

ARTS COUNCIL

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22 October 1991

Steven Bode
Film and Video Umbrella
Top Floor
78-79 Lots Road
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Dear Steve

I'm writing to invite you to participate in a seminar to discuss A New Idea for Innovation? This event is part of the consultation process for the National Arts and Media Strategy and a brief background description is enclosed.

This seminar concerns an issue that was not fully covered by the discussion document on Arts and Broadcasting commissioned previously. This makes it all the more important to discuss the cutting edge of innovation at the interface between video art and television.

John Wyver is the facilitator and provocateur for the seminar. He has written a short piece, which is enclosed titled A New Idea for Innovation? which he will speak to at the beginning of the seminar.

The seminar will be held as follows:

Date: November 26th 1991
Time: 1.30pm buffet lunch for 2.15pm meeting
Venue: CONVOCATION HALL
Ist Floor, Church House Conference Centre, Deans Yard,
Westminster, SW1P 3NZ.

I very much hope you will be able to attend and contribute your thoughts and views to what promises to be a lively debate. The issues raised in John's paper have an impact on central concerns in our policies for supporting innovative programme making. The seminar is an opportunity to help shape our policy for the rest of the decade. I would be grateful if you could telephone your reply through on 071 973 6443.

Yours sincerely

Rodney
Rodney Wilson
Director of Film, Video and Broadcasting





A New Idea of Innovation?

The 1980's have witnessed a radical redefinition of avant-garde film and artist's video. The widespread availability of image-making and image manipulation technologies has stimulated an explosion of creative and imaginative work. Television has begun both to screen and to commission experimental programmes which previously had been excluded. At the same time commercials, pop promos and title sequences now both steal and develop the visual techniques of the avant-garde. And as the boundaries loosen between the mainstream and the margin, and as artists and programme-makers frequently cross over between the two, television series like Def II and The Late Show are often at the cutting edge of innovation.

Yet genuinely innovative work from the margins is still frequently misunderstood or ignored, and it continues to suffer from under-funding and from the lack of established distribution and exhibition structures. So how can the surprising and challenging images of tomorrow best be nurtured? What new possibilities can be opened up for the funding of experimentation in video and in the state of the art digital technologies? What part can and should television play in this process, and what place is there for other forms of distribution including cassettes, laserdics and related interactive systems? How can a supportive structure of criticism and analysis be put into place, and perhaps most importantly, how can new audiences be encouraged?

An important section of the National Arts and Media Strategy, which is currently being drafted, will address these and related questions. We should like to invite you to contribute your views to the discussions which are framing the Strategy, and we would be delighted if you could join us, along with twenty or so others, for an afternoon of structured debate on Tuesday 26th November.

John Wyver
October 1991