Cultural Communications

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NICARAGUA

THAILAND

SOUTH AMERICA

JAPAN

WAR IN FLOWERLAND
VIDEO IN NICARAGUA
NEW MEDIA AGE IN JAPAN
VIDEO AMONG THE YANOMAMI OF VENEZUELA
TRAVELING WITH VIDEO
TAKING PHOTOS FROM VIDEO
This issue of Video Guide looks at the subject of independent video as a source of cultural communication—a network that reaches beyond national borders and has the capacity to communicate outside of standard documentary formats or the presumptions of national mega-networks. The movement to encourage independent producers over the last ten to fifteen years has facilitated its own exchange system in which videotapes move around the world and reach the public through exhibitions and access networks. Video equipment is the common denominator, but cultural communication is a vital factor in this broad democratic system which facilitates the sharing of varying personal priorities, social experience, cultural and aesthetic notions, physical characteristics, and language, and environment, whether this communication is peripheral or directly aimed.

The commercial media defines the hegemony of our own culture constantly in its stance of 'objective analysis' and patriotic concern for world situations. Independent video, on the other hand, is drawn from individual social experience, cultural and aesthetic notions, physical communications, and language, and environment, whether this communication is peripheral or directly addressed. The articles in this issue present different ways in which communication is accomplished: from Fujiko Nakaya's careful analysis of Japanese cultural influences on video in that country, to the more objective dilemmas of traveling with equipment and working with integrity within a foreign context, to the political use of video in Nicaragua as a means of cultural change.

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Video Guide would like to thank the Canada Council, Publication Section, for continuing our funding for the 1985-86 year. It is our hope that we can improve the quality of Video Guide throughout this next year.

This issue is a special issue, guest edited by Karen Henry. It includes a look at cross-cultural communications as expressed through VIDEO. We would like to thank all the contributors for their help and efforts. In an attempt to continue an international view, we want to hear from our readers, writers, and artists from around the world.

Video Guide would like to include a page for artists. In the past we have put aside an "Artist's Page." Anyone wishing to submit a page can do so by sending in the camera-ready artwork or sending details of layout with photos, graphics, and text. This page can be your page, so please send thoughts and ideas for format.

In upcoming issues we plan to focus on Broadcasting, Access, Media Arts which includes computer graphics, and Personal Documentary as expressed with VIDEO. With the help of our international editors, we will try to include an international look at these subjects. This will be more likely if we hear from you, our readers. Thoughts, articles, reviews, etc. should be sent to The Editorial Board, VIDEO GUIDE, 261 Powell Street, Vancouver, B.C. V6A 1G3.

We depend on subscriptions and advertising to cover some of our costs—please check your subscription and renew on time. Also, encourage your friends, libraries, and schools to subscribe. Our next deadlines are January 15, September 15, and November 15, 1985, and January 30 and April 15, 1986.

Shawn Preus
for the Satellite Video Exchange Society

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Burma lies sandwiched between the two giants India and China, with Thailand to the southeast. For almost all of its history there has been no central power base: the indigenous Burmese co-existed with several other ethnic groups. In 1886, after several skirmishes with British-ruled India, Burma was annexed by the British as a province of India. Burma's economy suffered drastically from the colonization, and by 1931 Burma's people had begun to rebel. Japan invaded Burma with the help of Burmese rebels during World War II and declared Burma a fully sovereign state. The Japanese army, however, maintained actual control over the government, and the Burmese found it necessary to ask aid from the British in breaking the Japanese hold. The Japanese were successfully defeated, and in 1947 the British granted Burma's independence. Since that time Burma has sought to develop its own style of socialism. In March 1962, General Ne Win led a successful coup d'etat against the prevailing government and introduced a military dictatorship to Burma.

The Karen people had always [like Burma's other minorities, the Shan, the Chin] struggled to maintain an independent state within Burma. When the British arrived, the Karen cooperated with them, winning their favour and achieving a certain level of independence. Unfortunately when the British left Burma, the Karens were persecuted and have continued to be persecuted by the Burmese who resent their earlier political position. Last year the Burmese army made deep inroads into the Karen's highland territory. Most of the villages seen in War In Flowerland were destroyed.

War In Flowerland, produced in 1982 by Byron Black and Marlin Oliveros, documents the Karen's struggle for independence. 'Flowerland' is the English translation of 'Kawt hau' lai,' the name they have chosen for their independent state. Shot in 35mm and smuggled out of the country under the pseudonym Porcer Bryant, this tape may be the only attempt a westerner has made to show us this war — one of the longest wars of the twentieth century, yet almost entirely unheard of outside the immediate region.

Black has worked in Thailand and around the far east for several years producing many tapes on the region including Byron's Black In Baphok, and What's a Sentient Being Like You Doing In a Place Like This? All of them are characterized by a 'wide-eyed' quality and a slow, meditative pacing. Black maintains an aura of innocence in these introspective works that lacks any trace of cynicism, even in Sentient Being and Flowerland which contain strong opinions on the social and political turmoil in Burma.

War In Flowerland was shot in the Karen's highland territory during rainy season, traditionally until last year's raid) a safe time of year. Black uses long, flowing shots of both the environment and the people. The Karens give an impression of being a relaxed and peaceful people, as much through the video's mise en scene as through their actions. Yet M16's are everywhere, especially in the hands of young boys. Black estimates the average age of the commandos to be 17 or 18. The Karen leaders and the majority of the population are Christians (unlike the majority of Burmese who are Buddhist), and most of the elders speak English, a result of the British occupation. The people are obviously very poor and the army unpleasantly outfitted. It is a conservative society so we hear almost exclusively from men. Black interviews Ministers of State, young commandos, a wounded soldier, a school teacher, and records the capture of Chinese narcotic smugglers at a Karen checkpoint. Black has produced a short edit of this tape called Kawthau/la: The Unknown Revolution which did include more footage of female Karens including an interview with an older woman. Unfortunately, his decision not to include some of this footage limits our potential understanding of Karen society.

Burma's history is long and complex. To a certain degree it has chosen to remain isolated from the rest of the world in an attempt at autonomy. Unfortunately for the minorities, and arguably for a large percentage of the population as a whole, this means its poverty and unceasing racial problems go unnoticed. There is very little external pressure put on Burma to solve its difficulties. Black has tried to summarize for the viewer, as concisely as possible, the history of the Karens and the reason for this war. A relatively lengthy text runs over the visuals at varying points. He makes no attempt to camouflage his biases, the result being a very black and white version of Karen history. Given the length of the video and our ignorance of the topic to begin with, he could not have done much else, nor was it his desire to produce a lukewarm documentary. His sympathies are obviously with the Karen, and the intent of the tape is to influence ours in the same direction.

There is no attempt to hide the presence of the camera, either from the viewer or the Karens. It is always a subjective camera, always hand held, thus becoming an extension of his own visual and aural experience. We see microphones, the sound of his movement, even breathing. His subjects look directly into the lens, one extends his hand and we see Black's hand come into the frame and shake it. Neither response is typical of a westerner. The Karen's lack of exposure to such technologies allowed a frankness not possible when recording most cultures.

The Karen's viewpoint is treated with great respect. When they speak Black allows them to do so at their own pace, and editing is minimal. Instead of interrupting their dialogue through excessive edits, he uses a zoom to highlight actions or emotions. This demands a certain amount of patience on the part of the viewer who has always had pauses, stumbles, and 'excesses' removed, either for his convenience or for the purpose of manipulating the information. Black's use of zoom is one of the most sensitive I have seen, being capable of intuiting the subject's next action and maximizing its impact.

Black's warm interaction with the Karen people and his openly sympathetic response to their problem has resulted in an intimate portrait of a people at war; their faces and personalities are some of the most lasting memories of the tape. He has successfully bridged two diverse cultures by accentuating the humanity in one to appeal to the humanity in the other. In doing so, his vision could be criticized as being naive. There is no battle footage, no sensationalism — in fact, no bitter anger shown on the part of the Karens. There is an almost hokey romanticism to these revolutionsaries. They are shown as beautiful and wise, determined and proud, the good guys in a bad guys kind of world. War In Flowerland is seductive. Even if you're wary of its apparent simplicity, it is difficult to resist.

Photography by Porcer Bryant

Kawthau/la: The Unknown Revolution

review by Karen Knights

WAR IN FLOWERING

A Personal Video Documentary by Marlin Oliveros & Byron Black

VANCOUVER GUIDE
I've been shooting around the planet ever since I was two weeks old. That's when my father joined the Air Force, and as a career officer he - and we - were continually on the move. Until I went to teach at Fresno State College in 1967, I never lived in one place more than nine months. Continuous changing of schools, new fights with new kids, the assault of languages and cultures - it was a challenge and a trial.

But in a sense it was nice to have no roots. For in the years since leaving home, about half my life to be precise, I've been able to bounce around from country to country, adapting easily to other peoples, customs, and social situations.

The first time I engaged on a full-scale international media production was when the Canada Council gave me a Film Production Grant in 1977, under the august title of "Baron Infinity's Asian Film Shooting Spree." I say film (or, more properly in Kanak, filmum) because I worked in 16mm silent film form from 1965 until 1979, by which time I had moved definitively into the video medium. I was shooting video in those alien scenes of the early 1970s, when continents were still shifting, volcanoes roaring, and steppe-grazing anglophone and mongoloid stagnating along under the burden of a Soyoy Rover (the Japanese marketing folk who name their gear have their own twisted sense of humour, as we shall see later), a huge floppy black-and-white camera with a room that went dank and never seemed quite in focus, feeding a rather leadenly gained-drunk image into a leaden portapak that didn't really appreciate being ported - if you swung around too quickly to follow some action, you would lose all pretense of sync, as the picture wiggled and rolled.

The early half inch systems were nasty and brutish, and frequently experienced phantom hysterias, vidicon burn (even a fluorescent tube was dangerous to look at), and, with a heart-stopping sound like Tyrannosaurus Rex instead, kiddo? The fierce 2850's time having to snip a clunk and never seemed quite in focus, there is a hurdy gurdy funseekers is an awesome trial. - if you swing around too quickly to follow some action, you would lose all pretense of sync, as the picture wiggled and rolled.

So you finish your edit of 1973's deathless video masterpiece, and go to play it on somebody's U-Matic machine. How about introducing the Three Little Pigs to Tiwamuruveros Rev instead, Kiddo? The force 2850's loved to take a lovely Master Edit (no others need apply), and, with a heart-stopping sound like Grinding Gears First Day in Driving School, twist, wrinkle, stretch, and otherwise befoul the tape. Hope you didn't erase the original material...

All of which brings us to explain why I was foolish to invest my energies in video until manufacturers figured out small, cheap, sensitive, reliable systems... and when they did, they did it with a vengeance.

In 1977 I loaded up my trusty Beaulieu R-16s (film-makers will primate or sneer, but I joke not - as long as I took care of the Beaulieus, it was dead-reliable, but a one-man camera it certainly was), a few thousand feet of Ekstremeon Nemo Reversal, tripod and little more, and jetted off to Japan, Thailand, and the Philippines, where I produced a number of films, including the prize-winning Mango Magritte and Flix Pinto Picasso, among mongols and cynics, respectively. Ever eat a mango and smoke a cigar at the same time? You aren't supposed to, silly, no more than you'd eat a cigar and smoke a mango. The films were discreet and independent expressions of affection and erudition for these two products of Mother Nature.

Getting through Customs is the second issue. The first is the matter of loading the jet. Your IATA Standard Ticket Form says you are allowed 20kg of baggage allowance, two pieces of luggage to be exact, and you'll pay 1% of the First-Class Fare for every kilo of Excess Baggage over that. If you believe that you'll believe Ailta Bryant, speaking of Excess Baggage.

What the IATA ticket doesn't say is that there are only about a million ways of both you and the airline ticket person letting you on with a lot more than you'd think, depending on the airline and whether the afore-mentioned ticketier likes the way you wiggle your eyebrows.

First, there is the matter of Hand Baggage. I always load up batteries and other monstrously heavy items in an innocent-looking sports bag, so heavy the straps are straining and I am too - you can get about 10kg extra that way easy. Which brings up the matter of hand baggage. I swear upon a stack of Korans that I have observed passengers wedging their way into a stuffed Philippine Airlines 747 with at least two huge handbags, a backpack, a shiny ghetto-blasters, camera bag and occasionally some other odd piece of native paraphernalia, like Indian musical instruments or exotic sports gear.

Try that on Japan Air Lines and you won't get near the aircraft - they'll send you back to check it all in and pay the penalty. Seriously, it depends a whole lot on the air and the airport (security is the excuse they give for only allowing one or two pieces of hand-luggage, but that's six-squatch-feathers). I have had good luck with these airlines: Korean Air, Thai Airlines, Philippine Airlines, and (to a lesser extent) Singapore Airlines Air. Northwest Orient and Japan Airlines are among the less sympathetic. If you arrive early for Check-In and the Ticket Agent isn't under a lot of pressure (from passengers or bosses, whoever), and you bat your cute little eyelashes and speak with a musical lilt, he can let a huge amount of overweight slide by. I've checked in practically double the limit at times, two huge Korean-made vinyl suitcases practically so heavy that they can't be picked up. I am naturally apprehensive as I approach the counter, for you can get a step or two off the plane.

But even if you are, say, 15kg overweight you'll usually not hit you for more than about half that much. Always remember: the airlines are fully aware of passenger goodwill, and they know that passengers have very little loyalty to any one airline (flying a popular route. (If you go somewhere that only one carrier serves, like somewhere remote in Australia or Africa, then you are really at their mercy.) So they try their best not to get you annoyed or you won't come back next time.

Another way to get through is to buy a cheapo ticket that has you in some phony "package tour." It works this way: you buy through an agent, who either sends you a ticket or a voucher that says you are a bona fide member of the Reformed Bird of the Lamb Seventh-Day Armist Ante Aardvark Study Tour. You, of course, have never laid eyes in your life on your fellow members of the RFOFLSADAS, and never hope to again, once the wretched plane divesggers you at the other end. But the great scam here is Group Check-In at Baggage. Which is to say, you simply set your suitcases in line with everyone else's, and check in as a group. No one is going to weigh them, although you should have everything in two pieces - if you have nine stepper trunks and a noodle-cage, somebody will raise the alarm to be sure.

The catch here is that when you return from your exotic foreign destination, then you'll be checking in as an individual, and when the agent's eyes light up merrily and he gets this Beuls Lugosi smile on his face, you know that you're going to cough up cold cash. This has happened to me on the way back from Bangkok: going down from Tokyo I was part of a group; coming back I got nicked badly.

Some airports, like Kai Tak in Hong Kong or Gatwick in London, have pooled baggage checkin, so there's no way a helpful ticket person can bend the rules in your favour. You simply pay.

I started with the matter of mass and volume because with video you usually end up with more than the average sunseetking tourist, by a long shot. You may choose to avoid the ghastly ghast of Excess Baggage by shipping your heavy gear as Air Freight and then picking it up at the other end, but there is a deadly hitch in this way of doing things: when you yourself are clearing your baggage at the other end as an ordinary tourist (and that is always the best way to do so), then Customs tends to be perfunctory and pleasant - a jumbo crumpling almost 400 tired and ornery funseekers is an awesome spectacle, and they are happy just to get you stamped and out of the airport most of the time. But if you ship Air Freight, then you face the hideous task of Customs Clearance, which means getting a broker, making a number of trips to the Customs Office, going through bureaucratic routines that would bring tears of joy to Kafka's eyes (had he any eyes left to cry with), greasing more than a few palms (the Thais call this down the moon) and you run the risk of getting a broker, making a number of trips to the Customs Office, going through bureaucratic routines that would bring tears of joy to Kafka's eyes (had he any eyes left to cry with), greasing more than a few palms (the Thais call this down the moon) and papering your face.

When I went to the Philippines with Tony Reif in 1979 to produce a documentary on the cassowary (water buffalo) festival and investigate the chances of starting a production company there, I wrote to the Ministry of Tourism beforehand for some kind of sponsorship. (They had arranged free hotel rooms and free domestic transportation, including a helicopter, in 1977.) This time there were no freebies, but they did help with Customs Clearance at the airport when we arrived. One funny aspect of this is that when I wrote and said that I was going to produce films with the assistance of a Canada Council Grant they sent back this most gushy letter, promising all possible aid and commenting how many marvelous
The author prepares to leave on a shooting expedition... 

Canada Council films they had seen in the past. Have you guessed it? It only took me a wink to realize I was getting in on the basis of a confusion of almost cosmic irony—they were thinking of the dear old National Film Board productions when they leapt forth to welcome me.

We also tried to hit up the airlines for free tickets or at least discounts, but that Golden Era was, we discovered, a thing of the past. But through some gotten in on the basis of a confusion of almost cosmic irony—they were thinking of the dear old National Film Board productions when they leapt forth to welcome me.

The Vancouver-by-the-Void and Yours Truly the Radioactive Aristocraz had, it seemed, become rather weary of one another, how to put it delicately, had perhaps exhausted each other's credibility. So when Taki Blues Singer phoned from Japan with an offer to carry the camera/VTR with me in the cabin, there were many strains during my three and a half years at Narita—hand baggage X-ray, body search, etc. at Narita Airport, AirLines, etc. unless they know you'll produce something of dramatic and direct advantage to them. Which pretty much lets most video out.

In early 1980 Vancouver-by-the-Void and Yours Truly the Radioactive Aristocraz had, it seemed, become rather weary of one another, how to put it delicately, had perhaps exhausted each other's credibility. So when Taki Blues Singer phoned from Japan with an offer to carry the camera/VTR with me in the cabin, there were many strains during my three and a half years at Narita—hand baggage X-ray, body search, etc. at Narita Airport, AirLines, etc. unless they know you'll produce something of dramatic and direct advantage to them. Which pretty much lets most video out.

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There is no way you're going to sneak in most countries as a tourist with an ENG outfit. If you show up with a plethora of expensive aluminum cases full of battery chargers, lenses, tapes, etc. that are going to treat you like a journalist (which is often Not Very Nice), and might try to whack you for a great thumping amount of cash for a Customs Bond. And when you pay off these hundreds or even thousands of dollars, the thought should flicker across the mind like a summer lightning flash that you've just paid back from Customs—it's their country, remember. You can yell and scream and talk about free publicicity and international friendship and all that crap, but it is safe to say they have heard it all before and it will get you zip. You might be able to buy your way through but you have to watch that too, or someone will begin dandering about "attempting to bribe a public servant of the People's Republic of Grenada" and you'll have worse things than a Customs Bond to worry on.

For me, the answer is to travel with a so-called "home video" unit. Any prejudice against VHS or Beta, based on preconceptions born in the early days of these formats, is absolutely obsolete. The cameras now being marketed with CCD or Saticon tubes are reliable, lightweight, cheap, produce good stable colour, and will pick up a like standard tourist items and with the exception of VHS-C (though for most of us that is really not the central issue). It looks to North America for its cultural excitement. How many Russky missiles does it take to incite enough fear to offset the excitement generated by one Michael Jackson? Why should it be able to buy your way through but you have to watch that too, or someone will begin dandering about "attempting to bribe a public servant of the People's Republic of Grenada" and you'll have worse things than a Customs Bond to worry on.

As far as stability is concerned, I'd like to tell you about My Gallin Tempura [translated as "Heaven for Foreigners"] a ten-minute tape I won a prize with at the 1984 Osaka Video Contest. (It was shot on VHS-C format and dubbed and edited on U-Matic.) It was shown over NHK Kansai Region, and when I watched it there were no rolls, no tears, no colour problems, and nothing else that would inform the average citizen that they were watching "home video." Believe me, the quality of the latest-generation camera/recorders, and the HG half-inch tape, is just the ticket for the independent video producers.

I carry the camera/VTR with me in the cabin I know it's going to work when I get where I am going.

It is obviously in the interest of the smart producer to carry as little as possible, and to use the most compact and lightweight equipment he/she can. Those who know me and have had to endure my brads know how much I am against the kind of hardware-nobility that has poisoned much of independent video (and, much more so, the crippled medium of computer games). "VV/P" and "Saticon tubes" are forced to produce PR/drama tapes for manufacturers, as their "artworks," in order to be able to use the vast amount of electronics and manpower necessary to do anything in that medium).
JUAN DOWNEY—NORESHI TOWAI
Yanomami Indians of Venezuela

Some cultures of the American continent exist today in strict isolation, unaware of the cultural diversity of the hemisphere and of commonly shared myths. I decided to survey Central, North, and South America, using video to develop a form of inquiring space while evolving in time among their inhabitants, especially among the Indians, in order to strengthen their rich tribal bonds: a videotaped testimony extending from Alaska to Tierra del Fuego—a form of infolding space while evolving in time—playing back a culture in the context of another, the culture itself in its own context, and finally editing all the interactions of time, space, and context into a work of art.

Since 1972, I have led cultural expeditions to Bolivia, Chile, Guatemala, Mexico, Nicaragua, and Peru, equipped with portable half-inch video. In 1976, sponsored by the Guggenheim Foundation, I went to Venezuela to live and work with indigenous tribes of the upper Orinoco. From August to October 1976 I stayed among the Gaahibos, and from November to May 1977 among the Yanomami. During that whole period, I also made drawings based on my own daily meditations and on the cosmology of those natives. Here, art is the document of a process and not the manipulation of passive materials, and the role of the artist is understood as that of a cultural commissary.

It is time to start a fresh aesthetic!

Among the Yanomami, the cinema, photography, and (since my sojourn in their territory) video are called noreshi towai, a term which means, literally, the taking of a person's double. For this reason, the Yanomami are somewhat afraid of the white people's cameras. The noreshi is the shadow or double of a person and is an integral part of his spirit. Not even the Yanomami themselves know for sure the reason for the term noreshi towai whereby they attribute such power to the cameras. Nevertheless, they take delight in watching good documentation of their own culture and in listening to recordings of their shamans. On more than one occasion I have discussed with them the absurd relation between the noreshi and photography. The only reason that appears to remain for their resistance to the camera is that of not wanting, in a possible future, to sadden their descendants by confronting them with the image of a dead person. So the camera represents a danger only beyond death—and even so, at the most, that of causing sorrow to their relatives. The photographic image, filmed or printed, offends no Yanomami except in that relation to death. (Aware of the risk of losing an image to destruction in the wild fury of an outraged relative, I was careful of what I showed to whom.)

In Tayari, I went to the empty shabono (circular communal dwelling) to shoot a tape of the building without its inhabitants. (All the Tayari folk were living temporarily in the jungle, gathering fruits and perhaps hunting.) A shiny pauji* decided to accompany me on my circular route, diverting me as I followed with the camera its black and iridescent form. Alone in the empty dwelling, I was recording the bird's walk when Hebewe, a youth of twenty, burst in through one of the small openings in the base of the roof, calling to me. He kept erect as I came closer, focusing the camera on him. With tearful eyes he said, "A child has died in the jungle. Everyone is sad. Now they are coming back." He turned and moved away. I understood that he had invited me to follow him, and I went out with my video equipment.

I saw the Yanomami returing and heard their lamentations increase inside the circular roof. Without the camera, I returned to the interior of the shabono, where they prepared a pyre. Then came funeral gestures and ritual dances of the mother and other women, the rhythmic lament-like song. The yellowed corpse of a child, half covered and in a basket, was cast by a relative into the flames. Many men joined in the lamentations and surrounded the fire, carrying bows and arrows. Some shamans with wav ing arms and hands extended sought to drive the harmful smoke up and far away from the shabono.

I wanted to get my video equipment to record so beautiful a rite, but was afraid to disrupt in this way the sorrow which seemed so great. But had Hebewe actually meant for me to remove the video equipment from the shabono to prevent the cremation to be performed within? The Yanomami took great interest in all sorts of recordings of image or sound. Unfortun efly (far beyond the extent of my interest or patience) they watched and listened to the films and tapes that I had of them. Those who learned to handle the videotape equipment or the camera took pride and pleasure in doing so, and in general they devoted themselves enthusiastically to playing with the closed-circuit video as if it were a mirror reflecting variable angles and distances. Since they felt certain that there would be no images in the future to cause sorrow to their descendants, live television afforded them a playful approach to electronic and cybernetic technology. But furthermore, for this culture whose highest value is transition or behaviour, a game so uniquely situated in the present as closed-circuit video, which did not violate their ritual prohibitions, would twang the most intimate fibres of their temperament and fancy.

One night we were watching a videotape about the Incas. There were many insects; dozens of mosquitoes were flying in the beam of light emanating from the video monitor or sitting on the screen itself, obscuring the picture. At the end, the Indians were commenting on the...
great numbers of mosquitoes that there are in Peru! Evidently, to them, the entire luminous content emerging from the tube is an integral part of the videotape; in other words, whatever happens in the blue come of light could be considered as the subject of the videotape. Or, better still, the concomitant circumstances became an element of the content for the watchers absorbed in the program.

The Yanomami seemed to see no difference between black-and-white and colour. To them, both representations are a reduction of reality, equally valid or invalid. Only to our accidental eyes, which have witnessed the development of photography, of the cinema, of television, and its presumed progress from black-and-white to colour, is one or another system preferable. For the Indians, both are nareshi towai, or the taking of the shadow or the double, of a person; but never is it the person himself. Black-and-white and colour are both abstractions equally removed from reality.

On different occasions, two young shamans prepared, separately, to commune with the spirits, having agreed that I would record a videotape during the religious session. In both instances, they took drugs and summoned separately, to commune with the spirits, having agreed to entrance even a part of a person's spirit. They did not cease to threaten, and little by little they became unbearable, I continued to resist, above all with the Yanomami's spirit. Black-and-white confers on danger the unreality which black-and-white confers on danger. Instinctively I pointed the camera at my potential assassin as if it were a firearm, with that aggressive gesture, that imaginary threat which we videographers use as a warning that the camera also is a dangerous weapon, as if bullets could come out of the lens. Still looking through the camera, I sensed a rustle at my back. Without moving my feet, I turned my torso from the waist through ninety degrees toward the rear and saw through the finder that the Yanomami who had been in the rear was now seriously attaking. Something impossible was unfolding. It fascinated them to watch tapes of the enemy shamans which I had made in neighbouring communities, where they could not visit without being attacked. Something impossible was possible without video: to see that fearful being, to hear his voice, and, interpreting his words, to discover his conspiracy with the spirits.

Involuntarily my aesthetic task took on an unsuspected informative value. For the Indians, the tapes I recorded provided them with a keyhole through which they could see, without being seen, faraway shamans and sometimes their enemies, the objects of so much suspicion—often unfounded. They were coming closer. However, even though the tension was fearsome, I continued to resist, above all without showing fear. After threatening me for a long time, they lowered their arms and we continued on our way.

For the watchers absorbed in the program, the Yanomami seemed to see no difference between black-and-white and colour. To them, both representations are a reduction of reality, equally valid or invalid. Only to our accidental eyes, which have witnessed the development of photography, of the cinema, of television, and its presumed progress from black-and-white to colour, is one or another system preferable. For the Indians, both are nareshi towai, or the taking of the shadow or the double, of a person; but never is it the person himself. Black-and-white and colour are both abstractions equally removed from reality.

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The following text is an interview with Francisco Sanchez and Roberto Alvarez who work for Taller Popular de Video Timotes Velasquez (named for a fallen comrade) in Nicaragua. Video and media in general are seen as crucial to the revolutionary process. Broader access to equipment and communication among all levels of the government and the people are distant ideals. The Taller is an association of the two major unions, the CST (Central Sandinista de Trabajadores) and the ACT (Asociacion de Trabajadores y Campesinos, the rural workers organization). It is one of the sources of production of grass-roots documentary video and news material which is shown on SSTV, the national Sistema Sandinista, though it operates independently of this national network. The interview reveals the tactics of the revolution and the dedication of its workers as they struggle with the practical limits of production. The interview is conducted by Ezra Hallack of X-Change TV.

Francisco Sanchez: The video collective of the ACT and CST consists of six comprades. At first, we operated as two teams. Each team was composed of three comprades from the respective trade unions.

One of the comprades of the ACT, the trade union for farm workers, had journalistic experience. She worked for Machete, the weekly publication of the ACT. Another was a receptionist. They had absolutely no experience with video or even photographic equipment.

Roberto Alvarez had only minimal experience with a still camera before he joined the Taller. He had been a union leader in the ATC.

Another comprade, a member of the CST, the union for industrial and other urban workers, was moved from his workplace in an optical centre to be integrated in the Taller. Meanwhile another comprade, Amina Luna, came from the staff of Trabajadores, a bi-monthly publication of the CST.

We received six months of technical training and practical experience. Now, almost three years later, we have enough experience to produce and direct programs with no technical support save for the advice of Wolf Tirado and Jan Kees of Taller when we were still in technical training, we began to be able to operate a camera, distinguish different shot planes and sequences, and prepare a script, and so on. The course lasted four or five months.

Subsequently we worked with the Chicago Solidarity Committee and in particular Julie Lesage who was here for two months. She gave us help and advice and jelled the knowledge we had previously acquired. The work we did with her, what she taught us, has served us well in what we presently do.

EH: What has been your relationship with Tercer Cine?

RA: The only relationship that has existed is that Wolf Tirado and Jan Kees were instructors for the Taller when the project was set up. Wolf was technical advisor and Jan artistic advisor. As institutions, the Taller and Tercer Cine have had nothing to do with each other.

EH: Let's move on to how the Taller presently functions. There are two teams, one from the ATC and the other from the CST. Do each of the teams work separately?

RA: Presently, the working class is moving towards one team and as far as we know, they are now only the Taller, without any divisions. We made the productions together. At the beginning we had two different teams, always with wide collaboration. Before, there were never any problems, much less now.

EH: What have been the internal developments in the Taller?

RA: One of the important developments has been the increase in specialization. Before, we all did everything, a general sharing of all the tasks. Now, we have divided the tasks into script, camera, direction, sound, and editing. This has led to better quality work, but for the person in charge of your work, it perfect it. Without specialization there is no perfection.

EH: With the specialization, then, what does what?

RA: We have two editors, Mina and Miriam. Oscar is the camera person, I'm the sound person, and Francisco is the director.

We've only been specializing since May 9, 1984. It has led to better quality work, and further improvement will be seen in the future. This does not mean we don't learn from each other personally. Specialization has not made us have an illness in the family; the work will not be set back, as there will be someone to cover.

EH: What was the original vision of the Taller and what limitations have you encountered, say in distribution, which prevent a full realization of this vision?

FS: The general objective has been clear since the formation. It was the first time in the history of Nicaragua that a group of workers produced video and did so technically in the use of video. As union members, our purpose has been to use any available tool to improve the working of our organization and its members. Later, as we devised and technically it developed, its objectives for the Taller. We belong to the national commissions of propaganda of our respective unions, and specifically the Taller worked to popularize the role of workers in the revolution, trade union, and the political work of our respective organizations.

EH: What did your work with Julie Lesage consist of?

SF: The point is simple. The countryside is different from the city. There are agriculture workers who have never seen a television before. They have never seen coffee, because the former government never bothered about this marginalized sector. But today there is concern and the countryside is being carried forward. Thus the population. Step by step, progress is arriving to this sector. But there are places where it is difficult to bring in...
**VIDEO IN NICARAGUA**

by Ezra Halleck

this progress because of the terrain and constraints resulting from the aggression. As a result, our work has met with obstacles from time to time.

But, we are working on one playback unit. We are limited to one screening at a time, and because of lack of electricity in the countryside we must rely on a portable generator. Worker Roberto was referring to this: rural workers hear about progress and development in the city, but it is difficult for them to leave the countryside and see it with their own eyes. The programs that we make about the city lead the rural workers to a more general and concrete understanding of urban development.

The sugar mill Matagalpa may be one of the biggest projects in Central America with an enormous production capacity. Talking numbers, the agricultural worker will understand little. Dedicated to the production of corn, coffee workers usually will understand little. We face some enormous limitation. We have to be disappointed.

**RA:** Also, in the interchange of which we would call culture there are, for example, regions more advanced in adult education, say in the north. The measures that were taken to achieve this quality serve as examples to be taken to areas that have fallen behind in this task. Taking the example of the young people in Leon from the north to Chiriqui, where, even though they have better conditions they are not doing well on this task, serves to stimulate the community, to follow the example, yes, the people there in the north study. After work we should be doing the same thing.

**EH:** With your focus being production and counting on one playback unit, how is it possible to have much impact on the country?

**RA:** We have all the incentive. We have done about 100 presentations in the countryside and about another hundred in the city. However, when we were in the countryside, the fact that because of the terrible road conditions the Betamex broke down, and because of the blockade on parts, it's still in the repair centre. It's certain we face some enormous limitation. As an estimate, we need some ten betamex for the countryside and another ten for the cities. With one betamex, there's the union activity in Leon and Managua the same weekend, you can't very well be in both places. This limitation means very few of our people see the productions. We have screened for audiences averaging 100 to 120 persons, and with a small monitor, the people can't see very clearly.

We've had over 300 compass in the cotton growing region of Managua. The programs that we have made about this region. But since we couldn't increase our number and our schedule required us elsewhere the following day, some had to be disappointed.

We have screened for about 10,000 compass in the countryside, but as there are 170,000 agricultural workers, it has not been sufficient. Also, some have seen some of our programs, but others have seen different versions. It has been somewhat haphazard.

**EH:** If you do get more (half inch) equipment, how will it be utilized fully?

**FS:** We are primarily dedicated to the production of programs, and at certain times we have time to go and show them at the different production centres. We work on the support of the trade union leaders of our organizations, and at times are given the task of show them. If we can make with the Betamex, we have. Yet this is the limitation — with one betamex, we couldn't even cover one region. In Managua you find most of the production centres, so on the support of the trade union leadership. We'll take the equipment to the regional headquarters of the ATC or CST and they'll understand better what is the problem. But here there's no problem if we produce and they do most of the screening.

**EH:** Are you counting on international support for more playback units?

**FS:** We have planned to cover the country more extensively with the work we do which presumes the acquisition of more 35 mm decks. We have asked for them, but this doesn't mean we can get them, because the economic conditions in the countryside we must rely on a portable generator. With one deck, only one team can work. We have two cameras, but with only one deck we can't get on the road.

**EH:** How were the six of you chosen for this work?

**FS:** We were chosen to receive the technical training because of certain characteristics. For one, we all worked on the commission of propaganda. And as video is an effective medium of propaganda, we were prime candidates. In addition, some of us worked with culture. There is a technical relationship between what we do previously and video, but rather we were chosen because of our relation and experience with the union leadership and direction. We work here under a guideline set by our organizations, and they made the decision that we came here.

**EH:** What is the procedure for making a program?

**RA:** Once a script is drafted and has been approved in a weekly meeting, we take it to our directors. It is not a question of censorship, but rather of content ideas. We are not required to consult the directors. We are of the propaganda commission: if the tape has to do with a certain area of the union, then yes, it is possible a member of the commission will give you advice. The leaders of these areas will say this is good or no it's lacking something. In the adult education, for example, we can see how the committee is formed. It has to be within the organization responsible for this sector. The trade unions participate in everything.

**EH:** How do you view your situation as a few individuals, perhaps a privileged group? There must be other workers with the willingness and ability to work in video?

**FS:** We are privileged. For the first time in the history of Nicaragua, workers of the city and countryside have been prepared for the operation of this sophisticated equipment.

There are workers in production who have never had contact with this type of technology and, if they have, it is inevitably as a spectator or when someone arrives to film in the countryside.

The cost of this equipment makes it difficult to begin other centres so that more have this privilege. SSTV uses professionals, compas who have worked in video many years, even before the revolution. They were the only ones privileged, and this was their work. They contribute a technical, professional point of view, while we are first activating the trade union leadership.

**RA:** We believe that in the future the Taller will grow so that more compass will have this opportunity. Right now, the limitation is technical. For example, right now we only have one deck. We have two cameras, but with one deck only one team can work.

**FS:** It would not be meaningful for us to lend ourselves to sharing our knowledge with other compass when they are not going to have a place to develop this knowledge. There are only four video centres here in Nicaragua, in addition to SSTV.

**EH:** What can you say to the independent producers in North America?

**RA:** We believe in friendship and solidarity of the people, and with this, we believe we can overcome the economic limitations we now have. One concrete example is the Betamex. If we had just ten more machines, we could have a much more effective distribution network.

**FS:** One thing that would help us very much and would be interesting for us is the exchange of experiences with compas who work as independents, who are revolutionary, people who help the peoples fighting to liberate them solve their own problems. We believe that friendship is possible. We would like to know how they develop their work, especially clandestine work. We realize that the work they do is very difficult, but they are working against the interests of these same transnationals. It's the same for us, because we know that it would be very difficult for us to run a small society through these networks. Through the compas who work in independent video and film, our reality can become known and may be seen as a part of the whole solidarity movement. We are clear that the Reagan administration is one thing, and the U.S. people are another. It is people who look for peace, who struggle to have a more just distribution, and it is the same cause there as here.
NEW MEDIA AGE IN JAPAN

by Fujiko Nakaya

The following essay is an excerpt from the VIDEO '84 catalogue in which Fujiko Nakaya addresses the relationship of Japanese culture to video art. Nakaya-san is an artist and administrator of SCAN video in Tokyo. This in-depth study of Japanese video springs from the accumulation of many years of association with video art and the developing aesthetics.

Although the variety of work may be limited, if Japanese video artists have something to contribute to the present attempts to describe and classify video art, it will be in terms of their particular approach to the medium, their notion of time and space, and their sense of scale, which seem to reflect Japanese cultural consciousness.

Concept of Time

Japanese sense of time can be described as being characteristically non-linear, non-sequential. Time is generally sensed, not by its development, but by synchronization and deviation. The structure of our timing is based on breathing. Since every individual's breathing rhythm is different, one's sense of time is always lapsed; and thus randomness constitutes its basic structure. The concept of MA, of 'in between', is thus introduced as a catalyst.

MA literally means the interval or the opening between exhalation of one's breath and inhalation of the next breath. It is a moment when nothing happens, or 'an empty void'; but the void is also the moment of the largest potential. The opening can be saturated with KI, atmospheric energy.

MA or 'in between' is purposely undefined, to accommodate individual differences. It allows for natural breathing of individuals to occur without being governed by outside forces. Communication is thus understood as the synchronization of basically different individuals; and discommunication is not a dead-end, but ZURE, a deviation or lapse. If you allow for some MA, it will synchronize.

MA is an important aesthetic notion and also a commodious instrument which traverses Japanese culture on the everyday life level. Even in the most banal situations, MA is used as a measure for value judgement. 'Having a bad MA', for instance, means someone awkward or who doesn't fit in well. A stupid person is said to be 'missing MA,' in the art of Kabuki or Noh Drama, the actors are often evaluated by having either mastered MA or not.

How is this particular notion of 'time' manifest in the works of video artists? A good example is the work of Keigo Yamamoto, who has dealt with this concept of MA and KI and used them as his methodology even since his first involvement with video in 1969.

The basic scheme of Keigo Yamamoto's performance-installation is the attempt by a participating viewer/performer at simultaneously copying an action which the artist has prerecorded on video. The participant's action is also recorded live and then played back simultaneously with the original model's action. The inevitable delay in the two actions is depicted through video and physically experienced in a simple game-like performance. Since the video image, unlike a mirror, is turned around the right way, as seen by others, the performance of mimicry becomes more difficult than it seems. The deviation of ZURE is amplified as one's perception and cognition are challenged.

Yamamoto's work is operative also on an epistemological level. ZURE here is employed as an epistemological representation of the cognitive process of seeing, or the lapse between seeing and being seen. The most attractive element of Yamamoto's performance-installation, however, is the intimacy or the liveliness of audience participation. Everyone, including children and people outside of the arts, can understand and enjoy this perceptual game of paradoxical viewpoints.

In the installation exhibited at VIDEO '84, between Sound and Sound, No. 1 (1984), the artist sets out on a new direction by extending the visual denotations further into sound. The viewer/performer is pleasantly surprised when she hears in the playback the sounds of ZURE amplified. ZURE is transposed into music composed of incidental sounds created by all the mistaken steps made in trying to copy the action. The platform on which the performer stands is built like a drum, with a microphone underneath.

A young video artist, Yoshitaka Shimanou, has from the start of his career intervened with his physical body in dealing with television. In one of his earliest videotapes he carries a 16 inch Profex monitor on a backpack and a dynamo and a VTR in front. He walks down a suburban street, continuing on to a country road; the same route shows on the monitor. In the gathering dusk, one realizes how the image inside the monitor is turned around the right way. Here too the subject is ZURE, a lapse between recorded time and real time connected by the human body.

In Shimano's recent work Rolling (1984), the artist rolls a monitor like a rock. The image inside the monitor synchronizes with the scenery outside, with slight ZURE, of course, rendering the TV set almost transparent. In the last half, the TV set is carted over a hill with the

*"Video Communication — Do It Yourself! Kit*, Sony Building, Ginza, 1972
Nobuhito Kawamura explaining video delay
Foot No. 3 by Keigo Yamamoto

Video Letter (1982-83) by Shuji Terayama and Shuntaro Tanikawa, conceived by Katsue Tomiyama, is a more poetic example of video correspondence. Both Terayama and Tanikawa are renowned poets in Japan, in their late 40's; this tape was made. Their aesthetic notions are quite different. Tanikawa often writes with 'I' in a personal style using everyday language.

Terayama is the director of Tenjojiki Theatre, whose aesthetic interest has always been to transform reality into fiction. The two poets have known each other for 25 years.

Both respond naively to this new medium as an homage to video as a personal and intimate medium. Sooner or later, however, the two slide off the fence of naïveté. Terayama says "Video is like being the only child in a family,... the undue affirmation of self leads to self-indulgence." Tanikawa, biologically responding to the medium, decides to ride along and indulge if he must. Terayama, ideologically responding, tries to reveal himself painfully. The video letter comes to an end with Terayama's death in May 1983, at the age of 47.

In terms of methodology, by intention or not, the exchange between the two poets transposes the method of Renku, a collective form of Haiku. In Renku, clinging on or excessive familiarity is considered bad taste. "Friendship is not the finding out of common denominators, but rather it is something fostered in the process of recognizing and understanding the differences," says Terayama. In Japanese language, to understand means to separate. The same character is used to write these two words.

A new approach to video correspondence is experimented in K & K Video Letter (1984-) by Yoshinobu Kurokawa and Yohani Kibe, a film/video maker and a young theatre director, both in their 20's. Two rolls of video letters, one started by Kurokawa and the other by Kibe, three minutes each in length and with no editing, are exchanged simultaneously every three days.

The exchange on video of the clips of their real time life at a forced speed breeds a new video experience, as suggested by the subtitle 'Experimental Life.' It is quite different from, and not so cool as, the correspondence based on individual differences. Images of water, light, and shadow, thoughts on and around film, eyes, city, and the details of their daily life are exchanged just like two ballplayers sporting with a surveillance camera.

"If we corresponded only with words, it would be much easier. What an ambiguous and uncomfortable affair their late 40's at the time this tape was made. Their aesthetic notions are quite different, comments Kurokawa after one month of video exchange with Kibe. "I wanted to personally correspond with Yohani Kibe, but at the same time I was writing a letter with a hope of addressing it to the world. But only after we began, I realized that there were so many factors rolling about in the exchange itself which had to be tackled." What does video communicate? This is yet to be answered by the time this tape was made.

Relationship to Nature and Technology

Japanese affinity with technology is a topic to be discussed, especially when we talk about works by young artists of the TV generation whose lives are immersed in the high-tech, hybrid environment of contemporary Japan.

Growing rice in the same rice paddies without rotation for over thousands of years is certainly high tech. "Is Man a part of Nature?" Japanese relationship to nature is not always so pacific, but often intense and dynamic. Since ancient times, the inhabitants of these small islands with limited resources have invented a variety of ways to converse with nature, to get the best out of nature, and to enjoy the intimate relationship of co-existence through technology.

Japanese pliancy with technology can also be attributed to the fact that we never experienced an Industrial Revolution. The Industrial Revolution made definitive the dichotomy between man and machine. It gave birth to the unions which protected workers' rights; and the machines were degraded to do the jobs that human beings didn't want to do.

Technology to the Japanese, on the contrary, is mere wisdom, or a friend to help get along better with nature, and not a monster which threatens human beings and their dignity. A computer is nothing more than a big abacus. To say that we are not threatened by technology does not mean that we totally trust it either. That many Japanese still trust their sixth sense more than a computer is evident.

The desire to communicate with nature sometimes took an extreme form of artificiality, as seen in the art of bonsai, the miniature tree landscape. This old art form can be traced to the miniature mountainscape of Nara Period, over 1,200 years ago.

A dwarfed tree must seem like a cruel hobby to Western eyes, anti-nature. For Japanese, or for those who practice this art, it is a way to pay tribute to nature. Getting up at 4 a.m., seeing the air, reading the seasonal changes, they pick the shoots, chop off branches, bend and pull, only for the sake of the tree to develop its best line.

It is an intimate relationship of give and take through which you learn, appreciate, and master the intricacy of Nature's systems. The process entails an elaborate knowledge of Nature.
Yet the result may not be rewarding. Your tree might just swivel around on those awkward tree trunks and mass

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Arts Management & Administration Workshops

In January, 1985, Simon Fraser University launched a professional development program for practising arts administrators. Due to the unqualified success of the first four workshops, our summer workshop offers eight workshops for administrators in arts organizations with an annual budget of less than $500,000, junior administrators in larger organizations, and independent artists. The aims of the program are to develop a sound understanding of the concepts of management and to provide administrators with practical skill and knowledge in a variety of management subjects.

Summer Calendar of Workshops

For independent artists—

Financial Self-Management
Marketing and Career Development for Arts Administrators
Fundraising with Government and Foundations
Fundraising in the Private Sector
Boards of Directors in Arts Organizations
Marketing and Audience Development
Media Relations
Management Accounting

The generous assistance of the Vancouver Partnership for Business and the Arts is gratefully acknowledged.

Financial Self-Management for Independent Artists

This workshop provides information on the practicalities of financial self-management. It is specifically designed for independent artists conducting their own business affairs. Topics will include:

- organizing records and receipts — an artist's method
- choosing an accountant or tax consultant
- basics of contract negotiations
- deductions and tax breaks, an overview
- essential financial cases such as mortgages, loans and financing, and budgets

Graeme Waymark is a Chartered Accountant with extensive experience as a tax consultant, business manager and contract negotiator for many of Canada's leading artists and performers. His clients have included well-known actors and actresses, dancers, rock groups, painters, musicians and vocalists. In addition to his worldwide connections in the entertainment field, Mr. Waymark has served on the boards of many local performing arts organizations and as a trustee of the Vancouver School Board.

The fee is $60.00. Enrollment is limited to 35 participants. Friday and Saturday, June 7-8, 1985, 9:30 am to 4:30 pm daily, at the Hyatt Regency Hotel, 655 Burrard Street, Vancouver, B.C.

Marketing and Career Development for Independent Artists

Professional training in the arts, especially the classical performing arts, prepares artists for the realities of the marketplace. This two-day workshop will provide an overview of career development for individual artists and arts organizations in North American and European markets. Contracts, negotiations, promotion, and choosing an agent are some of the topics which will be addressed.

Ann Summers Dowson is internationally recognized for her work in career development management. Originally from Toronto, Miss Summers has established herself and her company, Ann Summers International, in New York, Toronto, and Rome. She has been responsible for the European debut performances of some of Canada's most distinguished performing artists. Currently Miss Summers is serving as director of the Resource Centre for Career Performing Artists in Toronto.

The fee is $60.00. Enrollment is limited to 35 participants. Sunday and Monday, June 9-10, 1985, 9:30 am to 4:30 pm daily, at the Hyatt Regency Hotel, 655 Burrard Street, Vancouver, B.C.

Fundraising with Government and Foundations

Long range planning and targeted special projects are two keys to successful fundraising with governments and foundations. This workshop will include practical information on topics such as:

- preparation of grant application forms
- appropriate supporting documents
- criteria and guidelines for providing grants
- relationships with government officers
- preparation of budget proposals

Joy Leach is Director of Development, Simon Fraser University. Over the past seven years she has been involved in projects ranging from capital campaigns, employment projects, National Research Council support projects with business and industry, and many arts and cultural projects including Summer Arts Festivals, Children's Festivals, and the development of museum facilities. She was recently elected to the Board of Vancouver City Savings Credit Union.

The fee is $125.00. Enrollment is limited to 25 participants, Monday and Tuesday, May 27-28, 1985, 9:30 am to 4:30 pm daily, at the Granville Island Hotel, 1253 Johnston Street, Vancouver, B.C.

Fundraising in the Private Sector

This workshop consists of lectures, panel discussions, and case studies to provide participants with a framework for developing new and effective fundraising plans. Topics will include:

- repositioning; fundraising as marketing
- corporate sponsorship
- the five "C's" of a successful campaign
- panel of corporate representatives — "what works?"

Nuala Woodham has a decade of experience as a fundraiser for non-profit organizations and is currently a consultant in resource development under management development. She has worked for the University of the Lower Mainland, the Vancouver Symphony, and the Notting Hill Housing Trust in London, England. Ms. Woodham consults with groups in the fields of the arts, education, health and welfare, and advises on both operating and capital campaigns.

The fee is $125.00. Enrollment is limited to 25 participants. Monday and Tuesday, June 3-4, 1985, 9:30 am to 4:30 pm daily, at the Granville Island Hotel, 1253 Johnston Street, Vancouver, B.C.

Boards of Directors in Arts Organizations

The relationship between the board, the community, the government, and paid staff, including both artists and management, especially in smaller non-profit arts organizations is crucial to the success or failure of the organization. Topics to be emphasized in this two-day workshop include:

- various forms of board structure
- financial and legal responsibilities of board members
- how board members are selected
- chains of command
- conducting a productive meeting
- working with volunteer committees
- funding of arts organizations
- the board of the future

Mayer Moore has been celebrated for this work as a playwright, director, producer, actor, composer, and critic of the arts. He is a professor emeritus in Fine Arts at York University and, from 1978-83, chaired the Canada Council. Mr. Moore's list of awards, honorary degrees and board credits is extensive and his creative contributions stand as a legacy to the performing arts in Canada. Currently, Mr. Moore is an adjunct professor in Fine Arts at the University of Victoria and writes a weekly column for the Globe and Mail.

The fee is $125.00. Enrollment is limited to 25 participants. Monday and Tuesday, June 17-18, 1985, 9:30 am to 4:30 pm daily, at the Granville Island Hotel, 1253 Johnston Street, Vancouver, B.C.

Management Accounting

The emphasis in this workshop is placed on creating an awareness of the different types of decisions faced by arts managers and the appropriate models and information necessary in making decisions. Topics will include consideration of internal control systems, budgeting, cash flow projections, standard variance models as well as other managerial accounting techniques. The objective is to combine planning, budgeting, and operational decision-making in one process.

The workshop format will include lecture and participant discussion groups.

Beverly Trifonidis is General Manager of the Vancouver Opera. She is a Certified Public Accountant and holds a Masters degree in Professional Accountancy from the University of Texas in Austin. Her area of specialization is accounting in the public sector. Ms. Trifonidis has been a member of the Faculty of Business Administration and has taught in the Foundation Program in Management for Women at Simon Fraser University for six years.

The fee is $125.00. Enrollment is limited to 25 participants. Monday and Tuesday, July 22-23, 1985, 9:30 am to 4:30 pm daily, at the Granville Island Hotel, 1253 Johnston Street, Vancouver, B.C.

Arts Management & Administration

Simon Fraser University Downtown

549 Howe Street

Vancouver, B.C. V6C 2C2

A 112 pg. distribution catalogue complete with artist bios, photos and descriptions of 150 selected workshops is referenced by producer, title and subject area. Published by:

Satellite Video Exchange Society
261 Powell St.
Vancouver, B.C.
Canada V6A 1G3

$5
In 1971 I mailed about 300 cards to artists, art centres, and the few video people I knew in various countries, asking for replies from any non-commercial users of small-format video. The results were compiled in the first Video Exchange Directory, published under the auspices of Intermedia and Image Bank.

Among the 140 responses, I was surprised to get a listing from the Black Panthers' office in Algeria. I'd heard through the rumour mill they'd been visited by some (white American) video people, allowed themselves to be taped, and then confiscated the portapak as "payment." (I also once read in the newspaper that a TV network had found Yippie Gerry Rubin in hiding, interviewed him, and given him the unprecedented gift of a VTR at his request.) True or false? Who knows.

A matter of fact is that LSD originator Timothy Leary, on the run from the law, took refuge with the Black Panthers in Algiers. There is a now [in]famous tape of him in two versions. The original was him talking about his philosophy, a message to the counter-culture. The subsequent version, which I saw in Montreal, was released by the Panthers after he and they had a falling out. Using "audio dub," Leary's voice was replaced with a narrator denouncing his mistaken ideas. I'd like to hear what he had to say, as well as the Black-Liberation activists rebuttal. So much for communication. I thought it disrespectful to him and to the viewer.

Those were the days before stereo. They probably didn't know the "dollar bill trick" for sound-on-sound. (You had to unscrew the lid and put the bill between erase head and tape.) It was long before anyone could afford a Gen. Lock to key in subtitles, let alone a titler. The frustration of watching Leary's lips move without a sound marked how I would think about cross-cultural communication.

Startling too was the lack of any respondents in Japan. One would have thought there'd be numerous video artists in the country where almost all the hardware is produced. I took advantage of some outstanding travel money from a Canada Council sculpture grant I'd gotten a bit back and went to try and make personal contact. The truth is there were only a few people using video at all (Keigo Yamamoto being the most prominent). Thanks to the initiative of Fujiko Nakaya and Katsuhiko Yamaguchi, Sony agreed to sponsor a workshop, lend us production equipment, and then give us a floor in their Ginza building for a two week show. When I saw the Directory reproduced in Blowup below the banks of monitors (including the Panthers), I sensed that video could indeed be taken seriously as a medium for international communication.

The main impediment to global video exchange, as we all know, is the three TV standards (PAL, SECAM, NTSC) and their variants. There are many video centres in Europe that have tri-standard decks and monitors, so they can play (but not copy) tapes from elsewhere. No so in the U.S., although Canada is not too bad in this regard. Transcoding from one standard to another is costly. Notable for discounts to artists and non-profit groups are the National Film Board of Canada, the Dutch TV system, and G.I.T. in Tokyo.

After years of experience with international video festivals, conferences, and organizing numerous exhibitions in Canada, Japan, and Europe, I still have no set formula for showing foreign tapes. We decided early on at the Video Inn to concentrate on exchange shows—you send us yours; we'll send you ours. I still think it's a workable model, better than distribution only. It demonstrated our interest in and respect for what people in other countries are doing with video. It also made us many long-lasting friends.

Most of the independently produced tapes now moving around the world are of much superior quality to those of our modest beginnings. Yet we are still faced with the problem of cross-cultural communication. I remember seeing Fellini's "Roma" in Italian, with Japanese subtitles. Hmm...Transcribing a videotape, translating it in writing, and then adding the second language is a laborious process, often thankless, always with little or no remuneration. And the results, difficult to read (unless it's outline lettering), tiring on the eyes, and distracting from the imagery.

Voice-over has its drawbacks as well. If the reader doesn't do justice to the original, unfortunately all too often the case, a fine tape comes across as amateurish. Using several voices adds variety, but it's as weak as the weakest reader. The most successful second-language project I've been involved in was at VIDEO ROMA. A single simultaneous translator, fluent in French, English, and Italian, adequate in German, viewed the tapes once, then did a running translation. When dissatisfied with a bit she'd just done, we'd rewind and play, pressing the audio "inert" at the point she wished to pick it up. Her enthusiasm for documentaries and art tapes both her energy, and her professional voice were a rare combination.

When "versioning" a tape into another language, it's crucial to have some "vade-mecums"—mixing the original soundtrack in the background of the "voice
over." With stereo (standard on \( \frac{3}{4} \)" but still rare on \( \frac{1}{2} \)"), you can play just the translated track, or both, through the sound system. I've had the most success in Tokyo labelling one loudspeaker as "English" and the other, separated as far as possible, "Japanese." It is not too distracting. Two monitors make it even better.

Tapes which depend mainly on language for their meaning to be understood pose the greatest obstacle to international exchange. British videotapes are notoriously verbose and hard to grasp in Japan. Tapes that are visually rich or in which there are sufficient clues in the symbology and action have more chance of being appreciated by an audience which does not have a grasp of the language. Documentary tapes often require translation; less so art tapes. Yet art is not inherently universal, and I wish more artists would make the effort to cross cultural borders.

With all good intentions, my experience with my own tapes indicates that this is not an easy matter. I have tried various approaches, including the use of two languages in the dialogue. This "dialogue" was not as successful as I had hoped, but I wouldn't give up on it. The truth is that the parts of my tapes, and those in their entirety, which have found the most appeal are documentary in style, with little language. These I term "personal documentaries," where my point of view is clear. I don't suggest this as a model. It does work for me, however, and fits my approach to artistic expression.

There is danger, even in visual works, of the message (if there is one) eluding the viewer of another culture. There are many image-oriented tapes, the symbols of which are rich in meaning for one cultural set, that become blank in another, or exotic at best. The video artist's aesthetic sensitivity can transcend this mystery and succeed in evoking a response in the viewer. I've always felt we can aspire to reach the universal when expression is based on the very personal. But I do not expect a singular meaning to be imparted in cross-cultural video communication. In any showing, for any viewer, only a few tapes will likely hold interest. It's likely a different set, though, when you can't follow the language. There's a certain amount of frustration, even if the dialogue isn't "important" (you don't know that).

When video was in its infancy, it was common for the producer to accompany tapes. Formal and informal discussion between viewers and the artist was a learning experience for both. Social action tapes were often intended primarily as a catalyst for discussion following the showing. Despite numerous shows moving around the globe, communication with viewers leaves room for a lot of improvement. It is my hope to see many more artists attend public showings of their works and produce new tapes in cultures very different from their own.

We're just scratching the surface of international video communication. From the start, I've found it to be a fascinating process. Fourteen years later it is still worth the effort.
Bay Area Video Coalition is happy to announce a 1985 VIDEO FESTIVAL DIRECTORY published by Video Networks available for sale. The Directory contains 50 national festivals with information targeted just for the videomaker. The vital statistics for each festival are provided with a short paragraph description which may tell the videomaker about some of last year's winners, the judging process, the viewing audience and the compensation. Send $2 plus $1 for postage and handling to:

Bay Area Video Coalition

1111 17th Street
San Francisco, CA 94107

NYC EXPERIMENTAL VIDEO & FILM FESTIVAL

The 4th Annual NYC Experimental Video and Film Festival, a single forum for video art, experimental films and hybrid work announces the 1985 finalists. They are:

1. Connie Coleman and Alan Powell, Philadelphia, Glass Vibes, 3:30 min., 1984, VHS, 16", and 1", colour, sound. "With original music composed and performed by Gareth Downs, this is a highly graphic and rhythmic portrait of the kids on our street showing off their good spirits."

2. Ewa Turska and Camille Maheux, Montreal, Deux, 11 min., 1984, 34", colour, sound. "This French Canadian tape presents in a very natural and straightforward manner a picture of an artist's loft in Montreal. Deux retains its artistic intent without the use of image processing or synthesized sound which has become the norm for NYC experimental work." –Hunter Yoder

3. Jules Engel, Los Angeles, Play-Pen, 6 min., 1985, film, colour, sound. "Play-Pen is a toy menagerie in an abstract concept... some of the toys are stationary... some are in motion."

4. Hank Bull and Eric Metcalfe, Vancouver, Sax Island, 12 min., 1984, 16", colour, sound. "Sax Island is an invisible place, located somewhere between South America and Africa. It is utopia in the shape of a saxophone. Let me introduce you to Major Off, Hookman, and Beef Bine, distinguished residents of the island. Although the importation of corks is discouraged, the use of hypodermic syringes, commonly referred to as getting one's doo doos, is the order of the day." –Hunter Yoder


6. Shalom Goretzki, New York, Blue Swell, 3:30 min., 1984, 34", and 1", colour, sound. "Blue Swell is a Jamaican expression to describe things that are hard to define. It seemed like a good way of describing U.S. intervention in Grenada. Image processing and original music composed by Brooks Williams drive home the point."

7. Jill Kroesen, New York, Mr. President, 3 min., 1985, 34", and 1", colour, sound. "Taylor Mead is Mr. President in this playful satire on Ronald Reagan. He gives a short speech on his basic philosophy to the tune of "My Country Tis of Thee," while animated flags and animals silently comment on his speech."

8. Matthew Schlanger, Ouevo, N.Y., Insomnia, 8 min., 1984, 34", colour, sound. "A work concentrating on electronic image processing using tools available through the Experimental Television Center in Ouevo, N.Y., as well as his own equipment. The images and sound are strikingly original considering the amount of work done and seen coming out of E.T.C."


These tapes/film were selected from over eighty entries from all over the world. The selection committee consisted of Wendy Chambers, Artistic and Videoclip; Marie Nesthus, director of Donnell Library's Media Center; and John Hanhardt, curator of film and video, Whitney Museum of American Art.

The NYC Experimental Festival was founded by its director, Hunter Yoder, in 1981. It is the only festival which integrates experimental film and video art as well as hybrid work. The 4th Annual NYC Experimental Video and Film Festival is made possible with public funds from the New York State Council on the Arts.

The Canada Council requires a Media Arts Officer

(Distribution)

Duties

Under the direction of the Head, Media Arts Section, assists in the management of the section; administers the film and video distribution programs; manages the workshops and communications funds; provides information to applicants and organizations receiving funding; reviews applications for eligibility, makes recommendations to the Council for support, and communicates Council decisions to applicants; contributes to the formulation of Council policy in media arts.

Qualifications

Knowledge of media arts (film, video, audio, integrated media) in Canada, with particular emphasis on distribution practices and market strategies. Good management skills, with ability to interpret policies, write reports, and communicate orally and in writing with the English- and French-language artistic communities. Completion of university studies and four years related experience.

Language

The duties of the position require the use of both official languages.

Location

Ottawa

Salary

From $31,205 to $38,368, depending on qualifications.

Please submit a resume by 7 June to:

Human Resources
The Canada Council
P.O. Box 1047
Ottawa, Ontario
K1P 5V8

San Francisco Film Arts Festival

45 Hyde St., Suite 319
San Francisco, CA 94102
(415) 558-4999

CONTACT: Hadi Robayashi
FORMATS ACCEPTED: 16" single chan.only

FEES: $5

CATEGORIES: Open to all subject matter except corporate or industrial must be 15 minutes or less

FESTIVAL DATE: Early August

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: Early July

San Francisco Arts Festival considers emerging resident video artists in the Bay Area Counties to apply. Entries of the 1984 festival were judged by a jury chaired by Constance Lowell, Associate Curator at the University Art Muesum in San Francisco. A $250 winning honorarium is awarded.

BANFF TELEVISION FESTIVAL

Benn Television Festival
P. O. Box 1029
Banff, Alberta
Canada, T0L 1C0
(403) 762-3000

CONTACT: Amy Easkel
FORMATS ACCEPTED: 16" NTSC or film

FEES: $100 per entry

CATEGORIES: Televisio Features, Limited Series, Continuing Series, Special and Political Documentaries: Outdoor and Wildlife Documentaries; Fine Art Programs; Television Comedies, Light Entertainment, Festivals, Intellect. DEADLINE: Late July

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: July 1, 1985

BANFF is an annual international competitive event "dedicated to the recognition and celebration of excellence in television films and programs." Producers of films and programs judged in each category will be awarded a bronze statue. A grand prize including $5000 cash will be awarded to the program judged Best of the Festival.

The Native American Film Festival

The National American Film and Video Festival Museum of the American Indian
Broadway at 155th Street
New York, New York 10032
(212) 282-2475

CONTACT: Elizabeth Weatherford
FORMATS ACCEPTED: "16" or "35mm"

FEES: None

CATEGORIES: Documentary and Fiction
FESTIVAL DATE: November

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: August

The Native American Film and Video Festival is open to works on all aspects of Native American culture. Native American and independent producers dominate the selected tapes. In 1984, 23 films and tapes were selected out of a total of 200 submissions. Most works were 20 minutes or more in length. The 1984 Festival was held at three different locations in New York City. The Festival offers no prizes but does pay travel expenses, accommodations, and speaking fees for presenters of work.

The American Film Institute

Applications for the 1986 cycle of the Independent Filmmaker Program will be accepted after July 15, 1985 for a September 13, 1985 deadline. For information about the program, call (213) 856-7606 or write to: The Independent Filmmaker Program, 1301 National Arts Building, 9250 Sunset Boulevard, P.O. Box 27999, Los Angeles, CA 90027.

The American Film Institute (AFI) is an independent, non-profit organization founded in 1967 to advance the moving image as an art form, to assure preservation of that art form, and to develop and encourage new talent.

Native American Film and Video Festival
Museum of the American Indian
Broadway at 155th Street
New York, New York 10032
(212) 282-2475

CONTACT: Elizabeth Weatherford
FORMATS ACCEPTED: "16" or "35mm"

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Explore the latest and best of the digital arts, the blending of high technology with the visual, and performing arts.

Graphics, Music, Sculpture, Animation, Fabric Arts, Seminars, Performances, Exhibits, and more!

DIGICON 85
2nd International Conference on the Digital Arts
August 15-17, 1985
Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada

Views of U.S. Half-Inch Video
Competition
Video Contest
P.O. Box 200
Hollywood, CA 90028
(213) 856-7745
CONTACT: Cathy Jung
FORMATS ACCEPTED: VHS, Beta
FEES: None
CATEGORIES: Fiction, Nonfiction, Music Video, Experimental
FESTIVAL DATE: September
SUBMISSION DEADLINE: Late June

Sponsored by Sony and administered by the American Film Institute. Visions of the U.S. is devoted solely to tapes created on half-inch systems. Prizes include a variety of half-inch equipment.

San Francisco International Video Festival
1250 17th Street
San Francisco, CA 94107
(415) 656-4343
CONTACT: Steve Agrestine and Wendy Garfield
FORMATS ACCEPTED: 1/2" P2, 1/2" P2, 1/2" P2
CATEGORIES: Open to all genres
PROXIMATE DATE: October
SUBMISSION DEADLINE: August 1
All works selected for the Festival exhibition receive an honorarium of $100. Exhibition is held in a variety of sites throughout the Bay Area during the 10-day festival. Television, theatre or gallery venues are selected to best fit the work and stimulate the widest possible audience. SFIVF also curates a traveling show, exhibiting in institutions worldwide.

Tucson Women's Video Festival
902 E. Hampton
Tucson, AZ 85719
(602) 624-8441
CONTACT: Jane Lane
FORMATS ACCEPTED: 1/2" VHS
FEES: Return postage required
CATEGORIES: Drama/Fictional: Journalism/Nonfiction: Art/Experimental
FESTIVAL DATE: Early October
SUBMISSION DEADLINE: Early August
Tucson Women's Video Festival winners receive cash prizes and are shown on Cox cable community access. Winners are chosen for a variety of perspectives, cultural group representation, and knowledge in the field.

National Federation of Local Cable Producers
NATIONAL CONFERENCE
BOSTON PARK PLAZA HOTEL
Boston, Massachusetts
July 11-13, 1985
REGISTER NOW — before June 27
The 1985 National Convention has been expanded to include more for you:
MORE pre-conference workshops:
- Advanced Computers
- Franchise Renewal
- Audience Measurement
- Cable Contract Modification
- Creating Local Advertising
- 3 Master Classes
MORE workshop tracks:
- Special Cable Users and Audiences
- Churches and Cable Communications
- International Community Programming
MORE fun:
- The 1985 National Production and Programming Showcase will display the latest in technology, equipment, and — for the first time — programming, for your review and enjoyment.
MORE Fun
- This year’s NFLCP Friday night party will be a harbor cruise aboard the M/V Fort Warren, a double-decked, luxury ship reserved especially for our use. Enjoy the harbor and the magnificent lights of Boston while dancing aboard the Fort Warren!
Program Coordinator
Professional Meeting Management
P.O. Box 467
Fort Collins, CO 80522
(303) 484-8300
NFLCP
906 Pennsylvania Avenue SE
Washington, D.C. 20003

Night Flight seeks short tapes and films by students and young artists for "New Filmmakers" segment on USA Cable. Renomination of $10 per minute will be paid upon use. For more information, write to Carrie Franklin, AT&T Video Enterprises, 888 7th Ave., New York, NY 10016, (212) 977-1300

PROJECT VIDEO ART
5th Fools Festival of Copenhagen will take place June 8 to 30, 1985.
This year the Fools Festival will include international VIDEO ART, video tapes, video installations, and video performances.

The event will take place at Charlotteborg, the most important official exhibition space in Copenhagen. The exhibition will be curated by Niels Lomholt (Falling Annual Livingroom Video Festival), Torben Soborg (video workshop/HASLEV), and Svend G. Thomsen (Galleri/Artspace Turekunter, Copenhagen).

The intention is to show a wide range of what has been happening in video art over the last few years, and what is happening now, covering as many aspects of VIDEO ART as possible.

For more information contact video workshop/HASLEV Sundrige 12
DK-4690 Haslev
Denmark

DISTRIBUTE
ACCESS VIDEO

Since 1983, Video Women have produced as a group a community cable access series focusing on women. We want to showcase films and videotapes about and/or by other women. Work used would be promoted in a "preview" segment of our magazine format program, and by press releases and flyers.

Please send us a description of your work, running time, and publicity materials if available. Indicate the minimum compensation you would require for cablecasting of the work four to ten times in a two week period. Pittsburgh cable community access Channel 21 is available to all subscribers, approximately 75,000 homes.

VIDEO WOMEN
C/o Access Video
1150 Greenfield Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15217

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

In the March 1985 issue of Video Guide, Edward Mowbray is quoted as saying “in Japan they don't want cockroaches in the jewels; in Rio de Janeiro they don't want public hair.” It may be the other way around. He also said “Big World ... is probably not going to be shown in Japan because I have a five second shot of public hair. I can either black it out or cut it out.”

It is true that it is illegal to show public hair here, and customs has stopped a number of art tapes. It is also a fact that galleries have exhibited nudity with no problems. We have indeed selected Big World for Canadian Video Mosaic.

I am strongly against censorship, but fear if the line is as effective as enforcement. Let's underestimate it if we can, not exaggerate the difficulties.

Michael Goldberg
PHOTOS FROM VIDEO

Introduction

Instead of shooting video last summer, I shot thousands of test photos off the TV monitor. I thought my video stills were fine until I really got into it. The results of this research are distilled into this series: films, filters, picture tubes, specialized equipment, etc. will be covered. From the beginner to the experienced, I hope you will gain useful information for shooting your own photos from video.

Let's start off with the basics: set-up, camera, lens, focus, exposure value, B&W pics. We'll progress to colour temperature, filters, films, monitors, etc., in the next installment. Finally we'll cover video s/n, field & frame stills, CRT hood, video printers, computer interpolation, laser scanning, and the Rievich SLR-4 camera.

Setting Up

It is best to shoot photos off a TV monitor in a room that can be darkened, to avoid reflections or halation on the glass faceplate. Shooting at night, with all the lights out, is often the answer. You should also be careful to face the TV away from any shiny objects which could reflect the bright video image back onto the TV glass.

If there is a tinted glass covering the front of the monitor, carefully remove it. Most have screws which can be loosened with a coin. Some have clips at the top, not too difficult to push sideways and remove, but a puzzle to get back in the first time. Handle the glass by the edges, like a record, and place it in a safe spot.

The picture tube builds up a strong charge of static electricity which attracts dust and other dirt. It gets filthy in no time. So clean the faceplate well (with the TV power "off"). Diluted vinegar or a damp cloth with mild detergent should remove finger marks as well (moist, not a dripping wet cloth). The lens cleaning tissue or a soft, clean cloth. Clean your camera lens, while you're in the mood.

Secure the camera well to the tripod. I suggest moving it right up to the TV screen to adjust the height (tripod legs, rather than the elevator neck, for stability) to the mid-line of the TV tube. Move the tripod back in a straight line, 90° from the screen surface, until the video image is framed the way you like with the camera in focus. Ensure that all the tripod's lock screws are good and tight. You may wish to tape the legs to the floor, so the framing remains the same. I usually take photos with a black border showing around the picture-tube frame. Occasionally I shoot pictures of only part of the screen (i.e., close-ups) which gives squared-off edges, but a strong video "feel" to the photo.

To avoid vibration (for sharpest focus) use a shutter-release, or the self-timer if the camera has one. Larger format lens-shutter cameras should have a preset to preset the viewfinder mirror up, which minimizes vibration. You have to trip the lens iris as well as the shutter-release in that case.

1/15", ASA 400, 18

Check List

For your convenience, here is a short list of things you require:

- TV monitor
- VTR (1/8" VHS Beta
- Beta I playback
- VTR-to-TV cable
- Tape(s)
- Beta I, II, III
- VHS (1"
- Tripod
- Still camera
- Normal lens (close-up adapter for small TV)
- Film(s)
- Light meter
- Farad
- Slide reversal
- Colour-correction filter(s)
- Shutter release
- Lens cleaning kit
- Incident Light Meter
- Notepaper and pen
- Bag for garbage

Cameras

The most common photographic camera is the 35mm SLR (single lens reflex). Those which are totally automatic are not recommended for shooting photos of video, as you cannot set the shutter speed. Nor should you rely on a semi-automatic camera, though it can be set at the shutter speed you desire. Its TTL (through the lens) light meter very likely assesses the brightness of the TV screen for less than 1/30th second (and less than 1/25th in Europe), "reading" only a fraction of the TV picture's scan lines. It depends where the picture tube happens to be scanning at that instant, what exposure your film will get. I've had more than an f-stop each way, reshooting the same scene, depending on whether the TTL meter read sky at the top of the image or shadows at the bottom, for example.

A twin-lens reflex is fine for taking pictures of the TV screen, with its lens shutter (see below) and larger film (120). Only part of the film's 6cm x 6cm (2¼" x 2¼") square surface is used, which is a bit of a waste; but the image is bigger than 35mm film, thus clearer. Frame the TV screen low in the viewfinder frame, to avoid the parallax problem of your not viewing exactly what the film will shoot. For close-ups, before loading the film you can open the camera back and place thin tracing paper where the film goes, pressing the shutter release in "time-exposure" setting, for exact framing. You can purchase old twin-lens reflex cameras (e.g., Rolleif, Mamiya) very reasonably.

The 6 x 7 camera also uses 120 film, taking 10 shots (a 6x6 camera takes 12). Its slightly rectangular frame is better suited for the TV screen, the aspect ratio of which is 3:4 (height x width). The result is a larger image of the TV. Since the lens is also nice and large, resolution of your stills should be crisp, good for making enlargements. Many 6x7 cameras have a focal plane shutter, which is less expensive; those with a lens shutter are preferable.

Lens Shutter

A few still cameras have a shutter inside each of their interchangeable lenses, which is expensive. They are by far the best for taking photos of video. The shutter opens and closes like the iris in your eye.

Cheap, instant-film cameras give surprisingly good B/W photos off the TV screen; colour prints turn grainy and contrasty.

Following is a partial list of good lens shutter cameras: Hasselblad CM or 500 ELM; Bronica ETRS, SQ-A or GS-1; Mamiya RB or RZ, also 330F; Yashica 124G.

Lens

The lens you use has a direct bearing on the quality of picture you get: the finer the optics and larger the surface of the lens, the better the resolution, as a general rule. Of course the TV image itself is grainy, especially home video which was shot under less than ideal lighting. So you don't need to have a Hasselblad, unless you plan to greatly enlarge the photograph.

It is best to use a "normal lens," so as not to distort the shape of the TV screen. On 35mm cameras, the 50mm lens is fine; for a 6x7 camera, 105mm or more should do. A wide-angle lens, up close, will result in a "pinch effect." If you must use a telephoto lens quite a distance from the screen, you will require a larger lens opening or higher speed film. If the TV monitor is 10 to 12 inches result is somewhat like having a silt move across the film from left to right. Shutter speed varies somewhat, but it is close to the settings you will usually use for video (1/30th or 1/50th).

The picture tube of the TV monitor scans from top to bottom, as you well know. As a result, focal plane shutters sometimes result in a diagonal bar in your photo, which may be faint or dark, depending on whether the shutter speed is a bit fast or a bit slow. It appears when you least expect it, so take more than one shot of each image you want, if possible, repositioning the tape a bit or leaving it in "freeze-frame" ("still") if the VCR gives good stop action. "Pause." Some FPS cameras are worse than others. A few (tuned for precision at high speeds with a strobe flash) have horizontal shutters, which move down and up, instead of a diagonal result in horizontal bars in the picture.
Focus

It is virtually impossible to focus on the TV monitor faceplate when there is no image on the screen. Either turn the TV to a broadcast channel or play a tape. In the center of the picture tube, about 15 cm away from it; not too close or the faceplate will darken the photo. For the best possible exposure of your film, you should use the "video enhancer" to reduce the brightness of the TV screen image at all.

Most video artists prefer "sharp" stills which show the dot pattern of the picture tube. Some photographers prefer a slightly soft focus, to emphasize image content rather than the texture of the TV screen. For the photos I took off the screen of the tape I shot of our daughter's birth, where technical problems gave jagged edges to the picture tube's 525 lines are scanned in 1/30th second, shoot in neutral density (ND) filter will do the trick.

The exposure value (EV) for the photos you wish to take is a calculation based on the speed (sensitivity) of your monitor and the brightness of the source (TV screen). The shutter speed gives the best exposure for the light entering the TV. There is much less of what you are shooting is in focus, especially if it is close up. For this reason it is wise to avoid shooting stills of the TV screen with the lens open wide (f:8 or wider), as most picture tubes are slightly curved. Each f/stop doubles or halves the light entering the camera. For example, twice as much light reaches the film at f:8 as at f:4. See the Exposure Values chart.

Just like the video camera lens, the iris of a photographic lens is measured in f-stops. The higher the number (e.g., f:8 or f:16), the more the iris is stopped down (closed), the less light enters the camera. Another point to consider is that, conversely, the more the iris is open (lower numbers), the less depth-of-field there is. Less of what you are shooting is in focus, especially if it is close up. For this reason it is wise to avoid shooting stills of the TV screen with the lens open wide (f:8 or wider), as most picture tubes are slightly curved. Each f/stop doubles or halves the light entering the camera. For example, twice as much light reaches the film at f:8 as at f:4. See the Exposure Values chart.

The exposure value for the photo you wish to take is a calculation based on the speed (sensitivity) of your monitor and the brightness of the source (TV screen). An incident light meter is best to determine the latter. Once again, the EV gives the best exposure for the light entering the TV. There is much less of what you are shooting is in focus, especially if it is close up. For this reason it is wise to avoid shooting stills of the TV screen with the lens open wide (f:8 or wider), as most picture tubes are slightly curved. Each f/stop doubles or halves the light entering the camera. For example, twice as much light reaches the film at f:8 as at f:4. See the Exposure Values chart.

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