

ARTISTS' FILM AND VIDEO SUB-COMMITTEE: OUTREACH REPORT1 Pattern of Funding

Subsidy of Artists' Film/Video exhibition began at a modest level in the first year of the Sub-Committee's existence because it was recognised that there was little point in producing work if no efforts were made to get it shown. In almost every year during the next decade there was an increase in the proportion of the Sub-Committee's allocation spent on exhibition.

Appendix 1 documents this pattern of subsidy, and indicates (in brackets) the overlapping pattern of 'direct provision', including major (Art Dept funded) exhibitions at the Hayward and Serpentine Galleries.

2 Nature of Work

Artists working with film/video present the exhibitor with the many practical problems associated with screening film, to which are sometimes added problems similar to those of exhibiting sculpture. While some film/video artists make works which respect the conventional arrangement of projector/screen/seating, many prefer to work with several screens in different alignments, combinations of film/video with live performance, environmental arrangements, continuous installations etc. These need gallery space rather than cinema space in which to operate. Additionally, many artists, in common with other independent film-makers produce works which deliberately set out to challenge the forms and conventions of commercial cinema, thus adding a level of intellectual demand.

3 Problems of distribution/exhibition

In other parts of Europe a relatively healthy 'art-house' cinema circuit survives and is capable of accommodating a proportion of independent work. In Britain the period of growth in independent cinema has been matched by the collapse of the 'art-house' circuit (see Appendix II) and few similar opportunities present themselves here. (even the innovative BFI Media Centres are wary of artists' work and require subsidy for showing this unfamiliar area of work). Further, artists are faced by the near total absence in 'art' cinemas and galleries of film/video programmers and exhibition organisers with any experience of their kind of work (or indeed any time-based medium, for the problem is shared by performance artists).

Finally, but not least, is the deterrent of the expense of mounting any film/video screening. The cost of hiring and transporting 'exhibition' equipment may itself be considerable, but artists also expect to recover at least a proportion of their production costs in the form of a rental fee for each screening. This form of payment (50p per min per screening is currently the average), has evolved in the absence of any real probability of the sale of work. But its effect has been to make the screening of artists' film/video extremely expensive in comparison with the exhibition of other gallery art forms, or even the screening of commercial films, (where a continuous run and a percentage arrangement with the distributor offer a 'shared risk' and a potential for profit).

The extent to which artists' film/video has successfully penetrated the schedules of cinemas and galleries is therefore a measure of

the success of the artists' own initiatives and perserverence, and to a lesser but increasingly important extent to the impact of the Sub-Committee's policies.

4 National Profile

The absence of curators/programmers with knowledge of artists' film/video has also contributed to the low-profile of British work as seen from abroad. Any British presence at the major experimental/avant-garde/artists festival abroad (Hyerer, Montreal Nouveau, Berlin 'Young Forum') is likely to have happened as a result of the film-makers' own initiatives or through happy accident. The British Council is generally supportive of British film/video artists when requests for their work come from abroad, but the lack of recent major film/video festivals or exhibitions in Britain has led to a considerable ignorance abroad about the state of the art here. The Arts Council's own reluctance to include film/video in major survey shows of contemporary art has undoubtedly compounded this problem.

It is perhaps worth observing that the Whitney Museum in New York and the Beaubourg in Paris both run a daily programme of artists' film/video, based on a repertory of international 'classics' and/or current national work. Film archives in Berlin, Brussels, New York, Paris, San Francisco, Stockholm, Vienna and the Australian National Library all include substantial holdings of artists' work which they show in their regular repertory of screenings; London, with one of the largest film archives in the world, has no comparable collection or programme.

5 Extent of 'Outreach'

Appendix III offers a partial picture of the extent to which work by British film/video artists has been included in major shows at home and abroad. ('partial' because the main source of this information has been the AC's ephemera boxes and LVA's rental ledgers).

Appendix IV more completely shows 4 individual artists' track records at home and abroad, excluding Film/Video-Makers on Tour Scheme appearances and college lectures.

Appendices V and VI outline the Sub-Committee's involvement in supplying 'exhibition' through its Film-Makers and Video Artists on Tour Schemes, directly provided exhibitions, 'Modular' Scheme packages and the 'Umbrella' scheme. For a description of how these schemes operate - see 7 below.

Appendix VII lists a number of regular venues for artists' work and classifies them according to their pattern of exhibition.

Appendix VIII records the limited extent to which artists' film/video has penetrated the broadcast TV schedules.

Appendix IX shows the pattern of use of the artists' film/video collection within the Arnolfini Video Access Library during the year 1982-3.

6 Notes on Film-Makers/Video-Artists on Tour Schemes

These schemes which all recognised film/video artists are eligible to join, encourage the artists' own exhibition initiatives by subsidising personal introductions of film/video programmes, but they have also been used successfully by venues as the basis for a continuing low-cost exhibition programme. It is still the case that the majority of venues using the scheme are colleges, but the proportion of public venues continues to increase, due at least, in part, to the effective missionary work of the programming advisor funded by the Sub-Committee in 1982-3.

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Notes on the Sub-Committee's exhibition provision

The Sub-Committee initially involved itself in the direct provision of touring exhibitions because it recognised the need in arts centres/ cinemas for ready packaged work (see Section 3) and the improbability of any other body providing this. At first these packages were relatively large scale with many programmes and fairly substantial catalogues, following as far as possible, the established Arts Council touring exhibition format. However the greater flexibility for programmers of smaller packages (1-3 programmes) and the attractiveness to the public of 'give-away' broadsheets has led to adoption of this alternative in the 'Modular' and 'Umbrella' schemes. The Modular and Umbrella schemes in different ways set out to encourage film/tape exhibition ideas; the first by directly soliciting proposals for Arts Council touring programmes from critics and artists; the second by adopting a number of successful programmes each year (which originated elsewhere), and using the Arts Council's resources to tour them. The Umbrella scheme has developed the 'convenience package' strategy further to include a greater emphasis on assisting the venues with publicity and promotion. The Sub-Committee is anxious that the major distributors of artists' film/video should take on some of the work of 'packaging' this work, and there are signs that this is beginning to happen (Circles 'Deren' programme; LVA's <sup>Music</sup> programme etc).

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The Role of Video Access Libraries

The problems surrounding the exhibition of artists' film/video are those of an art-form without a natural home; the Sub-Committee has therefore always been alert to new ways of making this work available. It therefore eagerly supported the ICA and Arnolfini when they put forward proposals to establish video access libraries in 1979/80. Uniquely these libraries make artists' work available on demand, thus overcoming the restriction of 'performance schedules' - which demand a high level of committed interest from the audience and set up a 'theatrical' expectation not always appropriate to the scale of the scale of the work. (see Appendix IX for pattern of use at Arnolfini). 3 of the 4 existing libraries acquire artists' work in the form of purchases, a system which has been welcomed by artists as a new (and devolved from AC/RAA/BFI) source of public patronage. Regrettably, on its standstill budget, the Sub-Committee is unable to contemplate any growth ~~this year~~ of the existing network, and indeed this year is unable to give more than token purchase funds to the network.

The Video Access Libraries have been a joint venture between the Sub-Committee and its parent Committee, and this area of common interest will be pursued, it is hoped, in a potentially even more valuable experiment in the area of loan schemes through public lending libraries.

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In conclusion, it must be pointed out once again that the Sub-Committee has been on a standstill budget since 1981, and is endeavouring to meet an ever increasing level of production demand and the cost of an ambitious exhibition programme on an allocation which is diminishing in real terms.

The Sub-Committee has exercised extraordinary ingenuity in stretching its funds as far as possible, but has had to start cutting back on its activities. In 1983-4 it was unable to give purchase funds to the network of video access libraries; in this financial year they have restored to minimal funding, but only at the expense of our much valued placement bursaries.

Committee last funded a major festival in 1979-80, but couldn't contemplate funding a similar event in present circumstances, although festivals are a proven showcase for British work within the international scene. It has long been Committee's ambition to see a proper repertory of artists' work established in London, possibly by upgrading the ICA Cinemateque, but again this is currently a vain hope. But without a substantial increase in funds, there is little hope of extending the 'outreach' of this medium.

David Curtis  
Assistant Film Officer April 1984

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Exhibition Funding by the Artists' Film and Video Sub-Committee 1972-84.Exhibition Funding by the Artists' Film and Video Sub-Committee 1972-84.

✓ 1972/3	Survey of the avant-garde in Great Britain	Gallery House	£750
1973/4	Second Festival of Independent/ Avant- Garde Film	National Film Theatre	£1000
1974/5	First Festival of British Independent Cinema	Arnolfini	£1300
1975/6	Performance (Ron Haselden)	London Film-Makers' Co-operative	£50
	Experimental Cinema Event (Guy Sherwin et al.)	London Film-Makers' Co-operative	£100
	Festival of Expanded Cinema	ICA Gallery	£3000
			£3150: Total
	(The Video Show, Serpentine Gallery, 1/26 May)		
1976/7	Second Festival of Independent Cinema (research, resulting in catalogue).		£500
	Expanded Cinema event	Arnolfini	£670
	Derby Film Awards		£1472
	International Forum on the Avant-Garde	Edinburgh Film Festival	£6400
	Artists Video Festival (I)	Biddick Farm Arts Centre, Washington New Town	£300
	Installation (Ron Haselden)	Acme Gallery	£350
	Installation (Jane Rigby)	Battersea Arts Centre	£90
	Installation (Steve Partridge)	Acme	£500
			£10282: Total
1977/8	Installation/performance (Hearne, Raban, Sobel)	Acme Gallery	£870
	Expanded performance (Guy Sherwin)	Spectro, Newcastle	£125
	Video/performance (Kevin Atherton)		£750
	Installation (David Dye)	Arnolfini	£140

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1977/8 (cont)

Artists Video Festival (II)	Biddick Farm Arts Centre, Washington New Town	£400
Installation (Tony Sinden)	Acme Gallery	£820
Video Art 78	Herbert Gallery, Coventry	£4615
Film Season (William Raban, Marilyn Halford et al)	Peterloo Gallery	£390

£8110: Total

(Perspectives on British Avant-Garde Film, Hayward Gallery March 2 - April 24 1977)

FILM-MAKERS ON TOUR begins.

1978/9	Feminism, Fiction and the Avant-Garde	London Film-Makers' Co-operative	£850
	Art in Society (film event)	Whitechapel Art Gallery	£500
	South West Film Tour (organised by SWA and Rod Stoneman).		£800
	Artists Video Festival (III)	Biddick Farm Arts Centre	£856
	Film/music event (Peter Greenaway Riverside and Michael Nyman)		£428
	Experimental event (Guy Sherwin, Richard Wooley)	Bradford Film Theatre	£200

£3634: Total

(A Perspective on English Avant-Garde Film: tour begins at Edinburgh Film Festival, August)

1979/80	Season of video screenings	London Video Arts	£1000
	Performance (Peter Greenaway, and Michael Nyman)	Norwich	£300
	3rd International Festival of Avant-Garde Film	National Film Theatre	£5538
	Cambridge Animation Festival		£300
	Brighton Festival		£500
	Artists Video Festival (IV)	Biddick Farm Arts Centre	£1740
	Season of film/video events (Film As Film, May - June, Hayward Gallery)	Biddick Farm Arts Centre	£800

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1980/1	Kurt Kren Tour	London Film-Makers Co-operative	£331
	Summer Show	London Film-Makers Co-operative	£843
	Women Live Show (organised by Kate Elwes)		£915
	Installation (Marceline Mori)	Arnolfini	£403
	Artists Video Festival	Biddick Farm Arts Centre	£3740
	Season film/video screenigs	Circles Film Distributor	£420
	Installation/performance/tour (Tina Keane)		£346
			£7298: Total
	(Unpacking 7 Films tour begins April 80)		
	(Films by American Artists tour begins March 81)		
1981/2	Exhibition/equipment	Basement, Newcastle	£3220
	SW Arts Film/Video tour		£300
	Installation (Tony Sinden)	Acme Gallery + 20 venues	£1506
	Summer Show	London Film-Makers Co-operative	£1586
	Animateur Bursary (film/video regional programmer)		£3000
	Cambridge Animation Festival (experimental sections)		£2500
	South West Film/Video Tour (II)		£1000
	Seasons of video screenings	London Video Arts	£1800
	Day Event (East Midlands Arts)		£150
	South East Arts f/v Tour		£345
			£15407: Total
1982/3	Independent Film-Makers Assoc.		£284
	Preview Show	London Film-Makers Co-operative	£600
	Summer Show	London Film-makers Co-operative	£2000

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1982/3 (cont)

Women in Entertainment/Women Live Events.	London Film-Makers Co-operative	£1000
Seasons of video screenings	London Video Arts	£1400
Installation/performance (Kerry Trengrove)		£714 + 1045
Seasons of video screenings plus exhibition equipment.	London Video Arts	£1755
Film Tour support (Eastern Arts)		£390
Season of Film/video events	Northampton Arts Centre	£255
Season of events	North by North-West Film Society, Manchester	£435
Events/Equipment	Basement Group, Newcastle	£475
Cambridge Animation Festival 83/4 (Breer exhibition and catalogue)		£2500
Film/Expanded Cinema Tour (Michael Snow)		£1010

£13863: Total

(American Video Tour begins, March 83/ Her Image Fades tour begins March 83)

1983/4 Funded Work show	National Film Theatre	£500
Working Frame by Frame/ Her Image Fades/Image-Sound: completion of Modular units and tour support.		£1900
Umbrella Packages (Robert Breer, Cubism, Recent British Video, New German Film etc)		£4000
Umbrella organiser's fee and expenses		£3500
Season of installation and film/ video screenings	B2 Gallery	£900
(Salon of 83, B2 Gallery, £500 not taken up).		
Landscape Season	London Film-Makers' Co-operative	£1000
Preview Show	London Film-Makers' Co-operative	£687
Summer Show	London Film-Makers' Co-operative	£1900

1983/4 (cont)

Season of video screenings	London Video Arts	£4755
Landscape Season (Undercut)	Air and B2 Galleries	£545
Maya Deren Tour (organised by SW Arts)		£600
Series of film/video events	Slow Dancer Film Co-operative, Liverpool	£646
3 Avant-Garde Seminars	"33" Guildford St, Luton	£250
Film/video season support	Northampton Arts Centre	£280
Support for installation/ performance season	Diorama	£620
Ten Years Mixed Media (organiser's fee)	Royal College of Art	£320

£22903: Total

(Working Frame by Frame tour begins July 83)

(Image and Sound tour begins January 84)

(Robert Breer tour begins September 83)

(Recent British Video Tour begins October 83)

(Cubist Cinema tour begins November 83)

1984/5	Season of video screenings	London Video Arts	£4000
	Organiser's cost and expenses at London Video Arts		£6000
	Cross Currents (10 Years Mixed Media); month of installations and performances	Royal College of Art	£3800
	Maya Deren Tour and catalogue (Circles Film Distributors)		£1250
	Preview Show	London Film-Makers' Co-operative	£460
	Summer Show and Salon of 84	London Film-Makers' Co-operative	£2000
	Underground weekend event	Northampton Arts Centre	£135
	Super 8mm Festival	Leicester Independent Film/Video Association.	£456
	Umbrella packages 84/5		£5500

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1984/5 (cont)

Umbrella organiser's fee  
and expenses

£3500

Support for existing Arts Council  
Modular exhibition schemes

£1000

(German Films and Forms tour to begin May 84)

Artists' Film and Video Sub-Committee: Direct Provision and Schemes.1. A PERSPECTIVE ON ENGLISH AVANT-GARDE FILM 1978-1980.  
(Joint AC/British Council touring exhibition)

9 Programmes of Films  
catalogue

- 1978: Edinburgh Film Festival  
Centre George Pompidou, Paris  
Espace d'Echanges d'Art Contemporain, Lyon  
Chapell des Penitents Blancs, Avignon  
Kommunales Kino, Hanover
- 1979 Film Museum, Stadtmuseum, Munich  
Kommunales Kino, Historisches Museum, Frankfurt  
Kunstverein, Cologne  
Freunde der Deutschen Kinemathek, Berlin  
ARC II, Musee d'Art Modern de la Ville de Paris  
Henie Onstad Centre, Hovikodden, Oslo  
Longford Cinema, Melbourne  
Cinema, Paddington Town Hall, Sidney  
Union Cinema, Adelaide University  
PIFT Cinema, Adelaide Street, Fremantle  
Cultural Centre, Hong Kong  
Museum Lodz  
Students Cultural Centre, Belgrade
- 1980 Oxford Film Co-op  
Chapter Arts Workshop, Cardiff  
Side Gallery, Newcastle  
East Anglian Film Co-op, Norwich  
Whitworth Gallery, Manchester  
Modena, Italy

2. STAN BRAKHAGE: AN AMERICAN INDEPENDENT FILM-MAKER 1980-81

4-7 programmes of films  
catalogue and broadsheet/poster

- 1980 London Film-Makers' Co-op  
Ikon Gallery, Birmingham  
Luton Arts Council  
Biddick Farm Arts Centre, Washington New Town
- 1981 Cambridge Arts Club  
Tate Gallery  
Arnolfini

3. UNPACKING 7 FILMS 1980-82

8 panels of blown-up film images and texts  
10 programmes of films  
broadsheets

- 1980 Arnolfini, Bristol  
Third Eye, Glasgow Film Theatre  
Dartington Arts Centre/Film Theatre  
Chapter Arts Centre, Cardiff

## 3. (cont) Unpacking 7 Film.

- 1981 Newcastle Polytechnic/Spectro Arts Centre  
University of Kent/Gulbenkian Theatre  
St Edmunds Arts Centre, Salisbury  
ICA Gallery, London  
MOMO, Oxford
- 1982 University of East Anglia/Cinema City, Norwich

4. FILMS BY AMERICAN ARTISTS 1981-84

4-7 programmes of films  
catalogue

- 1981 Tate Gallery  
London Film-Makers' Co-op  
South Hill Park Arts Centre
- 1982 Leicester Polytechnic  
Central School of Art and Design  
Basement Group/Spectro, Newcastle
- 1983 Portsmouth Polytechnic/Film Workshop  
Goldsmith's College  
Luton Arts Council  
Tate Gallery  
Peterborough Arts Council
- 1984 Cardiff College of Art  
Ravensbourne College of Art

5. MODULAR SCHEMES 1983-84

(exhibition packages proposed to the Sub-Committee for touring with AC subsidy).

AMERICAN VIDEO

4 programmes of tapes  
4 broadsheets  
lecturer

- 1983 London College of Printing  
Brighton Polytechnic  
Falmouth College of Art  
ICA Cinemateque  
Leicester Film and Video Association  
Sunderland Arts Centre  
Third Cinema, Edinburgh  
Leeds Polytechnic  
Exeter College of Art
- 1984 Exeter College of Art  
South Glamorgan Institute

WORKING FRAME BY FRAME

4 page broadsheet  
1 programme of films  
lecturer

- 1983 London Film-Makers Co-op  
Northampton Arts Centre  
North East London Poly
- 1984 Brighton Film Workshop  
Camberwell School of Art  
Metro Cinema, Derby



## 5. (cont) Modular Schemes.

HER IMAGE FADES AS HER VOICE RISES

8 page broadsheet  
1 programme of films  
lecturer

- 1983 Arnolfini  
Institute of Education, London  
City Lit, London  
Harrow College of Further Education  
London Film-Makers' Co-op
- 1984 Hull College of Further Education  
Camberwell School of Art  
South Hill Park Arts Centre  
Sheffield Polytechnic

IMAGE AND SOUND

1 or 2 programmes  
8 page broadsheet  
lecturer

- 1984 Camberwell School of Art  
Chelsea School of Art

6. UMBRELLA SCHEMES 1983-84

(Tours promoted and toured by Mike O'Pray. Organised with the assistance of the Film Office).

ROBERT BREER (from Cambridge Animation Festival).

18 framed panels of artwork (from animated films)  
1 programme of films  
video tape interview with the artist  
catalogue  
\* appearance of the artist

- 1983 Gallery on the Cam/Arts Cinema, Cambridge (festival)  
Chapter Film Workshop, Cardiff (workshop event only)\*  
Midland Group/IFA East Midlands, Nottingham\*  
ICA, London (extended to 8 programmes)\*  
Watershed, Bristol\*  
Luton Arts Centre  
Aspex Gallery, Portsmouth  
Metro Cinema, Derby  
Nene College/Northampton Arts Centre  
Spacex Gallery, Exeter Film Workshop

CUBISM AND THE CINEMA (from the Tate Gallery)

2-3 programmes of films  
8 page broadsheet  
lecturer

- 1983 Edinburgh Film House  
Exeter College of Art
- 1984 ICA, London  
Watershed  
Colchester Film Workshop  
Dartington  
New Cinema, Nottingham

6. (cont) Umbrella Schemes

RECENT BRITISH VIDEO (from British American Arts Association)

4 programmes of tapes

catalogue

lecturer

1983 Preston Polytechnic

Leeds Polytechnic

1984 Spacex Gallery

Arts Centre, Northampton

Media Arts Lab, Swindon

New Cinema, Nottingham

Art at the Minories, Colchester