

Minutes of the 61st Meeting of the Artists' Film and Video Sub-Committee, held at 10.30 am, on June 18 in the 2nd Floor Conference Room, 105 Piccadilly London W1.

## M I N U T E S

Present:	A.L. Rees	Chairman
	Tina Keane	
	David Parsons	
	Anne Rees-Mogg	
	Mick Hartney	
	Vera Neubauer	
	Jo Comino	
	Malcolm Allen	Secretary, CORAA Film Officers Group
	Rodney Wilson	Film Officer
	David Curtis	Assistant Film Officer
	Trisha Anderson	Secretary

Apologies for absence were received from Joanna Drew and Roger Wilson.

AFVsc84m 2,3,4.

1 Minutes of March 5, April 2 and April 9 were approved.

2 Matters Arising

C84p34

2.1 Report by the Film Officer on Sir Brian Young's paper to Council.

The Film Officer reported that there had been considerable sympathy from Council for the plight of Arts Films and its attempts to re-establish the level of allocation temporarily reduced in 1982. However Council decided to defer consideration of the appeal until July, when it would be considered alongside other requests for supplementary funds. The FO told Committee in view of this, he thought the appeal unlikely to succeed.

2.2 Distribution Meeting of May 8: the following had been recommended:

Sandra Lahire: £260 (Arrows) - Distribution  
 Philippe Regniez: £204 (Benares) - Distribution  
 John Maybury: £450 (Circus Logic) Distribution/Completion  
 Lucy Panteli: £439 (Photoplay) - Distribution/Completion

The Assistant Film Officer pointed out that Committee's earlier rejection of Philippe Regniez's film had been reversed because he'd been asked to participate in an event which involved the daily showing of Benares.

The Chairman thanked the Distribution group for their work.

2.3 Film-Makers/Video Artists on Tour

The AFO informed Committee that it was proposed to issue a publicity leaflet for the scheme annually, making it more topical. It would be in A5 booklet format, replacing the loose-leaf wallets. It was hoped that the booklets would be in circulation in September.

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2.4 Modular Scheme

The AFO proposed an increase in the Modular Scheme fee from £25 to £30.

AGREED

2.5 London Video Arts Production Bursaries

The Committee was informed that the bursaries had been awarded to Marty St James/Anne Wilson, Katharine Meynell and Sandra Goldbacher/Kim Flitcroft.

Tina Keane expressed deep concern over the issue of shared copyright mentioned in the information sheets supplied to the applicants by LVA. She understood that copyright of the tapes produced by the bursary holders would belong jointly to LVA and the bursary holders. She thought this needed proper discussion. The Chairman asked the AFO to investigate further and report back to Committee in the Autumn.

2.6 The British Art Show

Committee welcomed the inclusion of film/video in this major touring exhibition.

The AFO pointed out that films would be screened once, at a venue near the exhibition, but would be continuously screened on video within the exhibition setting. Concern was expressed that film work would be diminished by transfer to video.

The AFO agreed but thought the overriding considerations were practical; the show was designed to tour and mobility was essential. Video provided the obvious solution, allowing viewings of film (albeit in a reduced state) in otherwise unsuitable venues.

2.7 Reports

2.7.1 International Super 8 Festival: Jo Comino reported that the event had been thoroughly successful; attendances had been good, the opening and last night attracting higher audiences, due she thought to the music context. Audiences were mixed and included home movie-makers and even school children, not just Super 8 'artists'.

2.7.2 London Film-Makers Co-op: Preview Show

The Chairman reported that the show had been successful although he wasn't convinced that it would succeed in its objective of increasing hirings. He suggested a combined Summer Show and Preview Show for future years.

Anne Rees-Mogg favoured separate shows pointing out that the artists included in each were from different areas eg Summer Show attracted many students and the Preview Show attracted more established artists.

2.7.3 London Film-Makers' Co-op: Salon

The Chairman reported that the Salon at the ICA had attracted substantial new audiences. TK agreed that the event was very well attended.

Malcolm Allen arrived.

2.7.4 American Underground Weekend

The Chairman reported that this event had had mixed success. Although audiences averaged only 40, they were very enthusiastic. He suggested the venue itself posed a problem and the timing was unfortunate, coinciding with the CND weekend.

Malcolm Allen thought the siting of the venue a less important problem compared with publicity, which he thought needed circulating at least 2 months in advance. He also thought the time of year was inappropriate for an indoor event of this nature.

2.7.5 "33" Guildford Street

The Chairman reported that the detailed publicity was distributed well in advance but audience numbers were very low (max 20) and there had been little response from local people. Audiences consisted mainly of people from outside the area.

2.8 Umbrella Scheme

2.8.1 German Tales and Forums: the AFO reported that at the Watershed, publicity had been poor and the event was generally disappointing. The Tate had been more successful and Derby Metro had been very good. Although audience numbers were low at Edinburgh, the event was considered a success by Film House itself.

2.8.2 P.Adams Sitney Lecture Tour: The AFO reported that the Sitney Tour was proceeding successfully, attendances were high and the lectures were proving of interest. Derby Metro had had audiences of c40. A further report would be given in October.

2.9 Other Events assisted by the Film Office.2.9.1 Aberystwyth Arts Centre

The AFO explained that this event had been organised using the Film-Makers on Tour/Welsh Arts Council reciprocal agreement. Audiences were small but very enthusiastic. The event consisted of a week of events including films/talks by Welsby, Leggett, Sherwin and Garratt. The organiser, Cliff McLucas had been recently appointed to the WAC Film Panel and the AFO hoped for continuing involvement.

2.9.2 Cambridge Darkroom

The AFO reported that this was a new venue and the event was the result of an invitation to Chris Welsby. The budget for the 2 week event was small - £200/300 plus FMoT and Modular Scheme subsidy.

2.9.4 Gallery of Modern Art, Scotland

The AFO reported that the GMA had moved to larger premises and were organising a major show - Creation, Modern Art and Nature which would include 8 programmes of film/video to be shown repeatedly over a 2 month period. The Film Office had been assisting this show, which was developing well.

3.1 Placement Bursaries

The Film Officer reminded the Committee that discussion of this item should also take into account the requests made by Middlesex and Newcastle Polytechnics to be considered as hosts for placement bursaries. He added that the present level of funding for placements had been agreed in 1977 and a review was long overdue. He suggested that 3 models existed which could be the basis for developments:

- 1) those involving teaching such as NELP and Sheffield
- 2) those emphasising the production of new work by the artist - such as Brighton and Maidstone
- 3) the recent 'workshop' model of LVA

The AFO added that the Committee should first decide if bursaries were a priority in view of the standstill budget. Further clarification was needed on a) whether money would be earmarked for the bursaries; b) they were to be considered in competition with the individual bursaries at the October meetings; c) they should be discontinued until the next financial year.

Malcolm Allen thought clarification of the purpose was needed. Were they to enable students' work to develop as a result of the teaching element; to provide the bursary holders with the means to continue their own work; or create a culture of production in educational institutions?

Committee members had differing views about the value of a teaching component in the bursaries. Tina Keane thought it could lead to the artist being viewed as a technician by the students while David Parsons thought it helped the bursary holder to mature. It was generally agreed that there were good reasons for continuing to site placements in educational institutions. The Chairman said that, given the complexity of the argument, it would be wise to assess the effectiveness of the current models. The FO reminded Committee that the idea of placements had been arrived at to help video artists gain access to equipment. This was no longer so imperative. The current range of placement bursaries reflected attempts to adjust to changing circumstances, particularly the erosion of available funds and he supported the Chairman's suggestion. The AFO was concerned that funds were deployed in relation to institutions that did not demonstrate sufficient commitment. Ideally, the Committee should seek a 50% funding contribution but he accepted that it would be realistic to seek other forms of contribution such as accommodation or materials. The Film Officer recommended seeking sponsorship, citing the Sony Student Festival and the AFO thought an arrangement could be made with Channel 4.

IT WAS AGREED that the Chairperson and the AFO draft a list of possible conditions and proposals after discussion with various groups and individuals and report back to Committee. The report would offer options based on either a standstill budget or an increased budget. Included in the report would be a detailed assessment of the existing models, including

workshops, and the proposed new models such as Channel 4 which could incorporate business sponsorship.

IT WAS AGREED that, in the immediate future, no funds would be made available for placement bursaries in 1984/5. Continuation of existing placements and the commencement of new ones such as Newcastle would only be possible if additional funds were available in 1985/6.

### 3.2 Regional Development

The Chairman asked MA to comment on the relationship between RAA activity and that of the Sub-Committee. MA said that the policies of the RAAs varied greatly from each other as well as from the Sub-Committee. He thought that co-operation between RAAs and the Sub-Committee could be developed and welcomed increased discussion.

The AFO asked MA to comment on the effect of the Code of Practice and Workshop Declaration which operated in the regions. MA expressed dissatisfaction with the current situation which he thought was not due to the COP, but to the extremely low budgets on which RAAs were operating. He said some RAAs had been able to use the COP to increase production budgets eg EMA had increased their budget from £12 thousand to £20 thousand.

However in other cases the reverse had occurred and the COP had prevented them functioning efficiently. He added that it was difficult to ascertain who was in fact implementing the COP. He pointed out that under the COP, from a budget of £7000, only one ½hr category 2 movie could be made. Whereas if the same money was allocated in the form of £500 bursaries not governed by the COP, more would benefit.

The Chairman asked MA to clarify the details of the COP and to explain the various categories. He did so in detail and discussion followed. He explained that in EMA's case, the budget was mainly allocated for project-based work, although some provision was made for awarding bursaries of £500 for unspecified projects. He added that because of the nature of the bursaries it was not possible to implement the COP. The FO asked MA to comment on the production policies of workshops in the regions. MA explained that the policies were very varied. For example the workshops in Nottingham and Leicester didn't produce collectively under a 'workshop' name, but were used by individuals and groups who were often involved in productions suitable for Channel 4 broadcasting. Some avant-garde work was produced and also what he considered to be 'classic' RAA feature films eg Frozen Music, which cost £7000.

The FO asked MA whether he thought there was any way of assessing the level of productivity in the workshops and comparing it to other means of funding such as individual bursaries? He suggested a national survey of this would be useful.

MA pointed out that EMA's policy was to fund workshops such as Nottingham and Leicester, with provision for an organiser and overheads, and to fund individuals and groups for project-based work. Other RAAs funded on similar lines. Almost all applicants for funding had a relationship with one or other workshop.

TK asked MA to comment on the type of work produced with these funds. MA said the money was often allocated in the

form of supplementary grants for work already in production from AC funding, for small-scale experimental work, for 'classic' RAA feature films (Frozen Music, After the Event) and only occasionally by way of co-funding with Channel 4 and the BFI Production Board. All of these films were produced in the workshops.

TK asked whether Channel 4 films could be made using resources other than those in the funded workshops. MA thought not. MA was asked about the waging element in the COP. He clarified this and discussion followed on this and the various categories of film. He pointed out that whilst there were definite categories each with clearly defined parameters, the ACIT was not obstructive but very flexible and co-operative. The 3 categories were recognised and agreed by all which he regarded as a positive factor. The exceptions to these rules were the bursaries. He thought it advantageous to work within the COP as it enabled work to be shown on TV if the opportunity arose. This was not however the impetus behind the work. The FO pointed out that another pattern seemed to be emerging within the RAAs - that of 'seed-funding' work but failing to follow up with completion funding. He told MA that the Sub-Committee had had a succession of applications of this nature and that it had felt obliged to adopt a policy of refusing completion funds in this situation.

MA agreed with the FO's observations but thought it unlikely that a policy could be agreed between CORAA and the AC, although agreement with individual RAAs might succeed.

The Chairman asked Committee to consider exhibition and distribution activities within the regions and the RAA funded workshops.

The FO mentioned the failure of the proposal to extend the Film-Makers on Tour Scheme to the regions, and he asked MA to comment.

MA said he had been sympathetic to the proposal, but the RAA Film Officers were unable to reach a collective agreement. He had been disappointed but thought the situation was unlikely to change significantly as it required a level of commitment which at present was unforthcoming.

Discussion followed on general exhibition policies within the RAAs. MA said there was no established exhibition policy and feared the tradition of independent cinema in the regions was weakening.

Jo Comino asked MA how exclusively each RAA supported the exhibition of work within its own region or whether there were any exchanges between the regions.

MA said the financial constraints had not encouraged this. He said that whilst EMA included an element of subsidy for promotion and distribution in its awards, he thought it inadequate. He did not think the problem of exhibition would be solved using ambitious schemes but thought modest initiatives would be more successful. The AFO said the current eagerness of some film-makers to produce work for TV had lead to other forms of exhibition being ignored especially those involving the film-maker in personal confrontation with an audience.

MA thought that schemes initiated by the AC to stimulate exhibition policy in the regions should be modelled on the

work of the 'animateur'. Such schemes would need to include work funded by RAAs not just the AC, and should avoid the privileging of particular artists.

DP thought the RAA Film Officers were resistant to AC initiatives and suggested either devising a scheme designed to appeal to them or by-pass them completely.

MA said there were RAAs whose funding policy was similar to that of the AC and suggested that sufficient common ground existed to form the basis for a touring exhibition. The AFO agreed and suggested that such a tour might well develop out of the activities of the Umbrella Scheme organiser, but it should not rely on the AC as sole funder. It would be proper to seek funds from an RAA where the programme reflected the particular interests of that RAA.

MA pointed out that the independent cinema network operated with a great deal of autonomy, with links to the BFI as well as, in some cases RAAs. He thought it unwise to devise tours to be foisted on unwilling exhibitors but thought the animateur and Umbrella organiser could contribute by designing a programme of interest to this network. He thought it would be easier to interest them in a programme with a limited exhibition period rather than for example the FMOT scheme which was continuously available and he thought harder to market. He thought the future of exhibition lay more in the hands of cinema organisers/exhibitors than in workshop exhibition, which he thought was in a period of decline. The AFO thought it also important to encourage the exhibition of artists' film/video in galleries. The AFO said the progress made by Michael O'Pray and Simon Field with the RFT area should not be overlooked and thought the lack of past activity in this area resulted from BFI trained programmers having little or no knowledge of 'artists/independent' work.

MA agreed and supported ARM's suggestion to programme a package of 'shorts' for use in conjunction with feature films. He suggested publishing a promotional booklet/broadsheet for use with the package, in order to interest mainstream programmers. TK reminded MA that the majority of existing initiatives had been generated by the AC and suggested that RAAs had sufficient resources to organise such a scheme themselves. She disapproved of using AC funds to develop schemes on behalf of other funding bodies.

The AFO pointed out that Northern Arts and other RAAs had funded tours in their own areas.

MA thought that CORAA would support a 'shorts' scheme and suggested approaching the BFI for co-funding. He suggested having meetings 2/3 times a year to agree collective exhibition policies. The Chairman concluded the discussion and thanked MA on behalf of the Sub-Committee for his valuable contribution to the meeting.

### 3.3 Forums and Exhibitions

- 3.3.1 The Chairman reminded Committee that the inclusion of this item resulted from the NFT Forum in January. TK thought that an open meeting would provide a welcome opportunity to discuss funding criteria and assessment procedures, which she thought had been inadequate at the NFT Forum.

ARM suggested organising a forum alongside the Co-op Preview Show in order to allow discussion with programmers who were present.

The FO thought it appropriate to delegate the organisation of such an event to the Umbrella organiser and thought it could be attractively promoted, encouraging a greater response. The AFO stressed his support of a 'day school' around exhibition and thought a narrower discussion would be more focussed and therefore productive. He stressed that many organisers were ignorant of both the area, and of the basic technical problems involved but were keen to learn.

TK reiterated the point made at the January Policy meeting - that major galleries should make provision in their budgets and time for at least one major show per year of film/video. The AFO reminded Committee that the organisers of many major galleries had yet to be convinced of the validity of this medium. The Chairman agreed and reminded Committee of the proposal made several years ago for a major video exhibition at the Hayward. To date, no progress had been made. The FO said that film/video were regarded as curiosities in relation to 'important' works. He thought forums would help raise public and curatorial awareness and understanding of the work.

The Chairman concluded that there was unanimous approval of points 3.3.1 a) - a day school/workshop on the exhibition of artists film/video designed for exhibition organisers in galleries and arts centres, and point 3.3.1 b) - an open meeting at which Committee seeks the views of artists on production/distribution issues.

AGREED

### 3.3.2 Discussion followed on the proposed exhibition of video work funded by the Sub-Committee.

The AFO pointed out that Roger Wilson and himself viewed work for this show some time ago and concluded that the strongest work resulted from placement bursaries. He thought the Serpentine would be the most suitable venue as it allowed an opportunity to exhibit expanded work whereas the alternative venue, the NFT, did not.

DP suggested Channel 4 as a 'media' venue which would cover all regions. The Chairman suggested a regional tour. The AFO thought the lack of finance would make both suggestions problematic. DP/TK and the FO disagreed and thought exhibiting regionally posed no extra problems and thought the RAAs might provide funds if work they had funded was included.

The FO pointed out that many questions and grievances left unanswered at the NFT show could be settled by organising a touring show. MA agreed and suggested the show should avoid being exclusive and should include work produced with RAA funding.

The AFO thought it important to consult the artists for their views.

ARM asked what provision was made for the televising of non-broadcast standard work. MH said there was currently a 2% allowance for this. There was general agreement that TV should be explored as a possible exhibition vehicle.



IT WAS AGREED that these directions should be pursued and reported back to the Autumn meeting. TK and MH volunteered to assist the AFO in the preliminary work such as selection, documentation and liaison with artists. The AFO reminded Committee that the venue must be free of charge. JC suggested the possibility of organising an event parallel to the London Film Festival and thereby benefitting from the publicity. She told Committee she had discussed this with Derek Malcolm who was supportive, but unable to provide funds, and with the ICA who estimated they'd require a budget of £4000 to organise the event. The ICA was considered by all to be an inadequate venue. ARM and DP thought the Co-op might be suitable. She was confident they'd be able to organise such an event on a much smaller budget than that suggested by the ICA. DC reminded Committee that no funds whatever existed for exhibition. MA thought it pointless to pursue the idea in view of the lack of funds. He thought organising an event in conjunction with the Tyneside Film Festival would be interesting and thought TV was not a medium conducive to the work.

- 3.3.3 Although ideally a broad-based, mixed film/video show was thought desirable, it was agreed that due to financial constraints an annual show, alternating between film and video would be most practical. The AFO added that finding a venue conducive to the exhibition of both film and video would prove difficult. TK thought that if an event were organised as part of the LFF, Committee would have little or no input into programming as this would be handled by the festival organisers. DP thought none-the-less that the shock element of holding such an event at a prestigious festival was important and would be beneficial and stimulating. The AFO thought the Co-op could not provide this. DP defended the Co-op and said it was precisely because of the lack of substantial input that the Co-op remained marginalised. He thought an important exhibition would rectify this. He suggested 2 shows, a LFF event and a biennial funded work show with a selection committee to undertake the organisation. The AFO stressed once more the lack of funds. The Chairman was anxious that Committee avoided committing itself to undertake activities it could not properly fund. The AFO favoured the agreed solution of a biennial film/video show - research to be done in time for a video show in 1985/6. The FO stressed that money needed to be allocated for this event. The Chairman thought it could be done more properly at a later meeting when the proposals had been costed, and the 1985/6 allocation was known.

#### 4 Any Other Business

- 4.1 Art Publishing: Undercut and Afterimage.  
The Chairman reminded Committee that the Art Dept had devolved responsibility for funding the publications of these two

negatives to the Film Section. However in view of the lack of funds and the Section's continuing struggle to support its present activities, the additional burden of these publications without concomitant funding was intolerable. IT WAS AGREED to ask Sir Brian Young to bring the matter to the attention of Council, meanwhile the Film Officers would arrange discussion with Jeffrey Knowles-Smith at the BFI.

The meeting ended at 4.00 pm.