



FILM & VIDEO UMBRELLA

Organisers: Michael O'Pray & Cordelia Swann
7 Rossetti House
Erasmus Street
London SW1P 4HT
Tel: 01-821 7586

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REPORT AND PROPOSAL FOR FUNDING

FEBRUARY 1986

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1. INTRODUCTION

The basic feeling over the past year has been that the Umbrella's activities are outstripping its resources. There are three broad reasons for this: first, more tours are being organised - six this year, excluding short tours; second, the tours are longer e.g. fifteen venues for the Recent Super 8; third, the Umbrella is becoming more and more involved in other activities which are spin-offs from its tours. For example, the Umbrella advises both galleries and cinemas on programming, it is continually approached by British and visiting film and video makers who wish to find exhibition outlets.

All of this has meant that the work has become full-time. There is more administration, liaison with venues and transporting of films. There is an increase in research, film-note writing, planning meetings and programming. It has been difficult to sustain this work-load on the present bursary of £4500 p.a. particularly without assistance with typing, correspondence and general administration. Equally, the problem of space has become more acute, and the stage has been reached where office space would be enormously helpful but I am aware that this would involve substantial extra funding. It is obvious that the Umbrella is fulfilling an important role in film exhibition and distribution in this country. The success of the touring packages and their varied nature, plus the range of venues taking the programmes has been marked this year. The consolidation I spoke about in a previous report is now happening and it is important that funding is sustained from both the Arts Council and the British Film Institute. It is also true that the Umbrella must continue to develop new ideas concerning its aims and seek new sources of funding.

In what follows I will provide brief summaries of different areas of interest. Financial reports and estimates are in appendices at the back of the report.

2. TOURS FROM APRIL 1985 - APRIL 1986

Recent British Super 8 Tour

This was by and large a successful tour given the unfamiliarity of the work and its use of a medium as its theme i.e. super 8. The package comprised three programmes originally: single screen, expanded work and New Romantic work. The latter programme collapsed due to problems of obtaining a print of The Dream Machine. The expanded programme was expensive to tour requiring three projectors and at least two projectionists thus incurring high travel and waging expenses. Nevertheless seven venues, many of them Regional Film Theatres (RFTs), took the expanded programme, a testimony to the potential for exhibiting difficult work (in both content and technical requirements). The single screen work had a life of its own due largely to the efforts of Jo Comino, Laraine Porter and Caroline Pick who took it abroad to various international Super 8 festivals. There seems little doubt that the interest in the work owes much to the high profile of the Leicester Super 8 festival and the enormous growth in super 8 film-making in this country over the past few years.

Venues (with audience figures)

Watershed, Bristol 15, 20, 40
 Metro Cinema, Derby 15
 Filmhouse, Edinburgh 35, 35
 Darkroom Gallery, Cambridge 12
 Filmshed, Canterbury 25
 Osnabruck Film Festival, Germany 100
 Cinema, Frankfurt 50
 Montecatini Super 8 Festival, Italy
 Phoenix Cinema, Leicester 50
 Canterbury Fringe Film Festival 40
 Media Workshop, Aberystwyth 15
 Counterimage, Manchester 30
 Tate Gallery, London 60, 25
 Slade School of Fine Art, London 50

Subverting Television (Deconstruct/Scratch/Alterimage)

A very popular tour comprising three programmes. The dearth of video art material available in packaged for venues is probably one main reason for its success. It also included some of the best video art material around at the time (much of it was shown on the Channel 4 Video Art series). Serious and yet accessible the audiences were mainly good. Fortunately, the Umbrella was the first supporter of scratch work and during the year this work became enormously successful in terms of publicity. It also provided a focal point for debate in the video art community. This was very much in line with the Umbrella's aim to encourage and exhibit new work (as in the Super 8) and reach a wider audience quickly. To a certain extent the scratch programme took on a life of its own being shown at three major festivals. The Umbrella must take some credit for the success of this work, with Rodney Wilson's pressure on the Edinburgh Television Festival where it was a major success being an important factor. The whole package reached a very broad and varied audience.

Venues (with audience figures)

Watershed, Bristol 15, 20, 25
 Metro Cinema, Derby 100 (in total)
 Zap Club, Brighton 25, 30, 25
 Edinburgh Television Festival 200
 Edinburgh Film Festival 20, 40
 Museum of Modern Art, Oxford 140
 Canterbury Fringe Film Festival 35
 Brighton Festival
 Plymouth Arts Centre 45
 Counterimage, Manchester 20, 8
 London Film Festival 200
 Tate Gallery London 80

Surrealist Traces

This tour began in Autumn 1984 and extended through to the end May 1985. It toured twelve venues with large audiences at each, often with full houses. The earlier success of the Cubism and the Cinema was repeated and confirmed the view that historical packages (with recent work intermixed) are very popular and effective. Surrealist traces was expensive due to the inclusion of film by Bunuel and Cocteau.

Venues (with audience figures)

Watershed, Bristol
 New Cinema, Nottingham
 Metro Cinema, Derby
 Filmhouse, Edinburgh
 ICA, London
 Minorities, Colchester
 Aberdeen Art Gallery
 Tate Gallery, London
 Warwick Arts Centre
 Dartington Film Theatre
 33 Luton
 Spacex Gallery, Exeter

Derek Jarman Tour

This tour stemmed from Metro Cinema Derby whose programmer, Laurie Hayward, requested a Jarman programme. This rapidly developed into a tour. Discussions were held with Ian Christie, Head of Distribution at the BFI, who agreed to funding and support for the tour as it was envisaged as primarily a RFT tour using 35mm films and a programme of ambitious size (twelve programmes). The programme was mixed with art films, super 8 and avant-garde work with the emphasis on the breaking down of filmic categories in Jarman's work. In this way the tour fulfilled one of the Umbrella's strategies - to integrate work from different cinematic areas in a productive way.

The BFI paid for prints of Imagining October and the two programmes of super 8 work. They also funded the broadsheet and at the same time it was decided to publish an issue of Afterimage on Jarman to act as back-up documentation. The BFI Regional Programmers Consortium funded and organised their own photographic exhibition of stills, scripts and set designs. Fortunately again, interest grew in Jarman's work during the planning stage with Jarman obtaining funding from the BFI for Caravaggio. Also Powell and Pressburger's Colonel Blimp, which we intended to tour for the first time in a new print, took off as a box-office success and we also used the newly discovered print of Dreyer's Passion of Joan of Arc. This all added up to a very successful tour. The Home Movies (super 8) were accompanied with a speaker so that the more experimental aspect of the work was made central.

The tour was a good example of how different skills and sectors of exhibition, distribution and publishing can be creatively drawn together and the financial burden spread. There is no doubt that with the right subject matter such a process could be repeated in the future.

Venues (with audience figures for the Home Movies programmes only)

Metro Cinema, Derby 40
 Tate Gallery London 90, 90
 New Cinema Nottingham 20, 10
 Chapter Cardiff 12
 Watershed, Bristol 12 *
 Filmhouse Edinburgh 35, 27
 Cornerhouse, Manchester *
 Plymouth Arts Centre 30 *
 International Super 8 Festival, Brussels 80
 Phoenix Cinema, Leicester 40, 45

* programme(s) not shown yet.

New Film and Video Artists' Prizewinners Tour

This tour followed the awards event at the ICA in October 1985 and it was intended as a short sharp tour, as there was a print availability problem and it was this would be the most effective way of using the impetus of the award event's publicity. Notably, it was unproblematic finding six major venues to show the work. A more lively title for touring purposes might be worth considering for the future.

This was not an easy programme as it contained 16mm, Super 8 (one at silent speed) and U-matic. It might be worthwhile having a speaker in the future in order to draw audiences. The single programme is notoriously difficult to work but it is a good sign that venues are willing to show unfamiliar avant-garde work.

Venues (with audience figures)

Watershed, Bristol 5
 Filmhouse, Edinburgh 51
 Cornerhouse, Manchester 28
 Metro Cinema, Derby 7
 Tate Gallery, London 50
 Spacex Gallery, Exeter (show cancelled)
 ICA London 150

Oskar Fishinger Tour

A programme of films, video and art-work originally programmed and shown at the Cambridge Animation Festival in November 1985. The tour was difficult to organise for the reason that the work was only available in this country for a relatively short period of time and galleries book very far ahead. It is hoped to tour a three part programme of films only in the near future.

Venues

Cambridge Animation Festival Darkroom Gallery
 DLI Museum Durham
 Filmhouse Edinburgh

A Camera of One's Own

This tour will begin at the end of March and has been organised by Cordelia Swann and Tina Keane. It comprises two programmes of new work by young British women film-makers and was originally shown at the Co-op as part of the London Film Festival in November 1985. The following bookings have been confirmed so far:

New Cinema, Nottingham
 Metro Cinema Derby
 Spacex Gallery Exeter
 Plymouth Arts Centre

and booking are expected from the following: Filmhouse Edinburgh, Watershed Bristol, Chapter Cardiff, Cornerhouse Manchester.

Klaus Wyborny Short Tour

Wyborny was invited to the Leicester Super 8 Festival last year and it was felt to be an opportune moment to organise a brief tour as he had brought new films over with him. Air fares were paid for by the Festival through the BFI and venues paid rentals, speaker fees whilst the Umbrella paid some travel expenses. In this way the tour was economical.

It is part of the Umbrella's policy to encourage and support small tours of foreign film and video makers. This is often possible if funding can be raised from other sources e.g. festivals, BFI, Visiting Arts Unit. This aspect of the Umbrella's work needs to be developed and more formal contacts are to be made with the British Council in the future.

Venues (with audience figures)

Leicester Super 8 Film Festival 40, 45
 Watershed, Bristol 15
 Slade School of Fine Art London 35
 London Film-makers' Co-op 35

3. VENUES AND EXHIBITION

Regional Film Theatres (RFTs) and Arts Centres

This category of venue comprises largely fully equipped cinemas with the capacity for 35mm, 16mm, Super 8 and video. There are variations here - some arts centres do not have 35mm or video, whilst some RFTs have video projection (Metro Derby and Watershed Bristol). Full-time projectionists are often available or at least part-time professional projectionists. All have projection booths with proper sound systems and programme booklets etc. They also employ programmers on a full-time basis. More often than not they are committed to educational-bias programming with thematic programming and connections with local education institutions and workshops. They also programme two to three months in advance.

In many ways the RFTs are the core venues for the Umbrella. The enthusiastic support of the BFI Distribution Division and in particular Paul Taylor, Jayne Pilling and Ian Christie has been very important in the Umbrella's success at reaching a wide public. Some venues have taken almost all the packages since the Umbrella's inception in 1983 e.g. Watershed Bristol, Metro Derby, Filmhouse Edinburgh, New Cinema Nottingham thus enabling experimental work to be shown in large urban centres. Recently, the new Cornerhouse in Manchester has taken programmes and looks to be a future regular booker. Plymouth Arts Centre has been a regular booked recently as has Chapter Arts Cardiff and Phoenix Leicester. The ICA London tends to take only the historical packages with which they have much success.

Other arts centres and cinemas (BFI supported) which takes programmes although on a less regular basis are: Barn Theatre Dartington, Warwick Arts Centre, Northampton Arts Centre.

It is largely our connections with these RFTs and BFI supported cinemas that has helped our funding situation with the BFI and contributed to the Umbrella's success and growth.

Art Galleries

These are often quite different in their approach and facilities. Very few have proper projection facilities e.g. the Tate Gallery. Most show film or video in gallery space with hired or borrowed equipment and very little technical expertise. They are also enormously underfunded and in the past we have charged lower rental rates to the smaller galleries in order to make the packages a more attractive offer. Most do not have regular screenings so that audiences for film and video are relatively underdeveloped. On the other hand, with the art-historical type packages they can have huge successes e.g. Cubism and Cinema and Surrealist Traces. Many tend to programme in tandem with their main exhibitions and

are unwilling to book simply on the basis of the films are video package offered. Furthermore they often programme months (and sometimes years) in advance, a time-system which the Umbrella is not geared to meet. The most regular bookers of Umbrella tours are:

Tate Gallery London
 Minorities Colchester
 Spacex Exeter
 Darkroom Cambridge

Whilst the Tate Gallery is not ideal in terms of projection and sound, it is an important venue because of its ability to pick up large audiences passing through the gallery, who are not familiar with experimental work so fulfilling our strategy to try and avoid "preaching to the faithful". The Minorities has always had a strong interest in film due to its workshop associations. Spacex equally has been strongly sympathetic due to its connections with the local art college and film-makers. The Darkroom, one of the few photography galleries has always been willing and constant in its support for experimental time-based media.

Other galleries who have taken odd packages often with great success are:

MOMA, Oxford
 Aberdeen Art Gallery
 Aspex Plymouth

Under the influence of Paul Bonaventura, MOMA has shown a strong interest in film and video recently having much success with Subverting Television. MOMA is undergoing repairs at present but it is hoped that we will be able to develop strong relations with them in the future.

The galleries need a particular approach, with visits and programming suggestions and the willingness, not always possible, to tailor tour to their individual needs. Help and advice with equipment is often necessary. One-off animating is often the best means of achieving success with the galleries. The basic problem however is the lack of understanding of and sympathy for film and video in many galleries. Nonetheless, a quarter to a third of venues which take Umbrella packages are galleries.

It should be mentioned that the fact that galleries unlike RFTs do not have a centralised clearing house for film and video bookings makes the work involved in making an impact on them very time consuming.

Workshops and Small Venues

These are not frequent users of Umbrella programmes. Many workshops and smaller venues are starved of exhibition money. Many have good contacts with Arts Centres and RFTs. For example, Counterimage in Manchester have contacts with Cornerhouse and programme so that they are not competing. This is obviously economic for workshops and sometimes they can obtain assistance from larger venues. Many smaller venues however are the sole torch bearers for cinema within a locale and need support from the Umbrella. For example, the Media Workshop in Aberystwyth and Filmshed Canterbury (a group of ex-film students who have a £200 budget and show in a schoolroom often to good audiences of 25-50).

Audiences in such venues can be small but committed and the Umbrella must weigh up the economic disadvantages of sending films and speaker to the end of the country, against the advantages of a small energetic

group of artists and students. Obviously some workshops are only interested in work that complements their own interests e.g. video or Super 8 etc.

4. FESTIVALS

This has been a highly successful spin-off area for the Umbrella's activities in the past year. Two basic kinds of relationship are involved:

Film Festival programme --- Tour

Originally the Umbrella envisaged as one of its main tasks, picking up work from other events and touring it thus making it financially viable in that much of the work had been done already. This opportunistic approach led to the following tours:

Cambridge Animation Festival 1983 - Robert Breer Tour
 Leicester Super 8 Festival 1984 and London Film Festival 1984
 - Recent British Super 8 Tour
 Cambridge Animation Festival 1985 - Oskar Fischinger Tour
 Tate Gallery Cubist Cinema Season 1983 - Cubism and the Cinema Tour
 London Film Festival - A Camera of One's Own

Tour --- Festival

Over the years the tours have been picked up, often in part, by festivals. In this way the Umbrella has generated interest in an area of new work leading to more exposure at festivals. For example:

German Forms and Tales - two films at Edinburgh Film Festival 1984
 Recent British Super 8 - Osnabruck Festival Germany; Montecatini Super 8 Festival Italy; Canterbury Fringe Film Festival
 Subverting Television - Scratch video to Edinburgh Television Festival; Edinburgh Film Festival; London Film Festival; Canterbury Fringe Film Festival; and whole package to Brighton Festival.
 Derek Jarman Tour - Super 8 Festival at Brussels, Edinburgh Film Festival

This festival involvement has been an important activity of the past year. Work is shown to a wider audience and experimental work which has been neglected in festivals in this country in the 1980s becomes part of festival programmers' view of the cinema. Derek Malcolm's progressive programming policy for the LFF and the work of Cordelia Swann at the co-op over the past two years has been crucial in this respect. With no avant-garde festival in Britain the role of incursions in other festivals is very important. Good working relationships have been established with Derek Malcolm and Jim Hickey at Edinburgh.

5. BLIND SPOTS

A list of cities and areas outside the Umbrella's touring circuit are as follows:

Liverpool
 Birmingham
 Newcastle
 Glasgow
 Sheffield
 Leeds

Time and resources are necessary to break into these cities where the Umbrella has failed to reach.

Ironically, the Umbrella's tours tend to be booked to saturation point in terms of print availability, subsidy limits etc so that extending tours to cover these areas as well would be a great strain on the Umbrella's resources at present. Nevertheless in the future exploration of these potential outlets needs to be done.

6. FUTURE PLANS AND TOURS FOR 1986-7

Not all of these plans will materialise for reasons still hidden in the future:

Soviet Cinema - planned for Autumn 1986 and extending into 1987 to coincide with the Eisenstein exhibition (MOMA Oxford and Hayward Gallery) and anniversary of October Revolution. This is a RFT tour with hopefully a core programme which could visit smaller venues. It will use newly acquired prints from the BFI library holdings and hopefully will attract BFI funding and assistance. Much interest has been expressed by BFI in terms of joint tour with Soviet Cultural tour of Socialist Realist work. Cordelia Swann will take programming responsibility.

Poetics, Politics and Propoganda

To include work by Jennings, Lye, Cavalcanti, Workers Film movement with the emphasis on aesthetic and formal strategies in relationship to political and social content. This package will include work by recent video and film-makers working in the space of politics and avant-garde poetics.

Margaret Tait

A tour of her work with personal appearances it is hoped by Margaret Tait.

Bruce Conner

In the context of the American Underground and a tour to show new prints acquired by BFI for Co-op.

Oskar Fischinger Tour

planned to tour three part programme of films in context as follow up to Cambridge Animation event.

Svankmeyer/Quay Brothers Tour

To be organised in conjunction with Jayne Pilling at BFI. East European Surrealist influenced animation work context.

Black Film and Video Makers Tour

Early stages of thinking. Contacts have yet to be made with black artists to discuss possibilities.

7. FUNDING

The BFI contributed £3000 last year with the condition that we toured about two programme of work mainly culled from their own holdings so that work could be seen particularly from the more experimental end. Some of the proposals above are determined by this condition, although it should be pointed out this is welcomed by the Umbrella as it creates the possibility for broad programming. The success of the broadsheets with essays and film notes is important here as it very much fulfills the BFI's own commitment to an educational input in their regional programming. It is hoped that the BFI will not only sustain its present level of funding but seriously consider increasing it.

Equally, it is hoped that the Arts Council sub-committee will also math that increase, for all the reasons adumbrated in this report.

8. GENERAL OVERVIEW

In the past year there has been over 100 separate screenings of Umbrella programmes, and this does not include the art films included in the Jarman tour. This means that on average two programmes per week of Umbrella material has been exhibited in this country. This stresses the view that the resources have been overstretched this year. It is also evidence of the Umbrella's success in terms of pick-up by venues. In fact it would be difficult to improve on that figure as it would be physically impossible to transport films and videos between venues in any shorter time. This is not to say that audience figures cannot be improved in many cases. Investigating audience figures would need research outside the scope of this report. One obvious area is publicity and here venues differ according to the skills, sympathies, resources of individual programmers. Secondly, some venues are better placed in terms of experimental work with local art colleges or workshops etc.

The Umbrella tours across a wide variety of venues and it intends to encourage and develop this broad view of the kinds of exhibition appropriate to the Umbrella's packages.

At the inception of the Umbrella three years ago no one would have predicted that tours would have such a pick-up. From a rough average of about 7 venues per major tour there has been an increase to about 10-12 venues per tour. It has also been realised that it is better to keep the tours extended as far as possible as the bookings have a snowball effect.

The mix of work being toured is varied (Dreyer and Eisenstein as well as Wyborny and younger film- and video-makers. It is hoped that by placing experimental work in varying contexts not only will it be more comprehensible to audiences, and help to break down what are often artificial barriers between types of film-making. We hope to sustain the commitment to new work that has been a strong characteristic of this past year's tours.

Interest has been expressed from abroad in the tours but at present the difficulties involved in taking work abroad is such that there has been no follow through on this. It is hoped that in the future year some concrete plans can be pushed forward through bodies like the British Council in order to make this a possibility for the future.

FINANCIAL BREAKDOWN FOR 1985-6

EXPENDITURE

Surrealist Traces

Film rentals	1408.00
Speakers fees, travel expenses	341.00

Subverting Television

Editing facilities	385.00
Tape rentals ("life of tape")	1710.00
Broadsheet setting, printing	1113.00
Writers fees	100.00

Recent British Super 8

Print costs	750.00
Transport/projectionist fees	529.00
Broadsheet setting/printing	754.00
Rentals	70.00

German Forms and Tales

Outstanding rentals	334.00
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Oskar Fischinger

Publicity	158.00
Transport	208.00

Derek Jarman Tour

Film rentals	420.00
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INCOME

Film Hire	1925.00
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10. FINANCIAL ESTIMATE FOR 1986-7

Soviet Cinema

Broadsheet	800.00
Travel/accom. Speakers fees	600.00
Rentals	250

A Camera of One's Own

Broadsheet	600.00
Travel	600.00
Rentals	400.00

Oskar Fischinger

Travel	500.00
Rentals	400.00

Bruce Conner

Broadsheet	-
Travel	600.00
Rentals	35.0.00

Margaret Tait

Broadsheet	500.00
Travel	500.00

Poetics Politics and Propoganda

Broadsheet	700.00
Travel	400.00

11. PROPOSAL FOR FUNDING FOR 1986-7

Organiser's fee at £30 per day for 330 days 9900

Expenses (includes travel, telephone, stationary etc) 1500

Production Costs

Publicity (A4 and broadsheets) includes printing, setting, design and writers fees 2600

Rentals 1400

Speakers fees, travel etc 3200

Total 18600

Less income on tour hire 1600

Less BFI input (estimated) 5000

Total 12000

Mike
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to sign
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FILM AND VIDEO UMBRELLA

AFVbc86p5

A request for payment for 33 days worked at £30 per day

£990

During period April 1985 to February 1986 and
extra to the 150 days covered in bursary awarded
for that period.

MICHAEL O'PRAY

6th February 1986