

AFVsc86ml

Minutes of the 70th Meeting of the Artists' Film and Video Sub-Committee held at 10.30 am on February 12 1986, in the First Floor Board Room, 105 Piccadilly, London W1.

## M I N U T E S

Present:	A.L. Rees	Chairman
	Jayne Parker	
	Marion Doyen	
	Caroline Pick	RAA Observer
	Catherine Lacey	
	Jo Comino	
	Malcolm Le Grice	Observer
	Isaac Julien	
	Tina Keane	
	Marghanita Laski	Vice Chairman of Council
	Joanna Drew	Director of Art (for items 1,2)
	Jane Kleiner	Assistant Subsidy Officer (for item
	Rodney Wilson	Film Officer
	David Curtis	Assistant Film Officer
Trisha Anderson	Secretary	

Apologies were received from Mick Hartney.

- 1 The Chairman introduced the new members of Sub-Committee, Isaac Julien and Marion Doyen.

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- 2 Minutes of November 6.  
A correction was made to the minutes of November 6: George Barber's application had been recommended, not rejected as reported in the minutes.

The AFO commented on the brevity of the applications' section of the minutes: this new pattern resulted from recommendations made by the Working Party on Projects and Awards last year. Committee considered the new model insufficiently detailed; without a fuller record of the arguments for and against projects, Committee and Film Office staff would have no back-up information, should it be required.

IT WAS AGREED that these views should be passed on to the relevant Arts Council officer. The minutes were approved.

- 3 Matters Arising

3.1 Organisational Review

- 3.1.1/ The Film Officer summarised the implications of the  
.1.2 Review for Film Section. Although details were undecided the following had been agreed: Film Section would become a department, expanding the present responsibilities to include the Council's new policy on Film/ Video and Broadcasting. A new Film/Video and Broadcasting Panel would be set up to which the Advisory Committee on Arts Films and the Artists' Film and Video Sub-Committee would report.

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Unfortunately no additional money or staff would be allocated to the department. Links would be encouraged between the department and the RAAs and BFI, and responsibility for monitoring the RAAs support of community film/video projects had been passed to the department. Additionally Film Department was to advise other AC departments in their use of film/video in promotion, training, education and advertising. He thought implementation of these new responsibilities would be difficult without extra staff and resources. He further mentioned that the research project on the use of film/video in education, begun in May 85, would be completed in May of this year. The results of this would inform debate on the use of film/video in formal education and other areas. A second research project, financed by the Gulbenkian on the AC clients' use of film/video in education/promotion etc was to start in May this year.

The Film/Video and Broadcasting Panel would have overall responsibility for the department's policy, and would feed this into Council's deliberations, hopefully to the future financial benefit of the department.

- 3.1.3 The AFO reported that there'd been discussions on where artists' film and video was to be placed within the Council. His preferred solution was to remain within Film Section but to develop strong links with other areas such as art exhibition subsidy, which would be of obvious benefit to the Sub-Committee and would help prevent projects falling between categories and provide more opportunity to promote an experimental arts policy which had been Talks along these lines were currently occurring at officer level. In the future it was hoped that members of the Sub-Committee would serve on performance arts monitoring groups and Exhibition Sub-Committee.
- 3.1.4 The AFO reported that the new evaluation procedures included the setting up of an ethnic minorities Arts Monitoring Team - to be drawn from advisors on Council committees, who would be reviewing the progress of the implementation of Council's Ethnic Arts Policy.
- 3.1.5 It was noted that Fantasy Factory was to be devolved to GLAA - a move which had been in the pipeline for some time.
- 3.1.6 Discussions were going on about the future of LVA between Regional Dept, the BFI and GLA. The AFO thought that LVA might now possibly become a client of the Sub-Committee.

### 3.2 Reports

#### 3.2.1 Umbrella

There was considerable discussion of the role of the two organisers - Mike O'Pray and Cordelia Swann. It was noted that no mention was made of Cordelia Swann in the Umbrella report/bid for 86/7 funds.

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The AFO said the organisers worked in parallel but not as one unit and the report presented was Mike O'Pray's bid for money for his work during 86/7; Cordelia Swann's work had only recently begun and work on the Soviet Season had not started. Cordelia Swann had accepted that the funding awarded for 85/6 would be extended to cover work done in 86/7. If she required more money she could apply to the March 19 Meeting.

Jo Comino thought if indeed the organisers worked separately, it was inefficient and work might well be duplicated.

Malcolm Le Grice asked how objectives were formed for the scheme and how Committee communicated them to the organisers in time to affect programming. The AFO pointed out that MO had touched on this area in his reports eg "targets to be approached": MO had not proposed any radical new direction or tasks; his original brief had included the clear task of getting work into galleries, but this had not been the area of his success. The AFO thought galleries presented particular difficulties Committee could now ask him to concentrate his efforts in that area but the AFO thought that this would result in a drop of activity overall. Mo had made substantial headway with the RFTs which had been virgin territory. The AFO thought it would be inadvisable to slacken off pressure in that area.

The FO added that the initial objective of the scheme was inherited from the older 'animateur' scheme, run by Simon Field, whose brief had been to provide programming advice in areas where work was unknown. It had soon become clear that programming advice alone was not sufficient, so the Umbrella Scheme had been devised to provide both advice and programming. He stressed that the Umbrella's independence was valuable as it had allowed MO to respond immediately to current developments for example 'Scratch'. This responsiveness would not have been possible via Committee. The FO thought vexed questions such as the relationship of CS and MO would not be an issue if more funds were available and more models could be devised. A hopeful sign was that the Umbrella Scheme was now beginning to attract funds from other sources, for example, the BFI had contributed £3000 in 85/6.

Tina Keane thought more initiatives could be devised involving mixed media work, perhaps involving the Umbrella in collaborations with other AC panels and using their resources, for example Art Exhibition Subsidy.

The AFO mentioned the new guidelines had been drawn for the Art Dept which included initiatives for mixed media shows. This Art Dept scheme was now sympathetic to experimental work and he hoped that galleries would put forward applications and lobby MO.

3.3 Upper Tier Awards

The AFO reported that neither Cerith Wyn-Evans, nor Robina Rose's work was complete. CWE had a rough cut copy but Robina Rose's work was hardly started.

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4 Financial Report

The ASO indicated that cf5000 was available to this meeting from allocations currently underspent.

5 Applications

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5.1 Film/Video Umbrella: Mike O'Pray

IT WAS AGREED to award Mike O'Pray £1000 for 32 days extra work on the Umbrella Scheme during 1985/6.

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5.2 Film/Video Umbrella: A Camera of Her Own (Cordelia Swann)

IT WAS AGREED to earmark £1000 for print costs and broadsheet production expenses for the above package.

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5.3/.4 "33" Luton/East Anglia Film-Makers Ltd

Applications from Luton and East Anglia were considered together. The demands made upon Luton workshop were thought greater than those on East Anglia although both venues had support from Eastern Arts. The particular equipment requested from Luton was thought crucial to the overall operation.

IT WAS AGREED to recommend an award of £3,200 to Luton for a time-base corrector.

IT WAS AGREED to defer East Anglia's application until the meeting on March 19.

6 Division of Allocation 1986/7

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The AFO introduced his paper: he proposed that the 4% increase should be added to the production allocation and other figures should remain roughly at a standstill.

London Video Arts, the London Film-Makers' Co-op and Undercut and Afterimage had been identified by Finance Dept as annual clients; not so the Umbrella Scheme. The major change he suggested in funding procedures was in the 'one-offs' area - exhibition and equipment grants. He further suggested adding Placement Bursaries to this category.

6.1 Production

The AFO outlined the various production schemes for the benefit of new members.

6.1.1 Placement Bursaries

Tina Keane expressed concern over the Newcastle Placement interviews. She was concerned that the original objectives of the scheme - to give work opportunities to mature artists - had been ignored. She was also concerned by the fact that all the staff at Newcastle Poly were male. In this context she felt that Zoe Redman, one of two applicants interviewed, had not had a fair hearing. The Chairman thought it was proper that the host organisation had the greater say in any choice but agreed that the scheme had been designed generally to benefit artists with a sizeable body of work, rather than recent college

leavers. The AFO reported that he had, late in the day, attempted to improve the sexual balance on the selection committee, and assured TK that the eventual recipient, though a recent college leaver, was none-the-less an artist with an impressive body of work.

Malcolm Le Grice thought it inadvisable to do a post mortem on which of the two candidates should have been appointed. He preferred to see statistical evidence of how the pattern of funding was developing. A list was produced and it was noted that since the beginning of the scheme in 1972, 8 women and 22 men had received bursaries. The AFO thought this was in proportion to the funding pattern overall.

MLG thought the problem had arisen through lack of clear objectives for the scheme. He considered it of great importance to increase the number of women in colleges and increase their influence generally.

The AFO suggested that in future committee should issue an equal opportunities questionnaire to the prospective host venue which would provide data on the male/female balance and racial minorities employment in the institution, before any placement was agreed. This was agreed.

#### 6.1.2 Upper Tier Awards

It was considered too early to assess the success of the UTAs particularly as no finished work was available for viewing. However it was agreed that a formal assessment of the work would be required and an organised viewing, when complete.

Caroline Pick enquired whether it was policy to prevent successful UTA applicants from returning to the AFVSC for completion funding. It was agreed that this might prove problematic as the applicants were not precluded from reapplying for other forms of funding.

### 6.2 Exhibition

#### 6.2.1 Umbrella Scheme

There was further discussion of the Umbrella Scheme. It was noted that the original intention to limit the length of the appointment, and to offer it alternately to a man and a woman had not been put into practice.

The AFO anticipated difficulties in finding another organiser as successful as MO. He thought it would be unwise to discontinue MO's work for the sake of implementing policy. Committee agreed.

Committee was unclear about CS's relationship to the Umbrella. The AFO explained that she had applied jointly with MO to work on specific packages eg A Camera of Her Own and a Soviet Cinema package and to work on packages for film festivals. She had so far received half of her fee but to-date no programme was

was complete. The Soviet Season had been originally scheduled for September 85 but was now postponed until at least autumn 86.

The original award had been made to both MO and CS and included a joint expenses element. He added that if CS planned additional work such as the Margaret Tait programme mentioned some time ago, she was free to apply for extra funds in the same way as MO. At present MO was working for the Umbrella full-time, whereas CS was not, and this was reflected in the AFO's recommended breakdown of allocation. He pointed out that Committee could, if it wished, offer full-time Umbrella work to CS as well, but this would entail committing the full Exhibition Allocation to the Umbrella.

The Chairman added that currently there was uncertainty whether CS would work herself into the scheme; he understood that the question of the relative payments to each of the organisers was not the paramount issue. This was accepted by Committee.

Marion Doyen commented that the Umbrella had been a very valuable resource to the regions, and she hoped it would continue to develop.

IT WAS AGREED to reserve £12,000 from the 1986/7 allocation for the Umbrella, and that CS should be allowed to apply for funding for additional programming work in 1986/7 should this become necessary.

#### 6.2.2 Film and Video Artists on Tour

IT WAS AGREED that no change was necessary to the scheme. The new booklet was considered very successful.

#### 6.2.3 Project Development Fund (Exhibition/Equipment/Placement Bursaries).

The AFO introduced his proposal by saying that with 50% of committee's allocation going to production and a further 40% to annual clients, the Tour Scheme and the Umbrella, little was left for exhibition and equipment funding. This having been the case for some time, it was not surprising that Committee was unable to evolve clear policies for funding in these areas. His proposal was that Committee should resist the further encroachment of annual clients, and should instead lump together exhibition and equipment funds - and perhaps placement bursary funds - to create a fund for the support of new artists' film/video initiatives in the regions, in partnership with the RAAs. This fund would continue to be used primarily for exhibition, equipment and placements, but without any predetermined internal division of the allocation. Funds would be offered on a limited term basis with the requirement that the appropriate RAA would agree to assist in securing replacement money should the project be deemed a success. In this way Committee's funds would be used strategically, and to the benefit of different regions

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in succession.

CP was impressed by the proposal, but was concerned that the result of withdrawing funding after a fixed period might mean the collapse of any matching money, and that funds to replace those of the AC might be very difficult to find. The AFO accepted that this might sometimes be the case - but that the alternative was to risk all the Committee's funds in these areas becoming committed to an increasing number of annual clients. The Leicester Super 8 Festival and the Co-op Summer Show had started as 'one-offs' and had developed into on-going commitments; Committee should not, he felt, guarantee to fund them each year.

The Film Officer said that if the proposal was agreed in principle, it would be part of the discussion to be held between the AC Film Officers and panels and CORAA Film Officers and panels; a fuller discussion would be possible, a record of which would be circulated. he thought account needed to be taken of the regional and national role of clients.

Isaac Julien was concerned that in any discussion, full account should be taken of cultural spheres of activity and not just geographic location; flexibility was needed. The AFO reminded Committee that any decisions made would not be implemented until April 87; there was a year in which to consult and revise.

IT WAS AGREED that discussions on the AFO's proposal should go ahead taking full account of cultural spheres as well as geographic, national and well as regional. The exhibition section of the AFO's paper was approved.

### 6.3 Magazines

It was noted that Committee's two annual clients - Afterimage and Undercut - both dealt predominantly with film. It was generally agreed that this bias reflected activity within the constituency. It was thought Independent Video catered for video criticism and news.

Some committee members regretted this division - the magazines should be writing about both film and video.

It was noted that Committee did already fund writings on video via various broadsheets accompanying AC funded packages, and that Arj Monthly and the Monthly Film Bulletin published writings on video.

IT WAS AGREED that Committee's interest and concern should be communicated to Afterimage and Undercut regarding the absence of video writing.

The AFO asked for volunteer readers for Afterimage and Undercut; JC and TK volunteered; reports to be available on March 19.

Ethnic Arts

The AFO outlined the objectives of the Action Plan on Ethnic Minority Arts which had been tabled.

The AFO pointed out that the 2% shift anticipated in 86/7 allocations and the 4% target for 87/8 were to be applied not just to the AC's own direct funding, but to the activities of all its clients. Both were free to nominate specific areas in which they would achieve that target. It was also accepted that the application of this policy was a fairly blunt instrument.

The FO said that the Film section has currently expending roughly 16% of its budget on ethnic arts, mainly through the documentaries committee. Film Section had been producing films on black and Asian arts for several years. He said it would be difficult for Film Section to operate the balance of funding on a strictly percentage basis as devoting the the funding of one documentary to black/Asian arts would reach far beyond the 4% required. The AFVSC faced a particular problem in that its terms of reference limited it to supporting a fine art practice, whereas the majority of work produced by black/Asian workshops was documentary/political and therefore more within the area covered by the BFI, Channel 4 and the RAAs.

It was clear that the new policy needed to be interpreted in spirit rather than on a statistical basis. He thought identifying ethnic arts was itself a problem - should only contemporary work be considered or should historical work be included; should production companies be treated as temporary clients and asked to complete the AC questionnaire?

IJ was concerned that the policy was genuinely applied, for example were black workers employed on the 'Ballet Negre' project? He thought a special effort should be made regarding advertising opportunities for film-makers although it was acknowledged that the AFVSC sent information to black workshops and periodicals. Efforts should be made to encourage Undercut and Afterimage to report on black film/video making; efforts should be made to clarify the AFVSC's terms of reference. He felt the lack of a clear definition was particularly offputting to many black artists. He regarded the exclusivity of the AFVSC's terms of reference a central issue.

Catherine Lacey pointed out that a westernist/modernist tradition was embodied in the AFVSC's definition of art.

The Chairman stressed that Committee was committed to the support of artists film/video which was a broad and ever-changing constituency. Black film-makers who defined themselves within a fine art practice would be considered; but many black and Asian film-makers related more directly to a political or other practice.

The FO reminded Committee that the definition given to the AFVSC by Council was to encourage innovative/experimental/avant-garde work. He also thought that the remit of Committee's work was partly defined by the work done by other funding bodies eg BFI, Channel 4 etc; facilities existed for those who the AC did not fund.



TK thought that many black/Asian film/video makers produced community based work because they were more confident about their opportunities of receiving funds in those areas; the AFVSC should encourage black/Asian film/video makers to work in experimental area and give assurances of willingness to provide funding.

The Chairman added that the current intention was to encourage production and exhibition; to this end tentative discussions had been held regarding the Umbrella Scheme promoting a package of work by black artists and works associated with it.

IJ thought the support of a black project might prove a successful means of affecting the balance of support given to work.

The FO thought the Prizes Scheme might help Committee to monitor black artists emerging from art schools and feed into the general pool of information on black arts.

7 Application Form

Committee was generally sympathetic to the notion of monitoring equal opportunities but strongly objected to the sheet presented. It was considered insufficiently 'user-friendly' and did not provide an adequate statement of the AC's policy and intentions. Without this explanation, the linking of race, sex and disabilities was likely to cause offence.

The main body of the application form was considered satisfactory with the following amendments:

The statement: "The AFVSC particularly welcomes artists belonging to..." was amended to read: "The AFVSC particularly welcomes women artists and artists belong to..."

The title of the 'artists prizes scheme' was changed from: "Artists Film and Video Prizes Scheme" to "Student Film and Video Art Prizes Scheme". It was thought the latter title would avoid any confusion over the status of the work.

8 Any Other Business

IJ and TK agreed to report on the LVA/Air Gallery Installation Show. The meeting ended at 4.30 pm.