

VIDEO GUIDE

ISSUE 41
OCTOBER, 1987
VOLUME 9, NUMBER 1
\$2.00



DISTRIBUTION ISSUE

DISTRIBUTION

EDIT

by Jeanette Reinhardt

In this issue of *Video Guide* we profile Canada's five major distributors — Videographe, Art Metropole, V/Tape, Video Pool, Women In Focus, and Video Out — and explore the unique services each provides within their individual region.

All are non-profit organizations who largely cater to educational and cultural institutions — museums, galleries, media art centres, schools, libraries, community organizations, and some broadcasting.

Each centre was asked to write an article based on their history, objectives, procedures, and issues of concern regarding distribution. Unfortunately, not all of the centres were able to provide us with all of the information requested.

I'd hoped for more discussion on important issues that were facing each of the organizations in terms of direction. Such issues as 1/2" distribution (I avoid the term "home market" for it is no longer that simple since most institutions have VHS, and many of them are phasing out their 3/4" systems and have no scruples about buying "home market" tapes), or how funding (or the lack of it) is affecting distribution.

Last spring, Canada Council's Media Arts section sent out a "distribution overview" to their clients involved with distribution of video or film or both. This paper was intended to create reaction or reflection from the community so that a distribution policy could finally be made. Because of the naivety, inaccuracy, and negative tone of the paper as well as the entrapment of the questions asked, reaction to the paper was to reject it.

Last May, at the annual general meeting of the Independent Film and Video Alliance in Montreal, it was resolved not to accept the overview as a basis for forming policy (regretfully the initial motion to reject the paper was toned down), and that Council consult with the video community. A list of recommended organizations/individuals was included to assist in drafting its policy on distribution.

Since that time there has been a major change of personnel in the Media Arts section. Glen Lewis has replaced Tom Sherman as head of the Media Arts section; Alan Conter has replaced Susan Nasgaard as Distribution officer, and we have yet to see who will be replacing Denis L'Esperance as the Video officer. I can only hope that with the infusion of new blood and enthusiasm in the Council, we will see more aggressive lobbying done on our behalf to increase the funding available for distribution rather than asking the distributors to suggest where cutbacks could be made.

Le Videographe dispels the myth that they are only producers and distributors of socio-political documentaries of regional concerns. Within "A Conversation", Q and A discuss how they have a history of producing video art and are currently expanding their collection to works of artists produced not only outside of Le Videographe, but outside Quebec as well.

In the article "1/2" Videotape Distribution", Lynn Cummins tells us that Art Metropole has taken a new approach to marketing video by artists by switching from 3/4" to 1/2" distribution. They are planning to expand their market by taking advantage of the distribution system that has been established in their bookstore for artist's books.

Kim Tomczak introduces V/Tape, the only non-exclusive, non-curatorial videotape distribution information service for all independent video artists/producers. He also looks at some of the problems that distributors are faced with, including censorship.

In the article "Video Pool Distribution, The State of Video Distribution in the Canadian Mid-West", Gerry Kisil negates the notion of a national distributor and says that what we have is a network of regionally based distributors.

In "Women In Focus Distribution: An Interview With Shona Rossel" by Jill Pollack, we are introduced to Shona, the former distribution manager who explains how Women In Focus goes about the task of promoting videotapes and films that are produced by women and mainly concerned with Feminist Issues.

Elspeth Sage's "Video Out — A Short Course" offers a brief history and basic outline of the distribution policy and procedures of Video Out.

Under SCANNING there is a more extensive listing of Canadian, American, and International distributors.

I would recommend that producers call or send a letter of inquiry before sending any distributor your work for distribution consideration.

Don't worry about submitting your work to more than one distributor. Since most offer non-exclusive agreements, an artist can maximize his/her exposure by placing work with several distributors. The artist may also want to place a work produced for a specific audience with a distributor who has targeted and developed the appropriate audience.

Video criticism and contextualization have played a major part in developing a video audience. Jill Pollack's

"After Photography but Before Computers" and Elizabeth Vander Zaag's "Articulate Video" are both concerned with how the written word can alter the experience of seeing a work.

In "Another Look at the Plot for the Western, re: Placing the Satellite: Media Culture on the Plains", Leila Sujir and Vern Hume present a series of notes, based on ideas introduced and discussed at the Playback exhibition in Saskatoon.

Karen Henry reviews *Infermental IV*, the international video magazine that was compiled and edited at the Western Front, Vancouver.

Su Rynard criticizes the 1986 S.A.W. Gallery International Festival of Video Art from the perspective of a participating artist.

Rick Sheridan provides a basic networking guide to media resources in the "Directory of Innovative Media Projects."

Anne Goodwyne reviews *Video As a Social Tool*, a selection of work which addresses social issues from the standpoint of personal, social, and political priorities, which was presented at the Video In.

VIDEO GUIDE

Vancouver's Video Magazine
Volume 9, Number 1 Issue 41

Publisher
The Satellite Video Exchange
(a non-profit society est. 1973)

Managing Editor
Shawn Preus

Editor This Issue
Jeanette Reinhardt

Production
Crista Haukedal
Jill Kelly
Shawn Preus
Jeanette Reinhardt
Frans Van de Ven

Contributors
M.E. Buescher
Lynne Cummings
Alberto De Lisi
Annie Goodwyne
Karen Henry
Vern Hume
Gerry Kisil
Jill Pollack
Shona Rossel
Su Rynard
Elspeth Sage
Rick Sheridan
Kim Tomczak
Elizabeth Vander Zagg

Photos
Art Metropole
Video Out
Video Pool
V/Tape
Western Front

Thanks To
Canada Council
City of Vancouver

CONTENTS

2 EDIT

VANCOUVER GUIDE

3 AFTER PHOTOGRAPHY BEFORE COMPUTERS

by Jill Pollack

ARTICULATE VIDEO

by Elizabeth Vander Zagg

4 REVIEW: VIDEO AS A SOCIAL TOOL

by Annie Goodwyne

5 WOMEN IN FOCUS

by Jill Pollack, Shona Rossel

NATIONAL

6 ANOTHER LOOK AT THE PLOT FOR THE WESTERN

Re: Placing the Satellite; Media Culture on the Plains
by Vern Hume

8 VIDEO POOL DISTRIBUTION

by Gerry Kisil

10 VIDEO OUT — A SHORT COURSE

by Elspeth Sage

11 V/TAPE

by Kim Tomczak

12 CONVERSATION

by Le Videographe, Alberto De Lisi

13 1/2" VIDEOTAPE DISTRIBUTION

by Lynne Cummings

GLOBAL

14 INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF VIDEO ART

S.A.W. GALLERY
by Su Rynard

15 DIRECTORY OF INNOVATIVE MEDIA PROJECTS

by Rick Sheridan

16 SCANNING

18 INFERMENTAL VI

by Karen Henry

19 A KISS FOR ANATOL

by M.E. Buescher

British Columbia, Canada
2ND CLASS MAIL REG. NO. 7268

ISSN 02286726

AFTER PHOTOGRAPHY BEFORE COMPUTERS

Video Criticism

by Jill Pollack

A trend has been evolving towards the criticism of criticism, coupled with specific theories inherently incorporated into the analyses. Whether feminist, semiological, postmodern, marxist, etc., the critical stance has never carried so much baggage. Not always elucidated, these intrinsic viewpoints seem to only infrequently reflect the artist's intentions. Art criticism, while perhaps more exciting than ever, has gone beyond the realm of its historical precedents. Criticism has pervaded the art bureaucracy in a profound and somewhat disturbing manner. At the same time as the tone of authority of a critical piece has been obfuscated by the writer's subjectivity, personal affiliations, and goals, it is seen as the signpost of an artist's or curator's worth. Art criticism is no longer (was it ever, really?) a vehicle for citing an artist in art historical terms or interpreting work or evaluating effective communication.

The position of the critic does have a history which demanded ultimate authority over the careers of artists. Berenson, Greenberg, Maus, etc., have all exercised their power with a hidden agenda designed more to promote their ideology than analyze the artwork. In recent years, criticism has gone through fashions, as has art. In some instances, it is still not clear to me which comes first — the critical stance or the art. This dilemma further obviates the place of criticism in Canada, because, in many cases, it borrows its philosophical intent from Europe. While a more global context within which criticism can exist has positive overtones, somehow the responsibility (hence the integrity) of a critical piece seems to have been overlooked.

We have a blatant situation here in Canada, with the Canada Council grant application forms clearly asking for recent reviews. The importance of this cannot be denied. The life of a critical piece extends beyond its initial appearance in a magazine, newspaper, or on radio. Whether a review or a critique, it will in all likelihood end up firstly in someone's curriculum vitae and subsequently in a Canada Council grant request or an exhibition proposal submission. Further, it may be inserted into an artist's file in a library or a curator's office. It will be used as a research tool for other critics, curators, and art historians. While initially it may reach only a limited audience, over the years it may in fact be read by more people and under many different contexts.

Looming over the inception of any critical piece is the knowledge that the structure of cultural activity has drastically altered the role of the critic. Once words are set in twelve-point type, they take on an importance and a definitiveness that has a false face of authority. There is an assumption that the writer has knowledge and insight beyond that of the reader. The very framework within which the criticism exists asserts an influence over its reading. A piece in, say, *Flash Art* or *Artforum* is given more credence than one in, say, *HERizons* or *Artswest*. Often, the validity and insight of critical writing is undervalued because of the venue within which it appears. Somehow we have reached a point where the quality of the writing and analysis is not as important as the vehicle.

We also seem to have lost sight of the subjective and temporal nature of criticism. Simply, it is one person's opinion which we are reading. Now, there are certain assumptions that can (generously) be made. Firstly, the critic has a good command of the language and is able to clearly articulate her/his viewpoint. Secondly, that viewpoint has been arrived at through research, looking, consideration, and experience. And thirdly, the critic's intentions are to express her/his thoughts using the first and through the second points. How can (or should) the critic deal with the subjective and temporal nature of the critical stance? Is it a given, understood by all and therefore unnecessary to overtly delineate? Or should each critic or editor take responsibility for clearly stating her/his biases? On a purely theoretical level, we may assume that the reader is of a sufficient intelligence that she/he understands this. But on a practical level, (thinking especially of book jackets and movie ads), we tend to believe, adopt, and perhaps even act on, the content of a critical piece. The critic is assumed to be performing a critical role because someone has deemed her/him worthy of doing so. This theory does not take into account deadlines, personal associations, or other hidden agendas. And in fact, just as much can be learned about the slant of the critic/venue by what isn't discussed as by what is.

This relates specifically to video, ceramic, and fibre arts. Most art magazines do not give regular coverage to

these disciplines and, as a result, the critical dialogue surrounding them is limited. While a particularized knowledge is assumed on the part of any critic, these three media seem (at least outwardly) to entail a further set of information which only a small sector of the writing constituency feel prepared to tackle. A situation has arisen wherein the presence of video criticism has been primarily relegated to those forums devoted solely to video art and the same holds true for fibre art and ceramics. Art criticism in general is not a mainstream activity; even further removed is video criticism.

An interesting aspect of video criticism concerns authorship. The majority of pieces are written by those involved in some way with video (mainly producers or curators). Whereas other artforms are usually assessed by once-removed parties, criticism of video tends to be done by those with a vested interest in the medium. At the same time as this needs to be clarified, it speaks of the level of knowledge held by the writers and of the make-up of the perceived audience. This can also explain why video criticism tends to focus not on the effective use of the medium or how the technique informs the content, but on the content itself. Other articles discuss various usages of video (i.e., documentary videos from Nicaragua, etc.). Rarely, however, are these factors addressed within a single article; rarely is there an analysis of video within the larger framework of art history. Aspects such as the time-based nature of video, the (non)relationship to television, viewing trends and approaches to video exhibitions are all too often ignored. Investigations within the realm of video criticism need to be made, especially those avenues which relate specifically to video art as opposed to the visual arts in general.

The aim of criticizing criticism is to point out areas which need to be re-assessed and to applaud aspects which deserve recognition. Increased awareness on a more overt level as to the subjective and non-definitive nature of a critical piece, combined with more exposure of video art in general art magazines will do much to help the current situation rise out of speaking to only a few, and move into informing more people. Art-historically citing video between photography and computer art can only enhance its import. And that, finally, should be the outcome of any critical writing on video.

VIDEO

ARTICULATE VIDEO

by Elizabeth Vander Zaag

Without the writers and the curators there would be no video "art" exposure. The sensitivity of these people to the central impetus of video work is important to the creation of interesting shows. The video medium, since it is not quite so verbal, offers endless interpretations and iterations of intent — verbally, that is. Do the words that are said about a tape, the categories it is displayed under, the written artist's statements, the loose definitions that show titles and themes impose on work that is presented in them, affect the individual's experience of the work? Do the articulations of video curators and writers create a context for video work to be produced in? Whatever the context, the distribution of video work has a resiliency that can only come from the constant evolution of the medium, through the work of the producers and those that handle the work. The most interesting work would be the work that would distance these efforts with endless variations, and the most interesting writing would inform the artist as well as the public about the construed information evolving from the tape.

The two following fictitious conversations illustrate some differences between "articulated" video and the articulations from which the video came.

R.r.ring

The hung-over young video artist from Vancouver resented being woken up so early by her Toronto distributor. "Yeah," nodded the tousled head of various shades.

"What festival? The 'blue' festival?" Apparently the tapes with the most blue in them were to be submitted.

"Yeah, sure, o.k." The Vancouver video artist just wanted her cut, and shrugged at the cat. "Yeah, I'm under 25 . . . no, it's not about that. . . oh well, just because the guy talks about 'tyrannizing desire'. . . o.k. . . multiple play . . . I don't know if I'm gay. . . you know how early it is here! Sure show the tape with whatever kind of articulation. I was up late last night shooting. . . you know. Never mind."

By now the young video artist's head was pounding. She needed a Perrier badly. "How come they didn't come through on the rental for that other show?" she asked, thirst making her belligerent.

"The statement your tape made about media subversion wasn't clear enough," said the distributor. "Didn't you get the letter yet?"

"But it's a process-oriented tape, how could anything be said more strongly than in the process?" The young video maker hesitated, "I know the 'tautology of tape tension just results in pleonastic tech. . . I got to go, you know, . . . like the bathroom. . . o.k., bye."

R.r.ring

The tall, dark-haired woman answered the telephone, pencil in hand. It was her distributor asking for a verbal tape description for a show in the east.

"Uh. .m.m," she said, twirling the pencil in her hair. "It has to start with a sentence, I guess," she said. "Right?"

Winsome words wafted through her mind, left over from the subconscious poetry that she had been pencilling into her poetry book, perhaps the next script.

"Well, maybe you could start with the title, the length of the tape, and perhaps the nature of the tape. . . is it narrative or experimental? Who did the music? You know, the whole story in thirty words or less." The distributor laughed as she realized the incongruity of what she had said, but the tall dark-haired woman struggled, pencil flailing the air, lips rounding words only to utter them noiselessly.

"I have to send this description by air letter tonight," continued the distributor. "Sorry to give you such short notice. By the way, did you fill out the form that I gave you from that Toronto distributor?"

The tall pencil waver came to, after all she couldn't lose it all together on the phone to her distributor. That was the only income she had except for prostitution and the odd gardening job. "Yes, I attempted to," she said, staring out the window and wondering what category the large family of ball tossers on her front sidewalk would fall under — rural issues? religion?

Instantly a flash wiped away the wafting whimsies in her mind. "Hey!" she said to her distributor. "Why don't I fill out the form (it was in the top middle drawer of her desk) and then I'll know what the tape is about. I'll call you in half an hour, o.k.? . . . 30 words. . . right. Bye."

VIDEO

REVIEW

VIDEO AS A SOCIAL TOOL

by Annie Goodwynne

To appreciate the videos included in the screening "Video As A Social Tool" which took place at the Video Inn December 18 and 19, 1986, one must put aside expectations of being passively entertained and recognize viewing as participation. Video as a learning device, a means of self-expression and communication, is extremely valuable. The immediacy of the subjects and the need to document specific events pertinent to the people or community involved find a vehicle in the medium of video.

For example, *Fight Back: Transition House* (Speak Out Productions, Vancouver, 1984) documents the life and times of the only protective shelter in Vancouver for battered women. The video was made when B.C.'s Social Credit government's funding cuts threatened the continuance of Transition House. Two years after the decline of Transition House, this video serves as a testimony to the crucial problems social services in B.C. face, as well as an informative, disturbing documentary on battered women. Each of the videos included in the screening is provocative. Some are straightforward documentaries while others incorporate performance art to comment on social issues. They all ask the viewer to think while viewing, to act on the controversial issues for which they were created.

Self-Government Training Video, produced in Alert Bay by Salmonista Video (1985), a native women's group, and sponsored by the Kwakiutl District Council, was meant as a learning tool to bring about discussions on the contemporary movement of self-government in native communities. For a non-native outside the community, this tape provides an insight into the lives of individuals within that community and an awareness of the inherent problems it faces. The tape gives some historical background, but consists mainly of conversations with various Kwakiutl people about their ideas, hopes, and opinions. There are differing viewpoints, but a common thread runs through the entire community — a deep concern for ancient values. If self-government is to step forward, it will be based on pride in their heritage. Elders once held council which played a major role in decision making. The most moving moments in the video are the conversations with the elders, speaking in their native tongue. One sees ordinary people, struggling to survive as a people. The performance of traditional drumming and chanting at the closing of the video brings chills. Although *Self-Government Training Video* only begins to touch upon the difficulties these people face, one senses the deep commitment to their culture and fears of its disappearance. This is an important documentary not only as a learning tool for native groups, but for all those concerned with Indian rights.

The Absence of Us, by Pamela Pike, Halifax (1986) is a personal video collage merging documentary with figurative style. The video starts as a woman reads from her diary. A clock ticks. She writes about "having a room of one's own. . . an identity" and tells us what it means to be a lesbian. Her monologue is poetic as she sits in a corner of her room and reflects on her experiences with her lover, who has gone away. She is isolated, grappling with the frustration and difficulty of learning to "come out" in the world. Her voice becomes distorted and echoes off the walls. She speaks about loneliness, the need to love freely without being labelled or scorned by society. We see her writing in her diary; this act helps to link her



Fight Back: Transition House, Speak Out Productions, 1984

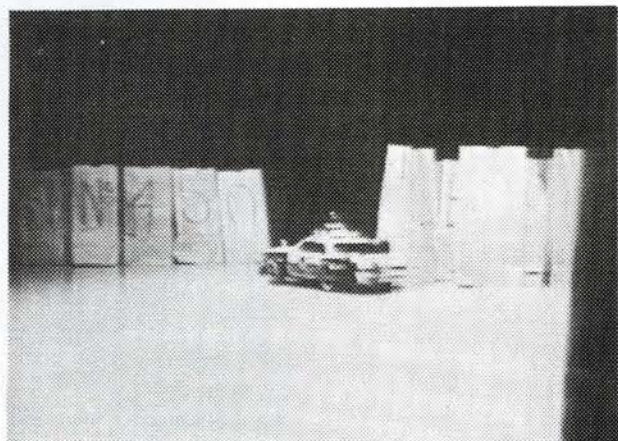
inner feelings with a political stance. Coming to grips with her identity, she takes a walk outside. A month later, when her lover returns, she describes the excitement as they realize their ability to face the world together. Visuals of women writing graffiti on walls and on the streets are backed by beating drums and the guttural chanting of women. The tribal/primal element of female relationships swells as they laugh and talk together. There is a sense of belonging, of victories being won. Although the production has a rough, gutsy edge to it, there is the gentleness of discovery woven through the loosely-told story. With its utilization of writing, music, visual and sound effects, *The Absence of Us* is an authentic, hearty montage.

Qu'est Ce Qu'un Homme Peut Faire? by Clive Robertson, Toronto (1986) covers a lot of ground in 26 minutes. The themes running through the video interlace wife/child abuse with the patriarchal system of warfare and how it affects society. Robertson draws from political essays which are read over stark and symbolic visuals. Metaphorical imagery is superimposed onto cerebral commentary to create an artful tension. The video begins as the camera closes in on a church. A man (Clive Robertson) stands inside a dark room. He wears army boots and a black overcoat and is singing hymns from a tattered prayer book. He removes his coat revealing a blood stained shirt. The room is bare except for rows of paper bags with the phrase "There's no place like home" written across them. An announcer calls out destination points as the man straightens the rows of paper bags. Battle sounds are heard as a woman calmly recites an essay. . . "Politics is the study of who gets what, when, and how." He is crawling on the floor between rows as if in trenches. Pouring a glass of wine, he attempts to drink it as he drags himself through the battle zone. He cowers as tanks rage and people scream. Another female voice comments "There is no place so violent as home." Phrases from the essays are echoed and overlapped. He plays with a toy war plane; drums beat as a voice reads "welfare is the salvation of the poor — warfare of the rich . . . every welfare/warfare state is engaged in the agonizing discovery that it cannot afford both kinds of goodies (guns and butter)." A woman recites statistics about battery. "One third of all assaulted women require medical attention." The statistics become more ominous as they are coolly recited over sounds of breaking glass and an eerie bass line. The man plays with a toy cop car.

As a male voice reads a memoir about abusing his child, the man on the floor plays with blocks. They tumble to the floor and he looks at them helplessly. In an emaciated state, he drags himself along with a rose in his teeth. A woman tells a story about her husband raping her. The phrase "he told me to get back in bed . . . that we were going to make love. . . I said 'no'," is repeated as Phil Collins sings "it must be love." This segment ends. We are outdoors with Clive Robertson, who caps the preceding portion with an original song, "What Can a Man Say?" As a saxophonist plays a jazzy riff against a dilapidated sidewalk scene, Clive intonates "It's no longer capitalism versus communism. It's welfare versus warfare and the patriarchy versus everyone else." This video is an intense protest of some weighty issues, but it is also an artistic statement which exhibits a clever use of video technique.

Nez, Gorge, Oreille (An Essay in Translation) by Elsa Cayo, Montreal (1986) is a whimsically avant garde piece about what it's like to have a foreign accent in America. Totally unassuming and without malice, it subtly provokes the viewer into contemplating prejudice and discrimination. A unique statement of individuality, it begins with a woman (Ms. Cayo) sitting in front of a world map, as if she were a television announcer, reading eloquent passages from a sheaf of papers. An essay in translation expands into a series of wry suppositions. The material is intriguing in its simplicity — she tells us, "If I held up a bank with a mask on my face and said 'nobody move, Lie on the ground or you're dead', witnesses later would certainly say, 'the woman is a foreigner.' Therefore, if I held up a bank I could not speak and would use only gestures. I can change gestures, but I can only modify my accent." In another bit she observes, "I couldn't read evening news on TV even after taking several classes in phonetics and with audio-visual aids, and if I did, at once a great number of protest letters would be sent, and the viewers who protested would be right to do so because instead of listening to what I will say, they will be distracted by the way I said it and will finally end up not understanding a thing about the latest news." As she says in the opening of the tape, "Everything I read will be spoken with an accent, even the word accent . . . MY accent." At the end of the tape, she concludes, "Who can do better than what I have to do myself?"

photos Video Out



Qu'est Ce Qu'un Homme Peut Faire?
Clive Robertson, 1986



Les Tatouages De La Memoire, Helen Doyle



Daughters of the Nile, Nillie Mole Naar / Joop Van Wijk

photos Women In Focus

WOMEN IN FOCUS DISTRIBUTION

Jill Pollack/Shona Rossel

Women In Focus is one of three non-profit feminist arts centres in Canada devoted to women's cultural production in the film, video, and visual arts disciplines.

Based in Vancouver, British Columbia, since the centre's founding in 1974, Women In Focus has over 200 members across Canada and distributes the 120 films and videotapes in their catalogue nationally and internationally. Their Distribution Manager is currently Zainub Verjee

Shona Rossel: Women In Focus has a specific philosophy and I think it's very important; we want to be leaders in the promotion of feminist aesthetics. We're concerned with positive images, with the craft that women are producing. Women have caught up with the technology and are far more professional than they used to be. A higher calibre production is coming through the door, now. We've widened our spectrum to include more video art and experimental work. We want to show the diversity and perspectives of what women are doing.

Jill Pollack: What are the criteria for taking on a tape or film?

SR: When I hear of a tape or film that would be of interest to us, something we could move in the educational or museum market, I write to the producers. Or women can submit material to us. The first thing I look at is how well we can distribute it. We don't want to take something on we can't move. We're getting in more dramatic work and trying to build up certain bodies of work, such as a retrospective of Anne Wheeler or early work by Kathleen Shannon, etc. Recently, we've just completed a deal with the Australian Film Commission (the equivalent to Studio D of the National Film Board), and we're taking on all their films.

JP: Could you go through the process of what happens after a tape lands on your desk?

SR: I write to the producer to thank her for submitting and to let her know the Distribution Committee will be looking at it in the next three weeks. The Committee is a volunteer group, made up of Women In Focus members, who meet once a month. All decisions are made in concert with the Committee. I screen it first, and present comments to the Committee; then they screen it and we discuss it. If we decide to take something on, I will write the producer and start contract negotiations. I think it's a very fair contract, because we pay for all publicity and promotion; we take a 50/50 split on rentals, 65/35 on sales, with 65% going to the producer. While video producers supply us with a sub-master, we cover all the costs for tape and any other additional costs. Filmmakers give us a new film and access to their lab, and we have clients pay up-front for prints when they buy a film. We pay producer fees semi-annually. As an artist-run centre, we want to be able to offer producers the opportunity to use other distributors, so the contract is non-exclusive; however, I'm finding that, generally, people do want to stick to one distributor. I also keep in touch regularly with the producers, letting them know what we're doing, what changes have happened at Women In Focus, etc.

JP: Are there any specific priorities right now, in terms of subject matter?

SR: The educational market will always be a priority. The "movers" seem to pertain to sexual abuse, violence against women, sexual harassment, women in technology, women in trades, women's empowerment. Documentaries, issue-oriented productions, and dramas all do well. For instance, *Breaking Silence* goes out everyday. But at the same time, dramas such as *Far From Poland*, *Thriller*, and *Gold Diggers* are very popular. Interestingly, more productions now are going out to Eastern Canada and the U.S. than locally. But whatever the content, when a new acquisition comes in, I write to the clients and tell them about it, and encourage them to take a look at it. I'm finding that we are making a lot of sales in the educational marketplace, because it is worthwhile for

a university or particular class to own a film or video, rather than rent it over and over again. There is some bias about what people think feminism means, but the diversity of the material helps to offset that. The tapes themselves induce awareness and can educate on a totally different level. When you put all the productions together in one dynamic package, people start to unveil different attitudes and understand that what women are doing is not some dogmatic, 'bra-burning' type of thing. I think we are strong because of our specialization. Women's history has been covered up for so many years, and there's been an introduction to a new awareness in the educational marketplace. They want to have material available, and they look to Women In Focus for that material. On the average, we send out between three to five films and videos a day. And we have a new catalogue. It's a dynamic and flexible format that can keep all the clients up-to-date on what's happening. It's part of an endeavour to better serve both the producer and the client-user. More than anything, you have to let your clients and media-buyers know what you've got, that it's good, and that it's something they can use. We are employing other tactics as well. We want to have a symposium of women's work, and show the wide dynamism of what women are doing. We carry 150 titles, including our archives. We represent producers from all over the world. Since November, 1986, we've acquired 25 new titles, and that's very important to us and to our market. We're celebrating the producers and the craftspeople who work within the productions. I think Women In Focus is successful because of our emphasis. When I send material out, people get excited. We do very well.

Founded in 1974, Women In Focus is the only feminist film and video distributor in Western Canada. As Shona Rossel points out, submissions are welcome any time, and new producers are encouraged to contact them. Call, write, or drop by: 2nd Floor, 456 West Broadway, Vancouver, B.C. V5Y 1R3. (604) 872-2250.



Playing With Fire, Emma Productions



The Blue Collar Worker Speaks Out, Antalocy/Gerzon

ANOTHER LOOK AT THE PLOT

RE: PLACING THE SATELLITE: MEDIA

(NOTES FROM A DIALOGUE AT THE PLAYBACK CABARET)

For the last few years the Playback Cabaret, an annual video exhibition and student festival, has been held in Saskatoon sponsored by A.K.A. Gallery, the Gordon Snelgrove Gallery, and the University of Saskatchewan Students' Union. This year, *Re:placing the Satellite: Media Culture on the Plains* (1977-1987), examined the marginal position of the regional media artist. The exhibition was accompanied by a panel, "Memory, History, Representation, The Place of the Regional Media Artist," and a presentation, "Constructing a History: Seeing Ourselves." The lecturers and panelists were Calgary writer and media artist Leila Sujir, Winnipeg video artist Gerry Kisil, and Calgary video artist and exhibition curator Vern Hume. Video Cabaret was organized by Saskatoon artist, administrator, and writer Sheena Gourlay with the assistance of Catherine Macaulay.

The following are a series of notes based on the ideas introduced and discussed at the exhibition in Saskatoon. This is meant to be read as notations in a continuing dialogue.

INTRODUCTION

In the classic structure of the Hollywood Western film, the townspeople, representing the urban values of the East, are unable to function in the Western landscape. The townspeople draw their strength from the signs of the imported "urban" in the culture. In order to live, the townspeople must "colonize" the local landscape — ignoring its unique strengths — and are thus reliant on an imported culture. The archetypal Western town, Dry Gulch, is a place everyone wants to leave, except for the ranchers and indigenous population.

The question becomes: are the plains media artists located in a mythical Western scenario in the formula plot for the Western, which is written and rewritten until no other scenario is possible?

The regions in Canada have and continue to express their resentment about the marginal status granted to them by centralized decision-making policy. Aside from having momentary attention, which predictably results in token gestures, the simple expression of regional disparity has yet to appreciably alter the diminished position of the region. The regional, the local, remains a marginal place. Despite the recent development of local media production centres, the regional practice of media art, particularly on the plains, remains an activity within a regional community, itself located in a larger but still marginal national media community.

The discussions in Saskatoon began by examining the marginal position of the Plains media artist, but rather than embarking on another futile argument about regionalism, the speakers questioned the colonial structures which place less value on the local and favour the centre. By raising the model of colonialism, the exhibition began to articulate a position for the regional media artist, literally creating a place to speak from. This position, based on difference, allows the local to express and thereby see itself.

The exhibition developed a regional position, or literally re:placed the West as Satellite; these ideas were first discussed at The Plains Canada Independent Film and Video Conference¹ held at EM/MEDIA in Calgary in August 1985. The Plains Conference developed out of the need for individuals and groups working on the plains to co-operatively overcome their isolation and regional insecurity. Rather than looking to the outside, the discussions at the Plains Conference focused on the importance of communities within the region and began to address issues of mutual concern, thus proposing ways of surviving in one's location on the frontier. The Plains Conference succeeded in creating and encouraging a greater exchange within the region, but it also pointed out that there was no singular "plains" vision. That is, although the plains are traditionally referred to as a region, in reality, the plains are composed of many different communities, each of which has an independent history and identity. These communities are linked not through a shared identity, but through the marginal cultural status assigned to them from the outside and, to a lesser degree, through geographic proximity. (Cheap air fares to larger centres and the colonized notion that the local is sub-standard has

generally minimized communication/travel between centres on the plains.) In short, communities on the plains share a common non-position on the margin.

Re:placing the Satellite: Media Culture on the Plains did not attempt to define a regional identity. However, by examining how the imposition of values from the mega-centres displaces the local, the exhibition began to positively "place" the regional, thus converting geographic distance into a desirable critical remove.

A STAGECOACH STOP, A POINT IN-BETWEEN

For the most part, the plains have been a point in-between: at best, a stagecoach stop for those travelling through, and at worst, an inconvenient void that separates culture on one coast from culture on the other. The plains — ironically sometimes referred to as the "central" region, since it is geographically positioned at the centre of Canada — are culturally situated on the margin. It is a place that people leave. The regions, specifically the plains, have and continue for the most part to be importers of culture. This hiatus — to emerge as a point in-between — in the development of a regional community is not an isolated incident, but has become an all too common point beyond which little development occurs.

Oddly enough, parallels can be found between the relegation of the local/regional to the marginal position of a place in-between (a stagecoach stop) within Canadian and International culture, and the stagecoach passengers' relationship to the country in the John Ford film *Stagecoach*. The passengers are colonialists, townspeople who view the countryside through which the stagecoach passes as hostile and empty of their culture — a void. In the film, the only locations in which the passengers feel even remotely comfortable are the stagecoach and the stagecoach stop — a simple outpost, a desolate point in-between — at least from the perspective of the passengers.

Replace the stagecoach with the airplane and this comparison seems more than appropriate. From within the constructs of an imported set of standards the local can easily be dismissed or misunderstood as a void — in the same way that the passengers from inside the stagecoach in the John Ford film view the Western landscape as empty. In this sense, the regional routinely colonizes itself by adopting the same imported standards — which make invisible the local. Given the ongoing colonization of Canada by American media, it seems a strange twist of fate that an analysis of the relationships constructed in the archetypal Hollywood Western reveal the same colonial models which media artists on the plains are subject to.

In order to survive in the long-term, a regional centre cannot simply exist as a point in-between, a stagecoach stop. It must be able to see itself from its own perspective. It is difficult for a place to continue as simply an outpost of ideas and culture created elsewhere, where the inhabitants continually feel disadvantaged by their geographic distance from what is perceived to be the centre. Inevitably, in such a situation, a continual emigration from the local to the centre occurs. A joke in Winnipeg has been that the city's major export is people. This flow of human resources simply reinforces the desire to be closer to the centre, thereby devaluing the local.

The development of media access centres on the plains has allowed local access to production tools, and to some degree has slowed the emigration of artists out of the plains community. But the simple placement of production equipment in places which central Canada may see as "secondary communities", does not sufficiently offset the dominance of the centre, nor does it allow a space for the local to develop. The local, provided only with equipment, continues to be a disadvantaged place in terms of its ability to develop its own voice. Often, the tools granted to the region simply allow the reproduction of ideas imposed from the outside. Until the regional centres cease to be points in-between, the offering of access to such tools is only a partial solution. The regions have been at this crossroad before — possessing the tools, but lacking a voice. In this respect it is interesting to note a comment made in a 1973 Challenge for Change newsletter — an issue devoted to the plains — which acknowledges this hiatus:

The lack of access to the lines of communication in Canada is not simple overt repression. It is a class or establishment bias to our newspapers and TV networks that denies most of us not simply the hardware but the time, skills, money, and other resources necessary for the effective use of subtle and sophisticated communication techniques. It is not enough to give people a camera and a studio and say to them that it's their fault if they don't use it.²

Without the ability or desire to progress beyond this arrested point in its development, the current plains media community could again slip from its marginal position, as a point in-between, into a void.

MEMORY, REPRESENTATION, HISTORY, THE PLACE OF THE REGIONAL MEDIA ARTIST

The current plains community has developed almost entirely independently, uninfluenced by earlier activity in the region. In short, there has been no collective memory to keep alive the knowledge and experience, thus connecting the present to the past. A fracture, a loss of memory and history, has occurred. The current community is separated and isolated from what came before. Thus, despite the importance of the artists, the work, and the exhibitions which took place (particularly in Calgary) during the seventies, now in the eighties, media activity on the plains has to be rebuilt, re-invented, relearned, and re-experienced. A lost history, a lost memory. The existence of work, centres, and the artists who built them is only part of the process of creating a community and a practice. To exist and continue, a community must be able to recognize itself, thus constructing its identity, rather than accepting the identity imposed from the outside (through satellite, through mass communications, through centralized Canadian culture which displaces all the regions). Without history there will only be isolated occurrences.

Perhaps, it is even more important to examine the relationship of the media art produced on the plains (a marginal place in terms of the larger centres) to that produced, discussed, and represented in the mega-centres. An attempt should be made to place or, more accurately, to create a place for a regional media art practice. This is not a request for a token representative.

It is my intention in initiating this discussion to step outside of the current dialogues surrounding Canadian Video Art and to raise questions regarding place, memory, and representation. It is my intention to deliberately make some "reckless generalizations", to present the possibility of new beginnings and to develop a position, a space from which the regional media artist can speak.

The development of a cultural identity and a community is an on-going process involving, in its initial stages, a community's recognition of itself as a unique entity with its own values and ideology, and subsequently, the articulation and continuance of these attributes through a common language. Through this process — recognition, dissemination, and reception — a place is created for the individual, the artist, to express her/his experience and the experiences of others in her/his community. A shared experience — memory — can then be formed. Implicit in this cycle is the ability to see one's concerns, one's culture represented in the environment created by language, media, and image-making. Representation is then the last component that completes the cycle: self-recognition (the need to communicate), its expression (the production of work, images, narrative), and representation within the larger community and culture (the reflection of identity).

The structures and codes of language, visual images, media, embody the values of the dominant group whose interests and needs it evolved to serve. These act to define meaning. These codes structure the way in which we perceive. This is a close system of relationships which appears so natural that the ideologies, the values that it transmits are not always obvious. Such systems of representation are continually at work defining and ordering perception. Positioned outside, at the margin, the borderline, is the local, the individual, the minority, the regional artist. Distanced from the mechanisms of representation

FOR THE WESTERN CULTURE ON THE PLAINS

by Vern Hume

(language), which create and disseminate culture, those who inhabit the marginal are in a position of perpetual reception. The position of Canadians living near the American border receiving American broadcasting or being native in a white society — a one way proposition, a consumer-only environment. The marginal position is, therefore, colonized by the continual onslaught of images, ideas, and representations created by and for the interests of the group(s) which dominate the centre. For the regional artist, the issue of marginality, curiously, must be central. We are still living in an age of colonialism and are ourselves colonized.

In his book *Electronic Colonialism: The Future of International Broadcasting and Communications*, Thomas McPhail views contemporary colonialism as

*"the dependence relationship, established by the importation of communication hardware, foreign-produced software, along with engineers, technicians, and related information protocols, that vicariously establish a set of foreign norms, values and expectations which, of varying degrees, may alter the domestic cultures and socialization processes. Comic books to satellites, computers to lasers, along with more traditional fare such as radio programs, theater, movies, and wire services to television shows demonstrate the wide range of information activities which make up the broad configuration of what is possible to send and thus to receive. . . ."*³

While this analogy is specifically directed toward the domination of world broadcasting by the first world countries (the U.S. in particular), it can equally be applied to the dissemination of mass culture and art culture within Canada, as well as from outside Canada. Marginality is an issue which not only affects the regional artist, but minorities, third world countries, women, or any group not currently represented in centralized culture. Being located on the margin, in terms of place, allows us to ask questions about the mainstream or centralized culture. How can we deflect or de-centre a centralized system of representation and the production of culture?

What happens when we cannot see ourselves reflected — except in the form of quaint generalizations in national and international dialogues, and when our experience and concern lies outside the currents of presentation? These broad questions allude to larger political issues, but at the same time are issues which connect those on the margins, on the borderlines.

It is not enough to simply address the issue of marginality from a geographically specific position, for even if the regional media artist enters into the national dialogue, only one layer of remove has been overcome. There is no place for the national media arts community — itself marginalized from electronic mass media, popular culture, and mainstream art. The margin or borderline is, therefore, not only a concern with regards to a Halifax/Toronto, Saskatoon/Toronto axiom, but also to a Toronto/New York or Africa/North America axiom.

SEEING OURSELVES

In initiating a constructive dialogue on the position of the regional artist, questions must be brought into play which begin with the local and expand outwards. How has the dominance of one or two centres in this country affected the development of a regional media art practice? How has centralized policy affected the development of the regional? How has centralized culture affected the ability of groups to represent themselves? How has mass media, satellite communications, and so on, colonized us? And in light of this, how do we develop a place for difference?

The regional media artist is not only distanced from the major centres, but distanced from the processes which define high culture and mass culture: on the fringe of the margin of the fringe, three times marginalized. But in order to create a greater diversity of expression in our culture which can accommodate the representation of difference, the process of representation must become de-centred. In this project, distance becomes an advantage allowing a space, a perspective, from which the canons and codes of both international art style and mass culture can be de-constructed, and re-invented. The margin is then an important place to speak from.

In attempting to locate current activity in the region, the search for an identifiable unified "Plains" voice may not be the most productive line of thought to take. Such an analysis would not bring to light any information that is constructive or useful, for as is evident by the work, there is no one Plains style that can easily be labeled. In the past, the attempt to find a specific singular regional vision which can be used to easily distinguish the Plains or the Atlantic, and so on, has only served to ghettoize the regional artist. Such attempts seem to have focused on the most visible, the obvious manifestations of a region — the grain elevator, the grain fields, the sky, the mountains — and result in a caricature rather than a

genuine identification of difference. A search for commonality in these terms can create a negative or superficial description of the regional — quaint generalizations that have only limited value in expressing the experience of the local. If such generalizations are used to define a regional voice, the potential field of legitimate subject matter is reduced to only a veneer, forever marginalizing any further meaningful development. Such caricatures are often the only representation of the local which appears in mass culture and/or centralized Canadian culture and are so removed from our reality that they are meaningless. Within such a context, the local/regional is functionally voiceless. The regional is placed on the margin by centralized Canadian culture and in turn centralized Canadian culture is made local by mass (international) culture. Do we have to continue to make videotapes, write books, paint, and so on, confined by these quaint colloquialisms and be quaint colonialists in order to be recognized?

Instead of pursuing such a counter-productive analysis, it would seem more constructive to examine the influences affecting the work and see how these have been assimilated and subsequently "re-invented" to suit the needs of the individual artist. This approach allows for a diversity of subject matter and genres to emerge and be discussed.

In this sense, the title of this exhibition, "Re:Placing the Satellite. . .", refers to both the place of the work in the context of national and international influences — literally placing or contextualizing the work — and through this discussion a place is developed for the work. Thus, the regions will have a dialogue to replace their colonized view, a dialogue informed by the external but generated from within. In short, the satellite is both the vehicle for cultural colonialism and the link to the outside — a reference point through which the local/regional can place itself.

FOOTNOTES

¹A Plains exhibition catalogue is available from EM/MEDIA which contains excerpts from the Keynote addresses given at the Plains Canada Conference.

²*Prairie Dog Press Manitoba's Alternative Newspaper*. Cited by Bob Brunelle, "Radical Prairie Roots", *Challenge for Change Newsletter*, Winter 1973-74, p. 11.

³McPhail, Thomas. *Electronic Colonialism: The Future of International Broadcasting and Communications*. London: Sage Publications, 1982.



LE VIDÉOGRAPHE

PRODUCTION - DIFFUSION - DISTRIBUTION - FORMATION



DEMANDEZ NOTRE CATALOGUE:

LE VIDÉOGRAPHE 4550 RUE GARNIER MONTRÉAL, QUÉBEC CANADA H2J 3S7
514-521-2118

IN MEMORIAM

Doug had dark brown hair and pale skin. He was very thin; in short sleeves, you saw his bones sticking up. He had a moustache and, once, a beard. He had long fingernails on his right hand. When he was in high school, these were for adjusting the computer; later, they were for finger-picking. He wore glasses, a fedora, cowboy boots, corduroys, and old flannel shirts; he looked like a cowboy gangster in a college professor's pants. He drove an old, unreliable Dodge pick-up that he called "Betsy". He was funny, silly, and cynically sharp-witted; he rarely took anything, or anyone, seriously. He wrote great songs, and he played guitar, clarinet, saxophone, and harmonica, among other things. He sang, in a voice that was, well, distinctive. He wrote stories, articles, essays; he worked as a video technician, an audio engineer, a magician's special effects man. He loved eating in diners and drinking expensive Scotch whiskey. He loved music; Hank Williams, Elvis Costello, Thelonious Monk, and many, many more. He loved comic books, movies, novels; Bogart, Benchley, Burroughs, Chandler, West, and, lately, Mervyn Peake. He knew more about bugs than most people would care to hear. He was a great friend and we will miss him dearly.

DOUGLAS JAMES BROWN • 1962-1987

VIDEO POOL DISTRIBUTION

"THE STATE OF VIDEO DISTRIBUTION IN THE CANADIAN MID-WEST"

by Gerry Kisil

In considering the development and current state of video distribution in the Canadian Mid-West, it helps to first look at the history of this region's support and promotion of its video artists. My involvement in the development of Winnipeg's video community began as an independent producer and founding member of Video Pool Inc. This non-profit organization was created to develop a market for the productions of what was, at the time, a rather small and anonymous group of video artists. Manitoba, being geographically isolated from the major centres of distribution and production, has always created a climate that requires group solutions to the problems faced by individual artists. These methods, of course, have traditionally been employed by social/political groups and movements on the prairies. As the exception to the rule, some video makers are engaged in self-promotion. However, it is, for the majority, financially prohibitive to be involved in distribution of your own work. Further, video artists may lack the skills, information resources, or simply the time necessary for self-promotion. Therefore, well-considered marketing strategies and promotional materials, as generated in the context of a professional distribution facility, are a necessity for artists competing in the very limited market place. Practically speaking, without an identifiable distributor like Video Pool, work by prairie video makers would be very difficult, if not impossible, for curators and programmers to locate.

Video activity has existed in Winnipeg since 1975, primarily supported through exhibitions of video art at

open membership. This situation steadily deteriorated until there was no longer any interest in producing through the space.

Although video production dropped off considerably during this period, artists in the community continued to be interested in the medium. Therefore, Winnipeg supported video activity in the form of screenings of the work of video artists from other, larger centres. From time to time, over the same period, there were several attempts at rekindling an interest in the Plug In Video Group, but the level of energy required to organize the group could not be maintained. This is not to say that video was not being produced. However, there was no focus for the community and no profile for its activities.



Motel, Donnelly Smallwood, 1986

In November of 1981, Plug In hosted the Winnipeg Video Forum, a program which brought together six video artists from across the country to screen and discuss their work. This event revitalized local interest in the medium by bringing public attention to a variety of video practices. The symposium was pivotal in the development of the community because it provided a focus for the existing local activity. Soon after the Forum, the Video Group was resurrected and the group's energies were directed at securing equipment and establishing a production facility. Unfortunately, as time passed and the hardware was still not secured, the energy dissipated, and finally the group disbanded again.

During this period, four members of the Video Group — Vern Hume, Al Poruchnyk, Jon Tupper, and myself — were discussing informally the possibility of beginning to distribute video tape. Three of us had produced tapes, but they weren't being shown anywhere; I guess because no one knew who we were. Without an accessible vehicle for getting the work out, there was no incentive to encourage new production. So we created Video Pool to address the need to get our own work shown and to facilitate the growth of a video community.

Our strategy was simple: we decided to create interest in our work by breaking into the existing market with a "gimmick". This turned out to be the Compilation Tape.



Canova, Kim Ouellette, 1986

We put together a package of current material from Winnipeg in a closed circuit program format and offered it to galleries at a special rate of \$150 for an hour and a half program, which included six individual pieces. At the conventional per-title rate, the fee would have been twice this. With no track record behind us, we relied on price and volume as our main marketing feature. Video Pool received a handling fee off the top, and the remainder was divided equally among the participating artists. The strategy was successful in that it landed us screenings in Toronto and Saskatoon right away. These developments in turn legitimized our activities and established the organization as a distributor.

The compilation tape provides an interesting context to program video works which relate to specific themes or issues, or which document a diverse range of concerns and/or practices. Considering the relative isolation of this community, the compilation tape has been valuable as a tool to represent the range of Winnipeg's video activity to the rest of the country. The strategy is also financially efficient, keeping the costs to the client relatively low. Although it means less revenue to the artists on a per screening basis, the low cost to programmers is incentive for more frequent exhibitions. For all the advantages of the compilation tape, it was not our intention to distribute entirely in this fashion. Rather, this format is used to augment our more conventional distribution activities. It provides another opportunity to get our material out, to attract more clients, and to promote our community.

Tape exchanges with other centres have also been an important part of Video Pool's distribution activity. These initiatives have been successful in encouraging communication between groups and they allow younger producers to show work which may not otherwise be picked up for screening. Exchanges with such groups as P.R.I.M., Montreal in 1982, EM/Media, Calgary in 1985, and Monitor North, Thunder Bay in 1986 have helped Video Pool promote work by Winnipeg video artists within a context that necessarily facilitates a regional or cross-regional dialogue.



Champagne Dream, Darrell Varga, 1986

Plug In Gallery — then called the Arthur Street Gallery — and to a lesser extent at the Winnipeg Art Gallery. In the spring of 1978, Plug In purchased some ¾" video production equipment, and early in 1979 the first formal meeting of the Plug In Video Group took place. Initially the gallery encouraged members of the group with unrestricted access to both the space and equipment. However, it was not long before problems began to develop as a result of this policy. These problems revolved around the fact that Plug In was a gallery, not an equipment access facility. Understandably, the gallery eventually became reluctant to offer unrestricted access to a group with an

Video Pool also maintains a library of video tapes. This archive holds over one hundred separate titles that represent work dealing with a variety of regional interests and concerns. These tapes are available for viewing by interested members of the public during regular office hours on an in-house basis only, and this service is provided free of charge. There is no criteria for depositing material with us other than the work must have been produced in one of the prairie provinces.

Both the library and distribution contracts are non-exclusive, which means that the producer can use the services of, or deposit work with, other distributors or libraries. In face we encourage producers to do just that. After all, it is in their best interest to make their work as available as possible. It is interesting to note, however,



When They First Came, Nida Home Doherty, 1986

that our producers have not enjoyed the same success through other organizations that they have with Video Pool.

Video Pool was created to address some cold hard facts. As individual producers, we could not get into the existing distribution market, so we were compelled to organize. Our efforts have been so successful in increasing the profile of our artists that our distribution mandate has expanded to include Alberta and Saskatchewan. We actively distribute work from all three prairie provinces



Dream Voices, Day Voices, John Galloway, 1986

and maintain an archive that represents the most complete collection of Mid-Western video in this country. We take our role as a regional distributor very seriously, encouraged by the amount of interest being shown in the material coming from the plains.

I am convinced that there is no such thing as a national video distributor in this country. Instead, we have a network of regionally based distributors; each in the best position to promote and talk about the work of their producers. The material being produced in the Canadian Mid-West is in demand and has been featured in exhibitions throughout the world. It is indeed naïve to believe that organizations located in larger cities constitute national distribution simply by virtue of their size. Large organizations tend to support their respective constituencies just as much as smaller ones do. Witness the virtual non-existence of distribution of producers from the Mid-West by organizations not based in this region.

All of our successes are the result of community support and the hard work of some very dedicated individuals. We are working together to promote our artists and it is paying off. It is not a question of whether or not we can effectively distribute the work, or if an interested audience exists for our productions. It does. The problem seems to be how to produce enough material to meet the existing, and ever increasing, demand.

photos by Ryan Takatsu

VIDEO/AUDIO PRODUCTION

VIDEO POOL

Has Moved

3RD FLOOR
100 ARTHUR, STREET
WINNIPEG, MB
(204) 949-9134

Western Front VIDEO NEW RELEASES

PATRICK HUGHES "6,6,6 o'clock news"
KIM TOMCZAK & LISA STEELE "private eyes"
INFERMENTAL 6 edited by HANK BULL, VERA BODY
PAUL LANG "tactile"
SUSAN MILNE "neurostalgia"
JUDI NORRIS "bennu"
JEANETTE REINHARDT "mother may I?"
JOE SARAHAH "holy joe"
MAURIZIO NANNUCCI "sometexts"
NINA SKOGSTER tba

co-ordinated by ELIZABETH VANDER ZAAG for
WESTERN FRONT VIDEO
also available custom software by K. GOODWIN
and R. RICHARDSON, NTSC, 16 mm, and 35 mm format
SOFT DISCO ambient video

WESTERN FRONT VIDEO, 303 E. 8th Ave., Vancouver
876-9343

INFORMATION AND DISTRIBUTION
SERVICES FOR VIDEOTAPES BY
ARTISTS AND INDEPENDENTS

THE COMPLETE RESOURCE The CATALOGUE of CATALOGUES

Videotapes by Artists and Independents

- VIDEO ART
- FEMINIST VIDEO
- NEW NARRATIVE VIDEO
- VIDEOTAPES ON SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ISSUES
- DOCUMENTARY VIDEO
- VIDEOTAPES PRODUCED BY COMMUNITY GROUPS
- QUEBEC VIDEO
- RECENT BRITISH VIDEO
- VIDEOTAPES BY GAYS AND LESBIANS
- ISSUES OF RACE
- MEDIA ANALYSIS AND LITERACY

Tape
V

NEW ADDRESS: 183 Bathurst Street, 1st Floor, Toronto, Ontario, Canada

VIDEO OUT

A SHORT COURSE

by Elspeth Sage

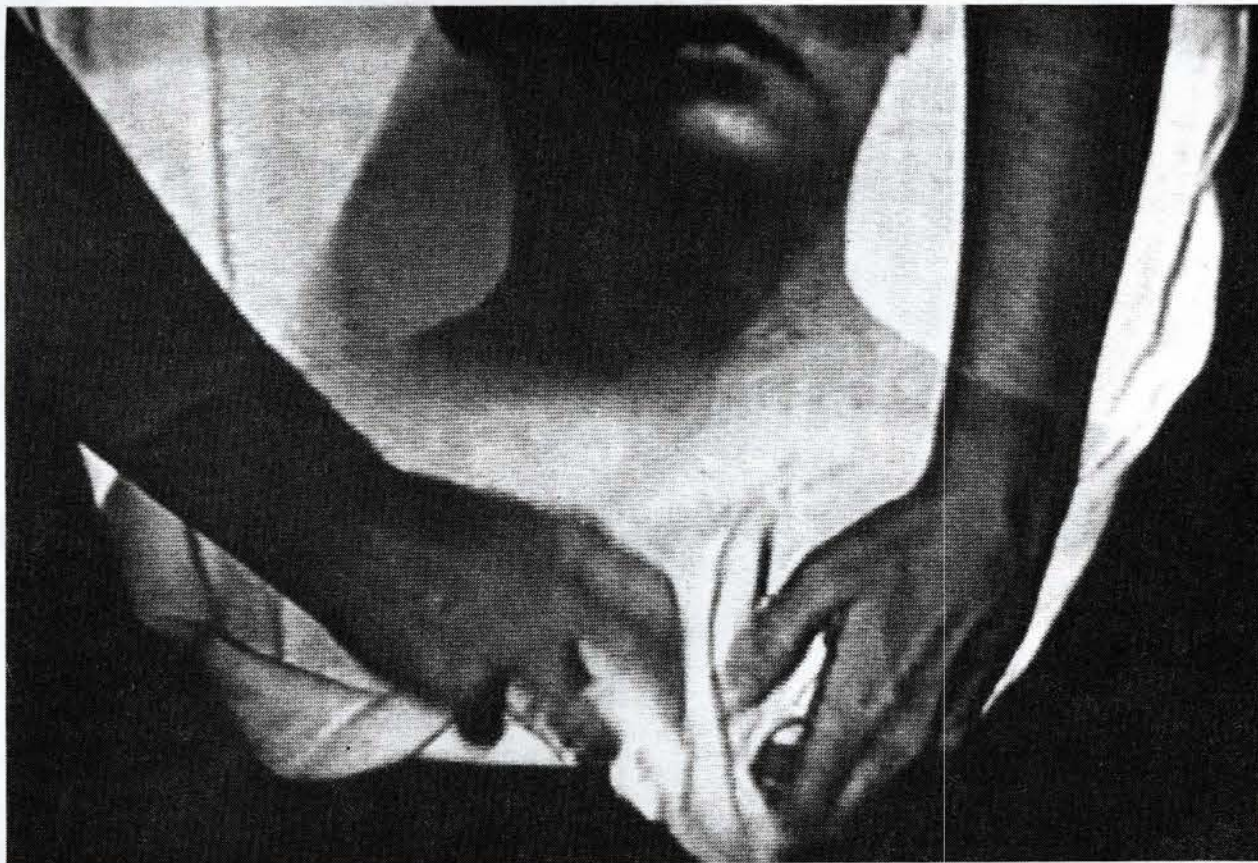


photo Video Out

A Dedication to Lee Choon-Sop by Laurie McDonald

Video Out is the non-exclusive international video distribution service operating under the auspices of the Satellite Video Exchange Society. Formed in 1979 in response to the need for more orderly distribution of artists' videotapes, Video Out represents work by independent, non-commercial producers throughout the world. At present, we distribute over 375 titles which include the work of roughly 125 artists. The content of the tapes varies from performing, visual and video arts to social/political works dealing with human rights, media, environmental concerns and feminist politics. The works are organized into seven general categories: Social Issues, Video Art, Performance, Synaesthetic, Multi-Channel/Installations, Other Visual Art, and Dance.

In order to promote videotapes in their proper context and avoid passive assimilation of visual imagery, Video Out assembles producers' portfolios which contain the artist's c.v., *raison d'être*, tape descriptions, photos, and press reviews. This information is also used in the Video Out catalogue, press releases announcing new work, and all other forms of promotion. All tapes available for distribution are then catalogued into our computer program. The tapes can be retrieved by subject, producer, and title. This helps to produce our cross-indexed catalogue which is updated yearly. Our computer base is also used in the production of smaller, thematic catalogues for specific exhibitions.

Our market is as diverse as the range of content of the tapes we distribute. It includes galleries, museums, artist-run centres, libraries, educational institutions, art and community centres, unions, special interest groups, festivals (where an artist fee can be guaranteed), the home market, cable, broadcast and pay TV. We are continually looking for ways to expand our market and one of these is the Video Out Southwestern U.S. Tour taking place during the month of October, 1987. It is a comprehensive schedule which includes six U.S. states and will allow our representative to meet personally with educators, programmers, and curators. She will have an updated version of our catalogue with her and a promotional package video sampler of the works we distribute. We believe that this 'hands-on' approach is a positive response to the need for change in video distribution techniques outlined in the preliminary report on the state of video's development in Canada for ANNPAC (1981):

"As video's popularity grows, distributors should increase their promotional function. Most centres who distribute tapes have been adequately connected to their audience and therefore have not needed to make extraordinary efforts in the area of promotion. Approximately half of them publish a catalogue, or take out ads in specialized magazines and journals. As video art, documentary or community work becomes more accepted and sought out by larger audiences, the distribution function will have to make a more active effort to promote the video product."

Two other areas which have been identified as potentially useful for distribution are the home market and broadcast. Video Out takes the position that there is much groundwork to be done before either of these areas could be entered into without encountering the real dangers of copyright infractions and the persistent broadcast philosophy of non-payment of artists' fees. At present, Video Out does have one tape, *Luminous Sites*, on 1/2" distribution for the home market, but this has been fairly strictly confined to institutions and the like. In the case of broadcast distribution, the problems vary from the market constantly changing due to budgets, differences from country to country, and ultimately the absence, or in some cases, sub-standard level of fees that broadcasters are willing to pay for artists' videotapes.

In general terms, the works chosen for distribution by Video Out are eclectic in style, content, length, and philosophy. The only unifying factor is format: the tapes must be submitted on 3/4" NTSC sub-master, post-production on 3/4" and only video. (Video Out does not distribute film.) Video Out looks for tapes that have technical excellence and that, in their focus, somehow help Video Out to maintain a diverse range of topics/themes/styles. In addition, Video Out will take on any new work by a producer whose work is already handled by Video Out. There is no time limit for the length of the tapes submitted.

There are a few caveats of which Video Out advises its producers and potential artist-clients in advance. The first is that Video Out does not submit any of its titles to the BC Classification Board. The second is that the work must fall within the philosophy of being 'politically correct.' By this we mean that Video Out will not distribute tapes that promote racial hatred or support sexual stereotypes, etc., unless these works somehow approach these issues in an analytical way to deconstruct the subject. The third point is that the work must be independently produced and non-commercial.

Once a tape is received for consideration and distribution by Video Out, it is usually put before the Acquisitions Committee which is appointed by the Board of Directors of the Satellite Video Exchange Society. However, the Distribution Director has the right to select tapes that she/he may feel meet the criteria for distribution without consulting the Acquisitions Committee. The Acquisitions Committee consists of 12 people: 50% from the Society Board and 50% from the community. It views tapes submitted for distribution four times a year. The Distribution Director is responsible for supplying the committee with a full list of tapes acquired for distribution between acquisition meetings. The committee is made up of members who fairly represent all types of interests in the visual arts, social issues, etc.

After a tape has been selected for distribution by Video Out, the producer is required to supply an NTSC sub-master, or in the case of PAL/SECAM, a copy of the master NTSC dub, preferably a time-based corrected copy.

Video Out absorbs the cost of the raw tape stock used for the sub-master and reimburses the producer. From then on, all leased copies of the work will be copied from Video Out's sub-master. Copies of all tapes accepted are deposited in the Video In Library for in-house use. With the help of the producer, Video Out assembles a portfolio on the artist with as much pertinent information as possible, including a videography, essays, reviews, scheduled showings, and promotional layouts. Each tape is catalogued and cross-referenced in as many categories as possible, enabling Video Out to develop a wide range of marketing possibilities for thematic packaging. The catalogue, reproduced every two years but updated yearly, is distributed free to the producers listed, previous clients, institutions, and individuals involved in curating, etc., thus ensuring wide circulation of the availability of each tape for distribution. In addition, there are separate promotional mailouts for each tape, subject or package, which are sent to specific interest organizations. All costs involved in promotion, insurance, and handling are borne by Video Out.

The main areas of successful distribution have been the artist-run centres, museums, and galleries that specialize in video art. Included in this have been requests for Video Out to curate shows for galleries, select and present work as part of art fairs, public-information forums, colloquiums, and video festivals. Video Out has also been active in promoting and sponsoring international competitions which has helped to expand the market for its own products. We have also arranged the Canadian portion of many international exchange shows which has resulted in a number of internationally acclaimed artists requesting our distribution services. However, the largest market for distribution remains in Canada and deals mainly with rentals, not sales. There are some instances of direct sales (i.e., leasing for the life of the tape), such as many recent purchases by the National Gallery in Ottawa, but these are the exception rather than the rule. The tapes are distributed on NTSC, 1/2" open-reel, VHS, Beta I & II, in English, although there are a few cases where Video Out has worked with a producer to obtain funding to enable sub-titling the work. Quotes on other formats, such as 1", PAL, and SECAM can be obtained on request.

The business and monetary side of the agreement with Video Out and its producers starts with a written contract. These contracts, which have been in use since Video Out's inception in 1979, take the form of a letter of agreement rather than some sort of complicated legal document. At present there is no fixed time length of the contract, but it can be dissolved on the basis of mutual consent. The contract guarantees the producer two-thirds of all revenues generated from rental or sale of the work. The remaining one-third goes to Video Out as the distributor. The producers' royalties are forwarded twice a year along with a report of all transactions made with regard to that particular work. When available, Video Out will also forward any promotional material, such as catalogues, posters, brochures and reviews resulting from an exhibition that included an artist's work. The only exception to the 2/3, 1/3 arrangement with regard to fees is through the leasing or sale of any Western Front Video Production. In those cases, one half of all monies generated is paid to the artist and the other half is equally divided between the Western Front and Video Out.

The standard fee charged for leasing (whether 1/2" or 3/4"), which is presently under review, is \$50 per half hour, \$75 per hour for a single play; \$200 per half hour per week per exhibition for single play, \$300 per hour per week per exhibition for multiple plays; and for sale, \$150 for less than 10 minutes, \$350 for up to 30 minutes, and \$500 for up to 60 minutes. These prices regarding the sale of tapes are only guidelines and may vary according to our agreement with the producer. The figures quoted for sale also only refer to the life of the tape. Should another copy be required because of damage or wear and tear, the purchaser would be charged the standard fee. The copyright is retained at all times by the artist, regardless of sale or rental.

The terms and conditions that each renter or purchaser is subject to are clearly spelt out before the tape is distributed. These terms are that the tape: 1) may not be duplicated in whole or part; 2) is not licenced for commercial or theatrical exhibition; 3) will be exhibited in its entirety and may not be altered or excerpted in any way; 4) may not be transferred or lent by the licensee to any institution or individual; and 5) may not be broadcast or cablecast without the prior written consent of Video Out.

VIDEO OUT, Continued page 10

V/TAPE

by Kim Tomczak



The Flow of Appearances by Tess Payne, 1986

In the tradition of other Toronto video organizations (Trinity Square Video, Charles Street Video), V/tape operates under the belief that video artists and producers should have access to distribution for their work. Having stated that, I will explain how we operate and why we chose to structure V/tape as we have. In the later part of this article I have outlined some current obstacles producers and distributors run into.

In general, from our perspective, video distribution is in a growth period. That is, there are a growing number of venues for independent video as well as a growing number of individuals and groups producing video.

V/tape is an information and distribution service for videotapes by artists and independents. It is a non-curatorial, non-exclusive and non-profit artist run organization. V/tape's mandate favours an inclusive rather than exclusive approach to cultural dissemination and strives to be as comprehensive as possible. All staff and board members are video producers.

V/tape was originally formed in 1980 by Rodney Werden, Clive Robertson, Lisa Steele, Susan Britton, and Colin Campbell and operated as a distribution co-operative. In the fall of 1980, Rodney Werden explained V/tape's plans to expand with the help of a computerized system of distribution. In 1982, Lisa Steele and I applied for and received an Explorations grant to study the feasibility of such a service. The present structure of V/tape is a result of that initial study.

In 1982, there were fundamental problems with distribution mainly around the lack of representation for video artists. There was a distributor in Toronto (Art Metropole) at that time, but it chose a highly selective model (like a stable of artists in a private gallery, presumably based on some sort of notion of quality) to operate under. This left the vast majority of video producers without formal distribution. Strangely, many Toronto producers were being represented in Vancouver, London, England, and even the U.S., but not in Toronto. This is not to devalue self-distribution, as many artists did and still do successful self-distribution, but it is our experience that many programmers and curators and, in particular, educators do not have an enormous amount of time and energy to devote to seek-and-find missions like trying to locate artists on an individual basis.

Our original goal was to catalogue (that is, to write descriptions, in as comprehensive a way as possible) all the tapes produced in Canada over the past 15 (or more) years. Our thoughts on this were that tapes were disappearing without a trace and this was both regrettable and unacceptable. This catalogue would be contained on a computerized system which could accommodate the extensive records on the videotapes we were cataloguing. It could also be used for cross-referencing according to subject, producer, title, year of production, and so on. This computerized catalogue contains descriptions of videotapes in distribution with other distributors, in self-distribution, as well as in V/tape's own shipping

service (the distribution wing of V/tape). This computerized cataloguing system remains the backbone of our service.

We are frequently asked how, in practice does a non-curatorial distribution work? Surely, the question continues, you have favourites, tapes which you push? The staff of V/tape neither engage in or infer any notions of excellence or quality when dealing with videotape requests. Instead, we find it successful to identify the client's (the end user of video) area of interest and then provide them with a list that reflects a broad interpretation of their request. This practice is based on two ideas: the first one is that the programmers, curators, or educators are intelligent and fully capable of making their own decisions about suitability, etc; the second is that by providing a broad interpretation of their requests for suitable tapes, the programmers etc. will undoubtedly come across work they hadn't counted on. In this second example we have seen programmers use documentary style video in shows which might have featured only more formal types of tapes, and vice versa.

In order to maintain our goal of being comprehensive, we have, over the past year, initiated our catalogue service. The Catalogue of Catalogues combines all of the existing video distributors' catalogues (Video Out, Women In Focus, Video Pool, V/tape, GIV, Videographe, and Video Femmes) within a two volume binder. Because distributors publish up-dates at various times throughout the year and typically reprint their catalogues every two years, this information service is offered to clients by subscription. We supply the clients with up-dates every six months, in order to guarantee that their information is always up to date. As we only supply the Catalogue of Catalogues complete, programmers always have all the information about available videotapes in a non-disposable format.

As well as information about videotapes and video producers, we compile information on potential programmers and markets. We identified two main markets initially when we started V/tape. We based these markets on in-depth research with more mature video distributors in Canada, the U.S., and Europe. The two markets are the cultural sector (galleries, museums, artist-run centres, etc.) and the educational sector. The home and broadcast market round out the spectrum of potential markets.

Video has come to take the cultural sector for granted, which could be a mistake. It only takes a minute to see that the major public galleries (the Vancouver Art Gallery, The Art Gallery of Ontario, the Musée de Beaux Arts in Montreal, the Winnipeg Art Gallery) have not exhibited or collected video for some time now. Readers will recall the fact that the National Gallery of Canada was almost added to that list. Responding to an impressive amount of pressure from the video arts community, they hired a new curator (Susan Ditta) to handle film and video, reversing an earlier decision to drop video until the move to their new home. Obviously, this kind of pressure must be

continued and extended throughout the cultural sector.

The educational sector poses even more challenges for video producers and distributors. Alliances with this market were formed with film distributors before the advent of video production. This is not a competitive or antagonistic statement, just historical. The reader would be correct to point out that the educational sector now purchases/rents materials on videotape; however, we must remember that the source remains for the most part the same. Film distributors (larger and better funded) now dump their 'products' to videotape without missing a beat in the so-called video revolution. However, we are making inroads in this market, which is potentially very large. It is important to note two things here: firstly, that film distributors are not the enemy, in fact, as far as V/tape is concerned, we routinely share information with the Canadian Filmmakers Distribution Centre, and secondly, the educational sector doesn't particularly care if a title was produced on video or film transferred to video. The challenge is to enter into the educational market professionally and on a par with the more established film distributors. This can only come with consistent, long-term market approaches, sometimes taking several years to complete.

Others cite the home market as the answer, failing to analyze how it is that movies get to their local 7-11 store, ignoring the fact that, for Hollywood, the home market is gravy — their investments being recovered at the box office.

Broadcasting independent video seems, and is, a logical idea. In practice, however, we encounter a myriad of problems. The long and short of it is, in my opinion, that without legislation which forces the public and private broadcasters to program independent work, we are in a very weak bargaining position. Perhaps the arts funding bodies could help in this matter by doing some much needed legal work in this area.

With all these terrific ideas, video producers have every right to ask, how come I make so little off my work? Distribution has not been identified as a priority by the arts councils in Canada. It is at best viewed as an obligation, sort of like taking your cousin to a dance, and consequently there is very little money going to centres like V/tape or any of the video distributors, for that matter. Video production, exhibition, and distribution exist in a symbiotic relationship. Take away one and the other two falter. Distribution plays a strategic role in the video sector. However, many key players in the funding game seem to ignore this fact, choosing to believe that the distribution 'bridge' will be crossed at some later date. Some even cite future 'coming soon' technological changes as the salvation for video makers. In other words, later.

Censorship is an enormous problem for video producers in Ontario. It is important to point out that Ontario has a video community which is outspoken and articulate about censorship. The practice of not submitting video to the censor board either in the form of a description of the work, Examination by Documentation, or the actual videotape to the Ontario Film Review Board (I will continue to call it the Ontario Censor Board, its original name) is widespread here. Galleries, cultural centres, curators, and programmers fully respect this position. This is not the case for independent film. Like it or not, video producers and filmmakers constitute different communities with different histories, strategies, and economic environments.

The term 'censorship' can be misleading. Many people feel that it isn't actually censorship until something has been actually cut out of a tape or the tape has been prevented from being exhibited by some agency of the government. I feel that the presence of such a restrictive mediator such as a censorship board, between the producer and her/his audience, creates an environment of production, exhibition, and distribution that is difficult if not destructive.

Things begin to happen. Like advertising a video show and hoping no one notices — no one from the government that is. The self-conscious exclusion of 'problems' from videotapes (not all video artists, thankfully, have fallen victim to this). Issues of sexual representation in video tapes have to be approached in a manner reminiscent to planning and building a pyramid. Minority positions around politics, around sexuality suffer similarly.

If the porn bill (as it is called by the press) before Parliament at this time passes, this situation will get even worse. Video artists could find themselves in court, being forced to provide arguments along the lines of — is it art? is it erotica? is it porn?

What next!

VIDEO

CONVERSATION

by Le Videographe

translated by Alberto De Lisi

What strikes me first at Le Videographe is the impression that there is a leftist, even a red tradition here. Yet if we closely follow what is currently happening, we receive a different impression, namely, that video art is produced here.

Yes. People are now rediscovering Le Videographe for the reasons you mention. When one takes the time to study both the history of Le Videographe and its productions, without any preconceptions, it becomes clear that the majority of the early works featured art.

I think there was a period in the late 1970's and early 1980's when certain members perhaps needed to affirm that Le Videographe always had been, was, and always would be geared towards the socio-political documentary. But history disproves this. If we flip through the recently-published catalogue, we see that from 1971 to today, Le Videographe has produced many art videos and relatively few socio-political documentaries. Because of Quebec's unique political situation in the late 1970's and early 1980's, however, this fact has been overshadowed. Although socio-politically relevant art was very popular back then, many other types of projects were also being produced during the same period.

We may wonder if, from 1971 to 1975, Le Videographe did not set up a "challenge" between experimental video and the documentary. We can recall experiments with "feed-back" video at the time, as well as works such as those produced by Falardeau and Poulin, which fall somewhere between the two categories mentioned above; we are reminded at once of Continous Le Combat. But let's not forget Les Seins De Louise, a 1972 work on the question of eroticism and women's reaction to it. Initially, isn't there a notion that the two types of experiences can be combined?

Yes, definitely.

Could it have developed an influence on works produced from 1975 to 1980, as well as from 1980 to 1987? When we enter the 1980's, can there be a continuity in that approach? For many, the Quebec Referendum is a forgotten cause. But at Le Videographe, we continue to produce socio-political-type works on the Honduras, Nicaragua, Latin America, etc. Does an interest in works dealing with the Third World replace the documentary in terms of appeal and even importance for the distribution service?

This analysis requires a more in-depth study, but it is an interesting observation nevertheless.

Since the Referendum is a cause the intellectual establishment failed to win, and since video art is increasingly more important within Le Videographe, nationalist types of productions do not seem to be as popular, and this is

well reflected throughout the catalogue. Does aesthetic representation now play a prominent role in this establishment? Thus, there is openness of thought in a much larger milieu; one that, it so happens, permits the distribution of art tapes.

I think we can clearly perceive a new generation in Quebec, one which goes against the political ideas of the older generation; a new generation that says no to its predecessors: "My roots will be as international as yours were nationalist. I will not repeat your errors." This is what is happening right now in Quebec at several levels of society, including the cultural level.

Is this why Le Videographe distributes to such an extent in North America and Europe?

I think so. It is a fact that in the 1970's, Le Videographe had less opportunity to compete in those markets because of the aestheticism of the works themselves, although many video art works were being produced. Let's not forget the technological aspect: the black and white half-inch format had a much more limited opportunity for distribution than current video productions. There is now a growing interest in video, an interest based in the demand for technology and in works produced by technology. It's fundamental!

When we view videos produced or distributed by Le Videographe, it seems there is once again a "challenge" in the form of an ever-present question within the work: Yes, I am for technology, but at the same time I could be somewhat opposed, and I will show it by reworking the work's contents. On this matter, the position of Zone Productions and Agent Orange, for example, is a unique one.

We are North Americans, but because of the French language, we are somewhat less affected by the culture of our continent. Agent Orange and Zone Productions identify with an international aestheticism. After all, they read Chateaubriand in school while learning French. That is part of you! Even if they wish to think in "video terms," they do so with words, and those words are in French. Quebec will always express itself differently. In many ways the same can be said of Le Videographe.

Let's look at the question of sexuality, a question that some anglophone communities in Canada pay particular attention to because of the ongoing problems with censorship in their provinces. In Quebec, it seems that we already had to deal with this issue in 1971-72, and it has come full circle in the 1980's. It is reaffirmed in Gus est Encore Dans l'Armee by Dufour and Morin, and in other experiences by Marc Paradis and Jean Gagnon, for example. What is your opinion?

I agree with you that the interest in the question of sexuality has been around for a long time in Quebec and that it has never ceased to exist. Comparisons with English Canada, however, are possibly unfair. Quebecois works on sexuality refer perhaps less directly to political thought. Quebec underwent an important transformation during the "quiet revolution" in the early 1960's, during the fight against censorship by the Catholic Church. In English Canada, events unfolded otherwise, and the current fight by one part of the country covers a reality which is somewhat irrelevant to the unique development Quebec has undergone with respect to this question.

To what degree could Le Videographe, which is both a group and a non-profit organization, act as curator, perhaps alienating the rights of some directors in the process?

Curatorship is indeed a special problem. The supposition is that Le Videographe will choose works from its video collection which stand the best chances of being distributed. But there is also an aesthetic choice behind this, and Le Videographe has always discouraged anything which could put certain types of productions at a disadvantage. We have always provided artists the opportunity to express themselves freely. We must keep to this principle. It has been our greatest accomplishment! We have done so the way V/Tape and Video Out are doing it — in their own contexts. We distribute acquisitions which were not produced here at Le Videographe. But we also distribute works produced with our equipment, and works that are co-produced with Le Videographe. Once works are completed, our distribution department endeavours to insure the best possible service. If as a distribution network we begin selecting works, we become faced with the question of defining ourselves as an organization.

How about production?

We have been an artist-run access centre since the beginning. Naturally, we have evolved along with technology. We have produced and continue to produce works which are much more sophisticated and expensive.

As I have already mentioned, we also co-produce. We are involved in the production aspect because we believe in quality. We offer our expertise, our experience, our technology and our technicians to those who wish to pursue artistic creativity. In the final analysis, the wishes of Le Videographe's pioneers continue to be respected. There is reason for us to be proud!

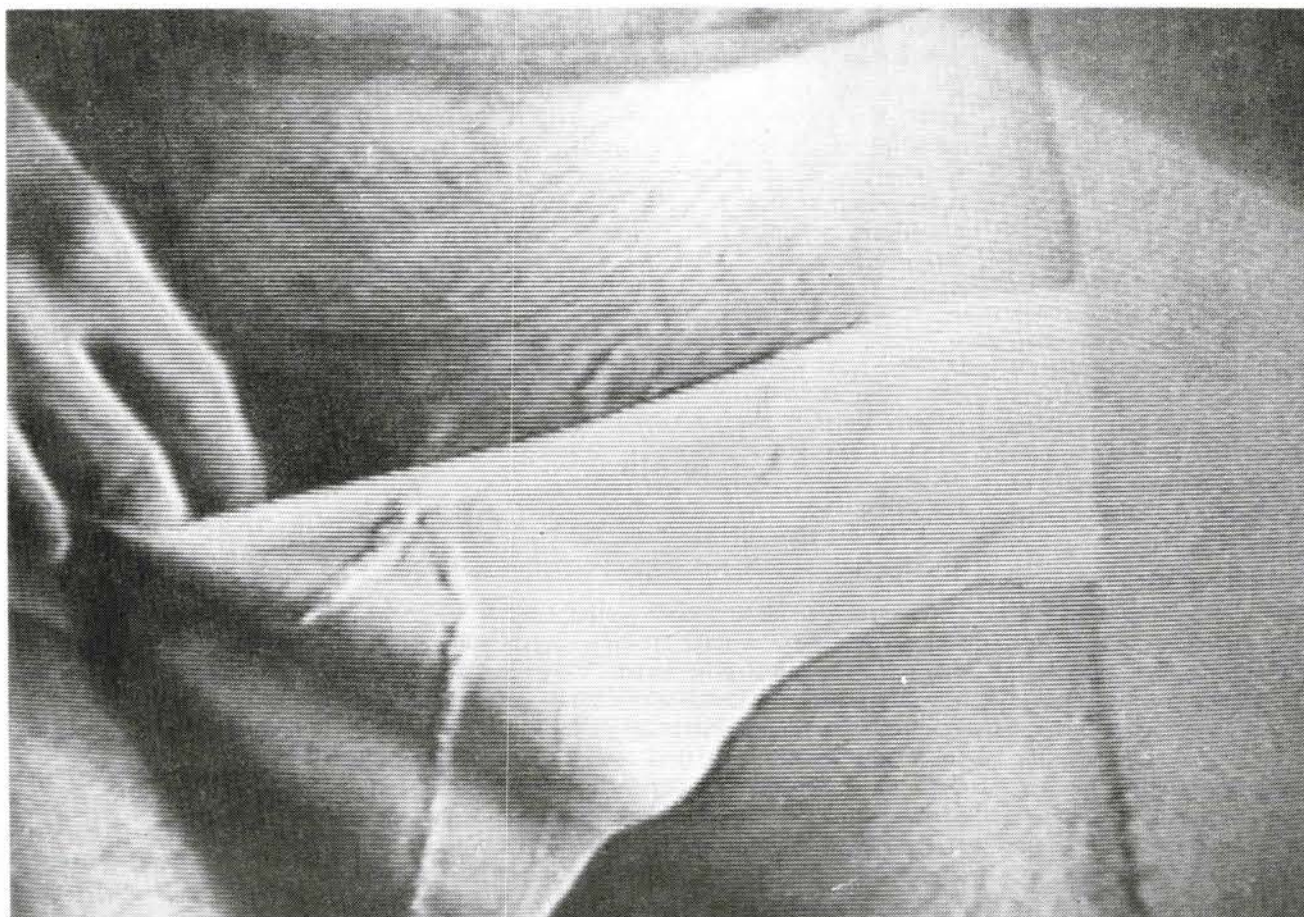


photo Video Out

1/2" VIDEOTAPE DISTRIBUTION

(A TAPE TO CALL YOUR OWN)

by Lynne Cummings

1/2" VIDEOTAPES BY ARTISTS AVAILABLE FOR SALE (A tape to call your own)

During the last 12 years, Art Metropole has been distributing information on contemporary art. Artists' video distribution is one of the areas in which we specialize. Recently, we have been following the dramatic expansion of the home market use of VCR's as well as the common practice of purchasing videotapes for home use. To continue with Art Metropole's objective of collecting, publishing, and distributing artists' material, we have ventured forth into the area of 1/2" sales of artists' video.

To date, we have released 15 tapes, all by Canadian artists. Our next series will feature an international selection of major works. We have been in touch with artists in Europe and USA, as well as organizations who have initiated similar programs such as Voyager Press, Los Angeles; the CAT Fund, Boston; CGA (Interior) Video and Pioneer Group, Japan; and 235 Video, Koln.

The following tapes are included in the first series:

<i>Rhea and Jumped Out</i>	David Askevold
<i>Tatouages de la Memoire</i>	Helen Doyle
<i>Retrospective 1973-83</i>	Noel Harding
<i>Test Tube</i>	
<i>Shut the Fuck Up</i>	General Idea
<i>Diamond Mind</i>	Les Levine
<i>Hell</i>	Ardele Lister
<i>Crime Time Comix Presents</i>	
<i>Steel and Flesh</i>	Eric Metcalfe/Dana Atchley
<i>Not Dead Yet</i>	Edward Mowbray
<i>Come On Touch It</i>	
<i>(Study No. 4 for a Personality Inventory Channel)</i>	Ian Murray
<i>Hygiene</i>	Andrew Paterson/Jorge Lozano

<i>Wallace + Theresa</i>	Jan Peacock
<i>Here in the Southwest</i>	Joyan Saunders
<i>Blue Moon</i>	Rodney Werden
<i>Prime Cuts</i>	Paul Wong

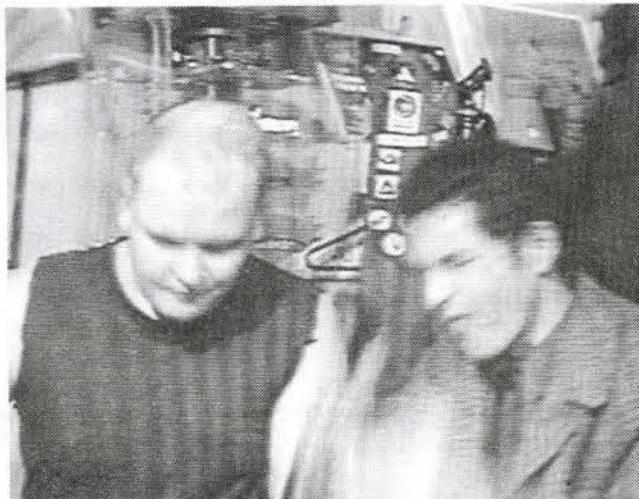
Our tapes are not available for sale to museums to use in their collection or for use in public exhibition. (Art Metropole is willing to supply museums with contacts regarding 3/4" sales and rentals.) The tapes are the copyright of the artist and can not be copied. Each tape is available on VHS and Beta, \$65.00. Call or write for a free brochure; wholesale enquiries are welcome. For further information please contact Art Metropole, 217 Richmond Street West, Toronto, Ontario, M5V 1W2, (416) 977-1685.

VIDEO

photos Art Metropole



Prime Cuts, Paul Wong, 1981



Blue Moon, Rodney Werden, 1983



Here In The Southwest, Joyan Saunders, 1984

WOMEN, ART AND THE PERIPHERY MUJER, ARTE Y PERIFERIA

Chilean Artists-Curators

Diamela Eltit, Nelly Richard and Lotty Rosenfeld

will be in Vancouver

November 11 - December 19

(Foreign Visiting Artists at Video In)

For Further Information Please Contact:

Video In
1160 Hamilton
Vancouver, B.C.
V6B 2S2
(604) 688 - 4336

Women in Focus
204 - 456 W. Broadway
Vancouver, B.C.
V5Y 1R3
(604) 872 - 2250

Western Front
303 E. 8th Ave
Vancouver, B.C.
V5T 1S1
(604) 876 - 9343

As Co-curators at **Women in Focus**

An Exhibition of Thirteen Chilean Women Artists' Recent Multimedia Works

November 11 (8pm)
November 11 - December 19
December 10 (8pm)

Opening
Exhibition
Walking Tour of Works
with Chilean curators

* A talk on Women & Literature in Chile by Diamela Eltit at local universities (details forthcoming)

As Foreign Visiting Artists-in-Residence at the **Video In**

November 21 & 22 (9pm)
November 27 (9pm)
December 4
December 5 (10am-5pm)
December 11
December 12 (noon - 6pm)

Video Screenings: Recent Video Art
by Chilean Women
Video Installation: Opening
'Art Action' (details forthcoming)
Workshop: Women and Art in Chile
'Art Action' (details forthcoming)
Workshop: Interchange with
Canadian Artists

As Artist-in-Residence at the **Western Front**

November - December

Lotty Rosenfeld

VIDEO OUT, Continued from page 10

At present Video Out is in the process of revamping some of its policies, specifically to do with the acquisitions end of things. There is a recognition that the number of tapes that can be successfully distributed with the resources available is finite. With this in mind, a process is being looked at to separate titles, likely based on age and demand, into areas of "active" and "non-active" dis-

tribution. This might also include setting a limit on the number of tapes that will remain in the active distribution arena. The non-active tapes would remain accessible to renters and buyers but would not be actively distributed.

Yet at the same time, Video Out is looking for certain types of tapes to fill in areas lacking proper coverage. These include, at time of writing, works dealing with social documentaries, issues such as AIDS, the environ-

ment, native concerns, feminist politics, health, labour and international politics. Further, there is a need to strengthen our representation of certain regional areas such as to include works from the Prairies and the Maritimes. It is hoped that through this gathering process we will be able to present a more even balance between works treated specifically as video art, and those dealing with local, social issues which will likely only broaden our opportunities for international distribution.

VIDEO

INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF VIDEO ART S.A.W. GALLERY

by Su Rynard

The 1986 S.A.W. Gallery International Festival of Video Art, consisted of well-researched thematic programs of international video art which toured eight artist-run centres across Canada. The tape programs were accompanied by a workshop/lecture series presented by three international artists and one Canadian. A Festival catalogue, including essays and tape descriptions, accompanied the exhibition. The festival was co-ordinated by Bill White and curated by Elke Towne.

The touring aspect and thematic design of the festival attempted to address the specificity of the Canadian situation — the expanse of the country and its regional diversity. However well intended this idea was, its implementation proved difficult. Each participating centre had the ability to "select" various programs and visiting artists that would best meet their respective needs. This resulted in some rather complex administration for the Festival organizers and pushed the limits of efficient organization.

To organize and mount an International Festival is a difficult task. With the limited budgets and staff resources of many of the smaller artist-run centres, it would not be possible. One might assume that these centres would be pleased to play host to such an event, enthusiastic at the prospect of accessing an International package of work. Yet several of the centres were hesitant to confirm their participation in the S.A.W. Festival. Using Toronto as an example, where the festival was hosted by A Space (and partially co-sponsored by Art Metropole and Trinity Square Video), a general lack of enthusiasm toward the Festival was coupled with poor attendance. The S.A.W. Festival failed to draw more than a minimal audience.

Contributing to this problem was the fact that the festival was not well advertised or promoted. But, "Whose show was it?" S.A.W. provided interesting and well-designed catalogues and posters for the exhibition, yet these items alone were not enough to sufficiently promote an International Festival. The responsibility of advertising was left up to each centre. In Ottawa, S.A.W. attempted to sufficiently promote the festival, yet in other cities, in many cases, the participating centres were unable to invest further capital in an exhibition to which they had little input or would receive little credit. Any "glamour"

of the S.A.W. Festival would clearly be attributed to S.A.W. and not to the hosting centres.

The manner in which the tapes were disseminated added to the problems. After the tapes were screened at one centre they were sent along to the next. Even though there were several sets of the festival tapes available (which added the complicated issue of dubbing artists' work), there was not enough time at each centre for press preview screenings.

The workshop component of the festival intended to provide a technical basis for those wishing to understand more about the process of creating a video tape, as well as allow insight into individual artists' perspectives. Attempting to do this, I believe, is an important educational and personable aspect of the festival. Unfortunately, faced with a similar set of problems as the screening aspect of the Festival, the lecture and workshop series did not achieve its maximum potential.

Although some of the limited effectiveness of the Festival is specific to the organization of the Festival itself, the S.A.W. Festival suffers from larger problems belonging to Canadian video art in general. Video art remains isolated from other contemporary art practices. There are few art periodicals that cover video art on a regular basis. There are even fewer galleries that program video art on a regular basis. Video art has a very uneasy relationship with film (both mainstream and experimental) and its audience. As well, the artist run independent distributors' funds are too limited to "invest" and promote the work. No video art to date has received a theatrical release which entails capital investment and media attention. Historically, video art has had limited television distribution. Recently in Canada there have been isolated purchases and screenings of video art on television, which is a very important and significant move. Yet, as isolated events, these will be of minimal consequence. As well as a regular programming slot on television, Canada needs a well-contextualized overview of video art on our national network.

It is not solely a situation of "educating" audiences to "understand" the work, but a situation where greater exposure will subsequently foster a greater familiarity

and understanding of the work. It is a situation of sufficiently contextualizing the work by asserting its position in the existing gallery and critical structure. That is to say, video art needs and deserves equal representation in the contemporary art context. As well, video art needs increased distribution and access to a wider and more general audience through television broadcast and/or theatrical release.

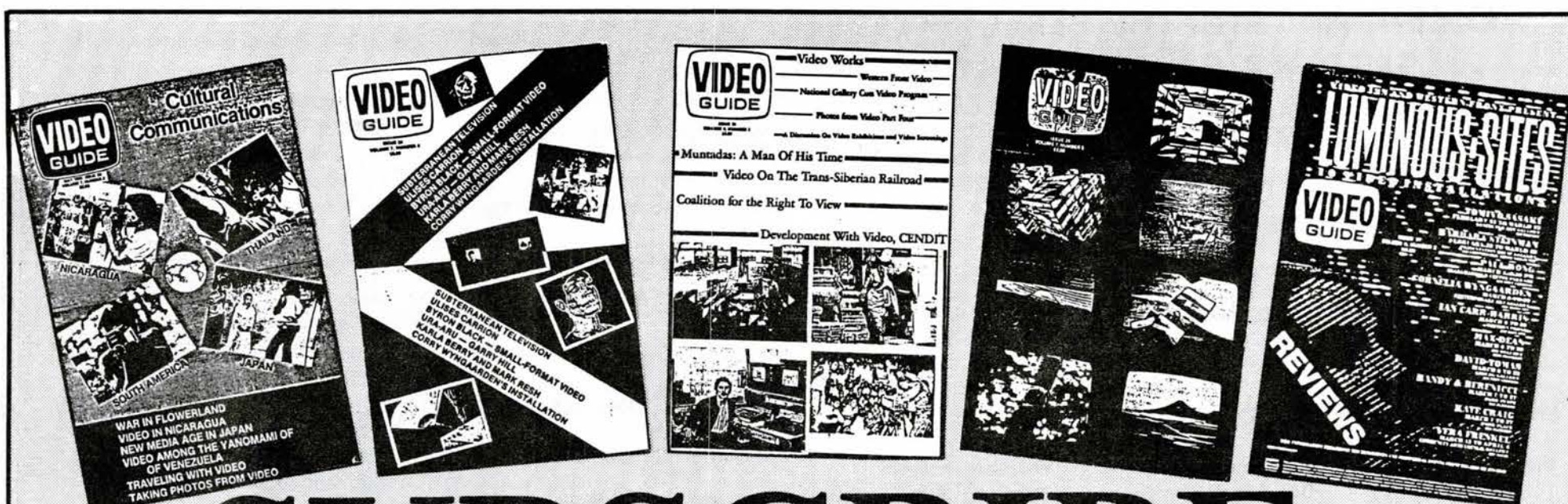
It is disappointing that the S.A.W. International Festival did not receive the exposure and audience it deserved.

It is interesting at this time to compare the S.A.W. Festival to two other recent Canadian festivals which used different methods to reach their respective audiences: Video Culture International, and The 15th Festival International Du Nouveau Cinema et de la Video Montreal.

There are obvious immediate differences between these two festivals and S.A.W.: the comparatively larger size of the Montreal Festival and Video Culture, and the fact that these festivals are based in major city centres. Although also problematic, Video Culture did attempt to reach a wider audience through television. The works were presented on City-TV's Much Music program three times per day over a period of one week. One major restriction was rooted in the format and audience of Much Music itself: obviously the nature of the program excluded longer and language-based work. The organizers of the Montreal Festival appear to be dedicated to including Video Art as an essential and well-developed component of that festival. Generally speaking, however, there is the danger of the work being marginalized within the larger context of a predominantly film festival.

I have not compared these festivals in an attempt to suggest a solution to a complex Festival distribution situation. The Montreal Festival and Video Culture did, however, exhibit a responsibility toward audience in a way S.A.W. did not. If the S.A.W. Festival is to continue as a bi-annual event, it must continue to make an attempt to reach out to the public, acknowledge its past difficulties, and address the larger situation of video art in Canada — not just in the festival's design and premise, but in its actual implementation.

VIDEO



SUBSCRIBE FIVE ISSUES

\$10. IN CANADA, \$10. U.S. IN U.S. FUNDS, \$15. OVERSEAS IN CDN. FUNDS

Video Guide, 1160 HAMILTON STREET, VANCOUVER, B.C., V6B 2S2, TEL: (604) 688 4336

DIRECTORY OF INNOVATIVE MEDIA PROJECTS

by Rick Sheridan

This directory of innovative media projects is a result of three years of research into the various community media and public access projects going on in the United States. I have included a variety of groups such as arts, film, journalism, and computer-related.

The listing here is by no means complete. It is a basic networking guide to help anyone find the resources they need. If your project is not listed, send it in and we will include it in a future issue.

I encourage anyone to pass this information along. There is no copyright on this one publication, so feel free to photocopy it. My only goal with this is to help the worthwhile groups mentioned here.

Paper Tiger Television has been very active lately promoting their cable access project. They are collecting locally-produced art videos and others and sending them over satellite so there is plenty of material now available. As you might know, local cable stations must provide a specific amount of time for community-produced programs. Until now, many program directors complained of the lack of material being offered.
165 W. 91st St., 14F, New York, NY 10024.

National Federation of Local Cable Programmers work on a variety of projects including a national library of videotapes for people involved in local cable TV programming, a clearinghouse of information on access programming, sponsorship of a Hometown USA Video Festival, etc. They also represent community cable companies when dealing with the FCC.
906 Pennsylvania Ave., SE, Washington, DC 20003.

Cable Co-operative of Palo Alto, Inc. was awarded the city's franchise in 1985. As a co-op they provide rate control on profit-sharing. They also want to expand community oriented programming and have set aside three channels for its use.
636 Waverly, Palo Alto, CA 94301.
A very active group exists in Santa Cruz, PO Box 8471, Santa Cruz, CA 95061.

Satellite Video Exchange Society is a professional non-profit group that provides resources for alternative video and film makers. Many cultural and political topics are covered in their publication *Video Guide*.
1160 Hamilton St., Vancouver, B.C. Canada V6B 2S2.

Media Network is a resource group for independent community and politically-oriented film makers. Publishes a quarterly networking journal full of different projects.
208 W. 13th St., New York, NY 10011.

Community Memory Project is a two way "people's computer network" set up in Berkeley, California. They have terminals in several public locations where anyone can exchange ideas, barter services, tap into community information, or add obscenities to the program.
P.O. Box 996, Berkeley, CA 94701.

Alternative America is a directory of several thousand groups, both in the United States and overseas. Many innovative arts and media groups are listed.
Box 134, Harvard Square, Cambridge, MA 02238-0134.

Art Com/La Mamelle, Inc. has ten years experience in the areas of performance, video, and publishing. They distribute art-related books and videos and have a gallery space. Their latest innovative project is to switch from a regular magazine format to electronic publishing via computer. This will allow access to back issues and related information.
70 12th St., San Francisco, CA 94103.

New Day Films is a film makers co-operative whose members share ideas, resources, and energy in bringing about social change. They cover such subjects as sexism, marriage, growing up in America, societal values and other related topics.
P.O. Box 315, Franklin Lakes, NJ 07417.

Artists' Television Access has set up regular screenings for art videos to be shown to the public. These range from abstract to practical. They also serve as a gallery for sculpture and oil paintings. Artists' Television Access also has production facilities available for video editing.
220 8th St., San Francisco, CA 94103.

Association for Multi-Image is a clearinghouse for those folks who work with multiple projectors. They hold regular exhibitions, festivals, along with producing a newsletter. The newsletter lists tips, dates of festivals, and classified ads from other members.
1033 Battery St., San Francisco, CA 94111.

New Music Seminars brings together independent musicians, video artists, managers, etc. for large networking conferences.
1747 First Ave., New York, NY 10128.

New Music Distribution Service distributes independent non-commercial music including over 2000 records on 360 labels. They are a non-profit group supported in part by the National Endowment for the Arts. They deal with everyone on an equal basis and provide an alternative to the limited commercial channels of distribution.
500 Broadway, New York, NY 10012.

Pollution Control helps coordinate the independent music scene, from the bands to the progressive college and public radio stations. They provide a station airplay package and produce a regular networking newsletter.
1725 E. 115th St., Cleveland, OH 44106.

Contact List of Electronic Music is a directory that provides listings of progressive radio stations, record producers, music magazines, and related organizations. Lots of resources for the independent, alternative music person.
P.O. Box 86010, North Vancouver, B.C. Canada V7L 4J5.

Haight Ashbury Community Radio facilitates communication between people and the community, and provides community access to the media. They produce regular radio programs and documentaries.
618 Shrader, San Francisco, CA 94117.

Beef Magazine covers art, music, and culture, and is distributed quarterly to several cities. Beef is a collection of artists who live in San Francisco, and their magazine includes reviews, interviews, original art, and networking resources.
659 Haight, San Francisco, CA 94117.

Factsheet Five is a fanzine that reviews hundreds of other small magazines. Most deal with music, arts, alternative culture, or abstract subjects. Other feature stories are included. Mike Gunderloy.
41 Lawrence St., Medford, MA 02155.

Co-operative Editorial Association is made up of 300 members, most of whom are editors or communication specialists employed by a co-operative organization. They help exchange ideas, facts, research techniques, and professional standards among members.
2116 East Gate Place, Bloomington, IL 61701.

The Networking Institute is a large professional group devoted to networking in a variety of ways. Members share ideas and contacts with other members ranging from corporation leaders, academic persons, governmental groups, and the non-profit sector.
P.O. Box 66, West Newton, MA 02165.

City News Service offers supplies for new and experienced journalists. These include stationery, how-to reports, and legal forms. The unique thing about these folks is the press passes they issue to beginners, along with the know-how to use them.
P.O. Box 39, Willow Springs, MO 65793.

Freelance Syndicate, Inc. is a new non-profit group that wants to serve writers, artists, poets, illustrators, photographers, etc. They propose a barter exchange among members so material can be re-sold to several places. They also offer seminars and other networking resources.
Box 1626, Orem, UT 84057.

Bay Area Alternative Press teaches disadvantaged youngsters the printing and graphic arts trade. They also provide inexpensive printing for various social change groups.
1919 5th Avenue, Berkeley, CA 94704.

Newcomp Graphics Center is a non-profit typesetting house that offers non-commercial arts and literary groups the opportunity to have one of their members trained to use the equipment. Newcomp is also willing to do the

work themselves for a slightly higher rate. Newcomp Graphics Center is part of the Beyond Baroque Foundation who provide a forum for poets, writers, musicians, and visual artists to present their work to the public. They also provide support services for all the arts.
681 Venice Blvd., Box 806, Venice, CA 90291.

Mr. Natural's Electric Classroom is a non-profit "public benefit corporation" that teaches the art of everything from color graphics, printing music theory, to voice and sound synthesis. They also advertise themselves as a community resource and information access center and would probably be willing to share their networking know-how with the public.
1911 Hayes Street, San Francisco, CA 94103.

Visual Studies Workshop located in upstate New York is an internationally recognized center for photography, art, and video. They provide services such as scholarly research, exhibition, publishing programs, and facilities for the production of artwork. They issue a monthly magazine, *Afterimage*, that provides arts-related interviews and feature stories. An international "Notices" section lists exhibitions of art and video.
31 Prince Street, Rochester, NY 14607.

Apprentice Alliance provides a very practical and ancient approach to learning. They began as an extension of Carrol Rae's fiber studio in San Francisco, devoted mainly to the arts. They have expanded and now offer apprentice/master match ups in a wide variety of fields, with many arts and music-related skills still being offered.
151 Potrero, San Francisco, CA 94103.

Directory of Arts Activism is an arts networking publication. It lists literally hundreds of groups such as mural painters, video and filmmakers, writers' groups, dance, photography, music, and theatre. The directory is organized according to region and includes some international contacts. Many creative ideas can be gathered from reviewing other projects.
505 West End Avenue, 15C, New York, NY 10024.

ARC The Rural Arts Newsletter devoted to artists of many varieties, ARC publishes a bi-monthly newspaper that offers feature stories, along with an extensive News and Opportunities networking section that covers art happenings across the United States.
P.O. Box 1547, Mendocino, CA 95460.

South of Market Art Resources (SOMAR) have several projects going on, including a mural painters' resource center, large gallery space, a graphic arts area, along with publishing *Expo-See* magazine, a commentary on the Bay Area arts scene.
934 Brannan, San Francisco, CA 94103.

Kerista Commune does a variety of projects, including *The Node*, a futuristic computer magazine that combines software reviews with visions of expanded human potential. They also publish *The Utopian Classroom*, which describes their views on communal lifestyles. Also in the works is a housecleaning collective, and a Willing Silent Partner business support package.
543 Frederick, San Francisco, CA 94117.

Media Distribution Co-op offers specialized mailing lists and bibliographies for writers, artists, and musicians. The idea here is do-it-yourself publicity. The group plans to start a Syndicated Features Co-op next year that will allow writers and filmmakers to help each other get the work out.
1745 Louisiana Street, Lawrence, KS 66044.





SCANNING VIDEO SCANNING

PERIODICALS

INDEPENDENT MEDIA
is a monthly magazine.

Subscriptions: £6 (individual),
£12 (institutional), £38 (group
for 20 copies a month). £4 extra
overseas

Cheques to South Hill Park Trust

**Independent Media, The
Media Centre, South Hill
Park, Bracknell, Berkshire
RG12 4PA**

Telephone - 0344 427272

VIDEO BY ARTISTS 2

"Video by Artists 2" closes with a probe into the future. Tom Sherman's "Message to Electro-Culture" addresses the issues of video and interactive electronic art in a series of succinct statements and stories. Here, the most radical and entrancing views of video's future emerge, where possibilities threaten to become probabilities as video's very nature as an independent medium is engulfed by the magnitude of our electronic future.

"Video by Artists 2" edited by independent critic/curator Elke Town, former video director for Art Metropole, is the latest volume in Art Metropole's "By Artists" series. English texts throughout including original French and German essays.

Paperback \$18.00; 152 pp, profusely illustrated. For information, contact Lynn Cummings, (416) 977-1685.

Art Metropole
217 Richmond Street West
Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5V 1W2



**1160 Hamilton Street
Vancouver, B.C. V6B 2S2
(604) 688-4336**

WINNIPEG FILM GROUP

88 ADELAIDE STREET
WINNIPEG, MANITOBA R3A 0W2
(204) 942-6795

P.R.I.M.

PRODUCTIONS RÉALISATIONS INDÉPENDANTES DE
MONTRÉAL

3981 BOULEVARD ST-LAURENT, SUITE 310
MONTRÉAL, QUÉBEC H2W 1Y5
(514) 849-5065

Contact: *Guilhemme Saulnier*

P.R.I.M. vidéo est un centre d'accès dont le but premier est d'assister les artistes et réalisateurs indépendants pour le tournage et la post-production d'œuvres d'art vidéo. P.R.I.M. a également pour objectif de diffuser les bandes produites au centre ainsi que de présenter au public montréalais la production vidéographique internationale. Les membres de P.R.I.M. ont accès à l'équipement de production et peuvent bénéficier d'une assistance technique professionnelle sur demande. Des ateliers d'apprentissage en production, en post-production ainsi qu'en montage sonore sont périodiquement offerts aux membres de P.R.I.M.

VIDÉO FEMMES

56, RUE ST-PIERRE
QUÉBEC, QUÉBEC G1K 4A1
(418) 692-3090

Vidéo Femmes est un centre de production et de diffusion de vidéos réalisées par/pour les femmes. Nos objectifs sont de produire et de diffuser des documents vidéo sur la condition de la femme et sur l'amélioration de la qualité de la vie en général, de répertorier les documents vidéo traitant de ces questions et constituer une vidéothèque accessible à la population, d'utiliser ces documents comme instruments d'animation et comme déclencheurs, et dispenser de l'information sur les techniques magnétoscopiques. Les vidéos réalisées par les membres au Centre sont répertoriées dans le catalogue Vidéo-Femmes.

Video Out

1160 Hamilton St.,
Vancouver, BC, V6B 2S2
(604) 688-4336

contact: Jeanette Reinhardt

Video Pool

Box 2702
100 Arthur St.
3rd Floor
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3C 4B3
(204) 949-9134
contact: Gerry Kisil

Videographe

4550 Garnier,
Montreal, Quebec H2J 3S6
(514) 521-2116
contact: Claude Marchand

V/Tape

183 Bathurst St.,
Toronto, Ont. M5T 2R7
(416) 863-9897
contact: Kim Tomczak

Women In Focus

204 - 456 W. Broadway
Vancouver, B.C. V5Y 1R3
(604) 872-2250
contact: Zainub Verjee

USA

American Federation

of the Arts
41 E. 65th St.,
New York, NY 10021
(212) 988-7700
contact: Sam McElfresh,
Tom Smith

SASKATCHEWAN FILMPOOL CO-OPERATIVE

2108 RAE STREET
REGINA, SASKATCHEWAN S4T 2E7
(306) 757-8818
Contact: *Barrie Pollock, Co-ordinator*

DISTRIBUTE

CANADA

Art Metropole
788 King St. West
Toronto, Ont. M5V 1N6
(416) 367-2304
contact: Micah Lexier

GROUPE INTERVENTION VIDÉO

1308 GILFORD
MONTRÉAL, QUÉBEC H2J 1R5
(514) 524-3259

Le Groupe Intervention Vidéo (GIV) est un organisme de distribution depuis maintenant dix ans. Préoccupé particulièrement par l'apport des femmes dans les domaines sociaux, éducatifs et culturels, le GIV favorise l'acquisition de documents réalisés par des femmes. Le collectif désire refléter une pluralité de tendances en production vidéo à travers les multiples formes d'expression que sont le documentaire, la fiction, les clips. C'est dans cette optique que le GIV élabore un réseau de distribution anglophone afin de faciliter les échanges nationaux et même internationaux. Si vous êtes en train de produire ou si vous avez déjà produit un vidéo de ce genre, envoyez-nous une description de votre vidéo (inclure le nom de la réalisatrice/eur, l'année de production, le format, couleur/noir et blanc, contenu).

Group Intervention Video (GIV) is a distribution centre that was established in 1975. With a particular focus on women in social, educational and cultural domains, GIV favours the acquisition of videotapes produced by women. The desire of this collective is to reflect the plurality of tendencies in video production and its multiple forms of expression — documentation, fiction, videoclips. Keeping this in mind, GIV has increased its distribution to the English sector in order to help facilitate an exchange on a more national and international level. If you are in the process of producing or have already produced a videotape of this nature and would like it distributed with GIV, send us a videotape description (including the name of the producer, year of production, format, color/black and white, and content).

Art Com Television
P.O. Box 3123 Rincott Annex
San Francisco, CA 94119
(415) 421-7524/7672
contact: Nancy Frank

ATI Video
504 E. 74th St.,
New York, NY 10021
(212) 517-5010
contact: Nancy Henry

Electronic Arts Intermix
10 Waverly Place
New York, NY 10003
(212) 473-6822
contact: Lori Zippay

Green Mountain Post Film
Box 229,
Turner Falls, MA 01376
(413) 863-4754
contact: Charles Light

Icarus Films
200 Park Ave., South
New York, NY 10003
(212) 674-3375
contact: Jon Miller

The Kitchen Video Distribution
512 W. 19th St.
New York, NY 10011
(212) 255-5793
contact: Amy Taubin

The Media Project
P.O.Box 2008
Portland, OR 97208
(503) 223-5335
contact: Missy Stewart

University Community Video
425 Ontario St. SE
Minneapolis MN 55414
(612) 627-4444
contact: Odessa Flores

The Video Data Bank
at The School of the
Art Institute of Chicago
280 Columbus Drive
Chicago, Illinois 60603
(312) 433-3793
contact: Lyn Blumenthal

INTERNATIONAL

Centre Audiovisuel
Simone de Beauvoir
7, rue Francis de Pressense
75014 Paris, France
Tel. 542-21-43

Feminist Film Distribution
27 Clerkenwell Close,
London EC1R 0AT, England
tel: (01) 251-4978

London Video Arts
97 Wardour St.,
London W1, England
(01) 734-7410
contact: Jeremy Welsh

Maison de la Culture
et la Communication
Jardin des Plantes 42
030 Saint Etienne, France
tel: 77-25-35-18

Om Rice
3-17-6 Kichijoji Honcho
Musashisho, Tokyo 180,
Japan
tel: (0422) 22-4689
contact: Alfred Birnbaum

Time Based Arts
Bloemgracht 121
1016 KK Amsterdam, Netherlands
tel: 229 764
contact: Aart van Barneveldt

Video Cine Troc
15, passage de la Main d'Or
75011 Paris, France
(1) 48-06-55-00



CALL FOR ENTRIES

12th ATLANTA FILM AND VIDEO FESTIVAL

The 12th Atlanta Film and Video Festival, May 18-22, is being held in conjunction with the 1988 National Alliance of Media Arts Centers (NAMAC) Conference, May 18-21, in Atlanta's High Museum/Atlanta College of Art complex. Approximately \$5,000 in cash and equipment prizes will be awarded at the discretion of the judges, with prizes for best dramatic, experimental, and animated films and videos, plus other awards. Last year's winners included Joanne Akalatis' *Dead End Kids*, Erica Beckman's *Cinderella*, Victor Fridman's *Argentina: A Broken Silence*, Emily Breer's *Fluke*, Curt Madison's *Songs in Minto Life*, David Daniel's *Buzz Box*, and Stephen Roszell's *Other Prisoners*.

This year's Judges: MARION LUNTZ is the Program Director at the Southwest Alternative Media Program (SWAMP), a regional media arts center based in Houston, TX. TONA BUBA has been making films about his hometown of Braddock, Pa., for the last fifteen years. His films have earned him over 30 awards from dozens of film festivals, one-person shows at the Museum of Modern Art, and a Guggenheim Fellowship. PAUL WONG is a video maker, photographer, and performance artist from Vancouver, Canada. He is a founding member of the Video In in Vancouver, the Vancouver Artists League, On Edge Productions, and Mainstreet, Inc. ANNE BRAY is a video artist who also serves as the Video Coordinator and ON-LINE administrator at Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions (LACE), an interdisciplinary exhibition, performance and screening facility.

NAMAC Conference: The theme of the 1988 NAMAC Conference is EXHIBITION. Top-level media arts directors, programmers, critics, and artists will participate in two days worth of panels and workshops devoted to all areas of the media arts field, especially the exhibition of film, video, and multi-media.

Entry fees are \$25, \$40 for works submitted by a distributor. Please do not enter industrial training films or commercial films/videos produced for a client. For more information and/or entry applications, contact IMAGE Film/Video Center, 75 Bennet Street, M-1, Atlanta, GA 30309. (404) 352-4225. Deadline for entries is Friday, February 12, 1988.

CALL FOR VIDEOTAPES

The Video In is looking for documentary, narrative, or non-narrative videotapes over 70 minutes in length for "The 1988 International Feature Video Festival" to be held in Vancouver in late Spring. The festival will include several days of screenings and panel discussions that will include a panel of invited video directors.

Through the "Feature Video Festival", the organizers hope to provide a forum for new feature video by artists to be seen by West Coast producers, critics, and general public; to increase awareness as to the diversity of independent video; and to initiate a discourse within the video community regarding the effect of feature length on its current programming, marketing, and production practices.

Only works mastered as/on videotape will be considered. This is a feature length video, not film, festival.

A catalogue of the festival will be published. Artist fees, and travel costs for those invited to participate in the panels, will be paid.

Submission deadline is March 15, 1988

Send information and/or videotapes to the attention of Karen Knights at the Satellite Video Exchange Society, 1160 Hamilton Street, Vancouver, B.C. V6B 2S2. Include credit list, release date, resume, videography, and photographs.

International submissions:
Do not use bonded couriers. Send by regular post only. Mark parcels "Educational Material. No Commercial Value."

INFERMENTAL VI

Western Front

by Karen Henry

Infermental: This is the information age in which the use of technological forms ferments with the mental processes of concept and creativity and distills into production and distribution. This infers the total process, from the inspiration of thought into image and the transfer of that image throughout the system. Lewis Carroll, an author uninhibited by the conventions of communication borrowed the word 'porte-manteau' (hat-rack) to designate a word made up of fragments of other words which refer to the multiple meanings and possibilities, juxtaposing language and potential for creativity. This is my attempt to imagine some of the references for Infermental.

Infermental began in 1980 as the brainchild of Gabor and Vera Body in Berlin. In was to be a magazine of film and video distributed on videocassettes — a collection of cinematic images from all over the world (though primarily Europe and North America). The format uses excerpts and short tapes. *Infermental* has evolved as the umbrella organization and distributor, and each issue is produced by a new team of people. This idea of a participatory network is central to the representative concerns of the organization. Since its inception there have been six issues and two special editions. The magazine has been produced in Germany, Hungary, France, the Netherlands, and now, Canada.

Each issue is from four to six hours in length and, while the idea of 'magazine' implies easy access, it is, in fact, cost-prohibitive on an individual or small organization basis. According to the statement, it is not supposed to be a festival; however, its presentation is very similar.

The inclusion of film and video in one package is consistent with the school of thought which includes video in the already existing theory of cinema, moving images. While there are many points of convergence, this continuum does not take into account the different framing conventions, production and presentation processes. The *Infermental* format does, in fact, prejudice and predispose itself toward video through its access, presentation, and distribution. The accessibility of the videocassette format is very much a part of the networking concerns of the organization, which have their roots in the potential of video as a sharing/communications tool, a tool of electronic writing and broad-scale publication — what Gene Youngblood calls "the heroic promise of the Video Revolution." Though it does not reach the pinnacle of accessible, interactive transmission, it is part of the concern for representative participation. In this it participates in the liberal utopian project for media.

VIDEO



R.E.N.U.S. (Rituale eines noch unbekannten stammes)
Ika Schier



Pyrotechnics, Erotic Psyche



Insomnia, Gyorgy Romvari



In Our Language, Edgar Heap of Birds



Al Hansen, Images (excerpt)

The NEW WORLD EDITION

Infermental VI was recently completed in Vancouver by Hank Bull, Vera Body, and Gerard Couty. It includes 59 contributions from 25 countries and the viewing time is six hours. The only pre-established criterion was length. Time restrictions required some selection from the original 300 entries, but the priority was to be as inclusive as possible and to create "a video map of the world." In his introductory statement in the catalogue, Hank Bull characterized the project as "a collection of people all talking at the same time." Past issues have categorized the work in various ways — *Infermental V* from Holland (eds. R. Perree, L. Bodeving, and L. Schouten) focused on fictional narratives. *Infermental VI* looks at the syntax of video: Satellite Control, Fractal Grammar, Telepathic Music, Poetical Control, and Myxology. The categories are evocative rather than discreet, with references to the subjective language of the medium and the 'tactile sense' of watching the tapes. The creative catalogue descriptions go off on tangents which encourage dialogue and cross-over of terms. The project encompasses multiple references, cultural, social and aesthetic diversity, technological and traditional language.

bon dia. willkommen in nova virus mazurka fiesta. voulez-vous mythe drink? barman bitte. s'il vous plait una historia imperialismo zeitgeist maraschino foch mit hong kong zimbabwe gaspacho flambee por favor. relax in aktuel pampas show mundial. image blitz con rumore dans frigo. gogo post-planete kultur mixing inter espacio fantastico.

—Hank Bull, describing the category 'Myxology'

The video adventure continues, and *Infermental* serves as an indicator of production around the world, a reference guide to the alternative network of individuals speaking through video.

VIDEO

CROSS CULTURAL TELEVISION

SPECIAL FEATURE: CROSS-CULTURAL TELEVISION
Hank Bull and Antonio Muntadas

Video continues to look over its shoulder at the neighbourhood bully, broadcast television. This process of defining the codes of power (economic and social), the standards of implied value and meaning in the structure and framing of the elements, and the kinds of material portrayed, are part of how video comes to know itself and its differences. The special feature of *Infermental VI*, Cross-Cultural Television (CCTV), is an inquiring look at the television empire, this time as it transits the globe. The metalanguage of the communication system, like the system of super-highways and the attendant food chains in North America, superimposes itself on top of the local culture, sometimes threatening to stifle it, but certainly creating another strata of authority, a hybrid bearing distinct resemblances to the parent project of North American broadcast. The project of CCTV was to collect one hour of television from as many different countries as possible. The material was collected off-air through a network of artists who had access to the technology. Sixty hours of broadcast was collected from 15 countries including Thailand, India, Japan, Chile, China, Europe, U.S., and more. The material was then categorized as news, sports, drama, advertising, entertainment, etc. The tapes themselves constitute a body of raw material which

is rich in possibilities. The editors of CCTV focused their first effort on looking at the television news, from the dazzling computer generated introductions through the genre of the TV anchorperson and even into the underpinnings of the presentation and editing process. In a series of short consecutive edits, CCTV makes the parallels throughout the system glaringly apparent. One is left with a distinct uneasiness about the centralization of information as well as a revelation about the styles of address. The piece is edited for easy comparison, but then, editing is what it is all about. CCTV is one of the most important exposes of television to date, and most revealing of its all-encompassing terms.

VIDEO



photos by M.E. Buescher

A KISS FOR ANATOL

FROM WEST TO EAST, WITH LOVE

by M.E. Buescher

From West to East, With Love is the name of the program, made by the Berlin video producers Michaela Buescher and Gerd Conradt. It is doubtlessly one of the strangest products ever to have been broadcast from Mainz (Channel 2 of West German television). For 45 minutes we witness the German-German tragedy, but this time it is the personal dimension of partition. We experience the Berlin Wall in the raw, are made aware of the dramatic implications of the political status quo since post-war partition.



We will never find out who Anatol is, but the kiss sent to him in East Germany by his ex-girlfriend here in West Germany, her shiny red lips pressed onto the camera lens (i.e., the screen) will not be forgotten by viewers. And when Nina Hagen, that all-German Pippi Longstocking of Pop with the touch of punk, announces from her circus caravan that she would like to enter the G.D.R. (go on, let me in), we do not know whether to laugh or cry.

The idea behind this novel form is nothing out of the ordinary; it just needed someone to come up with it: using video to create electronic postcards (nowadays, thanks to home recorders, more or less part of family life). Just like their printed predecessors, they bear the addresses of sender and recipient on the back, and on the front, the iridescent video greeting. Fifteen ex-G.D.R. citizens were chosen by Buescher and Conradt to try out this service for sending their own personal messages across the border.

What goes on is, of course, unusually folksy, direct, unfiltered, and not always comprehensible to the general public (like the ride on the cow in front of the 'Reichstag' building), sometimes very close to parody *a la* Lorient, but at the same time also true, cruel, touching. When, for example, an ordinary mum simply states that the worst thing about separation is the fact that we cannot touch or embrace each other; or when that courageous woman who dragged an East German policeman after her when she escaped into the West German diplomatic mission in East Berlin, refers to her "power of assertion"; or when the ex-political prisoner compares prisons in East and West.

It is unlikely that these televised messages from West to East will become a regular feature on Channel 2, even though it would, by no means, be a far-fetched idea. It is unfortunately just as unlikely that East German television will send replies. Likely it is, however, that the critics were sitting relatively perplexed in front of the box — for this is not a work of art, even though it could be seen in a completely different light in a few years.

It is, on the other hand, quite certain that Michaela Buescher's and Gerd Conradt's screen novelty can have no effect on the absurdity of the partition of Germany, desirable as this would perhaps be. But let us hope that Anatol, at least, really was sitting in front of the television screen in East Berlin, tuned to Channel 2.

VIDEO

DAVID ASKEVOLD

FIFTEEN

HELEN DOYLE

ARTISTS

GENERAL IDEA

VIDEOTAPES

NOEL HARDING

AVAILABLE

LES LEVINE

IN

ARDELE LISTER

VHS OR BETA

METCALFE • ATCHLEY

FOR

EDWARD MOWBRAY

\$65

IAN MURRAY

EACH

PATERSON • LOZANO

FROM

JAN PEACOCK

ART METROPOLE

JOYAN SAUNDERS

217 RICHMOND STREET WEST

RODNEY WERDEN

TORONTO ONTARIO CANADA M5V 1W2

PAUL WONG

(416) 977-1685