

LONDON FILM-MAKERS CO-OP - ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 12th NOVEMBER 1983

- Those present:
- |                     |                 |                 |
|---------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Jim Divers (chair)  | Andrew Sedrick  | Patrick Keiller |
| Jo Comino (minutes) | Paul Bush       | Anne Rees-Mogg  |
| George Saxon        | Nicky Hamlyn    | Anne Thew       |
| Peter Milner        | Lois Stone      | Jones Clark     |
| Monica Morawietz    | David Tomler    | Robin Setts     |
| Sue Aron            | Michael Austin  | John Smith      |
| Vanda Krajinovic    | Brian Cleaver   | Mark Sheehan    |
| Nick Gordon-Smith   | Hugh Charterton | Sue Mitchell    |
| David Southwell     | Claudio Solano  | Flore Gregry    |
| Paul de Burgh       | Vanda Carter    | Michael Maziere |
| David Finch         | Cordelia Swann  | Nina Danino     |
| Janusz Szczerek     |                 |                 |

The meeting commenced at 11.55am.

ADMINISTRATION REPORT

Thomas Mutke explained that he had undertaken the administration of the LFMC as a temporary measure in mid-June.

1. Accounts

Accounts for the year ending 31st March 1983 presented and passed. Thomas and Chris Kennedy had re-budgeted in June according to the revenue funding of £36,000 from the BFI. Generally, figures were well within this. In addition, £16,000 capital funding from the GLC plus £4,000 still unspent from last year's GLC grant. The Workshop was now very well-equipped so that the next application to the GLC should concentrate on funds for Cinema (tape/slide and audio equipment) and Distribution (telecine and marketing strategies).

2. Taxation

LFMC now liable to register for VAT as unacceptable that Distribution working on behalf of film-makers by collecting their royalties. Income from courses also taxable unless separate account opened. Staff to pay self-employed NI contributions. PAYE disadvantageous to all.

3. Applications

Cinema application to GLC pending. 50% more to be asked for to cover extra publicity as audience nos. dropping. GLC appeared unwilling to fund courses on top of capital funding. Priority ~~LA~~ was BFI application due 4th December and policy discussions were under way between the BFI and the LFMC.

4. Building

The building is to be sold by auction in February as BR is being forced by the Government to sell certain assets. Considering the nature of the site, it seems likely that potential buyers will be interested in re-development. It is not clear whether the LFMC is protected within the terms of the lease: Patrick Keiller suggested that the best course of action would be to approach the Town Planning Dept. of Camden Council and press for a deal whereby the Council grants permission for re-development on condition that the LFMC is found an alternative site. This is common practice in cases

where the organisation provides facilities for the community. Anna Thew and Patrick Keiller volunteered to help Thomas with matters concerning the building, ie. approaching Camden Council, looking into the terms of the lease plus other correspondence to do with finding a new site.

CINEMA REPORT

Cordelia Swann explained that she had taken over as Cinema Organiser in June, after Carolyn Sandys's resignation, and the Cinema had been already programmed through to the Summer Show and on to the end of July. It had been closed as usual over August, then September in the Pink had taken up September to October, followed by the Realismo Fantastico event programmed in collaboration with Claudio Solano to run alongside the Latin-American course he had been running. Screenings were now on Friday and Saturday nights, while Open Screenings had been changed from Tuesdays to Wednesdays. Audience numbers varied from 30/40 to about 80. Problems were getting the equipment properly serviced and publicity which was taking up approximately three out of four of the Cinema Organiser's working days. Staff and members had been very supportive and audiences were gradually building up. Policy discussion with the BFI to take place on 23rd November so a preliminary policy meeting to discuss film-making practices was announced for Thursday 17th November at 7pm.

DISTRIBUTION REPORT

1. Marketing Strategies

Distribution staff described traditional strategy concerning the promotion of films in distribution as passive, relying on a solid group of customers, mainly schools, colleges and film societies. Constitutionally no one film in distribution can be promoted above the rest. However Mike D'Pray of the ACCB's Umbrella scheme was on the lookout for films for packages and had been given a list of new films in distribution and being produced in the Workshop. The problem was that potential programmers had no opportunity to view material they might be interested in booking. Distribution staff proposed that a letter be sent to all film-makers asking them if they objected to their film being viewed on the Steenbeck once a year for programming purposes. The LFMC would be responsible for any damage. The proposal was carried: 19 for, 1 against, 2 abstentions. Chris Kennedy mentioned that records should be kept of all such viewings.

2. Telecine

The ACCB had suggested that there should be funds to provide a small bursary for someone to research into telecine, and report on technical information and the membership was asked to put forward suggestions for a suitable candidate and to mandate the executive to make a recommendation to the ACCB. Mandate passed: 19 for, 0 against, 2 abstentions.

3. Budget

Distribution were applying to the GLC for funds to acquire a checking machine. There was now £680 in the budget allocated for publicity about Distribution, particularly for the Preview Show. This was to be advertised to the public as well as to regular hirers. David Finch mentioned that people were coming forward to write articles about programmes of new films in distribution. He also mentioned that a start had been made in sorting out various film ephemera, letters and programmes that Distribution had accumulated over

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the years. Cordelia Swann suggested that some of this material be donated to the BFI library which had virtually nothing on file about the EFMC.

#### 4. Super 8

Vanda Carter said that the distribution of Super 8 should be reconsidered as the films never go out, partly because many of them had separate soundtracks. She had been thinking of producing a catalogue in line with the Workshop and also of sending a questionnaire to hirers. A Super 8 supplement to the main catalogue had been produced.

### WORKSHOP REPORT (followed after lunch 2 - 3.20pm)

#### 1. Equipment

Arriflex BL, redhead lights acquired. Acmade camera expected in 2 weeks or by Christmas. Sound transfer room in process of being modified to receive new equipment. George Saxon also reported that the Workshop had acquired optical and contact printers through Paul de Burgh of the National Film Archive but there was a lot of work to be done on these.

#### 2. GLC applications

The capital grant of £16,800 was being spent on sound equipment, a Nagra and mics, on Super 8 equipment, cameras and double-system editing. It was hoped to set up a Super 8 processing facility similar to the 16mm one, capable of dealing with B/W stock imported from the US. Storage and space were proving a problem, particularly accommodating Super 8 cutting room. Provision had also been made for the purchase of items of Cinema equipment and for the material costs of redecorating the office.

A courses application (to cover wages and expenses) of £9,000 had been submitted to the GLC who were not now prepared to fund LFMC courses unless the money for these came out of the £16,800 capital grant. On the other hand, the capital grant would not be awarded unless courses went ahead. Jim Divers explained the reason for the GLC's change of policy towards the LFMC as the recent upheavals over the accessibility of the place to women and minority groups. A proposal to hold general, unspecific courses would not be successful. Course applications were to be re-submitted, specifying the work to be covered. Gay, Latin-American and Women's skill-sharing courses had already taken place and future proposals were for a women's beginners' and follow-up course, black and unemployed courses. Hopefully, the GLC would have reconsidered its decision by January and the membership would be kept informed.

#### 3. 3rd worker

The need for a 3rd workshop worker was discussed. The person would be responsible for generating teaching programmes and would also help in the Cinema. Potential sources of funding were discussed. Cordelia suggested approaching the Manpower Services Commission.

#### 4. Working Parties

The Workshop staff expressed thanks to certain workshop members, especially Robin Betts, James Clark and Madeleine Hall, for their commitment in helping to solve some of the problems in the workshop. One project was to produce manuals with technical information which would be sold at a

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nominal price. Robin Betts and Paul Bueh had started collecting the information and the design would be done through an art college. Other projects included work on recent acquisitions such as the contact and optical printers and the production of clear information sheets for the equipment. Work on the animation rostrum was proceeding slowly and some of the work produced on it was being shown at Open Screenings and the Workshop intended to produce a newsletter with information about all areas of the LFMC.

#### 5. Positive Discrimination

At the EGM there had been a lot of contention as to whether the new Workshop worker should not be a woman, as the standing member of staff was a man. The Executive had discussed the issue since and come to the unanimous conclusion that it should become LFMC policy that 50% of the LFMC staff, at least, should be women and where there was job-sharing, at least one member of staff in that area should be a woman.

Proposal that 50% of staff should be women carried: 24 for, 0 against, 2 abstentions.

Proposal that there should be at least 1 woman in each department carried: 24 for, 0 against, 4 abst.

### EXECUTIVE REPORT

Jim Divers reported that the Executive was 4 members short and explained the sequence of events from the last EGM which had led to 5 resignations. He proposed that selection/election for Executive should be taken much more seriously, and for this reason, suggested changing the timing of these so they did not coincide with staff elections. If Executive members were elected at the November AGM there would be more chance both that they knew what they were letting themselves in for and that the membership knew who they were voting for. This February a special meeting would be called for Executive elections. Candidates would be advised to attend at least 2 Executive meetings prior to this and to submit a written application.

Proposal to change the date of Executive elections carried: 25 for, 0 against 1 abstention.

The membership had to approve the selection procedure for the administration post. Acceptance of this was one of the conditions of the BFI grant. The administrator was to be chosen by a selection committee consisting of 1 BFI representative, 1 ACCB representative, and 4 LFMC reps., 2 staff, 2 non-staff Executive members. The latter would make their decisions on behalf of the Executive as a whole on the basis of consultation with the Executive as a body. The entire executive would be involved in shortlisting on the basis of written selection in order of preference. Sufficient time should be allowed for to circulate applications and to meet the candidates.

Selection procedure approved: 23 for, 0 against, 1 abstention.  
The temporary administrator would have tenure until April.

### OPEN ACCESS

Vanda Carter, David Finch and Chris Kennedy laid down guidelines for a broad-based discussion on the LFMC's policy of open access, suggesting there was room for change, to be implemented through specific proposals with a right of veto. Chris voiced the contention that there were certain

files in the cupboards which were offensive and which should not be distributed by the LFMC on the grounds that they were pornographic. Vanda added that there was a contradiction in the idea that the films associated with the LFMC were supposed to break down barriers and stereotypes and to promote new ways of looking at things when LFMC distributed films that re-inforced the status quo. David Finch proposed some sort of system whereby a film was not automatically vetted but, if there happened to be a particular objection, it could be raised at an Executive meeting, a screening arranged and the fullest discussion could take place before a decision was arrived at. Other members felt that the right of veto over films was akin to censorship and was potentially dangerous or dogmatic. Anna Thew felt it was important to keep the audience in a position of knowledge so that they could choose for themselves whether to walk out or otherwise take action. Patrick Keiller thought that the right to veto opened the possibility of people making other sorts of judgments on films, that it was a lazy option and certainly not the only way of dealing with objectionable films. The discussion continued along quite abstract lines but it was generally felt that the issue was an extremely complex one which touched questions of politics, aesthetics, representation, freedom and censorship and would merit at least a whole day's discussion, possibly in conjunction with actual screenings.

The meeting closed at 7pm.