

AFVsc84p12

UMBRELLA SCHEME: Proposals for Summer/early Autumn 84

1. German Tales and Forms (New German Cinema)

Contemporary German experimental film, as it is represented in this package, is marked by its refusal to take a narrow dogmatic view of its own cultural boundaries. This pluralism produces work that is difficult to define in the English context eg. Elfi Mikesch's feminist fantasies of sexual desire and Heinz Emigholz's fragmented narratives. Furthermore, it draws on a rich tradition that is not simply a German one, but also involves Hollywood and the European "art movie". The confident approach to such material again results in uncategorisable work such as Telscher's and Woernle's. (see over page) Lastly, the abstract and formalist tradition of Germany is still explored with great technical and artistic imagination as in the short films by Kels and Reuth.

These three factors make this package an exciting and perhaps instructive introduction to one of the most vital experimental traditions in the world today.

Programme 1

NORMALSATZ	Heinz Emigholz	3 mins
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Programme 2

1982	Karl Kels	17 mins
AMERICAN HOTEL	Klaus Telscher	20 mins
EAST OF NO WEST	Klaus Wyborny	20 mins
90°	Rotraut Pape	40 mins

Programme 3

SYDNEY ON THE RIVER WUPPER	Bettina Woernel	47 mins
THE WEST VILLAGE MEAT MARKET	Noll Brinckmann	10 mins
HYENA'S BREAKFAST	Elfi Mikesch	30 mins
KOOL KILLER	Pola Reuth	5 mins

Emigholz's Normalsatz is a manic discourse on Germany, relationships, art and American soap-operas. Humour vies with with an explosive hysteria to make an anarchic statement on what might be called the "brain state" of Germany itself.

Programme 2 comprises recent work in Germany's fine tradition of formal experimentation, however recent films seem to returned more to a graphic beauty of colour and composition as in Karl Kels 1982 where a compressed energy shows the influence of his teacher, Peter Kubelka. Telscher's American Hotel won two prizes at the festival in Hyeres 1983, and is an elegant, cool and precise work of objects and interiors that pays ambivalent homage to Hollywood. Rotrautape's film show great technical skill and a strong obsession with mirrors and illusion. 90° wittily explores a room installation through camera angle, ~~XXXXXX~~ optical printing and sheer visual imagination in a fast moving and exubereant film. Wyborny, with Emigholz, the only film-makers in this package, well known in experimental circles outside Germany, produces with East of No West a harsh rigorous film of industrial landscapes very different in mood from the other works here, with its rhythmic cutting and subtle colouring. The programme represents a film domain rich in formal conceits and moods, with enormous technical expertise and a range of approaches that would be difficult to match at present anywhere else.

Programme 3 consists of women film-makers although the choice was not made on gender lines. They were the best films of the narrative-type and to this extent show the depth of involvement of women film-makers in present-day German cinema (remembering film-makers of the stature of Ulrike Ottinger, Margarethe von Trotta). Elfi Mikesch's films can only be described as eye-openers in terms of what seems her unerring ability to produce short epiphanies that take a completely individual approach to women and sexuality using editing and lighting and composition in a way that merges strong echoes of high quality American B movies with a narrative devices that always reveal the fragility of narrative assumptions. Hyena's Breakfast is a nerve wracking study of female masochism and sexual desire with a mean twist at the end. Bettina Woernle's film shown at last years Berlin Film Festival is based on an Australian dancer's memory of her home country from the point of view of her life in Wuppertal, Germany. Again the influence of American film is apparent, plus a feminism that owes nothing to dogma but rather invets the film with a woman's sensibility in relation to work, life and love. Noll Brinckmann's short film The West Village Meat Market has a fine innocence in its gentle evocation of a part of New York. Always understated, it is potent mix of documentary and personal diary reminiscent of Maria Menken and Margaret Tait. Pola Reuth, like Karl Kels and other young film-makers of some talent, was a student of Peter Kubelka at Frankfurt. Her Kool Killer won the German film critics Prize in 1982 and works on the beauty cult associated with Leni Riefenstahl as much as it does more abstract problems of form.

2. Three Installations

RAINFALL: Chris Welsby

THE REFLECTED PORTRAIT: THE PETRIFICATION OF TRANSCIENCE: Holly Warburton
VIDEO INSTALLATION

This package will show the range and diversity of work being done in installation/mixed media area in this country at present.

All three installations are of a technical complexity which makes them impossible to tour under the FM/VA on Tour Scheme. Being visually very striking, they are ideally suited to continuous showing in gallery spaces, and it is hoped that a number of regional galleries which have expressed themselves keen to begin showing this kind of work, will be enabled to do so via this tour.

Three Installations represents different approaches and relationships to time-based media. Warburton's complex installation using images of Romanticism whilst having strong expressionist and emotional overtones, creates a theatrical and filmic space that merges the formal with the imaginative. Welsby's Rainfall uses light to sculptural effect and advances his work on the illusory aspect of film through the play on screen surface as water surface. The video work will be more related to social and semantic issues in relation to the image (Steve Hawley's work is being considered).

3. Dreams, Myths and Symbols

Since Melies and through the early surrealist avant-garde film movement to the lyrical Romantic work of the American film-makers, the realms of the imagination has been a potent source for film-makers.

Recent trends in English artists' film-making towards use of a more symbolic vocabulary and Romantic imagery are here set in this broader context, by drawing together Brakhage, Keen, Jarman, Cocteau, Gance and Anger et al. The package will be in 2/3 programmes and will link work thematically rather than historically. It is designed to introduce a wider audience to recent developments in avant-garde film while indicating something of their historical roots.

The films under consideration are:

MAD LOVE Jeff Keen

DREAM MACHINE Jarman, Wyn Evans, Kostiff and Maybury

BELLS OF ATLANTIS Ian Hugo

LEAD SHOES Jayne Parker

I DISH Jayne Parker

THE FOLLY OF DR TUBE Abel Gance

ROSEMARIE Gordelia Swann

THE DEAD Stan Brakhage

EAUX D'ARTIFICE Kenneth Anger

BERLIN HORSE Malcolm Le Grice

ORA John Apps

ARIEL Margaret Tait

Films by Julia Percy, Heather Sear, Steve Chivers

CHARLESTON Renoir