part of the DanceAfrica/Chicago 1995 series, hip-hop videos and lecture by choreographer Rennie Harris. Discussion following both screenings was lively, Kracher says.

The center's greatest self-appointed challenge, according to CCR board president Peter Benkendorf, is to expand its constituency. "The size of the audience that we served is miniscule," he says, "compared to the potential audience that

is out there." The center has adopted two new initiatives that they hope will widen its appeal. The first, a programming partnership with other community nonprofit organizations, has already completed several projects, including a six-week intensive production seminar for young Chinese, Vietnamese, and Cambodians from the Chinese Mutual Aid Association who made a documentary on their North Side neighborhood and a collaboration with Family Matters, a program for teenage girls, and Women in the Director's Chair in which the girls produced a video diary under the direction of local video artist Leah Gilliam. For the second initiative, the center proposes to help other nonprofits determine their specific communication needs, whether for a public service announcement or a newsletter, and match them with a communications professional to do the project.

The center is also the only organization committed to continuing the Midwest Regional Fellowship Program, one of several that lost their NEA funding last year due to budget cuts.

These programs will, of course, cost money at a time when, McClendon asserts, "not only is public sector funding being cut, but availability of private sector monies is also dropping." The center's workshops, equipment and editing rentals, and screenings have always brought in some money, but never enough. The board and staff recently reviewed the funding picture. "We found that we were depending [entirely] on the NEA and the Illinois Arts Council grants," Benkendorf says. "Almost no other funding venues were pursued. There were more funders out there who didn't know us, than who did." But he says he is encouraged by the funding community's response to the center's new direction. The Chicago-based Polk Brother Foundation has provided seed money for the matchmaking program, and the MacArthur Foundation is interested in supporting video access partnership programs, although it has so far made no firm commitment.

According to McClendon, this expansion of services and outreach to other community-based nonprofits and new sources of funding is something all media arts organizations must do to survive in these troubled times. She and the board of the Center for Communications Resources hope the latter will prove an example of success—or at least survival—for others to follow.

H.D. MOTYL

H.D. Motyl is a film- and videomaker living in Chicago. His latest work, Milk & Cookies, is the first in a planned series of children's videos about how things are made.

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▼
MATTHEW HARRISON
director

RHYTHM THIEF

BY MICHELE SHAPIRO

Robert Breer at Cooper Union School of Art and was influenced by Stan Brakhage. "Everything I do is about form," comments the tanned, goateed director. Harrison's experimental angles, contrast, and unusual visual effects helped set *Rhythm Thief* apart from other no-budget fare and earned him a Jury Prize earlier this year at Sundance.

Rhythm Thief started out in 1993 as "a two-page idea that I wrote quickly," Harrison recalls. "I wanted to make a film as soon as possible after my first feature [*Spare Me*]. I didn't want to get caught up in the development process.... I had my own plan for financing, but it was taking too long. I had the actor I wanted [*Last Exit to Brooklyn's* Jason Andrews] and a building to shoot in, so I just went for it."

Both cast and crew worked for deferred pay, and the conditions weren't ideal. "The building we shot in was so old, we blew the fuses a few times," Harrison recalls, "and sometimes when we'd come in there'd be blood stains on the wall." But production actually wrapped a day early and \$1,000 under budget.



Rhythm Thief director Matthew Harrison (l.) with cinematographer Howard Krupa. Photo: Andreas Rentsch, courtesy Film Crash

THE NEXT TIME MAYOR RUDY GIULIANI IS LOOKING for a savvy young independent to produce a public service campaign for New York City, odds are he won't call Matthew Harrison—especially if he happened to catch *Rhythm Thief* during its run at New York's Film Forum in November.

Produced in a head-spinning 11 days for just \$11,000, the film, about a Lower East Side music bootlegger named Simon who can't get his life on the eight-track, paints a gritty, black-and-white portrait of back streets few would dare wander. But the area is dear to Harrison, a born-and-bred New Yorker who lived for years across the street from Katz's Deli.

The son of British parents—both fine artists—Harrison studied experimental filmmaking with

Since Sundance, Harrison quit his job as a graphic designer for American Express and now divides his time between L.A., where he's working as a director-for-hire on the \$3-million action pic *Code 99*, and New York, where he's trying to get a new film off the ground: *Kicked in the Head*, a comedy about a kid who falls in love with a stewardess, which Martin Scorsese is interested in executive producing. He also has eight scripts in various stages of completion and is repped by ICM on both coasts.

Harrison hopes he has outgrown the "well under \$1 million" phase of his career. For *Kicked in the Head* he's seeking investments of \$1-3 million. The fine artist in him, however, is still devoted to

making independent films and producing them under the Film Crash moniker. Harrison formed the umbrella organization with 11 other producers, writers, and directors long before *Rhythm Thief* became the dark horse of the festival circuit. Film Crash has no physical office space. "Our motto is zero overhead," says Harrison. But the organization's members all share a common goal: to make films. "We call them 'prune films,'" he jokes, "because they keep us regular."

Rhythm Thief: Jonathan Starch, 185 W Houston St. #3G, New York NY 10014; (212) 645-1970; FilmCrash1@aol.com

Michele Shapiro is film editor of Time Out New York.

▼
KATE KIRTZ & NELL LUNDY
co-producers

JANE: AN ABORTION SERVICE

BY DAVID BARKER

JANE: AN ABORTION SERVICE IS AN HOUR-LONG documentary about Jane, a Chicago-based women's health collective that, without formal training, performed more than 12,000 safe, illegal abortions between 1969 and 1973. Funded largely by the Independent Television Service (ITVS), coproducers Kate Kirtz and Nell Lundy worked for more than three years on this fascinating oral history told by the women who ran or were served by the group.

Making *Jane* took Kirtz and Lundy so long in part because many of the women whose stories comprise the video had never before consented to speak publicly about their experiences. "Everyone said 'They'll never talk to you, they don't trust anyone, people have been approaching them for years,'" remembers Kirtz, "and when ITVS funded us we had contacted only one Jane member and been turned down." Thus began the slow process of gaining the trust of a few members through extensive letters, phone calls, and meetings. No one they met turned them down, and when word slowly got through the Jane grapevine, women even began contacting the filmmakers.

Kirtz, then 24, and Lundy, then 28, persuaded many of the women to be interviewed by explaining their belief in reconstructing the rad-



Kate Kirtz (l.) and Nell Lundy, co-producers of *Jane: An Abortion Service*. Photo: François Robert, courtesy Juicy Productions

ical history that had been lost between their generation and that of their mothers. "We told the Janes that as young people we had lost any sense of our feminist history," Kirtz explains. "We [said] if we did a tape about the power they had taken, a lot of people could learn from it, that politically we are in such a time of backlash that it's really important to remember what we can do both about abortion and other issues." Lundy agrees that although the primary interest of the video is for anyone concerned about reproductive rights, the implications exceed any one issue: "Growing up after Watergate and during Reagan, I didn't have many good contemporary examples of what women could do to shape society, and the women of Jane were mostly in their mid to late 20's, with no formal training, working with no pay. Just knowing something like this can happen is very empowering."

In 1965, Jane's founder, Heather Booth, was an undergrad with a civil-rights activist background and contacts among some safe, illegal abortionists. Her referral service expanded to meet growing demand; by 1968 Jane had become a sophisticated system of women's outreach programs. Members learned to perform abortions themselves, eventually servicing more than 300 women a month—"matrons and teenagers, radicals and policemen's wives." Seven key members were arrested in May 1972, 10 months before the passage of *Roe v. Wade*.

Jane has already screened at the New York Video Festival and the American Film Institute Festival. In keeping with their original intentions, Kirtz and Lundy are interested in reaching young people "who are trying to figure out what kind of impact they can have on the world," explains Lundy. The pair have received a small grant from the Robeson Foundation to

help subsidize tapes for community groups and grassroots organizations and plan to self-distribute the video for the time being, so they can maintain personal contact with the people screening it.

Jane: An Abortion Service, Juicy Prod., Inc., Box 268581, Chicago, IL 60626.

David Barker is a filmmaker, producer, and partner in Drift Releasing, an independent distribution company.

▼ JUAN MANDELBAUM *documentarian* **RINGL & PIT**

BY JULIE LEVINSON

LIKE THE SUBJECTS OF HIS LATEST FILM, ARGENTINE-born Juan Mandelbaum is a citizen of the world. Mandelbaum left his homeland for the United States in 1976, the year of the military coup. Although he has lived in the States ever since, Mandelbaum's films have taken him—and his audiences—all over the globe.

Mandelbaum named his Boston-based production company Geovision in order to reflect his commitment to multicultural, multilingual documentaries. Founded in 1989, Geovision provides Mandelbaum with an infrastructure for his independent work, and the corporate projects the company takes on help subsidize his labors of love. As he explains it, "By providing me with access to equipment, Geovision allows me to

produce my independent projects for around one quarter of the usual cost." This, coupled with his abundant energy, explains Mandelbaum's prolific film output. His primary focus for the past three years has been *Ringl and Pit*, an hour-long documentary that explores the lives and times of Grete Stern, now age 91, and Ellen Auerbach, 89. The pair's childhood nicknames—Ringl and Pit—became the name of the photography studio they established in Berlin in 1929. Both women had turned their backs on their provincial upbringings to join in the artistic and social ferment centered around the Bauhaus. Their pictures from the period are whimsical comments on the culture of consumption and the commodification of women during the Weimar era.

With the rise of the Nazis, Auerbach and Stern fled Germany, eventually settling in New York and Buenos Aires respectively. Although they never collaborated again, both continued their artistic endeavors, recently rediscovered by museums and the press. But what sets Mandelbaum's film apart from these tributes is its focus on the durability of a friendship that spanned continents, decades, and divergent lives.

Since 1992, Mandelbaum has also produced four short artist profiles. His films on Brazilian singer Caetano Veloso and Argentine artist Lilita Porter in particular reveal his knack for witty, intimate portraiture. During this same period, he was hired to produce two segments of *Americas*, PBS's multi-part look at Latin America, and shot two more in a series of spots for *Sesame Street* on kids at play around the globe.

Commenting on his various projects, Mandelbaum says, "The advantage of working independently is that you don't have to please different constituencies. On *Ringl and Pit*, I had a tenth of the resources than at PBS but ten times more time. I was able to put the film aside for several months and come back with a fresh eye. And I released it only when I thought it was done."

While engaged in self-distributing *Ringl and Pit*, Mandelbaum is also at work on a new independent project, *Looking at An-Other*, a wry



Ringl and Pit's Juan Mandelbaum. Courtesy: Geovision

commentary on how cultural identity gets exported and distorted. The film will combine mainstream media footage with Mandelbaum's musings on the vagaries of cultural apprehension. As an antidote to what he decries as "the Disney view of the world," the film promises to be another geovisionary piece of his ongoing film opus.

Mandelbaum's films are available from Geovision, 1168 Commonwealth Ave., 3rd fl, Boston, MA 02134; (617) 739-0305. *Ringl and Pit* will play as part of the New Documentaries series at the Museum of Modern Art in New York on January 25.

Julie Levinson is professor of film at Babson College and producer/curator of the Mixed Signals cable series for the New England Foundation for the Arts. She is working on a book on the success myth in American film.

JAY J. KOH director

MY BROWN EYES

BY TOM KEOGH

JAY J. KOH IS THE SORT OF INTERVIEWEE WHO GIVES a little reflexive laugh following everything he says. It's a nervous but endearing tic that speaks to the rawness of Koh's first taste of being taken seriously as a filmmaker—though he wants nothing more and has achieved nothing less through his deeply moving, 17-minute debut work, *My Brown Eyes*.

Koh's heartfelt, untutored responses to a journalist's questions resonate with the emotional clarity of his young hero in the autobiographical *My Brown Eyes*. The film concerns a day in the life of Jhune (Grant Sohn), a 10-year-old Korean immigrant who speaks no English and is woefully isolated from his working parents and from taunting classmates at a Seattle school. Crushing loneliness at home and humiliated on the playground, Jhune retreats into a patterned life of preparing breakfast for his exhausted mom and dad, spraying oil on a squeaky door several times a day, and finding small joys in egg sandwiches and new shoes.

For the most part, Koh says, *My Brown Eyes* is his own story. "I moved with my parents from Korea to Cerritos, California, in 1979," says Koh. "I was ten, and I spent half my days at school with

an English-language tutor and the other half with kids. I remember my mom working sixteen-hour days at a sweatshop. I became a bully for a couple of years just to get respect."

The Koh family moved to Seattle in 1980, where Jay eventually graduated from the University of Washington and spent a year at a special program offered by the Vancouver Film School. "I didn't want to invest the money to stay longer at a film school," Koh says. "Vancouver was short and sweet, very technical, very competitive."

In lieu of the extended education, Koh decided to begin his apprenticeship writing and directing *My Brown Eyes*. The project (with print costs) came to \$15,000, but was a model of efficiency; Koh cut the movie in two days using the off-line, Lightworks digital editing process. Koh also proved he can make a movie strong on production values but stronger on heart. Jhune's silence, for example, gave Koh the opportunity to tell a tight, visual story in a world soaked in pleasing crayon colors, accomplishing more in 17 minutes than many first-time directors do at feature length.

Since going out in the summer of 1994, the film has been popular on the festival circuit, and while Koh enjoys the praise, he's painfully aware he has

Director Jay Koh checks the exposure of *My Brown Eyes* actor Grant Sohn. Courtesy filmmaker



to make a feature to get further along in the industry. Toward that end, he's polishing a script called *Ice Cream Story*, which he was going to sell but decided instead would make a good directing debut, reflecting the human values that matter to

him.

"I don't ever want to make a film that I can't show my mother," Koh says, laughing. "So I'm trying not to do anything that would take away from my goals right now."

Brown Eyes: Motion Pictures, 10606 Roosevelt Way, N.E., Seattle WA 98125; (206) 559-3383.

Tom Keogh writes about film for Seattle Weekly and Eastsideweek.

BRIDGETT DAVIS director

NAKED ACTS

BY CYLENA SIMONDS

"THE ERA OF THE URBAN HOOD FILM IS ENDING," declares Bridgett Davis. "It's had a five-year reign. In its place we'll find the personal film. These won't be films that look at 'the Black experience' in a stereotypical way, but ones that stretch to portray a human condition, informed by cultural specificity."

"I believe it will be Black women who will be at the forefront of that trend, because women tend to be more comfortable with personal stories."

Davis is fully intent on being part of that shift. This year she completed her first project as writer/director/producer, *Naked Acts*, a feature dramatizing a young African American woman's struggle with body image. After losing weight to attain an "ideal" body, the film's protagonist continues to wrestle with her desire to be attractive and to be respected for her talent as an actress. Widely accessible to women of all races and at the same time specific to the experiences of African American women, *Naked Acts* explores the inner and outer struggles women confront over physical beauty.

Davis came to filmmaking via writing. She was a journalist for the *Atlanta Journal and Constitution* and the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, and continues to write freelance while also working as a high school literacy instructor. In 1991 Davis tried a screenwriting class at New York University, and it fit like a glove. Screenwriting, she found, was similar to journalism in that both disciplines require extensive research and rewrites (she went through 14 drafts for *Naked Acts*).

When making the leap to a feature script,

Bridgett Davis, director of *Naked Acts*.

Courtesy filmmaker



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Davis's biggest task was "developing her visual muscle." The challenge, she says, was "how to translate words into visual images, so that what was in my head would be what appeared on the screen." Davis began this process by taking Polaroids of the scenes and worked closely with her mentor and *Naked Acts* cinematographer Herman Lew.

To learn production, she turned to New York City's nonprofit media arts centers, rather than enrolling in film school, and produced two shorts through Third World Newsreel: *Last Wish* (1992), about an escaped black female prisoner who meets a white diner owner; and an experimental video called *Creative Detours* (1992).

For *Naked Acts*, produced for "under \$1 million," Davis used her savings as seed money, then turned to friends, family, and small businesses for investments of \$500 to \$5,000. While soliciting funds, Davis met African American attorney Henri E. Norris, who was so compelled by the project that she volunteered to be execu-

tive producer and contributed two-thirds of the production costs.

Other chance meetings were equally fortuitous. Davis met her lead actress, Jake-ann Jones, in a writing workshop called Dark Body Collective. At a conference she met artist Renee Cox, whose photographic work addresses the representation of Black women's bodies; Cox wound up in a supporting role playing a character similar to herself.

With this kind of collaborative community, it's no wonder Davis calls her production company Kindred Spirits. Its projects help add a distinctly African American woman's perspective to independent film and Black genres in particular.

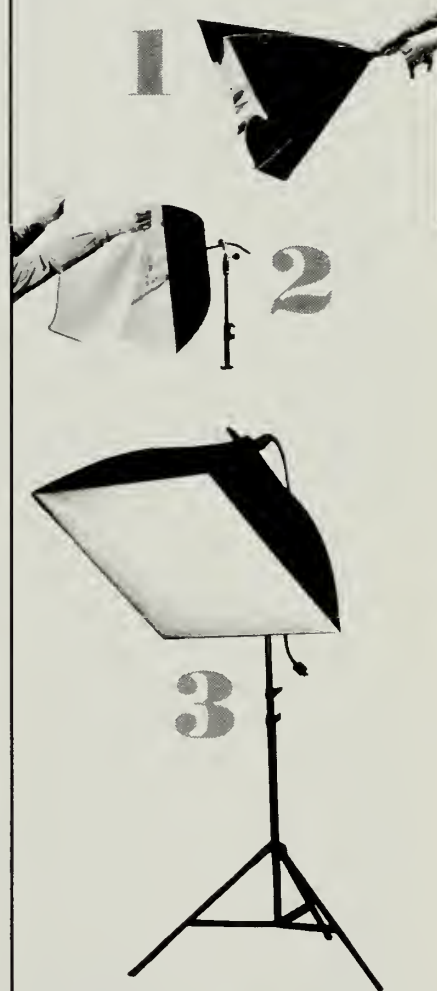
Naked Acts: Kindred Spirit Productions, 322 W. 14th St., #3C, NY, NY 10014; (212) 802-7247; fax: 727-1011.

Cylena Simonds is a freelance video programmer and writer based in New York City.

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Documentarians Spencer Nakasako (r.) and Sokly Ny (a.k.a. *Don Bonus*).

Photo: Pamela Gentile, courtesy videomakers



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**SPENCER NAKASAKO &
SOKLY NY**
documentarians
a.k.a. DON BONUS

BY JERRY WHITE

"THE CAMERA BECAME PART OF HIS WARDROBE," says filmmaker Spencer Nakasako. That's how his young collaborator, Sokly Ny, then a 17-year-old Cambodian immigrant living in San Francisco, managed to integrate a video camera into his everyday life. The result was *a.k.a. Don Bonus*, a remarkable 55-minute video diary that follows Ny (who also goes by the name Don Bonus) during senior year in high school, detailing his difficulties with classes, his year-end tests, and his struggles growing up in San Francisco's housing projects.

Recently shown at the prestigious New York Video Festival, the project was produced by the National Asian American Telecommunications Association (NAATA), with some money from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

a.k.a. Don Bonus intersperses documentary

scenes of daily life in the high school hallways and after-school hangouts with shots of Ny directly addressing the camera, talking about what's going on in his life. The video quietly but powerfully evokes the regimentation that determines so many futures, as in the shots of anxious adolescents assembled for a standardized test that determines graduation. Outside of school, Ny powerfully sums up the frustration of survival in the projects in a scene where he tries to summon the police after someone threw rocks through his window. He is bounced from operators to answering machines, but is unable to break through to any human being willing to help.

Ny came to videomaking through the Vietnamese Youth Development Center, which holds video workshops for kids and assigns a working professional to guide the projects. The first time Spencer Nakasako agreed to oversee a workshop was in the summer of 1991, when Ny was one of the new students. "What was interesting to me was the material that [the kids] were coming back with unsupervised," says Nakasako (whose own documentary credits include the *Frontline* documentary *School Colors*, 1993/94; as well as writing and co-directing Wayne Wang's *Life Is Cheap, But Toilet Paper Is Expensive*, 1991). It quickly became apparent to Nakasako that turning the kids loose with as little guidance as possible was the best way to go. Ny recalled how Nakasako

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agreed never to be around when the teenager was shooting, so as not to influence what was or wasn't considered "interesting."

Nakasako estimates Ny's shooting ratio was about 70:1. As a result, the teenager quickly became bogged down when it came time to edit. "I thought I should be out with my girlfriend or something," rather than logging 70 hours of video, Ny recalls. It was hard logic for Nakasako to argue with, so they agreed to let the more seasoned filmmaker take over the nuts-and-bolts of editing, while Ny would regularly come in to help resolve matters of structure.

Ny claims that while making the video, "I wasn't thinking about the audience at all; I was too young." Nonetheless, he and Nakasako agree the film is aimed at youth. Their original cut was 80 minutes, but high schoolers were bored by it. So they cut it down to 50 minutes; at this length, kids were able to sustain a level of enthusiasm—to say the least. During one screening, the students were so happy to see such immediately resonant images they filled the high school auditorium with hoots and hollers at the screen. Nakasako chuckles, satisfied. "It was interactive!"

a.k.a. Don Bonus: NAATA, 346 Ninth St., San Francisco CA 94103; (415) 863-0814; fax: 863-7428.

Jerry White is on the program staff of the Neighborhood Film/Video Project and the Philadelphia Festival of World Cinema.

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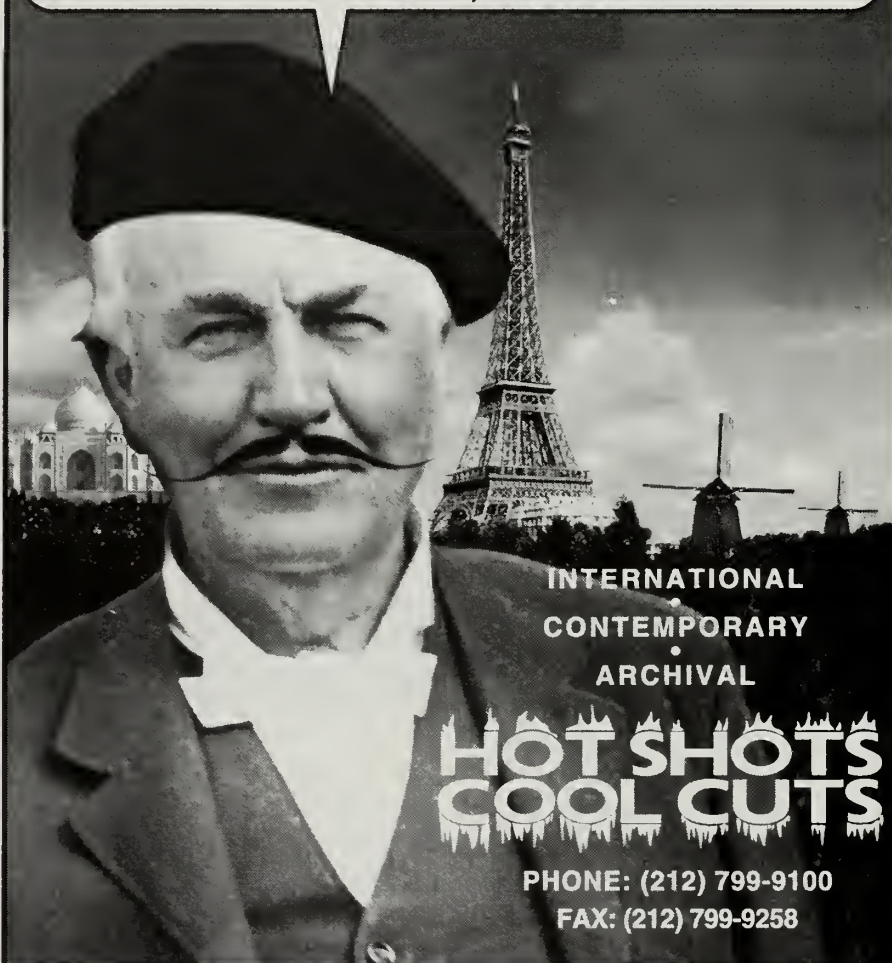
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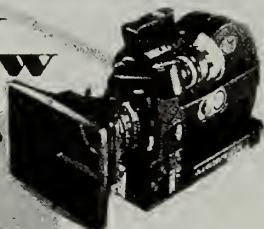
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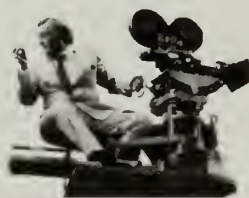
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JEFFREY THOMAS *documentarian* **THE SYSTEM**

BY TOM KEOGH

I'M SITTING IN A CRAMPED STUDY ON LOWER QUEEN Anne in Seattle, looking at unedited video footage of pedestrians walking along a pleasant, if poorly maintained, side street in Moscow, Russia. The camera pans a row of trees, gates, and parked cars that line one side of the road, then lingers at the sad sight of the once splendid, now ruinous white edifice built during the age of Czars.

"Slap some paint on that," barks Jeffrey Thomas at the monitor, with intentional irony. Thomas directed this poignant shot, and many others like it, last spring during a visit to the former Soviet Union. In a spirit that might best be described as reckless but inspired abandon, Thomas suddenly found himself on an independent mission half a world away from his Microsoft office in Redmond shooting an ambitious documentary about one facet of that nation's story of internal struggle and outward decline: the history of Soviet filmmaking.

Thomas took a tiny production crew, including his wife and assistant Shellie Tucker, to Russia for the making of *The System*, a revealing, frequently compelling look at the history of the Soviet Union's infamous, government-operated film industry and its rehabilitation.

Asked why a Microsoft "technical editor in documentation" would put his own dollars and sweat equity on the line for an hour-long documentary about filmmakers largely unknown in this country, Thomas recalls his early curiosity about Russian culture and language. More recently, he says, he became intensely interested in the sudden appearance of numerous Russian films from the 1960s that had been officially banned from distribution until the era of Gorbachev.

Telling a couple of friends with Russian ties that he was thinking about a project focusing on the now-defunct Soviet filmmaking process, Thomas subsequently found those friends talking up his alleged movie to supportive industry types in Moscow. Suddenly, Thomas heard he was making a film even before he was making a film.

"The Russians told me to come, so I had to do it," he jokes. "I didn't want to create an interna-



Jeffrey Thomas on location.
Courtesy filmmaker

tional incident."

Thomas's formal film background is limited to a handful of classes in cinema appreciation and hands-on production. His education in Soviet films is self-taught, bolstered by the availability of older works on video and through film festivals in recent years. Ideally, Thomas wants *The System* to be seen on the festival circuit and television in concert with increased distribution of Gennadi Poloka's *Intervention* and other resuscitated Soviet works from the sixties.

"What really sets *The System* apart from other projects about films," says Thomas, "is that it goes beyond film history. Even though gravity is always pulling me to focus on directors, I'm fighting that in order to look at government administrators, studio heads, and the people who ran Goskino," the government agency in charge of all aspects of Soviet professional filmmaking. Time and again, directors who had benefited from rigorous film training at the state-run schools found their professional productions subjected to maddening scrutiny at all levels of government bureaucracy. In one telling instance, director Andrei Konchalovsky—who later made *Runaway Train* and other films in Hollywood—came under fire from the Ministry of Agriculture for a work depicting hard living in a rural village.

Thomas is amazed at the relative ease with which he was able to record interviews with individuals who ran Goskino at the height of its power, as well as officials running the reformed agency today. He spoke with several former *redaktors*, Goskino script editors who were the first line of defense for State and Communist Party orthodoxy. Thomas also interviewed Filipp Yermash, the head of Goskino during the final years of routine blacklisting of filmmakers, and his successor, Alexander Kamshalov, who

helped usher in a more open age.

Thomas also found, remarkably, that all the directors who spoke to him on camera—men who were often discredited and banned from working altogether—refuse even today to condemn the old system because it created the legendary talents that it also oppressed, including such figures as Konchalovsky, the revered Andrei Tarkovsky (*Nostalgia*), and Gennadi Poloka (*Intervention*).

Poloka, whose career was destroyed in 1967 with *Intervention*—a political farce about a scoundrel who becomes a Socialist hero—figures prominently in *The System*. Grey and thickened with age, Poloka is shown happily working again, directing a movie about the making of another movie: Sergei Eisenstein's 1925 landmark, *The Battleship Potemkin*.

Thomas, who spent \$22,000 of his own money for the first round of location shooting, is organizing a series of fundraising parties (he hopes to hold one for high-rollers at the Russian consulate in Seattle). There's no getting around the need for cash: Thomas plans on going back to Russia at least three more times.

What does it feel like to be an American poking around the ashes of the punishing Soviet infrastructure? Thomas takes no particular comfort as a lifelong consumer of American film product. The subtle but unavoidable parallels between Russia's former censorship-driven movie industry and Hollywood's long history of buckling under political pressure while squelching creativity for profit is written between the lines of *The System*.

"I don't have to make that point in my project," Thomas says. "All those oppressed Russian directors make it themselves. What's the difference between Poloka and what happened to Orson Welles? Any Russian could come over here and make the same documentary about us."

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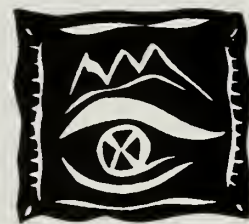
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INSIDE THE CHARMED CIRCLE

IFFM Launches No Borders MiniMart

BY LYNNE PALAZZI

OUTRAGEOUS DRAG QUEENS DISTRIBUTING CHOCOLATES. *Waterworld* and *Dogfight* mentioned in the same conversation. Cryptic T-shirt messages—"My Dubious Sex Drive," "The Day I Shot President Kennedy"—observed by laminated badges. If it's mid-September at the theater on the corner of New York City's Mercer and Houston Streets, this can all mean only one thing: the Independent Feature Film Market (IFFM), presented by the Independent Feature Project (IFP).

Each year, the Angelika Film Center is taken over for a full week by filmmakers, screenwriters, producers, buyers, and distributors who arrive to take part in what one filmmaker called "massive group therapy." It could also be called a large-scale game of cat and mouse with 2,251 participants, as green badges (filmmakers and screenwriters) chase blue badges (buyers and producers) in the hopes of getting a 30-second pitch in the lobby. As a result, buyers often flip their badges over accidentally-on-purpose as they try to dodge the faces whose phone calls they've never returned.

But this year there was a place where honchos didn't have to hide their stripes. Across the street and up five stories, at 599 Broadway, the IFFM held its first No Borders co-production market. It was a calm, civilized contrast to the pandemonium of the Angelika—complete with complimentary sandwiches. There, some 40 buyers, distributors, lawyers, and producers met in one-on-one and group sessions with a select group of filmmakers whose projects had been deemed "promising" based on their ability to attract co-financing. No Borders involved 33 works-in-progress submitted by the IFP, the Sundance Writer's Lab, and CineMart—the co-financing market attached to the Rotterdam Film Festival and the model for No Borders. The fourth partner, Germany's North Rhine Westphalia Film Foundation, helped fund No Borders.

Of the 400 projects entered in 1995's IFFM, 10 were chosen for No Borders. One that generated a buzz was a work-in-progress titled *Divine Trash*,

a documentary about the making of John Waters's seminal 1972 film *Pink Flamingos*. Producer/director/writer Steve Yeager came to No Borders with a track record—his film *On the Block* had been released theatrically as well as on video and cable—but producer Cindy Miller thinks it's John Waters's universal appeal that qualified the project as No Borders fodder. She and Yeager headed to the IFFM from Baltimore in order to shop for the \$300,000 they needed for *Divine Trash*. As a teaser, they edited together 22 minutes of footage of Waters behind the camera. "It gave us more direction and focus," Miller said of No Borders. "Now the work really begins."

One honcho found such enthusiasm and determination "infectious," but said that many of the makers at No Borders came to the meetings unprepared. "Most of the people were naive," the source said. "It would have been healthier if they had arrived with a clear idea of what they wanted to get out of the meetings. It was as if they just wanted to get the script into someone's hands. Instead of 'What do you think is the best way for us to go about getting financing?' it was 'Are you interested in my project?' We ended up taking the lead in a lot of those discussions. There was insufficient preparation on their part, but I'm sure it was due to inexperience. We were there as a resource, and I felt we weren't used fully. It's a fantastic idea, though. I think we helped, but we could have helped a lot more."

According to the IFP deputy director Michelle Byrd, No Borders participants were not given any special preparation for the meetings other than the standard orientations that took place in Los Angeles, Miami, San Francisco, and New York in the weeks before the market.

Caroline Kaplan, director of programming for Bravo and the Independent Film Channel, said No Borders offered buyers a different perspective. "It was helpful for us because distributors that supply us with product were there, and it was interesting to see them forming their opinions early on," she said. "Plus, there is really no centralized place for us to go to find out what's in production." Lois Johnson, assistant manager for

HBO Showcase, agreed, saying, "It was great to come face-to-face with the independent film community at such an early stage."

Some might say No Borders sets up an indie elite that counters the spirit of the market. But IFP's Michelle Byrd says it strengthens the overall market by attracting a higher caliber of buyers, which means everyone benefits. "If we get San Fu Maltha from Polygram to come to the market and he does No Borders meetings, we also put him on a panel so that everybody has access to him," she says. "It was really important to us that everyone was integrated, that they weren't this elite group of filmmakers and elite group of buyers sequestered off in a corner. That would defeat the purpose of why we wanted to do this. We wanted to attract buyers to the market." At least one buyer said No Borders allowed her to maximize the market, because she didn't have to waste time hunting for the people she knew she wanted to see.

Producer Jason Kliot had been a self-professed IFFM cynic, but he says No Borders reaffirmed his faith in the market. "Finally," he said, "a serious forum for people who've been at this for a while." Kliot and his partner, Joana Vicente, were the associate producers on *The Incredibly True Adventure of Two Girls in Love*, and they were busy with some 20 meetings in the three days of No Borders. Their production company, Open City Films, had a script and a work-in-progress at the market. "If we pitched a project to one company and it wasn't up their alley, we could say, 'Well, we have this other project,'" he said. "We definitely advanced."

No Borders is the culmination of three years of work on the part of the IFP to strengthen its ties to CineMart and to broaden the number of American projects represented there. Byrd says No Borders will definitely be on the 1996 IFFM agenda because "we accomplished what we set out to do, which was to create a mini-market within the IFFM and to make it seamless."

Lynne Palazzi is a freelance writer who has contributed stories to *I.D.*, *New Woman*, and *Seventeen*.



IFFM Central: New York's Angelika Film Center serves as the hub of the market. Below: Exhibiting filmmakers Thomas Harris (L.) and Steven Ascher share a 30-second schmooze.

Photos: Patricia Thomson



Waiting for the dog: John Waters and his actors in Steve Yeager's *Divine Trash: The Making of John Waters's Pink Flamingos*. This was one of 33 projects selected for the IFFM's first No Borders coproduction market.

Courtesy filmmaker

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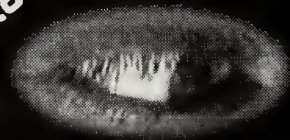
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IFFM BYTES

New Technology Sidebar Launched

BY PATRICIA THOMSON

YOU GOTTA HAND IT TO 'EM FOR TRYING. THOUGH the New Technology sidebar was the weakest part of this year's Independent Feature Film Market, at least it was there.

Half a block from the center-ring madness at Angelika Film Center, the market's newly launched Technology Center was a subdued and sparsely populated space with half a dozen computer terminals and about that many people at any given time. Here you could participate in guided tours of the Internet, salons on the New York-based electronic bulletin board Echo, hands-on sessions with Avid nonlinear editing systems, and demos of interactive games and all-digital films. The New Tech sidebar was rounded out over at 8 Bond Street by a requisite batch of panel discussions on where all this new technology is taking us.

Trouble was, few filmmakers were paying any attention. One can chalk this up in part to filmmaker apathy; but the other part of the equation was some inappropriate choices IFP made when configuring the line-up.

Take Softimage, for instance. This computer animation and modelling software is truly impressive—it helped create the saurian stars of *Jurassic Park* (subsequently Softimage was itself devoured in a Microsoft buyout), as well as those annoying, dancing Shell-Mastercard commercials. But since most low-budget indies aren't looking for ways to morph a protagonist or integrate flying fruits with live actors, Softimage's presence was a puzzle—even for filmmakers in the audience, who could barely muster any questions during an awkward Q&A.

Other sessions were thinly disguised sales pitches. "Promoting Your Film on the Internet" could have been a revealing tour of those sites on the Net where pioneering filmmakers have already staked their flags. Instead, we got representatives from Entertainment Drive, an online entertainment magazine located on CompuServe (GO EMOVIES). While it's nice to know that Entertainment Drive is dedicating a forum to

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Get a job: Peter Adair and Haney Armstrong made the leap from documentary film to CD-ROM technology—and have had a much easier time finding financial backers. Photo: Patricia Thomson

independent film called *Renegade Road* and that they'll take care of digitizing and packaging your clips, photos, production notes, and other promotional materials (*Clerks* screen-savers, anyone?), they were a less-than-inspired choice. For one, they're currently limited to CompuServe, and while three million users are nothing to sneeze at, the latter is still a self-contained universe by Net standards. Unlike sites on the World Wide Web, there are no links in or out.

More up indie alley would have been a demo of Virtual Film Festival (<http://www.virtualfilm.com>), a Web site started by two Montreal-based filmmakers, Peter Wintonick (*Manufacturing Consent*) and Glenn Salzman, who could be found wandering around Angelika looking a little lost. (Salzman said he would have liked to have had a more visible presence and demo terminal at the market, but just couldn't afford the \$5,000 booth fee.) They, too, digitize and package filmmakers' materials for online promotion. But the Virtual Film Festival also provides links to a long roster of festival Web sites and is distinguished by a live chat and interactive capability that far exceeds current Web standards (developed with support from the Canadian government's Centre for Information Technologies Innovation). What this means in practical terms was demonstrated at the Toronto International Film Festival, where real-time online sessions were arranged with acquisition honchos from *Alive TV* and the Canadian Broadcast Corporation that had filmmakers lining

up in droves to pitch their ideas.

Or IFP could have invited a Net savvy filmmaker like Trent Harris to talk about promoting your film on the Internet. Harris, at the market with his goofy sci-fi flick *Plan 10 from Outer Space*, could have described the Web site for *Plan 10* he set up a good two years ago (<http://mcchurch.org/plan10>), as well other ways he's used the Net, like a live MBONE video press conference from Sundance last year, or trolling for exhibition outlets (he found a list

of 200 arthouse theaters that played another cult classic, *Rocky Horror Picture Show*, and he browses university sites to acquire the email addresses of film faculty).

But if IFP occasionally missed the boat, filmmakers at IFFM routinely ignored good opportunities to find out what independents are doing with this new technology.



Please, Mr. Postman: *Mail Bonding*, the first all-digital production, was on display in IFFM's New Tech room. Courtesy filmmaker

They could have talked to former documentary filmmaker Haney Armstrong (*Word Is Out*), who, with partner Peter Adair, joined with software developer Broderbund after getting fed up with the endless tin-cup routine in the independent documentary world. Broderbund, known for its children's CD-ROMs, recently began investing in adult games after its phe-

nominal success with *Myst*; their next project was Armstrong and Adair's courtroom game *In the 1st Degree*. At the market, Armstrong demonstrated the innovative full-screen presentation he and Adair developed that combines color slides, blue-screen techniques, and video footage of San Francisco. He also talked to anyone who cared about the hows and whys of making the leap from independent film to the CD-ROM industry.

Over at the next terminal was director Robert Miller's *Mail Bonding*, a whimsical 12-minute short about a loner smitten by a postal carrier which was being billed as "the first all-digital production." *Mail Bonding* was shot with Sony's new digital camcorder, the widescreen DVW-700 Digital Betacam, and Miller efficiently fed its signal straight to an Avid as he shot. Before production, he and his team of collaborators designed the set using ArchiCad, a 3-D architectural design program. One of the program's tools allowed him to set up camera angles down to the inch—and simultaneously anticipate design modifications needed for the set long before a hammer was ever lifted. Miller



had a lot to say about the technological breakthroughs, naturally; but he was also a fount of information on what it took to convince companies like Avid, Sony, Apple, and the pioneering production/postproduction facility Pacific Video Resources to contribute equipment, expertise and caché to his project—useful knowledge, if there ever were any, for inde-

pendent mediamakers.

Mail Bonding is proof that there's currently a window of opportunity for independents who want to set up R&D partnerships with equipment and software manufacturers. But in order to seize these opportunities, mediamakers need to have some sense of what's coming down the technological pike.

That was one of the points reiterated by panelists at "New Media: Boom or Bust for Independents?", particularly in terms of distribution. "Independents should look for that thing that has no gatekeeper," said Alyce Dissette, formerly with *Alive from Off Center* and most recently founder of 5013C Inc., a nonprofit organization that explores computer technology in collaboration with the arts and humanities. "That thing," all agreed, was the Internet, particularly once bandwidth limitations were solved. "Position yourself so you can move in with your work rather than chase after those guys who are getting big, bigger, and biggest, like Miramax," Dissette advised.

The time to lay the groundwork is now, before the Internet becomes commercialized. Currently "the Net is not owned by anybody," Dissette explained. "That's why Congress is freaking out. They tell you it's about pornography; I tell you it's about economics." In fact, two turf wars are pending: one over content, and another over who controls Internet access—and what they charge. According to Peter Becker of Voyager, the new media publisher, "Access is going to cost more once you get to the point that a movie can be sent out on the Web. It's \$19 a month now; it'll go up, I promise you." Relatively small Internet providers like Panix will either be forced out of the picture or will remain servers for low band-width access, Becker predicted, while giants like AT&T will emerge as the ones who provide the large band-width access, "and they'll be the ones who charge."

The panelists went on to related topics—the ability to produce CD-ROM disks for 65 to 75 cents apiece that can hold two hours of video, four hours of audio, and hundreds of pages of text; the Digital Video Disk (DVD) technology that will be debuting this winter; and the continuing importance of narrative in nonlinear media. But when all was said and done, Becker sagely counseled the IFFM audience, "If you're a filmmaker, you should make films. Don't use new media because it's there, like climbing Mt. Everest." But whatever medium one ultimately chooses, it pays to know what changes are in store for distribution, whether on the Internet or elsewhere. As Dissette cautioned, "If you don't pay attention, you're going to be left in the dust."

Patricia Thomson is editor of *The Independent*.

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BLOC BUSTERS

Eastern European Festivals Break Out

BY CATHY MEILS

A FILM FESTIVAL BOOM HIT EASTERN EUROPE in a big way this year. Where once a single major festival used to serve as the gateway between East and West, suddenly there were three vying for attention, guests, and films. It's still unclear whether the Karlovy Vary International Film Festival (June 30–July 8), the Moscow International Film Festival (July 17–28), and Golden Golem, the Prague International Film Festival (June 9–17) will all survive the struggle for funding and audiences. But for American independent filmmakers, 1995 was a year of opportunity in Eastern Europe.

The tradition of film festivals in the region goes back to 1946, when the graceful Victorian spa town of Karlovy Vary (also known by its German name, Karlsbad) in western Czechoslovakia initiated one of the oldest enduring festivals in the world. Originally an annual event, Karlovy Vary International Film Festival was granted Category A status by FIAPF in the fifties, elevating it to the top echelon of world festivals. When Moscow established its own festival a few years later in the Stalinist era, Karlovy Vary shared the A status and alternate year scheduling with its big Russian brother. Since everything in the Communist Bloc film industry was state funded, the festivals could count on government money for their Communist showcases.

After 1989 and the demise of the Communist system, the turmoil behind the festivals began to emerge. In the Czech Republic, Prime Minister Vaclav Klaus's cold turkey plunge into a market-led economy left the Karlovy Vary event to sink or swim. In the five years since, the festival established a foundation to acquire funding, and, freed from Moscow's grip, it decided to return to its annual scheduling. That proved harder than expected, with film production in a slump and the country only beginning to find its bearings in the new capitalist world order, so it wasn't until 1995 that Karlovy Vary was again a yearly event. In the meantime, dissension behind the scenes led to a split within the ranks in 1994. The following year a new Czech festival, the Golden Golem in Prague, was firmly on the map. To the astonishment of nearly everyone, the Golden Golem was also the new holder of the Category A status at

Karlovy Vary's expense. It further challenged Karlovy Vary's position by snaring its major private sponsor (Skoda Plzen, the Czech automobile manufacturer) and scheduling itself just two weeks before the old-timer's long established dates in early July.

Moscow, meanwhile, was having problems of its own. In 1993, the festival wasn't sure it would even happen until the last minute. When the festival's director died shortly afterward, the wheels were set into motion for its reinvention. Now, with much of the old guard replaced and a serious effort by its new business-oriented general manager to put Moscow on a par with its Western counterparts, the 1995 festival could prove seminal.

Overall, American independents benefited from the East's new windows on the West. Moscow and Golden Golem presented their first American Independent sections, both spearheaded by American women, and Karlovy Vary built upon its Independent section, which debuted in 1992, with a rich assortment of American films.

GOLDEN GOLEM

FIRST OFF AND RUNNING WAS THE PRAGUE MAIDEN effort. Czech filmmaker Antonin Moskalyk, director and driving force behind the Golden Golem, served as general manager of last year's Karlovy Vary festival. The Czech capital was rife with behind-the-scenes rumors as to Moskalyk's defec-

tion. He explains his decision to start a rival festival as stemming from the fact that the Czechs were in danger of losing their coveted A status to Moscow. With only four months preparation time, the Golem's lurch onto the world stage was at times clumsy and more glittery than golden; but flaws were to be expected in its initial run.

American influence was strong, perhaps due in part to Moskalyk's ties to the United States through his Hollywood-based daughter. The festival's program director was John Riley, a former Hollywood agent, and its programmer of American independent film was Stephanie Beroes, a producer/director of short films and programmer for New York Women in Film and Television. Beroes brought a decidedly East Coast slant to her selections. Of the 13 independents shown, all but two (*Hoop Dreams* and *Crumb*) were New York products. Most were feature debuts, and two (*Angela* by Rebecca Miller and *Captive* by Karl Slovin) were presented in the Competition section. Their directors and producers were guests of the festival, as were representatives from five other films (directors Deirdre Fishel of *Risk* and Bob Balaban of *The Last Good Time*, and producers Fred Marx of *Hoop Dreams*, Richard Miller of *Heavy*, and Scott McCauley and Robin O'Hara of *What Happened Was*).

Moskalyk counted on Prague's magic to lure guests to the festival. Prague did indeed prove a magnet—perhaps too strong a one. Many festival guests seemed to spend more time in the city's fairytale center than at the huge, cold Palace of Culture, a Communist-era edifice located a couple of kilometers away that served as festival headquarters and venue for Competition films. Likewise, the local audience largely avoided the Palace of Culture, but they eventually began filling up the four downtown

Prague's magic lures guests to the Golden Golem Film Festival.

All photos courtesy Cathy Meils



cinemas that were showing festival selections and popular retrospectives of Russian classics and Nikita Mikhalkov's films.

With continued private funding and the potential to tap commercially Prague's population of 1.5 million, the Golden Golem is well-placed to continue. Its commitment to American independents isn't quite so certain; organizers suggest that the Independent section will be maintained, but focusing on a different country each year.

KARLOVY VARY

ELEGANCE WAS THE KEY TO THE 30TH KARLOVY Vary festival. From the accreditation center's decor to the closing ceremony, a classic 1930s stylishness pervaded the festival. Karlovy Vary may have been financially pinched, having had its budget cut by one quarter since the previous

Hepnerova is the formidable and savvy program director; and newcomer Rudolf Biermann, a Slovak producer, took over as general manager. Biermann, a powerhouse who is breathing new life into Slovak film production, is generally credited with giving the festival a classy, high profile on a stringent budget. The festival was a triumph for him in another way, as well: he produced the film that walked off with the most prizes, *The Garden*, directed by rising Slovak star Martin Sulik.

Another pair of Slovaks, Hana Cielova and Stefan Uhrik, who host a monthly Czech TV series on films and festivals, were responsible for the most popular and critically successful section of the festival: The Return of the Magnificent Seven. The enigmatic title refers not to classic Hollywood Westerns, but to the North American independent directors introduced to Czech audiences at the festival three years ago (Lizzie

tors present to introduce their films at the festival.

Cielova and Uhrik's bigger coup happened outside the festival. Inspired by the section's proven popularity, Barrandov Studios (the former state-owned Czech studio) announced that it will distribute a half-dozen independent films this year, beginning with Egoyan's *Exotica* (the films were chosen with input from Cielova and Uhrik). The move is a major breakthrough in Eastern Europe, where Hollywood fare corners up to 90 percent of the market and, until recently, American independent films were lucky to get a single screening at any festival.

MOSCOW

THE RUSSIAN FILM INDUSTRY HAS A LOT IN COMMON with American independent filmmakers right now, according to Wanda Bershen, who, along with Max B. Miller, programmed the U.S.

Independent section at the Moscow Film Festival. The huge state monolith has suddenly exploded into fragments, with dozens of production companies fighting for private funding and adrift without a reliable central distribution network. Amazingly, good films are still getting made, but, as in the United States, the hitch is distribution. The Moscow Film Festival and its early summer competi-

tor on the Black Sea coast, the Sochi Film Festival, may be the only chances for exhibition an emerging filmmaker has.

Russia hit the bull's eye with the double success of Nikita Mikhalkov's *Burnt by the Sun* at Cannes and the Oscars, where it won Best Foreign Film. Suddenly Moscow is attracting international attention. The festival hitched itself onto the Mikhalkov comet by appointing the director to its board, scheduling a Mikhalkov retrospective, and

Elegant Karlovy Vary, home to a 30-year-old festival that's struggling to remain the Czech Republic's main film event.



year, but it was nowhere in evidence. Even the ushers were professionally coiffed and made up as glamorous Joan Crawfords, with mannish pinstriped suits. With Karlovy Vary's existence in threat, Czechs audiences, press, and other sentimental supporters turned out in record numbers in a show of solidarity.

The trio at the head of the festival is a cunning combination: Jiri Bartoska, a Czech matinee idol, runs the foundation; Eva Zaoralova-

Borden, Charles Burnett, Joel and Ethan Coen, Atom Egoyan, Jim Jarmusch, Jon Jost, and Gus Van Sant). This year all but two returned, and the section's boundaries expanded beyond North America to include retrospectives of Iranian director Amir Naderi, Finnish director Mika Kaurismaki, plus the U.S.'s Hal Hartley. In all, 20 independent filmmakers were represented, with Jost, Lodge Kerrigan, Kelly Reichardt, and Polish immigrant Rafal Zielinski among the U.S. direc-

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The Moscow Film Festival might be an emerging Russian filmmaker's only chances for local exhibition



having him co-host a festival cruise for VIPs. This year was the festival's re-birthday out of the ashes of the old era's Party-controlled sham, and thousands showed up for the welcoming.

But visitors to the new "Wild East" were in for a bumpy ride. Accusations that the Competition jury walked out of screenings flew through the air like wild punches. Russian-style word-of-mouth information was often more reliable than printed sources. Transportation to the scattered cinemas was a constant struggle, and heavy Russian dubbing via loudspeakers drowned out the subtleties of many a foreign film.

Surprises were also in store for Wanda Bershen. She arrived in Moscow to find two films she'd never heard of appearing in the U.S. Independent line-up. Nonetheless, the selection provided a popular sampling of American filmmakers from Charles Burnett (*To Sleep with Anger*) and Ang Lee (*Wedding Banquet*) to Hal Hartley (*Amateur*) and Louis Malle (*Vanya on 42nd Street*). Organizers underestimated the hunger for Russian audiences for their first taste of non-Hollywood films and scrambled to add extra screenings.

Hope for the festival's transformation now lies in the hands of a new generation of artist/businessmen, such as general manager Alexander Atanessyan (who also produced the festival's audience favorite, *Mute Witness*). In the end, the pragmatist's point of view must win out. This time around, the Moscow Film Festival managed to provide a showcase for the best of the CIS (former Soviet Union) filmmakers and an opportunity for Russians to see films otherwise unavailable to them. It's a start.

Cathy Meils writes about arts and culture in Eastern Europe and is the Prague correspondent for Variety.

SWISS STAKES

The Locarno International Film Festival

BY BÉRÉNICE REYNAUD

MEDIUM-SIZE "A" CATEGORY FILM FESTIVALS ARE in a rough spot. Compelled by regulations to show only international, or, at least, European premieres in their competition, they lose a great

competition at Locarno (August 3-13) was a bit dull, and that the Golden Leopard award to the French film *RAI* by Thomas Gilou was a disappointment. However the Silver Leopard went to Mario Van Peebles' *Panther*, a good omen for the European career of a film whose American release

Week-end (produced by Showtime with a screenplay by East Village writer Joel Rose); and an exciting, semi-improvised, independently produced French film, Françoise Etchegaray's *Sept en Attente*.

Yet the real events of the festival took place outside the competition. A complete retrospective of Iranian director Abbas Kiarostami—known in the US only through his latest film, *Through the Olive Trees*—allowed an in-depth understanding of the filmmaker's survival strategy as an independent artist: For years Kiarostami made films under the aegis of the Center for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults, which allowed him to avoid both political censorship and commercial constraints. Kiarostami was thus able to coin an original film language and



Faces in the dark: Michael Almereyda's *Nadja* at Locarno, the "bigger of small film festivals."

Courtesy Locarno International Film Festival

number of films to Cannes, Venice, or Berlin. So, is a festival competition that important? Film "professionals"—producers, agents, buyers—pretend that it is indeed all that matters. And what about the rest of us, the filmmakers, critics, and plain film lovers who want to be informed on the state of world cinema? Do we really care if a film is a premiere? The question is particularly relevant to the Locarno International Film Festival, the self-styled "bigger of small film festivals" with its ever-enthusiastic audience.

Indeed, some complained that this year's

was sabotaged by the studio and the white establishment, according to screenwriter/producer Melvin Van Peebles (Mario's father and legendary hero of the blaxploitation films of the seventies). The Ecumenical Prize went to Cheick Oumar Sissoko's *Guimba*, a superb Malian film already awarded the Grand Prize at the FESPACO film festival of African cinema in Ouagadougou. The competition also included a generous (albeit uneven) selection of Japanese cinema (Ishii Takashi's *Gonin*, Tsukamoto Shin'ya's *Tokyo Fist* and Hayashi Kaizo's *The Breath*); *Tropical Fish*, by first-time Taiwanese director Chen Yuxun; a new film by New York independent Amos Poe, *Dead*

explore Iranian society through the eyes of little boys or young men. As a spin-off, the festival organized an homage to Iranian women filmmakers and brought three of them, Tamineh Milani, Forud Farokhzad, and Rakhshan Bani-Etemad. The latter also presented a film, *The Blue-Veiled*, in competition, where it was awarded the Bronze Leopard. This "special event" made it possible not only to discover original talents within Iranian cinema, but also to challenge much of the audience's preconceived ideas about the lives of women and their access to the film industry after the Islamic Revolution.

Locarno also celebrated Jean-Luc Godard's

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monumental *Histoire(s) du cinéma* (started in 1978, it comprises eight episodes so far, plus two hours on French and Russian cinema)—a fascinating, yet melancholy palimpsest on the past and future of cinema, on what cinematic vision has meant for the now-fading 20th century, on the significance of having a sizeable part of your affective memory made of images fabricated for the silver screen. French historian Bernard Eisenschitz curated a program of films that acquire a new dimension under Godard's acute gaze (from D.W. Griffith's *Birth of a Nation* to Alain Resnais's *Night and Fog* to Roberto Rossellini's *La Prise de pouvoir par Louis XIV*) and organized three panels of experts, graced only *en passant* by the acerbic presence of the Master on his way to receive Locarno's Honorary Leopard.

It has been said that Mark Rappaport's latest "experimental documentaries," *Rock Hudson's Home Movies* (1992) and *From the Journals of Jean Seberg* (1995) were influenced by Godard's *Histoire(s)*... "I saw a screening of it in Berlin in 1990 and found it incredibly exciting," says the New York independent filmmaker, who was world-premiering *From the Journals*... in one of the Locarno sidebars. "On the other hand, video stores played as strong an influence as Godard's. I use film as a kind of archeological dig, going through the shards and the pieces and try to reconstruct them in a new way through the perspective of our times." Rappaport's special brand of witty "deconstruction" and "revisionist film history" (his own words) took as its raw material

actress/political activist/FBI target Jean Seberg. Euro-American icon admired by some for having graced a few masterpieces (from Otto Preminger's *Bonjour Tristesse* to Godard's *Breathless*) and jettisoned by others for appearing in less successful movies (such as Preminger's *Saint Joan* and Roman Polanski's *Birds in Peru*). Well-researched yet nonchalant, occasionally bitchy yet profoundly melancholy, *From the Journals*... is an original look at film history and the representation of women on screen.

As a result of his presence in Locarno, Rappaport was invited to the Viennale in Austria and offered a retrospective at the Galerie Nationale du Jeu de Paume in Paris. Yet, no distributor contacted him. "In terms of marketplace," he says, "I don't think very much happens [in Locarno], that many TV people or distributors come here. Rappaport is talking to distributors in the U.S., and I'm ready to distribute *From the Journals*... himself. If he did *Rock Hudson*, should a deal fail to materialize. "Self-distribution is possible—*Rock Hudson* made money—but very time-consuming. Locarno can't help me directly, but there have been a lot of great reviews about *From the Journals*... in Italian newspapers." However, for a film buff like Rappaport, Locarno, with its unlimited streaming of movies, has other advantages. "I had a great time. It's been very enjoyable, very relaxing."

One of Locarno's claim to fame is its 85 by 100 foot open-air screen on the Piazza Grande, a legend in itself, and, for New York independent filmmaker Mark Rappaport, it was a "thrill" to see his *Nadja* projected in such conditions. "It was like finally see

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Art imitates life: Mary Beth Hurt (l) as Jean Seberg (r) in Mark Rappaport's *From the Journals of Jean Seberg*.

Courtesy New York Film Festival

Jean-Luc Godard receives Locarno's Honorary Leopard from Marco Müller.

Courtesy Fotofestival

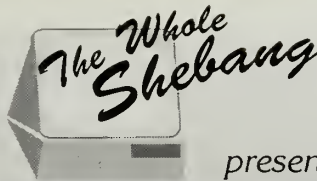
the Niagara Falls," he says. "I never watch my work projected, but I was with a friend and we decided to walk around the screen and it is so huge that it took us 15 minutes. I had never imagined that *Nadja* would ever look that good and would have that big an audience."

Piazza Grande films don't have to be premieres (the program included Wayne Wang's *Smoke*, Anthony Waller independent horror flick, *Mute Witness*—"discovered" at Sundance and shown at Cannes—Gus Van Sant's *To Die For*, Swiss auteur Daniel Schmid's superbly visual documentary on kabuki acting, *The Written Face*, and a restored print of Luchino Visconti's *Senso*), but they are expected to be crowd pleasers, and

some thought that Marco Müller, the director of the festival, was taking risks in showing Almereyda's unconventional vampire story. The gamble paid off, for the audience loved its cool approach to narrative, its alternation between crisp black-and-white 35mm cinematography and the defracted images of the Pixelvision toy video camera that has become Almereyda's trademark.

However, the filmmaker acknowledges that "the festival has had practically no impact on my life. I think it's a fairly exotic, if respected, festival, but, unlike Berlin, Cannes or Toronto, awareness of it is still limited in the U.S." *Nadja* had already been in several film festivals and has a distributor in the U.S. (October Films), as well as internationally (Ciby Sales, an independent off-shoot of French studio Ciby 2000), so for Almereyda professional contacts were "not a factor" in his enjoyment of Locarno. "It was exciting to go to a place where I had never been, meet so many filmmakers, and see so many people I already knew, such as Charles Burnett who was on the jury." Burnett is some sort of a hero in Locarno: last year his director's cut of *The Glass Shield* was shown in competition, and this year he world-premiered his wonderful 13-minute short *When It Rains* ("the best film in the festival," says Almereyda)—another sign of the festival's dedication to presenting American independent cinema.

Bérénice Reynaud is a correspondent for *Cahiers du cinéma*, the *Créteil Film Festival*, and the *San Sebastian Film Festival* and teaches at the *California Institute of the Arts*.



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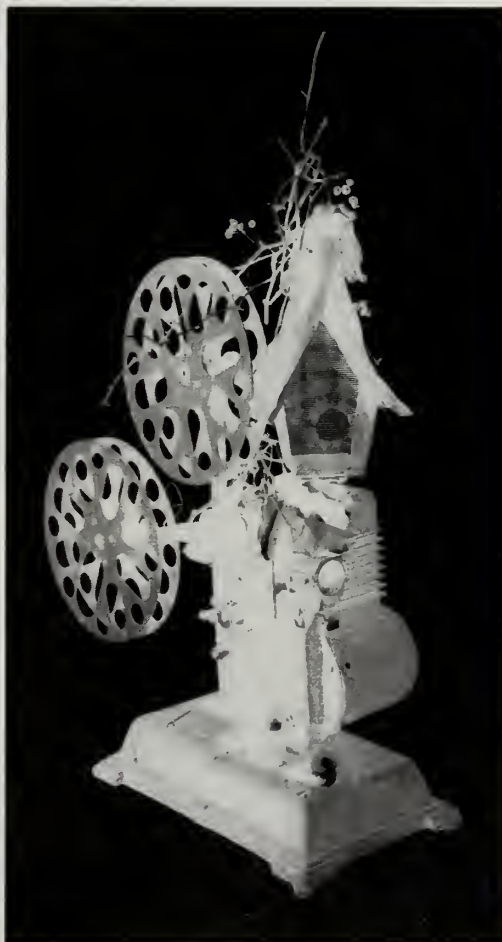
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Art assemblage by Linda S. Parker



DOWN RIO WAY

Brazil's Rio Cine Festival

BY PAT AUFDERHEIDE

FINDING A PLACE TO MAKE NORTH-SOUTH CONNECTIONS has become more difficult as Havana's Festival of New Latin American Cinema has declined with political crisis. The 11-year-old Rio Cine Festival in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, which in the last three years has focused on international independent work in both video and film, is now staking a claim to be a meeting ground for independents battling for turf in the age of MondoDisney and Imperial Microsoft. The festival organization has a history of media activism, including recent work with environmental organizations and recycling programs, and impressive connections in Rio's media world.

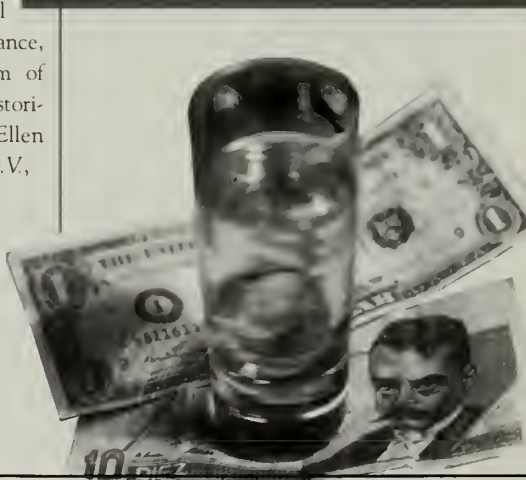
This year's program, held from July 24 to 31, heaped together an eclectic variety of mini-events, ranging from an Orson Welles retrospective to screenings of Brazilian short films and videos in competition for a \$3,300 top prize. The festival presented about 32 features, 116 short videos, and 18 short films in competition, plus about 200 Latin American works in the Latino INPUT Workshop. International features ranged in tone from the wry, elegant Colombian social comedy *Eagles Don't Hunt Flies*, by Sergio Cabrera, to American Matthew Harrison's raucous and raw *Rhythm Thief*. The festival also scheduled showcases of work programmed by U.S. non-profit distributors Electronic Arts Intermix, Video Data Bank, Cine Acción, and The Kitchen. Besides screenings—some held in the robber-baron splendor of the Banco do Brasil's Cultural Center, others in the sumptuous luxury Hotel Copacabana—the festival also hosted workshops and forums. For instance, Barbara London, founder of the Museum of Modern Art's video program, presented a historical overview of U.S. video work, and Ellen Schneider, co-executive producer of P.O.V., offered a workshop for prospective producers of personal diary video. Both found attentive, responsive audiences.

Audiences generally filled the spaces and demonstrated an appetite for crosscultural exchange. "I was really pleased at our screenings," said The Kitchen's director of media services, David Azarch. "They were

all still there when the lights went up. It's great that the general public is so responsive to video, as well as to cinema."

In fact, says Rio Cine Festival director Walkiria Barbosa, one of the event's objectives is to cross boundaries between audiovisual forms—a goal that certainly makes sense in an area of the world where video production is far more prevalent these days than film. (Brazil's film production is

One sunny afternoon, British sales agent Jane Balfour could be found by the hotel pool sharing program catalogs with Roberto Mylaert, creator of Brazil's most innovative public TV channel, who now wants to offer upscale arts and entertainment to the affluent Brazilians buying cable TV subscriptions faster than budding companies can sell them.



finally beginning to pick up after years of drought triggered by economic austerity, but film production is still out of range for many independents.)

This year the festival highlighted the importance of television for independent producers by imitating the model of the annual international public television conference INPUT. The festival's Latino INPUT Workshop, featuring selected work produced for public TV from Latin American countries, used the familiar INPUT model of screenings followed by discussions with producers. Panels on the present and future of public TV involved both Latin American public TV bureaucrats and a mix of INPUT stalwarts, such as Spain's Enrique Nicanor (TV Española), Italy's Sergio Borelli (RAI), and Germany's Eckart Stein (ZDF).

The picture of Latin American public television that emerged was one of state-controlled educational channels that only in the latest wave of democratization have been fumbling toward a concept of "public" rather than "government." In Brazil, public TV channels have had scant production resources; among the few producers have been São Paulo's TV Cultura and Rio de Janeiro's TVE, both of which have suffered financial crises recently.

Nonetheless, creative producers find niches. For instance, an organization called TV Zero produces engaging verité documentaries on social themes such as AIDS, meant both for TV and presentation off-air. The Rio-based Center for the Creation of a Popular Image sponsors video profiles of popular culture—for example, Sergio Goldemberg's portrait of pop music and youth, *Funk Rio*, which might as easily be found projected on screens outdoors in poor neighborhoods as on television.

Other Latin American producers also demonstrate the socially engaged edge that has long marked production in the region. Among the most talked-about Latin American tapes was Gloria Ribe and Jose Manuel Pintado's *The Tequila Effect*. A savagely witty analysis of contemporary Mexican economy and culture, it uses a delirious collage of old movies, news footage, and graphics.

The belated arrival of Brazilian cable TV, licenses for which were first issued only last year,

has created small but promising opportunities for increased diversity, since the new law requires public access channels. But commercial cable doesn't bode well for

From *Efecto Tequila*, by Gloria Ribe and Jose Manuel Pintado, a witty analysis of the Mexican economy that was one of the most talked about tapes at the festival.

Courtesy filmmakers

independents. Cable programming at the moment is overwhelmingly U.S.: *Rin-Tin-Tin*, *I Dream of Jeannie*, TNT, CNN Headline News, *The Today Show*, and World Wrestling Federation all flow past the casual viewer. Wilson Cunha, a programmer for the pay TV channel Multishow, notes that the only Brazilian-produced programming on his network at the moment is a show for teens on video games. He believes that cable expansion after its first flush is premised on national production, but programmers will be looking for winning commercial formulas.

The festival's closing ceremony was a dazzling homegrown Oscars show, complete with major TV stars, a professional comedian, and nationally famous tap dancers. While diverting, its relationship with the tone of most independent work was hard to figure.

Another well-intentioned failure was the festival's attempt at a market, where prospective buyers could (sometimes) view tapes of the Latin American productions (which weren't necessarily for sale). There were only a handful of serious buyers, and they found the market difficult to use. Some films that were already in distribution were presented as available, for instance; other films were missing.

Nonetheless, people managed to transact business, whether at the beach or the TV monitor. One sunny afternoon, British sales agent Jane Balfour could be found pouring over program catalogs by the pool at the Hotel Copacabana. Sharing her catalogs was Brazilian Roberto Muylaert, who won his reputation as the creator of Brazil's most innovative public TV channel and now wants to offer upscale arts and entertainment to the affluent sector of the Brazilian population that's buying cable TV subscriptions faster than the budding companies can fill them. Sylvia Stevens, who is working with ex-Channel Four programmer Alan Fountain to establish an international satellite-fed channel to be called Mondial, also found her encounters productive.

As Balfour opined, "There's tremendous enthusiasm here for the kind of video and film that I've always hoped would find an audience. There seem to be growing possibilities."

Rio Cine Festival organizers continue to make ambitious plans. The festival has already made a bid with INPUT organizers to host the 1998 INPUT conference, which alternates between the Old and New Worlds. That prospect will depend on factors other than the charm of Rio, most importantly the health of public television internationally.

Pat Aufderheide, an associate professor in the School of Communication at the American University in Washington, D.C., is a Fulbright scholar at the Universidade de Brasilia, Brazil. She served on the jury for Brazilian independent video at the Rio Cine Festival.



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Sonic Outlaws' Craig Baldwin explores the limits of copyright law.
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SAN FRANCISCO FILMMAKER CRAIG BALDWIN'S FRANKLY POLITICAL FILMS are blizzards of found footage and appropriated images. A former student of Bruce Conner, Baldwin developed an interest in collage film and

how the courts view it?

AK: That's how it should be viewed, although that's not always how the courts view it.

and Run

BY MICHAEL FOX

art early on. His densely edited works, including *RocketKitKongoKit* (1986), *Tribulation 99* (1991), and *O No Coronado!* (1992), cull footage from sources as disparate as discarded vintage educational films and Saturday morning cartoons.

The inspiration for Baldwin's latest experimental documentary, *Sonic Outlaws*, was the irreverent Oakland band Negativland, which Island Records sued in 1991 for copyright infringement after Negativland released an album containing an audio-collage remix mocking Island artists U2. Negativland's record company, SST, immediately rolled over without a fight, agreeing to Island's demands that they destroy all remaining copies of the album. SST then sued Negativland for the expense it incurred in producing and distributing the album.

Three years after the Negativland furor, the Supreme Court ruled that 2 Live Crew had not infringed the copyright of Roy Orbison's song "Oh, Pretty Woman" with their parody, "Pretty Woman." While this decision generally expands artists' rights, its application will vary case by case, as the following conversation illustrates.

In *Sonic Outlaws*, Baldwin examines the subculture of renegades who manipulate the raw material of popular culture for their own artistic and political statements. His film incorporates interviews with members of the Barbie Liberation Organization, Emergency Broadcast Network, the Tape-beatles, and others working with "found sound," and looks at the issue of copyright infringement and fair use in this age of "phone-pranking, billboard alteration, media-hoaxing, and the digitization of intellectual property." In the spirit of his subjects, Baldwin appropriates film footage ranging from *Frankenstein* to newscasts, TV evangelists, and UFO flicks.

Sonic Outlaws sports the credo, "Copyright infringement is your best entertainment value." I cornered Baldwin and San Francisco musician-turned-attorney Alan Korn (an expert on "sampling" who appears in the movie) to explore the aesthetic and legal implications of such an attitude.

IND: First of all, Craig, did you pay for the footage you used in *Sonic Outlaws*?

CB: I'm running the risk of endangering myself, since people would not necessarily know that I took their stuff for this little underground film. But I so clearly set out to be provocative that it's okay.

AK: The film puts it in a context, so the audience can understand why you're using it.

IND: So context is the critical issue in determining fair use, and that's

CB: I understand your point is to clear up the issues and make a lucid article that's helpful to other filmmakers. I wanted to confuse the thing. For perversity or a punk attitude, I wanted to make it seem more complex, to show how difficult it is in this day and age, how all these categories are sliding around on top of each other. Being so lowly and having no deep pockets or studio behind me, I could probably get away with it.

IND: But if someone wanted to make an issue out of it, you'd have more to gain than to lose.

CB: There you go. That's not cynical and planned, either. It is in good faith, and the issues are discussed. When I appropriated something, the concerns of the people who might have the right to it were the last thing on my list. But I never felt I was taking advantage of people. Being a consumer of culture, I'm already walking through this environment, picking fruit off the trees or collecting junk in the gutters. I felt like it was already out there, already available.

IND: But musicians pay royalties when they sample.

AK: That's a standard in that industry. Which is not to say that unpermissive sampling doesn't occur, but it exists on a continuum—depending on whether you're putting out demo tapes to your friends, or you're a big fish signed to a major label.

CB: I don't think it has so much to do with the moral questions. Do they have the money behind them? Paying doesn't reflect on what's right and wrong, just what their economic stake is.

AK: Not paying for a copyright license subjects you to incredible liability in terms of copyright law. If the copyright is registered, there are statutory damages of up to \$100,000 per infringement plus attorney's fees, which makes it in somebody's interest to sue. An attorney will take it on contingency. The question becomes where you draw the line in terms of subjecting yourself to liability in order to discuss critical issues. And the whole point of fair-use analysis is to demarcate what is owned on a limited monopoly basis and what use is permissible to promote the arts and the sciences and to advance the culture, creatively and intellectually.

IND: So legally speaking, you have to license every clip, even a shot of *Vertigo* on TV in the background of a scene?

AK: There you're dealing not only with the movie rights but also with the underlying rights to the script, which might be owned by the studio or might have lapsed into public domain or might have reverted back to the estate. You just don't go into the movie company and say, "I want the rights to *Vertigo*." You have got to get the music rights, the story rights, everything. In some instances the studio might have all this already, and other times you simply can't obtain all the rights.

CB: That's his problem. I see myself as a film artist. I know that whole body of law exists, but if I bothered to get into it—and the same goes for Negativland—we'd never come up for air. We'd never be able to make this kind of work and talk about the issues. I wanted to make a collage that would confront these issues. But to spend all the time and energy to clear all the rights would be sort of a contradiction.

AK: It's a risk. Look at Todd Haynes. He cannot distribute *Superstar*

"People don't like to be parodied; people don't like to be critiqued. They especially don't like to have their own product used as a critique against them."

anymore because he didn't acquire the music rights. It's a critical and very challenging work, and it's unfortunate that in certain critical instances you need to acquire each of those rights. On the other hand, I can see another attorney saying, "It's this person's intellectual property, it's their right to do what they want with it. You could have used a different type of song from that period or written a song yourself."

Craig is fortunate in that his chosen topic is an analysis of fair use. Craig is well-positioned in the event anyone comes after him for copyright infringement to say that this is educational, critical, even parody in some aspects, and it's furthering intellectual debate on these very important issues.

IND: If Haynes didn't charge when he showed the film, would it have made any difference?

AK: The 2 Live Crew decision does not render a commercial use of copyrighted material presumptively unfair. You've got four elements that you're weighing [see sidebar p. 35]. And based on case law and what the statute says, the judge has to weigh all these things on a case-by-case basis. Of course, this is after you've been sued for infringement, so you're spending money defending it.

It's important to have a lawyer evaluate whether something would be a fair use. People don't like to be parodied; people don't like to be critiqued. They especially don't like to have their own product used as a critique against them.

There's a footnote in the 2 Live Crew decision that basically says you're not penalized if you asked to license it first. If it's a fair use and you've been denied permission, then that won't weigh against you. So actually it is in your best interest to ask first. If you're denied, then you have to do some legal analysis and soul-searching to determine if you want to take the risk of getting sued.

IND: If you claim fair use, you don't have to pay for the rights?

AK: Fair use is an exception to the monopoly of rights granted to a copyright owner. As such, it is a defense against a claim of copyright infringement. If it is a fair use, you don't need to pay because you're not threatening any of the exclusive rights the copyright holder may have. So you can either license or obtain the rights, use material that has entered the public domain, or determine that it's a "fair use."

IND: What should the law be? What's fair?

CB: I think there should be an expanded interpretation of fair use. There should be an understanding within the law of what collage is. It doesn't exploit anyone's particular market, it's just a comment on the thing.

AK: Many years ago, Congress dealt with one common aspect of the music industry by instituting compulsory licensing, whereby if somebody covers your song you get x cents for every unit sold. There's talk in the multimedia industry of instituting a similar policy.

IND: What are the legal grounds for CD-ROMs right now?

AK: Licensing fees are all negotiated now. I hope with digital sampling that ultimately there will be standards, some sort of marketplace amount that is construed as fair within that industry.

IND: What about the Internet?

AK: The Internet is subject to the same copyright rules as anything else. However, copyright infringement exists all over the Net.

CB: There's no way you could possibly prosecute all the cases on the Internet. The technology has outstripped the law. My documentary tries to describe that limbo. So what if it's in violation of the copyright law? There's probably five quadrillion pieces of Julia Roberts on the Internet right now. It's out of the realm of corporations now. Why would whoever owns it want to track these little nerds down, except for economic gain? It's just mean-spirited.

AK: On the other hand, I've represented photographers and artists whose images have been exploited and infringed by corporations and these artists weren't offered a penny. Conversely, Andres Serrano's *Piss Christ* was used by the Reverend Donald Wildmon in fundraising literature. Serrano sued for copyright infringement and a fair use defense was successfully raised, so it cuts both ways.

Marlon Riggs tried to obtain *Amos 'n Andy* footage from CBS for *Color Adjustment*, and they refused him. After an analysis of the fair use issue, Riggs ultimately decided to use this footage anyway.

IND: Is there a difference in how the courts interpret the law when it's a compilation documentary with a narrator, using the footage as part of a thesis, and when it's a parody or collage?

AK: Section 107 of the Copyright Act specifically states that fair use covers such things as criticism, comment, news reporting, teaching (including multiple copies for classroom use), scholarship, or research. But how much are you using? Is it commercial or noncommercial? Are you using published or unpublished material? Is it transformative in some way? Is it replacing the market value of the original piece? An attorney would evaluate each of these different factors.

The development of First Amendment rights has involved a constant political and legal battle. It's the same thing with copyright. I think what Craig and Negativland are doing is a new front in the battle over who owns the images that constitute our identity as a society. Copyright law is 50 to 100 years behind. It's just barely entered the age of mechanical reproduction, much less the global village and electronic communication.

The 2 Live Crew case is interesting because you finally had a millionaire—Luther Campbell aka Luke Skywalker—who had the money to defend the case. But had the defendant been an impoverished Craig Baldwin, this issue never would have gotten to the Supreme Court. With respect to parody, the 2 Live Crew decision clears up some issues. For example, a commercial use is no longer presumptively an unfair use. As Justice Brennan once said in dissent, "Every protected use they talk

"I think there should be an understanding within the law of what collage is. It doesn't exploit anyone's particular market, it's just a comment on the thing."

Section 107 of the Copyright Act provides the underpinning of the fair use defense, stating that:

[F]air use of a copyrighted work, including such use by reproduction in copies or phonorecords . . . for purposes such as criticism, comment, news reporting, teaching (including multiple copies for courtroom use), scholarship or research, is not an infringement of copyright. In determining whether the use made of a work in any particular case is a fair use, the factors to be considered shall include:

(1) the purpose and character of the use, including whether such use is of a commercial nature or is for non-profit educational purposes;

(2) the nature of the copyrighted work;

(3) the amount and substantiality of the portion used in relation to the copyrighted work as a whole; and

(4) the effect of the use upon the potential market for or value of the copyrighted work.

about in the fair use statute (i.e., teaching, criticism, commentary) is done for profit." In the 2 Live Crew decision, Justice Souter agrees, citing Samuel Johnson: "No man but a blockhead ever wrote, except for money."

This decision also looked at the transformative nature of the use of the copyrighted work in the derivative piece. That wasn't in black letter law previously; if the 2 Live Crew decision had come out prior to Negativland putting out their work on U2, it would have been a different outcome, perhaps. This decision, in terms of Craig's film, is a good thing. It cements a certain level of protection.

CB: The court decision still leaves for me this very problematic area of collage. 2 Live Crew's song isn't a collage; it's a cover.

AK: This decision might possibly extend to collage, to the extent it's a critique or commentary. There are elements in the 2 Live Crew decision—such as the language applying to transformative use of the copyrighted material—that address collage, but since collage isn't explicitly addressed, it isn't altogether clear that it's covered.

CB: It's not so easy to get from the fact that you're using bits and pieces of something else to the fact that it's a commentary. The judges don't automatically know that, just because you put two weird things together, it's commentary.

AK: The House report [Congressional testimony underlying the 1976 Copyright Act] lists a number of areas where the fair use section of the copyright law would apply, such as criticism, commentary, they even mentioned parody, even though parody isn't explicitly set forth in the statute. They didn't say collage, and that's something you should be concerned about.

IND: What advice would you give filmmakers?

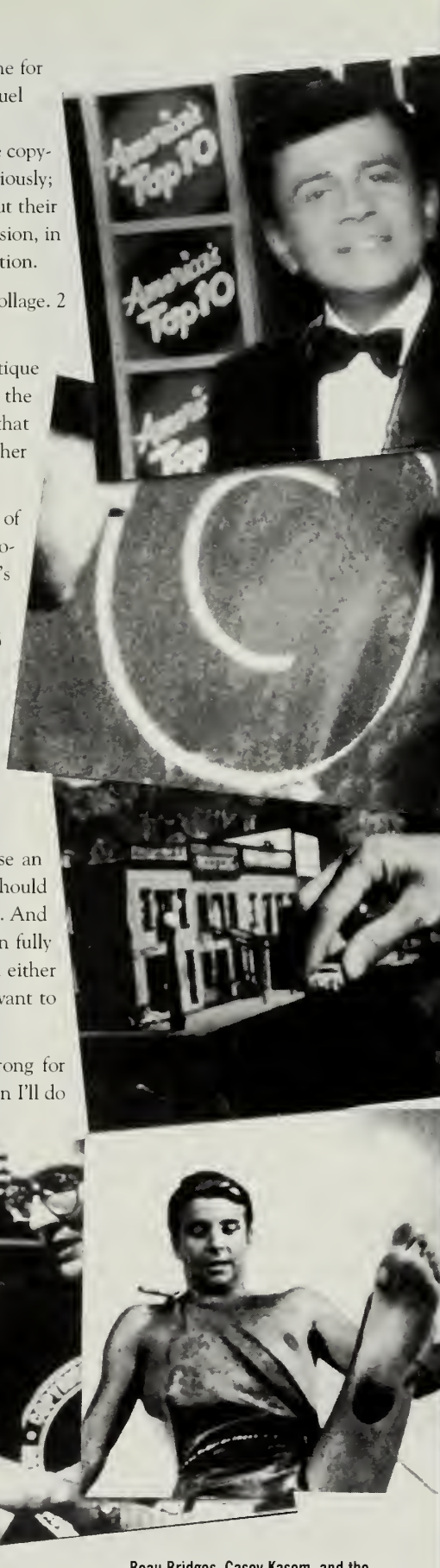
AK: You can't really give general legal advice regarding fair use, because an attorney has to analyze each scenario on a case-by-case basis. But artists should be aware of the penalties if they're found liable for copyright infringement. And it doesn't hurt to contact people and try to license material first. Explain fully to the owner of the copyrighted material what you need it for. Then you either negotiate a license or make a determination at that point whether you want to risk unpermissible use.

CB: I think artists should lead, attorneys follow. The attitude's all wrong for someone in the creative world. You don't go and say, "Can I do this? Then I'll do it."

AK: By law, trademark owners are forced to "police" the market so they don't lose their trademark rights, or see them become generic like "kleenex." A lot of critical artists will unfortunately be the victims of the current intellectual property laws. I hope things will shake out, given where technology is going. The law will probably always be far behind the arts. It's a matter of *realpolitik*. Corporations have more money, but artists are clever and have their wits.

CB: And we've got the numbers.

Michael Fox is a San Francisco freelance writer and regular contributor to The Independent.



Beau Bridges, Casey Kasem, and the American Way: scenes from *Sonic Outlaws*. All photos courtesy mediamaker

FROM Yesterday

TWELVE YEARS IN THE MAKING, THE GRINGO IN MANANALAND
TOOK DEEDEE HALLECK, BOB SUMMERS, AND PENNEE BENDER
THROUGH 7,000 FILMS, 11 ARCHIVES, AND ENDLESS DEBATES
HOW TO PUT IT ALL TOGETHER. HERE'S HOW THEY DID IT.

BY DEIRDRE BOYLE



THE 1995 WHITNEY BIENNIAL SAW the premiere of the long-awaited archival project *The Gringo in Mañanaland*. DeeDee Halleck's critical analysis of how U.S. media have represented Latin America began in 1983 as *De Películas*, a feature-length 35mm compilation documentary. The story behind the making of this fascinating, hour-long video is almost as interesting as the tape itself.

In 1983 DeeDee Halleck, co-founder of the public access collective Paper Tiger Television, and film editor Pennee Bender were finishing work on another documentary film, *Haiti: Bitter Cane*. They had been looking for elusive archival

material of the U.S. Marines in Haiti in the twenties and became fascinated with the possibilities of making an archival film on U.S. involvement in Central America and the Caribbean. The recent box-office hit *The Atomic Cafe* (1982) had proven that well-made archival films could be not only theatrically successful but effective vehicles for mass education on controversial subjects. So, they wrote a grant to the New York Council on the Humanities for initial research to survey the archives to see what films existed.

The original grant was to develop a database—long before the word “database” was in common currency or laptops made computerized research portable. Before the National Archives had computerized its resources, the *De Películas* project began putting all its research on computer. It took time to develop the right research plan, find a database program, and adapt it to their needs. Without benefit of a hard drive, they had to shuffle floppy discs back and forth and lug full-sized Macs to each archive.

Bender and Halleck's initial research was at the John E. Allen film archive in New York City where they met Bob Summers, veteran archivist of this historic nitrate film collection and, in Halleck's own words, “an angel put on earth to help independent filmmakers.” Summers, who had worked at the Library of Congress, the Museum of Modern Art, and the Smithsonian before joining John E. Allen, was a highly respected archivist with an impressive store of knowledge in his head—a living resource. Bender, then an accomplished film editor, learned how to do archival film research under Summer's tutelage. Together with Halleck, the trio formed the principals in the *De Películas* project.

“We spent hours and hours pulling cans almost randomly just to see

Scenes from DeeDee Halleck's *The Gringo in Mañanaland*. Courtesy filmmaker



what was in them,” Bender recalls. “Sometimes the film would be disintegrating in front of your eyes. Oh, the smell! Sometimes the film would be powdery, sometimes it was jelly. I always used to worry about Bob. I'd be out there with a cold, and I'd blow my nose, and it would come out brown. And Bob sat there every day spinning through this dust of nitrate.” At the time, John E. Allen was one of the few archives where

researchers actually handled the original film; since then, the archive has transferred much of its holdings to video. Many of the valuable films they found were on the verge of disintegration, and so they were transferred to safety film or video, thus insuring that the historic 1898 Edison films of the Spanish-American war and footage of FDR in Haiti, for instance, were preserved.

"In the beginning I perceived there were indexes and archives, and people knew where things were. When we got out there and realized that people really just didn't know where anything was, that...indexes hadn't been created yet, we became a little bit obsessed," Bender admits. "We took on the task of making a definitive filmography that showed U.S. involvement in Latin America, but it's an impossible task."



Determined to create an information resource for future researchers, the film became almost secondary to the act of documenting the extant collections of relevant materials.

The research project kept growing. "We were trying to find the mosaic out of all the footage that survived and see what we could weave out of it," Summers recalls. "So we were looking under Latin America,

country by country, which is a huge topic," Bender adds. "We were even looking under headings like 'transportation,' thinking of U.S. involvement in the railroads in Mexico and Central America... Or 'Bureau of Mines,' which you might not think of as having a lot, but if you really go through everything, you find the petroleum industry in Mexico and the copper industry in Chile."

When *De Películas* was conceived, the producers planned to examine actuality films in Central America and the Caribbean made between 1895 and 1940, but fairly quickly the scope of the project widened to encompass Hollywood fiction films through the sixties. And since so many films failed to differentiate among the various Central, Latin American, and Caribbean countries, with real and imaginary nations south of border often treated to a generic media view of "Our Latin Neighbors," it became impossible to limit the focus to the Caribbean and Central America only. Textbooks, photos, film stills, advertising, and postcards as well as radio broadcasts and vintage musical recordings were also part of the research. In all they looked at over 7,000 films from John E. Allen, the Prelinger Archives, the University of South Carolina, the UCLA Film and TV Archives, the Library of Congress, National Archives, Defense Audio Visual Archive, Sherman Grinberg, Archive Films, the Joel Katz Collection, and Summers' subsequent archival business, the New York-based Film/Audio Services.

Bender went through publications like *Moving Picture News* and the existing American Film Institute catalogs of feature films from all the relevant decades, trying to find any reference to Latin America or Latinos or simply references to "bandits," which frequently proved to be a cryptic reference to "revolutionists." This is how, for example, members of the Caco Resistance in Haiti were described by Marines.

Budget limitations confined them mainly to archives in the United States, although they were able to locate materials from abroad when friends who were travelling could add a day's research to their schedule. Valuable footage from Cuba, Mexico and Guatemala were shared by archivists. William Boddy, a friend from Paper Tiger Television, looked in England and found recordings of all the princes of Wales visiting the colonies. Alan Steinheimer found footage of the Swedish King visiting the Caribbean. In addition to friends, they relied on the good will and research skills of sympathetic archivists. Joyce Compton, then at the Fox-Movietone Outtakes Archive at the University of South Carolina, combed through packing lists and came up with some of the most amazing finds included in the final work. Compton located the shots, used in the tape's opening, of Mrs. Warren Harding hand-cranking a camera at the Pan American Women's Conference in 1923. Compton also found footage of the Carnegie expedition to Chichen Itza, which included interviews of poor women dressed up as Mayans. Even more impressive was early sound film shot at a press conference in 1929 with Faustin Wirkus, a former U.S. Marine who had written a memoir about his experiences in Haiti, *White King of Gonave*.

Looking back now, Bender and Summers readily admit they should have been narrowing their focus rather than enlarging it as they went along. But they were caught between two imperatives—that of the historian-archivist anxious to uncover and identify more documentary evidence, and that of the filmmaker driven to tell a coherent story in a lim-

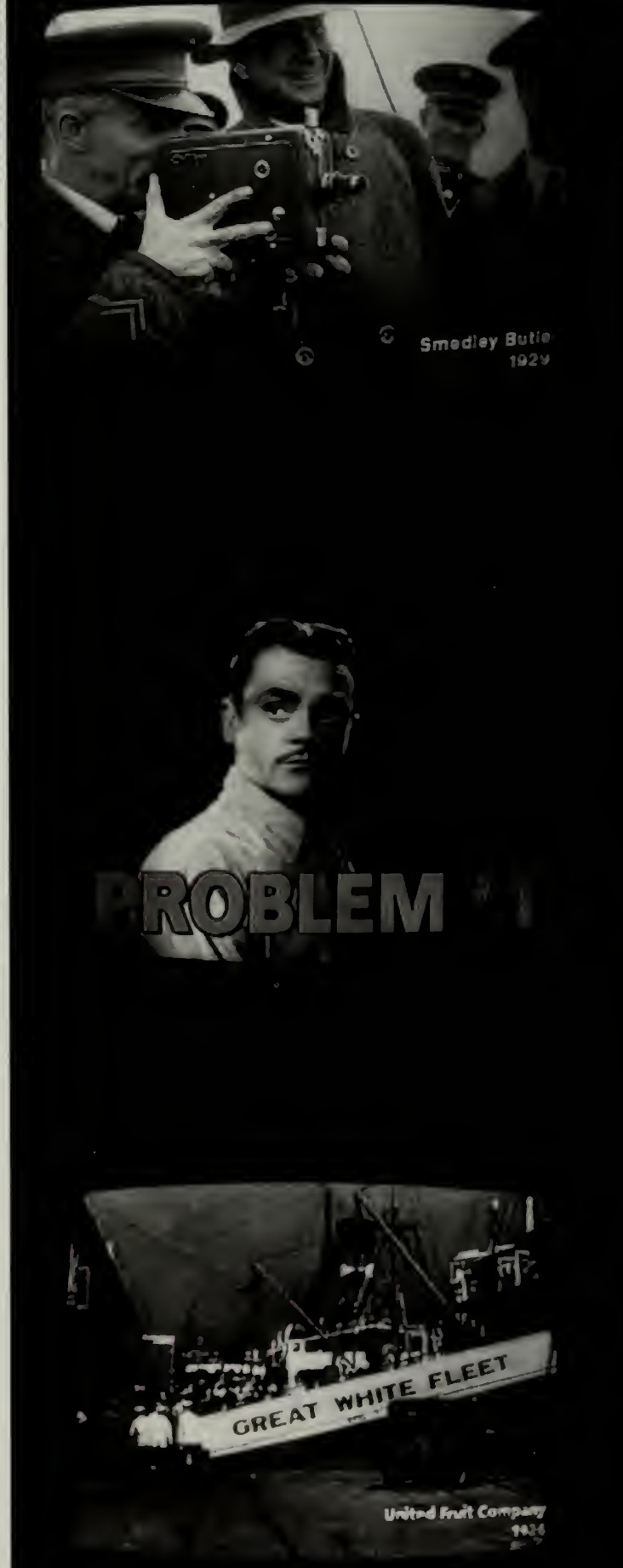
ited amount of time with a limited amount of money. Bender, who is today completing a doctoral dissertation in history and working at the American Social History Project, discovered how important historical research was for her while working on this film. Summers came into the project knowing he was an archivist driven by an archivist's passion. And DeeDee Halleck proved to be the filmmaker whose determination to tell a story ultimately prevailed.

In 1986, just as the project was slated to receive a \$35,000 Media Arts grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, it encountered one of the first attacks on the arts from the NEA's new conservative leadership. The peer panel's recommendation was overturned by the National Council on the Arts based on "aesthetic grounds," a rejection that foreshadowed later challenges to artists like Robert Mapplethorpe and Andres Serrano. [For a more detailed discussion, see Martha Gever's "Quality Control: Hodsoll Overturns Peer Panel" in *The Independent*, November 1986.] Despite unqualified support from the peer review panel and media arts world, the grant and its subsequent appeal were both turned down. Believing the decision was ideologically motivated, DeeDee Halleck observed at the time, "It shows the weakness of Reagan's foreign policy that anything that would increase public outrage won't be funded at the federal level. Our film is about imperialism as manufactured through the consciousness industry, and that's how opinions are shaped."

The NEA decision dealt a blow to the production team as well as to the film. The decision to spend nearly a year in the appeals process diverted energy and resources away from researching the film and writing new grants, and the team—overworked and underpaid—began to pull apart. Efforts at rough cutting the material began to reveal important differences of opinion within the production collective that would prove irresolvable.

Most important was the issue of structure and how to differentiate *Mañanaland*'s voice from that of the archival material. "There was always a concern about replaying these images without intervening in some way," according to Pennee Bender. "Is juxtaposition and repetition enough to counter the stereotyping and the narrative that was initially constructed? Can you rewrite those through juxtaposition alone? It's an edge that I'm not always comfortable with," she admits. "I don't know whether I always thought in terms of a traditional narration, but [I believed] that we needed more of an intervention that could have taken any number of forms."

At one point, when the group was still pursuing a chronological structure, they worked with Tuli Kupferberg of the Fugs who created a character introducing film clips in a show titled "Uncle Sam's Tropical Review." Kupferberg's funky spontaneity was right out of Paper Tiger Television's early outspoken media critiques, but it wasn't right for a work that seemed to call for more sober reflection. Ultimately, Halleck decided not to intervene in the narrative, which proved to be a breaking point for Bender, who withdrew from the project after the option of hiring a Latino writer-scholar like Eduardo Galliano to develop commentary was dropped. The reason seemed to come down to money once again: the project had received a modest grant from the California Humanities Council to hire a Latin American writer, and a month later Halleck received a substantial Rockefeller fellowship of \$35,000 that specified there would be no narration. So, due in part to the vagaries of funder's choices and changing aesthetic fashions in documentary production, what began as a collective enterprise ultimately became an individual media artist's perspective.





Halleck, who went to California to teach at the University of California at San Diego, persevered with the film, opening a new office and working with Nathalie Magnan and CheChe Martinez for several years developing the script and final edit. They tried many cuts juxtaposing Hollywood clips with archival stills, but found the Hollywood material so strong it overwhelmed all attempts to introduce a critical element. "It made me appreciate the power of the Hollywood narrative," Halleck remarked, as well as the power of the stars like James Cagney, Barbara Stanwyck, Fred Astaire, and Carmen Miranda.

Susan Ryan, a doctoral film student at the time, volunteered to do the rights research and spent several months determining that it would cost more than \$200,000 to buy all the rights to the Hollywood footage. Halleck decided that since the subject of the film is the "construction" of Latin America in American films, she was willing to go to court if needed to prove that using these clips to demonstrate U.S. media misrepresentation of Latin America was a matter of fair use. The closing credits of *The Gringo in Mañanaland* include an excerpt from the fair use clause in the current copyright law as a warning to license-holders who might want to sue.

Halleck did pay for all the copyrighted actuality footage used. It was, in part, an agreement she had made with Bob Summers at John E. Allen and also a tribute to the valiant archivists who make such fugitive material available. Halleck's reasoning is that Hollywood films have been preserved because people recognize they can still make money from them, but actuality films, which have a less certain economic future, have been largely neglected though they are just as deserving of preservation. Paying rights fees is another way of supporting the archives and their preservation efforts. Halleck spent about \$10,000 for nontheatrical, educational, and nonbroadcasting rights. Should she be successful in interesting a broadcasting outlet in the tape, she would then raise money to acquire those rights.

Ultimately, the only voiceover in *The Gringo in Mañanaland* is Halleck's own. She tells of her childhood experience in Cuba, where her father went to work for a U.S. mining company, and of watching American films five nights a week and seeing a shadowland called Latin America that bore little resemblance to the world she knew. This formative experience, which undoubtedly shaped Halleck's lifelong perspective as a media critic on the margins, also explains the film's focus. But her decision to juxtapose newsreels, features, cartoons, educational documentaries, and advertising—and let them speak for themselves, without direct analysis or historical contextualizing—will remain a point of debate for documentary critics and scholars.

For colleagues Pennée Bender and Bob Summers, this decision now seems less important than the single fact that the film has finally been completed. The fragile archival films they unearthed and preserved and their exhaustive research are finally reaching an audience. (A seven-volume database of research material and the collection of books, tapes, and graphic materials compiled for the project will be donated to a university library for scholarly use.)

Pierce Rafferty, co-producer of *The Atomic Cafe*, once told Halleck that the difference between their two films was that everyone knows that radiation is bad, but not everyone is convinced racism and colonialism are bad. Maybe if enough people see and discuss *The Gringo in Mañanaland*, such prejudice will begin to disintegrate like the nitrate stock that once celebrated it.

Deirdre Boyle just completed her own 12-year project, a history of American documentary video in the seventies. Guerrilla Television Revisited will be published by Oxford University Press next fall.

© 1995 Deirdre Boyle

How to Do Archival Film Research

Asked whether there is some intuitive gift essential for doing archival research, some dowser's ability for retrieving hidden films, or maybe a chromosome that disposes one to be an archivist, Pennee Bender and Bob Summers laugh and say no. "But there is a lot of perseverance needed, and the ability to stay awake," Bender noted. Since archival film research is not formally taught in this country, the duo—who have given workshops advising people on how to design research strategies, develop search categories, and differentiate different kinds of film stocks, among other topics—offered some practical advice to would-be archival filmmakers.

- If possible, hire a professional researcher. Anyone can do research in a film archive, but a professional researcher who is already familiar with the archives—skilled in combing through indexes and reading between the lines—can find material that an amateur would never locate. For example for *The Gringo in Mañanaland* Eddie Becker was responsible for locating the elusive footage of the Marines in Haiti: he suggested that Bender check at the Norton Air Force Base for numbered items missing from the National Archives. Even though the Base archive assured Bender they had no material earlier than 1932, dusty cans were unearthed containing original nitrate footage of the Marines in Haiti, Nicaragua, and the West Indies, thanks to Becker's stratagem. Working with a professional can prove invaluable, saving you time and money.

- If you can't hire a professional, do your homework first. Someone recently faxed Summers a request for footage of Harry Truman's acceptance speech on January 1, 1961. There were at least 10 more howlers like this one on the list. Summers has frequently located material from the teens for clients, who then ask if it has sound. "Nooooo," he answers, to which they reply, "Well, we can't use it." "How can they expect to be taken seriously?"

Summers says, exasperated. Often the most inexperienced person working on a project is assigned the job of archival research instead of the most knowledgeable. Filmmakers can get into trouble contracting to do an archival project only to discover too late that the material they counted on using does not—and maybe never did—exist.

- Don't be dogmatic; don't act like you know it all; listen to what an archivist says to you. Bender thinks many researchers don't give enough thought to how they present themselves to archivists. "Unless you can show you have done a lot of work in advance, know your subject, and are really prepared, they're not going to help you," Bender warns. Archivists need time to get to know what your research interest is and more time to tap their own store of knowledge, whether filed on computer disks or in their heads. It can take you several days working in an archive before an archivist accepts your seriousness and begins making connections that can help you locate relevant material.

- Make sure you have an adequate budget. Now that archival films are popular again, providing quick and seemingly cheap programming for hungry cable providers, Summers reminds filmmakers to secure adequate funding to conduct research, duplicate films, and secure the rights to them. Although much archival film footage exists in the public domain, what you are looking for may exist in private collections. As archive holders recognize the value of their collections, access to special collections can become more difficult and more costly than you planned. Acquiring rights can prove prohibitive if all rights are desired. Halleck's decision to secure limited rights to the actuality footage she used was a practical decision that enabled the tape to be released. Such pragmatic considerations should factor into any archival project's reckoning.

— DEIRDRE BOYLE

If you can't hire a professional, do your homework first. Someone recently faxed Summers a request for footage of Harry Truman's acceptance speech on January 1, 1961.

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BY ROBERT DARDON

Checking the Meter

THE SPECTRA PROFESSIONAL

The original Spectra Professional, now referred to as the "Classic," is an incident analog meter that for 33 years was every DP's workhorse. Reliable (unless dropped or baked in a car), compact (it's smaller than most people's hands), and fast (no waiting for an exceedingly precise digitized number to settle down), the Professional is a no nonsense, no frills, no battery meter.

Little has changed about the Classic since its introduction in 1947 except its status: the former industry standard is now the industry backup.

The problem with the Classic is that the mechanism required to move its pointer demands that it be treated delicately. Even gaffers and cinematographers who still swear by it complain of the Classic's zero tolerance for rough handling—one solid jolt and it could lose accuracy. Though many of these meters seemed impervious to the consequences of hard knocks (in 15 years, I never had a problem with either of my Spectras), their brethren's reputations as wimps had even tough ones like mine in the shop between pictures for checks.

The introduction of the more rugged Minolta III Digital Meter in the early eighties chipped away at the Classic's preeminence. The novelty of a digital readout attracted younger generations of cinematographers more comfortable with digital equipment in general. But the most notable feature of digital meters is that they are more resistance to jolts than analog meters, as they have no moving parts.

THE MINOLTA AUTO METER IV F

As with most light meters, the head of a Minolta Auto Meter IV F swivels 270 degrees. It reads both ambient light and quartz flashes with a silicon photocell.

The IV F reads shutter speeds from 1/8,000 of

The Minolta Autometer IV F reads only in camera aperture stops, not foot-candles. Courtesy Minolta



a second to second in half-stop notches and 8–128 frames per second. It also features two-channel memory (to take foreground and background readings, for instance), average calculation of these channel values, and a wide range of film speeds (3 to 8,000 ASA in 1/3 stop increments). One drawback, however, is that the meter reads only in camera aperture stops, not foot-candles. For many DPs, this is a problem. Chris Chomyn, a Los Angeles cinematographer and lecturer, prefers foot-candles "because the numbers have a direct mathematical relationship to one another, and the exposure calculations are easier."

The meter will deliver readings from f1.0 to f90 in 1/10 stop increments. Brightness difference is also measured on a scale from -9.9 to +9.9 in 1/10 stop increments. The power source for the meter is one AA battery.

There seems to be one fairly common problem with Minolta IV Fs: several cinematographers have experienced sudden, inexplicably inaccurate readings as much as two or three stops off.

Spectra's Pro IV has surpassed both its own analog meter and the Minolta IV F in popularity. Courtesy Spectra



"I purchased the Minolta IV F last year and have enjoyed using it until last month on a commercial, when my instincts told me the readings were not right," says Mike Southon, BSC. "I checked it out: my IV F was reading two stops under. I have treated this meter very carefully—I've never dropped it. A quick check with crew members revealed that they knew of other DPs whose IV Fs had done the same thing. Minolta switched the electronics out and didn't charge me for the repairs. According to what friends tell me, this usually fixes the problem once and for all."

There is speculation among DPs that the circuitry enabling Auto IV Fs to read stroboscopic light somehow hinders them from reading constant incident light with a high degree of consistency. But this simply is not true. One thing to watch out for: the battery can dip below a certain level of voltage with age. The scary part is that inaccurate readings may occur for a while before the Low Voltage Indicator activates. This is especially true of lithium batteries.

THE SPECTRA PROFESSIONAL IV (Digital)

Three years ago Spectra finally acknowledged consumer preference for digital meters and came out with its own version. Since then, the Spectra Pro IV has surpassed both its own analog meter and the Minolta IV F in popularity, for several reasons.

The Pro IV reads light in both T-Stops and foot-candles. What's more, it is designed to read both incident and reflected light with a silicon Photo voltaic cell and computer-selected glass filters tailored to the specific response of the film. Plus, information such as shutter angle, film speed, etc., can be locked in and forgotten about.

In terms of industrial design, the 6 oz. Spectra doesn't feel as good in your hand as the ergonomically correct Minolta and is 1.5 oz. heavier. Laszlo Kovacs, ASC, once jokingly said that after working with his new Spectra it felt like he'd been holding a brick in his hand all day.

On a more technical level, the range of light the Pro IV will read digitally is 1,000,000 to 1, or 20 stops. In digital f-stops, that's f0.35 to f90 in 1/10th stop increments. In analog mode, the meter reads from f0.7 to f45 in 1/3 stop increments. In foot-candles it reads from 0.1 fc to 70,000 fc. (in Lux this is one to 100,000.) Aside

from this greater range, the Spectra has one more very useful feature: an illuminated scale. This little light, held over from the old Spectra Combi, comes in handy when shooting with only one or two foot-candles.

Speaking of digital meters in general, Chomyn brings up a quirky phenomenon. "At times I actually prefer to use an analog meter over a digital meter," he says, "because I find that digital meters tend to create a false need to adjust lights within minute fractions of the desired levels, whereas analog meters tend to be less 'demanding.'"

Something else to watch out for when using digital meters is that they seem to be sensitive to radio signals. Glen MacPherson, a Vancouver, B.C., cinematographer, has a pretty scary story.

"I discovered a couple of years ago that the Autometer III, when close to a walkie will give you some wildly erratic readings," MacPherson says. "It happened as I measured a light on a condor, and my gaffer, standing next to me, radioed instructions up to the electrician. I've demonstrated this to every gaffer I've worked with, because some guys keep their walkies keyed while you adjust the light. I've since bought a IV F and find that it doesn't react as much, if at all, to radio interference."

Most seasoned cinematographers use either Spectras or Minoltas, but, of course, there are other meters available which are generally less

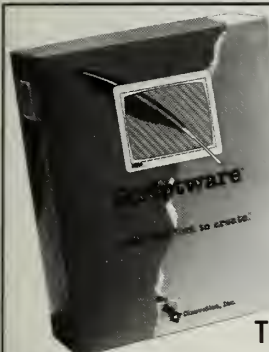
expensive.

The Sekonic L398M (also known as the Studio Deluxe) is not as sensitive to low levels of light as a Spectra, but neither is it as delicate. It is considered the best "entry level" meter, and it is fine for most situations, but if you are making a serious commitment to cinematography, it is only a matter of time before you'll wish you could read the low levels of light today's film stocks and lenses are prepared to handle.

Finally, there's the Gossen Luna Pro. Many cinematographers feel this meter is best suited for still photography and studio work. The photosphere is very small, and the dial is difficult to read. Moreover, it is sensitive and in the shop for adjustments and repairs quite often. One feature its devotees are fond of is a correction function that allows for programming exact exposures with a variety of shutter angles.

These last two are good "entry level" meters because they sell for under \$150 (versus \$360 for the Spectra or \$300 for the Minolta.) But it you are making a serious commitment to cinematography, it is only a matter of time before you'll wish you had the more expensive meters than can read the low levels of light that today's film stocks and lenses are able to handle.

Robert Dardon is a filmmaker and runs the Independent Filmmaker's Forum (Indie@indiefilm.com), an online information system in Los Angeles.



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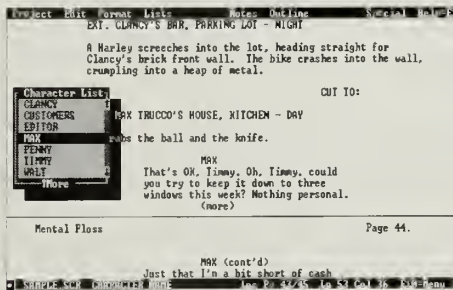
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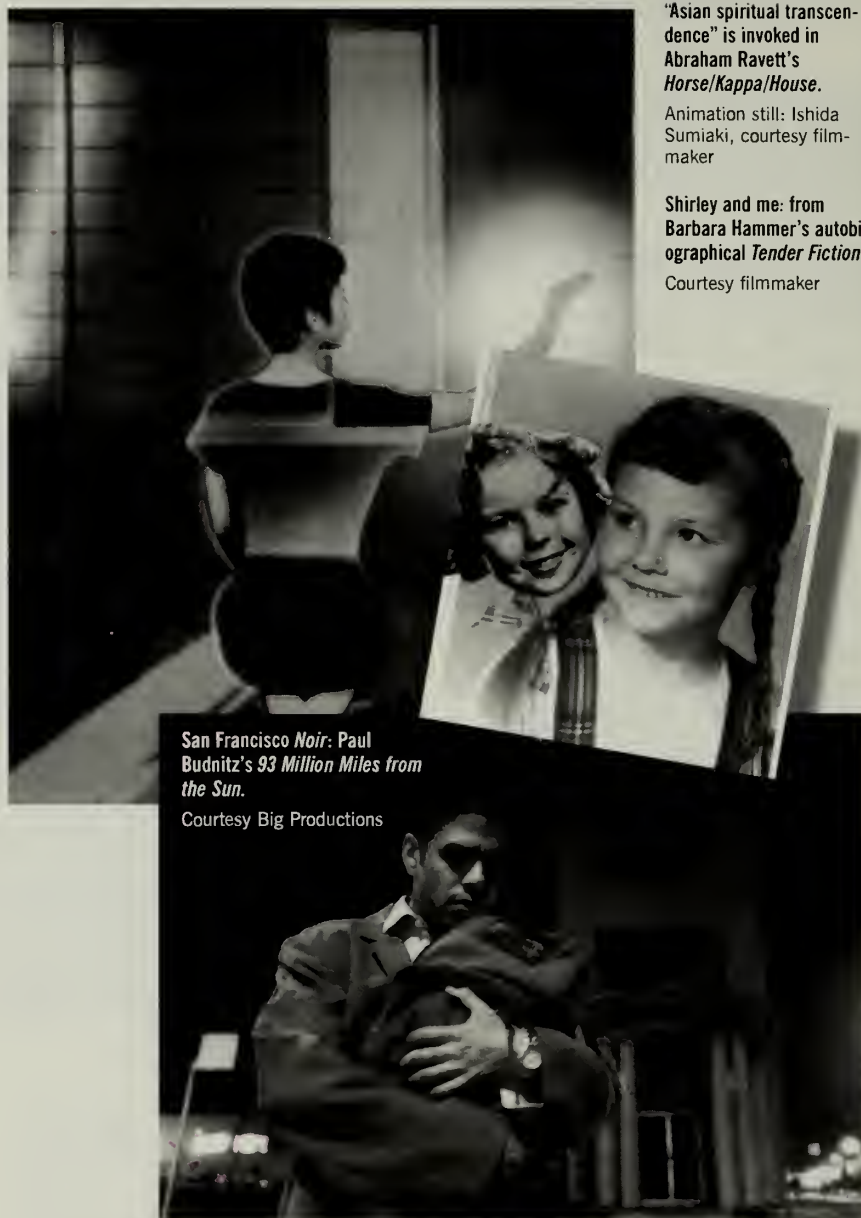


BY ADAM KNEE &
MITCH ALBERT

Values of family in America come under close scrutiny in Thomas Allen Harris's **Vintage: Families of Value** (72 min., 16mm), which explores three African-American families (including the filmmaker's own) through the eyes of lesbian and gay siblings [see sidebar p. 46]. Harris, an Assistant Professor at the University of California-San Diego and a former staff producer at New York City's PBS affiliate WNET, originally shot this experimental documentary on Hi-8 and super 8mm, often allowing his subjects to tape and interview one another. The result is an intimate dialog among black families on such often difficult issues as familial relationships, child abuse, coming out, and AIDS. *Vintage: Families of Value*, Chimpanzee Productions, Visual Arts #0327, 9500 Gilman Drive, La Jolla, CA 92093; (619) 534-1307.

Autobiographical exploration is also the order of the day for lesbian-feminist filmmaker Barbara Hammer's **Tender Fictions** (58 min., 16mm), a sequel to her award-winning 1992 documentary *Nitrate Kisses*. Hammer here relates "childhood stories of the artist as a young lesbian and intimate tales of the lesbian as a young artist," drawing on cultural studies discourses to establish a critical distance from the material and to provide an ironic edge to synthesized "voices of authority." The filmmaker incorporates personal archival footage of such landmark events as the first San Diego Women's Music Festival (1965) and the 1968 AFL/CIO faculty strike at San Francisco State College in an autobiographical montage which operates along the fragile line between truth and fiction. *Tender Fictions*, Barbara Hammer, 55 Bethune St. #114G, New York, NY 10014; (212) 645-9077 (tel/fax).

The doors of perception melt into an all-perceiving state of not-feeling for the yogi who worship Shiva, Creator and Destroyer. This is darsan, "sacred perception." And this is **Shiva Darsan** (12 min., VHS), video/computer artist Barbara Sykes-Dietze's "video poem" about Hinduism,



"Asian spiritual transcendence" is invoked in Abraham Ravett's *Horse/Kappa/House*.

Animation still: Ishida Sumiaki, courtesy filmmaker

Shirley and me: from Barbara Hammer's autobiographical *Tender Fictions*. Courtesy filmmaker

San Francisco Noir: Paul Budnitz's *93 Million Miles from the Sun*.

Courtesy Big Productions

holy men, and transcendence. Sykes-Dietze attended the Shivaratri Festival in Kathmandu, held at the most sacred shrine in Nepal, to observe the celebration of Shiva at his birthplace and offer up some reflections of her own. *Shiva Darsan*, CINE (Council on International Non-Theatrical Events), 1001 Connecticut Ave., ste. 638, Washington, DC 20036; (202) 785-1136; fax: 785-4114.

Asian spiritual transcendence is also cinematographically invoked in Abraham Ravett's *Horse/Kappa/House* (33min., 16mm), a work inspired by an early 20th Century collection of regional Japanese folk tales known as *The Legends of Tono* (*Tono monogatari*). Ravett, a professor at Hampshire College, recorded the landscapes surrounding a number of small villages in the north-

eastern Iwate Prefecture in order to create a cinematic space which echoes, by implication and association, the unseen, spiritual dimensions of the environment. The film makes use of such techniques as time lapse cinematography, animation, and optical printing, as well as a soundtrack incorporating indigenous sounds, field recordings of religious ceremonies, and lullabies, in order to amplify and alter our perceptions of time and place. *Horse/Kappa/House*, Abraham Ravett, 193 Nonotuck St., Florence, MA 01060; (413) 596-6588.

Re-Noir: A mysterious French woman hires a New York private detective to locate *The Golden Ram* (90 min., 16mm), a legendary jewel of extraordinary value with medieval Berber origins and a present-day provenance of

da Mob. Alain G. Cloarec's credit-card-financed homage to B-movies, femmes fatales, MacGuffins, and P.I.s features such locations as Martinique, France, the Sahara, and Cuba, where different characters tell their versions of the Ram's odyssey. New York chase sequences encompass the 59th St. Bridge, the Statue of Liberty, and "a maze of tunnels culminating at the top of the Brooklyn Bridge tower." The film was shot over a four-year period and should be ready to make the rounds this winter. *The Golden Ram*, Alain G. Cloarec, 333 E. 79th St., #17N, NY, NY 10021; (212) 988-2903.

Also venturing into noir territory, after a fashion, is *93 Million Miles from the Sun* (106 min., 16mm), shot almost exclusively at night on location in the alleyways and parking lots of San Francisco's Mission District. Filmed in color, this off-beat feature follows the lives of four divergent characters over the course of a single night and utilizes an unconventional temporal structure. The filming situation posed quite a number of challenges for first-time writer/director Paul Budnitz, such as the presence of real-life youth gangs (who were accommodated by being incorporated into the film) and an assault by a transsexual with a handgun and several pit-bulls. The film was produced on a small budget with an all-volunteer cast and crew; food, film, and equipment were donated by local businesses. Budnitz edited the film in his living room using a home computer. *93 Million Miles from the Sun*, Big Productions, 2237 Parker Street, Berkeley, CA 94704; (510) 843-2447.

Those who are fed up with watching too much trash might want to take a look at Cintia Cabib's *Good Garbage* (19 min., video), a work that takes the position that Americans are throwing out an ever increasing amount of perfectly usable refuse. The video makes use of live footage, cartoons, and songs to show how a curbside recycling program can turn trash into a resource, reducing our reliance on landfills and incinerators and thereby benefiting our environment. *Good Garbage*, Cintia Cabib, 4242 East-West Hwy., apt. 712, Chevy Chase, MD 20815; (301) 657-3225.

An intense attraction between two thirtysomething women is the focus of Marilyn Freeman's *Meeting Magdalene* (34 min., 16 mm). Set in Olympia, Washington, the film tells the story of a computer consultant and a would-be cop who fall for each other hard and fast—only to discover that neither woman is really available. The work was produced through Olympia Pictures, an emerging Northwest production company concerned with promoting tolerance and diversity through films about the lesbian and gay community. *Meeting Magdalene*, Olympia Pictures, Box 341, Olympia, WA 98507-0341; (360) 438-9502.

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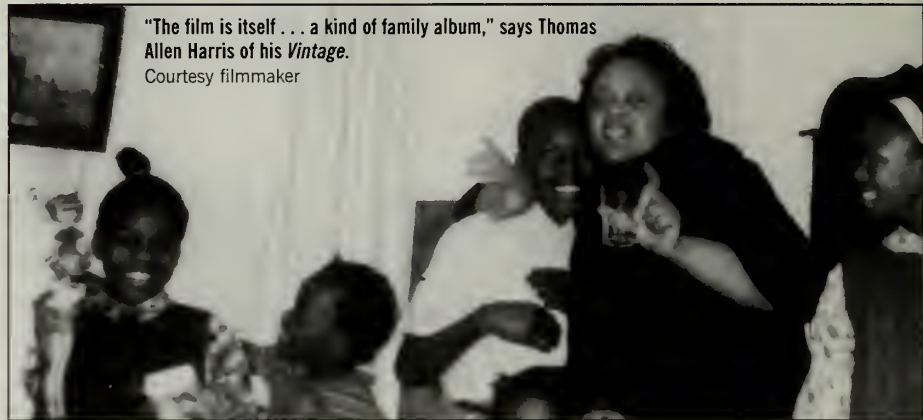
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Cue & A

with Thomas Allen Harris



Q: Could you talk a little about the genesis of *Vintage: Families of Value*?

A: My brother and I, as two queer siblings close in age, shared a very active childhood fantasy world, which would later inform the work of each of us as artists. I was interested in the way this childhood world contributed to how we thought about ourselves and in the processes by which the two of us had been able to educate and change our family in a fundamental way.

I also wondered: did other queer black siblings likewise experience the creation of a kind of microfamily within the family? I was very interested in exploring what other kinds of familial relationships had been found, what other kinds of identities had evolved—especially given the religious right's tendency to oppose the terms "queer" and "family." To this end, I not only turned the camera on my own family, but gave cameras to other families with queer siblings as well.

Q: To what extent did you allow these other families to shape the material in which they were involved?

A: I taught the other groups of siblings how to use the camera—basics of composition, lighting, and framing. I patched the camera into a television set, so they would have a sense of what the image would look like. And I talked with all of them, engaging some of the issues of the project. Then I could leave the premises.

Q: Why would you leave during the shooting?

A: To give the siblings the time to talk among themselves and not have a third intermediary. Everyone is already aware of the camera. And

here there was also the extra baggage of the family. I didn't want them worrying about the filmmaker as well, but instead negotiating family power dynamics, using the camera to step outside, to introduce new spaces of being.

I let the subjects be in charge of the film's fantasy sequences as well. The roots of the film have very much to do with free play, with the black queer imagination and how it responds to an American family legacy that weighs upon all of us.

Q: Did you find it particularly challenging to film the sequences involving your own family?

A: It was very difficult. I hadn't completely reconciled myself with my father or completely come to terms with my brother's HIV positive status. This is part of why it took me two years to finish editing the film. It forced me to work through some of the things I was feeling, and I couldn't shape the material until I achieved some kind of resolution.

Part of my interest here is in how art or cinema can transform. For me, it happened in the filmmaking process. The film is itself a document of this transformative process, but it's also structured as a kind of family album, slipping between memory, conversation, and documentary, as well as fantasy. It's an album not just of my family but of a kind of extended family, exploring the experience and imagination of a larger community.

—ADAM KNEE

BY KATHRYN
BOWSER

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ANTI FILM FESTIVAL, February, FL. Founded in '93, fest emphasizes films "that challenge status quo, present difficult ideas & feature social, political or structural analysis." Organizers of fest define it as: "Anti Film Festival," not "anti film," in opposition to fests as gala marketing affairs w/ corporate sponsorship, etc. Seek marginal, obscure minority of filmmakers w/ taste for poetry, danger & complete disregard for market. Entries should be under 15 min, completed w/in last yr. Formats: 16mm, 1/2", super 8. Entry fee: \$25. Deadline: Early Jan. Contact: Mark Boswell, director, Alliance Film Video Coop, 924 Lincoln Road, Suite 214, Miami Beach, FL 33139; (305) 538-8242, fax: 532-9710.

ASIFA-EAST ANIMATED FILM AWARDS, January, NY. ASIFA is int'l society of animators founded in '61; this is longest continuously running animation fest in US. Amateur & student prods, sponsored works of specified lengths & nonsponsored work accepted; entries must have been produced in previous 3 yrs. Awards (certificates & cash prizes) for direction animation, design, concept, soundtrack & student. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2". Entry fee: \$5-30. Deadline: Early Jan. Contact: Linda Simensky, president, ASIFA-EAST Animated Film Awards, 470 W. 24th St., #15A, NY, NY 10011; (212) 924-8283.

ATLANTA FILM AND VIDEO FESTIVAL, June, GA. Presented by media arts center IMAGE,

competitive fest, founded in '76, is dedicated to innovative, entertaining productions & boasts enthusiastic local audience. \$7,000 in cash, services & equipment; film & video awarded separately. Film: Grand Jury Award, Best Doc, Best Informative Doc, Best Experimental, Best Narrative, Best Animation, Best Student (experimental, narrative, experimental narrative, doc, technical achievement, emerging vision). Video: Juror's Award for Achievement, Best Doc, Best Experimental Doc, Best Doc by an Emerging Maker, Best Performance Art Doc, Best Experimental, Best Experimental Children's Program, Best Narrative, Best Student, Best Narrative Comedy, Best Use of Animation, Best Media Criticism, Best Dramatic Criticism. Screenings held at High Museum of Art, IMAGE & local theatres. All work must be ind. & completed since Jan. 1 of preceding 2 yrs. Sponsored works (industrials, commercials, etc.) ineligible. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", super 8, 8mm. Entry fee: \$40 (individual/nonprofit); \$50 (distributor/for profit); add \$5 for foreign. Deadline: Mid Dec./early Jan. Contact: Anne Hubbell, fest director, Atlanta Film and Video Festival, IMAGE Film/Video Center, 75 Bennett St., Ste N1, Atlanta, GA 30307; (404) 352-4254; fax: 352-0653.

BACA/BROOKLYN ARTS COUNCIL FILM AND VIDEO FESTIVAL, March, NY. Short ind films & videos accepted in this fest, in its 30th yr in 1996. Juried by panel of film/video professionals, many from New York Chapter of National Academy of Television Arts & Sciences. Highest scoring films & videos (about 25) given award certificates & screened publicly at various NYC venues, incl. Metropolitan Museum, Millennium, Brooklyn College & BACA Downtown Theater. All entries must be completed works no longer than 60 min. Industrial or instructional films ineligible. Winning films get opportunity to air on Bravo. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", Beta, 1", Hi8, D-2. Entry fee: \$40. Deadline: mid-Jan. Contact: Lorraine Boyd, exec. dir., BACA/Brooklyn Arts Council Film & Video Festival, Brooklyn Arts Council, 195 Cadman Plaza West, Brooklyn, NY 11201; (718) 625-0080, fax: 625-3294

BALTIMORE INDEPENDENT FILM & VIDEO MAKERS COMPETITION, April, MD. "Celebrates spirit & enthusiasm" of ind. film & video artist. Work must be from N. America. Winners receive cash prizes in each cat & for Best of Fest & are screened in Baltimore Int'l Film Fest. Other special honors incl. Helen Cyr award for best work produced in MD, Pink Flamingo award for gay-themed work & best African-American work. Formats accepted: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2"; preview on 1/2" only. Entry fee: \$50; \$60 over 60 min. Deadline: Late Jan. Contact: Gabriel Wardell, program dir., Baltimore Independent Film & Video Makers Competition, Baltimore Film Forum, Baltimore Museum of Art, 10 Art Museum Drive, Baltimore, MD 21218; (410) 235-2777, fax: 235-3111.

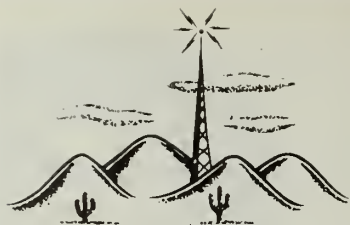
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LOS ANGELES ASIAN PACIFIC FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, May, CA. Estab. '85 by Visual Communications, nation's oldest Asian Pacific American media arts center & UCLA Film & TV Archive, fest has grown into major showcase highlighting cinematic & video expression by Asian Pacific Amer. & Asian int'l mediamakers. 1994 fest offered 120 works, w/ diverse program providing audiences a chance to view important achievements



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by establ. & emerging mediamakers. Features & shorts eligible in cats: dramatic/narrative, docs, experimental, animation/graphic films & 1-channel videos in all genres. Works must be by Asian & Pacific Americans w/ themes involving but not limited to Asian Pacific American culture, history & experiences. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, super 8, 3/4", 1/2". Entry fee: \$10 for return shipping. Deadline: Late Jan. Contact: Abraham Ferrer, Los Angeles Asian Pacific Film & Video Festival, Visual Communications, 263 So. Los Angeles St., Ste 307, Los Angeles, CA 90012; (213) 680-4462; fax: 687-4848.

LOS ANGELES INDEPENDENT FILM FESTIVAL: SHOWCASE OF CULTURAL DIVERSITY, April, CA. Debuting in '95, fest's focus is American ind. films. Committed to "very strong focus on the filmmaker." Eight nonprofit orgs also help curate to ensure diversity of submissions, incl. American Cinematheque, Black Filmmaker Foundation, Filmforum, Coalition of Asian Pacifics in Entertainment, Gay & Lesbian Media Coalition, International Documentary Association, National Latino Communication Center & Women in Film. Most work by first-time filmmakers. Opening & closing night galas held at DGA; body of fest held at Raleigh Studios. Entries must have been completed since Jan 1 of previous 2 yrs & director must be US resident. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 1/2". Entry fee: \$25 over 50 min./\$15 under 50 min. Deadline: Early Jan. Contact: Robert Faust, fest director, Los Angeles Independent Film Festival, 8306 Wilshire Blvd., Ste 28, Beverly Hills, CA 90211; (213) 930-2102; fax: 930-2780.

MAIN STREET FILM FESTIVAL, May, CA. Founded '92, fest is showcase for experimental, ind. & student films not restricted by cat & theme. Interested in new work of all types, especially "those that move boundaries of accepted practices forward." Premiere preferred but not required. About 20-25 films & videos programmed each yr. Awards given in each cat, along with Best of Fest & Honorable Mention awards. Entries must have been completed w/in previous 18 mos. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", 8mm. Entry fee: \$15-\$25 (can be waived). Deadline: Mid Jan. Contact: Cheryl Harris, director, Communication Studies, Main Street Film Festival, 5500 University Parkway, California State Univ., San Bernardino, CA 92407; (619) 434-1461; fax: 434-2403; charris@cts.com.

MEDICINE WHEEL ANIMATION FESTIVAL, April, MA. Annually selected touring collection of artistic animated shorts by N. Amer. ind. filmmakers; dedicated exclusively to noncommercial, experimental animation rarely seen by public; looks for "historical, difficult, challenging, enlightening, experimental & multicultural films." In 1990, fest premiered at Harvard Univ Film Archive & has gone on to present tours across country in such venues as Coolidge Corner Theatre (MA), George Eastman House (NY), Cleveland Cinematheque (OH), Hallwalls (NY), IMAGE (GA), Oglethorpe University (GA), Rhode Island School of Design (RI), Lawrence Academy (MA), Brattle Theatre (MA), Biograph Theatre (DC) & universities, galleries & museums. Filmmakers share 20% of profit on touring fest. Entries must be under 25 min.; can be completed in any yr. Fest sponsored by Medicine Wheel Artists'

Retreat, nonprofit org. w/ mission of supporting working artists in pursuit of their personal visions. Formats: 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", super 8. Entry fee: None. Deadline: Late Jan. Contact: Cheri Amarna, project director, Medicine Wheel Animation Festival, Box 1088, Groton, MA 01450-3088; (508) 448-3717.

MUSEUM OF FLIGHT FILM AND VIDEO FESTIVAL, April, WA. Nat'l event showcasing outstanding aviation films & videos created "to encourage use & enjoyment of film & video related to flight." Individuals as well as airplane manufacturers & airlines eligible. Films receive certificate of exhibition & are eligible to be chosen by audience for "Ernie Gann Best of Fest Award." All entries must have been produced or released during 18 mo. preceding yr of entry. Formats accepted: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2". Entry fee: \$25, reduced entry fee for students. Deadline: Early Jan. Contact: Don Franks, Museum of Flight Film & Video Festival, 9404 East Marginal Way South Seattle, WA 98108-4097; (206) 764-5700; fax: 764-5707.

NATIONAL STUDENT MEDIA ARTS EXHIBITION (MEATFEST), March-May, NY. Founded in '88, fest organized entirely by & for students. All tapes reviewed by peer committees of students of time-based media. MeatFest seeks wide variety of interesting & challenging work that demonstrates concerns of students of all ages. All genres & subjects welcome; works must be completed w/in previous 2 yrs & no more than 29 min. Selected tapes incl. in 6 wk exhibit in Visual Studies Workshop Gallery & cablecast on RCTV public access. Fest also becomes part of extensive archives of Visual Studies Workshop Galleries traveling exhibitions program. About 20 works selected each yr for audiences of over 400. Entry fee: None (return postage necessary). Deadline: Mid Jan. Contact: Pia Cseri-Briones, media center coord., National Student Media Arts Exhibition (Meatfest), Visual Studies Workshop, 31 Prince St., Rochester, NY 14607-1499; (716) 442-8676; fax: 442-1992.

NEW DIRECTORS/NEW FILMS, March, NY. Highly regarded noncompetitive series presented by Film Society of Lincoln Center & Museum of Modern Art. Founded in '72, fest presents average of 23 features & 15 shorts each yr at MoMA. About 900 entries submitted. No cats: all genres & lengths considered. Shorts presented w/ features. Films generally shown twice; however, docs may be shown only once. Films selected by 3 programmers at Film Society & 3 curators from museum. Fest is well publicized; all programs reviewed in *New York Times* & *Village Voice*. Generally sells out (attendance averages 93% & estimated at 25,000). Entries must have been completed w/in previous yr & be NY premieres with no prior public exhibition. Formats: 35mm, 16mm; preview on cassette. Entry fee: None. Deadline: Mid Jan. Contact: Isa Cucinotta, film coordinator, New Directors/New Films, Film Society of Lincoln Center, 70 Lincoln Center Plaza, New York, NY 10023-6595; (212) 875-5610; fax: 875-5636.

NEW ENGLAND FILM AND VIDEO FESTIVAL, May, MA. Founded in '75, fest open to ind. & college student film/videomakers w/ works complet-

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Members are eligible to purchase discounted personal and production insurance plans through AIVF suppliers. A wide range of health insurance options are available, as well as special liability, E&O, and production plans tailored for the needs of low-budget mediamakers.

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A growing list of businesses across the country offer AIVF members discounts on equipment and auto rentals, film processing, transfers, editing, and other production necessities. Plus long-distance and overnight courier services are available at special rates for AIVF members from national companies. In New York, members receive discounted rates at two hotels to make attendance at our programs and other important events more convenient.

CONFERENCE/SCREENING ROOM

AIVF's new office has a low-cost facility for members to hold meetings and small private screenings of work for friends, distributors, programmers, funders, and producers.

INFORMATION

We distribute a series of publications on financing, funding, distribution, and production; members receive discounts on selected titles. AIVF's staff also can provide information about distributors, festivals, and general information pertinent to your needs. Our library houses information on everything from distributors to sample contracts to budgets.

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Members receive periodic advocacy alerts, with updates on important legislative issues affecting the independent field and mobilization for collective action.

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AIVF sponsors monthly member get-togethers in cities across the country; call the office for the one nearest you. Plus members are carrying on active dialogue online—creating a "virtual community" for independents to share information, resources, and ideas. Another way to reach fellow independents to let them know about your screenings, business services, and other announcements is by renting our mailing list, available at a discount to members.

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ed in previous 2 yrs; highlights work of New England film & videomakers & is known for diverse offerings. Entrants must be students from NE colleges or from NE who are resident at other colleges. All lengths eligible. Awards of up to \$6,000 in cash & services awarded in ind. & student cats, incl. Best of Fest, Indie Film, Indie Video, Student Film & Video, Animation, Experimental, Conceptual Originality, Doc, Community Access. About 15-20 works showcased, w/ audiences estimated at 2,000. Reviewed in regional press. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, super 8, 3/4", 1/2", Beta, 8mm; preview on 1/2" only. Entry fee: \$30 inds, \$20 college students. Deadline: Late Jan. Contact: Cherie Martin, fest co-director, New England Film & Video Festival, 1126 Boylston St., Ste. 201, Boston, MA 02215; (617) 536-1540; fax: 536-3576; bfvf@aol.com.

NEW YORK LESBIAN AND GAY FILM FESTIVAL—THE NEW FESTIVAL, June, NY. Fest showcases all genres by, for, or about gay men & lesbians, incl. dramatic features & shorts, docs & experimental works. Committed to presenting diverse & culturally inclusive programs of film & video. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2"; preview on 1/2" only. Entry fee: None. Deadline: Mid Jan. Contact: Fest Director, The New Festival, 462 Broadway, Ste. 510, New York, NY 10013; (212) 343-2707; fax: 343-0629.

NEW YORK UNDERGROUND FILM AND VIDEO FESTIVAL, March, NY. Fest founded to cater to "true ind. artist" & in response to other fests that "act merely as springboards for minijobs' art house releases." Agenda is to show works that might not otherwise have a forum. Awards go to best feature, doc, short, experimental & animation; also a People's Choice Award. No cash prizes. Fest launches exhaustive publicity campaign. In '94 audiences estimated at 8,000, growing to 10,000 in '95, its second edition. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", super 8, CD-ROM. Entry fee: \$25. Deadline: Late Jan. Contact: Andrew Gurland, exec. programmer, New York Underground Film & Video Festival, 225 Lafayette St., Ste. 409, New York, NY 10012; (212) 925-3440; fax: 925-3430.

ROSEBUD COMPETITION, April, DC. Rosebud is all-volunteer org. formed in '90 to promote ind. film & video in Washington, DC, area. Goal is to honor "innovative, experimental, unusual or deeply personal in creative filmmaking." Competition accepts works completed or first released since Jan. of preceding 2 yrs; eligible entrants are producers or directors who are current residents of DC, MD, or VA. Works accepted in all cats, incl. narrative, doc, art/experimental, music video & animation; works-in-progress/trailers/promos welcome if they stand on their own. 20 nominees & 5 winners, incl. Best of Show, chosen by panel of film & video professionals. Nominated works showcased at Washington's Biograph Theatre & winners announced later in month at gala invitation-only awards ceremony, with their works screened at Filmfest DC. Prizes in 1995 incl. \$400 for each winner, \$1,000 of Kodak Film for Best of Show & \$50 to each of 4 honorable mentions. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2". Entry fee: \$20. Deadline: Late Jan. Contact: Natasha Reatig, exec.

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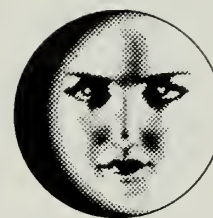
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SAN JOSE STATE VISUAL ARTISTS FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, April, CA. Founded in '90, this 2-day fest accepts works of all subject matters & styles. Events incl. screenings, music & seminars. Formats accepted: 1/2". Entry fee: \$10. Deadline: Late Jan. Contact: Colleen Pon, exec. dir. San Jose State Visual Artists Film & Video Festival, Associated Students Program Board, San Jose State University, Student Union Rm. 350, San Jose, CA 95192-0132; (408) 924-6260; fax: 924-6239.

SOUTH BY SOUTHWEST FILM FESTIVAL (SXSW), March, TX. Regional & ind. film & video fest showcases approx 90 works, incl. shorts, for audiences estimated at 10,000 over 9 days. Entries must have been completed w/in previous 2 yrs. Awards: Best Narrative Feature, Best Doc Feature, Best Narrative Short, Best Doc Short, Best Music Video. SXSW features 2-day conference kicking off fest & coincides w/ annual SXSW Film Conference, which offers panel discussions on aspects of filmmaking geared toward working film & videomakers as well as screenwriters, aspiring professionals & movie aficionados. Formats accepted: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2". Entry fee: \$15 (\$20 w/ return of video). Deadline: Early Jan. Contact: Nancy Schafer, exec. producer, SXSW, Box 4999, Austin, TX 78765; (512) 467-7979; fax: 451-0754; 72662.2465@compuserve.com.

TAOS TALKING PICTURE FESTIVAL, April, NM. Debuting in '95, fest celebrates Taos, storytelling & moving image. Purpose is "to present a celebration of film which exemplifies & explores leadership role of film & to encourage literate production & informed consumption of powerful arts of film & video." Incl. ind. features, shorts & docs. Foci of '95 fest were media literacy, Native Amer. & Hispanic filmmakers & new film discoveries "steeped in mystique of Southwest." Highlights incl. conference on media literacy; tributes; *Open Sheet* screenings (a come-one-come-all showcase for emerging filmmakers); exposition/hands-on lab for adults & children to illuminate history of storytelling, from oral traditions to new technologies. Entries should have been completed w/in 18 months of fest. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4". Entry fee: \$10. Deadline: Mid Jan. Contact: Joshua Bryant, exec. dir., Taos Talking Picture Festival, 216 North Pueblo Road, #216, Taos, NM; (505) 751-0637; fax: 751-7385; taosfilm@laplaza.taos.nm.us.

TORRANCE SHORT FILM FESTIVAL, March, CA. Founded in '94, fest held at Torrance Cultural Arts Center in 500-seat James Armstrong Theatre w/ film & video projection. Special emphasis placed on entries w/ humorous social commentary, winners of other fests or that use film as learning tool. Awards: 1st, 2nd & 3rd prizes; Jury Choice Award; Audience Choice Award. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 1/2". Entry fee: \$10. Deadline: Mid Jan. Contact: Barbara Blum, exec. dir., Torrance Short Film Festival, Torrance Visitors Bureau, 3400 Torrance Blvd., Ste 100, Torrance, CA 90503; (310) 792-2343; fax: 540-7662.

U.S. COMEDY ARTS FESTIVAL, March, CO. Held in Aspen, fest sponsored by HBO, shows select group of "exceptional" live action short comedies & administered by American Film Institute. Entries must be under 20 min. Also other comedy events. Formats: 35mm, 16mm; preview on cassette. Entry fee: None. Deadline: Late Jan. Contact: Ken Wlaschin/Gary McVey, U.S. Comedy Arts Festival, American Film Institute, 2021 North Western Ave, Los Angeles, CA 90027; (213) 856-7707; fax: 462-4049.

UNITED STATES SUPER 8MM FILM FESTIVAL, February, NJ. 8th edition of fest, which encourages any genre (animation, doc, experimental, fiction, personal, etc.) originated on super 8mm film or 8mm video. All works screened by panel of judges who award \$1000 in cash & prizes. In 1995, 17 works out of 146 entries from throughout U.S. & Canada won prizes. Rutgers Film Cop/NJMAC has sponsored four touring programs culled from Super 8 Fest prize winners from previous four yrs. Tours media art centers, film fests & universities, incl. 2nd World Fest of Video in Brussels; Visual Studies Workshop in Rochester, NY; 911 Media Arts Center in Seattle; Boston School of Museum of Fine Arts; Hallwalls in Buffalo, NY; Melbourne Super 8 Fest in Australia; Pittsburgh Filmmakers & many others. Formats: 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", super 8. Entry fee: \$30. Deadline: Mid Jan. Contact: Albert Nigrin, director, United States Super 8mm Film Festival, Rutgers Film Coop/NJ Media Arts Center, Program in Cinema Studies, Rutgers University, 43 Mine Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08903; (908) 932-8482; fax: 932-1935; njmac@aol.com.

VIDEOSCAPE: AN ASIAN AMERICAN VIDEO SHOWCASE, March, NY. Sponsored by Asian CineVision, NY-based nat'l media arts center dedicated to heightening understanding & appreciation of Asian & Asian American media, noncompetitive fest showcases latest works by Asian & Asian American video artists. Entries must have been originally produced on video & produced, directed &/or written by artists of Asian heritage. Formats: 3/4"; preview on 1/2". Entry fee: None. Deadline: Mid Jan. Contact: Fest Director, Videoscape, Asian Cine Vision, 32 East Broadway, 4th fl., New York, NY 10002; (212) 925-8685; fax: 925-8157.

FOREIGN

DRESDEN FILM FESTIVAL, April, Germany. Founded in '89, fest "developed after re-unification in city famous for 'classical arts.'" Special interest in animation & short ind films. Awards: animation 1st prize (DM10,000), animation 2nd prize (DM5,000), animation 3rd prize (DM3,000), audience prize (DM3,000), short 1st prize (DM5,000), short 2nd prize (DM3,500), short 3rd prize (DM2,500). Entries must have been completed w/in previous two yrs, w/ max running time of 30 min. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, super 8, 3/4", 1/2". Entry fee: None. Deadline: Late Jan. Contact: Mirella Feige, fest dir, Dresden Film Festival, Filmfest Dresden Internationales Festival für Animations und Independente Filme, Filminitiative Dresden, Rähnitzgasse 22, D-01907 Dresden, Germany; tel: 011 49 351 57 05

37; fax: 011 49 351 51 897.

HONG KONG INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Late March/early April, Hong Kong. Fest celebrated its 20th yr in 1995. Noncompetitive event organized by Urban Council of Hong Kong aims to "serve as a platform for int'l film exchange & a window to world for Hong Kong cinema." Program incl. Int'l Cinema (70-80 new features); Asian Cinema (40-50 new features); Hong Kong Cinema (8-12 films) & Hong Kong Retrospective Cinema (25-30 films on different topic every yr). Films must not have been shown in Hong Kong prior to fest screenings. Program incl. features, shorts, doc & animated films. Formats: 35mm, 16mm; preview on cassette. Entry fee: None. Deadline: Early Jan. Contact: Senior Manager, Hong Kong Int'l Film Festival, Hong Kong Cultural Centre, Level 7, Administration Bldg, 10 Salisbury Rd, Tsim Sha Tsui, Kowloon, Hong Kong; tel: 011 852 2734 2900-6; fax: 011 852 2366 5206.

SINGAPORE INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, April, Singapore. FIAPF-recognized invitation-al fest for features, shorts, docs & animation celebrated 9th yr in '95. Offers noncompetitive & competitive section for Asian cinema, w/ award for best Asian feature. Open to features completed after Jan. 1 of preceding yr. Entries must be Singapore premieres. About 120 features shown in '95, along with 60 shorts & videos from 35 countries. Main section shows 35mm; all other formats accepted in fringe programs. Several US ind. films featured in 1995. Also Children's/Young Adults Section. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2". Entry fee: None. Deadline: Mid Jan. Contact: Philip Cheah, fest dir, Singapore Int'l Film Festival, 168 Kim Seng Road, Singapore 0923; tel: 011 65 738 7567; fax: 011 65 738 7578.

TAMPERE INTERNATIONAL SHORT FILM FESTIVAL, March, Finland. Leading int'l short film fest, this FIAPF-recognized competitive event celebrated its 25th anniv. in '95. Latest in Finnish & int'l productions & selected films from earlier yrs for audiences of over 40,000, w/ over 200 int'l guests & large group from Finnish film industry & press. Over 400 films from 40 countries showcased. 3 cats in int'l competition (100 films): animated films, docs & fiction. Running time may not exceed 35 min. & films must have had first public screening on or after Jan. 1 of preceding yr. Educational, industrial, advertising & tourist films not accepted. Awards: Grand Prix: statuette "Kiss" & 25,000 FIM (about \$4,545); Cat Prizes: "Kiss" & 4,000 FIM (about \$730) for best film in each cat; Special Prize of Jury: "Kiss" & 4,000 FIM (\$730); Diplomas of Merit. About 20 thematic programs. In 1995 special programs on Orson Welles, gay & lesbian shorts, Cuban docs from 1960s onward, British women's animation, Caribbean shorts, film school specials, treasures from film archives & highlights from Australian film schools. There is also film market (w/ over 1,300 shorts), seminars, open discussions & screenings for children. Formats: 35mm, 16mm; preview on cassette. Entry fee: None. Deadline: Mid Jan. Contact: Pertti Palttila, fest dir, Tampere Int'l Short Film Festival, Tampereen Kansainvaliset Iyhytelokuvajuhlat, Box 305, FIN-33101 Tampere, Finland; tel: 011 358 31 213 0034; fax: 223 0121.

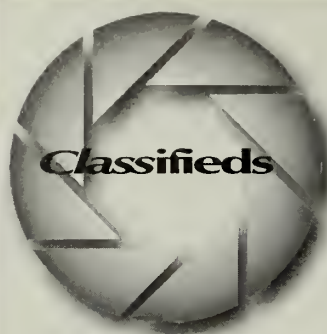
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Looking to hire?

Beginning in the Jan./Feb. issue, the **Opportunities • Gigs** category that now runs under Notices will be moved to Classifieds. There will be a **charge of \$25/ad for AIVF members and \$35 for nonmembers**. If you have a position open at a museum, media arts center, university, or with a production, **Opportunities • Gigs** is the place to spread the word.

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CONFERENCES • SEMINARS

FILM/VIDEO ARTS EDUCATION DEPT provides quality, hands-on instruction in film & video prod. at reasonable rates & offers year-round schedule of beginning, intermediate & advanced courses. Education Dept. (212) 673-9361.

MEDIA AND DEMOCRACY CONGRESS, to be held in San Francisco on Feb. 29, March 1 & 2, will address the threat to democracy posed by the consolidation of media power in the hands of a few transnational corporations. The incorporation of the media promises to curtail diversity & freedom of expression, replacing hard news and investigative journalism with homogenized & sanitized information, packaged to pacify rather than provoke thought or action. The Congress will address these issues: developing viable models of alternative media & committing to the collective action necessary for nothing less than the survival of freedom of expression. Papers proposing new media systems, products & collaborations will be distributed beforehand. For more information contact: Institute for Alternative Journalism, 77 Federal St., San Francisco, CA 94107; (415) 284-1420; fax 1414; e-mail: 71362,27@compuserve.com.

PHILADELPHIA MULTIMEDIA TECHNOLOGY SEMINAR for ind. producers, Dec. 6, PA. Sealworks, specialists in multimedia integration & development, will show how to combine text, graphics, animation, sound & video to produce interactive appls. Power Mac desktop video prod. w/ products like Radius' Vision Studio & Telecast boards, Adobe Premiere & CoSA After Effects; multimedia authoring w/ MacroMedia Director & cross-platform development tools; session on Internet, Mosaic & World Wide Web. Admission free. Philadelphia Apple Market Center. To register, call (800) 967-6628 x100; (215) 579-9072 w/ questions.

FILMS • TAPES WANTED

ART IN GENERAL seeks video works & guest-curated video programs for new monthly screening series. All kinds of work welcome, from experimental film & video to home videos; doc & activist to public access works. Send VHS tape (cued), résumé &/or brief statement & SASE. For more

info, call Joanna Spitzner (212) 219-0473.

ART ON FILM DATABASE wants to know: Have you produced film, video or video disc on visual arts? Send info on prod. to Program for Art on Film Database, a computer index to over 19,000 prods on visual arts. Interested in prods on all visual arts topics, & welcomes info on prods about artists of color & multicultural art projects. Send info to: Art on Film at Columbia University, 2875 Broadway, 2nd fl., NY, NY 10025; (212) 854-9570; fax: 9577.

AUSTIN, TEXAS INDEPENDENT PRODUCER offering cable access venue to showcase ind. films & videos. All genres & subject matter accepted. Shorts & music videos linked by discussions on ind. films. Films/videos running longer than 40 min. may be aired in series of 2 consecutive shows. Send release & info about film/filmmaker. Formats 1/4" & 3/4" are preferable. No payment, but credit & exposure. James Shelton, Tex-Cinema Productions, PO Box 3633, Austin, TX 78764-3633; (512) 867-9901.

BLACKCHAIR PRODUCTIONS currently accepting works of any genre for ongoing *Public Exposure* program. Works will be considered for a bi-monthly "video-zine," open-screenings, galleries, clubs, rave-parties, national public-access programs, submissions to festivals, competitions, and calls-for-works. Let us use our marketing skills to get your works seen. No fee to submit. Send 1/2", Hi8, or 8mm to: Joel S. Bachar, Blackchair Productions, 2318 Second Ave., #313-A, Seattle, WA 98121 (include SASE if you want tapes returned); e-mail: witrain@nwrain.com.

BLACK ENTERTAINMENT TELEVISION seeks films & videos by black ind. makers, directors, or producers for "Black Vision" portion of *Screen Scene*, weekly 1/2-hr. show that previews TV lineup & latest theatrical releases. Contact: *Screen Scene*, BET, 1899 9th St. NE, Washington, DC 20018; (202) 608-2800.

BLACK VIDEO PERSPECTIVE, new community TV prod. in Atlanta area, seeks works for/by/about African Americans. Contact: Karen L. Forest (404) 231-4846.

CAFE Y PELICULA looking for films and videos for possible monthly exhibition. Students' work welcome. No payment; ongoing deadline. Send 3/4" or 1/2" with appropriate release, credits, awards, and personal info to: Cafe y Pelicula, PO Box 362991, San Juan, PR 00936-2991; e-mail crubin@caribe.net.

CHILDREN'S MEDIA PROJECT seeks tax-deductible donations of film & video equipment. Needs monitors, cameras, decks, etc. 71 Wappingers Falls, New York, NY 12590; (914) 227-1838.

CINCINNATI ARTISTS' GROUP EFFORT seeks proposals for exhibitions, performances & audio/video/film works to show in their galleries. Experimental, traditional & collaborative projects encouraged. Contact: CAGE, 1416 Main St., Cincinnati, OH 45210; (513) 381-2437.

CINE CLUB seeks VHS submissions of ind. shorts for future programs. Send SASE and brief resume to: Cine Club c/o Sophie Fenwick, 335 Court St., 82, Brooklyn, NY 11231. Also welcomes proposals from ind. curators and others.



CINEMA VIDEO, monthly showcase of works by ind. video- & filmmakers, seeks S-VHS or VHS submissions of any style, content, or length. Utilizing high-end projector, selected videos are projected onto 10.5' x 14' screen. Monthly shows are collections of several artists' videos, but occasionally features are shown as special events when work merits it. Cinema Video is prod. of Velvet Elvis Arts Lounge Theater in Seattle, WA, a non-profit fringe theater. Send submissions to: Kevin Picolet, 2207 E. Republican, Seattle, WA 98112; (206) 323-3307.

CINEQUEST, weekly half-hour TV series, looking for films/videos less than 20 min. to air on 30 min. cable show. Work over 20 min. will air on monthly special in Orlando, FL market during primetime. Seeking all genres. Concept of show is to stretch perceptions of conventional TV & expose viewers to scope & talent of indies. Submit on 1/2" or 3/4". Submissions need not be recent. No submission limit or deadline. Will acknowledge receipt in 10 days. Send pre-paid mailer if need work returned. Contact: Michael McGowan, Cinequest Prod., 2550 Alafayia Trail, #8100, Orlando, FL 32826; (407) 658-4865.

CITY TV, an Emmy Award-winning, progressive municipal cable channel in Santa Monica, seeks programming of any length, esp. works about seniors, disabled, children, Spanish-lang. & video art. Our budget is limited, but we offer opp. for producers to showcase work. Cablecast rights may be exchanged for equip. access. Contact: Lisa Bernard, City TV, 1685 Main St., Santa Monica, CA 90401; (310) 458-8913.

CONNECT TV, a new series on ind. videomakers, seeks work for 1/2-hr. show. Progressive, social issue docs, art, humor. Will air on Cablevision of CT. Metro Video (203) 866-1090.

CUCARACHA THEATRE seeks 16mm films for Tuesday night series in Jan. & Feb. Send 2 tapes to: Chris Oldcom/Janet Paparazzo, c/o Cucaracha, 500 Greenwich St., NY NY 10013.

DANCE ON VIDEO wanted for the Spirit of Dance, a live, 1 hr. monthly program covering all types & aspects of dance. Under 5 min. or excerpts from longer works. S-VHS preferred. Produced at Cape Cod Community Television, South Yarmouth, MA; (508) 430-1321; fax: (508) 398-4520.

DATABASE & DIRECTORY OF LATIN AMERICAN FILM & VIDEO organized by Int'l Media Resources Exchange seeks works by Latin American & US Latino ind. producers. To incl. work in this resource or for info, contact: Karen Ranucci, IMRE, 124 Washington Place, NY, NY 10014; (212) 463-0108.



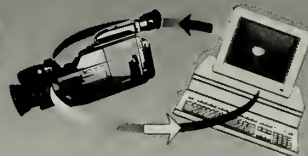
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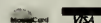
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EVENTWORKS '96 accepting proposals for annual fest of experimental media arts in April. Film, video, Internet events, sound, spoken word, performance, etc. Deadline: Dec. 1. Submit to: Eventworks, 621 Huntington Ave., Boston, MA 02115; (617) 731-2136; eventworks@mecon.mass.edu; <http://www.tiac.net/users/zone/eventworks>.

FILM PRODUCER SEEKS original or adapted comedic screenplays/synopses suited to \$300,000-\$750,000 budgets. Will option; points/production position possible. Submissions w/ SASE for return to: Infinity Pictures, 21 Kent St., Brookline, MA 02146.

HALCYON DAYS PRODUCTIONS seeks video segments (1-5 min.) by 15- to 25-year-olds for video compilation show. If piece is selected, you may have chance to be video correspondent for show. Work may be editorial, real-life coverage, political satire, slapstick—you decide. Just personalize. Submit VHS or Hi8 (returnable w/ SASE) to: Mai Kim Holley, Halcyon Days Prod., c/o Hi8, 12 W. End Ave., 5th fl., NY, NY 10023; (212) 397-7754.

HERE, a not-for-profit arts organization, seeks submissions of films and videos for 1995 to 96 season. 16mm, 8mm, 3/4". All genres and lengths. Installation proposals also welcome. Send VHS, resume, & description of work to: HERE, 145 Ave. of the Americas, frnt. 1, New York NY 10013, attn: film/video. Enclose SASE for more info. about upcoming season.

IN VISIBLE COLOURS FILM & VIDEO SOCIETY seeks videos by women of color for library collection. Work will be accessible to members, producers, multicultural groups & educational institutions. For more info, contact: Claire Thomas, In Visible Colours, 119 W. Pender, ste. 115, Vancouver, B.C. V6B 1S5; (604) 682-1116.

IND. FILM & VIDEO SHOWCASE, cable access show; seeks student & ind. films & videos to give artists exposure. Send films or video in 3/4" format w/ paragraph about artist & his/her work. Send to: The Independent Film & Video Showcase, 2820 S. Sepulveda Blvd. #7, Los Angeles, CA 90064, Attn: Jerry Salata.

INSIDE OUT, a video program open to outsiders, insiders, & anyone who can make visible what is normally unseen, seeks work addressing exposure, revelation, exclusion, inclusion, rold reversal, irony. 20 mins. or less. Deadline: Dec. 15. NYC screening and cable broadcast. Send VHS NTSC tapes, plus SASE for return, & statement to Inside Out, P.O. Box 304, Knickerbocker Station, NY, NY 10002.

INO COLLABORATIVE, bimonthly screening series seeks works by Latino film/videomakers. Honoraria paid. Send VHS preview tapes to: Latino Collaborative Bimonthly Screening Series, Vanessa Codorniu, 280 Broadway, ste. 412, NY, NY 10007; (212) 732-1121.

NERVOUS IMPULSE, nat'l screening series focusing on science, seeks films/videos. Open to experimental, non-narrative & animated works that address scientific representation or knowledge or interplay between science & culture. Send pre-

view VHS & SASE to: Nervous Impulse, Times Square Station, PO Box 2578, NY, NY 10036-2578.

THE NEW MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART and the Educational Video Center seek recent work that explores youth perspectives on cultural identity, relationship, sexuality, health, disabilities, family, school, immigration, violence, etc., in genres incl. memoir, testimonial, narrative, doc, experimental & public service announcement. Selected works will be incl. in fall '96 exhibit at museum. Formats: VHS, S-VHS, or 3/4". Length: no more than 15 min. For interactive computer projects: disk or written proposal for PC or MAC. Deadline: Jan. 1. Enclose SASE w/ submission to: Brian Goldfarb, Curator of Education, The New Museum of Contemporary Art, 583 Broadway, NY, NY 10012.

NEWCITY PRODUCTIONS seeks completed or in-progress documentaries on all subjects for monthly screenings. Committed to promoting ind. community by establishing forum of new voices. Have professional large screen video projector. Send cassettes to NewCity Productions, 635 Madison Ave., ste. 1101, New York, NY 10022; (212) 753-1326.

NEWTON TELEVISION FOUNDATION seeks proposals on ongoing basis from ind. producers. NTF is nonprofit foundation collaborating w/ ind. producers on docs concerning contemporary issues. Past works have been broadcast on local & national public TV, won numerous awards & most are currently in distribution in educational market. Contact NTF for details: 1608 Beacon St., Waban, MA 02168; (617) 965-8477; email: ntf@tmn.com; walshntf@aol.com.

OFFLINE seeks creative and independently produced videos. The hour-long show airs biweekly on public access channels throughout New York State and around the country. Submissions should not exceed 20 mins. Longer works will be considered for serialization. Formats: 3/4", SVHS, Hi8 or VHS. Include postage for tape return. OffLine, 203 Pine Tree Rd., Ithaca NY 14850; (607) 272-2613; email: 72137.3352@compuserve.com.

THE OTHER SIDE FILM SHOW is looking for entries in all cats: narrative, doc, experimental, animation, etc. for TV series of ind. films/videos. Submissions should be under 30 min. 3/4" video preferred, but VHS acceptable. Send to U. of South Florida, art dept., 4202 E. Fowler Ave., Tampa, FL 33620-7350, attn: The Other Side. For return shipping incl. SASE.

OVERWINE PRODUCTIONS, weekly intimate theater & public access program, seeks contemporary film/video in any format to be showcased in & around Detroit area. Contact: Patrick Dennis, 2660 Riverside Dr., Trenton, Michigan, 48183-2807; (313) 676-3876.

PLANET CENTRAL, new LA-based cable station focusing on the environment, global economy, & holistic health, is looking for stories, ideas & video footage for new fall program *Not in the News*, alternative weekly news program. Send info to: Planet Central, c/o World TV, 6611 Santa Monica Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90038; (213) 871-9153; fax: 469-2193.

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REEL TIME AT P.S. 122, an ongoing quarterly screening series, is now accepting submissions of recent ind. film & video works for 1995-96 season. Exhibition formats include S-8, 16mm, 3/4" & VHS. Send VHS submission tapes, written promotion & return postage to: Curator, Reel Time, P.S. #122, 150 1st Ave., NY, NY 10009; (212) 477-5829 (x327).

RIGHTS & WRONGS, weekly nonprofit human rights global TV magazine series scheduled to resume broadcast in February, seeks story ideas & footage for upcoming season. Last yr 34 programs covering issues from China to Guatemala were produced. Contact: Danny Schechter or Rory O'Connor, The Global Center, 1600 Broadway, ste. 700, NY, NY 10019; (212) 246-0202; fax: 2677.

REGISTERED seeks experimental & non-narrative videos about consumerism &/or modern ritual for nationally touring screening. Send VHS for preview w/ SASE & short description to: Registered, Attn.: Joe Sola, PO Box 1960, Peter Stuyvesant Station, 432 E. 14th St., NY, NY 10009.

SHORT FILM & VIDEO: All genres, any medium, 1 min. to 1 hr. Unconventional, signature work in VHS or 3/4" for nat'l broadcast! Submit to: EDGE TV, 7805 Sunset Blvd., ste. 203, Los Angeles, CA 90046.

STATEN ISLAND COMMUNITY TELEVISION PRODUCER seeks experimental works, all subjects, by ind. video & film artists. The more explicit, the better; film & video on 3/4" preferred, but 1/2" &/or 8mm acceptable. Send tapes to: Matteo Masiello, 140 Redwood Loop, Staten Island, NY 10309.

THE SPIRIT OF DANCE, live, 1-hr. monthly program covering all aspects of dance, seeks excerpts from longer works under 5 min. S-VHS preferred. Produced at Cape Cod Community Television, South Yarmouth, MA. Call producers at (508) 430-1321, (508) 759-7005; fax: (508) 398-4520. Contact: Ken Glazebrook, 656 Depot St., Harwich, MA 02645.

TOXIC TELEVISION seeks broadcast-quality, creative video shorts (under 10 min.) for alternative TV experience. Looking for works in animation, puppetry, experimental, computers, etc. Send VHS or 3/4" tape, SASE & résumé to: Tom Lenz, 12412 Belfran St., Hudson, FL 34669.

UNQUOTE TELEVISION, 1/2 hr program dedicated to exposing new, innovative film & video artists, seeks ind. doc, narrative, experimental, performance works under 28 min. Reaches 5 million homes via program exchange nationwide. 1/2" & 3/4" dubs accepted. Submit to: Unquote TV, c/o DUTV, 33rd & Chestnut St., Philadelphia, PA 19104; (215) 895-2927, attn. Jennifer Terrigno, Melissa Mandell.

URBAN INSTITUTE FOR CONTEMPORARY ARTS is accepting video & 16mm film in all genres for next season of programming. Fee paid if accepted. Send VHS tape w/ SASE to: Film Committee, UTICA, 88 Monroe Ave. NW, Grand Rapids, MI 49503.

VIDEO DATA BANK is seeking experimental, doc & narrative tapes on women's conflicted rela-

tionships w/ food & eating. Tapes: produced after 1990; length: max. 30 min. Please submit preview tapes in 3/4" or VHS format (returnable w/ SASE) & brief statement about producer's relationship to subject matter. Deadline: Sept. 15. Contact: Video Data Bank, Unacceptable Appetites Program, 112 S. Michigan Ave., Chicago, IL 60603.

VIDEO ICON, new TV program focusing on innovative video/ film art & animation, is currently reviewing work. Send VHS or S-VHS copy & SASE. Floating Image Productions, PO Box 66365, Los Angeles, CA 90066; (310) 313-6935.

VIDEOSPACE, an artist run collective devoted to the presentation of media arts in New England, is currently accepting video artist tapes for a Jan. 1996 show. The show, *Gender & Technology*, will be screened at Mobius, Boston's artist-run center for experimental work in all media. Deadline: Dec. 15. Send 1/2" or 3/4" tape, brief description, résumé, & SASE to Gender & Technology Video, 9 Myrtle St., Jamaica Plain, MA 02130. For more info contact A. Allyn, (401) 421-0827

VIDEOSPACE AT DECORDOVA MEDIA ARTS ARCHIVE: DeCordova Museum & Sculpture Park seeks VHS copies of video art, & documentation of performance, installation art & new genres from New England artists for inclusion in new media arts archive. Send for info & guidelines: Videospace at DeCordova, DeCordova Museum, 51 Sandy Pond Rd., Lincoln, MA 01773-2600.

WEIRD TV, satellite TV show airing weekly on Telstar 302, specializes in alternative viewing. Will consider works of 3 min. max., animation or shorts. Submit work to: Weird TV, 1818 W. Victory, Glendale, CA 91201; (818) 637-2820.

WYBE-TV 35, Philadelphia's independent television station, seeks work for series featuring film & video from independent media artists from around the nation. This 10-hr, 10-wk series airs in prime time each spring. All styles welcome; shorts up to 20 min. preferred. Deadline: Jan. 1996. Entry forms avail. from: *Through the Lens 6*, WYBE-TV 35, 6070 Ridge Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19128; (215) 483-3900; fax 6908.

OPPORTUNITIES • GIGS

BOSTON FILM/VIDEO FOUNDATION has internships avail. at the 21st annual New England Film & Video Festival. Positions in marketing/press and general administration. 4 positions in spring (fest is in May 1996). Must be avail. to work 6-12 hr/wk. Contact: Shayna Casey, BF/VE, 1126 Boylston St., Boston, MA 02215; (617) 536-1540; fax: 3540; e-mail: bfvf@aol.com.

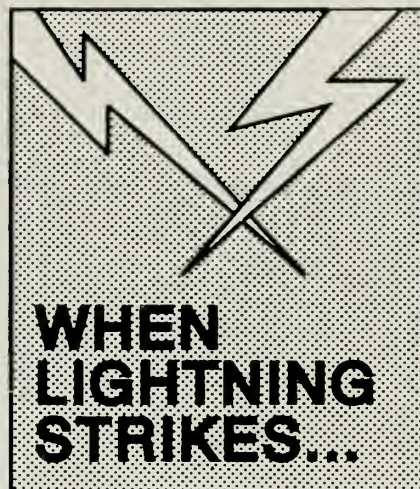
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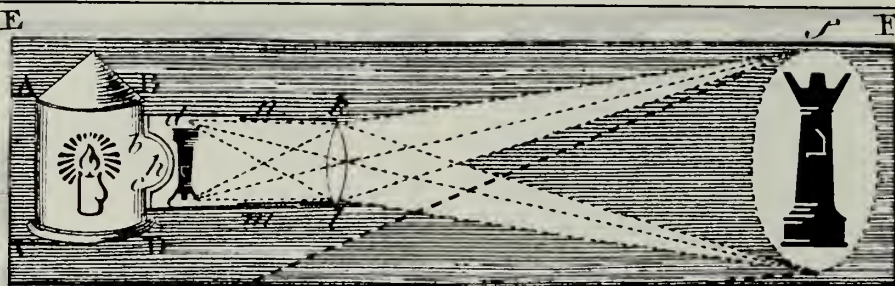


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DIRECTOR sought by production company for 13-part PBS series. Distribution secured, funding underway. Nat'l TV and doc experience essential. Send resume and project list ASAP to: Pancor Productions, 5850 Pebble Oak, St. Louis, MO 63128-1412.

DIRECTOR/WRITER: Manhattan-based educational publishing co. producing training videos on variety of subjects seeks freelance directors for future projects. Prior experience need not include educational work, but must show ability to convey information in structured, entertaining way. Send background info, résumé & VHS demo reel to: HSSC, Box 466, Bowling Green Station, NY, NY 10274.

MACDOWELL COLONY seeking film/video artists for residencies of up to 2 months at multidisciplinary artist community. Limited travel grants available. Deadlines: Jan. 15 for May-Aug. session, Apr. 15 for Sept.-Dec. Write or call: 100 High Street, Peterborough, NH 03548; (603) 924-3886.

OPEN SEARCH for occasional teaching in computer animation (Amiga) &/or animation drawing. Masters & college teaching experience preferred. Send résumé w/ tape or reel to: University of the Arts, Media Arts dept., 333 S. Broad St., Philadelphia, PA 19102.

TAOS TALKING PICTURES, media arts organization, film fest & media literacy conference, is looking for director of development. Prefer candidate w/ MBA or extensive nonprofit arts management/ fundraising experience. Deadline: Ongoing. Send letter of interest, résumé, & three refs to: Taos Talking Pictures, 216M North Pueblo Rd. #216, Taos, NM 87571.

PUBLICATIONS

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RESOURCES • FUNDS

BOSTON FILM/VIDEO FOUNDATION seeks proposals for fiscal sponsorship from ind. producers. No deadline or genre restrictions. Reviewed on an ongoing basis. Contact BF/VF for brochure: Cherie Martin, 1126 Boylston St., Boston, MA 02215. Ph: (617) 536-1540; fax: 3540; e-mail: bfvf@aol.com.

CREATIVE PROJECT GRANTS: During this fiscal yr, 8 artists will receive grants for 30 hrs of subsidized use of The Media Loft video/computer suite at rate of \$7.50/hr., in blocks of at least 5-hr segments. Grants awarded on ongoing basis to artists doing creative, experimental, narrative, language-based, visual, or conceptual video &/or Amiga computer work. Political, promotional, doc & commercial projects are not w/in framework of the grant. To apply, send project description, résumé, approximate dates of proposed use & statement of level of video &/or computer experience to: The Media Loft, 727 Ave. of the Americas, NY, NY 10010; (212) 924-4893.

DCTV Artist-in-Residence is now accepting appls for \$500 worth of equipment access on ongoing basis w/in one year. When 1 funded project is complete, DCTV will review appls on file & select next project. Pref given to projects already underway. For appl., send SASE to: AIR, c/o DCTV, 87 Lafayette St., NY, NY 10013-4435.

HUMANITIES PROJECTS IN MEDIA administered by NEH has canceled the October and March deadlines. The new deadline for all application categories is Jan. 12, 1996. 20 copies of appl. required on or before deadline. For appl., guidelines, write: National Endowment for the Humanities, Division of Public Programs, Humanities Projects in Media, rm. 420, 1100 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20506; (202) 606-8278; e-mail: mediaprogram@neh.fed.us.

ILLINOIS ARTS COUNCIL (IAC) SPECIAL ASSISTANCE ARTS PROGRAM: Matching grants of up to \$1,500 avail. to IL artists for specific projects. Activities that may be funded are: registration fees & travel to attend conferences, seminars, or workshops; consultant fees for resolution of specific artistic problem; exhibits, performances, publications, screenings; materials, supplies, or services. Funds awarded based on quality of work submitted & impact of proposed project on artist's professional development. Appl. must be received at least 8 wks prior to project starting date. Degree students are not eligible to apply. Call (312) 814-6750.

MEDIA ALLIANCE assists NYC artists & nonprofit organizations in using state-of-art equipment, postprod. & prod. facilities at reduced rates. Contact: Media Alliance, c/o WNET, 356 W. 58th St., NY, NY 10019; (212) 560-2919.

MEDIANET: A GUIDE TO THE INTERNET FOR VIDEO AND FILMMAKERS available free at <http://www.infi.net/~riddle/medianet.htm>, or contact riddle@infi.net.

POLLOCK-KRASNER FOUNDATION gives financial assistance to artists of recognizable merit & financial need working as mixed-media or installation artists. Grants awarded throughout yr., \$1,000-\$30,000. For guidelines, write: Pollock-Krasner Foundation, 725 Park Ave., NY, NY 10021.

PENNSYLVANIA HISTORICAL & MUSEUM COMMISSION invites applicants for 1996-97 Scholars in Residence Program. The program provides support for full-time research & study at any Commission facility. Residencies avail. for 4-12 consecutive wks. between May 1, 1996 & April 30, 1997, at \$1,200 per month. Program open to all conducting research on PA history. Deadline: Jan. 12, 1996. For info & appl., contact: Division of History, Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission, Box 1026, Harrisburg, PA 17108; (717) 787-3034.

THE RESIDENCY PROGRAM at the Experimental Television Center (ETC) accepting appls. Program offers opp. to study techniques of video image in intensive 5-day residency. Artists work on variety of cutting edge & hi-tech equipment. Program open to experienced video artists. Appl. must incl. résumé, & project description, as well as videotape of recent work (if you are a first time applicant), either 3/4" or VHS formats, w/ SASE for return. Write: ETC Ltd., 109 Lower Fairfield Rd., Newark Valley, NY 13811; (607) 687-4341.

VISUAL STUDIES WORKSHOP MEDIA CENTER in Rochester, NY, accepts proposals on ongoing basis for its Media Access program. Artists, ind. producers & nonprofits awarded access at reduced rates,

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The Foundation for Independent Video and Film (FIVF), the educational affiliate of the Association for Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF), supports a variety of programs and services for the independent media community, including publication of *The Independent*, operation of the Festival Bureau, seminars and workshops, and an information clearing house. None of this work would be possible without the generous support of the AIVF membership and the following organizations:

The Center for Arts Criticism, Consolidated Edison Company of New York, John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts, National Video Resources, New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, New York Community Trust, New York State Council on the Arts, Rockefeller Foundation, and Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc.

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Nonprofit Members

Access Media Art Cen., New Haven, CT; ACS Network Prod., Washington, DC; Alternate Current, NY, NY; The American Cen., Paris, FR; American Civil Liberties Union, NY, NY; Ann Arbor Comm. Access TV, Ann Arbor, MI; Ann Arbor Film Fest., Ann Arbor, MI; Appalshop, Whitesburg, KY; John Armstrong, Brooklyn, NY; Art Matters Inc., NY, NY; The Asia Society, NY, NY; Assemblage, NY, NY; Athens Cen. for Film & Video, Athens, OH; AVFN Int'l, Inc., Anchorage, AK; Bennu Prod., Yonkers, NY; Benton Fdn., Washington, DC; Black Planet Prod., NY, NY; Blackside, Inc., Boston, MA; Carnegie Inst., Pittsburgh, PA; Carved Image Prod., NY, NY; Cen. for Investigative Reporting, San Francisco, CA; Cen. for New Media, NY, NY; Chicago Video Project, Chicago, IL; CNC, Washington, DC; Coe Film Ass., NY, NY; Colelli Prod., Columbus, OH; Columbia College, Chicago, IL; Command Comm.s, Rye Brook, NY; Common Voice Films, NY, NY; Comm. Arts, Old Westbury, NY; Comm. Arts-MHCC, Gresham, OR; Comm. Television Network, Chicago, IL; Denver Film Society, Denver, CO; Documentary Resource Cen., Lemont, PA; Duke Univ., Durham, NC; Dyke TV, NY, NY; Eclipse Comm.s, Springfield, MA; Educational Video Cen., NY, NY; Edwards Films, Eagle Bridge, NY; Examus Company, Fort Lauderdale, FL; Fallout Shelter Prod., Mansfield, OH; The Film Crew, Woodland Hills, CA; Fox Chapel High School, Pittsburgh, PA; Great Lakes Film and Video, Milwaukee, WI; Hogskulen I Volda, Volda, Norway; Idaho State Univ., Pocatello, ID; Image Film Video Cen., Atlanta, GA; Int'l Audiochrome, Rye, NY; Int'l Cultural Programming, NY, NY; Int'l Film Seminars, NY, NY; ITVS, St. Paul, MN; The Jewish Film Fest., Berkeley, CA; The Jewish Museum, NY, NY; Komplex Studio Merdeka, Selangor, Malaysia; KPBS, San Diego, CA; Little City Fdn./Media Arts, Palatine, IL; Long Bow Group Inc., Brookline, MA; Manhattan Neighborhood Network, NY, NY; Media Arts, Palatine, IL; Media Resource Centre, Adelaide, Australia; Mesilla Valley Film Society, Mesilla, NM; Milestone Entertainment, Irving, TX; Miranda Smith Prod., Boulder, CO; Missoula Comm. Access, Missoula, MT; NAMAC, Oakland, CA; Nat. Cen. for Film & Video Preservation, Los Angeles, CA; Nat. Latino Comm. Cente/KCET, Los Angeles, CA; Nat. Video Resources, NY, NY; Neighborhood Film/Video Project, Philadelphia, PA; Neon, Inc., NY, NY; New Image Prod., Las Vegas, NV; New Liberty Prod., Philadelphia, PA; NY Inst. of Technology, Old Westbury, NY; 911 Media Arts Cen., Seattle, WA; Ohio Arts Council, Columbus, OH; Ohio Univ., Athens, OH; One Eighty One Prod., NY, NY; Outside in July, NY, NY; Pennsylvania State Univ., Univ. Park, PA; Pittsburgh Filmmakers, Pittsburgh, PA; Post Modern Prod., Inc., Elmhurst, IL; Pro Videographers, Morton Grove, IL; Promontory Point Films, Albany, NY; Rainy States Film Fest., Seattle, WA; Medina Rich, NY, NY; Paul Robeson Fund/Funding Exchange, NY, NY; Ross Film Theater, Lincoln, NE; Ross-Gafney, NY, NY; San Francisco Art Inst., San Francisco, CA; Santa Fe Comm. College, Santa Fe, MN; School of the Art Inst., Chicago, IL; Scribe Video Cen., Philadelphia, PA; Southwest Alternate Media Project, Houston, TX; Squeaky Wheel, Buffalo, NY; Strato Films, Hollywood, CA; Sundance Inst., Los Angeles, CA; SUNY/Buffalo-Dept. Media Studies, Buffalo, NY; Swiss Inst., NY, NY; Terrace Films, Brooklyn, NY; Thurston Comm. Television Archive, Los Angeles, CA; Trinity Square Video, Toronto, Ontario; Tucson Comm. Cable Corp., Tucson, AZ; UCLA Film & Television Archive, Los Angeles, CA; UMAB/School of Social Work Media Cen., Baltimore, MD; Univ. of Arizona, Tucson, AZ; Univ. of Hawaii, Honolulu, HI; Univ. of Nebraska, Lincoln, NE; Univ. of Southern Florida, Tampa, FL; Univ. of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, WI; VA Fest. of American Film, Charlottesville, VA; Vancouver Film School, Vancouver, BC; Veritas Int'l, Elmhurst, IL; Video Data Bank, Chicago, IL; Video Pool, Winnipeg, Manitoba; V.I.E.W. Video, NY, NY; W. Hollywood Public Access, West Hollywood, CA; Wexner Cen., Columbus, OH; WNET/13, NY, NY; Women Make Movies, NY, NY; WTTW/Chicago, Chicago, IL; York Univ. Libraries, North York, Ontario.

prod. & postprod. equipment for work on non-commercial projects. For appl., tour, or more info, call (716) 442-8676.

YADDO invites appls from film/video artists for residencies of 2 wks to 2 mos at multi-disciplinary artists' community in Saratoga Springs, NY. Deadline: Jan. 15 (for May-Feb.). Artistic merit is standard for judgment. For more info write: The Admissions Committee, PO Box 395, Saratoga Springs, NY, 12866; (518) 584-0746

COMPETITIONS

CRESCENT FILMS announces 1995 Lone Star Screenplay Competition open to screenwriters worldwide who submit original feature-length screenplay. In addition to 6 cash awards, winning authors eligible to sign development option w/ Crescent Films. Deadline: Dec. 31. For info, send SASE to: Lone Star Screenplay Competition, 1920 Abrams Pkwy., No. 419, Dallas, TX 75214-3915; (214) 606-3041; e-mail: lonestar@pic.net.

MONTEREY COUNTY FILM COMMISSION SCREENWRITING CONTEST for writers who haven't earned money writing for TV/film. All genres. \$1500 top prize. \$35 entry fee. Deadline: Jan. 31. For rules, send SASE to: MCFC, PO Box 111, Monterey, CA 93942.

ORAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION accepting applications for 1996 awards, given for work published or completed between Jan. 1, 1995 and Mar. 30, 1996. Honorific awards for a published article or essay addressing oral history, a completed oral history project & to a postsecondary educator who has made outstanding use of oral history in the classroom. Deadline: Apr. 1. Contact: Rebecca Sharpless, exec. secretary, Oral History Assoc., Baylor University, Box 97234, Waco, TX 76798-7234; e-mail: OHA_Support@Baylor.edu.

PHILADELPHIA STORIES: 4th annual "Set in Philadelphia" Screenwriting Competition accepting submissions nationally for original feature-length screenplays set primarily in greater Philadelphia metro. area. All genres. Awards: \$5,000, passes to Philadelphia Festival of World Cinema, story notes. Postmark deadline: Jan. 10. \$20 entry fee. For info, send SASE to: PFWC/Screenwriting Competition, International House, 3701 Chestnut St., Philadelphia, PA 19104.

WRITERS WORKSHOP NATIONAL SCRIPTWRITING CONTEST is accepting scripts from throughout US. 5 to 6 winners will be chosen to receive \$500 cash award. Winners also receive free tuition for critical evaluation of scripts before panel of motion picture agents, producers, writers, & directors. Deadline: Ongoing. For submission info, send legal size SASE w/ 60¢ postage to: Willard Rogers, Writers Workshop National Contest, Box 69799, Los Angeles, CA 90069; (213) 933-9232.

Continued from p. 64

Silverlake Life: The View from Here; producer/director, *The Heck With Hollywood!*); Judith Helfand (co-producer, *The Uprising of '34*, producer/director, *A Healthy Baby Girl*); David Leitner (associate producer, *Gate of Heavenly Peace*; director, *Vienna Is Different*; co-producer, *For All Mankind*; former technical director, DuArt Film Laboratory); Ellen Schneider (executive producer, *E.C.U.*; executive director, *The American Documentary*).

When: Saturday, January 6, 10:00 a.m.
Where: Showbiz Expo, New York Hilton
Price: \$28 advance; \$35 on-site

AIVF members receive complimentary VIP admission to Showbiz Expo, but you must register for panels and seminars separately. We have passes and registration materials in the office, or you may call Showbiz Expo directly: (800) 331-5706.

"MANY TO MANY" MONTHLY MEMBER SALONS

This is a monthly opportunity for members to discuss work, meet other independents, share war stories, and connect with the AIVF community across the country. Note: Our copy deadline is two months before the meetings listed below; be sure to call the local organizers to confirm that there have been no last-minute changes.

Austin, TX:

Call for dates and locations.
Contact: Ben Davis, (512) 708-1962

Boston, MA:

Call for dates and locations
Contact: Susan Walsh (617) 965-8477

Brooklyn, NY:

Call for dates and locations
Contact: Glenn Francis Fontera, (718) 646-7533

Dallas, TX:

When: 3rd Wednesday of each month, 7 p.m.
Where: Call for locations.
Contact: Bart Weiss, (214) 823-8909

Kansas City, MO:

Call for dates and locations
Contact: Rossana Jeran, (816) 363-2249

Los Angeles, CA:

When: 1st Wednesday of each month, 7 p.m.
Where: Swing Cafe, 8543 Santa Monica Blvd.
Contact: Pat Branch, (310) 289-8612

New York City:

Come to our holiday party December 11!
Watch the Jan/Feb issue of *The Independent* for news of our new monthly program, **In the Works**.

Norwalk, CT:

Call for dates and locations
Contact: Guy Perrotta (203) 831-8205

Portland, OR:

Call for dates and locations
Contact: Grace Lee-Park, (503) 284-5085

Schenectady, NY:

When: 1st Wednesday of each month, 6 p.m.
Where: Media Play, Mohawk Mall
Contact: Mike Camoin, (518) 895-5269

St. Louis, MO:

When: 3rd Wednesday of each month, 7 p.m.
Where: Midtown Arts, 3207 Washington St.
Contact: Tom Booth, (314) 776-6270

Washington, DC:

When: Friday, Dec. 8, 7 p.m.: "Interactive Technology and Independent Filmmaking"; Tuesday, Jan. 16, 7 p.m.: "Self Distribution."
Where: Washington Performing Arts, 400 7th St. NW (at D St.)
Contact: December: Lorie Paterson (301) 340-9630 or (202) 414-8151. January: Rebecca Crumlish (202) 328-8355.

MOVING FORWARD....

Members are organizing AIVF salons all over the country! For contact information, or to talk to us about starting something in your area, call Leslie Fields at AIVF, (212) 807-1400.

NEW IN THE LIBRARY

Producer's Guide to Nontheatrical Distribution, by Kate Spohr, published by the National Educational Media Network, Oakland, 1995. An in-depth survey of dozens of distributors to educational and other nontheatrical markets.

INSURANCE UPDATE

Our insurance agent, TEIGET, is required by California law to offer a 30-day open enrollment period once each year for the CIGNA Health plans to all our California members. During the open enrollment period any California resident-member who applies will be automatically accepted, regardless of medical history.

The open enrollment period will begin January 1, 1996, and end January 30, 1996. Members may request application materials starting now; coverage may begin January 1, February 1, or March 1, 1996, at the member's option. However, all applications must be received by TEIGET prior to the requested starting date, and in all cases postmarked no later than January 30, 1996.

There are two CIGNA plans: a conventional HMO and one where you can go to the doctor of your choice. For details, contact: TEIGET, 845 3rd Ave., NYC 10022; (212) 758-5675; fax: 888-4916.

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THE BOOKS ARE COMING!

After many months of painstaking data-gathering, compiling, and editing, we are now proud to announce that *we've done it!* All-new, all-improved editions of our three most popular and valuable titles are rolling off the presses! We're sure you'll find them an indispensable part of your library.

The AIVF/FIVE Guide to International Film and Video Festivals and The AIVF/FIVE Guide to Film and Video Distributors, both edited by Kathryn Bowser, provide comprehensive and in-depth information on the resources most needed by medi makers once your media project is done and the real work begins.

The festival guide includes listings and reprints of articles from *The Independent*, so you can get a picture not only of the objective data about a festival, but an eyewitness account of the experiences of independents at that festival, from Sundance to San Sebastian.

The distributors' guide likewise contains full information on the distributors, large and small, who handle independent work. Distribution is a rapidly changing field, so this update to our last guide fills a real need for independents.

Likewise, you will find *The Next Step: Distributing Independent Film and Video*, edited by Morrie Warshawski, filled with information you can't afford to do without. The authors include Joe Berlinger, producer/director of *Brother's Keeper*, writing about theatrical self-distribution; attorney Robert Freedman on contracts; Nancy Walzog of Tapestry on international distribution; and many more. Marc Mauceri's chapter on sequencing your release was our cover story for the October issue of *The Independent*.

You can order the books with the tear-out coupon in this magazine, or call us at (212) 807-1400. Come to our office to celebrate the launch of these publications on December 11!

WINTER EVENTS

WORKSHOP: SHAKING THE MONEY TREE: HOW TO GET GRANTS AND DONATIONS FOR FILM AND VIDEO

We're thrilled to announce a workshop on the all-important subject of fundraising led by Morrie Warshawski, author of the best-selling book *Shaking the Money Tree* and editor of our all-new edition of *The Next Step: Distributing Independent Film and Video*. Topics include: how to design your film/video project from the start to attract funders; the kind of mindset a mediamaker must adopt in dealing with funding sources; cultivating and approaching funders up-front through telephone inquiries, letters, and personal contacts; the importance of research; how to get money from individual donors through direct mail, parties, and in-person requests; and the elements of a perfect proposal package. This seminar is a must for any independent mediamaker preparing to enter the highly competitive field of public and private grantsmanship. Call (212) 807-1400 to register.

When: Tuesday, December 12, 6-10 p.m.

Where: AIVF Office

Price: \$50 members; \$60 others.

Ltd enrollment; 50% deposit required to hold place.

Flash! "Shaking the Money Tree" workshops in Massachusetts coming in February! Watch the Jan./Feb. issue for details, or call Susan Walsh at Newton Television Foundation, (617) 965-8477.

MEET AND GREETs

These are opportunities for members to meet producers, distributors, funders, programmers, and others to exchange information in an informal atmosphere at the AIVF offices. Free; open to AIVF members only. Limited to 20 participants. RSVP required.

RICHARD PEÑA

Director of Programming, Film Society of Lincoln Center

Curator for New Directors/New Films and the New York Film Festival

When: Monday, December 4, 6:30 p.m.

Directions to the new office: We are at 304 Hudson St., 6th fl., on the east side of the street between Spring and Vandam, 4 blocks south of Houston. (Hudson is the equivalent of 8th Ave., on the west side of lower Manhattan.) The nearest subways are: C or E to Spring St., walk 2 blocks west to Hudson; 1 or 9 to Houston, walk 1 block west to Hudson and 4 blocks south to Spring.

BY PAMELA CALVERT

NEW OFFICE WARMING & HOLIDAY PARTY!

To start the holiday season right,
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with a big party.

Come eat, drink, and
celebrate AIVF /
FIVE's new books.

RSVP (212) 807-1400.

When: Monday, December
11, 7-9 p.m.

Where: AIVF office



PANEL:

WHAT CAN THE NEW YORK GOVERNMENT DO FOR YOU?

Patricia Scott of the New York City Mayor's Office of Film, Theater, and Broadcasting, and Patricia Kauffman of the New York State Governor's Office of Motion Picture and TV Development will present information on the services their offices offer to New York medi-makers, including referrals to facilities and services, location scouting, liaison with property owners and government agencies, and information on union rules, tax regulations, and labor laws. Cosponsored by New York Women in Film and Television, the Independent Feature Project, and Women Make Movies. Free. No reservation necessary.

When: Thursday, December 7, 6-8 p.m.

Where: Museum of Television and Radio, 25 W. 52nd St., NYC

PANEL: SMALL FORMAT VIDEO THE FUTURE OF DOCUMENTARY?

Presented at Showbiz Expo '96

Small format video documentary is enjoying a place in the sun right now, from the Sundance success and theatrical release of *Jupiter's Wife* to the new PBS series *E.C.U.* Is this just a sign of the lean-and-mean times, or the shape of things to come? Panelists will explore the technical, financial, formal, and political challenges at the vanguard of the camcorder revolution. You'll also see demos of some of the new equipment reaching the market right now.

Moderator: Pamela Calvert, Director of Programs and Services, AIVF/FIVE. Panelists: Doug Block (co-producer, *Jupiter's Wife*), co-producer,
Continued on p. 63

TRADE DISCOUNTS FOR AIVF MEMBERS

THE FOLLOWING BUSINESSES,
SUPPORT INDEPENDENT MEDIA
BY PROVIDING DISCOUNTS TO
AIVF MEMBERS:

CALIFORNIA

Rick Caine Productions

856 1/2 N. Occidental Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90026; (213) 413-3222/ Contact: Rick Caine or Debbie Melnyk
15% discount on Sony Betacam SP equipment, crew rentals, duplication and offline editing.

Mill Valley Film Group

104 Eucalyptus Knoll, Mill Valley, CA 94941; (415) 461-8334/ Contact: Will Parrinello
35% discounts on Beta SP production packages, production personnel & VHS off-line editing facilities. Rates further negotiable for selected projects.

Studio Film and Tape

6674 Santa Monica Blvd., Hollywood, CA 90038; (213) 466-8101/ Contact: Carole Dean
5% discount on Kodak short-ends & recans; 10% discount on new Fuji film (20% to students w/ i.d.).

COLORADO

MovieMaker

4730 Table Mesa Dr., Suite B-100, Boulder, CO 80303; (303) 499-6300 / Contact: Susan Lyle Kinney
15% discount on video production services including shooting, editing, script consultation.

FLORIDA

DHA Production

2375 No. Tamiami Trail, Naples 33940; (813) 263-3939/ Contact: George Steinhoff
Discounted hourly rate of \$325 for edit suite, a Beta SP Component Digital Sony series 6000, including use of Abekas A-65, Sony DME-500 and Chyron Max.

Film Friends

4019 No. Meridian Ave., Miami Beach 33140; (305) 532-6966 or (800) 235-2713/ Contact: Mik Cribben
30% discount on extensive range of equipment rentals - camera, lighting, sound, grip, editing.

ILLINOIS

Brella Productions

1840 Oak Ave., Evanston 60201; (708) 866-1884/ Contact: Bernadette Burke
35% off nonlinear editing & 3D animation work.

EditMasters

17 W. 755 Butterfield Rd., Oakbrook Terrace, IL 60181; (708) 515-4340/ Contact: Michael Sorenson
30-50% discount on digital nonlinear post-production services.

NEW YORK

BCS Broadcast Store, Inc.

460 West 34th Street, 4th Fl., NY 10001; (212) 268-8800/ Contact: Michael Rose
10-15% discount on all used video equipment.

Best Shot Video

81 Pondfield Rd., Bronxville, NY 10708; (914) 664-1943/ Contact: Adam Shanker
10% discount on video editing, duplication & production services.

Bill Creston

727 Ave. of the Americas (23rd St.), NYC 10010; (212) 924-4893/ Contact: Barbara Rosenthal
5% discounts on all Super-8 film & sound production services, including editing, sound transfers, VHS to VHS dubs. Also: low-cost services on Amiga computer & still photography.

Downtown Community TV Center

87 Lafayette St., NYC 10013-4435; (212) 966-4510, (800) VIDEO-NY, (212) 219-0248 fax/ Contact: Hye Jung Park or Paul Pittman
10-20% discount on video workshops & seminars; 10-30% discount on all editing services & equipment packages for nonprofit projects; Avid nonlinear editing, CMX editing, off-line editing, Beta SP & EVW300 Hi8 camera pkg rental.

DuArt Film and Video

245 West 55th Street, NY 10019; (212) 757-4580 x 637/ Contact: David Fisher
Negotiable discounts on color negative developing, workprinting, blow-ups from 16mm and S16mm to 35mm, and titles

Film Friends

16 East 17th St., NY 10003; (212) 620-0084/ Contact: Mike Gallagher
30% discount on extensive range of equipment rentals - camera, lighting, sound, grip, editing.

Media Loft

727 Ave. of the Americas (23rd St.), NYC 10010; (212) 924-4893/ Contact: Barbara Rosenthal
5% discount on 3/4" VHS & interformat editing, titling, dubbing, special effects, Hi8, Amiga computer, slides & photos to tape, S-8.

Mercer Street Sound

133 Mercer St., NYC 10012; (212) 966-6794/ Contact: Bill Seery
50% discount off corporate book rate for audio postproduction

Metrovision Production Services

138 East 26th Street, NYC 10010; (212) 689-7900/ Contact: John Brown
Discount on video and film equipment packages

L. Matthew Miller Associates, Ltd.

48 West 25th Street, 11th Fl., NYC 10010; (212) 741-8011 x 229/ Contact: Steve Cohen
Discounted videotape and hardware.

Picture This Music

50 West 34th Street, Suite 9C9, NYC 10001; (212) 947-6107/ Contact: Paul D. Goldman
10-30% off digital audio postproduction: music, voice-over, sound design, SFX, audio mixing (ProTools work stations).

Post Digital

236 West 27th Street, 3rd Fl., NYC 10001; (212) 366-5353/ Contact: Michael Helman
40% discount off nonlinear offline editing facility; duplication; animation production

PrimaLux Video

30 West 26th St., NYC 10010; (212) 206-1402/ Contact: Matt Clarke
10% or more discounts (nonprofits encouraged) on services including: studio production facilities, remote production packages, and postproduction.

Rafik

814 Broadway, NYC 10003; (212) 475-7884/ Contact: Charles Kephart
25% discounts on used cassettes over \$100, 10% on single invoices over \$100 for video services, editing, duplication, viewing, film-to-tape transfers.

Sound Dimensions Editorial

321 West 44th Street, #602, NYC 10036; (212) 757-5147/ Contact: Brian Langman
15% discount on transfers, effects, and sound studio services: Foley, ADR, narration, mixing.

Star Tech

152 West 72nd Street, #2FE, NYC 10023; (212) 757-5147/ Contact: John Hampton
Discounts on paging equipment & services & 10% off Audio Limited wireless mics & accessories.

Studio Film and Tape

630 9th Avenue, NYC 10036; (212) 977-9330/ Contact: John Troyan
5% discount on Kodak short-ends & recans; 10% discount on new Fuji film (20% w/ student i.d.).

Suite 2410

330 West 42nd St., Ste. 2410, NYC 10036; (212) 947-1417/ Contact: Madeleine Solano
10% discount on all editing services and facilities: 16 mm; 3/4" to 3/4"; Betacam to Betacam; AVID; Betacam SP to Betacam SP - A/B Roll, Chyron, Digital Effects.

Technicolor Inc., East Coast Division

321 West 44th St., NYC 10036; (212) 582-7310/ Contact: Ray Chung
Discounts on processing; deeper discounts available to students and feature-length projects.

NORTH CAROLINA

The Empowerment Project

3403 Highway 54 West, Chapel Hill, NC 27516; (919) 967-1863/ Contact: David Kasper
20% discount on video editing; up to 35% discount for selected projects.

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